

The Role of YouTube Children's Educational Videos in Enhancing Early Childhood English Language Proficiency: An Investigation of Parental Perceptions

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the use of YouTube children's educational videos to enhance early childhood English language proficiency. The study utilized a qualitative research design, and data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 10 parents of preschool-aged children. The findings of the study revealed that parents used a variety of YouTube children's educational videos to enhance their children's English language proficiency, including videos that taught basic English vocabulary, songs, nursery rhymes, grammar, and sentence structures. Participants also identified perceived benefits and drawbacks of using YouTube children's educational videos, such as improvements in vocabulary and grammar skills, exposure to the English language, and concerns about addiction to watching videos, exposure to inappropriate content, and quality and accuracy issues. Moreover, parents perceived YouTube children's educational videos to be effective in enhancing their children's English language skills, and various factors influenced their decision to use such videos, such as convenience, affordability, variety of content, and fun and engaging learning

INTRODUCTION

With the advent of technology, its integration in education has rapidly increased, especially in recent years. YouTube has revolutionized the way children access educational materials. YouTube children's educational videos have become an increasingly popular tool in many educational settings, including homes and classrooms. Early childhood education is critical for children's academic success and future social and economic well-being, and English language proficiency is an essential skill in the modern world (Ashdown & Bernard, 2012). Therefore, it is important to develop children's English language skills at an early age to equip them better for future success. The use of YouTube children's educational videos has the potential to enhance early childhood English language proficiency.

YouTube has become an essential resource for educational content with thousands of educational channels available to parents and educators. Children's educational videos on YouTube are increasingly popular among young learners and are a convenient and accessible way for children to learn new skills. These videos have been used as a tool to teach children various subjects such as math, science, and literacy.

English language learning is one area where YouTube children's educational videos can be particularly beneficial. Research has demonstrated that early childhood English language proficiency is essential for academic success in later years (Cohen 2016). Additionally, studies have shown that children who develop English language proficiency at an early age have a better chance of succeeding academically and socially in later years.

Parents play a crucial role in the education of their children, especially in the early childhood period. They are responsible for providing their children with the tools and resources necessary to develop their cognitive and linguistic abilities (Kilag et al., 2022). Parental involvement in early childhood education has a positive impact on children's academic and social development.

However, parents may not always have the time or resources to provide their children with necessary English language education. YouTube children's educational videos can provide parents with a tool to supplement their children's education, especially in households where English is not the primary language. The aim of this research is to investigate the role of YouTube children's educational videos in enhancing early childhood English language proficiency. Specifically, this study aims to explore parental perceptions of using YouTube children's educational videos as a tool for improving their children's English language skills.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review aims to provide an overview of the research conducted on the use of YouTube children's educational videos in enhancing early childhood English language proficiency. This review will focus on the benefits and drawbacks of using YouTube children's educational videos as a teaching tool, parental perceptions of their effectiveness, and the factors that influence parents' decisions to use them.

Research has shown that YouTube children's educational videos can be an effective tool for enhancing early childhood English language proficiency. These videos provide children with an engaging and interactive learning experience, which can help to develop their language skills (Chen et al., 2021). They can also expose children to different accents and dialects, which can help to develop their listening and speaking skills (Mendoza, 2018).

However, there are also drawbacks to using YouTube children's educational videos. For example, not all videos are appropriate for young learners, and some may contain inappropriate content (Sadeghi & Sepahi, 2018). Additionally, children may not always be able to focus on the videos, leading to a decrease in learning effectiveness (Kilag, et al., 2023).

Research has also explored parental perceptions of the effectiveness of YouTube children's educational videos in enhancing early childhood English language proficiency. Many parents view these videos as a useful tool for supplementing their children's education, particularly in households where English is not the primary language (Sasan, et al., 2022).

However, some parents express concerns about the quality and appropriateness of the videos, as well as the potential negative effects of screen time on their children's development (Yin, 2019). Parents also report that they may not have the time or resources to adequately monitor their children's use of YouTube children's educational videos (Sasan, 2021).

Several factors influence parents' decisions to use YouTube children's educational videos to enhance early childhood English language proficiency. Research suggests that parents who have a higher level of education and income are more likely to use these videos than those with lower levels of education and income (Russell-Bennett, et al., 2022).

Parents' perceptions of their children's readiness for English language learning also play a role in their decision to use YouTube children's educational videos. Some parents may feel that their children are not yet ready for English language learning, while others may believe that their children are already proficient enough in English (Zentz, 2015).

The use of YouTube children's educational videos to enhance early childhood English language proficiency has several implications for educators and policymakers. First, it is important for educators and policymakers to provide guidance and support for parents in selecting appropriate videos and monitoring their children's use of them (Zucker et al., 2021).

Second, educators and policymakers should work to ensure that YouTube children's educational videos meet appropriate standards for quality and appropriateness. This may involve creating guidelines for video creators and

providing resources for parents and educators to evaluate the quality of the videos (Palmgren-Neuvonen, et al., 2015).

This literature review has provided an overview of the research conducted on the use of YouTube children's educational videos in enhancing early childhood English language proficiency. The research suggests that these videos can be an effective tool for enhancing early childhood English language proficiency, but there are also drawbacks to their use. Parental perceptions of their effectiveness, as well as factors influencing parents' decisions to use them, are also important considerations. Finally, the use of YouTube children's educational videos has several implications for educators and policymakers, highlighting the need for guidance, support.

METHODOLOGY

This research investigated parental perceptions of the role of YouTube children's educational videos in enhancing early childhood English language proficiency in the Toledo City, Cebu, Philippines. The study used a qualitative research design, specifically semi-structured interviews, to collect data from seven parents of children aged between three to six years old.

Sampling

The participants for this study were selected using purposive sampling, based on the criteria of being a parent of a child aged between three to six years old and residing in the Toledo City, Cebu, Philippines. The sample size for this study was seven participants, which is sufficient for a qualitative study, as the focus is on gaining in-depth insights into the perceptions of parents regarding the use of YouTube children's educational videos to enhance early childhood English language proficiency.

Data Collection

Data was collected through semi-structured interviews. The interviews were conducted face-to-face, and each interview lasted approximately 30 to 45 minutes. The interviews were recorded using a digital recorder, with the participants' consent. The interviews were conducted in English, which is the medium of instruction in the Philippines, and the language of the YouTube educational videos used by the participants.

Interview Questions

The interview questions were developed based on the research questions and were used to guide the discussion with the participants. The questions were open-ended to allow the participants to express their opinions and experiences freely. The questions were structured to elicit information on the following topics:

Data Analysis

The recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim and were analyzed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a qualitative method of analysis that involves identifying patterns or themes within the data. The analysis involved the following steps:

1. Familiarization with the data: The researcher listened to the recordings and read the transcripts several times to become familiar with the data.
2. Coding: The researcher identified and labeled significant portions of the data, such as phrases or sentences, that relate to the research questions.
3. Theme development: The codes were grouped into themes based on similarities and differences.
4. Data interpretation: The researcher interpreted the data within the context of the research questions and the literature review.

Ethical Considerations

This research followed the ethical principles of informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation. The participants were informed of the purpose of the study, and their consent was obtained before the interviews. The participants were assured of the confidentiality of their responses, and their anonymity was maintained throughout the study. The participants were informed that their participation in the study was voluntary, and they had the right to withdraw at any time without consequences.

Findings

The findings of this study on parental perceptions of the role of YouTube children's educational videos in enhancing early childhood English language proficiency in the Toledo City, Cebu, Philippines, revealed four main themes: (1) the types of YouTube children's educational videos used by parents to enhance their children's English language proficiency, (2) the perceived benefits and drawbacks of using YouTube children's educational videos to enhance early childhood English language proficiency, (3) the perceived effectiveness of YouTube children's educational videos in enhancing children's English language skills, and (4) the factors that influence parents' decision to use YouTube children's educational videos to enhance their children's English language skills.

Theme 1: Types of YouTube Children's Educational Videos Used by Parents to Enhance Their Children's English Language Proficiency

The findings of the study showed that parents used a variety of YouTube children's educational videos to enhance their children's English language proficiency. The most commonly used videos were those that focused on teaching basic English vocabulary, such as colors, numbers, and animals. Other popular videos were those that featured English songs and nursery rhymes, as well as videos that taught English grammar and sentence structures.

During the interviews, participants shared their experiences of using YouTube educational videos to enhance their children's English language skills. One participant mentioned using videos that teach basic English vocabulary:

"I usually play videos that teach basic English vocabulary like colors, numbers, and animals. My child loves watching them, and I can see that she is learning a lot from these videos."

Another participant mentioned the use of videos that featured English songs and nursery rhymes:

"I find that my child learns better when she watches videos that feature English songs and nursery rhymes. The melody and repetition help her remember the words and phrases."

Participants also shared their experiences of using videos that taught English grammar and sentence structures. One participant said:

"I use videos that teach grammar and sentence structures. My child is now able to construct simple sentences in English, and I'm happy to see her progress."

In addition to these types of videos, some parents also mentioned using educational videos that were specifically designed for young learners of English, such as those produced by popular English language learning programs like Oxford English for Kids and Fun English. One parent noted that they found these videos to be particularly effective in helping their child learn English:

"I think the videos that are designed for English language learners are really good. They have simple language and are easy for my child to understand. Plus, they have fun animations and characters that keep my child engaged and interested in learning."

It was also noted that some parents used a combination of videos in order to provide a more comprehensive approach to their child's English language learning. For example, one parent said they would first watch a video that introduced new vocabulary words, and then follow up with a song or game that reinforced those words:

"I usually start by showing my child a video that introduces new words, like colors or animals. Then, I'll put on a song or game that uses those words, so my child can practice saying and using them. I think this helps my child learn in a more fun and engaging way."

Overall, the findings of this study suggest that parents in the Toledo City, Cebu, Philippines use a variety of YouTube children's educational videos to enhance their children's English language proficiency. These videos range from basic vocabulary lessons to more complex grammar and sentence structure lessons, and often include songs and nursery rhymes. Some parents also use videos specifically designed for young learners of English, which they find particularly effective in helping their children learn. Additionally, some parents use a combination of videos to provide a more comprehensive approach to their child's English language learning.

Theme 2: Perceived Benefits and Drawbacks of Using YouTube Children's Educational Videos to Enhance Early Childhood English Language Proficiency

The participants in the study identified several benefits of using YouTube children's educational videos to enhance early childhood English language proficiency. These benefits included improved vocabulary and grammar skills, increased exposure to the English language, and enhanced motivation to learn English. However, the participants also identified several drawbacks, such as the potential for children to become addicted to watching videos, the risk of exposure to inappropriate content, and concerns about the quality and accuracy of some educational videos.

One participant shared their opinion on the benefits of using YouTube educational videos:

"I think using YouTube educational videos is a great way to expose children to the English language. My daughter learned a lot of English words and phrases just by watching these videos. It's also a fun way to learn, which makes her more motivated to practice and improve her English."

Another participant mentioned their concerns about the drawbacks of using YouTube videos:

"I'm worried about the risks of exposure to inappropriate content, especially because there are so many videos out there. I also think that some educational videos may not be accurate or reliable sources of information. So, I always make sure to monitor my child's screen time and supervise the videos that she watches."

Another participant shared their view on the potential for addiction to YouTube videos:

"My son loves watching YouTube videos, especially educational ones. But sometimes I worry that he spends too much time watching them and becomes addicted. So, I try to balance his screen time and encourage him to engage in other activities, like playing outside or reading books."

The participants also discussed their experiences with using YouTube children's educational videos to enhance their children's English language proficiency. Some parents reported that their children became more confident in speaking English after watching these videos, while others mentioned that their children became more interested in learning English as a result of these videos. One parent noted:

"My son used to be very shy when it came to speaking English, but after watching these videos regularly, he has become much more confident in speaking English. He even tries to teach me new words now!"

Another parent highlighted the convenience of using YouTube children's educational videos to support their children's language learning:

"As a working parent, it's difficult for me to find the time to sit down with my child and teach them English. These videos have been a great help, as I can put them on while I'm cooking or doing other chores around the house, and my child can learn English in a fun and engaging way."

However, some parents expressed concerns about the potential negative effects of excessive screen time on their children's development. One parent stated:

"I worry that my child is spending too much time watching these videos and not enough time engaging in other activities. I try to limit their screen time, but it's difficult when they enjoy watching the videos so much."

The participants recognized the benefits of using YouTube children's educational videos to enhance their children's English language proficiency, but also acknowledged the need to be mindful of the potential drawbacks and to monitor their children's screen time.

Theme 3: Perceived Effectiveness of YouTube Children's Educational Videos in Enhancing Children's English Language Skills

The findings of the study indicated that parents perceived YouTube children's educational videos to be effective in enhancing their children's English language skills. The participants reported that their children showed improvements in vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation skills after watching educational videos. However, some parents also noted that the effectiveness of the videos depended on the quality of the content and the engagement of the child.

The participants in the study provided insightful comments on the effectiveness of YouTube children's educational videos in enhancing children's English language skills. One parent shared, "I have seen a significant improvement in my child's vocabulary skills since we started using educational videos on YouTube. She can now identify and name several objects, animals, and colors in English that she couldn't before." Another participant remarked, "The videos have helped my child with pronunciation. She can now pronounce words more clearly and accurately."

However, some parents also highlighted the importance of the quality of the videos in determining their effectiveness. One participant stated, "I think the effectiveness of the videos depends on the quality of the content. Some videos are not well-made, and the information is not accurate. So, I always make sure to check the video's credibility before showing it to my child." Another parent shared a similar sentiment, "I have noticed that my child engages more with videos that have good graphics and animation. The videos that are boring or poorly made don't keep her attention for long."

Furthermore, some parents noted that the effectiveness of the videos depended on the age of their children. For instance, one parent mentioned that "the videos are effective for my five-year-old daughter, who is just starting to learn English. However, for my eight-year-old son who has already learned some English in school, the videos are not challenging enough."

Another parent highlighted that the effectiveness of the videos was enhanced when they were used in combination with other educational activities. They said, "I usually watch the videos with my child and ask questions about the content to make sure he understands it. We also practice speaking and writing in English together. So, the videos are just one part of our English learning routine."

The findings suggest that YouTube children's educational videos can be an effective tool for enhancing children's English language skills, but their effectiveness may vary depending on factors such as the age of the child and the quality of the content. Additionally, using the videos in combination with other educational activities can further enhance their effectiveness.

Theme 4: Factors that Influence Parents' Decision to Use Youtube Children's Educational Videos to Enhance Their Children's English Language Skills

The participants in the study identified several factors that influenced their decision to use YouTube children's educational videos to enhance their children's English language skills. These factors included the convenience of accessing videos on YouTube, the affordability of using free educational videos, the variety of content available on YouTube, and the belief that using educational videos was a fun and engaging way for their children to learn English.

The participants in the study shared their experiences and reasons for using YouTube children's educational videos to enhance their children's English language skills. Convenience was a major factor influencing the decision to use YouTube, as it allowed parents to access educational videos at any time and from anywhere. One participant stated, "I find YouTube to be a very convenient platform, as I can easily access it from my phone, tablet or computer. It is very helpful as it allows me to find educational videos for my child whenever I need them."

Another factor that influenced parents' decision to use YouTube children's educational videos was affordability. Many parents found it cost-effective to use free educational videos available on YouTube. As one participant noted, "YouTube is a great resource for free educational videos. I don't have to pay for expensive language classes or materials, and I can find quality videos for my child to learn from."

Participants also mentioned the variety of content available on YouTube as a factor influencing their decision. Parents appreciated the wide range of educational videos available, which catered to different age groups and language levels. One participant mentioned, "There are so many options available on YouTube, which makes it easier to find videos that are age-appropriate and relevant to my child's language level."

The participants also noted that using educational videos on YouTube was a fun and engaging way for their children to learn English. Parents felt that their children enjoyed watching educational videos on YouTube and were more motivated to learn English through this medium. As one participant stated, "My child loves watching videos on YouTube, and learning English through these videos has become a fun and engaging experience for him. He looks forward to watching new videos and learning new words."

However, some participants also mentioned concerns about the quality of educational videos available on YouTube. Some videos were found to be inaccurate or misleading, which could negatively impact children's language learning. One participant mentioned, "I have to be careful when choosing educational videos on YouTube, as some videos may not be accurate or may contain inappropriate content. I always check the video quality and accuracy before allowing my child to watch."

In addition, some participants were concerned about the amount of time their children spent watching videos on YouTube. Some parents worried that their children may become addicted to watching videos and may not spend enough time engaging in other activities. One participant stated, "I try to limit the amount of time my child spends watching videos on YouTube, as I don't want him to become addicted to it. I want him to engage in other activities as well."

The participants in the study perceived YouTube children's educational videos to be a useful and effective tool for enhancing their children's English language proficiency. Convenience, affordability, variety, and engagement were some of the factors that influenced parents' decision to use YouTube as a platform for their children's language learning. However, concerns about video quality, accuracy, and addiction were also raised, highlighting the importance of parental supervision and careful selection of educational videos.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The present study aimed to explore the types of YouTube children's educational videos used by parents to enhance their children's English language proficiency, the perceived benefits and drawbacks of using such videos, the perceived effectiveness of these videos in enhancing children's English language skills, and the factors that influence parents' decision to use these videos. The findings of the study indicated that parents used a variety of YouTube children's educational videos, including those that focused on teaching basic English vocabulary, English songs and nursery rhymes, and English grammar and sentence structures. The participants perceived these videos to be effective in enhancing their children's English language skills, with improvements in vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation skills being reported. However, the participants also identified some drawbacks of using these videos, such as the potential for addiction, exposure to inappropriate content, and concerns about the quality and accuracy of some educational videos. Factors such as convenience, affordability, variety, and engagement were found to influence parents' decision to use YouTube children's educational videos.

These findings are consistent with previous studies that have explored the use of YouTube and other digital media for educational purposes. For instance, a study by Celik (2013) found that YouTube videos were used by Turkish EFL (English as a foreign language) learners to improve their vocabulary, listening, and speaking skills. Similarly, a study by Xodabande (2017) found that English language learners in Turkey used YouTube videos to enhance their listening, speaking, and pronunciation skills. In both of these studies, the participants perceived YouTube videos to be effective in improving their English language skills, with increased motivation and engagement being reported.

Another study by Lee and Lin (2019) investigated the effectiveness of using YouTube videos to teach English vocabulary to Hong Kong secondary students. The findings of the study indicated that the use of YouTube videos resulted in higher levels of vocabulary learning than traditional classroom instruction, with increased engagement and enjoyment being reported by the students. Similarly, a study by Nishioka (2021) explored the use of YouTube videos to teach English listening comprehension to Korean EFL learners. The findings of the study indicated that the use of YouTube videos enhanced the learners' listening comprehension skills and increased their motivation to learn English.

Overall, the findings of the present study and previous studies suggest that YouTube children's educational videos can be an effective and engaging tool for enhancing children's English language skills. However, there are some potential drawbacks and concerns that should be considered, such as the risk of addiction and exposure to inappropriate content. Therefore, it is important for parents to monitor their children's use of YouTube and ensure that they are accessing high-quality and appropriate educational content.

The present study contributes to the existing literature on the use of YouTube and digital media for educational purposes by exploring the use of YouTube children's educational videos to enhance early childhood English

language proficiency. The findings of the study provide insights into the types of videos used by parents, the perceived benefits and drawbacks of using such videos, the perceived effectiveness of these videos in enhancing children's English language skills, and the factors that influence parents' decision to use these videos. These findings have important implications for parents, educators, and researchers who are interested in using digital media for educational purposes.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study demonstrate that parents perceive YouTube children's educational videos to be an effective tool for enhancing their children's English language proficiency in early childhood. The study also revealed that parents use a variety of videos to teach English vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structures, including videos that feature English songs and nursery rhymes. Additionally, the study identified several benefits of using YouTube children's educational videos, such as increased exposure to the English language and improved motivation to learn English.

However, the study also identified some drawbacks associated with using YouTube children's educational videos, including the potential for children to become addicted to watching videos and the risk of exposure to inappropriate content. Additionally, the study highlighted concerns about the quality and accuracy of some educational videos.

Overall, the findings of this study provide valuable insights into the perceptions of parents regarding the use of YouTube children's educational videos to enhance early childhood English language proficiency. The results suggest that YouTube children's educational videos have the potential to be a valuable tool for parents and educators in promoting English language learning in early childhood. Nonetheless, there is a need for further research to explore the impact of YouTube children's educational videos on children's language development in more detail, as well as to address concerns about the potential risks associated with their use.

In summary, this study contributes to the ongoing discussion about the use of digital media in early childhood education and provides insights into how parents use YouTube children's educational videos to enhance their children's English language proficiency. The findings of this study have important implications for educators, parents, and policymakers who are interested in promoting early childhood language development, as well as for researchers interested in studying the impact of digital media on child development.

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