

## Afghan UiTM TESL Students' Perceptions Using YouTube in Assisting Post Graduate Studies

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**Abstract:** Technology has opened up opportunities for rich and new approaches to deal with educational issues and offer solutions to the increasing requirements for learning resources. There are several online materials that tend to be integrated into traditional lessons, such as YouTube videos. YouTube, as a supplemental material, can have a vital role in the field of teaching and learning. Despite its potential efficacy in the context of education, the question still remains vague how YouTube assists the learners in their learning activities. Therefore, it needs to be examined its suitable usage more in detail. The aim of this study is to examine the perception of the students with regards to the utilization of YouTube and how it assists them in their learning. In order to discover their perceptions, a qualitative approach was employed and the data was gathered through the interviews with five Afghan UiTM TESL students as the respondents for this study. The findings, as discovered from the interviews, YouTube is mainly utilized for learning and entertainment purposes. Specifically, preference of YouTube over the classroom lectures and using YouTube as a guide for assignments.

**Key Words:** YouTube, Video, Afghan, UiTM

### Introduction

Technology plays an important role in today's society and it is utilized for various aspects of daily life. For example, people use technology in order to organize activities and work like looking for a job, connecting with friends abroad, business transactions, and collecting information. Technology offers many teaching and learning materials, such as learning websites and offers the learners extraordinary source of information (Almurashi, 2016). Technology has opened up possibilities for rich and new approaches to deal with educational issues and offer solutions to the growing needs for learning resources (Alwehaibi, 2015). Furthermore, today's students belong to the digital world and they seem to have no problem to deal with technology in their lives and classroom. As well as, technology also assists the teachers to finish many of their works successfully and effectively (Khalid and Muhammad, 2012).

Thus, there are several online materials that tend to be incorporated into traditional lessons, such as YouTube website. YouTube is an online video storage resource in which almost any digital video can be kept and displayed free of any charge and the students can easily access it (Watkins and Wilkins, 2011). YouTube as a source of online material can have a significant role in the field of learning and teaching (Almurashi, 2016). Despite YouTube being produced as a video-sharing service for the daily users, its potential use for educational purposes has not been ignored (Snelson, 2011). Utilizing YouTube as additional material to teaching will offer learners with proper comprehension and knowledge of their lessons. Additionally, it is presumably making the

learning process more exciting and significant, and it provides students the chance to memorize their lessons very smoothly (Almurashi, 2016). There are various ways using YouTube to assist and improve the learning process, and YouTube is perhaps more beneficial within the context of language learning other than any other educational context (Alwehaibi, 2015).

There are effective features of YouTube that assist learners to apprehend well such as video-text and audio-visual aid and students are interested and enjoy different activities. As a result, YouTube videos are regarded as a satisfactory website to offer the learning materials to students (Ayu, 2017). Likewise, implementation of YouTube in classrooms offer students with a well understanding of the lessons through the visual support (Khalid and Muhammad, 2012). Furthermore, YouTube is also considered as one of the most efficient ways to attain success especially in English classrooms where the learners can search the topic studied in the classroom.

### **a. Problem Statement**

There are very few studies that indicate Afghan educators exploit technology, particularly, YouTube. Developing and reinforcing technology in education is another groundwork step in the development of a strong educational system in Afghanistan (Sherzad, 2017). Due to the lack of prior knowledge of some certain courses and limited time, sometimes the Afghan TESL students as the researcher observed had difficulties and were not able to practice them efficiently in the classroom. Students gradually lose interest in learning the respective course unless it is practiced. Therefore, students were usually motivated to enhance their learning by watching YouTube at homes. This was also found by Silviyanti (2014) who stated that students were motivated having practiced their lessons from authentic materials such as YouTube and did their assigned tasks eagerly. The purpose of this study is to examine Afghan TESL students' perceptions of using YouTube in enhancing their learning. In addition to promoting the community of student-centered interaction, it is a need to further examine the Afghan TESL students' perceptions.

### **b. Research Objective**

The main objective of this study is to examine Afghan TESL students' perceptions towards the effectiveness of the YouTube and its usage as an additional material assisting the students in their post graduate studies.

This study attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the Afghan TESL students' perceptions towards the effectiveness of the YouTube for learning?
2. How can the use of YouTube as a supplementary material assist Afghan TESL students in their post graduate studies?

### **Review of Literature**

The need for the usage of internet is considerably growing, together with websites and applications. The usage of internet in education has a great influence on learning and teaching, particularly in the classroom (Khalid and Muhammad, 2012). Today's students belong to the world of technology as described in Gen-X, millennials and they rapidly understand the

information from various sources simultaneously in the form of images and videos (Duffy, 2008). Al-Jenaibi (2011) who carried out a study with regards to the usage of social media in the Arab Emirates found that majority of the respondents used YouTube in order to view and post new information. In YouTube channel, music videos, political speech, and amateur movies are simply accessible (Mullen and Wedwick, 2008). These authors added that the instructors are just starting to unravel the likely advantages of YouTube usage during the lessons. Similarly, according to Tamim (2013), the instructors around the world use YouTube for various purposes. The author found that YouTube videos were used for the purpose of presentations in teacher-led classrooms. Also, assisting the learning process, increasing interest, and efficacy and improving the content are the advantages he identified in his study.

Anyone for his/her specific need can access a large database of YouTube videos and the user can also create an account and keep the selected videos there and teachers can spare their times wasted for searching the appropriate video during the lesson (Mullen and Wedwick, 2008). Furthermore, Duffy (2008) discussed the educational benefits of using YouTube as it is an influential educational tool. The writer added that an effective video instruction is a teacher-to-student instruction rather than television-to-student and educators increasingly utilize YouTube as a pedagogic resource to teach students. Similarly, Almurashi (2016) revealed that YouTube plays a key role in assisting students to comprehend their lessons. In particular, YouTube offered an extensive impact on learners' comprehension of English language.

The lessons and classroom activities are detailed and homework and projects students do require online videos (Watkins and Wilkins, 2011). Likewise, Buzzetto-More (2015) suggested the learners in his study to embrace the usage of YouTube videos for their projects, presentations, assignments, and discussions. Furthermore, how to get the students, according to Sherer and Shea (2011), prepared for class sessions and how to involve them in classroom activities are the regular concerns in teaching. In light of these concerns, skillfully constructed assignments and activities tend to be the driving force by using YouTube videos. Integrating YouTube videos simultaneously provides limitless chances to improve assignments, classroom discussion, or even exams. In the same manner, Byrne (2010) surveyed students from three different departments and found the students uncomfortable and had difficult times doing the tasks without experiencing YouTube videos. On the other hand, the students demonstrated a great success and enthusiasm doing a similar homework by using YouTube.

In addition, Khalid and Muhammad (2012) regarded YouTube as one of the most remarkable applications that assist in comprehension of language and it provides the learners the opportunity to experience the language in the video in a dynamic way. Based on their claim, YouTube presents the language more realistically and comprehensively than any other teaching method. Moreover, with the variety of videos on YouTube discussed by Morat and Abidin (2011), the EFL lecturers have the opportunity to utilize video for various language learning purposes in different creative ways. Meanwhile, YouTube contains videos uploaded by users from around the world, this will also assist in demonstrating the variation of English from all over the world in an authentic way to the language learners. In spite of its various benefits as a source to facilitate learning and teaching, researchers added that there are some difficulties that teachers are required to consider. First of all, the users need to be connected to the internet. Hence, it is a key challenge unless there is a connection or it is slow and it is because of the fact that high

bandwidth capacity is necessary for watching YouTube videos of great quality. Besides its technical concerns, teachers have to spend more time in selecting appropriate videos to be integrated into their instructions.

With respect to understanding the lesson well, Almurashi (2016) stated that YouTube should be integrated by teachers in the classroom since it is perceived to be more successful and effective than textbooks and it tends to be a successful method in dealing with learners' problems and barriers in comprehending their lessons. In a study conducted by Wilson (2015) found YouTube as a valuable educational resource and it should be regarded as teachers' teaching practices. Watkins and Wilkins (2011) addressed the two main advantages of YouTube in the ESL classroom such as authentic English and promotion of learning style that is more student-centered and autonomous. Also, YouTube is used as an activity to motivate cultural lessons and the activities will be more comprehensive inside the classroom as well as the homework and projects which need YouTube. Further, students outside of the classroom use YouTube for watching videos and this reflects that the students are familiar with the usage of YouTube and know how to use it for their comprehensive learning (Khalid and Muhammad, 2012).

Furthermore, DeWitt et al (2013) conducted a study in Malaysia that the incorporation of technology in teaching and learning tends to be done through the usage of YouTube and it is used as a video storage to help both learners and instructors. Likewise, Jones and Cuthrell (2011) argue that the YouTube as a valuable source within the classroom that can be utilized by the teachers and it can be used in various ways to enhance their teaching. In the same vein, using YouTube technology as a means for capturing students' attention and their interest, is particularly helpful at the beginning of the lesson. However, teachers must be attentive and check the credibility of the video they are presenting in the class because teachers are responsible for supplementing their lessons with YouTube. DeWitt et al. (2013) argued that learners need to improve their technological skills in the future as this is associated with globalization. The authors also argued that teachers need to observe when the learning happens through the YouTube and learners are not affected negatively by the YouTube. The authors further stated that lecturers and learners can use YouTube as a source to help them in teaching and learning and also to boost knowledge base.

## Methodology

The approach for this study is precisely qualitative, concentrating on the respondents' experiences and standpoints. According to Myer (1997), qualitative research approach was established in the social science to assist the researchers to study social and cultural phenomena. Similarly, Griffin (2004) indicated that qualitative method finds out a profound analysis of the experiences of reasonably small numbers of respondents and how the respondents practice the events from their perspective. Further, Alfehaid (2011) stated that employing a qualitative approach allows the researcher to get closer to the respondents and bring out their perceptions and outlooks concerning the research problem.

### a. Population and Sample

The selection of the respondents was purposeful for the sake of contribution to this research study. For this study, all the accessible population was five Afghan TESL students who were pursuing their master's degree at UiTM in Malaysia. In addition, this study involved students aged between 25 to 32 years old to elicit their experiences regarding the usage of YouTube. All the respondents were selected with diverse backgrounds and experiences. Especially, common characteristics of the respondents are that they are all lecturers and they have all been using technology for their teaching and learning practices. These respondents were informed of an agreement of the interview and made the appointment.

### b. Instrument

The interview questions (See Appendix A) administered for this research study were adopted and adapted from a variety of research articles. The related questions were posed for the elaboration on some points and it took 10 minutes for each face-to-face interview.

### c. Data Analysis

After the interview was carried out smoothly, the recordings were transcribed. The procedure of data analysis is to make sense out of the responses which include merging, reducing and interpreting. According to woods (2011), the qualitative analysis includes identifying and categorizing themes emerged from the data. With regards to the analysis, the researcher determined the data regarded as the main themes.

## Findings

The findings of this research with regards to the use of YouTube have been organized into themes emerged through the process of interviews and the findings will answer the two research questions. The sequence follows the order of the two research questions presenting the results responding to each research question.

**Research Question 1:** What are the students' perceptions towards the effectiveness of the YouTube for learning?

Table 1: Findings on students' perception regarding YouTube.

Research Question 1	Respondents	Themes
Students' perception towards the effectiveness of YouTube	1, 2, 3, 4 & 5	Students use YouTube for Learning and Entertainment
	1, 2 & 4	YouTube has Visual Effect
	2, 3 & 4	YouTube is exciting

Table 1 demonstrates the emerged themes of the students' perception towards the YouTube. All the respondents were asked about their usage of YouTube. The most common theme revealed by the five respondents is YouTube is utilized for learning and entertainment. Below are the answers given by the respondents regarding YouTube.

### **Theme 1: Learning and Entertainment**

The first theme emerged from the data highlighted the perceptions of the respondents towards the utilization of YouTube. When asked about the usage of the YouTube, all the respondents provided a similar response and agreed that they use the YouTube for two main purposes, such as learning, entertainment and recreational purposes.

*"I use YouTube for different reasons. First of all, I use it for learning purpose. Some subjects are difficult to understand, so I refer to YouTube and watch some videos to support my learning content because YouTube provides videos which allow the learners to better illustrate complex concepts. Secondly, I watch YouTube for entertainment. Usually, when I get bored, I open YouTube to watch shows, music, trailers of newly released movies, and sports." (All respondents)*

### **Theme 2: Visual Effect**

The second theme perceived from the interview is that YouTube is visually effective. Three of the respondents compared YouTube with reading textbooks, and as a result, they find YouTube interesting because they are visual learners. However, reading text is often dull.

*"I am a visual learner and watching videos help me learn more efficiently than reading texts. Further, visual contexts contribute me to easily retain the knowledge and attract my attention as the demonstration is the most effective way of developing skills." (Respondents 1, 2 & 4)*

### **Theme 3: YouTube is exciting**

Other than the first two themes, the third theme the respondents addressed YouTube as an exciting material. Three of the respondents elaborated on the usage of YouTube. According to them, using YouTube offers them excitement because it assists them to master to a great extent of their courses and more interestingly, it provides a number of videos with their preferred language. Similarly, respondent 3 stated that he feels as if he is present in that particular setting while watching YouTube for virtual learning.

**Research Question 2:** How can the use of YouTube as a supplementary material assist learners in their lessons?

In this part, this current study attempted to answer the second research question. In addition, this study will also attempt to highlight how the YouTube assisted the respondents of this study to better comprehend their lessons and finish their assignments or projects.

Table 2: Findings on YouTube as a supplement to assist lessons.

Research Question 1	Respondents	Themes
YouTube assist learners in their lessons	2, 4 & 5	YouTube better than Class Lecture
	1, 2, 3, 4 & 5	YouTube as Guide to do Assignments

Table 2 identifies the perceived themes of the YouTube contributing learners to their lessons and projects. There are two themes emerged from the interview data. The excerpts of the respondents are provided below.

### Theme 1: YouTube better than Classroom Lecture

While asked the respondents whether the YouTube is a valuable website for supporting their lessons. Three of the respondents agreed that adding YouTube as an additional material to their subject content has resulted very proficiently. The extracts below indicated that YouTube is an effective tutor.

*“YouTube provided a great deal of contribution when I encountered a difficulty in SPSS as compared to the lecture.”* (Respondent 2)

*“To be honest, sometimes I cannot learn from the lecturers or from the presentations of my lecturers. Therefore, I refer using YouTube to look for videos on the related topics to master them fully.”* (Respondents 4)

*“When I failed to understand the lecture, at these times, what I did was using YouTube videos for further comprehension of the lecture.”* (Respondent 5)

### Theme 2: Using YouTube as a Guide to do the Assignments

The second theme found in this study highlighted the insights provided by the respondents of this study. In one or the other way, all of the respondents acknowledged that YouTube is an effective contribution in doing their assignment. When they face any difficulty, they turn to the YouTube for their assignments and they all made it through the YouTube.

*“Recently, I was experiencing difficulty in inserting List of Tables and List of Figures in Microsoft Word then I referred to YouTube and helped me how to insert tables.”* (Respondent 1)

*“I watched YouTube videos in order to do my SPSS assignments.”* (Respondent 2)

*“Recently, I was working on an assignment related to research seminar subject and the professor asked us to write a conceptual framework for three studies she has provided.”* (Respondent 3)

*“Recently, I used YouTube to do one of my assignments which was related the use of WhatsApp as a learning tool.”* (Respondent 4)

*“I did my case study in sociolinguistics where we watched YouTube videos from different talent shows in order to compare the compliment instances.”* (Respondent 5)

## Discussion

One of the most significant findings this study identified is that the YouTube, according to the respondents, is utilized for learning and recreational purposes. The respondents use YouTube when they face any difficulty with regards to their lessons, and they also use it when they get bored and want to entertain themselves. These findings match with Morat and Abidins’ (2011) findings who claimed the usage of YouTube enhances the learning and it is identified as a potential resource in assisting the learners in their learning. In addition, Holland (2016) also established YouTube as part of the entertainment industry and found it as a platform where the users upload and share their videos to make people entertained. The current study also identified that learners enjoy learning from YouTube as compared to learning from textbooks because it provides visual support and they are visual learners. This finding is further supported by Harris (2011) that viewing YouTube contents allow learners enjoy learning, it creates a connection between the viewer and the content and it makes the content more comprehensive and pertinent. Moreover, this research revealed that YouTube makes them excited when using it. This finding is in association with Buzzetto-More’s (2015) finding who found YouTube useful at making the learning environment more exciting for learners to learn better.

Additionally, this study found that utilization of YouTube is more effective and has a greater value than lectures in the classroom. The respondents find it a supportive resource in topic comprehension and greater ease of learning. This study produced a result which corroborates with the previous findings of Brecht (2012) who perceived that YouTube video has a slower and more step-by-step lecture style as compared to the classroom lectures. YouTube videos also, according to the author, contribute learners to control the lecture and they can view anytime and anywhere. More importantly, this previous study found that students’ grades constantly become better and witnessed the reduction course dropout rates than not having video lectures available. Furthermore, this research indicated that getting the assignments done effectively is the result of the utilization of the YouTube videos. This result matches with that observed in Buzzetto-More’s (2015) early study who suggested learners to embrace and integrate YouTube videos into assignments, presentations, and discussions.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

The advancement of technology in this modern age has undeniably facilitated both learners and lecturers to integrate it into lessons in making learning and teaching activities more comprehensive and exciting. YouTube, in particular, is known as world’s most famous online destination and potential resource in education in assisting teaching and learning. With respect to

the value and effectiveness of YouTube videos, a greater preference for its adoption is available. At the same time, among teachers and learners, innovation and creativity can be prompted. Ultimately, YouTube videos keep learners enthralled and remain a valid resource for teachers and learners seeking to boost their lessons with topical contents.

Hence, YouTube is recommended to be taken into consideration as an authentic and efficient teaching and learning tool for developing content. Likewise, learners should begin utilizing relevant and appropriate YouTube videos for their comprehensive learning. Thus, future research should be conducted in order to elicit Afghan lecturers' and students' attitudes towards the authentic input of YouTube and how this authentic material develops teaching and learning skills effectively are the aspects to be explored in future investigations.

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**Appendix****Interview Questions**

1. When you use YouTube on your own, what do you usually use it for?
2. Do you find watching YouTube for learning more interesting? Why?
3. Do you think watching YouTube videos can assist you with your lessons?
4. Give an example of assignments which you have recently worked on with using YouTube.