

THE USE OF YOUTUBE ANIMATION VIDEOS IN IMPROVING ENGLISH VOCABULARY IN PRESCHOOL CHILDREN AT SPS SEULANGA CERIA

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ABSTRACT

Purpose. Vocabulary mastery is one of the fundamental aspects of English language learning, particularly for preschool children who are in the critical stage of language acquisition. However, many young learners experience difficulties in understanding, memorizing, and pronouncing English vocabulary because of limited exposure to English and the use of less engaging instructional media. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of YouTube animation videos in improving English vocabulary mastery among preschool children at SPS Seulanga Ceria, Banda Aceh.

Materials and Methods. This study employed a quantitative approach using a pre-experimental method with a One-Group Pre-test and Post-test Design. The participants consisted of 15 preschool children aged 5–6 years selected from SPS Seulanga Ceria. Data were collected through vocabulary tests administered before and after the implementation of YouTube animation videos as the instructional medium. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, the Shapiro–Wilk normality test, and the Paired Sample t-test with the assistance of SPSS software.

Results. The findings revealed a substantial improvement in the children's English vocabulary achievement after the intervention. The mean pre-test score was 45.33, whereas the mean post-test score increased to 82.33, resulting in a mean gain of 37.00 points. The Shapiro–Wilk test indicated that both pre-test and post-test data were normally distributed (pre-test $p = 0.051$; post-test $p = 0.415$). Furthermore, the Paired Sample t-test produced a significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), demonstrating a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores.

Conclusions. The findings indicate that YouTube animation videos are an effective audiovisual learning medium for enhancing English vocabulary mastery among preschool children. The integration of visual illustrations, audio pronunciation, and repetitive exposure creates an engaging learning environment that facilitates vocabulary acquisition. Therefore, YouTube animation videos can be considered an effective instructional medium for early childhood English learning.

Keywords: YouTube animation videos, English vocabulary, preschool children, vocabulary mastery, early childhood education

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INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary is one of the fundamental components of English language learning because it serves as the basis for developing listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Without sufficient vocabulary knowledge, learners encounter difficulties in understanding information and expressing ideas effectively. According to Nation and Webb (2011), vocabulary comprises all the words used in communication, and a broad vocabulary contributes significantly to language proficiency. Similarly, Richards and Renandya emphasize that vocabulary forms the core of language competence, enabling learners to communicate successfully across different contexts. Therefore, vocabulary

instruction should become a primary concern in English language teaching, particularly for young learners who are at the initial stage of language acquisition.

Early childhood is considered a critical period for language development because children rapidly acquire linguistic knowledge through meaningful interaction and repeated exposure to language. During this stage, children learn new words by connecting spoken language with real objects, pictures, sounds, and daily experiences. Breitfeld (2024) explains that children's vocabulary develops through continuous interaction with their environment, allowing them to associate words with concrete objects and situations. Consequently, providing appropriate learning experiences during preschool education is essential for supporting children's cognitive, linguistic, and social development.

Despite its importance, English vocabulary learning among preschool children still faces several challenges. Many children have difficulty understanding, memorizing, and pronouncing English words because English is introduced as a foreign language with limited exposure outside the classroom. In many early childhood education settings, vocabulary instruction still relies on conventional teaching methods such as picture cards and teacher explanations without integrating interactive learning activities. These approaches often reduce children's motivation and limit opportunities for meaningful vocabulary acquisition. In addition, limited parental support, insufficient English learning resources at home, and the lack of engaging instructional media further contribute to children's low vocabulary mastery.

The integration of educational technology has become one of the most promising approaches to overcome these challenges. Multimedia learning enables children to process information through multiple sensory channels, thereby facilitating better comprehension and retention. According to Mayer's Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (2019), students learn more effectively when information is presented through a combination of words, pictures, sounds, and animations rather than through verbal explanations alone. Multimedia-based instruction enhances learners' attention, reduces cognitive overload, and promotes meaningful learning by simultaneously stimulating visual and auditory processing.

One instructional medium that has gained increasing attention is YouTube. As one of the largest digital learning platforms, YouTube provides a wide range of educational resources that can be easily accessed by teachers, parents, and children. Among its various contents, animation videos are particularly suitable for preschool learners because they combine colorful visual illustrations, attractive characters, music, pronunciation models, and repetitive language patterns. These characteristics create an enjoyable learning environment that encourages children to pay attention, imitate pronunciation, and remember new vocabulary more effectively.

The effectiveness of animation videos can also be explained through Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977), which states that children acquire knowledge by observing and imitating others' behaviors. In animation videos, children observe how characters pronounce words, respond to situations, and communicate using simple English expressions. Through repeated observation and imitation, children gradually internalize vocabulary and pronunciation patterns. Furthermore, YouTube animation videos allow repeated viewing, enabling children to reinforce previously learned vocabulary while improving listening and speaking skills in an enjoyable manner.

Several previous studies have reported positive findings regarding the use of YouTube-based learning media in English language instruction. Hartati (2024) found that YouTube Kids' Songs effectively improved vocabulary mastery among elementary school students. Putri (2023) reported that YouTube animation videos positively influenced English language development among kindergarten children. Likewise, Yuli (2023) demonstrated that Cocomelon animation videos enhanced English vocabulary recognition among first-grade elementary school students. These studies consistently indicate that audiovisual media can improve vocabulary learning by increasing learners' engagement and motivation.

Although previous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of YouTube-based learning, several research gaps remain. Most existing studies have focused on elementary school students or have examined YouTube songs rather than animation videos specifically designed for preschool

learners. In addition, relatively few studies have investigated the effectiveness of YouTube animation videos in improving English vocabulary among preschool children in Indonesian early childhood education settings. Considering that preschool children possess unique developmental characteristics and learning needs, further investigation is necessary to determine whether YouTube animation videos provide significant benefits for vocabulary acquisition at this educational level.

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on preschool children aged 5–6 years attending SPS Seulanga Ceria, Banda Aceh, and its examination of YouTube animation videos as an audiovisual learning medium for improving English vocabulary mastery. Unlike previous studies that emphasized songs or involved older learners, this research specifically investigates how animation videos combining visual, auditory, and repetitive learning experiences contribute to vocabulary development during early childhood. The findings are expected to provide empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of YouTube animation videos as an instructional medium and to offer practical recommendations for English teachers, preschool educators, and parents in integrating digital media into early childhood English learning.

Therefore, this study aims to determine whether the use of YouTube animation videos significantly improves English vocabulary mastery among preschool children at SPS Seulanga Ceria, Banda Aceh.

METHOD

Study Participants

This study employed a quantitative approach using a pre-experimental method with a One-Group Pre-test and Post-test Design (Maisyarah & Sufa, 2026). This design was selected to determine the effectiveness of YouTube animation videos in improving English vocabulary among preschool children by comparing their vocabulary achievement before and after the intervention.

The research was conducted at SPS Seulanga Ceria, Lamglumpang Village, Ulee Kareng District, Banda Aceh, Indonesia. The participants consisted of 15 preschool children aged 5–6 years, selected using purposive sampling. The inclusion criteria were children enrolled in the preschool, aged between five and six years, regularly attending classroom activities, and willing to participate in the study with parental and school approval.

The study focused on introducing basic English vocabulary related to parts of the body, including head, shoulders, knees, toes, eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. This vocabulary was selected because it is appropriate for early childhood language development and is commonly included in preschool English learning materials.

Study Organization

The study was conducted over seven consecutive days. On the first day, the participants completed a pre-test to measure their initial English vocabulary mastery. The assessment evaluated four aspects: (1) recognizing pictures, (2) identifying body parts based on the teacher's instructions, (3) listening comprehension, and (4) pronouncing English vocabulary correctly.

The treatment was implemented from the second to the sixth day. During this period, children watched YouTube animation videos specifically designed for learning English vocabulary through colorful animations, songs, repetition, and interactive movements. Each learning session lasted approximately 5 minutes, followed by guided classroom activities led by the teacher. The teacher encouraged the children to imitate the pronunciation, identify pictures, point to body parts, and repeat the vocabulary introduced in the videos. Repetition was intentionally incorporated throughout the treatment because repeated exposure is considered essential for vocabulary retention among preschool learners.

On the seventh day, a post-test using the same assessment instrument as the pre-test was administered to measure vocabulary improvement after the intervention. The scoring rubric consisted of four indicators: recognizing pictures, identifying body parts, listening comprehension,

and pronunciation ability. Each indicator was scored on a scale of 0–25, resulting in a maximum total score of 100. Higher scores indicated better English vocabulary mastery.

Statistical Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics. Descriptive statistics, including mean scores and score differences, were used to summarize participants' vocabulary achievement before and after the intervention.

Prior to hypothesis testing, the data distribution was examined using the Shapiro–Wilk normality test, which is appropriate for small sample sizes ($n < 50$). The normality test indicated that both pre-test and post-test scores were normally distributed (pre-test Sig. = 0.051; post-test Sig. = 0.415), satisfying the assumptions for parametric analysis.

To determine whether the intervention significantly improved children's English vocabulary, a Paired Sample t -test was conducted at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$. The null hypothesis (H_0) stated that YouTube animation videos did not significantly improve English vocabulary, whereas the alternative hypothesis (H_1) stated that YouTube animation videos significantly improved English vocabulary among preschool children. A significance value of $p < 0.05$ was considered evidence to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that the intervention had a statistically significant effect on vocabulary mastery.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Finding

The study involved 15 preschool children aged 5–6 years from SPS Seulanga Ceria, Banda Aceh. The effectiveness of YouTube animation videos in improving English vocabulary was evaluated by comparing the participants' pre-test and post-test scores. The descriptive analysis showed a substantial improvement in children's English vocabulary after the intervention. The mean pre-test score was **45.33** ($SD = 6.40$), indicating a relatively low level of vocabulary mastery before the treatment. After five learning sessions using YouTube animation videos, the mean post-test score increased to **82.33** ($SD = 11.16$), representing a gain of **37.00 points**. These findings indicate a considerable improvement in vocabulary achievement following the implementation of the instructional media.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Pre-test and Post-test Scores

Test	N	Mean	SD
Pre-test	15	45.33	6.40
Post-test	15	82.33	11.16

To ensure that parametric statistical analysis could be applied, the data were first examined using the Shapiro–Wilk normality test because the sample size was fewer than 50 participants. The results indicated that both the pre-test (Sig. = 0.051) and post-test (Sig. = 0.415) scores were normally distributed, as all significance values exceeded the 0.05 threshold. Therefore, the assumption of normality was satisfied.

Table 2. Shapiro–Wilk Normality Test

Variable	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pre-test	0.744	15	0.051
Post-test	0.943	15	0.415

Following confirmation of data normality, a Paired Sample t -test was conducted to examine whether the observed improvement in vocabulary scores was statistically significant. The analysis revealed a mean difference of **–37.00** ($SD = 10.99$), with a t -value of **–13.043** ($df = 14$) and a significance level of **0.000** ($p < 0.05$). These results indicate a statistically significant improvement in English vocabulary after the implementation of YouTube animation videos.

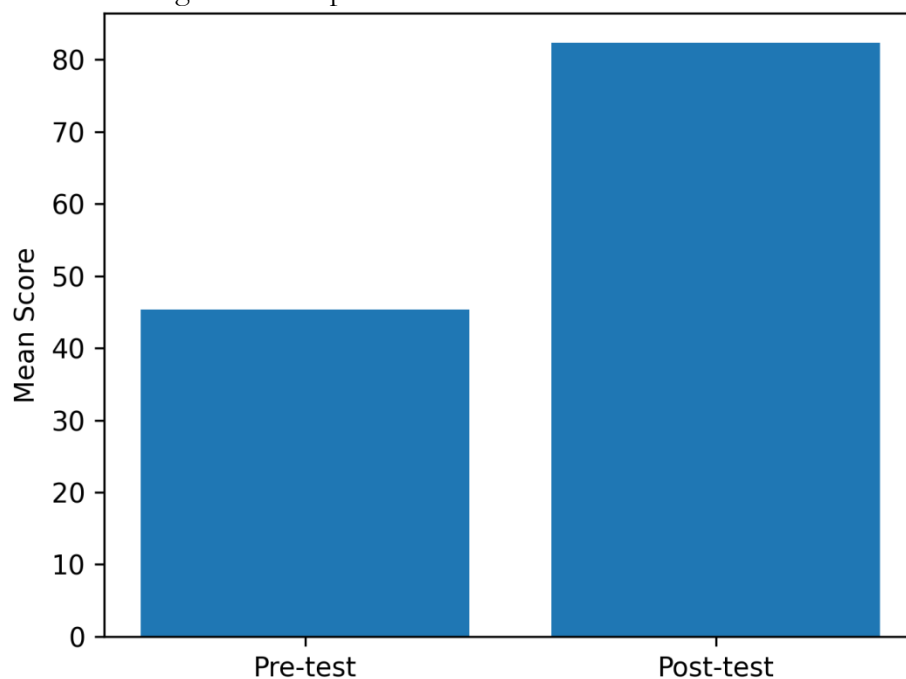
Table 3. Paired Sample t -test Results

Variable	Mean Difference	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
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Pre-test – Post-test	-37.00	-13.043	14	0.000
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The findings demonstrate that YouTube animation videos had a significant positive effect on preschool children's English vocabulary mastery. All participants achieved higher scores in the post-test than in the pre-test, indicating consistent improvement after the intervention. The integration of visual animation, audio pronunciation, songs, and repeated exposure appeared to facilitate vocabulary recognition, listening comprehension, and pronunciation among young learners.

Figure 1. Comparison of Mean Pre-test and Post-test Scores



The descriptive analysis revealed a substantial increase in the children's English vocabulary achievement after the implementation of YouTube animation videos. The mean pre-test score was 45.33, whereas the mean post-test score increased to 82.33, indicating an average gain of 37.00 points. This descriptive finding suggests that the participants demonstrated better vocabulary mastery following the treatment. The comparison of the mean scores is presented in Figure 1.

Discussion

This study aimed to investigate whether the use of YouTube animation videos could improve English vocabulary among preschool children at SPS Seulanga Ceria, Banda Aceh. The findings demonstrated a statistically significant improvement in the children's vocabulary mastery after the implementation of YouTube animation videos. The increase in the mean score from the pre-test to the post-test, supported by the Paired Sample t-test results ($p < 0.05$), indicates that the integration of animated audiovisual media contributed positively to vocabulary learning. Therefore, the research hypothesis (H_a) was accepted, confirming that YouTube animation videos are effective in improving English vocabulary among preschool children.

The improvement in vocabulary achievement can be explained by the characteristics of animated videos, which combine visual images, spoken language, music, and repetition into meaningful learning experiences. Preschool children are still in the preoperational stage of cognitive development, in which learning occurs more effectively through concrete and visual representations rather than abstract explanations. Animated videos enable children to associate English words directly with objects and actions presented on the screen, making vocabulary easier to understand, remember, and pronounce. This finding is consistent with Piaget's theory of cognitive development, which emphasizes the importance of concrete learning experiences during early childhood.

The findings are also supported by the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning proposed by Mayer (2020), which explains that learners understand information more effectively when verbal and visual information are presented simultaneously. During the intervention, children listened to

English vocabulary while observing animated characters demonstrating corresponding body movements. This simultaneous presentation reduced cognitive load and facilitated meaningful learning. Likewise, Paivio's Dual Coding Theory suggests that information processed through both verbal and visual channels is more likely to be stored in long-term memory. The combination of colorful animation, authentic pronunciation, and repeated exposure enabled children to retain vocabulary more effectively than through conventional instruction alone.

Another factor contributing to the improvement is the enjoyable learning atmosphere created by YouTube animation videos. The videos incorporated songs, movement, and repeated vocabulary practice, encouraging children to participate actively in the learning process. This finding supports Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis, which states that language acquisition occurs more successfully when learners experience low anxiety and high motivation. The play-based learning activities implemented during the treatment also provided opportunities for children to imitate pronunciation and gestures, supporting Bandura's Social Learning Theory that children acquire knowledge by observing and imitating modeled behaviors.

The present findings are consistent with previous studies investigating the effectiveness of YouTube-based learning media. Hartati (2024) reported that YouTube learning videos successfully improved elementary school students' English vocabulary through engaging audiovisual activities. Similarly, Putri (2023) found that YouTube animation videos positively influenced English language development among kindergarten children. Yuli (2023) also concluded that Cocomelon animation videos significantly enhanced elementary students' English vocabulary acquisition. Although these studies involved different educational levels and learning contexts, they consistently indicate that YouTube animation videos provide meaningful learning experiences that facilitate vocabulary development.

The novelty of the present study lies in its focus on preschool children and the application of short YouTube animation videos within a structured pre-experimental learning design. Unlike many previous studies that involved elementary school students or employed qualitative approaches, this study provides quantitative evidence demonstrating the effectiveness of YouTube animation videos in improving vocabulary mastery among children aged five to six years. These findings contribute to the growing body of research on technology-assisted language learning in early childhood education.

From a practical perspective, the findings suggest that YouTube animation videos can serve as an effective instructional medium for English learning in preschool settings. Teachers are encouraged to integrate age-appropriate animated videos into classroom activities to increase children's motivation, vocabulary retention, and pronunciation practice. Parents may also utilize educational YouTube content at home to provide additional vocabulary exposure through enjoyable and interactive learning experiences. The integration of digital media with play-based learning may therefore enhance both classroom instruction and home learning environments.

Despite these promising findings, several limitations should be considered when interpreting the results. The study involved only fifteen participants from a single preschool institution and employed a one-group pre-test–post-test design without a control group. Consequently, the findings should be interpreted cautiously and may not be generalized to broader populations. Future studies are recommended to employ larger sample sizes, include comparison groups, investigate longer intervention periods, and examine additional aspects of English language development such as listening comprehension, speaking ability, pronunciation accuracy, and language retention.

CONCLUSIONS

This study aimed to investigate whether the use of YouTube animation videos could improve English vocabulary among preschool children at SPS Seulanga Ceria, Banda Aceh. The findings demonstrate that YouTube animation videos significantly improved the children's English vocabulary mastery. The comparison between the pre-test and post-test scores revealed a considerable increase in learning achievement, with the mean score improving from 45.33 before

the treatment to 82.33 after the intervention. Statistical analysis using the Paired Sample t-test further confirmed that this improvement was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), indicating that the research hypothesis was accepted. These findings provide empirical evidence that YouTube animation videos are an effective audiovisual learning medium for enhancing English vocabulary acquisition among preschool children.

The improvement in vocabulary mastery can be explained by the characteristics of YouTube animation videos, which integrate visual illustrations, authentic pronunciation, music, movement, and repeated vocabulary exposure into meaningful learning experiences. These multimedia elements enable children to associate English words with concrete objects and actions, making vocabulary easier to understand, remember, and pronounce. The findings are consistent with the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning proposed by Mayer and the Dual Coding Theory developed by Paivio, which emphasize that learning becomes more effective when information is processed simultaneously through visual and auditory channels. Furthermore, the enjoyable and interactive learning environment created by animated videos increases children's motivation and participation, allowing vocabulary acquisition to occur naturally through play-based learning activities that are appropriate for early childhood development.

This study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on technology-assisted language learning, particularly in the context of early childhood English education. Unlike many previous studies that focused on elementary school students, this research provides quantitative evidence regarding the effectiveness of YouTube animation videos for preschool learners aged five to six years. The findings suggest that integrating digital audiovisual media into preschool English instruction can improve vocabulary learning while creating an engaging and child-centered classroom environment. Therefore, teachers are encouraged to incorporate carefully selected educational YouTube animation videos into English lessons as complementary learning resources. Parents may also support children's vocabulary development by providing supervised access to educational animation videos at home and encouraging children to practice newly learned vocabulary in everyday communication. In addition, schools should facilitate the integration of technology-based learning by providing adequate digital facilities and professional development opportunities for teachers.

Despite these promising findings, several limitations should be acknowledged. This study involved only fifteen participants from a single preschool institution and employed a one-group pre-test–post-test design without a control group. These limitations may restrict the generalizability of the findings and reduce the ability to attribute all observed improvements exclusively to the intervention. Although the statistical results indicate a significant positive effect, future research should involve larger and more diverse samples, apply quasi-experimental or true experimental designs, and include comparison groups to strengthen the validity of the findings. Further studies are also recommended to investigate the long-term impact of YouTube animation videos on vocabulary retention and to examine their effectiveness in developing other English language skills, such as listening comprehension, speaking fluency, pronunciation accuracy, sentence construction, and communicative competence. Expanding the intervention to different vocabulary themes and educational settings would also provide a broader understanding of the role of digital multimedia in supporting English language learning for young children.

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