

Students' Perceptions of Online Video-Assisted Learning for Enhancing Japanese Language Competency

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ABSTRACT

This study examines students' perceptions of online video-assisted learning in the context of Japanese language education. This research aims to explore how learners perceive the use of online video platforms as a learning medium and how these perceptions relate to their proficiency in the Japanese language. A mixed-method design was employed, combining survey questionnaire-based quantitative data and qualitative interviews to capture students' attitudes, preferences, and perceived benefits and challenges of using online video for learning Japanese. The participants were 25 Indonesian university students enrolled in Japanese language programs who experienced video-assisted instruction as part of their learning process, both inside and outside the classroom, using the YouTube platform. The findings indicate that students generally hold positive perceptions of online video-based learning, recognizing its potential to enhance listening comprehension, vocabulary retention, and cultural understanding. YouTube is also recognized as an effective, input-rich environment when paired with explicit classroom instruction and teacher guidance for form-focused Japanese learning. Furthermore, the study highlights the pedagogical implications of integrating digital platforms in language education, promoting more autonomous and real-life Japanese learning.

Keywords: Japanese learning, online video-assisted learning, students perceptions, YouTube.

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of information and communication technology (ICT) has significantly transformed educational practices in the digital age (Abdulrahman et al., 2020). In contemporary language education, teachers are expected not only to deliver conventional instructional materials but also to design learning environments that promote autonomy, creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving skills, aligning with 21st-century competencies. These abilities are crucial for preparing learners to be confident, independent, and competitive at both national and global levels.

Among various digital learning platforms, YouTube has become one of the most widely utilized online video-sharing media. It provides diverse content ranging from personal interests and lifestyle to news, educational materials, and language use in authentic contexts. Because YouTube is easily accessible to users from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, it serves as a valuable online learning resource, particularly for language learning (Nasution, 2019; Nofrika, 2019; Albahlal, 2019). Its multimedia features—combining sound, visuals, and animation—offer learning

experiences that are often more engaging than traditional textbooks or static classroom materials (Bastos & Ramos, 2009). The platform also offers a wide range of educational materials—from structured instructional videos to natural conversational content—that can be accessed anytime and anywhere, supporting self-directed and autonomous learning (Satriani et al., 2023; Tariq et al., 2020; Zeng, 2020). With teacher guidance, learners can select meaningful video content to enhance vocabulary, express opinions, and increase confidence in language communication.

Empirical studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of YouTube in supporting language skill development. Almurashi (2016) reported that more than 85% of students agreed that watching short video clips on YouTube improved their language competence and comprehension. Similarly, research shows significant improvements in listening and speaking proficiency when students are exposed to authentic audiovisual materials (Mutiarani & Rusiana, 2021; Alkathiri, 2019). Video-based learning can also enhance learner motivation and engagement, making the learning process more enjoyable and personally relevant (Danial, 2022; Qomariyah, Permana, & Hidayatullah, 2021). Furthermore, short video formats and live-stream interactions allow learners to access, share, and discuss learning content flexibly (Mahrus & Kiptiyah, 2024; Pratama, Arifin, & Widianingsih, 2020).

However, the effectiveness of YouTube as a language learning tool depends on several factors, including the authenticity and quality of video content, learners' critical viewing strategies, and the integration of video resources within a structured learning framework. The platform's lack of direct face-to-face interaction may also limit opportunities for communicative practice if not complemented by additional learning activities (Pratama et al., 2020).

While most existing research focuses on English language learning, studies exploring students' perceptions of video-assisted learning in Japanese language education are relatively limited, despite a significant increase in Japanese language content creators providing a wide range of instructional materials on platforms such as YouTube. Given the unique linguistic features of Japanese, such as pronunciation, intonation patterns, and socio-cultural communication norms, it is important to examine how online video resources may support the development of Japanese language skills. Therefore, this study aims to investigate students' perceptions of online video-assisted learning in enhancing Japanese language proficiency and to explore further how learners can effectively utilize YouTube online videos for Japanese learning, identifying the practices and types of content that most contribute to their success.

To achieve this goal, the study will address three primary research questions: First, what are the perceived benefits and challenges of using YouTube as an online video platform for learning Japanese? By examining learners' experiences and perceptions, the study seeks to offer a balanced perspective on the platform's strengths

and limitations, ultimately providing practical recommendations for maximizing its educational potential. Second, how do learners engage with YouTube online video content to enhance their Japanese proficiency? Understanding the strategies and practices employed by successful learners can offer insights into practical ways to utilize online video content for language development. Third, what types of YouTube online video content are most effective for learning Japanese? By identifying the specific genres and formats that provide the most significant educational benefits, this research can help teachers assist Japanese learners in selecting the most valuable sources and learning Japanese effectively through YouTube.

2. METHODOLOGY

This research aims to explore how learners perceive the use of online video platforms as learning media and how such perceptions relate to their Japanese speaking ability. A mixed-method design was employed, combining survey questionnaire-based quantitative data and qualitative interviews to capture students' attitudes, preferences, and perceived benefits and challenges of using online video for learning Japanese.

2.1. Research Design

To gather detailed insights into the participants' experiences and strategies for using YouTube online videos for learning Japanese, a survey questionnaire and in-depth interviews were conducted. Survey questionnaires were used to gather general information about learners' experiences and attitudes, as they allow for the collection of information on a wide range of topics by asking a set of questions in a relatively short amount of time (Kelley et al., 2003; Cohen et al., 2007). While interviews allowed the researchers to explore the participants' motivations, challenges, and the specific types of content they found most beneficial. The open-ended nature of the interviews provided a rich qualitative dataset, capturing the nuances of individual learning processes and preferences (Patton, 2015).

2.2. Participants of the Study

The sample for this study was selected based on the criterion that participants have prior experience with YouTube videos for Japanese learning. This is known as purposive sampling, where the sample was chosen based on specific characteristics (Cohen et al, 2007). The study involved 25 participants, all of whom were intermediate-level Japanese learners from Indonesia. These individuals were selected because they have been using YouTube online videos as a supplemental tool for learning Japanese for over two years, inside and outside the classroom. Their experience with the platform

has given them a level of familiarity and engagement that makes them ideal candidates for exploring the effectiveness of YouTube in Japanese learning.

3.3. Instruments

Survey questionnaires with a five-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree," were used to gather general information about learners' experiences and attitudes. This type of scale is commonly used in research to measure attitudes and perceptions. By using a Likert scale, we can assign numerical values to the responses and analyse the data quantitatively, which will provide more accurate and reliable results. Moreover, semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions enabled the researchers to explore the participants' motivations, challenges, and the specific types of content they found most beneficial for their success in learning Japanese.

2.4. Data Analysis Techniques

The data collected from the survey questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Each item on the scale was scored as follows: 5 points for Strongly Agree (SA), 4 points for Agree (A), 3 points for Neutral (N), 2 points for Disagree (D), and 1 point for Strongly Disagree (SD). The results of the semi-structured interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis. This method was chosen for its effectiveness in identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis allowed the researchers to systematically examine the participants' responses, leading to the identification of key themes related to the use of YouTube videos in Japanese learning. These themes provided a structured way to understand the varied experiences of the participants and to draw broader conclusions about the effectiveness of different types of YouTube content in enhancing language proficiency (Daeli & Santosa, 2025).

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results are the main part of scientific articles, containing: final results without data analysis process, hypothesis testing results. Results can be presented with tables or graphs, to clarify the results verbally. Discussion is the most important part of the entire contents of scientific articles. The objectives of the discussion are: answering research problems, interpreting findings, integrating findings from research into existing sets of knowledge and composing new theories or modifying existing theories. Based on the findings of the questionnaire, the responses of the students to each item are shown in Table 1 below.

Tabel 1. Table of Participants Perceptions Towards YouTube Online Videos for Japanese Learning

No	Statement	Mean (SD)	SD
1	YouTube videos help me learn new Japanese vocabulary that I have not learned in the classroom.	4.60	.500
2	When I struggle to concentrate on my studies, YouTube videos help me stay attentive with the interesting and varied content.	4.32	.476
3	YouTube videos make learning Japanese an exciting experience.	4.20	.645
4	The Japanese language content of the YouTube videos is easy to comprehend.	3.68	.690
5	Do not think YouTube improves my vocabulary retention.	1.68	.476
6	YouTube provides relevant materials to prepare assignments.	3.48	.585
7	YouTube offers relevant materials to help you learn the Japanese language.	4.48	.509
8	I found it challenging to select the most suitable YouTube video materials for learning Japanese.	2.20	.816
9	Writing down the significant points in a diary while watching videos on YouTube helps me acquire Japanese.	4.40	.500
10	Watching YouTube videos helps me develop my speaking skills.	4.24	.597
11	The YouTube videos enhance my listening comprehension.	4.64	.489
12	Use of YouTube enhances my grammatical competence.	3.24	.879
13	YouTube does not improve my basic Japanese competencies (listening, speaking, and reading comprehension).	2.04	.611
14	I am not interested in using YouTube Videos for learning Japanese.	1.36	.489
15	YouTube videos help me to learn real-life Japanese context, such as manners, culture, norms, etc.	4.48	.509

n: 25

The findings of the study were supported by the semi-structured interview results, as it shown in table 2 below.

Tabel 2. Table of Participants Positive Response Towards YouTube Online Videos for Japanese Learning

Participants	Participants Response	Category
S1, S7	"My listening and speaking ability have been increased through listening to Japanese-speaking channels, podcasts, vlogs, animated movies, and Japanese songs. I have started confidently speaking in Japanese after getting input from the YouTube channel."	Types of Effective YouTube Content for Language Learning: Vlogs and real-life context videos
S15, S23	"I always take notes and remember a few Japanese words and phrases from YouTube channels, which I use in my daily conversations."	Types of Effective YouTube Content for Language Learning: Conversational videos
S12, S18	"When a teacher asks me to complete a Japanese teaching project assignment, I search for example models on YouTube. The YouTubers explain the topic in simple language, making it easier for me to comprehend."	Types of Effective YouTube Content for Language Learning: Structured lessons and tutorials, Frequency of Using YouTube
S22, S24	"Japanese tutorials provide structured lessons, clear explanations, and examples to illustrate grammar rules, vocabulary usage, and pronunciation."	Types of Effective YouTube Content for Language Learning: Structured lessons and tutorials
S2	"The YouTube videos on Japanese grammar are interesting and help me to understand easily."	Types of Effective YouTube Content for Language Learning: Structured lessons and tutorials
S6, S13	"I use YouTube to learn Japanese almost every day, watching one or two videos daily to improve my skills and expand my knowledge of Japanese culture."	Frequency of Using YouTube
S5, S16	"Learning Japanese through YouTube was very convenient because I could learn at any time and from anywhere I wanted. Moreover, I can select the materials I want to learn at the time"	YouTube's flexibility

Tabel 3. Table of Participants Negative Response Towards YouTube Online Videos for Japanese Learning

Participants	Participants Response	Category
S6, S10, S13	"YouTube has so many videos, but it is hard to tell which ones are actually good for learning. So, I need assistance from the lecturer to help me select the appropriate videos for my Japanese learning."	YouTube's flexibility

Participants	Participants Response	Category
S19, S12	"I watched Japanese grammar lessons on YouTube, but I found it difficult to learn since I struggled to understand the grammatical items explained by the mentors. Especially to understand the meaning of similar Japanese grammar or expressions in my mother tongue."	Types of Effective YouTube Content for Language Learning: Structured lessons and tutorials
S1	"After watching Japanese lessons or tutorials on YouTube, many questions arise in my mind. However, I cannot ask the speaker these questions. Therefore, my queries remain unanswered. It does not seem that helpful if we watch the Japanese lessons channel"	Types of Effective YouTube Content for Language Learning: Structured lessons and tutorials

n: 25

The results indicate that students generally hold highly positive perceptions of YouTube as a supplementary learning tool for learning Japanese. The strongest perceived benefits are seen in the development of listening comprehension (see statement 11, Mean of 4.64), acquisition of new vocabulary (see statement 1, Mean of 4.60), and understanding of real-life cultural and pragmatic contexts (see statement 15, Mean of 4.48).

These findings align with the results of the study carried out by Chien, Huang, and Huang (2020) and Al Harbi (2019), which indicated visible improvement in Taiwanese learners' and Saudi learners' listening comprehension skills after receiving input from YouTube videos. In terms of vocabulary acquisition, these findings are similar to those of a study conducted by Kabooha and Elyas (2018) and Hia (2021), which found that learners were highly motivated to learn vocabulary by watching educational YouTube videos. These occurred as learners repeatedly watched and listened to audio and videos; they became curious about the new words whenever they encountered them, and learned spontaneously (Tahmina, 2023). The findings also highlight YouTube's motivational benefits, particularly its role in sustaining learner engagement and attention. These results parallel earlier work by Kelsen (2009) and Jones and Cuthrell (2011), who found that learners respond positively to digital platforms due to their accessibility and variety of media content. Positive findings can also be seen in learners' comprehension of real-life cultural and pragmatic contexts.

Students consistently agreed that YouTube exposes them to authentic Japanese language use beyond what is provided in classroom settings, particularly phrases used in daily communication, colloquial expressions, and context-based vocabulary, helping learners apply Japanese in real-life situation. Such content helps learners improve conversational skills and build confidence. These findings is supported by research of Toleuzhan et al., (2022), who implied that exposure to natural spoken language in various contexts enhances learners' listening comprehension and spoken language

abilities. The strong agreement on these aspects suggests that exposure to authentic audiovisual input plays a central role in supporting language learning. These results align with previous studies in English as a foreign language contexts, where learners who regularly engaged with YouTube content showed improvement in listening comprehension (Chien, Huang, & Huang, 2020; Al Harbi, 2019). Similarly, the findings are consistent with Kabooha and Elyas (2018) and Hia (2021), who reported that YouTube effectively enhances learners' vocabulary development by stimulating curiosity and enabling spontaneous acquisition through repeated exposure. As noted by Tahmina (2023), repeated listening and viewing of authentic materials encourage learners to naturally internalize new words. This is also supported by Toleuzhan et al. (2022), who emphasized the value of natural spoken input in improving learners' communicative abilities and confidence.

The availability of diverse and engaging content also sustains attention and motivation, suggesting that YouTube supports emotional engagement in the learning process (see statements 2 and 3, with a Mean of 4.32 and 4.20). This demonstrates YouTube's importance in consistent language exposure. This aligns with the findings of previous studies, such as Kelsen (2009) and Jones and Cuthrell (2011), which emphasized that digital platforms like YouTube are effective in promoting regular language practice due to their accessibility and the wide range of available content.

The frequency of using YouTube as a tool for learning Japanese shows significant variability among learners, reflecting diverse learning habits and schedules. This demonstrates YouTube's importance in consistent language exposure. This aligns with the findings of previous studies, such as Kelsen (2009) & Jones and Cuthrell (2011), which emphasized that digital platforms like YouTube are effective in promoting regular language practice due to their accessibility and the wide range of available content, directly correlates with improved language proficiency, suggesting that daily exposure can significantly enhance learning outcomes.

In terms of YouTube's flexibility, nature is another key factor in its popularity among language learners. The platform allows users to learn at their own pace, revisit content as needed, and tailor their learning experiences to fit their lifestyles. This finding is supported by research from Watkins and Wilkins (2011) & Ong Long et al. (2023), who noted that the flexibility of online learning platforms empowers learners to take control of their learning process, resulting in more personalized and engaging learning experiences.

However, despite these strengths, the findings reveal limitations in grammar acquisition, suggesting that while YouTube promotes implicit learning, it does not independently facilitate systematic understanding of grammatical structures. Moreover, although many students felt confident navigating YouTube, some faced challenges in selecting appropriate materials, indicating variation in digital literacy and the need for

teacher guidance. This concern is echoed in earlier research, for instance, Yaradılmış et al. (2020) noted that the most viewed YouTube videos were often found to have lower quality scores, suggesting that popularity does not equate to the reliability of the content. The issue of inconsistent motivation and self-discipline is a significant challenge in autonomous learning. Previous research by Holec in Daeli & Sentosa (2025) and Ushioda (2008) has emphasized that successful autonomous learning requires a high degree of self-regulation and intrinsic motivation.

Several recommendations can be made based on the study's findings. Japanese language teachers can start using YouTube as a language-learning tool as it plays a vital role in learning (Almurashi, 2016). Gradually, learners will come to rely on this platform as a spontaneous and essential task. A variation in the choice of YouTube videos is necessary; otherwise, their use might not motivate language learners. Usually, learners get input in the language classes. When a language teacher suggests watching a Japanese movie to learn vocabulary, it is enjoyable for them. They learn wholeheartedly and in a stress-free mood (Heriyanto, 2018).

4. CONCLUSION

The findings indicate that students regard YouTube as a powerful supplementary resource for advancing Japanese proficiency, particularly for listening comprehension, vocabulary growth, and pragmatic/cultural understanding, because it provides abundant authentic audiovisual input that textbooks often lack. Pedagogically, this suggests teachers should deliberately integrate well-curated YouTube materials into course designs to exploit their strengths (authenticity, repetition, multimodality) while scaffolding learners' use of the platform through digital-literacy training and guided activities (note-taking, shadowing, tasks that require product creation). The platform's motivational affordances (sustained attention, variety, and flexible pacing) make it particularly useful for promoting regular exposure and autonomous practice. However, reliance on YouTube without teacher mediation risks uneven quality, shallow grammar learning, and selection difficulties among learners.

In conclusion, YouTube is most effective as a complementary, input-rich environment paired with explicit classroom instruction for form-focused learning and teacher guidance. therefore, course designers should combine input activities (vlogs, podcasts, clips) with targeted grammar explanations, evaluation rubrics, and digital literacy modules to maximize gains.

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