

## The Effectiveness of Using YouTube as a Learning Media in Improving Early Childhood Literacy"

***Mursyidah<sup>1</sup>, Maria Andriyani<sup>2</sup>, Yenni Pudji Rahmawati<sup>3</sup>***

PGRI Semarang University, Postgraduate PGRI Semarang University

e-mail: \*<sup>1</sup>[unikmursyidah@gmail.com](mailto:unikmursyidah@gmail.com), <sup>2</sup>[maria.andriani2580@gmail.com](mailto:maria.andriani2580@gmail.com),

<sup>3</sup>[yennipudjirahmawati@gmail.com](mailto:yennipudjirahmawati@gmail.com)

### **Abstract.**

This study aims to examine the effectiveness of using YouTube as a learning media in improving early childhood literacy through literature study method. Literacy is an important aspect in children's cognitive development that needs to be instilled early on. In the digital era, YouTube media becomes one of the interesting learning alternatives because it presents audio-visual content that can stimulate children's interest and understanding more optimally. This research was conducted by reviewing various scientific sources, journal articles, and relevant previous research results within the last five years. The results of the study show that the use of learning videos from YouTube, especially those containing letter recognition materials, vocabulary and children's stories, is proven to be able to improve literacy aspects such as the ability to recognise letters, understand initial sounds, and increase children's vocabulary. Educational animated videos presented with attractive colours, music and narration can create a fun and interactive learning atmosphere. Thus, it can be concluded that YouTube is an effective learning media in supporting early childhood literacy development, with a note that its use must be directed and supervised by educators or parents wisely.

### **Abstract.**

This study aims to examine the effectiveness of using YouTube as a learning medium in improving early childhood literacy through the literature study method. Literacy is an important aspect of children's cognitive development that needs to be instilled early on. In the digital era, YouTube media is one of the interesting learning alternatives because it presents audio-visual content that can stimulate children's interest and understanding more optimally. This research was conducted by reviewing various scientific sources, journal articles, and relevant previous research results within the last five years. The results of the study show that the use of learning videos from YouTube, especially those containing letter recognition materials, vocabulary and children's stories, is proven to be able to improve literacy aspects such as the ability to recognise letters, understand initial sounds, and increase children's vocabulary. Educational animated videos presented with attractive colours, music and narration can create a fun and interactive learning atmosphere. Thus, it can be concluded that YouTube is an effective learning media in supporting early childhood literacy development, provided that its use must be directed and supervised by educators or parents wisely.

**Key words:** You Tube, Learning Media, Literacy, Early Childhood

### **Introduction**

Literacy is an important aspect of early childhood development as it forms the basis

for further learning. Literacy skills are not only limited to recognising letters and words, but also include listening skills, understanding stories, and expressing ideas orally and in writing (Sulistiyowati, 2021). Therefore, a learning approach is needed that is able to stimulate literacy skills as a whole from an early age.

Along with the development of digital technology, video-based learning media such as **YouTube** are starting to be utilised in the early childhood learning process. YouTube offers a variety of educational content in the form of songs, picture stories, animations and interactive activities specifically designed for children. This kind of visual-auditory media is considered capable of increasing children's attention, motivation, and understanding of the material presented (Nurfadilah & Hamidah, 2022).

Although digital media such as YouTube has great potential in supporting the development of early childhood literacy, in reality, its utilisation in the educational environment still faces various obstacles. The root of the problem that often arises is the **lack of digital literacy among educators and parents**, so the use of YouTube has not been maximised as a directed learning tool. Many PAUD teachers are not accustomed to developing learning strategies based on educational videos, or are unable to assess content that is appropriate for children's developmental characteristics. On the other hand, parents also do not fully understand that assistance when children watch YouTube is very important to guide the process of thinking, asking questions, and understanding the meaning of the story or show being watched (Sari & Haryanti, 2021). As a result, the medium is used more as entertainment than as a literacy tool.

To overcome this problem, there needs to be a **strategy to increase the capacity of teachers and parents in utilising digital media educationally**, for example through training on using YouTube as a literacy medium, curating relevant content and developing guidelines for using digital media in PAUD. In addition, schools or PAUD institutions can also compile a list of safe and age-appropriate educational videos and schedule video-based literacy activities regularly and integrate them into play-learning activities. With the right approach, YouTube is not only an entertainment medium but can also serve as an effective, engaging and age-appropriate literacy tool for early childhood.

Previous research has shown that using YouTube in learning can have a positive impact on children's literacy skills, especially in terms of vocabulary, story comprehension and active listening skills (Rahmawati & Yulianti, 2020). In addition, YouTube allows for

flexible, iterative and visually appealing learning, which is very much in line with early childhood learning characteristics (Prasetyo & Marini, 2023).

However, the effectiveness of using YouTube as a learning medium is also influenced by several factors such as the quality of the content, the duration of the show, the involvement of teachers and parents in mentoring, and the suitability of the child's developmental stage. Undirected use can lead to screen dependence or content that is not age-appropriate (Ardiansyah & Ramdhani, 2021). Therefore, a comprehensive literature review is needed to determine the **effectiveness of using YouTube in improving early childhood literacy**, as well as strategies that can be implemented so that this media has an optimal positive impact.

On the other hand, improving early childhood literacy cannot be separated from the role of learning environments that are rich in language, stories and fun visual experiences. Media such as YouTube provide a variety of educational content that can be used as an alternative learning resource, especially in introducing new vocabulary, picture stories, nursery rhymes and fun reading activities. Through interactive videos equipped with moving visuals and narrative audio, children can more easily understand the content of the story, imitate pronunciation, and improve their memory of the language conveyed (Putri & Azhar, 2022). This is very useful in stimulating early literacy skills, especially for children who are not yet able to read conventionally.

However, it needs to be emphasised that not all YouTube content is appropriate for the needs and developmental stages of early childhood. Without proper mentoring and content selection, children are at risk of being exposed to uneducative information or spending excessive screen time. Therefore, the effectiveness of YouTube as a learning medium in improving children's literacy needs to be studied in more depth, taking into account pedagogical, psychological and technological aspects. This research is important to identify the most effective types of educational content, the role of teachers and parents in facilitating video-based learning, and the boundaries of healthy and productive use in the ECD context. With proper utilisation, YouTube has the potential to be a powerful medium to foster early literacy in a fun, contextual and meaningful way.

Based on the background of the above problems, this study aims to analyse the current research results on the use of YouTube in the context of early childhood literacy learning.

## **METHODS**

The method used in writing this article is a **literature review** that includes references from 2014 to 2022. Literature review, according to Marzali (2017), is the activity of tracing and reading various sources such as books, journals, magazines, and other publications that have relevance to the topic discussed, with the aim of producing systematic written work. In line with this, Melfianora (2017) explains that literature review can be interpreted as a literary study or theoretical study, namely the activity of searching for scientific information through various types of works, including research articles that have been published or not. In this study, **data collection is not carried out through field observations**, but by **relying on literature searches** which include scientific journals, academic books, and other sources of information relevant to the problem under study.

## **Discussion**

Learning with YouTube media is considered effective in improving early childhood literacy because basically early childhood is happy with playing and seeing visuals in the form of animation or others so that it can be utilised if it is used wisely. Although YouTube media learning is considered to have negative influence, overall this learning is considered effective because early childhood under the supervision of parents or teachers is able to capture well if the use of Youtube media is used as a learning medium. Early childhood is also able to receive a good response when using YouTube media as a learning medium.

To gain a deeper understanding of the effectiveness of using YouTube as a learning medium in improving early childhood literacy, a review of several previous studies was conducted. This review aims to find empirical evidence, research gaps, and recommendations that can be used as a basis for the implementation and development of this research. Previous research is an important foundation in strengthening theoretical and methodological arguments, as well as a reference in developing research instruments and designs.

Ningsih et al. (2024) found that the **use of YouTube applications** improved children's communication skills at PAUD Al-Ikhlas, Aektinga Village, through viewing activities followed by discussion and reflection accompanied by teachers/parents.

Pratiwi et al. (2024) used the literature study method and concluded that YouTube applications are effective as learning media if used under the **supervision of teachers or parents**, although it is necessary to pay attention to potential negative impacts.

Research by Laiya et al. (2023) developed an **animated early literacy video**, showing that it was effective in introducing letters, vocabulary and encouraging children's engagement during learning. This kind of interactive video is very much in line with the characteristics of early literacy learning.

Agustini, Yuliana & Hamliyah (2024) conducted a qualitative study on **motivation to learn Indonesian** at PAUD Aster 36 through YouTube. They found that educational videos, such as animations and songs, increased children's interest and engagement, and encouraged learning interactions, although there is still a need for proper management of viewing duration and content selection.

Amada & Hakim (2022) showed that when teachers created **learning videos on YouTube** based on SOPs, KI/KDs and completed evaluation through interaction with children, the media became effective as an ECD teaching tool.

Based on the previous research above, it can be concluded that the use of YouTube is effective in improving literacy and communication in early childhood, especially if accompanied by teachers or parents. Educational video content such as animations, songs, and stories can increase children's vocabulary, interest in learning, and speaking skills. The effectiveness of this media is also influenced by the quality of the content, the duration of the show, and the teacher's involvement in selecting or creating videos that are in line with learning objectives. With proper utilisation, YouTube can be a learning medium that supports the development of early childhood literacy optimally.

The utilisation of YouTube media in the learning process is a form of educational innovation that is in line with current technological developments. YouTube provides a variety of information that can be utilised as a learning resource, including many educational video contents that are tailored to the material in the learning syllabus. Some research results also show that videos available on the YouTube platform can function effectively as learning media (Lestari, 2017).

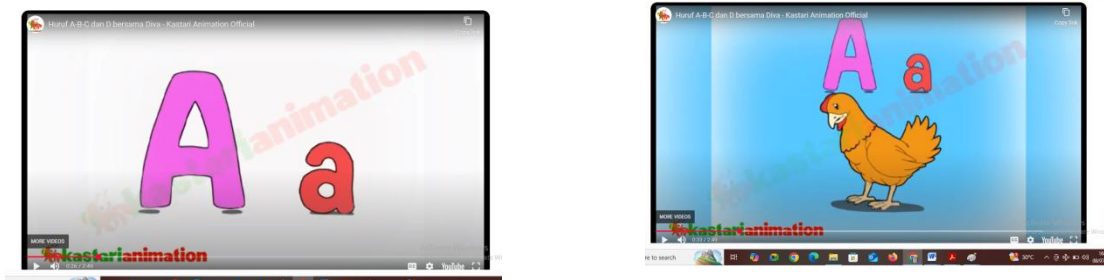


Figure.1 Example of an Early Childhood Literacy YouTube video

(Source: [https://youtu.be/DkMb\\_MV-XCM](https://youtu.be/DkMb_MV-XCM))

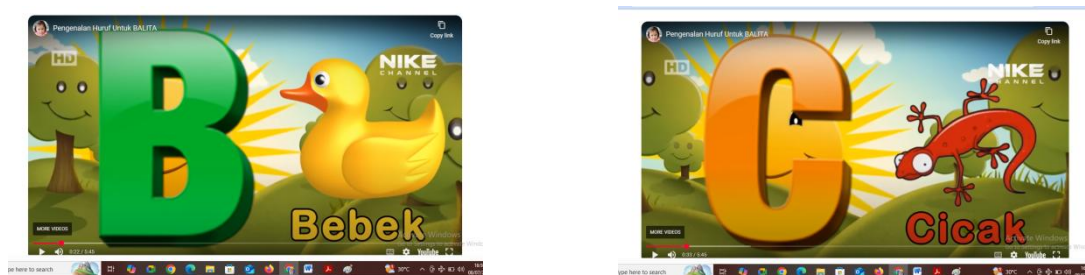


Figure. 2 Example of an Early Childhood Literacy YouTube video

(Source: <https://youtu.be/1qhJqFk7wUc>.)

The learning videos displayed through the YouTube platform as in the pictures above show an interesting visual and auditory approach to introducing the letters of the alphabet to early childhood. In **Figure 1**, the letter "A" is introduced in the form of capital and lowercase letters with striking colours. Furthermore, the letter is linked to an image of the animal "**Chicken**", which starts with the letter "A", helping children recognise the relationship between the letter and the initial sound of the word.

Then, **Figure 2** features the letter "B" together with a picture of "**Duck**", presented with a bright background and child-friendly animated characters. This method reinforces phonetic understanding and word association through visualisation. Similarly, in **Figure 3** the letter "C" is introduced with a picture of a "**Lizard**", using an attractive cartoon design that makes it easier for children to remember the shape of the letter and the associated word.

Overall, this animated media is very effective in attracting children's attention and increasing their engagement in learning to read, as well as supporting basic literacy development in a fun and interactive way.

YouTube media shows have two sides of influence, namely positive and negative. From the positive side, YouTube can help children control the rhythm while playing, get



children used to using strategies in game activities, and stimulate the development of the right brain. But on the other hand, YouTube can also have a negative impact, such as decreasing children's liveliness and weakening their ability to interact socially. This has the potential to foster individualistic behaviour in children (Dewi & Deliana, 2019).

Based on the results of the literature review and analyses that have been conducted, it can be concluded that the use of YouTube media has proven effective in improving early childhood literacy. Learning videos presented through YouTube, such as those containing letter recognition accompanied by interesting pictures and sounds, can increase children's interest in learning, facilitate the process of letter recognition, and strengthen children's memory of letter sounds and shapes. In addition, this media also provides visual and auditory stimulus that is in accordance with the learning characteristics of early childhood. Thus, YouTube as a learning media can be an innovative and relevant alternative in supporting early literacy development, provided that it is used in a directed manner and accompanied by educators or parents actively.

## **Conclusion**

This study shows that using YouTube as a learning tool is highly effective in improving early childhood literacy. Video media that presents educational content in the form of letter recognition and vocabulary with visual, audio and interesting animation approaches is proven to be able to increase children's interest in learning and help them understand letters, recognise initial sounds and expand vocabulary. Children tend to be more enthusiastic and focused when the learning process takes place through this media, compared to conventional methods. Therefore, YouTube can be used as a learning media that supports basic literacy development in an interactive and fun way.

## **Suggestions**

**For Educators**, it is recommended to make selective use of YouTube media by choosing videos that are suitable for children's age, learning needs and curriculum, and accompanying children during the viewing process to create meaningful interactions, **For Parents**, they should take an active role in providing supervision and guidance when children

access content on YouTube, and make watching moments part of learning activities together, **For Educational Content Developers**, It is recommended to continue to create learning videos that are interesting, interactive, and in accordance with early childhood development, taking into account pedagogical elements, simple language, and visualisation that supports literacy learning, **For Future Researchers**, it is hoped that they can expand the scope of the study by testing the effectiveness of other digital media or comparing different types of media to find out which media are most effective in developing early childhood literacy.

## Bibliography

- Agustini, SD, Yuliana, S., & Hamliyah, H. (2024). Utilisation of Youtube Media in Improving Indonesian Language Learning Motivation at Paud Aster 36: *Journal of Research and Education Science*, 5 (4), 1515-1521.
- Amada, NZ, & Hakim, A. (2022). Analysis of the use of YouTube as an open media for early childhood education in the digital era. *Journal of Paud Teacher Education Research*, 9-14.
- Ardiansyah, A., & Ramdhani, M. A. (2021). *The impact of digital media use on early childhood language development*. **Journal of Early Childhood Education**, 5(2), 89-98.
- Dewi, S. K., & Deliana, S. M. (2019). Impact of Youtube Kids Impressions on Early Childhood Prosocial Behaviour.
- Hasmiza, H., & Humaidi, M.N. (2023). The effectiveness of YouTube as a medium for learning Islamic religion in the digitalisation era. *Journal of Educational Research and Development*, 9 (1), 97-105.
- Laiya, SW, Utoyo, S., Juniarti, Y., & Lanter, N. (2023). Development of animated videos in introducing early literacy in early childhood. *Journal of Obsession: Journal of Early Childhood Education*, 7 (6), 7623-7637.
- Lestari, R. (2017). The Use of Youtube as English Learning Media. *The Second Progressive and Fun Education Seminar*, 607-612. <https://publikasiilmiah.ums.ac.id/bitstream/handle/11617/9566/68.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>
- Marzali, A.-. (2017). Writing Literature Review. *ETNOSIA: Journal of Indonesian Ethnography*, 1(2), 27.
- Melfianora. (2017). *WRITING SCIENTIFIC PAPERS WITH LITERATURE STUDIES*. Pekanbaru: UPT Balai Pelatihan Penyuluh Pertanian.
- Ningsih, IJ, Lubis, MY, & Pulungan, SH (2024). The Effect of Youtube Application on Children's Communication Skills at PAUD Al-Ikhlas Aektinga Village, Sosa District. *Khirani: Journal of Early Childhood Education*, 2 (1), 39-56.



- Nurfadilah, D., & Hamidah, N. (2022). *Utilisation of YouTube media as a literacy learning resource for early childhood*. **Scientific Journal of Child Education**, 7(3), 221-230.
- Prasetyo, H., & Marini, A. (2023). *Digital learning media and improving early childhood literacy: A literature review*. **Journal of Educational Technology**, 11(1), 43-52.
- Rahmawati, F., & Yulianti, K. (2020). *The effect of YouTube video media on early childhood listening skills*. **Journal of Obsession: Journal of Early Childhood Education**, 4(2), 554-561.
- Pratiwi, AI, Cahyo, ED, Azizah, BN, Wahyuningsih, H., & Fitria, L. (2024). Effectiveness of Using Youtube Application as Learning Media for Early Childhood Education. *Journal of Al-Amin Early Childhood Education*, 2 (1), 7-18.
- Putri, L. A., & Azhar, N. (2022). *The role of YouTube media in early childhood literacy development*. **Journal of Quality Early Childhood Education**, 6(1), 31-40.
- Sari, P. N., & Haryanti, D. (2021). *The role of parents in assisting children to watch YouTube as a learning media*. **Journal of Child Education**, 6(2), 101-110.
- Sulistyowati, I. (2021). *Early literacy in early childhood learning*. **Journal of Golden Age**, 5(1), 11-19