

## **The Challenges of Learning Arabic Listening Skills Using Youtube as a Learning Tool**

**<sup>a</sup>Lulu Azka, <sup>b</sup>Ummi Nur Hafsoh, <sup>c</sup>Faishol Mahmoud Adam Ibrahim**

*<sup>ab</sup>UIN Walisongo Semarang, Indonesia, <sup>c</sup>University of the Holy Quran and Islamic Sciences Omdurman, Sudan*

Corresponding author: 2203026082@student.walisongo.ac.id

### **Abstract**

*This study investigates the challenges encountered in learning mahārat al-istimā' (listening skills) through using YouTube as a supplementary learning tool. Employing a quantitative approach with a survey design, the research gathered data on students' experiences and perceptions regarding the integration of YouTube in Arabic listening instruction. The findings indicate several obstacles, such as rapid native speech, unclear dialogues, unfamiliar vocabulary, auditory processing difficulties, limited comprehension, and reduced concentration. The study also highlights the psychological effects and motivational responses associated with using this platform. Despite these challenges, YouTube demonstrates significant potential as a rich and accessible resource for enhancing listening skills. The study recommends improving content accessibility, applying stricter content selection, and integrating guided learning strategies to support a more effective and engaging learning environment.*

### **Abstrak**

Penelitian ini mengkaji tantangan yang dihadapi dalam pembelajaran mahārat al-istimā' (keterampilan menyimak) melalui penggunaan YouTube sebagai alat bantu pembelajaran. Dengan pendekatan kuantitatif dan desain survei, penelitian ini mengumpulkan data mengenai pengalaman dan persepsi mahasiswa terhadap integrasi YouTube dalam pembelajaran menyimak bahasa Arab. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan berbagai

kendala, seperti kecepatan bicara penutur asli yang tinggi, dialog yang kurang jelas, kosakata yang tidak dikenal, kesulitan dalam memproses informasi secara auditif, keterbatasan pemahaman, dan menurunnya konsentrasi. Penelitian ini juga menyoroti dampak psikologis dan respon motivasional mahasiswa saat menggunakan platform ini. Meskipun terdapat tantangan, YouTube tetap menunjukkan potensi besar sebagai sumber pembelajaran yang kaya dan mudah diakses. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan peningkatan aksesibilitas konten, penerapan kriteria seleksi yang lebih ketat, serta integrasi strategi pembelajaran berbasis bimbingan untuk mendukung lingkungan belajar yang lebih efektif dan menarik.

### الملخص

يتناول هذا البحث التحديات التي تواجه تعلم مهارة الاستماع من خلال استخدام اليوتيوب كأداة تعليمية مساعدة. اعتمد البحث على منهج كمي بتصميم استقبالي لجمع البيانات حول تجارب الطلاب وانطباعاتهم بشأن دمج اليوتيوب في تعليم الاستماع باللغة العربية. كشفت النتائج عن عدة صعوبات، منها سرعة كلام المتحدثين الأصليين، وعدم وضوح الحوارات، ووجود مفردات غير مألوفة، وصعوبات في المعالجة السمعية، وضعف في الفهم، وقلة التركيز أثناء التعلم. كما يسلط البحث الضوء على الآثار النفسية واستجابات الدفاعية لدى الطلاب عند استخدام هذه المنصة. وعلى الرغم من هذه التحديات، يظل اليوتيوب أداة تعليمية ذات إمكانات كبيرة كمصدر غني وسهل الوصول إليه لتطوير مهارة الاستماع. ويوصي البحث بتحسين الوصول إلى المحتوى، ووضع معايير أكثر دقة لاختيار المواد، ودمج استراتيجيات إرشادية فعالة لدعم بيئة تعليمية أكثر توازناً وتفاعلاً.

**Keywords:** Arabic listening skills; challenges in learning Arabic; Youtube learning media

### Introduction

The acquisition of Arabic language skills is pivotal for understanding Islamic teachings, as Arabic serves as the liturgical language of Islam and a key to accessing religious texts. Effective language learning requires innovative and contextually relevant approaches to foster proficiency in the four core language skills: listening (*mahārat al-istimā*), speaking

(*mahārat al-kalām*), reading (*mahārat al-qirā'ah*), and writing (*mahārat al-kitābah*).<sup>1</sup> Mastering these skills is essential for students in Arabic Language Education (PBA) programs, as they are prospective educators or professionals in Arabic-related fields.<sup>2</sup> Among these, *mahārat al-istimā'* (listening comprehension) is foundational, as it underpins the ability to understand spoken Arabic, a prerequisite for engaging with both religious and cultural contexts.<sup>3</sup>

As Ṭu'aymah outlined, listening proficiency demands a comprehensive grasp of Arabic phonetics, vocabulary, sentence structures, and cultural nuances, alongside familiarity with contemporary topics and conversational intent.<sup>4</sup> Research underscores the critical role of listening skills in academic success, with effective listeners demonstrating superior academic outcomes.<sup>5</sup> In Arabic language learning, *mahārat al-istimā'* involves processing and comprehending spoken discourse from interlocutors or media through repetitive listening to familiarize learners with linguistic patterns or focused listening to extract meaning and narrative structure.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Hamidah Hamidah, "Arabic Language: Between Learning Necessity and Responsibility (Ar)," *Al-Ta'rib : Jurnal Ilmiah Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Arab IAIN Palangka Raya* 7, no. 1 (2019): 35–44, <https://doi.org/10.23971/altarib.v7i1.1472>.

<sup>2</sup> Hamidah Hamidah and Marsiah Marsiah, "Pembelajaran Maharah Al-Istima' dengan Memanfaatkan Media Youtube: Problematika dan Solusi," *Al-Ta'rib : Jurnal Ilmiah Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Arab IAIN Palangka Raya* 8, no. 2 (2020): 147–60, <https://doi.org/10.23971/altarib.v8i2.2282>.

<sup>3</sup> Acep Hermawan, *Metodologi Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab* (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2011).

<sup>4</sup> Rushdī Aḥmad Ṭu'aymah, *Al-Marja' Fī Ta'lim Al-Lughah Al-'Arabīyah Li-Al-Nāṭiqīn Bi-Lughāt Ukhrā* (Mecca: Jāmi'at Umm al-Qurā, 1986).

<sup>5</sup> Harlen M. Adams, "Learning to Listen," *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas* 20, no. 7 (1946): 401–3, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00098655.1946.11473767>; Ulin Nuha, *Ragam Metodologi dan Media Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab* (Yogyakarta: DIVA Press, 2016).

<sup>6</sup> Radliyah Zainuddin, *Metodologi dan Strategi Alternatif Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab* (Jakarta: Pustaka Rihlah Group, 2005).

The integration of digital media, particularly YouTube, has transformed language education by offering accessible, authentic, and engaging resources. Multimedia platforms like YouTube expose native speakers' expressions, enhancing motivation, confidence, and linguistic competence.<sup>7</sup> Studies highlight audiovisual media's efficacy in fostering intellectual and emotional engagement, such as films, making them valuable tools in foreign language instruction.<sup>8</sup> YouTube, accessible via smartphones, supports flexible learning environments, enabling students to engage with educational content both in and out of the classroom.<sup>9</sup> Recent research also indicates that audiovisual materials, such as documentaries on YouTube, significantly enhance students' interest and engagement compared to traditional methods.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Imam Makruf, "Pemanfaatan Teknologi Informasi dan Komunikasi dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab di Madrasah Aliyah Kabupaten Sukoharjo," *Arabi: Journal of Arabic Studies* 5, no. 1 (2020): 79–90, <https://doi.org/10.24865/ajas.v5i1.93>.

<sup>8</sup> G. C. Marchant, "The Efficiency of Film in Education," *Educational Media International* 11, no. 1 (1974): 11–12, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09523987408548696>; Dwi Imroatu Julaikah, "Menghadirkan Film dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Jerman sebagai Bahasa Asing (Deutsch Als Fremdsprache)," *Paramasastra* 4, no. 1 (2017): 119–27, <https://doi.org/10.26740/parama.v4i1.1487>.

<sup>9</sup> Mahfuz Rizqi Mubarak et al., "Penggunaan Vlog dalam Pembelajaran Mahārah Kalām," *Al Mi'yar: Jurnal Ilmiah Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab dan Kebahasaaraban* 3, no. 1 (2020): 109–26, <https://doi.org/10.35931/am.v3i1.209>; Siti Jubaidah et al., "Fa'aliyyah Ta'līm Mahārah Al-Istimā' Bi Istikhdām Android Li Al-Jawwāl," *LISANIA: Journal of Arabic Education and Literature* 4, no. 1 (2020): 49–64, <https://doi.org/10.18326/lisania.v4i1.49-64>.

<sup>10</sup> Richard Ojinnakaeze Azor et al., "YouTube Audio-Visual Documentaries: Effect on Nigeria Students' Achievement and Interest in History Curriculum," *The Journal of Educational Research* 113, no. 5 (2020): 317–26, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220671.2020.1819182>; Sri Indah Lestari, Yasmadi Yasmadi, and M Taufiqurrahman, "Penerapan Metode Audiolingual dalam Pembelajaran Keterampilan Menyimak Bahasa Arab secara Daring: Studi Kasus di SMPIT Adzkia Padang," *Alsina: Journal of Arabic Studies* 6, no. 1 (2024): 27–46, <https://doi.org/10.21580/alsina.6.1.23100>.

Despite these advancements, learning *mahārat al-istimāʿ* through YouTube presents challenges. Linguistic barriers, including phonetic complexities, limited vocabulary, rapid speech by native speakers, and difficulties with grammar (*naḥw* and *ṣarf*), persist alongside non-linguistic factors such as cultural unfamiliarity, lack of concentration, and learner fatigue.<sup>11</sup> While prior studies have explored technology's role in Arabic language education, there remains a gap in understanding the specific benefits and challenges of using YouTube for *mahārat al-istimāʿ*, particularly across varying proficiency levels and text complexities.

This study investigates the benefits of YouTube as a pedagogical tool for developing *mahārat al-istimāʿ* among Arabic language learners and explores the associated challenges. Conducted at UIN Walisongo Semarang, the research focuses on PBA students' experiences with YouTube-based listening activities, both in class and as homework.

This study employed a quantitative approach with a survey design to collect data on the experiences and perceptions of 25 students from UIN Walisongo Semarang regarding the use of YouTube in learning *mahārat al-istimāʿ* (Arabic listening skills), both in the classroom and as homework assignments. Data were collected using a Google Forms-based questionnaire featuring Likert-scale items and open-ended questions to evaluate the effectiveness, sustainability, and authenticity of YouTube

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<sup>11</sup> Putra Bagus Mochammad and Wiaam Mohammad Syairozi, "Istiratijiyat Talamidz Al-Marhalah Al-Tsanawiyah Bi Ma'Had Darussalam Gontor Fi Ta'Allum Maharah Al-Kitabah," *Arabiyat: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab Dan Kebahasaaraban* 4, no. 1 (2017): 102–11, <https://doi.org/10.15408/a.v4i1.5329>; Ahmad Muradi and Hasbullah Hasbullah, "Strategi Belajar Bahasa Arab Mahasiswa Prodi PBA IAIN Antasari Banjarmasin Menurut Model Oxford," *LiNGUA: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa dan Sastra* 11, no. 1 (2016): 54–62, <https://doi.org/10.18860/ling.v11i1.3413>; Yeny Nuraeny, "Strategi Mengatasi Kesulitan Belajar Bahasa Arab Peserta Didik pada Mata Kuliah Istima'i," *Alashriyyah* 2, no. 1 (2016): 117–28, <https://doi.org/10.53038/alashriyyah.v2i1.15>.

materials and their impact on learning. The data were analyzed qualitatively through coding and thematic analysis to identify key patterns and themes related to challenges in learning *mahārat al-istimāʿ*, thereby providing in-depth and contextual insights into the issues.

**Results**

This study aims to describe the use of YouTube as a medium in teaching *mahārat al-istimāʿ* (listening skills) and to identify the problems faced by students. We collected data through questionnaires completed by 25 students. The results are presented systematically below.

***Use of YouTube Media***

Lecturers use YouTube as the primary medium for *mahārat al-istimāʿ* instruction. The process involves selecting and evaluating videos based on authenticity, content relevance, and clarity of audio and visuals. Students access materials in class using a Smart TV or independently at home on personal devices.

***Level of YouTube Utilization***

To determine how widely YouTube is used in instruction, students were asked whether they used YouTube in the *mahārat al-istimāʿ* course, as shown in Table 1.

*Table 1*  
*Utilization of YouTube in learning*

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	23	92%
No	2	8%

Table 1 shows that most students (92%) used YouTube in learning *mahārat al-istimāʿ*. This finding indicates that YouTube has become a dominant and widely accepted learning medium.

***Degree of Difficulty in Using YouTube***

Beyond utilization, the study also assessed the extent to which students encountered difficulties while using YouTube for listening instruction. The data is represented in Table 2.

*Table 2*  
*Difficulty experienced when using YouTube*

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	23	92%
No	2	8%

Table 2 reveals that 92% of students reported difficulties using YouTube for al-istimā‘ learning. This finding demonstrates a significant challenge despite high usage rates.

### ***Reported Levels of Difficulty***

To explore difficulty levels in more detail, students were asked whether their perceived difficulty was high, moderate, or low (see Table 3).

*Table 3.*  
*Students’ reported levels of difficulty*

<b>Level</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
High	5	20%
Moderate	19	76%
Low	1	4%

Table 3 shows that most students (76%) reported moderate difficulty, with 20% reporting high difficulty. This finding indicates a meaningful barrier to effective learning.

### ***Familiarity with an Arabic-Speaking Environment***

Students’ familiarity with an Arabic-speaking environment was also investigated, as this factor can influence listening comprehension. The results are shown in Table 4.

*Table 4*  
*Familiarity with Arabic-speaking environments*

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	10	40%
No	15	60%

Table 4 indicates that 60% of students were unfamiliar with an Arabic-speaking environment. This lack of immersion can limit their ability to understand native Arabic videos.

***Hearing Problems When Watching Videos***

The study also examined whether students had hearing problems that could affect their learning ability from YouTube videos. These results are summarized in Table 5 below.

*Table 5*  
*Hearing problems when watching videos*

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	5	20%
No	20	80%

Table 5 shows that most students (80%) did not report hearing problems. However, 20% did report such issues, which may hinder listening comprehension.

***Perception of Speech Speed in Videos***

Students were also asked to assess the speed of speech in the videos they watched to understand if it posed a comprehension barrier. This information is captured in Table 6.

*Table 6*  
*Perceptions of speech speed in videos*

Perception	Frequency	Percentage
Fast	11	44%
Moderate	13	52%
Slow	1	4%

Table 6 shows that 44% of students perceived the speech speed as fast. Most of the others (52%) rated it as moderate, suggesting speed remains an issue for a substantial portion.

***Difficulty with Foreign Vocabulary***

Students were asked about their difficulty in understanding unfamiliar Arabic vocabulary in the videos, as shown in Table 7.

*Table 7*  
*Difficulty with foreign vocabulary in videos*

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	24	96%
No	1	4%



Table 7 reveals that nearly all students (96%) struggled with unfamiliar vocabulary. This finding represents a significant obstacle in learning Mahārat al-istimāʿ via YouTube.

### ***Student Perceptions of Using YouTube***

The study also explored students' subjective perceptions of using YouTube in class, ranging from enthusiasm to boredom. The distribution is displayed in Table 8.

*Table 8*  
*Student perceptions of Youtube use in learning*

Perception	Frequency	Percentage
Easy to Understand & Enthusiastic	9	36%
Neutral	13	52%
Bored & Sleepy	3	12%

Table 8 shows that most students (52%) had neutral feelings about using YouTube. Some students found it engaging (36%), while a minority (12%) found it boring.

### ***Level of Comprehension of Course Content***

The study also measured students' self-reported comprehension of the course material delivered through YouTube. Details can be seen in Table 9.

*Table 9*  
*Students' comprehension levels of istimāʿ material*

Level	Frequency	Percentage
High	2	8%
Moderate	22	88%
Low	1	4%

Table 9 indicates that most students (88%) rated their understanding of the material as moderate. This finding suggests comprehension has not yet reached an optimal level.

### ***Difficulty in Understanding the Delivered Material***

Finally, students were asked whether they found the listening material presented via YouTube difficult to understand. This information is captured in Table 10.

*Table 10*  
*Difficulty in understanding istimā‘ material delivered via*  
*YouTube*

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	18	72%
No	7	28%

Table 10 shows that most students (72%) reported difficulty understanding the material presented through YouTube. This finding confirms a substantial challenge in using this medium for listening instruction.

The findings indicate that while YouTube is widely used in teaching *mahārat al-istimā‘*, students face multiple challenges. These include unfamiliar vocabulary, the speed of native speakers’ speech, limited exposure to Arabic-speaking environments, and varying levels of comprehension, all of which contribute to difficulties in effectively learning listening skills through this medium.

**Discussion**

This section examines three core themes emerging from our results: (1) students’ adoption of and attitudes toward YouTube, (2) listening comprehension challenges, and (3) contextual and individual learner factors, before drawing out implications for teaching practice.

***Use of YouTube and Student Perceptions***

Most students (92%) reported using YouTube in their *mahārat al-istimā‘* course (Table 1), and while 36% found it “easy to understand and engaging,” a majority (52%) were neutral, and 12% felt bored or sleepy (Table 8). This high adoption rate aligns with the broader trend of using video

platforms in listening instruction due to their accessibility and abundant authentic content.<sup>12</sup>

Research shows that the multimodal input from videos—such as facial expressions, gestures, and visual context—can enhance learners' comprehension and engagement.<sup>13</sup> Students exposed to visual and auditory channels tend to concentrate better and process information meaningfully. Furthermore, built-in features like playback speed control and captions allow learners to personalize their experience, which supports autonomy and motivation.<sup>14</sup>

Nonetheless, our findings echo concerns in prior research that passive exposure alone may not sustain motivation or lead to improved comprehension. For example, while captions support understanding, overreliance on text can hinder auditory parsing skills if not managed carefully.<sup>15</sup> Thus, integrating participatory tasks—such as guided note-taking,

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<sup>12</sup> Sedigheh Moghavvemi et al., "Social Media as a Complementary Learning Tool for Teaching and Learning: The Case of Youtube," *The International Journal of Management Education* 16, no. 1 (March 2018): 37–42, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijme.2017.12.001>; Laura Mahalingappa, Jiaxuan Zong, and Nihat Polat, "The Impact of Captioning and Playback Speed on Listening Comprehension of Multilingual English Learners at Varying Proficiency Levels," *System* 120 (2024): 103192, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2023.103192>.

<sup>13</sup> Tan Shaojie, Arshad Abd Samad, and Lilliati Ismail, "Systematic Literature Review on Audio-Visual Multimodal Input in Listening Comprehension," *Frontiers in Psychology* 13 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.980133>; Jana Boltziar and Dasa Munkova, "Emergency Remote Teaching of Listening Comprehension Using YouTube Videos with Captions," *Education and Information Technologies* 29, no. 9 (2024): 11367–83, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-023-12282-7>.

<sup>14</sup> Mahalingappa, Zong, and Polat, "The Impact of Captioning and Playback Speed on Listening Comprehension of Multilingual English Learners at Varying Proficiency Levels."

<sup>15</sup> Yufen Hsieh, "Effects of Video Captioning on EFL Vocabulary Learning and Listening Comprehension," *Computer Assisted Language Learning* 33, no. 5–6 (2020): 567–89, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2019.1577898>; Boltziar and Munkova, "Emergency Remote Teaching of Listening Comprehension Using YouTube Videos with Captions."

discussion, or sequenced caption strategies (e.g., first without captions, then with)—could help turn neutral attitudes into active engagement.<sup>16</sup>

### ***Listening Comprehension Challenges***

A large majority (92%) experienced general difficulty using YouTube (Table 2), with 76% rating it “moderate” and 20% “high” (Table 3). Moreover, 72% reported difficulty understanding the material (Table 10), and 88% self-rated their comprehension as only moderate (Table 9). Nearly all students (96%) struggled with unfamiliar vocabulary (Table 7), and 44% perceived native speech as too fast (Table 6).

These findings are consistent with several studies, which underscore how authentic materials—though rich in input—can overwhelm learners with fast-paced delivery, idiomatic language, and unpredictable structures.<sup>17</sup> Mahalingappa et al. found that learners of all proficiency levels scored significantly better on listening tasks when videos were accompanied by captions and slowed playback.<sup>18</sup>

However, technical constraints may limit such support. In our study, a minority (20%) also reported hearing-related difficulties, which aligns with studies noting that low-quality

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<sup>16</sup> Nur Padilah Nasution, “Nahwu Learning at Darul Ikhlas Islamic Boarding School Mandailing Natal,” *Lisaanuna Ta’lim Al-Lughah Al-Arabiyah: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 5, no. 1 (2022): 70–83, <https://doi.org/10.15548/lisaanuna.v5i1.3837>; Rana M. Tamim, “Teachers’ Use of YouTube in the United Arab Emirates: An Exploratory Study,” *Computers in the Schools* 30, no. 4 (2013): 329–45, <https://doi.org/10.1080/07380569.2013.844641>.

<sup>17</sup> Moghavvemi et al., “Social Media as a Complementary Learning Tool for Teaching and Learning: The Case of Youtube”; Mahalingappa, Zong, and Polat, “The Impact of Captioning and Playback Speed on Listening Comprehension of Multilingual English Learners at Varying Proficiency Levels.”

<sup>18</sup> Mahalingappa, Zong, and Polat, “The Impact of Captioning and Playback Speed on Listening Comprehension of Multilingual English Learners at Varying Proficiency Levels.”

internet, buffering, or poor audio synchronization can disrupt comprehension and increase frustration.<sup>19</sup>

Pedagogically, these results stress the importance of scaffolding video content through previewing vocabulary, slowing audio speed, and embedding comprehension tasks—strategies emphasized in the literature as crucial to successful video-based listening instruction.<sup>20</sup>

### ***Contextual and Individual Learner Factors***

Sixty percent of students were not accustomed to Arabic-speaking environments (Table 4), and 20% reported auditory strain when listening to videos (Table 5). This lack of immersion likely exacerbates comprehension issues, especially when students are exposed to diverse dialects or authentic discourse without structured preparation.

Indeed, studies suggest that exposure to authentic language—including different accents, idioms, and regional vocabulary—can boost linguistic and cultural competence, but only if learners are guided in how to approach such content.<sup>21</sup> In contexts where immersion is limited, simulated experiences through subtitled videos, shadowing activities, or dialogic listening sessions can substitute for real-life exposure.<sup>22</sup>

Moreover, effective use of YouTube demands that students be taught viewing strategies: pause and rewind, when to use or turn off captions, and how to take notes. Without these

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<sup>19</sup> Boltiziar and Munkova, "Emergency Remote Teaching of Listening Comprehension Using YouTube Videos with Captions."

<sup>20</sup> Troy Jones and Kristen Cuthrell, *YouTube: Educational Potentials and Pitfalls, Computers in the Schools*, vol. 28, 2011, <https://doi.org/10.1080/07380569.2011.553149>; Hung-chun Wang and Cheryl Wei-yu Chen, "Learning English from YouTubers: English L2 learners' self-regulated language learning on YouTube," *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching* 14, no. 4 (2020): 333–46, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17501229.2019.1607356>.

<sup>21</sup> Mahalingappa, Zong, and Polat, "The Impact of Captioning and Playback Speed on Listening Comprehension of Multilingual English Learners at Varying Proficiency Levels."

<sup>22</sup> Nasution, "Nahwu Learning at Darul Ikhlas Islamic Boarding School Mandailing Natal."

metacognitive strategies, learners may engage in surface-level viewing rather than deep language processing.<sup>23</sup>

### ***Implications for Teaching Practice***

These findings suggest that while YouTube offers abundant, authentic input for *mahārat al-istimāʿ*, its pedagogical effectiveness depends on deliberate instructional design. Instructors should: (1) Curate: Select videos with appropriate linguistic complexity, clear audio, and cultural relevance; (2) Scaffold: Pre-teach vocabulary, activate background knowledge, and provide guided comprehension questions; (3) Differentiate: Use playback speed controls, subtitles, and transcripts to accommodate varying learner needs; (4) Engage: Incorporate interactive tasks—peer discussions, listening journals, and reflection prompts—to sustain motivation and deepen processing.

Research across contexts confirms that when integrated thoughtfully, YouTube and similar video platforms enhance learner engagement, promote autonomy, and improve key listening skills.<sup>24</sup> However, these benefits depend on access, instructional support, and strategy training. A passive “watch and learn” approach is insufficient; only with careful design can YouTube truly enhance the listening competence of Arabic language learners.

### **Conclusion**

Listening instruction requires more intricate pedagogical strategies than other language skills. Without an engaging approach, it can quickly become monotonous and ineffective.

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<sup>23</sup> Boltiziar and Munkova, “Emergency Remote Teaching of Listening Comprehension Using YouTube Videos with Captions.”

<sup>24</sup> Mahalingappa, Zong, and Polat, “The Impact of Captioning and Playback Speed on Listening Comprehension of Multilingual English Learners at Varying Proficiency Levels”; Hsieh, “Effects of Video Captioning on EFL Vocabulary Learning and Listening Comprehension”; Shaojie, Samad, and Ismail, “Systematic Literature Review on Audio-Visual Multimodal Input in Listening Comprehension.”

The findings of this study indicate that the integration of digital media, particularly YouTube, offers significant potential to enhance the appeal and effectiveness of listening instruction. Nevertheless, several challenges emerged, including the fast-paced speech of native speakers, unclear pronunciation, unfamiliar vocabulary, auditory difficulties, and a lack of student focus. These obstacles suggest the need for careful content selection, sufficient instructional guidance, and the incorporation of complementary strategies to increase learner engagement. By adopting a holistic, learner-centered approach, YouTube-based listening instruction can be optimized. This study contributes valuable insights into the dynamics of using online video platforms in the teaching of listening skills, and it highlights the need for further efforts to address existing challenges. In doing so, YouTube may serve as an effective and sustainable resource in Arabic language education in the digital era.

The scope of participants in this study was relatively limited, as it only involved 25 students from one institution. While the findings provide meaningful insights, they may not fully represent the broader experiences of learners in different educational settings. Future studies are encouraged to involve a more diverse and larger group of participants across multiple institutions to enhance the generalizability of the results and to explore further dimensions of YouTube-assisted listening instruction.

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