

Students' Perception of Using YouTube to Learn English: A Case Study at Van Lang University

Ly Nguyen Minh Chau¹, Chu Tien Dat¹, Tran Thi Hue An¹, Pham Que Anh^{1*}

¹Faculty of Foreign Language, Van Lang University, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

*Corresponding author's email: and.pham@vlu.edu.vn

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0005-0800-7674>

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ABSTRACT

Keywords: YouTube, video-based learning, autonomy, motivation, students' perception

The research is set to examine students' perspectives on using YouTube for English language learning and its impact on their motivation and autonomy in education. A mixed-methods approach was employed, which surveyed 333 English-major students at Van Lang University using a 24-item multiple-choice questionnaire based on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). The questionnaire was based on the TAM model, which includes three factors: Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, and Intention of Use. Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with ten students to delve deeper into their individual experiences and perspectives, focusing on the themes of skill development, motivation, and autonomy. Data revealed that students generally find YouTube an effective tool to motivate them to learn English and give them control over their learning. Also, apart from listening, students are found to have their speaking skills enhanced to some extent. This research recommends that English teachers adapt and adjust the use of YouTube for both in-class assignments and homework. Therefore, teachers may encourage their students' motivation and autonomy, eventually resulting in more effective and enjoyable language learning.

Introduction

Today's digital era has revolutionized education in many areas, with new platforms and technologies available to support learning. One of the most effective methods applied today is learning English through social networks. According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), social media consists of web-based platforms grounded in the principles of Web 2.0, enabling users to produce and share their own content. In the era of technological advancement, social media is gradually becoming an indispensable part of English learning, as it helps students to be provided with knowledge more conveniently and easily (Prayudha, J., 2022). Among those social media platforms, YouTube is seen as an English learning tool that supports students in learning English independently (Dabamona & Yunus, 2022). Furthermore, because of its

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audiovisual format, it provides a dynamic and interesting learning environment that may improve students' motivation and understanding. According to Sakkir et al. (2020), it is being used more and more in both classroom and self-study settings as an additional learning tool, which is now known to be an essential tool for various colleges and universities worldwide. Therefore, researchers and educators are especially interested in the use of YouTube in language acquisition.

This study aims to investigate how students feel about utilizing YouTube as a language-learning resource for English. The study specifically focused on students at Van Lang University, a prestigious university in Vietnam. Van Lang University was selected due to its high enrollment in language courses, widespread use of digital platforms among students, and the institution's openness to innovative teaching methodologies. At this university, many teachers have combined watching YouTube videos into English lessons in class and have the task of watching video lectures on YouTube for self-study sessions. These factors make it an ideal setting for examining the educational impacts of YouTube. Many previous studies also investigated awareness and attitudes towards using YouTube as an English learning platform but focused little on motivation and autonomy, especially in a tertiary education context. Therefore, this research aims to offer insights into how students evaluate the usefulness of YouTube in improving their English language proficiency and how it affects their motivation and autonomy in learning English.

Regarding the significance of the study, it is important to understand how students see YouTube since this affects their motivation, engagement, and, ultimately, the effectiveness of using YouTube in language learning programs. Learners benefit from watching educational videos on YouTube, and using YouTube has many positive effects on EFL learners' English proficiency (Tahmina, T. 2023). In particular, YouTube plays a crucial role in explaining and examining lessons and assignments, allowing for time efficiency and enhancing the enjoyment of studying (Alhrahshah, R., 2024). This research focused on students' motivation and autonomy because learners with greater autonomy are more likely to exhibit higher levels of intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). This intrinsic motivation is crucial as it fuels learners' persistence and effort in language learning tasks (Noels et al., 2001). Additionally, studies have shown that autonomous learners are better at self-regulation and goal-setting, which further enhances their language proficiency (Benson, 2011). The ability to make choices about their learning process empowers students, making them more engaged and invested in their studies. Furthermore, motivation and autonomy in learning are always related to each other because autonomy has an interwoven relationship with motivation and success in language learning (Spratt et al., 2002). Therefore, fostering learner autonomy boosts motivation and leads to more effective and successful language acquisition. Therefore, the investigation in this matter may help educators and curriculum designers decide how to integrate video-based learning into teaching methods to boost the efficiency of students' English learning.

Literature Review

Perception

Perception is defined by the Cambridge Dictionary as "a belief or opinion, often held by many people and based on how things seem." In the context of student learning, students' perception refers to the way in which students interpret and make sense of their educational experiences, including their understanding, beliefs, attitudes, and feelings towards various aspects of their learning environment, curriculum, teaching methods, and institutional support. (Weimer, 2013).

It encompasses how students perceive the quality, relevance, fairness, and effectiveness of their educational experiences based on their personal perspectives and individual contexts. Marsden et al. (2017) provided a summary of this concept as the way that students perceive their learning experience through several factors, such as their learning styles, the amount of knowledge they acquired, and the factors they consider relevant or important as to cultivate learning success (Huy et al., 2021). To measure students' perceptions, Afifah and Yunus's (2020) study used quantitative and qualitative research methods, namely closed-ended and open-ended questions, to investigate students' views on the benefits of using social media to learn English. Similarly, a recent study by Rahmawati et al. (2024) also used a closed-ended questionnaire based on previous research by Afifah and Yunus (2020) and Nuarta (2020) and interviews to measure students' perceptions about how social media can help to improve writing skills. Although there are other methods that can be used to investigate students' perceptions, like observations, diaries or journals, or ethnography, surveys, and interviews are popular methods for measuring student perceptions because they offer complementary strengths: surveys provide breadth and quantifiability, while interviews offer depth and qualitative insights. Surveys often help to effectively collect standardized, quantitative data from a large population, which is essential for the descriptive quantitative nature of this study. Researchers often choose between these methods based on their research objectives, the complexity of the research questions, and practical considerations such as resources and participant accessibility.

Technical acceptance model (TAM)

The technical acceptance model (TAM) was developed by Davis (1989), consisting of two main factors that influence users' intention to use a new technology: (1) perception of usefulness (PU) and (2) perception of ease of use (PEU). These three elements are simple to comprehend and strongly correlate with the ultimate outcome, which is users' perception of a particular technology. TAM has been extensively validated and applied across various contexts and technologies, including educational settings. Many researchers have also conducted research to reinforce the principles laid out in TAM. For instance, King & He (2006) conducted a meta-analysis by investigating 88 studies that have used the TAM model. The study has demonstrated this model's applicability and validity in various contexts, reaffirming TAM's efficacy in anticipating and elucidating users' adoption of technology by combining results from multiple studies. This study also adds to our understanding of how perceptions affect technology adoption. Additionally, Lee (2009) pointed out that TAM's attractiveness lies in its detail and efficiency, and it can accurately predict how people will use technology. In education-related fields, TAM is the most popular model for estimating the adoption intentions for the application of technology to support learning performance (Liao et al., 2022). This is because TAM provides a straightforward model with key constructs—perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEOU)—that are easy to operationalize and measure through surveys or interviews. This simplicity makes it accessible and practical for researchers to apply in studying students' perceptions of technology for learning English.

YouTube as a video-based learning platform

YouTube, a social media platform used to share videos, was registered on February 14, 2005, by Steve Chen, Chad Hurley, and Jawed Karim. The company is based in San Bruno, California (Hosch et al., 2024). Sakkir et al. (2020) state that YouTube is now an essential tool for colleges and universities worldwide. Snelson, C. (2011) found that YouTube offers internet access to an incredible quantity of free public videos covering a wide range of subjects, which is certainly one of the advantages of online learning. Teachers can help students connect to the "real-life" aspect of YouTube videos by providing context for these short videos that allow students to

explore an expanded variety of online English learning opportunities. Moreover, YouTube videos can be utilized in an ELT classroom to teach a variety of subjects, including voice modulation, accents, pronunciations, and vocabulary (Ghasemi et al., 2011). This platform can also be utilized as a teaching tool to provide students with unlimited resources for their English language studies. Additionally, it provides students with a wider range of opportunities to enhance their skills and aspects of English language learning, including speaking, listening, grammar, vocabulary, and cultural content. (Dabamona & Yunus, 2022) There has been some consensus among researchers about the usefulness of YouTube in ELT.

Perceptions of students on using YouTube to learn English

There is a high volume of empirical research investigating students' perceptions about using YouTube to learn English. Sakkir et al. (2020) examined the students' perceptions of using YouTube in learning English at the English Education Department, Universitas Negeri Makassar Indonesia. The participants were 76 first-semester undergraduate students at that department's Faculty of Language and Literature. The questionnaire featured a five-point Likert Scale to examine their feelings, opinions, and thoughts about using the media. Findings from this research pointed out that using YouTube as visual media applies to teaching English, and the students had positive perceptions of using YouTube for learning English. Gracella, J., and Nur, D. R. (2020) conducted a qualitative study to determine students' perspectives regarding the usefulness and assistance of YouTube in the English language learning process to examine a deeper insight. Five students from SMK Negeri 17 who utilize YouTube as a platform for English language instruction participated in this study. Data were gathered through open-ended interview questions based on a case study approach. The study's findings show that all students greatly benefited from using YouTube to improve their English language proficiency. These benefits are also readily available on nearly all student gadgets, providing support and motivation for learning English in a variety of environments. Most students also gave positive feedback regarding using the YouTube application for English language study.

Other researchers are interested in how and why students can use YouTube to learn English effectively. One of those was Dabamona, M., & Yunus, A. (2022), who assessed how students use YouTube and explored a technology-based approach to learning English. This study involved six participants in the English Education Program at Sorong National Islamic Academy who were actively engaged in learning using YouTube. The author employs the descriptive qualitative method to gather information and data. Observation, interviews, and note-taking instruments were employed in a triangulation strategy to validate the data collected. The findings demonstrated that students can utilize YouTube as a tool to help them study and improve their English on their own. Additionally, the study showed how YouTube may be used as instructional technology to encourage students' technology-based learning strategies by promoting autonomous, enjoyable, and productive learning.

Some studies wanted to examine the specific skills that YouTube can assist students in learning. Rusgandi (2021) carried out a study to investigate how students felt about using YouTube to practice speaking English. The qualitative method was employed in this study, along with a descriptive design by the researcher. 30 English students in the second semester of the UNISMA English Education Department participated in this study. As the representative of 30 respondents, only 10 students were available for interviews. Semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire with a Likert scale were the study's instruments. The results indicated that every student believed YouTube was a major factor in helping them become more comfortable public speakers. The students reported that using YouTube had improved their fluency and pronunciation. Furthermore, their vocabulary was expanded. Additionally, every student

mentioned how versatile YouTube was, allowing them to utilize it anytime and anywhere they wanted to practice speaking. In general, the students stated that using YouTube to improve their speaking ability was positive.

Student autonomy

A variety of theoretical frameworks has shaped the concept of student autonomy. John Dewey's 1916 book *Democracy and Education* laid the groundwork for the growth of learner autonomy (Dewey, 1916), a period marked by rapid social and industrial changes in the United States, and his work was part of a larger movement in progressive education that stressed the need for education to prepare people to take part in democracy. The idea of autonomy has been greatly affected by Dewey's ideas about learning through experience, how important it is for the learner to be actively involved in the learning process, and how education should promote democratic values. His focus on how people interact with society laid the philosophical groundwork for the growth of learner autonomy.

Since then, this concept has been defined by various researchers; Holec (1979), whose project was created in the context of adult language education in Europe and shaped by the Council of Europe's efforts to promote lifelong learning and the need for students to learn how to manage their own time, first defined student autonomy as the ability to regulate one's own learning. He set the stage for future research and practice on learner autonomy by saying that autonomy means being able to take charge of one's own learning. This was different from the usual teacher-centered approaches because it stressed the importance of learner responsibility and the role of learners in their own learning.

Later on, David Little's book, published in 1991, resulted from his concentration on language education and participation with the European Centre for Modern Languages, which was a period when the evolution of communicative language teaching strategies and self-directed learning attracted increasing interest. Little (1991, p. 4, as cited in Hafner & Miller, 2011) named it the "capacity for detachment, critical reflection, decision-making, and independent action.". Little helped us learn more about the problems and issues that come up in real life when we try to give learners more freedom. He looked into what this meant for how lessons are planned, what teachers do, and how tests are given. His work helped to put the idea of autonomy in language learning into practice and looked at how to make autonomous learning environments work in real life.

Benson's (2013) work reflects a more global and contemporary context, incorporating insights from various educational settings and advancements in technology, and throughout his book, he expanded the understanding of autonomy by incorporating psychological, sociocultural, and political dimensions. His practical strategies for fostering autonomy and linking theory with empirical research make the concept more accessible and actionable for educators. While Benson (2013) has the same definition as Holec (1979), he further stated that autonomy is recognized as a multidimensional capacity that everyone possesses in varying degrees and that this capacity varies within the same human at different times and in different settings. As Holec laid the groundwork by defining learner autonomy and emphasizing the learner's responsibility, Benson's work expands this definition by incorporating psychological, sociocultural, and political perspectives, offering practical strategies for implementation, and grounding his discussion in extensive research. Benson's more holistic and detailed approach provides a richer and more actionable understanding of learner autonomy.

Holec (1979) first outlined five areas where autonomy is involved: (1) *what to do*, (2) *what is included in that task*, (3) *how it can be done*, (4) *what has worked and what has not*, and (5)

how it proceeds. In line with this, one and a half decades later, Dickinson (1993, pp. 330–331), had the same categorization. Later, Benson's (2013) definition of student autonomy includes psychological (learners' beliefs, motivations, attitudes toward learning, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, self-efficacy, and learner identity), sociocultural (social interactions, cultural contexts, and institutional settings) and political (power dynamics within educational institutions and broader societal structures) aspects, along with practical strategies (teaching strategies, curriculum design, and the use of technology).

In a more recent study, Cheon & Reeve (2015) defined student autonomy as the extent to which students perceive themselves as having choices, control, and responsibility over their learning processes within the classroom context, and it includes students' ability to make decisions about their learning goals, methods, and evaluation criteria, as well as their sense of ownership and self-regulation in learning activities in their study to help teachers increase students' motivation.

For a comprehensive and modern definition of student autonomy, we adopt the ideas of Holec (1979), Benson (2013), and Cheon & Reeve (2015). Student autonomy is defined as the capacity of learners to take charge of their own learning, including the ability to set goals, track progress, and select learning strategies.

Student motivation

Motivation, by definition of Oxford Learner's Dictionary, is the feeling of wanting to do something, especially something that involves hard work and effort. Learning motivation is the promotion, guidance, and maintenance of learning activities carried out via an internal strength or process (Fernanda et al., 2024). For a well-rounded definition of student motivation, we use concepts from Brophy (1998) and Pintrich and Schunk (1996), which include intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influence students' engagement, effort, and persistence in learning activities. Furthermore, to use an up-to-date definition of motivation, we define intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation, according to Shaikholeslami and Khayyer (2006), as the drive stemming from internal rewards such as personal interest or enjoyment in the task itself, and external rewards or pressures, such as grades or approval from others.

Motivation is one of the most important elements influencing students' English learning success, and foreign language teachers and scholars have long been worried about it (Lai, 2011, as cited in Fernanda et al., 2024). In general education, student motivation is a critical factor in language learning, as it directly influences learners' engagement, persistence, and overall success. Most scholars agree that motivation is one of the most important variables influencing the rate and success of second/foreign language learning (Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Dörnyei, 2001; Noels et al., 2001; Anjomshoa & Sadighi, 2015). Once learning motivation is established, the student will adopt an active learning attitude, demonstrate a strong interest in learning, and focus attention in class to master knowledge. It can affect their use of learning strategies, communication readiness, and overall success in picking up a second language. Studies by Noels, Clément, and Pelletier (2001) revealed that better language learning results are linked to extrinsic motivations, and getting students excited about learning a language is very important for getting good results. Additionally, Anjomshoa and Sadighi (2015) highlighted that motivated language learners are more likely to use good learning strategies and communicate, leading to better language skills.

Using technology in language learning has been widely recognized for its positive impact on motivation among learners. Research by Kukulska-Hulme and Shield (2008) underscores how technological tools provide learners with access to diverse resources such as interactive apps, online courses, and multimedia platforms like YouTube, catering to various learning styles and

interests. These resources offer interactive and engaging content, facilitate immediate feedback, and foster opportunities for social interaction and collaboration, thereby significantly enhancing learner motivation. Additionally, studies by Godwin-Jones (2014) emphasize that technological advancements enable adaptive learning experiences that customize content and activities to individual learners' needs, preferences, and proficiency levels, promoting autonomy and control over the learning process, which further boosts motivation. By harnessing these technological benefits, educators can effectively motivate English learners by making learning more flexible, accessible, and aligned with their diverse interests and learning goals.

The impact of YouTube on students' autonomy and motivation

Regarding how YouTube affects students' autonomy and motivation, research consistently demonstrates the importance of motivation in language learning and highlights various methodologies and findings related to using digital tools like YouTube to enhance learner autonomy. Nguyen, M. T. (2022) used a qualitative research design to show that due to students prioritizing their selections when watching movies, they can dig deeper on their own and, therefore, automatically spend more time emerging themselves in English content. Sakkir et al. (2020) conducted a survey and found that overall, students view YouTube as having a positive impact on learning English, finding it engaging and helpful. Kelsen (2009) surveyed 69 college EFL students, adding that students are motivated to study languages thanks to YouTube's 'authenticity'. YouTube videos, i.e., authentic language input, are capable of helping students learn a lot of new vocabulary, topics, and grammatical awareness, all of which significantly impact the growth of their second language. Budianto (2014) employed a case study approach to reveal that ICT-based learning promotes autonomous learning among students also agreed that YouTube, being an authentic English source, enables learners to interconnect, interexchange, and, most importantly, learn autonomously. Specifically, Chen (2013) used a mixed-methods approach with 140 university students found the YouTube-based learning method is primarily referred to as experiential learning, where learners use their own power of observation and interpersonal skills so as to achieve learning outcomes through useful and meaningful learning, regarding YouTube as language learning evoking self-autonomy and self-control.

Even though there have been some studies on YouTube usage for teaching and learning EFL, only some have investigated undergraduate students' perceptions of the impacts of YouTube on their motivation and autonomy in language learning, and little research has adapted the TAM model for its questionnaires. For instance, Puspitasari's undergraduate thesis (2019) examines student autonomy via YouTube. Still, the participants are junior high school students, and the research by Nguyen, M. T. (2022) investigated university students. Still, in his quantitative data collection, the questionnaires designed are based on something other than any frameworks. Furthermore, in the setting of Van Lang University, there was already a paper investigating the students' perceptions of social media in EFL learning in general (Pham et al. et al., 2023), and scholars have pointed out that YouTube comes in the first position of student choice for English vocabulary learning. Therefore, the current study can be considered a step further as it examines students' perceptions of YouTube's impact on English learning in the same setting. The research questions of this study are as follows:

1. What are the perceptions of students about using YouTube for language learning?
2. How does YouTube influence students' autonomy and motivation in English learning according to their perception?

Methods

Pedagogical Setting & Participants

The study was conducted in the second semester of the academic year 2023 - 2024 at Van Lang University. The students participating in the research were asked to fill out questionnaires via Google Forms. After collecting survey responses, the researchers invited 10 volunteers from the group of participants to answer interview questions. When conducting surveys and interviews, we asked permission from the subjects who were given survey forms as well as those who were interviewed. We clearly explained to participants how their data would be used, stored, and protected, and in the questionnaire, we also inserted informed consent to ensure they understood the confidentiality measures in place. We also removed any identifying information from the data. This can include names, addresses, and any other personal details that could potentially identify participants, when analyzing the interview transcript, we used pseudonyms to ensure participants' confidentiality.

Design of the Study

To conduct this study, we employed a mixed-method approach. Mixed methods research capitalizes on the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative research while improving their weaknesses to provide an integrated and comprehensive understanding of the topic being studied (Scammon et al., 2013; Wisdom et al., 2012). Regarding the process of collecting data, students in classes majoring in English Language at Van Lang University were sent the questionnaire form to fill out, and then ten of them were picked up for an individual interview. The survey consisted of 26 questions with a five-point Likert scale from "totally disagree" to "totally agree" (1 = totally disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neutral; 4 = agree; 5 = totally agree). The questionnaire was based on the TAM model, which includes three factors: Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, and Intention of Use. Items in the questionnaire were adapted from various research (Rafique et al., 2018; Hong et al., 2011; Davis, 1989; Chintalapati & Daruri, 2017; Venkatesh et al., 2002; Lee et al., 2011) and adapted to suit the topic of this study. The interview is semi-structured. One of its primary benefits is that the semi-structured interview method has been shown to be effective in promoting reciprocity between the interviewer and the participant (Galletta, 2012) and allowing the interviewer to improvise additional queries based on the responses of the participants (Rubin & Rubin, 2011; Polit & Beck, 2010). The questionnaire contains 20 items, which are divided into three categories according to TAM: (1) *Perceived Usefulness* (13 items), (2) *Perceived Ease of Use* (4 items), and (3) *Intention of Use* (3 items).

Data collection & analysis

The quantitative data were collected within three weeks, and the qualitative data were collected within two weeks. The current total number of English-majored students at Van Lang University is 2463 students. To determine the minimum sample size required for the survey, a formula that takes into account the total population size, the desired confidence level, and the margin of error was used. This formula is attributed to Cochran (1977) and is widely used in research to determine sample size in surveys and other studies. It combines elements of probability theory and statistical inference to provide an estimate of the required sample size based on desired confidence levels and margins of error.

Common confidence levels are 90%, 95%, and 99%. A 95% confidence level is most commonly used, so this figure was chosen for the research. The margin of error is the range within which

the true population parameter is expected to fall. Common margins of error are 5% or 3%, so 5% was chosen for this research.

$$n = \frac{N \cdot Z^2 \cdot p \cdot (1 - p)}{E^2 \cdot (N - 1) + Z^2 \cdot p \cdot (1 - p)}$$

Where:

- n = required sample size
- N = population size (2463 in our case)
- Z = Z-value (the number of standard deviations from the mean; for a 95% confidence level, it's 1.96)
- p = estimated proportion of an attribute that is present in the population (use 0.5 if unknown, as it gives the maximum sample size)
- E = margin of error (0.05 for 5%)

$$n = \frac{2463 \cdot (1.96)^2 \cdot 0.5 \cdot (1 - 0.5)}{(0.05)^2 \cdot (2463 - 1) + (1.96)^2 \cdot 0.5 \cdot (1 - 0.5)}$$

$$n \approx 332.47$$

Therefore, the authors would need to survey at least 332 students to have a representative sample with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. Due to the time constraint, convenience sampling was used. This is a non-probability sampling method where researchers select participants based on their accessibility and proximity to the researcher. Among the 411 students who were sent the survey, 333 filled out the form. In order to come up with a final result to answer the research questions, this research utilizes a table with detailed data along with extracts from the semi-structured interviews. After that, we compare our findings with those of previous studies to consolidate the answers.

Results/Findings

Item numbers and interview questions are included in the appendices of this paper. To answer both research questions, questionnaires, and interviews were utilized to investigate the insights of students' perception of YouTube in general and the perceived impacts of this platform on their motivation and autonomy.

Research question 1: What are students' perceptions about using YouTube for language learning?

Table 1*Students' Perceived Usefulness of YouTube in Learning English*

No.	Statement	Probability					Mean	SD
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree		
1	YouTube can improve my academic performance	3,59%	1,20%	26,95%	45,51%	21,56%	3,81	0,91
2	YouTube increases my understanding of English	2,69%	0,60%	10,48%	53,89%	31,14%	4,12	0,82
3	I can watch videos on a subject that I missed or did not understand at school	2,40%	2,69%	11,68%	52,99%	29,04%	4,05	0,86
4	I can listen to the same lesson from different teachers on YouTube	3,89%	5,09%	20,96%	40,12%	28,74%	3,86	1,02
5	YouTube gives me more control over my learning	3,29%	3,29%	18,26%	46,11%	27,84%	3,94	0,95
6	YouTube helps me learn new ideas	4,19%	0,90%	11,38%	48,80%	33,53%	4,08	0,93
7	I can find answers to my questions on YouTube	2,40%	4,19%	24,25%	46,71%	21,86%	3,82	0,91
8	I have a lot of fun watching YouTube videos for educational purposes	3,89%	2,69%	20,36%	49,10%	22,75%	3,84	0,94
9	The variety of content on YouTube covers all topics of interest to me	2,40%	1,80%	14,97%	45,81%	33,83%	4,08	0,89
10	Watching YouTube videos helps me improve my writing skills	3,89%	6,59%	33,53%	35,63%	18,86%	3,60	1,00
11	Watching YouTube videos helps me improve my speaking skills	3,29%	1,80%	15,87%	46,71%	31,74%	4,03	0,92
12	Watching YouTube videos helps me improve my reading skills	3,59%	3,59%	20,96%	44,01%	26,35%	3,88	0,97
13	Watching YouTube videos helps me improve my listening skills	3,29%	0,60%	10,78%	42,22%	41,62%	4,20	0,90

Generally, most students agree that using YouTube helps them improve their English skills. In particular, approximately 85% out of 333 students agree and strongly agree that YouTube helps them increase their understanding of English. 70% of the participants find the content on YouTube interesting.

Almost all participants said that using YouTube helps them learn languages effectively. The interviewees said that through YouTube, they can explore and learn the knowledge they lack, such as grammar, vocabulary, or other skills. Watching many videos on YouTube helps learners become more confident in communicating in English.

Before using YouTube videos to learn English my English was much worse. I knew a lot of grammar and vocabulary. But I couldn't use them in you know incentives when I speak but after watching a lot of YouTube videos now I can speak with more confidence. I believe that it really improves my English overall. (P1)

Two participants mentioned how other people's opinions affect their YouTube utilization. While P1 stated that her curiosity about using YouTube to learn English was triggered by seeing others around her doing so, P6 further discussed some sub-skills, such as taking notes and taking baby steps for her brain to emerge to English content with increased difficulties.

I was introduced to many different sources and useful channels on YouTube that teach English and essential skills to improve my understanding of English. I also learned from my friends how to take important notes and adapt to the most effective ways of learning the language. One most important things that I have learned is not to try to gain a bunch of new knowledge, but to go slowly and start from the tiniest things. From there, basic comprehension will be more likely to be retained in my brain, then I will be able to move on to the more complicated things. (P6)

Regarding skills, most students strongly agree that using YouTube helps improve their listening skills (41,62%). Writing skills are regarded as having the least improvement, with 3.6 as the mean. 3,89% of students strongly disagree, 6.59% disagree, and only 18.86% strongly agree that YouTube helps them with their writing in English.

In line with the quantitative results, interviewees said they improved their listening and speaking skills the most by learning English by watching videos on YouTube. They felt that these two skills improved the most for the following reasons. Regarding listening skills, most videos on YouTube talk about our daily lives, and there are very authentic English learning materials. Watching videos of native speakers of English helps learners come into contact with different accents and ways of using words in communication and daily life. Regarding speaking skills, watching YouTube videos helps learners understand how native speakers use idioms and phrasal verbs and can use them in daily life and studying. In addition, repeating sentences in videos helps learners improve pronunciation and expand vocabulary to communicate more fluently, as stated by Participant 6:

Watching YouTube videos helps me improve my listening and speaking skills. Hearing people talk in the videos provides me with opportunities to be exposed to different accents and how English is used every day in conversations. Additionally, I even try to repeat what they say in order to practice my speaking skills.

Participant 7 also believes that learning English through YouTube will help her improve her reading skills by reading subtitles, which will help her "absorb new vocabulary and diversify sentence structures." She also stated that content creators do a good job summarizing lengthy books.

Table 2
Students' Perceived Ease of Using YouTube

No.	Statement	Probability					Mean	SD
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree		
14	My interaction with YouTube is clear and understandable.	3,89%	0,90%	14,37%	49,10%	30,54%	4,03	0,92
15	I find YouTube easy to use.	2,69%	0,90%	6,29%	47,31%	41,62%	4,26	0,84
16	It is easy to get YouTube to do what I want.	2,99%	1,80%	16,77%	45,81%	31,44%	4,02	0,91
17	Interacting with YouTube requires a lot of mental effort.	21,56%	21,26%	14,07%	26,65%	15,57%	2,94	1,41

In terms of technicality, as shown in Table 2, a staggering number of students (almost 90%) believe that YouTube is very easy to use, and most of them agree that the interaction with YouTube is clear and understandable (about 80%). As an assistant for the English learning process, 82% of the students agree that they can use it to watch and learn from the videos on YouTube of the same subject that they missed or did not fully understand when they were at school, 69% agree that they can listen to the same lesson from different teachers on YouTube. The proportion of participants who learned new ideas on YouTube and those who could find the answers to their questions on YouTube was 82,33% and 68,57%, respectively. These factors lead to the attitude of liking using YouTube for learning amongst the students and the intention to keep using it outside the classroom regardless of its impacts on their grades (68.26%)

Table 3
Students' Intention to Learn English via YouTube

No.	Statement	Probability					Mean	SD
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree		
18	I prefer YouTube because it allows me to learn new knowledge.	2,10%	1,20%	18,56%	52,40%	24,55%	3,97	0,82
19	I prefer YouTube because it can arouse my interest.	3,29%	2,40%	22,75%	49,40%	20,96%	3,83	0,90
20	Even if I do not achieve good school grades, I will still choose YouTube because it develops my English skills.	2,99%	3,59%	23,95%	44,01%	24,25%	3,84	0,94

The data from the survey items on preferences towards YouTube for learning English reveal several insights into students' motivations and attitudes. Item 18 shows that a significant majority (76.95%) either agree or strongly agree that they prefer YouTube because it allows them to learn new knowledge, indicating a strong positive perception of YouTube's educational value. Item 19 similarly indicates that 70.36% of respondents find YouTube capable of arousing their interest, suggesting that its content diversity and presentation styles effectively engage learners. Item 20 highlights that 68.26% of respondents are willing to prioritize YouTube over school grades, emphasizing the perceived effectiveness of YouTube in developing English skills independently of traditional academic metrics. These findings collectively underscore YouTube's role not only as a learning resource but also as a motivator that caters to diverse learning preferences and interests among students.

YouTube utilization in class

For the integration of YouTube in class time, all interview participants realized that teachers combining lectures with students watching YouTube videos effectively teach language for the following reasons: interesting visual aids, concise information, and another way of absorbing innovative and time-saving information. While P1 emphasized the importance of YouTube for young learners, others agreed that such an idea is correct for all learners' age groups.

Yes. In many cases, showing YouTube videos to children can be very effective because it's a way to make the class more lively. If the teachers only give students the paperwork or make them do grammar-to-call questions or vocabulary quizzes, it'll be tedious for child students. But if teachers can integrate these YouTube videos into their teaching techniques, then students will be a lot more interested in the class, and they can learn, you know, from different sources. (P1)

Teachers incorporating watching YouTube videos into their lessons are effective in teaching. Videos on YouTube will have a certain condensation of the article or speech. To end and summarize the content of the lecture, a concise and coherent 4-5 minute video will help students fully understand the knowledge the teacher taught during the lesson. (P2)

Using YouTube in class makes learning much more interesting, as the videos help explain things differently, making it easier for me to understand. Watching videos with my classmates and discussing them afterward is also fun. (P6)

Depending on the topic and lesson objectives, teachers can choose to combine watching YouTube videos. For example, if the lesson is about social knowledge, the teacher should combine videos to make it easier for students to absorb. (P8)

The participants' opinions varied when asked whether YouTube or proper language schooling is the better way to learn English. Those who chose the former all said that learning via YouTube will bring comfort, convenience, and diversity in choosing topics to learn.

Yes, definitely because when I learn a language through YouTube there is less stress. I'm in my own space listening to it at my own. You know at my own pace and some things are more comfortable. And that's one of the things that make me absorb the knowledge more easily and also because that I can listen to whatever I want whatever topics that I've interested in at school I have to follow you know textbooks and teacher, so there are a lot of topics that I'm not interested in so I'd prefer YouTube. (P1)

Yes, Learning English on YouTube is way more fun for me compared to learning in school because I can pick any topic that I'm interested in. Due to the huge amount of different

videos to watch, it never gets boring. I can watch them whenever I want, which is extremely convenient. (P6)

Have. I feel that learning languages through YouTube is more interesting than learning languages at school. Because on YouTube there are many diverse topics for viewers to choose from. For example, if I like history, I can watch documentaries. Learners can actively choose topics. (P8)

Those who are of the latter opinion believe that learning at school will involve interaction between teachers and students. While two interviewees completely favored schools over self-study with YouTube, one sat on the fence.

I don't feel that learning a language through YouTube is more interesting than learning a language at school. Because it lacks interaction, although it is possible to interact through live broadcasts, it is only through words, while learning in class will have more activities, interaction will be clear and meaningful. More ways to learn. (P2)

The answer will be yes and no. Yes because learning through YouTube will have more vivid and interesting images and sounds at school. However, at school, there will be a teacher who can answer my questions.” (P3)

I don't feel that learning a language through YouTube is more interesting than learning a language at school. Because when you come to class, there will be more activities and lectures designed more vividly by the instructor. Because YouTube content is only condensed. Learners will not have interaction with instructors. (P4)

Research question 2: How does YouTube influence students' autonomy and motivation in English learning according to their perception?

Based on our earlier definition of student autonomy and motivation, it is clear that items 3–7 and 10–16 were used to rate student autonomy, and items 1, 2, 8–13, and 17–20 were used to measure student motivation. The specific explanation for this categorization is detailed in the following table:

Table 4

The Indication of each Item for Student's Autonomy and Motivation

Feature	Items	Item	Indication
Autonomy	3	I can watch videos on a subject that I missed or needed help understanding at school.	Students' responsibility for their own learning gaps
	4	I can listen to the same lesson from different teachers on YouTube	Students' freedom to choose different learning sources
	5	YouTube gives me more control over my learning	Chances for students to plan their own learning activities
	6	YouTube helps me learn new ideas	Students can seek knowledge and learn on their own
	7	I can find answers to my questions on YouTube	Students' Proactive learning behavior and problem-solving

	14	My interaction with YouTube is clear and understandable.	Students can effectively navigate and control learning resources.
	15	I find YouTube easy to use.	Students can easily use the platform on their own
	16	It is easy to get YouTube to do what I want it to do.	Students have control over the learning process.
	17	Interacting with YouTube requires a lot of mental effort.	Facing challenges encourages students to make informed decisions about their learning priorities and strategies.
Motivation	1	YouTube can improve my academic performance	Extrinsic motivation to achieve better grades
	2	YouTube increases my understanding of English.	Extrinsic motivation through the perceived improvement in all skills in general
	8	I have a lot of fun watching YouTube videos for educational purposes	Intrinsic motivation based on enjoyment
	9	The variety of content on YouTube covers all topics of interest to me	Intrinsic motivation driven by the availability of diverse and interesting content
	10	Watching YouTube videos helps me improve my writing skills.	Extrinsic motivation to enhance respective skills
	11	Watching YouTube videos helps me improve my speaking skills.	
	12	Watching YouTube videos helps me improve my reading skills.	
	13	Watching YouTube videos helps me improve my listening skills.	
	17	Interacting with YouTube requires a lot of mental effort.	Challenges can stimulate intrinsic motivation when students desire to learn.
	18	I prefer YouTube because it allows me to learn new knowledge.	Intrinsic motivation is driven by the desire to acquire new information
	19	I prefer YouTube because it can arouse my interest.	Intrinsic motivation based on engaging and interesting content
	20	Even if I do not achieve good school grades, I will still choose YouTube because it develops my English skills.	Intrinsic motivation is where the value of learning and skill development outweighs external rewards like grades.

Student autonomy

In line with the quantitative data, most interviewees are sure that self-study through watching YouTube videos helps them improve, making their English learning journey more independent. Because they can study on their own whenever they want, this is not limited by time like

studying in a classroom. In addition, when needing to learn knowledge related to lessons learned in class, learners can actively search for lecture videos on YouTube. Above all, the freedom to choose appropriate videos and the vividness of these videos also help increase the ability to absorb knowledge. Finally, learning through YouTube is unlimited in the amount of knowledge because this resource provides a rich amount of knowledge they cannot learn in school.

I definitely think that self-study through watching YouTube videos makes me more, makes my English learning journey more independent. Like, I don't have to rely on teachers at school or any classes. If I wanna study English, I can just turn on my computer and then I have these very reliable sources to study English. (P1)

I feel that self-study through YouTube promotes more learning autonomy because when watching YouTube, there are videos related to the knowledge I have already learned in addition to gaining new knowledge. Novelty and familiarity help me promote self-study. (P2)

Yes, because in addition to learning the basic knowledge learned in class, when I get home, I can search for that knowledge on YouTube if I forget, or can learn new knowledge that is not taught in class. (P3)

I feel that self-study through YouTube promotes more learning autonomy because when studying through YouTube, I will have to try to manage my time and thinking to motivate myself to study. (P4)

Students' motivation

Data analysis shows that in terms of extrinsic motivation, YouTube offers many engaging English learning materials such as tutorials, language lessons, and educational channels. This variety can cater to different learning styles and interests, motivating students to explore and learn. Regarding intrinsic motivation, the diverse content on YouTube can spark students' interest and curiosity in learning English, especially when they find content that aligns with their hobbies or passions. Furthermore, successfully learning from YouTube videos can boost students' confidence and belief in their ability to learn English independently.

However, it can be recognized from the interviews that the abundance of content on YouTube can overwhelm students, making it difficult for them to focus or commit to a structured learning plan. Furthermore, misleading information can also affect students' motivation to learn English in general.

Discussion

Students' perceptions of using YouTube to learn English

Overall, according to the results of the study, it is apparent that most students have found YouTube accessible, easy to use, and considerably effective in helping students learn English, especially in improving their English listening skills, according to the TAM model. This is in line with several studies, such as those of Kabouha & Elyas (2015) and Kabouha & Elyas (2018), which also claimed that YouTube is an effective means of obtaining vocabulary, which ultimately has a positive influence on their overall English abilities.

Most of the students in this research claimed that they find YouTube content very interesting and engaging, which is the factor that motivates them to use YouTube to learn English and ultimately helps them improve their English abilities. A great number of researchers have shared

the same view (Tarantino, 2011). He suggested that YouTube provides quick and enjoyable access to instructional videos and language-based content from around the world. YouTube videos give teachers and students a platform to share their videos, but more significantly, they give pupils the chance to interact with the language in a meaningful way. For example, one can find videos in which native speakers take the camera around their neighborhoods, constructing situations encountered in everyday life and showcasing how a native speaker would speak in those situations. These kinds of videos are interesting because they introduce learners to how language is used in real-life situations, but the knowledge is also thoroughly explained, accompanied by eye-catching media, making the learning process a lot more enjoyable for learners. In addition, Ngo's (2023) findings also concur with our findings that English is an effective practice platform for college students. This platform provides access to authentic spoken language in various contexts. Students can watch videos of native speakers conversing, giving speeches, participating in interviews, or engaging in everyday conversations. Exposure to authentic language helps students become familiar with natural speech patterns, accents, intonations, and colloquial expressions, thereby improving their speaking efficiency. This is in line with the study of Pham Manh, Nguyen, and Cao Thi Xuan (2023), which also found that social media plays a vital role in expanding vocabulary range from various sources, enabling students to improve their English skills in general. Social media also helps to create a platform where students can speak a second language and share their ideas verbally, enhancing speaking skills (Van Nguyen & Tran, 2024). Additionally, Alqahtani (2014) found that YouTube effectively enhances EFL students' listening skills. YouTube offers content suitable for learners at various proficiency levels. Beginners can find videos with slower speech and simpler language, while advanced learners can challenge themselves with more complex content such as lectures, podcasts, interviews, and debates.

From the data collected in the research, the perceived ease of use of YouTube contributes to the intention of use amongst the participants. The layout of YouTube is made to minimize users' efforts with a search engine that stands out on the top of the page and suggests videos underneath. Users can easily watch the videos they choose in the suggestion section by clicking on the preview image or putting the keywords into the search engine to search for what they want. Everything is straightforward and almost labour-free. Due to its easy-to-use interface, internet users are eager to continue using YouTube for their own purposes. This point of view is consistent with that put forward by Wu and Chen (2017), who also contended that perceived ease of use directly influences attitudes toward the use of technology, which ultimately affects the intention to use that technology.

However, it is also important to note that there are limitations to learning English through YouTube. Although the results showed a generally positive effect of YouTube on students' reading and writing skills, many of the participants are still uncertain and even suspicious as to whether or not (and if so, how) YouTube really helps them with their reading and writing skills in the classroom. As the content on YouTube is primarily presented in spoken form and in an informal context, it would be hard for learners to make use of the language they consume on YouTube for their formal academic reading and writing tasks. Bronowicki (2014) also concurs with this viewpoint. Moreover, excessive exposure to the media for a long time can also cause learners to be distracted from their academic tasks, addiction, and various adverse effects such as mental health problems and poor academic performance (Alroqi et al., 2023).

Students' perceptions of the impact of YouTube on students' autonomy

Participants' answers show that there is strong agreement on how useful YouTube is as a tool for boosting student autonomy. They can watch videos on YouTube about things they missed

or struggled to understand in school, listen to the same lesson from different teachers, and find answers to their questions. Most of the people who took the survey agreed or strongly agreed with these statements. They also said that YouTube helps them learn new things and gives them more control over how they learn. The people who took part also said that watching YouTube videos helps them speak, write, read, and listen better. They also thought that their interactions with YouTube were clear and easy to understand, as well as flexible and able to meet their needs. However, some of them did admit that interacting with YouTube takes a lot of mental effort.

These results are similar to those of other studies. In 2014, Budianto talked about how ICT-based learning, like YouTube, can help students learn on their own by giving them a variety of interactive resources that give them the power to be responsible for their own learning. According to Budianto, students using ICT tools like YouTube were more interested in and responsible for their learning. This led to better language skills and a more self-directed learning environment. This fits with what the people we surveyed said—that YouTube helps them learn new things and gives them more control over how they learn.

Chen (2013) also talked about how YouTube can motivate people by highlighting how it can engage students and help them learn on their own by providing a lot of content that is easy to find. Chen's research showed that students thought YouTube was a good way to learn because it was fun and interactive. The platform supported self-directed learning by letting students pick and choose their own learning pace and content. This is similar to what we found with YouTube, which helps participants catch up on subjects they missed, listen to different teachers, and find answers to their questions.

Nguyen, M. T. (2022) also found that YouTube helps students become more independent writers because it has real materials and many different ways to learn. Nguyen's research showed that YouTube videos helped students improve their writing skills by giving them access to real-life materials. This gave students more freedom as they looked for and watched relevant content on their own. The people who participated in our study said that watching YouTube videos helped them improve at speaking, writing, reading, and listening.

Students perceptions of the impact of Youtube on their motivation

Regarding the concept of intrinsic motivation, our study's findings show that students can increase their knowledge of foreign cultures through the use of YouTube, which also makes the learning process more interesting. Additionally, Nguyen, M. T. (2022)'s research demonstrates that students value a wide range of information that covers topics that are personally interesting to them. This enjoyment is an essential factor in the process of developing a constructive attitude toward learning. Additionally, Kelsen's (2009) research discovered that almost all students saw using YouTube in the classroom as a pleasurable experience. Given the high level of engagement on the platform, YouTube has the potential to make learning more enjoyable and interesting. Furthermore, our research has also received positive feedback from students about educational videos on YouTube. These videos feature a wide variety of innovative and diverse content designed to facilitate students' knowledge-acquisition processes.

Extrinsic motivation is characterized by the act of engaging in an activity to achieve positive outcomes, such as enhanced performance or better results. On a similar note, the research conducted by Nguyen, M. T. (2022) found that students reported higher levels of motivation, improved engagement, and better knowledge when exposed to a variety of video content suited for educational purposes. According to our study's findings, most students believe that watching videos on YouTube is beneficial to their academic performance. Almost all people who

participated in the survey believed that watching videos on YouTube helped them develop their English skills. Listening skills are the ones that make the most development among them. Previous research conducted by Nguyen, M. T. (2022) provided evidence of similar findings. Students are aware that watching educational videos can improve their skills and their performance in school. This is because the videos provide more practice and exposure to the language. The students pointed out that the visual and audio components of the video contributed to the reinforcement of linguistic concepts (Kelsen, 2009). The findings of the previous studies, as well as the findings of our research, all point to the beneficial effects that YouTube offers in terms of encouraging and motivating students to learn English. This is also consistent with Brophy (1998) and Pintrich and Schunk (1996), who found that YouTube creates motivation that includes both intrinsic and extrinsic factors.

The implication of this study suggests that teachers should create opportunities for students to use YouTube in class and at home to boost their autonomy and motivation, hence fostering their learning efficiency. The videos on YouTube are beneficial to students in terms of helping them to spark their interest in English as they can watch videos about the topics they are fond of, and the platform also allows them to find out the content related to the lessons in class if they want to understand and grasp the knowledge more carefully at their own pace. If teachers can make use of this great source of knowledge, this can enable students to learn more interestingly. This notion is also amplified by the research of Bui and Nguyen (2023), who investigated digital transformation in education. They highlighted how digital techniques were transforming education, proposing a paradigm shift in teaching and learning approaches and underscoring the necessity for educational institutions to adopt these changes actively. However, it is very important to categorize the resources according to students' levels and scope of background knowledge so they can understand the content effectively.

Conclusion

As technology continues to develop and become increasingly important in people's everyday lives, learning is no longer restricted to coming to school. Instead, social media platforms such as YouTube have become very efficient assistants to students, especially in their English learning, thanks to their interesting and diverse content. Students found that YouTube enhances their English skills, especially listening skills. Moreover, YouTube also offers students flexibility and greater autonomy in their learning process. This research sheds light on the impact and influence of YouTube on Vietnamese students' English-acquiring processes.

The limit of this study comes from qualitative sampling. The sample was selected using convenience sampling, which may introduce certain biases. Efforts were made to include a diverse group of students in terms of gender and academic levels, but the representativeness of the sample cannot be guaranteed. As Marshall (1996) described, this sampling technique has advantages and disadvantages. The main pros are its accessibility, cost-effectiveness, and utility for pilot studies and exploratory research. However, the findings of this study should be interpreted with caution due to the potential sampling biases. Future research with a larger and more representative sample is recommended to confirm and extend the results of this study. Despite these limitations, the current study provides valuable insights into Students' Perception of Using YouTube to Learn English: A Case Study at Van Lang University among English-major students at Van Lang University.

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Appendices

The questionnaire items with references

Appendix 1: Table 1 items

No.	Statement
1	YouTube can improve my academic performance
2	YouTube increases my understanding of English
3	I can watch videos on a subject that I missed or did not understand at school
4	I can listen to the same lesson from different teachers on YouTube
5	YouTube gives me more control over my learning
6	YouTube helps me learn new ideas
7	I can find answers to my questions on YouTube
8	I have a lot of fun watching YouTube videos for educational purposes
9	The variety of content on YouTube covers all topics of interest to me
10	Watching YouTube videos helps me improve my speaking skill
11	Watching YouTube videos helps me improve my writing skill
12	Watching YouTube videos helps me improve my reading skill
13	Watching YouTube videos helps me improve my listening skill

Appendix 2: Table 2 items

No.	Statement
14	My interaction with YouTube is clear and understandable.
15	I find YouTube easy to use.
16	I think it is easy to get YouTube to do what I want it to do.
17	Interacting with YouTube requires a lot of mental effort.

Appendix 3: Table 3 items

No.	Statement
18	I prefer YouTube because it allows me to learn new knowledge.
19	I prefer YouTube because it can arouse my interest.
20	Even if I do not achieve good school grades, I will still choose YouTube because it develops my English skills.

Appendix 4: Interview questions

1. How often do you use YouTube for English learning?
2. Which skill do you think watching YouTube videos helps you improve the most? Why?
3. Do you think that learning a language through YouTube is more interesting than learning a language at school? Why?
4. Do you think learning English through watching YouTube videos is effective? Why?
5. Do you think that self-study through watching YouTube videos promotes autonomy in language learning? Why?
6. Do you think that teachers combining lectures with watching YouTube videos is effective in teaching language? Why?
7. How do people's opinions and habits of using YouTube affect your habit of using YouTube to improve your English skills?
8. What are the challenges that you face during the process of learning the English language through YouTube?

Biodata

Ly Nguyen Minh Chau is currently a student at Van Lang University, Ho Chi Minh City, pursuing a master's degree in English Language Studies. Her research interests are using social media to enhance English skills and using ChatGPT in English language learning.

Chu Tien Dat is currently a student at Van Lang University, Ho Chi Minh City, pursuing a master's degree in English Language Studies. His research fields of interest are linguistics and teaching methodologies.

Tran Thi Hue An is currently a student at Van Lang University, Ho Chi Minh City, pursuing a master's degree in English Language Studies. Her research fields of interest are linguistics and teaching methodologies.

Pham Que Anh is an English lecturer at the Faculty of Languages, Van Lang University. She often teaches English skills and English major subjects like Phonetics, IT application in language learning, Morphology and Syntax, and Translation. Her research interest includes language teaching methodology, fostering students' motivation and applying CALL in EFL teaching at secondary, high school and tertiary levels.