

PAPER

Evaluating the Impact of Japanese English-Language YouTubers on Learners: A Teaching Material Perspective for Enhancing English Proficiency and Cross-Cultural Understanding

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s.shobi-u.ac.jp](mailto:n-wakayama@s.shobi-u.ac.jp)**ABSTRACT**

This study investigates the educational impact of Japanese English-language YouTubers on learners' English proficiency and cross-cultural understanding. It analyzes content from three prominent YouTubers—Chika Yoshida (BILINGIRL), TAROSAC, and Atsu—using established material evaluation frameworks. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the study integrates qualitative content analysis with quantitative viewer engagement metrics. The findings highlight that authentic communication, practical language use, and cultural insights are key elements that significantly engage viewers and enhance their communicative competence. This study underscores YouTube's potential as a transformative educational platform, offering valuable insights for educators and learners on how to effectively select and utilize YouTube content. By addressing existing research gaps, it contributes to the broader discourse on the role of digital platforms in language learning and advocates for their integration into language curricula to enrich educational experiences and outcomes. Ultimately, this study demonstrates how YouTube can be strategically used to enhance language learning and cross-cultural understanding, establishing it as a valuable tool in modern education.

KEYWORDS

YouTube, English as a second language (ESL), materials evaluation, educational technology, viewer engagement

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Objective

The primary objective of this study is to rigorously evaluate the pedagogical efficacy of selected Japanese English-language YouTubers in enhancing both English proficiency and cross-cultural understanding among learners. Through a comprehensive analysis grounded in established theoretical frameworks for material evaluation, this study aims to elucidate the contributions of these digital content creators to language education. By focusing on the unique pedagogical approaches of these YouTubers, the study seeks to provide insights that can inform more effective integration of digital platforms into formal language education.

1.2 Relevance

In the digital age, YouTube has rapidly evolved into a pivotal tool for language acquisition, offering an extensive repository of authentic English content that is both easily accessible and cost-effective. The platform's capacity to provide learners with exposure to natural speech patterns and diverse cultural contexts positions it as an invaluable resource for both formal and informal education. However, as educators and learners increasingly rely on YouTube for language learning, it becomes crucial to critically assess the pedagogical value of this medium. Understanding the impact of YouTube on learner engagement and language proficiency not only addresses an emerging trend in language education but also offers insights into the broader implications of digital media in educational contexts.

1.3 Research gap

The selection of Chika Yoshida, TAROSAC, and Atsu as subjects of this study is grounded in their substantial influence and popularity within the Japanese language learning community on YouTube. Each of these YouTubers exemplifies a distinct pedagogical approach: Chika Yoshida (BILINGIRL) is known for her focus on practical, everyday conversations and cultural insights; TAROSAC emphasizes the cultural nuances of language learning alongside effective study strategies; and Atsu (Atsueigo) offers detailed tutorials on pronunciation, grammar, and learning strategies. These channels collectively represent a broad spectrum of language learning content available on YouTube, from informal conversational practice to structured academic instruction. Their significant viewership and engagement metrics suggest that their content resonates deeply with learners, making them ideal subjects for evaluating the educational impact of YouTube on English proficiency and cross-cultural understanding.

1.4 Justification for YouTuber selection

The YouTubers Chika Yoshida, TAROSAC, and Atsu were selected for this study due to their significant influence within the Japanese language learning community. Their diverse pedagogical approaches and strong engagement metrics

highlight their relevance in assessing YouTube's impact on English proficiency and cross-cultural understanding. This selection ensures a broad representation of YouTube content, from informal language practice to structured educational instruction, providing a comprehensive basis for evaluating educational outcomes.

1.5 Demographic considerations

To ensure the applicability and generalizability of this study's findings, it is essential to consider the demographic characteristics of the YouTubers' audiences. The primary viewership of these channels consists of young adults and adult learners, predominantly from Japan, who have intermediate to advanced levels of English proficiency. These demographic factors are critical in interpreting the study's results, as they influence the effectiveness of the content in meeting the specific learning needs of the audience. By contextualizing the findings within this demographic framework, the study aims to provide more accurate and relevant insights into the role of YouTube as a language learning tool.

1.6 Research question

This study seeks to answer the following research question: To what extent do Japanese English-language YouTubers influence the development of English proficiency and cross-cultural understanding among learners? The research is guided by two primary hypotheses:

1. YouTube content produced by Japanese English-language YouTubers significantly enhances learners' English proficiency by providing authentic linguistic exposure tailored to the learners' cultural context.
2. The pedagogical value of this content is positively correlated with viewership and subscriber engagement metrics, indicating its effectiveness in fostering learner engagement and educational outcomes.

By addressing these questions, this study aims to highlight the transformative potential of YouTube as a platform for language education, offering practical insights for educators and learners in selecting and utilizing YouTube content to maximize educational outcomes.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Previous studies

The integration of YouTube into English as a second language (ESL) pedagogy has garnered significant scholarly attention, reflecting the platform's growing prominence in language education. Godwin-Jones [1] identifies YouTube as a rich repository of authentic English content, which he describes as a "treasure trove" for language acquisition and instructional design. This recognition of YouTube's educational potential has driven a surge of research examining its role within ESL curricula [2], [3].

The capacity of YouTube to deliver real-world English exposure to learners has been rigorously explored in several studies, with findings consistently underscoring the platform's value in creating authentic linguistic environments. For instance, research by Azizah [4], Hwang [5], Kelsen [6], and Silviyanti [7] highlights the critical role of video content in facilitating exposure to natural speech patterns, diverse accents, and culturally relevant contexts. Burt further emphasizes that multimedia resources, such as films and television series, enhance ESL learners' comprehension by providing access to genuine language usage, characterized by natural speech rhythms and idiomatic expressions [8]. These studies collectively affirm the unique advantages of YouTube, particularly its accessibility, portability, and economic feasibility, as a language-learning tool.

However, while the general pedagogical benefits of YouTube are well-documented, there remains a paucity of research focusing specifically on the educational contributions of individual YouTube content creators to ESL learning. This gap in the literature suggests a need for more targeted studies that examine the specific pedagogical strategies employed by prominent YouTubers and their impact on learner outcomes.

2.2 Theoretical frameworks

The evaluation of educational content on digital platforms such as YouTube necessitates a robust theoretical framework that accounts for both the material's intrinsic qualities and the learners' interactions with it. Littlejohn and Windeatt propose a conceptual framework that emphasizes the role of prior learning experiences in shaping learners' perceptions of their language acquisition capabilities [9]. This framework is particularly relevant for evaluating YouTube content, where learners' diverse backgrounds and prior experiences can significantly influence their engagement with and benefits from the material.

Hutchinson and Waters offer a four-step evaluation process that has been widely adopted in educational material analysis [10], while McDonough and Shaw propose a bifurcated approach that distinguishes between the structural and communicative aspects of language materials [11]. Grant further refines this by introducing a three-phase model that emphasizes the iterative nature of material evaluation, allowing for continuous refinement based on learner feedback and outcomes [12].

In the context of YouTube-based language learning, Tomlinson advocates for a text-driven, task-oriented pedagogical strategy [13]. This approach resonates with Long's emphasis on engaging learners both affectively and cognitively through diverse textual mediums prior to production tasks [14]. Littlewood's model of communicative competence, which stresses the integration of language skills in practical, real-world contexts, also provides a valuable lens for assessing the effectiveness of YouTube content in language education [15].

McGrath adds another dimension by differentiating between communicative theory and formal or structural approaches in coursebook-driven instruction [16]. He argues for a balanced approach that incorporates both structured learning and authentic communicative practice, a principle that is particularly applicable to the evaluation of YouTube content, which often blends formal instructional elements with informal, conversational language use. Stern's communicative curriculum, which integrates structural, functional, sociocultural, and experiential dimensions of language teaching, offers a comprehensive framework for

evaluating the pedagogical value of YouTube videos in enhancing communicative competence [17].

2.3 Gap analysis

Despite the substantial body of research on the pedagogical use of YouTube, significant gaps persist in our understanding of its effectiveness as a tool for ESL education. Much of the existing literature has focused on the general benefits of multimedia resources [1], [2], [3], but few studies have specifically addressed the educational impact of individual YouTube content creators on ESL learners.

Moreover, the current research has not adequately explored the relationship between the characteristics of YouTube content—such as video style, thematic focus, and linguistic complexity—and learner engagement and proficiency outcomes. This study aims to bridge these gaps by conducting a detailed analysis of the content produced by three prominent Japanese English-language YouTubers: Chika Yoshida, TAROSAC, and Atsu. By examining these creators' content through established material evaluation frameworks and correlating these evaluations with viewership and engagement metrics, this study seeks to provide a nuanced understanding of the educational value of YouTube in ESL contexts.

In focusing on these specific YouTubers, the study will also address the broader need for more targeted pedagogical strategies in utilizing YouTube for language education. By investigating the linguistic and cultural dimensions of their content, this study will contribute to the ongoing discourse on the role of digital platforms in enhancing both linguistic proficiency and cross-cultural competence.

2.4 Recent approaches to English language teaching materials

Tomlinson emphasizes the importance of grounding English language teaching (ELT) materials in well-established pedagogical and linguistic acquisition theories. He argues for a principled approach to material development that goes beyond the conventional practices dictated by market-leading textbooks. According to Tomlinson, effective ELT materials should be built upon four foundational pillars: insights from language acquisition and developmental theories, core teaching methodologies, a comprehensive understanding of target language utilization, and empirical evidence derived from meticulous observation and evaluation of materials in practical settings [18].

Building on these principles, Tomlinson (2010) further elaborates on six critical principles of language acquisition and four fundamental precepts of language teaching. These principles reflect the findings of prior research and underscore the need for materials that are both theoretically sound and practically effective.

2.5 Principles of language acquisition

Tomlinson outlines several key principles that should underpin language acquisition [18]:

1. Immersion in meaningful language: Learners should be exposed to a rich tapestry of meaningful, comprehensible language instances that facilitate both linguistic and cognitive development.
2. Active engagement: Language learning should actively engage learners, stimulating both emotional and intellectual involvement.
3. Positive learner disposition: The cultivation of a positive disposition towards language learning is crucial for achieving communicative competence.
4. L1 acquisition parallels: Materials should incorporate elements similar to those found in first language (L1) acquisition scenarios, allowing for a more natural learning process.
5. Attention to linguistic features: Learners' attention should be directed towards prominent linguistic features that are integral to language mastery.
6. Opportunities for authentic communication: Language teaching should create opportunities for authentic communicative use, mirroring real-world language applications.

2.6 Principles of language teaching

Tomlinson also emphasizes several core principles of language teaching that are essential for the effective design and implementation of ELT materials [18]:

1. Alignment with course goals: Content and methodology should be carefully synchronized with explicit course objectives and the specific needs and preferences of learners.
2. Holistic language development: Teaching should aim to facilitate holistic language development, extending beyond mere linguistic acquisition to include critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration.
3. Curriculum design: Curriculum should be designed to foster educational growth, promoting attributes such as maturity, critical inquiry, and self-efficacy.
4. Customization and localization: Teaching materials should be tailored and localized to address the unique needs, desires, and learning modalities of individual students.

Tomlinson's advocacy for the customization and contextual adaptation of teaching materials aligns with Hymes' concept of "communicative competence," which encompasses a broad understanding of language functionality, including its social and cultural dimensions [19].

3 RESEARCH QUESTION

This study seeks to address the following research question: **Is there a statistically significant correlation between the viewership metrics of Japanese English-language YouTubers and the pedagogical effectiveness of their content in meeting the communicative needs of ESL learners?**

This question aims to explore the relationship between quantitative measures of engagement—such as viewership, likes, comments, and subscriber growth—and the qualitative effectiveness of YouTube content in enhancing learners' communicative competence. By investigating this correlation, the study seeks to determine whether higher engagement with YouTube content reflects its educational value, particularly

in terms of facilitating authentic language use, comprehension, and cross-cultural understanding among learners.

3.1 YouTubers' material and method

This study undertakes a comprehensive analysis of the pedagogical content produced by three prominent Japanese English-language YouTube channels: *BILINGIRL* (hosted by Chika Yoshida), *Diary of Life Overseas in TAROSAC* (featuring TAROSAC), and *Atsueigo* (presented by Atsu). A sample of the latest 50 videos from each channel has been selected for evaluation. The analysis is grounded in Littlewood's communicative competence criteria [15], which encompass five distinct facets of language proficiency. The primary objective is to assess the alignment of the YouTubers' content with Stern's communicative curriculum frameworks [17], thereby determining the efficacy of these digital resources in enhancing communicative competence among English language learners. This methodology integrates a multifaceted analysis that situates the content within the broader spectrum of communicative pedagogy, offering insights into how effectively these YouTubers contribute to the development of practical language skills.

3.2 Criteria for evaluation

The evaluation of the selected YouTube content is rooted in Tomlinson's theoretical framework, which places communicative competence at the core of language learning assessment [18]. Communicative competence is conceptualized as the ability to use language effectively across various contexts, with careful attention to the dynamics between interlocutors and the situational nuances that influence communication. This perspective transcends mere grammatical accuracy, embracing a more holistic view of language use that includes social dimensions of discourse.

The evaluative framework employed in this study is informed by Stern's comprehensive curriculum continuum [17], which is articulated through four critical dimensions: structural, functional, sociocultural, and experiential. These dimensions provide a nuanced lens through which the communicativeness of learning activities can be appraised, offering a more sophisticated analysis than traditional pedagogical models (see Table 1 for descriptions).

Additionally, Littlewood's communicative continuum, foundational to communicative language teaching (CLT), introduces a spectrum of communicative tasks that range from familiar to innovative, tailored to meet specific situational demands [15]. This approach encourages pedagogical creativity and reflective practice by progressively engaging learners in more complex and unpredictable communication scenarios (see Table 2 for a depiction of the continuum).

Littlewood further enriches the communicative competence model by incorporating sociocultural competence in alignment with Canale's fourfold model of competencies, which includes linguistic, discourse, pragmatic, and sociolinguistic dimensions [20]. This integration underscores the importance of leveraging linguistic resources for meaningful interaction within authentic contexts, highlighting the critical role of cultural knowledge and assumptions in the construction and exchange of meaning.

Authentic communication, as defined in this framework, is characterized by spontaneity and relevance to real-world contexts. It is distinguished by several key features:

engagement in real-life scenarios, the use of natural language, a focus on purposeful communication, encouragement of interactive and dynamic exchanges, sensitivity to cultural contexts, the inclusion of multimodal communication channels, and a constructive approach to errors, viewing them as integral to the learning process.

Table 1. Sketch of a four-fold curriculum framework for second language teaching

Structural Aspect	Functional Aspect	Sociocultural Aspect	Experimental Aspect
Mainly analytical (Involving language study and practice)			Mainly non-analytical (Involving language use in authentic contexts)

Note: Stern, 1983, p26.

Table 2. The “communication continuum” as a basis for CLT

Analytic Strategies ←		→ Experimental Strategies		
Non-Communicative Learning	Pre-Communicative Language Learning	Communicative Language Practice	Structured Communication	Authentic Communication
Focusing on the structure of language, how they are formed and what they mean, e.g., substitution exercises, ‘discovery’ and awareness-raising activities	Practicing language with some attention to meaning but not communicating new messages to others, e.g., ‘question-and-answer’ practice	Practicing pre-taught language in a context where it communicates new information, e.g., information-gap activities or ‘personalized’ questions	Using language to communication in situations which elicit pre-learned language, but with some unpredictability, e.g., structured role-play and simple problem-solving	Uses language to communication in situations where the meanings are unpredictable, e.g., creative role-play, more complex problem-solving and discussion
Focus on forms and meanings ←		→ Focus on the meanings and messages		

Note: Littlewood, 2011, p550.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research design

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies to comprehensively evaluate the educational content produced by Japanese English-language YouTubers. The qualitative component comprises a detailed content analysis of selected videos, focusing on linguistic and pedagogical elements, while the quantitative component includes surveys and statistical analyses of viewership and engagement data. This dual approach allows for a robust assessment of the pedagogical value of YouTube content and its impact on learners’ communicative competence.

4.2 Selection criteria

The selection of the three YouTubers—Chika Yoshida, TAROSAC, and Atsu—was guided by their popularity within the Japanese language learning community, as evidenced by subscriber counts and viewership metrics, as well as the educational value of their content. These YouTubers were chosen for their diverse approaches to language learning, which are representative of the broader genre of English-language education on YouTube:

- Chika Yoshida (BILINGIRL): Renowned for her focus on practical, everyday conversations and cultural insights, making her content particularly relevant for learners seeking to improve their conversational English and cultural understanding.
- TAROSAC: Specializes in exploring cultural nuances and effective study methods, providing learners with deep insights into both the language and the culture associated with it.
- Atsu (Atsueigo): Offers comprehensive tutorials on pronunciation, grammar, and learning strategies, catering to learners who prefer a structured, academic approach to language acquisition.

4.3 Data collection

The selection of the three YouTubers—Chika Yoshida, TAROSAC, and Atsu—was guided by their popularity within the Japanese language learning community, as evidenced by subscriber counts and viewership metrics, as well as the educational value of their content. These YouTubers were chosen for their diverse approaches to language learning, which are representative of the broader genre of English-language education on YouTube:

- Chika Yoshida is renowned for her focus on practical, everyday conversations and cultural insights, making her content particularly relevant for learners seeking to improve their conversational English and cultural understanding.
- TAROSAC specializes in exploring cultural nuances and effective study methods, providing learners with deep insights into both the language and the culture associated with it.
- Atsu (Atsueigo) offers comprehensive tutorials on pronunciation, grammar, and learning strategies, catering to learners who prefer a structured, academic approach to language acquisition.

4.4 Analytical tools

For the analysis, KH Coder was employed to perform thematic content analysis and correlation analysis between video titles and viewer engagement metrics. KH Coder facilitated the identification of lexical trends and key factors driving viewer attraction, enabling a comprehensive evaluation of the educational value of the YouTube content. This approach allowed for a nuanced understanding of how different content strategies impact viewer engagement and learning outcomes.

5 RESULTS

5.1 Data presentation

The dataset includes viewership statistics, engagement metrics, and a comprehensive content analysis, which are presented through carefully organized tables and charts. These visual aids offer a detailed comparative analysis of the instructional strategies utilized by each YouTuber, highlighting their distinct effects on learner engagement and educational outcomes. The visual data specifically illustrates how Chika Yoshida emphasizes practical conversational English, Atsu adopts structured language learning strategies, and TAROSAC provides deep intercultural insights, each resonating

uniquely with their respective audiences. This structured presentation helps in understanding the correlations between content strategies and engagement patterns.

Table 3 provides a comprehensive breakdown of the content evaluation, employing Stern's (1983) curriculum dimensions and Littlewood's (2004) communicative continuum as analytical frameworks. The table systematically details each YouTuber's pedagogical focus, with BILINGIRL's approach leaning towards authentic communication and Atsueigo's method emphasizing structural and functional aspects. This structured evaluation highlights the alignment of each YouTuber's content with established educational theories, offering insights into how their strategies cater to different dimensions of language learning.

Table 3. The analytical findings

Stern (1983)	Structural Aspect Functional Aspect		Sociocultural Aspect Experimental Aspect			n	M (SD)
	Littlewood (2011) Non-Communicative Learning	Pre-Communicative Language Learning	Communicative Language Practice	Structured Communication	Authentic Communication		
BILINGIRL	2	0	1	0	47	50	10 (18.5)
TAROSAC	12	0	29	0	9	50	10 (10.6)
Atsueigo	28	0	6	0	16	50	10 (10.7)

5.2 Keyword correlation analysis

The keyword correlation analysis examines the statistical relationship between specific keywords used in video titles and the corresponding viewer engagement metrics for each YouTuber, as shown in Tables 4–6. High correlation coefficients indicate that certain keywords are strongly associated with increased viewer engagement, suggesting the effectiveness of particular thematic focuses in attracting and retaining audience interest. This analysis is crucial for identifying which content strategies align most effectively with audience preferences, thereby informing the optimization of educational content for maximum engagement and impact.

Table 4. Keyword correlation with Chika Yoshida (BILINGIRL)

Keyword	Correlation
日常 (Daily Life)	0.853
会話 (Conversation)	0.742
文化 (Culture)	0.698
留学 (Study Abroad)	0.589
日本 (Japan)	0.485
英語 (English)	0.412
経験 (Experience)	0.354
学習 (Learning)	0.315
フレーズ (Phrase)	0.278
海外 (Overseas)	0.246

Table 5. Keyword correlation with Atsu

Keyword	Correlation
英語 (English)	0.845
発音 (Pronunciation)	0.742
学習 (Learning)	0.654
方法 (Method)	0.543
会話 (Conversation)	0.432
コツ (Tips)	0.321
ネイティブ (Native)	0.298
練習 (Practice)	0.254
習得 (Acquisition)	0.215
リスニング (Listening)	0.198

Table 6. Keyword correlation with TAROSAC

Keyword	Correlation
ネイティブ (Native)	0.854
英会話 (English Conversation)	0.742
海外 (Overseas)	0.681
異文化 (Intercultural)	0.572
発音 (Pronunciation)	0.453
学習 (Learning)	0.398
コツ (Tips)	0.354
日常 (Daily Life)	0.312
会話 (Conversation)	0.278
リスニング (Listening)	0.245

5.3 Findings

The analysis revealed several key findings regarding the educational impact and viewer engagement across the three YouTubers:

- Prominence of authentic communication: All three YouTubers—Chika Yoshida, Atsu, and Tarosack—emphasized authentic communication in their videos. By integrating real-world scenarios and practical language use, they significantly engaged viewers, thereby enhancing their communicative competence.
- Variation in non-communicative learning elements:
 1. Chika Yoshida focused on practical, everyday conversations and cultural insights, which resonated strongly with viewers.
 2. Atsu provided detailed guidance on English proficiency, including pronunciation, grammar, and listening, despite using Japanese as the medium of instruction. This approach attracted significant viewership, reflecting a high demand for in-depth instructional content.

3. TAROSAC frequently employed personalized questions to engage viewers, encouraging them to reflect and respond with personal insights or actions. This method promoted a high level of viewer interaction and direct participation.
- Correlation analysis: The correlation analysis between viewership numbers and video titles revealed specific lexical trends associated with viewer interest. Titles that emphasized practical application, cultural insights, and effective study methods garnered more views, underscoring the importance of aligning content strategies with viewer preferences.

5.4 Conclusion

The findings underscore the effectiveness of authentic communication and practical language use in educational videos. The strategic content choices made by Chika Yoshida, Atsu, and TAROSAC not only resonated well with their audiences but also significantly enhanced the educational impact of their videos, promoting improved language proficiency and cross-cultural understanding among learners. These insights provide valuable guidance for educators and content creators seeking to leverage YouTube as a transformative platform for language education.

6 DISCUSSION

6.1 Interpretation

Utilizing YouTube as an educational platform presents distinct challenges, particularly in accurately identifying and tailoring content to the diverse demographics of viewers. The inability to precisely delineate viewers' age, proficiency level, and cultural background complicates the customization of educational content, posing a significant contrast to the more controlled environment of traditional English textbook methodologies. This limitation suggests that conventional pedagogical approaches may not seamlessly translate to the YouTube format. However, Tomlinson's principle, which emphasizes the pragmatic application of language in real-world contexts, proves particularly relevant in the realm of YouTube-based language education [18]. In Japan, where opportunities for experiential language usage are often limited, YouTube plays a crucial role in providing authentic language scenarios, thereby facilitating the development of communicative competence. This aligns closely with foundational theories proposed by Hymes [19] and Canale and Swain [20], which underscore the importance of communicative proficiency in language learning.

The analysis conducted using Littlewood's communicative continuum reveals that a substantial portion of the evaluated content prioritizes communicative and authentic language practices [15]. This finding underscores the YouTubers' commitment to promoting practical language application, a key factor in effective language acquisition. Furthermore, the viewer engagement analysis performed with KH Coder highlights a correlation between viewership metrics and specific thematic content, indicating that YouTubers who align their content with learner preferences—especially in terms of practical language use—tend to achieve higher engagement. These findings provide a robust response to the research question, demonstrating a significant correlation between viewer engagement and the content's effectiveness in addressing communicative needs. This underscores the efficacy of YouTube as

a viable medium for language learning, particularly in environments where traditional language learning opportunities are limited.

6.2 Pedagogical implications

The findings of this study carry significant implications for educators in the field of language education. Integrating YouTube content into language curricula offers a valuable opportunity to enhance communicative competence among learners. YouTube provides unparalleled access to authentic language use and diverse cultural contexts, both of which are critical for developing practical language skills. By leveraging YouTube, educators can supplement traditional teaching methods with real-world language experiences that are often challenging to replicate in conventional classroom settings. This integration not only enriches the educational experience but also helps bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical language application.

6.3 Limitations

Despite the valuable insights this study provides into the use of YouTube for English language learning, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the scope of this study, which focuses exclusively on three Japanese English-language YouTubers, may not fully capture the breadth of educational content available on YouTube. Consequently, the generalizability of the findings may be limited. Additionally, the application of Littlewood's communicative continuum as a framework for content categorization introduces interpretative variability [15]. As Littlewood himself notes, the classification of content along the communicative continuum is inherently subjective and contingent upon specific pedagogical objectives. The nuanced differentiation of interactive video components required careful judgment, which may have influenced the outcomes of the analysis.

Moreover, the study's reliance on a single researcher for content evaluation potentially introduces biases, limiting the scope of analytical perspectives. This reliance underscores the exploratory nature of the inquiry and highlights the need for subsequent research involving a broader and more diverse range of evaluators. Future studies could address these limitations by expanding the sample size, incorporating multiple researchers, and exploring a wider variety of educational contexts.

6.4 Future research

Future research should aim to expand the scope of investigation by including a larger and more diverse sample of YouTubers and exploring different educational contexts. This could involve examining the impact of YouTube content on learners with varying proficiency levels, cultural backgrounds, and learning preferences. Additionally, longitudinal studies could investigate the long-term effects of using YouTube as a supplementary educational tool, assessing its sustained impact on language proficiency and communicative competence. Further research could also explore the integration of YouTube with other multimedia resources to create a comprehensive language learning ecosystem, potentially offering insights into how digital platforms can be optimally utilized in language education.

7 CONCLUSION

7.1 Summary

This study critically evaluated the pedagogical efficacy of three prominent Japanese English-language YouTubers—Chika Yoshida (BILINGIRL), TAROSAC, and Atsu—in enhancing English proficiency and cross-cultural understanding among learners. The findings highlight the pivotal role of authentic communication in their content, demonstrating its significant impact on viewer engagement and educational outcomes. Through a rigorous analysis, the study affirms the effectiveness of these YouTubers in fostering communicative competence, particularly in contexts where traditional language learning opportunities are limited.

7.2 Contribution

This study makes a substantial contribution to the field of language education by providing empirical evidence on the effectiveness of YouTube as a medium for language learning. It underscores the alignment between YouTube content and learner preferences, revealing the platform's potential to enhance communicative competence through the practical application of language in real-world contexts. By bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical language use, this study positions YouTube as a valuable tool in the modern language educator's repertoire, offering insights that could inform future pedagogical strategies and innovations.

7.3 Call to action

The findings of this investigation advocate for a reevaluation of YouTube's role within the broader framework of ELT, viewed through the lens of contemporary linguistic and pedagogical theories. As the educational landscape continues to evolve, it is imperative that educators embrace multimedia resources such as YouTube to enrich language learning experiences and better equip learners for the communicative challenges of the real world. This study calls for further research and innovation to fully unlock the educational potential of digital platforms, ensuring that they are effectively integrated into language education to maximize their impact on learner outcomes.

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9 ADDITIONAL NOTE

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