

Examining the impact of YouTube vlogging on communication skills in teens with speech and language disorders

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ABSTRACT

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The major goal of this research is to examine how vlogging on YouTube affects the communication skills of Jordan teenagers with language and speech disorders. Fifty people, ranging in age from 13 to 18, participated in an eight-week vlogging intervention program designed to improve their communication skills. The results of the pre- and post-tests showed a statistically significant improvement in communicative competence, with the mean difference between the two measures being 10.5. Vlogging has a significant effect as an intervention because of its remarkable ability to actively engage participants in the creation of relevant content, the facilitation of authentic real-life communication experiences, the encouragement of creative and self-expressive expression, and the provision of individualized therapeutic approaches. Adolescents with speech and language disabilities have unique obstacles in communicating, and this study gives insight on the possible use of novel tools, such as vlogging, to address these issues.

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1. Introduction

Extremely impossible to emphasize the value of good communication skills in our daily lives, since they have a direct bearing on our ability to share ideas and feelings with people and form lasting relationships (Hartley, 2019). As they go through adolescence and into adulthood, teenagers face several challenges, not the least of which is improving their communication skills. During this time, they are focused on excelling in a variety of areas, including school, friendships, and careers (Erikson, 1968). Adolescents with speech and language disorders have severe barriers to communication because of issues with articulation, fluency, vocabulary, and pragmatic language skills (ASHA, 2021). Adolescents in Jordan need to grow and adapt to their rapidly changing cultural and social surroundings (Alamri et al., 2020).

According to the World Health Organization (2020), there is cause for worry in Jordan as well, since a growing number of Jordan adolescents are exhibiting symptoms of speech and language impairments. Beitchman et al. (1996) state that these disorders may hinder educational performance, limit participation in extracurricular activities, and limit future employment prospects. According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2020), the estimated worldwide prevalence of speech and language deficits in children is between 5 and 10%. While there is a lack of information on the prevalence of speech and language deficits among Jordan adolescents, the issue is widely recognized as one of great concern (Alamri et al., 2020). Misdiagnosis and a lack of treatment are prevalent, leaving patients with worse communication and a lower quality of life.

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Traditional speech therapy approaches have long been the gold standard for treating language and communication disorders. Growing digital platforms, however, have opened up new ways to address these challenges (Gillam & Marquardt, 2019). With over two billion users logging in each month the video-sharing platform YouTube has become an important platform for young people all over the world to express themselves and connect with one another (Mazman & Usluel, 2010). YouTube vlogging, the practice of creating and sharing video diaries (vlogs) on the video-sharing website, has exploded in popularity, especially among young people (DeAndrea et al., 2016). Vlogging is a kind of online video blogging that has helped individuals successfully share their thoughts, feelings, and stories (Lin et al., 2016). The increasing popularity of vlogging makes it more important to investigate the medium's potential for assisting teenagers with speech and language difficulties in their efforts to communicate. Teens in Jordan who have trouble communicating because of speech or language impairments now have a unique opportunity because to the popularity of YouTube vlogging. Vlogging may help people overcome barriers that prevent them from improving their communication abilities. Adolescents may practice and improve their communication skills in a real-world context via vlogging, get feedback from online communities, and build confidence in their own talents to express themselves clearly (Williams & Schreier, 2017).

Given that teenage media consumption of digital content is on the rise (Rideout & Robb, 2019), experts must be familiar with the many ways in which YouTube may be utilized to help people with speech impairments (Vannest et al., 2010). In addition, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) (United Nations, 2006) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (United Nations, 2015) provide a framework for which this research is consistent with efforts to improve the well-being and social inclusion of people with disabilities on a global scale.

1.1 Objective of the Study

The major goal of this study is to examine how YouTube vlogging has affected the communication skills of Jordan teenagers who have been identified with speech and language impairments. The purpose of this research is to investigate the potential benefits and drawbacks of vlogging therapies in this context, and to clarify the factors that could affect their effectiveness.

2. Literature Review and Previous Studies

Disabilities in articulation, fluency, language, and pragmatic language all fall under the umbrella of speech and language disorders (ASHA, 2021). Communication difficulties are common among adolescents with these diagnoses (Bishop et al., 2016), and these difficulties may manifest in a variety of forms. The difficulties listed above may lead to poor grades, isolation, and feelings of worthlessness (Beitchman et al., 1996). Teenagers are at a pivotal stage in their lives, a crossroads between childhood and maturity, and it is crucial that they learn to communicate effectively. Adolescent identity development is seen as pivotal in Erikson's (1968) theory of psychosocial development. Effective communication is a major factor in the development of a sense of self, friendships among peers, and integration into society. Possessing strong communication skills has also been connected to higher levels of academic accomplishment, as well as increased employment opportunities and professional advancement. Digital media's arrival and broad usage has fundamentally changed the ways in which people communicate. Gillam and Gillam (2019) argue that websites like YouTube and Facebook provide users new ways to express themselves and connect with others. Livingstone (2008) argues that the environments created by these mediums are ideal for the development and use of communicative skills.

YouTube, the most popular video-sharing website in the world, has been crucial to the development and spread of vlogging as a cultural phenomenon (Mazman & Usluel, 2010). To "vlog" is to use video content as a means of sharing one's own thoughts, feelings, and experiences with the world (DeAndrea et al., 2016). According to Burgess and Green (2018), vlog material may be as simple as an account of the vlogger's life or as complex as an in-depth examination of a certain subject. Because of their fluid and ever-changing format, vlogs are appealing as a means of personal expression (Lin et al., 2016).

According to Snelson (2018), YouTube has become a well-recognized resource for teachers. Several academic fields, including language instruction, science education (Veletsianos & Houlden, 2020), and health education (Abroms et al., 2013), have conducted substantial research on the use of this instrument. Those findings highlight YouTube's potential as a platform for delivering educational content and raising scholastic standards.

Based on their research, Vannest et al. (2010) conclude that digital media have the potential to improve students' learning capacities and aid in the growth of efficient modes of communication. Hew and Cheung (2013) argue that social media users may improve their linguistic competence, engage in substantive discourse, and expand their digital literacy by actively using these tools. Participating in these kinds of activities may help one become a better communicator overall, but especially when it comes to writing.

The benefits of vlogging as a communication tool have been studied before, but earlier research focused on a more general audience than those with speech or language problems. Williams and Schreier (2017) found that vloggers benefit from increased self-expression, improved self-esteem, and more confidence while speaking in public as a result of their participation in vlogging activities. This study's findings suggest that vlogging may be just as helpful as regular blogging for teens struggling with language acquisition.

It's important to recognize that vlogging comes with its own set of challenges and moral questions. According to Barlett et al. (2014), cyberbullying and the prevalence of nasty comments inside online communities are serious problems. Concerns about privacy, consent, and digital literacy should also be taken into account and addressed when working with teenage participants in vlogging interventions (Livingstone, 2008).

3. Methods

To assess how participating in YouTube vlogging workshops affected the participants' capacity for communication, this study used a quantitative research approach, namely a pre-post intervention strategy. The adopted plan made it easier to evaluate the impact of the vlogging intervention.

Fifty teenagers, aged 13 to 18, were recruited for the research because they had been identified as having speech and language impairments. Participants were drawn from a variety of Jordan educational and healthcare institutions. Purposive sampling was used to choose participants so that both sexes, as well as people of varying ages and degrees of language impairment, would be adequately represented.

An eight-week program of YouTube vlogging seminars was implemented as part of the intervention. Expert speech therapists and vlogging professionals led the workshops, instructing participants on vlogging techniques, content creation, and effective communication strategies. The major goal of the seminars was to encourage attendees to create vlogs focusing on topics of their choosing, all the while addressing specific communication barriers associated with their speech and language difficulties.

There were two phases to the data collection process: pre-intervention and post-intervention checks. To provide a starting point for gauging the improvement in participants' communication skills, a pre-intervention assessment was given before the vlogging courses began. The Clinical examination of Language Fundamentals (CELF), articulation tests, and self-report questionnaires were all used as part of the examination.

After the vlogging intervention was finished, an instant assessment was given. Similar standardized tests were used to measure progress in oral and written communication skills. Participants' output from the vlogging workshops was also collected and analyzed; this output took the form of video logs (vlogs).

Quantitative data was analyzed with the use of statistical tools. Means, standard deviations, and frequencies were calculated for pre- and post-intervention assessments of communicative competence by the study's authors. We utilized paired-samples t-tests to determine whether or not the improvements in perceived communication skills before and after the vlogging intervention were statistically significant.

4. Results

Prior to the vlogging intervention, the table provides descriptive data on the participants' appraisal ratings of their communication skills. The determined mean score of 58.2 is the average starting point for participants' communicative abilities. The scores ranged from a low of 42 to a high of 76, therefore the estimated standard deviation of 9.4 shows that there was some variation in the initial results.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics for Pre-Intervention Communication Skills Assessment

	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Minimum Score	Maximum Score
Participants (N=50)	58.2	9.4	42	76

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics for Post-Intervention Communication Skills Assessment

	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Minimum Score	Maximum Score
Participants (N=50)	68.7	10.2	50	88

After completing an eight-week vlogging intervention, the table presents a summary of descriptive data relevant to assessment ratings of the participants' communication skills. Comparing the average score before (58.2) and after (68.7) the intervention, a clear increase in communication skills can be seen. With a minimum score of 50 and a maximum score of 88, the standard deviation of the post-intervention scores is 10.2, indicating that there is still some variation in the results.

Table 3
Paired-Samples t-Test Results for Communication Skills Assessment

	Pre-Intervention Mean	Post-Intervention Mean	t-value	p-value
Communication Skills (N=50)	58.2	68.7	6.2	<0.001

The average scores on tests of communication ability were compared before and after the vlogging intervention was implemented, and the results are reported in the table below using the paired-samples t-test. The observed t-value of 6.2 is statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), indicating that participants' communication skills significantly improved as a result of participating in the vlogging courses. The positive difference between the pre- and post-intervention means (58.2 and 68.7) is indicative of a substantial improvement in participants' communication skills.

Table 4
Paired-Samples T-Test Results for Communication Skills Assessment

	Pre-Intervention (M1)	Post-Intervention (M2)	Mean Difference (M2 - M1)	Standard Deviation of Differences	t-value	p-value
Communication Skills (N=50)	58.2	68.7	10.5	8.1	6.2	<0.001

Before the vlogging intervention, the average score for communication skills was 58.2. After the eight-week vlogging intervention, the average score for communication abilities increased to 68.7. A rise of 10.5 points in communication ability was typical. It was determined that the gaps between pre- and post-intervention scores had a standard deviation of 8.1. Mean communication skills improved by 10.5 points, and a t-value of 6.2 indicates there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups. High significance ($p < 0.001$) indicates that the observed increase in communication skills may be linked to the intervention of vlogging rather than to random variability.

The results of a paired-samples t-test show that participants' communication skills significantly improved after participating in an eight-week intervention that included vlogging. On average, participants' communication skills improved by 10.5 points, as shown by the mean difference. The resulting p-value is less than 0.001, which indicates that it is very unlikely that the improvement was the result of chance. This study's findings suggest that the participants' communication skills improved significantly because of their participation in the vlogging workshops.

5. Discussion

5.1 Improvement in Communication Skills

Vlogging's potential as a dynamic method of communication is shown by the huge increase in communication competence evidenced in the large average gap of 10.5 points. Williams and Schreier (2017) argue that vlogging is superior to traditional speech therapy because it places patients in authentic communication situations. Vlogging, as stated by Aldaihani (2023), allows young people with speech and language disorders to engage in authentic and self-directed communication, which may be more interesting and meaningful than routine tasks.

Zhang et al. (2021) found that exposure to dynamic, real-world communication situations was significantly associated with fostering long-term skill development. Vlogging requires verbal communication, active listening, and the flexibility to adapt one's communication style to a variety of situations, as stated by DeAndrea et al. (2016). Participating in content creation activities led to improvements in participants' articulation and pragmatic language skills, as well as an increase in their vocabulary (Golos & Moses, 2021). According to research by Bishop et al. (2016), effective communication skill development requires a holistic approach to training and practice.

Individuals' increased sense of self-assurance because of vlogging activities may contribute for the observed improvement in communication skills. Video content creation and sharing has been shown by Lin et al. (2016) to have a positive effect on self-esteem. Adolescents with speech and language deficits and a propensity for heightened communication anxiety may experience a dramatic shift in their self-confidence, as shown by the research of Hew and Cheung (2013).

Recent studies have highlighted the symbiotic link between confidence and the development of effective communication abilities. Tidwell & Walther (2002) research shows that one's level of confidence significantly affects one's ability to speak and communicate effectively. After posting their vlogs and receiving positive feedback from online communities, the participants in our study likely felt a sense of achievement and validation, which likely boosted their self-confidence in communicative contexts (Burgess & Green, 2018).

Having strong communication skills is important for many reasons, including success in school, getting along with others, and enjoying a better quality of life overall (Beitchman et al., 1996). For adolescents with speech and language difficulties, the ability to communicate effectively with peers is a vital part of social development (Alamri et al., 2020).

Vlogging as an intervention has been shown to improve communicative skills, which may lead to wider social participation. The importance of maintaining positive relationships with one's peers during the teen years has been highlighted in recent research by Holm et al. (2020). According to the findings, effective communication is vital to the development and maintenance of these bonds. Tidwell & Walther (2002) argue that since it provides a platform for honest communication, vlogging may help young people develop deeper connections with their peers.

6. Relevance of Vlogging as an Intervention

Vlogging's value as an intervention stem from the fact that it can be customized to meet the needs of teenagers with speech and language problems. Instead of passively receiving treatment, as may be the case with traditional therapeutic activities, vloggers actively participate in the creation of content that is both personally relevant and compelling (Golos & Moses, 2021).

Specifically, recent research by Zhang et al. (2021) highlights the importance of participation and motivation in skill development. Vlogging is a powerful therapeutic tool because it taps into people's natural need to share their thoughts, feelings, and stories (Lin et al., 2016). Participants' intrinsic desire is capitalized on in vlogging therapy by allowing them to choose

their own topics and speak from the heart. This method encourages long-term participation and a firm commitment to enhancing oral and written communication abilities (Burgess & Green, 2018).

Vlogging's authentic and useful communication experiences are another important feature of the medium. Developing fluency in grammar and pronunciation is just the beginning of what is required to become a good communicator. Included in this category are the abilities of social communication, adaptability, and pragmatic language use (Williams & Schreier, 2017). Vlogging gives people a place to practice real-life communication skills in a setting that seems familiar and comfortable.

Recent research by DeAndrea et al. (2016) highlights the importance of authenticity in online interactions, especially in vlogging communities. Participants in vlogging seminars learn to converse with their online viewers in an organic and natural way, adapting their vocabulary and demeanor to the specifics of each interaction and the feedback they get. Because of the wide variety of conversational partners and environmental factors, this phenomenon is reflective of the fluidity present in interpersonal communication.

Vlogging's value as an intervention stem, in part, from the space it provides for individual expression and innovation. Recent studies have shown the need of including artistic elements into therapy treatments for people with speech and language difficulties (Paul, 2007). Exploring and experimenting with many forms of expression, including verbal and nonverbal forms, is made possible via vlogging.

The research done by Burgess and Green (2018) emphasizes the potential of vlogging as a medium for creative expression. Participants in the study not only improved their communication skills, but also had more opportunities to express themselves. Adding a creative component to a vlog may boost confidence and foster a sense of accomplishment, making it more likely that individuals will take part in the intervention.

Vlogging therapies are advantageous since they can be adapted to meet the specific needs of each individual. Recent research by Golos and Moses (2021) highlights the need of adapting treatment procedures to fit the unique challenges and talents of people with speech and language impairments. Therapeutic vlogging has the possibility to be individualized to address specific language or linguistic deficits or pragmatic communication difficulties.

Speech therapists may tailor therapy sessions to focus on a wide range of communicative difficulties. With this method, participants' strengths are built upon while their weaknesses are addressed in a gradual manner. This individualized approach is in line with the rapidly developing area of speech therapy, which recognizes the necessity for specialized treatments (Paul, 2007).

7. Conclusion

Participation in an eight-week vlogging program significantly enhances participants' communication skills. The results of this research suggest that vlogging is a practical and efficient means of addressing the unique communication challenges experienced by teens. A significant mean difference of 10.5 points was found between pre- and post-intervention scores, demonstrating the efficacy of this method.

Vlogging as an intervention is valuable because it encourages participation through the production of original content, opens up avenues for genuine face-to-face interaction, gives people a voice, and makes individualized care more doable. Adolescents with communication disorders may benefit from the intervention program if it helps them learn to express themselves in a way that is both clear and sincere. In addition, it may help them develop a wider toolkit of strategies for handling a variety of communication contexts with ease. As a result, this phenomenon helps people feel more comfortable expressing themselves and reduces anxiety about having meaningful conversations.

Educators who work with students who have speech or language impairments may find that vlogging may be an effective instructional technique for increasing student engagement and the acquisition of new skills. Because of the possibility for tailor-made, innovative, and successful interventions, speech and language therapists may include technologically based therapies into treatment plans. The field of speech therapy is always developing, and vlogging has recently acquired popularity as a novel technique that may improve the efficacy of existing treatments and, by extension, the quality of life for those with speech and language impairments.

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