



Youtube Videos as a Tool to Improve Indonesian EFL Students' Pronunciation Skills: A Special Case on the Dhar Mann Channel

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ABSTRACT

Most EFL students in Indonesia have struggled to improve their English skills. They have limited chances to speak or listen to native English speakers directly. They may have many opportunities to practice their English among their fellows in the English department, but they lack the opportunity to experience conversations with native speakers. This article recommends using videos from Youtube to increase EFL students' pronunciation skills by self-learning, especially by watching the Dhar Mann Youtube channel. The objective of this article is to prove that by watching Dhar Mann channel the EFL students will get some benefits related to pronunciation skills: (i) to be aware of correct stress on English words, (ii) to be aware of correct stress in English sentences, (iii) to be aware of correct intonation in English sentences, (iv) to be aware of correct pronunciation on linking in English sentences. Some recommendations will be added at the end part of the article.

Keywords: Benefits from youtube videos; pronunciation videos; pronunciation errors; pronunciation subskills; EFL students

First Receive:

08 November 2022

Revised:

01 December 2022

Accepted:

02 January 2023

Final Proof Received:

18 February 2023

Published:

1 March 2023

How to cite (in APA style):

Natasha, H. (2023). Youtube Videos as a Tool to Improve Indonesian EFL Students' Pronunciation Skills: A Special Case on the Dhar Mann Channel. *ELITE Journal*, 5(1), 59-68.

INTRODUCTION

For EFL learners from Indonesia, there are several challenging things in learning the language. However, speaking seems to be the hardest part. The learners must think about correct grammar, the appropriate vocabulary, and correctly pronouncing the words and sentences. Meanwhile, English pronunciation is not only about how you pronounce the words correctly but also about the correct stress in words, sentences, and the intonation in uttering the sentences. The bad news is that the way native speakers pronounce English is different from the way Indonesian EFL learners speak in Bahasa Indonesia.

Most Indonesian EFL learners find it difficult to speak English correctly. This difficulty is because they never get in touch with English in the first place. Most of them interact with others using the Indonesian language or their other first language (local). Their first language acquisition is from what they have listened to since they were babies. They listened to their parents or other people they lived with when these people were talking. These people spoke in Bahasa Indonesia or the local language. They never hear English

words in the whole of their life. Therefore, they do not have any experience or examples of how to pronounce English words and sentences correctly.

Some EFL learners from Indonesia learned English from English courses. Some others learned it from books by themselves. They can learn grammar and vocabulary well but can not understand how to pronounce English in a class or by themselves. In the past, not all English courses have native speakers of English work in their institutions. In addition, it was not easy to find a native speaker of English and then ask him to practice speaking English with these EFL learners. Consequently, there is no appropriate example for EFL learners to pronounce English correctly.

Fortunately, many people can learn English from the internet in this digital era. Many videos are posted on many platforms, one on YouTube. Millions of videos from many YouTube channels discuss how to speak English well. This number-one video platform also offers many kinds of videos from English-speaking countries, such as podcasts, tell stories, short drama stories, gamers, and many more. By watching these videos, hopefully, EFL learners from Indonesia can improve their English in every skill.

Several researchers have asserted in their research about using youtube videos to improve the English skills of EFL learners. Puspa Ayu (2016) and Huang, Yenling, Peiwen (2020) mentioned that watching youtube videos supported EFL learners in learning listening skills.

Then, Almurashi (2016) suggested that youtube videos have a significant role in helping students understand their English materials, enhance their performance, and increase their understanding of English. At the same time, Alkathiri (2019) stated that using youtube in the EFL classroom could motivate students to participate in English lessons. Finally, a pile of research discussed that the use of youtube videos have a significant impact on EFL learners' speaking skill, especially on their pronunciation (Jalaludin, 2016; Rahmawati & Cahyani, 2020; Gunada, 2000; Riswandi (2016); A.Saed, S.Haider, Al-Salman, F.Hussein (2021). Thus, it has been proven that YouTube videos could significantly support EFL learners learning English.

In this article, the writer intends to propose one channel from YouTube that she thinks could be a tool for EFL learners to learn English, especially to improve their pronunciation skills. The name of the channel is Dhar Mann. This channel was founded by an American entrepreneur and film producer named Dhar Mann. He is famous for his video production company, Dhar Mann Studios, which creates short films for a social media platform, YouTube. The videos target a young audience and typically feature a turn of events that teaches the protagonist a moral lesson (Wikipedia). This youtube channel has over ten million subscribers. Dhar Mann Channel posts videos about life lessons and the videos are posted about four videos every week. The duration of each video ranges from around 20 to 30 minutes.

Because the videos are usually about lessons in our daily life, the form of the content is obviously in everyday conversation. This fact can support EFL learners in getting in touch with conversational English directly. The actors and actresses are primarily American and, for sure, use American accents in the conversation. Various topics are provided in the Dhar Mann videos, which means it is really interesting to watch.

DISCUSSION

A. Advantages of using the Dhar Mann YouTube Channel to Improve Pronunciation Skill

There are many advantages that EFL learners can get by watching Dhar Mann's Youtube channel routinely related to pronunciation skills.

1. To be aware of correct stress in English words

Stress in English words is various. It could be at the first syllable, the second syllable, the third, or the last syllable. The position of stress in English words may make EFL learners confused. However, if they watch and listen to Dhar Mann's youtube channel regularly, they can differentiate the stress on kinds of word classes such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. Watkins and Wilkins (2011) mentioned in their article that using videos from YouTube may improve EFL learners' pronunciation skills. They named the activity to be a Movie trailer voiceover. EFL learners imitate the character's pronunciation on videos and can practice the stress on English words. Stress on two-syllable words may be put on the first or the second syllable.

Stress is at the first syllable of a noun and the last syllable of a verb. EFL learners can listen to the first video on the word *Reason*, REA-son. On the word *excuse*, the speaker puts stress on the second syllable; ex.CUSE.



The stress will be at the first syllable when the Noun + Noun is put together to become a compound word, for example, *HEARTbreaking*.



The stress will be at the first syllable in adjective words, for example, *PREE.ty* and *AWE.some*.



The stress will be at the second syllable from the last syllable in the word containing ending *-ic*, *sion*, *-tion*, and *-ion*, for example, *in.vi.TA.tion*, *pro MO.tion*, *cong.ra.tu.LA.tion*, *sho.pa.HOL.ic*.



The stress will be at the third syllable (ante-penultimate) from the last syllable in the word containing ending *-al*, for example, *TY.pic.al*



2. To be aware of correct stress in English sentences.

English is a language with music or "*beat*." That is why it needs stress in its sentences. These stresses help listeners understand spoken English even when the speakers talk fast. Stress in English sentences is accented on particular words (Küçüköğlu, 2012). It was also mentioned that stressed words are the fundamental element of intonation in English. When the speakers utter sentences, the words stressed are commonly the *content words* such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, and question words as they have the meaning.

In contrast, unstressed words are *function words*, usually small and simple words in sentences, such as pronouns, articles, conjunction, prepositions, and auxiliary verbs. Here are the main rules of sentence stress; 1. Content words are stressed 2. Structure words are unstressed 3. The time between stressed words is always the same.

Unfortunately, English intonation is different from the Indonesian language. As EFL learners, they struggle enough to imitate the native speaker's pronunciation when they speak. Therefore, real examples are needed to make them improve their pronunciation skills. When you watch and listen to Dhar Mann's youtube channel, EFL learners can directly identify the word stressed in sentences. They can do that easily because most of the contents are in daily conversation, where two or more people talk together. The characters are all doing great expression and acting so that the words stressed in sentences can be seen and learned by EFL learners.



JAY! WHAT in the WORLD are you DOING?



SORRY, I was HUNGRY, and I WANTED it.



YO! What's all the YELLING about?



Have you ever TRIED the whole REVERSE PSYCHOLOGY THING on him?



LOOKS LIKE at least I RAISE ONE GOOD KID.

3. To Be Aware of Correct Intonation in English Sentences.

Spencer in Kucukoglu (2012) mentioned that rhythm, stress, and intonation are usually named prosody. Bauman-Waengler, in the same article, stated that intonation refers to a particular language or utterance rhythm. At the same time, Kelly (2000) asserted that intonation is how the voice goes up and down in pitch when we are speaking. Further, she said that through intonation, speakers could tell you their expression of what they intend to say exactly. At the same time, you can understand what others think of something.

a. Rules of Intonation in English Sentences

1. Falling Intonation:

a. Information Questions with *who*, *what*, *where*, etc.

When you are being asked for the first time.

What's your name? What's the time? Where do you live?

b. Statements

He lives in the house

c. Imperatives

Sit down, put it on the table

d. Question tags

Expecting confirmation

You are French, aren't you?

He's very tall, isn't he?

2. Rising intonation :

a. Questions expecting a 'yes/no' answer.

Is it the blue one? Have you got a pen?

b. Question tags

Showing less certainty

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You're French, aren't you?
Your train leaves at six, doesn't it?

3. Rising, Rising and finally Falling

Lists of items

You need a pen, a pencil, and one piece of paper.
The stall sells ribbons, beads, elastics and buttons.

English intonation is different from Indonesian intonation. Meanwhile, some EFL learners in Indonesia speak in English by using Indonesian intonation. Therefore, EFL learners from Indonesia need to listen to native speakers of English to recognize the intonation of English.

In Dhar Mann videos, EFL learners from Indonesia could find and listen to many examples of correct intonation in English sentences. In these videos, the conversation mostly took place in an American accent. The EFL learners can learn it directly by watching the videos.

Examples from videos:

a. Falling Intonation:

1) Information Questions with *who, what, where*, etc.

a. When you being asked for the first time.



What are you watching?



b. Statements

Dhar Mann and Jay Shetty just came out with a new podcast.



You can shop at the thrift store.



c. Imperative



Drink your just. ↘

- d. Question tags
Expecting confirmation



Priya always listens to her mom, don't you, Priya? ↘

- 2) Rising intonation :
a. Questions expecting a 'yes/no' answer.



Can I just have the password? ↗



Do you ever stop talking? ↗



Are you OK? ↗



Is it cool if I come in? ↗

- b. Question tags

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- Showing less certainty
4. Rising, Rising and finally Falling
Lists of items



You should enjoy your life, travel, experience new things, now's the time to do that.

4. To be aware of the correct pronunciation of connected speech in English sentences.

Stress in words and sentences is part of connected speech. Another aspect of connected speech happens when one phoneme meets another phoneme in speaking (Kelly, 2001). The first one is assimilation where it happens for sounds modify each other when they meet. such as /t/, /d/, and /n/ often become consonants /p/, /b/ and /m/. For examples in the words: *fat_boy* (/t/ to /p/), etc.



So, it's not that bad (/t/ to /p/)



You're gonna get caught (/t/ to /k/)

Elision is the disappearance of a sound, for example, in the sound *next_week*. The sound /t/ disappears at these words and directly to the sound /w/. **Linking /r/** is how the speaker links the sounds /r/ in a different way. Some are connected with /r/, and others are linked without /r/.

There is also an **intrusive /r/** when a particular phoneme meets another phoneme. **Linking /j/** happens when a word is finished by /i:/, or a diphthong ends with /I/ speakers introduce /j/ to ease the transition to the following vowel; I_agree /aIjəgri:/. **Linking /w/** takes place when a word ends with /u:/ or a diphthong finishes with /ʊ/; speakers introduce /w/ to ease the transition to the following vowel.

Go on! Go in! /gəʊwɒn/ /gəʊwɪn/

This is because to form /u:/ and /ʊ/; the mouth is in or less the same position as it is for a start of the semi-vowel /w/.

Advantages of Using the Dhar Mann YouTube channel

There are many advantages of using the Dhar Mann YouTube channel for EFL learners from Indonesia, and some of them are listed below:

- Dhar Mann's YouTube channel has posted many videos in its channel so EFL learners can choose any videos they like
- All characters in every video use an American accent that is easy for EFL learners to learn.

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- c. The characters in the videos present great acting and clear utterance so that EFL learners can learn all theories about English pronunciation well
- d. This Youtube channel presents various daily topics, so EFL learners can choose the best topic they are interested in.
- e. All topics from this channel are very interesting, so EFL learners will not be bored learning through the videos.
- f. All videos are completed with subtitles in a pretty big font of writing so EFL learners can identify what the characters are uttering.
- g. The characters also use several idioms in speaking, and EFL learners can learn from them.
- h. From this channel, Youtube EFL learners will listen to English pronunciation examples and how Americans speak in daily conversation.
- i. This channel could be beneficial as an online resource for teaching and learning.
- j. The life lesson presented in the videos could be a real lesson for EFL learners.

Disadvantages of Using the Dhar Mann YouTube Channel

- a. In the beginning, EFL learners may find it challenging to catch certain utterances when the characters are making a conversation.
- b. For very beginner levels, This might be difficult for them to practice or imitate the English pronunciation from the videos.
- c. Some videos might have a kind of shock culture for Indonesian EFL learners.

CONCLUSION

Learning about speaking skills is not only about how to speak with good grammar and appropriate vocabulary but also how to utter sentences correctly. To have correct English pronunciation, EFL learners need to have experience in directly listening to native speakers of English. They do not have to see the native speakers face to face, for in this digital era, EFL learners can find thousands of native speakers speaking on the internet. One of the best platforms to find native speakers is Youtube.

In this article, I introduce one channel that could be one of the sources EFL learners can use to improve their English pronunciation. The name of the channel is Dhar Mann. This channel presents daily life drama, which is full of life lessons. Most characters use an American accent in their conversation, which is considered easy for EFL learners to learn. EFL learners from Indonesia can find all things related to pronunciation theory, such as stress in words, sentences, intonation, and speech connected. The writer believes that EFL learners can use this channel to experience listening to native speakers of English and practice it directly.

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