

Embedding Global Citizenship Elements while Using YouTube to Enhance Malaysian University Students' Listening Skills

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.100801041>

Received: 07 September 2026; Accepted: 12 September 2026; Published: 23 September 2026

ABSTRACT

Embedding Global Citizenship Education (GCED) into language learning offers opportunities to enhance students' English proficiency while developing their awareness of global issues. This study investigated Malaysian university students' perceptions of using GCED-related YouTube videos to improve their English listening skills and global awareness. A quantitative research design was employed using a 15-item structured online questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale. The participants comprised 174 undergraduate students enrolled in the compulsory English for Communicative Competence II course at Universiti Teknologi MARA, Negeri Sembilan Branch, Kuala Pilah Campus. The sample included 143 female and 31 male students aged between 18 and 23 years. Before completing the questionnaire, the students were introduced to GCED through classroom instruction and discussion. They subsequently viewed two GCED-related YouTube videos selected by the researchers according to the study objectives. The collected data were analysed using SPSS Version 22 through descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and linear regression analyses. The findings revealed that students had moderately positive perceptions of the role of GCED-related YouTube videos in improving their English listening skills ($M = 3.15$, $Md = 2.89$) and global awareness ($M = 3.02$, $Md = 2.67$). A moderately strong positive relationship was identified between students' perceptions and global awareness ($r = .644$, $p < .001$). Furthermore, students' perceptions significantly predicted their global awareness, accounting for approximately 41.2% of the variance (adjusted $R^2 = .412$). These findings demonstrate the potential of GCED-related YouTube content to support English listening development while fostering students' understanding of important global issues. Educators are therefore encouraged to incorporate relevant and high-quality GCED-related digital content into English language lessons to promote meaningful language learning, critical thinking, empathy, and global responsibility. Future research may examine the long-term effects of this approach and explore the use of other digital platforms in promoting GCED within Malaysian higher education.

Keywords: global citizenship education, listening skill, ESL, university students, YouTube

INTRODUCTION

Universities are increasingly expected to prepare graduates who can communicate across differences, interpret complex global developments and act responsibly in interconnected communities. Global Citizenship Education (GCED) responds to this expectation by cultivating knowledge of global issues, socio-emotional dispositions such as empathy and respect, and behavioural capacities for responsible participation [13]. Malaysia has taken up this agenda in its own tertiary English classrooms, where instructors are increasingly encouraged to widen

students' engagement with global perspectives, both to meet national policy expectations and to prepare graduates for an interconnected job market [16].

Listening instruction is a productive site for this integration. Rather than treating listening as the decoding of isolated recordings, educators can use globally relevant materials to make comprehension activities purposeful. YouTube is especially useful because it provides a large and familiar archive of speeches, explainers, interviews and short documentaries. Its audiovisual affordances can support comprehension through visual context, while captions, replay functions and variable pacing may help students manage difficult input. Beyond sheer volume, the platform's audiovisual format supports comprehension by supplying visual context alongside spoken language, while features such as captions, replay and adjustable playback speed give learners some control over difficult input [6]. Studies on YouTube-based listening instruction report similar gains, alongside improvements in learner confidence and motivation to engage with English outside the classroom [15]. At the same time, its abundance demands careful teacher curation as a video is pedagogically valuable only when its language level, factual quality and framing suit the learning purpose.

Environmental issues are an appropriate entry point for GCED in Malaysian higher education because climate change, public health, migration, poverty and conflict are interconnected concerns that students will encounter in their future professional and civic lives. These themes can also prompt students to listen for main ideas, supporting details, stance and evidence while considering who is represented, whose perspectives are missing, and how proposed solutions affect different communities.

Even so, there is still relatively little empirical work from Malaysian university English classrooms examining how students actually experience GCED-oriented YouTube listening activities, or how those experiences relate to their awareness of global issues. This gap is what motivates the present study. It looks at how curated, GCED-related YouTube videos were embedded into an undergraduate English proficiency course, and examines students' perceptions of these videos' contribution to their listening development, their awareness of selected global environmental issues, and how the two are related.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Global Citizenship Education in language learning

GCED is commonly understood as education that helps learners understand the interdependence of local and global realities, appreciate human dignity and diversity, and participate in addressing shared challenges. UNESCO (2015) [13] frames GCED across cognitive, socio-emotional and behavioural learning domains. In language education, these domains can be developed through texts that require learners to interpret viewpoints, examine claims, communicate respectfully and reflect on their own responsibilities. Such work expands the purpose of English learning beyond linguistic accuracy without displacing core language outcomes. Ismail et al. (2024) [5] further explained that GCED is a notion introduced by UNESCO, which highlights on the strategy to remove obstacles to world peace and sustainability, by integrating the goals of nurturing students values, attitudes, and behaviours that support responsible global citizenship, such as creativity, innovation, and a commitment to peace, human rights, and sustainable development.

For English as a second language (ESL) learners, globally oriented content can offer both authentic language exposure and an intellectually engaging reason to listen. Environmental and social issues are often explained through accessible narratives, interviews and public-information genres. When teaching tasks are designed around those materials, learners practise comprehension strategies while discussing issues that matter beyond the classroom. The approach is consistent with calls for education that connects disciplinary learning to sustainable development and global responsibility. In examining the integration of GCED in English education, Lenihan and O'Flaherty (2026) [8], conducted a study to examine how educator created and carried out a learning unit centered on GCE and social justice themes using literary and non-literary texts within the framework of English pedagogy. The findings of the study presented that GCE centered learning unit offers rich learning opportunities for numerous crucial and adaptable soft skills that enhance English as a discipline, and through GCE integration, students' critical thinking skills can be enhanced as it was found in the study that the students

were able to explain how their lessons were related to GCE, emphasizing on issues of justice, equality, poverty, and peace. Based on these profound findings, it can be perceived that GCED integration in English education is a learning strategy that moves beyond practicing generic textbook dialogues and traditional classroom context. It is impactful to integrate GCED into English education, as GCED lens teaches students not just how to learn the mechanics of English, but it promotes students' ability to engage more deeply when using English to discuss real global issue.

YouTube as a listening-learning resource

Digital video can support listening because it combines spoken language with contextual cues, visual evidence and paralinguistic information. YouTube also allows students to replay selected sequences, pause at difficult points and engage with a variety of Englishes. Prior research has reported that online video can increase motivation and provide authentic exposure, particularly when teachers structure viewing with clear tasks rather than relying on passive watching. The notion of the use of YouTube can enhance ESL learners' listening skills is supported by Ate et al. (2025) [3], where they explored how students used YouTube's features to improve their listening abilities, the observed advantages, and encountered difficulties, and the findings found emphasized that the students actively used YouTube's playback controls, subtitles, content diversity, which enhanced their abilities to recognize advance accents, understanding of natural speech, and increase vocabulary. This shows that English learning can be facilitated with the use of existing and evolving multimodal channels, as it promotes learners' engagement, as well as facilitates educators to provide a more creative and interactive learning nature to students.

However, accessibility is not equivalent to learning. Learners may focus on visuals rather than spoken content, select entertainment materials that do not stretch their comprehension, or encounter inaccurate and polarised accounts of global issues. Teachers therefore need to identify reputable sources, define language objectives, teach critical viewing and include opportunities for learners to verify information. GCED-oriented YouTube work should help students ask not only "What did I hear?" but also "Whose perspective is presented?" and "What evidence supports this claim?"

Perceptions, awareness and the present study

Students' perceptions matter because they influence attention, motivation and willingness to persist with unfamiliar tasks. A learner who regards a video activity as relevant and manageable is more likely to use listening strategies actively. Ramadhani and Samsi (2023) [12], conducted a study to explore students' readiness to employ YouTube to facilitate them in learning English listening skills, and it was demonstrated that the students responded favorably to the method of leaning English listening skills through YouTube. The students concurred that using YouTube videos improved their listening comprehension, increased their motivation and interest in honing both their listening and speaking abilities. Hence, it can be inferred that, digital tools like YouTube may offer an alternative for students to escape the boredom of learning activities due to monotonous learning activities in the classroom and provide a more fun nature of learning English with the help of audio-visual media, however, students' readiness in accepting the use of the multimodal channels is essential to ensure that the efficacy of this learning method can be achieved.

In turn, repeated attention to global issues may be associated with greater awareness of those issues. Yet a positive association does not establish that videos alone cause awareness, as prior knowledge, personal interest, media habits and classroom discussion may all contribute. This study therefore examines association and prediction within a single survey dataset, while interpreting the findings cautiously.

Research Objectives and Questions

The study was guided by three objectives: (1) to determine learners' perceptions of the role of GCED-related YouTube videos in improving English listening skills; (2) to determine learners' awareness of global environmental issues; and (3) to examine the relationship and predictive association between perceptions of GCED-related YouTube videos and awareness of global environmental issues.

Accordingly, the following research questions were addressed:

- (1) What are learners' perceptions of the role of GCED-related YouTube videos in improving English listening skills?
- (2) What is the level of learners' awareness of global environmental issues?
- (3) Is there a significant relationship between learners' perceptions of GCED-related YouTube videos and their awareness of global environmental issues?
- (4) Do learners' perceptions significantly predict their awareness of global environmental issues?

METHODOLOGY

Research design and participants

This study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design. Participants were 174 undergraduate students from the Faculty of Applied Sciences enrolled in the compulsory English for Communicative Competence II course at Universiti Teknologi MARA, Negeri Sembilan Branch, Kuala Pilah Campus. Participants were recruited purposively from the relevant course cohort. The sample comprised 143 female students (82.2%) and 31 male students (17.8%), aged 18 to 23 years. The study was conducted within regular course activities and focused on students' post-activity perceptions and awareness.

Learning procedure

Before completing the questionnaire, students were introduced to GCED through a classroom session and guided discussion. In the subsequent session, the researchers provided two curated YouTube videos aligned with the learning objectives and selected global-issue themes. Students watched the videos as part of a listening activity and responded to associated questions. This sequence positioned the videos within a teacher-guided lesson rather than as stand-alone media consumption.

Instrument and data analysis

Data were collected through a 15-item structured questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree). The first nine items measuring learners' perceptions of YouTube for listening were adapted from Fadhillah, Muniroh, and Rahmaningtyas [4]. The remaining six items measuring familiarity with global issues were adapted from the OECD global competence materials [11]. Both instruments were contextualised to GCED-related YouTube listening activities. The issue items covered climate change, global health, migration, international conflict, hunger and poverty.

The data were analysed using SPSS version 22. Descriptive statistics (mean, median and standard deviation) were used to summarise both constructs. Mean scores were interpreted using the guideline proposed by Norasmah and Salmah [10]: 1.00-2.00 = low, 2.01-3.00 = moderately low, 3.01-4.00 = moderately high and 4.01-5.00 = high. Pearson correlation examined the relationship between constructs; its strength was interpreted using Kowang et al. [7]. Simple linear regression assessed whether perceptions statistically predicted awareness.

RESULTS

Instrument validity and reliability

Preliminary analyses indicated that the dataset was suitable for factor analysis. The KMO value of .865 is within the meritorious range, indicating adequate common variance among items. Bartlett's test was statistically significant, $\chi^2(105) = 1438.110$, $p < .001$, rejecting the assumption that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix. The instrument also demonstrated excellent internal consistency, with Cronbach's $\alpha = .907$ for the 15 items. These results support the use of the composite measures in subsequent analyses.

Table 1. Instrument suitability and reliability statistics.

Test	Result	Interpretation
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin	0.865	Meritorious sampling adequacy
Bartlett's test of sphericity	$\chi^2(105) = 1438.110, p < .001$	Correlation matrix suitable for factor analysis
Cronbach's alpha	0.907 (15 items)	Excellent internal consistency

Perceptions of YouTube-supported listening

The overall perception score was $M = 3.15$ (Median = 2.89, $SD = .97$), which falls within the moderately high range. This indicates a modestly positive overall perception of the role of GCED-related YouTube videos in English listening learning. Nevertheless, the median below the mean and the relatively large standard deviation indicate substantial variation among learners. The result should therefore be read as an average tendency rather than evidence of uniform agreement.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for the two study constructs.

Construct	Mean	Median	SD	Interpretation
Perception of GCED-related YouTube videos for listening	3.150	2.89	.970	Moderately high
Awareness of global environmental issues	3.020	2.667	.866	Moderately high

At item level, students most strongly agreed that YouTube helped them learn vocabulary ($M = 3.62$), followed by the view that watching YouTube improved their listening skill ($M = 3.43$) and motivated listening practice ($M = 3.32$). The lowest-rated item concerned differentiating English accents ($M = 2.67$), suggesting that short exposure to curated video may not be sufficient for this more demanding listening skill. Students also reported only moderately low agreement that YouTube assisted their listening-comprehension process ($M = 2.98$) and increased engagement in English learning ($M = 2.93$).

Table 3. Learners' perceptions of GCED-related YouTube videos for listening.

Item	M	SD	Level
YouTube assists my listening-comprehension process	2.98	1.29	Moderately low
I learn vocabulary by watching and listening to YouTube	3.62	1.42	Moderately high
I can identify the topic in English YouTube content	3.00	1.39	Moderately low
I can differentiate some English accents	2.67	1.15	Moderately low
Watching YouTube has improved my listening skill	3.43	1.48	Moderately high
I enjoy GCED-oriented YouTube listening practice	3.13	1.36	Moderately high
YouTube engages me in English language learning	2.93	1.33	Moderately low
I use YouTube as a fun way to practise listening	3.26	1.40	Moderately high
I am motivated to practise listening while watching videos	3.32	1.43	Moderately high

Awareness of global issues

Students' awareness score was $M = 3.02$ (Median = 2.67, $SD = .87$), also in the moderately high range. The proximity of the mean to the neutral point, together with the lower median, suggests a mixed pattern rather than strong confidence. Students reported moderately low familiarity with climate change and global warming ($M = 2.93$), global health issues ($M = 2.95$) and migration ($M = 2.93$). By contrast, they reported moderately high

familiarity with international conflicts ($M = 3.01$), hunger or malnutrition ($M = 3.04$) and causes of poverty ($M = 3.28$).

Table 4. Learners' awareness of global issues.

Global issue awareness item	M	SD	Level
Climate change and global warming	2.93	1.13	Moderately low
Global health, such as epidemics	2.95	1.15	Moderately low
Migration and movement of people	2.93	1.07	Moderately low
International conflicts	3.01	1.10	Moderately high
Hunger or malnutrition	3.04	1.05	Moderately high
Causes of poverty	3.28	1.08	Moderately high

Relationship and predictive association

A Pearson correlation analysis revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between perceptions of GCED-related YouTube videos for listening and awareness of global environmental issues, $r = .644$, $p < .001$, $N = 174$. According to the interpretation guideline used in this study, this represents a strong positive relationship. Students who reported more positive perceptions of the videos also tended to report greater awareness of global issues.

Table 5. Pearson correlation between perceptions and awareness.

Variables	r	p	N	Interpretation
Perceptions of GCED-related YouTube videos and awareness of global issues	.644	< .001	174	Strong positive relationship

Simple linear regression further showed that perceptions significantly predicted awareness, $F(1, 172) = 122.009$, $p < .001$. The model accounted for 41.5% of the variance in awareness ($R^2 = .415$; adjusted $R^2 = .412$). The predictor was significant ($B = .575$, $SE = .052$, $\beta = .644$, $t = 11.046$, $p < .001$). The result indicates a sizeable statistical association in this sample. It does not, however, establish that the videos caused higher awareness because the study did not use an experimental control group or measure pre-intervention awareness.

Table 6. Summary of linear regression predicting awareness of global issues.

Model statistic	Value
R	.644
R ²	.415
Adjusted R ²	.412
F(1, 172)	122.009, $p < .001$
Perception predictor	$B = .575$, $SE = .052$, $\beta = .644$, $t = 11.046$, $p < .001$

DISCUSSION

The findings suggest that GCED-related YouTube videos can offer a useful bridge between English listening practice and global learning. Students' overall perception of the videos was moderately high, with relatively strong endorsement of vocabulary learning, listening improvement and motivation. This pattern is consistent with the view that video-based materials may make listening more accessible and engaging by combining spoken input with visual support and familiar digital practices [3, 4].

The item-level variation is equally important. Students were less confident about differentiating English accents and did not strongly agree that YouTube assisted their listening-comprehension process. These findings imply that exposure alone is insufficient. Accent recognition and strategic comprehension require explicit scaffolding: teachers can introduce key vocabulary, preview speaker background, set focused listening questions, replay selected extracts and ask students to compare what they heard with captions only after attempting the task independently. Such design makes YouTube a structured resource rather than a substitute for teaching.

Students' awareness of global issues was modest rather than unequivocally high. The relatively lower awareness of climate change, global health and migration highlights a need for deeper conceptual work. It is possible that students recognise these topics but do not yet feel able to explain their causes, consequences and competing viewpoints. GCED lessons should therefore move beyond awareness-raising toward evidence-based inquiry. For example, after viewing a short climate explainer, students might identify the claim, supporting evidence, affected stakeholders and possible local implications. This preserves the language focus while inviting reflective and responsible engagement.

The strong positive correlation and significant regression model indicate that positive perceptions of GCED-related YouTube learning were associated with greater global-issue awareness. The model explained 41.2% of the adjusted variance in awareness, a meaningful proportion in an educational setting. However, the result must not be overextended. Perceptions may be shaped by students who already possess greater interest in global issues or confidence in English, while prior media exposure and classroom discussion may also influence awareness. The design therefore supports a predictive statistical relationship, not causal proof of an intervention effect.

For Malaysian university English courses, the practical implication is that GCED integration should be deliberate and sequenced. Instructors can select short, credible videos; align them with a specific listening outcome; provide pre-, while- and post-listening tasks; and include a critical literacy component. A post-listening task could ask students to summarise a speaker's viewpoint, identify language that signals uncertainty or persuasion, and compare the video's framing with a second source. This approach serves language-development goals while fostering the critical, empathetic and responsible dispositions central to GCED.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study examined undergraduate learners' perceptions of GCED-related YouTube videos in English listening activities and their awareness of global environmental issues. Both constructs were at a moderately high level, although the detailed items revealed substantial variation. Positive perceptions of the videos were strongly and significantly associated with awareness, and regression analysis showed that perceptions accounted for 41.2% of the adjusted variance in awareness. The findings support the use of carefully selected YouTube materials as one component of an integrated approach to language learning and GCED.

Three recommendations follow. First, teachers should curate credible, level-appropriate videos and make the listening goal explicit. Second, video tasks should include critical viewing and follow-up discussion so that students evaluate information rather than simply consume it. Third, future research should use pre- and post-tests, comparison groups and qualitative interviews to determine how different kinds of GCED video tasks influence listening proficiency, awareness and classroom engagement over time. Research could also examine whether particular themes, video genres or levels of teacher scaffolding are especially effective for Malaysian ESL learners.

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