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EFL Libyan Teachers and Students' Perception toward the Use of YouTube Videos in Enhancing EFL Speaking Skills.

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate how Libyan EFL teachers and learners perceive the use of YouTube videos to improve the teaching and learning of English-speaking skills. The research employed a mixed-method approach. To gather data, the researcher conducted structured interviews with four Libyan EFL teachers who have been teaching English at the Faculty of Languages at the University of Benghazi for more than 10 years. Also, an online questionnaire was conducted. Thirty EFL students of the first semester at the Department of English at the University of Benghazi responded to the questionnaire. Data obtained from interviews were analyzed using content analysis, while data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed descriptively using SPSS Statistics. The findings indicated that, despite facing some challenges, participants generally had a positive view towards using YouTube videos to enhance EFL speaking abilities and recognized the benefits of incorporating YouTube videos into their EFL speaking lessons..

KEYWORDS: YouTube Videos, EFL learners, EFL teachers, speaking skills.

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1.LITERATURE REVIEW

Speaking English is not an easy task for EFL learners. It is a complex process that involves both comprehending and producing English. While speaking, learners must consider various aspects, such as language chunks, simplified forms, performance issues, informal language, speaking speed, stress, rhythm, and intonation [1]. The difficulty of enhancing EFL learners' speaking abilities was highlighted by numerous researchers [2],[3]. According to Pinter [3], speaking is a complex process that requires the integration of two interrelated processes: speaking and thinking. This means that in our daily activities, we examine our speech to correct errors while also organizing our thoughts for clear and effective communication. Brown [2] pointed out that speaking English is a unique and difficult skill for many EFL students. The use of language chunks, contractions and basic words, along with the natural speed of native speakers, presents the most difficult speaking aspects among most EFL students. Nevertheless, it is a fundamental skill for language learning [4], and it is an indication of how languages are learned and practiced [5].

Because of its integrated, interrelated complex nature, speaking is perceived by many EFL teachers as one of the most challenging language skills [6]. For example, most Libyan EFL teachers find teaching speaking skills challenging because most of them graduate from university with a low level of communication skills in English [7],[8]. Therefore, most of them resort to using their L1 (Arabic) in EFL classes [6], and most of them employ outdated teaching methods [9],[10]. Also, their knowledge of the most effective practice of speaking activities in classrooms is rather weak [11]. Most of those teachers complain that the large number of students in each classroom makes it difficult for them to assess each student's speaking performance, which leads to decreased motivation, increased stress levels, and reduced opportunities to improve teaching quality [12].

Speaking English is also challenging for many Libyan EFL students. Many researchers noted that the reliance of Libyan EFL teachers on traditional teacher-centered methods rather than learner-centered methods. As a result, students become passive receivers of English with a complete reliance on their teachers [13],[14]., which negatively impacts their speaking abilities [15]. Additionally, large class size (more than 30 students per class) limits chances for students to engage in conversation or exchange speech in oral interaction [12]. As a result, Libyan EFL students often demonstrate poor command of spoken English because of a lack of immediate feedback and insufficient chances for participation in speaking lessons [16]. A study at the Faculty of Languages at the University of Zawia by Owhda [17] identified many factors that hindered Libyan students' speaking skills. These included limited vocabulary, poor accuracy of grammar, and significant psychological issues such as shyness, nervousness, and anxiety. Owhda [17] also noted that a lack of exposure to authentic English materials and great reliance on learners' first language (Arabic) had worsened this problem. Similarly, Diaab [11] stated that Libyan students at Sebha University faced difficulties in English communication skills because of linguistic and psychological barriers, as well as insufficient exposure to authentic English and frequent use of Arabic in the EFL classroom.

Due to these speaking difficulties faced by Libyan EFL teachers and learners, many researchers have constantly emphasized the importance of using authentic materials to facilitate the teaching and learning of EFL speaking skills. One effective way to present these authentic materials is through the use of YouTube videos, which offer real-life examples of spoken language, and allow students to watch and hear how native speakers use vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation in everyday situations [18],[19]. Moreover, the visual component of these videos further enhances understanding of spoken language by enabling students to relate what they

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hear to what they see [20]. Additionally, these videos are easily accessible [18], in a way that students can explore and search for a wide range of content at their convenience [21]. Furthermore, YouTube videos create a relaxed atmosphere that helps students feel more comfortable and confident to participate in speaking activities [22],[23]. Above all, they promote independent learning since students can watch these videos and learn English on their own outside the classroom [19],[23].

Many studies showed that using YouTube videos in EFL classrooms facilitated EFL teaching, enhanced the learning of speaking skills, and increased students' engagement and participation in speaking activities [22],[21],[24]. Most notably, Lu et al. [25] examined how these videos affected Taiwanese EFL learners and discovered that they felt more comfortable, produced longer speaking responses, and their worry about speaking in English decreased when watching these videos. Muslem et al. [26] highlighted that YouTube videos could improve students' overall speaking proficiency, including vocabulary, grammar, and listening skills. Similarly, Riswandi [27] found that integrating YouTube videos with a task-based learning method significantly enhanced students' fluency and made speaking activities both enjoyable and beneficial for learners. Jensen et al. [28] also indicated that presenting YouTube videos in language lessons offered numerous opportunities to learn in a dynamic and interactive EFL classroom environment.

Because of the low level of speaking skills among Libyan EFL teachers and learners [7],[14], and the persistent demands for technology integration to enhance English speaking skills in Libya [11], [15], [17], this study sought to understand the attitudes of Libyan EFL teachers and learners towards the use of YouTube videos in EFL speaking classes. This study aimed to find out what perceptions Libyan EFL teachers and learners at the Faculty of Languages at the University of Benghazi had toward using YouTube videos in EFL speaking classes.

2.MATERIALS AND METHODS

A mixed-method research design MMR was used to adequately meet the objectives of this research. MMR combines both quantitative (e.g., a questionnaire) and qualitative (e.g., interviews) methods for data collection [29]. This method was chosen because it permits the combination of the strengths of the two methods (quantitative and qualitative) without incurring their individual drawbacks. According to Creswell and Creswell [29], a mixed-method research design enhances the validity and trustworthiness of any research. It also ensures the generalizability of any results as well as in-depth findings [29].

Participants in this study were EFL teachers and learners from the Faculty of Languages at the University of Benghazi. This decision was made because the Faculty of Languages administration aims to provide teachers with effective methods and techniques so that their students can improve their English-speaking skills. Consequently, research is highly required to inform the dean about the attitude of Libyan EFL teachers and learners towards the use of YouTube videos to enhance the teaching and learning of EFL speaking courses at the university.

In-depth structured interviews were conducted with Libyan EFL teachers since this research method enables participants to give detailed insights and perspectives on the topic [30]. Interviews are a primary method for collecting data in many research studies [31]. Questions of these interviews were designed to be close-ended, requiring more than simple yes or no responses [31]. The goal of the interviews was to reveal the views of Libyan EFL teachers regarding the use of YouTube videos in EFL speaking classes. Each of the interviewees has been teaching English as a foreign language for more than 10 years in Libya. One of them holds a PhD degree in TEFL, while the other three are at the stage of writing their PhD dissertations in the English language. Each participant was interviewed individually in an online interview that lasted

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for nearly half an hour. After taking the permission of participants, interviews were recorded and then transcribed. Data gathered from interviews were analyzed using content analysis to reveal more in-depth insights. Furthermore, an online questionnaire was conducted with 30 Libyan EFL students (10 males and 20 females) from the Department of English at the Faculty of Languages in Benghazi. Students responded to a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree), and their answers were analyzed using SPSS. Cronbach's Alpha was calculated using SPSS to ensure the reliability and validity of the questionnaire (see Table 1). The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for the 10 items was .723, indicating an acceptable reliability level for this sample because it is above the .70 threshold.

Table 1: Questionnaire's Cronbach's Alpha

Cronbach's Alpha	N. of Items
723	10

3.RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Table 2 below presents the results of the questionnaire. It is important to note that a score of 2.14 on average is regarded as in agreement with the facts and statements presented.

Table 2: Students' Perceptions of Using YouTube videos in EFL Speaking Classes

No.	Item	N	Mean	SD
1	Watching YouTube videos helped me improve my speaking skills.	30	2.43	.971
2	Watching videos helped me increase my vocabulary repertoire.	30	2.33	.802
3	Watching YouTube videos helped me to strengthen my understanding of effective speaking skills.	30	2.37	1.30
4	Watching YouTube videos makes my motivation and inspiration to speak higher.	30	2.23	1.14
5	When watching YouTube videos, I can pronounce words more properly when speaking.	30	2.47	1.41
6	Watching YouTube videos helped me correctly and accurately use grammar in speaking.	30	2.67	1.16
7	Watching YouTube videos helped with my choice of vocabulary in speaking.	30	2.87	1.20
8	My fluency in speaking has increased because of watching YouTube videos.	30	2.63	1.27
9	YouTube videos have increased my confidence to speak English.	30	2.60	1.16
10	Watching YouTube videos helped me to be active and participate in speaking.	30	2.57	1.07

Across items, the means ranged from 2.23 to 2.87, which suggested that, on average, students generally agreed that YouTube videos contributed to the improvement of their speaking skills and language development (since means were closer to 1 than to 5). The SD values (from .802 to 1.41) showed moderate variation in how strongly students felt about each statement. It was clear from the results that students seemed to acknowledge the benefits of YouTube videos in improving their speaking skills.

4. RESULTS OF THE INTERVIEWS

Data obtained from the interview questions in this study were as follows:

1. What is the effect of using YouTube videos to enhance students' engagement and motivation in EFL Speaking classes?

Teacher 1 emphasized that these videos had great value in speaking classes in general, and these videos could keep students more attentive, motivated, and focused. Teacher 2 said that "YouTube videos are a source of engagement for learners, and provide important and crucial visual representation of the speaking curriculum and contribute to the dynamics and changes of speaking classes." Teacher 3 and Teacher 4 noted that YouTube videos could lower worry among students, while at the same time increasing engagement, motivation, and participation.

2. What is the best time for presenting YouTube videos in speaking lessons, at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of the lesson?

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Teacher 1 said that these videos should be played in the middle of class to help students understand the topic being discussed. In opposition, the second instructor proposed utilizing these videos as a way to introduce the lesson topic. She added that the time allotted for presenting these videos was dependent on the teaching process's dynamics. A video should be played back at the right time for an intended purpose, as stated by the fourth teacher, who suggested using these videos during introductions or practice sessions to ensure that the students get a clear picture of the lesson.

3. How does the use of YouTube videos in speaking classes affect your time?

The first teacher noted that playing videos in class serves as valuable input for students after the topic has been introduced, and it does not affect the time of the lesson. The second teacher commented that it depends on the videos' length and stressed that teachers choose videos that suit their teaching dynamics. The third and fourth teachers said that there is plenty of time in lectures to play these videos and that they do not affect their time; instead, these videos save time and directly present the intended idea of the topic.

4. How would you rate the usefulness of YouTube videos from 1 to 5 regarding speaking skill (strongly important, important, neutral, not important, strongly important?

The first teacher classified YouTube videos as strongly important. The second teacher rated them between "strongly important" and "important." The third and fourth teachers considered the videos to be important as far as there were good facilities to play them.

5. Do you have any comments or suggestions to add about using YouTube videos in EFL speaking classes?

Teacher 1 said that although she had never used YouTube videos in her speaking classes because of the lack of facilities in Libyan EFL classrooms, she stressed the importance of selecting videos that were good and culturally relevant for our Libyan EFL students. Teacher 2, as teacher 1, also stressed that selecting these videos should align with students' Islamic culture as well as their language proficiency levels. She emphasized that it was necessary for teachers to carefully prepare their video choices. Furthermore, she highlighted some difficulties for implementing these videos in Libyan EFL classes, such as the lack of internet access, the absence of equipment like data-shows, and frequent electricity outages. Teacher 3 had strongly stressed that the university should facilitate teaching job for teachers and ensure internet access in EFL classes. Teacher 4 noted that the most important thing for these videos was being interesting, engaging, and relevant to the curriculum, and they must be well-planned by the administration of the faculty itself.

5. DISCUSSION

Table 2 above indicates that most participants generally showed agreement that YouTube videos were effective in enhancing their EFL speaking skills. Most of them agreed on benefits such as appropriate grammar use, accuracy, and fluency, while some showed agreement on aspects like promoting motivation and enriching vocabulary. These findings were in line with Harmer [32], who noted that using videos in language learning could be beneficial for students. The findings were also consistent with Zaidi et al. [18], Albahlal [19], Mekheimer [33] who stated that integrating video-based materials in learning classes could improve students' overall language speaking proficiency at the university level.

Teachers' responses during the interviews of this study indicated that they considered YouTube videos to be highly engaging and motivating for students in speaking classes. They noted that there was no specific time for presenting these videos; instead, they could be used whenever the teacher or lesson context requires them. They also noted that teachers should bear in mind factors like learners' needs and their proficiency level when choosing these videos. The interviewees also stated that the challenges of limited internet access and a shortage of equipment, such as projectors,

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presented a great obstacle for incorporating these videos in classes. However, all the interviewees agreed that YouTube videos were generally effective and saved time in speaking classes. They emphasized the necessity of selecting culturally relevant videos that meet Arab non-native English speakers' needs and ideologies. These findings were in line with Alshraideh [34], whose results showed that the use of online videos had a positive influence on EFLT in general. The findings were also consistent with Zayraey [35] whose study revealed that students' engagement with watching videos improved their speaking skills, including vocabulary, motivation, pronunciation, and other related sub-skills. The findings were also compatible with González Cabañas & Núñez Mercado [36], whose study indicated that teachers had positive attitudes towards the use of authentic videos to develop students' speaking skills and understood the benefits of using authentic YouTube videos. Although partially compatible, findings of this study were in line with Albahlal [19], Balbay and Kilis [37], and Watkins and Wilkins [38], whose studies revealed that this type of video had been found to be useful to develop all four language skills.

6. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it can be evidently concluded that Libyan EFL teachers and learners have positive attitudes towards integrating YouTube videos in EFL speaking classes. They view YouTube videos as engaging, effective, and enriching tools that can enhance the teaching of speaking skills when used thoughtfully. Today's learners are the Tech-Users generation, and incorporating these videos into English classes does increase and enhance their motivation and ambition for learning. It was also concluded that by using YouTube videos, teachers can minimize their own talking time and create a more productive learning environment.

This study contributes to the literature by looking at the views of EFL teachers and students on YouTube videos used in speaking classes. However, some limitations have to be acknowledged. Experimental research is needed to determine the practical use of these videos in classrooms and the appropriate timing for their use during classroom time. Additionally, interviewees' positive views on YouTube videos might be due to their ongoing work as PhD students at the university, so teachers in other contexts might have different views and attitudes. Future research needs to consider these issues.

In conclusion, based on the findings of this study, it is highly recommended to improve the infrastructure of EFL classrooms at the University of Benghazi. Internet access and tools like projectors should be highly incorporated in Libyan EFL classrooms.

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