

Using YouTube in EFL Classroom: Students' Perceptions and Practices

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1. Abstract

This study aims at examining undergraduate students' perceptions and practices about the usage of YouTube in EFL classroom. The study was applied at the university of Gazira, in Sudan in the first semester of the year 2022-2023. The sample was a hundred and fourteen (114) EFL female students who major in English language in the faculty of education. A quantitative research method was followed in this study and descriptive statistics were used to analyse results that were displayed in frequencies and percentages. The results of this study reveal that more than half of the participants (53.5%) agree to the questionnaire statements which show that they have positive perception towards using YouTube in EFL classroom. And, the majority of these students (47.4%) agree that practice English language using YouTube makes them more attentive. In addition, most of them stated that YouTube is interesting and fruitful which motivate and encourage them to study. According to these results it is recommended that YouTube must be considered as a very useful, entertaining and informative tool in EFL classrooms. Teachers can stimulate the students' interest by introducing YouTube to EFL classroom to practice English language.

Keywords: EFL classroom, Perception, Practice, YouTube

Introduction

Today YouTube is considered as an essential website for many academic and educational institutions in the world. and the Web Analytics Association (2006), stated that MySpace, Facebook and YouTube are the most preferable websites that undergrads use during their learning time. Therefore, the development of information technologies such as internet and the worldwide web make it possible to use the YouTube in teaching and learning process. In addition, the modern technology has great role in improving the qualities of teaching and studying English language for both teachers and learners. Therefore, the use of internet, social media and YouTube videos widely spread in the educational institutions, and now, most of undergraduates in Sudan intensively rely on it to facilitate their learning process specially in learning English language.

Nowadays, the usage of YouTube in the EFL classroom is considered something effective to meet the educational needs of youth learners. Although textbook materials are still the standard for long periods, recently, with in the fast development of technology, using YouTube videos in English language teaching is common. According to what is mention, this study aims at examining undergraduate students' perception toward the efficacy of using YouTube in EFL class. Moreover, to know the reasons that make these students use YouTube to practice English language in their EFL classes.

The significance of this study comes from the fact that students' perceptions are crucial in the educational process because when the teachers get knowledge about students' preferences it can influence learning outcome. However, teachers are required to be more creative and innovative when teaching using online media, so that the material that has been taught can be digested properly. In addition, the study will conclude with a discussion of potential limitations that might come with using YouTube technology and suggestions for future research.

Statement of the Problem

The main problem of this study comes from the fact that the usage of YouTube in EFL class is still a new idea,

and the techniques of using this application to facilitate learning English language in EFL classroom is still not activated in Sudan. Snelson (2011) believed that investigations in using YouTube in ESL classroom for undergraduate students is a relatively new field of study and there is no much literature available regarding this topic. At the other hand, little research has been conducted to investigate the perceptions and practices of Sudanese EFL undergraduate in using YouTube in their English language learning. Therefore, the researchers believe that awareness of students' perceptions helps the teachers to develop appropriate teaching methods and teaching materials that meet the students' preferences and needs.

Research Questions

- a. What are the perceptions of undergraduate students toward using YouTube in their EFL classroom in Sudan?
- b. Why do Sudanese undergraduate students use YouTube to practice English language in their EFL classroom?

Literature Review

YouTube is an American online video sharing and social media platform owned by Google. It was launched on February 14, 2005, by Steve Chen, Chad Hurley, and Jawed Karim. YouTube with its official address www.youtube.com is a well-known video sharing website where users can upload, view and share video clips (Duffy, 2008; Roodt & Peier, 2013). It is the second most visited website, right after Google itself. The users of YouTube are more than one billion per month, and they often watch more than one billion hours of videos each day. As of May 2019, videos were being uploaded at a rate of more than 500 hours of content per minute. Then recently, YouTube is known as the most popular video sharing website where registered users can upload and share videos with anyone able to access the site. These videos can also be included and shared on other sites. YouTube was developed by former PayPal employees in 2005 and was acquired by Google in 2006. Now YouTube is crucial website in Social media and has deep effect on media and advertising.

Brook (2011) defines "YouTube is a web 2.0 site that is primarily based around video sharing, commenting and viewing". Similarly, Jones and Cuthrell (2011) "web 2.0 is the technology that allows users around the world to communicate with others over the internet via, social networking, websites, blogging tools and wiki entries". Then, Berk (2009) added "YouTube is an educational manner is beneficial for stimulating a learning activity and motivating the students". Therefore, according to those studies, YouTube is a learning tool. It helps and motivates learners to improve their learning outcomes.

YouTube in EFL Classrooms

Conducting Research concerning YouTube's usage in EFL classroom is an attractive area of study at the present time. Because the usage of YouTube and other ICT applications in language teaching and learning are becoming popular discussion all over the world. In addition, there are many scholars from different countries who have noticed that using ICT in EFL classroom will be more prevalent in coming years (Brunner, 2013 Poulouva; 2014). It is very noticeable, now a days, that most of learners use technology more than any other methods as a medium of communication and socialization. Accordingly, many teachers think that playing YouTube's videos in EFL classroom can be efficient and suit the students' preferences and interest as well as making the learning environments more interesting.

At the other hand, many students can rely on YouTube as a modern resource when studying English language. According to (Benson, 2015), "YouTube is an online service, officially launched in late 2005, which allows registered users to upload video clips for viewing by the general population of internet users". (Kousha, Thelwall, and Abdoli, 2012) support the statement by stating that; "YouTube is video-sharing for public use and the third most visited website after Google and Facebook". It is well known that YouTube videos are easy to follow at any situation and can be accessed anytime and anywhere. The aims of using YouTube are to make the learning conditions and atmosphere more interesting, fun, and interactive..

The use of YouTube in teaching and learning English language in EFL classes has positive impacts on the students' motivation. As mentioned by Berk, (2009), the effect of the videos on the students' minds and senses is very strong. So, he has suggested that the use of YouTube's videos should be included in multimedia presentation to develop the process of education in higher educational institutions. These included using videos in order to help learners pay more attention, increase concentration, add interests to the lesson, improve students' understanding of the content, draw on students' imagination and make the educational process enjoyable and meaningful. It has been also claimed that YouTube videos provide the teachers with different and various learning materials and

styles for instance verbal, visual, musical, and emotional intelligences (Berk, 2009).

Many English language teachers purposefully use YouTube to improve English-speaking skills of EFL students. Researches have evaluated the use of this technique on EFL students and have found that there was noticeable improvement in the students' speaking skills after using the YouTube. In particular, Ahmad and Basri (2015) found that knowledge of content, grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, and fluency improved for EFL students who had participated in their study. Thus, it is concluded that the applying of YouTube videos have great value in English language classroom. Because, through this modern technique, students are exposed to the language-based authentic materials that they are learning and YouTube may make the experience more meaningful and interesting.

Methodology

A combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches is used to collect the required data. The link of the questionnaire is sent to the chosen population to find answers to the study questions and their responses are collected and analyzed. The questionnaire has consisted of ten (10) statements that aimed at examining the undergraduate students' perceptions toward using YouTube in EFL classroom and the reasons that make them practice English language using this application. The items of the questionnaire are adapted by the researchers themselves using A Likert scale. The tool for analyzing data in this study is SPSS program and results are displayed in tables using frequencies and percentages.

Sampling

The sample has consisted of a hundred and fourteen (114) undergraduate female students who study English as a foreign language at the University of Gazira, faculty of education in Sudan a non-English speaking country.

Instrument

A questionnaire is used for data collection which is designed on the basis of the questions of the study after a comprehensive investigation into the field of teaching and learning English language. The questionnaire has consisted of ten (10) statements and Likert scale is used with five options ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

The data in this study is analysed using statistical and textual procedure. The participants' responds to the questionnaire statements was taken as an output of this study to determine their perceptions towards using YouTube in EFL classrooms. Accordingly, the findings of the study is utilized and recommendations are given.

Results and Discussion

The questionnaire has reflected the perceptions of undergraduates' students who study English language, in faculty of education, University of Gazira, toward using YouTube in their EFL classroom. Table (4.1) below presented their responses to the statements of the questionnaire.

The Results of the Questionnaire

Table (1) Perceptions of Undergraduate EFL Students Toward YouTube

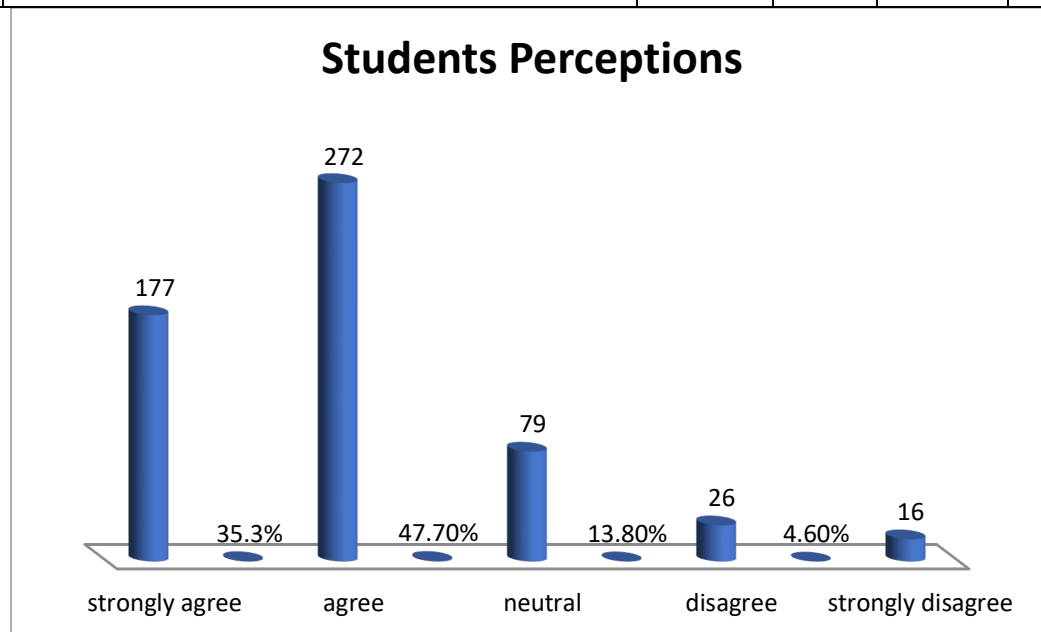
Discussion

The results which are displayed in the table (1), show that most of the students who participated in this study have positive perceptions toward using YouTube to learn English language in their EFL classes. Studying the table above show that (50.9%) of the students who are under this investigation agree that they are more motivated when using YouTube in their EFL class. And (47.4%) of them agree that they are more productive when learning English through YouTube in their EFL classroom. While (53.5%) represented the rate of the participants who agree that they are more interactive when using YouTube in their EFL classroom. The agreement rate of the participants who are encouraged learning English through YouTube in their EFL classroom is (45.6%). And about (41.2%) of the participants agree that using YouTube to in EFL class make them more accomplished and they are able to achieve their goals. The statement "I am more interactive learning English through YouTube in my EFL classroom" has got the highest rate (53.5%) as more than half of the students agree to this statement. While the lowest rate (41.2%) of the students agreement is for this statement "Using YouTube to in my EFL class make me more accomplished and reach my goals".

What are the perceptions of undergraduate EFL students toward using YouTube in their classroom?						
N	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	I am more motivated learning English through YouTube in my EFL classroom	34	58	14	5	3
		29.8%	50.9%	12.3%	4.4%	2.6%
2	I am more productive learning English through YouTube in my EFL classroom	38	54	17	4	1
		33.3%	47.4%	14.9%	3.5%	0.9%
3	I am more interactive learning English through YouTube in my EFL classroom.	26	61	17	6	4
		22.8%	53.5%	14.9%	5.3%	3.5%
4	I am more encouraged learning English through YouTube in my EFL classroom	39	52	15	5	3
		34.2%	45.6%	13.2%	4.4%	2.6%
5	Using YouTube in my EFL class make me more accomplished and reach my goals.	40	47	16	6	5
		35.1%	41.2%	12.3%	5.3%	4.4%
	Total	177	272	79	26	16
		31.1%	47.7%	13.8%	4.6%	2.8%

Chart No (1) The Students Perceptions Toward Using YouTube

Why do undergraduate EFL students use YouTube to practice English language?						
N	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	I like to practice English language using YouTube because it is fruitful.	36	51	16	7	4
		31.6%	44.7%	14.0%	6.1%	3.5%
2	I like to practice English language using YouTube because is interesting	40	48	15	8	3
		33.3%	42.1%	14.9%	3.5%	0.9%
3	I like to practice English language using YouTube because the material is easy to understand.	39	41	18	9	7
		34.2%	36.0%	15.8%	7.9%	6.1%
4	I like to practice English language using YouTube because its videos make me attentive.	32	54	17	6	5
		28.1%	47.4%	14.9%	5.3%	4.4%
5	I like to practice English language using YouTube because it is self-study.	30	45	21	10	8
		26.3%	39.5%	18.4%	8.8%	7.0%
	Total	177	239	87	40	27
		31.1%	41.9%	15.3%	7.0%	4.7%

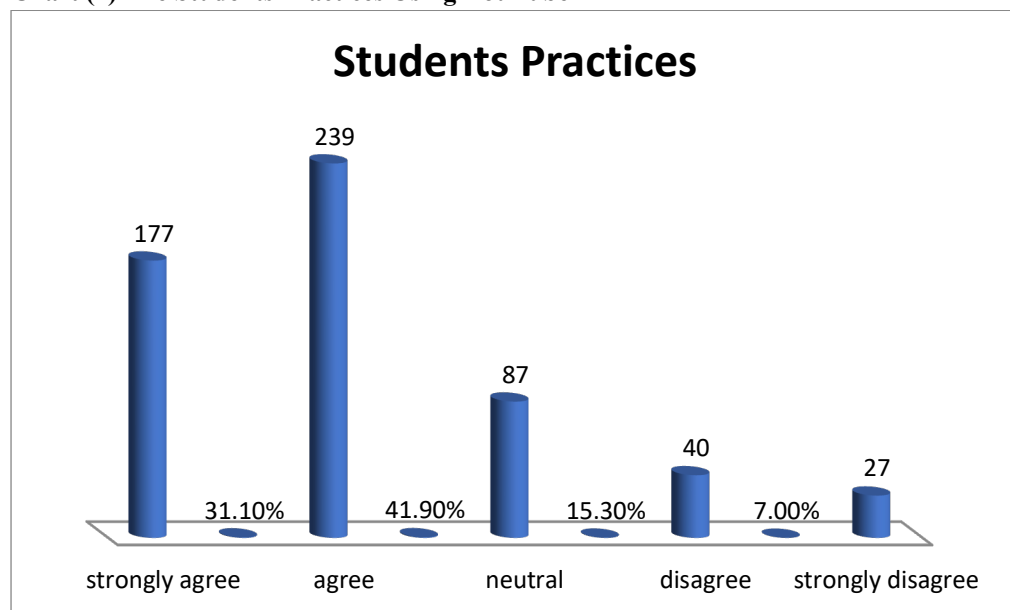


The overall results, concerning the first question of this study, are displayed in the above chart (1) show that most of the participants who have responded to the questionnaire are agreed to its statements (47.7%). While the rate of those who disagree to the questionnaire statement are only (4.6%) of the participants. The results of the first five statements have revealed that most of the students who participated in this study have positive perceptions about the usage of YouTube in their EFL classrooms. *“What are the perceptions of undergraduate EFL students toward using YouTube in their classroom?”*

Table (2) The Students' Practices of English Language Using YouTube

The aim of the last five statements of the questionnaire is to investigate the reasons that make the undergraduate students practice English language using YouTube in EFL classroom. The analysis of the results of these statements in table (2) above show that (44.7%) of the students who responded to this study like to practice English language using YouTube because it is fruitful. And about (42.1%) agree that they like using YouTube because it is interesting. On the same way, (36.0%) is the rate of those who like to practice English language through YouTube because the material is easy to understand. While nearly half of the participant (47.4%) agree that they like to practice English using YouTube because its videos make them more attentive. And (39.5%) like to practice English through YouTube because it is self-study and no need for teachers. The statement "I like to practice English language using YouTube because its videos make me attentive" has got the highest rate (47.4%) of the students' agreement while the statement "I like to practice English language using YouTube because the material is easy to understand" has got the lowest rate (36.0%) of the students agreement.

Chart (2) The Students Practices Using YouTube



The overall results, concerning the second question of this study, are displayed in the above chart (2) show that most of the participants who have responded to the questionnaire are agreed to its statements (41.9%). While the rate of those who disagree to the questionnaire statement are only (7.0%) of the participants. The results of the last five statements have revealed that most of the students who participated in this study like to practice English language using YouTube in their EFL classrooms because it makes them attentive and self-study. In addition, these students find YouTube interesting and fruitful. Therefore these results give answer to the second question of this study “*Why do Sudanese undergraduate students use YouTube to practice English language in their EFL classroom?*”

Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to examine the perception of undergraduate students at the faculty of education, Gazira University, Sudan, about using YouTube in their EFL classrooms. Moreover, the study aims at finding out the reasons that make these students practice English language through YouTube. The findings have revealed that the majority of the students have positive perceptions and reported that they benefitted by watching YouTube videos. Most of the participants who have responded to this study like to practice English language using YouTube because it makes them more attentive.

Findings

The main findings of this study are:

1. Most of undergraduates’ students have positive perceptions toward YouTube in EFL classroom.
2. YouTube is a good applicable media in practicing English for undergraduates’ students in EFL classrooms as they are more attentive and productive.
3. YouTube make the students more accomplished and reach their goals.

4. Students practice English using YouTube because the students can easily understand the materials and it is also interesting and fruitful.

Recommendations

1. YouTube must be considered as a very useful, entertaining and informative tool in EFL classrooms.
2. Teachers can stimulate the students' interest by introducing YouTube to EFL classroom to practice English language.
3. Teachers should make use of YouTube because it is a very useful online resource to teach English language in EFL classroom.
4. Teacher can use YouTube as authentic material to assist their student's production in the EFL classrooms.

Limitations of the Study

The subject of study is limited to the students' perceptions and practices of the usage of YouTube in EFL classroom. A hundred and fourteen (114) EFL undergraduate students who study English language at the university of Gazira in Sudan were taken as samples, and a questionnaire was used as a tool to collect the required data. The study was conducted during the academic year (2022-2023) second semester. So, due to the limited number of the population, results may not be elaborate enough as for wider population. In addition, the limited time on which this study was investigated was also caused some limitations which may affect the results.

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