Utilizing YouTube to Enhance English Speaking Skill: EFL Tertiary Students’ Practices and Perceptions

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Abstract

In the 4.0 era, social media are becoming increasingly popular worldwide. For better learning, one way is to utilize these platforms, one of which is YouTube. This study aims to investigate the practices and perceptions of EFL university students who use the YouTube platform to boost their English-speaking skills. The study included a total of 106 EFL university students from various classes in different academic school years. The research used a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview as instruments to collect quantitative and qualitative data and determine the level of perceptions and practices. The findings reveal that EFL tertiary students can improve their English speaking skills when learning with the YouTube platform. The results also show that students recognized YouTube as a helpful tool in the learning process when they needed to practice and improve their speaking skills. Based on the study's findings, the researchers suggest that EFL students use the YouTube platform to improve their speaking skills. Following this, there are some recommendations for further research into YouTube platform utilization.

Keywords: English speaking skill, YouTube, EFL tertiary students, perceptions, practices

1. Introduction

Speaking is a significant skill in communication, which English learners must master. This is because the speaking process utilizes verbal and nonverbal signals in which there is a combination of information organization and sharing (Chaney & Burk, 1998). There are many methods for learning to speak and many applications or tools that enhance speaking skills. One way is using videos, which proves to significantly affect students’ sense and what they think (Berk, 2009). One of the sources for good videos which are used to improve speaking skills is YouTube. It is the most popular online video uploader that can be used for language learning. It is used in blended learning to replace the teacher's spoken input and make the class more engaged (Ataei & Puteh, 2012). Via this media, videos could be used to teach speaking skills where students may view the graphics while listening to the discourse. YouTube platform is regarded as an innovative way for visually or physically impaired students to learn (Burke & Snyder, 2008). Furthermore, the YouTube platform encourages students to have a positive learning attitude in the classroom, mainly in speaking skills. For education, to apply English as a lingua franca, ESL and EFL learners would be proficient and fluent in four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among these skills, speaking is an essential skill that the speaker
can communicate with others orally. According to Burns and Joyce (1997), speaking is a collaborative process of building meaning that includes producing, receiving and processing information. J. Hadfield and C. Hadfield (2013) said that speaking acts as a connection between the classroom environment and the world outside for students. Making a connection between teachers and students is needed to prepare many opportunities with speaking activities to practice their communicative ability in class. To many countries in Asia, especially in Vietnam, English is a foreign language for learners to study, communicate and research, etc. However, students must face many difficulties when studying and practicing their speaking skills. Some issues students frequently encounter are being worried about making mistakes in a foreign language, being inhibited from expressing their ideas, feeling shy, lacking topical knowledge, and being concerned about receiving feedback during speaking activities. Jannah and Fitriati (2016) stated that students' lack of self-confidence may lead to students thinking that they cannot be good at English speaking. Moreover, Rivers (1968) stated learners would be inhibited in their ideas when the teacher has chosen a topic that is not suitable to express. According to Nunan (1999), the cause of learners' lack of motivation is uninspired teaching traditional methodology, which lacks the purpose of learning outcome and the practical relevance of the material. In order to achieve the goal of enhancing speaking ability, instructors can be involved in modern teaching methodology by using YouTube, which provides video clips or music videos with English subtitles. This helps students with their learning motivation (Huy, Baker & Tran, 2021). Indeed, speaking is an essential skill and a fantastic significant way to interact with people and express their ideas in their daily lives. In addition, the number of levels using social media, specifically the YouTube platform, to practice a speaking skill is utilized popularly. There have been a lot of studies dealing with the benefits of using YouTube in improving students’ speaking skills in general; however, little has been done into EFL university students’ perceptions and practices towards the utilization. Therefore, this study has been established to survey the practices and perceptions of EFL tertiary students in utilizing the YouTube platform to enhance their speaking skills.

2. Literature review

2.1. YouTube

YouTube platform (or YouTube) can provide many kinds of videos and other content, namely video blogging, short original videos, and educational videos (Jalaluddin, 2016). Anyone can find out all the videos with the wide range of content available on YouTube. It also enables people to upload a little video about expressing their personal experiences on certain topics or fields, even allowing them to share a lot of recorded presenting videos like a recorded lesson for learners to watch and consult. YouTube is a resource with videos in all fields of knowledge that are easily accessible (Kabooha & Elyas, 2015). YouTube allows EFL students to try and access a native language in a natural context (Nurkholida, 2016). That may be the best option for English learners who want to learn English as a foreign language. Teachers can use YouTube videos to assess students’ listening and speaking abilities by allowing them to watch and listen (Watkins & Wilkins, 2011). To clarify, teachers may design questions based on the videos and test students’ understanding through these videos with listening exercises and speaking
activities. Many kinds of videos are uploaded on YouTube, and it also has many languages and the language which is used popularly as a global phenomenon is the English language. The use of YouTube increases students’ motivation to study English (Styati, 2016). More importantly, the researcher discovered that YouTube was an authentic material for teaching the four skills of English. YouTube is a video platform that provides its users crucial freedoms in expressing themselves and sharing information. The use of YouTube videos may assist students in improving their speaking skills in preparation for uploading video assignments (Saiful, 2019).

2.2. Speaking skills

Speaking is an important skill to communicate in a language that must be mastered by learners studying English. It is the process of organizing and sharing information using verbal and nonverbal symbols (Chaney & Burk, 1998). That means this is a skill needed in anyone's interactions and expressions with others to convey the ideas, information, and story, and to negotiate so the listener can hear and reach an approval. In that, speaking skill is also defined variously. Skill develops through practice and experience, and it is consistently acquired through experience and continuous training (Romiszowski, 2016). Djoub (2017) stated that the term skill means the ability to complete a task with predictable results in each quantity of time, energy, or both. Furthermore, skills have usually involved the activity of different environmental reinforcements and situations in evaluating the level of skill being demonstrated and applied. While from a more general perspective, students should perform various types of tasks and practice their abilities. That means each individual has obtained skills acquired through practice and by applying their own declarative knowledge. Speakers who want to speak proficiently and fluently are involved in the six aspects of speaking ability: comprehension, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, grammar, and intonation (Penny, 2006). First, comprehension is necessary for speakers who want to understand the meaning of a conversation in learning speaking skills. When speakers would like to convey a message, they have got to use their resources and abilities, regardless of grammar mistakes and any other errors (Gower, Philips & Walters, 2005). It means that speakers can talk to their ability and that understanding the meaning is more important than the use of grammar. Second, vocabulary is a crucial aspect of learning the English language. If speakers limited their use of vocabulary, they would lack understanding. Someone who lacks a sufficient vocabulary will not communicate effectively in both oral and written forms (Widari, 2017). Third, pronunciation is good and can be helpful in regular communication and expressive nature. Pronunciation is the method by which students produce the utterance of words clearly when speaking (Kline, 2001). When it comes to fluency, it is defined as the ability to communicate in a communicative, fluent, and accurate manner. Fluency typically refers to expressing oral language freely and without interruption (Brown, 2001). In the aspect of grammar rules, when students are learning English speaking skills, the instructors teach them how to speak correctly and understand the theory of how to produce an English sentence correctly according to grammatical rules (Penny, 2006). Last but not least, intonation in the speaking skill is also significant because it is necessary to intonate in order to clarify a sentence delivered in English. In general, rising intonation and falling intonation are the two types of intonation in an English sentence. Both intonations must be trained adequately in elementary students before they can be used in speaking skills (Penny, 2006).
2.3. The benefits of YouTube in the learning process

As one of the well-known learning platforms, YouTube has some benefits for students to improve their speaking skills (Kurniawan, 2019) and even helps with four skills of English, including speaking, writing, reading, and listening (Van, Dang, Pham, Vo & Pham, 2021). By uploading the speaking video, learners can get some feedback from other users on YouTube. Wu, Hou, Zhu, Zhang and Peha (2001) investigated the powerful use of videos on the Internet and suggested several instructions and methods emphasizing the effectiveness of utilizing videos in education. So, it is a kind of learning style that helps students improve speaking performance by using videos.

According to Cakir (2006), the video content is interesting and motivating for language instructors because it creates a natural, contextualized, and the authentic teaching-learning environment. Nasution (2019) regarded YouTube as a valuable educational resource for language teachers. It is a highly effective medium for developing language skills through vocabulary development and presenting topics for debate and dialogue that represent all varieties of English used in the EFL classroom. Therefore, YouTube videos can be provided for instructors to provide a variety of video clips that aid in teaching a foreign language.

Anggraeni (2012) and Pratiwi (2011) confirmed that using videos supports students in organizing their thoughts, selecting appropriate words, constructing coherent sentences, and utilizing proper writing mechanics (including punctuation and spelling). Many suggestions for improving the learning process inside the class, such as websites, blogs, video-sharing websites, iTunes, and Vimeo, YouTube, appear to be the most widely used and have become extremely popular, particularly among young adults (Alimemaj, 2010). Moreover, Silviyanti (2014) affirmed that utilizing YouTube in the EFL classroom may be convincing, promotive, and advantageous, with students showing up energetic and eager to watch various videos, then practicing pronunciation and giving a speech like native speakers. As these studies demonstrated the benefits of using YouTube in searching for new knowledge, it also made students more eager to learn. Overall, YouTube benefits students’ language learning (Huy, Baker & Tran, 2021)

2.4. The effectiveness of YouTube in learning speaking skills

Using YouTube to improve speaking skills has been frequently practiced by students (Su, Cao, Le, Nguyen & Nguyen, 2021). The use of YouTube has had a positive impact on students’ motivation. As Berk (2009) stated, videos can significantly impact their minds and senses. He also suggested that video clips be used through multimedia presentations in order to improve learning in higher education institutions. Berk’s research also claimed that YouTube videos could assist different learning styles, such as visual, verbal, emotional, and musical intelligence, in addition to attracting students’ attention. Watching videos also allows the brain to actively respond to both sides of the brain, which helps to increase and improve students’ understanding. Higher activation levels were found in brain regions associated with social memories and cognition, as well as imitation (Sherman, Payton, Hernandez, Greenfield & Dapretto, 2016).

Qomar (2016) examined the use of YouTube to improve students’ speaking performance, and it was discovered that it could improve students’ speaking ability. The study found that students
use the proper intonation and stress when they utter sentences, as well as correct grammatical structures and correct and appropriate vocabulary. The students could also start to speak without any hesitation, unwanted interruptions, or word repetition. The use of YouTube for learning may open a new opportunity for a more interactive and productive educational environment (Alkathiri, 2019). Similarly, Wagner (2007) suggested utilizing videos to teach speaking skills in the class because videos could help students remember information, improve their pronunciation, comprehend what is being said via graphics and illustrations, and speak fluently and flexibly. All these researchers reported and gave the role of the YouTube platform, which is a tool for learning and practicing a foreign language, especially in speaking skills. Through the YouTube platform, learners could learn how to master speaking skills and practice using videos effectively.

YouTube was also used as a tool to support collaborative learning (Roodt & De Villiers, 2011). More specifically, Tan and Pearce (2012) agreed that using YouTube videos enabled students to explain key concepts in a sociology class. The researchers also confirmed that using YouTube videos was a helpful way to supplement their learning.

Kurniawan (2019) showed that students refer to YouTube as a useful tool for enhancing their speaking skills. On the same note, research findings by Meinavati, Harmoko and Ramah (2020) affirmed that students who watched YouTube videos spoke more smoothly and confidently. YouTube videos, according to Bueno Alastuey (2011), played an essential role in enabling learners to speak and communicate with their teachers and classmates, as well as understand their surroundings. According to Watkins and Wilkins (2011), YouTube is an effective teaching tool that enhances learning both inside and outside the classroom. It offers a multimedia platform for promoting all language learning skills, particularly listening and speaking, and enhancing students’ vocabulary in diverse aspects and cultural backgrounds. In conclusion, content on YouTube improves students’ speaking skills in three areas: fluency, accuracy, and overall performance (Jati, Saukah & Suryati, 2019).

2.5. Factors to a good speaking skill

Boonkit (2010) noted that boosting confidence in giving a speech to an audience was primarily considered a factor that improved speaking performance. The tasks designed in the course that focused on speaking for exceptional communication in a variety of situations also assisted students in preparing for speaking, and once each speaking task was well-prepared, this preparation became an effective strategy to reduce shyness and thus maximize speaking confidence. The finding also showed that topic selection freedom encouraged participants to feel at ease, persuaded them to speak English, and boosted EFL learners’ speaking ability.

According to Prieto Castillo (2007), interacting with others, learning from others, and selecting topics based on the learners’ interests can all help to boost speaking skills. The development of EFL/ESL learners’ English skills was recommended to include promoting speaking confidence as well as appropriate task design (Bailey, 2005; Nunan, 2006; Patil, 2008; Trent, 2009). Doff (1998) asserted that learners would not better their speaking ability if they did not also improve their listening ability. Noon-ura (2008) has the same finding when he states speaking, and listening skills are frequently connected. So as to have an effective dialogue, learners must
comprehend what is said to them. When students speak, Shumi (1997) claims that the other students respond through the process of listening. Speakers could perform both the roles of listeners and speakers. It can be concluded that students cannot respond if they do not understand what is being said to them. Therefore, speaking is linked to listening, with learners engaging in media-based listening and attempting to speak in real-life situations.

Many students expect their teachers to provide them with the necessary feedback on their speaking abilities. According to Harmer (1991), instructors’ attitudes toward their students’ performance are influenced by the stages of the lesson, the tasks, and the types of errors they make. Harmer also went on to explain that if instructors correct their students’ mistakes directly, the conversation's smoothness and the speaking activity's goal will be affected. Baker and Westrup (2003) declared that if students are constantly corrected, they will become demotivated and fearful of speaking. Instructors should always positively correct their students’ mistakes and provide them with more help and persuasion during the speaking process. Based on motivational orientations, Dincer and Yesilyurt (2013) revealed that teachers had negative attitudes toward speaking instruction, even though they believed it was critical to speaking ability. They concluded that despite having various motivational orientations toward speaking English, the teachers felt unskilled in oral communication. Their study pointed out that learners’ self-perceptions of their speaking ability were negative, and they described themselves as inefficient English speakers.

EFL students should be familiar with words and sentences. EFL learners’ speaking ability is influenced by linguistic components such as lexical resources, phonology, syntax, and semantics, as well as psychosocial characteristics like motivation and character traits (Mahripah, 2014). The students should know how words are broken down into different sounds and how sentences are stressed in different ways. Grammatical competence can surely help speakers incorrectly apply and perceive the structure of the English language, leading to development in fluency (Latha & Ramesh, 2012).

2.6. Research Questions

As mentioned above, the main purpose of the study is to examine how EFL tertiary students practice and perceive the utilization of the YouTube platform in improving their speaking skills. To achieve this purpose, the research has posed two questions:

Research question 1: What are EFL university students' practices in using YouTube to improve their speaking skills?

Research question 2: What are EFL university students' perceptions of using the YouTube platform to enhance their speaking skills?

3. Methods

3.1 Pedagogical Setting & Participants

This study was carried out at the Faculty of Foreign Languages of a university in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. The paper included 106 university students from various classes who are learning English as a foreign language. They were selected for the fact that they best reflected
the nature of the study, and the authors are working or studying in this faculty, so it would be convenient to conduct the survey and the interview. It can be seen from the table that there are 67.9% of females, 31.1% of males, and 0.9% of participants preferred not to say about their gender participating in this survey (see table 1). Moreover, the researchers interviewed six students who were randomly selected from the group of survey respondents. There are two students who are males and four students who are females to participate in the interview.

Table 1

Demographic Information of the Sample (Gender) (N=106)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>67.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>31.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Prefer not to say</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are no big differences in the number of students in different academic school years. A big proportion of students participating in the survey are in their third year, followed by seniors. A similar percentage of students are in their first and second years. (Figure 1)

![Figure 1. Demographic information of the sample (academic school year) (N=106)](image)

As for students' self-rate of speaking ability, most of them are in the level from 5 to 7 out of 10. Some students scored themselves poorly, and just a small number of students rated themselves advanced speakers (at 9 or 10). (Figure 2)
3.2 Design of the Study

This research was conducted using quantitative and qualitative methods. For the quantitative method, a questionnaire was used as an instrument to collect quantitative data. The authors came up with a questionnaire to survey how EFL university students perceive the use of YouTube. All the items in the questionnaire were originally developed. To create the questionnaire, the authors reviewed articles about the benefits/effectiveness of using YouTube in improving speaking skills and what makes a good speaking skill. The questionnaire also got some constructive feedback from two other colleagues in the field before being finalized by the researchers. All the items in the questionnaire were put into SPSS 25.0 for analysis to determine their reliability. There are three parts to the questionnaire. The first part has three items asking about participants' gender, academic school year, and their self-rate of speaking competence. Part two focuses on students' practices with five items. Part three is about students' perceptions with ten items which are grouped into three categories: students' feelings, students' speaking skill enhancement, and students' learning process and understanding. This part employs the five-point Likert scale to discover how much they agree with each statement (5: strongly agree; 4: agree; 3: neutral; 2: disagree; 1: strongly disagree). A semi-structured interview was employed to collect qualitative data for the qualitative method. There are five open-ended questions to investigate students' practices and perceptions deeply. The results from the interview will be used as supporting arguments for the questionnaire results, so they will be embedded in answer to the research questions in the findings/results section.

3.3 Data collection & analysis

Due to the complexity of the Covid-19 pandemic and social distancing, the survey was published by Google form to the private groups in order for students to access the link of the questionnaire survey easily and safely. The private groups consist of students and staff from the faculty and are administered by the staff. The researchers would like to obtain 30 responses for piloting in 7 days. After that, the researchers decided to stop getting responses and started importing the answering data of part 3 (students’ perceptions) to analyze the reliability. The data was examined using advanced calculation techniques called Cronbach's Alpha with the calculation tool named Statistical Package for the Social Sciences 25 (SPSS 25). The figures can be seen in table 2.
Table 2

The Cronbach's Alpha for Each Category of the Questionnaire – Part 3 (30 Responses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
<th>No of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Feelings</td>
<td>.747</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Speaking skill enhancing</td>
<td>.564</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Learning process and understanding</td>
<td>.654</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Cronbach's Alpha for the first and third categories is acceptable. There is one problem with the second category, for the Cronbach's Alpha of Reliability Statistics is 0.564 (the number of Cronbach's Alpha is at least 0.6 to be accepted) (Table 3). Taking a closer look, the authors found that the statement "I can improve my speaking skill through watching videos on YouTube," with the number of Corrected item-total Correlation of Speaking three just 0.280 (the recommended figure is at least 0.3). If this was corrected, the Cronbach's Alpha for category two could be improved. The researchers changed statement number 3 into “I can improve my speaking skill through watching English videos of my beloved speaker on YouTube”. This is more specific, and students would be aware of what they were going to select.

Table 3

Item-Total Statistics (30 Responses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Scale Variance if Item Deleted</th>
<th>Corrected Item-Total Correlation</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I can mimic any accent of native speakers naturally.</td>
<td>1.568</td>
<td>.485</td>
<td>.296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I can learn to speak English in front of the public.</td>
<td>1.926</td>
<td>.415</td>
<td>.437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I can improve my speaking skill through watching videos on YouTube.</td>
<td>1.444</td>
<td>.280</td>
<td>.678</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After testing the reliability of 30 responses and changing the statement, the survey was published by Google form to the private groups having students of all academic years (including freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors) on Facebook (a social media network) and MS Teams (an online learning platform) again. The researchers got 106 responses from the students in two months when the link was closed to continue importing the data for analysis. The reliability coefficient of the questionnaire used in this study ranged from .709 to .765, indicating
that the data collection instrument is highly reliable (See table 4).

Table 4

*Cronbach’s Alpha for Each Category of the Questionnaire (106 Responses)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Feelings</td>
<td>.716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Speaking skill enhancing</td>
<td>.709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Learning process and understanding</td>
<td>.765</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Furthermore, the researchers randomly chose 6 participants from 106 respondents who gave their opinions in the interview sections. Because some participants who joined the interview sections had their personal business and some schedule conflicts, they were interviewed individually at their convenient times. All participants were added to the group of the interview by the researchers on Ms. Teams. In addition, to efficiently conduct the finding results during the interview, the researchers recorded the meeting to review with the participants' permission. The researchers declared to the interviewees that all the answers were anonymous and explained clearly that the data only served the purpose of the study. After the interview, the researchers listened to the recording again, entered the data into Microsoft Excel, and started to synthesize and compare the responses among participants. The following parts will not use the real names of the participants. Instead, this paper will code the participants with the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, and P6).

The procedure of data collection and analysis can be summarized as follows.

Weeks 1,2,3,4 Reviewing factors to a good speaking skills and benefits of using YouTube for English speaking skills and starting to construct the items in the questionnaire.

Week 5 Completing the questionnaire and sending it to two other colleagues for modifications

Week 6 Sending the first version of the questionnaire to students for piloting

Week 7 Analyzing the reliability of the questions (part 3) and modifying one item (abovementioned), using SPSS 25

Week 7 Sending the final version of the questionnaire to the participants on Facebook groups and MS Teams groups, using google form

Weeks 7-14 Waiting for responses

Week 15 Getting 106 responses and starting to analyze the Cronbach’s Alpha as well as some descriptive statistics, using SPSS 25

Week 16 Sending invitations to participants for interviews and conducting the interviews

Week 17 Analyzing the results of the interview, synthesizing and comparing the response content from interviewees
Week 18 Finding the connections between the survey results and the answers from the interviews and analyzing

4. Results/Findings and discussion

4.1. Results/Findings

4.1.1. EFL university students’ practices in using YouTube to improve their speaking skill

As for students’ habits in using YouTube to enhance their learning, the study discovered that almost all students choose this network. Nearly half of the students surveyed use YouTube very often. Only one student never uses YouTube for his or her learning purposes. (Figure 3)

![Figure 3. Students’ frequency of using YouTube platform for learning purposes](image)

When it comes to what percentage of students who prefer to learn the speaking skill on a regular basis via YouTube, the finding found that a vast majority of students utilized it. Only a few students rarely or never use this social media to serve the purpose of enhancing their speaking skills. (Figure 4)

![Figure 4. Students' frequency of using the YouTube platform to enhance their speaking skill](image)

Taking a closer look at why students used YouTube for practicing speaking skills, nearly all students admit that they utilize YouTube to improve their speaking fluency, to have more
knowledge of lexis and grammatical structures and to sharpen their reflexes in listening comprehension. This shows the necessary aspects to learn for speaking skill enhancement. (Figure 5)

![Figure 5. The purposes of using YouTube to improve speaking skill](image)

Figure 6 shows more specific aspects of learning when they watch videos on YouTube to enhance their speaking skill. Almost all students choose to learn pronunciation and intonation, while only a tiny fraction choose to learn other aspects related to linguistics. It was discovered that the number of people choosing pronunciation and intonation outnumbers other aspects. Speakers who want to communicate with foreigners and ensure they understand the information must improve their ability to pronounce words clearly and to smoothly intonate sentences. Following pronunciation and intonation, students want to study vocabulary, collocation, and grammar.
Figure 6. What students learn from YouTube to improve their speaking skill

Figure 7 shows which purpose the students think YouTube best serves to improve speaking skills. The figure for pronunciation and intonation is the highest from the pie chart. Following that is the reflex of communication. The third best service is perseverance during the practice process.

Figure 7. The purposes YouTube best serves to enhance speaking skill
Overall, most EFL university students surveyed use YouTube very often as their tool to serve their learning in general and to enhance their speaking ability in particular. The purposes of using this social media are also varied, the most popular of which range from increasing knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, improving reflexes on listening comprehension to boosting fluency. More specifically, some of the aspects that students can learn the most from this platform include pronunciation, intonation, lexis, collocation, and grammar. Among these, they believe that YouTube can help them improve pronunciation and intonation most, followed by reflexes in communication and determination in the learning process. Moreover, all participants in the interview used YouTube to enhance mainly speaking and listening skills. They all state that they use YouTube on a regular basis in order to improve different aspects which are useful for their speaking practice, including pronunciation, intonation, grammar, and vocabulary. Therefore, besides speaking, listening is also a skill that can be practiced through YouTube as P1 says, "I think YouTube can help us practice listening skills also, and this is really necessary if we want to boost our speaking skills. Through YouTube, I can really improve both my listening and speaking skills".

4.1.2. EFL university students’ perceptions towards using YouTube platform to enhance their speaking skill

Table 5

The Feelings of Students Using YouTube Platform

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I am able to be self-controlled when presenting in English.</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.2642</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I feel interested in practicing speaking via YouTube.</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.6321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I feel more confident giving any idea in English in the classroom.</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.3491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I can be confident speaking English when I don’t mind using the wrong grammatical structures.</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.5283</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Four items in table 5 illustrate students’ feelings using YouTube platform when practicing speaking skills. All these four mean scores range from 3.26 to 3.63, which shows students' agreement. The results show students take an interest in practicing speaking via YouTube, and they can be more confident without worrying about making mistakes in grammatical structures. For the other two statements, which are about the ability to be self-controlled and boost confidence in giving ideas in English, students seem to agree slightly, but there is still a sense of positive feelings.
The interview results have shown that all the participants feel interested when using YouTube because they can watch movies and cartoons in English and listen to music to relax and learn a language. Besides, they can find many sources of audio and short tips videos on YouTube, such as VOA speaking, IELTS public speaking, and Ted-talk, where they practice their pronunciation, intonation, and accent like a foreigner. YouTube can be helpful for listening repetition, so they can mimic the voice and improve their fluency when speaking English naturally. The data shown in table 5 indicate some sense of moderate agreement, and the responses of interviewees can explain this. Participants talk about their psychology when they present in the class. P1 says that the factor which impacts speakers’ lack of self-control is forgetting the word they want to say. It means students cannot control themselves well due to the fact that they don’t remember what is said next in their presentation. P2 states that the mentality is too unstable to remember the information transferred to listeners. As the aspect other participants mentioned, preparation is the main factor in a successful presentation. Therefore, it can be seen the factors that impact speakers are preparation, such as the primary information to present, the suitable vocabulary, good performance and skill, and an unstable mentality that affects the performance for presentation in English.

Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I can mimic any accent of native speakers naturally.</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.1038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I can learn to speak English in front of the public.</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.3585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I can improve my speaking skill through watching English videos of my beloved speaker on YouTube.</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.8868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>106</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 illustrates students' perceptions when using YouTube to boost their speaking skill. As can be seen from the table, participants who use the YouTube platform to practice their speaking skills can improve themselves through watching videos of their beloved speakers. For the other two statements, the mean score is not very high, which shows moderate agreement. In the interview section, participants admit YouTube can provide knowledge such as vocabulary, intonation, pronunciation, phrases or structures for presentation, and use of grammar. Eventually, participants can learn how to communicate and to gesture. With the audio voice-over and the short videos, learners can practice their voice and fluency to mimic a native speaker using the YouTube platform. Ultimately, participants can study how to speak reflexively like a native speaker, acquire the sample sentence related to the phrase, and the short paragraph to communicate with foreigners more naturally. Significantly, all participants can learn how to
develop the skill and vocabulary for presentation in the class. Through YouTube, P4 can improve their speaking skill to practice pronunciation and improve their communication ability. Besides, P5 also mentions being able to enhance confidence during the speaking process. Therefore, YouTube is indeed a valuable platform for learners who require to improve their knowledge such as vocabulary, phrases for communication, and tips to develop their performance in presentative or public speaking. YouTube is essential for learners to improve their skills effectively during the pandemic when they must learn at home.

Table 7

*Learning Process and Understanding of Students Using YouTube Platform*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I can easily study a lot of new vocabulary which will support my speaking skill.</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.6981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I can understand the information in English that one wants to present.</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.6321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I am proactive in spending time practicing speaking via YouTube.</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.5849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>106</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7 demonstrates students' learning process and understanding when using the YouTube platform to learn and improve speaking performance. The mean scores show agreement among students. They agree that they can learn vocabulary which will support their speaking skill, understand more about English in presentation and spend more time practicing proactively. In the interview, students' understanding, knowledge, and proactiveness can be attributed to many factors. P1 uses the YouTube platform to listen to music and watch movies in English, through which he can learn about the pronunciation and intonation of speech. P2 and P4 can easily review the video to understand the information and content provided in English. They claim that the English video can easily be learned by using a tool such as a subtitle. P2 also declares that he can learn the pronunciation and improve speaking intonation. P3 states that she can learn how to pronounce and communicate logically and naturally. Especially, P5 can watch many tips about how to speak English that has not been translated before. P6 can learn how to mimic fluency like a foreigner. Besides, interviewees also recommend some good English channels such as BBC News, BBC Learning English, Langmaster, VOA, English with Lucy, Rachel English, IELTS Face-Off, English Speeches, National Geographic, English Marie, and Ted Talk. These channels on YouTube can provide learners with sample sentences on random topics, share knowledge about the vocabulary, idioms, and slang words, and instruct learners on how to express the content and how to look for a good performance on the stage.
Overall, nearly all students have a positive attitude towards the use of YouTube to enhance their speaking skills. Although there is some moderate agreement in the survey, the results from the interview section confirm the benefits the platform gives to EFL university students in enhancing their speaking skills. More specifically, students can be self-controlled in their speaking performance, more interested, and more confident in expressing ideas without worrying about making mistakes. They are also able to mimic the native speakers to sound more natural in speech and learn from them how to speak publicly well, which is thanks to watching English videos of their beloved speakers. Besides, YouTube can help them easily increase lexical resources to understand better and become more active in their learning. P2, P3, and P4 have the same idea that YouTube is a good source to offer different types of knowledge, including grammar, vocabulary, and tips on how to pronounce and intonate well. P1, P5, and P6 added learners could use different abovementioned channels to implement English learning, especially speaking. They all have a great experience when using YouTube for their speaking practice, and all agree that pronunciation, intonation, vocabulary, and reflexes are some aspects that can be practiced most effectively through this media.

4.2. Discussion

Students using YouTube can improve their intuitive listening skills and learn a lot of vocabulary and grammar knowledge. That shows the YouTube platform can provide a lot of helpful knowledge for learners who need to practice their skills, not only speaking skills but also listening comprehension skills. A high number of students choose to practice pronunciation and intonation via YouTube, which shows that learners need to practice pronunciation and intonation to speak naturally. Besides, vocabulary and collocations are also dominant choices in the obtained survey results. EFL university students want to be able to convey content to listeners understandably, and they certainly need to cultivate English vocabulary. Thus, the speakers can feel confident in communicating the information or presenting content to the audience in a public efficiently.

The results show that EFL students commonly practice pronunciation and reflexes when speaking. This is because YouTube has a repetition mode to listen to the content of a video and easily understand the content when the subtitle mode is turned on. When students try to watch videos, their brain activity helps increase students understanding and memory. This opinion best fits other researchers’ including Berk (2009), Bueno Alastuey (2011), Sherman et al. (2016), and Wagner (2007). It shows that learners can easily practice pronunciation, imitate the way native speakers speak, and practice speaking speed and reflexes in communication. As a result, they can improve their speaking ability, which was also found by Kurniawan (2019) and Qomar (2016). This means students can speak more smoothly and flexibly, as Meinawati et al. (2020) and Wagner (2007) have concluded.

When it comes to the students’ feelings after using the YouTube platform, positive ones can be found. On YouTube, there are videos on how to construct a method for learning a foreign language that is comfortable and confident in providing ideas instead of being anxious when speaking incorrect grammar. Therefore, students feel more confident when learning English on YouTube. This is in line with Meinawati et al. (2020). The fact that YouTube could help learners improve their speaking skills parallels what Kurniawan (2019) claimed, which is that the
YouTube platform is an effective tool that can support students improve their speaking skills. Wagner (2007) recommended using the videos to help students remember the information, improve pronunciation, understand what is being said, and even speak fluently. While watching videos, EFL students can learn much knowledge from vocabulary, grammar, as well as presentation skills. Besides, EFL students can learn by imitating the voice of native speakers to make it sound like a native speaker. At the same time, EFL students can learn how to speak in public most naturally. The researchers realize that YouTube is a helpful platform for language learners, especially for speaking skills.

Moreover, EFL university students can acquire knowledge related to speaking skills. YouTube can provide helpful knowledge that is new vocabulary, which is what Bueno Alastuey (2011) agrees on. Specifically, students can provide engaging learning channels such as BBC News, BBC Learning English, Langmaster, VOA, English with Lucy, Rachel English, IELTS Face-Off, English Speeches, National Geographic, English Marie, and Ted Talk. They can improve more when they understand what they want to say when they convey it to others, even when presenting in front of the class.

The use of YouTube can help students positively impact students’ learning outcomes and satisfaction, which Orús et al. (2016) would agree on. Furthermore, at the same time, students can be more active when practicing YouTube with speaking skills because they can study anytime. However, their speaking skills will improve significantly if they are patient and have an effective learning schedule and motivation.

In conclusion, YouTube supplements students’ learning (Roodt & De Villiers, 2011; Tan & Pearce, 2012) and improves their overall performance in speaking (Jati, Saukah & Suryati, 2019).

5. Conclusion

EFL tertiary students can practice speaking on YouTube to improve their performance. They can explore many sources for practicing speaking on YouTube. Most of the time, vocabulary and grammar are the primary sources from which new words can be easily found and learned. EFL learners must continue to study vocabulary and grammar to communicate with others effectively. Pronunciation is also an essential skill for students to learn, and they can practice it by listening to what the foreigner says and then naturally trying to mimic the voice and sound. Furthermore, the reflex on communication is the most preferred in the questionnaire, which allows students to practice reflexes such as foreigner communication via YouTube. Moreover, almost all students are interested in using YouTube for learning. EFL university learners can gain experience by watching movies, listening to music in English, finding a suitable source to practice fluency and control the speed of speaking like a native speaker, understanding information when a partner speaks in English, and relying on it through YouTube. Thus, YouTube is indeed a good tool in the learning process for those who aspire to improve their speaking skill and improve their performance.

This research has some contributions concerning the effectiveness of using YouTube to enhance EFL tertiary students’ speaking skill, but it still faces certain limitations. These limitations also
somehow affect the results and significance of the study. These limitations include the sample of the study and the speaking level of the participants being studied. Firstly, this study surveyed EFL university students at a Faculty of Foreign Languages from a university and it seems not to extend the survey to other faculties and universities. Secondly, the results obtained for students’ ability are only quite average, from 5 to 7 points when they are self-rated, which may keep students using YouTube to practice speaking skills unsatisfactory. There are two possible suggestions for future research on the same topic based on current discoveries and potential limitations. With the limitations mentioned above, the future research paper will spread among many students at different faculties and universities. With the speaking level of students using YouTube to improve their speaking skills, it is expected to increase in size and a correlation between speaking students’ level and effectiveness of using YouTube can be investigated.

Acknowledgment

We would like to express our gratitude to all the respondents and interviewees who partook in our survey. We also would like to send our sincere thanks to Van Lang University at 69/68 Dang Thuy Tram Street, Ward 13, Binh Thanh District, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam where our research was funded. The last special thanks would go to two of our colleagues that provided us with some constructive feedback on our questionnaire.

References


**APPENDIX**

**Appendix A – Questionnaire**

**PART 1: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

1. Your gender
   - Male
   - Female
   - Prefer not to say

2. You are a…
   - Freshman
   - Sophomore
   - Junior
   - Senior

3. How would you rate your speaking skill? (1-10 scale)

**PART 2: STUDENTS’ PRACTICES:**

1. How often do you use the YouTube platform for learning purposes?
   - Always
   - Usually
   - Sometimes
   - Rarely
   - Never

2. How often do you use the YouTube platform for enhancing your speaking skill?
   - Always
   - Usually
   - Sometimes
   - Rarely
   - Never

3. Why do you use the YouTube platform for learning speaking skill?
   - To improve speaking fluency
   - To have more knowledge of vocabulary and grammar
   - To sharpen reflexes in listening comprehension
4. Which knowledge do you often learn from YouTube to practice speaking skill?
   - Vocabulary
   - Grammar
   - Collocations
   - Pronunciation and intonation
   - Others (please specify):
5. Which aspect do you think YouTube best serves to enhance speaking skills?
   - Fluency
   - Pronunciation and intonation
   - Knowledge of vocabulary and grammar
   - Reflexes on communication
   - Perseverance during practice process
   - Others (please specify):

PART 3: STUDENTS’ PERCEPTIONS
The following statements are about your perceptions toward using YouTube for enhancing speaking skill. Please read each one and click on the bullet to show how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

Strongly disagree (1)/ Disagree (2)/ Neutral (3)/ Agree (4)/ Strongly agree (5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Item</th>
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<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Student’s feelings</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I am able to be self-controlled when presenting in English.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I feel interested in practicing speaking via YouTube.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I feel more confident giving any idea in English in the classroom.</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I can be confident speaking English when I don’t mind using the wrong grammatical structures.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Speaking skill enhancing</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I can mimic any accent of native speakers naturally.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I can learn to speak English in front of the public.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Learning process and understanding</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I can easily study a lot of new vocabulary which will support my speaking skill.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I can understand the information in English that one wants to present.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I am proactive in spending time practicing speaking via YouTube.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Appendix B – Interview Questions
1. Do you often use YouTube for learning purposes? Do you use YouTube to improve your speaking skill?
2. Tell me your experience in using YouTube to improve speaking skill.
3. In your opinion, is YouTube a good source to offer knowledge for developing English
speaking skills? What knowledge does it offer?
4. In your opinion, for which purpose is YouTube used to practice speaking skills effectively?
5. Can you recommend any good English learning websites or channels? What are those? Is it possible to practice speaking via those?

Biodata

Thao Quang Le holds a master’s degree in Applied Linguistics from Curtin University. He has ten years of English-teaching experience. He is now a lecturer in the Faculty of Foreign Languages, Van Lang University, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. He has been giving classes on four English language skills and teaching courses in such English linguistic components as phonetics, phonology, morphology, and syntax. Conducting studies into L1 instructions in L2 classrooms and on language assessment is his particular interest.

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