

Improving the Teaching of Arabic Through the Effective Use of YouTube

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ABSTRACT

This study examines ways of improving Arabic's teaching and learning process by applying YouTube video clips as audio-visual aids. Eighteen Arabic students in Kaduna State College of Education and Kwara State University constituted the study sample. A descriptive method with Pre-test and Post-test was conducted. Data were collected through the essay writing, translation, and structure test. The data were analyzed through the descriptive statistics of frequency (f) and percentage (%). The study findings revealed that the subjects performed better and demonstrated linguistic communicative competence in Arabic. Finally, the study recommends that YouTube videos should be integrated into the Arabic teaching-learning process.

KEYWORDS: Arabic language; Effective Use; Teaching; YouTube; Audio-Visual

INTRODUCTION

The Arabic language is growing day by day in its teaching and learning in Nigeria. The language could have made more progress in the country if modern techniques of teaching are adopted. It is observed that most Arabic institutions use old methods, such as Grammar-Translation Method, Reading Method, Imitation and Memorisation Method, Talk and Chalk Method, etc. in the process. Therefore, the researchers in this study call for the use of ICT to promote the teaching and learning of the language.

It is crystal clear that the advancement of technology, mainly Information and Communication Technology (ICT), has brought rapid development in almost all the fields of human endeavors, including education. In 2012, the National Commission for College of Education (NCCE) carried out curriculum reformation in teacher education. The reformation requires teachers to adopt more activity-based, technology and resource-supported, and learner-centered approaches (NCCE, 2012a; Kolawole, 2015).

This paper aims to examine the integration of YouTube videos into teaching and learning of Arabic as an implementation of the requirements of the 2012 NCCE Curriculum reform by employing Computer – Assisted Language Learning (CALL).

The field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) or Second language teaching and learning has embraced many strategies and methodologies to improve the teaching and learning process of Second Language (L2). Although Arabic - according to Amuni (2004), Onisabi (2014), and Yasin(2017) - is an indigenous language; the majority of the learners of the language in Nigeria are to be treated as non-native speakers simply because their mother tongues or native languages are not Arabic. Thus, it is believed that Arabic teaching and learning in Nigeria have to adopt SLA teaching and learning approach. Dalahem and Wakawa (2017) emphasize that integrating ICTs into the classroom for effective teaching and learning has been the concern of stakeholders in education. It is because ICTs allow interaction between teachers and students, and between students and learning materials. This study, therefore, tries to figure out the effective ways and strategies of integrating CALL into Arabic teaching and learning through YouTube videos so they could achieve the linguistic competence.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHOD

According to Yakub (2005) and Onisabi & Adamu (2007), Arabic is the language of Arabs. It belongs to the Semitic group of languages; other languages of this group are Modern Hebrew, Amharic, and other spoken languages of Ethiopia. Arabic is the second largest most widely used alphabetic writing system globally (the Latin alphabetic is the most widespread). The Arabic script has been adapted to diverse languages such as Persian, Turkish, Spanish, and Swahili (Sariki 2005).

In the words of Alaso (2018), Arabic is the first developed language that brought its rich culture to Nigeria many centuries before the Europeans could dream of coming to the area. The time of its emergence in the country could not be precisely stated. Still, the popular opinion is that commercial link was the first factor responsible for its introduction into Nigeria as far back as the seventh century. (Galadanci, 1992). Since its inception in the country, the language has been playing a great role in Nigeria as far as history, economics, politics, diplomacy, education, religion, and socio-cultural activities are concerned.

Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL), with its various types, can be employed in Arabic classes. Thus, teaching this wonderful language should be exposed to more innovations and supported by integrating modern technology for better performance of the learners of the language. This paper focuses on integrating video clips from YouTube channels to enhance teaching and learning of Arabic.

The Importance of Teaching Language through Audio-Visual Aids

Audio-visual aids are resources that appeal to the senses of sight and hearing. Daniel (2013) believes that to convey some concepts more effectively and successfully to students, the teacher takes some instructional aids. Such aids are called audio-visual aids. Such aids can serve many

purposes in the teaching of language. Teaching aids' effectiveness implies its relevance to the teaching point, achieving some instructional objective and appropriate use. Katherine (2009) opines that during learning, the teacher has to provide the learning situation to satisfy the learners' natural reaction, which is achieved through audio-visual aids. The learners' attention is caught, and his interest is won as he/she is ready to learn. Katherine (2009) identifies audio-visual resources into real objects, three-dimensional displays, and films. Some other scholars identify them as sound film and filmstrips, slide, tape decks, tape recorder, television programs, videotapes, and dramatization. Then, the rests classify them into educational programs, games, programmed instructions, and demonstrations.

Farooq (2014) states that useful audio-visual aids must be appealing to the senses and attractive enough to hold attention and focused on essential elements to be learned at the proper time. Mathew and Akimat (2013) believe that using multimedia audio-visual aids stimulates thinking and improves the classroom's learning environment. The main purposes of teaching through audio-visual aids are: to avoid excessive meaningless verbalization in teaching Arabic; provide direct sense experience to students; form clear and accurate concepts in Arabic or any foreign language; provide various activities, interest and inspiration; create a language atmosphere; reduce teachers talking; clarify the subject matter; save time and energy.

YouTube Videos

YouTube is an American video-sharing website headquartered in San Bruno, California. YouTube allows users to upload, view, rate, share, add to playlists, report, comment on videos, and subscribe to other users. As of February 2017, there were more than 400 hours of content uploaded to YouTube each minute and one billion hours of content being watched on

YouTube every day. By August 2018, the website was ranked as the second most popular site globally, just after Google (Alexa Internet, 2019).

Various YouTube videos can be used for the teaching and learning process, depending on the area and the relevance of the content. It is a vital resource that can be tapped to enhance learners' performance of a foreign language. One of the salient pedagogical benefits of the computer is its multimedia nature. A computer can be used as a television, a tape recorder, a camera, a radio, and a video. Apart from its conventional role, Sotillo (2000) submits that technical revolution and expanding use of computers are rapidly changing the nature and scope of pedagogy in all knowledge fields. Wilcox (2016) also believes that ICT holds great promise to improve teaching and learning when properly used.

Studies emphasize that computer-based technology provides real-life situations in teaching and learning of Arabic (Salaberry (1999); Rasul, Qadir&Batool (2011); Pisarenko (2017); Yani and Ahmad (2018); and Al-Jawahiri (2019). It combines sounds, pictures/images, and texts which draw the learners' attention or compel them to watch, listen, and engage in the lesson. Besides, Wazeema & Kareema (2017) observe that advanced technological developments have opened new potentials to integrate multimedia audio-visual aids in language classrooms. Through these aids, the students find that audio-visual aids are the motivational tools to improve the second language's learning.

This study applied a descriptive qualitative method. The study sample comprised selected Arabic students in Kaduna State College of Education and Kwara State University. Of eighteen students, twelve are from NCE II students (five females and seven males) and six undergraduate students (two males and four females). The two institutions' students were purposely chosen from the class of "Reading, Comprehension and Translation" and "Advanced Translation Drills I & II" distributed at the first

and second semesters. The researchers aim to select the level and the courses to test the four language skills ability in the selected students.

The selected courses' students are expected to read, listen, study and comprehend any material given to them and then translate it into Arabic or English. The pre-test and post-test marking scheme were based on an assessment guide through the content, organization, expression, mechanical accuracy, or structure. The researchers carefully chose and downloaded several YouTube videos on News Analysis, Interviews, Discussant Programmes from Al- Jazeera, BBC Arabic Service, Al-Mayadeen, RT Arabic, and Abdel Bari Atwani Channels. The majority of the videos were in Arabic; only four of them were in English.

Data were collected from two instruments, video watching and essay writing, translation and structure test. The test was divided into two parts. The first part of the test contained the participants' biographical data, such as name, gender, first language, and how many years he/she had been studying Arabic. The second part was divided into three sections. Section 1 was devoted to essay writing, section 2 focused on structure test, and section 3 was for translation from Arabic to English and vice – versa. The researchers' drafted questions and the marking scheme were given to the experts in Language and Measurement for validation. Their suggestions and comments were used to improve the questions and the marking scheme for the test.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The class's primary discussion and the contents of video clips dealt with the current issues in Middle – East, particularly the tension in Strait of Hormuz, which characterized the Rift in the relationship between Saudi – Arabia, Iran, and Yemen. The rift was widely covered by Arabic International Media mentioned above. The coverage, which was documented and stored on YouTube Channel by these giant Media, has left substantial linguistic

materials tapped for Arabic teaching and learning, particularly non-speakers of Arabic.

The participants were divided into three groups six in each in the class; (1st and 2nd groups from the NCE level at their college in caf the 3rd group are from the undergraduate). The researchers gave a brief introduction of the contents of a video to be used at the beginning of every lesson, after which it would be shown while the students watched the video with rapture attention. After watching the video the researchers asked each group to write report explaining the major points in the discussant programme they had just watched. Then later they would briefly tell the story. Before closing each meeting, the video was shared and downloaded into individual student's mobile phone for further watching and studying at their convenient time and places. Assignments were given to them on various areas of language skills. The transcript of interview, news analysis, or discussant programmes they watched would be written, later translated and posted on their group Whatsapp. The Whatsapp group was created to follow up discussion after the lesson. Thus, interacting questions and answers were taking place in the group chat. The students developed a great interest for the course and they were highly motivated to the extent that they hardly missed a class. At the end of the experiment, a post test was conducted. An essay on 'Tension in the Strait of Hormuz and Solutions to the problem' was given to the students, after which it would be translated into English. The treatment was administered for the period of 10 weeks, while two weeks were used for revision and examination a result of which was used as a finding of this study.

Table 1: Result of Pre – test

	Excellent (A)	%	Very Good (B)	%	Good (C)	%	Average (D)	%	Total
Content			4	0.22	8	0.44	6	0.33	18
Organization			3	0.17	10	0.56	5	0.27	18

	Excellent (A)	%	Very Good (B)	%	Good (C)	%	Average (D)	%	Total
Expression			3	0.17	6	0.33	9	0.50	18
MA/Structure			3	0.17	7	0.39	8	0.44	18

Table 2: Result of post test

	Excellent (A)	%	Very Good (B)	%	Good (C)	%	Average (D)	%	Total
Content	6	0.33	5	0.28	7	0.39			18
Organization	5	0.28	6	0.33	7	0.39			18
Expression	7	0.39	6	0.33	5	0.28			18
MA/Structure	5	0.28	7	0.39	6	0.33			18

Integration of educational technology such as computer-assisted language learning (CALL) into the instructional delivery will enhance the learning performance. This study was conducted to experiment with the integration of YouTube video clips to the teaching of Arabic. Table 1 shows the participants' routine before their exposure to the treatment. 4 students representing 0,22% that the contents of their essay writing were able to score higher. In contrast, 8 of them or 0.44% scored good or C and 6 or 0.33% reached average in the same contents. Another variable tested is organization. Table 1 also indicates that only 3 students representing 0.017% could earn Very Good or B in the organization. 10 of them or 0.56 scored C or Good in the organization while 5 students 0,27% whose organization score Average or D. Another variable tested is expression. Table 1 shows that only 3 student representing 0.17% scored B or Very Good. 6 students or 0.33% earned C or Good in Expression, while the large number of them 9 or 0.50% scored D or Average. Finally, table 1 revealed the scores of the participants in Mechanical Accuracy/ Structure. Table 1 has shown that 3 students or 0.17% scored B, 7 representing 39% earned C while 8 of them or 0.44% could score D or Average under this category.

In comparison to the participants' academic performance in the four variables tested after the exposure to the treatment, table 2 shows each participant's high performance. Table 2 shows that under the Content 6 students representing 0.33% scored A or Excellent. Similarly, 5 participants or 0.28% scored B or Very Good, while 7 or 0.39% earned C or Very Good. Under the organization, 5 participants representing 0.28% scored A or Excellent. 6 or 0.33% scored B or Very Good while the large number of them 7 or 0.39% earned C or Good under this category. Result in Table 2 under Expression reveals that the large number of the percipients 7 representing 0.39% scored A or Excellent, while 6 and 5 participants representing 0.33% and 0.28% scored B or Very Good and C or Good respectively. Finally, under Mechanic Accuracy/Structure table 2 shows that 5 students representing 0.28% scored A or Excellent. 7 participants or 0.39% earned B or Very Good while 6 or 0.33% scored C or Good.

The results revealed a significant difference between the participants' performance before and after the exposure to the treatment. Through the written test by the subjects of this study before receiving treatment, their performance was low. No one could get a B score, even the number of those who scored B in the four variables was small. But their performance after they had received the treatment was significantly high. The results were from the integration of CALL through the YouTube video into the instructional delivery of Arabic. Educational technology makes the instruction more meaningful, and the learners find the learning exciting and meaningful.

Consequently, YouTube videos contribute immensely to the high performance of the students. In this study, Arabic students watched various discussions and had ample opportunities to listen to or watch native speakers communicate. By this rare opportunity brought about by digital technology, they were exposed to many different expressions and language skills since they could play the videos as many times as possible. It is in line

with Polisarenko (2017), who argues that foreign language training based on AT (Audiovisual Technology) positively influences student performance and should play a leading role. This study also confirms and corroborates Al-Jawahiri (2019) assertion that the idea of using videos is to facilitate communication, conversation, speaking, presentation skills, and active viewing to increase the students' excitement, enjoyment, and satisfaction with each lesson. Moreover, the instructional delivery employed in digital technology made learning meaningful, and the learners find it more exciting and, consequently, be highly motivated. As a result, it had positively affected their performance.

Furthermore, Arabic needs acculturation, whereby the learners will be exposed to native speakers in their daily activities. YouTube video plays a veritable opportunity to give the learners an ample opportunity to get the needed acculturation through exposure to different video types, showing native speakers speaking and communicating on various occasions. This opportunity was given to them in the comfort of their environment without traveling out. It was one of the pedagogical benefits of digital technology if it is well employed in teaching and learning.

The subjects of this study also demonstrated significant development in the linguistic competence of Arabic. The contents, expression, mechanical accuracy, and logical development of their writings were highly commendable. It was abundantly clear that this study benefited from the YouTube videos employed as audio-visual aids.

CONCLUSION

This work attempted to shed light on the benefits of YouTube videos' employment in Arabic teaching and learning. The participants were exposed to various types of YouTube video Clips, which provided different linguistic communicative skills by native speakers. The exposure of the non – speakers, Arabic learners to the native speakers of Arabic has dramatically

assisted them to become linguistic and communicative competence. It is obvious that if a YouTube video is effectively used as audio–visual aids, it can provide a self–paced and motivating language environment in which the students work with a high level of interest faster. It can be concluded that using YouTube Video Clips can promote the effectiveness of Arabic language teaching and learning. The teachers of Arabic languages are enjoined to integrate this type of teaching aids in their teaching activities. Also, further study is needed to uncover more benefits derived from employing the strategy.

Furthermore, it is recommended that efforts should be made by language teachers, Arabic to integrate digital technology into their instructional delivery. Language teachers should be given adequate computer application training to integrate the computer into his teaching and learning process successfully. The government should increase education funding to provide computers and internet facilities in all of our institutions. The library will be available and provide funds for capacity building or manpower training for our teachers. Learner – Centered approach should be encouraged and supported. Further research in the area of digital technology in education should be encouraged as well.

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