



Research Article

EFFECTIVENESS OF USING YUGLISH ON AUTOMOTIVE TECHNOLOGY STUDENTS' ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION COMPREHENSIBILITY AT HO CHI MINH CITY VOCATIONAL COLLEGE

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ABSTRACT

English pronunciation plays an important role in successful spoken communication. However, Vietnamese students of English as a foreign language (EFL) have limited access to English, real pronunciation samples, and the opportunity to practice English. This study aimed to examine the effectiveness of YouGlish to improve pronunciation comprehensibility among Vietnamese vocational college students. The study used an experimental design with 40 second-year automotive technology students learning English at a vocational college in Ho Chi Minh City using YouGlish for four weeks. Data for analysis were collected through pretest and posttest and a survey questionnaire about the students' perceptions. The results of the study showed that the scores on the pre and posttests increased significantly. The results also revealed that the participants were aware of pronunciation characteristics and had positive perceptions of the usefulness and ease of use of YouGlish. These findings suggest that regular use of authentic video samples of pronunciation on YouGlish help Vietnamese EFL students of automotive technology pay attention to pronunciation characteristics and improve their English. It also offers other practical recommendations for using technology such as YouGlish in language classrooms.

Keywords: pronunciation; technology-enhanced pronunciation learning; Vietnamese EFL vocational students; YouGlish

1. Introduction

In second language acquisition (SLA), a speaker's speech production is an important factor in communication because it directly affects intelligibility to the listener (Field, 2005). English learners in the EFL context may have difficulty producing comprehensible speech because of limited exposure to authentic spoken English and limited opportunities for

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meaningful speaking practice. Traditionally, pronunciation instruction focused on the accurate production of individual speech sounds. However, more recent literature has shifted the emphasis from native-like pronunciation to comprehensibility (Derwing & Munro, 2015; Levis, 2018; Munro & Derwing, 1995). According to Derwing and Munro (2005), comprehensibility refers to the ease with which a listener understands a speaker's utterance. Similarly, this perspective prioritizes effective communication over native-like pronunciation (Levis, 2005).

Thanks to the rapid technological advances in education, technology-enhanced language-learning opportunities enable learners to access authentic input, including pronunciation in the target language, and provide them with a means of learning autonomously outside the language classroom (Thomson, 2018). One of the resources available to learners is videos for learning English, with auditory and visual input through multisensory and multimodal delivery of content (Sueyoshi & Hardison, 2005; Wagner, 2010). While language-learning videos have long been recognized as valuable tools for enhancing EFL learners' pronunciation skills, YouGlish has recently emerged as a platform, offering authentic, real-world speech examples that allow learners to access native pronunciation on demand. YouGlish enables learners to search for individual words or phrases in YouTube videos from authentic communicative situations in numerous contexts and from diverse speakers. YouGlish also provides the opportunity for learners to listen repeatedly to pronunciation in multiple contexts, which could help create awareness of phonological features and assist learners in their ability to notice these features, reflecting the Noticing Hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990, 2001) in second language acquisition.

There is limited research on technology-assisted pronunciation tools in vocational EFL teaching and learning. Traditional teaching methods often focus on reading and grammar rather than speaking, so there is little classroom time for pronunciation practice (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016). Vocational students usually do not have opportunities to learn and talk with native speaker teachers of English as well as with the natural characteristics of English speech, such as stress, rhythm, and connected speech. Therefore, when speaking English, their pronunciation might be negatively influenced (Bui et al., 2025; Thach & Nguyen, 2024; Tam, 2005). In other words, vocational education and training students often struggle to develop good pronunciation skills. Thus, this study aims to explore whether and in what ways YouGlish can help improve pronunciation for Vietnamese vocational students of English and investigate their perceptions about its usefulness and effectiveness by answering the two research questions:

- 1) What are automotive technology students' perceptions of the effectiveness of YouGlish for improving their English pronunciation comprehensibility?
- 2) What are the perceived advantages and challenges of using YouGlish from the students' perspective?

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Design

To examine changes in pronunciation comprehensibility and learners' perceptions of using YouGlish, this study used a mixed-methods design. The design combined measures of pronunciation performance after a short intervention with accounts of learners' experiences using the tool. Quantitative and qualitative data together provided an overview of technology-enhanced pronunciation learning among Vietnamese EFL students.

The study used a pretest–posttest design to see whether learners' pronunciation became easier to understand after they used the YouGlish tool. Each learner's pronunciation was assessed before the intervention and after it. Comparing the two recordings showed us whether their pronunciation improved or not. This design has been used in schools to judge whether a teaching intervention works when comparing outcomes across data collection periods.

To learn what students thought of YouGlish when they learn pronunciation, the researchers also conducted a survey. Its items were built based on the technology acceptance model (TAM). The analysis focused on perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use to explore how learners rated the tool's effectiveness and usability during the intervention.

2.2. Participants

The participants of the study included 40 undergraduate students majoring in automotive technology (N=40). They took the English language course as a part of their curriculum. They were provided with little pronunciation instruction, which is usual for Vietnamese EFL students. They were in their first or second years and had pre-intermediate English proficiency based on institutional placement test results. They had learned English at the secondary level. Furthermore, they had little experience with specialized pronunciation training tools prior to the study. Such characteristics of the students make them suitable participants for the exploration of the usefulness of YouGlish. Before data collection, the purpose of the study was explained to all participants who agreed with the consent to participate in the study. Also, participants could withdraw at any time. The researcher kept all collected data confidential throughout the study.

2.3. Instruments

The research employed pronunciation tests and surveys to collect qualitative and quantitative data. The recordings of the pretest and posttest were used to evaluate listeners' level of understanding. The participants were asked to read a short text in order to collect samples of speech sounds. This method was in line with previous research using listener ratings to evaluate pronunciation. Drawing upon the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the questionnaire was distributed at the end of the experiment and asked questions about perceived usefulness and ease of use of YouGlish. The questionnaire consisted of statements with Likert scales asking participants whether they believe that YouGlish is useful and user-

friendly. Survey items were written bilingually (English and Vietnamese) so that participants with limited English skills could understand the items.

2.4. Intervention Procedure

YouGlish was used to teach students the pronunciation of the chosen words and phrases on authentic YouTube videos. The intervention lasted for four weeks. In the beginning, students were instructed on how to operate YouGlish and look for specific words when searching. They were encouraged to listen to different speakers using the pronunciation they attempted to learn.

The learning activities basically involved four stages. At first, students were given a vocabulary list with different pronunciations to focus on. Second, they watched videos from YouGlish and were attentive to how the pronunciation was done by the speakers. Third, they attempted to repeat the pronunciation of words and phrases after speakers. Fourth, they compared their pronunciation to the pronunciation they listened to. During the four weeks, the teacher assisted and corrected students in their activities. They were also encouraged to find more videos in YouGlish and try more words they needed to master. The major aim of such activities was to make students more sensitive to the sounds and pronunciation patterns of the English language.

2.5. Data Collection and Analysis

Before the intervention, the participants in the study were asked to read selected words and phrases in their automotive technology aloud to record their voices. These first recordings served as baseline data, establishing the level of speech intelligibility for each student at the outset. Subsequently, the students spent four weeks using YouGlish under our guidance. At the end of this period, they read the same words and phrases again, and we conducted a second round of recordings. This process allowed us to assess whether their speaking abilities had changed and whether their speech had become easier for listeners to understand. After the intervention stage, participants in the study completed a questionnaire with 26 items. This survey evaluated the usefulness of YouGlish for English speaking skills as well as the tool's ease of use. We securely stored all recordings and protected the participants' personal information.

We analyzed the quantitative data using descriptive statistics and compared the students' intelligibility scores from the pre- and post-tests. We calculated mean values and standard deviations to track changes in performance; higher post-test scores indicated improved speech intelligibility. We use students' responses to open-ended questions to identify the benefits and challenges they perceive when using YouGlish and to gain a better understanding of their learning. So, the combination of the findings from the pronunciation tests and the survey questionnaire could provide a more comprehensive look on students' progress and their opinions of YouGlish for learning pronunciation.

3. Results and discussion

This study combined quantitative data analysis with qualitative interpretation and studied how the students articulated English and how they accepted new technology tools like YouGlish. In other words, the analysis brought to two aspects: the enhancement in the quality of students' speech after employing YouGlish and their perception of the effectiveness of this technique for pronunciation practice.

3.1. Impact of YouGlish on Students' Pronunciation Comprehensibility

The first analysis involved checking how well students pronounced words and phrases related to automobile technology. It was compared how well students pronounced these terms before and after using YouGlish.

3.1.1. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were calculated to see changes in pronunciation comprehensibility. Table 1 below shows the pretest mean and posttest mean and standard deviations.

Table 1. Pretest and Posttest Scores of Pronunciation Comprehensibility

Test	N	M	SD
Pretest	40	3.0042	0.79751
Posttest	40	3.6833	0.85801

According to the data provided in Table 1, the average value increased from 3.0042 in the pre-test to 3.6833 in the post-test. This increase in value suggests that the students' pronunciation became much better and clearer after they started using YouGlish. All in all, as a result of the intervention, students developed their pronunciation.

3.1.2. Paired-Samples *t* Test Results

A paired-samples *t* test compared pretest and posttest scores to determine whether the observed increase was statistically significant. Table 2 presents the results.

Table 2. Paired-Samples *t* Test for Pronunciation Comprehensibility

Comparison	Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Pretest – Posttest	-0.67917	-9.929	39	< .001

The paired-samples *t* test indicated a statistically significant difference between pretest and posttest scores, $t(39) = -9.929$, $p < .001$. Students' pronunciation was more comprehensible after the intervention, suggesting that YouGlish might help improve the ease with which listeners understood their speech.

3.1.3. Discussion of Pronunciation Improvement

The improvement in English pronunciation may be understood through Schmidt's (2001) noticing hypothesis in second language acquisition, which emphasizes awareness of linguistic features in learning language. Since there was an opportunity to listen to the English language being spoken by native English speakers using the YouGlish videos, they

might have become more aware of the stress, intonation, rhythm, and sounds used in the pronunciation (Isaacs & Trofimovich, 2012). In turn, it meant that the students could correct their pronunciation exercises where they noticed some differences in sounds between the two languages in their recordings and pronunciations made by the native speakers.

One thing that makes YouGlish unique is that the development of the learners' pronunciation is achieved through provision of examples of the language taken from the real-life YouTube videos, rather than from isolated examples.

These results align with previous studies indicating that authentic audiovisual sources can contribute to the improvement of pronunciation input. Repeated exercises during the intervention might also contribute to students' ability to achieve more control over articulation and improve their speech production. These results also correspond with research conducted internationally in the field of technology-mediated pronunciation learning such as the work of Chen et al. (2019), Lee (2020), and Fouz-González (2017). This research indicates that the use of pronunciation sources like YouGlish beyond the classroom can supplement regular classes to improve pronunciation.

In the case of Vietnamese EFL education, teaching pronunciation tends to be ignored due to the focus on grammar and reading processes. Therefore, students have very few chances to be exposed to real pronunciation models.

Integrating YouGlish into pronunciation practice may provide an additional resource for developing their pronunciation. Notably, students' pronunciation comprehensibility improved after the intervention time spent on the YouGlish tool. The findings suggest that interactive use of the tool may support pronunciation development among Vietnamese EFL learners.

3.2. Students' Perceptions of YouGlish

The students' perception asked students if they found YouGlish a good tool for improving pronunciation. We looked at what students wrote in the survey, including their self-awareness about their pronunciation, what they found to be useful about it, and what problems they faced.

3.2.1. Pronunciation Awareness

Descriptive statistics for pronunciation awareness before and after the intervention are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Pretest and Posttest Pronunciation Awareness Scores

Test	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Pretest	40	3.0050	0.60000
Posttest	40	3.7000	0.62500

The mean pronunciation awareness rating increased from 3.0050 to 3.7000, and this suggests that students noticed more specific pronunciation characteristics after using YouGlish.

To see if this increase was statistically significant, a paired-samples *t* test was performed. The results indicated that there was a statistically significant increase in the level of awareness of pronunciation, $t(39) = -6.386$, $p < .001$.

Table 4. Paired-Samples *t* Test for Pronunciation Awareness

Comparison	Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Pretest – Posttest	-0.69500	-6.386	39	< .001

This finding is consistent with the noticing hypothesis, which emphasizes conscious attention to linguistic features in language development. Repeated listening to authentic pronunciation may have increased students' awareness of pronunciation characteristics they had not previously noticed.

3.2.2. Perceived Advantages of YouGlish

Students' perceptions of the advantages of YouGlish are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5. Perceived Advantages of YouGlish

Test	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Pretest	40	2.9250	0.58300
Posttest	40	3.5250	0.61000

The mean rating for the perceived advantages of YouGlish increased from 2.9250 to 3.5250, indicating more favorable ratings after the intervention.

Table 6. Paired-Samples *t* Test for Perceived Advantages

Comparison	Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Pretest – Posttest	-0.60000	-10.014	39	< .001

As can be seen from Table 6, results showed a statistically significant difference between the two measures ($t(39) = -10.014$, $p < .001$).

It was in line with the technology acceptance model (Davis, 1989), students felt that YouGlish was easy to use and helpful for them to improve pronunciation. When they believe a tool could help them learn, they would be more likely to use it more. The students felt content with the program because they thought it was easy to use and have real pronunciation examples, and these examples can be found through searching for words pronounced by native speakers in different contexts easily and simply.

3.2.3. Perceived Challenges of Using YouGlish

Students generally expressed positive perceptions of YouGlish, but they also identified challenges in using it. Table 7 presents descriptive statistics for perceived challenges.

Table 7. *Perceived Challenges of Using YouGlish*

Test	N	M	SD
Pretest	40	2.8625	0.62000
Posttest	40	2.2710	0.58000

The mean rating for perceived challenges decreased from 2.8625 to 2.2710 after the intervention, suggesting difficulties became less as students got familiar with YouGlish.

Table 8. *Paired-Samples t-Test for Perceived Challenges*

Comparison	Mean difference	t	df	p
Pretest – Posttest	0.59150	6.596	39	< .001

Perceived challenges differed significantly between the pretest and posttest, $t(39) = 6.596$, $p < .001$.

This decrease may indicate that the more familiar students got with the technology, the less worried they became. Having used the platform before might have helped them understand how to use it and deal with any problems that came up.

The use of YouGlish may have helped people grasp pronunciation far more and gain a better opinion about learning with technology. Such findings are consistent with Schmidt's (2001) noticing hypothesis; numerous instances of hearing real pronunciation may have contributed to knowledge of phonological features. The positive evaluations of the tool correspond with the technology acceptance model, which suggests that learners will utilize only those technologies that are effective and easy to use.

4. Conclusion

The study examined the effectiveness of YouGlish in improving pronunciation comprehensibility among Vietnamese vocational college students learning English. The findings revealed that the speech of Vietnamese EFL learners became clearer after practicing with YouGlish videos, and the students felt more confident about their English skills after the practice time. The study findings support the noticing hypothesis (Schmidt, 2001) and technology acceptance model (Davis, 1989). These findings suggest YouGlish should be used as a connected link between education in class and practice outside classroom. However, the study was limited with few learners participating in the study, in a short time, and with no control group to have better comparison. Future research should use longer interventions, longitudinal and experimental designs with control groups, and more interviews to see if students can have their better pronunciation when speaking English freely.

❖ **Conflict of Interest:** *Authors have no conflict of interest to declare.*

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**HIỆU QUẢ ỨNG DỤNG YOUGLISH TRONG VIỆC CẢI THIỆN PHÁT ÂM TIẾNG ANH
ĐỐI VỚI SINH VIÊN NGÀNH Ô TÔ Ở TRƯỜNG DẠY NGHỀ
TẠI THÀNH PHỐ HỒ CHÍ MINH**

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TÓM TẮT

Phát âm tiếng Anh đóng vai trò quan trọng trong việc giao tiếp thành công. Tuy nhiên, trong bối cảnh tiếng Anh được dạy và học như là ngoại ngữ (EFL) như ở Việt Nam, nhiều sinh viên vẫn còn hạn chế cơ hội tiếp xúc với tiếng Anh giao tiếp thực tế, các mẫu phát âm, cũng như điều kiện phù hợp để luyện phát âm. Mục đích của bài viết là nghiên cứu tính hiệu quả của sử dụng công cụ YouGlish giúp cải thiện độ dễ hiểu trong phát âm tiếng Anh của sinh viên trường cao đẳng nghề ở Việt Nam. Nghiên cứu áp dụng phương pháp thực nghiệm với 40 sinh viên năm thứ hai ngành Công nghệ ô tô tại một trường cao đẳng nghề ở Thành phố Hồ Chí Minh, trong đó sinh viên sử dụng công cụ YouGlish trong bốn tuần. Dữ liệu phân tích được thu thông qua các bài kiểm tra đánh giá mức độ hiểu phát âm của sinh viên trước và sau thực nghiệm, kết hợp với bảng hỏi khảo sát nhận thức và đánh giá của sinh viên về công cụ này. Kết quả nghiên cứu cho thấy điểm số các bài kiểm tra tăng lên đáng kể sau quá trình thực nghiệm. Ngoài ra, kết quả cũng chỉ ra rằng sinh viên nhận thức rõ hơn về các đặc điểm phát âm và có những đánh giá tích cực về tính hữu ích cũng như sự dễ dàng sử dụng của công cụ. Kết quả này cho thấy việc thường xuyên sử dụng các video mẫu phát âm trên YouGlish có thể giúp sinh viên ngành Công nghệ ô tô nhận ra các đặc trưng ngữ âm quan trọng và cải thiện giao tiếp tiếng Anh. Nghiên cứu cũng đề xuất những khuyến nghị về việc ứng dụng công nghệ như YouGlish trong dạy và học ngoại ngữ.

Từ khóa: phát âm; dạy và học ngữ âm có sử dụng công nghệ; sinh viên nghề Việt Nam học tiếng Anh; YouGlish