

Click, Watch, and Speak: The Effect of YouGlish on Kuwaiti EFL Students' Speaking Achievement

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DOI Link: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v16-i6/28217>

Published Date: 12 June 2026

Abstract

Despite growing interest in digital tools for speaking skills, research on YouGlish's impact on EFL learners' speaking achievement, particularly in Kuwait, remains limited. This study examined the effect of integrating YouGlish in English lessons on Kuwaiti EFL students' speaking achievement and their experience of using the tool. A mixed-method approach with explanatory sequential design was adopted. Eighty-four first-year English major students were randomly assigned to the experimental or the control group. The speaking achievement test was used to collect the quantitative data before and after the intervention, while a semi-structured interview was used to collect the qualitative data from 12 students who were purposively selected based on their post-test scores. An ANCOVA was conducted, and the results indicated a significant positive effect of YouGlish on speaking achievement. The highest improvement was in the lexical resource, followed by fluency and coherence, pronunciation, and grammatical range and accuracy. Thematic analysis of the interviews revealed that students found YouGlish to be entertaining and supportive of development of their pronunciation and fluency. Kuwaiti EFL students should be encouraged to use YouGlish for independent practice, while teachers integrate it into lessons. Policymakers should support this by providing training and adequate infrastructure.

Keywords: YouGlish, EFL Speaking Achievement, Kuwaiti Learners, Mixed-Methods Research, Technology-Enhanced Language Learning

Introduction

Technology plays a significant role in delivering education to EFL learners outside of school (Nurhidayat et al., 2024). Technology has also introduced some tools, such as YouTube, FORVO, and YouGlish which aim to enhance learners' speaking skills by improving their

phonetic accuracy, intonation, stress, and rhythm (Asratie et al., 2023; Nguyen & Pham, 2022; Sun, 2023). The importance of technology in EFL learning has grown due to the increasing number of learners who wish to use English fluently for communicative purposes (Diyab et al., 2013). Further, Lezaraton (1996) supported this by noting that speaking in a second or foreign language is often considered the most demanding of the four language skills. This skill is a primary focus for English language learners and should encompass fluency and coherence, lexical resources, grammatical range and accuracy, and pronunciation, as emphasized by (Sosas, 2021). Research on EFL speaking development is essential, as mastering speaking requires integrating linguistics, pragmatic, and conversational skills, yet many learners, especially EFL learners, struggle to use them effectively in real-life contexts (Alvarez et al., 2024; Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). Speaking achievement pertains to the skilful and appropriate use of oral language in a variety of learning environments, both in and out of the classroom. Richards and Schmidt (2013) emphasized that speaking achievement involves delivering speech with speed, smoothness, and accuracy, resulting in communication that is both natural and fluent. Speaking is a multifaceted skill requiring fluency, coherence, a strong lexical repertoire, grammatical accuracy, and clear pronunciation (Aziz & Kashinathan, 2021). Fluency enables smooth expression, coherence ensures logical organization, and lexical resources provide contextually appropriate vocabulary. Grammatical accuracy and precise pronunciation further enhance clarity and intelligibility, making effective communication possible (Quaid, 2018; Renandya & Nguyen, 2022).

Studies done in the Kuwaiti EFL context has confirmed that Kuwaiti EFL students face significant challenges in various aspects of speaking skills (AlAjlan & Ani, 2023; Almutairi, 2021). Further, the weakness of spoken English among Kuwaiti EFL students has been noticed to be a wide spread problem for Kuwaiti EFL students. These students often struggle to speak fluently due to repetition and hesitation, fail to speak coherently with appropriate cohesive features, lack the ability to use a wide range of vocabulary flexibly to convey precise meanings, and do not utilize a full range of grammatical structures and pronunciation features with precision. In the Kuwaiti EFL context, low motivation, limited focus on speaking, inadequate resources, and minimal use of speaking technology highlight a research gap on its impact on Kuwaiti EFL students' speaking achievement.

In the Kuwaiti EFL context, factors such as low motivation, limited emphasis on speaking, insufficient resources, and minimal integration of speaking technologies reveal a research gap regarding their impact on students' speaking achievement. Recently, Assaf (2023) has highlighted key challenges in the Kuwaiti EFL context, including low student motivation for speaking activities, limited emphasis on speaking skills in the syllabus, and insufficient use of technology, such as language labs and auditory aids, in teaching practices. It has been highlighted that a major challenge faced by EFL learners is the limited number of speaking classes and inadequate resources (Alghasab et al., 2020; Almutairi, 2021). In addressing these challenges, researchers such as Atli and Bergil (2012) found that students expressed dissatisfaction with their pronunciation, accuracy, fluency, grammar, and diction, often lacking awareness of English sound structures and the ability to articulate them due to insufficient use of educational speaking technology tools. Although there have been national and international studies on using educational speaking technology, there is a lack of research

specifically on the effects of these tools on Kuwaiti EFL students' speaking achievement. Notably, the integration of educational speaking technology has been an overlooked aspect of teaching speaking skills in this study area. Despite the many benefits that technology offers for enhancing speaking skills, both EFL students and teachers in Kuwait are not fully leveraging these tools, which limits the overall effectiveness and sustainability of learning outcomes (Alghasab et al., 2020; Saad et al., 2024). Traditional teaching methods still dominate many classrooms in Kuwait, with teachers primarily relying on printed handouts that focus on language skills but fail to incorporate modern, technology-driven resources that support authentic speaking practice (Alghasab et al., 2020; Almutairi, 2021; Saad et al., 2024).

Technology significantly enhances speaking skills by providing learners with interactive, authentic, and personalized opportunities to practice and improve their oral communication. Recent studies have shown that YouGlish can improve the speaking and pronunciation skills of foreign language learners. Fu and Yang (2019) explained that oral skills, particularly word usage, have improved significantly. Recently, Prastyo et al. (2022) have reported that 90% of students accepted YouGlish as a fun and effective tool for pronunciation assistance, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Sahboun et al. (2023) and Quispe Vargas et al. (2024) also explained that learners who use YouGlish have improved their speaking skills, including vocabulary and pronunciation. Based on the results of these studies, it can be seen that YouGlish can provide opportunities for self-directed learning that is realistic, particularly in overcoming the limitations of manual teaching. Although various educational technologies have been used in EFL contexts, no research has investigated the use of YouGlish in speaking courses in the Kuwaiti EFL context. Thus, this study aims at filling this gap by using a quasi-experimental research design to investigate the impact of using YouGlish on Kuwaiti EFL students' speaking achievement in terms of fluency, coherence, accuracy, and vocabulary compared to traditional instruction. The study also aims at investigating Kuwaiti EFL students' experiences of using YouGlish to develop their speaking skills.

Literature Review

A growing body of research highlights the significant role of YouGlish in enhancing EFL learners' speaking performance across different contexts, proficiency levels, and learning environments. Studies consistently report improvements in pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, coherence, and learner autonomy, as well as heightened motivation and positive attitudes toward English learning. For instance, Fu and Yang (2019), through a mixed-methods design, found notable oral skill improvements—especially in word usage—alongside enhanced self-directed learning, though challenges such as the time required to locate suitable clips and the lack of translation features were reported. Similarly, Sardegna and Jarosz (2022) demonstrated that high-engagement learners using YouGlish for English word-stress practice made considerable progress in prediction and perception skills, gaining self-efficacy, while those with limited engagement struggled without teacher scaffolding.

Perception-based studies further support these findings. Prastyo et al. (2022) and Romayanti et al. (2024) found that most learners viewed YouGlish as an enjoyable and effective pronunciation tool that supports confidence and engagement, especially during online learning conditions. These positive attitudes underscore the role of YouGlish as an accessible and motivating technological aid in speaking instruction. Experimental and quasi-

experimental research provides further evidence of measurable performance gains. Sahboun et al. (2023) and Asratie et al. (2023) reported significant improvements across pronunciation, fluency, grammar, and vocabulary when YouGlish was integrated into instruction. Learners in the experimental groups also demonstrated higher engagement and motivation than those receiving traditional instruction.

Additional empirical support comes from Alsuhaibani et al. (2024) and Quispe Vargas et al. (2024). The former demonstrated that targeted pronunciation training with YouGlish, particularly for consonant clusters, enhanced both immediate and long-term pronunciation accuracy through authentic, high-variability input. The latter confirmed that YouGlish use significantly improved learners' vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar while boosting their confidence and willingness to communicate in English. Collectively, these studies establish YouGlish as a pedagogically valuable tool that combines authentic input, learner autonomy, and technological interactivity to foster both linguistic development and motivation. Nonetheless, researchers emphasize the need for structured teacher support, guided practice, and thoughtful pedagogical integration to maximize its long-term benefits in EFL contexts.

Although YouGlish has demonstrated strong potential in diverse EFL environments, no empirical study has yet examined its impact on speaking achievement among Kuwaiti EFL learners. Taking this into account, this study addresses both a contextual and pedagogical gap by exploring how YouGlish can enhance students' exposure to authentic language input and improve their speaking performance within a formal classroom setting.

Research Gap and Contributions of the Study

This section presents the problems encountered by Kuwaiti EFL students in developing their speaking skills, identifies the gaps in previous studies, and highlights the contributions of the present study. The section concludes with the research questions addressed in this study.

Although previous studies have highlighted the usefulness of YouGlish in improving pronunciation, vocabulary learning, fluency, and learner motivation in different EFL contexts (e.g., Asratie et al., 2023; Fu & Yang, 2019; Prastyo et al., 2022; Sardegna & Jarosz, 2022), some important gaps remain in previous studies. In the Kuwaiti EFL context, students continue to experience considerable difficulties in speaking English effectively. Previous studies in the Kuwaiti EFL context have shown that many Kuwaiti EFL learners struggle with fluency because of hesitation and repetition, encounter difficulties in organizing ideas coherently, and demonstrate limited lexical range and grammatical accuracy in spoken communication (AlAjlan & Ani, 2023; Almutairi, 2021). Additionally, studies in the Kuwaiti EFL context have reported that Kuwaiti EFL students also face challenges related to pronunciation, stress patterns, and natural speech production, partly because of limited exposure to authentic spoken English and the continued reliance on traditional teaching methods that provide insufficient opportunities for meaningful speaking practice (Alghasab et al., 2020; Assaf, 2023). Furthermore, speaking instruction in many Kuwaiti classrooms still places limited emphasis on technology-enhanced learning and authentic communicative input despite the increasing importance of digital tools in language education (Alshuraiaan & Almfleh, 2023; Saad et al., 2024). Consequently, many students remain unable to communicate confidently and naturally in English, particularly in real-life communicative

situations. These challenges highlight the need for effective technology-based interventions that can support Kuwaiti EFL students' speaking development in more authentic, interactive, and engaging ways.

Despite the growing body of research on YouGlish, many previous studies have focused mainly on pronunciation development or learners' perceptions of this tool, with limited attention given to speaking achievement as a multidimensional construct involving fluency and coherence, lexical resource, grammatical range and accuracy, and pronunciation. Although some studies reported general improvements in speaking skills (Fu & Yang, 2019; Quispe Vargas et al., 2024), few examined these speaking components comprehensively using standardized speaking assessment criteria. In addition, much of the existing research relied primarily on quantitative or perception-based approaches, while relatively few studies employed mixed-methods designs to examine both measurable speaking outcomes and learners' experiences with the tool simultaneously. Furthermore, despite the growing emphasis on technology-enhanced language learning in the Gulf region, no empirical study has investigated the effect of YouGlish on Kuwaiti EFL learners' speaking achievement in higher education contexts. Therefore, further research is needed to examine whether YouGlish can effectively support the development of speaking achievement among Kuwaiti EFL learners.

Accordingly, this study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on speaking development. Contextually, it extends research on technology-enhanced language learning to the Kuwaiti EFL context, which remains underrepresented in previous research on YouGlish. Conceptually, the study examines speaking achievement as a multidimensional construct by investigating the effect of YouGlish on fluency and coherence, lexical resource, grammatical range and accuracy, and pronunciation. Methodologically, the study employs a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design that combines ANCOVA analysis of speaking achievement with qualitative exploration of learners' experiences, thereby providing a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of YouGlish on speaking development. Pedagogically, the findings provide practical insights for teachers, curriculum designers, and policymakers regarding the integration of authentic video-based tools into speaking instruction to support learners' pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary development, and communicative confidence.

Specifically, the present study investigated the effect of integrating YouGlish into Kuwaiti EFL speaking courses on students' speaking achievement, as well as their experiences of using the tool. Accordingly, the study addressed the following research questions:

1. How does the use of YouGlish affect Kuwaiti EFL students' speaking achievement in terms of fluency and coherence, lexical resource, grammatical range and accuracy, and pronunciation?
2. What are Kuwaiti EFL students' experiences of using YouGlish in developing their speaking achievement?

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design (Creswell & Creswell, 2023) to investigate the effect of YouGlish on Kuwaiti EFL students' speaking achievement. In

the quantitative phase, a quasi-experimental approach was implemented with 84 undergraduate students from Kuwait University, divided into experimental and control groups. Data were collected through pre- and post-speaking tests assessing four components—fluency and coherence, lexical resource, grammatical range and accuracy, and pronunciation—based on IELTS criteria. The qualitative phase followed, involving semi-structured interviews with 12 students from the experimental group to explore their experiences with YouGlish in developing speaking performance. Integrating quantitative and qualitative data provided a comprehensive understanding of the research problem and enabled deeper interpretation of statistical results. This mixed-methods design was selected for its ability to combine numerical measurement with rich contextual insights, thereby enhancing the validity and credibility of the findings (Ary et al., 2013; Gay et al., 2012; Mills et al., 2022).

Context and Sample

This study was conducted in the Department of English Language and Literature at the College of Arts, Kuwait University. The department emphasizes linguistic competence, critical thinking, and cultural awareness through a curriculum that integrates theoretical and practical aspects of language learning. Its focus on technology-enhanced instruction and modern infrastructure provides an ideal context for examining the effectiveness of YouGlish in developing EFL students' speaking achievement.

The sample consisted of first-year English major students, who often face challenges in achieving fluency and confidence in speaking English (Almutairi, 2021). In the quantitative phase, 84 students were selected through convenience sampling ((Etikan et al., 2016) based on their enrolment in a speaking course and availability for the intervention. They were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups, a common approach in educational research when random sampling is not feasible (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). For the qualitative phase, purposive sampling was used to select 12 students from the experimental group, representing high, average, and low achievers. This sample size aligns with recommendations for achieving data saturation and ensuring diverse perspectives (Guest et al., 2020; Hennink & Kaiser, 2022; Rahimi, 2024). The study adhered to the institutional guidelines, with approval obtained from the context of the study to do the research. Participants were informed of the purpose and procedures of the study. Further, written consent was secured prior to participation. Confidentiality was ensured through coded identifiers and participants had the right to withdraw at any stage. Data were used solely for research purpose and stored securely. Ethical principles of informed consent, privacy, and voluntary participation were maintained throughout (Cohen et al., 2002; Creswell & Poth, 2016).

Intervention Program

The intervention program aimed to enhance Kuwaiti EFL students' speaking achievement by integrating YouGlish into their English-Speaking Course. The instructor, trained by an applied linguistics expert, used YouGlish to develop students' pronunciation, vocabulary, and fluency through exposure to authentic native speaker input. The experimental group practiced by listening, recording, and tracking their speech using YouGlish, while the control group followed traditional methods such as printed materials and peer-instructor interactions. Weekly lessons focused on specific themes—travel, technology, friendship, and professional

communication—incorporating debates, dialogues, and presentations to promote coherence and fluency. YouGlish supported self-evaluation as students compared their recordings with native models, reinforcing communicative and technology-enhanced learning principles (Asratie et al., 2023; Gilakjani, 2016; Lai & Gu, 2011). Pre- and post-tests measured improvements in speaking in terms of fluency and coherence, lexical resource, grammatical range and accuracy, and pronunciation, allowing comparison between the experimental and control groups.

Data Collection

In the quantitative phase, a speaking achievement test was administered to evaluate the effectiveness of using YouGlish compared to traditional instruction (Appendix A). Adapted from the IELTS speaking test, it assessed four key components: fluency and coherence, lexical resource, grammatical range and accuracy, and pronunciation—commonly used in language performance evaluation (Brown, 2006; Dashti & Razmjoo, 2020). The test was rated by the researcher and two experienced IELTS examiners to ensure balanced judgment, with independent scoring applied to reduce bias. Inter-rater reliability was calculated using intraclass correlation coefficients (ICCs), and discrepancies were resolved through consensus. The use of standardized IELTS descriptors enhanced the validity and reliability of the assessment. The speaking achievement test was evaluated by the researcher and two experienced IELTS raters, ensuring a thorough assessment of fluency, coherence, lexical resource, grammatical accuracy, and pronunciation. Inter-rater reliability was high, with an ICC value of 0.82 (95% CI: 0.76–0.88), indicating excellent agreement (Koo & Li, 2016). The test's validity was strengthened through the use of IELTS band descriptors and expert judgment from the raters, ensuring alignment with international standards and accurately measuring speaking proficiency (Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Fulcher & Davidson, 2007; Weir, 2005). The test involved independent scoring by the raters to reduce bias, and any discrepancies were resolved through consensus. The use of standardized IELTS descriptors further enhanced the validity and reliability of the assessment, ensuring a consistent and objective evaluation process.

In the qualitative phase of the study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 participants from the experimental group. An interview protocol was developed, consisting of open-ended questions designed to explore participants' experiences with the intervention program (Appendix B). Interviews were conducted in a quiet setting to ensure comfort, audio-recorded with participants' consent, and transcribed verbatim for accuracy (Creswell & Poth, 2016; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The transcriptions were reviewed and organized for thematic analysis following the framework of Braun and Clarke (2006). This approach allowed for a flexible yet systematic exploration of participants' perspectives, providing rich qualitative data to complement the quantitative findings.

Data Analysis

The assessment of speaking achievement was conducted using a customized rubric adapted from the IELTS Speaking Band Descriptors, focusing on fluency and coherence, lexical resource, grammatical range and accuracy, and pronunciation. Drawing also on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), the rubric ensured comprehensive and standardized evaluation of students' speaking proficiency before and after the intervention (Heidari Vinchek et al., 2024). It enabled consistent measurement of key competencies such

as fluency, organization of ideas, lexical range, grammatical accuracy, and pronunciation clarity, thereby minimizing subjectivity and ensuring reliable comparison between pre- and post-test performance (Asratie et al., 2023; Dashti & Razmjoo, 2020). Quantitative data were analysed using both descriptive statistics and analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) to determine the effect of YouGlish on speaking achievement. Descriptive statistics summarized students' pre-test and post-test scores, while ANCOVA compared post-test means between the experimental and control groups, controlling for pre-test differences (Pallant, 2020). Statistical significance was set at $p < .05$, and effect sizes were calculated to determine the magnitude of the intervention's impact. Assumptions of ANCOVA—linearity, homogeneity of regression slopes, normality, and homogeneity of variances—were tested and met, confirming the robustness of the results (Field, 2024).

The qualitative data were analysed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) to explore students' experiences with YouGlish. Semi-structured interviews with 12 participants from the experimental group provided in-depth insights into their perceptions of the tool's effectiveness. Both deductive and inductive coding were applied to identify recurring patterns, which resulted in one main theme, which is benefits of using YouGlish for speaking skills with three codes. Representative quotes are presented in tables, when reporting the results, to enhance clarity and facilitate the connection between the theme, codes, and participant responses. Data saturation was achieved when no new insights emerged (Guest et al., 2020), ensuring credibility and comprehensive representation of participants' experiences.

Table 1
Codes for reporting interviews analysis

	Theme	Codes
1	Benefits of using YouGlish for speaking skills	1. Improvement in specific speaking skills (e.g., pronunciation, fluency) 2. Support in understanding correct pronunciation and word usage 3. Enhanced fluency and coherence

Results

Research Question 1: Effect of YouGlish on Speaking Achievement

As shown in Table 2, descriptive statistics were computed to compare the post-test overall speaking achievement of students in both the experimental and control groups. As shown in Table 2, the experimental group ($M = 79.10$, $SD = 5.57$, $N = 42$) obtained a higher mean score than the control group ($M = 70.55$, $SD = 5.48$, $N = 42$). The difference of approximately 8.5 points suggests that students who used YouGlish outperformed their peers who followed traditional instruction in terms of overall speaking achievement. The total mean score across both groups was 74.82 ($SD = 6.97$), indicating a moderate level of overall speaking achievement among all participants. While these descriptive results show that the experimental group achieved higher scores than the control group, it was important to examine whether this difference remained significant after controlling for pre-test overall speaking performance. To address this, ANCOVA was conducted with post-test overall speaking scores as the dependent variable, group as the independent variable, and pre-test scores as the covariate. The following section presents the results of this analysis.

Table 2

Descriptive statistics for overall post-test speaking achievement by group

Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Experimental	79.0952	5.56912	42
Control	70.5476	5.47813	42
Total	74.8214	6.97355	84

Table 3 presents the ANCOVA results examining the effect of YouGlish on students' overall speaking achievement, with pre-test scores entered as a covariate to control for initial differences between groups. The findings indicate that the covariate (the total scores in the pre-test) was not statistically significant, $F(1, 81) = 0.69$, $p = .409$, partial $\eta^2 = .008$. This suggests that students' prior speaking performance did not exert a meaningful influence on their post-test scores. In other words, the differences observed in post-test achievement can be attributed primarily to the intervention rather than to pre-existing disparities in students' speaking ability. This result strengthens the internal validity of the study, as it shows that pre-test scores did not confound the outcomes.

Importantly, the main effect of group was found to be statistically significant, $F(1, 81) = 35.63$, $p < .001$, with a large effect size (partial $\eta^2 = .305$). This indicates that students who received instruction with the support of YouGlish achieved substantially higher post-test scores compared to their peers in the control group, even after adjusting for initial performance levels. The adjusted means show a clear advantage for the experimental group, highlighting that the use of YouGlish contributed positively to students' overall speaking achievement.

The overall model was also significant, $F(2, 81) = 25.39$, $p < .001$, with an R^2 of .385 (Adjusted $R^2 = .370$). This means that approximately 38.5% of the variance in post-test speaking achievement can be explained by the model, which includes both group membership and pre-test scores. This proportion of explained variance is considered substantial in educational research, underscoring the strong impact of the intervention. Taken together, these results provide robust evidence that YouGlish was effective in enhancing the speaking achievement of Kuwaiti EFL students.

Table 3

Effect of YouGlish on students' overall speaking achievement

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	1555.407	2	777.703	25.39	.000	.385
Intercept	10051.104	1	10051.104	328.1	.000	.802
Total scores in pre-test	21.109	1	21.109	.689	.409	.008
Group	1091.278	1	1091.278	35.62	.000	.305
Error	2480.915	81	30.629			
Total	474289.000	84				
Corrected Total	4036.321	83				

R Squared = .385 (Adjusted R Squared = .370)

Further, ANCOVA analyses were conducted to examine the effect of YouGlish on four components of speaking achievement: fluency and coherence, lexical resource, grammatical range and accuracy, and pronunciation. Table 4 summarizes the results for each component. The analysis for fluency and coherence revealed a significant main effect of group, $F(1, 81) = 12.28$, $p = .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .132$, with the model explaining 20% of the variance ($R^2 = .20$, adjusted $R^2 = .18$). This indicates that students in the experimental group demonstrated higher post-test fluency and coherence scores than those in the control group after adjusting for pre-test differences. The pre-test covariate was not significant ($p = .135$), confirming that initial group differences did not influence post-test results.

For lexical resource, the ANCOVA showed a highly significant group effect, $F(1, 81) = 34.39$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .298$, with the model accounting for 35% of the variance ($R^2 = .35$, adjusted $R^2 = .34$). This result indicates that the experimental group achieved markedly higher post-test scores in lexical resource than the control group, after controlling for pre-test performance. The pre-test covariate was non-significant ($p = .539$), suggesting that the two groups were equivalent at the start of the intervention. The analysis of grammatical range and accuracy also revealed a significant effect of group, $F(1, 81) = 5.54$, $p = .021$, partial $\eta^2 = .064$. Although the effect size was smaller than that observed for other components, the model still explained 7% of the variance ($R^2 = .07$, adjusted $R^2 = .05$). The pre-test scores did not significantly influence the results ($p = .945$), indicating comparable starting levels of grammatical accuracy between the two groups. Finally, the analysis for pronunciation yielded a significant group effect, $F(1, 81) = 15.99$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .165$, with the model explaining 27% of the variance ($R^2 = .27$, adjusted $R^2 = .25$). Participants in the experimental group achieved higher post-test pronunciation scores than those in the control group, while pre-test differences were not significant ($p = .235$).

Across all four components, the ANCOVA results demonstrate that the YouGlish intervention had a statistically significant effect on post-test speaking achievement. The pre-test covariates were non-significant in all analyses, confirming that group differences observed in the post-test scores were attributable to the intervention rather than pre-existing disparities in speaking proficiency. The proportion of explained variance ranged from 7% to 35%, indicating that the model accounted for a meaningful portion of performance differences between the experimental and control groups.

Table 4

ANCOVA results for the effect of YouGlish on the four components of speaking achievement

Component	F(1,81)	p	Partial η^2	R ²	Adj. R ²
Fluency and Coherence	12.28	.001	.132	.20	.18
Lexical Resource	34.39	.000	.298	.35	.34
Grammatical Range and Accuracy	5.54	.021	.064	.07	.05
Pronunciation	15.99	.000	.165	.27	.25

Research Question 2: Students' Experiences with Youglish in Developing Speaking

One of the aspects that semi structured interviews focused on is whether the integration of YouGlish in the speaking course improved students' speaking achievement. Three codes were generated under this theme: (a) improvement in pronunciation and fluency, (b) support in

understanding correct pronunciation and word usage, and (c) enhanced fluency and coherence.

Improvement in Pronunciation and Fluency

Concerning improvement in speaking skills in terms of pronunciation and fluency, Table 7 presents participants' views on how using YouGlish in their speaking classes contributed to improvements in their pronunciation and fluency. Excerpts given in Table 7 reveal a pattern of increased confidence and clearer speech among Kuwaiti EFL learners. Most of the responses from the interviewees highlight the specific benefits of YouGlish in enhancing speaking skills among the participants. Participants widely agreed that YouGlish contributed to noticeable improvements in pronunciation and fluency. As shown in Table 7, students described how exposure to native speaker models enhanced their accuracy and confidence in speaking. Participant 1 mentioned that their pronunciation improved substantially and that they now speak more naturally after using YouGlish. Similarly, Participant 2 highlighted progress in pronouncing specific English words, while Participant 6 emphasized greater confidence when articulating difficult sounds. Participant 11 explained that watching native speakers pronounce words helped them practice effectively, while Participant 12 noted that hearing multi-syllable words in natural speech improved their ability to apply correct stress patterns. Overall, the excerpts indicate that YouGlish supported both segmental and suprasegmental aspects of pronunciation and provided authentic input that strengthened learners' confidence and fluency in English communication.

Table 7

Excerpts on improvement in pronunciation and fluency

Participant	Excerpt
Participant 1	<i>"My pronunciation improved a lot. I also feel I speak more naturally after using YouGlish in this semester."</i>
Participant 2	<i>"I have seen a big improvement in how I pronounce certain English words."</i>
Participant 6	<i>"My pronunciation... yes, it was my pronunciation of words. I often had problems pronouncing different words, but now I feel more confident."</i>
Participant 11	<i>"It helped a lot with my pronunciation... after watching how native speakers say them on YouGlish, I was able to practice and improve."</i>
Participant 12	<i>"It was mostly for my pronunciation... I have trouble with the stresses of the words with more than one syllable, so hearing them in natural speech via YouGlish helped me get it right."</i>

Support in Correct Pronunciation and Word Usage

The analysis of the interviews also revealed that YouGlish was useful in supporting students to understand correct pronunciation and word usage. Table 8 presents excerpts from participants that highlight their experiences in improving their understanding of pronunciation and word usage through YouGlish. Students also reported that YouGlish helped them understand the correct pronunciation and contextual use of words. As presented in Table 8, many learners found that repeated exposure to authentic speech clarified how words are pronounced and used in various contexts. Participant 1, for example, explained that hearing difficult words like entrepreneur and subtle multiple times helped them master correct pronunciation. Participant 6 appreciated hearing diverse native accents, noting that the same word can be pronounced differently yet remain correct. Similarly, Participant 7 found YouGlish more effective than traditional dictionaries because it

demonstrated words in realistic sentences. Other participants described how YouGlish enhanced their listening and contextual understanding. Participant 9 observed that exposure to fast, natural speech improved both listening and speaking, while Participant 11 valued hearing how the same word could vary across formal and informal contexts. Participant 12 added that understanding meaning in different sentences made learning more authentic.

Table 8

Excerpts on understanding correct pronunciation and word usage

Participant	Excerpt
Participant 1	<i>"Before, I wasn't sure how to say some difficult words like entrepreneur or subtle. But when I hear them many times in different sentences, I can repeat them correctly."</i>
Participant 6	<i>"I hear different pronunciations of the word by different native speakers. I also noticed that the same word can be pronounced differently but still be correct."</i>
Participant 7	<i>"It showed the words used in sentences... it is better than a dictionary because it is more realistic."</i>
Participant 9	<i>"It made me understand how a word can sound different in fast speech... it helped me improve my listening and speaking skills."</i>
Participant 11	<i>"I could hear how the same word is used in formal and informal situations, which helped me understand how to use it naturally."</i>
Participant 12	<i>"I liked when it shows the students how the same word is used in different sentences. I found that the meaning changes on the sentence or context."</i>

Enhanced Fluency and Coherence

The analysis of the interviews has also showed YouGlish played a significant role in helping students enhance their fluency and coherence in speaking English. As shown in Table 9, Participants explained that YouGlish helped them sound more natural, speak with fewer pauses, and organize their ideas more coherently. As shown in Table 9, Participant 1 shared that using phrases learned from YouGlish reduced hesitation and improved smoothness. Participant 4 emphasized that exposure to natural phrases made their speech sound more conversational and spontaneous. Participant 7 noted that repeated exposure to similar sentence patterns helped them speak more fluently and stall less, while Participant 12 highlighted that observing pausing and emphasis in authentic speech improved their coherence and delivery. In other words, Participant 12 found that YouGlish helped them improve their coherence in speech by showing how to properly pause and place emphasis on certain points. By learning these subtle features of spoken English, they were able to give their speech a more structured and logical flow, enhancing overall coherence. Overall, students perceived YouGlish as a tool that not only refined their pronunciation but also enhanced the rhythm, flow, and organization of their spoken English.

Table 9

Excerpts on the effect of YouGlish on fluency and coherence

Participant	Excerpts
Participant 1	<i>"I used some phrases I picked up from YouGlish, and I didn't pause too much because I had heard how they are used. It helped me keep talking more smoothly."</i>
Participant 4	<i>"I learnt some common phrases that people use naturally, which has helped me speak more like a real conversation instead of something memorized or robotic."</i>
Participant 7	<i>"I can see the same word or sentence structure over and over. I can start using them naturally when I speak. I am more fluent, and I stall less."</i>
Participant 12	<i>"Coherence-wise, it showed me how to pause and put emphasis on certain points in speech, so I have been trying to do that."</i>

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that integrating YouGlish into English language instruction significantly enhanced Kuwaiti EFL students' speaking achievement, particularly in lexical resource and pronunciation. This aligns with previous research highlighting YouGlish's effectiveness in developing learners' oral proficiency through exposure to authentic spoken English. Similar to Fu and Yang (2019), who reported marked gains in word usage and self-directed learning, the present study found that repeated exposure to contextualized video input supported vocabulary expansion and natural word use. Likewise, the improvement in pronunciation echoes the results of Sardegna and Jarosz (2022) and Alsuhaibani et al. (2024), who found that YouGlish improved learners' perception and production of stress patterns and consonant clusters through high-variability input. The positive impact of YouGlish on fluency and coherence also supports findings by Sahboun et al. (2023) and Asratie et al. (2023), who demonstrated that authentic, technology-based materials fostered smoother speech production and more coherent expression compared to traditional instruction. This study further extends those results by confirming that even in a Kuwaiti EFL context—where access to authentic spoken input is often limited—YouGlish can facilitate more natural and confident speech. Qualitative findings complement the quantitative results, revealing that students perceived YouGlish as an effective tool for improving pronunciation, fluency, and vocabulary use. These perceptions are consistent with those reported by Prastyo et al. (2022) and Romayanti et al. (2024), where learners described YouGlish as enjoyable, accessible, and conducive to autonomous learning. Students in the current study also highlighted increased confidence and enjoyment, suggesting that YouGlish promotes not only linguistic improvement but also affective engagement, an essential component of successful language learning.

Overall, this study reinforces the growing evidence that YouGlish is a powerful supplementary tool for EFL speaking instruction. By combining authentic input with learner autonomy and technological engagement, it helps bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-world communication. Yet, as with previous studies, its effectiveness depends on thoughtful integration within communicative and scaffolded instructional frameworks.

Practical Recommendations

Kuwaiti EFL students are encouraged to make regular, independent use of YouGlish and similar digital tools to strengthen their speaking practice beyond the classroom. They should replay videos, imitate native speakers' pronunciation, intonation, and stress patterns, and take notes on vocabulary use in authentic communicative contexts. Setting personal goals—such as mastering new words or practicing specific pronunciation targets daily—can help them build confidence and fluency. Teachers should systematically integrate YouGlish into speaking lessons through pronunciation drills, role-plays, and guided vocabulary exploration tasks to expose students to authentic language input and diverse accents. They should also support learners who struggle with fast or accented speech by pre-teaching key vocabulary, adjusting playback speed, and providing feedback modelled on authentic speech examples. Policymakers should promote the inclusion of innovative tools like YouGlish in national curricula, provide professional development for teachers on technology integration, and ensure schools are equipped with reliable internet access and multimedia facilities to sustain effective implementation.

Conclusion and Future Studies

The results of the study suggest that the YouGlish intervention significantly enhanced Kuwaiti EFL students' vocabulary use and access to appropriate lexical items during speaking tasks, likely due to the rich, contextualized exposure to authentic language input it provides. Pronunciation showed the second-highest improvement, indicating that consistent auditory input and imitation of native speaker models contributed to better articulation, stress, and intonation. Fluency and coherence also improved moderately, reflecting YouGlish's role in supporting smoother and more organized speech production. Although grammatical range and accuracy showed the smallest gains, this suggests that grammar development may require explicit, sustained instruction alongside technology-based practice. Overall, the study demonstrates the pedagogical value of integrating YouGlish into EFL speaking courses. By bridging classroom learning with real-world communication, YouGlish fosters authentic engagement, learner autonomy, and communicative competence.

Future research should examine the long-term effects of YouGlish and similar technology-based tools on EFL learners' speaking development, focusing on sustained improvements in pronunciation, fluency, and grammatical accuracy. Continued research should explore the long-term impact of YouGlish and its integration with explicit grammar instruction and other technological tools to maximize its effectiveness in diverse EFL contexts. Studies with larger and more diverse samples across different educational contexts could enhance the generalizability of findings and reveal variations in learners' responses to technology-enhanced instruction. Comparative studies between YouGlish and other emerging digital tools, such as AI-powered feedback applications, are also recommended to determine which technologies most effectively support speaking proficiency in EFL settings.

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