Teacher as a YouTuber:
Investigating Teacher-Generated Asynchronous Videos, Students' Engagement, and the Teacher-Student Relationship

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Abstract—This qualitative case study explores the use of teacher-generated videos uploaded on YouTube and their influences on teacher-middle school students' relationships in social science classes in Istanbul, Turkey. The teacher has prepared twelve videos for eighty students in four different classrooms for three months. The videos' content and language were analysed using inductive thematic analysis. Interviews were held with the teacher and ten randomly chosen students. The data generated through the interviews were analysed using inductive thematic analysis by two Turkish-English speaking researchers. The video content analysis revealed that media richness, manipulation of self, and informality had played a central role in student engagement and their attitude towards the teacher and the lessons. The language used in the videos had a conversational tone, including humour and prompts, which attracted the students' attention and created a sense of community. The nature of teacher-generated videos achieved parental engagement and a sense of pride and positively impacted the classroom climate.

Keywords—teacher-generated videos, YouTube, social media, teacher-student relationship, asynchronous videos, social presence

1   Introduction

This research explores a teacher's (Ali) use of a video-based social-media platform, YouTube. This paper will investigate the role of a teacher's performance with a video-sharing social-media tool. The teacher will be seen as the main actor in building a meaningful interaction with his students through YouTube. The nature of the teacher's communicative acts in the videos and their influences, if any, on the students' understanding of the teacher/student relationship will be investigated. This study will provide a better understanding of the use of YouTube as a teaching tool for middle school students.

1.1   Self-presentation through digital technology

Before investigating the use of digital platforms in education, it is helpful to explore how self-presentation and teacher-student interactions could occur in digitally mediated environments. First, it needs to be understood how one party (in this study, teachers) might reflect their identity on a platform where they know they are being followed and recorded and why they put forward a particular identity. Goffman [1], one of the earliest thinkers who theorised self-presentation, stated that people could be theorised as performers and therefore present a performance in front of others to be accepted to avoid disapproval. So, humans act to give "an impression to others which it is in his interests to convey" [2, p.4]. Goffman claimed that such representation aims to put the best personality forward and create a favourable perception to reach a particular goal. As Leary [3] also puts it, self-presentation is the process of controlling how other people perceive one. People might use language, products, brands, symbols or various artefacts to express themselves to others [4].

It may be claimed that people who present themselves on social media might show differences from their presentation in face-to-face contexts, even though the strategies that people use might not be so different. Digital media might provide more opportunities to use various communication channels to achieve the desired target. For instance, Schau and Gilly [5] found that personal website users consciously manage their identity based on the assumption that others observe them. Furthermore, presenting oneself on online platforms aims to put the desired image forward for others [6]. As analysing the online and offline teacher-student relationship is a complex process [7], one of the questions that this study will ask is how and in what ways teachers manage this self-presentation or how social media de-stabilises their identity.

1.2   Use of video-based social media platforms in education

Videos have been utilised in different ways to enrich learning and teaching. Using asynchronous video offers various forms of flexibility in time, resources, and usability. Apart from the benefits of using teacher-generated asynchronous videos, it should be noted that the context where learners interact with the videos and their content becomes crucial. In this regard, video-based social media platforms attract the attention of many educators today. Social media platforms such as TikTok and YouTube have become extremely popular among youth [8, 9]. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdowns across the globe, these platforms' popularity has increased dramatically. On these platforms, such as TikTok, users share their daily lives and express their opinions through short videos [10, 11]. Such platforms are not limited to everyday life experiences, but teachers have also used them [12, 13]. Hence, social media platforms can offer various opportunities to instructors to use this space for learning and teaching. During the Covid-19 pandemic, all teachers and students experienced a significant shift from face-to-face to online learning. Therefore, teachers have faced an important question: how could they use such platforms to engage their students?

Literat [14] stated that to better engage students in online space; we should first understand how young people use social media. The author analysed 2,000 TikTok videos

where young people reflected on their online learning experience. It was revealed that students wanted to be listened to and sought empathy and support from teachers. The fact that the students expressed such feelings via TikTok is significant for this paper, as this study aims to explore how a teacher can build a positive relationship with his students using YouTube. Miller [15] stated that students' emotional and mental well-being and home environment should be considered online learning. A sense of care towards students' challenges and vulnerabilities should be fostered [16, 17].

In another study, TikTok-a video-based social media platform- was used for online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic [18]. The students expressed increased motivation and engagement. It was revealed that the use of TikTok also fostered skills such as creativity and curiosity. Escamilla-Fajardo, et al. [18] also stated that academic outcomes improved. The authors recommended using TikTok as a teaching-learning tool. It was underlined that social media platforms are already in young people's lives, and these platforms are primarily associated with fun. This seemed to facilitate the easy adoption of TikTok for teaching purposes[18].

Bilushchak and Bratus [19] also underline that using video content is necessary rather than a preference to engage Generation Z. In their study; YouTube was integrated into the institution's VLE. The participant students found the use of YouTube videos beneficial. In another study, Lovett, et al. [20] investigated the use of TikTok for radiology related content delivery. The authors stated that there is increasing use of the video-based social media platform, TikTok during the Covid-19 pandemic. It was recommended that such video-sharing social media platforms should be used more by instructors. YouTube was found to be flexible, practical, and easy to use for online learning and teaching [21]. Irawan, et al. [21] recommended a more organised way of creating teacher-generated videos using the ADDIE model; Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation and Evaluation. Karamina, et al. [22] also investigated the use of YouTube as a vlog-based learning platform. The authors stated that YouTube helped teachers adopt a more innovative teaching style, which created an engaging and enjoyable learning atmosphere.

1.3   The importance of teacher presence in asynchronous videos

Although the context in which teaching takes place is crucial (e.g., YouTube, TikTok. VLE), one of the most critical factors that influence learners' motivation and engagement with online learning platforms might be the instructor's presence. There have been various studies that have investigated teachers' online presence and influences on video-based online platforms. It has been claimed that with the flexibility of asynchronous communication and the feeling of face-to-face interaction, a successful online learning experience could be accomplished [23].

It is stated that teachers interrelate "multiple 'I' positions in such a way that a more or less coherent and consistent sense of self is maintained" in digital platforms [24, p.315]. It has also been suggested that using different communication modes would increase the learners' sense of closeness to the instructor [25]. In this regard, asynchronous video materials can be designed so that the learners can feel a sense of connection.

It has been suggested that using teacher-generated video would improve teachers' social and teaching presence, contributing to students' engagement and satisfaction with learning materials [26]. It has also been found that the use of asynchronous video improved students' engagement and created a positive attitude in undergraduate students towards the subject being taught [27]. In addition, Borup *et al.* (2012) reported that using teacher-generated videos increased the teacher's social and teaching presence, which improved the students' sense of closeness to the teacher. Griffiths and Graham [28] evaluated video recordings to give students feedback. The findings showed that using teacher-generated videos made the students feel more connected to the teacher than in the face-to-face classroom and increased their engagement with the lessons.

1.4 Research questions

As will be mentioned in the method section, the participant teacher in this study was willing to use YouTube rather than other social media platforms. The teacher delivers the same curriculum to four different classrooms, so he wanted all his students to study before coming to the class. It can be seen in the literature that the use of video-based social media platforms has been reported to have the potential to increase the social presence of teachers, which might improve student engagement and create a sense of connectedness. However, it would not be reasonable to expect students in secondary education to watch a 40-minute video where their teacher only stands and speaks. Hence, rather than just delivering the lesson content on an online platform that is no different from the classroom environment apart from the pause and play features, the teacher aimed to increase his social presence with a video-sharing social-media tool in this study. Therefore, we shall explore teacher-generated videos by specifically addressing two research questions in a social studies classroom in a Turkish secondary school.

1. What did the teacher do when he wanted to foster his relationship with his students through asynchronous video?
2. Whether or how did the teacher's performance on the uploaded videos influence the students' perception of the teacher and their engagement?

2 Methodology

2.1 Case study research design

The case study is a research strategy suitable for exploring a phenomenon considering its context (Patton, 1990). It can deal with a phenomenon in different forms, such as situations, individuals, organisations, events or processes (R. K. Yin, 2014). One of the essential principles of a case study is to explore a phenomenon from various perspectives to understand better why and how the researched phenomenon occurs in the way it does.

This study will focus on teachers' communicative acts through a video-based social media platform. Such digital social-media tools, as mediators, might influence teachers' interaction styles which, in turn, might affect teacher/student interactions. However, whether digital social-media tools (the instrumental context) could impact a teacher's actions (phenomenon) is not evident. Therefore, case study research will be beneficial for closely examining the reciprocal relationship between context and phenomena.

2.2 Student participants and time range

Ali taught eighty students in four different classes. The students were all aged thirteen and had a tablet device. The students were asked to study the lesson contents by watching YouTube videos and then discuss them in the classroom. The data collection process was projected to be five months but lasted three months as YouTube was temporarily banned in Turkey.

2.3 The teacher

The teacher in this study will be referred to as Ali. Ali is 31 years old. His discipline is social studies, and he has been teaching for seven years in the same school. He was familiar with recent technologies and committed considerable effort to use his knowledge about technology in education. Before we met, he stated that he used to share some available videos on the internet for students to become familiar with the topic of future lessons. However, he was unsure whether the students watched the videos and entirely concentrated on the subject. He stated that the videos were not functioning successfully as few students seemed to have watched a whole video and paid attention to the essential parts. He said he was interested in this research when he was told that this research aims to foster teacher/student relationships on social media around learning and teaching. He wanted to attract his students' attention to social media platforms and build a pedagogical relationship.

2.4 Data generation methods

There were two main data collection methods, interviews and online activity records.

Interviews. Two interviews were held with the teacher, one before the data generation process and the other at the end of the project. Each interview lasted nearly one hour. Ten randomly selected students were interviewed at the end of the data generation process. Each interview lasted approximately 35 minutes and was audio-recorded. For the students to feel relaxed during the interviews, two students were interviewed simultaneously. None of the selected students declined to participate in the interviews.

Skype interviews. In addition to the two face-to-face interviews, informal Skype conversations were held with the teacher. The first was performed the day after he had uploaded the first video on YouTube. The second was conducted after the third video,

and the final one was held after the seventh video. These timings were chosen purposefully as there were new practices that the teacher performed in the videos which needed the researcher to make sense of.

Online documentation. One of the research questions aimed to understand the teacher-generated videos' characteristics when the teacher tried to foster a stronger relationship with his students. The YouTube channel that the teacher created was therefore observed for three months. All the videos were downloaded for detailed analysis.

2.5 Data analysis

Data analysis was performed according to this research's overarching aim: to understand teacher-generated videos' influence on the teacher/student relationship and student engagement. Therefore, an inductive thematic approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was taken to analyse the data to explore the unique concepts revealed in the data generated. In such an inductive analytic strategy, the identification of codes and themes begins with an intensive and iterative engagement with the data. Unlike the deductive approach, categories and themes should be generated from the data, rather than using some pre-established frameworks or theories to code the data. The pupil participants had been raised in the Turkish culture, and so they may have had their rituals for when they form a relationship with their teacher and peers. Therefore, employing an inductive thematic analytic approach would allow different sorts of practice to be revealed, including different communication styles. Two researchers coded 40% of all the data to increase the reliability of the analysis process. After the analysis, the codes which each researcher had created were discussed in detail.

2.6 Development of themes

An iterative process was followed to code the data set. Table 1 illustrates a sample of codes extracted from the data sets and formed a theme. It should be noted that the illustrated codes were refined from a larger cluster of codes to answer the research questions.

Table 1. An example of the development of the initial themes

Data set	Initial engagement with the data	Interpretation of data	Codes	Initial Themes
Materials used in videos	Use of historical costumes, being a sultan, talking to himself, introducing a topic as a sultan, being a singer, pretending to play the guitar, using famous people, being a journalist, being a gardener, acting, creating small sketches etc.	The data show that the teacher formed different characters to enrich the videos. This seemed to engage the students and change their perception of the teacher.	*Changing identity *Acting *Voicing historical characters	Manipulation of self
The language used in the videos	Making fun of his appearance, making fun of his voice, creating comic sketches, teasing the students, making a fool of himself, pretending to be confused, imitating some famous Turkish soap-opera actors, changing his voice etc.	The data show that the teacher revealed his sense of humour on YouTube. The use of jokes seemed to attract the students' attention to the videos.	*Joking *Acting *Self-exposure	Language of humour
Interviews with the teacher	Jokes are suitable for social media …, it is a different world …, difficult to be funny in the class …, cannot do everything in class …, be anyone on social media …, I use informal language …, love making jokes on YouTube …, not like class …, acts are perceived differently on social media …, young people see social media differently …, entertainment suits YouTube …, being rigid on YouTube is wrong …, flexible …, being cool means being informal …, easy to act on YouTube … etc.	This cluster of data implies that the teacher distinguished YouTube from the classroom environment. The teacher's emphasis on this difference indicates that informality becomes a priority when using social media.	*Being relaxed on social media *Formal class vs informal YouTube *A different perception of social media	YouTube as an informal platform

2.7 Ethics

Necessary permissions from the Turkish Ministry of Education (MONE) to research Turkish schools have been obtained. MONE was informed by providing information about the aims, location, and participants of the study. The information sheet was distributed to the governors, teachers, students, and parents. After receiving their consent, the data generation process was initiated. At the end of the data collection process, the researcher interviewed the teachers and the students. All the students, teachers, parents, and governors were aware that we had access to the YouTube videos that were publicly available. The screenshots used in this study have been taken from the videos that were public on YouTube. In addition to the consent to participate in the research, the teacher permitted the use of the screenshots in the study. Ethical approval has also been obtained from the University of Nottingham.

3 Results

Three main themes were identified after an intense engagement with the videos and an iterative coding process.

- Media Richness
- Manipulation of self and a sense of humour
- Use of different contexts

These themes will be scrutinised in detail in the following sections.

3.1 Media richness

Ali used various artefacts in the videos: images, texts, instances from some historical movies, music, animations, and diagrams were placed in each of the videos. As shown in Figure 1, some moments from a film play in the background while he talks about war details in the Ottoman Empire's history.

Fig. 1. A snapshot from the first YouTube video showing the teacher and animation in the background

The sounds of horses and the clash of swords are heard in the background. Ali seemed to create a sense of realism by inserting such movie scenes into the videos.

Ali was not consistently seen in the videos, so he transitioned from his appearance to texts, diagrams and movie scenes. He presented some concepts using a graph, image, and handwriting.

Ali reported that using various communication channels attracted the students' attention. He stated that spoken language could not give the realism that the movies, images and animations show. Hence, his main point for using diverse communications channels was to increase student engagement. As Ali expressed, the videos were revealed to be rich in both the visual and the audio aspects, which seemed to be an essential element for potentially retaining the students' engagement.

3.2   Manipulation of self and a sense of humour

This theme was coded in these terms because, in the second Skype conversation, Ali stated that he wanted to make the students enjoy the videos and laugh, so he acted like a different person in some instances of the videos.

In Figure 2 he can be seen wearing a costume that sultans used to wear in the Ottoman Empire. A map and one of the real Ottoman sultans can also be seen in the background. In this video, he talks about how the Ottoman Empire widened its territory, so he acted as one of the sultans.

Fig. 2. A snapshot from the second YouTube video showing the teachers wearing a costume about the topic of the week

The teacher added a short sketch at the beginning of the second video. He duplicated himself by using special software and conversing with himself about the topic. This video had been viewed 1110 times within two weeks and received some students' comments. The number of views reached 12,070 by the end of the year.

3.3   Use of different contexts

Ali did not always use green screen technology, but he used various school parts to film videos. One of the topics was agriculture and trade, so he filmed a video in the school's garden, as seen in Figure 3.

Fig. 3. A snapshot from the sixth YouTube video showing the teacher at the school's garden
while teaching a topic about agriculture

There were also some words inserted in the videos that summarised vital points. Ali
wanted to create an informal environment by being in the garden and sitting on the
grass, which he thought would make a story-telling atmosphere. This is an important
aspect, as Ali believed that informality is an indispensable social media element. To
animate the lesson content he was teaching; Figure 4 shows Ali doing some work in
the garden for a couple of seconds as if he was a farmer because the topic was agricul-
ture.

Fig. 4. A snapshot from the sixth YouTube video showing the teacher at the school's garden
while teaching a topic about agriculture

Ali also used corridors, the teachers' room and one of the classrooms as locations.
As he stated in the second Skype conversation, using real places related to the topic
engaged his students. Ali referred to the nature of social media for him to do such ac-
tivities. In the third Skype conversation, he stated that what he did on YouTube should
be 'different' and 'social'. He reported that if he wanted to prepare a video where he
only talks, he would have used the school's virtual learning platform (VLE). Although

VLE is also an online platform, YouTube as a social-media tool seemed distinguished from other online learning platforms in terms of being informal and 'different'.

3.4 The language used in the videos

Using multi-modal communication tools such as songs, movies and texts in the videos might have an essential role in engaging the students. Another, perhaps the most critical tool used in the videos was language. Therefore, it was essential to analyse Ali's use of language in the videos.

First, the language which Ali used in the videos was transcribed. Two English-Turkish speaking researchers carried out the analysis. First, each researcher separately made a list of codes attributed to the language that Ali used. Then these codes were compared and edited following the discussions. Three main themes were revealed from the codes. These were;

- The language of humour
- Conversational language
- Stimulative language.

The language of humour. Ali mainly conveyed the lesson content as if he was reading a story. Teaching history seemed to help him achieve such a 'story-telling language', as Ali called it.

Ali mostly used humorous language in a conversational form as if the students were listening and responding to him. There were always some jokes that the students seemed to find comical. Although some were about himself, some of the jokes were related to the taught subject. For example, after giving lengthy information about a topic in one of the videos, he said, '*Wait, wait, I know this is boring, but there are a few more* (laughs)'. He also talked about himself in ways such as '*I did not like my hair today* (laughs)' or '*Do I look ugly or handsome? Tell me which one* (laughs)'. He also made jokes about his costumes, saying, '*It is tough to fill this costume; I am too small for it* (laughs)'.

He also had a conversation with himself, as shown in Figure 5 with the dialogue involved:

Fig. 5. A snapshot from the second YouTube video shows the teacher duplicating himself with special software and having a conversation with himself about the topic

In our third Skype conversation, He stated that making jokes in the videos was something the students liked. He said that jokes are necessary if teachers want to use social media effectively.

Conversational language. Ali's language to attract the students' attention to a forthcoming topic was coded as conversational language. When he talked about the taught subject, Ali always emphasised the important points with statements such as '*O my God! What a war this was, guys, it was very tough. Let's look at it together!*' or '*Let us come and look at the politics together!*' He changed the volume of his voice to underline that he was about to talk about something important.

Ali used similar language to the quotations above before starting to teach a new topic. He changed his voice tone and directly spoke to the camera while talking to the students. For instance, Ali walked toward the camera and quietly said, '*Look! I will tell you something significant!*' and then he underlined some key points.

When Ali asked the students to undertake some research, they reported that they stopped the videos and searched on the internet about the topic. Thus, the prompts that Ali used in the videos may have had an important effect in encouraging the students to engage with the taught subject.

Stimulative language. Ali also encouraged his students to be active while watching the videos. He directly talked to the students and asked them to search for some concepts and come to the class with their opinions. Ali stated that he used such language as he did not want his students to watch the videos passively. Instead, he tried to stimulate them to find information by themselves and then discuss it in the classroom. In the quotation below, there are some examples of how Ali tried to engage the students:

(Ali suddenly stops talking and looks at the camera) *Come on; what more I can do to give you the message that you should do a bit of Googling about this topic* (laughs). *If you stop the video and do some searches, it will be perfect for you. After that, there will be a short movie, and we will discuss this in the class tomorrow.*

Ali mainly used informal language to have a conversational interaction with the students. Phrases such as '*Come on*' and '*What more I can do*' are relatively informal in the Turkish language. Instead of using instructions such as 'Now stop the video and do some research, the language's informal nature might be perceived as more encouraging.

Phrases such as '*Come on, don't look at me like that!*', '*I believe in you, you can do it!*' *Let's come and do it together!*' and '*Is there anyone wondering why science was so popular in Egypt?*' are both formal and informal conversational forms. The nature of some of the language that Ali used signalled that it was as if he saw the students and talked with them, such as '*Don't look at me like that*' and '*Why are you waiting, let`s do it*'.

3.5 Interviews with students

Five semi-structured interviews were held with ten students. For the students to feel more comfortable, two students were interviewed at a time. The students' statements were labelled as S1 for the first interviewed student, and S2 for the second student. There were three main themes identified from the interviews:

- Enjoyment and Parental Engagement
- A Sense of Pride
- Classroom Climate.

The data which illustrate these themes will be presented in the following sections.

Enjoyment and parental engagement. All the students' statements included phases related to enjoyment, but interestingly, there was also much emphasis on their family's engagement with the videos. This engagement seemed to be perceived very positively by the students.

*"Our teacher is hilarious; I always laugh when I watch him, he wears different things, I generally watch with my parents." (*S3*)*

In this statement, S3 made two important points parallel to other students' statements. First, the teacher's presence with some acting and costumes was perceived as very enjoyable. Second, parents' attention was also attracted by these videos as most of the students stated that at least one of the family members watched several videos together.

These two points are also present in other statements, as in the following example.

*"Sometimes I watch it and laugh, my mum does not understand because I always have earphones and a tablet so they can't see it, they think I am playing a game, they ask me what I am doing, and I show them the videos, we then watch some part of it together. My father wrote a comment because he liked it. (*S4*)*

S4's father opened a YouTube account specifically to comment and stated, '*We thank our teacher for this video; thanks for your effort, we are lucky that you are our children's teacher*'.

The videos' entertainment side seemed to function as a bridge between Ali and the parents, which seemed to be an additional motivation factor for the students to engage with the subject being taught. When S9 was asked how many times he watched the

videos, he replied that Ali's use of humour and entertaining acting seemed to engage the students and their families. The theme of enjoyment occurred in all the interviews held with the students.

A sense of pride. It was revealed from the interviews that the students had a sense of ownership of the videos. All the students interviewed mentioned how their friends and relatives had reacted to the videos. Such reactions seemed to make them feel a sense of pride. They seemed to regard themselves as privileged by having a teacher who entertainingly used social media. The interviewees reported that almost all the students in the class shared the videos on their social media accounts as they seemed to see the videos as more than just a lesson. When asked whether or not the students enjoyed the videos, they talked about their friends' interests in the videos:

— Not just we, even my friends liked the videos; they even studied from these videos before the exams (S3)
— (*Interviewer*) How do they know about the videos?
— I share them on Facebook (*laughs*) (S3)
— I also share it on Facebook and Twitter. People like it a lot; they make comments. (S4)
— My friends are jealous of me; they say they wish their teacher did the same videos. (S3)
— Their teacher can never do the same thing as our teacher; it is normal that they are jealous of you. (*laughs*) (S4)

The students did not perceive the videos as something they had to watch and learn from; instead, they were something that the students were proud of and wanted to share with others. They perceived them as different from regular lesson videos in which there are only 'teaching and learning'.

Classroom climate. Ali's use of social media and his performance on the videos seemed to influence the classroom atmosphere, the participants reported. As Ali also confirmed in the interviews, the students became more active in the class. The following conversation held with S5 and S6 shows that the videos seemed to trigger classroom discussions. The more the students engaged with the videos, the more it facilitated their activeness in the class.

— (*Interviewer*) Do you talk about the videos in the classroom?
— Yes, we always talk about them; our teacher asks if we like it, and everybody says something, then we check the questions and solve more questions (S5)
— We also want to watch it together again, but our teacher does not always let us watch it in the class, but we talk about the topic again… (S6)
— Also, our teacher asks us to do some research in the videos; I always find interesting things about the topic and talk about them in the class (S5)
— I also do searches, and our teacher asks everyone if they did any research (S6)

The impact of the videos on the students' engagement with the subjects was also seen in other students' statements:

— (*Interviewer* Do you just watch the videos? Do you do anything else?

— When I don't understand I stop the video and watch it again; sometimes I take notes because our teacher put some notes in the videos (S2)
— Our teacher asks questions in the videos; I ask my father and if he doesn't know, I search it on the internet; everyone talks about what they found (S1)
— (*Interviewer*) Do you talk in the class, you mean?
— Yes, you can also comment on YouTube, but I generally like to talk in the class. I always try to find interesting things about the topic; our teacher likes it. (S1)

In all the interviews, the students also felt a sense of debt. They often expressed this when they talked about the videos. They seemed to appreciate the effort that Ali had spent on them. This sense of indebtedness could be considered an essential element of a sense of connectedness between Ali and the students.

3.6 Interview with the teacher: YouTube as an informal platform

One of the most important findings was related to Ali's perception of social media. He saw YouTube as a platform on which he needed to be 'different'. This perception was observed during all the interviews with Ali. He repeatedly referred to social media when he talked about the positive outcomes of his relationship with the students.

For instance, Ali believed that there are three important must-haves if a teacher uses a social-media tool. He stated that *"Attraction, enjoyment and content are the most important things that connect the teacher to students"*. When he was asked whether or not these elements are also needed in the classroom, he stated that:

"Yes, definitely, but it is not always that easy to be that attractive and enjoyable in the classroom. For instance, I cannot do most of the things I did in the videos. The jokes, costumes or acting are more suitable for social media. It is like a different world where you can be anything, and I guess I used this opportunity."

Ali's statement about social media shows an important influence of the use of social media on the behaviours that Ali displayed in the videos. Statements such as '*a different world*' and '*you can be anything*' show that the perception of social media gave Ali the flexibility to be different.

In particular, Ali associated social media with informality. When he was asked why he thought that his students liked the videos, he responded:

"I always use informal language, so it is not like classroom teaching; they hear my voice, and see my actions, and appearance. You need to have a few acting skills too (laughs), then it is important to know how to shoot videos. Chatting, and jokes should be there but just for four or five seconds, it should not be longer than this."

Sense of humour, acting skills, appearance (for example, wearing an unusual costume), informal language and his voice were some of the elements that Ali associated with social media. He stated that such elements were more effective when they occur on social media:

"Even if I do the same things in the class, I think I would not (laughs), I don't think it is the same thing. I mean, young people see social media differently. When they listen

to and watch you on YouTube, its (YouTube's) atmosphere also attracts them. For instance, as I said to you before, I would not prepare such entertaining videos if I was to upload them on the school's VLE."

It seemed that Ali also distinguished social media from other online tools and face-to-face teaching. The school's VLE was perceived as a more formal place that would influence his use of videos. Also, he believed that the students perceived YouTube as a more attractive platform which influenced their engagement.

4 Discussion

This study aimed to see what the teacher would do when he wanted to foster his relationship with students via social media. A video-sharing website, YouTube, was used to accomplish this goal. In this section, the results will be discussed in light of the research questions: '*What did the teacher do when he wanted to use YouTube to increase the students' engagement?*' and '*How did the teacher's performance on the uploaded videos influence the students' perception of the teacher?*'

4.1 RQ1: What did the teacher do when wanted to use YouTube to increase student engagement?

The first research question considers the teacher's communicative acts and the elements used in the videos. As the research explores the efforts to use social media to foster a positive teacher-student relationship, this will be discussed first under three main findings: Identity manipulation, media richness, and informal language. These findings reflect the teacher's communicative acts and his social media presence.

Identity manipulation and informality are seen as core elements of social media. It is claimed that digital technologies could re-configure local culture, perceptions, and practices [29]. One of the key findings is also related to this claim. The teacher seemed to develop a perception of social media as he distinguished it from face-to-face contexts and virtual learning environments. YouTube was perceived as a platform where there should be informality, attractiveness, jokes and acting. It was found that the mediation of the teacher's activities on YouTube shows differences from the face-to-face context. Different practices were also expected compared with other online learning platforms such as VLEs.

Walter (1996) stated that users could put their 'best personality' forward to other people. They can also disclose their personal life in a controlled way so that the receivers might feel a sense of closeness. The teacher might not have put their best personality on YouTube in this study, as Walter (1996) suggested. However, it could be said that they presented a 'desired personality' suitable for the age and interests of the audience, who were middle-school students. For instance, Song, et al. [30] reported that a teacher's self-disclosure is more effective in building online teacher/student relationships than face-to-face. They stated that because of limited communication opportunities, the teacher's disclosure of their personal life becomes more significant on online

platforms; otherwise, building a bond between teachers and students becomes challenging. Hence, users, in this case, teachers, might share a limited amount of information about their personal lives with students, which might create a bond between students and teachers. This claim is in line with the findings of other studies that claimed that online interactions include more self-disclosure [31-33].

The participant teacher's informal behaviours on YouTube could be categorised as immediacy behaviours. The term 'immediacy' has long been discussed among scholars. Mehrabian [34] described immediacy behaviours as non-verbal interactions that foster closeness with other people. Another definition of immediacy behaviours in education puts teachers into the centre. It proposed that "Teacher immediacy is conceptualised as those nonverbal behaviours that reduce physical and/or psychological distance between teachers and students" [35, p.544]. However, Gorham [36] later added that it is not only non-verbal interactions but also verbal interactions which create a sense of immediacy and have a significant role in reducing the psychological gap between teachers and students. This confirms the findings from other studies [30-33]. Instructors' self-exposure has been defined as "conscious and deliberate disclosures about oneself, aspects of one's professional practice, world or personal views, personal history, and responses to ongoing classroom events" [37, p.192]. Such communicative acts are the basis of interpersonal relationships and one of the first elements that create a sense of intimacy among people [30, 32, 33, 38].

Media Richness and informal language are seen as core elements for student engagement. As other studies also confirm, using multi-communication channels helped create a meaningful relationship with the students[39, 40]. It is also stated that learners' motivations and engagement are closely associated with their learning outcomes [41]. The teacher believed that "attraction, entertainment and content" are must-have things on the social media platform to build a good interaction with the students. The students' reactions to the videos were found to be highly positive. The comments made by the students mainly included appreciation and enjoyment. Ali's presence in the videos played an important role in attracting the students' attention to the videos. In particular, the videos' entertainment side seemed to increase their engagement with the taught subject. Using images, songs, and scenes from some movies in the background was an engaging technique. Enriching the videos with various media use has been found to be engaging and enjoyable [40, 42, 43]. Most of the students watched the videos more than once due to their enjoyment. Hence, entertainment was used to lure the students into watching the videos. The use of various media increased the teacher's social presence and positively influenced the students' attitudes towards the teacher.

Several crucial points arose concerning the language that the teacher used. The nature of the language included humour, attraction, and stimulation. Both Ali and the students reported that the lessons became more interactive because of the prompts that Ali gave to the videos. The nature of Ali's language in the videos was in a conversational form and included humour. Apart from the sincere language he used in the videos, he tried to create an interactive learning experience on YouTube. The students were encouraged to stop the video and conduct some searches about the topic. The students were also asked to bring their opinions and the information they had gathered to the classroom [44-49].

The prompts and conversational language that the teacher used seemed to change the classroom climate as this gave the students more opportunities to discuss and share their opinions in the class. The teacher's prompts in the videos matched the idea of a cognitive presence by which an instructor's "direct intervention is constructive, and open communication is not threatened" [50, p.10]. This situation was identified again as 'open communication' by Garrison, et al. [51] and is one of the elements of social presence. In this current study, the teacher's cognitive presence triggered an element of social presence. Hence, without these prompts, "lecturing online or simply providing access to information is a complete misuse of asynchronous learning networks" [50, p.10]. Hence, whilst using language and prompts may be used to initiate more in-depth thinking about the topics, they also serve as a tool to open up opportunities for the students.

4.2 RQ2: How did the teacher's performance on the uploaded videos influence the students' perception of the teacher

The second research question considers whether or how the teacher's communicative acts and digital presence on the social media platform, YouTube, affected the students' attitudes towards the teacher.

Beyond videos: a sense of pride, gratitude, and parental engagement. The interviews with the students revealed a noteworthy point about the videos' influence. The students expressed that they were grateful for the teacher's efforts. Apart from the videos' entertainment and content sides, the teacher's efforts to use a different medium in a unique style created sympathy, making the students feel indebted so that they became more active and prepared for the class. The teacher's effort gave the students a signal that he loved and cared about them, which has been claimed to be one of the cornerstones of feeling a sense of community by several studies [52-56].

As discussed in the previous section, using informal language seemed to be crucial in two respects. First, it had an important role in building a sense of closeness between the teacher and the students. Second, the students were encouraged to be more active in the classroom, which positively changed the classroom climate. The use of humour seemed to be one of the principal factors that engaged the students and fostered a positive interaction between the teacher and the students in the classroom. The enjoyment of a sense of humour is also related to content engagement, decreasing stress, and increasing learners' motivation. Such factors were important as it was reported in other studies that information-based teaching styles have negative effects on students' attitudes on learning activities [57].

The students also shared the videos on their social media accounts. The underlying reason for this appeared to be a feeling of pride in Ali. Ali's use of YouTube and some acting skills and historical costumes seemed to change the students' perceptions of lessons. They saw their teacher as someone to be proud of, and they were willing to share these feelings with their friends and families. A sense of pride has been claimed to be a positive perspective that people might feel towards themselves and the community or place where they live, so it is recognised as one of the signs of a sense of community [58, 59]. People tend to feel a sense of pride about the uniqueness of the community to

which they belong [54], so the students' feeling of pride may be one source of evidence of a feeling of community because when they refer to Ali, they often called him 'our' teacher and spoke about what interesting things 'their' teacher does.

An important point for consideration was the parents' engagement with the videos. Ali and all the students reported that at least one of the family members watched the videos and expressed their appreciation to Ali. One of the parents commented on YouTube, stating, 'how *lucky they are to have Ali as their teacher*'. The interviewed students also reported their family members' interest in the videos. This shows that the teacher could attract parents' attention by using social media. The benefits of a positive parent/teacher relationship have been emphasised by previous studies [60-62]. It has been claimed that parents' involvement in students' learning process helped students to foster a more positive attitude towards their teacher and their school community[63, 64]. This study has also shown that the students seemed to enjoy their parents' engagement with their schoolwork, which positively affected their attitudes towards the teacher.

4.3 Limitations of the study, future research and recommendations

This study is not exempt from limitations. First, this study reported a teacher's and eighty students' experiences. Although it is beneficial to report an in-depth analysis of a single case, future studies could involve several teachers' experiences with creating teacher-generated videos on YouTube. Second, while the teacher, in this case, was not purposefully selected to participate in this study, future studies could carry out a more selective approach to finding teachers who are from different backgrounds. For instance, these teachers could be purposefully selected among teachers who identify themselves as tech-savvy or not. Third, this study did not have a control group. Although the teacher in this study teaches four different classrooms, excluding one of the groups due to ethical concerns was not possible. This would mean that one classroom would lack behind, so this was not possible for the current study. However, this study would be replicated in a voluntary-based teaching and learning environment (e.g., outside of school hours) where the control group would not be disadvantaged in obtaining lower marks or missing essential concepts of a lesson. Fourth, the nature of the qualitative case study approach does not intend to generalise the outcomes of a single case study to the whole population. While lessons would be learnt, and this study could be guidance for other teachers, we should be cautious in generalising the findings of this study.

It should also be noted that this study does not focus on learning outcomes. The impact of teachers' digital presence on students' academic performance remains a significant point to be investigated. Further studies could explore whether there is an association between teachers' presence and learning outcomes.

We suggest that future studies could involve several teachers from various backgrounds, include a control group, and, if possible, use both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. We conclude this study by recommending using video-based social media platforms such as YouTube or TikTok, particularly in a secondary school context. We recommend that institutions provide necessary training, digital equipment

and software for teachers' use. For instance, a schoolroom could be turned into a studio where a green background, a camera, and a PC with video editing software could be set up. For less tech-savvy teachers, it would be helpful to assign an ICT staff or learning technologist to facilitate creating teacher-generated videos.

5   Conclusion

This study showed how a teacher's use of theatrical skills, a sense of humour, and various visual artefacts in a video-sharing social-media tool influenced his students' perception and engagement. The findings presented in this study demonstrate the significance of using asynchronous videos for creating a positive teacher image.

The teacher's presence and efforts to present the taught subject engagingly had a central role in creating enjoyment, engagement, a sense of closeness, pride, and bashful gratitude, which indicated a sense of community. While the asynchronous videos offered the flexibility of anytime, anywhere access to the subject being taught, they also stimulated classroom discussions. The students were quickly involved in the discussions. The interactions between the students and the teacher increased by references to the videos' prompts and artefacts.

It can be concluded that a different approach could be taken regarding the use of asynchronous video to foster teacher/student interaction in secondary education. Rather than having the instructor's head talking on the videos, different contexts and artefacts can be utilised for the teacher to project their identity, increase the students' engagement, and make the videos more attractive. Realising the potential of asynchronous videos may help teachers achieve more than what they could do within the classroom walls, making them a core tool for classroom teaching.

It should be noted that not all teachers would feel comfortable using a video-based social media tool. As can be seen in the study of Durgungoz and Durgungoz (2021), WhatsApp, an instant messaging tool, can also have similar results in terms of having a positive teacher-student relationship. Therefore, it is advisable to examine students' needs and interests and choose appropriate social software. The teacher's teaching style and personality is also a significant factor in selecting a social media tool. Although the teacher in this study seemed to make the right social-media choice, this cannot be generalised. For instance, instead of creating a sincere relationship, a teacher's use of YouTube could cause conflicts in a classroom environment. There could also be misunderstandings between teachers and students in a conversation-oriented social-media tool such as WhatsApp because of limited communication cues. Although there were no conflicts among the participants in this study, it would be likely that such conflicts could occur in another case. As such disagreements did not happen in this study, there were no opportunities to examine how the teachers would or would not overcome such issues. This could be considered a limitation of this study.

It could be suggested that the use of a video-based social-media tool in education could bring about new practices that have various impacts on the teaching and learning process. Mediation of teachers' activities is one of these impacts. In this digital age, restricting education within the classroom walls might be unrealistic; hence, education

providers should utilise digital platforms on which children spend considerable time. Social media can offer teachers various communication channels to create an attractive product for students. Such mediation might influence teaching practices to adopt more informal and flexible activities. This change could lead students to have a different perception of the teacher image, improving teacher/student relationships.

6 References

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