

ENGLISH STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF USING YOUTUBE AS AN ENGLISH LEARNING MEDIA AND THEIR STRATEGIES IN UTILIZING IT

Dhea Ivana Marcya Boiliu ^{a,1,*}
Soleman Dapa Taka ^{b,2}
Zantty O. Padahana ^{c,3}

^{abc}English Education Study Program, Nusa Cendana University, Kupang, 85001, Indonesia

¹dheaboiliu05@gmail.com;

²sdapataka@gmail.com;

³zantty@staf.undana.ac.id

KEYWORDS

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ABSTRACT

In today's digital age, YouTube became one of the most popular English learning platforms among students. The utilization of YouTube enabled students to access a variety of educational content independently, which could enhance their language skills outside the formal classroom environment. This study aimed to examine English Education students' perceptions of using YouTube as a medium as an English learning media, as well as the strategies they employed in the learning process. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, data were collected through questionnaires and interviews from students who actively used YouTube to learn English independently. The results indicated that 61% of respondents agreed that YouTube had assisted them in learning English independently, 32% remained neutral, and 7% disagreed. In terms of learning strategies, students utilized various types of content, such as songs, movies, podcasts, and vlogs, among others, to improve their language skills, encompassing both basic skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) and language components (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation). Students also leveraged YouTube to study course materials, including syntax, morphology, academic writing, and additional subjects. Furthermore, some students consulted explanations from language experts on specific topics of interest. The selection of content types was tailored to the skills each student sought to develop. The findings demonstrated that YouTube constituted an effective tool in supporting self-taught English learning, provided that students were capable of applying learning strategies suitable for their individual needs and learning objectives.

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INTRODUCTION

Education evolves rapidly, driven by the pervasive influence of technology in our globalized world. This technological shift profoundly reshapes learning processes, particularly in language acquisition. As language serves as a fundamental communication tool, effective learning is paramount, and technology makes this process more engaging and essential. Both educators and students must adapt to these changing times, transitioning from traditional language learning methods to approaches embracing the digital era (Rajval & Devi, 2011). Technology's critical role in teaching and learning, both inside and outside the classroom, is undeniable. Graddol (1997, as cited in Bruce & Levin, 2001, p.8) emphasizes that technology is central to globalization, impacting work, educational culture, communication, and the creation of teaching materials, empowering self-expression.

The rapid advancement of technology in this globalized age enables individuals to accomplish tasks without direct interaction, fostering independent learning. This concept, often referred to as learning media, describes the process of acquiring knowledge without direct teacher guidance. Suparno (1997:61) defines this as self-education, where individuals assimilate new information by connecting it with existing understanding to deepen their comprehension. This independent learning approach extends to language acquisition, with technology significantly streamlining the process. Among the numerous technological advancements, YouTube stands out as the world's most popular video-sharing website.

Benson (2015) describes YouTube, launched in late 2005, as an online service where registered users can upload videos for public viewing. Kousha, Thelwall, and Abdoli (2012, p.2) further highlight YouTube's prominence as a public-use video-sharing platform, ranking as the third most visited website globally after Google and Facebook. Its integration of videos and animated content, beyond just text and images, makes it highly appealing, especially to students. Consequently, YouTube holds significant educational potential, as noted by DeWitt, Siraj, Yakuub, Ayob, and Ishak (2013), who recognize its capacity as a valuable learning medium.

Based on this, YouTube emerges as a highly effective learning medium for students to acquire English independently. As a frequent YouTube user, the writer personally experiences its utility during leisure time, whether waiting for lecturers, during class breaks, or at home. This observation extends to the writer's social circle, where many friends leverage YouTube for learning due to its engaging and easily repeatable video content. Its flexibility allows access anytime, anywhere, offering a wealth of animated videos and diverse content for English skill practice. This demonstrates YouTube's proven role as a learning medium in foreign language acquisition, particularly English. Driven by these observations and the desire to understand English students' perceptions and strategies in using YouTube as a learning medium, the writer conducts research titled *"ENGLISH STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF USING YOUTUBE AS AN ENGLISH LEARNING MEDIA AND THEIR STRATEGIES IN UTILIZING IT."*

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research approach to explore English students' perceptions and strategies regarding YouTube's use as an English learning medium. The methodology focused on understanding the "why" and "how" of this social phenomenon, gathering in-depth data through words and descriptions rather than statistics. The research aimed to answer specific questions: what are students' experiences, thoughts, or perceptions about using YouTube for English learning, and what strategies do they employ in this process?

Data sources for this research primarily included questionnaires and interviews. The study population comprised English students from Nusa Cendana University, Batch 2022. From this group, fifth-semester students from Class C were selected as the research sample. All students in Class C completed the questionnaire, and to gather more in-depth insights, 11 representatives (30% of the 38 students) were purposively selected for semi-structured interviews.

The research instruments were paper-based questionnaires utilizing a 1-5 Likert scale (Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree) to gauge perceptions, and semi-structured interviews to uncover learning strategies. The questionnaire, adapted from previous research by Lai and Gu (2011) and used in Putri's (2019) study, covered six perception-related areas. Interviews aimed to delve deeper into students' approaches to using YouTube for English learning, aligning with the qualitative nature of the study.

Data analysis followed the framework by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014), involving three main components. First, data condensation involved selecting, focusing, and simplifying the collected data. This meant quantifying questionnaire data into percentages using a specific formula ($P = F/N \times 100\%$), while interview transcripts were meticulously selected and focused only on information relevant to the research problems. Second, data display involved presenting the organized information. Perceptions gathered from questionnaires were presented visually in a pie chart. Meanwhile, strategies identified from interviews were presented as narratives, offering detailed insights into students' learning approaches. Finally, conclusion drawing and verification formed the last stage. This involved interpreting the analyzed data to draw meaningful conclusions, consistently verifying these findings against the original data and research problems. This iterative process ensured the conclusions were well-supported and relevant to the study's objectives.

In essence, this research systematically collected and analyzed qualitative data to provide a comprehensive understanding of how English students perceive and strategically utilize YouTube for independent English language learning.

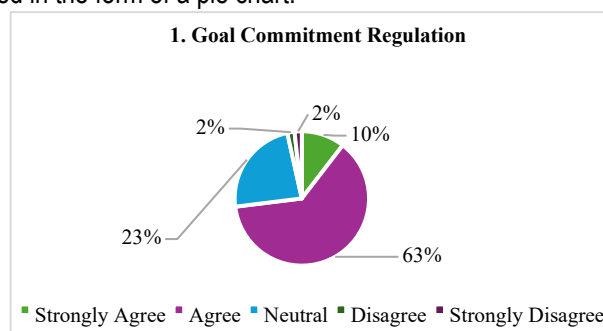
FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

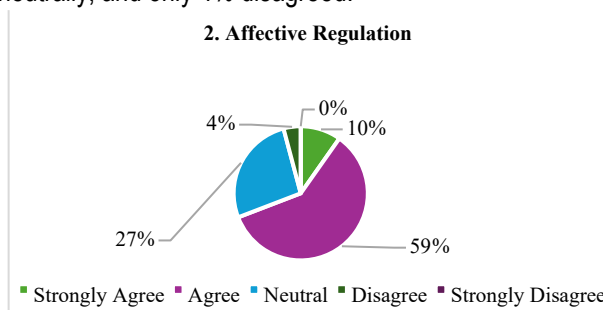
As stated in the introduction, this study has two research objectives (1) to find out the perceptions or thoughts of English students towards using YouTube as a medium for English learning media and (2) to find out the ways or strategies of English students in using YouTube as a medium for English learning media. To achieve the research objectives above, the writer explains them as follows:

1. *The perceptions of English Students towards the use of YouTube as a medium for English learning media*

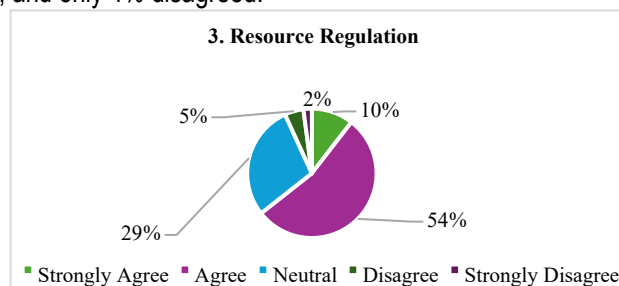
To find out students' perceptions of the use of YouTube as a self-taught learning medium, the writer distributed a questionnaire to 38 5th semester students from class C consisting of 27 questions and divided into six sub-sections, which specifically reviewed how YouTube is used in the English learning process. To measure students' perceptions of the use of YouTube as a medium for English learning media, the writer adapted a questionnaire from Lai and Gu (2011) which contains five aspects related to independent learning, which are goal commitment, affective, resources, metacognitive and social. The following is the presentation described in the form of a pie chart:



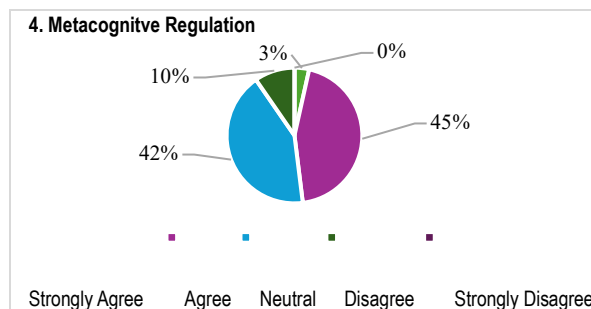
The questionnaire results indicate that 73% of students agreed with their commitment to achieving English learning objectives through autodidactic English learning using YouTube. Meanwhile, 23% of students responded neutrally, and only 4% disagreed.



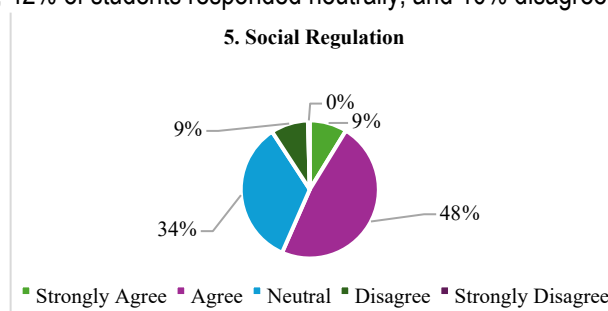
The questionnaire results indicate that 69% of students agreed on ability to manage and control their feelings or emotions in order to remain appropriate to the situation at hand. Meanwhile, 27% of students responded neutrally, and only 4% disagreed.



The questionnaire results indicate that 64% of students agreed with the effective use of YouTube as a resource for autodidactic English learning to achieve desired outcomes. Meanwhile, 24% of students responded neutrally, and only 7% disagreed.



The questionnaire results indicate that 48% of students agreed with their ability to manage their own learning strategies using YouTube resources to achieve desired outcomes in autodidactic English learning. Meanwhile, 42% of students responded neutrally, and 10% disagreed.



The questionnaire results indicate that 57% of students agreed with their ability to collaborate effectively in groups by collectively regulating and adjusting behaviors, strategies, and emotions to achieve shared learning goals. In this context, they utilized YouTube resources for autodidactic English learning. Meanwhile, 34% of students responded neutrally, and 9% disagreed.

2. *The strategies of English students in using YouTube as a medium for English learning media*

After identifying English language students' perceptions of using YouTube as a tool for self-study, the writer conducted interviews to further explore the strategies and methods used by students in learning English through the platform. The interview findings revealed that the students adopted various learning strategies to practice both basic language skills and language skills components.

a. *Basic Language Skills*

Listening

1. Multimodal listening comprehension

To improve their listening skills, some students use the strategy of Multimodal Listening Comprehension, which relies on different modes of input, such as visual and auditory, to improve comprehension by listening to podcasts and watching English videos with subtitles. Below are some of the responses given by the interviewees regarding multimodal listening comprehension:

"Regarding listening, I usually watch videos on YouTube with English subtitles enabled. This way, I can understand the pronunciation as well as see how the words are written. So, I can practice pronunciation and listening at the same time." (Ani, personal interview, January 2025)

2. Accent specific listening practice

Some students use accent-specific listening practice techniques, which entail purposefully listening to a range of English accents, to enhance their listening abilities. Because the choice is made based on personal desire or interest in the accent one wishes to study, it is referred to as purposeful. The following are a few of the interviewees' responses:

"I pay attention to the way they pronounce words and their accents. For example, there's a food vlogger named Marina Tasya. The accent she uses sounds like an American accent." (Jelin, personal interview, January 2025)

3. Integrated listening instruction

To improve subsequent listening skills, a student applies an integrated listening teaching strategy, which combines listening practice with other methods to enrich understanding, by integrating with courses. Here are the responses from the interviewee:

"Initially, I started learning listening through YouTube because there was a course called Intensive Listening. In the course, we were asked to watch an English video on YouTube, then explain the content of the video in our own words. Yes, sis. So, we watched the

video and made a summary. In addition, we could also follow the way they spoke in the video. That's how I started using YouTube to practice my listening skills." (Jelita, personal interview, February 2025)

4. Repetitive listening strategy

To improve their listening skills, some students applied the repeated listening strategy, which involves repeatedly listening to the same material to deepen understanding. Here are the responses from the interviewees:

"With regards to listening, I usually listen to one of the channels, TED Talks. While watching the content, I usually repeat the video three or four times in order to understand the phrases or pronunciation in the video." (Siska, personal interview, January 2025)

5. Lyric-based listening comprehension

To improve their listening skills, the students applied a lyric-based listening comprehension strategy, which involves learning through song lyrics to gain a deeper understanding of language. Here are some responses from the interviewees:

"To learn listening through YouTube, I often use music. I look at the lyrics to understand the vocabulary more clearly." (Nostra, personal interview, February 2025)

Speaking

1. Interactive language learning

To improve speaking skills, students apply interactive language learning strategies, which emphasize active engagement in the learning process through direct interaction by using educational channels that provide pauses to answer questions, utilizing interactive features such as conversation practice and consistency in imitating the way native speakers speak. Here are the responses from the interviewees:

"For speaking, there is one channel that I often watch, but I forgot the name. The channel is made for educational purposes. So, there are conversations that require us to respond. In the video, there is a story, then we will be given a question with a pause to think for a moment, then provided with several vocabulary choices that we can use as answers. In my opinion, this method is very helpful in improving speaking skills. Although it's not an instant process, it takes about four to six months, but it's worth it. Moreover, YouTube is a free platform, so we can watch as much as we want, download videos, and learn anytime and anywhere. I think this method is very flexible and effective." (Chris, personal interview, February 2025)

2. Imitative speech learning

To improve their speaking skills, the students applied the imitative speech practice strategy, which involves imitating speech from videos, including intonation, pronunciation, and accent to improve their speaking skills. Here are the responses from the interviewees:

"In the video, I paid attention to the speaker's pronunciation. When listening, I often pause the video and immediately imitate what they say. So it's like practicing speaking" (Elsa, personal interview, February 2025).

3. Observational learning in language acquisition

To improve speaking ability, students apply the observational learning strategy in language acquisition, which involves learning by observing how native speakers speak before practicing it themselves, by using YouTube to observe how a moderator speaks in English before practicing it in the Speaking course. Here are the responses from the interviewees:

"For speaking, again there was the Speaking course, where we were asked to act as moderators. I used YouTube to see how to be a moderator, how to speak, and what to do. From there, I started practicing speaking... After watching the video, I immediately tried to speak and practice what I had watched, with the help of Google Translate." (Jelita, personal interview, February 2025)

4. Shadowing technique

To improve their speaking skills, the students applied the shadowing technique, which involves live imitation of the video in real time, by mimicking the pronunciation in the video and participating in content that invites the audience to read the text as if they were conversing with a native speaker. Here are the responses from the interviewees:

"I usually watch short videos on YouTube, such as shorts, made by content creators who are native speakers. In some of these channels, there are parts where we are asked to read the text provided, so it's as if there is a conversation between the speaker and me. The content is usually news or current affairs." (Elsa, personal interview, February 2025)

5. Participatory listening and speaking

To improve speaking skills, students apply participatory listening and speaking strategies, which involve active engagement with content that requires direct interaction, such as using shorts and interactive conversation exercises from YouTube. Here are the responses from the interviewees:

"For speaking, I usually watch short videos on YouTube, such as shorts. Apart from that, I also watch YouTube content that provides conversation practice. I forget the name of the channel, but the concept is like an interactive dialog, where we read a predetermined part. For example, I read the text in red, while the speaker reads the text in blue. Other than that, I also often read the news." (Ate, personal interview, January 2025)

6. Singing

To improve their speaking skills, the students applied the strategy of singing as a tool for pronunciation and fluency, which involves using songs as a means to practice pronunciation and speaking fluency. Here are the responses from the interviewees:

"So you see, I listen to the song while looking at the lyrics. Then, I also sing it. That way, speaking and listening skills can develop simultaneously." (Olvi, personal interview, February 2025)

Reading

1. Through subtitles

To improve reading skills, students apply incidental vocabulary learning strategies through videos with subtitles, which involves indirect vocabulary acquisition by reading subtitles while watching videos. Here are the responses from the interviewees:

"In addition, I also practice reading by watching vlogs from native speakers. Since there are subtitles in them, I read while listening to their accents." (Ate, personal interview, January 2025).

2. Reading aloud

To improve reading skills, students apply interactive read aloud strategies for comprehension and pronunciation, which involve reading text aloud to improve comprehension and pronunciation, such as reading story texts from educational channels that provide interactive reading, practicing comprehension by reading aloud or with children and connecting reading with audio to understand intonation and sentence structure. Here are the responses from the interviewees:

"For reading, I often read stories to my nephew at home, which I usually take from YouTube. The stories are children's fairy tales in English. Initially, my intention was just to read the story, but it turns out that I also get the benefits. I also practiced reading because in the channel, in addition to listening to the story, we are also given the opportunity to read certain parts..... If I'm not mistaken Stories of Fairies. This channel discusses folklore and fairy tales. I didn't intend to learn at first, but I ended up getting the educational benefits as well. This way, the material I learn is more easily embedded in my memory, so I can enjoy it while learning." (Chris, personal interview, February 2025).

3. Digital reading through scrolling text and stimulated conversations

To improve their reading, the students implemented digital reading strategies through scrolling text and simulated conversations, which involved reading scrolling text automatically in a digital format commonly found on platforms such as YouTube Short. Here are the responses from the interviewees:

"Usually, I watch videos with running text, like those on YouTube Shorts. So, indirectly, I also practice my reading skills." Usually the content is in the form of narrative text, Sis. I have also practiced reading with news content or simulations such as flight attendants talking." (Jelita, personal interview, February 2025).

4. Pausing and repeating strategy

To improve their reading skills, students applied the video-based reading with pausing and repetition strategy, which involves reading text within videos by pausing and repeating specific sections to deepen comprehension. Here are the responses from the interviewees:

"Regarding reading, I usually watch channels that provide content related to reading, including one that presents stories about news, daily life, and various other types of content. If I have difficulty understanding, I usually pause or replay the video so I can read it again." (Siska, personal interview, January 2025).

Writing

1. Note-taking

To improve their writing skills, the students applied an incidental writing strategy through vocabulary note-taking, which involved recording vocabulary encountered in various contexts. The following is a response from one of the participants:

- "I improved it by getting myself used to listening to podcasts or watching English videos on YouTube while turning on subtitles or translations... during that process, I took notes." (Dey, personal interview, February 2025).
- "As for writing, I haven't used YouTube as a practice tool so far. However, I more often take notes on new vocabulary that I come across." (Siska, personal interview, January 2025).
- "I usually pay attention to how a sentence is written, and then I write it down." (Irsa, personal interview, January 2025).

2. Scaffolded writing with vocabulary box and observational learning.

To enhance their writing skills, some students applied a scaffolded writing strategy using vocabulary boxes and learning through observation. Here is a response from one of the participants:

"Writing, in my opinion, is a skill that was often overlooked at first. However, after entering the academic world, I realized that writing is one of the important aspects of mastering English. Eventually, I started learning from YouTube. At first, I didn't know what to search for to improve my writing skills, but then I found many channels that teach writing techniques. One method I learned was using a vocabulary box, where we were asked to form sentences from the words provided. At first, I didn't really understand its benefits, but after practicing for about seven to nine months, I started to notice improvements. Since I was initially not very good at writing and was somewhat lazy to learn, it took quite a long time before I could improve my writing skills to an advanced level. In terms of grammar and vocabulary, I started to understand more complex structures. So, I didn't just learn at a basic level, but also at a higher level. I measure this advanced level by the use of vocabulary. For instance, there are words that are often overused, even though there are synonyms that are more varied and less commonly used. When I hear these words in a context, I can immediately understand their meaning without having to look them up in the dictionary. From this, I realized that my vocabulary had developed, and so had my writing skills." (Chris, personal interview, February 2025).

3. Content based note taking for academic writing development

To improve their skills, some students apply the content-based note-taking strategy as part of their academic writing development, by noting key points from videos related to course material, such as in the Phonology course. The following is a response from one of the participants:

"I once practiced writing, especially during my Phonology course. There were some aspects of writing that I didn't quite understand, so I looked for explanations on YouTube and noted down the key points. At that time, I was preparing for an exam the next day, hehe. This also applies to everything else I study." (Ani, personal interview, February 2025).

4. Lexical integration through sentence construction

To improve their writing skills through YouTube, students also applied the strategy of lexical integration through sentence construction, which involves connecting the vocabulary learned from the song with the creation of new sentences. Here are the responses from the interviewees:

"So, when I come across new vocabulary, I try to create or use it in a sentence I make based on the lyrics I listen to." (Nostra, personal interview, February 2025).

5. Input Enhancement and Noticing in the Context of Form-Focused Instruction.

Developing writing skills through YouTube can be supported by strategies such as noticing and input enhancement. When students pay attention to how sentences are structured and how words are spelled in authentic English content, they are engaging in form-focused instruction, which helps them internalize accurate language patterns. As one participant stated:

"Usually, I pay attention to how a sentence is written and then write it down. I also study the correct spelling and how writing is structured in English" (Irsa, Personal interview, January 2025).

b. Basic Language Skills

Grammar

1. Implicit grammar learning through exposure

One of the strategies that students use to improve their grammar skills through YouTube is implicit grammar learning through exposure, by not specifically watching content about grammar, but gradually understanding the patterns of language structure through exposure to various videos in English and learning grammar through the Syntax course, which is learned using YouTube. The following are the responses from the interviewees:

"Like the Syntax course, because I find it quite difficult, so I need to relearn it through YouTube. That also includes me learning grammar". (Dey, personal interview, February 2025).

2. Naturalistic grammar acquisition through listening and reading

In the process of improving their grammar skills through YouTube, students also apply naturalistic grammar acquisition strategies by understanding grammar patterns naturally through listening and reading, observing how native speakers use grammar in daily communication and learning sentence structures in context, not just memorizing rules. The following are the responses from the interviewees:

"That's right. For grammar, I learn by reading and listening to stories on YouTube. This way, I can understand sentence structures naturally without having to study them academically. For example, I can immediately know the sentence pattern in the present tense without having to memorize the grammar rules. It's just natural". (Chris, personal interview, February 2025).

3. Incidental grammar learning through repeated exposure

Students who want to improve their grammar skills through YouTube often apply the strategy of incidental grammar learning through repeated exposure, which involves the unconscious

acquisition of grammar knowledge through frequent exposure to the target language. The following are the responses from the interviewees:

"So far, I haven't specifically studied grammar. I just watched and absorbed the information. However, over time, when a lecturer or someone gave me a sample sentence, I started to realize the correct sentence structure pattern. From there, I could understand that, "Oh, it's structured like this," or, "Oh, this is wrong, it shouldn't be like this." It's like a language instinct. I've experienced this since high school. Sometimes, a friend would ask me why one sentence is right and the other is wrong. I can't explain it in theory, but I know what's right and what's wrong. I think YouTube is very helpful in learning English". (Ani, personal interview, January 2025).

4. Explicit grammar learning through video-based instruction

Students who want to improve their grammar skills through YouTube often adopt the strategy of explicit grammar learning through video-based instruction, which involves explicitly learning grammar by watching videos that systematically explain grammar rules. The following are the responses from the interviewees:

"Hmm... I have. At that time, I watched a content creator. I forgot his name, who in one video spoke using various tenses. Besides tenses, I also watched content about prepositions. I learned that too". (Jelita, personal interview, February 2025).

Pronunciation

To improve students' pronunciation skills, all students used similar strategies of imitating what they were watching and utilizing other technologies to help them. Therefore, here are some responses from the interviewees:

- "For pronunciation, since most of the videos I watched were in English, I automatically improved my pronunciation. First, I observe the way native speakers speak. If I want to learn a certain accent, such as a British or Australian accent, I just adjust the content I watch. So, in my opinion, YouTube is a very useful platform. After watching, I imitate. It's free, you can learn anytime and anywhere, and you can learn in a fun way. That's what I like about YouTube". (Chris, personal interview, February 2025)
- "For pronunciation, I always imitate the way of speaking in the videos I watch. Sometimes I also use the help of AI, such as Gemini, to practice because I don't have friends to practice with and often study alone". (Ani, personal interview, January 2025)
- "For pronunciation, so far I have repeated or imitated what the speaker said in the video" (Siska, personal interview, January 2025).
- "When I learned from YouTube, I imitated the pronunciation right away. So far, I haven't had any difficulties despite being self-taught. Even though I am self-taught, I still use the help of Google Translate and a dictionary because there is a pronunciation guide. So, I imitate it from there". (Olvi, personal interview, February 2025).

Vocabulary

1. Incidental vocabulary learning

To improve their vocabulary skills, students use incidental learning strategies by picking up new words naturally while watching English content. The following are responses from the participants:

"When I come across new words, like the word 'bizarre,' I immediately look up its meaning using Google Translate as a tool. I just find out what it means and understand that the word has a specific meaning." (Dey, personal interview, February 2025).

2. Contextual vocabulary acquisition

To improve vocabulary through YouTube, students use the Contextual Vocabulary Acquisition (CVA) strategy, which involves learning and mastering vocabulary based on its use in context. Here are the responses from the interviewees:

"For vocabulary, YouTube provides tons of references. Whenever I come across new vocabulary used by advanced speakers, I will immediately look up the meaning. Usually, educational channels will immediately provide an explanation of the meaning and its use in various situations. For example, in a video about an accident, I can learn the specific vocabulary used in that context." (Chris, personal interview, February 2025).

3. Subtitle mediated vocabulary learning

To improve their vocabulary skills through YouTube, students apply vocabulary learning strategies mediated by subtitles, which involve acquiring vocabulary with the help of subtitles that present both text and audio simultaneously. The following are responses from the participants:

"Usually, I watch videos and movies with subtitles turned on. I often switch the subtitles, from Indonesian to English, and then back to Indonesian again. I like doing that. Sometimes, I just look at the subtitles and figure out the meaning. I search for the translation on Google Translate, and that's it, done." (Jelita, personal interview, February 2025).

4. Real time vocabulary acquisition

To improve vocabulary skills through YouTube, students apply the strategy of direct vocabulary acquisition, which involves immediately looking up the meanings of unfamiliar words they encounter in videos. The following is a response from the participant:

- "Yes, that's correct. When I watch English content and come across vocabulary that is unfamiliar or new to me, I write it down and immediately look up its meaning on Google Translate. Nowadays, I rarely use a dictionary because with Google Translate, the search is faster." (Siska, personal interview, February 2025).

- "I practice it by watching a channel called Good English. The channel provides simple conversation content and various other materials. Additionally, when watching, I also like to memorize new vocabulary, write it down, or immediately look up its meaning." (Irsa, personal interview, January 2025).

5. Music based vocabulary acquisition

To improve vocabulary skills through YouTube, students apply the music-based vocabulary acquisition strategy, which involves learning vocabulary through songs. The following is a response from the participant:

- "Oh yes, I've practiced through songs. However, I just listen and look up the meaning. I listen to the song and get curious about its meaning, then I search for the translation on YouTube." (Dey, personal interview, February 2025).
- "Usually, I learn new vocabulary from song lyrics. I look up the meanings of words I don't understand." (Jelin, personal interview, January 2025).

c. Course Materials

Self-regulated learning (SRL) in independent learning.

YouTube serves a dual purpose in language education, enhancing both language skills and foundational knowledge while also supporting self-directed learning. Students employ SelfRegulated Learning (SRL) strategies to maximize their learning by utilizing educational videos and other resources. Here are some insights from informants on this matter.

- "Like Syntax course, because I found it quite challenging, so I needed to relearn it through YouTube." (Dey, personal interview, February 2025)
- "There was an Academic Writing course. Generally, the explanations were understandable, but since the lectures were in the afternoon and I was already feeling tired, it was often hard to digest the material well. Therefore, I would revisit the material by watching YouTube videos at home at a more comfortable time. Additionally, I would also read comments on YouTube, which I found very helpful because there were many discussions and tips shared by other viewers." (Chris, personal interview, February 2025)
- "For example, there was a course that required us to watch a video and then write a summary based on our perspective in a journal. Or, we also had assignments to create videos based on those summaries... And thankfully, I felt a sense of progress from what I learned through YouTube. I could see the improvement." (Nostra, personal interview, February 2025)

Technology-enhanced language learning (TELL) in linguistic studies.

In addition to helping improve basic language skills, YouTube is also utilized as a means to study and understand course material. In the context of linguistics studies, students often apply the Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL) approach. Here is the response from one of the informants:

"I use YouTube not just for learning English, but also for studying linguistics topics such as morphology, phonology, and syntax. I prefer watching content from international experts like professors and teachers, as I find their explanations more detailed compared to Indonesian content." (Olvi, personal interview, February 2025).

Discussion

The perceptions of English Students toward the use of YouTube as a medium for English learning media.

To understand English students' perceptions of YouTube as a medium for English learning media, the writer distributed a questionnaire adapted from Lai and Gu (2011). This questionnaire contained 27 questions, divided into five key sub-sections related to students' opinions on using YouTube in their self-directed learning process. Based on these five sub-sections, the writer then discusses each finding. Here is the discussion:

1. *Goal Commitment Regulation*

The high percentage indicates that students possess strong intrinsic motivation to enhance their abilities and view YouTube as a legitimate tool for achieving their specific goals. This suggests they are aware of the importance of self-directed learning and are willing to invest time and effort. This phenomenon aligns well with Locke & Latham's (1990) GoalSetting Theory, which posits that specific and challenging goals, once accepted and committed to, lead to higher performance. Students committed to their English learning goals via YouTube tend to be more persistent and proactive in seeking and utilizing resources on the platform, even when facing challenges.

2. *Affective Regulation*

This finding shows that most students feel capable of managing negative emotions like frustration or boredom that might arise during self-directed learning. The ability to manage affect is crucial in autodidactic learning, where no instructor directly motivates. Expert support here comes from the concept of Self-Regulated Learning (SRL), specifically the Affective Regulation dimension as described by Pintrich (2004). Pintrich emphasizes that effective selflearners are those who can control their emotions, anxiety, and

internal motivation to remain focused on the task. This ability allows students to maintain perseverance and adaptability when encountering learning difficulties without direct supervision.

3. *Resource Regulation*

This figure indicates that YouTube is generally regarded as a valuable and effectively usable resource. Students seemingly recognize YouTube's potential in providing diverse content. This concept aligns with the idea of Autonomous Learning, which often requires students' ability to identify and utilize various learning resources. Benson (2013), a leading expert in learner autonomy, argues that one of the key dimensions of self-directed learners is the ability to manage their own learning resources, including choosing the most appropriate materials, tools, and learning environments. However, the significant neutral percentage also suggests that not all students are fully proficient in optimally utilizing these resource management strategies.

4. *Metacognitive Regulation*

This finding is a significant indicator and highlights a major challenge in autodidactic learning. Metacognition is the ability to think about one's own thinking process—planning, monitoring, and evaluating one's learning. The low agreement rate suggests that students may lack the skills to regulate their self-directed learning strategies. This is strongly supported by the Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) theory pioneered by Zimmerman (2000). Zimmerman identifies metacognition as a core component of SRL, involving processes of planning, monitoring, and reflection/evaluation. If students lack strong metacognitive abilities, they might passively consume YouTube content without effective learning strategies, thereby reducing the effectiveness of their autodidactic learning.

5. *Social Regulation*

Social regulation in the context of autodidactic learning with YouTube can include sharing videos, discussing content, or forming study groups. Although autodidactic learning is often perceived as an individual activity, this finding indicates an awareness of the importance of the social aspect. This aligns with Albert Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory, which emphasizes the importance of observational learning and social interaction in self-development. In this context, social regulation is not just about interacting, but also about how individuals influence and assist each other in achieving learning goals. While YouTube is primarily an individual platform, comment sections, discussion groups, or even simply sharing video recommendations can be forms of social regulation that support learning. However, the relatively high neutral percentage suggests that the full potential of social regulation in autodidactic learning with YouTube has not been fully utilized or recognized by all students.

The strategies of English students in using YouTube as a medium for English learning media.

These interview findings provide comprehensive insights into the diverse strategies adopted by English students who use YouTube for self-directed learning. They illustrate that YouTube is perceived not merely as a passive platform but as a dynamic ecosystem that enables the practice of various language skills and their components, as well as supporting coursework.

1. *Basic Language Skills*

Listening

- a) **Multimodal Listening Comprehension:** Students' use of English subtitles alongside audio demonstrates an understanding of integrating visual and auditory input. This practice aligns with Mayer's (2001) Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning, which posits that presenting information in both visual and auditory channels enhances comprehension and retention. The simultaneous exposure to spoken and written forms helps learners connect pronunciation with spelling, strengthening overall understanding.
- b) **Accent-Specific Listening Practice:** The deliberate choice to listen to specific accents, as reported by Jelin, indicates a personalized learning strategy driven by intrinsic motivation. This resonates with Krashen's (1985) Input Hypothesis, where learners benefit from comprehensible input that is also personally interesting and relevant, making the learning process more engaging and effective for targeted accent acquisition.

- c) **Integrated Listening Instruction:** Jelita's approach of integrating YouTube videos with her "Intensive Listening" course tasks exemplifies a blended learning approach, where digital media extends and reinforces formal classroom instruction. This strategy supports Hattie's (2009) concept of visible learning, where clearly defined learning goals are met through a combination of teacher-led instruction and self-directed practice using external resources.
- d) **Repetitive Listening Strategy:** Siska's repeated listening to material for deeper understanding is a classic strategy supported by Cognitive Load Theory (Sweller, 1988). Repetition helps reduce cognitive load by allowing information to be processed more deeply and eventually become automated in long-term memory, particularly crucial for mastering phonological and lexical aspects of a new language.
- e) **Lyric-Based Listening Comprehension:** Nostra's use of song lyrics highlights the role of music as a powerful mnemonic device and contextualize of language. As Schank and Abelson (1977) in their work on scripts and frames suggest, songs provide a structured, memorable context for vocabulary and grammar, facilitating deeper comprehension and retention by embedding language in an engaging narrative.

Speaking

- a) **Interactive Language Learning:** Chris's experience with educational channels featuring pauses for responses reflects a form of simulated interactive practice. This aligns with Vygotsky's (1978) Sociocultural Theory, where even without a direct human interlocutor, the structured prompts create a 'Zone of Proximal Development,' encouraging learners to produce language actively and internalize conversational patterns.
- b) **Imitative Speech Learning:** Elsa's practice of mimicking pronunciation, intonation, and accent directly from videos is a fundamental behaviorist strategy, closely linked to Skinner's (1957) operant conditioning, where repetition and imitation reinforce desired linguistic behaviors and improve oral fluency and accuracy.
- c) **Observational Learning in Language Acquisition:** Jelita's strategy of observing native speakers on YouTube before practicing herself is a direct application of Albert Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory. Learners acquire behaviors by observing models, forming mental representations, and then reproducing those behaviors, demonstrating YouTube's role as a rich source of authentic language models.
- d) **Shadowing Technique:** The use of shadowing by Elsa and Ate is a highly effective technique for improving fluency, intonation, and rhythm. As Lambert (1967) noted in his early work on simultaneous translation, shadowing helps build automaticity in language production by forcing a direct link between auditory perception and vocal output.
- e) **Participatory Listening and Speaking:** Ate's engagement with "shorts" and interactive conversation exercises demonstrates a desire for active content engagement that demands verbal response. This echoes principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which emphasizes active participation and interaction to develop communicative competence, even in a self-study context.
- f) **Singing:** Olvi's use of songs for pronunciation and fluency practice is widely supported by research in language and music. Scholars like Grigorenko (2005) argue that the rhythmic and melodic patterns in songs aid in phonological memory and prosody, making language acquisition more enjoyable and effective by engaging multiple cognitive systems.

Reading

- a) **Through Subtitles:** Ate's practice of reading through subtitles during vlogs exemplifies incidental vocabulary learning. This aligns with Nation's (2001) principles of vocabulary acquisition, which suggest that learners can acquire a significant amount of vocabulary indirectly through extensive exposure to comprehensible input, particularly when supported by visual or textual aids like subtitles.
- b) **Reading Aloud:** Chris's strategy of reading English children's stories aloud from YouTube highlights the benefits of interactive read-aloud for both comprehension and pronunciation. This practice reinforces the connection between phonology and orthography, as suggested by Gough and Tunmer's (1986) Simple View of Reading, which emphasizes decoding skills alongside language comprehension.

- c) **Digital Reading through Scrolling Text and Simulated Conversations:** Jelita's adaptation to "running text" on YouTube Shorts demonstrates the development of digital literacy skills alongside reading comprehension. This mirrors the multiliteracies approach (New London Group, 1996), where learners engage with diverse text formats in digital environments, fostering quick comprehension of narrative and informational texts.
- d) **Pausing and Repeating Strategy:** Siska's method of pausing and replaying videos to reread difficult sections underscores the importance of self-monitoring and repetition in reading comprehension. This active strategy is a component of effective metacognitive regulation (Zimmerman, 2000), allowing learners to control their reading pace and ensure thorough understanding of challenging material.

Writing

- a) **Note-taking:** Dey, Siska, and Irsa's practice of noting new vocabulary or sentence patterns aligns with Cognitive Load Theory (Sweller, 1988), where active processing and encoding of information through note-taking facilitate deeper learning and memory consolidation, crucial for improving writing accuracy and fluency.
- b) **Scaffolded Writing with Vocabulary Box and Observational Learning:** Chris's experience with "vocabulary boxes" and observing writing techniques from YouTube channels illustrates how the platform can provide scaffolded writing practice. This is consistent with Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), where learners receive structured support to move from their current writing ability to a higher level by observing models and applying learned techniques.
- c) **Content-Based Note-taking for Academic Writing Development:** Ani's strategy of noting key points from YouTube videos for her Phonology course demonstrates the use of YouTube as a supplementary academic resource. This aligns with academic literacy practices, where students develop their writing by integrating information from various sources and organizing it effectively, crucial for tasks like summarizing and essay writing.
- d) **Lexical Integration through Sentence Construction:** Nostra's practice of using new vocabulary from songs to construct new sentences is a direct application of lexical integration. This active process of transferring passive vocabulary into active production is a key component of vocabulary depth (Nation, 2001), moving beyond mere recognition to productive use in writing.
- e) **Input Enhancement and Noticing in the Context of Form-Focused Instruction:** Irsa's attention to sentence structure and spelling in authentic content on YouTube exemplifies "noticing" (Schmidt, 1990), a crucial process in language acquisition where learners consciously attend to specific forms in the input. This supports form-focused instruction in an incidental way, helping learners internalize accurate grammatical and orthographical patterns.

2. Language Skills Component

Grammar

- a) **Implicit Grammar Learning through Exposure:** Dey's incidental grammar learning through exposure to various English videos is a strong example of implicit grammar acquisition. This aligns with Krashen's (1985) distinction between acquisition and learning, suggesting that language rules can be internalized subconsciously through extensive exposure to comprehensible input, similar to how first languages are acquired.
- b) **Naturalistic Grammar Acquisition through Listening and Reading:** Chris's approach to understanding grammar patterns naturally from stories on YouTube mirrors naturalistic language acquisition. This emphasizes contextualized learning over explicit rule memorization, a principle supported by Long's (1996) Interaction Hypothesis, where meaningful input and negotiation of meaning contribute to grammar development.
- c) **Incidental Grammar Learning through Repeated Exposure:** Ani's development of a "language instinct" through repeated exposure is a testament to implicit learning through extensive input. As Ellis (2002) argues, repeated encounters with linguistic forms in various contexts can lead to the gradual, unconscious internalization of grammatical patterns, forming an intuitive sense of correctness.
- d) **Explicit Grammar Learning through Video-Based Instruction:** Jelita's use of YouTube videos to systematically learn grammar rules exemplifies explicit grammar instruction. This method, often preferred by analytical learners, directly provides rules and explanations, complementing implicit

learning by offering a clear cognitive map of the language system, as supported by Ellis (2002) in his work on explicit and implicit knowledge.

Pronunciation

Observing and Imitating: The universal adoption of observing and imitating native speakers by Chris, Ani, Siska, and Olvi highlights the fundamental role of modeling and imitation in pronunciation acquisition. This is a core tenet of Behaviorist Theory (Skinner, 1957) and is further enhanced by the use of modern tools like AI (Gemini) and Google Translate, providing immediate feedback and scaffolding for self-correction.

Vocabulary

- a) **Incidental Vocabulary Learning:** Dey's practice of looking up new words encountered in context demonstrates incidental vocabulary acquisition. This highly efficient method aligns with Nation's (2001) four strands of vocabulary learning, emphasizing learning from meaning-focused input, where words are encountered in authentic contexts.
- b) **Contextual Vocabulary Acquisition (CVA):** Chris's strategy of learning vocabulary based on its use in specific contexts (e.g., accident vocabulary) is a prime example of Contextual Vocabulary Acquisition. This approach, supported by Sternberg and Powell (1983), emphasizes understanding word meaning and usage through the surrounding linguistic environment, leading to deeper comprehension and more accurate application.
- c) **Subtitle-Mediated Vocabulary Learning:** Jelita's practice of switching subtitles between Indonesian and English highlights the role of subtitles as a dual-coding mechanism. As per Paivio's (1986) Dual-Coding Theory, information presented in both verbal and non-verbal forms (text and audio/visuals) is processed more effectively, facilitating vocabulary acquisition by reinforcing the connection between the spoken word and its written form.
- d) **Real-Time Vocabulary Acquisition:** Siska and Irsa's immediate lookup of unfamiliar words during video watching demonstrates active, real-time vocabulary acquisition. This proactive strategy aligns with learner autonomy (Benson, 2013), where individuals take responsibility for their own learning by promptly addressing lexical gaps and utilizing readily available digital tools for efficiency.
- e) **Music-Based Vocabulary Acquisition:** Dey and Jelin's use of songs for vocabulary learning is a widely recognized and effective strategy. Songs provide memorable contexts and repetitive exposure, which, as argued by Schmidt (1990) in his Noticing Hypothesis, can increase the salience of new words and facilitate their intake and retention.

3. Course Material

- a) **Self-regulated learning (SRL) in independent learning:**
YouTube's role in supporting self-regulated learning is evident through Chris's flexible time management and use of comments for support, aligning with Zimmerman's (2000) cyclical model of SRL (forethought, performance, self-reflection). Nostra's perceived "sense of progress" further underscores how YouTube acts as a tool for self-monitoring and evaluating learning outcomes, reinforcing the cycle of self-regulation.
- b) **Technology-enhanced language learning (TELL) in linguistic studies:**
Olvi's use of YouTube to study linguistics topics from international experts strongly exemplifies Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL). This demonstrates how TELL can democratize access to diverse academic perspectives and detailed explanations, supporting Higgins (2003) who defines TELL as the application of technology to support language learning, expanding beyond traditional classroom boundaries to facilitate deeper disciplinary knowledge.

CONCLUSION

The writer would like to draw several conclusions to answer the research problems in this study as stated in the previous chapter. Based on the research findings and discussion, the writer concludes that

1. The study showed the majority of students (61%) were positive towards YouTube for self-directed English learning, which aligns with aspects of self-directed learning (SRL) such as motivation and resource utilization. YouTube was rated as effective because it helps maintain motivation, provides broad access to materials, and facilitates learning strategies. For beginners in particular, YouTube is

particularly beneficial due to its immersive visual and audio content, allowing exposure to real English through simple videos, repetition features, speed control, as well as educational channels designed specifically for beginners. Therefore, YouTube is an effective medium to support self-directed English learning, especially for basic level learners.

2. Meanwhile, the second research problem found that the strategy for learning English through YouTube in listening skills, participants relied on videos such as vlogs, interviews, and movie or series content in English to practice their ability to understand native English speakers' conversations. For speaking, they imitated pronunciation, intonation, and speaking style from native speakers in YouTube videos and practiced through personal monologues or speaking in front of a mirror. In the aspect of reading, participants often read English subtitles simultaneously while watching videos and also accessed the transcript feature provided by YouTube to reinforce their understanding of sentence structures. Meanwhile, writing skills were honed through activities such as rewriting information from videos, taking notes, or commenting in English in the video comment section. In terms of language components, for pronunciation, participants imitated the correct pronunciation from YouTubers, especially those with native accents like American or British English. Vocabulary was acquired contextually through content exposure, and participants usually noted new vocabulary they encountered. For grammar, they absorbed sentence structures used in videos and then practiced them in writing or conversation.
3. In addition, YouTube is not only effective in improving English language skills but also plays a significant role in supporting students' academic learning through Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) and Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL) approaches. Through SRL, they can regulate their learning strategies independently with the help of video content, and through TELL, they gain flexible access to linguistic materials from credible sources. Thus, YouTube becomes a relevant, interactive, and supportive learning medium for linguistic understanding in the digital era.

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