

EFL Students' Experiences of Using YouTube to Support Autonomous English Learning

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi pengalaman mahasiswa EFL dalam menggunakan YouTube untuk mendukung pembelajaran bahasa Inggris secara mandiri. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain deskriptif kualitatif. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur terhadap enam mahasiswa Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris yang aktif memanfaatkan YouTube sebagai media pembelajaran bahasa Inggris secara mandiri. Data dianalisis menggunakan analisis tematik untuk mengidentifikasi tema-tema yang muncul dari pengalaman peserta. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa YouTube dipandang sebagai lingkungan belajar yang menarik, fleksibel, dan mudah diakses. Mahasiswa menerapkan berbagai strategi belajar mandiri, seperti penggunaan subtitle, pengulangan video, pencatatan kosakata, dan pencarian informasi tambahan untuk mengatasi kesulitan belajar. Penggunaan YouTube juga berkontribusi terhadap perkembangan kemampuan bahasa Inggris, khususnya dalam penguasaan kosakata, keterampilan menyimak, pelafalan, dan kepercayaan diri berbicara. Meskipun demikian, mahasiswa masih menghadapi tantangan berupa kecepatan berbicara penutur asli, variasi aksen, keterbatasan kosakata, gangguan selama belajar, dan kendala akses internet. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa YouTube tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai sumber belajar digital, tetapi juga mendukung pengembangan kemandirian belajar melalui penerapan strategi belajar mandiri dan pengelolaan proses belajar secara independen. Temuan penelitian ini memberikan implikasi bagi dosen untuk mendorong pengembangan keterampilan regulasi diri dalam pemanfaatan media digital untuk pembelajaran bahasa Inggris.

Kata Kunci: *Kemandirian Belajar; Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris Mandiri; Mahasiswa EFL; Strategi Belajar Mandiri; Sumber Belajar Digital.*

Abstract

This study aimed to explore EFL students' experiences of using YouTube to support autonomous English learning. The study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive qualitative design. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with six students from the English Education Department who actively used YouTube for independent English learning. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify themes emerging from the participants' experiences. The findings revealed that YouTube was perceived as an engaging, flexible, and accessible learning environment. Students applied various self-directed learning strategies, including the use of subtitles, video replay, vocabulary note-taking, and searching for additional information to overcome learning difficulties. The use of YouTube also contributed to the development of English language skills, particularly vocabulary acquisition, listening comprehension, pronunciation, and speaking confidence. However, students encountered several challenges, including fast speech, unfamiliar accents, limited vocabulary knowledge, learning distractions, and internet connectivity issues. The study concludes that YouTube functions not only as a digital learning resource but also as a platform that supports the development of learner autonomy through self-directed learning strategies and independent learning management. The findings imply that lecturers should encourage the development of self-regulation skills to maximize the educational benefits of digital media in English language learning.

Keyword: *Learner Autonomy; Autonomous English Learning; EFL Students; Self-Directed Learning; Strategies; Digital Learning Resources.*

INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technology has significantly transformed educational practices, particularly in English language learning contexts. The integration of digital media into language learning has provided students with broader opportunities to access learning materials independently beyond traditional classroom settings. In recent years, online platforms such as YouTube have become increasingly popular among EFL learners because they offer authentic, flexible, and accessible learning resources through audio-visual content. YouTube enables learners to access various English-language materials such as films, educational videos, documentaries, podcasts, tutorials, and conversations that can support language development and independent learning practices. Recent educational technology studies also indicate that digital learning environments have reshaped students' learning behaviors and increased the use of online learning platforms in language learning contexts (Leon & Soyoo, 2026).

In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, autonomous learning has become an important aspect of language learning because students are expected to take greater responsibility for managing their own learning processes. According to Holec (1981), learner autonomy refers to learners' ability to take responsibility for their own learning, including determining learning objectives, selecting learning materials, monitoring learning progress, and evaluating learning outcomes. The development of digital technologies has further strengthened opportunities for students to engage in autonomous English learning through various online platforms. Previous studies revealed that digital technologies support learner autonomy by providing flexible learning opportunities and encouraging self-regulated learning behaviors in online learning environments (Pratiwi & Waluyo, 2023).

Among various digital platforms, YouTube has attracted considerable attention in English language learning because it provides authentic language exposure and interactive learning experiences. Previous studies have reported that YouTube can improve students' listening skills through authentic audio-visual materials and repeated exposure to English content (Hendrayasa, 2021). Similarly, Saed et al. (2021) found that YouTube contributes positively to the development of speaking and pronunciation skills among EFL university students. In addition, Faishol et al. (2026) explained that YouTube creates a more enjoyable and engaging learning atmosphere that increases students' motivation and participation in English learning activities. Satriani et al. (2023) also reported that students perceive YouTube as a practical and flexible learning medium that supports independent learning activities outside classroom settings.

Furthermore, multimedia learning environments may enhance learners' cognitive engagement and language learning performance when students actively interact with digital learning materials (Alzobidy et al., 2024). Lai et al. (2022) found that learners frequently use digital technologies and mobile learning platforms to implement self-directed learning strategies such as repetition practice, self-monitoring, independent material searching, and vocabulary note-taking. In addition, Yaşar (2025) explained that video-based learning environments contribute to the development of self-regulated learning and independent learning engagement among EFL learners. Another study emphasized that personalized digital learning platforms support students' adaptive learning strategies and autonomous learning behaviors in technology-assisted learning environments (XIE & JIANG, 2025).

Although YouTube provides authentic English input and extensive learning opportunities, EFL learners may encounter challenges when interacting with authentic language materials. Some learners experience difficulties understanding native-speaker speech due to fast speaking rates,

unfamiliar accents, and complex vocabulary. Nevertheless, YouTube offers several features, such as subtitles, replay functions, and adjustable playback speed, which may help learners overcome these difficulties. Through these features, learners can gradually transform challenging language input into more comprehensible input while simultaneously developing autonomous learning strategies. Therefore, understanding how learners utilize these features in their independent learning process is important for examining the role of YouTube in supporting autonomous English learning.

Several previous studies have also highlighted that authentic English content available on digital media platforms can increase students' confidence, engagement, and familiarity with real-life English communication contexts (Widiantari & Dewi, 2023). Moreover, recent educational technology research revealed that digital learning environments encourage learners to become more active and independent in managing their learning processes (Harmaini, 2026). Another study further explained that flexible online learning platforms provide opportunities for learners to access personalized learning experiences according to their learning needs and interests (Apoko & Waluyo, 2025). In addition, digital video-based learning environments may support students' motivation and learner autonomy through interactive and accessible learning experiences (Pannatier & Béntrancourt, 2024).

Several previous studies have examined the use of YouTube and digital technologies in English language learning. Hendrayasa (2021) focused on the benefits of YouTube for teaching listening skills, while Saed et al. (2021) investigated the role of YouTube in developing speaking skills among EFL university students. In addition, Lai et al. (2022) examined self-directed learning strategies using mobile technology, and Pratiwi & Waluyo (2023) explored autonomous learning through digital technologies in online English classrooms. Yaşar (2025) also discussed self-regulated learning development through video-based pedagogical frameworks. However, these studies mainly emphasized language achievement, learning strategies, or instructional effectiveness rather than students' lived experiences in managing autonomous English learning through YouTube. Therefore, further investigation is still needed to explore how EFL students experience the use of YouTube in supporting autonomous English learning.

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on exploring EFL students' experiences of using YouTube to support autonomous English learning from the perspective of learner autonomy and self-directed learning behaviors. Unlike previous studies that mainly focused on language achievement, classroom instruction, or instructional effectiveness, this study specifically investigates how students independently utilize YouTube, implement learning strategies, experience language development, and overcome learning challenges during autonomous English learning processes. Based on the explanation above, this study aims to answer the following research question: How do EFL students experience the use of YouTube to support autonomous English learning?

Therefore, the objective of this study is to explore EFL students' experiences of using YouTube to support autonomous English learning, including the learning strategies they apply, the benefits they experience, and the challenges they encounter during the learning process.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research design to explore EFL students' experiences of using YouTube to support autonomous English learning. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the study focused on understanding participants' personal experiences,

learning behaviors, perceptions, and strategies in utilizing YouTube for independent English learning. Specifically, this study applied a descriptive qualitative method to obtain detailed and in-depth information regarding students' autonomous learning experiences in digital learning environments (Creswell, 2014).

The participants of this study consisted of six EFL students from the English Education Department at IAIN Parepare who actively used YouTube as a medium for autonomous English learning. The participants were selected using purposive sampling because they met specific criteria relevant to the objectives of the study. The criteria included students who frequently accessed YouTube for English learning purposes, independently utilized English-language content, and had experience in learning English outside formal classroom activities. A total of six participants were selected because they were able to provide rich and meaningful information related to the research topic and their experiences were considered sufficient to address the research objective (Creswell, 2014).

The primary instrument used in this study was a semi-structured interview. The interview instrument was designed to explore participants' experiences in using YouTube for autonomous English learning, including the types of content they watched, learning strategies they applied, perceived benefits, learning challenges, and the influence of YouTube on their English language development. Semi-structured interviews were chosen because they allowed flexibility for participants to express their experiences and opinions in greater depth while still maintaining alignment with the research objectives (Creswell, 2014). In addition, the researcher used interview guidelines and audio recordings to support the data collection process.

The data were collected through individual interviews conducted with the participants. Before conducting the interviews, the researcher explained the purpose of the study and obtained participants' consent to participate in the research. The interviews were conducted in a flexible and comfortable setting to encourage participants to share their experiences openly. During the interviews, the researcher asked several open-ended questions related to students' experiences in using YouTube to support autonomous English learning. Each interview lasted approximately 20–30 minutes and was audio-recorded with the participants' permission. The recordings were subsequently transcribed verbatim for further analysis.

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis following the procedures proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). First, all interview recordings were transcribed, and the resulting transcripts were reviewed repeatedly to gain a comprehensive understanding of the data. Second, the researcher identified meaningful statements and coded important information related to students' experiences, learning strategies, benefits, and challenges in using YouTube for autonomous English learning. Third, the codes were grouped into broader categories and organized into themes representing recurring patterns across participants' responses. Finally, the themes were interpreted and discussed to answer the research question and achieve the objective of the study.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the data, the researcher applied member checking by confirming several interview interpretations with the participants as suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985). In addition, repeated reading of the interview transcripts and careful interpretation of the data were conducted to maintain credibility and consistency throughout the analysis process. These procedures helped ensure that the findings accurately represented the participants' experiences and perspectives.

FINDINGS

This section presents the findings of the study regarding EFL students' experiences of using YouTube to support autonomous English learning. The findings were obtained through semi-structured interviews and analyzed using thematic analysis. Based on the analysis of the interview data and coding results, five major themes emerged from the data: (1) YouTube as an Engaging and Flexible Environment for Autonomous English Learning, (2) Active Learning Practices and Learning Strategies in Using YouTube, (3) Perceived Language Development Through YouTube-Based Learning, (4) Challenges in Understanding Authentic English Content, and (5) Development of Learner Autonomy Through YouTube.

Table 1. Themes and Categories Generated from Thematic Analysis

Themes	Categories
Theme 1. YouTube as an Engaging and Flexible Environment for Autonomous English Learning	Learning Motivation and Initiation; Learning Environment; Content Characteristics
Theme 2. Active Learning Practices and Learning Strategies in Using YouTube	Learning Behavior; Learning Strategies (Responses)
Theme 3. Perceived Language Development Through YouTube-Based Learning	Learning Outcomes
Theme 4. Challenges in Understanding Authentic English Content	Challenges
Theme 5. Development of Learner Autonomy Through YouTube	Learner Autonomy

YouTube as an Engaging and Flexible Environment for Autonomous English Learning

The findings revealed that participants perceived YouTube as an engaging, enjoyable, and flexible environment for autonomous English learning. Most participants initially used YouTube for entertainment purposes; however, over time they became aware of its educational value and intentionally used it to improve their English skills. Participants explained that YouTube allowed them to learn English in a relaxed manner without the pressure commonly experienced in formal classroom settings.

In addition, participants reported that YouTube provided a wide variety of English-language content, including films, vlogs, documentaries, podcasts, educational videos, and authentic conversations. The availability of diverse content enabled students to choose learning materials according to their interests, needs, and proficiency levels.

One participant stated:

“I usually learn English through YouTube because it is more enjoyable and not boring. I can choose videos that I like and learn in my free time.” (SP)

Another participant explained:

“There are many kinds of English content on YouTube, so I can choose videos based on what I need and what I am interested in.” (HTA)

The coding analysis further revealed that learning motivation, flexibility, enjoyable learning experiences, and content diversity were dominant factors influencing students' use of YouTube.

These findings suggest that YouTube functions as a supportive learning environment that encourages students to engage in autonomous English learning activities.

Active Learning Practices and Learning Strategies in Using YouTube

The findings also demonstrated that participants actively applied various learning strategies while using YouTube. Rather than passively watching videos, students engaged in active learning practices such as replaying videos, pausing difficult sections, activating subtitles, taking notes of unfamiliar vocabulary, and searching for additional explanations through Google or online dictionaries.

Several participants explained that replaying videos and using subtitles helped them understand difficult expressions and improve their comprehension. Participants also reported practicing pronunciation by imitating native speakers and repeatedly listening to English expressions used in videos.

One participant stated:

“If I do not understand a word, I pause the video and search for the meaning before continuing.” (AA)

Another participant mentioned:

“I usually replay videos several times and use subtitles because they help me understand the pronunciation and vocabulary better.” (AN)

Furthermore, the findings revealed that students independently managed their own learning processes by selecting learning materials, monitoring their understanding, and adjusting learning strategies according to their needs. The coding process showed that subtitle use, repetition, note-taking, pronunciation practice, and independent problem-solving were frequently applied during autonomous English learning activities.

Perceived Language Development Through YouTube-Based Learning

The findings revealed that YouTube contributed positively to participants' English language development. Most participants reported improvements in vocabulary acquisition, listening comprehension, pronunciation, speaking ability, grammar understanding, reading skills, and overall English proficiency after regularly using YouTube as a learning medium.

Participants explained that continuous exposure to authentic English content helped them become more familiar with natural speech patterns, pronunciation, and commonly used expressions. Several students also mentioned that regular exposure to English videos increased their confidence in using English.

One participant stated:

“My vocabulary has improved because I often learn new words from YouTube videos.” (M)

Another participant explained:

“After watching English videos regularly, I feel more confident speaking English because I know how words are pronounced correctly.” (SP)

The coding findings indicate that vocabulary growth, listening improvement, pronunciation development, and increased confidence were among the most frequently reported benefits. In

addition, students perceived that YouTube helped them develop a broader understanding of authentic English communication and real-life language use.

Challenges in Understanding Authentic English Content

Although YouTube provided many learning benefits, the findings also revealed several challenges encountered by students during autonomous English learning activities. The most common difficulties included fast speech, unfamiliar accents, limited vocabulary knowledge, difficulties understanding contextual meanings, internet connectivity problems, and dependence on subtitles.

Several participants explained that authentic English content could be difficult to understand because native speakers often spoke too quickly and used unfamiliar vocabulary.

One participant stated:

“Sometimes native speakers speak too fast, so I cannot understand everything they say.” (SP)

Another participant explained:

“Different accents make some videos difficult to understand, especially when I hear unfamiliar words.” (AN)

Despite these difficulties, participants reported using various strategies to overcome the challenges. They replayed videos, activated subtitles, searched for unfamiliar vocabulary through dictionaries or online resources, and selected alternative videos that were more suitable for their proficiency levels. The coding analysis demonstrated that although authentic English content presented comprehension challenges, students actively employed problem-solving strategies to continue their learning activities.

Development of Learner Autonomy Through YouTube

The findings further demonstrated that YouTube played an important role in fostering learner autonomy among participants. Students reported becoming more independent in selecting learning materials, organizing learning activities, managing learning time, and solving learning difficulties without relying heavily on classroom instruction.

Participants explained that YouTube allowed them to decide what to learn, when to learn, and how to learn according to their personal goals and interests.

One participant stated:

“I can choose what I want to learn and study at my own pace without depending on classroom activities.” (MA)

Another participant explained:

“YouTube helps me learn independently because I can search for materials that suit my needs and interests.” (AN)

The coding analysis revealed that freedom in selecting learning resources, self-directed learning behaviors, and independent learning management were dominant indicators of learner autonomy. These findings suggest that YouTube functions not only as a learning resource but also as a platform that supports students in taking responsibility for their own learning processes.

Overall, the findings indicate that YouTube played a significant role in supporting autonomous English learning among EFL students. The platform provided an engaging and

flexible learning environment, encouraged the use of active learning strategies, contributed to language development, and fostered learner autonomy. However, students also encountered several challenges related to authentic English content and technical issues, which they addressed through various self-directed learning strategies.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that YouTube plays a significant role in supporting autonomous English learning among EFL students. The participants perceived YouTube as an engaging, flexible, and accessible learning environment that enabled them to learn English beyond formal classroom settings. The findings indicate that students were attracted to YouTube not only because of its educational value but also because of its enjoyable and less stressful learning atmosphere. The availability of diverse content such as films, vlogs, documentaries, podcasts, educational videos, and authentic conversations allowed students to select learning materials that matched their interests, learning needs, and proficiency levels. These findings support Holec's (1981) concept of learner autonomy, which emphasizes learners' responsibility for managing their own learning process, including selecting learning materials and determining learning objectives. Through YouTube, students were able to independently access resources and create personalized learning experiences according to their individual preferences.

The findings also revealed that participants actively applied various self-directed learning strategies while using YouTube. Students intentionally searched for English-learning content, replayed videos, paused difficult sections, activated subtitles, recorded unfamiliar vocabulary, and searched for additional explanations using online resources. These findings indicate that students were not passive consumers of digital content but active participants in their own learning process. According to Zimmerman (2002), self-regulated learners actively plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning activities to achieve learning goals effectively. The learning behaviors demonstrated by the participants reflect important characteristics of self-regulated learning because students independently selected strategies to overcome learning difficulties and improve their understanding of English content.

The findings further support previous studies highlighting the role of digital technologies in promoting autonomous and self-directed learning. Lai et al. (2022) found that digital platforms encourage learners to regulate their own learning activities through strategy use, self-monitoring, and independent resource selection. Similarly, Yaşar (2025) emphasized that video-based learning environments contribute to the development of self-regulated learning behaviors by encouraging learners to actively engage with learning materials. The present study extends these findings by demonstrating how EFL students utilize YouTube not only as a source of information but also as a platform for implementing practical learning strategies that support independent language learning.

Another important finding concerns the contribution of YouTube to students' language development. Participants reported improvements in vocabulary acquisition, listening comprehension, pronunciation, speaking confidence, grammar understanding, reading skills, and overall English proficiency. These findings suggest that continuous exposure to authentic English content provides meaningful opportunities for language development. This finding is consistent with Krashen's Input Hypothesis, which states that language acquisition occurs when learners are exposed to meaningful and comprehensible language input (Krashen, 1985). Through YouTube, students regularly encountered authentic English language use in real-life contexts, enabling them to expand their vocabulary, improve listening skills, and become more familiar with natural patterns of communication.

However, several participants reported difficulties understanding native speakers due to fast speech, unfamiliar accents, and complex vocabulary. At first glance, this finding may appear inconsistent with the concept of comprehensible input proposed by Krashen (1985). Nevertheless, the interview data revealed that students employed adaptive learning strategies such as replaying videos, activating subtitles, pausing difficult sections, and searching for unfamiliar vocabulary through dictionaries or online resources. These strategies enabled learners to gradually transform initially challenging input into comprehensible input that could be processed and understood more effectively. Therefore, the findings suggest that YouTube not only provides authentic language exposure but also offers learning features that help learners make authentic input more comprehensible. This process illustrates how learner autonomy and self-regulated learning strategies play a crucial role in facilitating language acquisition through digital learning environments.

The findings also demonstrated that YouTube contributes to students' motivation and confidence in learning English. Participants explained that learning through YouTube was more enjoyable, flexible, and less intimidating than traditional classroom learning. This finding aligns with previous research indicating that enjoyable learning environments can increase learners' engagement and motivation in language learning activities (Faishol et al., 2026). Furthermore, Widiantari and Dewi (2023) reported that exposure to authentic English content can increase learners' confidence because it familiarizes them with natural language use and real-life communication contexts. In the present study, students reported becoming more confident in speaking English after regularly observing native-speaker pronunciation and conversational patterns through YouTube videos.

The findings further support Mayer's Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning, which explains that learning becomes more effective when information is presented through both visual and auditory channels (Mayer, 2009). Participants reported that the combination of audio, visual elements, subtitles, and contextual explanations helped them understand English content more easily. This suggests that YouTube's multimedia features facilitate cognitive processing and enhance language learning experiences. Consistent with this finding, Alzobidy et al. (2024) argued that multimedia learning environments improve learners' engagement and support more effective language acquisition compared to conventional learning approaches.

Despite the positive contributions of YouTube, participants also encountered several challenges during autonomous learning activities. The most common difficulties included fast speech, accent variation, unfamiliar vocabulary, limited explanations in some videos, internet connectivity issues, and distractions from entertainment content. These findings indicate that autonomous learning through digital platforms requires not only access to learning resources but also the ability to manage learning challenges effectively. Benson (2013) argued that successful autonomous learning depends on learners' capacity to regulate their learning behaviors and maintain control over their learning process. The participants in this study demonstrated such capacities by applying various problem-solving strategies, including searching for alternative videos, using online dictionaries, replaying videos, and finding more suitable learning materials.

An important contribution of this study concerns the development of learner autonomy among EFL students. The findings revealed that participants became more independent in selecting learning materials, organizing learning activities, managing learning time, and solving learning difficulties through their own initiatives. Students were able to choose videos based on their interests, proficiency levels, and learning goals while also determining when and how they wanted to learn. These findings reinforce Holec's (1981) view that learner autonomy involves

learners' ability to take responsibility for decisions related to their own learning. In addition, the participants demonstrated characteristics of autonomous learners by monitoring their understanding, adapting learning strategies when encountering difficulties, and independently seeking solutions through subtitles, replaying videos, and online resources. Therefore, YouTube functions not only as a digital learning resource but also as a learning environment that encourages self-directed learning and supports the development of learner autonomy among EFL students.

The findings of this study provide both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, the study strengthens the concepts of learner autonomy, self-regulated learning, and comprehensible input by demonstrating how digital platforms support independent language learning. Practically, the findings suggest that English lecturers should not only integrate YouTube into language instruction but also guide students in developing self-regulation skills. Lecturers may encourage students to establish learning goals, create consistent learning schedules, monitor their learning progress, and reflect on their learning outcomes. Such guidance may help students minimize distractions, maintain learning consistency, and maximize the educational benefits of YouTube for autonomous English learning.

Overall, the findings indicate that YouTube serves as a valuable digital learning platform that supports autonomous English learning by providing authentic language exposure, promoting self-directed learning strategies, facilitating language development, and encouraging learner autonomy. Although students encounter several challenges when engaging with authentic English content, the use of adaptive learning strategies enables them to overcome these difficulties and continue developing their English proficiency independently.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to explore EFL students' experiences of using YouTube to support autonomous English learning. The findings revealed that EFL students experienced YouTube as an engaging, flexible, and accessible learning environment that enabled them to learn English independently beyond formal classroom settings. Students utilized various self-directed learning strategies, such as using subtitles, replaying videos, taking vocabulary notes, and searching for additional information to overcome learning difficulties and support their learning goals.

The study also found that YouTube contributed positively to students' language development, particularly in vocabulary acquisition, listening comprehension, pronunciation, speaking confidence, and overall English understanding. Furthermore, YouTube supported the development of learner autonomy by enabling students to independently select learning materials, manage learning activities, regulate learning processes, and solve learning problems. Although students encountered challenges such as fast speech, unfamiliar accents, limited vocabulary knowledge, internet connectivity issues, and learning distractions, they demonstrated adaptive strategies that allowed them to continue learning effectively.

These findings indicate that YouTube functions not only as a digital learning resource but also as a platform that promotes autonomous learning and self-directed learning behaviors among EFL students. Therefore, English lecturers should not only integrate YouTube into language learning activities but also support students in developing self-regulation skills, such as setting learning goals, maintaining consistent learning routines, monitoring learning progress, and reflecting on learning outcomes.

Future research may involve larger participant groups, different educational contexts, or mixed-methods designs to provide broader insights into how digital platforms support learner autonomy and autonomous English learning.

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