Students’ Perceptions and Experiences on YouTube-mediated Self-regulated Learning

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Abstract
Self-regulated learning is an independent and effective process where learners can fully control their learning. This narrative inquiry research aims to investigate the perspectives and experiences of EFL students who frequently watch YouTube videos to learn English outside of the classroom. The data from six participants of one of state university in Karawang, Indonesia were collected through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. It was found that the majority of the students’ showed positive perceptions towards the use of YouTube for their goal commitment, affective, resource, and culture regulation. In contrast, the students showed negative perceptions towards the use of YouTube for their metacognitive and social regulation. Regarding students’ experiences, the findings revealed: (1) English skills that can be improved by frequently watching YouTube are listening and speaking skills; (2) the students tend to like the videos as feedback; (3) each student has a different preference on what videos and channels they usually watch to help them learn English; and (4) learning English using YouTube was considered to be more flexible, easier to be understood, and more enjoyable than formal learning; nonetheless, formal learning can help the students practice their English more. In conclusion, using YouTube videos was considered to be helpful to accommodate the students’ self-regulated English learning.

Keywords: self-regulated learning, students’ perceptions, students’ experiences, videos, YouTube

Introduction
The limitation of English use in daily activities has become a major problem for EFL students in improving their English skills (Cahyono, 2008; Zahra, 2020). In the scope of Indonesian classrooms, Zahra (2020) stated in her research that the students seem to be unmotivated to learn English. Thus, the students tend to learn English only in the...
classroom with their teacher, and rarely try to improve their English skills outside of the classroom (Zahra, 2020). This behavior indicates that the Indonesian EFL students have low self-regulated learning skills, especially in learning English.

Meanwhile, the success of learning a foreign language depends on how frequent the students try to improve their language abilities outside the classroom. Students need to have good self-regulated learning skills in order to achieve their goals in learning a foreign language (Oxford, 2001; cited in Mahmooodi et al., 2014; Carneiro et al., 2011; cited in Wang & Chen, 2019). Zimmerman and Schunk (2011) state that self-regulated learning (SRL), which is closely related to learners' self-determination (Oxford, 2005; cited in Wang & Chen, 2019), is best defined as a progressive and effective process where learners can manage their learning by setting up their goals, monitoring their development, and controlling their cognitive process, motivation and behavior (Teng & Zhang, 2019). Self-regulated learning (SRL) emphasizes the students’ independence and responsibility to direct their learning (Carneiro et al., 2011; cited in Wang & Chen, 2019).

In addition, students’ ability to utilize the self-regulated learning strategies effectively is considered as an important factor in improving their capacity and learning goals (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015; Han & Hiver, 2018; Tseng et al., 2006, cited in Teng and Zhang, 2019). Given the fact that self-regulatory skill in learning language is important, students should have maintained their self-regulatory skill to a high level, especially in the context of learning language outside the classroom.

Furthermore, the current advancements in technology help to break the boundaries of language learning and teaching in classroom (Wang & Chen, 2019). Technology advancements offer the students a wide range of informal learning strategies outside the classroom. As soon as they open the virtual space, they will find a lot of fun and effective resources to support their learning. With the freedom access, they can get the materials as much as they want and they can choose the materials based on their needs and capacities. These advantages of the virtual space soon will build the students’ awareness of self-regulated learning (SRL).

One of the most famous virtual spaces is YouTube. The site was built in 2005 and it offers people the freedom to watch, produce, comment, and share videos online (Chau, 2011; Wang & Chen, 2019). According to Ilin et al. (2013), video is an extensive multimedia device that consists of both audio and visual content. Besides its sound and image, some videos also offer the viewer several advancements such as transcripts, subtitles, captions, and authorities (Pujola, 2002; Ilin et al., 2013). Furthermore, Ilin et al. (2013) added that video can be a useful multimedia tool to attract the learners’ interest and build their curiosity. With the various features of the video mentioned above, the video can possibly engage the students who have different learning styles (Zhu, 2012; Ilin et al., 2013).

YouTube offers a lot of videos with various contents. The learners, especially language learners, can freely choose whatever videos that they want to watch to help them improve their language knowledge and ability. Despite the fact that a video from YouTube can help them practice their language ability, the YouTube video can also introduce them to a whole new culture of the English language. These advantages of YouTube video technically can offer the easiest way for the students to manage their self-regulated learning on a higher level. Besides all the advantages and possibilities that the YouTube video have to help the learners self-regulating their learning, however, there are only few research done to study about this topic, and especially the study that aims to find out the students’ perceptions (e.g. Wang & Chen, 2019; Putri, 2019; Putri et al., 2020) and experiences (e.g. Wang & Chen, 2019) on using YouTube video to self-regulate their learning.

In the three previous research mentioned above (i.e. Wang & Chen, 2019; Putri, 2019; Putri et al., 2020), their conducted study only focused on the students’ perceptions on the use of YouTube to self-regulate the students’
learning, only the study conducted by Wang & Chen (2019) that included the students’ experiences of self-regulating their language learning using YouTube. Especially, Wang & Chen’s (2019) research studied about L2 students’ perceptions and experiences on learning autonomously using YouTube outside of the classroom. Furthermore, the data of the research only gathered by using the semi-structured interview without any other additional data collection techniques. Consequently, as stated by the researchers themselves (Wang & Chen, 2019), the results of their study were limited.

Moreover, in the other research (Putri, 2019; and Putri et al., 2020), though their studies were conducted to find out EFL students’ perceptions on the use of YouTube to self-regulate the students’ language learning, yet they did not include the students’ experiences on the topic mentioned. Therefore, in the realization of a need for further research that presents the use of data triangulation of EFL students’ perceptions and experiences on this particular topic, the researcher aims to investigate the students’ perceptions and experiences towards the use of YouTube to self-regulate their language learning.

Self-regulated Language Learning

Pintrich (2000) in Seker (2015) stated that self-regulated learning (SRL) is an active, and productive process in which learners formulating their purposes, managing, regulating, and controlling their cognitive skill, motivation, and behavior directed by their goals, and the related context of their learning environment. In the field of language learning, self-regulated learning skill is considered as very important to be mastered by the language learners. Students need to have good self-regulated learning skills in order to achieve their goals in learning a foreign language (Oxford, 2001; cited in Mahmoodi et al., 2014; Carneiro et al., 2011; cited in Wang & Chen, 2019). Related to this, Seker (2015) stated that language learners need to practice their language ability through some active participation in curricular or extracurricular activities both inside and outside the classroom.

By self-regulating their learning, especially outside the classroom, language learners will be able to choose the best strategies to improve their language capability. The SRL strategies will also give them the freedom to choose the materials that they want to learn based on their language level. As a consequence, the learners will be able to manage their learning adequately. Further, if they use the SRL strategies effectively regularly, it will lead them to deeper learning and higher performance in their language skills (Seker, 2015) such as speaking (Ehrman, 1996; Ma & Oxford, 2014); reading comprehension (Ehrman, 1996); writing (Andrade & Evans, 2013; Wang et al., 2009); and vocabulary (Rasekh & Ranjbary, 2003).

Video

Some researchers (Sun et al., 2015; Po-Sheng Chiu et al., 2016) states that, digital video is a combination of visual material and auditory explanation that provides an attractive learning environment for the learners. In addition, videos have several advantages for both teachers and learners. Ilin et al. (2013) stated that video can be a useful multimedia tool to attract the learners’ interest and build their curiosity. With the various features of the video mentioned above, the video can possibly engage the students who have different learning styles (Zhu, 2012; Ilin et al., 2013). Furthermore, Cinganotto and Cuccurullu (2015) mentioned that in order to find suitable videos for them to improve their listening and comprehending strategies, we need to analyze the learners’ needs, background knowledge, and language competence.

YouTube as a Free Language-Learning Website

YouTube is now an online website where people can create, watch, comment, and share videos unlimitedly (Chau, 2011: Wang & Chen, 2019). The videos offered are various and almost include all aspects of life, such as foods, travels, movies, music, technology,
education, and even language learning. The contents on YouTube are uploaded by people around the world called YouTubers. These people’s age ranges from the very young to the very old. Besides, YouTube is a fascinating social medium that contributes to worldwide education (Bonk, 2009; Alhamami, 2013).

In the field of language learning, YouTube can be one of the best options to help language learners improve their language skills in a fun and easy way. Further, it is being significantly used by English language teachers to share their materials (Duffy, 2008; Alhamami, 2013). YouTube offers so many language learning, especially English, various interesting videos that do not have to make the process of gaining new language materials seems bored for the learners. Moreover, YouTubers who uploaded English-teaching content got a large increase in the past few years. This increase in the content also increases the number of language learners who use YouTube as one of their media in self-regulated language learning strategies. By watching YouTube videos, students have all freedom to choose their materials for their language learning. They can watch a video to help them learn new materials based on their abilities and language level.

Subjects

In the present study, the researcher investigated the EFL students from a state university in Karawang, Indonesia. Furthermore, the participants of the research were English Education Department students from different semesters. Specifically, 6 EFL students range from 20-22 years old were chosen using purposive sampling. The rationale for selecting the participants was due to the participants are well-known as frequent YouTube video viewers and they have been learning English using YouTube outside of the classroom.

Design and Procedures

For achieving the aim of the research, a narrative inquiry was used as a method in conducting the research. Barkhuizen et al. (2014) stated that narrative inquiry is “an established umbrella term for research involving stories” (p. 3). The use of narrative inquiry in this study helped the researcher gaining more contextual data and a deeper understanding related to the students’ perceptions and experiences on the use of YouTube to self-regulate their language learning.

Data Collection and Data Analysis

To collect the data from the participants, semi-structured interview and questionnaires were used. The interview and questionnaires was gathered online by using the Zoom and Google Form. The interview was conducted using Indonesian to ensure the participants’ understandings of the questions given and to ease them in answering the questions. Furthermore, the questionnaire used in this research was the Self-Regulated Language Learning Scale (SRLLS) adapted from Lai and Gu’s (2011) framework used in Putri (2019). The items were on a five-point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Respectively, the six parts of the second section were as follows: Goal Commitment, Affective, Social, Resource, Metacognitive, and Culture Learning. The data from the questionnaires were presented in the form of tables. Moreover, the researcher used thematic analyses pioneered by Braun and Clarke (2006) to analyse the data from the interview process.

Findings and Discussion

Students’ Perceptions on YouTube-mediated Self-regulated learning

The findings on students’ perceptions of these factors will be presented based on the six factors of self-regulated language learning, as follows.

Goal commitment regulation

As stated by Lai and Gu (2011), goal commitment is a component that can be used to encourage the students to preserve and commit to their learning goals. In Table 2 below, the data showed that four of the students strongly agreed that YouTube can help them achieve their language learning goal
quickly and efficiently. One of the students stated that they agreed, yet the last one chose neutral over the same idea. This finding is supported by the following representative quote:

“I think the use of YouTube is really effective since it’s a quite famous platform in Indonesia. Also, because, first, it’s more efficient. [I] can access it anywhere and anytime...YouTube is also easy to be operated and it offers many topics and choices [to provide my English learning].” (P5)

Table 2. Goal Commitment Regulation

| No | GOAL COMMITMENT                                                                 | SD | D | N | A | SA |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1  | YouTube is an important source to maintain my interest in achieving my language learning goal. | 4  | 2  |    |    |    |
| 2  | I believe YouTube can help me preserve in reaching my ultimate goal in learning the language. | 3  | 3  |    |    |    |
| 3  | I believe YouTube can help me achieve my language learning goals more quickly and efficiently. | 1  | 1  | 4  |    |    |

As seen in Table 3, four of the students agreed that YouTube helps to make their language learning a relaxing process. Two of the students even choose to strongly agree to the idea. As illustrated by the following words:

Affective regulation

According to Lai and Gu (2011), affective regulation is a component of self-regulated learning that is useful for regulating the students’ emotions and enhancing the attraction of learning.

Table 3. Affective Regulation

| No | AFFECTIVE                                                                 | SD | D | N | A | SA |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|
| 4  | When I feel bored with learning the language I use YouTube to decrease the boredom and increase the enjoyment. | 2  | 1  | 3  |    |    |
| 5  | I use YouTube to make the task of language learning more attractive to me. | 1  | 2  | 3  |    |    |
| 6  | I feel YouTube effectively maintains my interest and enthusiasm in learning the language. | 3  | 3  |    |    |    |
| 7  | When I start to resist learning the language, I use YouTube to help myself regain interest and enthusiasm in learning. | 2  | 1  | 3  |    |    |
| 8  | YouTube helps to make my language learning a relaxing process. | 4  | 2  |    |    |    |
| 9  | YouTube makes me enjoy learning the language more. | 5  | 1  |    |    |    |
| 10 | I use YouTube to increase the time I spend on learning the language. | 3  | 2  | 1  |    |    |
“I can enjoy it more because I can watch [the videos] anywhere and while I’m doing anything…I also feel happy, sometimes, when I can understand the materials explained [by the YouTubers]. The videos are also interactive so I can enjoy it more.” (P4)

“…I enjoy watching the videos [on YouTube] because they provide so many interesting features, like images, animation…and the colorfulness [of the videos].” (P5)

Based on the interview transcript above, it is found that the students enjoyed learning English using YouTube because YouTube is flexible and efficient, also the videos on YouTube are interactive for its interesting features. Emerging from the data, the findings showed that the students have positive perceptions towards the use of YouTube to enhance their interest in learning English. The same results had been found in Wang and Chen’s (2019) research whose many students express that watching YouTube videos helps them gain more positive emotions and makes the learning process less intimidating.

**Resource regulation**

Lai and Gu (2011) described resource regulation as the aspect of self-regulated learning used to help the students find more and expand their language learning resources. As seen in the Table 4, three students stated that they strongly agreed with the idea that they use YouTube to expand their learning sources. Two students agreed and one student chose to be neutral upon this concept. As illustrated by the students’ representative statement:

“All of the sources are available [on YouTube]. All of the materials are available, [too].” (P6)

| No | RESOURCE                                                                 | SD | D | N | A | SA |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|---|---|---|----|
| 11 | When I feel I need more learning resources in the language, I use YouTube to expand my learning resources. | 1  | 2 | 3 |
| 12 | I use YouTube to expand my learning experience outside the language classroom. | 1  | 3 | 2 |
| 13 | I use YouTube to create and increase opportunities to learn and use the language. |    |   | 2 | 4 |
| 14 | I use YouTube to seek learning resources and opportunities to help achieve my language learning goals. | 1  | 1 | 4 |
| 15 | I search for attractive language learning materials and experiences delivered via YouTube. | 2  | 2 | 4 |

Based on the data presented above, the students have given positive perceptions towards the use of YouTube to expand their English learning sources. In Wang and Chen’s (2019) research, it was found that the resource regulation had become the highest regulation found useful by the students.

**Metacognitive regulation**

Metacognitive regulation is one of the aspects of self-regulated learning that is used by the students to help them plan, evaluate, and monitor their learning process (Lai and Gu, 2011). As seen in the Table 5, to the idea that they usually plan to learn tasks and relevant materials to do outside of school that involves the use of YouTube, half of the students showed their agreements (N=2 ‘strongly agree; N=1 ‘agree’) and the other students (N=3) showed their neutrality. P3 stated that she usually make a plan before using YouTube, as illustrated by her words:

“I usually make a plan only when I want to learn about the formal materials of English, such as tenses.” (P3)
Furthermore, four students stated that they never made any plan before watching YouTube, however, they will use YouTube when they have assignments or lessons. This finding is illustrated by the students’ words:

“Well, only when I got assignments. For example, when I haven’t understood certain materials, so [I would] find [the materials] on YouTube.” (P4)

| N | METACOGNITIV | S | D | N | A | S |
|---|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 16 | I know how to use YouTube to effectively monitor myself to achieve the learning goals at each stage. | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| 17 | I plan to learn tasks and relevant materials to do outside of school that involve the use of YouTube. | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| 18 | I adjust my language learning goals using YouTube. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 19 | I am satisfied with the way I use YouTube to help myself continue in reaching my learning goals. | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| 20 | I set sub-goals for the next stage of learning in the light of how much I can understand and produce when using YouTube to acquire information or communicate with others. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 21 | For the areas that I’m weak in, I know how to select and use appropriate YouTube channels to improve the areas. | 1 | 3 | 2 |

Based on the data, it was found that the students have negative perceptions towards the use of YouTube in their metacognitive regulation. As stated by Carneiro et al (2011) in Wang and Chen (2019), self-regulated learning (SRL) emphasizes the students’ independence and responsibility to direct their learning. However, as presented in the findings, only two out of six students stated that they made a plan before learning formal English materials on YouTube.

Social regulation

Social regulation aspect can help students maximize the use of YouTube to increase their social connections with and seek help from native speakers and other peer learners around the world (Lai and Gu, 2011).

| No | SOCIAL | SD | D | N | A | SA |
|----|--------|----|---|---|---|----|
| 22 | I use YouTube to connect with native speakers of the language. | 1 | 5 |
| 23 | I use YouTube to connect with peer learners all over the world. | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| 24 | I use YouTube to seek encouragement and support from other learners of the language around the world. | 3 | 3 |

Despite the fact that several students showed positive perceptions towards the use of YouTube to help them connect with native speakers (N=5) and other peer learners around the world (N=5) (see Table 6), however, as taken from the interview data, all of the students showed negative perceptions to the similar idea. The following exemplar quote illustrated the students’ perceptions:

“YouTube is a media social, isn’t it? However, in my opinion, the social aspect of YouTube is not really dominant. So, it’s not quite helping me to build connections with other [English] learners.” (P3)

Most of the students had stated that they never tried to build any relation nor have any personal interaction with other English
learners on YouTube. Similar findings had been found in the related previous research. In Wang and Chen’s (2019) research, there was only one instance found related to the use of YouTube for social regulation. Similarly, Lai and Gu (2011) stated that the participants of their research seldom use technology to build social connections.

**Culture learning regulation**

Lai and Gu (2011) simply explained that the purpose of this culture regulation aspect is to help the students enhance their cultural understanding related to the country the language they are learning.

**Table 7. Culture Learning Regulation**

| No | CULTURE | SD | D | N | A | SA |
|----|---------|----|---|---|---|----|
| 25 | I use YouTube to seek answers to my questions about the language and culture. | 3 | 3 | | | |
| 26 | I use YouTube to help myself understand and appreciate the target culture better. | 3 | 3 | | | |
| 27 | I use YouTube to help myself to increase my ability to interact with the target culture. | 2 | 2 | 2 | | |

As seen in Table 7, all of the students showed their positive perceptions (N=3 ‘strongly agree; N=3 ‘agree’) on the use of YouTube to help themselves understand and appreciate the target culture better. This finding is supported by the following representative answers:

“Sure, it’s really helpful like I have mentioned before about the daily vlog [that I have been watching]. For example, I know that in America, self-checkouts or self-service checkouts are already used in their supermarkets. So, there is no cashier. Oh, I know that. I also know that in this university, for example, the system used is this way or that way. I also know about their cultures [and so on].” (P5)

Based on the data, it is found that YouTube is really helpful to enhance the students’ understanding of the English-speaking countries’ culture and their social environment. Again, this finding is reliable to both Wang and Chen’s (2019) and Putri’s (2019) research which found that students expressed positive perceptions towards the use of YouTube to build their cultural understanding.

**Students’ Experiences on YouTube-mediated Self-regulated learning**

**The skills that have been improved by the students as a result of watching YouTube videos for learning English**

Emerging from the interview results, five out of six participants stated that the skill that has been improved a lot by watching YouTube videos is listening. As illustrated by the following representative quote:

“I think [using YouTube to learn English] is great…Especially, for my listening skill. Back then, before I know YouTube and before I learn English using YouTube, my listening skill is so bad.” (P1)

As can be seen in the above quote, the students have experienced it themselves that YouTube can help them improve their listening skills. Gilakjani and Ahmadi (2011) in Vu and Shah (2016) stated that listening has an important role in individuals’ daily interaction and their learning process. By exposing themselves to English YouTube videos frequently, the students unconsciously have involved themselves in the extensive listening activity. As stated by Ivone and Renandya (2019), extensive listening is a language teaching and learning approach that exposes the students to a wide amount of English materials that are easier to be understood and more enjoyable to listen to over a long period. Therefore, by involving themselves in extensive listening activities with YouTube videos as the media, the students’ listening skills are expected to be improved.
In addition, besides listening skills, three students admitted that YouTube can help them improve their speaking skills. As illustrated the following exemplar quote:

“For example, speaking, most likely. Many videos that I have watched, most of the time, were produced by native speakers...so, by watching these videos, I can learn how they pronounce words when they were delivering a certain material.” (P4)

As stated by Yudar, Aditomo, and Silalahi (2020), speaking is the most significant skill in English for the reason that the students need to able to speak English to communicate globally. Speaking is an oral skill in which the speaker needs to produce verbal output to convey meaning (Silviana and Miftakh, 2021). In teaching and learning new languages, Silviana and Miftkah (2021) also stated that speaking is a skill that need to be mastered ad productively practiced. Emerging from the data, students admitted that English YouTube videos had helped them learn proper pronunciation and intonation. This finding is reliable to Yudar, Aditomo, and Silalahi’s (2020) statements related to the importance of pronunciation in speaking skills. Specifically, they stated that in order to be able to speak English and pronounce the words correctly, the students need to be encouraged to pay attention to the pronunciation of English vocabularies. Thus, by watching English YouTube videos, the students will be able to learn more about proper English pronunciation and are expected to improve their speaking skills.

The actions taken by the students after watching YouTube videos

The second point in the students’ experiences subsections examines the actions that the students take after watching YouTube videos. This point relates to the types of feedback that the students give to the video that they found useful to help them learn English. Apparently, all of the participants tend to give ‘Like’ to the videos that they have watched as an appreciation to the content creator who made those videos. As illustrated below:

“I mostly would give likes only [to the videos that I have watched].” (P2)

Besides ‘Like’, several students had mentioned that they also tend to subscribe (N=3), few students mentioned that would live comments to the videos that are useful but not so famous (N=2), and very few students mentioned that they would share the videos that they found helpful to their friends (N=1). These findings are illustrated by the following representative quotes:

“The feedback is in the forms of like, subscribe, and comments that can motivate [them] to produce more videos.” (P1)

“Then, if I feel like the channel is really helpful for me, I would subscribe [the channel] as a form of appreciation.” (P6)

“Well, when I learn a certain material, and I want to show [to my friends] that the English teacher on YouTube’s [YouTubers] explanation is better than our lecturers do, I’ll share the link from YouTube [to them].” (P1)

Similar findings were also found in Wang and Chen’s (2019) research where the students had stated that they would mostly press like, some students may subscribe, and very few students would leave a comment. The difference found between Wang and Chen’s results and this research is located only in the sharing behavior showed by the students. In this research, among six participants, only one student stated that he would share the videos that he find helpful, however in Wang and Chen’s findings, more than half of the participants would share the YouTube videos that they find useful.

Types of videos that the students watch to learn English on YouTube
Regarding to what types of videos that the students usually watch to help them learning English, two out of six participants admitted that mostly they will directly watch English teaching videos. This finding is illustrated by the following representative words:

“Actually, most of the time I would directly watch the English teaching videos.” (P2)

 Nonetheless, as can be seen in the following quotes stated by the students, it is found that not only the English teaching videos that can help them learn English, but the videos that are made to entertain can also help them learn English.

“I’ve said that before that I like to watch interview videos. So, it’s an interview of western singers…These help me know how their pronunciation and…intonation.” (P1)

“…I am indeed a type of person who had been quite frequently watching…a study vlog of students who are studying abroad. By watching these [videos], firstly, I can learn about English. [Especially], about how to speak English informally, [and] how to talk to a friend. It’s like I can see them directly.” (P5)

“[I] usually would watch videos such as Learning English from certain movies or characters…” (P3)

As representatively stated by P3 in the above quote, there are several students (N=2) who admit that they usually watch videos that can help them build their vocabulary in context, such as Learning English from Movies type of videos. Furthermore, P5 stated that she likes to watch study vlog videos to help her improve her listening skill, build her English vocabulary, and learn about the culture of English-speaking countries. Despite watching vocabulary improvement videos, P1 admitted that he also tends to watch interview videos of famous figures who speak English to help him learn about their pronunciation and intonation. P1 also admitted that these types of videos can help him improving his listening skill by making him familiar with the sounds of English words and their intonation. As can be seen in the presented findings above, each student has different preferences on what videos they usually watch to help them learn English. Despite the differences, each video and channel has various specialties that can help them improve their English skill, vocabulary, grammar, and their cultural understanding.

The differences between learning English using YouTube and learning English formally in the classroom

The researcher is also interested in knowing the students’ experience about how learning English from YouTube videos is different from learning English in the formal classroom with their lectures. This investigation will further help the researcher building knowledge on the reasons that motivate the students to watch YouTube videos outside of the classroom.

The first difference between learning English formally in the classroom with lecturers and outside of the classroom using YouTube mentioned by half of the students is the flexibility of time and place. This finding is illustrated by the students’ words:

“Also, [in formal learning] we do not learn in the place and time that we desire. However, using YouTube [to learn English] can help us manage the time [whenever we want]. So, we enjoy [the learning process] more.” (P1)

Similar results had been found in Wang and Chen’s (2019) research. In their findings, the students mentioned that classroom learning is mainly fixed and inflexible. Oppositely, YouTube can provide students the materials that relate to their English level, needs, and interests. The difference in those findings is located in the scope of the flexibility itself. In this research, the students more likely to focus
on how YouTube is flexible in time and place. Meanwhile, in Wang and Chen’s (2019) results the students tend to focus more on the longer period of time and their materials preferences.

The second difference between learning in the classroom and using YouTube videos is that YouTube can offer the students more English materials, meanwhile, in the classroom, they have the chance to practice their English more. The following exemplar quote illustrates how YouTube had helped the students learning more materials on YouTube:

“…as a student, sometimes I feel dissatisfied with the teachers’ explanation. Probably, [it’s] because the time is limited [at school] or somewhat. Therefore, I would find [more explanation] on YouTube.” (P4)

Furthermore, for illustrating how formal learning in the classroom can help the students practice their English more, several students stated:

“For me, it’s not enough learning using YouTube only….It’s because classroom learning can help me practice [my English more].” (P2)

This finding is mainly similar to the findings conducted by Wang and Chen (2019) in the previous paragraph where the students mentioned that learning English from YouTube can help them find more relevant materials related to their English proficiency levels, needs, and interest. Nevertheless, in Wang and Chen’s research, it had not been found that the students had mentioned anything about how learning English in the classroom can help them practice their English more.

The third difference between learning English formally in the classroom and learning English using YouTube is that YouTube is more enjoyable, meanwhile learning English in the classroom makes the students feel pressured to understand the materials. This finding is mentioned by P1 during the interview process. He specifically stated:

“…when we learn [English] in the classroom, we don’t feel like we enjoy that. [I feel like] we learn those materials is not because of our willingness, but there is a pressure for us to understand them.” (P1)

Again, the same findings had been found in Wang and Chen’s (2019) research. The participants of their research had stated that they felt less stress when they use YouTube to help them learn English because they can manage their learning schedules.

Conclusion and Suggestion

Based on the results, it was found that the students have expressed positive perceptions towards the use of YouTube for their goal commitment regulation, affective regulations, resource regulation, and culture learning regulation. However, the students had shown not too positive perceptions towards the use of YouTube for their metacognitive and social regulations. Regarding the students’ experiences, it was found that first, the English skills that are possible to be improved by frequently watching YouTube videos are listening and speaking skills. Second, the types of feedback that the students tend to give are like, subscribe, comment and share. Third, each student has a different preference on what videos and channels they usually watch to help them learn English. Finally, the three differences between YouTube and formal learning are YouTube can offer the flexibility of time and place while classroom learning had been set on a schedule, YouTube is more helpful to provide more materials while classroom learning is better in helping the students practice, and YouTube-mediated English learning is more enjoyable while the classroom formal learning is stricter.

The researcher suggests to the future researcher who is interested in researching the similar topic to specify what skills that students try to improve by using YouTube autonomously. Since the findings of this
research show that the students tend to use YouTube to improve their listening and speaking skills, thus the future researcher can consider studying the use of YouTube to self-regulate the students listening comprehension.

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