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Investigating the Significant Role of YouTube as an Educational Tool in Developing Learners' Self-determination: A case of EFL Students at Adıyaman University

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Abstract

The online video-sharing platform, YouTube.com, has been coded as today's mainstream media among youth. YouTube is a free service and can be a great online space for today's young generation to discover or search for things they like. From a theoretical point of view, many teachers and scholars believe that English is a dominant language in which much of the content can be found and understood. This fact encourages and motivates them to switch from traditional teaching to modern one to create joyful, prosperous, and academic content in online spaces to help learners develop their skills in learning English autonomously. From this perspective, this research study aims to investigate the use of YouTube and its crucial role in increasing university learners' self-determination. It brings some benefits to the field of English learning. To uphold this study with more valid data, we used a questionnaire as an appropriate research tool for students to investigate their perspective and attitude toward incorporating YouTube videos out of the classroom setting to develop students' autonomy. Our participants were third-year licence students in the English language department. The findings showed that using YouTube videos as motivational materials facilitate the students' English learning and develop their self-determination. Therefore, this research study confirms the significant role of YouTube in increasing learners' academic progress depending on their self-reliance, which is vital in language learning motivation and individual performance.

***Keywords*:** Online video-sharing platform, language learning, learner's autonomy, learner's Motivation, YouTube

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate my work to my Mother, even if she is not in this world, but I am sure

that she is in a place where she can see me, at least in my heart and my Father, who is my hero. Also, this thesis is dedicated to my dear teacher, Professor Hanane Sarnou, who gave me hope to do this work.

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List of Abbreviations

CALL: Computer-assisted language learning.

CFO: chief Financial Officer.

EFL: English as a Foreign Language.

URL: Uniform Resource Locators.

WWW: World Wide Web.

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General Introduction

The lack of self-determination is one of the significant downsides among EFL students. For the time being, the educational system in Turkey needs to match the actual situation, particularly regarding teachers' and learners' roles. This is mainly true since learner-centeredness, one of the system's pillars, needs to be improved. It is evident that English department students are still teacher-dependent. The term student-centeredness is widely used in the teaching and learning literature, but this approach gives much attention to the student. To create autonomous and competent learners in the learning process, the students take a more active part in the education experience. Therefore, all these factors lead the experts and scholars in the educational field to look for new technological, pedagogical and motivational methods to improve EFL students' autonomous learning; one of these motivational methods is to use YouTube videos in the language learning process.

In addition, there has been an increasing interest in incorporating these online platforms into the teaching/learning process, which have the potential to change the way students behave and the way of becoming independent. With the implementation of innovative technologies to assist student learning in many disciplines, higher education has changed dramatically. Therefore, the current study attempts to explore students' perceptions of using YouTube platforms on their self-determination and to enhance their Learning.

This research will explore the vital role of YouTube in developing English teaching and learning. The finding can help students obtain new insights and thoughts towards using YouTube Videos as motivational materials to make learning English more attractive and involved and develop their learning autonomy and performance.

The ability to control one's own learning, known as learner autonomy, in which students can engage in independent learning environments outside of the classroom, has become a major concern in the recent history of teaching. However, many language teachers, who are committed to autonomy and learner-centred learning, find it difficult to nurture or at least encourage learner autonomy in the language class(Holec, 1981).Nowadays, the common phenomenon among learners is the passive role they assume in the process of learning. They rely heavily on teachers and are reluctant to develop a sense of responsibility for the outcome of their learning. We assume that most EFL students have struggled to cope with these phenomena. Therefore, the present study attempts to determine the effect of online educational YouTube videos on third-year EFL students' learning autonomy.

Objectives of the research study

This study aims to cover three primary purposes: first, to discover the role of YouTube videos in learning English. Also, how YouTube videos can contribute to developing EFL students' autonomy. This research aims to know how much EFL students use YouTube videos during Learning.

Research Questions: The following research questions help us develop the present research study.

Research Question (1): What role does YouTube serve in education, particularly English language learning?

Research Question (2): How can YouTube videos develop EFL student self-determination?

Research Hypotheses: Based on the given research questions two essential hypotheses are formulated to be tested and verified. They are as follows:

Hypothesis (1): YouTube is a good material that should be incorporated into English lessons to help understand the lesson.

Hypothesis (2): YouTube videos may inspire students to engage in self-learning by instructing them to do a YouTube search for relevant educational videos.

To carry out this study, the researcher used a questionnaire tool to achieve the objectives and develop the research questions. The research data were collected at Adıyaman University. Sixteen third-year EFL students at Adıyaman University received a questionnaire in class to be answered. This held instrument helped the researcher to draw a clear picture of the effectiveness of the online platform YouTube in increasing the learners' autonomy.

Structure of the thesis

The present work is divided into three interrelated chapters for this research study. The first chapter is outlined mainly to introduce literature related to the YouTube platform - its history and appeal among young people, pointing out its content types and then explaining the importance of YouTube.com in autonomous learning and EFL learning and teaching. We pass through the concept of autonomous learning to gain an understanding of this notion, exploring its background history and psychological impact. Chapter two presents the research methodology used in this dissertation. The participants of the study were third-year Licence students of English at Adıyaman University. Data were collected mainly through a questionnaire that was developed for third-year licence EFL learners. Chapter three is devoted to results and discussions.

Chapter One : An Overview

1. **Introduction**

Autonomous learning is a great option for the learner to have a more prosperous and influential learning process. However, Learner autonomy must be nurtured and promoted, just like any other skill. While the teacher's influence on student autonomy should be reduced, supporting and developing autonomy should be a regular part of the educational process. Therefore, YouTube.com, with its variety of videos that can be used as study materials immediately, is a useful tool for independent language learning. Because of the platform's popularity among young people and children, it has much potential for building learner autonomy among these regular YouTube users. The main goal of this chapter is to focus on the importance of the YouTube Website and how it can be a handy tool in foreign language teaching and learning. It presents all related literature to the points mentioned above, starting from the history of YouTube.

1.1 History of YouTube

Before defining this interesting platform, it is crucial to understand how YouTube has grown as a content-sharing platform worldwide. YouTube was founded on YouTube and was launched by Chad Hurley, Steve Chen, and Jawed Karim on

February 14, 2005, by Chad Hurley, Steve Chen, and Jawed Karim when they worked for PayPal. Prior to working for PayPal, Hurley studied design at the Indiana University of Pennsylvania; Chen and Karim studied computer science together at the University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign. YouTube's initial headquarters was above a pizzeria and Japanese restaurant in San Mateo, California.
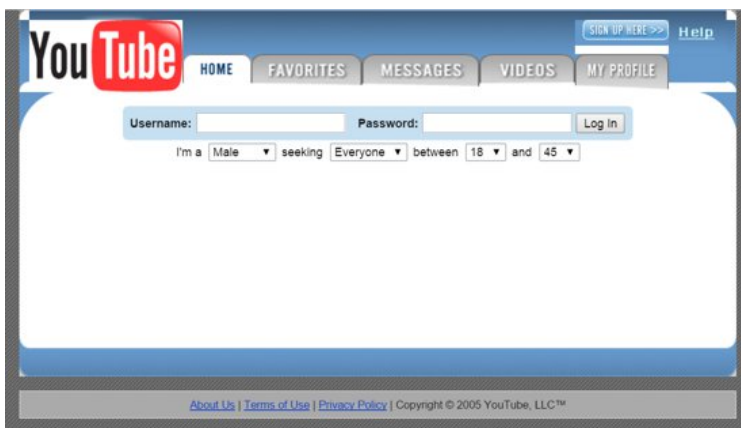
Figure 01: Approximate representation of the site as it appeared a few months after its launch

(*archived   by   the   Wayback   Machine*) "YouTube.com" was activated with video upload options being integrated on April 23, 2005, after being named "Tune In, Hook Up" — the original idea of Chad Hurley, Steve Chen, and Jawed Karim. The concept was an online dating service that failed but had an amazing video and uploading platform. After the infamous Justin Timberlake and Janet Jackson Halftime (2004) showedthe incident, the three creators realized they couldn't find any videos of it on the internet; after noticing that this type of platform did not exist, they made the changes to become the first major video sharing platform. The idea of the new company was for non-computer experts to use a simple interface that allowed the user to publish, upload and view streaming

videos through standard web browsers and modern internet speeds. Ultimately creating an easy-to-use video streaming platform that wouldn'twouldn't stress out the new internet users of the early 2000s.

The first YouTube video, "Me at the Zoo," was uploaded on April 23, 2005, and shows co-founder Jawed Karim at the San Diego Zoo currently has over 120 million views and almost 5 million likes. Hurley was behind more of the looks of the website. He used his art skills to create the logo and design the website's look. Chen ensured the page worked and that there would be no issues with the uploading and playback process. Karim was a programmer who helped make sure the initial website got put together correctly and helped in both design and programming. YouTube began as an angel-funded enterprise working from a makeshift office in a garage. In November 2005, venture firm Sequoia Capital invested an initial $3.5 million, and Roelof Botha (a partner of the firm and former CFO of PayPal) joined the YouTube board of directors. In April 2006, Sequoia and Artis Capital Management invested an additional $8 million in the company, which had experienced significant growth in its first few months. As of December 2005, the number of commenters' videos, favorites, and friends was directly indicated in the comment section, a video's backlinks, and comment counts in suggested videos, and rating indicator in video listings search results and channel pages. The site slogan was "Broadcast yourself. Watch and share your videos worldwide! Which would later become just "Broadcast yourself." Later, while some of these indicators were removed, the watch page displayed playlists linking to a video as of 2007.

After opening a beta service in May 2005, YouTube.com was trafficking around 30,000 viewers a day for months. After launching six months later, they would host well over two million viewers daily on the website. By March 2006, the site had over

25 million videos uploaded, generating around 20,000 uploads a day. During the summer of 2006, YouTube was one of the fastest-growing sites on the World Wide Web, hosting over 65,000 new video uploads. The site delivered an average of 100 million video views per day in July. However, this came with some problems. The rapid user growth meant YouTube had to keep up with it technologically speaking. They needed new equipment and a more comprehensive broadband internet connection to serve an ever-growing audience. The increasing copyright infringement problems and lack of commercializing YouTube eventually led to outsourcing to Google, which later failed in their own video platform, "Google Video." It was ranked the fifth-most-popular website on Alexa, far outpacing even MySpace's growth rate. The website averaged nearly 20 million visitors per month, according to Nielsen/ Net Ratings, with around 44% female and 56% male visitors. The 12- to 17-year-old age group was dominant. YouTube's pre-eminence in the online market was substantial. The website provided a straightforward, integrated interface where users could upload, publish, and view streaming videos without high technical knowledge. YouTube was comparable to other video startups until Google acquired the site for $1.65 billion in October 2006 (Burgess & Green, 2009). The site has steadily gained popularity; since 2008, it has consistently been in the top ten most visited sites globally (Morreale, 2014). Almost a decade later, it is the world" s third most popular online destination, available in 61 languages and with a million advertisers.

Today's YouTube is very different from 2005 when the first video was posted on the platform. In addition to the dozens of interface changes and new features implemented, the site has adapted to the development of the Internet itself. As the web gained space in the world, reaching every continent, the online video site was transformed to increase its global reach. It has local versions in 88 countries, reaches

96% of all Internet users, and continues to grow. Therefore, the popularization of YouTube has also influenced a new generation of young people looking to succeed on the Internet and gain fame. At a time when the Internet was still crawling, YouTube was a pioneering idea that practically introduced the consumption of videos on the web as we know it today. The platform created opportunities for millions to become creators, democratizing information and culture.

1.2 Description of the YouTube Platform

YouTube is a website designed for sharing videos. Millions of users worldwide have created accounts on the site that allow them to upload videos that anyone can watch. Every minute of every day, more than 35 hours of video is uploaded to YouTube. 8 Video files can be very large and are often too big to send to someone else by email. By posting a video on YouTube, you can share a video simply by sending the other person a URL "link" – that is, the 'address' of the relevant internet page. https://www.digitalunite.com/tv-video/youtube/what-youtube

YouTube is considered one of the most popular sites on the Internet for publishing and managing video. It provides a venue for sharing videos among friends and family and a showcase for new and experienced videographers. Meanwhile, based on YouTube Statistics (2015), YouTube has generated over 1 billion users; also, the number of people watching YouTube per day is up 40% since March 2014, with 76 different languages. Furthermore, YouTube is ranked as the third most popular website. This attractive platform encompasses many channels that include various videos such as educational, cultural, entertainment, and others. That can be very beneficial in many fields. In this regard, YouTube videos have the potential to be part of the teaching-learning process as an active technological tool for improving student's performance. The motivation behind creating such a website was to make

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the process of video uploading and video sharing available for any internet users. They can therefore upload, share, and view videos without technical knowledge. The platform utilizes a straightforward interface which makes uploading intuitive and simple. Users only need a stable internet connection and a web browser to upload or watch videos on this platform.

YouTube videos are one of the audio-visual media. They are an essential part of the overall experiences that we must help our students to cope with. They can be used by teachers and students, whatever the emphasis of the syllabus they are following. YouTube videos make a mighty contribution to both the content and the language learning process, especially to interest and motivation. They could be appropriate instructional media because they could function as an outlining device combining the design of grid contrast or comparison tables.

1.3 YouTube has a high potential for improving learning skills

Fathallah (2007) claims that educational videos are educational situations recorded on the World Wide Web. Such videos involve real elements, and they teach specific goals. Videos on YouTube offer several nine services like uploading, downloading, watching, and sharing among individuals. Clips on YouTube are available anytime and anywhere. They have high-quality of showing content and offer the potential to repeat, stop, or complete at any other time. YouTube videos provide multimedia content as they engage visual and verbal material. Thus, they develop many educational skills. YouTube videos encourage group work activities through sharing videos, which add fun and meaning to the learning environment. Thus, YouTube helps to keep the material in the long-term memory (Ebied, Kahouf & Rahman, 2016).

Portugal, Arruda, and Meneghello (2018) state that the central point of teaching and learning on YouTube is "interesting" but it is different from other planned educational contexts in that both the learner and the "informal teacher" display their free choice to enter to the learning situation. Also, the voice tone and expressions of the "informal teacher" in the video are like what they teach; otherwise, they do not need to do this. Thus, what makes YouTube different from school is that the latter gives neither the teacher nor the learner a choice about the curriculum to be taught or learned. Therefore, YouTube has all the options concerning what to teach, what to learn, when, where, how, etc.

1.4 Types of YouTube content

Over more than 15 years of its existence, YouTube has completely revolutionized online video entertainment and given rise to many new genres of videos (The most popular types of YouTube Videos, 2019). Finding a niche in the online video-sharing industry that has yet to be exploited is almost impossible. While there are many different types and genres of videos on the website, it is possible to pin down which genres currently resonate with the viewers. As of 2020, one of the lists of popular YouTube videos enumerates genres like product review videos, how-to videos, Vlogs, gaming videos, comedy skits, haul videos, pranks, unboxing videos, or educational videos among the most popular ones (Anderson, 2020).

Some types of YouTube videos will be better for English learning purposes and immersion. For instance, vlogs (a combination of words video and blog) are considered one of the best types of videos to improve one's speaking skills. In order to develop one's conversational skills, the latter can provide much better opportunities for this than, for example, watching TV shows or the news, due to the authenticity of English used in them, which corresponds to English used in ordinary

life. (To Fluency) .Table 01 below will show explicitly the use of YouTube Videos varieties which can improve the learner" s autonomy as EFL learner.

Types	Meaning	Examples
Video Tutorials	Asynchronous instructional videos (often screencasts, but also animation or live-action footage) providing step-by-step guidance for specialised activities.	• DIY videos • How to do a makeup • How to draw
Ask Me Anything (AMA)	AMA videos are a fun way to engage your community. They also bring a fresh voice with unique perspectives to the table.	• Asking Youtubers personal questions.
Educational Videos	Educational Video is a virtual medium that helps the individuals or students in understanding the concepts better with the help videos.	• Learning a new language.
Explainer Videos	Explainer videos are short online marketing videos used to explain your company's product or service.	• Explaining how to apply a specific product on the skin.
Documentary films	It deals with specific points in very regular and clear and appropriate English language, it transforms the	• Learners" can grasp new words and pronounce

	reality of society.		those words in a correct way.

Table 01: Types of YouTube Videos Content(Anderson, 2020)

1.5 YouTube in Autonomous learning

YouTube.com is an online video-sharing platform that has grown in popularity worldwide. Since YouTube.com is an internet website where multimedia content can be uploaded, viewed, and shared, technology is required when a learner wants to access and use the platform. Therefore, using the website for autonomous learning is a viable platform for the computer-assisted language learning approach. The primary purpose of spending time on a website is usually for one's enjoyment and entertainment. It is an excellent place for autonomy and getting authentic language resources. Therefore, using the YouTube platform fits well within the definition of resource-based approaches (specifically, out-of-class learning) to develop learner autonomy, which highlights the independent use of the resource outside of the formal learning environment and the learner's enjoyment of the interaction with the resource in question.

On the other hand, due to its short existence, the web-based video-sharing network YouTube.com is not explicitly discussed in many theoretical works concerning learner autonomy, computer-assisted learning, or EFL teaching and learning. For example, Derradji (2016) mentioned the importance of embedding YouTube videos in the classroom to enhance the vocabulary of English college students but needs to address student engagement outside of the formal education space using the YouTube platform. Similarly, Marandi (2013), in her extensive chapter on computer-

assisted language learning, does not mention YouTube or any other similar interactive video-based platform as a possible tool for CALL since most of the established theoretical work on CALL and learner autonomy was published in the 1990s and early 2000s, just before YouTube.com was launched in 2005. However, the use of YouTube for self-directed learning has been noticed. Many EFL teaching and learning publications published articles and studies on students' independent usage of YouTube, its application in the classroom, and its overall benefits in EFL learning and teaching. The following sections will review the benefits of using YouTube for EFL learning and promoting autonomy.

1.6 YouTube for EFL learning purposes

There are several reasons why using YouTube is beneficial in EFL teaching and learning - both inside and outside the classroom. Firstly, a student who wishes to utilize YouTube for learning purposes can access millions of free videos in the target language in just a few clicks - one can immerse oneself into the language from the comfort of his own house, which otherwise could have been done only by studying or living abroad in the country where the target language is spoken (Johnson & Swain, 1997). Such heightened exposure to the target language has been said to positively affect one's learning process (Mangubhai, 2005). Students engaging with English content on YouTube daily (or as frequently as possible) are therefore subconsciously and autonomously enhancing their language skills - without the teacher's help and without even leaving their house.

The main benefits and characteristics of the utilization of YouTube as an EFL learning tool are, therefore, twofold: the platform is in its nature highly student-centered (as opposed to a regular classroom setting, which tends to be a lot more

teacher-centered) and serves as a vast, seemingly endless collection of authentic language material (Watkins & Wilkins, 2011).

Another essential characteristic of learning on YouTube is the learner's ability to choose and watch what he or she finds entertaining and what suits his or her learning needs. Learners on YouTube are entirely independent; they choose what to watch and when to watch it. This independence and ability to choose the material to facilitate one's own learning are vital for autonomous learning because it enhances students' interest in the subject matter (Tullis & Benjamin, 2011).

Kelsen investigates the relationship between popular culture, learner freedom, and motivation, given that YouTube is a pop-cultural phenomenon of today's day, particularly among teenagers who can spend hours searching for interesting videos."YouTube, as mentioned, is a readily available source of authentic pop culture material. It encourages students to interact in an educational capacity with popular culture through English language. YouTube clips may act as a motivating factor for students wishing to further develop their language skills as they endeavor to gain a deeper understanding of content they willingly access online. Moreover, it is also available for students to engage in outside of class in some form of student-centered learning. "(2009)

As a result, watching YouTube videos in English might significantly boost student motivation and independent learning outside of the classroom because the information learners engage with is relevant to current events. Students who interact with such material only to learn about the subject it covers are immediately exposed to the language outside of their English classroom, immersing themselves in it and exposing themselves to learning possibilities - all depending on their own choice.

Learners who engage with YouTube content in English regularly will also benefit from exposure to different varieties and dialects of English and non-native speakers of English. In the regular classroom setting, students are often exposed to only one language variation in a much embellished, non-authentic environment. Students can be shocked when faced with the reality of how English is spoken in the real world (Watkins & Wilkins, 2011). YouTube is a great platform for students to experience what English might sound like in the real world.Furthermore, research on the content of the platform and nature of YouTube videos shows that many of them have great educational potential, and the way the platform interacts with its users (through recommendations or suggested search engine results) fosters autonomy in decision-making and obtaining control over one's own learning (Lee et al., 2015). This research also mentions YouTube's potential to supplement formal education, as it allows better access to knowledge for a wide range of users (Lee et al., 2015) worldwide.

The four skills might be developed by watching English-language YouTube videos. All four skills may be used in a variety of ways, but listening and speaking are particularly useful. Students involve themselves in the language while they browse YouTube for fun movies or content that interests them, improving their understanding and production of the language. When used in the classroom, YouTube videos can be used to practice listening and speaking skills by using a variety of follow-up activities given by the teacher (Watkins & Wilkins, 2011). Several studies on YouTube's role in EFL teaching concluded that the use of the platform indeed improved students' oral, auditory, and writing skills (Warschauer & Grimes, 2007; Mayora, 2009). According to Kelsen's research (2009) conducted in Taiwan with 69

EFL university students, YouTube can enhance learner motivation when used in the classroom.

1.7 Perception of the YouTube platform among theorists

The previous studies on using YouTube for autonomous learning purposes showed a lot of evidence that student perceive the platform's usage for learning purposes in a very positive way. There are several reasons why students react positively to YouTube. According to the latest studies, students enjoy learning on YouTube because of the website's ease of use, the ability to control their learning process by selecting learning materials that match their needs, and the freedom to control one's own time because the platform is accessible any time of day.

According to some researchers, students in a university listening class found the usage of YouTube in their lessons to be highly fascinating and effective for improving their listening abilities. The students specifically linked this utility to hearing and seeing the speaker and his or her lip movement. Having a moving picture accompanying the video, learning from native speakers, receiving interesting information from the content of the video, and having the resource for further exploration at home, were other reasons for students' positive perception. (Silviyanti, 2014).

Although students generally tend to view YouTube as a resource that can help them deepen their language competence and that is interactive, more flexible, and more interesting than learning English in the regular classroom setting, on the other hand, students preparing for important language exams did not find YouTube effective (Wang & Chen, 2019).

1.8 The Appeal of YouTubers and the YouTube Community

Although uploading and watching funny videos on an online video-sharing website is certainly enough of a reason for so many people (especially young people) paying so much attention to this platform and spending hours browsing through videos, another factor contributes to YouTube's popularity. With its nature and many features 28 allowing users to comment, express likes or dislikes, be subscribed to their favorite content creators' channels, and be notified whenever their favorite YouTube persona uploads a new video, YouTube has created a vast online community of people.Online communities can be based on a group of people having similar interests, and engaging with people in these groups online creates a psychological sense of belonging to a community (Strangelove, 2010). YouTube is a video-sharing network and a social medium that allows users to connect with video creators. It is, however, not only interaction with other users but also interaction with the content of a YouTuber which creates this sense of belonging, intimacy, and feeling like one knows the person behind the screen. A popular video format many YouTubers put out is a vlog where they go about their daily lives while filming themselves. With this very personal format and topics they share from their lives, people, especially teenagers, feel more connected with them than, for example, with classic mainstream celebrities (Dredge, 2016). Being relatable, authentic, and seemingly just like everybody else is a recipe for their popularity and why their content and personalities resonate with so many young people nowadays.

1.9 Learner autonomy

Nowadays, the concept of language learning has shifted from a set of rules passed on by teachers to learners to a process in which learners take more responsibility for learning; this gives the learner autonomy in language learning. Learner autonomy has been defined differently over the decades, as it has generated considerable

interest. It includes several versions that may lead to studying different degrees of autonomy to reach all levels of self-directed learning. Furthermore, different psychological factors impact the learner's autonomy and may help a set of procedures in the learner's autonomy training.

1.9.1 Definition of learner autonomy

Over the past few decades, researchers have disagreed on defining learner autonomy, which has been defined in different aspects. Henri Holec began by defining learner autonomy as "the ability to take charge of one" s own learning" (Holec, 1981). According to the father of learner autonomy Henri Holec, the first step towards developing self-directed learning is when learners take full responsibility for the learning process, acknowledging that the success of learning depends on ourselves and not others, noting that this ability is not inborn but must be acquired either by natural means or as most often happens by formal learning. This acceptance of responsibility requires learners to start learning in a systematic thoughtful way.

However, the word autonomy is applied to situations where learners are entirely self-taught, for innate abilities inhibited by institutional education. It applies to skills that can be learned and applied in learner autonomy. It is suitable for exercising students' sense of responsibility for their own learning. It is right for learners to decide their own learning direction.

According to Little (1991), the ability to learn autonomously is demonstrated both in the learning approach and in how learning is transferred to other situations. He indicates that: "Autonomy is a capacity for detachment, Critical reflection, decision making, and independent action, it entails that the learner will develop a particular

kind of psychological relation to the process and content of his learning" (Little,199). He focuses on the ignored dimension, which is related to psychology. Little describes his view of autonomy as possessing solid psychological aspects. He sees autonomous behaviour as universal, developing a psychological relationship to the language learning process and content. It presupposes, but also entails, that the learner will develop a particular kind of psychological relation to the process and content of his or her learning. Benson introduces a third dimension. In addition to the methodological and psychological aspects of autonomous learning already discussed, Benson (2000) claims that learners should freely determine the content of learning. In other words, he argues that autonomous language learners decide how and when they learn and how they think about and manage their learning. However, crucially, they also decide what and where they learn. This introduces a political and a social element to the definition. "the nature of the cognitive capabilities underlying effective self-management of learning." (Benson, 2000); Personal ability to evaluate ideas, express opinions, make decisions, utilize comparative validation and self-assessment. Each of the three dimensions of autonomy (methodological, psychological, and content) highlighted by Holec, Little, and Benson interacts with the other. Benson argues that the three dimensions are necessarily interdependent since affective learning management depends on control of the cognitive processes involved in learning, which necessarily has consequences for the self-management of learning. Control over cognitive processes should involve decisions concerning learning content. Since there are different definitions of autonomy, there has been considerable interest in "learner autonomy" for decades.

1.9.2 Origins and history of learner autonomy

Autonomy comes from the Greek roots auto, Meaning "self," and nomos meaning "custom" or "laws. " This reflects the political sense of the word, a group's right to self-government or self-rule. When a person seeks autonomy, he or she would like to be able to make a decision independently from an authority figure.

In its simplest sense, autonomy is about a person's ability to act on their values and interests. The word from ancient Greek means 'self-legislation or 'self-governance.' The most influential conceptions of autonomy are modern, having arisen in the 18th and 19th centuries in the philosophies of Immanuel Kant and John Stuart Mill.

For Immanuel Kant, a person is autonomous only if his or her choices and actions are unaffected by factors that are external or inessential to himself or herself. Thus, a person lacks autonomy or is heteronymous to the extent that his choices or actions are influenced by a convention, peer pressure, legal or religious authority, the perceived will of God, or even his own desires. That desires are inessential to the self is shown by the fact that, unlike the self, they are contingent on the situation in which one finds oneself a person whose situation and desires change. Rationality, in contrast, is an essential feature of the self, according to Kant. Thus, a person will be autonomous concerning his or her choices and actions if directed solely by his rationality. Kant is clear that this does not mean that a person is autonomous if he or she acts rationally to achieve some external end. To act in this way is merely to act on what Kant called a "hypothetical imperative", a rule of the form "If you want to achieve *X*, you should do *Y*." actions that are guided by hypothetical imperatives are motivated by desires, they cannot be performed autonomously.

According to John Stuart Mill's view of autonomy, known as the Million view, a person is autonomous to the extent that he directs his actions by his own values,

desires, and inclinations. Thus, Mill's view contrasts with Kant's in that it does not hold that autonomous persons cannot be motivated by desires; all it requires is that the desires be their own. The crucial question then becomes what it means to say that a given reason, value, or desire is a person's own. The Million account of autonomy has been more widely adopted within applied ethics than the Kantian one, partly because it is more realistic. In addition, the Million view has been developed in fruitful and interesting ways since the 1970s in so-called hierarchical analyses of autonomy, introduced by the American philosopher Harry Frankfurt in his seminal paper "Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person" (1971).

Frankfurt's early hierarchical account of autonomy addressed, among other problems, the intuitively plausible claim that there are cases in which a person might act following his or her own desires and yet not act autonomously. Frankfurt claimed that for a person to perform an action autonomously, he or she must not only possess a desire to perform the action but also reflectively endorse his or her desire to take that action. For Frankfurt, endorsing a desire consists in having a second-order desire to have that desire.

It is also necessary to mention American philosopher and educational reformist John Dewey. In the first half of the 20th century, his problem-solving approach laid a foundation for constructivist theories nowadays proposed as a theoretical basis for autonomy in language education. "*The philosophical underpinning for autonomy, as interpreted by philosophers and accepted as an ethical principle, is that all persons have intrinsic and unconditional worth and, therefore, should have the power to make rational and moral decisions.*" The term "learner's autonomy" goes back to 1971 when the Centre de Recherché et applications pédagogiques en langues (CRAPEL) was founded by Yves Châlon, who has been the "father" of the theory of learner's

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autonomy. Henri Holec coined the term itself; the successor of Châlon at the position of the CRAPEL leader (in 1981 in his report to the Council of Europe) (Holec,1981).

The learner autonomy movement focuses on adult education, equipped with authentic materials meant to develop self-directed learning and autonomy outside the classroom and thus without a teacher.

The latest trend focuses on implementing autonomous, self-directed learning into the curriculum with the help of new technologies. The tendency has been towards blurring the distinction between "classroom" and "out of class" applications, leading to the latest and often complex understanding of the role of autonomy in language learning. Besides, the history of learner autonomy; may involve different versions. There are three main versions of learner autonomy; (1) technical versions, (2) psychological versions, and (3) political version.

In (1) technical versions of learner autonomy, the concept is defined simply as the act of learning a language outside an educational institution's framework and without a teacher's intervention. Autonomy is seen in situations in which learners are obliged to take charge of their own learning. And the main issue is how to equip learners with the skills and techniques they need to cope with such situations when they arise.

(2) Psychological versions define autonomy as a capacity- a construct of attitudes and abilities that allows learners to take more responsibility for their learning. The development of autonomy is seen as an internal transformation within the individual that may be supported by situational autonomy without being dependent on it.

Lastly, (3) political versions of learner autonomy define the concept in terms of control over learning processes and content. The main issue for political approaches is how to achieve the structural conditions that will allow learners to control their learning

and the Institutional context within which it takes place. These three versions may lead to studying different degrees of learner autonomy.

1.9.3 Degrees of autonomy

To enhance learners' autonomy in class, teachers should be aware of the different levels involved in the autonomy process. On that base, Kumaravadivelu (2003) suggests that the learner undergoes three stages to seek autonomy:

1. The initial stage is for the teacher to guide and illustrate the provided aims and practices.

2. The intermediary stage. The learner has the chance to choose from tasks and materials that the teacher provides.

3. In the advanced stage, in which the learner can normally set their own goals and tasks, they will also have a complete chance to orient their own learning without the teacher's guidance.

Another significant aspect that should be considered when applying autonomy in the classroom is the degree of preparedness for learners to foster autonomy in the learning process. Hence, teachers should also be aware of their learners ' capacities to decide which autonomy level should be practised. According to Kumaravadivelu, the degree of autonomy which teachers practice concerning learning situations, learning practices and aims inside the classroom should be based on the level of autonomy that suits their learners and to what extent they can be opened to adopt autonomy, with the help of teacher-learners should also be responsible for the results and the improvement of their learning. In addition, they should be aware of their preparedness level to accept and foster autonomy in their learning.

1.9.3 Levels of autonomy

Many researchers have claimed that autonomy is a matter of levels. According to (Nunan, 1997); there are five levels of autonomy; they are classified and explained as follows:

Level	Content	Process
Awareness	Learners are made aware of the pedagogical goals and content of the materials they are using .	Learners identify strategy implications of pedagogical tasks and identify their own preferred learning styles/ strategies.
Involement	Learners are involved in selecting their own goals from a range of alternatives on offer.	Learners make choices among a range of options.
Intervention	Learners are involved in modifying and adapting the goals and content of the learning programme.	Learners modify /adapt tasks.
Creation	Learners create their own goals and objectives.	Learners create their own tasks.

Transcendence	Learners go beyond the classroom and make links between the content of classroom learning and the world beyond.	the	Learners become teachers and researchers.	teachers

Table 02: Nunan's Model, levels of implementation **(**Nunan, 1997**)**

1.10 Psychological Factors Impacting the Learners' Autonomy

The field of psychology plays an important role in the language learning process, in which three main psychological factors have a large impact on how individuals learn. These factors are motivation, anxiety and beliefs.

a- Motivation

The value learners place on tasks, their perceptions of self-efficacy, and the goals they set during their learning processes may contribute to their motivation. "The more learners value the task, the more motivated they are"(Broophy, 1999). According to Dicknson (1995), success in learning and enhanced motivation will occur when a learner has more control of their own learning process. "Success in learning appears to lead to greater motivation only for those students who accept responsibility for their own success" (Dicknson,1995). Ushioda (1996) stated that autonomous language learners were, by definition, motivated learners. In other words, learner autonomy is closely related to self-regulation, understood as the degree to which individuals are active participants in their learning. Autonomous people are intrinsically motivated and perceive themselves as individuals who can control their decision-making, take responsibility for the outcomes of their actions and

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have confidence in themselves. Learners can be motivated by their interests and successes, and it changes from one class to another, from one teacher to another and from one day to another.

Researchers divided motivation into two components related to learners' attitudes toward their learning process. The first is intrinsic motivation, which is related to learners who are interested in doing activities. They are just learning for pleasure. The second component is extrinsic motivation, which involves learners who are imposed to learn or want to be rewarded for learning.

b- Anxiety

It is a subjective feeling of tension and worries, usually accompanied by negative reactions, associated with foreign language learning. This type of learning anxiety is common among adults learning a foreign language in a classroom environment, and it can affect learners' performance detrimentally. It is associated with fear of negative evaluation, nervousness about being the centre of attention, and discomfort at being unable to present oneself to others in an authentic way. In this view, it must be noted that "generally speaking, language anxiety has been viewed as a particularly negative psychological factor in the language learning process by many of the researchers and academics who have considered its impact on learners"(Daubny, 2005)

Horwitz expresses that foreign language anxiety occurs when a lack of personal confidence, self-esteem, willingness, and motivation can hinder learner autonomy. Researchers view elements such as anxiety or lack of confidence as factors that strongly prevent learners from making decisions during their learning process.

c- Beliefs and Preferences

In addition to the two factors mentioned earlier, beliefs and preferences are the third factor to which the field of learning is related. They are concerned only with language learning. Different principles and early thoughts about the language learning process can majorly affect learners' reactions. According to Benson (2001), many pieces of research have been done on learners' beliefs and preferences. These researches have stated that different beliefs influence learners' attitudes towards the field of language learning. These psychological factors can help apply the learner's autonomy, and the learner's training can be achieved.

1.11 Applying Learner's Autonomy: Training and Implementing Autonomy Support

1.11.1 Learner Training

Learner training is the key factor in preparing learners to develop their learning skills and successfully improve their learning autonomy. The best-known principles were made by Wenden (1991), who suggested that learner training should be:

(1) **Informed:** the purpose of training should be made explicit and value brought to the student's attention.

(2) **Self-regulated:** students should be trained on how to plan and regulate the use of the strategy and monitor the difficulties they may face in implementing it.

(3) **Contextualized:** training should be relevant to the context of the subject matter content and/or skill for which it is appropriate. It should be directed to specific language learning problems related to the learner's experience.

(4) **Interactive:** learners should not be told what to do and when to do it and left on their own to practise; rather, until they evidence some ability to regulate their use of the strategy, teachers are expected to continue to work with them. In parallel with

Wenden's work, Dickinson stated a diagram summarising the main phases the learner passes through. This diagram is mentioned below.

1.11.2 Implementing Autonomy Support

Extent research studies have found that autonomy support positively impacts students' perceived competence and intrinsic motivation; students be given autonomy to engage freely with their learning environment. Teachers used autonomy-supportive strategies. Teachers supported student organizational autonomy by allowing them to choose work partners. They fostered cognitive autonomy by encouraging the student to think independently, encourage self-initiation, and honour students' voices. When implementing control, they acknowledged and respected student feelings, provided rationales for expected behaviour, and suppressed criticism.

Category	Description
Organizational autonomy support	Give students choice to manage learning environment e.g choice of group members, setting arrangement , and rules of work .
Procedural autonomy support	Give students choice over the form of their work . e.g how to display their projects , materials , and resources to use .
Cognitive autonomy support	Give students ownership of the learning process e.g solve problems independently , ask questions and voice opinions.

Controlling events	Events that deter students from being the origin or source of their behavior e.g imposition of directives , and restriction if choice.

Table 03: Implementing Autonomy Support (J. Koh ; Theodore Frick; 2010)

1.12 Conclusion

This chapter presented the most important points of the related literature that focuses on the significant role of YouTube in helping increase learner motivation and self-determination. It was found that the students perceived more autonomy while searching for supporting materials on YouTube. Also, it provides readers with much

information about the autonomy degree, level, and types and their significance in developing learning English.

Chapter Two : Rresearch Methodology and Data Collection Analysis

2.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, we discussed related literature about learners' autonomy and the importance of using YouTube videos to improve English. As the latter is our main aim to investigate the role of YouTube videos in developing EFL learners' autonomy. The purpose of this chapter is to present an overview of the methodological design and data analysis. It introduces the environment, the sample, population and described the research instruments and data collection.

2.2. Reserch Design

The present study is conducted at the Department of English at the University of Adıyaman. It requires involving EFL learners to illustrate the objective of the research. To do so, a questionnaire was used and delivered to 3rd-year students at the University of Adıyaman 2023-2024 in order to know their viewpoints concerning the effectiveness of YouTube videos in enhancing their autonomy in learning. The data collected through this questionnaire was analyzed by using Excel applications and SPSS programs to calculate and collect data.

2.3 Setting and Participants

One group of third-year students was selected for this study as a sample. Sixteen third-year EFL students were randomly chosen. The reasons behind our choice of third-year licence level are: firstly, they are in their final year of studies and are advanced in English. They are more confident and autonomous than other levels: L1 and L2 licence students. They can become teachers when they get their diplomas, and teachers must have the ability to be self-reliant.

2.4 Data Collection Research tools

Research tools are measurement tools designed to collect data about a research topic, such as questionnaires, interviews, observations, tests, etc. In this investigation, a questionnaire was chosen as tools for collecting relevant data.

2.4.1. Students' Questionnaire Distribution

The questionnaire was handed in a printed form and distributed hand to hand to sixteen (16) participants of third-year EFL students at the University of Adıyaman. This questionnaire consists of sixteen (16) questions which are divided into three sections and arranged in a logical order. The participants are asked to answer a multiple choice type and put a checkmark (✓) on the appropriate answer; also, they give their point of view and full answer whenever necessary. In the following analysis, the researcher analyzed only 11 questions from the questionnaire. **(See Appendix A)**

2.4.2. Students' Questionnaire Analysis

The questionnaire was designed to investigate the students' attitudes and perceptions toward learners' autonomy using several online platforms, such as YouTube. Accordingly, the participants confirmed that the questions were understandable. Yet, the researcher defined some terms _ such as Learner Autonomy, self-reliance, and YouTube platform_ after handing the questionnaires to the participants so they could answer appropriately. The data obtained in this questionnaire is analysed and interpreted qualitatively and quantitatively.

- **Section A: Background Information**

The first section of the questionnaire was designed to provide personal information on the participants' age, whether they were under 20 or more; the aim of asking the participants such a question is to pave the way to the next section.

Age	Respondents	Percentage
Less than 20 years old	02	13%
20 to 25 years old	14	87%
Over 25 years old	00	00%
Total	16	100%

Table 01: The Participants' Age

As we can see, the majority of students are between 20 and 25 years old. However, only two students (13%) are less than 20 years old.

Section B: Student attitudes towards learning English autonomously

This section aimed to interpret whether the participants were autonomous learners or not.

Question 03: What made you decide to study English?

Suggestions	Respondents	Percentage
Getting a good job	10	62%

Improving the language		02	13%
Participate in discussions		04	25%
Total		16	100%

Table 02: The Aim behind learning English Language

Table 02 displays that majority of the participants are willing to have a good profession through learning English. They are ambitious and eager to learn English.
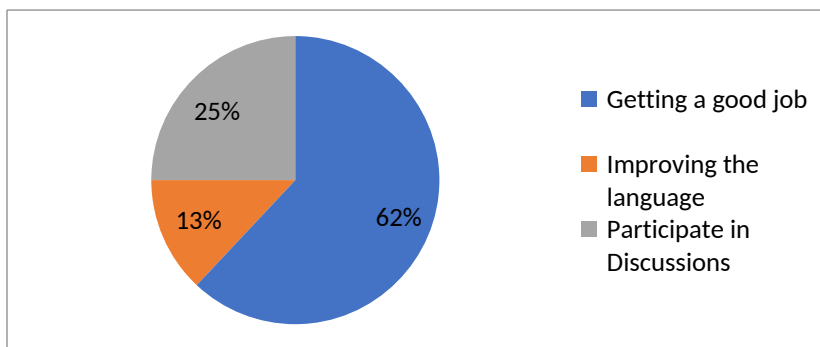

Figure 01: The Aim behind learning the English Language

Question05: what can be done to improve English language learning better?

This question aims to know the preferred way for students to learn English.

Suggestions	Respondents	Percentage
Self-directed learning	08	50%
Teacher's help	06	37%

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Learning with classmates		02	13%
Total		16	100%

Table 03: Students' perspectives about learning English

The table above illustrates that (50%) of the sample chose self-directed learning, whereas (37%) chose the second option, which is the Teacher's help, and the last option chosen by (13%) of the students.
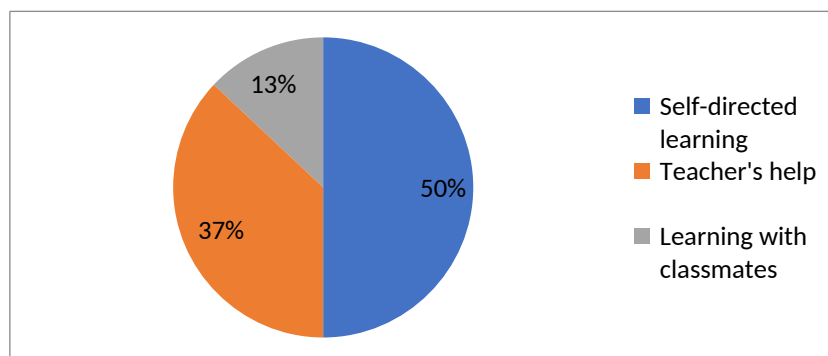
Figure 02:Students' perspectives about learning English

The answer to this question revealed that (50%) of the respondents rely on themselves, whereas (37%) decided to trust the Teacher's help, and the last option has only (13%) of students chose to learn with classmates as a better way to improve Their English language learning.

Question 06: Can you learn without teacher supervision?

This question was designed to classify students based on the direction of teachers.

Suggestions	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	05	31%
No	11	68%
Total	16	100%

Table 04: An inquiry into students' autonomy

The above table illustrates that (68%) of the sample, out of experience, Can only learn with the guide of the teacher, and (31%) thought of the opposite and could rely on themselves.

Question 07: Do you make a study plan at home?

The students were asked whether or not they planned their courses at home.

Suggestions	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	08	50%
No	08	50%
Total	16	100%

Table 05: Student planning out of class

The table above illustrates that (50%) of students have the ability to make a study plan by themselves. While the other (50%) were familiar with the outline made by the Ministry or followed the teachers' guide.

Question 09: Do you permanently practice the English language outside the classroom via the internet (English group chatting, watching English videos, reading books online, etc.)

Suggestions	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	14	87%
No	02	13%
Total	16	100%

Table 06: Students' interest of English via the Internet outside the Classroom

As presented in Table 6, the majority of the EFL learners practice the English language outside of the classroom setting (76%) through chatting via social media websites, watching online videos, reading several books online...etc. Moreover, (24%) of the participants said they did not practice the language. Therefore, practising English in their free time outside the classroom environment may assist learners in ameliorating their skills because the more students practice the language, the more they can gain knowledge to perform better in the English language process.

Section C: Student's attitudes towards using YouTube video outside the Classroom

This item aims to determine whether participants prefer to learn English beyond the class, without the assistance of a teacher, using mainly the YouTube platform.

Question 10: Which type of websites do you mostly use?

Suggestions	Respondents	Percentage
Entertainment	00	00%
Educational websites	06	37%
YouTube website	07	45%
Social media (Twitter, Facebook, Skype)	03	18%
Total	16	100%

Table 7: Frequency of most visited websites

It can be seen in table 7 that , nearly half the students(45%) mostlyuse the You Tube platform . On the other hand 37% of the students use educational websites, and 18% from the students use the other social media platforms, however no one from the students uses entertainment websites mostly.

Figure 03:

Frequency of most visited websites

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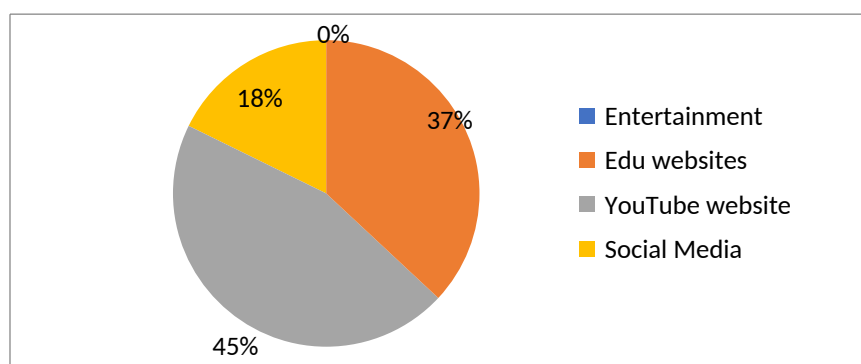
This question was asked to check the most visited websites that the learners spend time on; from the data findings mentioned above, we notice that (45%) of the participants access YouTube videos sites, while (37%) prefer to visit Educational websites, whereas (18%) represents those who use social media. In contrast, none of them shows that they visit Entertainment sites.

Still, the YouTube website is the most visited than other websites.

Question 12: How do you use YouTube?

Through this question, we would like to know about using YouTube as an efficient tool for learning English for different purposes.

Suggestions	Respondents	Percentage
As a source of Information	08	50%
As a learning Tool	06	37%
As a source of entertainment	02	13%
Total	16	100%

Table 08: Student's purpose for using YouTube videos

As presented in Table 11, half of the students use the YouTube platform to get information about how to make or use something, on the other side 37% of the students use YouTube as a learning source, however, 13% of the students use the YouTube platform for getting fun.
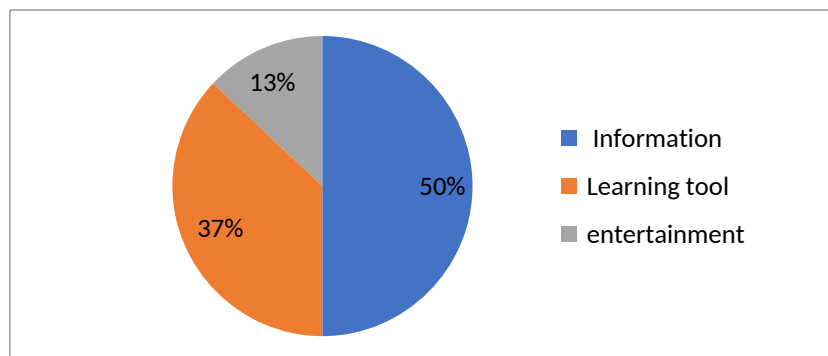
39

Figure 04:Student's purpose for using YouTube videos

The results of this question showed that (50%) of participants access the YouTube platform for information purposes, and (37%) use the platform rarely use YouTube videos for educational purposes, and (13%) consider it as an entertainment source.

Question 14: What kind of YouTube videos improve your English, then?

This question identified which type of YouTube video is better for improving English.

Suggestions	Respondents	Percentage
Music videos	05	31%
Movies videos	04	25%
Documentary videos	05	31%
TV Shows	02	14%
Total	16	100%

Table 09: Types of YouTube videos used by students to learn English

In Table 09, we can see that 31% of the students learn English through documentaries, and 31% of them use music videos, however, 25% watch movies on YouTube to improve their English, while 13% prefer to watch TV shows to practice their English.

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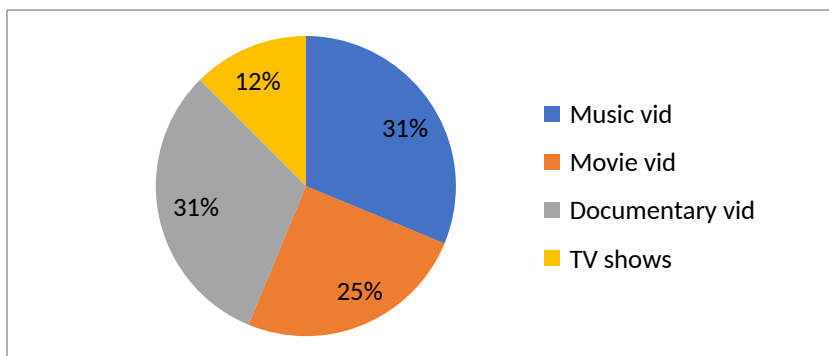
Figure 05: YouTube videos Types used by students to learn English

The findings showed the majority of respondents tried different kinds of YouTube videos to improve their English; for instance, (31%) of students used Documentary videos, and other (31 %) used Music clips, (25%) improved their language through watching movies, while (13%) practiced their English with TV shows.

Question 15: Does YouTube help learners to create their own learning pace?

This question was posed to determine whether YouTube help students in improving their study at their own speed or not.

Suggestions	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	14	87%
No	02	13%
Total	16	100%

Table 10: Students' perspectives toward YouTube as an enhancer of independent learning

The above table illustrates that (87%) of the sample, based on experience, claims that YouTube videos could help them to create their own pace of learning , and (13%) disagreed with the statement.

Question 16: According to you, how can YouTube videos enhance autonomous learning?

The question examined what students thought about using YouTube videos to boost autonomous learning.
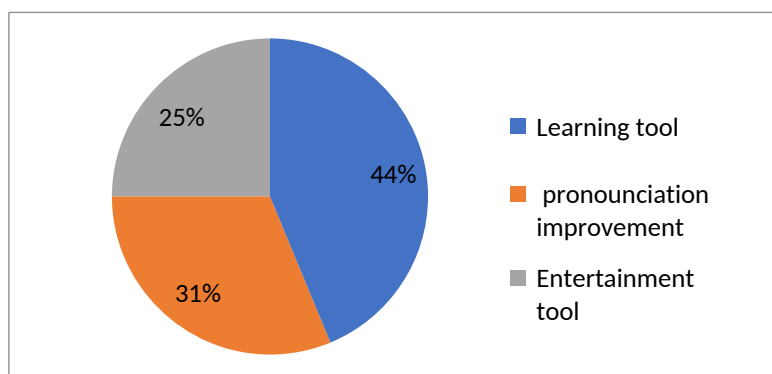
Figure 06: Youtube Benefits in Enhancing learners Autonomy:

As it is presented in the data results, which shows that out of (44%) of the students believed that by watching educational videos throughout the semester, they would acquire new English vocabulary and get a better understanding of the study subject. While (31%) represents those who considered YouTube clips would enhance the pronounciation and the right spelling of words. Likewise, (25%) of the participants' response negatively towards this idea claiming that YouTube videos does not enhance learner autonomy instead it is used for entertainment.

2.5 Conclusion

According to the questionnaire that has been adopted during this study, to investigate the viewpoint of EFL students concerning the effectiveness of the youtube platform in increasing their autonomy in learning, we found that students believe that the youtube platform could help them to create their own pace of learning and it could help them to learn new vocabulary and get a better understanding of the study subject and it can also enhance the pronunciation.

Chapter Three:Results and Discussions

In the previous chapter, an analysis of the student questionnaire revealed that using YouTube could develop learner autonomy. It showed that despite third-year EFL students having studied their whole life relying on teachers' help, they could improve their autonomous learning due to the available materials and knowledge. The present chapter discusses the results we obtained from the participants. It focuses more on the effectiveness of using YouTube videos in enhancing EFL students' independent learning.

3.2 Discussing and Analyzing the Questionnaire Results

The questionnaire was designed to investigate the students' attitudes and perceptions toward learners' autonomy using several online platforms, such as YouTube. Accordingly, the participants confirmed that the questions were understandable. Nevertheless, the researcher defined some terms, such as Learner Autonomy, Self-reliance, and YouTube Platform. The questionnaire was answered clearly by all the participants. Based on the participants' responses, our discussion of the results highlighted the following:

3.2.1 The aim of studying English: English is the language of the world now. All the communication, interaction, advertisements, etc., are predominantly in English. Not knowing English means missing the chance to avail of all the facilities provided on the Internet. English enhances personality, interactive skills, and imagination. No other language in the world is as comprehensive and fast-evolving as English is. If you know English, you can access any recent development in any research field.

English is the language of the new emerging world. It is the most popular international language in the world. English is the language of diplomacy, business, science, technology, banking, computing, medicine, aviation, engineering, tourism, Hollywood films, and the world's best pop and rock music. All higher education is imparted in English only. During job selection, your fluency in English plays a key role in your selection. If you are travelling to any other country in the world for business or leisure, English is helpful as it is spoken in all the advanced countries. According to the results, the majority of the participants are inclined to have a good profession by learning English, and the rest of them want to improve their ability to discuss and open debate with people who are native English speakers.

3.2.2 The choice between teacher supervision and self-directed learning: Self- learning is a necessity dictated by contemporary circumstances, and civilizational and cultural change characterizes the world as an era of Informatics». This means a significant, rapid, continuous, and comprehensive increase in all sectors of life; an extraordinary technological development has accompanied this knowledge explosion. As a result, the students may recieve much scientific and technological knowledge, which educational institutions cannot direct. Accordingly, providing the students with some experiences and training will enable them to deal with future life with the required competence. The knowledge explosion is another factor that justifies the need for self-learning, which is rapid professional mobility based on scientific and technological changes, as these changes lead to the disappearance of some professions and the emergence of other professions that were not known before. This situation is exacerbated by the fact that educational systems cannot adapt to the labour market or the structure of workers in the future. Faced with this change in the structure of professions, self-learning in various ways

can contribute to the graduates' acquisition of skills that help students adapt to potential professional changes and be prepared to join the new profession. Several terms, such as self-learning, self-directed learning, self-regulated learning, and independent study, revolve around one axis: independent study, the individual's own organized effort to deal with the surrounding changes in various fields. In light of what we discussed previously, the results of the question about the choice between teacher supervision and self-directed learning indicated that most students preferred relying on themselves rather than following the teacher's guidance. They are aware of the needs they may face in their studies and future careers.

3.2.3 The ability to develop a study plan: The steps adopted to achieve certain goals include exploiting resources, setting tables, and other steps. The study plan is a simple schedule that outlines your study times and learning goals, day by day, week by week; for those who study online, it is a valuable study tool that can help them organize their time around their current work schedule and personal lifestyle. Planning is important for every work, so it is a basic thing in the educational process. It determines the extent to which the associated goals are achieved. Whether you are studying online or in the classroom, creating a study plan on your own time is very helpful. Having a study plan helps students stay focused, sets reasonable learning goals, and helps them track their progress in relation to what they have achieved. Students, who can create their study schedule as independent learners, become more organized, plan their study into manageable chunks, and even plan for other goals in the future. As we can see in the results, half of the students are able to create a study plan. However, half of them do not have this ability. The importance of students' ability to make a study plan is to manage time by setting a schedule or time

plan that enables them to organize, divide and invest their time skilfully and efficiently.

3.2.4 E-Learning English outside the Classroom: The learning and teaching process using information technologies is called e-learning (Iktaana, 2012; Nedeva & Dimova, 2010). E-learning, also called online learning, which enables the transfer of skills and information with network support (Nedeva, Dimova, 2010), provides the most appropriate learning and teaching process design through various digital platforms (Yumnam, 2021). The e-learning process includes computer-based and internet-based learning (Nedeva & Dimova, 2010). There are many benefits of e-learning, which allow learning independently of time and place to minimize the obstacles to learning and support permanent learning. Enabling the interaction of students with each other to increase, accessing data at any time and quickly, organizing information easily, and delivering it to others make learning easier for everyone in the digital world (Bozna, 2019; Nedeva & Dimova, 2010; Bozkırlı & Er, 2021). Thanks to online environments that provide flexibility in learning, students' willingness to learn online increases. At the same time, it is thought that online learning is an application that encourages lifelong learning (Virkus, 2004). One of the positive aspects of online learning is that free access to most of the desired resources is available (Ying et al., 2021). E-learning is one of the most important learning methods that students should be familiar with because English language students are more communicative learners and use the Internet to communicate with fluent English speakers, whether for speaking and practicing the language or exchanging information. The fact that e-learning does not restrict students in time and place is considered easier to use. Therefore, as we can see in the results, the majority of students practice the English language outside of the classroom through

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group chats, reading e-books, and watching online videos (using YouTube). However, some learners need help with the language due to the lack of access to the Internet.

3.2.5 Most visited websites by students: According to Wikipedia statistics, YouTube is the second most visited site after Google. This site has advanced two places in the list of sites this year, continuously rising impressively. Almost 5 billion videos are watched on YouTube every day. YouTube receives more than 30 million visitors per day. Every minute, more than 300 minutes of video are uploaded to YouTube; it is expected to see YouTube in the top three for a long while. From the obtained statistics, we can see that YouTube is the most visited site by students. YouTube is one of the most visited sites because it has several characteristics that make it unique from other sites.

3.2.6 Access to the YouTube Website: Regarding the students' responses, the most visited website is YouTube. Because it is easy to access and use, however, some of them use educational websites which are in a written form due to less consuming data connection. As it is mentioned in the previous lines, YouTube is one of the most visited platforms in the world, as it provides many advantages and services to its users, and there are also many hidden tools within the platform that many do not know; the most important features are: Where the YouTube home page supports playing videos from a specific time, it also allows the user to share a specific video and specify its start from a specific time. Also, YouTube has a TV mode, which allows the YouTube user to enlarge the screen greatly, and this makes the user able to watch it like watching regular TV. Obtaining an animated image from the video is easy by selecting the video from which you want to get an animated image and adding the word gif before the word YouTube. In this way, the user is transferred to

another site that contains the same video, with tools that enable the user to crop the video and create animated images. In addition, YouTube allows saving videos to watch later, in what is called Offline mode, without an internet connection, which is one of the most important things that distinguishes YouTube from many other platforms.

3.2.7 YouTube videos that better improve English: Watching YouTube videos only is not enough to improve English. Students must listen to English podcasts, watch movies or series episodes, and read various books and dictionaries. Watching YouTube videos has many benefits. Several of them may facilitate learning grammar for students: memorizing and leasing words daily will help them learn grammar, and YouTube videos will help them understand important grammar basics and how to install sentences correctly. Of course, not all YouTube videos are for teaching grammar, but they may find many grammar courses that elite teachers teach. Learning through YouTube videos is much better than learning through books because watching videos is fun, and students will learn better than just reading. Practice listening: Students, while watching videos, can understand and learn some basic knowledge and grammar learn new words, and also the correct pronunciation because they listen to an explanation given by a native speaker.

3.2.8 Eliminating boredom: One of the most challenging learning times is when boredom swallows the desire to learn English. On YouTube videos, students may find that many language teachers can explain lessons in different ways to avoid boredom. The findings show that the majority of respondents tried different kinds of YouTube videos to improve their English. However, the lion's share of the answers is from watching documentary videos and music clips.

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3.2.9 Autonomous environment: Learner autonomy means his ability to take the initiative to learn independently and act and react in different situations and contexts. This includes the ability to make and follow informed decisions and the learner's competence in creating their own appropriate learning environment. Choosing the people and situations that help in learning and reflecting on the learning process is part of the skills and competencies included within this term. Burnet and others defined that "Self-study should be accompanied by direct supervision from the supervisor, especially with work groups, to ensure that students reach the goal by applying certain educational steps (others, 2000). Kolb (1984) believes that "the scientific method represents the method used by self-assessment for directed learning subjectively to the learner in the processes related to perceiving and processing information during the learning process. (2015). by acquiring knowledge and experiences by himself, as he has the largest role in the learning process, he interacts directly with different positions to gain experience, knowledge, and information and develop his skills and abilities. (Aqla, 2007). Jamal Kamel Al-Faleet defines it as: "A postgraduate student is driven by his desire to develop his preparations, potentials, and abilities, responding to his inclinations and interests, to achieve personal development and integration: Fleet (2015). Researchers define self-learning as: "a kind of distinguished learning that helps the learner to learn by himself without the help of others, especially as he is the focus of the educational process, by taking into account his abilities, talents, experiences, and inclinations, according to his speed, and according to the time and place that suits him in learning. It focuses on achieving the principle of taking into account the individual abilities of the learners because it takes into account the personal speeds of each learner. It stimulates motivation to learn and achieve self-efficacy, thus achieving the best." According to

most participants' answers, YouTube can be beneficial and help students to create self-paced learning and self-reliance. At the same time, the rest of them disagree that YouTube could benefit learners and enhance their learning autonomy. The importance of YouTube videos on autonomous learners: Some students believe they better understand the subject by watching educational videos. Moreover, some students considered YouTube clips as an enhancing tool for better Pronunciation. In contrast, others claim that YouTube videos are for entertainment, not for enhancing learner autonomy.

3.3 Recommendations

Based on what has been discussed, our recommendations for students are as follows:

1- **Digital literacy:** students should be more aware of the effectiveness of digital resources in increasing their autonomy; they should learn how to surf safely, which can lead them to use YouTube successfully. Therefore, they need to practice and ask for help if needed.

2- **Self-reliance:** Students must identify their own learning needs and set learning goals to address them. They should select the appropriate social networking sites (apps and platforms), such as the video-based platform YouTube, to help them achieve their learning goals, apply appropriate learning strategies and evaluate their learning outcomes.

3- **Motivation:** students should strongly desire education, despite the circumstances. They might need to set clear goals and invest the time and effort to reach them.

3.4 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study examined the use of YouTube to promote learner autonomy in third-year EFL students. There are a variety of limitations to the study, which are discussed as follows:

The first limitation relates to the limited time spent getting to know students due to the different schedules of the individual population groups. The second limitation relates to the lack of attention to learner autonomy at Adıyaman University. The third limitation is the lack of books and resources related to YouTube's video-based platform and learner autonomy in Adıyaman. This led to the study being based on web articles and e-books.

3.5 The benefits of learner Autonomy

An autonomous learner is capable of determining the objectives, defining the contents and progressions, selecting methods and techniques to be used, monitoring the procedure of acquisition properly speaking, and evaluating what has been acquired. According to Dam (1990), an autonomous learner is an active participant in the social processes of learning and an active interpreter of new information in terms of what she/he already and uniquely knows.

Autonomous people are intrinsically motivated, perceive themselves to be in control of their decision-making, take responsibility for the outcomes of their actions and have confidence in themselves (Deci & Ryan, 1985). As put forward by Dickinson (1992), what teachers aim to achieve through training learners on language learning strategies is to provide learners with an awareness of how to learn a foreign language on their own.

6 Suggestions for further research

This study discussed the use of YouTube to develop learner autonomy. Various research instruments and methods must be used in future investigations to obtain reliable information and valid answers.

3.7 Conclusion

As the results showed us, the aim of the majority of students behind studying English is to earn a good profession; half of them prefer the self-directed way of learning; however, some of them still base on the teacher's help during the study processes and more than the half of the participants they can not learn without the teacher supervision. Half of the students can make a study plan without following the ministry or the teacher's guide, but the other half need this ability. The majority of the students use the Internet while they are learning outside the classroom, and the majority of them use YouTube platform videos as a source of information and a tool of study.

General Conclusion

Throughout this study, we could have revealed the crucial role of the YouTube platform in learning English and how youtube videos can develop students' autonomy. We tend to think that **YouTube is** a good material that should be incorporated into English lessons to help us understand the lesson, and YouTube videos may inspire students to engage in self-learning by instructing them to do a YouTube search for relevant educational videos.

In the theoretical part, we addressed two variables: YouTube and Learner Autonomy. First, we focused on the overview of the YouTube platform in the EFL context and autonomous learning. Second, we have clarified the importance of autonomy in learners' daily life as an essential psychological aspect of any learning success. We conducted an exploratory study using a questionnaire as a valuable data-gathering tool to validate or reject the given hypotheses and collect reliable data. It was administered to third-year students at Adıyaman University 2023-2024. The hypotheses we created at the beginning of the study are confirmed based on all the results we obtained. We noticed that the majority of English third-year university Students are independent and self-reliant in terms of developing a study program and choosing appropriate websites and videos, and are excited to learn English on their own due to many factors:

• Availability of the Internet for all students, whether in their homes or on campus, due to the possibility of free Internet access at any time.

• Obtaining opportunities to take the initiative role in learning through integrating teachers with students in individual education.

• Providing classroom activities that encourage students to be independent, such as encouraging the inclusion of video clips in the learning process and creating an electronic learning environment based on technological means such as podcasts, chatting websites, documentaries...

• Our university's learning style insists on helping students to become independent by supporting and encouraging them to study outside the classroom by showing them how to search for authentic resources.

• Availability of some psychological factors, such as motivation and self-confidence, that contribute to the students' self-reliance and the continuation of the educational process outside the classrooms.

In the end, we conclude that, according to the hypotheses that we presented in the study, YouTube has a positive effect on the independence of the learner, as it is a technological means available to all groups (adults, teenagers, and kids), and it has a huge amount of learning resources in various fields (YouTube channels). Moreover, many students are interested in using YouTube because it is a very popular platform, especially among youth and teens, easy to use and for free. Hence, all students are able to learn using YouTube.

YouTube increases engagement and autonomy for learners to improve their learning skills by giving them the opportunity to make a study program and to choose the time, place and resource of learning. Finally, based on the results of our fieldwork on enabling learner autonomy through YouTube, we can confirm our hypotheses and confirm that integrating YouTube into the learning process is good because of its advantages and positive impact on autonomy and language development.

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APPENDIX

Students' Questionnaire

Dear Students,

This questionnaire aims to explore your views on using YouTube videos and their influence

on EFL learners' autonomy. You are kindly requested to answer the questions below by

ticking ☑your choice(s) in the corresponding boxes or completing your own information

whenever necessary. Thank you very much for your contribution.

A. Background Information

 Age:

    a. Less than 20 Years old   ☐

    b. 20 to 25   ☐

    c. Over 25 years old   ☐

 Gender:

        Female ☐   Male ☐

B. Student attitudes toward Learning English autonomously

Q3. What made you decide to study the English language?

  Getting a good job ☐   Improving the language ☐   Participate in discussions ☐

  other, please mention it………………………………

Q4. What can be done to better improve English language learning?

            ☐   61   ☐   ☐

Self-directed learning   Teachers' help   learning with classmates

Q5. Do you make a study plan at home?

- ➢ Yes ☐
- ➢ No ☐

Q6. Can you learn without teacher supervision?

- ➢ Yes ☐

No ☐

Q7. Do you practice the English language outside the classroom via the Internet (chatting, watching English videos, reading books online, etc.)

- ➢ Yes ☐
- ➢ No ☐

C. **Students' Attitudes Towards Using YouTube Videos Outside the Classroom**

Q8. Which type of websites do you mostly use?

Entertainment ☐   Educational websites ☐   YouTube website ☐

d. Social Media (Twitter, Facebook, and Skype) ☐ Other.................................

Q9. How do you use YouTube?

- ➢ As a source of information ☐
- ➢ As a learning tool ☐
- ➢ As a source of entertainment ☐

Q10. How often do you visit the YouTube website?

Always ☐   Often ☐   Occasionally ☐   Rarely ☐

Q11. Does YouTube serve as a primary source of English improvement?

- ➢ Yes ☐
- ➢ No ☐

Q12. What kind of YouTube videos improved your English, then?

Music videos ☐   Movies videos ☐   Documentary videos ☐   TV shows ☐

Q13. Does YouTube help learners to create their own learning pace?

☐

- ➢ Yes
- ➢ No ☐

Q14. According to you, how can YouTube videos enhance autonomous learning?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

Thank you

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