Pre-Service Teachers' Perception of Autonomous Learners in the 21st Century

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate pre-service teachers' perceptions of autonomous learners in the 21st century. By using the quantitative method in this study, the researcher distributed the questionnaire to 13 pre-service teachers in the 5th semester English education program at Ibn Khaldun University. There are 5 questions in the questionnaire related to this study. It intends to explore information related to how much pre-service teachers understand and what their perception of autonomous learners in the 21st century. The researcher distributed questionnaires to all participants through WhatsApp broadcast and all participants got the Google form link to answer all of the questions. Responses from participants regarding autonomous learners are processed by the researcher. Is that the results obtained that participants understand the concept of autonomous learners but the lack of application of autonomous learners in teaching and learning activities. The researchers in this study suggest that in the 21st century requires a deep understanding of autonomous learners by pre-service teachers to prepare the teaching-learning process in the class by using autonomous learners.

Keywords: autonomous learners, pre-service teacher, 21st century, perception.

I. Introduction

In the last three decades, learner autonomy is one of the most common problems discussed (Yıldırım, 2012) however, according to most teachers in Indonesian educational institutions are not familiar with learner autonomy. Can autonomous learners be applied to pre-service teachers? And what students' perceptions about the autonomous learner? The word autonomy is derived from a Greek word auto-nomos, auto means "self" and nomos means "rule of law" (Voltz, 2008 as cited in Dang, 2012). According to Bound(1981 as cited in Dang, 2012), the concept of autonomy originates from politics but Dearden (1972 as cited in Dang, 2012) claim that autonomy can be used in the sector, including philosophy, medicine, and psychology to justify the reason for something done is the ability of a person and organization. Little (2003 as cited in Dang, 2012) Autonomy is very complicated at the conceptual level. In addition (Tan Dang, 2010) Though learner autonomy has been identified as a complicated capacity but it can be a great impact on personal growth and achievement. Many theories that describe autonomous learners, (Kenny, 1993) state that:

"The first reference here, to autonomy as the making of choices, is a commonly held view of what autonomy is. The second, to freedom and growth, gives us a grander dimension to autonomy which is hard to reconcile with accuracy and

fluency. Accuracy and fluency, however, return us firmly to the world of language teaching and the subject discipline, with which many of us think autonomy of choice should be associated. The third and more mysterious reference, to the Self and the part it plays in our lives, introduces the most significant aspect of autonomy, and what which links it directly to the educational process, and particularly to experiential learning".

Learner autonomy often stems from the idea of independent language learning (Blin, 2004). (Holec, 1981 as cited in Yıldırım, 2012) view of learner autonomy as the ability to lead learning that is driven by itself. (Lengkanawati, 2017) support this view that an autonomous learner is someone that learning without the guidance of a teacher or instructor, in other words, the person that able to learn independently. However, (Gardner, 1999 as cited in Üstünlüoğlu, 2009) had slightly different perception he said autonomous learners are the responsibility to taking one's own progress and this process needs self-assessment to know one's level of knowledge and skill. In addition (Fazey and Fazey, 2001 cited in Üstünlüoğlu, 2009) state that there are psychological characteristics, they include; add three psychological characteristics; perception of competence, perceived internal locus of control, and intrinsic motivation. He also claims that the development of learner autonomy can be generated from students' internal perceptions of the locus of control about academic success or failure.

In addition (Benson 2001, as cited in Benson, 2007), He states that "The literature on autonomy in language teaching and learning from its origins in the mid-1970s up to the end of the 20th century. Since the turn of the century, however, interest in autonomy has grown considerably". (Dang,2012 as cited in Khotimah et al., 2019) claim that the attributes of learner autonomy into three categories, they include:

1. Initiating. In this attributes the learning process is related to understanding personal learning preferences, setting goals, preparing study plans, and creating learning opportunities
2. Monitoring. It is probably the longest process. Where most of the learning takes place, includes attributes related to learning engagement and maintenance such as selecting appropriate strategies, modifying learning paths, and negotiating with others.
3. Evaluating. A learning process that evaluates learning outcomes such as proofreading an assignment and appraising a piece of writing.

"The concept of learner autonomy is often mistakenly defined merely as independence-out-of-class learning in which learners are in control of all aspects of their learning process" (Hafner & Miller, 2011 as cited in Khotimah et al., 2019)

Autonomous learning has mainly been associated with western and tertiary educational settings and in Asian secondary level contexts, he perceived that LA in language learning is more problematic (Lamb, 2004). (Al Asmari, 2013) in a traditional classroom the authority in giving knowledge and learning is the task of a teacher, he also motivates and designs classes and gives authoritative feedback on student performance when learning activities. It is one of the reasons why in this era autonomous learner is necessary.

This study investigates pre-service teachers from the class of English education program in the 5th semester at Ibn Khaldun University to give the perception of autonomous learners. In addition, this study wants to know how deep the understanding of pre-service teachers mastered the concepts of autonomous learners.

This study was conducted at a time when a pre-service teacher in the teaching and learning process in the 5th semester that they will face the final project and they know more about education. In this study.

The following issues are addressed in this study:

1. Does pre-service teacher knowing about autonomous learners
2. Can autonomous learners improve students' understanding?
3. Does pre-service teachers' think that autonomous learners can be applied to education in the 21st century?
4. Is the teacher currently mastering the understanding of autonomous learners?
5. Does the pre-service teacher ever study independently?

II. Method

This study used a quantitative method. According to (Steckler et al., 1992) Quantitative methods adopted from the physical sciences, appropriate statistical techniques, health behavior, or other related social phenomena to determine if and to what extent predetermined study & variable are causally related. He also claims that by using the quantitative method can get a reliable, generalizable, and unbiased result. (Steckler et al., 1992) he claims that the quantitative method has strengthed the include, factual, reliable outcome data that are usually generalizable to some larger population, and the purposes, procedures, and benefits of quantitative methods are well known and accepted so some authors refer to use quantitative as the "dominant paradigm".

The researcher involved 13 pre-service teachers from the class of English education program in the 5th semester at Ibn Khaldun University. The reason for involving 5th-semester students because they will face the final project in the collage and they understand well about teaching in the class, it is mean they could call as a pre-service teacher. All the pre-service teachers involved were females and males ranging in age from 20 to 24. The researcher distributed questionnaires to all participants

through WhatsApp broadcast and all participants got the Google form link to answer all of the questions. The questioner consists of 5 questions related to this study.

III. Result and Discussion

After 13 of 13 participants fill out the questionnaire, the following tables are obtained

Pre-teachers knowing about autonomous learner

60% — 40% — 46% (Agree) — 54% (Disagree)
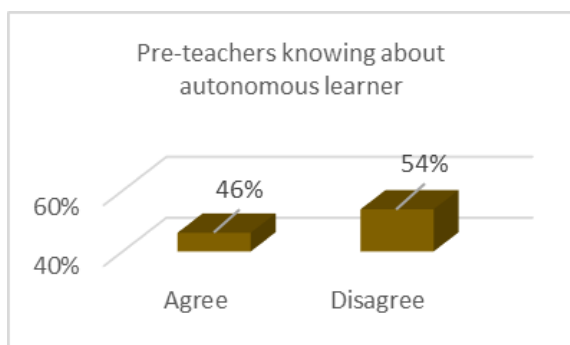
Statement 1

Based on the graphic above, on statement 1 6 of 13 participants knowing the definition of autonomous learners and 7 of 13 do not know about it. It means that autonomous learners not familiar. This is a problem discussed in 21st-century education. In this statement, it can be concluded that the need for an understanding of autonomous learners starts from the understanding, purpose, and objectives as well as the benefits of the autonomous student itself.

Can autonomous learners improve students' understanding?

100% — 0% — 69% (Agree) — 31% (Disagree)
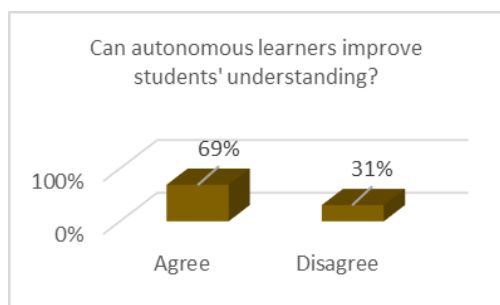
Statement 2

Different from statement 1 in statement 2 shows that 3 participants inconsistencies because in the second statement 2 they indirectly give the perception that they know about autonomous learners by giving the agreement that students can improve their understanding with autonomous learners.

Do you think that autonomous learners can be applied to education in 21st century ?

100% — 0% — 92% (Agree) — 8% (Disagree)
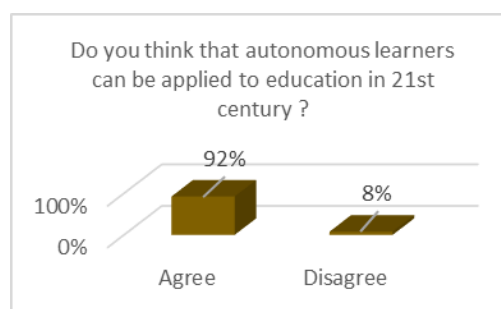
Statement 3

Based on the graphic above, in statement 3 inversely proportional to statement 1 because 12 of 13 participants answering that autonomous learner can be to education in the 21st century, it means they do understand what autonomous means.

Is the teacher currently mastering the understanding of autonomous learners?

100% — 0% — 23% (Agree) — 77% (Disagree)
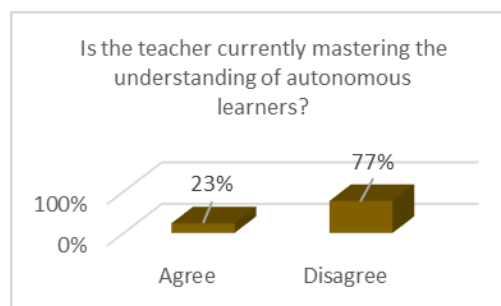
Statement 4

On statement 4 of 10 participants assumed that in 21st-century education teachers currently did not master the understanding of

autonomous learners. 77% from the results of the research participants stated that educators or teachers do not master autonomous learners, this statement can be concluded that the learning process in the class of students is more dependent on face-to-face learning methods with the instructor or lecturer as the source or center of the teaching-learning process.
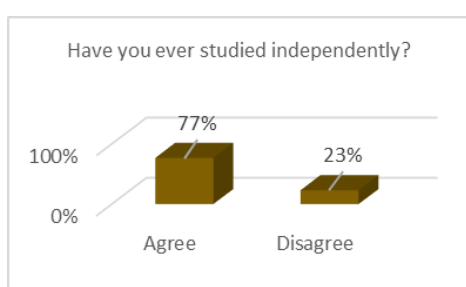
Statement 5

In the last statement, the researcher asked all participants that they have or never studying independently. 10 of 3 participants answered that they have study independently. Though in statement 1 6 of 13 participants don't know about autonomous learners but 4 of 6 have study independently, it means they did not realize that they do autonomous learners.

CONCLUSION

Based on quantitative research results using a questionnaire that has been done by the author, it shows that more than 50% of pre-service teachers do not know about autonomous learners. Autonomous learners have actually been widely applied in the teaching-learning process in the classroom, but the application has not been maximized so that the goals, benefits, and methods discussed do not have a major impact on improving understanding of learning in the classroom in 21st-century education. In this study, pre-service teachers assumed that the teacher does not fully master the autonomous learner so that it has an impact on the learning process itself. The existence of this research is expected to be able to answer the existing problems regarding autonomous learners, and with this study, it is also recommended that pre-service teachers better understand the concepts of autonomous learners so as to maximize the application of autonomous learners in the classroom.

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