

The Roles of Students' Autonomous Learning on EFL Students' Reading Mastery

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Abstract—This study aims at determining the impact of autonomous learning on EFL students' reading comprehension. This study used a quasi-experimental approach with two groups of research subjects, namely the experimental group using interactive reading activity and the control group using conventional methods. It was found that learning independence became a determining factor for student learning success, as indicated by the significant difference in results between students in the experimental group who learned to use interactive reading with high autonomous learning compared to students who had low autonomous learning. Those who had high autonomous learning got higher reading scores than students in the control group who had low autonomous learning. It indicates that students who have high autonomous learning have better reading mastery with significant differences. Therefore, learning independence needs to be grown on students so that they achieve the expected learning outcomes, and teachers need to train themselves to improve students' autonomous learning.

Keywords—reading mastery, autonomous learning level, learning independence

I. INTRODUCTION

Student autonomy is necessary in foreign language education research to support student life-long learning, which has shifted to a more communicative and student-centered approach, in creating more creative learning for students and involving elements of art in learning. This is in accordance with the objectives of the 2013 Indonesian Curriculum which encourages students to increase intellectual curiosity through a habituation and intervention approach [1].

Student autonomy and teacher autonomy are interrelated, so teachers who want to foster greater student autonomy must "start from themselves". Teachers must support the psychological and practical abilities of student learning independence (Smith, 2018), as well as build individual sides of students to connect class learning with language use and still have control over their teaching assignments. Many language teachers believe that students who learn by strategy become more successful because they learn more efficiently [2].

Learning paradigm that is centered on learners is considered as encouraging the emergence of student autonomy because knowledge is not only transmitted, but involves active construction by students through social interaction, and built together, and engages students in planning ways and learning media [3].

Reading mastery becomes a core part of foreign language learning, including English when taught as a second language, and influences academic achievement for second language learners, because reading mastery influences language competence as a component of language, communication, reading and other aspects, thus attracting the attention of researchers for years [4].

Research has shown that the use of the Interactive reading and Interactive reading activities can help students develop reading that further preserves words. In addition, more creative learning can prepare students to be able to adapt well, and it is more interesting if it involves elements of art in learning, with better learning outcomes than using conventional methods [5].

Regardless of the positive impacts of autonomous learning, there are some questions to be answered, such as how to implement autonomous learning in reading classes and how to inhabit autonomous learning, which leads students to be more independent in reading activities. This study, then, examines the level of reading mastery of students who learn using the interactive reading media across the levels of independence in reading activities.

II. METHODS

This present study employed an experimental design where the research subjects were divided into two groups namely experiment and control, both of which were chosen randomly. All groups got a reading mastery pretest. The teacher evaluated students' Autonomous Learning through a questionnaire adapted into English learning with three main components of independence: planning, implementing, and evaluating. After the learning process with the interactive reading, the respondents were given a post-test to assess the reading mastery. The number of research subjects in this study were 99

students. They were 3th and 5th semester students of a private university in East Java, Indonesia. The two subject groups of this study were 55 students in the experimental group learning to use interactive reading and 48 students in the control group using a conventional teaching method.

Student learning independence was measured to four class students who were given a pretest to find out the level of Autonomous Learning by using a questionnaire that had been adapted into English learning [6] covering initiative, monitoring, and evaluation. In addition, reading mastery measurement, using the Reading Test which was developed in accordance with the core reading contained in the 8th grade English textbook.

In pre-action or the initial stage, all subjects were given a reading mastery pre-test. In the learning process, the teacher fills out a questionnaire about learning independence. At the end, a post-test was conducted to identify the effect of interactive reading on the level of reading mastery of EFL students, including in terms of student learning independence.

The experimental group received reading mastery learning through interactive reading according to the chapters in the English subject books. The teacher gives an explanation of the interactive reading media, the teacher makes 10 (ten) core reading words on the interactive reading card, students are asked to write words that have relevance to the 10 words that are prepared on the card and stick them to the wall.

While carrying out activities using the interactive reading, the researchers also provided increased student learning independence. The teacher has the task of assessing the three stages of student learning independence through a questionnaire card.

The questions in the first part show the students' initiative to determine their learning plans, the questions in the second part are the teacher's assessment of the development of student learning activities, and the third part questions are the teacher's assessment of their learning outcomes.

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The implementation of autonomous learning on EFL students' reading comprehension was conducted in one consecutive semester 2019. Based on the implementation, there had been some relevant data needed to collect in order to answer the research question. Table 1, for instance, shows the level of student learning independence.

TABLE I. LEVEL OF STUDENT LEARNING INDEPENDENCE

Class	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Experiment	55	62.2102	1.13311
Control	48	60.2121	1.11213

Based on Table 1, the experimental group numbered 55 people, the average score of independence was 62.21 with a standard deviation of 1.133. Whereas in the control group with 48 students, the average independence was 60.21 with a standard deviation of 3.112 showing that experimental group applied higher level of learning independence.

In addition, Table 2 shows the distribution level of student learning independence employed by the two groups: experimental dan control.

TABLE II. DATA DISTRIBUTION LEVEL OF STUDENT LEARNING INDEPENDENCE

Class	Experiment	Control	Total
High AL	32	26	52
Low AL	23	24	47
Total	55	48	99

Table 2 highlights that, in majority, students employed learning independence where 52 of 99 students (52.53%). Somehow, it is not an ideal percentage since students should have empowered themselves with learning independence.

Other data were also found before the implementation of autonomous learning the reading class. In the first test (pre-test), in the experimental group the average reading mastery of students was 60.44 with a standard deviation of 1.34. Whereas in the control group the average was 59.22 with a standard deviation of 1.21 as presented in Table 3.

TABLE III. DESCRIPTIONS OF READING MASTERY PRE-TEST RESULTS

Class	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Experiment	55	60.4416	1.34552
Control	48	59.2291	1.21823

The distribution of pre-test mean scores for the reading ability of the two groups was not much different. The experimental group's reading mastery level of 60.44 did not differ greatly from the control group's average score of 59.22. Table 3 shows that the subjects in this study have a balanced ability so that research can be done to implement learning with interactive reading media.

Besides the pre-test, there was another test, namely post-test to investigate whether there was a significant effect of autonomous learning on students' reading mastery. Reading mastery posttest statistics show that the average reading mastery of students in the experimental class is higher than the control class and also higher than the pre-test, with the mean value of the experimental group at 64.83 and the control group at 61.48 (see Table 4).

TABLE IV. POST-TEST OF READING COMPREHENSION

Class	Criteria	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Experiment	High AL	32	62.63	1.38
	Low AL	23	61.06	1.47
Control	High AL	26	55.65	1.47
	Low AL	24	53.53	1.36

Table 4 shows that the results of the post-test mastery of the reading of students who learn using interactive reading achieve higher results than students who study without interactive reading. The average score of students with high learning independence in the experimental group was 62.63 with a standard deviation of 1.38 while students with low learning independence obtained an average score of 61.06 with a

standard deviation of 1.47. In the control group; the average score achieved by students with high learning independence is 55.65 with a standard deviation of 1.47 and students with low learning independence get a score of only 523.53 with a standard deviation of 1.29.

The unique thing in this research is the learning of reading mastery using interactive reading, students who have the independence to learn the ability to memorize reading tends to increase, the second uniqueness is the increase in students' learning independence in the reading mastery process which is based on the concept of learning independence. Questions number 1 to 5 are a reflection of student learning independence which illustrates how students perceive the importance of learning as they will experience. Questions number 6 to number 15 describe the students' independence in the learning process.

In interactive reading activities, students can measure the number of new words they have memorized based on simple sentences that have been written in each student's workbook, can be seen and memorized simply every day, and arrange new simple sentences based on the new reading they have memorized [7].

The reading mastery activity using interactive reading makes it easy for students to gain experience in memorizing reading especially with the added activity of making simple sentences. Thus, the interactive reading media implemented with the learning independence approach becomes an interesting challenge. Independent learning has a significant effect on student understanding, because students are individuals who actively shape their learning experiences for self-development [1].

Students who have the ability to self-regulation or learning independence have a level of reading ability that is better than students who do not have the ability to self-regulation. The success of students' learning independence is greatly influenced by students' experience during the learning period [8].

The use of interactive reading makes students active to improve mastery understanding of tenses. There is a strong positive correlation between high levels of self-regulation and high reading comprehension. That students who have less talent and independence learn, but their results in science learning have higher results than students without independence talent [9].

IV. CONCLUSION

Reading mastery using interactive reading and interactive reading activities in this study was proven to improve reading mastery. When applying learning independence as an attribute of learning, the students obtain far better results than those

without learning independence. This is an alternative for teachers to prioritize the element of learning independence as an important part in the learning process.

Learning independence is an important part to improve student learning outcomes and even achieve the expectations of schools and teachers, this is because the learning process is not just a transmission from the teacher but more because of the active process by students. The teacher can use the check list of students' learning independence to find out and find solutions if there is a weak side to students in the learning process.

It implies that the learning independence as the implementation of autonomous learning should be empowered in the classroom since autonomous learning creates better learning environment focusing on student-centered learning.

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