Teachers' Perspectives of Autonomous Behavior in Language Learning: A Survey among English Teachers

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ABSTRACT

The outbreak of the covid-19 pandemic affected the learning practices in Indonesian schools. The practice of the online learning suggested the practice of learning autonomous behavior. This study investigates teachers' perspective toward autonomous learning in the context of English language learning in the current pandemic era. This study constitutes quantitative study. For attaining the purpose of the study, a questionnaire had been constructed, it was about the learning autonomy behavior which were adapted from Nabila (2019) in which suggested 15 items of open-ended questions in of each sub dimension, item 1-3 for awareness, item 4-7 for self-effort, item 8-12 for self-esteem, then item 13-15 for the use of technology. The given scale is ranging from 1=Never, 2=Rarely, 3=Sometimes, 4=Often, 5=Always. The participants were fifteen English teachers belong to English teacher council group (Musyarawah Guru Mata Pelajaran-MGMP). They were selected purposely as they are practicing the online learning and having experience. They were easy to reach and access through online communication. The factors Age, teaching time period and their educational background were collected as the data to be considered. the collected data was analyzed using the SPSS tool to find the mean score as the main interpretation. The results exhibited that teachers' perception is overall negative. The findings suggested that only five aspects of the total fifteen given questions showing relatively positive perceptions indicated by achieving scores ranging from being average to highly moderate. Teachers identified few positives factors namely learners devoted time to study and practice their English, took notes and summarized on their own after learning, made use the school library in studying English, identified their errors in English and fixed them on their own, and watched English learning content on the internet to study and practice English. Yet, these are not sufficient to mark the presence and practice of the autonomous language learning among EFL learners in the current covid-19 pandemic situation. Some other main indicators of autonomous learning such as decision making and goal setting, consistent time organization, self-realization to study, self-formation of learning group, self-assessment of strengths and weaknesses, self-responsibility, self- evaluation, self-effort and search for online educational are viewed to be not generally carried out by learners.

Keywords: learning autonomy, teachers' perception, language learning

Introduction

Teaching and learning process in the midst of COVID-19 has shifted from school to home schooling. Teaching and learning process in the current situation makes the learning autonomy required to be applied among the learners because since of the pandemic outbreak on March 2020 the teaching learning process allotted time is decreased significantly until this time; thus, it is very important for learners to act autonomously (Ningsih, 2019). Either, Indonesian' curriculum 13 is assumed promoting learning autonomy in which learning process is weighed on learners' active participation as the replacement of traditional method (Ramadhiyah & Lengkanawati, 2019). Teachers' perception toward this notion is becoming vital as they are the main actor for learners during and of class (Ningsih, 2019). Briefly, either the successful or the unsuccessful of LA implementation depend on how they perceive and approach this notion.

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Several studies have revealed teachers' perspective toward the learning autonomy respectively on higher level education. It is seemed that teachers have had positive perspectives toward the learning autonomy ideas and had the eagerness to imply it in the teaching-learning situation; however, many of whom seemed to have difficulties in practices (Ja, 2017; Meisani & Rambet, 2017; Ramadhiyah & Lengkanawati, 2019). It implies that how positive the perspectives they had if it did not immediately accompany with a relevant knowledge in implementation.

Yasmin and Sohail (2017) claimed that most teachers remain lack of understanding of learners' autonomy. They still appear to apply teacher-centeredness rather than the learner-centeredness activity. It is also detected that teachers' beliefs, in Indonesian context, the perception on language learning autonomy was negative despite their perspectives was positive toward the notion; the lack of conceptual and practical understanding toward the essential is in lacking which hinder them to apply it into their teaching practices (Saraswati, 2019). Such circumstance serves to be the conceptual ground to carry out further investigation on the current teachers' perception toward language learning autonomy particularly of those who involve in the online learning during this covid-19 pandemic.

Methodology

The recent study is quantitative in nature. The approach is eligible with the recent study cases, firstly, it helps the researcher to cover a particular population and to generalized the findings as a whole or partial, further, it is eligible either to compute then comprehensible to be interpreted through percentages or mean scores with its indicator or formula (Nassaji, 2015). For attaining the purpose of the study, a questionnaire had been constructed, it was about the learning autonomy behavior which were adapted from Nabila (2019) in which suggested 15 items of open-ended questions in of each sub dimension, item 1-3 for awareness, item 4-7 for self-effort, item 8-12 for self-esteem, then item 13-15 for the use of technology. The given scale is ranging from 1=Never, 2=Rarely, 3=Sometimes, 4=Often, 5=Always. It was meant to seek teachers' perspectives toward the learning autonomy behavior in the current situation through the given questionnaire

The participants were the English teachers belong to English teacher council group (Musyarawah Guru Mata Pelajaran-MGMP). There were 15 teachers who participated. They had been selected purposely selected as they are easy to reach and accessed with through online communication. The instrument was distributed online through Google Form then succeeded collected 15 respondents. The factors Age, teaching time period and their educational background were collected as the data to be considered. Finally, the collected data was analyzed using the SPSS tool to find the mean score as the main interpretation indicator listed in Table 1 adopted from Mailizar and Fan (2020). Briefly, all participants' responses were described descriptively.

Table 1. Mean Score Interpretation

Mean Score	Interpretation
1.0-1.5	Very Low
1.6-2.0	Low
2.1-2.5	Moderately Low
2.6-2.9	Slightly Below Average
3.0	Average
3.1-3.5	Slightly Above Average
3.6-4.0	Moderately High
4.1-4.5	High
4.6-5.0	Very High

Findings

Teachers' data
The data of the teachers were gathered then are out as follows as listed in figure 1, figure 2 and figure 3 below.
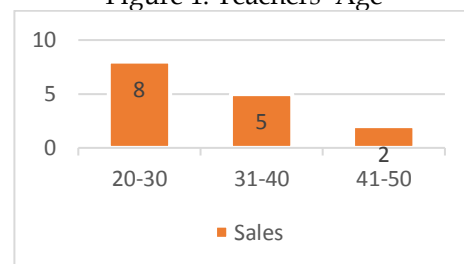
Figure 1. Teachers' Age

Figure 1 represents the teachers' age. From the highest to the lowest orderly, it indicates there are eight teachers aging between 20-3- years old, five teachers aging between 31-40 years old, and two teachers aging between 41-50 years old. Based on this findings it can be stated that most of the educators are nominated by the young English educators.
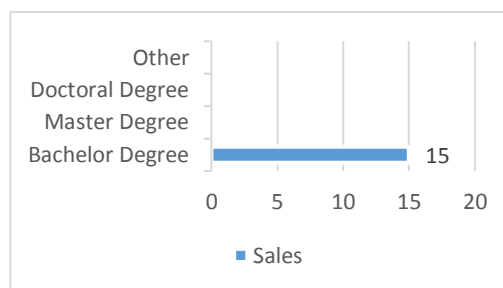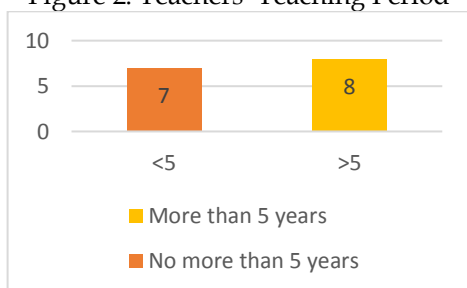
Figure 2. Teachers' Teaching Period

Further, figure 2 suggested the teachers' teaching period. Yellow colored bar indicates there are eight teachers in this case have had been teaching for more than 5 years, orange colored bar, however, indicates there are seven teachers have had been teaching for no more than 5 years. It can be seen that, since teachers have had been teaching for more than 5 years, this data strengthened they are well-known in regard to teachers' working.

Figure 3. Teachers' Educational Background

Last but not least, figure 3 displayed the teachers' educational background. The findings suggested that all teachers are degreed in education degree in which, once again, strengthened they are equipped to be a teachers in their field.

Teachers' Perceptions of Learning Autonomy Behavior

In this part, the results of how teachers perceive their learners' autonomous behavior in language learning was revealed. It is showed that, most of the teachers were showing negative perceptions toward the learners' learning autonomy behavior since many participants agreed their options on Rarely/Never and Sometimes on the given items in the questionnaire. It is also could be seen from the mean score where value 2 is the most appeared number, which indicating that learners were disagreed with the given arguments. Percentage's value and the mean score were computed in order to seek the high and low score in the collected data. The interpretation was conducted in each session and tables respectively similar to the previous one in learners' part. Firstly, the awareness sub dimension was computed and the results come out are as follow (Table 2):

Table 2. Awareness Mean Scores and Percentages

Items	Never/ Rarely	Some times	Very Often/ Often	Mean	Interpretation
Awareness					
1. Learners are making decisions and set goals for their English learning	54%	13%	33%	2.7	Slightly Below Average
2. Learners organize their time to learn English and being consistent with it	66%	8%	26%	2.4	Moderately Low
3. Learners, generally, realize why they need to study English	34%	40%	26%	2.9	Slightly Below Average

Table 2 reveals that of 54% teachers agreed their learners are never/rarely making decisions and setting goals of their learning. The mean score 2.7 presented at slightly below average level, seemed also strengthen the results of their perceptions toward their learners. Teachers seemed regard their learners are still too depending on them regarding making decision of their learning process in English. Then, of 66% teachers perceived their learners are never/rarely organized their time to learn and stick with it, the mean 2.4, Moderately Low in score. This is indicating that learners are hard to create time to learn and being consistent with it. Lastly, 34%

teachers agreed Rarely/Never then 40% agreed sometimes their learners realize why they need to study English; the mean 2.9 in score which indicates learners seemed still fail to perceived the good use of English for their academic achievement. Overall, based from the results above, teachers seemed agree of learners are having the low awareness when it comes to the learning autonomy.

The next, teachers' perceptions of learners' self-effort were computed and are out as follow listed in Table 3:

Table 3. Self-effort Mean Scores and Percentages

Self-effort					
Items	Never /Rarely	Some times	Very Often/ Often	Mean	Interpretation
4. Learners devoted time to study and practice their English	34%	40%	26%	3.00	Average
5. Learners forming group to study English together	73%	20%	7%	2.0	Low
6. In learning, Learners take notes and summarizes it on their own afterward	6%	46%	48%	3.6	Moderately High
7. Learners make use the school library in studying English	13%	40%	47%	3.6	Moderately High

Based on the Table 3, item 5 has the lowest score in the mean score, 2.0. Of the 73% teachers agreed their learners never/rarely formed a group discussion to learn English together. It is seemed that teachers are rarely and nearly never found their infants form a group to for learning purposes, perhaps for different or another purposes it may does. Next, item 4 indicates the average in the mean score, 3.00. Of 40% teachers believed that their infants sometimes devoted their time to learn and practice English; the result represents learners are showing efforts to study and exercise English language. Afterward, item 6 reveals the high score in the mean, 3.6 (moderately high), of 48% teachers opted often/very often their learners were taking notes and summarizing the lesson on their own. While 6% agreed rarely and 46% agreed sometimes.

This strategy of learning seemed well-known among the learners where they could take notes as much as they want, then memorize or even review it on their own afterward when they at their homes; this strategy would help them to record what the teachers had taught during the class. Next, item 7 reveals the high score in the mean, 3.6 also; and of 47% teachers opted often/very often their learners were making use the school library to study English. While 13% opted never, and 40% opted sometimes did it. Thus, generally, teachers' perceptions of their learners' effort in English learning are quite positive.

The next, teachers' perceptions of learners' self-effort were computed and are out as follow listed in Table 4:

Table 4. Self-esteem Mean Scores and Percentages

Self-Esteem					
Items	Never / Rarely	Some times	Very Often/ Often	Mean	Interpretation

8. Learners can notice their need to improve their English	67%	7%	26%	2.5	Moderately Low
9. Learners are assessing their strengths and weaknesses in English	60%	27%	13%	2.4	Moderately Low
10. Learners can notice their errors in English and fix it on their own	26%	27%	47%	3.2	Slightly Above Average
11. Learners find their own ways and being responsible on their study	60%	13%	27%	2.4	Moderately Low
12. Learners are tracking and evaluating their English learning process	80%	13%	7%	1.9	Low

Table 4 presents the results of item 8 until 12. The results visualized that item 8 was at moderately low level, and the mean was 2.5. Of 67% teachers believed their learners never/rarely can notice their need in improving English skill, only 26% teacher agreed their learners very often/often did it and while only 7% perceived their learners sometimes did it. This means that learners still could not notice their need in learning on their own. Item 9 was at moderately low level, and the mean was 2.4. Of 60% teachers agreed their learners never/rarely would assess their strengths and weaknesses in English, only 13% teachers opted very often/often and while 27% believed sometimes did it. Relates with the item 7' results, besides fail to notice their needs, learners seemed still fail to assess their characters in English learning on their own. Come to item 10, the mean was at slightly above average level, the mean score was 3.2. Of 47% teachers agreed their learners often/very often can notice when they committed errors in English and tried to fix it on their own, 26% agreed never, while 27% agreed sometimes their learners did it. From here, seems that learner were having a good sense of their performance, they could notice when they committed mistakes means that

they are quite familiar to the English words or sentences, which they often heard and familiar to how they pronounced or they written.

Next, item 11 presents moderately low level in mean score, 2.4. Of 60% teachers agreed their learners never/rarely find their own ways to learn and being responsible on their study, while 13% believed their learners sometimes did it and 27% believed their learners often did it. This indicating that most learners are still reluctant for being responsible for their learning. Lastly, item 12 presents low level in mean score, 1.9. Of 80% teachers agreed their learners never/rarely tracked and evaluated their English learning process, while only 13% and 7% teachers believed their learners sometimes and often did it; the result showed that many learners still reluctant to track and evaluate their English learning process, they would rather be letting their teachers do it for them. Hence, in terms of self-esteem, teachers mostly perceived their learners are still at low level.

The next, teachers' perceptions of learners used of technology was computed and are out as follow listed in Table 5:

Table 5. The use of technology Mean Scores and Percentages

The use of Technology					
Items	Never / Rarely	Some Times	Very Often/ Often	Mean	Interpretation
13. Learners make use of the educational apps to improve their English	53%	13%	34%	2.7	Slightly Below Average
14. Learners are accessing the educational books or articles on the internet to study and practice English	67%	13%	20%	2.2	Moderately Low
15. Learners are watching English learning content on the internet to study and practice English	33%	13%	54%	3.3	Slightly Above Average

Table 5 reveals of teachers' perceptions of the leaners used of technology in learning. Item 13 was at slightly below average, 2.7. Of 53% teachers believed their learners never/rarely make use of the educational application in the internet to improve their English skill, while on 13% agreed sometimes and 34% agreed very often/often did it; learners seemed did not perceived the advantages of technology in enhancing their English skills. Further, item 14 was at moderately low, 2.2. Of 67% teachers agreed their learners never/rarely accessing the educational articles on the internet to improve their English skills, only 13% and 20% teachers believed sometimes and often did it; learners apparently remain lack of the awareness of the good use of educational reading on the internet. Moreover, item 15 was at slightly above average, 3.3. Of 54% teachers convinced their learners very often/often watched English learning content on the internet to study and practice, while 33% and 13% teachers believed their learners never/rarely and sometimes did it; this means that learners are often use their facility to watch the English content videos

Discussions

The results of this study seem to reveal several points to elaborate. On the awareness subsection items (Table 2), it showed a negative perception within which implied that teachers believed their learners did not have a good awareness in studying English. This goes along with the results of the self-effort (Table 3), self-esteem (Table 4), and the use of technology in learning (Table 5) that displayed negative perception. It seemed that teachers likely comprehend the term of learning autonomy along with its benefits for learners meaning the teachers are aware of how the autonomous learners should act in specific way such as able to study under teachers' guidance and evaluation. However, when it comes to the practices, it meets the challenges of the technology and mental readiness of the learners. Teachers implied that few learners could manage to deal with the given tasks independently by the help of internet. Albeit they might realize that internet could provide abundant information to the user

Conclusion

The present study explored teachers' views about learning autonomy among the learners. The findings showed that teachers' perspective overall was negative. Teachers perceived that learning language

on the internet to improve their skills, seemed that watching are more engaging rather than reading. Thus, in terms of educational apps and reading learners are not really familiar with, but does to watching English videos, nevertheless, since two item were at low level (item 13-14), teachers' perceptions at this term is low.

In summary, the findings collected through a questionnaire suggested that teachers were showing a low perception toward their learners' learning autonomy behavior. This indicates that the perception is negative. Out of 15 items, there are only five items were showing positive results (4, 6, 7, 10 and 15) that mean score on 3.00 above. Teachers believed that their learners still need to learn a lot, especially in terms of learning autonomy, due to could not take the learning process on their own. Guidance, advised either help from teachers were required in making them do the English learning. Based on this finding, hence, teachers were low which indicates negative perception toward the learning autonomy behavior of their learners.

within no time (Thu Ba, 2018), yet they were not positively willing to take the advantage or do any efforts. This confirms the proposition that the learning autonomy is not apart from the availability of the technology infrastructure and students' personal effort (Liu and Li, 2010). Such finding may also clarify the notion behind the tendency of having negative perceptions toward the learning autonomy. Teachers apparently find difficult to implement due to some possible factors such as cultural perspectives, unfamiliarity, and learning condition (My Duong, 2014). This condition may feature the challenge for teachers in encouraging the autonomous language learning among students with low motivation, responsibility, and knowledge (Cirocki et al., 2019). Further these foreshadow more required efforts for teachers in endorsing learning autonomy such as giving learners opportunities to choose the material to study on their own outside the class hour, letting learners to be aware of their needs, and providing tasks frequently to practice learning autonomy (My Duong, 2014).

autonomy remains difficult in its implementation among students in this current pandemic situation. Although the sudden shift of mode of teaching from classroom meeting to online meeting, it does not

necessarily encourage and drive learners to turn to be autonomous. The responses to the given questionnaires suggested that merely five aspects of the total fifteen given questions showing a little bit positive perceptions indicated by achieved scores ranging from being average to highly moderate. Teachers saw that learners devoted time to study and practice their English, took notes and summarized on their own after learning, made use the school library in studying English, identified their errors in English and fixed them on their own, and watched English learning content on the internet to study and practice English. Yet, these are not sufficient to mark the presence and practice of the autonomous language learning among EFL learners in the current covid-19 pandemic situation. Some other main indicators of autonomous learning such as making decisions and set goals for English learning, organizing consistently time to learn English, realizing the reason the need to study

English, forming a group to study English, intending to assess the strengths and weaknesses in English, finding the ways and being responsible for the study, tracking and evaluating the English learning process, making use of the online educational apps to improve English, and accessing the educational online resources to study and practice English are viewed to be not generally carried out by learners. For which, the teachers defined the negative perception toward the practice of autonomous language learning. Yet, the present study has contributed to the field of EFL teaching, in general, and, in particular, learning autonomy among young learners especially junior high schools. This study may lead to reveal further researches concerning with the hindrance and causes of these phenomena or other contemporary accompanying aspects.

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