

Facilitation of learner autonomy in EFL: Teacher's and students' perspectives on *The Work in Progress* textbook

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates how the 'Work in Progress' English textbook facilitates learner autonomy, as perceived by an English teacher and tenth-grade students. Employing a qualitative case study design, data were collected through semi-structured interviews with one teacher and ten students who used the textbook as their primary learning material. Thematic analysis, guided by Nunan's framework, revealed eight themes from the teacher's perspective: Teacher's Unfamiliarity with Learner Autonomy, Awareness Level Facilitation, Involvement Level Facilitation, Intervention Level Facilitation, Creation Level Facilitation, Transcendence Level Facilitation, Technology Completing the Book Use, and the Need for Teacher Professional Development. As from the students' perspective, six themes are noted: Awareness Level Facilitation, Involvement Level Facilitation, Intervention Level Facilitation, Creation Level Facilitation, Transcendence Level Facilitation, and Partial Autonomy and External Dependence. The findings show that the textbook mainly supports autonomy at the Awareness, Involvement, Intervention, and Transcendence levels, but offers limited support for the Creation level. While the textbook helps students understand learning goals, provides choices, allows some flexibility in adapting tasks, and connects classroom materials to real-life contexts, opportunities for students to set their own learning goals and design tasks are limited and often initiated by the teacher rather than the textbook. Both the teacher and students viewed the textbook positively for its clear structure and flexibility but noted the need for additional support, such as professional development for teachers and scaffolding for students, to further develop learner autonomy. Many students continued to rely on external tools like translation apps, indicating ongoing challenges in independent learning. This study highlights the important role of textbooks in supporting various levels of learner autonomy in EFL classrooms and emphasizes the need for materials and teacher training that promote learners' ability to manage their own learning. The findings offer practical implications for curriculum developers, textbook authors, and policymakers seeking to enhance learner-centered practices and foster greater learner independence in language education.

Keywords: EFL Textbook, learner autonomy, student perspectives, teacher perspectives

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Introduction

The implementation of 'Kurikulum Merdeka' in Indonesia is intended to promote more student-centered pedagogies, with an emphasis on fostering learner autonomy (Fahrudin et al., 2024). According to Adilah et al., (2023), *Kurikulum Merdeka* places strong emphasis on learner autonomy, independence, and flexibility for both instructors and students. Learner autonomy, commonly defined as the capacity to take charge of one's own learning

(Benson, 2011; Holec, 1981; Littlewood, 1999), is widely recognized as a crucial factor in effective language acquisition. It enables students to set learning goals, select strategies, and monitor their progress independently (Benson, 2011). Moreover, fostering learner autonomy is essential for the development of lifelong learning skills (Little, 1991).

In the context of EFL education in Indonesia, fostering learner autonomy is

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particularly significant due to the traditionally teacher-centered approach that dominates classrooms, which may limit opportunities for students to engage in independent learning (Wiraningsih & Santosa, 2020). To address this challenge and promote learner autonomy effectively, educators should focus on providing support and guidance to students as they navigate this shift (Lengkanawati, 2017; Pasaribu, 2020; Wiraningsih & Santosa, 2020). This can involve incorporating opportunities for student choice and decision-making in the classroom, explicitly teaching skills for independent learning, and fostering a supportive educational atmosphere that values students' input and autonomy.

In classroom contexts, textbooks play a pivotal role in shaping classroom practices and can either promote or hinder the development of learner autonomy (Mustofa & Wirza, 2023). Textbooks continue to serve as reliable educational tools by providing accurate material to support students' understanding of key concepts and by organizing content into manageable, clear sections that make important information easier to grasp (Knight, 2015). Textbooks are essential in both formal and informal education, with their quality significantly influencing the success of the education system and enhancing students' performance (Sujatna et al., 2021).

In the Indonesian context, government-designed EFL textbooks are central to curriculum delivery, making it essential to investigate how these materials facilitate or restrict autonomous learning opportunities for students (Mustofa & Wirza, 2023). Exploring both students' and teacher's perspectives is crucial, as their experiences provide valuable insights into the real-world application and effectiveness of the textbook in promoting learner autonomy. Scholars like Benson (2011)

emphasize that learner autonomy develops through the dynamic interaction between teachers and learners, making it crucial to consider both groups' experiences. In this case, Little (2007) further argues that evaluating autonomy-supportive practices requires

understanding the beliefs and experiences of both learners and teachers. Teachers are key facilitators of learner autonomy, modeling and scaffolding autonomous behaviors within the constraints of the curriculum and available materials (Fahrudin et al., 2024). Their beliefs and strategies directly influence how autonomy is enacted in the classroom. Meanwhile, students' readiness, beliefs, and attitudes toward autonomy significantly affect the success of autonomy-oriented approaches (Fidyati, 2017). Indonesian EFL learners frequently exhibit only moderate to low levels of learner autonomy, meaning they often do not take full responsibility for their own learning process and tend to rely heavily on their teachers for guidance and direction throughout their English studies (Khaidir et al., 2020).

Nevertheless, despite the recognized importance of learner autonomy, textbook role, and the documented challenges related to learner autonomy in Indonesian EFL contexts, there is a noticeable lack of research that specifically examines how particular government-endorsed textbooks are perceived by both teachers and students in terms of their capacity to foster autonomous learning. This leaves an important gap in understanding how the intended aims of curriculum materials are realized in actual classroom practices and learner experiences. Therefore, this research addresses a critical gap by investigating the perspectives of both teacher and students regarding the effectiveness of 'Work in Progress', a government published textbook used in tenth-grade senior high school English classrooms in *Kurikulum Merdeka* in Indonesia, in fostering learner autonomy.

Understanding students' and teachers' perspectives of learner autonomy facilitation in Indonesian EFL textbooks not only provides a more nuanced evaluation of the textbook but also helps identify potential areas for improving instructional materials. Hence, this study aims to reveal the teachers' and students' perspectives regarding the facilitation of learner autonomy in the 'Work in Progress' Indonesian EFL textbook.

Method

This section contains detailed information about the procedures and steps of the research.

Research Design

This study aims to investigate the perspectives of an EFL teacher and students regarding the Work in Progress textbook in facilitating learner autonomy. To achieve this, a qualitative case study approach was employed. According to Yin (2018), qualitative case study research is particularly suitable for gaining an in-depth understanding of complex phenomena in real-life contexts. In this study, the “phenomena” refer to the nuanced experiences, perceptions, and interactions of both the teacher and students as they engage with the textbook to promote learner autonomy within the authentic setting of an Indonesian EFL classroom. This approach allows for a comprehensive exploration of how the textbook is used and perceived, making the qualitative case study an ideal method for addressing the research objectives.

Research Participants

This study involved one English teacher and ten tenth-grade students from an Indonesian school using the ‘Work in Progress’ book as the sole English lesson textbook. The teacher was purposively selected for her direct experience with the textbook and the curriculum. The decision to focus on a single teacher corresponds with the case study method, which emphasizes a thorough investigation of a specific case in its authentic context. For the students’ interview, 10 students were purposively selected to represent a range of academic performances and engagement levels, providing diverse insights into how they interact with elements of the books that promote learner autonomy. Accordingly, Yin (2018) explains that purposive sampling enables researchers to deliberately choose participants based on specific criteria to ensure a variety of relevant perspectives. The small sample size allows for a focused, detailed examination of learner autonomy within a single classroom setting. All participants were informed about the purpose of the study and

consented to participate. Their personal information and responses were kept confidential to maintain ethical standards.

Data Collection

To explore the perspectives of both the EFL teacher and students, semi-structured interviews were conducted. The semi-structured interview guidelines were primarily developed using Nunan’s (1997) Five Levels of Learner Autonomy Implementation framework, ensuring systematic exploration of learner autonomy in both student and teacher interviews. For students, all questions were directly aligned with the five framework levels. For the teacher, five questions followed Nunan’s framework, while three additional questions were included to capture the teacher’s broader views and perceptions of textbook use and learner autonomy beyond the framework. The teacher interview lasted approximately 45 minutes, while each student interview took about 10 minutes. All interviews were conducted in Indonesian, then transcribed and translated into English for analysis.

Data Analysis

The results of the interview were analyzed primarily with deductive thematic analysis, guided by Nunan’s (1997) Five Levels of Learner Autonomy Implementation framework, which structured the coding and theme development for all student interviews and five of the teacher interview questions. However, there are three teacher interview questions that explored the teacher’s broader views and perceptions of textbook use and learner autonomy, which were not directly mapped to the framework. Responses to these questions were analyzed inductively, allowing new themes to emerge from the data. This combination ensured that the analysis was both theory-driven and open to capturing insights from the teacher’s perspective. Triangulation of student and teacher perspectives further enhanced the credibility of the findings. This combined approach ensured a comprehensive and trustworthy interpretation of how the textbook facilitates learner autonomy in the EFL classroom.

Table 1. Nunan's (1997) Five Levels of Learner Autonomy Textbook Facilitation Overview

Levels	Textbook Facilitation
Awareness	Textbook made the students aware of the pedagogical goals and content they are learning
Involvement	Textbook provide opportunities for students to make choices in their learning activities
Intervention	Textbook allows students to adapt or modify learning content and tasks
Creation	Textbook give opportunities for students to create their own tasks or set learning goals
Transcendence	Textbook encourages connections between classroom learning and real life

Results and Discussions

Interviews with the teacher and students suggest that the 'Work in Progress' book supports learner autonomy in the stages of Awareness, Involvement, Intervention, and Transcendence, but there are clear gaps in Creation-level autonomy support.

Teacher Perspectives of Learner Autonomy Facilitation

The analysis of teacher interview result was conducted using a combination of deductive and inductive approaches. The deductive analysis was guided by Nunan's (1997) Five Levels of Learner Autonomy Implementation framework, which structured the identification of key themes related to the stages of learner autonomy facilitated by the textbook. In addition, inductive analysis was applied to capture broader aspects of the teacher's perceptions and experiences that extended beyond the framework. As a result, the analysis revealed eight major themes: (1) Teacher's Unfamiliarity with the Concept of Learner Autonomy (2) Awareness Level Facilitation, (3) Involvement Level Facilitation, (4) Intervention Level Facilitation, (5) Creation Level Facilitation, (6) Transcendence Level Facilitation, (7) Technology Completing the Book Use, and (8) The Need for Teacher Professional Development. These themes encompass both the teacher's understanding and facilitation of learner autonomy in the classroom, as well as contextual factors such as the integration of technology and the need for professional development. The following sections discuss each theme in detail, supported by representative excerpts from the teacher's interview.

Initially, the teacher admitted that fostering learner autonomy was not her

primary concern, and she expressed being unfamiliar with the concept, stating, "*I am not [familiar with learner autonomy concept]. It is not my concern yet. The students here have very low English skills. Can you share about it?*"

This initial unfamiliarity contrasts with the findings of Agustina et al. (2022), which indicate that many Indonesian EFL teachers already recognize the value of learner autonomy and are aware of its psychological and social dimensions. In contrast, the teacher in the present study was not familiar at first. However, after being introduced to the idea, she began to reflect on her own practices and consider ways to better support student independence. This suggests that, while positive orientations toward learner autonomy may not be universal among Indonesian teachers, exposure to the concept and opportunities for professional reflection can encourage teachers to adopt more autonomy-supportive approaches. In this way, the present study complements Agustina et al.'s (2022) findings by illustrating how teacher perceptions can evolve and how professional development can play a key role in fostering learner autonomy in the classroom.

The teacher's initial unfamiliarity with the concept of learner autonomy is a notable finding. In this regard, (Benson, 2011) argues that fostering learner autonomy requires educators to embrace a shift in their roles from knowledge providers to facilitators, guiding students in taking responsibility for their own learning. The teacher's evolving perspective on autonomy, after being introduced to the concept, aligns with the broader literature (Bajrami, 2015; Lamkhanter, 2024; Raya et al., 2017; Reinders, 2010; Yuzulia, 2020), which emphasizes the importance of teacher intervention and the need for targeted

professional development to effectively support learner autonomy. Teachers are not just facilitators of knowledge but also key figures in enabling students to develop the skills needed for autonomous learning (Bajrami, 2015; Lamkhanter, 2024). This underscores the necessity of teacher development programs that focus on equipping educators with the knowledge and strategies required to support learner autonomy effectively.

Regarding the textbook facilitation of learner autonomy, it was found that the teacher perceives the book as a good tool. Firstly, in Awareness level facilitation theme, the teacher expressed that the book provides easily understandable instruction, helping the students grasp the learning goals, materials, and content of the book well. The teacher believes the book helps students understand what they are learning, particularly due to its detailed instructions and step-by-step guidance, making it easier for students to grasp the learning content and achieve the learning objectives.

This means that the textbook aligns with the Awareness level of learner autonomy as outlined in Nunan (1997) framework. At this level, learners are made aware of the pedagogical goals and the content of the materials they are using. The textbook's role in helping students become aware of their learning goals is particularly valuable, as this supports the development of self-regulation (Benson, 2007). Similarly, Littlewood (1996) argues that awareness of learning goals is essential for learners to take ownership of their learning.

Then, at the Involvement level facilitation theme, the teacher views that the book provides opportunities for students to make choices regarding how they engage with tasks. The teacher stated *"The book gives students choices in doing the tasks and develop their skills according to their preferences."* When being asked further regarding the instances of the choice given, the teacher expressed *"For example, students can choose their preferred athlete in their descriptive text practice in Chapter 1 about descriptive text material."*

This finding regarding the Involvement stage aligns with the suggestion that true learner autonomy should involve students

having control over the task's content, not just the form (Littlewood, 1999), and that autonomy goes beyond simply learning independently to include adapting learning activities to fit each learner's personal interests and abilities (Benson, 2011). The opportunity for students to make content choices in the textbook reflects these ideas and supports the development of learner autonomy in the classroom.

Moving on to the next section, in Intervention level facilitation theme, the teacher perceives that the tasks can be adapted to better suit students' needs and interests, offering some degree of flexibility in learning. She uttered *"The book instructions can be adapted and modified along with the students' life context and experiences, which makes it more relevant for the students."*

This finding aligns with Nunan's (1997) definition of the intervention level, which involves learners modifying and adapting tasks, an approach that requires self-regulatory behaviors. In support of this, self-regulation is also highlighted as a foundation for learner autonomy and independent language learning (Reinders, 2010). Thus, the teacher's perspective demonstrates how tasks that allow for adaptation not only foster learner autonomy but also directly support the development of self-regulation skills, empowering students to take greater control of their own learning processes.

Furthermore, in Creation level facilitation theme, the teacher noted that the book does not explicitly encourage students to create their own learning objectives or tasks. However, the teacher recognized that she ever gave students the chance to do so on one task. It was during the Procedure Text material in Chapter 3, that she asked the students to perform a mini drama with the only requirement was that the drama should contain tips about health. Other than that, freed for the students to design the task by themselves. This includes encouraging students to set their own goals, such as creating drama scripts, deciding the roles, and other arrangements. The teacher explained *"I once asked them to create their mini drama performance in a group. Students set their own script and arranged their drama by themselves."*

Although the textbook does not specifically provide tasks at the Creation level,

the teacher's mini-drama assignment demonstrates how educators can bridge this gap by encouraging students to generate their own content. This initiative is significant, as opportunities for students to control both what they learn and how they learn it are essential for developing full autonomy (Benson, 2011; Littlewood, 1999). This Creation-level task originated from the teacher rather than the textbook highlights a limitation in the curriculum's support for learner autonomy. It suggests that, while textbooks may offer a foundation, teacher innovation remains crucial for fostering higher-order skills. This finding underscores the need for future textbook editions to include more open-ended activities that allow students to set their own learning goals or design their own tasks, further supporting the development of learner autonomy at the Creation level.

In the Transcendence level facilitation theme, the teacher highlighted that the book tasks support students to be able to connect classroom tasks to their own lives. The teacher expressed "*The book offers a wide range of topics and tasks that help students connect the English skills they learn in class to their own personal experiences.*" In this case, the teacher perceives the book as effective in supporting these aspects of learner autonomy.

The facilitation of textbook in transcendence level aligns with the suggestion that autonomy is enhanced when students are able to connect their learning with external contexts (Benson, 2007). Additionally, autonomy is fully realized when learners can apply their learning in real-world situations (Littlewood, 1999).

When being asked about her experiences and strategies in further maximizing the use of the book, the teacher explained that she takes advantages of technological tools and encouraged students to utilize technology and especially social media to expand their English skills. This is noted as Technology Completing the Book Use theme. The teacher stated

"I support the utilization of technology while using the book so that the students could explore more on their own, even when they are at home. I occasionally asked them upload their tasks results to their social media. I encouraged them to practice speaking too

using Google Translate first and then make a video to be uploaded."

The teacher views her practice in encouraging the students to upload their work to social media will make the students practice translation, improve their pronunciation, and boost their confidence better. Some of the technological tools that she mentioned are Canva editing app, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and Google Translate. In addition, Google Translate is seen as really important tools to be used along with the 'Work in Progress' Textbook for the students learning, as the students have very limited English skills and thus need Google Translate to help them comprehend English better, as the teacher expressed "*Many students here still do not have enough English skills, so they really use Google Translate a lot.*"

This approach is in line with the emphasis on the role of technology in supporting learner autonomy (Godwin-Jones, 2011). According to Godwin-Jones (2011) integrating digital and multimedia resources into textbook activities can greatly enhance autonomous learning. The teacher's integration of technology and encouragement for students to use social media along with the textbook aligns with previous research showing that ICT use, especially when combined with positive interpersonal strategies, empowers students to explore and practice autonomously, fostering beneficial behaviors (Daulay et al., 2024). This approach also reflects findings by Kristy et al. (2022), who reported that digital tools help learners overcome challenges and boost their enthusiasm for learning English, as well as Maru et al. (2021), who observed that students' engagement with English learning content on the internet supports the development of autonomous learning behaviors.

To further explore the role of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* in supporting learner autonomy, the researcher asked the teacher about the availability of professional development related to autonomous learning. The teacher shared that, while the curriculum emphasizes learner independence, she had not received any professional development or training on how to foster learner autonomy in the classroom. The teacher emphasized that training on fostering students' autonomous

learning would be valuable for their professional growth and the development of their students, as she stated *"I have never received any training about fostering students' autonomy from any party. Now that I think of it, I feel that it will be very good if the teachers are given training about supporting learner autonomy."* This is noted as The Need of Teacher Professional Development.

This lack of training is seen as a barrier to effectively supporting autonomy, as the teacher feels unsure about how to systematically encourage students to take ownership of their learning. It is in line with Little's (1995) argument that the development of learner autonomy is fundamentally dependent on teacher autonomy. Teachers cannot be expected to foster autonomy in their students unless they themselves understand and practice autonomous learning (Little, 1995). This suggests that teachers must first experience and model autonomy in their own professional lives to effectively encourage it in their learners. This also aligns with studies illustrating how systemic barriers, including lack of training, can hinder even well-intentioned teachers (Duong & Seepho, 2014).

In this case, the importance of teacher training in supporting learner autonomy is highlighted, as many teachers are not adequately equipped to promote autonomy in the classroom (Cotterall, 2017). Teachers who do not possess the necessary tools and strategies to implement autonomous learning may struggle to support their students effectively, even when the curriculum encourages such practices. Similarly, teachers' beliefs and previous experiences significantly shape their teaching practices (Intraboonsom et al., 2020). In addition, it has been confirmed that when teachers are provided with the tools and training to support autonomy, they are more likely to create classrooms that foster independent, self-motivated learners (Alrabai, 2021). Without proper training or exposure to autonomy-focused strategies, teachers may feel ill-equipped to foster independent learning in their students, potentially undermining the goals of the *Kurikulum Merdeka*.

The findings support Benson (2011) explanation that various approaches to learner

autonomy, including curriculum-based, teacher-based, and resource-based (in this context, textbooks) should be integrated to effectively support one another in practice. The curriculum that gives students more choice, teacher support, and well-crafted textbook as learning resources, can indeed be great support for students in developing their autonomy. While teachers can use various strategies to enhance students' autonomy in EFL learning, it appears likely that most effective results are achieved through a combination of approaches, rather than relying on a single method (Daflizar, 2023).

Overall, the teacher's views about learner autonomy may be influenced by several important factors. One possible aspect is the lack of special training or workshops about learner autonomy. The teacher mentioned never receiving guidance on this topic, which may have made it difficult to understand or apply autonomy-supportive teaching. Another possible factor is the teacher's perception of the students' low English proficiency. This belief could make the teacher feel that students need more guidance and support, so the teacher might not give students as many chances to be independent. In addition, the teacher's willingness to use technology and social media could be influenced by the growing use of digital tools in education. These aspects may have affected how the teacher answered the interview questions and how learner autonomy is practiced in the classroom.

In summary, based on the teacher's interview, it was found that the teacher views the 'Work in Progress' book positively, especially for its clear instructions and the flexibility it offers in task design. The teacher in this study sees that teachers have a significant role in fostering autonomy by adapting tasks and encouraging students to take responsibility for their learning. Nevertheless, the teacher perceives that there is a clear need for professional development to equip the teacher with strategies to further support learner autonomy in the classroom. Providing such training could improve the teacher's ability to foster more independent learning practices and better prepare students for self-directed learning in the future.

Students' Perspectives of Learner Autonomy Facilitation

Analysis of the students' interviews was conducted using a deductive thematic approach, guided by Nunan's (1997) Five Levels of Learner Autonomy Implementation framework. This process involved coding and categorizing student responses according to the framework's stages: Awareness, Involvement, Intervention, Creation, and Transcendence. In addition, analysis of the data revealed an additional theme related to students' partial autonomy and continued external dependence, which emerged from their descriptions of learning behaviors that did not fully align with any single level of the framework. In total, the analysis identified six major themes: (1) Awareness Level Facilitation, (2) Involvement Level Facilitation, (3) Intervention Level Facilitation, (4) Creation Level Facilitation, (5) Transcendence Level Facilitation, and (6) Partial Autonomy and External Dependence. These themes reflect the range of ways in which the textbook and classroom practices support or limit learner autonomy, as perceived by the students. The following sections discuss each theme in detail, supported by illustrative excerpts from the student interviews.

Firstly, in the Awareness Level facilitation theme, 8 out of 10 students mentioned that they could grasp the instructions of the book. This shows that more than half of the students have shown the Awareness stage of learner autonomy. For instance, Student 5 stated, *"The instructions [of the book] help me understand the materials I am learning"*. The other 2 students expressed they cannot comprehend the book's instruction by themselves. As an example, Student 1 expressed *"It depends, sometimes I understand, sometimes still confused"*, and S4 expressed *"Not really. I usually still asked my teacher about what the instruction means"*. This level of Awareness aligns with Holec (1981) assertion that learner autonomy begins with self-awareness of one's learning process.

However, it is important to note that while eight students (80%) mentioned they could understand the book's instruction that make them aware of the learning goals and materials they are using, their understanding are greatly helped by tools like Google

Translate, which indicates limited independence in understanding tasks if the students solely rely on their skills. As an example, student 3 remarked *"Yes, they are clear [the books instructions and explanation]. But to understand them I need help from a dictionary or Google Translate"*. Student 7 also emphasize *"So far, the book is always clear in giving us the instructions of our learning, as it also give examples and structured well. But, me and my friends use Google Translate if we do not understand the language in the book."*

This finding supports the view that digital tools, such as translation apps, can foster learner autonomy by allowing students to access resources and strategies that meet their individual needs (Benson, 2011). In this context, Google Translate helps students overcome language barriers in their learning, providing an easy way to access meanings and understand the material, which is especially useful when their English skills are still developing.

Next, in the Involvement level facilitation theme, all 10 students expressed appreciation for the book's flexibility in allowing them to select tasks topic or content based on their personal preferences and learning styles. Students consistently highlighted the engagement and satisfaction derived from making their own choices, emphasizing the role of flexibility in promoting autonomy. Responses such as Student 2's illustrate it, *"The book allows me to choose among a range of options, and I will answer based on my preferences"*. Similarly, Student 8 comment *"Yes, I can choose (tasks topic or content) according to what I want"*.

This finding aligns with Nunan (1997), who emphasizes that allowing students to make choices fosters engagement and personalization in learning, two key components of autonomy. According to Afrilia and Istikharoh (2023), a major difficulty in teaching English is getting students interested in the subject. The flexibility of the textbook, which lets students pick tasks and content that match their preferences, helps overcome this difficulty by improving engagement and encouraging independence. Autonomy involves more than just independent work, it also includes the ability to make decisions about how and why one learns (Benson, 2011). The

students' positive responses to the choice-making opportunities in the book demonstrate that offering students some level of control over their learning can significantly enhance their autonomy.

Furthermore, Intervention level facilitation theme reflects the creative freedom students experienced in adapting or personalizing tasks. All 10 students' responses highlighted the book's flexibility in adapting tasks to suit their individual needs. This aspect of the book encourages active engagement and critical thinking, fostering a sense of ownership in learning. For instance, student 6 mentioned *"I can adapt the tasks, especially when my friend can review my work and give comments,"*. Student 3 comment also highlight this flexibility *"Yes, the assignments challenge me to develop the tasks, just like the poster assignment"*. These responses suggest that the book encourages creative and personalized learning.

This is an important feature, as task adaptation is a critical aspect of self-regulation and autonomy (Nunan, 1997; Reinders, 2010). By adapting tasks, students actively engage in the learning process and take responsibility for tailoring their learning experiences. This reflects Holec's (1981) view that autonomy involves learners' ability to make decisions about their learning tasks, strategies, and goals.

Then the Creation level facilitation was the least frequently mentioned. When being asked whether the book have helped them create their own learning objectives they want to focus on or tasks for their practice on their own, only three students (30%) indicating they experienced it. As an example, student 4 mentioned *"I kind of created my own learning goal when working on the badminton athlete writing task"*. The students act of doing the task in their preferences and that they claimed they feel the experience of creating task on their own, enlighten a positive view that the students in this study show the readiness in making decision of their tasks. It also means that the students accepted the share responsibility of their teacher. Students' readiness and willingness to participate in decision-making about objectives, materials, and evaluation is crucial, and autonomy is most effectively fostered when students are actively involved

and share responsibility with teachers (Cotterall, 2000).

Most responses (70%), however, reflected a reliance on following the book's predefined instructions rather than self-directed planning.

While the textbook offers some opportunities for involvement and modification, it does not explicitly encourage students to set their own learning objectives or create their own tasks. Student 9 emphasize *"I could not recall having something like that [experiencing self-created learning goals and tasks]"*. Self-directed goal setting is an important aspect of learner autonomy (Benson, 2007), and the lack of opportunities for students to engage in this process highlights a gap in the textbook's facilitation of full autonomy.

At the Transcendence level facilitation theme, all 10 students reporting that the book effectively facilitates real-world relevance in learning. A comment from student 4 is the example, *"Yes, I can connect and use my past experiences to answer the assignments. I also use Google to look for more inspirations."* Student 6 answers also give same point *"Yes, to answer the tasks and works from the book, I relate them to my personal views, ask friends opinion, and use internet to complement the answer. I ever use TikTok too to see the examples done by others in making my assignments."*

The students use of outside learning resources besides from the book, especially the use of technological tools to explore more about the topic of their task and make the connection, implies that the students put effort in being a researcher and making action of connecting the learning with the real-world context. The ability to connect learning to real-world contexts enhances engagement and practical understanding, a key element of effective learner autonomy. In his "Nine steps to learner autonomy," Nunan (2003) outlines a continuum where learners move from dependence to autonomy. He explains the ways students progressively given more responsibility: from being made aware of goals, to setting their own goals, making choices about learning processes, and later in the end becoming "teachers and researchers" themselves. This then positions students as active agents in their learning. This supports the assertion that real-world application is crucial for fostering autonomy, as

it helps students see the relevance of what they are learning (Littlewood, 1999). It is further noted that when students can relate learning to their own lives, they are more likely to take responsibility for their learning, thus promoting independence and self-regulation (Benson, 2011).

The researcher also interviewed the students' overall opinion regarding their confidence in independently working on the book's activities without teacher assistance. The results show that there are four students expressed positively. However, the students who answered confident to use the book by themselves still need external tools to some extent, such as expressed by student 4, *"I can use the book without the teacher in my learning, as long as I use the internet"*.

From the interview, the students show interest in the concept of learner autonomy, as they show enthusiasm when the researcher explain about it. Therefore, to successfully help students in growing their autonomous learning abilities, they need to be provided with proper guidance and effort. According to Reinders (2018), successful autonomous learning for most students demands considerable effort to build the skills required to recognize learning needs, create a learning plan, track progress, and evaluate results, amongst many other skills. Programs that promote or facilitate autonomous learning without adequately preparing learners or providing support throughout the process are likely to fall short (Reinders, 2018).

The students' views on learner autonomy may be influenced by several factors. One possible aspect is their previous learning

experience. Many students in Indonesia are used to teacher-centered classrooms, which could make them less confident or less used to learning independently. This might explain why some students still need the teacher's help to understand instructions or complete tasks. Another possible factor is the way the textbook is used in class. Since the textbook gives clear instructions and structure, students might become used to following steps rather than making their own decisions. When students do get chances to choose topics or adapt tasks, they say they enjoy it, but these opportunities may not happen often enough to build strong autonomy skills. Also, students who say they can work independently often use the internet to assist them, which could mean they are still learning how to be fully autonomous. The use of technology and social media may help students learn, but it might also make them depend on outside sources instead of developing their own strategies. These possible aspects could have influenced how students talked about their learning experiences and their views on autonomy.

As a conclusion, the analysis from the students' perspectives reveals both the strengths and limitations of the book 'Work in Progress' in fostering learner autonomy. Overall, the book provides a solid foundation for autonomy, particularly in areas like helping the students with being aware of the learning goals and materials, offer choices, task flexibility, and real-world relevance. However, challenges remain in promoting self-directed task setting and complete independence. Future revisions of the textbook should focus on increasing opportunities for students to set their own goals and create personalized tasks.

Conclusion

This study examined how the 'Work in Progress' textbook facilitates learner autonomy, as perceived by an EFL teacher and the students, analyzed through Nunan's (1997) framework. The findings show that the book primarily supports autonomy at the Awareness, Involvement, Intervention, and Transcendence levels. It helps learners become aware of learning objectives and strategies, allows them to make choices, provides some flexibility for adapting tasks, and encourages

connections between classroom materials and students' real-life contexts.

From the teacher's perspective, the textbook is viewed as a supportive tool for promoting learner autonomy. The teacher shows willingness to reflect and adapt her teaching to better support learner autonomy. This study also highlights the need for teacher professional development to better prepare Indonesian EFL teachers in implementing autonomy-oriented teaching practices. Students also responded positively to the

book's prompts and content that facilitate the Awareness, Involvement, Intervention, and Transcendence level of autonomy but revealed limited experiences with independent goal-setting and task design, which are part of Creative level. Furthermore, many students still relied on external tools and teacher guidance, signaling a need for stronger support in developing self-directed learning skills.

The findings of this study have several important implications for EFL teaching and learning. First, while the 'Work in Progress' textbook provides a foundation for learner autonomy, it does not fully support higher levels such as Creation, where students are encouraged to set their own learning goals and design their own tasks. This suggests that textbook authors should consider adding more open-ended activities and opportunities for students to take greater responsibility for their

learning. For practice, schools and policymakers should prioritize teacher training on fostering learner autonomy and encourage teaching approaches that give students more opportunities for independent learning. Training should help teachers learn how to gradually give students more control of their learning. Schools and education authorities should also support teachers by providing resources and opportunities to share strategies for promoting autonomy. By addressing these areas, educational stakeholders can better align the textbook use and classroom practices with the aims of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* to foster learner independence.

Future studies could investigate the role of teacher adaptation and supplementation of textbook materials, examining how teachers modify or extend textbook tasks to better support autonomy and meet learners' needs.

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