

# Improving Student Learning Independence through Transfer of Learning Strategies

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**Abstract:** This study aims to solve learning problems related to efforts to improve student learning independence. Learning innovation developed is a transfer of learning model based on learning how to learn. The method used is classroom action research by applying a spiral cycle pattern starting from the action plan, observation and evaluation, reflection, and re-action. Learning outcomes are known, that the transfer of learning approach gives students the freedom to actualize and express in their learning activities as learning independence's product.

**Keywords:** transfer of learning, learning independence

## I. INTRODUCTION

Instilling student learning independence to understand the nature and meaning of comprehensive learning is not easy. Some learning methods that have been used in the classroom have not produced an ideal product to produce an understanding of the meaning and nature of learning and learning as a whole and correctly. The ability of students to understand lecture material is still temporary, pseudo, superficial, and peripherals has not touched the substance of learning objectives.

The results of the preliminary study showed that there were several problems in learning, namely: (1) students were unable and unwilling to learn on their own when they were not given assignments by the lecturer; (2) when the lecturers were unable to attend the class, students were unable to learn independently even though they were arranged semester lecture plan; (3) the learning process so far has not resulted in changes in attitudes, behavior and learning insights of students who are active, creative and independent because they are still bound by instructive learning patterns; (4) no change in learning behavior that encourages independence, independence and sustainability of learning as required in the learning climate in higher education; (5) students lack the ability and willingness to critically study learning materials and only carry out tasks as a form of mere fulfillment of obligations; (6) students do not understand the learning goals of each subject presented by lecturers n only learn if tests will be held; (7) students do not have a wealth of learning strategies that are relevant to addressing academic problems on campus or in their environment; (8) students are unable to learn well (effectively and efficiently) because they do not know how to learn good in college; (9) student learning models tend to be text book centered and do not have the ability to improvise and enrich learning strategies that can produce academic wealth; and (10) when getting homework students tend to cheat on their friends' work, so the results of his work also look uniform and do not reflect a creative and independent learning process [1].

The results of analysis can be concluded, that some learning problems result in students not having

learning independence include: (1) students lack clear information about how to learn the correct learning strategies in college; (2) students lack understanding of the philosophy and goals of learning in universities that have different characteristics from learning in schools; (3) students lack wide opportunities to improvise and enrichment in determining the learning model and strategy in accordance with the characteristics possessed; and (4) the learning model that has been applied has not provided opportunities for students to perform improvised learning optimally with a multi-directional interaction system for various learning sources so as not to produce creative and independent students.

To solve some of the above problems, a more innovative learning approach is needed and dare to make learning breakthroughs considered appropriate to overcome the problems at hand. Learning innovations that will be applied in this lecture activity are transfer of learning. Transfer of learning is a learning model based on efforts to make changes in understanding, meaning, and learning behavior of students in carrying out tasks, obligations and academic rights in the educational environment [2].

The learning process that will be implemented in this transfer of learning strategy is packaged in a single or transformative learning mission called "learning how to learn". In the perspective of transfer of learning, learning strategies that have been emphasizing more on the transfer of knowledge or knowledge transfer are deemed no longer suitable with the development of the learning paradigm [3].

Students are no longer as "empty bottles" that must be filled with information and knowledge by lecturers, but they are subjects of learning who have the ability and potential to develop creatively and independently. In fact, the development and potential of students can exceed the potential and capacity of lecturers. This means, the application of the transfer of learning model is the best solution and strategy to overcome various weaknesses and shortcomings of the learning process that has been applied in lectures.

## II. METHODS

This classroom action research was conducted at the State University of Malang. The research target

is students participating in the Learning Semester Course. Giving the transfer of learning action in this study is a cycle that lasts three times of learning. Each research cycle requires five learning meetings. The procedures adopted in the action include: (1) planning of actions; (2) implementation of actions; and (3) observation and reflection.

Action planning activities include: (1) identification of learning problems that arise in the lecture process; (2) describe problem solving strategies that will be carried out in learning activities; (3) formulate action plans to overcome learning problems; and (4) discuss action strategies that will implemented in class [4].

The implementation of the action includes the application of the transfer of learning model in accordance with the agreement and the scenario that has been determined jointly between lecturers and students. Observation and reflection are done by recording facts that appear in the learning process to be analyzed and used as material for improvement and formulation of subsequent actions. Data analysis is done by sorting and selecting data, presenting data, summarizing and verifying results [5].

### III. RESULTS

#### A. Increasing Learning Independence

The results of data analysis are known, that the transfer of learning strategy can improve the learning process in the classroom, especially in terms of increasing student learning independence on various aspects of learning. In general, the improvement of students' independence in learning is shown in the form of: (1) improving learning performance; (2) increasing learning motivation; (3) increasing self-confidence in doing learning reactions; and (4) improving self-learning skills.

In detail, an increase in student learning independence can be seen in the following matters, namely students start and carry out learning with enthusiasm and happiness, skilled in utilizing the environment as a learning media, like things that are considered new, have an interest in activities considered difficult for others, not easy to agree with other people's opinions before there is evidence, using the media according to need, likes to ask something that has not been mastered, likes to share the latest experiences with others, likes to try something that has never been experienced, likes to analyze the problem at hand, good at developing objects / objects in the form of imaginative learning media, having freedom with full responsibility.

In addition, students also have a high adaptability to the environment, able to explain complex things into simple, like to fantasize about objects that are not yet known, confident in interacting, clever to create a warmer atmosphere, not like repeating opinions with the same sentence and style as before, good at finding a way out of complicated problems, good at creating alternative solutions to various problems, good at solving several problems at the same time, not giving up easily on difficult situations, solving problems faster and more precisely, having the ability to speak logically, coherently, simple and easy to understand, has a high spontaneity in the creation of new things, and has a high power of expression.

#### B. Improvement of the Learning Process

The transfer of learning strategy in learning is proven to improve student learning performance especially in terms of increasing learning independence. The construction of the transfer of learning action model that is able to increase learning independence is as follows (Figure 1).

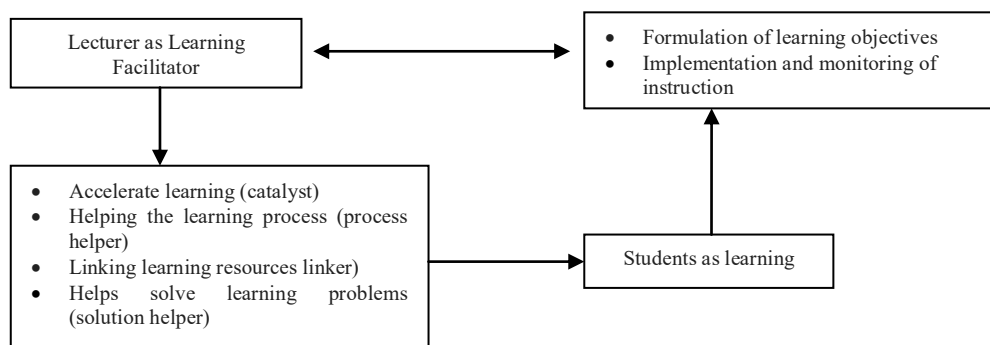


Figure 1  
The Construction of the Transfer of Learning Action Model

### IV. DISCUSSION

#### A. Transfer of Learning as a Technology for Engagement in Learning

Transfer of learning in this study is a learning process that is based on the philosophy of learning transfer and not just transfers of knowledge [2]. This learning model is designed to empower students to improve their learning independence based on the principle of learning "learning how to learn

effectively and efficiently" in accordance with the spirit of organizing Learning and Learning Courses as the development of the foundations and learning philosophy.

The paradigm of learning in higher education continues to develop along with the development of human thought in fulfilling various scientific needs. A variety of scientific needs will continue to be pursued through various research, development and learning.

The learning process that was previously interpreted as an effort to fill or provide knowledge by the teacher or lecturer to students or students, has now changed towards a transformative learning process that relies on efforts to change the mindset and action patterns of participants in a more dynamic, creative and independent way to life in society [6]. This kind of learning model is very interesting to develop, because in it occurs the process of transformation and academic transactions between students and lecturers which in turn will encourage lecturers and students to build learning agreements that will be implemented in the learning process activities [7]

According to Matthew Lipman independence is closely related to the power of imagination and the work of a strong brain [8]. With a creative attitude, everything that is considered complicated will become simple and become easier to understand. Creative attitudes will also enrich one's mindset, because creative people do not like to repeat something that is clear or past and will complete the work with a different method than others. Creative people also don't want to receive information just like that without proof first and they will continue to look for something that is considered new. Creative people will solve the problems faced by new ways, always pay attention to the factors in their environment, think parallel and be flexible in dealing with problems, are open and free to express [8] [9].

Thus, modern learning is not just an activity of transfer of knowledge (transfer of knowledge) to achieve intellectual capital, but rather a change process to build human capital as a future investment that is ready to face more competitive environmental conditions and conditions [10]. This kind of learning model must be built in a systematic and designed manner based on the principles of modern learning by adhering to the principle of students as learning subjects that have the potential to develop independently.

In this context, transformative learning with the transfer of learning strategy is one of the ways that is considered appropriate to build students more confident, independent and creative in carrying out their learning activities. This is understandable, because the transfer of learning model emphasizes more on the effort to cultivate understanding, awareness, appreciation and development of learning behaviors that are right in accordance with the academic climate in universities [17]. This is very important because learning is a process of change and must produce constructive changes for students. Learning is not an intervention process of behaviors and thoughts carried out by educators, but it is a process of awareness, generation and empowerment of teach participants in developing all the potential of themselves to make environmental changes as an effort to build self-awareness to become whatever is desired [11].

Learning in higher education certainly also has characteristics that are typical when compared to other learning patterns. Universities must be able to produce students who are creative in their work,

professional on duty, and scientific in their opinions [12]. Therefore, the learning system in universities must truly be able to produce intellectual products that are creative, independent, and innovative in their work and have a strong will to improve and renew their scientific abilities by awareness fully [18]. Learning with the transfer of learning model is the right way to build student learning independence, because it has characteristics of the empowerment process and transformative principles that lead to the creation of student learning independence.

## **B. Development of Learning Independence**

Independence is not purely innate behavior, but is the result of an educational process that involves the potential of the environment optimally by involving educator power in changing the potential of the environment as learning capital, and engineering the character of children as subjects of learning. In other words, independence will come to the surface after going through the process of education and social engineering (social engineering) by involving all elements of the environment related to the subject of learning and learning systems.

Compared to other learning substances, independence and creativity are still relatively new as a field of systematic academic activity and become an empirical research study. The study of new creativity and independence was revealed empirically in the context of learning after the Second World War through Guilford's (1950) historic speech as President of the „American Psychological Association“ (APA), which emphasized “the appalling neglect” of independence studies and reminded of the need for independence in the community through various learning and education systems. In addition, the launch of Sputnik (1957) was considered a threat to America to maintain its superiority in technology, which eventually encouraged America to inflame education based on the development of students' independence. Both of these events are considered by educators as a forerunner to the emergence of the independence dimension as an empirical study in various learning systems [9].

One of the critical problems in developing independence is the criterion. In general, experts agree that it is very difficult to formulate the right criteria in finding and developing children's independence. Yamamoto and Makiguchi, reminded that there is no way to find independent criteria that are not mixed with other human characteristics and behavior, especially intelligence, because independence is a multi-dimensional construct [13]. Moreover, the results of research that has been carried out prove that most teachers still like children who have a high IQ compared to children who have good independence. If such teachers are not immediately given an understanding, it will hamper the process of accelerating the development of student independence in each learning system. To create an atmosphere that supports students' independence, learners must be able to place themselves as facilitators or child learning assistants, in which they act as catalysts,

process helper, resource linker, and solution giver. In this way educators not only carry out the transfer of knowledge to students but are more emphasized in the process of transfer of learning. In addition, the teacher or lecturer must also learn to be open to new information, accept and respect the opinions of students, be flexible in thinking and behaving, respect the fantasies and imagination of students, give controlled freedom to students, provide opportunities for students to express and actualize through the media and learning facilities in their environment.

### **C. Transfer of Learning Strategy in Increasing Learning Independence**

Independence and intelligence act as vital points in the implementation of the transfer of learning model. Students must be given wide opportunities to improvise and explore learning strategies that have been agreed upon with the course lecturers. Therefore, the lecture process must be built on the basis of mutual trust and mutual respect for the achievements of each student. The selection of learning strategies and approaches chosen by the lecturer must also be carefully examined. Lecturers must be able to apply the principles of learning in accordance with the vision and mission of the department and the characteristics of students as agents of reform in the community. Learning strategies that are considered appropriate must also be a commitment and agreement of the department to be implemented in any learning activities or lectures.

Learning with the transfer of learning model must be a strong foundation for lecturers in implementing learning. The pillars of transformative education based on changes in mindset and patterns of student behavior must be formulated and implemented in learning as an effort to improve the quality of learning in universities. Mastuhu argues, that there are several pillars of education that must be considered in the learning model which according to the authors is very appropriate to build a transformative learning model with a transfer of learning approach, namely learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, learning to live together, learning how to learn, and learning throughout life [14].

In addition, a pillar of learning theory is also needed which is used as the basis for the development of transfer of learning, namely psychosocial theory, structural cognitive theory, independent learning theory, and Knowles' involvement theory. According to the psychosocial theory, individuals develop chronologically and are strongly influenced by the environment of society and the culture in which they live. In the learning process that takes place naturally, contradictory events often occur between success and failure, are interested and apathetic, diligent and lazy, consistent and inconsistent, capable and incapable, disciplined and undisciplined.

Based on the aforementioned thinking, learn and learning must begin to be dismantled and immediately redesigned to be truly in accordance with the nature of humans / learning participants as empowered people who have the potential to act and

develop independently. The right learning strategy to answer the above offer is a transfer of learning model, which is a learning model that emphasizes on student activities optimally with a focus of study in the form of enlightenment to students about how to learn correctly, effectively, efficiently, or with learning terms that are based on learning about how to learn and implement learning

According to Gagne, to create a learning pattern that is in accordance with the principles of learning, the learning process must start from giving stimulation to participants learning and ending with feedback about the performance achieved by students. So learning can not only be measured by the mastery of knowledge, but it is necessary to see the performance or overall appearance of the learning participants both with regard to their academic abilities and personality. It was further explained by Gagne that the types of abilities that learners must learn to gain e integrity of learning outcomes include intellectual skills, verbal information, cognitive strategies, motor skills, and attitudes [15.]

According to Erich Fromm, who was reappointed by Harefa in his book entitled *Being a Human Learner* said, that education has embraced many antagonism patterns of education "bank style", namely teachers teaching, students teaching; the teacher knows everything, students don't know anything; the teacher thinks, the student is thinking; the teacher talks, students listen; the teacher arranges, the student is organized; the teacher chooses and forces his choice, the student obeys and adjusts his will; the teacher acts, the student imagines how the action is in accordance with the teacher's actions; the teacher chooses what to teach, students adjust; The teacher acts as the subject of learning, while the student is the object [10]. The results of Zulkarnain and Khomariyah's study of learning contracts found that learning strategies applied by lecturers often did not provide clear understanding to students. Students are less skilled in learning and students only learn what lecturers give without doing learning enrichment [16]. Thus learning transfer of learning has urgency and relevance in improving learning performance because in the learning process educators act as facilitators of learning, while students as subjects of learning [3]. The learning facilitator has a role as a companion and pastor for student learning so that each participant has the power to develop optimally with the convenience of communicating and socializing directly with electronic media based on the characteristics of current learning [19].

## **V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **A. Conclusion**

In general, learning outcomes using the transfer of learning approach provide students with freedom to express and arouse learning understanding that is more entrenched in accordance with the style and characteristics of student learning. Transfer of learning is able to provide opportunities for students to actualize their own potential and encourage

students to act creatively, independently and not depend on the standard principles of the supervising lecturer who is not academically suited to the character of students.

In connection with the understanding of the substance of lectures, the learning model with the principle of transfer learning is able to give a double contribution to the achievement of learning outcomes, namely an understanding of lecture materials is much more improved and at the same time understanding learning strategies that are more effective and efficient in accordance with the character of the students concerned. Student learning independence is more so that the learning performance can produce constructive changes, both for lecturers and students.

## B. Recommendation

To improve the achievement of effective and efficient learning, a learning model of transfer of learning is required by applying tests on various subjects at the department level. This is intended to obtain a thorough understanding of the learning model of transfer of learning by students and lecturers in implementing learning strategies in accordance with the characteristics of their respective subjects. The role of lecturers and students must be clearly understood so that each has responsibilities and obligations that must be carried out in learning activities. All issues that arise from each lecturer and student must be recorded and then discussions are held in an academic forum to discuss issues and find solutions to obtain model improvements.

This learning model needs to be done repeatedly in various subjects by continuing to improvise and refine the steps in accordance with what happens in the field and learning field. Improving the learning model is done by learning methods that are free from the principles of indoctrination that do not value student achievement and independence. One of the principles that must be understood by the lecturer as a learning facilitator is the creation of students' understanding of the concepts and learning strategies that are correct and not memorizing the descriptions of lecture materials.

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