

# Learner Autonomy as Strategy to Enhance the Quality of Learner

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**Abstract:** The aim of this research is to measure the effectiveness of learner autonomy as a strategy to enhance the quality of learner. In designing a dynamic and quality learning, it is necessary to design an appropriate strategy to achieve the goals. For that reason, the class environment should be designed to bring autonomy learning for learners. The autonomy learning itself has a close relationship with the ability of learners in expressing, becoming more creative, having self-esteem, understand conceptual learning and love to be challenged. The method used in this research is the descriptive method, with a sample of 20 students from the German Language education program as the analyst unit in 4th-semester batch 2018/2019, which had been selected randomly. The data had been collected through questionnaires which consist of five aspects namely; motivation, planning, perform, surprise and evaluation. The result of the research indicates that there is a significant correlation between Learner Autonomy and the quality of learner. It means that the students, (1) are more motivated to study; (2) actively involved in student learning; (3) decision-making opportunities, (4) encouraging reflection. Based on the results, it can be concluded, that student's capacity to learn for themselves is encouraged and they are encouraged to develop their own learning strategy.

**Keywords:** *learner autonomy, quality of learner*

## INTRODUCTION

Today many teachers tend to prioritize learning outcomes rather than learning processes so that learners more often pursue high grades or scores in various ways and ignore the process of how that grades or scores are obtained (Tomasouw, 2018: 42). This is what causes the quality of learners to decline. While Karademir (2019:1) said that, the learning process, defined as behavior change, does not only involve learning; the individual is also expected to take an active role in this process and an academic risk in uncertain situations According to Sanjaya, (2008: 11), to improve the quality of learners, of course, teaching strategies should be well-packed by the instructor. Therefore it is necessary to design dynamic and qualified learning through selecting the right learning strategies to achieve the goals. In other words, Najeeb , (2013) quoted in Salimi and Ansari (2015: 1107) explained that autonomous learners realize their learning program goals, take the responsibility for their learning, take part in the process of activity planning and monitor and evaluate its effectiveness.

In line with Littlewood; (1999) cited in Yurdakul, (2016:1), explains that autonomous learning is involving student's capacity to use their learning independently of teachers and the capacity to communicate autonomously. Therefore it needs a strategy that can help students understand learning well. So, this is important because learning strategy is the plan and way of teaching that the teacher does by setting the main steps of teaching in accordance with the teaching objectives to be achieved in the curriculum. Micael, and Jurgen et.al. (2016: 132) said that learning strategies include approaches, models, methods and learning techniques that are specifically designed to serve student's needs regarding learning and how to think better. Smasal, (2010: 171), described teaching-learning strategies are one way of encouraging student

independence. Learning strategies are tools that can be used to acquire knowledge as well as control and develop their receptive and productive language-processing skills. They can also help to solve problems with learning and using a foreign language.

The use of learning strategies can have a significant influence on students' learning efficiency and output. However, it is important that students have a wide range of repertoire of learning strategies, but also that they apply them proficiently and in the appropriate situation (Smasal, 2010: 171). There are some strategies can be used to influence the effectiveness of the learning. One of which is used to improve student independence expressed by White (1995: 207), He underlines that strategies learners use strategies in self-instruction contexts and the degree of autonomy they exercise to develop foreign language skills without the help of a teacher or learning group has received little attention.

Whereas Hamdani (2010: 19) explained that, effective learning strategies, of course, will help teachers have an idea of how to help students in their learning activities. This is in line with what was conveyed by Prasetyo, (2017: 1) that a teacher must know and master various appropriate learning strategies so that students can learn effectively and efficiently, as well as achieving the expected goals. Nunan (1999: 193) underlines the effective language learner as one who can make effective choices in terms of learning tasks and strategies. Thus, current approaches in language teaching have focused on the ways of learning language better and more effectively. For this reason, one of the basic roles of the teacher is to teach learners explicitly the underlying strategies behind the tasks. "Many learners are content to leave the teacher to be completed, but will still need to develop the ability to use a wide range of strategies and to choose strategies that are appropriate for the task, if they are to take full responsibility for their learning "(Reinders, 2010) and Egel (2008: 2026) said that focus of language instruction from teacher-centered to the learner centered has given learners the responsibility of their own language.

Scarcella & Oxford (1992:63) cited in Oxford (2003:1) defined the learning strategy as the specific actions, behaviors, steps, or techniques such as seeking out conversation partners or giving oneself encouragement to handle a difficult language task -- used by students to enhance their own learning. Further explained that when the learner purposely chooses strategies to adjust the learning style and the L2 task at hand, these strategies become a useful toolkit for active, conscious, and purposeful self-regulation of learning

The relationship between strategy use and autonomy is complex and not direct, they both aim to help learners become better learners. Cohen (1998), cited in Benson (2006: 23); Richards, 2014:1 ) explains well the role of strategy training in the development of autonomy, explicitly teaching students. The way how to apply language learning and language use strategies can enhance student's efforts in reaching language program goals, encourages them to find their own pathways to success, and thus it promotes learner autonomy and self-direction". Consequently, it can be considered that the learners who use a wide range of learning strategies for appropriate tasks have a high tendency to autonomous learning. But, Little (1995:1) argues that learning strategy and learner training can play an important supporting role in the development of learner autonomy.

According to Holec, (1981:3); Cem. (2010:90), autonomy is "the ability to take charge of one's own learning". Benson (2001:48) describes autonomy "as the capacity to take control of one's learning as one that establishes a space in which differences of emphasis can co-exist". He also argues that it is important to consider three levels of control exercised by the learner; learning management, cognitive process and learning content (Tassinari, 2012:11). In order to

be more autonomous, learners are requested to develop their capacity to plan learning, monitor learning progress, and evaluate learning outcomes.

Learner autonomy is very effectively used in new language learning. For example, It is much more useful to learn a language by being exposed to it in comparison to learning patterns of different tenses. According to Vygotskian psychology, which supports the idea of autonomous learning, the development of students learning skills is never entirely separable from the content of their learning, seeing as learning a new language is quite different from learning any other subject. It is important to underline that the students can discover the language for themselves, with only a little guidance from their teacher so that they can fully understand it.

Benson (2008:15), From the teachers' perspective, autonomy tends to imply the learner taking control of arrangements whose underlying legitimacy is unquestioned. From the learners' perspective autonomy is primarily concerned with learning, Benson (2001:17) additionally that Autonomous learning makes learning more personal and focused and, consequently, is said to achieve better learning outcomes since learning is based on learners' needs and preferences. There are five principles for achieving autonomous learning: (1). Active involvement in student learning. (2). Providing options and resources. (3). Offering choices and decision-making opportunities. (4). Supporting learners. (5). Encouraging reflection.

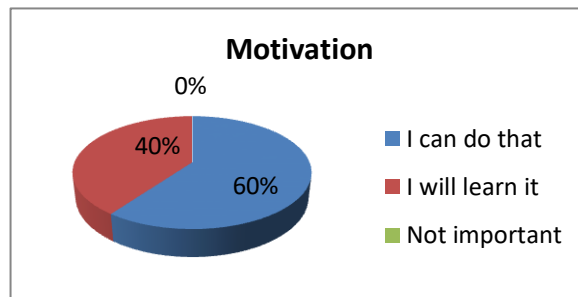
**METHODOLOGY**

This research used a quantitative descriptive method. The research objectives are to assess students' perspectives on learner autonomy, the student learning guidelines for importance, The population in this research was students of the German Language Study Program at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education at Pattimura University. While the sample of the research involved 20 students from the fourth semester academic year 2018/2019. Samples were selected using random sampling techniques. The study used a questionnaire survey, which is adapted by Tassinari, (2010: 132-133) which consists of five aspects, namely, motivation, planning, performance, evaluation and performance with 22 items. Each statement consists of three alternative answers namely I can do that, I will learn it and not important The time schedule of implementation is March to April 2019. Data were then analyzed using descriptive statistics to see the students' tendency towards the autonomous learner learning strategy.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This research aims to look at the students' perspective on autonomous literary learning strategies. Data collected from students varied for each aspect assessed

As explained bevor, there are 5 important aspects that used as the basis to arrange the instruments that is: motivation, planning, performance, supervision, and evaluation.



**Figure 1.** Motivation Aspect

The data above shows that the majority of students, namely 60%, consider that the motivational aspects greatly contribute to the autonomy learner. This is related to the introverted desire to learn from students and they always do, for example, always asking if there are obstacles encountered in language learning. While 40% said they were still learning to be motivated. It means that the students That means that students still need time for how they enhance their motivation so that learning outcomes are better.

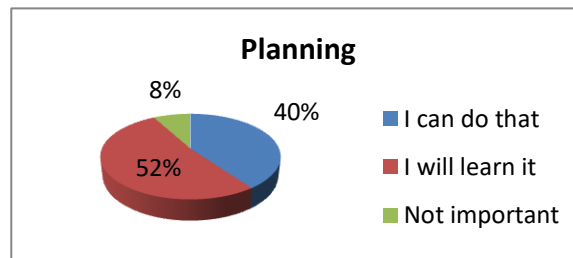


Figure 2. Planning Aspect

In planning an effective learning course, it needs a good learning strategy, therefore only 52% of students need to learn to manage learning strategies that enable them to obtain maximum learning outcomes. While 40% will try to do a strategic learning plan, and 8% of students feel the learning plan is not important.

Based on the above data it can be concluded that planning in learning strategies is very important. Where every student can design their learning strategies

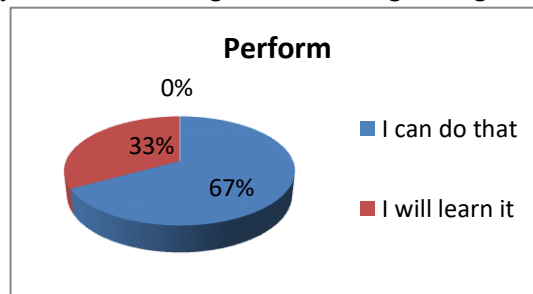


Figure 3. Perform Aspect

The date above shows that 67% of students were able to perform tasks assigned independently, even though the learning activities are difficult for them, they can handle them. On the other hand, 33% of the students have not been able to carry out the tasks given independently, they still need assistance. It means that most students can study independently.

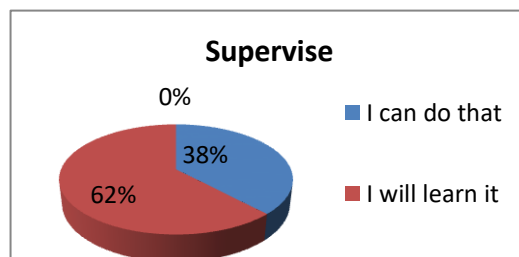
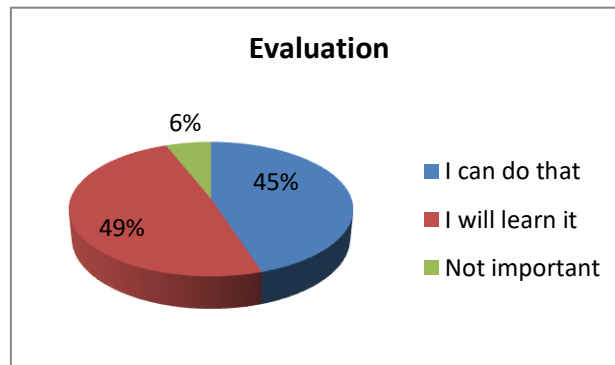


Figure 4. Supervise Aspect

The data above illustrates that 38% of students were able to know their personality through learning styles and learning strategies. This is very good because in this way they can control themselves both learning and personal. While the remaining 62% said I will learn that. That means that most students were still hesitant to determine which learning strategy is most suitable and their independence.



**Figure 5.** Evaluation Aspect

In evaluating learning independence regarding the ability to master a foreign language, it turns out that 49% of students tend to learn about their learning strategies. While 45% were able to recognize and evaluate their way of learning so that the quality of their learning is proofed

## DISCUSSION

Based on the research data presented above, it turns out that students in the German education study program have not been able to use the right learning strategies to improve the quality of their independent learning. Only two aspects that are motivation and performance that they use as a way to improve the quality of their learning. Whereas more than that to improve their independent learning, there needs to be assistance to direct them in using autonomous learning strategies.

Thus it can be said that students still need an explanation, they have not been able to be independent. Therefore as a teacher, there needs to be an initial observation about the weakness of the learning strategies used. Because learning strategies are tools to achieve goals, students need to be given responsibility in doing something. They must be committed to doing their tasks and involved in the decision-making process.

The students showed the flexibility of learning time because they had to make sure that they had already finished their responsibilities before starting their studies. This showed that the students had a high commitment to complete a task. Unfortunately, it seemed that they put their learning responsibilities after their other responsibilities. Yet, for the successful non-traditional students morning became their most preferred time for learning. The successful on traditional students stated that they can learn in any place. To balance their professional or familial responsibilities with their academic responsibilities, they must make themselves able to learn anywhere in limited time.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study it can be concluded that the autonomy Lerner is a learning strategy that can help improve the quality of learners. But in this study of five aspects that were used as indicators only two aspects which according to students they had been carried out properly. This will be effective if the instructor understands his role as a teacher by paying attention to his functions, such as (1) The teacher becomes less of an instructor and more of a facilitator. (2). Students' capacity to learn for themselves is encouraged. (3). Students are encouraged to develop their learning strategies.

The results of this study are to be very important because if students are more familiar with their learning strategies, they have the right to choose which is best for them. Autonomy Lerner will provide many benefits such as building confidence and feeling responsible for what will be done.

For many teachers, student autonomy is an important aspect of their teaching, which they try to manifest in a number of different ways – for example, through careful analysis of their learners' needs, through introducing and modeling strategies for independent learning, through consultation with students to help learners plan for their own learning and through the use of a self-access centre where a variety of independent learning resources are available.

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