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## **Promoting Autonomous Learning Using Self-Discovery Technique with Self-Prepared Worksheets in Extensive Reading Class**

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## Promoting Autonomous Learning Using Self-Discovery Technique with Self-Prepared Worksheets in Extensive Reading Class

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### Abstract

This research is an action research that investigates the implementation of self-discovery autonomous learning using self-discovery technique with self-prepared worksheet in extensive reading class. The study was conducted in the contexts of a classroom teaching and learning situation. Self-discovery learning is believed to be effective in helping the students to improve their reading skills because this technique forces student to be autonomous learner. The study used action research model by Kemmis and Taggart. However, the researcher does not use cyclic treatment in this study, instead its implemented in one big cycle in one semester. As it is needed to be implemented in the whole semester to get the real result. The autonomous learning using self-discovery technique with self-prepared worksheet in extensive reading class was able to improve the students' achievement in extensive reading, it is indicated in the post test scores compared to the pre-test score. Nevertheless, there are positives and negative effects found during the acting and observing phase. The positive effects are the students become more active in class, the students can explore the text freely as they like, thus, lead to the students' better communication. Whereas, the class becomes noisy since the students have to discuss in their group and the lecturer had more burdens in finding, selecting, choosing and providing the text for the class activities.

**Keywords:** autonomous learning, self-prepared worksheet, extensive reading

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### Introduction

The advancement of information technology accelerates the progression of communication strategies. Learning foreign languages becomes necessary. English, with the most speakers in the world is one of the preferred learning options chosen by most language learners in non-native English countries. The rapid progress of technology; the rapid changes in demography, economy and technology, is captured by acquiring English. This in fact has created the changes in how people in those countries see the role of English. People in Asian countries like Indonesia, begin to consider the importance of English as a mean to survive among other countries in the world; to understand and be understood by others. This current issue influences the decision making in official policies related to learning-teaching curriculum applied in schools. Learning English in educational institutions should be seen as learning language for communication. It assumes that the assessment system in learning teaching process fosters learner-centeredness, authenticity, and personal involvement (Richard, J. C. & Renandya, W. A., 2002). This paradigm shift in education is such an inescapable matter since education should be responsive to the challenges of globalization. Therefore, the students need to develop their own learning strategies so they have to be encouraged to become autonomous learners in language learning.

The terms autonomous learner, as stated by (Holec, 1981, p. 1), defines autonomy as "the ability to take charge of one's own learning" which is considered by some as "more effective than other approaching to learning". Meanwhile, (Kohonen, 1992) cited in (Benson, 2001, p. 14) argues that autonomy includes the notion of interdependence, i.e. learners are able to cooperate with others and solve conflicts constructively. (Holec, 1981) as cited by (Benson, 2001, p. 48) describes autonomy as "the ability to take charge of one's own learning." autonomous learner is based on the idea that students should involve in decision making process regarding

their own language competence. Autonomy can be seen as part of an individual process where the teacher is simply as the facilitator. Thus, in this context, this approach involves raising students' awareness as language learners as well as knowing their goals and their work inside and outside the classroom. To such an extent (Benson, 2001, p. 2) states that when learners succeed in developing autonomy, they not only become better language learners but they also develop into more responsible and critical members of the communities in which they live. For that reason autonomy needs to be practiced in language learning.

Engaging student in autonomous learning, self-investment is important. It means that giving the student more freedom in choosing their area of interest and their activity. (Tomlinson, 1998, p. 11) saying that "providing students with choices of focus and activity, giving them topic control, and giving them responsibility for making decisions about which materials to use and how to use them are working with great success in high school, in which each group in large class was given responsibility for one reading lesson per semester". It is an activity which involves learners in investigating energy and attention in order to discover something about the language for themselves facilitate self-discovery learning. Therefore, the students are given freedom to make their own worksheet. Teachers used worksheet as a means of the learning guidance. Worksheets are used to help the students to master the subject-matter. (Hornby, 1995, p. 1473) defines worksheet as "paper on which work that has been done or is in progress is recorded. In this case the worksheet is a sheet containing a set of instruction or questions which guide the students to understand the content of a certain reading materials (or any other texts and books). The questions and instruction in worksheet must help the students to study the important part of the materials. The questions are as guidelines for the students. It is a means which direct the students in learning the materials by themselves without depending merely on the teacher's explanation.

The English Education Study Program of Sarjanawiyata Tamansiswa University is a formal education institution which produces English teacher candidates; thus it deals with adult language learners. Therefore, it becomes the right setting to promote autonomous learning. One of the courses in the English Education Study Program that best suited to promote autonomous learning is extensive reading class. Based on the informal interview with the students of the English Language Education Study Program attending extensive reading class last semester, the researcher found that the teacher of that course had not applied autonomous learning in her class. Based on the above reasoning, the researcher decides to take the matter into a study. This study focuses only on the promoting autonomous learning in the Extensive Reading class using self-discovery technique with self-prepared worksheet, how is the autonomous learning using self-discovery technique with self-prepared worksheet implemented in extensive reading class and what are the effects of the implementation of autonomous learning using self-discovery technique with self-prepared worksheet in extensive reading class. The students are invited to make their own worksheet after they receive the extensive reading material topics or titles from the lecturer. They should create the most comprehensive worksheet to help themselves understand the best on the reading material given.

## **Method**

### **A. Research Design**

This research belongs to action research. In this research, the researcher tries to solve some problems that are found in the field using mix methods. This research is an action research that investigates the implementation of self-discovery autonomous learning using self-discovery technique with self-prepared worksheet in extensive reading class. The study was conducted in the contexts of a classroom teaching and learning situation. Self - discovery learning is believed to be effective in helping the students to improve their reading skills because this technique forces student to be autonomous learner. The study used action research model by (Kemmis, S. & McTaggart, R., 1988) However, the researcher chose one big cycle implemented in one semester. Since, it is needed to be implemented in the whole semester to see the real result. The lecturer herself also supports the decision and even let the researchers to prepare the whole course for the semester. Although this study is not done in cyclic treatment but the researcher still followed the steps that (Kemmis, S. & McTaggart, R., 1988) suggested, they are identifying problems, planning, acting, observing, reflecting and revising plan.

### **B. Subject of the Study**

The subjects of the study were 17 students enrolled at the extensive reading class in English Education Department, Universitas Sarjanawiyata Tamansiswa.

#### **D. Instrument of the Research**

There were some instruments used in this research. The first instrument was observation sheet. She prepared observation sheet to observe the lecturer's and students' activities. The second instrument was questionnaire sheet. The questionnaire sheets were used to get the data from the students and lecturer. The data were opinions about students' autonomous learning in extensive reading.

The third instrument was test. The test was used to gather scores on the students' reading performance. The tests were administered before the implementation of self-discovery technique with self-prepared worksheet and after the implementation. The results of the tests were scores to see if there is any improvement on the students' reading skills after using the self-discovery technique with self-prepared worksheet in Extensive Reading class.

The fourth instrument was interview. The researcher conducted the interview to gather information from the students, the teachers and other components to support the data from observations, test, and questionnaires. The interview was to gather data that have not been covered in the questionnaire.

#### **E. Data Collection Technique**

The data of the research were quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative data was obtained by test. The quantitative data were scores on the test to measure the improvements in reading skills in extensive reading class. The qualitative data is obtained by observing the English learning process and interviewing the lecturer and the students. The researcher observes the problem and the process related to the learning process in teaching reading and writes down in field notes. The interview and questionnaire were also used to obtain qualitative data about the problems related to the English teaching learning process in the class and the quality of the students' reading skill.

#### **F. Data Analysis Technique**

In this study, the researcher collected data using research instruments and then analyzed them using the qualitative and quantitative descriptive analysis. The first step was collecting all the data such as interviews transcripts, questionnaire, test score, and observation sheets. Then, the second step was selecting, limiting, and summarizing the data. The next step was data display. The data were reduced and organized. The data display was in the form of the test score, observation notes and interview transcripts. The researcher obtained and compared the quantitative data that is pre-test score and the post test score to see if there is an improvement in the students' reading skills in extensive reading class. The researcher support the analysis descriptively by elaborating the qualitative data such as the interview transcript, observation sheets/field notes, and questionnaire. The last step was making conclusion. All the data and the conclusion were presented in table and percentages.

### **Results and Discussion**

#### **1. Students' Pre-test and Post Test Scores.**

The implementation of the research took the whole semester. The implementation is preceded by identifying problem, planning, acting and observing, and reflecting. The outcomes of autonomous learning in extensive reading class can be seen in the pre-test and post-test scores' result. This class has 22 students. However, some of them only come on the first meeting and skip the meeting until the end of the semester. The researcher exclude those students and keeps the other as the data of the research.

After the whole semester is done, there are still 17 students in the class. The data for this study are taken from their pre-test score and final score. To measure the effect of using autonomous learning in extensive reading, the researcher compared the pre-test score and the post test score and calculates the mean. The first is the mean of the pre-test and the second is the mean of post-test. Both means will be compared to see if there is increment or not. To ease the calculation of means, both scores were compiled into one table as follows:

Table 4.4: Score Comparison

Participant	Pre Test Score	Post Test Score
1	70	82.79
2	60	50.54
3	70	87.75
4	60	47.58
5	75	86.00
6	75	90.92
7	80	89.75
8	70	86.92
9	70	88.00
10	60	78.33
11	70	85.58
12	75	82.08
13	70	81.00
14	70	76.29
15	70	60.08
16	60	59.96
17	60	55.08
Total	<b>1165</b>	<b>1288.65</b>
Mean	<b>68.53</b>	<b>75.80</b>

From the table, it can be seen that the total score for pre-test was 1165 and the total score of post-test is 1288.65. There is an improvement in the total score of the students' achievement. The amount of increment is as much  $1288.65 - 1165 = 123.65$  points. The mean calculation is as follows:

$$\text{The mean of the students' pre-test score} = \frac{\text{Total Score}}{\text{Students}} = \frac{1165}{17} = 68.53$$

$$\text{The mean of the students' post test score} = \frac{\text{Total Score}}{\text{Students}} = \frac{1288.65}{17} = 75.80$$

Based on the calculation, the mean for pre-test was 68.53 while for the post test was 75.80. It means that the post-test has better result than the pre-test. The mean score also indicates that the students' scores is increasing.

## 2. The Effects of Autonomous in Extensive Reading

### a. The Positive Point of the Autonomous Learning in Extensive Reading Class

#### 1). *Students Become More Active*

The use of self-prepared worksheet was the first time to be done in the extensive reading class. Based on the researcher's observation, the class becomes more active. The use autonomous learning technique gives more freedom for the students to be more creative and active in their effort to study and to get higher grade. The students become active because they have to choose the title of text that they like most. It brings consequence such as responsibility to make the best worksheet and report based on their personal efforts. Furthermore, the lecturer gives freedom for the students to use any available resources to help them finish the task. The resources can be internet, library, book store, and many others.

(Imane, 2015, p. 12) assert students are more motivated to engage in learning if they do their own choice. They are more likely to believe they are proficient if they feel they are in control of the actions required for. During the class activity, the students become active because they have to discuss the worksheet and their work with other students and then present it in front of the class. It forces them to do the best and use any help like bringing dictionary to the classroom, using their smart phone to access internet, laptop and many others. The students are also active at home because the lecturer gives some tasks to be done at home as homework. At home, the students have more freedom to do the worksheet because they have plenty of time to do the task. At home, there are more sources available like internet 24 hours a day and seven days a week. They can also ask their friends or other people that they consider have knowledge about the task. In this respect, (Nunan, David, 2013, p. 53) states that: "Learner autonomy is not a matter of handing over rights and powers to learners in a unilateral way. Nor does it

involve devaluing the teacher. Rather, it is a matter of educating learners so that they can gradually assume greater responsibility for their own learning”.

## **2). Students Explore the Text Freely**

With autonomous learning technique using self-prepared worksheet, the students have more freedom to explore the text more freely. Before applying the autonomous learning in extensive class, the students do not have too much freedom in exploring the text. They tend to stay passive as they do not need to explore deeper on the text because the lecturer has given the guidance to understand the text and to answer the questions. By applying autonomous learning using self-prepared worksheet the students were pushed to find many information so they can write anything they like and dig deeper on the text. There is no limitation given in their works. They can write as long as it is related to the text. Thus, they expressed their ideas and thought freely as long they have reasonable reasons on the ideas and thought they expressed. As stated by (Nunan, 1997) cited in (Imane, 2015, p. 27) the five levels of autonomy in the learner action: awareness, involvement, intervention, creation and transcendence. In the context of classroom activity, it involves learners' ability to take responsibility for their own learning to apply active strategies (autonomy as a learner).

By giving the student independence in the extensive reading class, there are more things uncovered by their efforts, for example; the students eager to dig deeper to find other relevant information related with the text like who publish the short story, novel or the text, what year the text is published, book editions, who translate the novel or short story, is the story real or just fictions by finding facts from the internet and many more. The students also able to make reflection about the story they read and connect it with their own life. It is important to find valuable things that can be adapted into the students' life. Such acts really showed that the students possessed their autonomy as a good language learner. The most successful self-access projects tend to be those that find effective and flexible ways of supporting learners. (Dam, L. & Thanasoulas, D., 1993) cited in (Heriyawati, 2015).

## **3). The Students can Develop Better Communication with Other Students**

(Littlewood, 1997) stated that three dimensions of autonomy that involve first, an ability to operate independently with the language and use it to communicate personal meanings in real, unpredictable situations,(autonomy as a communicator). By applying autonomous learning the students can develop better communication with other students. As the researcher's observed, not all students in the class know each other very well. Some of them come from different admissions year or semester while by making self-prepared worksheet the students will have initiative to work together with his/her friends to finish the task. Furthermore, the group discussion also forced the students to interact to the others and build good communication. The presentation of the worksheet in front of the class has additional advantage that is to train their skill in speaking and conveying facts with good reasoning. They will also have bravery to talk in front of the classroom. The benefit of implementing autonomous learner according to (Tanaka, 2017) is that “perceived autonomy had a positive impact on motivation, leading to higher intrinsic motivation and identified regulation, and lower a motivation, introjected regulation, and external regulation”.

### **b. The Drawbacks of the Autonomous Learning in Extensive Reading Class**

Though the result of the implement showed positive results, nonetheless, there are drawbacks of the use of autonomous learning in extensive reading class. The most visible drawbacks are the class become noisy. Lead to the use of self-prepared worksheet have made the class becomes noisy since the students have to engage with group discussion. They tend to talk loud to the other member of the group especially whenever they thought the story or the text was interested. Furthermore, there are also some students that choose to chat rather than tried to finish their task. Another drawback is that the lecturer has more burdens in finding, selecting, choosing and providing the text for the class activities. It is really a time consuming task for lecturer. However, this drawback can be reduced if the lecturer applied by letting the students looked for their own text. Or else the lecturer only gives the list of the title only.

## Conclusion

The autonomous learning using self-discovery technique with self-prepared worksheet implemented in extensive reading class is successful. The completion of autonomous learning took the whole semester preceded with pre-test in the first meeting and post-test in the last meeting. The extensive reading class was followed by 17 students and all of them are engaged fully in all activities prepared by the researcher and the lecturer. The autonomous learning using self-discovery technique with self-prepared worksheet in extensive reading class is effective in improving students' achievement in extensive reading, it is indicated in the improvement shown in the post test scores by 7.27 point. Thus, it indicates that the students' scores in extensive reading class is increasing. Furthermore, as for the effects there are positives and negative effects found during the acting and observing phase. The positive effects are the students become more active in class, the students can explore the text freely as they like, and the student can develop better communication with their friends. However, there is also drawbacks found, they are: the class becomes noisy since the students have discussion in their group and the lecturer has more burdens in finding, selecting, choosing and providing the text for the class activities.

## Recommendations

Lecturer/Teachers need interesting teaching technique such as autonomous learning using self-prepared worksheet. The same technique can be applied in other subjects. As the university students, the best way to teach them is by giving them more freedom with some responsibilities. Lecturer do not need to be the center of the learning anymore, they can merely become the facilitator in the learning process.

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