

# Enhancing Learner Autonomy Through Collaborative Learning in Distance Classroom of Morphology Class

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## ABSTRACT

*Learner autonomy concept appears crucially in amid of pandemic which makes student and teacher do a distance classroom. Students should aware of their learning capability in order to avoid learning loss. Therefore, this research aim to seek how well students apply learner autonomy concept in collaborative learning. Data were taken from morphology class evaluation among 42 English Literature students of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung which was collected from the google form record which later will be a document. The activities of teaching and learning was held from 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021 to 25<sup>th</sup> December 2021 in a distance learning via google meet. There were 42 students involved. The researcher applied document analysis technique in analyzing the student responses toward the learning activity. There were some characteristics that students applied in their learner autonomy and collaborative learning such as independence, confidence, responsibility, creativity and awareness. There were 17 data independence, 1 datum classified as confidence aspect, 15 data about responsibility, 3 data of creativity characteristic, 2 data regarding motivation and 4 data related with awareness. The student in this Morphology class had succeeded in applying the concept of learner autonomy through collaborative learning. They were able to collaborate with peers in group work even though in a distance learning. The success of their learning could be seen from the existence of the autonomy aspects.*

**Keywords:** learning autonomy; collaborative learning; distance language classroom

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Learner autonomy has been a topic discussion in language learning since 1980s. This topic has been increasing recently in amid of distance learning. As Holec stated in Littlewood (1999) that students should be responsible for their own learning in order to develop their ability. Taking responsibility is including several processes such as choosing learning method, deciding on learning objectives and evaluating progress. Therefore, this concept will associate with self-fulfillment or independence learner. In pursuing a success of learner autonomy, it needs the learners' awareness and recognition toward themselves. Learner autonomy concept will reflect the learner-centered approach and develop the exercise responsibility for their learning (Hurd & Lewis, 2008). The autonomy term points to the learner capability to define the learning content,

determine the learning objective, measure the progress, evaluate the whole learning process and take responsibility of their own learning (Lengkanawati, 2017).

Moreover, the idea of learner autonomy appears crucially in amid of pandemic situation which makes student and teacher do the distance teaching and learning. Generally, the learning and teaching method used the teacher-centered, where teacher delivers all of the information and lessons. Vice versa, in this pandemic era the method has changed and it becomes student-centered because of the learning distance, students should aware about their learning capability in order to avoid the learning lost. This situation is in the same line as Indonesia Curriculum 2013 which views the education as the freedom and opportunity to the learner for managing their learning. As in line with Respati (2019), by applying the concept of learner autonomy, it is able to construct the learner's character such as self-awareness, creativity, self-reflection, and the ability to think critically. Moreover, it will give students the additional value to develop leadership, creativity and innovation (Wiraningsih & Santosa, 2020).

Furthermore, in applying the concept of learning autonomy especially in language skills scope is necessary. The language learner needs to put a lot of effort to make the self-learning activity to increase and improve their language skills, because the language learning in a classroom is not enough to increase the language skills. Therefore, student needs to be aware of their learning activity outside the class without teacher's controlling. In order to make the self-learning goes well, the students need to know first about their language necessity. The more important point that students are competent in selecting the resources based on those language learning needs. The language needs refer to the targeted language practice, such as grammar, speaking, writing, pronunciation, vocabulary etc. There are many activities which students can do to improve the language skills based on their targeted language practice (Chik, Aoki, & Smith, 2018).

The concept of learner autonomy is centered to the student as the object or it is usually said as student learning centered. Students involve actively in the learning activity. Some research found that the concept of autonomous learning has the correlation with a peer-group in learning process. The collaborative approach has been experienced and developed through various educational background from Bachelor's to Doctorate's degree studies since 2002. In this collaborative approach the student will gain the social skills such as communication, managing conflicts and leadership processes (Luzzatto & DiMarco, 2010). The students will involve actively to exchange and share their thought or opinion about the lesson with other students in a group. The benefit of applying the collaborative learning could increase the student ability in a communication. Student will try to communicate with other friends to convey the ide and discuss the material (Respati, 2019). Even though it is the teacher-less teaching, it does not imply that the teacher role vanished entirely. In collaborative learning concept teacher becomes the facilitator not the knowledge provider. Moreover, teacher will orient students to get involved in collaborative learning and guide them to work, express idea, do task and so on by applying the learner autonomy itself in the collaborative learning (Yasmin & Naseem, 2019).

In the previous time, the concept of collaborative learning was setting with a face to face gathering discussion in order to have a space for students to work together. In the contrary, in recent time it has changed. The development of online communication platform provides new opportunities for student to collaborate in a distance learning with the teacher supporting group work The distance learning which supported by the collaborative learning enable student to learn anytime and anywhere. So students are able to study within different locations and times (Roberts, 2004).

As the fact of learner autonomy is fundamental in distance-learning. There were many researches who work in the same concern about learner autonomy. Every research has different main focus, such as observing the challenges which was faced by teacher in promoting learner autonomy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning

(Santosa, 2020), then some research which focusing both on the student and teacher in perceiving the meaning and importance of independent learning (Agustina & Fajar, 2018), and until seeking the attitude toward learner autonomy (Swatevacharkul & Boonma, 2020). This research would try to investigate the concept of learner autonomy in an English class which studied about Morphology. The research will focus on how the student enhance the learner autonomy characteristics and collaborative learning in their study. The correlation of learner autonomy and collaborative learning is needed to be studied in order to create the teaching and learning activity target is reached successfully. Therefore, this research is expected for those especially students to be independence and aware in understanding and applying learner autonomy learner.

## **2. METHODS**

This research used a descriptive qualitative method. It was generally known that descriptive qualitative research comprehend the summarization of events which was experienced by individual or group. Qualitative descriptive tend to describe a naturalistic inquiry (Lamber & Lamber, 2012). To obtain the data, this research used the morphology class evaluation which collected in a google form. The activities of teaching and learning was held in 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021 to 25<sup>th</sup> December 2021 in a distance learning via google meet application. There were 42 students in this morphology class. To make the learning activity became student-centered, the lecturer divided them into several group discussions with a certain different topic for each group. Not only did they present the material of the topic but they also need to make such an intermezzo before presenting and opening the discussion. Each group had to make any interesting talk show in presenting their materials. This kind of class activity was done by a group in a week. At the end of the class meeting, the lecturer asked them to fill the evaluation form regarding the online learning and teaching in a semester.

Furthermore, the data collection of descriptive qualitative concern on discovery of the specific events under study. The data collection involved

observations, reports, examinations of records, documents, photographs etc. The data were taken from morphology class evaluation among 42 students of English Literature of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung which was collected from the record of google form which later will be a document. Then the researcher applied the document analysis technique in analyzing the student responds toward the learning activity. Document analysis is a systematic procedure to review and evaluate document whether printed or electronic material. Document analysis required the data to be interpreted and examined to gain the understanding and elicit meaning (Bowen, 2009). Besides, to obtain the accurate data analysis the researcher watched the recording of the class activity to support the analysis. Furthermore, to analyze the data finding the researcher used several steps such as reading the students' respond, categorizing the data, describing and concluding.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following data is the data finding which the researcher observed from data sources. The data were taken from morphology class evaluation among 42 students of English Literature of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung. The data observed in this research were based on the characteristics of learner autonomy. There are 17 data related with independence, 1 datum classified as confidence aspect, 15 data about responsibility, 3 data of creativity characteristic, 2 data regarding motivation and 4 data related with awareness.

Table 1 The characteristics of how the students enhance the learner autonomy

No	Characteristics of Learner Autonomy	TOTAL
1.	Independence	17
2.	Confidence	1
3.	Responsibility	15
4.	Creativity	3
5.	Motivation	2
6.	Awareness	4
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>42</b>

The purpose of learning autonomy with the collaborative approach is to provide students with to work, learn and discuss with one another as a teamwork and to give them the opportunities developing particular skills such as communication and responsibilities when they take a particular roles in a group discussion. In applying the learner autonomy and collaborative learning the students tend to have the characteristics such as independence, confidence, responsibility, creativity, motivation and awareness. The researcher only present several main data which could represent each characteristic due to the efficiency the paper. The following discussion will reveal the students learning process when they applied the learner autonomy and collaborative learning.

#### **A. Independence**

Being in a distance between teacher and student will impact to the way of learning. The learners should be independent to understand and seek the learning material by themselves. The student will recognize the material based on their own understanding. Collaborative learning plays the role here. According to Luzzatto & DiMarco (2010) the positive of individual independence can be achieved by establishing the shared group objectives, complementary roles, defining group identity and recognizing all member contributions. After trying to understand the material by self-learning, the student could discuss the understanding toward peers. The students which formed into a group will have their own peer to discuss. Therefore, the student are able to share their understanding and help other group members who could not understand the material. As one of the students in morphology class stated in the following:

*My role in my group is the same, all my friends in my group have the same role. There is no leaders and no members. Everyone in my group is a different person with the same goal. We have one vision and one mission. We think of each other as teammates working hand in hand to achieve a common goal. Each of us has our advantages, it then makes us in control. Each of us can be the leader of those advantages.*

As the utterance from one of the students, it can be seen that by applying collaborative learning and learner autonomy could help one another for achieving the goals. The student also independence in team management. They

do not need the leader in their team because each of them have enough capability to reach the team goal. Moreover they know what to do in the team, therefore they can do the task confidently.

### **B. Confidence**

It is not enough to encourage the student's confidence in learning only for once time. As Din Kemyer and Dreikurs stated in Lestari (2016) that human is like a plant, humans need encouragement like a plant needs water which supplied continuously. It is the same line to the student. Student will feel more confident to perform their own learning if they are encouraged by using motivating words and wise instructors in a right way (Lestari, 2016). To arise the student confidence, collaborative learning can be the potential way to emerge student's confident. Confidence is the necessary one in delivering and sharing the idea. In making the student divided into a small group will make the shy student encourage himself to be brave in sharing the thought. As one of the students share his experience below:

*On talk shows I became a material giver. The best thing that I did, I can speak English without hesitation without being shy anymore. Besides that I can also solve problems that exist in the group, regarding the material that will be brought.*

The student's experience above shows that confidence is the important element which student must have. By having a confidence, the language learner could develop their speaking skill fast. Collaborative learning and learner autonomy besides giving a good impact to the student's character, it will help the student to elevate the English skills as well.

### **C. Responsibility**

Due to learning in a group, the student have a responsibility for their share in the task consigned (Yasmin & Naseem, 2019). In collaborative learning every student has his or her own work and it is automatically will become the individual responsibility. Responsibility of individual task will help student improve their

soft skill. As the respondent on the datum following shared his experience when he was a host in the talk-show of his group.

*In the talk show, I act as the host. My preparation to become a host started by looking for information on how to become a host who uses English. I look for this information from various sources such as YouTube, Google, and social media. After I get the information I need, then I study the material that I will bring. After I understood the material I was going to bring, I did the exercises several times at home.*

Responsibility in learner autonomy can be seen when the students try their best to complete the task. Responsibility also related to other characteristics such as independence and awareness. The respondent has a responsibility as the host in the talk show. Therefore, he tried his best to prepare being a host by looking for information, understanding the material and practicing by himself.

#### **D. Creativity**

One of the goals in learner autonomous is to develop student creativity. Creativities among students are various. To arise the student creativity the lecturer needs to provide a space for them to develop the creativity. As the following statement from one of the student said that:

*My task in this group work is as a creative medium, I make power points, digital books, as well as animated intermezzo.*

To arise the creativity among students, the lecture used the unique way. The lecture divided the students into several groups and asked them to present the morphology lesson in the theme of talk-show. Then, it gave the student to work in a group and collaborate with peer. Students are able to use different supporting tools to make the presentation or intermezzo video become attractive to the audience in the learning class. Therefore, the lecturer facilitate them to create the effective learning activity.

#### **E. Motivation**

In learning anything the learner needs some motivation in order to make their learning increases progressively. The difficulties which learner face will become

the challenging thing which could encourage them to develop. As the respondent experienced in the datum below, she had a role in a group as the speaker. She tried her best to be able to maximize her English ability because the speaker will have the responsibility to deliver material well.

*In my personal opinion, I contributed quite well in being a speaker where I discussed morphology in ESL/EFL. The reason is because in that case I try hard to be able to show my best ability in speaking English.*

The learner successes or failures are related to their learning effort, therefore Dickinson, (1987) stated that to enhance the learner motivation is a conditional on learners taking responsibility for their learning. The motivation factor will become the orientation toward a goal. The motivation will give the student the energy to take responsible for they decide to make an effort, a willing to sustain the learning activity and how hard they are going to pursue the goal (Mallipa, 2018).

#### **F. Awareness**

Learner awareness are crucial to be in autonomous learning. The approach to develop learner's awareness is divided them into a group work. Peer interaction will promote reflection on language learning, whether in face to face situation or online situation (Arnó-Macià, 2017). The success of learning autonomy is to make the student aware of their learning. The awareness of the learning process can be seen when the student knows what they need toward the studying. Moreover, if the student knows about their weakness and strength toward what they are studying comprehensively, it will be much better for them. After recognizing the weakness and strength, they should try to maximize their strength and fix the weakness becomes the strength. As the following datum finding, one of the students in morphology class had experienced when she realized that she could not understand the material. In collaborative learning, the student who has the lack understanding toward the lesson will be helped by other students. As what the student said:

*As the first speaker, of course, what I have to prepare is an understanding of the material that I will convey so that the message in it can be well received*

*for others. And of course I didn't just do it once or twice to understand it well. In fact, in the material I had some difficulties, especially because the material brought up the mention of the name of the disease in Sundanese, which because I am not a Sundanese I did not understand how to pronounce it correctly. However, my group of friends who are native Sundanese helped me, making it easier for me.*

The case of the datum finding above is about the student who became the speaker. She is aware of her duty as the speaker in her group. Before delivering the material on the online class presentation, she tried to understand the material, but she could not understand it because the material was related to *Sundanese*. Due to the collaborative learning, she got a help from the other friends to share the understanding. In this case, collaborative learning has a success role to facilitate student to be more active in sharing and helping one another.

#### **4. CONCLUSIONS**

The researcher concludes that the student in Morphology class has succeeded in applying the concept of learner autonomy through collaborative learning. They are able to collaborate with peer in a group work even though in a distance learning. The successful of their learning can be seen from the existence of the aspects of learner autonomy such as independence, confidence, responsibility, creativity, and awareness. Besides, the lecturer succeed in creating the class atmosphere as well. The lecture tried to seek students' ability by divided them into group work to enhance them to be autonomous learner. As the last, the concept of learner autonomy should exist in student soul for a long time learning process. Overall, the concept of learner autonomy and collaborative learning has a lot of benefit for student to increase their social and cognitive skills.

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