



THE LEVEL OF SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING READINESS OF 2013 ACADEMIC YEAR'S STUDENT AT ENGLISH DEPARTMENT OF THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF PADANG

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Abstract

This research discusses about students' level of self-directed learning readiness in learning English. The subject of the research is English students class of 2013 which selected by using simple random sampling method. The identified problem of the study is how the students SDLR level influences their learning English strategy. The objective of the study is to discover students' SDLR level and factors that influence their low level SDLR in learning English. There were two instruments used on the research, the questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. The result showed that the students had below average level of SDLR with an average score of 189.68. Based on the interviewed administered to the 16 students who scored below average level of SDLR, factors that influenced their low SDLR score were self-concept as an effective and independent learner, creativity and initiative in learning. In conclusion, English department students of UNP has low self-directed learning readiness level, and self-concept as an effective and independent learner, creativity and initiative in learning are its cause factors.

Key words: self-directed learning, self-directed learning readiness scale

A. INTRODUCTION

The demands of globalization promote the need for the students to become more conscious, controlled, independent and active in their learning. This way of learning enables students to adapt to the ever-changing situations in their personal and social lives in the knowledge society. Therefore, it is reasonable to say that SDL is a critical life skill for today's students. It enables a person to be highly adaptive to new situations and environments, to gather resources, learn quickly, solve new problems or handle the situations they encounter.

Self-directed learning must develop at every stage of age. When the children reach the legitimate schooling age, their self-directed learning habit is

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supposed to develop. However, Guglielmino (2008: 3) states that the education system has adopted what might be described as a manufacturing model of education designed to produce uniform results through promotion of conformity, obedience, and memorization of content dictated by others, leading to the transformation of self-directed learners into other directed learners.

Garrison (1997: 48) presents a comprehensive model of self-directed learning that includes the dimensions of self management, self-monitoring, and motivation. Apart from its importance for survival and competition in general, self-directed learning is also viewed as an effective mode of learning for college students in particular since college learning requires that learners be self-directed. College students need to be active in their own learning and able to conduct such learning at any time and any place according to Cohen (2012: 3).

According to those statements, it is fair enough to say that self-directed learning is very crucial for students to survive in the world which lays plenty of fierce competition in every aspect of life especially education. English is the world's language which gradually becomes essential both in society and education. It is the language that is used anywhere across this planet. It is through their exchanging information by communicating in English, they can understand what is being talked about. Hence it expands their knowledge such as cultures, customs, etc.

English is a study which focuses on how to master English language skills, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In English Department of the State University of Padang, there are two English programs, they are English Literature and English Education. Both programs have different concentration, but they basically taught the same basic subjects such as Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing and Grammar. These language basic skills are taught during the first until fifth semesters, every week on the active college period. Each course ranges a two until three credit hours in which one credit hour is taught approximately 55 minutes. The students are provided with a text book and a syllabus to achieve the learning target which is to comprehend and master English through either the point of view of literature or education. They are expected to apply what they have learned academically and in real life situations. To achieve such targets, the writer thinks that the time and the media to learn English are rather inadequate.

These college students, specifically, students in colleges of education, who will likely become teachers, need to possess the quality of self-directed learning since knowledge in the field is constantly changing. Johnson (2009: 14) calls for second language teacher professional development to prepare teachers of tomorrow to be self-directed, collaborative, and explorative. As self-directed learning is vital in today's world, educational institutions are expected to take into consideration learners' individual differences in order to encourage them to direct their own learning.

Unfortunately due to the manufacturing model of education designed the learners adapted since they were kids and the traditional curriculum which was teacher-centered and heavy on didactic lectures; self-directed learners at English Department of the State University of Padang are less than expected.

Based on preliminary research on students of class 2013 who concentrate on literature and education programs, these students do not quite follow the learning as they do to the trends. They tend to study only when they are going to present the topic in front of the class. It is also the writer's experience on most of her classes while enrolling in English Department where she and her classmates preferred to study only when they were appointed to perform their presentation from a particular topic which they saw fit to their comprehension.

The interview also shows that the students, class of 2013 can understand what they learn at the night before they perform the presentation, but this very topic that they try to master can only be remembered in a short time. Learning English uses discussion method in the classroom which requires students to comprehend each topic prior to the classroom-learning process. However, the lack of motivation or understanding on the importance of learning English, most of the students cannot get involved in the discussion, only few of them who already learned it can join in the discussion.

From the above description, it is quite clear that the number of learners who control their effort in learning or self-directed learners in learning English might not as many as expected. Much research has followed this hypothesis by creating ways to measure students' self-directed learning. One of the widely known is the Self-Directed Learning Readiness Scale (SDLRS) which is developed by Lucy Guglielmino in 1977 as part of her dissertation work at the University of Georgia. Guglielmino developed and field tested the Self-Directed Learning Readiness Scale (SDLRS), a Likert-type questionnaire with five response options per question. The SDLRS was later expanded to its current fifty eight items. The SDLRS has become the most widely used instrument for assessment of self-directed learning readiness according to Long & Ageykum (1988: 14); McCune (1989: 3); Merriam & Brockett (1997: 56).

By using the SDLRS of Guglielmino's, the writer thinks that the possibility to measure students' Self-Directed Learning should be manageable. The SDLR score which is the highlight of the research is also expected to show what factors influence students' self-directed learning readiness. The respondents who fit the criteria on this research is supposed to be on their early 20s. The students who enroll English major and have taken all those basic English skills' subjects, in this case the students of class of 2013 are seen to match the research requirement. And that is why the writer is interested in finding out the level of self-directed learning readiness of the students, class of 2013 at English Department of the State University of Padang.

B. RESEARCH METHODS

This study was designed as a descriptive research. In this research, the writer measured and described student's self-directed learning readiness at English Department of the State University of Padang by using questionnaire and interview. This research was conducted at the State University of Padang. The population in this study was English students of 2013 academic year. The population of the research was chosen because they were considered to be adults and also they had taken English skills classes. Simple random sampling was

chosen in order to avoid bias and corruption that might emerge during data collection. This research used 21 % sample of the population by using lottery system and in the end there were around 30 respondents of 140 total students.

In order to gather the data, the research instruments used in this research were questionnaire and interview. The questionnaire for this research adapted from SDLRS (Self-Directed Learning Readiness) Scale by Guglielmino (1977) and supported by Bahasa version of SDLRS by Darmayanti (1994). The researcher distributed and collected the questionnaires from the students. Then the responses from the students were calculated by scoring each item. The students' response was scored 1 (*tidak pernah*), 2 (*jarang*), 3 (*kadang-kadang*), 4 (*sering*), and 5 (*selalu*). The data of the questionnaire was then classified to the following classifications on the table 1 and analyzed in order to find out their level of self-directed learning readiness. The interview guidance administered only to the students who scored below average level of self-directed learning readiness. They were interviewed to discover the factors that influence them to have below average level of self-directed learning readiness.

Table 1. *Self-Directed Learning Readiness Classifications*

SDLR Scores	SDLR Level
252-290	high
227-251	above average
202-226	average
177-201	below average
58-176	low

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings of this research are the result of the questionnaire on the level of students' self-directed learning readiness and the result of interview.

1. Findings

a. The Level of Students' Self-Directed Learning Readiness

The researcher distributed the questionnaires to 30 students of 2013 academic year of English Department on February 24th, 2016. The questionnaires were administered to discover the level of students' self-directed learning readiness. The followings are findings of students' level of self-directed learning readiness. Based on the data analysis, among 30 respondents; 16 students apparently scored below average level; 9 students have average level; 3 students have low level; and 2 students have above average level of self-directed learning readiness in learning English. The following table is total frequency and percentage of the level of students' directed learning readiness in learning English:

Table 2. *The Total Frequency and Percentage of Students' Self-Directed Learning Readiness*

Classifications	Total Frequency	Percentage
High	0	0.00%
Above Average	2	6.67%
Average	9	30.00%

Below Average	16	53.33%
Low	3	10.00%
Total	30 students	100%

The table shows the frequency and percentage of the level of students' self-directed learning readiness in learning English where around 53% of the students have below average level of self-directed learning readiness; 30% of the students are on average level of self-directed learning readiness; 10% of the students are on low level of self-directed learning readiness; and around 6% of them are on above average self directed learning readiness. And, there are 0% of the students who have high level of self-directed learning readiness. Thus, the level of students' self-directed learning readiness in learning English inclined to be on *below average* with the mean score of 189.68.

b. Factors that Make Students Have Low Level of Self-Confidence

Having administered the questionnaire, the researcher conducted an interview session with students to find out which factors to influence students' to have below average level of self-directed learning readiness. The selection of students taking part in the interview was based on their level of self-directed learning readiness. On the interview session, 16 students were chosen to take part in it. The interview was conducted at different times because of availability of the students' time. The researcher carried out a semi structured interview which was conducted on 14th-18th of March, 2016. The interview started with a warm-up session to create a relaxing atmosphere and lower their anxiety.

The result of the interview with 16 students who scored below average score of self-directed learning readiness revealed that there were three factors that most frequent to influence students to have below average level of self-directed learning readiness; they were self-concept as an effective and independent learner, creativity and initiative in learning.

2. Discussions

Based on the findings, it is found that most students have below average level of self-directed learning readiness in learning English which is insufficient for conducting better language learning. The total score of 30 students who filed the questionnaire shows not as satisfactory results as expected where the mean score was 189.68. More than half of the students (16 students) have below average level of self-directed learning readiness in learning English.

In order to succeed in the process of learning, students must be capable of learning independently, take initiative to find extra resources and must be able to complete the assignments within the time frame. This is in line with Durr, Guglielmino and Guglielmino (1996) point of view; self-directed learning is an effective alternative to classroom learning in many situations.

Compared to the findings of Darmayanti's study (1994) of Indonesian student where the mean score of SDLRS is 215.52, the study conducted at English department of the State University of Padang scored lower. The different results of the research from Darmayanti's (1994) might be explained by the characteristics the students' involved in Darmayanti's study such as their motivation to enroll in distance learning at the Indonesia Open University;

Indonesian Open University already uses self-directed learning concepts in their educational system; 70% of Darmayanti's (1994) samples were mature students (working students) compared to samples at English department of the State University of Padang who are mostly high school graduate students.

The findings confirm that students of English department of the State University of Padang are likely to have below average level of self-directed learning readiness. Confessore (1991:132) says that some people have below average or low level of self-directed learning readiness because they have consistently been exposed to "other-directed" instruction (teacher-centered approaches). This study finding seems to support Confessore's views, as the educational system that is used in Indonesian's schools involves "other-directed" instruction (teacher-centered approaches).

After distributing and scoring the questionnaire, sixteen students scored below average level of self directed learning readiness, and all of them were brought to the next treatment, the interview. The interview was carried out to reveal which factors that most frequent to influence these learners to have below average level. Three factors were identified, self-concept as an effective and independent learner, creativity and initiative in learning.

The first most frequent factor to influence their below average level of self-directed learning readiness is self-concept as an effective and independent learner. The students do not feel confident that they can study effectively by themselves. They prefer to study during the courses where they can directly interact with their lecturers. Therefore, the excess of information provided to these students needs to be limited so that they would feel challenged. Instead of giving it all out, a challenging atmosphere could be created in the classroom to motivate these students to think more critically and begin setting the internal factors that make them effective and independent learners.

Creativity is the second most frequent factor to influence self-directed learning. The students admitted that they encompass all the subjects based on syllabuses. Most of them simply follow the procedures and stick to the routine that is far from making them a creative student. According to NACCCE, creative insights often occur when existing ideas are combined or reinterpreted in unexpected ways or when they are applied in areas they are not normally associated. These students seem to have lack of creativity long before they enrolled in this department. However, it is not too late for them to be creative as they can be motivated by engaging them to creative activities like SEA.

The third factor to most frequent to influence is initiative in learning. Due to the increasing amount of assignments and less time to relax these students prefer enjoying their free time by doing leisure things and refuse to study when they feel unnecessary, confessed these students during the interview. As a result, learning becomes an obligation and is more difficult to start. These learners need to step up their learning motivation and to lessen their learning schedule if they feel it is too much for them.

In general, students at English Department of the State University of Padang have some characteristics to become self-directed in learning such as love of learning, tolerance of risk, ambiguity and complexity in learning, view of

learning as a lifelong, beneficial process, self-understanding, and acceptance of responsibility for one's own. These factors they already acquire only need to be strengthened by applying self-directed learning concept in English program and the process should be fully monitored in order to increase students' self-directed learning readiness. And hopefully three factors that cause them to have below average level of self-directed can also be improved.

In conclusion, the researcher assumed that students' level of self-directed learning readiness can influence learning performance. When the students have high level of self-directed learning, they can achieve the learning goals well. Meanwhile, low level of self-directed learners cannot manage to do so. It is important to make them aware of how self-directed learning readiness can affect them. They also need to know what factors that most frequent to influence them to have high self-directed learning level and find out how to deal with it. So far, three factors are identified to most frequent influence students' below average level of self-directed learning readiness at learning English.

D. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings and discussion, the students of English department of the State University of Padang have below average level of self-directed learning readiness with the mean score 189.68. Among 30 students; 16 students scored the below average level which apparently the highest number on the table; 9 students have average level; 3 students have low level; 2 students have above average level; none of them has high level of self-directed learning readiness in learning English. The result of the interview with 16 students who scored below average level of self-directed learning readiness reveals that there were three factors that most influence students to have below average level of self-directed learning readiness; they were self-concept as an effective and independent learner, creativity and initiative in learning.

Based on the conclusion above, some suggestions are proposed. To make it easier for the students to adapt to self-directed learning approach, SSDL (Staged Self-Directed Learning) method proposed by Grow (1991) can be suitable for them. In addition, students learning consultation and monitor program should be implemented since more than half of the students have below average self-directed learning readiness. Thus, it is important to determine the level of students' SDLR, and enhance SDLR studies, particularly on how to manage the factors that mostly influence low level self-directed learners to balance their self-directed learning as a whole in future research.

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