

The Correlation Between Students' Autonomy and Motivation of Third Semester English Department

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to find out the relationship between autonomy and intrinsic motivation of the third semester students of English Department of Mulawarman University academic year 2019/2020. The design of this study was correlational design within quantitative approach. The sample of this study was 73 Third Semester students of English Department of Mulawarman University in academic year 2019/2020. The autonomy questionnaire was adapted from Lin & Reinders (2017) and motivation questionnaire was adapted from Gardner (1985). The data of this study were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Formula. The data analysis result of autonomy questionnaire showed that third semester English Department students' autonomy level was 0.392 (M=3.92) and deemed as 'approaching autonomy'. This result implied that participants had sufficient knowledge and supporting factors to increase their autonomy in learning but not in high rate. The data analysis for the motivation subscale showed that the mean score of students' motivation was 0.407 (M=4.07), which is considered as high degree of motivation. It can be inferred that the participants had high level of integrative and instrumental motivation. The result of the Pearson Product Formula (0.378) showed that there was a positive and low correlation. Positive correlation means there is a positive relationship between variable as both variables tend to increase or decrease linearly together. This means Null Hypothesis (Ho) is rejected and the Alternative Hypothesis (Ha) is accepted. This result meant that students' autonomy and motivation can be increased positively in linear manner. However, the correlation is not high since there are many other factors which has relationship with the development of autonomy and motivation.

Keywords: Autonomy, Students' Motivation

1. Introduction

In language learning nowadays, there is a shift from teacher-centered approach into learner-centered approach. This new approach, based from what Benson (2001) claimed, is responsible for a new concept called "learner autonomy" in language classroom to arise. Furthermore, learner autonomy (LA) is considered as a crucial thing that is needed to be applied in language learning. There are some reasons from experts for that argument. First, Smith (2008) explained that learner autonomy (LA) helps teachers to assist their students to become more independent. Second, Benson (2001) added the fact that language education is shifting toward learner-centered approach. The last is the reason from Little (2007) that learner autonomy (LA) is considered as fundamental need to enhance students' motivation.

Based on the reasons above, motivation is likely to appear as a result of learner autonomy (LA) itself. But, in the same journal, Spratt, Humphreys & Chan (2002) also stated that the relation between learner autonomy (LA) and motivation is not in one

direction only. They also stated that the correlation between autonomy and motivation could happen in both directions as their study was not mainly focusing on the relationship between autonomy and motivation.

Dickinson (1995) considered that the greater the students' acceptance on taking responsibility on their own learning, the greater motivation they will have. In line with this, in a study done by Noels (2001), he found that when teachers allowed students to be more autonomous, it enhanced students' motivation. Meanwhile, in another way, Spratt, Humphreys & Chan (2002) found that motivation was a key role of the readiness for learner autonomy (LA). This finding is in line with Ushioda (1996) who stated that "autonomous language learners are by definition motivated learners".

Regardless to the relationship between autonomy and motivation, both have important key role toward one another. Alongside with autonomy, motivation is also an important factor in the English as Foreign Language (EFL) students' engagement in their learning process. In line with this, Gardner (2001) believes that the main aspect which affects the English as Foreign Language (EFL) learning is the motivation itself.

Despite the importance of autonomy and motivation in English as Foreign Language (EFL) learning process, it is necessary to enhance our understanding regarding those matters. Especially, Sawan (2016) implied that autonomy and motivation are reinforcing each other when the students are exposed to proper support which they can use as catalyst to be more adaptable in learning. Liu (2015) also found that autonomy gives more positive perception on learning freedom that would increase students' motivation. It means that their autonomous attitude leads to an increase of motivation.

Based on aforementioned descriptions above, the researcher is interested to conduct a study about the correlation between students' autonomy and motivation of third semester students of English Department, Teacher Training and Education Faculty, Mulawarman University.

Based on the background of the study, the researcher formulated the research questions as the following:

1. How is the autonomy level of third semester English Department of Mulawarman University students?
2. How is the students' motivation level of third semester English Department of Mulawarman University students?
3. Is there a significant relationship between students' autonomy and students' motivation in third semester English Department of Mulawarman University students?

This study had purposes to answer the research questions as followed:

1. To determine the learner autonomy level of third semester English Department of Mulawarman University students.
2. To determine the students' motivation level of third semester English Department of Mulawarman University students.
3. To determine the relationship between third semester English Department of Mulawarman University students' autonomy and motivation.

Refers to the Research Questions and Purposes of the study above, the hypothesis of the study are stated as follows:

Ho : There is no significant relationship between Third Semester students' learner autonomy and their motivation.

HA : There is a significant relationship between Third Semester students' learner autonomy and their motivation

2. Literature Review

Definition of Learner Autonomy

A difficulty on defining the meaning of autonomy often leads into missintrepretation about autonomy itself. Little (1991) defined some points which are not autonomy: 1) Autonomy is not self-instruction in which is limited in learning without teachers or peers; 2) Autonomy does not mean that teacher give all their responsibility to their students by letting students learn on their own; 3) Autonomy is not a method; 4) Autonomy is not an easy thing to describe; 5) Autonomy is not a condition that can be achieved once and for all.

Coming from those different intrepretations in defining autonomy, Lin & Reinders (2017) synthesized the meaning of autonomy into a complex constellation of attitudes, abilities and behaviors related to taking charge of learning. They believed that those three dimensions are good predictor in defining the level of students' autonomy. Moreover, the dimensions are considered as crucial definitions that university level students implement in learning.

Furthermore, Lin & Reinders (2017) extended those three dimensions into three subscales: psychological, technical and behavioral, which are used as base for this research: 1.) Psychological dimension which demonstrates students' willingness and confidence in taking charge of their own learning; the way they nurture their mentality for stable fostered learning, 2.) Technical dimension, defined as knowledge and skills needed for autonomous learning; the way students deal with technology or other mediums that support their learning method both in and out of class, and 3.) Behavioral dimension, defined as students' engagement in autonomous learning behavior based on their interaction with their own selves, peers, teachers and so on, especially in defining their own learning system. Lin & Reinders (2017) divided autonomy level into three using the mean score: 1.) Developing autonomy (low level), 2.) Approaching autonomy (medium), and 3.) Ready (high). In more detail, the level is divided as presented in following table:

Mean	Level
4.00 – 5.00	Ready (High)
3.00 – 3.99	Approaching Autonomy (Medium)
3.00 – below	Developing Autonomy (Low)

Definition of Motivation

Djamarah (2002) stated that “motivation is an energy change within person characterized by effective arousal and anticipatory goal relatives”. Hence, it can be said that motivation as a goal which then generating, directing and establishing one's behavior.

According to Pintrich (2003), motivation requires action, physically or mentally. Physical activity includes effort, persistence and integrated actions. Meanwhile, mental activity includes such cognitive action such as planning, rehearsing, organizing, monitoring, making decisions, solving problem and assessing process. In English as Foreign Learning (EFL) context, motivation helps students to engage in learning process.

In language learning, students' have inclination to use English language as a vision to get better future. Lai (2013) implied that English language learners showed intention to accept English language as a motivational device to reach their dreams, such as working abroad. Ozen (2017) implied that motivation is a complex structure and not only a simple theory as motivation level and condition varies between each person. Tasgin & Tunc (2018) considered that lack of motivation will cause unhealthy environment in learning, as students lack driving force to fulfill the assignment. In learning, especially in English subject, motivation is an important driving force to enact proper handling of students' willingness to fulfill their assignments.

Gardner (2001) defined language learning motivation in higher education level into two distinct orientations: integrative motivation and instrumental motivation. Integrative motivation is a state when the learners do not need any external reward in learning a target language which they learn the target language and the culture of target language. Integrative motivation refers to someone's positive view on target language community and have desire to belong with them in intimate and close manner. It also means an individual's open relationship to other culture without leaving their basic culture. Meanwhile instrumental motivation is a type of motivation that makes someone wants to get social or economical benefit through language learning. This study put focus on students' integrative and instrumental motivation. Using the mean score, the researcher will determine the students' motivation level based on interpretation procedures by Degang (2010). Degang formulated five levels of motivation for intrinsic motivation.

Mean Range	Interpretation
4.50-5.00	Very high degree of motivation
3.50-4.49	High degree of motivation
2.50-3.49	Moderate degree of motivation
1.50-2.49	Low degree of motivation
1.00-1.49	Very low degree of motivation

Table of motivation level (Degang, 2010)

3. Methods

This study used correlation design in quantitative approach. The sample was 73 third semester students of English Department of Mulawarman University in simple random sampling.

Instrument

This research used adapted questionnaires from Lin & Reinders (2017) called the Scale of Language Learner Autonomy (SLLA), meanwhile the students' motivation questionnaire is adapted from Gardner (1985) which the researcher used the integrative and instrumental motivation subscales. The adapted questionnaires are in five-point Likert Scale and had been validated. The first adapted questionnaire is divided into three subscales (psychological, technical and behavioral) with 32 items in total, while the second adapted questionnaire is divided into two subscales (integrative and instrumental) with 20 items in total).

4. Result

An adapted autonomy questionnaire was used to assess English Department student' level of autonomy. The questionnaire has three subscales: 1) Psychological readiness; 2) Technical readiness, and; 3) Behavioral readiness. The result of the questionnaire was shown in the following table:

Scale/subscale	Mean
SLLA	3.92
Psychological	4.15
Technical	3.96
Behavioral	3.74

Statement	Psychological		Technical		Behavioral		All	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Strongly disagree / Never	1	0.04%	5	0.22%	8	0.35%	14	0.61%
Disagree / Seldom	7	0.31%	40	1.75%	82	3.60%	129	5.56%
Neither disagree nor Agree / Sometimes	55	2.41%	149	6.54%	204	8.95%	408	17.89%
Agree / Often	282	12.37%	499	21.89%	355	15.57%	1136	49.82%

Strongly Agree / Always	156	6.84%	233	10.22 %	204	8.95%	593	26.01 %
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Students' Mean Score with Respect to Level of Autonomy

From the table, it shows the mean score of English Department students gained from the questionnaire. Overall, the level of learner autonomy was still categorized as “Approaching Autonomy” (M = 3.92) based on autonomy level table. This was supported by 26.01% who agreed and 49.82% other stated strongly agree. This meant that most students have willingness and confidence, knowledge and skills as well as sufficient engagement related to the learner autonomy.

Mean	Level of Autonomy Readiness
4.00 – 5.00	Ready
3.00 – 3.99	Approaching Autonomy
3.00 – below	Developing Autonomy

Table of Autonomy Level by Lin & Reinders (2017)

Questionnaire was used to assess the English Department students' motivation toward learning. The adapted motivation questionnaire measured subject's perceived integrative and instrumental motivation. The result of the questionnaire was shown in the following table:

Scale/subscale	Mean	Statement	%
Integrative	3.98	Strongly Agree	15%
		Agree	22%
		Moderate	5%
		Disagree	2%
		Strongly Disagree	2%
Instrumental	4.16	Strongly Agree	23%
		Agree	25%
		Moderate	3%
		Disagree	2%
		Strongly Disagree	2%
Total	4.07		

Means and Percentage of the Motivation

The table shows the mean score of English Department gained from the questionnaire. Overall, the students' motivation level was categorized as “High Degree of Motivation”

(M = 4.07). This was supported by 85% (sum of *Strongly Agree* and *Agree*) students who stated “Strongly Agree” and “Agree”. Hence, it meant that most students had high level of integrative and instrumental motivation.

Mean Range	Interpretation
4.50-5.00	Very high degree of motivation
3.50-4.49	High degree of motivation
2.50-3.49	Moderate degree of motivation
1.50-2.49	Low degree of motivation
1.00-1.49	Very low degree of motivation

Motivation Interpretation Table (Dagang, 2010)

A calculation using SPSS 25 application was conducted to see the correlation between students’ motivation and students’ autonomy toward learning. The result showed that the correlation level was at 0.378.

Correlations

		TMotivation	TAutonomy
TMotivation	Pearson Correlation	1	.378**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	73	73
TAutonomy	Pearson Correlation	.378**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	73	73

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

It meant that there is a correlation between students’ motivation and students’ autonomy toward learning because the Pearson Correlation score is above r table = 0.2303.

R value	Interpretation
0.00-0.20	Very low correlation
0.20-0.40	Low correlation
0.40-0.60	Fair correlation
0.60-0.80	High correlation
0.80-1.00	Very high correlation

r Value Motivation Interpretation table by Degang (2010)

Based on the finding of the correlation between students’ motivation and students’ autonomy, it was concluded that there was low correlation between English Department students’ motivation and autonomy toward learning and the direction is positive, as both variables increased linearly rather than going to separated direction. Positive correlation is a result when both variables got linear high scores in same direction on each other to positive value rather than negative one..

5. Discussion

Three research questions had been formulated by researcher. The researcher had calculated the result in order to present the autonomy and motivation level then acquiring the degree of correlation.

The first research question was to know the level of third semester English Department students' autonomy. The analysis result showed that third semester English Department students' autonomy level was 0.392 which is categorized as 'approaching autonomy' or medium level. Lin & Reinders (2017) defined approaching autonomy as a condition where autonomy is applied sometimes because it is supported by proper environment but not in high rate of usage. This approaching autonomy rate is called medium level because the amount of perceived autonomy seems apparent yet the implementation is not effective enough which can be caused by lower frequency of using autonomy in learning. Autonomy itself is a complex constellation of attitudes, abilities and behaviors related to taking charge of learning. While considered a complex theory, this research tried to discuss the meaning of autonomy level using three dimensions of autonomy, which are psychological, technical and behavioral dimension based on Lin & Reinders (2017).

The first dimension is psychological dimension. It demonstrates students' willingness and confidence in taking charge of their own learning and the way they nurture their mentality for stable and fostered learning. The second dimension is technical dimension. It is knowledge and skills needed for autonomous learning and the way students deal with technology or other mediums that support their learning method both in and out of class. The last dimension is behavioral dimension. It is students' engagement in autonomous learning behavior based on their interaction with their own selves, peers, teachers and so on.

This research gave result that most participants agreed on all three dimensions with 49,82% for Agree choice and 26,01% for Strongly Agree choice, with 75,83% in total among other choices, implying that most of them had good amount of technical knowledge, positive learning behavior and confidence in learning. However, the level is not considered high in this case which can be traced to the frequency. This is supported by Kaplan (2017) who believes that teacher's control and support are crucial importance for student's willingness to enact their autonomy.

The second research question was to know the level of third semester English Department students' motivation. Based on the findings and the data analysis for the motivation subscale, the mean score of students' motivation was 4.07, which is considered as high degree of motivation.

According to Gardner (2001), integrative motivation and instrumental motivation are two motivation types that inherent to higher education level. The first type is integrative motivation. Integrative motivation is a state when the learners do not need any external reward like present, fame, or increased grade in learning a target language which they learn the target language and the culture of target language. Supporting above explanation, Tasgin & Tunc (2018) claimed that integrative motivation refers to someone's positive view on target language community and have desire to belong with them in intimate and close manner. It also means integrative motivation is an individual's open relationship to other culture without leaving their basic culture, such as someone's affinity to other people's foreign language or culture. The second type of motivation according to Gardner (2001) is instrumental motivation. Instrumental motivation is a type of motivation that makes someone wants to get social or economical benefit through language learning as an inner resolve to achieve something. According to Spratt, Humphreys & Chan (2002), the

practical benefits such as aiming to enter college that requires certain skill, getting good grades for personal satisfaction and acquiring increase of wage are some examples why someone can be instrumentally motivated.

This research's result on motivation level was deemed as high level of motivation. It was supported by 85% (sum of Strongly Agree and Agree) students who stated "Strongly Agree" and "Agree". It can be inferred that the participants had high level of integrative and instrumental motivation. It is a favorable result to know that Third Semester students got high degree of motivation as Tasgin & Tunc (2018) considered that lack of motivation will cause unhealthy environment in learning like a decrease of respect to teacher's way of teaching, rebellious tendency and increased laziness as students lack driving force to fulfill the assignment.

It is possible to conclude that students can gain interest to learn foreign language in class because their interest on target language's culture and they can also develop a reason to gain benefit by learning the target language like aiming to get a college abroad or working with specific language skill as requirement. In addition, it can be implied that Third Semester English Department Students had more tendency on instrumental motivation, where they learned the target language for a perceived social and economical goal like working abroad or getting job that requires the target language to be used, based on the mean of instrumental motivation ($M=4.16$) rather than integrative motivation ($M=3.98$).

The last research question would like to determine the correlation between third semester English Department students' autonomy and motivation. The correlation level between students' autonomy and motivation was positive and significant, even with low correlation ($r = 0.378$), from the r table = 0.2303. According to Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun (2012), positive correlation is a result when both variables got linear high scores in same direction on each other to positive value rather than negative value.

The result on correlation calculation gave insight that Third Semester students' autonomy and motivation can increase in same direction. This means their autonomy behaviors in learning like developing comfortable learning system, doing effective teamwork with peers and freedom of choice can affect their motivation level.

The findings on both analysis are similar with study done by Sawan (2016) who found that students' autonomy level increases linearly with their motivation level to some degree. Moreover, the correlation degree between autonomy and motivation is also the same as Sawan's result, which was at low degree of correlation. Sawan (2016) implied that the positive correlation between motivation and autonomy in learning means their autonomy will likely to appear if they are motivated, but the low level of correlation means the subjects gives little effort in invoking both of them in learning. This finding is also similar with a study done by Liu (2015) who found that the correlation between motivation and autonomy were positive and significant. Considering that Liu's result on autonomy and motivation went in the same direction, then it is similar as this research, as the existence of motivation within students' learning process will give chance for autonomy to be used. Supporting above results, the result of Bravo, Intriago, Holguín, Garzon & Arcia's (2017) study also gained conclusion that autonomy has correlation with motivation of all types (external and internal). It means that motivation, including intrinsic motivation, still contributed to autonomy.

Based on what has been discussed in the findings of the study, students' motivation correlate with students' willingness and confidence in taking charge of their autonomy implementation, as it is also correlated with students' who has enough knowledge and skills needed for autonomy and also their engagement in autonomous learning.

6. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study in previous chapter, the researcher had drawn conclusions as follows:

1. The data analysis result of autonomy questionnaire showed that third semester English Department students' autonomy level was 0.392 (M=3.92) which is deemed as 'approaching autonomy'. This result concluded that participants had sufficient knowledge and supporting factors to increase their autonomy in learning.
2. The data analysis for the motivation subscale showed that the mean score of students' motivation was 0.407 (M=4.07), which is considered as high degree of motivation. It can be inferred that the participants had high level of integrative and instrumental motivation.
3. Students' autonomy in learning English has positive correlation with their intrinsic motivation. Positive correlation means that both variables are increased linearly to each other. The correlation level is considered low with coefficient correlation calculated with Pearson Product Formula is 0.378, which is considered higher than r table value 0.2303 ($0.378 > 0.2303$). This means Null Hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and the Alternative Hypothesis (H_a) is accepted.

The researcher found that English Department students of Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Mulawarman University's correlation degree between motivation and autonomy was still categorized as positive but in low level. Hence, it can be concluded that English Department students of Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Mulawarman University still had willingness and confidence to take charge of their own learning and engaging on learning because they had enough knowledge and skills needed for autonomous learning which also supported by their motivation to learn.

7. Suggestions

The researcher understands that motivation and autonomy have relationship to boost students in their English learning. In order to improve the autonomy and motivation implementation in learning English, the researcher formulates suggestions as follows:

1. For the students, the result of this research can become a reference in understanding how students' autonomy and their intrinsic motivation correlate with each other to improve English learning.
2. For the lectures, this result of the research can be used as reference in understanding how students' autonomy has relations with their motivation. By knowing this, English Department can promote students' autonomy and motivation in and out of class.
3. For the future researcher, the result of this study can be used as a consideration for those who want to conduct a deeper research related to this topic. They can improve the subject by giving attention to other types of motivation based on defined theories by experts, such as intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The future researcher can conduct a study on this study by using different method, approach, or instruments

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