

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the background of the study, research problem, scope of the study, research questions, purposes of the study, significance of the study, and thesis overview.

1.1 Background of the Study

During the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia, the students are not expected to perform in-class learning activities. Instead, they have been performing home learning activities since March 2020 in order to cut off the spread of COVID-19. Considering that the students and teachers are not used to such new learning environments yet, this has become a challenge for them. In accordance with the government regulations, they still have to apply home learning as long as the spread of the virus has not stopped. To answer the challenge, the teachers have been preparing themselves by designing learning methods, materials, assessment procedures and their instruments, which are appropriate for home learning. For the students, they must prepare everything they need to do home learning, such as gadgets, Internet connections, and the most important aspect is an awareness to learn autonomously. Therefore, learner autonomy is highly demanded because it is not possible for the teachers to continuously monitor the students during their home learning activities.

English, as one of the school subjects, is a language learning that requires learner autonomy. Tomita and Sano (2016, 114) support this view, saying that learner autonomy is one of the keys of successful language learning. However, the

students' autonomy in learning has not been on the expected level yet because they lack of autonomous learning experiences. Their interests of home learning are considered low because prior to the existence of COVID-19, they always had on-site learning at school. The students have tended to think that no one is there to watch over them like when they are studying in class. It can be seen from the students' involvement since home learning began in March 2020. Some students rarely submitted their assignments punctually, some did not want to collaborate and cooperate with other students. Many did not use the opportunities to learn outside the classroom. It seems that the teachers are frustrated with investing innumerable amounts of energy in their students and getting very little responses.

Moreover, there is a tendency that the concept of autonomous learning does not fit in Indonesia, as one of the countries in Asia because Asian students are considered as rather less autonomous compared with their Western counterparts. The concept of learner autonomy is more suitable for Western students, and not for Asian contexts. Even Pokhrel (2016, 130) claimed that learner autonomy as a Western hegemony in English language teaching. He added further that learner autonomy, as a Western value, cannot be adjusted to non-Western countries as there is a contextual difference between the East and the West in terms of their philosophies, cultural values and norms.

In addition, the students must be facilitated with adequate facilities and equipment, such as laptops, computers, mobile phones and Internet access. The unreadiness of the facilities has become another obstacle for the students in doing home learning. This view is supported by Putri et al. (2020, 4813) saying that the students felt they were forced to shift to home learning without adequate facilities

and equipment at home. As a result, they felt discouraged and unwilling to study. Instead, the students with adequate facilities at home also have different challenges in terms of the ways of learning. They have experienced these challenges since they started learning at home because distance learning is not part of their learning culture. The students had become used to having interactions socially and physically at school and meeting with their friends.

To solve the problems described above, a solution is needed in order to enhance learner autonomy in doing home learning. In this case, the teachers can play a major role in guiding the students to be more autonomous (Abdelrazeq 2018, 736). It is the teachers' duties to create and foster such autonomous learning conditions. One possible way that can be done by the teachers is by applying self-reflections in a flipped classroom model as writing self-reflections is believed to develop learner autonomy in an organized meaningful three-phase model called flipped classroom (Gavranovic 2017, 498; Gholami 2016, 49; Tao & Yan 2019, 368; Pudyastuti & Sari 2016, 274).

1.2 Research Problem

Considering the facts explained above, it can be concluded that there is a gap between what is expected from the students (learner autonomy) and what truly happens on the ground (lack of learner autonomy). Hence, the problem of the study is the lack of learner autonomy and it needs to be enhanced in order to achieve successful language learning, especially in applying home learning.

1.3 Scope of the Study

This study was delimited to enhancing learner autonomy through writing self-reflections in a flipped classroom model and aimed at exploring how self-reflections could enhance learner autonomy in the English classes. The subjects in this study were delimited to the students in X IPA 3 at SMAK PENABUR Kota Wisata.

1.4 Research Questions

After identifying the problems, this study, therefore, sets out the following research questions.

- a) To what extent do the students learn autonomously in a flipped classroom model?
- b) Do self-reflections in a flipped classroom model enhance the students' autonomy in learning?
- c) To what extent do self-reflections in a flipped classroom model enhance the students' autonomy in learning?

1.5 Purposes of the Study

The first purpose of the study was to find out to what extent the students learned autonomously in a flipped classroom model. The second purpose of this study was to investigate whether writing self-reflections in a flipped classroom model would enhance learner autonomy. The third purpose was to analyze to what extent self-reflections enhanced learner autonomy. The attainment of the purpose can be verified objectively by looking at how many students have increased their autonomy in learning, analyzed from some aspects.

1.6 Significance of the Study

1) Theoretical Significance

This research can be used as the references for someone who wants to do a research in self-reflections and flipped classroom model. It also gives solution to find out the appropriate teaching method and strategy in home learning.

2) Practical Significance

This research is beneficial for the students who have become the subjects of the study. It is expected that they are accustomed to learning autonomously, especially outside the classroom and they also have awareness of the importance of learner autonomy.

Then, for the other colleagues who teach the students of X IPA 3, this research is also beneficial to support their on-site learning activities when the situation is back to normal. The students may no longer come with “bare hands” but they come to class with their prior knowledge due to self-learning before the classes start.

For the researcher himself, this research is the most important experience which can be used to enhance learner autonomy in other classes as well. This research also provides information for other researchers who have interest in promoting learner autonomy with other techniques.

For the school, this research helps improve the quality of education with the outcomes produced by the teachers and students in doing the teaching and learning activities. The concept of self-reflections and flipped classroom may be a new learning culture for the next batches in this school.

1.7 Thesis Overview

This thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter One describes the background of the study, research problem, scope of the study, research questions, purposes of the study, significance of the study, and thesis overview. The main problem of this research is a gap between what is expected from the students in this pandemic era, which is learner autonomy, and what truly happens on the ground (lack of learner autonomy). This thesis is specifically concerned with the implementation of self-reflections in a flipped classroom model as a solution to the problem.

Chapter Two reviews the relevant literatures used to explain learner autonomy, flipped classroom, and self-reflection. Learner autonomy is characterized by using adjectives (autonomous learners' behaviors) and verbs (autonomous learning activities). Literatures about flipped classroom model introduce three-phase model, which are pre-class, in-class, and after-class. Self-reflection is explained as a skill that enables the students to reflect on themselves and evaluate their own learning process. It also provides explanations of previous research projects that have been conducted on related areas. The previous research projects support the implementation of self-reflections and flipped classroom model to enhance learner autonomy.

Chapter Three describes the methodology, particularly the steps of collecting or gathering the data and how the data are analyzed and triangulated. Thirty-six students are served as subjects in this study, which is designed to investigate whether writing self-reflections in a flipped classroom model would enhance learner autonomy and the extent to which self-reflections enhanced learner

autonomy, by implementing two classroom action research cycles. The data are gathered by using questionnaires, interviews, and some documentations. Then the data are analyzed quantitatively with Microsoft Excel formula and qualitatively with the coding systems.

Chapter Four provides the evidence and data resulted from this research with the analysis both quantitatively and qualitatively. The results of two classroom action research cycles show that self-reflections could enhance the students' autonomy in learning. The quantitative data analysis presents the calculations of the data distributions. The qualitative data analysis explains the extent to which self-reflections enhance learner autonomy in seven aspects.

Chapter Five presents the conclusion, implications, and recommendations for future research. The main aim of the thesis has been reached. The researcher recommends further modification to be considered, such as applying a flipped classroom model in on-site learning, analyzing students' attitudes towards flipped classroom model and self-assessments, or analyzing the effectiveness of self-reflections as a self-assessment method. An experimental research design should also be applied to find out the effect of self-reflections only to learner autonomy.