

Exploring Self-Directed Learning (SDL) Experience in English Grammar of High School Students during New Normal Era

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki pengalaman siswa kelas dua belas dalam pembelajaran tata bahasa mandiri. Data diambil dari 6 siswa di SMAN 1 Karawang semester I tahun ajaran 2022/2023. Pendekatan kualitatif digunakan dalam melakukan penelitian ini. Hasil yang diperoleh berdasarkan wawancara semi terstruktur dan instrumentasi kerangka naratif dalam penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa 9 konsep kunci yang dibuat oleh Oswalt (2003) dibagi menjadi 3 kelompok besar; situasi belajar yang mengandung kemungkinan, dukungan, dan kerjasama, kemudian atribut siswa yang meliputi proses SDL, kemauan, dan isi. Hal ini menunjukkan dengan menggunakan berbagai media yang selain dari guru memberi, membantu mereka mengalami proses belajar yang lebih menyenangkan dari biasanya. Dan selanjutnya, siswa menjadi sadar bahwa metode dan media pembelajaran yang tepat dan menarik berperan sangat penting dalam membantu mereka memahami materi grammar. Dan temuan lain menunjukkan bahwa ada satu siswa yang berada pada tahap satu keterampilan SDL, satu siswa pada tahap 2, dan sisanya empat siswa pada tahap tiga. Sebagai rekomendasi, penulis menyarankan pada penelitian selanjutnya untuk menambahkan instrumen tes dalam menemukan tingkat keterampilan siswa SDL dengan tujuan membuat penelitian lebih baik dan lebih dapat diverifikasi.

Kata Kunci: *Grammar Bahasa Inggris, New Normal, Pembelajaran Mandiri, Pengalaman Belajar Siswa.*

Abstract

The research aimed to investigate twelfth-grade students' experience in self-directed grammar learning. The data was taken from 6 students in SMAN 1 Karawang in the first semester of the 2022/2023 academic year. A Qualitative approach was used in conducting this study. The results obtained based on semi-structured interviews and narrative frames instrumentation in this study that indicate the 9 key concepts created by Oswalt (2003) are divided into 3 major groups; learning situations which contain possibility, support, and collaboration, then student attributes which include the SDL process, willingness, and content. This showed using various media that apart from the teacher gave, help them experience a more enjoyable learning process than usual. And furthermore, students become aware that appropriate and interesting learning methods and media played a very important role in helping them to understand the grammar material. And another finding showed that there is one student who is in stage one of SDL skill, one student in stage 2, and the remain four students in stage three. As a recommendation, the author suggested in further research adding a test instrument in finding the students' SDL level skill with the intention of making research better and more verifiable.

Keywords: *English Grammar, New Normal, Self-Directed Learning, Students' Learning Experience.*

INTRODUCTION

In the last two years, Indonesian teachers and students have had to get used to online teaching and learning activities due to the global pandemic. SDL is one of the many online learning processes or can be called an integrated method with the help of technology. These methods are based on the belief that learners learn best when they have some control over their own learning and are encouraged to think critically, reflectively, and imaginatively (Brown, 2004). Gang et al. (2019) stated that students that are self-directed are also more motivated to reach their learning objectives. Even though there are many potentials for SDL implementation, however, there are still several barriers in implementing SDL even if this learning process is for adult learners.

There is a “particular dilemma” for adult educators, since even while most adults are self-directing in many parts of their lives, the minute they step into a scenario called 'education,' 'training,' or any of its equivalents, they hark back to their indoctrination in school, take a role of reliance, and want to be taught (Knowles, 1975; Merriam & Bierema, 2020).

From this statement, two possibilities arise when the SDL is studied at the high school level. First, their learning experience shows that they are less able to learn independently which will affect their learning outcomes if viewed from the perspective of maturity. Second, they can be more independent in learning when viewed from the length of the doctrine taught in school. The shorter the period of time they experience during the learning process at school, the lower their desire to always be taught material by material the teacher. This means that they have a greater desire to explore information on their own than they can more easily remember these grammar-related materials. Furthermore, one of the most significant barriers to online learning is the intrinsic and extrinsic motivational difficulties that students will face (Ryan & Deci, 2020). The presence of these barriers may also have an impact on student learning outcomes, which will stagnate or even worsen the outcomes. Hidayat, et al. (2020) also stated that students are not quite ready to learn online, the cause is due to study habits and less supportive technology. This gap eager researchers to study by herself related to SDL in high school students when learning grammar.

As the explanation mentioned before, the aim of this study arised, this study is aimed to investigate self-directed learning (SDL) experience in English grammar of senior high school students during new normal era.

Students’ Learning Experience

The result of student learning that occurs throughout the activity is the student learning experience. This learning experience consists of student learning styles, which describe individual learning habits and methods which also can be referred as the learning strategies. This experience will vary depending on the individual, therefore the data of students’ learning journey can be gathered from personal explanations and perspectives of students. Each person is in direct contact with people and gets stimuli through his or her sense organs. They will have perceptions as a result of the stimuli they get from the learning activities. Perception is the process through which a person interprets information (Lindsay & Norman (1977); Handayani & Mu, 2020). As a result, it is critical for educators to understand students' perspectives on learning. A teacher has to know students' views during in the lesson in order to assessthe conclusion of the classroom instruction, (Handayani and Mu, 2020). This is significant because learners' perceptions can aid in evaluating the efficiency of educators' instruction during the learning process (Chen, 2003; Ridho et al., 2019).

Self-Directed Learning

According to the definition of Merriam & Bierema (2014:63), SDL as a personal quality refers to an individual inclination toward the way of study, and pleasure with independence in the learning process. It's also been defined as a process in which individuals, with or without the assistance of others, diagnose their learning needs, formulate learning goals, identify human and other resourcesfor memorization, select and implement effective learning strategies, and evaluatethose learning outcomes (Knowles, 1975, p. 18). Teachers can use self-directed learning (SDL) as a chance for professional development, resulting in a more individualized learning experience that benefits student activities in the classroom(Wagner, 2018). It means that SDL is beneficial for both students and teachers.

According to a study by Dwilestari et al. from the year 2021, students' levels of self-directed learning (SDL) are crucial to the success of their learning. Two sets of questionnaires—one closed-ended and the other open-ended—were used to gather the data of this previous study. The result showed that 60% of learners are at a moderate level, 33% are at a high level, and 1% are at a poor level. Interaction between teachers and students and intrinsic motivation are two important aspects that influence students' SDL levels.

Researchers Adnan and Sayadi (2021) studied this SDL situation among Malaysian learners. This study used a survey methodology to assess secondary school students' degrees of self-directedness and preparedness to use self-directed learning to enhance their English writing abilities. The results showed that the majority of pupils had a medium degree of self-directedness, with no difference between them and the high-level kids. The study also found a link between students' preparedness to apply self-directed learning to their English writing abilities and their level of self-directedness. For instance, students with a high degree of self-directedness performed better than students with a low level of self-directedness in terms of their preparation for self-directed learning

in order to improve their English writing abilities.

And another research is from Subekti (2021), the interviews were employed as the data collecting approach. The research included six university-level EAP participants. The present study discovered through thematic analysis of the interview transcripts that learners with high SDL (HSDL) followed a properly planned learning agenda and were ready to learn more. In contrast, students who had low SDL (LSDL) reported making little to no effort to study English outside of class and not making any purposeful plans for their learning.

METHODS

In this research author used a qualitative research approach to learn the phenomenon of this topic in a deeper sight. Silverman (2013) mentioned that the motivations for using qualitative approaches are less artistically focused and more analytically insightful since qualitative data are naturally more interesting than numerical data. Moreover, the type of method relevant to this qualitative is Narrative Inquiry, based on the explanation from Riessman (2008) Narrative research is a humanities research design in which the researcher examines the lives of the people and asks one or more of them to share their experiences. Because narrative inquiry tells in chronological order of events that can be experienced by someone some time ago, the researcher finds a connection with the topic being discussed. The connection showed that using narrative inquiry is appropriate and can be used on the research topic discussed.

The data was taken from 6 students in one of the high school in Karawang in the first semester of the 2022/2023 academic year. They were in the twelfth grade of the science program and language programs. The reason why they were chosen and became the participants is that they already had 2 years experience and expected to get adjusted to self-online learning (SDL) or also can be said as Self-Directed Learning with Technology (SDLT) than students in the lower grade. The researcher will utilize a purposive typical cases sampling strategy in the selection procedure described by Patton (2002, p.122) and the site author that is "rich in information" for obtaining respondents and selecting the site in order to collect in-depth information.

This study used two instruments to collect the data, interview, and narrative frames. The interview session will run in a semi-structured manner where the participants are still able to answer all the questions in a flexible way and also the author could have a chance to receive some unexpected answers during the session. The interview guideline is adapted from some indicators obtained from the SDL model which was developed by Oswalt (2003:22). 10 questions were compiled by the researcher which included questions about grammar and the indicators mentioned. Another instrument used in this study was narrative frames, as a supporting tool for data collection. As defined by Barkhuizen (2014:45) narrative frame is a written story that contains incomplete sentences and blank spaces of varying lengths. In other words, narrative frames are in the form of a framework that will contain events that have been experienced through writing, participants can be helped in telling their personal experiences by filling in incomplete sentences more easily which is also a guide for them.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Based on the interviews and filling in the narrative frame with the participants, the results of data collection conducted on 6 grade 12 high school students located at SMA Negeri 1 Karawang show several things such as (1) Students are provided with the possibility by their teacher to do self-directed learning, but they also need good guidance from their teacher to succeed. (2) Because of the development of technology that makes English easier to reach many students, all students have their unique way of learning grammar whether it was consciously or subconsciously using various mediums such as watching movies and reading fiction, etc. (3) The time that students set aside for independent study are influenced by 2 things, which are their learning motivation and their curiosity about the topic being studied. (4) External motivation is found easily with which they access various learning resources such as applications, Youtube, and others. The lack of effectiveness in learning while at school also undermines their motivation to continue to study independently. (5) Students can find out which parts of their expertise and weaknesses, become more familiar with their own way of learning by reflecting on their learning critically, and most importantly, become aware of the role of appropriate and interesting learning methods and media in helping them understand the lesson. (6) This study showed that there is one student who is in stage one, one student who is in stage two, the rest of the respondents are in stage three of SDL skills and

there is no student who is in stage four.

Discussion

Students' Self-Directed Learning Experience

The study's goal was to look into twelfth-grade students' experiences with self-directed grammar learning. This study used Oswalt's (2003) SDL model to describe students' self-directed learning experiences. The findings revealed that how students learned English grammar on their own varied and was unique depending on what students had experienced. According to Oswalt (2003), the nine key components demonstrated the overall process of SDL, providing a more complete picture of SDL. The findings of this study, based on interviews and narrative frames, show that the 9 key concepts developed by Oswalt (2003) are divided into three major groups: learning situations, support, and collaboration, and student attributes, which include the ongoing SDL process, willingness, and content. The last component of learning is cognitive skills, also known as critical self-reflection, in which students can reflect on what happens during learning, their motivations, and also things that still exist in the context of SDL in grammar. Another finding revealed that all students performed at a different level of self-directed learning, ranging from stage one to stage three, but no student performed at stage four.

During this ineffective learning process caused by Covid, the teacher did indeed encourage students to engage in Self-Directed Learning. Although the teacher's provided material is quite diverse, students were unable to follow or understand the less detailed guidance because those resources were not appropriate for every student's understanding ability. As a result, rather than being assigned assignments, some students still require good guidance, such as detailed explanations. According to Zainuddin et al. (2019), this finding demonstrated that learners of SDL were influenced by interesting instructional content. They have their own favorite ways and platforms to help them learn grammar independently, aside from the sources and media that the teacher provided for students; they use games, dissect songs, and watch movies, etc. as a method of learning. This finding is consistent with Susanthi's (2021) learning strategy, which describes several learning strategies such as playing games, observing, and reading. According to Ogcilia et al. (2022), students find more effective media such as English-language videos, movies, games, and music as another option for learning English in helping them understand English. This demonstrated that by utilizing a variety of media, students can have a more enjoyable learning experience than is typical. One new discovery by the author is the flexibility of the intensity and frequency that can be adjusted by students, which is also one of the important things that they like about the learning process.

As a result of their delightful learning experience, students are eager to continue their studies on their own. Students were influenced to set aside time for independent study by two factors: their learning motivation and their curiosity about the grammar material they were studying. They demonstrate in this internal motivation that being aware of their lack of English language skills required them to practice continuously. Sulasiwi et al. (2019) stated that SDL skills are inextricably linked with awareness elements, learning strategies, and evaluations. According to Dwilestari (2021), interaction between teachers and students, as well as intrinsic motivation, are two important factors that influence students' SDL levels. Aside from the numerous outside sources of motivation for students, the lack of effectiveness during the learning process at school is what motivates them to continue learning. Unfortunately, Ryan and Deci (2020) stated that this internal and external motivation is a barrier that students must overcome when learning using the internet. Indeed, after two years, students feel the need to understand the learning material in order to become accustomed to it and take the initiative to do independent study without feeling burdened.

Students are able to think and reflect critically on their learning process as a result of their learning experiences while studying independently. As a result, students can find out which parts of their expertise, and weaknesses, and become more familiar with their own way of learning by doing a critical reflection. Furthermore, students realize that appropriate and interesting learning methods and media played a critical role in assisting them in understanding the grammar material. Some students also used grammar from function aspects, which means they used language to express themselves. This is similar to Halliday's (2004) assertion that language is the essence of meaning-making. However, because some students use the language for its meaning, they tend to be confused about the general grammar structure.

Students' Level of SDL Skills

From these six students, only one is in stage one of SDL, which is student 5. She explained that she is still

dependent and requires a lot of help from others to understand the learning material. Then there's student 6, who is in stage two of SDL skill development. What distinguishes him from the previous student is that he can still understand the lesson on his own, despite his admission that he still needs good guidance when learning independently. The remaining students demonstrated that they are in stage 3 because, as described in table 2.1, students in stage three are ready to explore the subject with good guidance and even explore some of it on their own. If they believe it is necessary, they will ask for assistance or discuss it with their friends or teacher.

This finding is supported by Adnan and Sayadi (2021) claimed that students with a high level of self-directedness outperformed students with a low level of self-directedness. Even though this statement is about writing, it also applies to learning grammar. According to these findings, students with a higher SDL level put in more effort to learn and understand the material, as evidenced by the R1 statement on vignette 12. Also, students 1 and 4 are steadfast in sticking to the schedule they have planned because they prefer to study with a structured time. This is also related to what Subekti (2021) stated in his research on EAP students, who had high SDL and were eager to learn more. And low SDL students who make little to no effort to study English outside of class.

CONCLUSION

According to the results and discussion above, it can be concluded from students' experiences that even though students were given the opportunity and many sources to do SDL, some students admitted that they still need guidance rather than being given assignments because they could not follow the instruction and the given material well. From there, students learn grammar in their own unique and more fun and engaging way, by observing songs, reading fiction, the storyline of a game, articles, watching movies and videos, and using other applications that support the learning. Aside from that, some students value the flexibility of intensity and frequency when doing independent learning.

They become more willing to continue doing SDL grammar by using fun mediums. Students' willingness to devote time to independent study is influenced by two factors: their learning motivation and their interest in the grammar being studied. Based on their experiences, students discovered both internal and external motivations. The awareness of one's lack of English ability serves as an internal motivator. They stated that they needed to learn grammar because it was difficult and required constant practice. While external motivation can be found in the ease with which students access various learning resources such as applications and others mentioned previously, the lack of effectiveness in learning while at school also contributes to their motivation to continue doing SDL.

Students also did critical self-reflection on their self-directed learning and discovered which parts of their expertise were strengths and weaknesses, became more familiar with their own way of learning by critically reflecting on their learning, and, most importantly, students became aware of the role of appropriate and interesting learning methods and media in helping them understand the grammar material. Their SDL grammar ability is found to be on a different level based on how they do self-directed learning. According to this study, one student is in stage one, one student is in stage two, the rest of the respondents are in stage three, and there is no student who is in stage four.

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