

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This part provides a brief description of the contents in the present research including background of the study, statements of the problem, purposes of the study, and significances of the study, definition of key terms and organization of the thesis.

1.1 Background of the Study

As stated in the Minister of Education and Culture Regulation (Permendikbud) 2014 number 104 about the 2013 curriculum implementation, teachers are suggested to change learning environment from teacher-centered to learner-centered (Nuh, 2014). Consequently, the 2013 curriculum implementation expects there is a change in the teaching and learning process. It can be said that students have to be trained to become autonomous by using learning strategies which will make them taking part more in managing their own learning. Learner autonomy leads the reduction of teacher-centered as suggested in the 2013 curriculum because learner autonomy gives the opportunity to learners to be more independent in the teaching and learning process.

Despite the regulation that learner-centered should be applied in the 2013 curriculum implementation, it cannot be denied that learner autonomy still poses a challenge to be implemented in Indonesia because of some issues. Learner autonomy may work very well in western contexts but not in Indonesian contexts because of the standard norm in the Indonesian culture in learning such as the principles of total obedience, the unquestioning mind, the concept of elders-know-all, and the belief that teachers can do no wrong (Dardjowidjojo, 2001). Another reason is, unlike in western context, Indonesia educational setting mostly has big classrooms which involve more than 25 students in a classroom.

Moreover, some teachers feel that it is hard to trigger some students to take part and initiate on their own learning during the teaching and learning process. It is

due to the attitude of self-directed learning that does not normally happen in most schools in Indonesia. In addition to that most students in Indonesia have been raised in a condition of being recipients in learning. They also mostly rely on teachers for what to learn and how to learn. As the result, the students frequently cannot see their needs in studying English and many of them tend to be less eager and enthusiastic to take the chance in learning English (Padmadewi, 2016). Those issues seem to be the reasons that learner autonomy is rarely implemented in Indonesian classroom.

Even though there is a fact that learner autonomy is still rarely implemented in Indonesia, the stakeholders and some researchers in Indonesia are still interested to investigate learner autonomy implementation in all educational levels due to the expectation of improvement. There have been some previous studies which investigated learner autonomy in the Indonesian context. One of them is a research from Agustina (2017) which explores the meaning of learner autonomy from high school teachers' points of view. By employing a multi-case study, she had found that diverse understanding of autonomy as reported by Junior High School English teachers in Magelang Regency, Central Java, Indonesia. She discussed those teachers' understanding in a more detailed way along with the implications when the concept was understood differently. She also suggested the need to consider the consequences of allowing the presence of various understanding of learner autonomy particularly when it is set as an educational goal.

In addition, Meysani and Rambet (2017) also found out a teacher's perceptions toward learner autonomy in the Indonesian context. Their study aimed to figure out how an EFL teacher perceives the notion of Learner Autonomy and its impacts on language learning and how she identifies the desirability and feasibility of implementing Learner Autonomy in the given context. The research which was conducted in Java revealed that the teacher believed and suggested that preparing activities that promoted language learner autonomy are essential for English teachers. Moreover, the teacher was confident that learning how to learn was a key to develop learner autonomy.

Another study investigated English teachers' roles in promoting learner autonomy in the EFL class of public Senior High Schools (Ja, 2017). The aims of this research were: to describe the teachers' role in promoting learner autonomy in EFL class, identify the frequency of the teachers' role in promoting learner autonomy and describe the students' responses toward the roles played by the EFL teachers in their class. The research found that there were six roles played by the English teachers in their class. Those roles were facilitator manager, assessor, resources, participant, and counselor. However, the EFL teachers played the roles in different frequency among one another.

Those studies reveal that teachers have positive perspectives about learner autonomy even if they understand learner autonomy in different ways, and they know that learner autonomy is more beneficial for students' learning rather than the dominant of teacher-centered learning. Those studies also show that most teachers know the ways to promote learner autonomy in their classroom. It means teachers know what to do and the reasons to promote learner autonomy in their classroom to achieve more meaningful learning outcomes. Nevertheless, learner autonomy is still less implemented in Indonesia although the 2013 curriculum suggests learner autonomy to take place in the learning process. To fill this gap, the present study explores EFL learner autonomy in the 2013 curriculum implementation by investigating both teacher's perspective and how teacher attempts to promote learner autonomy in the 2013 curriculum implementation combining with students' perspectives on that implementation of learner autonomy.

Investigating learners' perspectives on learner autonomy in the Indonesian context is still left less noticed. Besides, the current research specifically explored learner autonomy in the 2013 curriculum which has been applied in the Indonesian educational system in recent years. This current research framed students' perspectives into the three perspectives in learner autonomy (Benson, 1997 as cited in Palfreyman & Smith, 2003). It involves technical perspectives which have to do with skills or strategies and actions in learner autonomy, psychological perspectives which

emphasize on attitudes to take responsibility in learning and political perspectives which deal with the empowerment of learners in taking control in their learning.

This research also aimed to combine the investigation on how the teachers attempt to construct autonomous classroom during the teaching and learning process based on Dam's (2008) theory. Both investigations were conducted to get a complete understanding of learner autonomy implementation in the 2013 curriculum (Indonesian context). It is caused by the previous studies of learner autonomy in the Indonesian context mostly focus on teachers' perspectives rather than learners' perspectives. Meanwhile, when encouraging students to be autonomous, both teachers and students should treat learner autonomy in the same way (Harmer, 2007: p.396). That is why doing this investigation in one study gave a complete understanding about this case.

This study was worth doing because it could reveal students' attitude, knowledge and skill about learner autonomy itself. Earlier studies which analyzed students' perception on learner autonomy (Chan, 2001; Faharani, 2014; Rungwaraphong, 2012; Yildirim, 2008), have found that research in this area is important to be done before designing, promoting and applying learner autonomy in language curriculum. As a result, it can be decided then which part should be improved, fixed and enhanced from the learner to be an effective autonomous learner. Allwright (1988) suggests that it may be well worth trying to develop 'autonomy' and 'individualization' from whatever seeds we can already find in the language classroom. For those reasons, this current research aimed to explore EFL learner autonomy in the 2013 curriculum implementation by finding out the teacher's and students' perception in one study, to be beneficial for learner autonomy development in the 2013 curriculum implementation.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the issues explained in the background of the study, this present research attempted to answer three research questions in the following:

1. How do the students perceive learner autonomy?

2. How does the teacher perceive learner autonomy?
3. How does the teacher attempt to promote learner autonomy in the 2013 curriculum implementation?

1.3 Purposes of the Study

In line with the research questions above, this research was done to complete the objectives of the research like in the following:

1. To find out the students' perception of learner autonomy.
2. To recognize the teacher's perception of learner autonomy
3. To find out how the teacher attempts to construct learner autonomy in the teaching and learning process of the 2013 curriculum implementation.

1.4 The Scope of The Study

This research was limited to explore EFL learner autonomy in the 2013 curriculum implementation in a senior high school in Indonesia, particularly in Bukittinggi, West Sumatra. The EFL learning context in this study was limited to a teacher who taught English in that senior high school and thirty students in twelve grade class.

1.5 The Significance of the Study

The result of this study was expected to provide the teachers and the stakeholders with in-depth description on the teacher's and the students' perception of the shifting from teacher-centered to learner autonomy in the 2013 curriculum implementation. The research was expected to cover both theoretical and practical significance.

Theoretically, this study was conducted to contribute toward the enhancement of the literature in the same field of study on students' and teacher's perspectives in perceiving learner autonomy for EFL learning specifically in the 2013 curriculum implementation. Furthermore, it was expected to be one of the valuable references for other researchers to conduct further research in the same field, especially about learner autonomy. Practically, the results of this research were expected to offer valuable contributions for teachers and stakeholders in understanding students'

perspectives together with the way teachers construct learner autonomy environment in the classroom. It hopefully gave the teachers opportunity to promote, improve, fix and enhance students' knowledge, attitudes and skills toward learner autonomy in order to be effectively implemented in the classroom later.

1.6 Clarification of Terms

To the extent of this research, some terms used in this research are clarified below:

- a. *Learner autonomy*: according to Benson (2001), learner autonomy is the capacity of the students to take more control of their own learning, which is based on their desire, ability, and freedom related to the lesson.

Learner autonomy in this study: it refers to the implementation of learner autonomy, especially in the 2013 curriculum implementation, which means learners are demanded to be more active in taking responsibility toward their own learning during the teaching and learning process as suggested in the 2013 curriculum.

- b. *The 2013 curriculum*: It is the latest curriculum which is applied in Indonesia. The Regulation in Minister of Education and Culture (Permendikbud) 2014 number 104 and 2016 number 22 explains that this curriculum suggest the learning activity should be changed from teacher-centered into learner-centered (learner autonomy). Besides, during the implementation of this curriculum, the students are also expected to gain some skills in order to be creative, critical and independent in their learning (Baswedan, 2016; Nuh, 2014).

This current research focuses on some skills in the 2013 curriculum implementation which involves learner autonomy. It consists of creativity and independence in learning English.

- c. The three perspectives of learner autonomy in language education (Benson, 1997):

Technical perspective emphasizes skills or strategies for unsupervised learning: specific kinds of activity or process such as the 'metacognitive', 'cognitive',

‘social’ and other strategies, for instance, doing the assignments which are not compulsory, reading English magazine, etc.

Psychological perspective emphasizes broader attitudes and cognitive abilities which enable the learner to take responsibility for his/her own learning, such as identifying weaknesses in learning English, evaluating learning and paying attention to learning progress.

Political perspective emphasizes empowerment or emancipation of learners by giving them control over the content and processes of their learning.

1.7 Organization of the Thesis

In chapter I, there is a description of the background of the study, problems of the study, aims of the study, scope of the study, significances of the study, clarification of key terms and the organization of this thesis.

Chapter II deals with the review of literature. It involves the definition of learner autonomy, the importance of learner autonomy, perspectives on learner autonomy in language education, roles of students in learner autonomy, roles of the teacher in learner autonomy, autonomous classroom, learner autonomy in Indonesia, scientific approach in the 2013 curriculum, the concept of perception, and concluding remark.

Chapter III explains the methodology used in this study. It relates to research design, site and participants, research instruments, data collection procedure, and data analysis.

Chapter IV reports and discusses the findings in relation to the literature reviewed and the purposes of the research.

Chapter V presents conclusions which related to the issues and the important results of the study. It also describes the implications of this study, as well as limitations of this study and recommendations for future research.