

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents some information with regard to background of the research, research questions, aims, scope, and significance of the research. This chapter will also provide the clarification of some terms to give clear context of this research.

#### 1.1. Background of the study

Learning languages requires strategy and method to achieve meaningful and successful learning. Helping the learners to become more conscious of the learning process has become the concern of many language teachers (Genc, 2015). The concept of autonomy which focused on the learners helps them to learn foreign languages independently as in finding solutions and also choosing appropriate methods for themselves. In the EFL context, students need to be encouraged to take responsibility for their learning. Therefore, self-directed in learning language as a foreign language is crucial both inside and outside the classroom since the learners have to work within and beyond the classroom to develop their language skills (Najeeb, 2013). Therefore, having initiative and taking responsibility in learning a foreign language has been emerged during the learning process. However, in the Indonesian context learner autonomy is considered as an almost unfamiliar concept for the teachers and also the learners (Lengkanawati, 2017). On the other hand, being autonomous learners also need supports. In this case, the teachers need to promote and support the students to be self-directed learners.

The coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak brought a substantial challenge for educators worldwide. The closure of both public and private educational institutions forced them to find alternative methods to continue the learning process. Since attending face-to-face education has become impossible, distance education whereby the students may not physically attend the school have become a popular mode in the educational system. Nowadays, the common medium is the

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internet network which is commonly called online learning. Online learning during the pandemic brought many benefits as well as challenges for the teachers and the students. One of the most challenging parts in online learning is the students' awareness to learn by themselves. Responsibility in the learning process becomes more important in online learning. In recent years, self-directed learners who take responsibility for one's own learning process have become a central concern in language teaching. Furthermore, the asynchronous mode of online learning highly needs autonomous learning among the students. Students should have the ability to take charge of one's learning. Thanasoulas (2016) stated that promoting learner autonomy refers to encouraging students to determine their objectives, to define the contents and progressions, to select methods and techniques to be used, to monitor the procedures of acquisition and to evaluate what has been acquired. All of these skills are needed and important in online classrooms during the pandemic in order to keep the students getting meaningful learning.

Learning autonomy is the key to long-life learning (Gavrilyuk, 2015). Long-life learning is not only about implementing new technologies or providing unlimited access to new informational resources, but also about a better use of technology and resources as a tool for adaptation to new realities and constant self-development. Autonomy is associated with a set of personal characteristics including the motivation to achievement and self-development, internal locus of control, taking the responsibility, creativity, the ability to set the goals, the ability to make own decisions, the ability to make choices and also critical mindfulness (Gavrilyuk, 2013). These characteristics ensure the students' readiness for autonomous learning and self-directed learning. Learning autonomy also gives the freedom of teachers and students as well as decentralization of responsibility (Gavrilyuk, 2015). In addition, Surma (2004, p. 234) stated that learners that are more successful have an awareness of a long-term commitment for their learning. They can engage in reflective practice as well as decide their own strategies. Therefore, learning autonomy ensures students' constant self-development and plays a crucial role in providing life-long learning.

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The shifting from teacher-centered method to student-centered method has become the focus in educational settings in recent years. It means that the students will assume greater responsibility for their own learning. Therefore, promoting learning autonomy can be a perfect basis for encouraging the students to become autonomous. Learner autonomy is a form of student-centered learning (Lewis & Vialleton, 2011) since they take an active role for their own learning so they do not depend upon teachers (Jacobs & Shan, 2015). When the students exert independence in their learning, they will be more susceptible to succeed in the learning process. They have to know what to learn and also how to learn, hence the role of teachers in taking all the responsibility for helping learners to gain learners autonomy stands out. In order to guide the students to become autonomous, first of all the teachers should have a clear understanding of the concept of learner autonomy. Then, they also have to find effective strategies which can be employed. Yu (2020) argued that teachers should act as facilitators, counselors and resources in order to support the students' willingness to accept responsibility for their own learning.

Several studies have been conducted to investigate the description of language learner autonomy. Khoiriana (2018) found in her research that students' learner autonomy were manifested in the ability to learn English well, the ability to work alone, and good responsibility in doing the assignments. The students also develop the learner's autonomy by several ways such as identifying the learning difficulties, choosing books and exercises which are suitable with their ability, and taking note. In addition, Brikena and Gezim (2011) also found that students in senior high school believe that learner autonomy is important, but they rely on a teacher on many occasions. The students tend to use note taking to learn new English words independently.

However, most of the research on learner autonomy focused on the description and the perception of learning autonomy in the face-to-face classroom during the learning process. In this research, the study investigate the students' profile of their learning autonomy during online classrooms dominated by asynchronous sessions in which the awareness of learner autonomy increased significantly. The

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profile of students' learning autonomy focuses on the degree of learner autonomy and their ways in developing learning autonomy. It also investigates the teachers' roles in promoting learner autonomy especially during online learning. In addition, the previous studies mostly investigated students' learner autonomy in university context. The research about learner autonomy in secondary school has not been studied widely. Therefore, this study investigates the learner autonomy in secondary school in which this stage emerge promoting learner autonomy with greater responsibility in learning

### **1.2. Research questions**

1. How is the profile of students' language learner autonomy in the third grade of the school during online learning?
2. What are the teachers' roles in promoting language learner autonomy to the students during online learning?

### **1.3. The aims of the study**

Based on the formulation of the problem as mentioned above are:

1. To find out the profile of students' language learner autonomy in the thord grade of the school during online learning.
2. To find out the teachers' role in promoting the students' language learner autonomy during online learning. It is intended to get information regarding how the teachers help the students to become more autonomous especially during online learning with their condition that dominated by asynchronous learning.

### **1.4. The scope of the study**

This study focuses on how the profile of students' language learner autonomy in the third grade of senior high school in Kutowinangun during online learning. It investigates the students' attitudes and behavior that indicates their learning autonomy and the teacher's roles in promoting language learning autonomy during online learning which is dominated by asynchronous sessions.

### **1.5. Significance of the study**

It is worth conducting this study in three aspects including theoretical, practical, and political. For theoretical aspects, the findings of this study provides significance for both the teachers and other researchers. The findings of this study can be used as reference that gives information about the profile of students' learning autonomy during online learning. This description will give the chance for the teachers to find the strategy in promoting learning autonomy during the online learning. For other researchers, this study can be used as a starting point to conduct research in certain areas. It is expected to help optimize students' learning experience in acquiring foreign languages. In practice, this study can be beneficial for enhancement of practical organization and teachers' training. Meanwhile, for policy aspects, the findings of this study gives the information for relevant policy related to teachers' professional development commonly their roles in promoting learner autonomy.

### **1.6. Clarification of terms**

The following are some terms worth defining to avoid misunderstanding and ambiguity.

1. In this research, learning autonomy refers to the learners' ability and willingness to take responsibility and control their own learning in order to achieve their goals in the learning process which will be analyzed by Benson (1997). Profile of learning autonomy in this study refers to the students' behaviour and attitudes to act independently as autonomous learners based on Benson's framework (1997) of technical and psychological perspective of learning autonomy.
2. Online learning can be defined as a newer version and improved version of distance learning which improves access to educational opportunities for learners. In this study, the term online learning refers to a learning process in which the students and the teachers are geographically distant and takes place over the internet both synchronous and asynchronous learning.