

Chapter One

Introduction

Background of the Study

Nowadays, the field of education in Indonesia has created a diverse range of learning methods to achieve practical and successful learning. This was deliberately done to improve the quality of students' learning. The fact shows that many methods have not succeeded in achieving the desired target. Consequently, the students cannot learn the materials effectively. Many methods are arranged to gain the best results. The participation of students is also very influential to develop education in order to establish learning methods expected by students in Indonesia to be a successful learner in prosperous learning. Therefore, autonomous learning method has become a recent trend in education which highlights the students' engagement in their own learning.

There are some methods used by lecturers to teach and to apply in the classroom. Currently, a method that is familiar for students' and lecturers is the autonomous learning method. The meaning of autonomous learning method is independent learning. The method is still rarely used in faculties and other universities. For instance, in Indonesia, there are universities which apply autonomous learning, one of them is, the English Education Department, Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta.

A lecturer should help their students by directing them to run the autonomous learning method. As stated by Godwin (2011), a lecturer is not helpful to student's individual needs. Lecturer brings the problem of limited attention covering on the part of learners. The learning method is considered to be aggravating their students. The reason of lecturers at EED UMY applying this method is to make the students be more creative, active, and critical in completing all the tasks given. In addition, it makes their students be useful for the society around them. This research is based on the big theory, named self-determination. However, the involvements of students are more dominant because teachers have roles as mediators, facilitators, and friends for students to create effective learning.

Seeing the phenomena, the success of a student in mastering the course material and achieving the graduation is determined by the learning process. The process of students' learning can be seen from how they utilize the time to learn. They should have time management if they want to be successful learners. Most of them only use their time in the classroom to learn. However, as they finish the class, they feel that the obligation to study has been completed. Likewise, as they do the assignment given by lecturer, they feel that the time given by lecturer is not enough. Therefore, they do not feel all-out in doing it.

In autonomous learning method, the learning process will focus on the involvement of the students. According to Slavin (2006), being autonomous learners should know some criteria, they are creative, independent, critical and also active.

Therefore, they can be regarded as autonomous learners; the students have a responsibility to learn. However, as autonomous learners, they should be creative and active to find sources needed. It does not depend on sources given by lecturers but they should be active to look for the sources by themselves to complete tasks and also enhance their knowledge. Occasionally, the sources given by lecturers are not the same as sources that they have got. It is not a problem because it would be useful to add the knowledge.

In this research, the researcher will conduct a survey to some students of EED UMY. From the above backgrounds, the researcher is interested in conducting research on “The Practice of the Autonomous Learning Method in EED UMY”.

Limitation of Problem

The researcher limits this research on the practice of autonomous learning method at EED UMY. This research focuses on the students’ opinion, especially students’ opinion batch 2012 about their assumptions of the autonomous learning method that has already been applied at EED UMY.

Research Questions

The key point in this research focuses on the practice of autonomous learning method. The main questions addressed in this study are;

- 1) how is the implementation of Autonomous Learning method at EED UMY?
- 2) what are the challenges faced by the students in using Autonomous Learning method at EED UMY?

Objectives of the Research

The purposes of the research are;

- 1) to identify the implementation of Autonomous Learning method at EED UMY
- 2) to find out the challenges that are faced in using Autonomous Learning method by the students EED UMY

Significance of the Research

There are several benefits of this research. The benefits are categorized into four. They are;

The researcher. The result of the research would become the references for the next research. It comprehends about how to apply the autonomous learning method.

The students. The result of the research would give contribution for the students to be more active. They do not spend their time vainly. They are being motivated to search information to fulfill their tasks. They will have more knowledge in internal and external sides, and also become discipline and responsible to their obligation as students.

The lecturer. The result of this research includes the lecturers in becoming the guide and monitor for students. The lecturers should prepare their material for teaching, such as methodology and strategy to overcome students' difficulties in doing the tasks. The lecturers should prepare the material needed by students and consider the students' interests.

The institution. This research has influences for the institution, especially EED UMY. EED UMY have students and lecturers who bring the institution better for the future. Additionally, the English Education Department UMY is assumed to have good quality among the institutions or universities in Indonesia.

Outlines of the Research

In the first chapter, the researcher would like to tell about the background of the study. The researcher also gives some reasons why this study is held and tells about the problems as a basis in this study. The second chapter of this study offers review of autonomy, autonomous learning method, and the obstacles of autonomous learning method, and application of autonomous learning method. The literature on the definition characteristics of autonomous learning method and the reasons of applying autonomous learning method in teaching learning process are also discussed. The third chapter focuses on the methodology used to collect data and also discuss the data analysis. The forth chapter presents and discusses the findings of study, including conducting the questionnaires to the students and the result of practice the autonomous learning method. The fifth chapter construes the findings in previous research and discusses the implication for students at EED UMY.

Operational Definition of Variable

Based on the title of this research “The Practice of Autonomous Learning Method at EED UMY”, there is an important term to define operationally in this research: Autonomous Learning Method.

Autonomous Learning Method. Autonomous Learning is method where students determine their own learning. It refers to the independent learner. Therefore, Autonomy means capabilities to manage themselves.