

EFL Teachers' Perception On Students' Learner Autonomy: Merdeka Belajar Curriculum Context

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Abstract.

Learner autonomy plays a critical role in fostering students' accountability for their learning. Nevertheless, the teacher's contribution remains pivotal in acquainting students with autonomous learning and in advocating methods to enhance learner autonomy. The concepts addressed in the Merdeka Belajar curriculum support learner autonomy. Therefore, Researching how EFL teachers perceive and experience student autonomy in the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum is crucial. The goal of this study is to investigate how EFL teachers perceive the concept of learner autonomy and what strategies they employ to support it. This qualitative study was carried out using the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum at senior high schools in Surakarta and the surrounding areas. In this study, semi-structured interviews and questionnaires were used to gather data. Teachers addressed an argument that decisions about students' learning should involve them. The study's findings demonstrate that instructors have a positive perspective on student autonomy. It has been demonstrated that educators provide tactics that support students' learner autonomy.

Keywords: Learner Autonomy, EFL Teachers, Teachers' Perceptions and Merdeka Belajar.

I. INTRODUCTION

Learner autonomy is delineated in various manners. As per (Fredholm et al., 2015), autonomy is characterized by the capacity for taking responsibility for one's own learning. (Benson, 2011) In the same way, Benson defines autonomy as the capacity to assume responsibility for one's own learning. Setting objectives for oneself, organizing opportunities for learning, and monitoring the progress are all skills of an autonomous learner. Therefore, an autonomous learner possesses the independent ability to make and execute decisions that influence their actions. The concept of learner autonomy in language education has been a focal point due to the active engagement required from learners in the language learning process. Autonomous language learners are believed to be more proficient as they can effectively and independently apply classroom knowledge and skills to their autonomous learning endeavors. Learners are expected to assume many responsibilities traditionally assigned to teachers, such as establishing learning objectives, selecting learning methods, and assessing knowledge acquisition (Littlewood, 1999). Increasing learner control is believed to enhance self-determination, thereby fostering motivation in learner autonomy development. The most recent curriculum, known as the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum, is being used throughout Indonesia.

The Merdeka Belajar Curriculum is built on an independent and free learning environment in educational institutions. The Merdeka Belajar Curriculum places a strong emphasis on teachers' and students' autonomy in choosing and using instructional tactics (Angga & Iskandar, 2022). Furthermore, Merdeka Belajar highlights that learning can occur wherever that has the capacity to facilitate learning, not just in a classroom. Furthermore, the development of students' character is prioritized in the learning process, and this is carried out by educators and learners who can effectively communicate and engage with their educational surroundings (Mira Marisa, 2021). Teachers are essential in fostering learner autonomy in relation to teaching and learning activities because they model autonomy in their own teaching methods (Benson, 2011). Supporting learner autonomy involves reducing evaluative pressure and coercion in the classroom, while promoting students' learner autonomy and choice in academic tasks (Al Asmari, 2013).

Cultivating learner autonomy necessitates the establishment of a learning community for students, rather than teachers ceasing to instruct, which could disrupt learning progress.

Teacher autonomy is also indispensable for learner autonomy, as teachers must comprehend how to promote autonomy in order for students to develop this trait. Despite the growing interest from practitioners in researching learner autonomy, the field is still considered nascent (Benson, 2011). On the other hand, studies on teacher perspectives on encouraging student autonomy are still in their infancy. It is important to comprehend how teachers view learner autonomy since their opinions might affect their practices, which in turn affects how learners are able to learn (Borg & Al-Busaidi, 2012). Teachers define learner autonomy as providing students an opportunity to make choices about their learning experience. This entails students having the choice to determine what and how they learn. However, teachers must confront their apprehensions about relinquishing control in the classroom and enhance communication with students to foster learner autonomy. It is therefore crucial to reveal how EFL teachers perceive the autonomy of learners and the strategies they employ to promote it when implementing the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum, as teachers are the primary facilitators in the development of learner autonomy, especially in the context of the curriculum.

II. METHODS

To answer the research issues, the current study used a qualitative case study design. There are several reasons why this specific study is using a qualitative case study design. Initially, it aimed to delineate the perspectives of educators about the autonomy of learners and how they perceive the autonomy of learners during the implementation of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum. Subsequently, it scrutinized the strategies employed by educators to cultivate learner autonomy within educational settings. The research cohort comprised six EFL instructors catering to diverse educational institutions and student cohorts in Surakarta and its environs. These educators were enlisted as participants for the study and were tasked with completing a questionnaire. The data collection process encompassed the dissemination of questionnaires and the inclusion of open-ended inquiries. This investigation integrated a questionnaire modified from (Borg & Al-Busaidi, 2012), encompassing Likert-scale constructs that center on English educators' attitudes toward learner autonomy.

Following the compilation of data from the instructors' questionnaires, supplementary open-ended queries were conducted to delve deeper into educators' perspectives on learner autonomy and the methodologies employed to encourage students' autonomy within educational environments. In the stage of data analysis, the data gathered from the questionnaires was quantitatively analyzed employing descriptive statistical methodologies to determine the distribution percentages of the data. Because the teachers in this study varied in terms of gender, age, educational attainment, and prior teaching experience, the responders were diverse. Six EFL teachers who work at senior high schools in Surakarta and the surrounding areas made up the responders. Two male and four female EFL teachers made up the responders; five teachers held bachelor's degrees and one teacher held a master's. Experience in EFL teaching ranged from less than three years to more than fifteen years.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Questionnaire of Teachers' Perception on students' LA

The summary of the participants' answers can be found using the data from the questionnaire. By distributing a questionnaire that covered four aspects, the opinions of English teachers were obtained: Technical, political, psychological, and sociocultural aspects as has been indicated by (Borg & Al-Busaidi, 2012). The components concerning the facilities that are used for teaching, such as the internet connectivity that is available, the existence of a self-access center, and the use of library resources, have been systematically categorized under the technical perspectives. Items linked to the process of learning itself, like the age of the learner, their level of motivation, self-confidence, the overall effectiveness of the learning

experience, and the degree of learner-centeredness displayed, have been clearly classified within psychological perspectives.

For further explanation, the psychological perspectives items were categorized into three groups: 1) learner background, 2) learner autonomy contribution, and 3) psychology of learning. Considerations related to the various opportunities presented to learners, the choices they are able to make, the decisions they are empowered to take, the extent of freedom granted within the learning environment, and the prevalence of a teacher-centered approach are all encapsulated under the political perspectives. The factors that encompass the diverse backgrounds from which learners emerge, the levels of collaboration fostered within the learning setting, and the presence of issues that are either rooted in Western or non-Western contexts have been collated under the sociocultural perspectives.

Table 1. Teachers' perceptions on LA: Technical Perspectives

No	Statement	SD (%)	D (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
1	Independent study in the library is an activity which develops learner autonomy.	0	0	33.3	66.7
2	Autonomy can develop most effectively through learning outside the classroom.	0	16.7	66.7	16.7
3	Learner autonomy means learning without a teacher	16.7	66.7	0	16.7
4	Learner autonomy cannot develop without the help of the teacher.	0	50	16.7	33.3
5	Learner autonomy is promoted by independent work in a self-access center.	0	16.7	33.3	50.0
6	Learner autonomy requires the learner to be totally independent of the teacher.	0	66.7	33.3	0
7	Out-of-class tasks which require learners to use the internet promote learner autonomy.	0	16.7	50.0	33.3

Regarding to Table 1, the study discovered a strong correlation between learner independence and teachers' perceptions of learner autonomy (LA). They thought that using the internet and learning outside of the classroom could foster autonomy. Regarding the idea of learner autonomy, which entails learning without a teacher, the majorities of teachers either voted in disagreed or strongly disagree. They thought that in order to create a more effective and productive learning environment, teachers had a crucial role to play. The study also discovered that student autonomy realization does not require complete independence from the teacher.

Table 2. Teachers' perceptions on LA: Psychological Perspectives – Learner Background

No	Statement	SD (%)	D (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
1	Language learners of all ages can develop learner autonomy	0	0	83.3	16.7
2	It is harder to promote learner autonomy with proficient language learners than it is with beginners.	16.7	33.3	16.7	33.3
3	It is possible to promote learner autonomy with both young language learners and with adults.	0	0	83.3	16.7
4	Learner autonomy is only possible with adult learners.	16.7	33.3	50	0
5	Promoting autonomy is easier with beginning language learners than with more proficient learners.	0	50	50	0
6	The proficiency of a language learner does not affect their ability to develop autonomy.	0	66.7	33.3	0

Psychological perspectives reveal how factors like age, learner autonomy, motivation, and self-evaluation impact learners' performance. Teachers believe all ages can foster autonomy, but there's confusion about adult learners. Proficient and beginner language learners face similar challenges in promoting autonomy. Over half of teachers agree that proficiency can enhance autonomy, but proficiency also has its own difficulties. In Table 3, the data show all the teachers were in the same boat about students who have learner autonomy gained high potential to become effective language learners. In a similar way, all of the teachers concurred that learner autonomy plays a crucial role in helping students become successful language learners. It demonstrates how strongly teachers feel that learner autonomy plays a role in language acquisition. The examination of the interviews showed connections between language acquisition and LA.

Table 3. Teachers' perceptions on LA: Psychological Perspectives – LA contribution to language learning

No	Statement	SD (%)	D (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
1	Individuals who lack autonomy are not likely to be effective language learners.	0	0	83.3	16.7
2	Learner autonomy allows language learners to learn more effectively than they otherwise would.	0	0	66.7	33.3
3	Learner autonomy has a positive effect on success as a language learner.	0	0	50	50

Table 4. Teachers' perceptions on LA: Psychological Perspectives – Psychology of learning

No	Statement	SD (%)	D (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
1	Confident language learners are more likely to develop autonomy than those who lack confidence.	0	0	50	50
2	Learner-centered classrooms provide ideal conditions for developing learner autonomy.	0	0	66.7	33.3
3	Learning how to learn is key to developing learner autonomy.	0	0	50	50
4	The ability to monitor one's learning is central to learner autonomy.	0	16.7	66.7	16.7
5	Motivated language learners are more likely to develop learner autonomy than learners who are not motivated.	0	0	66.7	33.3
6	To become autonomous, learners need to develop the ability to evaluate their own learning.	0	0	50	50

In Table 4, the study focuses on the psychology of learning and found that most teachers agree that the ability to monitor one's learning is crucial for learner autonomy. Motivated and confident language learners are more likely to foster learner autonomy than those who are unmotivated. Teachers also agreed that students need to develop their ability to evaluate their own learning to become autonomous. Self-assessment and reflection help students explore their strengths and weaknesses, plan improvements, and find solutions. Teachers also agreed that implementing a learner-centered approach to teaching will provide an ideal circumstance to foster learner autonomy. Teachers believe that the main actor of learning is the learner itself, and they support students to become the center of learning through existing learning activities. The study concludes that learning how to learn is crucial for developing learner autonomy, with 100% agreement from teachers.

Table 5. Teachers' perceptions on LA: Political Perspectives

No	Statement	SD (%)	D (%)	A (%)	SAN(%)
1	Learner autonomy is promoted through regular opportunities for learners to complete tasks alone.	0	16.7	66.7	16.7
2	Autonomy means that learners can make choices about how they learn.	0	0	33.3	66.7
3	Involving learners in decisions about what to learn promotes learner autonomy.	0	0	66.7	33.3
4	Learner autonomy is promoted when learners have some choice in the kinds of activities they do.	0	0	66.7	33.3
5	Learner autonomy cannot be promoted in teacher-centered classrooms.	0	16.7	33.3	50
6	Learner autonomy implies a rejection of traditional teacher-led ways of teaching	16.7	0	66.7	16.7
7	Learner autonomy is promoted when learners are free to decide how their learning will be assessed.	0	33.3	50	16.7
8	Learner autonomy is promoted when learners can choose their own learning materials	0	0	66.7	33.3
9	The teacher has an important role to play in supporting learner autonomy.	0	16.7	50	33.3

According to Table 5, the political perspectives in the classroom include the rights of learners and the potential for learner autonomy. Teachers believe that regular tasks and student-led learning can promote learner autonomy. They also believe that involving students in decision-making about what to learn, how to learn, and the type of activities can help develop this autonomy. Teachers also expect students to choose their own learning material and design lessons accordingly. Most teachers agree that learner autonomy would

reject teacher-led teaching methods, but the role of teachers is still important. Most teachers believe that learning is not teacher-centered, but teachers play a significant role. Over half of teachers believe that students can participate in learning assessment, with enthusiastic students often achieving better grades. As data shown in Table 6, teachers held the view that students had an equal chance to develop autonomy and that learner autonomy is independent of cultural background. However, there is a 50/50 agreement between teachers on whether learner autonomy is not suitable for non-Western learners. Activities that allow students to learn from each other and cooperative group work activities are believed to promote learner autonomy. However, most teachers (n=5) believe that working together can promote learner autonomy, and working alone is not central. Teachers like Teacher 6 and Teacher 3 support students in developing learning responsibility through group work, as it allows them to learn from each other and help each other complete tasks. In general, teachers argue that collaboration is necessary for students to grow as independent learners and to participate in their education.

Table 6. Teachers' perceptions on LA: Socio-cultural Perspectives

No	Statement	SD (%)	D (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
1	Learner autonomy can be achieved by learners of all cultural backgrounds.	0	0	66.7	33.3
2	Learner autonomy is promoted through activities which give learners opportunities to learn from each other	0	0	33.3	66.7
3	Learner autonomy is promoted by activities that encourage learners to work together.	0	16.7	33.3	50
4	Learner autonomy is a concept which is not suited to non-Western learners.	16.7	33.3	33.3	16.7
5	Co-operative group work activities support the development of learner autonomy.	0	0	50	50
6	Promoting autonomy is easier with beginning language learners than with more proficient learners.	0	50	50	0
7	Learning to work alone is central to the development of learner autonomy.	16.7	16.7	50	16.7

The teachers' strategies in promoting LA

In a follow-up interview, all teachers expressed their efforts to promote learner autonomy, using various strategies fairly and frequently. They used various terms and statements to define their practices, which were grouped into categories and displayed in parenthesis. The total frequencies of these statements were also shown in parenthesis.

Table 7. Teachers' answer related to their practices in promoting learner autonomy

Theme	Category	Code
Teachers' practices to promote learner autonomy	<i>Giving chance to explore (5)</i>	- Giving chance to explore it themselves (2)
		- Advising them alternatives learning resources (2)
		- Not giving the answer directly and telling them to find it themselves
	<i>Decision-making (5)</i>	- Choosing topic (2)
		- Choosing material that students want to use
		- Discussing learning objectives
		- Discussing assessment
	<i>Out of class tasks (5)</i>	- Creating a poster
		- Creating reportage project
		- Creating personal letter (email)
- Creating daily conversation video		
- Acting out on a stage		
<i>Promoting perception (4)</i>	- Trying to promote their perception (4)	
<i>Removing fears (4)</i>	- Letting them making mistakes (3)	
	- Letting them read out bravely	
<i>Cooperative learning (4)</i>	- Promoting cooperative and peer learning	
	- Using grouping (3)	

<i>Guidance (3)</i>	-	Guiding them into program or new information (3)
<i>Activities like watching, listening (3)</i>	-	Advising them to watch movies Listening foreign song (2)
<i>Practicing Task (3)</i>	-	Telling them to chat or speak using English (2) Giving task about vocabulary-adding
<i>Learning strategies (2)</i>	-	Task differentiation (2)

According to Table 7, Teachers claim that encouraging students' autonomy in their English language learning can be done in a number of ways. These methods are thought to be the most beneficial and successful for language learning. Offering students the opportunity to explore their interests, strengths, and passions is one method to encourage their sense of autonomy. Two teachers believe that giving students the chance to explore is crucial for their learning development. They provide time space for students to explore what they are interested in, even if only for a short time. Teachers also suggest alternative resources, such as free online learning links and course information, to address the varied needs of students. Teacher 2 emphasizes the importance of letting students think or do something by themselves first, encouraging critical thinking and becoming more independent and confident. They enjoy when students look serious or discuss things with fellow classmates to find answers. Teachers also give learners the chance to participate in selecting the topics and materials they are going to explore. They encourage students to look for their own answers first, which will help them become more independent and confident. Involving students in deciding learning goals is also very helpful. Teachers also emphasize that the assessment will take place before the discussion, and students should be given the material and objectives to start proposing a theme or topic to enjoy the learning process. Out of class tasks, such as creating posters, personal letters, reportages, daily conversation videos, and acting, can help students improve their autonomy by allowing them to work independently or interdependently.

Teachers believe that activities such as acting out in groups can create a memorable and engaging learning experience. Furthermore, teachers believe that promoting students' perception is another way to foster learner autonomy. They argue that students need positive affirmation to raise their awareness and confidence. Teachers start the class by giving quotes, reviewing newest issues, providing tips and tricks for learning, and even listening to their difficulties. Teachers also encourage students to be more aware of their surroundings and identify things that can help them in learning. Letting students make mistakes might remove their fears for using English. Teachers sometimes focus on students' production and temporarily put aside perfection to make them not afraid to make mistakes while studying. Teachers also suggest that providing enough time for students to read aloud helps them deal with the learning process. Another practice obtained from teachers' responses is cooperative or grouping. Teachers conduct group activities to encourage students to work together, such as completing assignments or participating in discussions. Teachers also emphasize the importance of grouping in promoting autonomy, as it allows students to work together without relying on the teacher. In their teaching strategies, teachers highlight the value of encouraging student autonomy in learning. They aid students in navigating new programs and material, making sure they have adequate support and their personal learning objectives.

Teachers also need to upgrade their knowledge and skills before guiding their students. Engaging in activities like watching and listening to foreign films and music can support students' growth as independent learners. Teachers want learners to utilize English as often as they can because they think it's crucial for accomplishment. They also provide practicing tasks, such as vocabulary-adding, to help students develop their vocabulary. Teachers also prepare for students' different levels by providing different tasks based on their level. For example, teachers may prepare practice packages to accommodate students with higher proficiency levels, while those at a higher level may need a different challenge. Teachers assist students in improving their language competence and independence by encouraging autonomy. In summary, teachers believe that various practices can help promote students' autonomy in English language learning. By providing opportunities for students to explore, engage in decision-making, and participate in group activities,

teachers can create a supportive and engaging learning environment for their students. Hence, teachers also play a crucial role in promoting learning autonomy in their teaching methods. Teachers facilitate the growth of their students' language skills and independence by assigning varied assignments and planning for their various levels.

Discussions

The research findings were categorized into four perspectives: technical, psychological, political, and sociocultural. Technical perspectives focus on the physical environment, while psychological perspectives center on learner characteristics. Psychological perspectives recognize that language learners, regardless of age or maturity, can acquire learner autonomy from any background. Motivated learners, in the opinion of teachers, are more likely to become autonomous learners. Psychological perspectives emphasize the importance of students' capacity to recognize and comprehend their individual learning requirements as a stimulus for self-motivation in the learning process. This notion aligns with (Zulaihah & Harida, 2017), an autonomous learner is an individualized approach to learning that a person uses to determine his own learning objectives and needs, select the best method for his own learning, and track and assess his progress in learning. Political perspectives assert that encouraging students' autonomy in the classroom through their participation in decision-making processes is advantageous. As mentioned (Hamdani et al., 2021) that enabling students to participate in decisions-making about the process and the subject matter of their learning in order to encourage learning autonomy.

Teachers who support this feature suggest that letting students choose certain areas of their education would be a good way to promote autonomy (Evans & Boucher, 2015). This involves engaging in close partnerships with students, focusing on interactive engagement and customization of the course outline according to their objectives, preferences, interests, requirements, and language proficiency. Sociocultural perspectives highlight collaboration and social engagement as pivotal for promoting learner autonomy. This is in line with (Chowdhury, 2021) that Cooperative and collaborative learning are learner-centered teaching practices used in English language teaching (ELT) that support active, shared, inductive, and independent learning. Teachers agree that group work is an effective strategy for students to finish tasks more effectively and help them learn better by sharing ideas with peers. Fostering learner autonomy can take place within social settings, like language learning environments, through mutual support and teamwork. The results of the research refuted the notion that learner autonomy is inappropriate for non-Western cultures, particularly those of Indonesia, as every student has an equal chance to acquire it.

Teachers argue that students can be fostered to be autonomous learners. Psychological perspectives on learner background, autonomy, and the psychology of learning reveal that teachers agree that language learners can develop autonomy, contributing to their success. They believe students need mental qualities like motivation and confidence before autonomy can be developed. As stated by (Reeve & Cheon, 2021) that to encourage their intrinsic motivation teachers might promote student independence. Socio-cultural perspectives emphasize collaboration and social engagement, in order to promote autonomy, teachers propose allowing students to participate in decision-making and providing them with options. The extent to which teachers encourage students' learner autonomy is the main emphasis of the research question. Being asked if they encouraged learner autonomy in their students, teachers responded with a variety of strategies, techniques, and exercises.

1. Providing opportunities for students to independently explore a subject matter is crucial for encouraging cognitive development and critical thinking skills (Nold, 2017). This educational approach necessitates the allocation of sufficient time for students to engage in autonomous thinking or practical application of concepts. This indicates a resource-based approach, emphasizing affording students the chance to take charge of their own learning experience. Teachers should be patient and refrain from intervening prematurely while anticipating that students will explore and navigate through challenges independently.
2. Involving students in decision-making is another important aspect of promoting learner autonomy (Hamdani et al., 2021). Teachers should allow students to be involved in choosing topics and materials

used, making them more enthusiastic in the learning process (Lengkanawati, 2017). Curriculum-based approaches place a strong emphasis on teachers and students negotiating.

3. Giving out of class tasks such as acting, preparing a poster, writing an email to overseas friend, creating reportage, and daily conversation video can foster students' autonomy by teaching them how to gather information, organize it, act a role, and rehearse it. "Projects" are used in project-based learning, according to (Chiang and Lee et al., 2016), as a means of inspiring students and providing them with an opportunity to demonstrate and explain what they have learnt.
4. Promoting student perception is vital for encouraging learner autonomy because it is strongly associated with a successful outcome. Different perceptions between teachers and students regarding the level or autonomy in EFL classroom could impact the effectiveness of promoting autonomy. The improvement of teacher autonomy, which includes the teacher-based approach, is a prerequisite for the development of learner autonomy.
5. Removing students' fears and motivating them is essential for language acquisition. Teachers should refrain from excessive intervention when students are attempting to generate or produce something independently, as motivation is crucial for promoting learner autonomy. (Al-Hebaish, 2012) claimed that low-confidence students feel uneasy, afraid, and frustrated in the classroom.
6. Cooperative learning is an additional crucial component of encouraging learner autonomy. Integrating group activities into their instructional strategies should be done by teachers, as they serve as a catalyst for peer learning and reduce their reliance on direct guidance and instruction from teachers. (Chowdhury, 2021) asserted that encouraging student-to-student interaction raises student engagement, which promotes learner autonomy.
7. Providing guidance is necessary for promoting learner autonomy, as it helps students address uncertainty and lack of clarity issues. The entire autonomous learning process will result in ineffective learning if teachers are not present to provide direction and oversight (Hong-mei, 2018). Effective guiding has a positive effect on student autonomy, thus teachers need to be able to master it or know it better.
8. Students can be provided independent learning chances at any time and place by being encouraged to watch movies or listen to foreign music both inside and outside of the classroom. Using authentic resources, such as movies and songs, can enhance students' English language proficiency levels (Akbari & Razavi, 2015) Teachers use practicing tasks to promote English usage in real-life contexts, aiming to enhance self-assurance and independence in learners. In addition, (Suban, 2021) asserted that task's simplicity makes it easier for students to complete and gives them more confidence to compete the next time. This curriculum-based approach is closely related to task negotiation between teachers and students.
9. Task differentiation is crucial in promoting learner autonomy by providing individual needs and encouraging independence in learning. It is consistent with (Susilawati et al., 2024) that personalized instruction may fulfill each student's unique learning needs based on their interests, learning profiles, learning styles, and readiness for learning while also fostering their creative thinking. Different types of tasks can impact students' learner autonomy differently, focusing on providing essential skills or knowledge to improve their autonomy and language learning. The effectiveness of these strategies depends on teachers' ability to build strong relationships with students and their professional background working with specific populations.

The study reveals that teachers employ various strategies to enhance learner autonomy, with a positive correlation between their methods of instruction and how they view learner autonomy. These strategies include classroom-based, learner-based, resource-based, curriculum-based, and teacher-based approaches.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This study investigates how EFL teachers view the autonomy of their students. The findings reveal four perspectives: independent learning without rejecting teachers' role, outside of the classroom, as well as

using the library and other resources. Teachers believe even with their unique obstacles, learner autonomy can be encouraged at different ages, cultural backgrounds, and competence levels. Cooperative group work and involving students in learning decision-making and assessment are positively apprehended to promote learner autonomy. The study also examines the methods teachers employ within the framework of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum to encourage student autonomy. A positive correlation was found between how teachers viewed autonomy in students and how they actually taught in the classroom.

Teachers implemented approaches in the form of activities and other strategies, such as classroom-based, learner-based, resource-based, curriculum-based, and teacher-based approaches. Future research is needed to understand the challenges in encouraging autonomous learners more comprehensively, using other data collection instruments, considering a larger and more diverse sample of teachers, exploring the varying degrees of desire for autonomy among learners, and conducting quantitative studies to measure the relative impact of each perspective and challenges on learner autonomy.

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