

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presented: (1) background of this study; (2) problem of this study; (3) objective of this study; and (4) significance of this study.

1.1 Background

In this globalization era, English plays an important part in the world. Rao (2019) stated that English is used for communicating with people throughout the world. Many countries around the world use English for mutual communication. Rao (2019) added that English is considered as a language of communications in all fields, such as: science, engineering and technology, medicine, trade and commerce, scientific research, education, tourism, and industry. Moreover, English is included as an important language around the world to share information and communication technologies in education (Broughton, Brumfit, Flavell, Hill and Pincas, 2003).

In Indonesia, English is considered as a foreign language. Thus, in Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language starting from junior high school to university level. Mustafa, Kirana and Bahri (2017) asserted that junior and senior high school offers two English hours a week each semester. Thus, the way to understand English in Indonesia is through the learning process.

Learning means the process of gaining knowledge or skills through practice, research or teaching. According to Dharmaraj (2015), learning is

a method of gaining experience, expertise, skills and values by knowing what to do and how to perform any task by synthesizing the various types of information that we interpret. Moreover, Yan (2012) added that learning can be in different ways, learning through teacher's role or teacher's position is just as facilitator, students should set their own target goals, take responsibility for their learning and make decisions and solve the problem through their own strategies or it is called autonomous learning. Asiri and Shukri (2018) point that the distinguishing aspect of autonomous learning is that learners are responsible for their own learning.

The teaching and learning of English have changed its paradigm from teacher-centered to student-centered, which also called autonomous learning. Ceylan (2015) states that learner autonomy can be defined in simple terms as helping learners become more autonomous by teaching them in their language learning process to use language learning techniques effectively, thus accepting the responsibility of managing, evaluating and tracking their language learning process. Moreover, when teachers help them reflect on the learning process, when students study independently, they will become more active learners and carry on learning outside the classroom, shifting learning strategies from one specific topic to another. Furthermore, Zulaiha and Harida (2017) claimed that autonomous learning is a specific way of learning that an individual applies because of his ability to identify his own learning needs, set his own learning goals, and set the most suitable way for his own. If learners

develop their own learning on the basis of a set of experiences and events, then they are explicitly responsible for their own learning (Asiri & Shukri, 2018).

Autonomous learning is beneficial in several ways. Alonazi (2017) argued that autonomy allows learners to adapt the knowledge and skills they have learned in the classroom to real-life circumstances that can occur outside the classroom. Furthermore, learners' autonomy involves taking responsibility for one's own learning, which ensures that learners study on their own in a very efficient way (Alibakhshi, 2015). It means that learners not only study in class with their teacher role but learners also study out of class with their own effective way. When students can take care of their own learning experience, they can better grasp the concepts demonstrated by their teacher.

In relation to this, a preliminary study was conducted on by interviewing two teachers of English at MA Masdarul Ulum. Based on the interview, the teacher stated that she encouraged her students to become autonomous learners (M, personal communication, March 5th, 2021). The students in MA Masdarul Ulum are encouraged to responsible for their own learning, they are alert to change and capable of change in an adaptable, resourceful and opportunistic manner, and they will find a style of learning that fits them (AW, personal communication, March 15th, 2021).

Regarding the explanations above, several related studies have been conducted to investigate teachers' beliefs and practices concerning learner autonomy. A study conducted by Szocs (2017) found that learner autonomy has a positive influence on language learning and contribute to persons learning speed, deeper comprehension and sense of accomplishment. Furthermore, a study conducted by Juan and Yajie (2018), revealed that teacher practice offers some encouragement for learner autonomy, but conventional teaching is more popular and seldom provides opportunities for learners to make decisions. In contrast, a study conducted by Asiri and Shukri (2018) showed that in the current situations, Saudi English teachers have a negative view of learner autonomy, claiming that there are a variety of factors, such as the burden of weak students and not being able to decide what they need to learn.

Based on the explanation and result of preliminary study and previous related study, the researcher is encouraged to conduct a research about: *Teacher's Beliefs in Learners' Autonomy in English Language Learning: A Case Study at MA Masdarul Ulum.*

1.2 Research Problem

Based on the background, the research problem is formulated in the following question: “What are teachers’ beliefs in learners’ autonomy in English language learning at MA Masdarul Ulum?”

1.3 Research Objective

Based on the research problem, the objective of this research is to find out teachers’ beliefs in learners’ autonomy in English language learning at MA Masdarul Ulum.”

1.4 Significance of the study

This study is expected to provide beneficial contribution the following parties. Firstly, for the teachers, this study is expected to be used as a consideration in the teaching and learning process. The teachers are expected to promote more on autonomous learning in their classroom.

Secondly, for the students, this study is expected to provide information on the importance of autonomous learning. Thirdly, this study is expected to be used as a reference for further studies, as a guidance in developing their research in the same field.

And last, for the researcher herself, this study is expected to gain her experience in educational research, especially in qualitative research.