

## **Lecturer Motivating Student to Realize Autonomous Learning: with Particular Reference to the Faculty of Islamic Studies, Universitas Islam Sultan Agung (Unissula) Semarang Indonesia**

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**Abstract:** This study focuses on autonomous learning and how to motivate students in order to realize autonomous learning. The main purpose of the study is to describe the conception of autonomous learning and to motivate students in order to do it. The research subjects of this research are the lecturers of Unissula, especially Religious Science lecturers in the Faculty of Islamic Studies. Data collection was by in-depth interview which was conducted with 19 lecturers. The data were analysed using a qualitative approach. The qualitative data were analysed to describe in detail how autonomous learning is understood and promoted. The religious science lecturers conclude autonomous learning as follows: Students must prepare learning materials, read them deeply for enrichment, and be active in discussion, with the teacher as a facilitator, a motivator, and a moderator. They must seek a range of learning (information) resources and look for references by themselves. Learning methods depend on the student. There is no pressure to learn autonomously. Learning awareness is also very important in autonomous learning. the Religious Science lecturers have made some efforts to motivate students to be autonomous and disciplined, i.e. to explain the use of autonomous learning, to give students general learning material for students to develop and look for learning resources autonomously, to give them structured and autonomous assignments (individual or group), give questions to them before finishing the lecture, to encourage them to read many literature, and give problems related to the lecture.

**Keywords:** *Motivation, Lecturer, Student, Autonomous Learning, Indonesia*

### **1. Introduction**

Education is the principal aspect of life. It is a process of making people humanized in order to be the best person possible. The national educational purpose of Indonesia is mentioned in *Undang-Undang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional Nomor 20 Tahun 2003* (Ordinance of Republic of Indonesia Number 20 Year 2003 about National Education System, especially Section 2 of Chapter 2):

The function of National Education is to develop ability and to build civilized character and nation; to enhance national culture; to reinforce students' belief in and obedience to the One God; to have good character, health, knowledge, skill, creativity, autonomy; and to become a responsible democratic citizen.

As mentioned in the Ordinance of Republic of Indonesia Number 14 Year 2005 about Teachers and Lecturers, Section 1 of Chapter 1, a lecturer is a professional educator and scientist with the main duty of transforming, developing, and disseminating knowledge (science), technology, and art, through education, research, and contribution to society. Joyce and Weil (1986:143) wrote:

The teacher's role is that of a facilitator who has a personal relationship with students and who guides their growth and development. The teacher helps students explore new ideas about their lives, their school works, and their relationship with other".

Autonomy as the process and result (outcome) of education must be seriously taken into account. Benson (1997) distinguishes autonomy in learning into three kinds, i.e. technical, psychological and political autonomy. Furthermore, Benson (2001) relates those kinds to three levels of control over learning, i.e. learning management, cognitive processing, and content of learning.

The topic of this article is "Lecturer Motivating Student to Realize Autonomous Learning: with Particular Reference to the Faculty of Islamic Studies, 'Sultan Agung' Islamic University (Unissula) of Semarang, Indonesia". There are two reasons for choosing the topic. Firstly, education (teaching-learning system) is the vital aspect of human life. The teaching-learning system is the process of transferring knowledge and value to students or children in order to build their personality. In this case the importance of lecturer role must be considered. Lecturers are very educated people having already obtained a Masters or Doctoral Degree. They have a vital role in developing human resources, as well as developing science and technology in the educational world.

The second reason is because of the importance of autonomy as both process and result of education. An autonomous learning system is very important in developing a student's personality. According to Nilson (1998), the system ensures students are more motivated and achieves a higher cognitive level as well as longer retention of knowledge. Relating to this, lecturers have to motivate their students in order to do autonomous learning.

## **2. Literary Study**

### **2.1. Lecturer**

Lecture (teacher) as a human aspect can be the main aspect of teaching. Ideal lecturer is a lecturer who can fulfill three competences; those are personal competence, professional competence, and methodological competence. Personal competence refers to the good personality; It means that a teacher must have good personality, i.e. whatever he/she says, thinks, feels, sees, listens, etc., must represent good conduct. Like in Javanese idiom, *guru is digugu lan ditiru*; it means that teacher must be good model that can be well copied and followed.

Professional competence has two meanings, i.e., first, it refers to knowledge which is mastered by lecturer. Lecturer must master his/her own discipline or teaching material; Besides, he/she must understand curriculum knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, knowledge of educational purposes, knowledge of educational contexts, and knowledge of student characteristics. Second, it refers to certificate. Every lecturer must have formal certificate

assigned by certain educational institution, including the teaching certificate. The certificate must represent both certain discipline and skill of how teacher well teach.

Methodological competence means the competence which refers to approach, model, strategy, method, and technique of teaching. So, it is skill of how teacher well teach. Approach of teaching includes rational, emotional, functional, structural, communicative, and ethics approach. Model of teaching has four families, i.e. information processing family, personal family, social family, and behavioral system family. Strategy of teaching consists of individual, classical, and autonomous strategy. There are many methods of teaching, such as speech, dialogue, discussion, practice, tour, role playing, case study, and so on. Each method has techniques; In speech method, for example, there are some techniques like technique of moving body (eye, hand, etc.), using language, arranging text, managing sound, selecting terminology, and so forth.

Those competences (all competences) are not always fulfilled by lecturers. They sometimes have good professional competence, but their methodological competence is poor. They sometimes have strong methodological competence, but their professional competence is weak. Their personal competence is great, but they do not master the knowledge which must, of course, be understood by lecturer. Although it is not easy to be an ideal lecturer, there must be efforts to do so.

In *Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 14 Tahun 2005 tentang Guru dan Dosen* (Ordinance of Republic of Indonesia Number 14 Year 2005 about Teacher and Lecturer), it is mentioned in the Section 1 of Chapter 1 about definition of lecturer, i.e. "*Dosen adalah pendidik profesional dan ilmuwan dengan tugas utama mentransformasikan, mengembangkan, dan menyebarkan ilmu pengetahuan, teknologi, dan seni, melalui pendidikan, penelitian, dan pengabdian kepada masyarakat*" (Lecturer is professional educator and scientist with main duty of transforming, developing, and disseminating knowledge (science), technology, and art, through education, research, and contribution to society).

In that Ordinance, the Section 45 of Chapter 5, it is said, "*Dosen harus memiliki kualifikasi akademik, kompetensi, sertifikat pendidik, sehat jasmani dan rohani, dan memenuhi kualifikasi lain yang dipersyaratkan satuan pendidikan tinggi tempat bertugas, serta memiliki kemampuan untuk mewujudkan tujuan pendidikan nasional*" (Lecturer must have academic qualification, competence, teaching certificate, physical and spiritual healthy, and ability to fulfill the qualification required by university where he/she work, and ability to realize the purpose of national education).

The minimum of academic qualification and competence of Indonesian lecturer is Master Degree (for teaching in undergraduate level) and Doctoral Degree (for teaching in postgraduate level). Regarding the right and duty of lecturer, it is said in the Section 51 of Chapter 5, "*Dosen berhak memperoleh kesempatan untuk meningkatkan kompetensi, akses sumber belajar, informasi, sarana dan prasarana pembelajaran, serta penelitian dan pengabdian kepada masyarakat*" (Lecturer have the right to get the opportunity in developing competence, access of learning source and information, learning media, as well as developing research and contribution to society).

## 2.2. Motivation

According to Garrison (1997:21-29), the self-directed learning model includes three overlapping dimensions, i.e. self-management (task control), self-monitoring (cognitive responsibility), and motivation (entering and task). Self-management concerns with task control issues focusing on the social and behavioural implementation of learning intentions. It relates to the external activities associated with the learning process and the management of learning resources. This dimension is like what Benson (1997) called as 'technical autonomy'. Self-monitoring (cognitive responsibility) is cognitive and meta-cognitive process in which the learner takes responsibility to construct meaning, i.e. enriching existing knowledge and developing new one. This second dimension is like what Benson (1997) called as 'psychological autonomy'. Regarding motivation, Garrison (1997:26) said:

Motivation plays a very significant role in the initiation and maintenance of effort toward learning and the achievements of cognitive goals. ... Motivation reflects perceived value and anticipated success of learning goals at the time learning is initiated and mediates between context (control) and cognition (responsibility) during the learning process.

## 2.3. Autonomous Learning

Chene (1983) defined autonomous learning as the learner's ability to acquire knowledge or skill independently by processes that s/he determines. Ponton, et.al (2000) stated that autonomous learning involves personal initiative in engaging with learning as well as finding resources and opportunities for learning, and having persistence in learning.

Garrison (1997) defined self-directed learning as an approach where learners are motivated to assume personal responsibility and collaborative control of the cognitive (self-monitoring) and contextual (self-management) processes in constructing and confirming meaningful and worthwhile learning outcomes. In this definition Garrison used the term "self-directed learning", another name of autonomous learning. He stated that students have to be motivated in learning, since they have personal responsibility.

Nolen (1995:199-200) classified autonomous learning into 'autonomy of means' and 'autonomy of purpose'. 'Autonomy of means' is 'control over the strategies used to carry out a task without the guidance of a teacher'. It views autonomy as a process, i.e. as an activity (or activities) which will reach a purpose or target. In this case, autonomy is involved in an educational activity or a teaching-learning activity. 'Autonomy of purpose' means 'control over learning objectives'. Autonomy of purpose views autonomy as a goal (an outcome), i.e. autonomy as a result of education (the teaching-learning activity).

In relation to this, the role of a teacher (lecturer) as a facilitator and motivator is undoubtedly very important. S/he must know and understand the concept and practice of autonomy. Knowledge of what autonomous learning is, and of what are supporting and inhibiting factors are should be seriously considered. This consideration will enable her/him to promote autonomous learning in an educational world.

### **3. Research Methodology**

#### **3.1. Qualitative Approach**

Qualitative research is the research which qualitatively collects and analyzes the data from the field. Qualitative analysis refers to detailed description, appropriate classification, and close relationships. Detailed description means deep explanation about facts or data (as a system), in which there are sub-systems, principles, aspects, characters, structures, functions, statuses, roles, etc. Appropriate classification means exact division into certain points of view. Close relationship can be meant as the relationship between parts in a classification, among terminologies in a concept, between method and data, as well as between researcher and research subject.

Qualitative research does not use a statistical process (statistical formulae) or other means of quantification. Glaser (1992:11) said, "Qualitative analysis means any kind of analysis that produces finding or concepts and hypotheses, as in grounded theory, that are not arrived at by statistical methods".

#### **3.2. Research Subjects**

The research subject of the main study is 19 lecturers of Islamic Studies. They are lecturers in the 'Sultan Agung' Islamic University of Semarang, Indonesia, especially at the Faculty of Islamic Studies. The lecturers are chosen, since they fulfil the requirement of discipline (Religious Science, i.e. Islamic Studies), educational background (master and doctoral degree), and academic qualification (lector, head lector, and professor).

#### **3.3. Data Collection**

In this study, semi-structured in-depth interviews have been applied to collect data, since they enable the researcher to discuss the topic in detail. It is useful to gain detailed understanding of lecturers' opinions about autonomous learning and how to motivate students to realize it. In this kind of interview, although the questions had already been prepared, both researcher and research subjects were allowed to talk about other related topics. Open questions would be used in the interview, but some questions were closed questions. In this case, Yates (2004:140) wrote:

Semi-structured and unstructured in-depth interviews used open questions rather than closed questions, either covering a selected set of topics or allowing a free development of the interview.

According to Patton (1980:196), there are five interview forms, i.e. unstructured, partially structured, semi-structured, structured, and totally structured interview. The interview is used for collecting data of the study because it is the most popular method of collecting data in qualitative research. The interview provides an opportunity to have a face-to-face interaction between researcher and research subjects. Another reason is that interviews allow us to see things from the subject's point of view (perspective).

The data collected by in-depth interview is qualitatively analyzed. Glaser (1992:11) defined qualitative analysis, as said, "Qualitative analysis means any kind of analysis that produces findings or concepts and hypotheses, as in grounded theory that are not arrived at by statistical methods". However, qualitative analysis is the analysis which includes transcription, detailed

description, appropriate classification, close relation, and conclusion as a result of the research.

## 4. Data and It's Discussion

### 4.1. Definition of Autonomous Learning

The Religious Science lecturers stated that in autonomous learning the students must prepare learning materials, read them deeply for enrichment, and must be active in discussion. Lecturer RS-24 said, "It is self-ability to manage one's own learning". The roles of the teacher (lecturer) are those of facilitator, learning resource, moderator, and active guide. As in the opinions of the Religious Science lecturers, students must seek a range of information resources and look for references by themselves.

If we give learning material and assignment, the students can do and develop it. They can understand, as well as develop, learning material without help from lecturer, tutor, etc. They look for learning resources by themselves. (Lecturer RS-4)

Autonomous learning: Firstly, the students must prepare learning materials, read them deeply for enrichment of the materials, be active in discussion with their friends in class, be able to state the learning problems, and able to find their solutions. Teacher is as a facilitator, a learning resource, a moderator, an active guider or director of students in autonomous learning. (Lecturer RS-5)

Students learn autonomously, but lecturer still gives guidance. It is different from autodidact learning which is really autonomous. However, autonomous learning is still with lecturers' guidance. (Lecturer RS-6)

In addition, *freedom* of students should be considered in autonomous learning. Lecturer RS-8 said, "*Freedom* to decide methods and steps to be taken, learning methods depending on the student, curriculum and syllabi still according to institutional purpose".

Students are given *freedom* to decide methods and steps will be done. It is made small groups which decide their own purpose. They are only given a draft, and then they run autonomously. Regarding learning methods, it depends on students. However, curriculum and syllabi are still according to institutional purpose in the ordinance. (Lecturer RS-10)

*Learning awareness* is also very important in autonomous learning.

"It is self-learning full of *learning awareness* of the availability of knowledge from the lecturer. So, in this case students do not feel forced to learn autonomously. With their autonomy they study hard". (Lecturer RS-9)

It is more specific, i.e. how to encourage student in order to have *learning awareness* for themselves, concerning learning process, methods, etc. So, they have willingness to study and develop their knowledge. (Lecturer RS-1)

However, one Religious Science lecturer said that in the university educational system it is not possible yet to apply autonomous learning because lecturers are worried that students' knowledge is not well structured. The other



reason is that with the culture in the university it is not generally possible to apply this approach. According to him, autonomous learning is suitable only for certain students in certain classes.

What students want to learn or interest a certain topic is surely not prohibited. However, lecturers must concern with the well-structured syllabi (curriculum). As long as concerning with the syllabi, students can learn autonomously. Nevertheless, our educational system is not possible yet to apply autonomous learning because we are worry that students' knowledge is not well structured in the structure of knowledge. When students choose knowledge, it may be not suitable with our learned value. The other reason is that our culture is not generally possible to apply that approach. I think autonomous learning is suitable for certain students in the special class. However, it is generally not suitable for students. (Lecturer RS-12)

Finally, the religious science lecturers conclude autonomous learning as follows: students must prepare learning materials, read them deeply for enrichment, and be active in discussion, with the teacher as a facilitator, a motivator, and a moderator. They must seek a range of learning (information) resources and look for references by themselves. Learning methods depend on the student. There is no pressure to learn autonomously. Learning awareness is also very important in autonomous learning.

#### **4.2. Importance of Motivation**

According to the Religious Science lecturers, motivation and discipline are main aspect of developing autonomous learning. They are drivers for someone to do something, including autonomous learning. Promoting autonomous learning cannot be successful unless there are motivation and discipline. Lecturers RS-1, RS-2, RS-5, RS-6, RS-8, RS-9, and RS-24 agreed that motivation and discipline are very important for promoting autonomous learning.

Motivation and discipline are main aspect of developing autonomous learning. They are not supplementary. Therefore, in the first meeting, I stated that learning activity is like "worship God", in which the students have to do the best and get the 'pleasure of God'. (Lecturer RS-4)

Motivation is a driver for someone to do something. The main motivation is 'intrinsic motivation', from our selves. It can be developed by 'extrinsic motivation', for example, by the assignments. The assignments can motivate the students to learn autonomously, even they are told about the use and value of assignment, as well as an academic score. This can develop motivation and discipline, since the assignment is limited in time and target. (Lecturer RS-12)

Motivation and discipline is very important for promoting autonomous learning. Study in the university surely concerns with many assignments (course works) and regular time (discipline). If the students have no high motivation and discipline, they will not be able to build their autonomy in learning. (Lecturer RS-10)

Regarding the importance of motivation and discipline, the religious science lecturers concluded that motivation and discipline are main aspect of developing autonomous learning. They are drivers for someone to do autonomous learning.

Promoting autonomous learning cannot be successful unless there are motivation and discipline. Therefore, motivation and discipline are very important for promoting autonomous learning.

#### **4.3. Motivation to Be Autonomous Learning**

The Religious Science lecturers also gave students assignments: "The teaching methods include not only lectures but also assignments and discussions, which enable students to find learning resources" - (Lecturer RS-2). "I give assignments. Most assignments must be presented in class" (Lecturer RS-24). Other lecturers said:

Structured assignments and autonomous assignments must be developed. So, there are meetings in class, structured assignments, and autonomous assignments. I even give students the opportunity to decide freely the title of assignment. (Lecturer RS-4)

There are many ways; e.g. lecturers give not only knowledge but also many home works or assignments to write a paper. They can ask for students to summarize and understand a chapter of the book. (Lecturer RS-9)

As in PBL (problem-based learning), students are given assignments to find a problem and then solve it. Other lecturers said: "I also give students assignments related to case study (problem solving) or observation" (Lecturer RS-6); "I give problems related to the lecture. The problem will motivate students to find its solution" (Lecturer RS-10). There are benefits to giving assignment to students, as reported by a lecturer:

The other way is to give group assignments so that weak students can benefit from strong ones, so that there is equilibrium between weak and strong students, whereas individual assignments are used for finding individual differences among students. (Lecturer RS-12)

Giving assignments to students is a consequence of applying the rules of SKS (the semester credit system) in the university.

According to the rules of SKS (semester credit system), one credit includes 50 minutes for meeting in class, one hour for autonomous learning, and one hour for structured assignment per-week. So, in every meeting there should be an assignment, even if it's an easy and simple assignment. (Lecturer RS-5)

The Religious Science lecturers have made varied efforts to encourage students to be autonomous and disciplined, for example, to explain the use of autonomous learning, to give students general learning material and pose problems, then require them to research them and look for learning resources autonomously, and give solutions.

Students should be helped to understand and believe that more knowledge can be sought other than from lecturers or the teaching-learning process. Students should be encouraged to look for books and other learning resources. (Lecturer RS-2)

Firstly, I inform students of the learning purposes in the lecture plan. The learning purposes will require students to do something autonomously. We give the students all of the learning material, and then they develop it and look for learning resources autonomously. Autonomy in learning is applied,



i.e. looking for learning material and learning it autonomously. (Lecturer RS-4)

I always give questions to the students before finishing the lecture. I want ten different answers, so they must look for ten different answers (one student one answer), because they may be reading different sources. (Lecturer RS-6)

The Religious Science lecturers agreed that assignment can encourage the students to be autonomous in learning. Assignment requires the students to be responsible, active, creative, autonomous, and disciplined. Lecturer RS-24 said, "Assignment supports autonomous learning because the students are required to be responsible in seeking learning material and managing time". The other lecturers (RS-5, RS-6, RS-8, and RS-9) have the same opinions. Lecturer RS-4 stated, "Regarding assignment I give the students themes and some books as references to make a paper, in order to be responsible, creative, and disciplined".

Assignment can encourage the students to be autonomous in learning if there is the opportunity for them to represent the assignment in class and the opportunity for the lecturers to assess it and give feedback to the students. If there is not the opportunity to represent, assignment is only a duty which force the students to 'copy-paste' their friends' work. (Lecturer RS-2)

Today there is an unlimited information resource. The students are given the assignment and guidance of how to seek information, i.e. how access it and analyse it for doing the assignment. The students should be highly motivated to develop autonomous learning. The students do not study because they do not know to access and analyse information. (Lecturer RS-12)

Finally, the Religious Science lecturers have made some efforts to motivate students to be autonomous and disciplined, i.e. to explain the use of autonomous learning, to give students general learning material for students to develop and look for learning resources autonomously, to give them structured and autonomous assignments (individual or group), give questions to them before finishing the lecture, to encourage them to read many literature, and give problems related to the lecture. The problem will motivate students to find solution.

## 5. Conclusion

The religious science lecturers conclude autonomous learning as follows: Students must prepare learning materials, read them deeply for enrichment, and be active in discussion, with the teacher as a facilitator, a motivator, and a moderator. They must seek a range of learning (information) resources and look for references by themselves. Learning methods depend on the student. There is no pressure to learn autonomously. Learning awareness is also very important in autonomous learning.

Regarding the importance of motivation and discipline, the religious science lecturers concluded that motivation and discipline are main aspect of developing autonomous learning. They are drivers for someone to do autonomous learning. Promoting autonomous learning cannot be successful unless there are motivation and discipline.

The Religious Science lecturers have made some efforts to motivate students to be autonomous and disciplined, i.e. to explain the use of autonomous learning, to give students general learning material for students to develop and look for learning resources autonomously, to give them structured and autonomous assignments (individual or group), give questions to them before finishing the lecture, to encourage them to read many literature, and give problems related to the lecture.

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