CHAPTER II

THEORITICAL REVIEW

A. Learning Autonomy

1. Definition of Learning Autonomy

The term “learning autonomy” was first introduced by Henri Holec (1981) in his book entitled “Autonomy and Foreign Language Learning”. It was defined as “the ability to take charge of one’s own learning” (Al-Busaidi and Al-Maamari, 2014). To put in the other words, learners take charge of their own learning by carrying out their own learning plans according to their own needs (Wang, 2010). In line with this, Feng (2015) explained learners should be responsible for determining their objectives, contents, methodologies, monitoring the process acquisition, and evaluating what has been acquired. As Joshi (2011) defined, learning autonomy as the ability to assume responsibility for one’s own affairs – the ability to act in situation in which the students is totally responsible for all the decision concerned with his learning and the implementation of the decisions. Nunan in Onozawa (2010) adds that learners become actively involved in the management of the learning process, exercise freedom of choice in relation to learning resources and activities.
The idea to achieve learning autonomy for the learners need the following factors, they are self-esteem and motivation. The first term refers to “the evaluation of the learners themselves with the target language or learning in general”, and the second term defined “the combination of effort and desire to get the goal of learning and have good attitude toward learning” (Hayta and Yaprak, 2013). Achieving the condition of autonomous learners depends on the situation in which the learners study entirely on their own, and determine the direction of their own learning. The optimal form of learner autonomy is in making complementary contributions which result from learners’ and teachers’ negotiation process in planning and implementing activities and exercises (Zohrabi, 2011). Therefore, the teachers’ role here to make the learners responsible and accountable on their own learning in finding the practical ways of contributing to learner autonomy rather than following the dry and rigid the curriculum theories because learners autonomy is importance in the present and future learning. Learners who accept responsibility for their learning are more likely to achieve their learning targets, then learners achieve their learning targets, they are more likely to maintain a positive attitude in learning in the future (Little, 1995).

The idea that learners are seen as active participants who not only acquire knowledge but also have a role in monitoring the process of acquiring the knowledge. However, the extent in which students are
involved is what the question become. Littlewood in Benson (2006) suggests two levels of autonomy; reactive and proactive autonomy. Proactive autonomy affirms learners’ individuality and sets up directions which they themselves have partially created; meanwhile, reactive autonomy does not create its own directions, but once a direction is initiated, it enables students to organize their resources autonomously in order to reach their goal. Neupane (2010) concluded proactive autonomy is considered to be pure autonomy where the students are totally free to make individual choices. Seeing the explanation about proactive autonomy above, it is impossible to achieve that. There is unlikely to be total autonomy for learners, because formal learning contexts are never free from constraints.

2. Teachers’ Roles in Autonomous Learning

Autonomous learning is not a learning process without the teacher in the classroom activities. It is teachers’ task to guide the learners to be autonomous. Without teachers’ counsel and supervision, however, the whole process will result in low efficiency or even fall into disorder (Yan, 2012). Nuepane (2010) supports the idea that the scenario that learners without teacher leads us to nowhere, for teaching process and learning process go side by side. Learners have more in making learning strategies, but the teachers also does not deprive their responsibility in taking a control of their class activities (Zhuang,
That is the task of teachers to foster the learners to become autonomous learners.

Generally, a teacher in autonomous language learning holds a role as a facilitator, an organizer, a resource person providing learners with feedback and encouragement, and a creator of learning atmosphere and space (Joshi, 2011). In line with Breen and Candline in Yan (2012), they classify the roles of teachers to foster learning autonomy into following categorized:

a. Manager and Organizer

The teacher should take responsibilities of organizing various kinds of activities which are appropriate, effective and relevant to the classroom teaching and which will best meet the learners’ need and expectations. As a manager and an organizer, teacher is the foremost role in learning process to motivate the learners in learning process by giving good organization and on learners’ knowing exactly what they are expected to do.

b. Facilitator

In order to make the progress of autonomous learners, it is necessary for the teacher to serve as a facilitator. According to Voller in Yan (2012), a facilitator provides psycho-social support and technical support. Psycho-social support refers to the capacity of motivating learners, as well as the ability of raising learners’ awareness. Technical support refers to help learners to plan and
carry out their learning, helping learners to evaluate themselves, and helping learners enrich the skills and knowledge. Teachers need to do all the efforts to help make the learning easier and to motivate learners to get their best potentials. When the learners get difficulties in learning process, teacher should ready to provide information by giving them supplementary resources. To focus on learners’ success and progress so that a success-oriented learning atmosphere could be created. At the same time the learners will be more confident in autonomous learning.

c. Counselor

Teacher as counselor is to give advice and help learners to achieve efficient learning. This role can help learners to monitor themselves, fulfill learners’ aims and needs, giving feedback and support learners towards the target of autonomous learning. It helps learners to get which resources they should take and which material they should learn.

3. Learners’ Roles in Autonomous Learning

Learners in autonomous learning is the most responsible for what they learn, how they learn, and when they learn. By learning independently, the learners will develop an awareness of the learning process and the necessary strategies on how to approach the language learning process (Nunan in Zohrabi, 2011). It makes learners become active participant to do a lot on own with the suggestions and
facilitation of teacher. Learners are freer in choosing aspects of learning but at the same time they have more responsibilities to be accomplished. According to Joshi (2011), learners’ roles in autonomous learning is necessary which is described as:

a. a good learner that can make decision regarding choice of objectives, choice of content and materials, methods and technique to be used, and how to assess progress and outcomes,

b. become responsible learners who accept their effort for effective learning and co-operates with the teachers monitoring.

c. The aware learners which can see the relationship to what is to be learnt, how to learn, and the resources available to take control of learning.

4. Reasons for Autonomy in Language Learning

Many experts support the development of autonomy in language learning for some reasons. Learning autonomy deals with positive relation between present and future learning. Cited in Little (1995), learning autonomy needs to be fostered because learners who accept responsibility for their learning are more likely to achieve their learning targets; and if they do, they are more likely to maintain a positive attitude to learning in the future. Developing learning autonomy in language learning is to enable learners to become language users of their target language. Autonomous learners can implement knowledge and skill which is acquired in the learning
process of classroom activities to the situation that arise outside classroom.

In terms of foreign language learning, Little (1999) suggested Three Fundamental Pedagoical Principles of Foreign Language Classroom. First is learners’ empowerment. Learners should be involved in planning, monitoring, and evaluating their learning activities. Second is appropriate target language use. The principle of appropriate target language use requires the use of target language as the main media of the communication since proficiency in a foreign language can develop only to the extent that learners use whatever proficiency they have for genuine communicative purposes. The third is the use of target language as a cognitive tool. The use of language as a cognitive tool, insists on the necessity of using the written language to elaborate learning plans, remind learners of agreed learning task, capture parts of the learning process, summarize individual and collective evaluations, and the obvious instruments for doing this are the individual learners’ notebook, logbook or diary, or posters that are displayed on the classroom wall.

In response to the first principle, Hayta (2013) add that learners should be encouraged to become critical thinker to develop awareness about learning process and learning content. In line with this, learners’ reflection accounts for the ability built by the learners to think introspectively about their strength and weaknesses so as to give
an appropriate focus and twist to the next phase of learning activity (Elizondo and Garita, 2013). In addition, learners who are able to identify their weak areas and work to improve them are actually able to experience “learning” and the sense of improvement are important in motivation learners to continue studying (Imuro and Berger, 2010). Learners must be taught to think in retrospection in order to evaluate and revisit what they are done, what they are doing and what they will be doing (Elizondo and Garita, 2013).

5. Aspects in Learning Autonomy

Developing students’ autonomy in reading is an effort of creating independent students. To realize it, there are seven aspects of learning autonomy proposed by Joshi (2011) should be optimized. The aspects are described briefly in the following part.

a. Awareness in language learning

Language is a tool for communication. As a Foreign Language, English is not the main language which is used by learners to communicate each other. Learners should be aware to learn English by themselves. Language learners is a mental and internal capacity which the learner gradually develops by giving motivated and conscious attention to language in use to discover its pattern (Ali, 2011). To discover it pattern of critical language awareness, Fairclough (1992) defined critical language awareness as “conscious attention to properties of language and
language use as an element of language education,” is substantially impacted by the experience and perception of the individual. The purpose of critical language awareness is to encourage learners to uncover the ways that the language of texts is socially constructed and how language may position learners in negative ways, both purposefully and inadvertently (Paulson, 2008). In the other hand, Joshi stated that autonomous learners hold a role in aware learners. Learners’ awareness are those who sees the relationship to what is to be learnt, how to learn, and the resources available in order to take charge or control of learning. The important aspects of language awareness, according to Donnal (1985), operates on three distinctive levels. The first is cognitive level, referring to awareness of language patterns. Second is affective level, regarding to forming attitudes. The third is social level, which references the improvement of learners’ effectiveness as communicators.

b. Self-effort in learning English

Learners have insight into their own language learning style. They take an active approach to learning task. They actively attempt to develop the target language into a separate reference system and try to think in the target language as soon as possible. Learners are freer in choosing aspect of learning but the same time they have more responsibilities to be accomplished.
c. Broader autonomous activities beyond the class

The activities beyond the class make links between the content of classroom learning and the world beyond. In the other words, learners need to use the knowledge they get in the classroom and practice it in real life.

d. Self-reflection on learning process

In language learning process, learners have reflection on learning process to measure their ability. It includes all the decision made by learners for their own learning.

e. Use of references materials

Becoming autonomous learners, learners are claimed to be active participant. They should have learning target in their activities beyond and within the class. Learners are responsible what they want to learn and how they learn. It makes them search any kind of additional references to get new knowledge.

f. Self-motivation in learning

Maintaining motivation in learning is necessary in language learning. Learners can develop motivational patterns that lead to be more effective learning. By having motivation in themselves, learners have willingness to learn autonomously.

g. Use of computer technology in learning

Computers and the internet are considered in developing autonomoy in learners’ activities. That technology has facilitated
autonomous learning. It is a program where the learners can learn independently using computers.

B. Reading

1. Definition of Reading

In learning English, reading is a very important skill because by reading learners can add new knowledge which is learned by them. Moreover, reading also has big benefits as a tool which can give new information to the readers. As cited in Tarigan (1994), there is a correlation between reading and speaking which can enrich skill in oral language based on learners’ experience in their background of teaching reading, such as skill in pronouncing the statement clearly and fluently; much vocabularies; arranging the event correctly, and correlation between scrutinize and reading that is an important factor in learning reading effectively. Scrutinizing and reading have strong relation which both of them are the tools of receiving communication (iden). As Nuttal (1998) in Zahrei and Gahremani (2010) asserts reading has been described as the most the studied and the least understood process in educations. It is a process which is done by the readers to get the message by the writers through the medium of words or written language (Tarigan, 2008). Anderson (1972) in Tarigan (2008) explains reading strategies is a recording and decoding process, it is different from speaking and writing skill which is involving
encoding the text. Decoding is an aspect that the readers correlate written word with oral language meaning.

Equally important, many scholars have identified reading comprehension as one of the most crucial language skills (Zahre and Gahremani, 2010). According to Nunan (1997) to receive reading comprehension needs bottom up and bottom down approach. By bottom-up approach, reading is viewed as a process of decoding written symbols, working from smaller units (individual letter) to larger ones (words, clauses, and sentences). By top-down approach enables the readers to comprehend the text as well as knowledge of text structure based on their background knowledge to rewrite the text of the writers’ point of view. In line with the reading comprehension, it shows how the readers to do the task, how they interpret their reading and what they do when they do not comprehend (Khodabandehlou, et al, 2012). Successful reading involves skill to master the words completely such as identifying vocabulary, using grammatical knowledge to recover meaning, using different techniques for different purposes, relating text content to one’s own background knowledge of the subject, and identifying the functional intention of individual sentences (Nunan, 1991). Skill in reading helps the learners recognize their difficulties about, sounds, pronunciation, and punctuation to have recitation.
Learners should read extensively and independently to improve their skill in reading in language learning. Reading activities persuade the learners to raise their motivation to read more. In other words, learners’ commitment to read enthusiasm and true interest in reading are necessary for higher reading effectiveness (Channuan and Wasanasomsithi, 2013). Hence, reading strategies is needed to monitor and manage reading effectively. The strategies of reading ensure the learners to comprehend the text by using a dictionary, taking notes, underlining, or guessing the meaning of unknown words.

Based on the explanation above, reading is an activity which is important to be done by the learners in learning the language, because reading function is giving new information and knowledge related to the purposes of learning language. Reading will give benefits, if the readers able to understand the content of the text they read. That is why we need to comprehend the text to gain the benefit of reading.

2. The Purposes of Reading

The main purposes of reading is to gain the information, covers the content of the text, and comprehend the text. In reading activity there are some benefits that was explained by Brown (2001) in Hilmansyah (2013) that reading is a key to learners gain in reading ability, linguistic competence, vocabulary, spelling, and writing. In line with this, learners are socialized into reading, and the motivation
for learning to read is not only for enjoyment or information (Nunan, 1991).

Anderson as cited in Tarigan (2008) there are seven purposes of reading. They are as follow:

a. Reading for details and facts
   Reading for details and facts are reading to get the information that is done by figure or to solve the problems which are made by figure.

b. Reading for main ideas
   Reading for main ideas is to get the topic, the case of the story, the things that is learned or experienced, summarize something that has been done by the figure.

c. Reading for sequence or organization
   Reading for sequence or organization is reading to understand the parts of story from the beginning until the end of the story.

d. Reading for inference
   Reading for inference is to understand the figure do something or the writer’s mean of the passage.

e. Reading for classifying
   Reading for classifying is reading to understand something unusual, to find something that is it fact or not.
f. Reading for evaluating

Reading for evaluating is reading to evaluate and to know the figure.

g. Reading for comparing and contrast

It is reading to compare the content of the written.

3. The Types of Reading

Reading lets learners improving their general language and doing this activity for pleasure. To get maximum benefit of their reading, learners should be involved in extensive and intensive reading. Harmer classified reading activities into two types, they are as follows:

a. Extensive Reading

Brown (2001) stated that extensive reading is the way when learners learn to read in joyful condition. In one hand, Harmer (2007) cited extensive reading should involve reading for pleasure. Based on the statements, extensive reading is the type of reading activities that influence the learners to do it anywhere and anytime. They are free to choose every kind of the texts they want to read. In the end extensive reading can be concluded as highly individualized approach to reading improvement by selecting their own books and read at their own pace (Mikulecky in Hilmansyah, 2015).
In extensive reading activity, there are some benefits that was conducted by Brown in Hilmansyah (2015) that extensive reading is a key to learners gain in reading ability, linguistic competence, vocabulary, spelling, and writing. In one line, extensive reading is aimed to develop learners’ world recognition and for their improvement as reader.

b. Intensive Reading

Harmer (2007) says that intensive reading is an activity while teachers are encouraging learners to read for general understanding, without worrying about the meaning of every single word. The goal of intensive reading is comprehension the text. The use of translation ensures that learners understand the text, and when they do the translation by themselves, it allows the teacher to check whether they understand.

Tarigan (2008) stated that commonly there are two aspects of reading, they are as follows:

1) Mechanical skill that can be called as a lower order, this aspects covers:

a) Letter from introduction

b) Linguistics elements introduction.

c) Linking introduction.

d) Speed of reading to show standard.
2) Comprehension skill that can be called the higher order, this aspects covers:

   a) Knowing the simple meaning (lexical, grammatical, rhetorical).

   b) Knowing the meaning.

   c) Evaluation or assessment (content, form)

   d) The flexibility speed of reading.

4. The Aspects of Reading Comprehension

There are some aspects of reading comprehension that have to be known. It will support the success in comprehending reading material. According to Oxford (in Gilani, 2012) there are six aspects that have an important contribution in reading comprehension. They are as follow:

a. Prediction

   It refers to the use prior knowledge to guess the meaning or the message of the text from the topic, key words, or construction. Training learners in the use of this skill will ensure their active involvement and make reading easier to practice (Nuttal in Bonilla, 2014).

b. Skimming

   It deals with getting main ideas of the text without reading every single word. Nuttall in Bonilla, 2014 defined skimming is reading at glance rapidly through a text to determine its gist.
In skimming, readers do not look for specific information but only for general information.

c. Scanning

It has to do with looking for specific information. According to Estillo (2014), scanning is reading for particular points of information. It is a selective reading, and its purpose is to achieve very specific reading goals.

d. Inferring

Inferring refers to activities of reading between the lines which means that readers need to know how to get the message from word or sentences in the text. Inferring is defined as the interaction between words in a sentence or phrase or between sentences or phrases.

e. Guessing the meaning of new words

It refers to students’ ability to find the meaning of new words by drawing inferences from the context rather than using a dictionary.

f. Self-monitoring

It is an awareness of using strategy that allows readers to regulate their reading and helps learners to solve their problems in reading.
5. The Component of Reading

Reading comprehension is the process of understanding and constructing meaning from a piece of the text. In comprehending a reading material, the most important thing that needs to be considered is the components of reading comprehension. Leu and Kinzer (1987) said that there are some components of readings as follows:

a. Decoding Knowledge

The readers are used to determine the oral equivalent of written word.

b. Vocabulary Knowledge

The knowledge about word meanings is used to determine the necessary word meaning from context. Vocabulary knowledge is important at all levels, but it is a particularly important aspect of reading instruction as children develop and explore less familiar subject areas with some specialized vocabularies.

c. Syntactic Knowledge

Syntactic knowledge includes understanding word order rules that exist within sentences and permit you to determine the grammatical function and often the meaning and pronunciation of words.
d. Discourse Knowledge

Discourse knowledge is the knowledge the structure organization of language organization at units beyond the single-sentence level. It includes knowledge of different type of writing.

e. Readiness Aspects

Traditionally, reading readiness is the ability of a student to benefit from initial reading instruction. Recently, reading readiness has also included being ready to read and understand a particular selection.

f. Affective Aspects

In reading, affective aspects of comprehension include a reader’s attitude and interest. These increase motivation and facilitate reading comprehension.

C. Learning Autonomy in Reading

The correlation between learner autonomy and language proficiency have mainly discussed over the last three decades (Zarei, 2010). First, autonomous learners are more active and efficient in the process of language learning. Second, autonomous learners are more motivated to take part in various activities. And third, effective communication is achieved through language use, and one of the requirements of language use is the learners become autonomous. The success of an autonomous learners depends on his activation and use of
metacognitive knowledge and metacognitive strategies, among them are planning, monitoring, and evaluating in every skill.

Autonomous in reading, on the one hand, refers to involve in reading activities for their enjoyment or because of their perceived personal significance and meaning. Most researchers believe that reading is a purposeful process, mainly at more advanced stages, which involves the interaction of numerous skills, abilities, strategies, and background knowledge to produce comprehension. A higher level of comprehension by reading may occur when the learners are autonomous and employ metacognitive strategies, mainly monitoring strategies. Autonomous reading is associated with more positive outcomes, including higher leisure-time reading frequency, more reading engagement, and better reading comprehension. Dafei in Zarei and Ghaehmani (2010) stated autonomy in reading comprehension for the learners need to manifest self-confidence in their ability to tackle text and monitor their comprehension.

Learning autonomy in reading classes can be referred to as promoting the learner to develop a sense of responsibility for their language acquisition. In a reading classroom, autonomous learners can control in what way they would read, such as setting their own reading pace or deciding what comprehension tasks to complete (Lehtinen, 2007). Interactive reading activities may lead to improved motivation to read more (Day and Bamford, 2002). In other words, learners’ commitment to
read with enthusiasm and their true interest in reading are essential for higher reading affectiveness (Wasanasomsithi, 2013).

To sum up, most researchers believe that reading is a purposeful process, mainly at more advanced stages, which involves the interaction of numerous skills, abilities, strategies, and background knowledge to produce comprehension. It is also thought that the higher levels of reading could be fostered by the implementation of learner autonomy. In other words, a higher level of comprehension may occur when the learners are autonomous and employ metacognitive strategies, mainly monitoring strategies. The present study intends to investigate how the autonomy level of the learners at more advanced level of proficiency is related to their reading comprehension ability (Zarei, 2010). Having better reading comprehension helps learners to be autonomous because they may have greater enjoyment and motivation to read inside and outside the classroom.

D. Relevant Previous Studies

Budhiarti (2015) conducted a survey on autonomous English learning activities performed by EFL students in Banyumas. The respondents were 155 students choose by random sampling. A quantitative data were gained by using questionnaire to find out the students’ performance of autonomous language learning activities. There were 18 items eliciting students’ autonomous learning activities. The
items are rated into four point Likert scale from never to always. The researcher is also using semi structured interview to get deeper information. There are 10 representative by the students. The result revealed autonomous language learning activities was unsatisfactory. The result was students still rarely performed those autonomous language learning activities.

It was revealed that the students are aware to use free time in studying English is just 21%. Students who did self-effort to improve and enhance their English were about 39% by taking a note or summaries during the lessons. It is also found that the students develop their speech beyond the class by using audio visual materials.

Another research was conducted by Joshi (2011) a survey on autonomous learning activities of the Master level students, majoring in English Education, Tribhuvan University, Nepal. 80 master level students was chosen by random sampling. He used a questionnaire as collecting data. It was revealed that the learners made a good practice of autonomous activities.

E. Basic Assumption

Autonomous learning in reading provides chances for learners to be more independent on their own learning process. It leads learners to have more awareness in reading activities to comprehend and understand the meaning of written or printed words or texts. This research is aimed to
investigate autonomous learning in reading classes which have been done by students. By knowing this, learners can increase their interest in reading and aware the important of reading activities that can they do beyond the classroom.