

**SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENT'S AUTONOMY IN LEARNING  
ENGLISH AT SMA ISLAM AZ-ZAHRAH PALEMBANG**

**A Thesis by**

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**FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION**

**UNIVERSITAS TRIDINANTI**

**PALEMBANG**

**2025**

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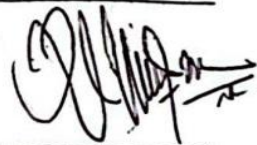
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## DEDICATIONS

- Allah SWT, who always provides guidance and mercy, so that I can complete this thesis easily and on time. Thank you for the substance and blessing you have bestowed upon me.
- My parents, Abdul Muis dan Laila Kodri. Thank you for your love, affection. Support, and unceasing prayers for me. I dedicate this thesis for you.
- My siblings, Marisa Ayu Fitriani, M. Romi Ubaidillah, M. Retno Prastio. Thank you for all the support and assistance you have provided.
- My two adorable nephews, M. Iqbal Al Faruq dan M. Fawwaz Arshaka. Thank you for the joy and enthusiasm you bring, which serve as a comfort when I feel sad.
- My two thesis advisors, Rahma Dianti, M.Pd dan Nita Ria, M.Pd. Thank you for your guidance, direction, patience, and the time you have dedicated throughout the thesis writing process.
- All the lectures who have imparted knowledge a guidance throughout my studies.
- My best friends: Tarisa, Martha, Sintia. Thank you for your constant support.
- Delia Rizki Rahmadiani and M. Ardhi Firmansyah. Thank you for your companionship during the writing of this thesis.
- My beloved classmates.
- The principal, teachers, and all staff of SMA Islam Az-Zahrah Palembang.
- All students of SMA Islam Az-Zahrah Palembang.
- And finally, my beloved almamater.

## MOTTO

*Life is not just about achieving what we want, but also about being grateful for what we have.* – Ust. Hanan Attaki

Try you best and don't give up if you fail. Include Allah and your parents in everything you do.

## PERNYATAAN

Saya menyatakan dengan sebenar-benarnya bahwa seluruh data, informasi, interpretasi serta pernyataan dalam pembahasan dan kesimpulan yang disajikan dalam karya ilmiah ini, kecuali yang disebutkan seumbernya adalah merupakan hasil pengamatan, penelitian, pengelolaan, serta pemikiran saya dengan pengarah dari pembimbing yang ditetapkan.

Apabila ternyata didalam naskah skripsi ini dapat dibuktikan terdapat unsur-unsur jiplakan, saya bersedia skripsi ini digugurkan dan gelar akademik yang telah saya peroleh (S-1) dibatalkan, serta diproses sesuai dengan peraturan perundang-undangan yang berlaku UU No. 20 Tahun 2003, Pasal 25 ayat 2 dan Pasal 70.

Palembang, Agustus 2025

Mahasiswa



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All praise be to Allah SWT, for all the blessings and gifts given so that the writer can complete this thesis entitled "Secondary School Student's Autonomy in Learning English at SMA Islam Az-Zahrah Palembang". This thesis is submitted as one of the requirements to accomplish S1 degree of Faculty of Teacher Training Education, English Study Program at Tridianti University.

In finishing this thesis, the writer would like to express sincere gratitude to all those who helped, guided, and supported the process of writing this thesis:

1. Prof. Dr. Ir. H. Edizal AE., MS, as the Rector of Tridianti University.
2. Nyayu Lulu Nadya, M.Pd., as the Dean of Faculty of Teacher Training and Education.
3. Jenny Elvinna Manurung, M.Pd., Dean Assistants of the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education.
4. Dr. Darmawan Budiyo, M.Pd., as the Head of English Education Study Program.
5. Rahma Dianti, M.Pd., as the first advisor for their guidance and advice during the thesis writing process.
6. Nita Ria, M.Pd., as the second advisor for their guidance and advice during the thesis writing process.
7. All lecturers at Tridianti University, especially those in the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education.
8. My beloved family, thank you for your constant support, prayers, and financial assistance.

Palembang, August 2025



Nur Yuliani Putri

## **Abstract**

Autonomy in learning is one of the important aspects in the English learning process. The ability to organize and direct one's own learning plays an important role in the development of learning autonomy. This study aimed to investigate the level of autonomy in learning and the dimensions that affect students' autonomy during learning English. A total of 116 students at SMA Islam Az-Zahrah Palembang participated in this study, chosen by using total sampling technique. This was quantitative research employing a survey design. Data collection was conducted by distributing online questionnaire through Google Form. The questionnaire was Learning Autonomy Questionnaire (LAQ) which was adopted from Dzung & Dzung (2024), consisting of 23 items and measuring the dimensions of self-initiation and self-regulation. The results of this study showed that students have a high level of autonomy in learning English. From the two scales measured, self-initiation became the most influential dimension for learner. Although self-initiation emerged as the dominant dimension, self-regulation also played a supportive role in shaping learners' autonomy. The findings underscore the role of teachers in guiding students to plan, strategize and reflect effectively in their learning process.

***Keywords: learner autonomy, English language learning, secondary school students***

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## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, the researcher discusses research background, research problems, research objectives, and research significances.

#### **1.1 The Background of Study**

Considering the position of English as the most widely spoken language in the world makes English education important. English is now the primary means for academic, business, and international communication. English has permeated many fields, including education, where it is now widely used as the language of instruction in many countries. Students who are proficient in English can access a wealth of information through books, scholarly articles, and online resources that are often in English, which helps succeed both academically and professionally (Crystal, 2003). Thus, having a good command of English is crucial for nowadays.

English language acquisition is a dynamic process, indicating that English language can be acquired through two ways, nature or nurture. Purnama (2017) in her research discusses that English language learning is influenced by nature and nurture factors. Children acquire language not only from the home environment, but also from interactions outside the home. Gao (2022) affirms that both nature and nurture are crucial in developing someone's language capacity. He adds that nature is something that has been

in the since birth, while nurture refers to all influential environmental variables, including childhood experiences, parenting, social relationships, and surrounding culture. Tomsello (2003) found that nature potential helps one understand a language, but environment and experience determine how well the language is mastered. In addition, Gervain (2014) explains that language acquisition involves both aspects, namely innate (nature) and environmental influences (nurture), rather than being solely dependent on one factor. In this case, experience and social interaction have a very important role in the acquisition of the language. Thus, nature and nurture factors can foster the way students develop language acquisition and learning autonomy (Ahmed & Hossain, 2024).

Learning autonomy can help learners know what they learn and how to learn it. The learners can take responsibility for the one learning. Benson (2011) defines learning autonomy as an individuals' ability highlights the importance of learners being able to take responsibility for their educational choices. Shirzad & Ebadi (2020) found that learning autonomy is expected to help students in choosing the learning sources and strategies independently. Furthermore, Dafei (2007) claims that learning autonomy is one of the most important issues that determine whether or not a person can reach their potential. Students who learn independently must have the initiative to start the process as well as the motivation to learn. In addition, learning autonomy can often be defined as the possibility for learners to take control of their own learning effectively to be more active in school and lifelong learning, and it can also change the lives of individuals for their

own benefit (Dang, 2024). To conclude, learning autonomy allows students to control the learning process, choose strategies independently to develop initiative and motivation to support lifelong and self-development.

In relation to this, there is a significant difference in characteristics between autonomous learners and nonautonomous learners. Fernanda & Munir (2023) found that students who have good sense of learning autonomy show self-directed learning behaviour and take responsibility for their language learning. In addition, they can also motivate themselves to achieve their goals (Yildiz & Yucedal, 2020). On the other hand, students who are not autonomous tend to be dependent on teachers, lack motivation, and struggle to understand English independently (Kemala, 2016). Thus, learning autonomy can be a driving force for the students to be more responsible and independent in managing their own learning pace. Conversely, lack of autonomy leads to dependency and learning difficulties.

Many studies have proved that learning autonomy contributes positive impacts toward English language learning. First, learning autonomy can increase students' engagement. It is in line with Lisady et al. (2022) and Susanti (2020) who found that learning autonomy has a positive effect in students' engagement. In addition, Phuong & Vo (2019) found that learning autonomy become one of the most factors that can improve English proficiency. This is evidenced by research finding by Dafei (2007) and Nguyen (2008) that revealed learning autonomy and English proficiency have a positive relationship. Next, Kartika (2018) found that the presence of autonomy in learners can enhance language awareness and better

cognition strategies, which are essential for efficient learning. In addition, learning autonomy can help learners to determine the situation, conditions, or direction of their own learning (Chasanah, 2017). This suggests that autonomy facilitates in the process through which learners acquire English proficiency both inside and outside the classroom. Also, Treesattayanmuneea & Baharudin (2024) showed a strong relation between a sufficient level of autonomy and an increase in interaction in the learning context, which is an important factor of the learning procedure. Rahman & Suharmoko (2017) in their research showed that developing autonomy in learning not only increases motivation, but also results in more effective language learning outcomes. In addition, Ceylan (2021) also found a positive relationship between motivation and autonomy. Those findings proved that learning autonomy holds a significant role in English language learning.

One of the main problems in promoting the learning autonomy in education is the lack of adequate support in curriculum design, which may prevent students from taking full responsibility for their own learning (Tanyeli & Kuter, 2013). Students also face difficulties in developing their autonomy due to that high dependence on teacher guidance. This makes it difficult to control their own learning process (Saeed, 2021). Based on the results of the interview with an English teacher at SMA Islam Az-Zahrah Palembang, it was found that there were students categorized as non-autonomous learners and autonomous learners. The teacher said that when students were autonomous learners, they took the initiative to understand



the material and complete tasks without waiting for the teachers' instructions. In contrast, students who were non-autonomous only began learning or working on assignments after receiving directions or orders from the teacher.

Regarding the elaboration above, the researcher conducted a survey entitled "Secondary School Student's Autonomy in Learning English at SMA Islam Az-Zahrah Palembang". This study aimed to investigate the level and the dimensions of autonomy in learning English among the eleventh-grade students of SMA Islam Az-Zahrah Palembang.

## **1.2 The Problem of the Research**

### **1.2.1 The Limitation of the Research**

Based on the background explanation, this research was limited to investigate student's autonomy in learning English at SMA Islam Az-Zahrah Palembang.

### **1.2.2 The Formulations of the Research**

Based on the limitation of the problem above, the research problems were formulated as follows:

- a. What level of learning autonomy did the eleventh graders of SMA Islam Az-Zahrah Palembang have?
- b. Which dimensions of learning autonomy mostly influenced the eleventh graders of SMA Islam Az-Zahrah Palembang?

### **1.3 The Objectives of the Research**

Based on the research problems above, the objectives of the research were formulated as follows:

- a. To identify the level of learning autonomy in learning English among the eleventh graders of SMA Islam Az-Zahrah Palembang.
- b. To describe the dimensions of learning autonomy that mostly influenced the eleventh graders of SMA Islam Az-Zahrah Palembang.

### **1.4 The Significance of the Research**

The results of this research is expected to be beneficial for the following groups:

- a. For the Students

This research can help to assess the students' level of learning autonomy.

- b. For the Teachers

This research can provide valuable insight to teachers about the importance of autonomy in learning English. It can support the teachers in developing the effective teaching process and environment that encourage learning autonomy.

- c. For the Researcher

The researcher gains a deeper understanding of how autonomy affected the English learning process, as well as gain experience in conducting a survey.

- d. For Other Researchers

This study provides a significant reference for future researchers on learning autonomy in English language learning.