

## **PROMOTING LEARNERS' AUTONOMY: TO WHAT EXTENT DO STUDENTS PRACTICE AUTONOMOUS ACTIVITIES FOR THEIR LEARNING?**

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**Abstract.** Learner autonomy plays a vital role in the success of language education. The specific purpose of this study is to investigate the views English majored first year students regarding the students' awareness of the importance of learner autonomy as well as the practice of autonomous activities inside and outside the classroom at Faculty of Foreign Languages ( FFL) of Industrial University of Ho Chi Minh City ( IUH). This study was conducted with two instruments: questionnaire and interview. The questionnaires were completed to elicit responses from 100 participants who were English majored freshmen at FFL. At the same time, the writer also made two interviews with teachers who were teaching freshmen. There are four conclusions that are obtained from the findings and discussion. First of all, the majority of the participants in the research have intrinsic motivation when practicing autonomous activities for their learning. Secondly, most of them are aware of the importance of learner autonomy in learning English. And the third finding is about students' strategies in their own learning English. The result indicates that most of the students usually practice listening when they practice language outside the classroom. Finally, it is found that both of the two teachers in the research suppose that 90% of English major freshman at IUH have good perception of learner autonomy, which is a very positive signal for the language learning process.

**Key words.** learning autonomy, awareness, learners

## **KHUYẾN KHÍCH KHẢ NĂNG TỰ HỌC: MỨC ĐỘ SINH VIÊN THỰC HÀNH CÁC HOẠT ĐỘNG TỰ HỌC?**

**Tóm tắt.** Tự học đóng một vai trò quan trọng trong sự thành công của giáo dục ngôn ngữ. Mục đích cụ thể của nghiên cứu này là điều tra các quan điểm của sinh viên chuyên Anh năm thứ nhất về nhận thức của sinh viên về tầm quan trọng của việc tự học cũng như thực trạng việc thực hành các hoạt động tự học trong và ngoài lớp học tại Khoa Ngoại ngữ (FFL) Đại học Công Nghiệp Thành phố Hồ Chí Minh (IUH). Nghiên cứu này được thực hiện với hai công cụ: bảng câu hỏi và phỏng vấn. Các câu hỏi đã được hoàn thành để gợi ra câu trả lời từ 100 người tham gia là sinh viên năm nhất chuyên ngành tiếng Anh tại FFL. Đồng thời, nhà nghiên cứu cũng thực hiện hai cuộc phỏng vấn với các giáo viên đang dạy sinh viên năm nhất. Có bốn kết luận thu được từ nghiên cứu này. Trước hết, phần lớn những người tham gia nghiên cứu có động lực nội tại khi thực hành các hoạt động tự học của họ. Thứ hai, hầu hết trong số họ nhận thức được tầm quan trọng của sự tự học trong việc học tiếng Anh. Thứ ba, kết quả nghiên cứu cũng cho thấy được các phương pháp luyện tập tiếng Anh của sinh viên. Kết quả chỉ ra rằng hầu hết các sinh viên thường luyện nghe khi họ thực hành ngôn ngữ sau giờ học chính khoa. Cuối cùng, cả hai giáo viên trong nghiên cứu đều cho rằng 90% sinh viên năm nhất chuyên ngành tiếng Anh tại IUH có nhận thức tốt về tầm quan trọng của việc tự học, đây là một tín hiệu rất tích cực cho quá trình học ngôn ngữ.

**Từ khóa.** Tự học, nhận thức, người học.

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1. The rational of research**

Nowadays, English language teaching methodology has shifted from the traditional teacher-centered approach to a more active one with learner-centered approach. In Vietnam, there are more and more people learning English to have a good preparation for themselves in the future. However, there are some factors influencing their learning process. And one of these factors is learner autonomy. Having been teachers of English for more than ten years, the researchers realize that learners' recognition of their

learning process plays an important role in their learning progress. Vietnamese students, in particular, value the teacher-centered teaching method. As a result, coming to universities, students have many difficulties to get acquainted with learning autonomy such as lacking of independent learning skills and not many universities has got any programs to help learners learn how to become independent learners. This is the main reason why we carried out the research named "Promoting learners 'autonomy: to what extent do students practice autonomous activities for their learning?"

### 1.2. Purpose of the research

The prospective study is designed with an attempt to investigate the views of English majored first year students regarding their practice of autonomous activities inside and outside the classroom at Faculty of Foreign Languages of Industrial University of Ho Chi Minh City as well as their awareness about learner autonomy, thus improving the students' awareness of learner autonomy. Then, this research focuses on answering those following questions:

1. What is English majored students' motivation when practicing English autonomously?
2. How are the English majored students aware of the importance of learning autonomy in learning English?
3. Which English skills receive the most attention from the students when they practice autonomous activities outside the classrooms?

### 1.3. The significance of the research

It is believed that this research will have many significant influences on both learners and teachers of English, especially the teachers of the Faculty of Foreign Languages (FFL) at IUH. For the students, they can understand the important role of learner autonomy in learning a foreign language in general and English in particular. Moreover, the research also helps students have a self- appreciation of their learning English process. For the teachers, through the research, they can realize more clearly their students' attitude toward learning autonomy. From there, teachers can classify their students into some different groups as well as apply to each group a suitable method when they teach English.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Definition of learner autonomy

The term 'learner autonomy' was first coined in 'Autonomy in foreign language learning' by Henri Holec [4], the 'father' of learner autonomy. Henri Holec [4] defines 'learner autonomy' as 'the ability to take charge of one's own learning'. He means that learners must take charge of their own learning, and responsible for all the decisions concerning all aspects of this learning. The five main issues Holec [4] mentions are listed as below:

- identifying the objectives;
- describing the contents and progressions;
- choosing methods and techniques to be used;
- observing the procedures of acquisition;
- assessing what has been acquired.

Similarly, Benson and Voller [2] suggests that there are at least five ways to use the term "autonomy", listed as follows:

- for a setting that learners were in their wholly own learning;
- for a group of skills which learners can studied and used in self-directed learning process;
- for an innate ability which is curbed by educational institutions;
- for the implementation of learners' charge of their own learning;
- for the permission of learners to identify the good instructions for their own learning.

Littlewood [7] also states that in education term, learner autonomy has to be independent from teachers, so learners become the most necessary and important element in language learning. Obviously, the only one person helping them would be themselves because teachers cannot not help them all the time.

Another definition of learner autonomy by Littlewood [7] is summarized from three different aspects: 1)

the foundation of learner autonomy is learners' awareness of responsibility for their own learning; 2) the growth of learner autonomy hang on the way the learners take responsibility for their own learning as well as their efforts to understand what they are learning, why they are learning, and how they are learning; and 3) the influence of learner autonomy to overcome the difficulties that come from the differences between formal learning and the wider environment in which the learner lives learning.

Considering all these definitions, it seems that learner autonomy can be considered as an attitude toward learning in which the learners are prepared to have responsibility for their own learning which is indispensable for the learning process.

## 2.2. Review of previous studies

Learner autonomy, a popular topic of discussion among language teachers, has raised many questions to explore in many research. A. Koçak [1] did the research "A study on learners' readiness for autonomous learning of English as a foreign language" with an aim to investigate whether, or not, students attending English Language Preparatory School at Başkent University were willing to involve in learning autonomy. The study was conducted by the questionnaire which was completed by 186 students attending Preparatory School of Başkent University. The study reported a number of results:

- Most of the students had high motivation in learner autonomy;
- Some metacognitive strategies like self-monitoring and self-evaluation were preferred to use in the students' learning;
- The teachers were considered more responsible for most of the tasks during their own learning process;
- Most of the students did not spend so much time for activities outside the class to get better;
- Females and elementary learners had higher motivation in learning English, but a significant difference was not in the degree of motivation: it related to the learners' major field, instead;
- Females tended to use more metacognitive strategies in learning English; however, proficiency level and major field of the learners were not significant factors to using metacognitive strategies;
- Learners' awareness of responsibility did not indicate a significant difference related to the participants' gender, proficiency degree and major field;
- Intermediate level language learners preferred to do more activities outside the class in learning English process; on the contrary, the frequency of joining in out-of-class activities in learning English did not indicate a significant difference regarding the subjects' gender and major field.

In addition, Q. Shujun [9] carried out a study to explore the attitude of Chinese English majors towards learner autonomy. This study was conducted by the questionnaire which included 24 statements regarding the students' attitudes and perception towards language learning, teachers and learners roles, and awareness of their capability in learner autonomy. The outcomes of this study pointed out that students had positive attitudes towards learner autonomy; they had a general expectation to be joined in the language learning process and believed in the significance of effort and self-discipline.

S. Sakai, A. Takagi, and M. Chu [10] conducted an investigation into students' perceptions of learner autonomy in English language learning at Japanese and Taiwan universities. There were two phases in this study: a quantitative research in Phase One and a qualitative research in Phase Two. In Phase One, a survey was conducted by using a changed version of the questionnaire built previously. This questionnaire was filled by 902 students. This aimed at exploring the relevance of the instrument for a larger number of the learners, students' awareness of their charge in learning English, and gender differences in their attitudes towards English learning. In Phase Two, the researchers carried out a survey of 73 students out of 902 students in Phase One using another questionnaire. In this questionnaire, students answered in an open-ended format to elucidate the outcomes of Phase One more deeply as well as to explore what effort teachers should do to help students involve in class management. The outcomes of this study confirmed that the changed instrument was reliable and relevant. The authors believed that independent students had a strong will to study English more and tended to get involved in different aspects of classroom management. The results of Phase Two showed that the East Asian students were

able to make good process in order to be autonomous learners if teachers helped them promote their autonomy in different ways. The researcher also stated that “having students set a goal,” “providing students with choices” and “considering individual differences” were some of the important factors to develop autonomy as a teacher.

Midori Mineishi [8] carried out the research to investigate East Asian EFL Learners' Autonomous Learning and Learner Perception, and the research focused on the autonomy of adult EFL learners in Japan. The researcher conducted two studies on learner autonomy of Japanese freshmen. The research question of *Study 1* was: “Are there any differences found between successful and less successful learners?” The questionnaire of *Study 1* was completed by 290 Japanese freshmen from four different departments. At the end of one academic year, the participants were given a comprehension test on the content of the program. Based on the test scores, all the participants were divided into two groups (successful and less successful) that helped the researcher get two significantly different types of learner samples. From the findings of *Study 1*, the second study was conducted and the research question of which was: “Do Japanese university EFL learners feel they learned English autonomously or not in their secondary EFL classrooms?” The questionnaire of *Study 2* was conducted for 225 first-year university students. The two studies showed that there were some differences between successful and less successful learners related to their awareness of learner autonomy, and that not a few numbers of students wanted to learn autonomously rather than to study passively as was often observed in the traditional Japanese classrooms.

The research “Teachers' and Students' Perceptions of Learner Autonomy in the ELT Department at Eastern Mediterranean University” done by Parmis Farahi [3] aimed at investigating the awareness of the ELT students and their instructors towards learner autonomy in the English Language Teaching (ELT) Department at Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU) in North Cyprus. The ELT students' and instructors' overall awareness of learner autonomy in general, and learner autonomy in the ELT Department at EMU in particular were identified. This study employed a descriptive-interpretive method. The study was conducted by two instruments: a questionnaire completed by 69 ELT students and 11 instructors teaching in the ELT Department at EMU and a number of interviews with instructors. The results of this study indicated that both students and teachers in the ELT Department had positive awareness of learner autonomy and supposed that decisions about students' learning should be decided by the students themselves, and that the ELT students also could become good autonomous learners. Nevertheless, it was quite unfeasible for the students to involve in every decision, as classroom management, the use of teaching methods, and the place and time of the lesson in the ELT Department. In contrast, the instructors proposed that they should try their best to improve learner autonomy in their courses by changing the ELT curriculum, redesigning the courses, allowing more freedom to the students to select their topics for projects and assignments, teaching students ways to learn effectively, etc. In conclusion, the outcomes of this study pointed out that the ELT students and their instructors had positive awareness of learner autonomy, and they were willing to promote learner autonomy.

In short, the review of the related research has proved that most of the teachers and the learners in question have positive awareness of learner autonomy. The majority of the learners would like to have some out-of class activities and more choices such as choosing the topics, setting the goals, etc. for their learning activities. These ideas should be taken into consideration by the teachers so as to design the syllabus as well as the lessons. This research is similar to some of these research in the sense that it will try to find out the students' awareness of learner autonomy but it will not look for the differences of awareness among students of different genders or levels of proficiency. Moreover, this study will investigate the autonomous activities that students do when they practice English outside the classroom and the reasons for these choices.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. The study's instruments**

A questionnaire with a list of 11 close-ended and 4 open-ended questions is then prepared to get data from

100 participants. There are 15 questions. Question 1 shows how many years the participants studying English. Questions 2 to 6 can point out students' attitude towards learning autonomy. Questions 11 to 14 will answer the final research question. At the same time, the researchers also conducted an interview with each of the two teachers who are teaching first year students at Faculty of Foreign Languages. The interviews consists of three questions: 1. *Do students complete all assignments given by teachers?* 2. *How about the obligatory assignments?* 3. *How do you appreciate students' awareness of learner autonomy?* Thanks to these questions, the researchers can get the teachers' comments on their students' awareness of learner autonomy and a reflection on the data given from the questionnaire. Viewing a phenomenon from 2 angles will give us a clearer understanding of the circumstances.

### **3.2 The study's participants**

The study's subjects were 100 freshmen in the Faculty of Foreign Languages at IUH and two teachers of English who are teaching language skills for freshmen at Faculty of Foreign Languages. These teachers have got the Master Degree in TESOL or Applied Linguistics and more than 10 years' experience in teaching English.

### **3.3 The study's data collection procedure**

In this research, there were two stages in the data collection procedure. The researcher got the students' opinion in Stage 1 and interviewed the teachers in Stage 2. Prior to data collection, all participants would listen to the explanation for the project. In Stage 1, after creating the questionnaire, the researchers started to gather the data from the classes of freshmen. The researchers asked three teachers for the permission to deliver the questionnaire to students during some days in April. It took students about ten minutes to complete. In Stage 2, after preparing questions for interviews of the teachers, the researchers also came and asked for the agreement from the teacher to collect the data. It was difficult to ask for teachers' permission because the teachers were busy to teach all the time. Some teachers said that they did not have enough time or did not want to participate in the interviews. Fortunately, 2 teachers agreed to spend their time answering the questions of the researchers. Finally, thanks to the helps of both the teachers and the students, all data needed for the research was collected.

### **3.4 The study's data analysis**

After the data collection procedure, the next important stage was that the researchers had to analyze all the data. First of all, it was necessary to make sure that the questionnaires have enough information by reading through all the answers. Next, data from the close-ended questions was analyzed using the Excel 2013. The responses for the open-ended questions were also noted in order to get the general viewpoint from the participants. This stage took a lot of time to perform because there were many questions in each questionnaire which should be summarized carefully and clearly. Then all the data was converted into percentage and displayed under the form of charts and graphs. With the interview, the researchers had to write down the answers from the two teachers and compare and contrast to see the difference as well as the similar ideas between the two teachers.

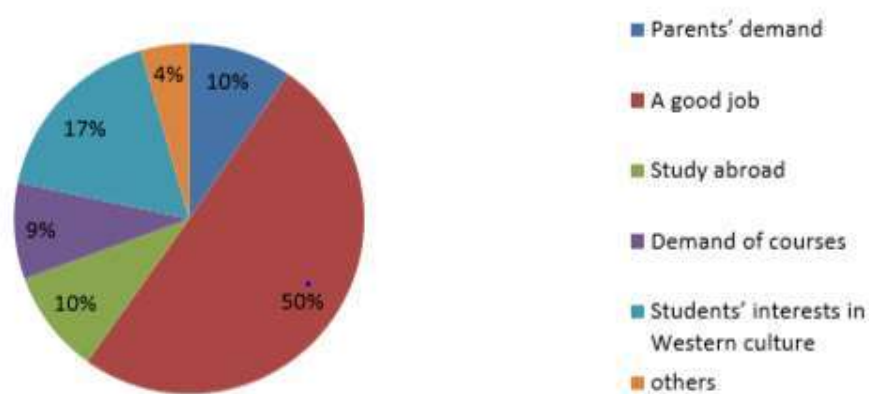
## **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **4.1 Students' motivation in learning English**

First, the responses from the first question of the questionnaire shows that the participants has spent about 6-10 years on learning English. Moreover, about 50% of the students practice autonomous English activities in order to get a good job. Thus we can see that they really have an intrinsic motivation to study English, which can affect their own learning autonomy because motivation and autonomy are really correlated (Hui-ju Liu) [5].

Figure 1. The reasons why students practice autonomous activities

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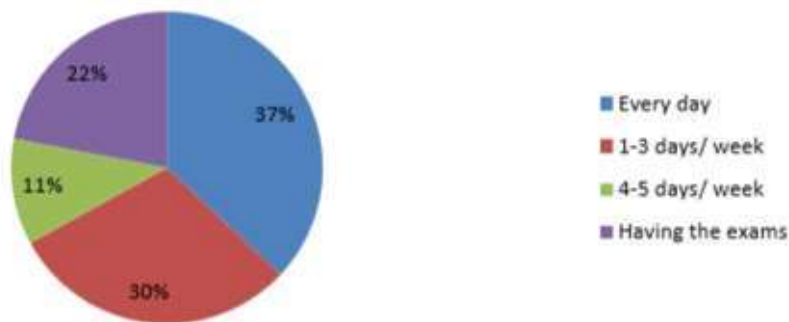


The pie chart presents the reason why the student practice English autonomously. It can be seen clearly from the pie chart that the percentage of the students studying English to get a good job in the future is 50%. Besides, 17% of the students practice because they are interested in the Western countries. The percentages of the students spending time for autonomous activities (1) because of their parents' demands, (2) to study abroad and (3) to meet the demands of the courses is 10%, 10% and 9% respectively. Moreover, there is about 4% of the students learning English because they like English and understand the importance of English in the modern life. The researchers suppose that when students are interested in English, they can have good attitudes to their own learning.

#### 4.2 Students' awareness of the importance of learner autonomy

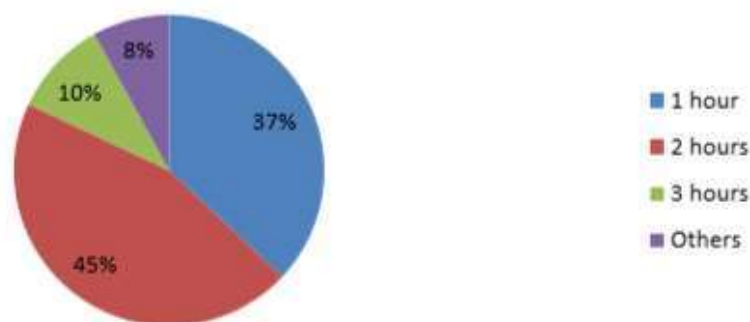
The next part of the questionnaire will figure out what students' attitudes towards the learner autonomy in learning English process are.

Figure 2. How often do students practice English autonomously?



The pie chart of figure 2 shows information about how many days (per week) the students do self-study after school. From the pie chart, it can be seen clearly that 37% of the students do self-study every day whereas the percentage of the students who learn autonomously about 1-3 days or 4-5 days is 30% and 11% respectively. However, there are 22% of the students who only do self-study to prepare for the exams. In other words, unless there are the exams, they would not practice English by themselves after school.

Figure 3. Time spending on practice autonomous activities



The pie chart indicates the amount of time in one day that the students spend on practice autonomous activities. The data indicates that 37% of the students spending an hour a day on their learning autonomy. The percentage of the students who self-study in two or three hours is 45% and 10% respectively. However, there are 8% of the students spending just about 20-30 minutes on their learning autonomy. For the last case, the researchers think that it is insufficient amount of time for learners to improve their English skills.

Figure 3. Students' awareness of learner autonomy in learning English



The pie chart of figure 3 presents the awareness of the English majors at IUH towards the importance of learner autonomy in learning English. When asked if learner autonomy is important to make progress in English learning, 98% of the student agreed on its important role in their own learning process. And there is only 2% of the participants who do not think so.

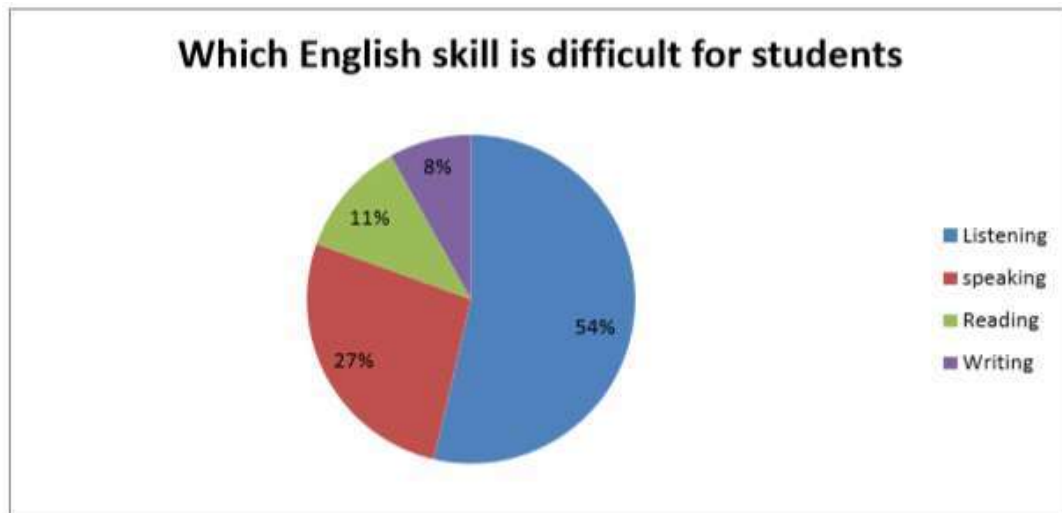
In short, the data has shown that the students are all aware of the importance of learner autonomy. However, their intrinsic motivation is not strong enough to force them to spend enough time for self-study. The amount of time spending on the self-study is still not a good number since only 37% of the student subjects do self-study every day.

### 4.3 Activities students used to improve their skills

In this third section, the results show information about the language skills which receive the most attention from the students when they practice autonomous activities. First, the researcher will find out

which skill is the most difficult for the students and thus to see if they have used most of their self-study time on that skill. Then the researcher also investigate which are the activities that the student subjects use for their learning autonomy.

Figure 4. Which English skill is difficult for students?



The pie chart of figure 4 provides the percentage of the students with the skills making them feel difficult when learning English.

The result obtained from the questionnaire indicates that 46% of the students have difficulties in listening skill. The percentages of the students who feel difficult to learn speaking and writing skill are 22% and 23% respectively. Besides, reading skill is the least difficult for the students. It makes up about 9%. As a result, most of the students state that they usually choose to practice listening and speaking skills when they learn autonomously. Another reason is that they think these skill are more important than the other 2 skills. The students suppose that once they are good at listening and speaking skills, they can improve other skills. On the other hand, some people prefer to learn these skills because of their interests. They love the movies, music, and TV shows or they like to communicate with foreigners.

The following will focus on the activities that the students use to improve the four basic language skills in English.

Figure 5. Activities to improve listening skill

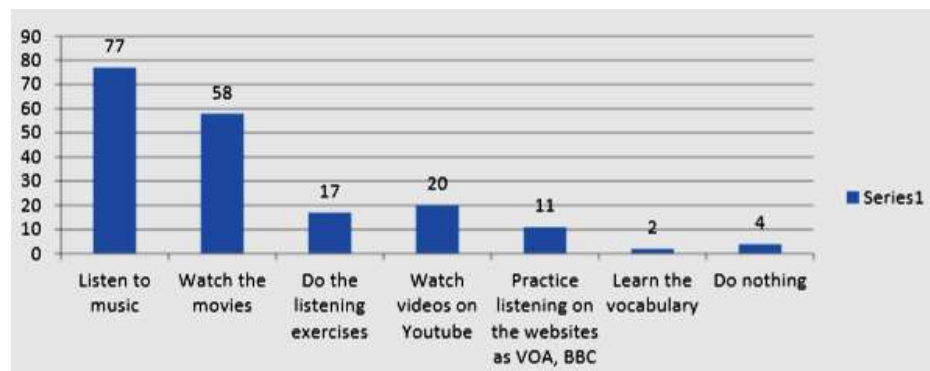


Figure 5 shows us how many students using these activities to improve their listening skill. Some studious learners utilize more than two activities for listening, but there are four students who are too lazy to do anything. From the chart, there are six activities which are usually used when the students learn



autonomously. The most popular activity is *listening to music* with 77 students while the second popular one is *watching the movies without the subtitle* used by 58 students. And some other activities are *watching English videos on YouTube*, *doing the listening exercises*, and *practice listening skills on the websites such as VOA, BBC, etc.* And the last one is *learning the vocabulary*. There are only 2 students choosing this activity because they think that improving their vocabulary can help them learn listening skill more effectively. To sum up, most of students prefer to listen to music and watch the movies in order to improve their listening skill because they can learn and relax at the same time.

Figure 6. Activities to improve speaking skill

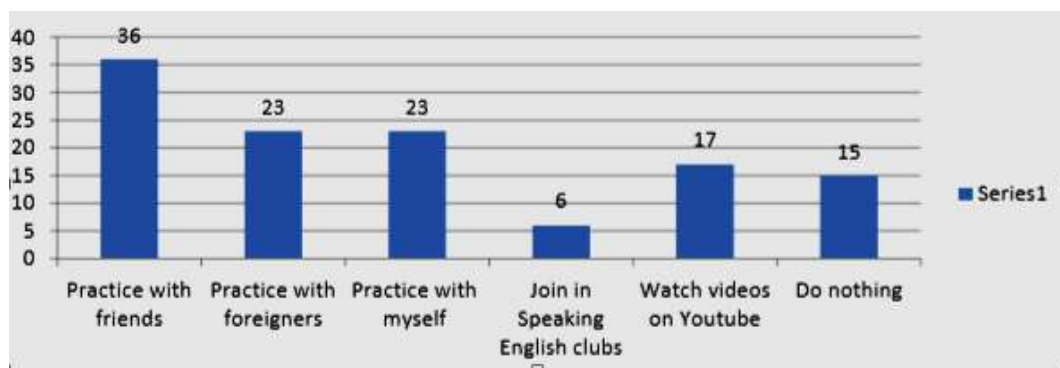


Figure 6 shows us the number of students using these activities to develop their speaking skill. From the chart, 36 students prefer to practice with their friends via their chat while 23 other students like to practice with foreigners because they not only develop their speaking skill but also learn about the pronunciation and the accents. Besides, 23 students usually practice to speak in front of a mirror. And there are 17 students who usually watch videos on YouTube to learn the way native speakers communicate with the others. Only 6 students choose to join in speaking English clubs to help them become more confident to speak in front of many people. However, there are 15 students who do nothing to improve their speaking skill. In conclusion, practicing with friends is the most popular because they can practice whenever they want and it is easier to talk with friends than teachers or foreigners. On the other hand, the researcher believes that the number of students who join the English club should be increased since this is a very useful activity which students can improve their speaking skill through the real speaking activity with other people.

Figure 7. Activities to improve reading skill

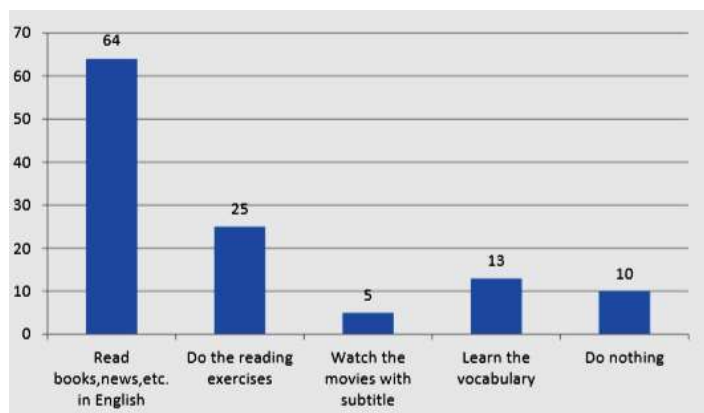


Figure 7 illustrates how students use these activities to improve their reading skill: most of the students like to read books, news, novels, etc. in English; 25 of the students usually do the reading exercises online or redo the tests or exercises in the textbook; 13 others suppose that learning the vocabulary can help

them read better; 10 of the students do not want to learn reading skill; and only 5 of them watch the movies with subtitle.

Figure 8. Activities to improve writing skills.

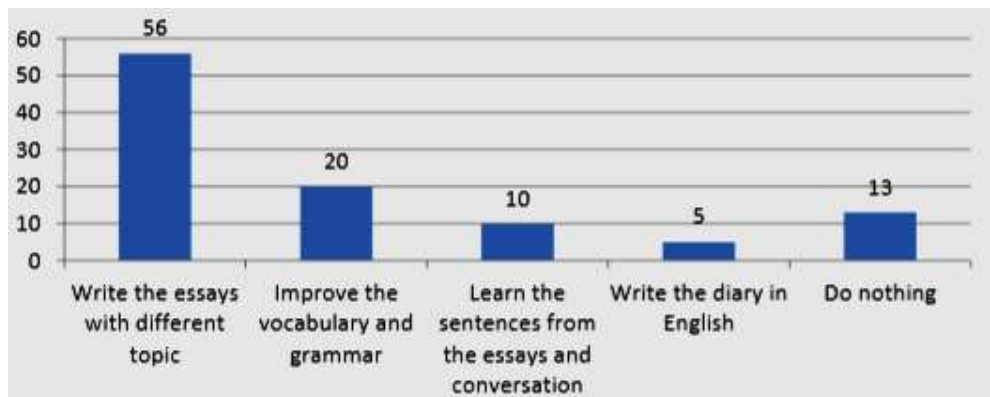


Figure 8 identifies 4 common activities that are used by the students to practice their writing skill: 56 students say that they usually choose a topic to write an essay about whenever they learn autonomously whereas improving the vocabulary and grammar is an activities chosen by 20 students.

Besides, there are 10 students reading the essays and conversations and learning the sentences from there. Moreover, there are 5 students writing the diary in English every day. However, some of them do not want do anything to improve their writing skill. This number is 13 people. To sum up, the majority of students believe that writing the essays with many different topics is the most effective method to improve their writing skill.

In short, according to the findings, the researchers realize that most of students usually learn listening skill when they learn autonomously because it is difficult for them to learn it well if they do not practice the skill after the class. Besides, thanks to their good awareness of learner autonomy, the students employ many different activities to develop their four basic language skills and the most popular activities are those of the students' interest. Some of the methods are not the most effective ones to help these students develop their abilities. For the last question, the students are requested to self-appreciate the effectiveness of their learning autonomy and choose a number from 1 to 10 marks. There are 75% of the students choosing a number under 6 to mark their own learning autonomy. Besides, 25% of the students believe that they have good awareness of learner autonomy and they get about 7-8 marks for themselves.

#### 4.4 Teachers' comments on their students' perception of learner autonomy

An interview was conducted to each of the two teachers teaching English major freshmen at IUH to find out about their comments on their students' perception of learner autonomy. Before the interview, all the two teachers were explained what learner autonomy was. Both of them agreed that the first year students that they worked with did not have real learner autonomy because they had not got enough level of proficiency in English. One teacher stated that there were 80-90% of the freshmen having good awareness towards learner autonomy. When teacher gave students an assignment, the percentage of the students doing the assignment was about 80%, and 60% of the students finished the assignment before the deadline. With the obligatory assignments to get points, if students did not have good awareness, they would not do anything for this assignments. Because the assignments usually make up to 20% of their final marks, which do not actually make much difference in these final marks, some of the students do not care to do the assignments. The teacher supposed that learner autonomy was still a new notion that students needed more time to get accustomed to. The other teacher said that every week, she always asked the students in her listening class to complete the obligatory assignment in 48 hours. The teacher realized that there were about 95% of the students who always finished all assignments before the deadline, while the other 5% did not complete the assignments because they did not even open the file. The teacher stated

that the percentage of the students having good awareness of learner autonomy was about 90%.

In short, the findings of the two interviews shows that with the guidance of the teachers through assignments, the students' performance has proved that most of them have good awareness of learner autonomy and that the students also used some of activities to help them develop their language skills. However, most of the activities in their learning autonomy are based on their interests. This finding is similar to the research conducted by Farahi Parmis [3], which found out that the students in the ELT Department had positive views towards learner autonomy in language learning. The results of the one done by Farahi Parmis [3] showed that both groups of the student subjects believed that it was desirable to involve students in decisions about their learning and that students had the ability to become autonomous learners. In other words, students become more and more active and independent in their own learning process. Furthermore, the research reported in this paper also has the same result as the one carried by Q. Shujun [9], which pointed out that students had positive attitudes towards learner autonomy.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

### **5.1. Conclusion**

This study is set out to investigate the views of English major first year students regarding their awareness of learner autonomy and their practice of autonomous activities inside and outside the classroom at FFL of IUH. There are four conclusions that are obtained from the findings and discussion in previous chapter. First of all, most of English major first year students at IUH have intrinsic motivation when practicing English autonomously. Under the guidance of teacher through the assignment, students become more and more active in their own learning process. Students actively find the references sources to learn autonomously and deal with difficulties and problems in learning process without helping from their teachers. The second results show that most of English major freshmen have good awareness of the importance of learner autonomy in learning English. However, the time students spending on learning autonomy is quite short. The third finding is about students' strategies in their own learning English. The result indicates that most of students usually learn listening skill when they do self-study because it is difficult language skill for them. Therefore, they spend more time to improve their listening skill. Besides, thanks to their good awareness of learner autonomy, most students use many different activities to learn different skills. However, the most popular activities which students like most are related to their interests. Some of them are not the most effective methods to help students develop their abilities. The last finding is about teachers' comment on students' perception of learner autonomy. Both two teachers suppose that most of English major freshman at IUH have good perception of learner autonomy, which makes up about 90% students.

### **5.2. Recommendation**

Based on the findings, there are some recommendations for teachers, students at IUH and further researchers.

#### **5.2.1 Teachers**

The writer believes that the teacher plays an important role in engaging students in learner autonomy. As Jim Scrivener's suggestion [6], the teaching process can be from Explanation (teacher tells the learner), Guided Discovery (Teacher helps the learner to tell himself), to Self-directed discovery (The learner tells himself). To promote learner's autonomy, students, especially the freshmen, will need the teacher's guidance so as to have self-directed learning activity at the end. Therefore, teachers should help students have positive views towards learner autonomy and guide them through the after-class activities such as E-learning or assignment. As Q. Shujun [9] suggested basing on the results of his study, teachers should convey more power to students in classroom, supply more opportunities for student involving in language teaching and raise students' perception and promoting their abilities in learner autonomy.

#### **5.2.3 Students**

Unlike the learning setting in high schools, learning setting at university demands students to become more active and independent in learning process. Being an active and autonomous learner is an important factor to help students learn English more effectively. Therefore, students should have positive awareness

of learner autonomy and its importance from the beginning. Students should actively learn from their teachers and their friends and spend more time on their self-study activity. The person taking the responsibility of one's own learning is the learner, not the teacher, who is only the supporter.

#### **5.2.4 Further research**

One of the limitations of this study is the small number of English majored freshmen and teachers who joined in this study. Future studies may try to conduct a bigger survey on a larger group of participants and interview more teachers. Moreover, more details about the ways to build up learner autonomy should be explored so as to guide students on their learning process.

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