

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

As the beginning, the first chapter comprises two crucial fundamentals of research: the background elucidates the growing issue discussed and research questions demonstrate certain questions to answer through the research. Supplementary sub-chapter such as the focus of the research, the objective of the research, the significance of the research, and the definition of the key terms are the additional foundations described to reinforce the fundamentals.

### 1.1 Background

Educational works have been growing to discuss not only the notability of foreign language teaching and learning inside the classroom but also the worth of beyond-the-classroom learning. The prominent term, which is so-called Language learning and teaching beyond the classroom (LBC) has occurred along with Richards' (2015) note on the significant balance of both activities inside and outside the classroom to accomplish effective learning. Moreover, the current persistent advance of technology has extended language teaching and learning to occur beyond the classroom (Reinders & Benson, 2017). Therefore, LBC has currently been extensively inspected.

Self-access approach is one of the LBC forms that take part in a central role in language education as a manifestation of a more student-centered approach throughout the world. Gardner and Miller (1999) outline self-access as a personalization where students decide how they can interact with particular learning atmospheres either controlled or uncontrolled in an inimitable way. Sheerin (2014) proposed three “pragmatic” goals of a self-access approach in English; emerging commercialization for learning English as a global language, assembling the learning resources due to the explosion of information along with the revolution of electronic, and fulfilling institution needs as a consequence of the growth of students' quantity. Alternatively, the self-access approach is learning personalization to accommodate student-centered learning where students

determine themselves the way to get into contact with a certain learning environment to direct their ways of learning.

Within a self-access approach, an introduced term, self-access centers (SAC), are the center of self-access providing facilities to boost self-access learning (Gardner & Miller, 1999). In other words, SAC provides facilities as the center where students do self-access the accessible facilities freely. Apart from SAC, a focus on language learning can be specified over self-access language learning (SALL) generally established under institutional management. Students can interact with numerous sited facilities designed in a particular atmosphere (Gardner & Miller, 1999) enabling students to advance their autonomous learning skills and proficiencies (Morrison, 2008). Hereafter, students are entirely responsible for their learning goals based on their learning needs.

The SALL origin is based on the development of resource-based learning (RBL). RBL is thus a term employed to state a learning approach by which students self-access and interact with the resources they desire attempting to develop their independent learning to achieve their desired goal (Morrison, 2008). Students interact with provided resources available in SALL through the RBL approach. Today, the innovation and integration of the internet into learning resources have been adopted to include an electronic, digital, or online resource that complements learning beyond the classroom (So, 2012). Therefore, resources in SAC and/ or SALL are facilities which can be language learning materials like books, audio, podcast, videos, etc., various pieces of equipment such as computers, internet, rooms, etc., and services, for instance, writing checks, speaking practice tutors and advisors (Suriaman, 2015). A vital problem of both printed and digital resources is the availability of miscellaneous resources urge to fit students' needs. Consequently, the management of SALL must have taken students' need for their desired resources into consideration in providing learning resources, especially for foreign language learning resources.

Providing resources for English as a foreign language (EFL) required extra careful consideration which can be complicated. The emergent issue in providing resources for EFL learning in the Indonesian context is authentic language inputs

as authentic resources. Nowadays, authentic language inputs derive from numerous forms that are accessible for students who learn EFL beyond the classrooms over various technologies, for instance, TV, CDs/DVDs, computers, the internet, etc. (Bahrani & Sim Tam, 2012). A study by Bahrani and Sim Tam (2012) comparing the authentic language input selection and its exposure time found that the authentic input selection evidenced more significantly affected the development of students' foreign language than its exposure time. This signifies that providing authentic language input as authentic resources requires careful consideration so that the selected authentic resources can develop students' language competence and facilitate their autonomous learning.

Autonomous learning is defined as students' ability to be responsible for deciding their learning objectives, progress, contents, methods, monitoring, and evaluation both in self-directed learning and in classroom learning (Benson, 2011; Holec, 1980). The characteristic of autonomous learners proposed by Littlewood (1996) is the ones who are capable of and willing to learn. Research on university students' autonomous learning has provided vigorous information about institutional, educational, and behavioral aspects, both human and mechanical (Benson, 2011; Mynard & Stevenson, 2017). Moreover, to boost their autonomous learning inside or beyond the classroom learning, the provision of learning-resources noted by Benson (2016), Gardner and Miller (1999) as well as Richards (2015) have to be able to appropriately fulfilled students' needs. One setting of beyond-the-classroom learning believed to be able to facilitate students to learn autonomously and to regulate their learning by deciding what, when, and how to learn in a natural circumstance is SAC (Hsieh H-C, Hsieh H-L, 2019). In short, SAC as beyond-the-classroom learning is trusted to be the place to enhance students' autonomous learning.

Since students are completely responsible for their learning goals based on their needs, another issue emerging is that students' autonomous learning activities and interaction with the resources in SALL are identified only a little. In the Taiwan context, autonomous learning activities found to be carried out in SAC were individual learning, consultation, and organized programs (Hsieh H-C, Hsieh H-L,

2019). The above findings were limited to the Taiwan context which has different characteristics to Indonesian students in that they admit senior high school graduates between 18-22 ages who have typically spent six-hour English classes in their senior high schools besides laboratory practice for one-hour each week before enrolling in university. However, little research found to examine Indonesian students' autonomous learning activities in SALL or SAC.

In the Indonesian context, researchers on SAC have been dominated by students' learning independence research based on Miller et al. (2007) believe that SAC is an influential means to boost students' lifetime and independence in learning where they are given the freedom to do individual activities based on their time, levels, and needs. A study in the Indonesian context done in 2015 about SAC patterns used by English major students found that only game and reading activities majored done by students in SAC (Furaidah & Suharmanto, 2015).

As a matter of fact, a study by Takahashi et al. (2013) found a high percentage of desire for human resources use where students can talk with tutors in certain rooms preferably native-speaker tutors, and physical resources, services, and other activities that can accommodate their directed-learning in SAC. Little information was found about Indonesian SAC counseling services to accommodate Indonesian students' productive skill development through counseling or consultation sessions in SAC like oral practice and writing sessions.

In SAC, teachers are the guides or counselors assisting students to learn how to learn (Riley, 1987). As guides and counselors, teachers cannot work by themselves to know about the appropriateness between the students' needs, beliefs, and attitudes and the available resources in SAC (Gardner & Miller, 1999). Therefore, to adjust the appropriateness of the varying needs (Long, 2005) SAC requires to survey analyzing the students' needs through need analysis which is defined by Brown (2009) as identifying students' needs, particularly in the Education field. In language learning, the concept of need analysis is aimed at knowing students as individuals using and learning the language, knowing the way language abilities, and learning served as an aid to optimize students' language abilities, and knowing the target atmosphere and environment to learn a language. Therefore, need analysis

in language learning requires understanding those three purposes to precisely interpret learning needs.

More specifically, among various models of need analysis, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) suggest two kinds of need analysis in language learning; students' target needs and learning needs. In the context of SAC, students' target needs are related to students' necessities, lacks, and wants toward SAC as the target situation while learning needs consist of desired language learning situation in the form of desired language learning inputs, and learning activities in SAC based on their interests, learning styles, and learning strategies in order to master language skills.

Previous related studies on the need analysis of SAC have been investigated by Detaramani and Shuk (1999) toward undergraduate students of all departments in the City University of Hong Kong and Ng and Gu (2016) examining the competing needs among stakeholders of SALL in the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shenzhen, Takahashi, et. al. (2013) who analyze student self-directed learning (SDL) needs to SAC at Kanda University of International Studies (KUIS), Japan and Sultana (2018) who analyzed the need of autonomous learning of Bangladeshi ESL learners.

Recent related studies on SAC examined SAC-used resources and autonomous learning behaviors in the context of Taiwanese undergraduates (Hsieh H-C, Hsieh H-L., 2019) and the analysis of the current condition and proposed future recommendations of SAC in relation to autonomous learning (Hobbs and Dofs (2017). Other prior related studies in the Indonesian context examined English department students' perception of SAC (Njoto, 2014), SAC patterns used by English major students (Furaidah & Suharmanto, 2015), students' strategies for independent learning via SAC (Suriaman, 2015), and SAC to improve students' self-independence and adjustment to their language competence (Samsudin et al., 2020).

To achieve autonomous learning success in a foreign language learning context, need analysis has proved to be essential to be implemented for students to empower them to be responsible for their learning and motivated them to initiate and enthusiastically engage in foreign language learning, particularly in self-

learning mode (Holec, 1980; Sultana, 2018). The above-mentioned previous related studies concerning needs analysis of autonomous learning were mostly conducted and projected to various students from the non-English department, the issue that rises is that little is known about the specific needs of autonomous learning for English department students within the SAC context. Therefore, this study analyzed English department students' needs for autonomous learning through SAC resources and activities.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

The declared questions that arisen as guidance to answer through the current research are:

- 1.2.1 What are the English department students' target needs for autonomous learning resources of SAC?
- 1.2.2 What are the English department students' learning needs for autonomous learning activities carried out in SAC?

## **1.3 Focus of the Research**

The study focuses on the need analysis of autonomous learning through SAC resources and activities perceived by English department students. Accordingly, the scope of this research is focusing on autonomous learning within two elements including SAC resources and activities as needed by English department students.

Meanwhile, as the object of the study is autonomous learning through SAC resources and activities by English department students, this study is limited to SAC in Muhammadiyah University of Malang (UMM) and projected to English department students of UMM. To avoid bias, the need analysis is done based on both English department students as beginners and experienced SAC users.

## **1.4 Objectives of the Research**

The research is aimed to examine English department students' need for autonomous learning through SAC resources and activities. Precisely, the objectives are to describe English department students' target needs for autonomous learning through the resources of SAC and to reveal their learning needs for autonomous learning through the activities performed in SAC to accommodate autonomous learning needed by English department students.

## **1.5 Significance of the Research**

The researcher expects the result of this research to gain an understanding of the specific needs of students in the English department which can inform the development of targeted resources and activities that can tailor to English department students' needs. This can help to enhance the effectiveness of English department students' autonomous learning experiences and improve their outcomes. Furthermore, this research can provide insights into the types of resources and activities that are most valued and useful to the English department students, which can inform decision-making about resource allocation and programming in SAC. Also, this research can contribute to the broader body of knowledge on autonomous learning and the ways in which it can be supported in higher education contexts. By understanding the specific needs and preferences of English department students, this research can inform the development of best practices and recommendations for supporting autonomous learning in other subject areas and institutions.

Furthermore, the practical implication of this research is projected to help prepare the initial phase of future development of an autonomous learning environment in SAC when the SAC resources and activities that can be carried out in SAC are in accordance with the identified needs for the English department students. Above practical implication can be achieved through providing information about the identified gap between the existing SAC resources as well as activities and the need for autonomous learning in both SAC resources and activities for English department students.

## **1.6 Definition of the Key Terms**

To make any terms used in this research clearly defined, the following key terms are defined in the word of the expert and described as the focus of this research.

### **1.6.1 Need Analysis**

Need analysis on educational grounds is defined as identifying students' learning needs. (Brown, 2009). Among various models of need analysis, Hutchinson, and Waters (1987) suggest two kinds of need analysis in language learning; students' target needs and learning needs. In this study, need analysis

refers to the SAC users', especially English department students', needs for autonomous learning through SAC resources and activities as a center to study English as their foreign language.

#### 1.6.2 Target Needs

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) define target needs as students' necessities, lacks, and wants toward English for Specific Purposes (ESP). This study adopted the term target needs by referring to students' necessities, lacks, and wants toward autonomous learning in SAC as the target situation.

#### 1.6.3 Learning Needs

Learning Needs means anything the students need to do with the aim of learning and mastering the language skills and knowledge required (Hutchinson, T., & Waters, A., 1987). In this study, learning needs are associated with students' learning needs consisting of desired language learning situation inputs, services, and activities based on their interests, learning styles, and learning strategies to accommodate their needs for autonomous learning in SAC.

#### 1.6.4 Autonomous Learning

Autonomous learning is defined as students' ability to be responsible for deciding their learning objectives, progress, contents, methods, monitoring, and evaluation both in self-directed learning and in classroom learning (Benson, 2011; Holec, 1980). In this study, autonomous learning refers to students' ability to self-regulate their learning in the context of SAC

#### 1.6.5 Self-Access Center (SAC)

SAC is defined as an approach of learning materials design and organization provided for students to enable them to choose materials and do tasks independently as well as gain advice toward what they are performing (Sheerin, 1991). It is also the center of self-access that provide facilities, and materials to boost self-access learning (Gardner & Miller, 1999). In this study, the term SAC refers to the place where students can access English learning resources, materials, and activities to accommodate their language learning autonomy and enhance their English proficiency.

### 1.6.6 SAC Resources

Resources in SAC are defined as facilities which can be language learning materials like books, audio, podcast, videos, etc., and various pieces of technology both hardware or software such as computers, internet connection, electronic books, electronic catalogs, etc. (Lazaro & Reinders, 2006; Suriaman, 2015). Hence, resources in SAC in this study cover both paper-based material and technology-based material and tools.

### 1.6.7 SAC Activities

Except for providing resources, SAC also functions as counseling as the activities carried out in SAC to assist, guide, and advice students' skills in language learning (Gardner & Miller, 1999). The provided counseling in SAC can be one-on-one or group speaking practices, writing coaching, workshop, and learning consultations (Detaramani & Shuk, 1999; Hsieh H-C, Hsieh H-L., 2019). In this study, autonomous learning activities carried out in SAC included activities in English learning skills covering listening, speaking, reading, and writing as well as language elements such as learning vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar that can be performed both individually and in group activities and interactions with resources, and tutors within SAC as the center of language learning beyond the classroom.