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## Teachers' Factors in Autonomous Learning During Language Learning: A Systematic Literature Review

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### Abstract

Autonomous learning is the cornerstone in a student-centred learning approach. The practice of autonomous learning helps make the teaching and learning more engaging for learners. However, there are very little systematic studies that cover this topic. These systematic studies will explore teachers' factors during the implementation of the autonomous learning approach and its respective representatives that covers the point of view from a teacher's perspective. The study carried out aid in bridging the gap in order to encourage and promote autonomous learning in the teaching and learning environment. The use of the Systematic Review and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) statement's was applied in the reviewed methodology to ensure an organised screening and filtering process to obtain related materials or articles suitable for the study. A total of 40 articles are identified from reliable search engines, namely, GoogleScholar and Web of Science databases. The systemic studies covers teachers' perceptions, teachers' roles, teachers' challenges and teachers' strategies in the autonomous approach implementation. Most of the studies cover the teachers' perceptions on both positive views and negative views toward autonomous learning. Teachers are able to embrace a student-centred approach with learners. Suggestions in the future should include students' perceptions in order to utilise the autonomous learning approach to good use. A scrutiny study will cover students' point of view.

**Keywords:** Teachers' Perceptions, Teachers' Strategies, Autonomous Learning, Learners' Autonomy, Language Learning

### Introduction

Teachers' responsibility in English language learning has always been the sole knowledge giver. The teacher's figure in maintaining a balanced learning environment is mandatory in order to enhance the autonomy of learners in the process of learning (Masouleh & Jooneghani, 2012). Students are very dependent on teachers and choose to stay sheltered in the comfort of conventional learning methods. According to Little (1991) learner autonomy and teacher autonomy are interconnected, and that teachers should imply the approach on themselves before nurturing students to be autonomous learners. Teachers need to reflect on their own beliefs, practices, experiences and expectations of the teaching and learning

environment. Educators too find it manageable orchestrating of the teaching and learning process. The problems and obstacles can be overseen and time is saved solely for completing the syllabus.

Autonomous learning is no longer a foreign teaching method especially in this 21<sup>st</sup> century. The importance of the 5C's namely, communication, creativity, critical thinking, characteristics and collaboration are often highlighted in the teaching plan. It is aligned with the principles that bind the key points of autonomous learning. According to Hasim & Zakaria (2016), the key concepts of learner autonomy are ownership, self-directed, responsible for acquired skills, socially-constructed and collaboration. It grants learners the responsibility to venture and be held responsible during their learning. Despite being the star in teaching methods, many have their doubts and worries during the implementation. As a result, many studies have been conducted to bridge the gap of finding teachers' perceptions towards autonomous learning in the language learning setting. Related materials which cover the teachers' roles, teachers' challenges and teachers' strategies contribute to the insights on the development of autonomous learning in the classroom.

The concept of autonomous learning has been introduced to schools and teachers but the responses are not as welcoming as the expected outcome. Educators are also encouraged to put the autonomous approach to use. However, teachers do not know where to begin as they are not provided with a proper guide or framework. Unlike the Common European Framework Reference (CEFR), teachers are provided with resources such as the *Super Minds* for Year 1 and Year 2 from 2017 and 2018. *Get Smart Plus 3* was introduced in 2019 as the primary textbook for Year 3 and followed by *Get Smart Plus 4* in the year of 2020. Meanwhile *Pulse 2* is provided from Secondary 1 and Secondary 2 students. The English Language Standards and Quality Council (ELSQC) was formed to oversee the implementation and dissemination of the new CEFR-aligned curriculum (Aziz, Rashid & Zainudin, 2018). Therefore, this systematic review was carried out based on the following questions:

1. What are teachers' perceptions towards learners' autonomy in Language Learning?
2. What are the representatives of teachers' perceptions towards autonomous learning?

## Methodology

The systematic review was conducted based on the Systematic Review and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) method. The PRISMA guidelines consist of a four-phase flow diagram and a 27-item checklist (Selçuk, 2019). This systematic literature review was initiated with the search of related material from Google Scholar and Web of Science. The general study of articles obtained will be filtered through several phases namely, identification phase, screening phase, eligibility phase and exclusion phase that fall under the scope of a review.

## Identification Phase

This systematic literature review articles was sourced from Google Scholar and Web of Science (WOS). Google Scholar catered to a countless number of articles ranging from education, science, engineering, etc. It covers a wide range of sources including conference proceedings, books, and reports which enable readers to excess without limitations. Google Scholar is not a human-curated database but a search engine of the whole internet which narrows the results to "scholarly " ones based on machine specific automated criteria. WOS is a reputable search engine providing accurate, concise and indexed articles and journals for researchers and readers. Table shows the keywords used for the article selections relating to

teachers' perceptions towards autonomous learning during language learning. The selection includes the timeline, language and literature type as narrowed by the researchers.

Table 1: Keywords used during the process of finding relevant literature

Search Engines	Keywords
Google Scholar	Title = (teachers' perceptions) AND (student teacher) AND (teacher trainee) AND (learners autonomy) AND (language learning) AND (teachers' role) AND (teachers' challenges)
Web of Science	TS = (teachers' perceptions) AND (student teacher) AND (teacher trainee) AND (learners autonomy) AND (language learning) AND (teachers' role) AND (teachers' challenges)

### Screening Phase

The researchers start screening and filtering articles found in both search engines. This is to avoid repetition in the articles' analysis in the later stage. The remaining articles are further filtered referring to the criterion decided.

### Eligibility Phase

The articles short listed must fit the criterion stated from the aspect of timeline and field of study. The study must cover the perspective of teachers. The study covering students' voices or perceptions are excluded. The timeline ranges from 2016 until 2021 to ensure its eligibility till the current date.

Table 2: The eligibility and exclusion criterion

Criterion	Eligibility	Exclusion
Literature Type	Journal (research articles)	Book, book series, proceedings, book's chapter, systematic review articles,
Language	English	Non-English
Factors' representatives	Teachers'	Students', Parents'
Timeline	Between 2016 till 2021	< 2016

### Exclusion Phase

In the exclusion phase, researchers look into the literature type of the materials obtained. The numbers of articles were included after the three stages of filtering and screening related articles. The included articles consist of qualitative method (QA), quantitative method (QN) and mixed method (MM) research. Materials of books, book series, proceedings and systematic review articles are excluded due to the fact of falling out of the criterion required.

Articles published in the year 2015 and before too are not accepted in order to produce an up to date systematic review. All the criteria are taken into account to produce a quality set of data.

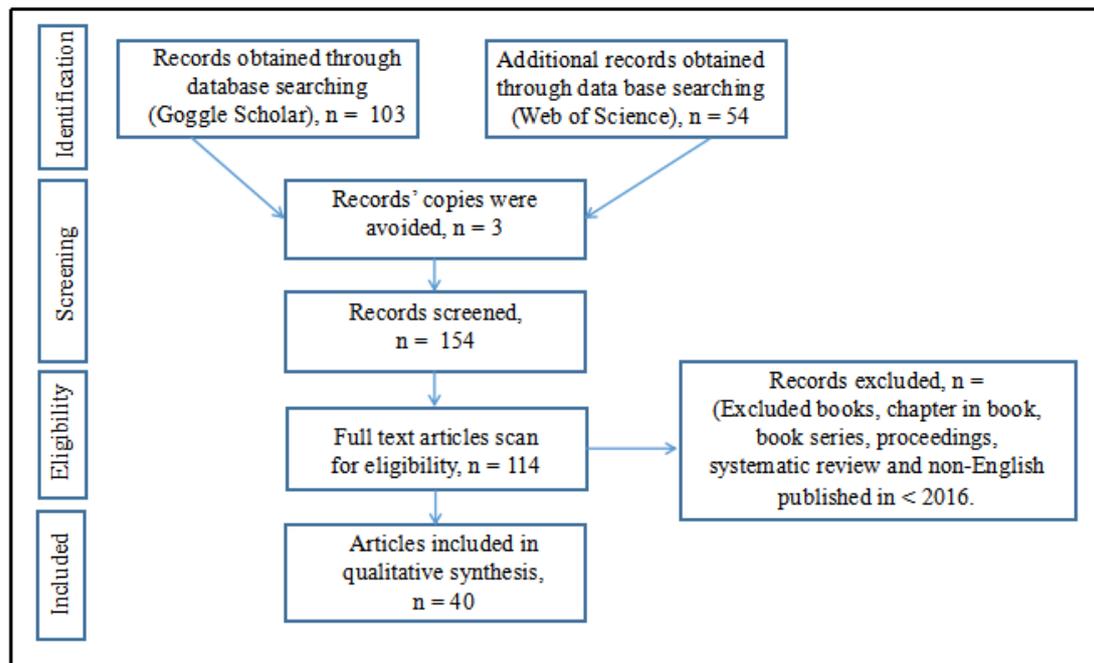


Figure 1: The stream chart of the examination

### Findings and Discussion

A total of 40 articles were identified and eligible after four phases of filtering and scanning. The number of studies are as shown in Table 3. In light of documenting and compiling the information, specialists focus on several aspects in regards to teachers' perceptions on learners autonomy during language learning. The content extracted from the articles are the researchers, methods conducted and representatives of teachers' factors. The methods conducted are classified into three types, which are qualitative method (QA), quantitative method (QN) and mixed method (MM).

These aspects include teachers' perceptions (Abdulkader, 2016; Abugohar et al., 2019; Agudelo & Morales-Vasco, 2019; Agustina, 2017; Almekhlafi & Abulibdeh, 2018; Almusharraf, 2020; Alzeebaree, 2016; Bakar et al., 2018; Borg & Alshumaimeri, 2019; Cakici, 2017; Dao et al., 2019; Darsih, 2018; Ghavifekr et al., 2016; Hamzah & Cheang, 2016; Hasim & Zakaria, 2016; Ju, 2018; Khalymon & Shevchenko, 2017; Mokhtar, 2016; Moodley & Aronstam, 2016; Ostovar-Namaghi & Gholami, 2018; Sabbir, 2019; Tayjasant & Suraratdecha, 2016; Xu et al., 2017; Yasmin et al., 2019; Yükselir, 2016; Yavuz et al., 2020; Yuzulia, 2020); teachers' role (Alonazi, 2017; Hasim et al., 2016; Javid, 2018; Lin & Reinders, 2019; Tayjasant, & Suraratdecha, 2016; Yasmin et al., 2019); teachers' challenges (Abdulkader, 2016; Almusharraf, 2020; Alonazi, 2017; Bakar et al., 2018; Borg & Alshumaimeri, 2019; Dogan & Mirici, 2017; Dwee & Anthony, 2017; Ghavifekr et al., 2016; Hamzah & Cheang, 2016; Lin & Reinders, 2019; Liu et al., 2018; Sabbir, 2019; Shamir-Inbal & Blau, 2021; Sidhu et al., 2018; Tayjasant, & Suraratdecha, 2016; Yasmin & Sohail, 2018a; Yasmin et al., 2019; Yavuz et al., 2020); teachers' strategies (Almusharraf, 2020; Borg & Alshumaimeri, 2019; Darsih, 2018; Dogan & Mirici, 2017; Dwee & Anthony, 2017; Hasim et al., 2016; Ju, 2018; Phan & Hamid, 2016; Sidhu et al., 2018; Yasmin & Sohail, 2017; Yasmin & Sohail, 2018b; Yuzulia, 2020).

Table 3: The findings

	Articles	Metho ds	Perceptio ns	Roles	Challenge s	Strategie s
1.	Abdulkader (2016) - Saudi Arabia	MM	/		/	
2.	Abugohar et al (2019) - Saudi Arabia	MM	/			
3.	Agudelo & Morales-Vasco (2019) - Columbia	QA	/			
4.	Agustina (2017) - Indonesia	MM	/			
5.	Almekhlafi & Abulibdeh (2018) - Saudi Arabia	QN	/			
6.	Almusharraf (2020) - Saudi Arabia	QA	/		/	/
7.	Alonazi (2017) - Saudi Arabia	QN		/	/	
8.	Alzeebaree (2016) - Iran	QN	/			
9.	Bakar et al (2018) - Malaysia	QN	/		/	
10.	Borg & Alshumaimeri (2019) - Saudi Arabia	QN	/		/	/
11.	Cakici (2017) - Turkey	QN	/			
12.	Dao et al (2019) - Mixed Countries	QA	/			
13.	Darsih (2018) - Indonesia	MM	/			/
14.	Dogan & Mirici (2017) - Turkey	MM			/	/
15.	Dwee & Anthony (2017) - Malaysia	QA			/	/
16.	Ghavifekr et al (2016) - Malaysia	QN	/		/	
17.	Hamzah & Cheang (2016) - Malaysia	MM	/		/	
18.	Hasim & Zakaria (2016) - Malaysia	QN	/			
19.	Hasim et al (2016) - Malaysia	QA		/		/
20.	Javid (2018) - Saudi Arabia	QN		/		

21.	Ju (2018) - Malaysia	QN	/		/
22.	Khalymon & Shevchenko (2017) - Ukraine	QN	/		
23.	Lin & Reinders (2019) - China	QN		/	/
24.	Liu, Mishan, & Chambers (2018) - China	MM			/
25.	Mokhtar (2016) - Turkey	QA	/		
26.	Moodley & Aronstam (2016) - South Africa	QA	/		
27.	Ostovar-Namaghi & Gholami (2018) - Pakistan	QN	/		
28.	Phan & Hamid (2016) - Vietnam	QA			/
29.	Sabbir (2019) - Malaysia	QN	/		/
30.	Shamir-Inbal & Blau (2021) - Israel	QA			/
31.	Sidhu et al. (2018) - Malaysia	QA			/
32.	Tayjasanant, Suraratdecha (2016) - Thailand	& QA	/	/	/
33.	Xu et al (2017) - China	MM	/		
34.	Yasmin & Sohail (2017) - Pakistan	QA			/
35.	Yasmin & Sohail (2018a) - Pakistan	QA			/
36.	Yasmin & Sohail (2018b) - Pakistan	QA			/
37.	Yasmin et al (2019) - Pakistan	QA	/	/	/
38.	Yavuz et al (2020) - Turkey	QA	/		/
39.	Yükselir (2016) - Turkey	QN	/		
40.	Yuzulia (2020) - Indonesia	QA	/		/

Table 4: Number of journal articles discussing the different representatives

Teacher factors' representatives	Number of Journals
Perceptions	27
Roles	6
Challenges	18
Strategies	12

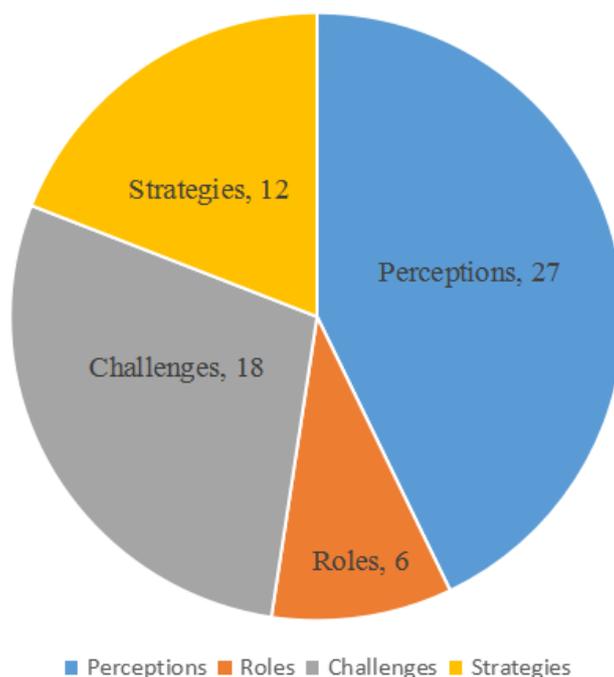


Figure 2: The number of journals

### Teachers' Factors towards Autonomous Learning in Language Learning

In this section, researchers focus on the teachers' perceptions regarding autonomous learning in language learning. The highlighted aspects include teachers' perceptions, teachers' role, teachers' challenges and teachers' strategies.

**Teachers' Perceptions**

Table 5: Findings regarding teachers' perceptions

No.	Authors (Years)	Positive Perceptions	Negative Perceptions
1.	Abdulkader (2016)	Showed positive attitudes	
2.	Abugohar et al. (2019)	Attractive learning, foster students' speaking confidence, enhance students' fluency	Cautious of accepting new techniques, time consuming
3.	Agudelo & Morales-Vasco (2019)	New opportunity, building together	
4.	Agustina (2017)	Reduce students workload, promote independent learning, students make decision	
5.	Almekhlafi & Abulibdeh (2018)	Promote teacher-learner communication skills, allows innovative thinking, develop learner ability to ask, provide opportunity for exchange of knowledge	
6.	Almusharraf (2020)	Engage in active learning	
7.	Alzeebaree (2016)	Promote decision making in students, students choose own learning tools	
8.	Bakar et al (2018)	Boost students' confidence level, promote active learning	
9.	Borg & Alshumaimeri (2019)	Motivate students, promote independent study, cultivate metacognitive, self monitoring and self assessment	
10.	Cakici (2017)	Students given more responsibility, more opportunity for students, students make decision, students choose learning materials, students plan, monitor and evaluate	
11.	Dao et al (2019)		Not compatible with theoretical framework, neglect students emotional dimension

12.	Darsih (2018)	Improve routine activity through individual tasks, students make choices, students choose materials, promote confidence, effective learning, promote collaborative work, student centred learning	
13.	Ghavifekr et al (2016)	Students' concentrate on learning, students try harder, students feel autonomous, Students understands easily	
14.	Hamzah & Cheang (2016)		Low proficiency students' face difficulty in speaking, backwash effect
15.	Hasim & Zakaria (2016)	LA has positive effect on language learners, confident learners will advance	Teachers lack of autonomy, students becoming ineffective language learners
16.	Ju (2018)	Learning become easier, monitor students' progress closely, boost students' interest and engagement, teachers convenience to choose what type of teaching model	Cannot move away from face-to-face to online teaching completely, Students lack of motivation
17.	Khalymon & Shevchenko (2017)	Students self-confidence to learn, increase students' motivation, students take responsibilities	
18.	Mokhtar (2016)	Attract student' attention, abundance of materials, promote students' efficacy, aspire future teachings	
19.	Moodley & Aronstam (2016)	Meaningful learning, improvise learning, learn within community	Complex task
20.	Ostovar-Namaghi & Gholami (2018)	Internalise materials, reduces students tension, remedial function of materials, motivates students	
21.	Sabbir (2019)	Open new ideas on approaches	
22.	Tayjasanant & Suraratdecha (2016)	Students choose own materials	

23.	Xu et al (2017)	Allows international exchange of economy and culture, English teachers are given more chances to attend to English teaching training, English teachers have better teaching abilities and more advanced teaching concepts	Large groups of students, limited materials, lack of time, availability of English use outside of classroom
24.	Yasmin et al (2019)	Students responsible of own learning, work collaboratively with peers	
25.	Yavuz et al (2020)	Improve four language skills, authentic materials	
26.	Yükselir (2016)	Enhance students' motivation, use authentic materials, students create online blogs	
27.	Yuzulia (2020)	Students more confident, students choose own materials, Students more motivated, authentic materials	Teachers are doubtful towards self assessment, teachers have conflicting beliefs

A total of 27 out of 40 articles covered the teachers' perceptions on autonomous learning. Out of the 27 articles, 25 agreed with the positive outcomes of learners' autonomy while 8 other articles discussed the negative perceptions on autonomous learning. This systematic review explained nurtured students' autonomy characteristics such as decision-making, independent learning, responsible learner, (Agustina, 2017; Alzebaree, 2016; Borg & Alshumaimeri, 2019; Cakici, 2017; Darsih, 2018; Ghavifekr et al., 2016; Khalymon & Shevchenko, 2017; Tayjasant & Suraratdecha, 2016; Yasmin et al., 2019; Yuzulia, 2020). Students have the ability and are responsible for choosing their own learning materials and tools. The learning becomes conducive as learners learn actively with a purpose and is able to engage in the teaching and learning (Abugohar et al., 2019; Almusharraf, 2020; Bakar et al., 2018; Darsih, 2018). Students can make sense of things they learn and relate it to their surroundings. The autonomous learning approach is believed to boost students' confidence and motivation to learn (Abugohar et al., 2019; Bakar et al., 2018; Borg & Alshumaimer, 2019; Darsih, 2018; Hasim & Zakaria, 2016; Khalymon & Shevchenko, 2017; Mokhtar, 2016; Ostovar-Namaghi & Gholami, 2018; Yükselir, 2016; Yuzulia, 2020). This automatically changes students' perceptions and their learning attitudes. Students gain their autonomy and have a sense of responsibility towards their learning. New opportunity and approaches are generated from autonomous learning where teaching methods are diversify (Agudelo & Morales-Vasco, 2019; Almekhlafi & Abulibdeh, 2018; Darsih, 2018; Mokhtar, 2016; Sabbir, 2019; Xu et al., 2017). The use of technology allows students to experience out of the classroom experience through creating blogs and communicating with overseas peers (Yükselir, 2016). Xu et al (2017) explains how the exposure to training and resources enable teachers to equip and assist the students better. Moodley & Aronstam (2016) autonomous

learning enables students to relate learning to real life situations and develop valuable skills. Teachers should focus more on open-ended questions for emergent outcomes than predetermined outcomes. This then students are given the space to ponder and generate ideas or solutions to fill the void in the questions given. The use of authentic materials help to promote meaningful learning (Mokhtar, 2016; Moodley & Aronstam, 2016; Yükselir, 2016; Yuzulia, 2020). Ostovar-Namaghi & Gholami (2018) highlighted that autonomous learning reduces students' tension. The practice of memorisation causes students to be constantly under pressure. Students tend to have the expectation to complete memorising a certain chapter or subtopic within a specific time frame. The use of known materials helps students to warm up during the introduction of new materials.

The negative perceptions of autonomous learning include surrounding factors such as large number of students, limited materials, lack of use outside of the classroom (Xu et al., 2017). Students only practice the language during lessons. They lack intrinsic motivation during language learning for personal benefits. Teachers' personal prejudice towards the student-centred method due to the lack of assurance and conflicting beliefs (Abugohar et al., 2019; Ju, 2018; Yuzulia, 2020). The long history of traditional teaching is more promising with students' good grades than the directionless autonomous learning. Autonomous learning is suitable for advanced learners as they are equipped with prior knowledge. However, lower proficiency learners will experience a washback effect as they have minimal knowledge and do not know where to begin or the continuation of the next lesson (Hamzah & Cheang, 2016). Moodley & Aronstam (2016) voiced the concern of autonomous learning involving complex tasks. It is time consuming for preparation and teachers are not able to complete the syllabus on time. The tasks are just complimentary activities but take up more preparation time than the main content of the lesson (Abugohar et al., 2019).

### **Teachers' Roles**

Table 6: Findings regarding teachers' roles

No.	Authors (Years)	Roles
1.	Alonazi (2017)	Facilitator, counsellor, role of source, classroom manager
2.	Hasim et al. (2016)	Facilitator, mentor
3.	Javid (2018)	Facilitator and helpers, help develop students' creativity, treat students equally, encourage students
4.	Lin & Reinders (2019)	Facilitator, monitor
5.	Tayjasanant & Suraratdecha (2016)	Facilitator, monitor
6.	Yasmin et al (2019)	Facilitator, counsellor, observer and motivator

In autonomous learning, teachers no longer play the character of an autonomous educator or knowledge giver. Students are given more spare and freedom to venture into the learning with their peers. All the six articles agree that teachers fit in the role as a facilitator. Teachers will watch by the side. Instead of the usual practice of top-down approach, the bottom-up

method is applied in the autonomous classroom. Javid (2018) stated that teachers should treat all their students equally and should not favour anyone regardless of their proficiency and background. The need to instigate and prompt students in asking questions when there are doubts is essential in promoting learners autonomy. According to Yunus, & Arshad (as cited in Javid), bestowing students with autonomy during their learning process, allows the growth of mutual coordination and trust. In return, students take initiative in acquiring knowledge by taking control of the student-centred classroom. In Yasmin, Naseemb & Masso (2019) the teacher gave responses as such, "Taking full responsibility of transmitting knowledge does not guarantee that the learning process can or will take place". Autonomous learning gives learners the opportunity to self-directed learning. Alonazi (2017) too initiated the need of a teacher to motivate and encourage students in order to make learning easy. Teachers cannot spoon-feed students at all times however the former can push the latter to be better through moral support. The role as monitor and mentor are essential in guaranteeing the success rate of autonomous learning (Hasim et al., 2016; Lin & Reinders, 2019; Tayjasanant & Suraratdecha, 2016).

### **Teachers' Challenges**

Table 7: Findings regarding teachers' challenges

No.	Authors (Years)	Challenges
1.	Abdulkader (2016)	Lack of training, large number of students, extensive teaching hours, time consuming for activity preparation
2.	Almusharraf (2020)	Lack of expertise, students lack of motivation
3.	Alonazi (2017)	Misconception of LA, school policy, lack of basic skills
4.	Bakar et al (2018)	Time constraint
5.	Borg & Alshumaimeri (2019)	Learner characteristics, curriculum, prior education
6.	Dogan & Mirici (2017)	Educational System, student learning attitude, lack of teacher autonomy
7.	Dwee & Anthony (2017)	Lack of readiness among the teachers, lack of interest in learning, relevance and timing of the English courses within curriculum
8.	Ghavifekr et al (2016)	Lack of assisting tools, lack of pedagogical support
9.	Hamzah & Cheang (2016)	Students language abilities, students sociocultural background, affective domain
10.	Lin & Reinders (2019)	Students' lack of incentive, environmental constraints, teachers' own problems; lack of pedagogical training & professional knowledge
11.	Liu et al. (2018)	Resource constraints, Constraints of students, Constraints of teachers, Constraints from administrative systems

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12.	Sabbir (2019)	Teaching materials, lack of technological resources, proficiency level of students.
13.	Shamir-Inbal & Blau (2021)	<u>Pedagogical</u> challenges, <u>technological</u> challenges, <u>systemic organisational</u> challenges, personal challenges
14.	Sidhu et al (2018)	Teachers' workload, time constraint , class enrollment, lack of training
15.	Tayjasanant & Suraratdecha (2016)	Lack of professional development, lack of social understanding, lack of English speaking environment, lack of parental understanding
16.	Yasmin & Sohail (2018a)	Lack of awareness, lack of teachers' tolerance, lack of teacher willingness, students' shyness, teachers bias
17.	Yasmin et al (2019)	Educational barrier, psychological barrier, cultural barrier, socio-political barrier
18.	Yavuz et al (2020)	Trouble in grabbing students' attention, need sufficient time to prepare for the lesson, familiarity with the subject Knowledge; pedagogical knowledge

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Challenges faced by teachers are mostly due to surrounding factors. The teachers' factors are the largest contributor to challenges faced by educators. The lack of training, exposure, professional development and resources were highlighted in all of the 18 articles related to the challenges faced by teachers when an autonomous learning approach was being applied in the classroom. It was an inevitable circumstance from the transition of conventional teaching to autonomous learning. Students being the centre of the lesson have their equal share of cooperation during autonomous learning. Therefore, students' passive attitude during learning is a form of setback towards this learner-centred approach (Almusharraf, 2020; Borg & Alshumaimeri, 2019; Dogan & Mirici, 2017; Dwee & Anthony, 2017; Hamzah & Cheang, 2016; Lin & Reinders, 2019; Liu et al., 2018; Yasmin & Sohail, 2018a; Yavuz et al., 2020). The lack of students' participation in an active communication restricts the smooth flow of the speaking activities during the teaching and learning settings. The low communication ability and the lack of exposure to different genres in conversation confine learners to limited words and slowly lead to drifting apart from expanding their network when socialising (Abdulkader, 2016). Students' low understanding and proficiency level in English language does not allow teachers to go above and beyond with a variety of learning materials and resources. This is needed in order to fit alongside students' level of acquisition. The fear of making mistakes among learners is rather prominent. Learners have the implication that getting things done right the first time is the good way to go. Mistakes are deemed as a form of embarrassment. Activities involving pair work and group work do not welcome responsive and warm feedback from students. Passive responses are typical among students from the Asian and Middle East region. This is due to the culture understanding of abiding by your elders and showing out most respect to those of high seniority.

Teachers' own personal affiliation regarding the application of traditional teaching method makes it hard for the full implementation of learner autonomy (Alonazi, 2017; Lin & Reinders, 2019; Liu et al., 2018; Shamir-Inbal & Blau, 2021; Yasmin & Sohail, 2018a). Teachers do not perceive their learners as autonomous due to the inconsistency of learning habits. This does not deny the fact that different degrees of autonomy require teachers' support and encouragement. Besides, the teacher's excessive workload including ad-hoc meetings, co-curriculum responsibilities and administrative duties are a setback to the main teaching profession. Teachers are divided as the original intention of the teaching profession is shifted into clerical work. Educators need to judge between the main task and subsidiary responsibilities. The influence and authority of policymakers make it hard for teachers to adjust the teaching according to learners' needs (Alonazi, 2017; Borg & Alshumaimeri, 2019; Dogan & Mirici, 2017; Liu et al., 2018; Yasmin et al., 2019). Teachers do not have the full autonomy over the syllabus due to the pressure coming from institutional reinforcement and institutional inflexibility. In Yasmin et al. (2019), educational barriers include obsolete and fixed syllabus where the criteria does not fulfil the lifelong learning concept.

The issues arising from class enrolment consist of large size classes, different proficiency level and classroom management. The content of the exercise is not compatible with the learners' proficiency. Students are not able to follow or catch the teaching as they have rather low proficiency. The students are unable to cope with the teaching and learning due to mismatch of the proficiency level compared to other learners. The need to give personal mentoring to weaker students is mandatory. Besides, the prescribed time does not sync the timetable. Surrounding factors such as number of students, culture barrier etc etc can manipulate and influence the effectiveness of autonomous approach being implemented in class (Abdulkader, 2016; Lin & Reinders, 2019; Sidhu et al., 2018; Yasmin et al., 2019). Ghavifekr et al (2016) elaborated on how the lack of assisting tools and pedagogical support can obstruct the autonomous approach in the teaching and learning setting. The large class size inhibits the teacher's ability to focus on all students. Teachers are not able to give emphasis on sections where learners tend to be weaker (Abdulkader, 2016). Limited time for the conduct of the lesson causes the teacher to rush the syllabus as the time given for the conduct is very tight and limited.

**Teacher' Strategies**

Table 8: Findings regarding teachers' strategies

No.	Authors (Years)	Strategies
1.	Almusharraf (2020)	Promote students self exploration, engage students in learning, incorporate technology
2.	Borg & Alshumaimeri (2019)	Encourage independent work, give students control
3.	Darsih (2018)	Provide structured task, recommend applications, motivate students, foster reading habits, apply various learning methods, students choose own materials, encourage students to perform outside of classroom
4.	Dogan & Mirici (2017)	Encourage students to engage, help learners to realise their strength and weakness
5.	Dwee & Anthony (2017)	Freedom of choice, encourage discussion, promote group work, teacher-student reflection, activate students' prior knowledge, selection of tasks-challenging, relevant, meaningful
6.	Hasim et al. (2016)	Communicative approach, cooperative Learning approach
7.	Ju (2018)	Well-organised teaching material and method, motivate teaching and learning,
8.	Phan & Hamid (2016)	Students choose working partners, teachers redesigned activities to meet students requirement, teachers' reflection
9.	Sidhu et al. (2018)	Read a variety of text, collaborative writing tasks, corrective feedback
10.	Yasmin & Sohail (2017)	Learners take charge of learning, build confident environment, learner experiment and practice the language, motivate learners
11.	Yasmin & Sohail (2018b)	Encourage independent learning, encourage creativity, boost students' confident, motivate learners, choice in topic selection, help learners in collecting tasks, collaborative task, out-of-class activities
12.	Yuzulia (2020)	Work cooperatively, use technology, worldwide interaction through video conference

From the systematic reviews, the majority of the suggested strategies by teachers are learner-centred approaches where students are given autonomy in their learning process. Most of the articles suggested collaborative work as their strategies. Students are encouraged to work collaboratively either in pair work or group work (Dwee & Anthony, 2017; Hasim et al., 2016; Phan & Hamid, 2016; Sidhu et al., 2018; Yasmin & Sohail, 2018; Yuzulia, 2020). On the other hand, giving students the choice of freedom in the selection of their own learning materials and taking charge of their learning are complementary strategies in promoting autonomous learning (Almusharraf, 2020; Borg & Alshumaimeri, 2019; Darsih, 2018; Dwee & Anthony, 2017; Phan & Hamid, 2016; Yasmin & Sohail, 2017; Yasmin & Sohail, 2018b). The materials selection and preparation by teachers play an important role in promoting autonomous learning (Darsih, 2018; Dwee & Anthony, 2017; Ju, 2018; Phan & Hamid, 2016; Yasmin & Sohail, 2018b). Reflection from both learners and teachers after lesson or activities are

suggested for better improvements in the next lesson (Dwee & Anthony, 2017; Phan & Hamid, 2016; Sidhu et al., 2018). Teachers' continuous reflection and analysis of their own teaching process is an effective method in assisting teachers to be an autonomous learner. The use of teachers' reflection after lessons relating with students allows two-way interaction instead of using the traditional top-down approach. CEFR emphasised on the communicative approach in order to build up learners' confidence to speak or voice their opinions as suggested by Hasim et al. (2016). Communicative and cooperative approaches are encouraged in the teaching and learning setting in alignment with the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning classroom. Students are given more opportunity to voice their opinions and lead the class. The use of technology was also mentioned in line with 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching and learning (Almusharraf, 2020; Yuzulia, 2020). The statement is further proven in a study by Yunus and Arshad as cited by Javid (2018) stating group discussion helps learners to think in a wider spectrum as two or more ways of interaction take place. Pair and group work is instrumental in the English language learning setting (Javid, 2011). It is the teacher's role to diversify the teaching method by making assessment fun and interesting. Providing building feedback for corrective purposes to improve learners' understanding for their learning experiences is mandatory (Sidhu et al., 2018). Critical thinking involving students in learning aids exposes learners to develop their self-confidence when expanding academic vocabulary (Almusharraf, 2020).

### **Conclusion**

This systematic review analyses the teachers' factors on autonomous learning and the representative of teachers' factors towards autonomous learning. It covers the teachers' perceptions, teachers' role, teachers' challenges and teachers' strategies. Majority of teachers harbour positive perceptions on autonomous learning. Only a handful of teachers have negative perceptions towards autonomous learning due to personal choice of approach and students' attitude. The roles played by teachers include facilitator, monitor, counsellor and motivator. Next, challenges faced by teachers are inevitable as it covers students' ability, lack of materials, policymaker inflexibility, sociocultural background and time. The highly recommended strategies include collaborative work in pairs or groups and incorporating technology by creating own blogs and connecting with overseas peers.

### **Implications and Recommendations**

The need to consider students' perceptions is mandatory as the teaching and learning involves students as well. Learning is a two-way process. Teacher and student components are related to the teaching and learning process. Feedback from learners will be of great help in the implementation of autonomous learning. The study of students' learning attitude can be the main highlight for the future systematic review. The breakdown of factors affecting students' motivation and learning habits can get to the root of students' refusal to study. Students' suggested activities and tasks should be carried out. Factors such as family background, students' proficiency level, students' mindset, social influence and socioeconomic aspect should be studied to bridge the gap between learners' autonomy and students' perceptions. Another suggestion will cover a narrower study of the teachers' perceptions and strategies in the Malaysia English Second Language Learning (ESL) classroom. The cultural factor and geographical aspect will shift the attention of the future systematic review to the local context. The need for more qualitative studies or mixed method studies are needed in order to fill the gap in terms of methodology.

### Limitations

Among the limitations of this systematic study is the sole coverage on teachers' factors on the use of autonomous learning in the teaching and learning setting. Besides, this systematic study only used two research engines, which were Google Scholar and Web Of Science (WOS). It would be a grander study if a third research engine was included. The study might cover more teachers' factors on the implementation of autonomous learning in the teaching and learning setting. The time constraint in order to meet the deadline with endless attempts to skim and scan a total of 157 journal articles can be very painstaking.

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