



Evaluating Supports for Learner Autonomy in ELT Textbooks

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The promotion of language learner autonomy has become a standard policy ratified by many language education curricula. Textbooks, one of the key tools for curriculum implementation, have a crucial role in bringing the aspiration of learner autonomy into classroom practice. This study aims to evaluate how existing English textbooks used in Indonesia's secondary schools support the development of learner autonomy, which is incorporated in current Indonesia's curricular goals. Two frameworks, from Reinders (2010) and Nunan (1997), were used to evaluate the evidence and levels of supports for language learner autonomy development in five selected English textbooks. The evaluation shows that the current English textbooks have not provided enough tasks that support learner autonomy. When evident, supports are mostly at a very superficial level. The findings suggest that textbooks have not been adequately explored and exploited for developing language learner autonomy.

Keywords: language learner autonomy, materials evaluation, self-directed learning, ELT textbooks, levels of supports for LA

Introduction

Fully autonomous language learners can manage their learning in the absence of the classroom, teacher, or textbooks. According to Nunan (1997), however, these learners only exist in an ideal world, and many of them commence learning without the willingness and capacity for autonomous learning. Dam's (1995) much-cited work suggests that teachers have an essential role in fostering learners' capacity for autonomous learning. Many current studies have investigated teacher's role from different perspectives, including the interrelatedness of learner autonomy (LA) and teacher autonomy (Lamb, 2008; Little, 1995), teacher beliefs about and practices in fostering LA (Borg & Alshumaimeri, 2019), teacher readiness to promote LA (Lin & Reinders, 2019), and teacher education for autonomy (Vázquez, 2018). Most studies agree that LA is not synonymous with learning without teachers and that teachers have essential roles in the context of formal education. While the number of studies on teachers' roles in fostering LA is increasing, how learning materials, such as textbooks, may support or hinder the development of LA has not received similar attention.

Textbooks have a unique role in classroom-based foreign language learning. They are core components of an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom mediating the learning materials, the teacher, and the learners (Bouckaert, 2018). Where English teachers' language proficiency is low, such as in the case



of some EFL contexts (Renandya, Hamied, & Joko, 2018), textbooks provide students with an accurate model of the target language. Furthermore, textbooks are useful tools for bringing and implementing new ideas in the classroom. Assuming that most beginner EFL learners are not autonomous, Nunan (1997) believes that textbooks can support LA by gradually developing the learner's skills and knowledge about LA. Textbooks can promote LA by providing students with choices (Fenner, 2000), and by focusing on learning skills and explicit strategy training (Reinders & Balçikanli, 2011).

Indonesia, like many other countries, has incorporated LA as one of its national educational goals. The newest national curriculum, the 2013 curriculum, identifies LA as one of its desired outcomes. In general, the new curriculum aims "to prepare Indonesians for becoming citizens who are religious, productive, innovative, and passionate as well as who can contribute to societal, nation's, and world's civilizations" (Widodo, 2016, pp. 136-137). To achieve these educational objectives, Indonesia's Minister of Education and Culture mandates that teaching and learning processes must be conducted based on active learning principles, including the provision of ample opportunities for learners to develop initiatives, creativity, and autonomy (Kemendikbud, 2014). The government has regulated the use of textbooks at schools, including the publication and distribution of prescribed textbooks for all school subjects, to help teachers enact the curriculum (Kemendikbud, 2016).

With LA now being incorporated in Indonesian ELT curriculum, it is deemed necessary to investigate how the concept is actualized at the school level. Previous studies (see Agustien, 2014; Arifin, 2018; Intansari, 2013; Qoyyimah, Singh, Doherty, & Exley, 2019) reported that English teachers are struggling with implementing the new curriculum. The government-published textbooks were designed to help teachers enact curricular aspirations, but teachers' frustration seems to suggest otherwise (Agustien, 2014). The current study aims to examine how ELT textbooks used in Indonesian classrooms, published both by the government and private publishers, support the development of learner autonomy that is mandated by the current curriculum.

Literature Review

Language Learner Autonomy

Introduced to language education in the 1970s, the concept of LA has become more appealing today because it reflects the spirit of contemporary socio-political views characterized by greater respect for the individual in society. Its initial emergence in the discourse on language education is frequently referred to in Holec's (1981) report to the Council of Europe's Modern Languages Project (i.e., Autonomy and Foreign Language Learning). Holec (1981) defines LA as "the ability to take charge of one's own learning" (p. 3). The definition resonates with an imperative for teaching and learning to shift from a teacher-centered to student-centered focus. Formerly thought of as a pedagogical concept derived from Western culture, LA is now well accepted and pursued as a goal in language education across the world (Al-Mahrooqi & Denman, 2015; Lengkanawati, 2017; Maruoka, 2013).

Since the early 2000s, literature on LA has expanded on contemporary understanding of the associated language education practices (Benson, 2011). LA is seen as the outcome of self-directed learning (SDL), a practice in which learners take the initiative in different stages of learning activities with or without any assistance from others (Knowles, 1975). Therefore, early attempts to develop LA focused on the provision of abundant access to authentic materials and counseling supports at Self-Access Language Centers (SALCs) so that learners can experiment with SDL (Benson, 2011). Various benefits of SALCs for LA development have been reported, such as improved metacognition and imagination (Murray, 2011), and persistence in SDL (Mynard, Curry, Junko, & Watkins, 2016). More recent practices to foster autonomy include the use of digital technologies such as social media and language learning social network sites (Chik, 2018). Greater access to digital technology allows learners to gain more control of the learning process and broader access to authentic materials and interactions in the target language.

Textbooks for Learner Autonomy

Many EFL learners know that being autonomous in their learning is key to successful learning, but not all learners start their learning journey with a developed understanding of autonomy. Learners should be made aware of the value of being autonomous language learners and be trained to build their LA capacity. Within this view, textbooks can play a crucial role and have the potential to promote LA (Dam, 1995). ELT textbooks for LA could be designed by providing texts and tasks which allow personal interpretation and exercise of freedom in learning (Fenner & Newby, 2000). Regrettably, such provision is often absent or limited in many ELT textbooks.

Accepting the important role of textbooks for developing LA means that both selecting and evaluating textbooks for classroom use are equally vital procedures. Evaluating learning materials for LA, however, is challenging as there are only a few studies that can be used as references. An ELT textbooks evaluation study by Reinders and Balçikanli (2011) is among the rare examples. Their study investigated supports for LA development in five internationally popular ELT textbooks. In their study, LA is defined as a mental capacity that is represented by SDL behaviors. This definition is in line with Benson's (2011) distinction of autonomy as “an attribute of the learner and self-directed learning as a mode of learning” (p. 37). In their study, a framework of SDL stages from Reinders (2010) is used to locate the provision of information or activities to support SDL. The findings show that SDL behaviors are rarely promoted in textbooks (Reinders & Balçikanli, 2011). Indeed, many current initiatives for the development of LA have not focused on how the principles of LA are represented in textbooks.

Kong (2014) reports the adoption of independent and lifelong learning—which are closely related to the concept of LA—as the educational goal of Hong Kong’s English Language Curriculum Guide. However, the study found that the adoption was not supported by the provision of textbooks that integrate LA principles. Another study from Turkey by Kısacık (2016) further confirms the lack of textbooks that support LA development. Upon investigating nine government-published textbooks used in both public and private high schools in Turkey, Kısacık concluded that the textbooks do not support LA because they do not provide “the power to choose to the learners” (Kısacık, 2016, p. 62). In general, the above three studies show that increased interests in LA have not been supported by the adoption of LA principles in textbook development.

Self-directed Learning Stages

The literature on language education has generally accepted autonomy as an important attribute to be promoted in learners (Little, Dam, & Legenhausen, 2017; Palfreyman & Benson, 2018). However, operationalizing the concept into pedagogical procedures is a difficult task. Attempting to operationalize LA, Reinders (2010) expands the five-step model of SDL from Knowles (1975) into a cycle of eight SDL stages. In this framework, observable SDL behaviors are defined as the manifestations of LA capacity.

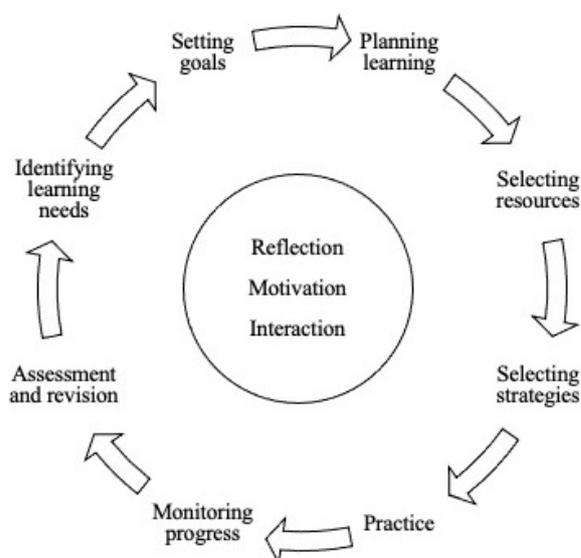


Figure 1. Cyclical nature of the autonomous learning process (Reinders, 2010).

In conventional foreign language classrooms, all stages of the learning activities tend to be directed by the teachers (Moser, 2017; Sakai, Chu, Takagi, & Lee, 2008). However, it is crucial for LA development that learners are encouraged to adopt more control at each stage of the learning process. Furthermore, Reinders (2010) emphasized the importance of reflection, motivation, and interaction as the cognitive, affective, and social foundations of the learning stages. Reinders and Balçikanli (2011) utilize these SDL stages as the framework to examine if classroom English textbooks encourage LA.

Levels of Implementing Learner Autonomy

Learners can develop LA when the required conditions are met. Two of the desired conditions for LA development are when learners are: 1) aware of the importance of taking control over their learning and 2) given opportunities to exercise the control (Benson, 2011; Reinders, 2010). Learning materials, such as textbooks, can be designed to help teachers create the required conditions, i.e., raising awareness and provide opportunities for LA. Nunan (1997) proposes gradual facilitation of LA by learning materials that include raising awareness, encouraging involvement, intervention, creation, and transcendence.

TABLE 1
Levels of Implementing Autonomy from Nunan (1997)

Level	Learner action	Content	Process
1	Awareness	Learners are made aware of the pedagogical goals and content of the materials they are using.	Learners identify strategy implications of pedagogical tasks and identify their own preferred learning styles/strategies
2	Involvement	Learners are involved in selecting their own goals from a range of alternatives on offer.	Learners make choices among a range of options.
3	Intervention	Learners are involved in modifying and adapting the goals and content of the learning program.	Learners modify/adapt tasks.
4	Creation	Learners create their own goals and objectives.	Learners create their own tasks.
5	Transcendence	Learners go beyond the classroom and make links between the content of classroom learning and the world beyond.	Learners become teachers and researchers.

The most superficial level of fostering LA is making learners aware of the objectives and contents of learning and choices of strategies to complete tasks at hand. The following level involves learners in selecting learning goals, materials, and tasks. At the next level, learners should be allowed to 'intervene' or modify and adapt learning goals, materials, and tasks. This level requires a higher level of flexibility in terms of the curriculum. The penultimate level is allowing learners to create their own learning goals, materials, and tasks. The final level is 'transcendence', which represents the capacity for fully autonomous learning. At this level, learners can transcend learning opportunities beyond any formal learning program. This scheme does not only offer a plan for designing and adapting learning programs and materials, but also provides us with a framework for materials evaluation.

There has not been adequate attention toward how textbooks could facilitate LA. Utilizing Reinders' (2010) SDL stages and Nunan's (1997) LA implementation levels, this study aims to evaluate the potential values of ELT textbooks to foster LA in Indonesian EFL classrooms. Two research questions guide this current study:

1. To what extent do ELT textbooks used in Indonesian schools facilitate self-direct learning?
2. What are the levels of support for LA provided by the textbooks?

Methodology

Research Design

This study follows the predictive materials evaluation tradition of research, which is an impressionistic valuation to predict if the learning materials can do what they are designed to do (Ellis, 1997). This study offers an analytical evaluation of learning materials, while trying to reduce vagueness using systematic, rigorous, and analytical procedures. This evaluation, however, acknowledges the influence of the researchers' subjectivity in interpreting the data.

This materials evaluation began with selecting five EFL textbooks consisting of one prescribed textbook (GB) published by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC), two textbooks from local publishers (LB1 and LB2), and two textbooks from international publishers (IB1 and IB2). All are for Grade 7, the first grade English is taught as a subject in Indonesian schools as mandated by the national curriculum. Some students may, however, start learning English earlier as an extracurricular subject in their primary school years. The second step was choosing two frameworks for addressing the research questions. Reinders' (2010) framework is used to evaluate evidence of SDL in different learning tasks of the textbooks. The evaluation framework from Nunan (1997) is used to evaluate the potential degree of LA promoted by each learning task. The third step was the evaluation of all the task instructions using the two frameworks. The evaluation proceeded with analyzing the findings to address the research questions and elaborating the discussion on the issue of developing LA in schools.

Instrumentation and Materials

The prescribed textbook (GB) is written to implement the current national curriculum and is distributed to all schools and students throughout the country via the Internet as a free-of-charge e-book. Schools would print the e-book and distribute the printed version to students. All schools are instructed to use the prescribed textbook (Setyono & Widodo, 2019). Schools may also use textbooks from local publishers provided that the textbooks have gone through the screening process by the Indonesian Board of National Education Standards or 'BSNP' (Kemendikbud, 2016). Some schools, especially those located in big cities, may also use textbooks from international publishers as supplementary learning materials. Being used as supplementary materials, the international textbooks do not need to be screened. No formal record of ELT textbooks use in Indonesian schools currently exists. Therefore, the selection of non-government

textbooks for this study relied on feedback on an informal survey to Grade 7 teachers in Jakarta and its surrounding areas. The selected textbooks were among the most popular according to the result of the survey. Table 2 below shows brief information about the selected textbooks.

TABLE 2
Materials Selection

Publisher	Title	Year	Code	Selected chapters and topics of discussion	Number of Tasks
MoEC	<i>Bahasa Inggris</i>	2017	GB	Ch. 2: Introducing self and others Ch. 7: Descriptive text	12 21
Quadra	English Way 1	2017	LB1	Ch. 2: Introducing self and others Ch. 7: Descriptive text	34 32
Yudhistira	Interactive English 1	2017	LB2	Ch. 2: Introducing self and others Ch. 7: Descriptive text	41 39
Pearson	Next Move 1	2013	IB1	Ch. 1: Personal profile Ch. 2: Describing a town	52 53
Oxford (OUP)	Aim High 1	2010	IB2	Ch. 1: Talking about family and friends Ch. 3: Describing about school	48 46

The chapters in each textbook follow a structured pattern. For example, each GB chapter starts with a brief introduction to contents and learning goals. On the subsequent pages, tasks and texts are presented following a cycle of “observing and asking questions”, “collecting information”, “associating”, and “communicating”. An LB1 chapter starts with the following themes: “observe the model”, “build your knowledge”, “do the project”, “explore the text”, and concludes with “communicate your idea”. With some variations, consistent structuring of materials is also found in other textbooks. For this reason, this study took two comparable chapters from each textbook for an in-depth evaluation. All five textbooks contain a chapter on introducing oneself and others, and a chapter on describing things. These two chapters with similar learning focus were selected for this evaluation. The unit of the evaluation was the instruction sentences of each task, henceforth task instructions. The number of tasks in each chapter ranged between 12 and 53. In sum, this study evaluated 378 task instructions. “Task instructions” of the selected textbooks are chosen as the focus of evaluation because they position the teacher and students of their assumed roles in teaching and learning process. Given the limited space, we believe by focusing on “task instructions” we can establish an initial parameter for examining learner autonomy.

Data Analysis

The framework from Reinders (2010) was used to identify supports for LA in textbooks by examining whether or not the task instructions incorporate any information about and opportunity for the learners to show SDL behaviors in different stages of learning. The second framework, from Nunan (1997), was used to examine the degree of the supports identified by the first framework. Following the evaluation by the first author, the second author conducted a sample evaluation to establish the inter-rater reliability of the findings. Inter-rater reliability is defined as ‘the degree to which different raters or judges make consistent estimates of the same phenomenon’ (Multon & Coleman, 2018, p. 3). A percentage agreement between raters was pursued. Three chapters, GB.Ch2, LB2.Ch7, and IB2.Ch1, were selected and analyzed by the first author and the second author using the same evaluation table. In total, 100 task instructions were evaluated in this joint analysis resulted in a 90% agreement shared between the raters.

Results and Discussion

Supports for Self-Directed Learning in Textbooks

The first research question of this study is formulated as “To what extent do ELT textbooks facilitate self-directed learning?” This study found that, in general, the selected ELT textbooks have partially facilitated the development of SDL in language learners. Referring to the SDL stages, the textbooks provide students with choices in setting goals, planning of learning, selecting resources, monitoring progress, and assessment and revision (Table 3). ‘Identifying needs’ and ‘Practice’ were two learning stages that were not represented. The government and local textbooks were written to address pre-set curricular goals, and these goals were not individually tailored. On the other hand, international textbooks were not specifically designed to meet the Indonesian curricular goals. Hence, they could have had more freedom than local textbooks to encourage students to identify their own learning needs. In this evaluation, however, this encouragement was absent from the selected international textbooks. In terms of supports for SDL in the practice stage, the exercises provided by all selected textbooks were very prescriptive and did not facilitate the creative use of the target language.

TABLE 3
Supports for SDL in All Textbooks

Reinders' Stages	GB		LB1		LB2		IB1		IB2	
	Ch2	Ch7	Ch2	Ch7	Ch2	Ch7	Ch1	Ch2	Ch1	Ch3
1 Identifying needs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2 Setting goals	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
3 Planning learning	11	19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4 Selecting resources	0	1	1	1	5	5	1	1	6	6
5 Selecting strategies	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6 Practice	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7 Monitoring progress	11	19	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	2
8 Assessment and revision	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0

A previous study by Reinders and Balçikanli (2011) on five internationally marketed textbooks found that SDL was supported only at two stages of learning: selecting learning strategies and monitoring progress. Other studies by Kong (2014) and Kısacık (2016) concluded that textbook authors and publishers, both in Hong Kong and in Turkey, did not incorporate the principles of LA, even though they designed the textbooks to meet the national curriculum objectives that include enhancing LA. The findings of this study are, in general, in agreement with the findings of previous studies in that the existing textbooks need to include more tasks that allow learners to exercise SDL. The subsequent sections divide the discussion of the findings into six subsections according to the identified supports of SDL identified in this study.

Setting goals

All selected textbooks include an introductory page previewing what students will do throughout the chapter. This information can raise student awareness of the goals and contents of the upcoming learning phases. Awareness of the learning objectives is the first step towards the development of autonomy (Nunan, 1997). However, as is commonly the case when using textbooks, this study found that students have little or no say in determining the goals and contents of learning.



Figure 2. Introductory page in GB.Ch. 2.

The provision of information about prearranged content or learning goals can only be considered as the imposition of an external agenda onto the students. As such, it cannot be considered as promoting autonomy because the students are not made aware of their own learning goals and needs. Learning goals and learning content are two aspects of learning over which autonomous learners are expected to take more control (Holec, 1981). Learners' involvement in deciding the learning contents is labeled as proactive autonomy, as opposed to reactive autonomy, and students are taking part in deciding the methods or strategies to achieve the learning objectives set by others (Littlewood, 1999). However, involving students in deciding learning objectives and contents may not be amenable in some contexts and can place students in conflict with the teachers and institutions (Fenner, 2000). Understandably, textbooks that are designed to enact a determined curriculum have limited flexibility in providing students with opportunities for exercising proactive autonomy.

Planning learning

Most of the selected textbooks do not include explicit information or tasks that could raise learners' awareness of the importance of planning learning. The only textbook in this evaluation containing tasks that can raise awareness of planning learning is GB. Throughout the GB textbook, students are precisely instructed on what and how to learn in the classroom (Figure 3). One noticeable observation about the task prompts or instructions in GB is that they tend to provide very detailed instructions specifying every step that students need to take. Each task instruction consists of three parts. The first part is the general planning of what students will do in the task. The second part is the step-by-step procedure of how the task is going to be completed. The last part is the instruction regarding the attitude that students need to have to approach the task. Students are asked to focus on accuracy and to go to the teacher for help when problems arise.

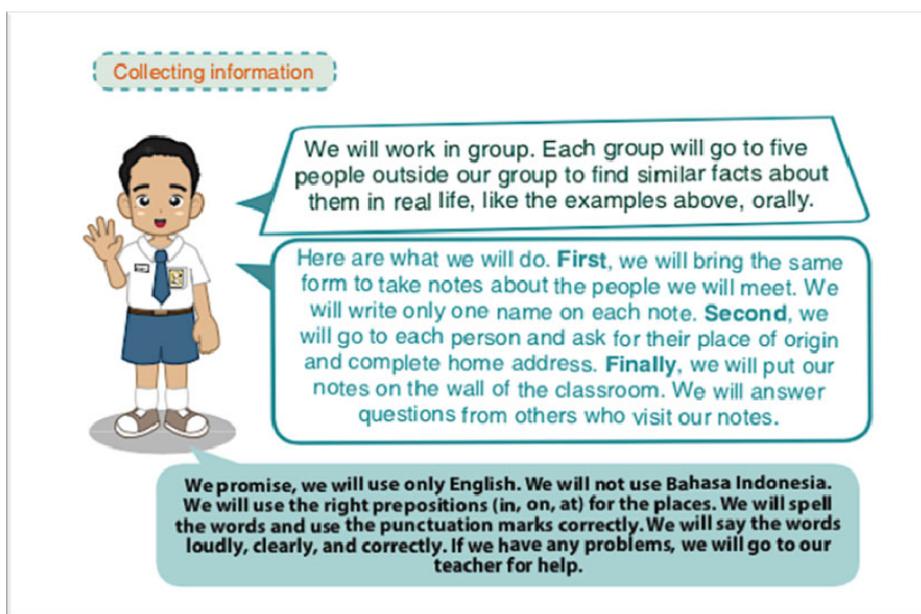


Figure 3. Task instruction in GB.Ch.2 (p. 26)

Planning one’s own learning is one of the metacognitive strategies displayed by effective language learners (Benson, 2011). Unfortunately, most ELT textbooks do little to encourage learners to plan learning. Rather than encouraging students to create their own learning plan, the government-published textbook dictates every step the students need to take to complete the task. Highly prescriptive step-by-step instructions limit the opportunity for students, or even teachers, to modify the tasks according to the students’ learning needs and interests. For teachers, assuming that many teachers would rely on this government-published textbook as their main source of inspiration for teaching, these remarkably detailed step-by-step instructions leave very little space to exercise their professional judgment to modify the tasks. In this sense, the too prescriptive instruction is counterproductive to the attempts to facilitate students to take control of their learning.

TABLE 4

Evaluation of Task Instruction of GB.Ch.2 p. 26

Task Instruction	SDL	Commentary
<i>We will work in group. Each group will go to five people outside our group to find similar facts about them in real life, like the examples above, orally.</i>	Planning learning	The first and second parts of this instruction function to inform students what they are going to do in the task, i.e., planning learning. But the plan is predetermined. In the evaluation, <u>they count as one unit.</u>
<i>Here are what we will do. First, we will bring the same form to take notes about the people we will meet. We will write only one name on each note. Second, we will go to each person and ask for their place of origin and complete home address. Finally, we will put our notes on the wall of the classroom. We will answer questions from others who visit our notes.</i>	Planning learning	

Fenner (2000) exemplifies how an ELT textbook for Russian learners of English provides options of strategies for coping with English spelling. The learners are given three different plans to learn English spelling from which learners can choose according to their preferred learning styles. Offering learners to make their own learning plan makes them participate more actively and increases their engagement

(Hanover Research, 2014). Learners' engagement with learning activities is a prerequisite condition where autonomy can flourish (Cotterall, 2017).

Selecting resources

Resources for classroom learning are often predetermined by the teachers, leaving students with little opportunity to use resources that may be more meaningful to them. In SDL, learners are encouraged to select and prepare learning resources (Reinders, 2010). Predetermined resources such as the texts found in textbooks may not be of interest to the students or even suitable for their proficiency levels. Facilitating self-directed learning through textbooks can be done by offering learners to select authentic texts based on their needs and interests (Fenner, 2000). This suggests that textbooks should include a range of text choices for the students. On the other hand, textbooks can also encourage students to contribute self-selected texts for learning resources. Dam (1995) exemplifies how encouraging students to contribute authentic materials can develop LA.

TABLE 5

Task Instruction in LB2. (Ch.7, p. 138)

Task Instruction	SDL	Commentary
<i>Work in groups. Go to the library or browse the Internet to find detailed information about descriptive texts. Discuss what you have found with the class.</i>	Selecting resources	The resources for learning in this task will be from resources students bring to the class. In other words, students are involved in providing the materials for class discussion.

In this evaluation, all textbooks were found to incorporate such choices, both by providing several text options and by encouraging students to select texts for learning. However, in some textbooks (i.e., GB, LB1, and IB1) the number of tasks to afford students the freedom to choose learning resources is limited; only one per chapter on average. The task example above (Table 5) requires students to browse the Internet to find information or samples of descriptive texts. This practice is in line with Reinders' (2010) selecting resources stage in which students are allowed to produce and share authentic materials found outside the classroom.

Monitoring progress

One crucial manifestation of LA capacity is the ability to reflect on the learning experiences. Reflection is at the core of Reinders' (2010) SDL framework and 'glues' all the stages of SDL. It is a conscious process upon which total self-regulation in learning develops (Little, 1991). In this study, support for learner reflection was found in the monitoring progress and assessment and revision stages. Almost all of the textbooks include tasks representing these two metacognitive strategies, which may imply that the authors are aware of the importance of these strategies for effective learning.

6 Write a description about you and your favourite things. Use 'My favourite things' and your answers from Exercise 5.

My favourite things

Paragraph 1

- Your personal information
My name is ... and I'm ... (age)
I'm from ...

Paragraph 2

- Your favourite things
My favourite thing is ... / My favourite things are ... and ...
- Extra information
I've got ... (number)
I haven't got ...
My favourite ... is ... because ...

Remember!

- Use capital letters, apostrophes and full stops in the correct places.
- Use the vocabulary in this unit.
- Check your grammar and spelling.

Figure 4. Task instruction in IB1 Ch.1, p. 17.

In the task instruction above which is taken from IB1, students are allowed to write about themselves. However, it is not a complete writing task because the students are only required to arrange the information they have written in the previous task. There is a box containing notes that the students can refer to when self-monitor their writing for accuracy. Furthermore, self-assessment is encouraged, but students need to use the supplementary workbook to complete the 'My assessment profile'. The assessment comprises a checklist with 'can-do' statements that address all language skills, as well as a brief journal of what they have learned and how they can practice their newly learned words and expressions.

In GB, information about monitoring learning can be found in the third part of every task instruction. This part of the task instruction always emphasizes that students aim for accuracy when practicing the language and go to the teacher for help. While it is necessary to encourage self-monitoring, the encouragement should be done with caution for at least two reasons. First, asking students to self-monitor their language production means that we ask them to pay more attention to their language accuracy. In communicative language teaching, however, teachers need to be able to manage the shifting orientations of classroom activities between a focus on accuracy and fluency. Accuracy and fluency, along with complexity, are dimensions of L2 performance in which the development of one may occur at the expense of the other (Ellis, 1994). Repetitive instruction to focus on accuracy may be detrimental to the students' building language fluency. Second, the ability to self-monitor L2 production necessitates that students have developed explicit awareness of the L2 rules (Ellis, 1994). Building awareness of language rules requires focus-on-form instructions that can take the form of grammar explanations and practices. In GB, while accuracy is always emphasized, the textbook does not give focus-on-form activities that may otherwise help students develop self-monitoring capacity. In this sense, the level of support for monitoring progress in GB is restricted to awareness-raising.

TABLE 6
Monitoring Progress Task in GB. (Ch.2 p. 26)

Task Instruction	SDL	Commentary
<i>We promise, we will use only English. We will not use Bahasa Indonesia. We will use the right prepositions (in, on, at) for the places. We will spell the words and use the punctuation marks correctly. We will say the words loudly, clearly, and correctly. If we have any problems, we will go to our teacher for help.</i>	Monitoring Progress	All instructions in this textbook include instruction for students to be accurate in practicing the language. In this example, the students are required to be careful in using the preposition in, on, at. However, the textbook does not give explicit grammar explanations on how to use prepositions correctly.

Textbooks have the potential to make self-monitoring the target of classroom intervention. All textbooks other than GB use different techniques to develop students' self-monitoring capacity, such as a writing self-checkbox in IB1, and peer-feedback activities in LB2. Training self-monitoring is beneficial to increase learners' awareness of their language competence and to improve self-regulation in learning (Schmidt & Ford, 2003). Self-monitoring practices can help students develop metacognitive strategies, an essential characteristic of autonomous learners.

Assessment and revision

While self-monitoring relates to checking one's comprehension and performance while completing the language task, self-assessment or evaluation focuses on checking performance against the learning objectives. A psychological view of LA suggests that the ability to evaluate progress is a crucial cognitive capacity that enables students to deliberately regulate learning, a defining character of effective language learners (Little, 1991). The ability also represents one of the seven metacognitive strategies that underlie learning self-management as theorized by O'Malley and Chamot (1990). Explicit instruction on metacognitive strategies could develop language learners' metacognition, self-efficacy, use of learning strategy, and improve learning outcomes (Kobayashi, 2016). All textbooks but GB provide opportunities for students to practice metacognitive strategy through different forms of reflective practices comparing learning progress to learning objectives. More importantly, the textbooks provide information about self-assessment and the opportunity to practice this metacognitive strategy in learning.

TABLE 7
Learning Journal in LB1

Task Instruction	SDL	Commentary
<i>Learning Journal: Write in the blank and check (✓) the correct information that describes how well you understand the lessons. In this unit I have learned about ... I understand ... the materials in this unit. () a little of () some of () most of () all of The materials that I don't understand well in this unit are ... I felt ... while studying the materials in this unit. () interested () uninterested My impression after learning the materials in this unit is ...</i>	Assessment and revision	A learning journal is given at the end of every chapter for students to fill in. The evaluation points are the same across the chapters and very general.

One example of the provision of assessment and revision in textbooks was found in LB1 (Table 7). The task directs students to perform self-evaluation using a learning journal, which is designed rather general. The evaluation points are the same across the chapters and are not directly related to the points described as learning materials and objectives at the beginning of the chapter. This learning journal invites students to reflect on their learning and to assess what went well and what did not go so well in the learning. This also brings explicitness to the learning process that can help students to build metacognitive strategies in

learning. However, the limitation of the provided learning journal is that it does not directly address how the students perform against the learning objectives described at the beginning of the chapter. Moreover, some questions are open-ended, and this may present difficulties for beginner-level students when trying to express their reflection. For instance, reflection number 5 requiring students to give their ‘impression’ of the learning requires a deep level of reflection.

In general, the results indicate that existing ELT textbooks have provided students with inadequate information about SDL. Therefore, the present study emphasizes that textbooks should not be considered as standalone resources with which students independently interact, but rather as tools for teachers to encourage students to take more responsibility for their learning. Textbooks should be designed to inspire teachers to re-examine how they exercise control in the classroom, which is traditionally considered an exclusive privilege of the teachers. However, to facilitate LA, this study encourages that teachers deliberately share control with the students throughout the learning processes.

Degree of Supports for Learner Autonomy

While the first framework found that the textbooks contain some supports of LA, the second framework qualified the degree of the supports. Using Nunan’s levels of implementing LA, this study found that most of the supports were only at the surface-level; namely, raising awareness. Nunan (1997) asserts that raising awareness is, however, an important first step towards the development of LA. Tasks that are identified to support the implementation of LA are mostly restricted to providing information about certain aspects of LA without providing any opportunity to put it into practice. In GB, for example, almost all of the task instructions include information that resembles a plan of learning. However, far from involving students in the planning process, the information presents detailed instruction that leaves little to no space for students, including for the teacher, to modify the course of learning. In this sense, the too prescriptive instruction is counterproductive to attempts at facilitating LA.

TABLE 8

Involving Learners to Contribute to Learning Resources (IB1.Ch1, p.19)

Task Instruction	SDL	Level	Commentary
"My Art File" In pairs, find about another famous 20th century painting. Think about: The artist The style of painting Other artists in the same style The objects/ people in the painting Why you like it Design a poster about your painting. Use your notes from Exercise 3 (the above exercise) to help you. Then present your poster to your class.	4	2	Students are given the chance to contribute to their own learning by providing the contents for a classroom presentation.

Upon examining the textbooks other than GB, this study found that some tasks do encourage student involvement in making decisions around aspects of learning. Such involvement can lead to improved attitudes toward self-direction and autonomy (Nunan, 1997). Students’ active involvement in the decision-making process promotes effective learning (Dickinson, 1995). In LB1 and LB2, the number of tasks that encourage student involvement gradually increased toward the later chapters.

TABLE 9
Nunan's Levels of implementing Learner Autonomy

Nunan's Levels	GB		LB1		LB2		IB1		IB2	
	Ch2	Ch7	Ch2	Ch7	Ch2	Ch7	Ch1	Ch2	Ch1	Ch3
1 Awareness	11	20	2	2	2	3	2	3	3	2
2 Involvement	0	1	1	1	5	6	2	1	6	7
3 Intervention	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4 Creation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5 Transcendence	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Furthermore, this study did not find any task that is designed to implement LA higher than the student involvement level. Higher levels of autonomy may be gradually encouraged upon the readiness of the students to assume more control. The provision of LA also depends on the teachers' readiness to share their authority in the classroom. Moreover, the flexibility of the education curriculum determines the levels of autonomy that could be facilitated.

Research on LA and textbooks

The results of this study provide important information regarding how textbooks support the development of LA. The findings have clearly shown that regardless of the increasing interest in developing LA within classroom contexts, textbook authors and developers have not translated this interest into the provision of tasks to exercise SDL. The findings corroborate other studies on textbooks for LA (Kıssacık, 2016; Kong, 2014; Reinders & Balçikanlı, 2011), which show that LA principles have not been incorporated adequately in the current ELT textbooks. The textbooks in this study do provide information about different stages of SDL, but they do not provide enough opportunities for students to put the information into practice. The findings also show the need for strengthening the connection between the trend in second language learning research and instructional materials development which has long been considered lacking (Richards, 2006). A logical implication of the findings is a call for further research on the materials evaluation and materials design for developing LA.

The effective use of textbooks for LA depends on how the textbooks structure the tasks and how teachers execute the learning plans. This predictive evaluation provides insight into the extent to which current ELT textbooks reflect the principles of LA, but it does not reflect the actual use of textbooks in the classroom. Since the principles of LA feature in many contemporary language curricula, this study contributes to the academic discussion by clearly illustrating which principles of LA have been represented in current textbooks and which need more enactment.

The fact that materials evaluation focusing on LA has not been frequently explored leaves this study with a very limited choice of any readily available evaluation framework. The SDL framework used in this study was taken from another textbooks evaluation study by Reinders and Balçikanlı (2011). Furthermore, this study focuses only on English textbooks for Grade 7, the first grade English subject is offered in Indonesian schools. On one hand, this could be viewed as a limitation of this study because instructions or tasks that encourage students to take control over their own learning may be deliberately limited. On the other hand, this could also be viewed as a strength because Grade 7 is the first time that students are formally introduced to ELT pedagogy and that an evaluation of LA is important.

Focusing on how ELT textbooks can encourage SDL behaviors, this study does not consider many other important aspects that a good English textbook needs to have. This study does not intend to predict what may actually happen in the classroom, as teachers may not follow every step suggested by the textbooks or may adapt the materials to better suit their teaching needs. A follow-up retrospective materials evaluation may do more justice to see if the textbooks have worked to support LA.

Future research is needed to establish more classroom-based evaluation criteria for evaluating learning materials used in EFL school contexts. The criteria should account for the restrictive nature of the EFL

curriculum and student language proficiency levels as they might influence their willingness to assume control over their own learning. Considering the relevance of this type of study in EFL settings, more established criteria for use by researchers and teachers for evaluating textbooks are of utmost importance. In addition, future studies should consider undertaking a retrospective materials evaluation to examine how the textbooks are used in the classroom. In addition to predictive evaluations to examine the extent to which the textbooks conform to the principles of LA and assist teachers in selecting better textbooks, retrospective evaluations can inform policymakers, authors, and publishers on how to improve materials for more effective learning. More importantly, retrospective materials evaluation can examine the actual effects of the textbooks on the development of LA. In this view, future retrospective evaluation should also examine what teachers and students have to say about the materials being evaluated.

Conclusion

The inclusion of LA as a desired goal in Indonesia's newest curriculum motivates this materials evaluation study. This study found that existing ELT textbooks do not provide students with enough information and opportunities for practicing SDL behaviors, which is the manifestation of LA capacity. When they do, however, they are limited and of superficial levels, i.e., awareness-raising and minor involvement in decision making regarding learning resources and activities. Considering the vital role of textbooks in curriculum implementation and EFL classrooms, this study has exposed the challenges and opportunities associated with the use of existing English textbooks.

Existing literature on LA has not yet fully explored the potential value of textbooks as a classroom-based approach to the development of LA. As a result, materials evaluation studies on LA remain under-researched. To date, the number of published literature on this topic is very limited (Nunan, 1997; Reinders & Balçikanlı, 2011). Studies on this topic are often limited to unpublished dissertations available only from university repositories (e.g., Kissacık, 2016; Kong, 2014). Should LA be the goal of language education at schools, more studies on how textbooks may contribute to this aspiration are needed, and this is the primary motivation of the present study.

Furthermore, the current study is optimistic about the use of textbooks for promoting LA. Promoting LA on a national scale using textbooks is presumably a feasible practice considering the existing support from the government that provides access to free textbooks. This, however, should not be seen as positioning textbooks as the only resources of learning, but rather as tools for inspiring changes in the classroom. Promoting autonomy through textbooks should be accompanied by an enhancement in other aspects of classroom-based approaches to LA such as developing a more accommodative curriculum and improving teacher readiness to foster LA.

Acknowledgments

This paper is based on the first author's Master of Research (MRes) thesis under the supervision of the second author, which was completed in 2019 at Macquarie School of Education, Macquarie University, Australia. The project was fully funded by Indonesia's Ministry of Religious Affairs' *Program 5000 Doktor*.

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(Received November 13, 2020; Revised February 28, 2021; Accepted March 10, 2021)