

# Learning Strategy

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## **KEEPING UP WITH LEARNING LOGS AND JOURNAL TO PROMOTE LEARNER AUTONOMY: A PERSONAL EVALUATION OF AN ESP CLASSROOM**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Autonomy is an important aspect in learning, particularly for those who learn English for specific purposes; one of which is English for communication purposes. However, learning English as a compulsory subject for non-ELT students is quite challenging because of their background and motivation as well. This can result in the absence of learner autonomy. This chapter shares a personal evaluation of using learning logs and journals as part of practices as an attempt to stimulate autonomous practices among the ESP students in a university in East Java. This chapter mainly shares on how lesson plan and its implementation work. Priorities included developing goal settings and self-explanatory. An independent learning journal that included focused autonomy-supporting tasks was developed, trialed, and evaluated. This chapter provides evidence that socially mediated support for autonomy may contribute on how the students become more autonomous and organized in their own learning.

**Keywords:** Autonomous learning; ESP; learning journals; learning logs

### **INTRODUCTION**

The importance of learner autonomy is widely recognized in English language teaching (ELT) (Al-Shaqsi, 2009; Sinclair, 2000). Indeed, in a recent survey of university level English as foreign language EFL teachers in Oman (Borg & Busaidi, 2012), the majority of teachers view that learner autonomy can give a positive impact on language learning, providing the students with “an enhanced ability to make decisions (p.283).”

According to Ushioda (2011), if students are able to take responsibility for, manage, and regulate their own learning, this suggests their behavior is self-determined. She maintains that the students can fulfill their potential to be the independent learner, thus a teacher should facilitate the learning sphere which supports them to learn independently. This does not mean that it is not self-instruction/learning without a teacher, nor it does not mean that intervention or initiative on the part of the teacher is discouraged.

In addition, another study was conducted by Al-Shaqsi (2009). The study involved 120 teachers of English in state schools in Oman. A questionnaire was devised specifically for obtaining the information related to (a) the characteristics of autonomous learners (b) the learners' ability to carry out the number of tasks (each of which was assumed to be an indicator of learner autonomy-e.g. deciding when the use of dictionary or identifying their own weaknesses) and (c) how learner autonomy might be promoted. The three characteristics of autonomous learners most often identified by the teachers were that they can use computers to find information, use a dictionary and ask the teacher to explain when they do not understand or comprehend well.

Moreover, the teachers in this study also assessed their learners positively on all the indicators of learner autonomy. The three most highly rated indicators were: asking the teacher to explain when something is not clear, giving their point of view on topics in the classroom and using the dictionary well. Finally, the teachers made several suggestions for promoting learner autonomy.

Unlike the studies previously stated, the present study tend to elaborate more on the teachers' side in designing the class to be more autonomous in such a way. The creation of activities stated in the course outline lead the students to prepare themselves before sitting on the class (see Appendix 1). To assist the students' activities, the teacher facilitates them in using learning logs and journals. The learning logs and journals are used to make them more organized and orderly in doing something. Such habituation will have an impact on their attitudes and personality.

#### What are Learning Logs and Journals?

Learning logs and journals are key tools for having students document and reflect on their learning experiences (Baker, 2003). Learning logs are self-report procedure in which the students record short entries concerning the subject matter being studied. Long entries may be questions about materials covered in lectures and readings, observations of science experiments, mathematics problem-solving entries, lists of outside readings, homework assignments, or anything else that lends itself to keeping records.

Learning journals are a self-report procedure in which the students record narrative entries concerning the subject matter being studied. Journal entries may be personal observations, feelings, and opinions in response to readings, events, and experiences (Hogan, 1995; Park, 2003). A journal is a personal collection of writing and thoughts that have values for the writer about what the writer is learning and its personal relevance. These entries often connect what is being studied in one class with other classes or with life outside the classroom. Journal entries are usually more descriptive, longer, and more free-flowing than logs. Exercise on keeping a journal can be seen in Table 1, 2, and 3 in the following parts.

#### The Merits of Using Learning Logs and Journals

According to Johnson and Johnson (2002), learning logs and journals are useful assessment tools for the following tasks.

1. Keeping track of the number of problems solved, books read, or homework as assignments completed
2. Recording lectures, movies, presentations, field trips, experiments, or reading assignments (a) key ideas, (b) questions, and (reflections)
3. Responding to questions posed by the teacher or other students
4. Following the progress of an experiment; the weather, in-school, national, or world events, or even a story and (a) monitoring change over time or (b) making predictions about what will happen next
5. Connecting ideas presented to other subject areas
6. Brainstorming ideas about potential projects, papers, or presentations
7. Identifying problems and recording problem-solving techniques
8. Applying what is learned in the course to clarify, update, and refine one's action theories (i.e., what actions are needed to achieve a desired consequence in a given situation)

Further, they state as the students complete and accomplish the course they will be asked to keep a journal in which they learn and record at the same time. It has to be kept up in a regular basis. Additionally, the learning journal is an important part for both students and teachers during the process of instruction. It is not an easy part though. The entries should be important to both parts as their collaborative effort to

make the course useful. After looking at the collections of the students' works and make some reflections and feedbacks, the students may realize how writing sharpens and organizes their thoughts. The learning journal informs how they are able to produce a piece of writing, such as an application letter, an insightful curriculum vitae, a poem, and other similar activities related to functional skills stated on the course outlines.

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## **SETTINGS AND PARTICIPANTS IN THE PRESENT STUDY**

This study was descriptive in nature. I was in charge teaching five classes of Business English in Management. Business English course with two credits and regarded as a compulsory course. This study delineated personal teaching 'story' with non-ELT students, learning English in practical ways. They were required to be able to communicate in English in both oral and written modes. This study also provided some relevant documents such as course outline (Appendix 1) and lesson plan which reflect the learning logs and journals.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **How do I Assign the Students to Write Learning Logs and Journals in the Classroom?**

Some experts argue that learning logs and journals are usually considered as formative assessment techniques. It is difficult to assign point values or letter grades. The use of learning logs and journals is as follows.

*First*, assign the students to keep a learning log or journal related to the content of the course. Explain the concept of learning log and learning journal. Highlight the cooperative goal of ensuring that all group members keep those journals that meet the specific criteria.

*Second*, inform the students when their entries should start, how often they are to write an entry, how long an entry should be, how often they will share their entries with group mates and the teacher, how the entries will be assessed, and when the final journal or log is due.

*Third*, show the students samples or models of completed journals or logs, ranging from excellent to poor. They need to develop a frame of reference as to what is and is not an acceptable journal or log.

*Fourth*, have the students develop (a) specific criteria to assess the quality of the completed journals or logs and (b) indicators of excellent, medium, and poor quality for each criterion. Inform them a standardized rubric if any.

*Fifth*, have the students construct their journals or logs. To help them make entries into their logs or journals, the teachers are recommended to give them a prompt or lead-in. Structure the first entry in the first-class session. In each subsequent class session, give a prompt, lead-in, or a procedure for an entry. Examples of daily prompts or lead-ins are depicted in Table 1.

**Table 1**

***Samples of Entry and Lead-in***

An interesting part is...	I want to know more about...
I predict...	I wonder...
Three important ideas are...	The way I help others learn are...
I need to work more on...	I am excited about...
A connecting idea is...	I believe...

*Sixth*, have the students share their journal or log entries with one another on a regular basis (e.g., daily, twice a week, and once a week).



*Seventh*, have the students complete the self-assessment on their journals or logs on a periodic basis for feedback and/or a grade based on the number of entries and their quality.

*Eighth*, have the students complete the self-assessment based on the predetermined criteria.

Further, have the students select a few of the journal entries to be rewritten and placed in their portfolios.

The first impression matters during the use of learning journals and logs. At the beginning of the meeting, it is unequivocally significant for the teachers to get the students ready for the class. Teacher's readiness is also essential to be maintained throughout the semester. Likewise, the course outline is equipped with other supplementary elements such as objectives, methods, and evaluation techniques.

The listed topics are the sources for the students to create the entries. It is necessary for the teachers to give rewards for those who write neatly and well-organized. The learning logs are intended to habituate them doing 'to-do list' activities which are beneficial for their future life. It is related their target accomplishment or goals.

**Table 2**  
*Course Outline*

Topic
1. Introduction to course outline
2. Introducing self in informal meeting— <i>Chapter 1.- Individual</i>
3. Communicating in formal meeting (1)– <i>Chapter 21-25. Speaking</i>
4. Communicating in formal meeting (2)– <i>Chapter 26-30 Speaking</i>
5. Making short talks - <i>Chapter 5- Speaking and Writing – Individual</i>
6. Giving Opinion – Chapter 31– <b>Individual – Writing and Speaking</b>
Mid-term
7. Jobs and Occupation –Chapter 2 – <b>Writing about your future jobs and career</b>
8. Question & Answer (part.1) – <i>Chapter 5 (Brainstorming)</i>
9. Question & Answer (part.2) - <i>Practices &amp; Exercises</i>
10. Public Speaking ( <i>the themes taken from Chapter 6,7,8,9,10 or free topics</i> ). s – Individual <b>-Listening to conference</b>
11. Public sphere conversation (part 1)- <i>Chapter 21-30</i> -dialogues – <b>Speaking practices</b>
12. Public sphere conversation (part 2 )- <i>Chapter 21-30</i> -dialogues – <b>Speaking practices</b>
13. Job Interview Tips (1) – <i>Group work – Reading and Resume</i>
14. Writing Application Letter (2) – <b>Writing</b> – Free Sources
15. Course Evaluation
Final-term

Furthermore, regarding the learning journal, it serves as the medium for the students to complete or execute their learning activities. Students' learning journals represent the 'output' or the results of students' learning process, reflecting their skills or performances. In the course outline mentioned before, they are able to see the things to prepare to accomplish their skills required. They may also be able to predict the score they want to get and they will get. Likewise, the four language skills- reading, listening, speaking, and writing are covered to anticipate monotonous activities particularly for the students. Moreover, the cooperative manners are also accommodated by pinning the group work or teamwork. It is intended to be so because, in the future, the students will face a workplace situation which enables them to work with team or group of people. The ability to work in a team or making a synergy is essentially needed.

### **How to Assess Learning Logs and Journals**

There are no certain or specific criteria in assessing the students' learning logs and journal. Teachers themselves have the authority in observing, scrutinizing, and rewarding on the students' logs and journals. The quality of logs and journals can be

assessed in two ways. First, rate entries against criteria of excellence. This method involves four steps: (1). Specifying a number of criteria for quality, (2) developing indicators of high, medium, and low performance for that criterion, (3) rating a student's log or journal on each of the criterion together to determine a total score (Johnson & Johnson, 2002). An example of a rating sheet is provided in Appendix 2. Second, assign point values to each criterion. This method for assessing the learning journals or logs allows the teachers as facilitators to rate different criteria with different value weights.

**Table 3**

*Sample of Problem-Solving Log*

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**Problem Solving Log**

**Name** : \_\_\_\_\_  
**Class** : \_\_\_\_\_  
**Date** : \_\_\_\_\_

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*My difficulties cover...*

*The possible way to analyze my speaking problem is by...*

*I experience the same problem as ...*

*I have one, two, three or several ways to solve the problem, which are...*

*I wonder if I still have the problem, which is...*

*I need a hand with...*

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The inclusion of four language skills as integrated skills in language learning is also delineated in this study. Reading activities are done to give the students insights in their mind that reading has powerful impacts in many aspects. In learning a language, reading plays an important role to enhance their knowledge bases, particularly in learning the language structure and pattern. Moreover, reading activities provide the students with the proper organization of ideas in the texts written in English.

**Table 4**

*Reading Logs*

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**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Key ideas:*  
*Connections:*  
*Questions:*  
*The best part:*

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In writing the reading logs, the students are given a text or allowed to determine the reading text based on their interests, based on the intended length, the topic, the objectives of the reading activities (this should refer to the teacher's guideline). Later on, the teacher helps evaluate the reading activities at the end of the course. The feedback given by the teacher is essential for both the teacher and the students to reflect on the reading performances and the reading program to formulate a better way in conducting the following reading activities.

**The Learning Log Assignment Process**

It is far reaching to discuss the learning log assignment process due to the students' comprehensive understanding in implementing it. The concept of learning journal and logs should not be considered as 'burden' or 'homework' like as they previously experienced. The activities simply intended to habituate them in practicing using the language.

In addition, Johnson and Johnson (2002) assert the following outline of the steps taken in assigning the writing of learning logs and journals in the classroom: (1) the teacher prepares and delivers a brief lecture on the concept and advantages of a

learning log assignment; (2) a sample learning log is placed on the network and a hard copy is given to each student during the lecture; (3) a list of topics is created and placed on the network for the students to look over before the next class; (4) the students sign up for topics on a first-come-first-serve basis. A website containing the topics can be used for this purpose. If no website is available, a simple sign-up sheet can be used. The next four steps comprise (5) the students are asked to maintain the learning log using a designated word processing software program; (6) as the students reaches the end of the learning log project, they are asked to create approximately ten frequently asked questions (FAQs) from the learning process they have experienced; (7) the students will periodically e-mail the partially completed learning log to the teacher for review and comments; (8) at the end of the learning log project, the students will prepare a PowerPoint presentation of the topic and present it to the class. The student "expert" is expected to give the presentation and answer any questions posed by the instructor or other students. The next five steps are (9) each student is given an evaluation sheet to evaluate each presentation after which those sheets are collected and reviewed by the teacher; (10) the final learning log file and PowerPoint file are sent to the teacher as e-mail attachments, then placed on the network, so all the students have access to them; (11) each student is given a learning log evaluation sheet and asked to read each learning log and evaluate it; (12) the teacher reads the learning logs and evaluation sheets and assigns a grade to both the learning log and PowerPoint presentation; and (13) in this specific course, the teacher has taken the learning logs and used them as a resource to build a website for the class.

Since a learning log assignment requires a substantial amount of time and a considerable commitment to improve and achieve the intended goals, the learning logs are best used in the upper-level courses. The activities and predetermined instructions explained in the earlier sections fit this description since they are usually enacted in an upper-level class. Many students will have had little or no previous experience with this type of structured self-assessment. Therefore, it is better to introduce the learning log assignment to them by providing examples, coaching, and regular reviews of their progress.

### Learning Log Procedure

According to Johnson and Johnson (2002), the students are required to keep learning log for the course. They bring their log to every class session. In the log entries, some important points are noted. To prepare the students for the class session, they need to complete a short, initial, focused discussion task.

Next, it is necessary for the teacher to set on the course around a series of questions that the course answers. To trigger the students' participation, they need brainstorming activities to prepare their questions. The teacher may write them on the board so that the students can see them. In pairs, the students come to agreement on their initial answers to the questions and record the answers in their learning logs as well as record them in their question logs they want to answer about the topic. By doing so, the students are supported to organize what they know about the topic to be studied and establish expectations about what the class session will focus on.

### CONCLUSION

In accommodating the students' learner autonomy, a guideline is required. Learning logs and journals are key tools for having students document and reflect on their learning experiences. In the learning logs, the students record short entries about what they are studying. In the learning journals, they record longer narratives about what they are studying. These activities help them keep track of what they have completed, respond to questions posed by the teacher, identify problems to be solved, and apply what they have learnt to their own personal life. They should look at the sample completed journals and logs first that range from excellent to poor as examples of how

to write meaningful entries. They should also be given specific criteria to assess the entries. In addition, they should periodically be given prompts to indicate what they should write about. The entries are assessed based on the predetermined criteria. Keeping a learning log or journal may increase the students' awareness of the actions that are needed to achieve the intended goals or outcomes in a given situation. Learning logs and journals can also be used in an informal cooperative learning environment where pairs of students write entries before, during, and after the lesson. They also help the students rate the quality of their learning experiences. Then, getting used to write a log or journal also enables them to be more organized in managing their routines and learning activities.

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## APPENDIXES

### Appendix 1: Course Outline

Course Outline

Business English

Management Department Faculty of Economics

Universitas Islam Lamongan (UNISLA)

Status : Required Instructor : Dr. Uzlifatul Masruroh Isnawati

Credit : 2 sks Day/smster : Fridays, ( Mj B ,16.00-18.00) (Mj A, 18.30-20.30)

Objectives : (1).The students are able to communicate (oral and written) in English in the workplace context; (2) The students are able read, learn, write, practice more other related business materials continuously and autonomously after the course ends.

Materials :

	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Date</b>
1	Introduction to course outline	5, March, 2021
2	Introducing self in informal meeting— <b>Chapter 1.- Individual</b>	12
3	Communicating in formal meeting (1)– <b>Chapter 21-25. Speaking</b>	19
4	Communicating in formal meeting (2)– <b>Chapter 26-30 Speaking</b>	26
5	Making short talks - <b>Chapter 5- Speaking and Writing - Individual</b>	9, April, 2021
6	Giving Opinion – Chapter 31– <b>Individual – Writing and Speaking</b>	16
	Mid-term	23
7	Jobs and Occupation –Chapter 2 – <b>Writing about your future jobs and career</b>	30
8	Question & Answer (part.1) – <b>Chapter 5 (Brainstorming)</b>	7, May, 2021
9	Question & Answer (part.2) - <b>Practices &amp; Exercises</b>	21
10	Public Speaking ( <b>the themes taken from Chapter 6,7,8,9,10 or free topics</b> ). s – Individual	28
11	Public sphere conversation (part 1)– <b>Chapter 21-30</b> -dialogues – <b>Speaking practices</b>	4, June, 2021
12	Public sphere conversation (part 2 )– <b>Chapter 21-30</b> -dialogues – <b>Speaking practices</b>	11
13	Job Interview Tips (1) – <b>Group work – Reading and Resume</b>	18
14	Writing Application Letter (2) – <b>Writing</b> – Free Sources	25
15	Course Evaluation	2, July, 2021
	Final-term	9

#### Activities:

The students must:

1. In individual, read the materials compiled in their hand out and do the exercises as their portfolios;
2. Attend classroom meeting regularly and show good attitude during the instruction;
3. Complete and accomplish their projects in each meeting.

#### Method:

Presentation, discussion, note taking, conferencing, and focus group discussion

#### Evaluation:

The students' final grade will be based on (1). The students' portfolio on exercises in every meeting based on the topics listed in every meeting both in group and individual basis (75), and (2). The student's active participation in the classroom during the instruction including their attitudes reflected in the classroom (25 %).

**Appendix 2: Lesson Plan**

**LESSON PLAN**

Video-making on Job Interview  
 Uzlifatul Masruroh Isnawati (lecturer)  
 Faculty of Economics, Management Dept. 2nd Semester  
 Universitas Islam Lamongan (UNISLA)

<b>Subject</b>	English for Business
<b>Level</b>	Intermediate
<b>Time allotment</b>	2 x 50
<b>Topic</b>	Job Interview
<b>Skill emphasized</b>	Speaking
<b>Target Grammar point</b>	Simple present tense, Past tense and Passive Voice
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- By the end of the lesson, the students will be able to:</li> <li>- Create a good resume about her/himself for job interview.</li> <li>- Answer the interviewer questions correctly and precisely;</li> <li>- Behave appropriately in attending job interview.</li> </ul>
<b>Pre-requisite</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The students have already learned about Job Vacancy</li> <li>- The students know about a good resume</li> <li>- The students have learned about some information about things frequently asked in job interview</li> <li>- The students know about what Do and Don't do in job interview session.</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment</b>	Video-making and rubric
<b>Materials/Equipment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Template on Job Interview questions</li> <li>- Template on making Resume for Job Interview.</li> </ul>
<b>Sources</b>	Youtube <a href="https://youtu.be/kayOhGRcNt4">https://youtu.be/kayOhGRcNt4</a> <a href="https://youtu.be/r_w9gRRbC6s">https://youtu.be/r_w9gRRbC6s</a> English for Socializing, Minimax- ASCD <a href="http://ascd.org">http://ascd.org</a>

**VIDEO RUBRIC**

Below is the rubric that will be used to score your video. The main skill assessed in the video will be your speaking skills and the performance during the interview. Do not worry too much about the video editing and transition, but rather emphasize and showcase the best of your performance in speaking and interviewing skills.

<b>Components</b>	<b>Scoring criteria</b>	<b>Score</b>
	25 Uses variety of vocabulary and expressions to convey precise meaning according to the level of formality, use less common and idiomatic vocabulary	
	20 Uses vocabulary resource flexibility, uses some less common and idiomatic vocabulary, and shows some awareness of style and collocation	
<b>Vocabulary and expression</b>	15 Uses limited and common vocabulary and expressions, but makes meaning clear in spite of inappropriate word choice.	
	10 Use only basic vocabulary and expressions.	
	25 Uses the simple present and other related tenses as sequence markers precisely	
	20 Uses the target structures with some mistakes that rarely cause comprehension problem	

<b>Grammatical accuracy</b>	15	Uses the target structure with reasonable accuracy but some errors may cause comprehension problems
	10	Errors in using the target structures are frequent and may lead to misunderstanding
	25	Explain with little hesitation that is mostly content-related and only rarely to
	20	Gives extended explanation with some language-related hesitation, repetition and/or self correction
<b>Fluency and appropriateness</b>	15	Is willing to speak at length, though may lose coherence at times due to occasional repetition, self correction and hesitation
	10	Usually maintains the flow of speech but uses repetition, self correction and/or slow speech to keep going
	25	Very well behaved, wear neat and appropriate outfit, full of confidence, no nervous during the interview
	20	Well behaves, wear neat outfit, confidence enough during the interview
<b>Performance</b>	15	Showing average and standard behavior, showing less appropriate outfit and less confidence during the interview.
	10	Inappropriate behavior, wear informal outfit, showing no confident and nervous during the interview

Source: IMMOC Video Rubric (2018) with some adaptations.

<b>Procedures</b>	<b>Materials</b>	<b>Interaction</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Objectives</b>
<b>Pre-Speaking Activities</b>				
Brainstorming The teacher previews students' prior knowledge on the situation of job interview they previously known, seen, imagined The students are encouraged to answer leading questions which commonly and frequently asked in job interview. The templates are as follows: 1. What is your name? 2. What is your nick name? 3. Where do you live? 4. Tell me about your educational background! 5. What is your current job? 6. Tell me about your working experience! 7. Tell me about your expertise! 8. Do you think your expertise would give significance contribution to this company? Convince me.	<a href="https://youtu.be/r_w9gRRbC6s">https://youtu.be/r_w9gRRbC6s</a>	Teacher-students  Students-teacher	10	To activate students' prior knowledge on job interview To practice how to answer job interview question.
The teacher explains about the Dos n Don't in job interview session	<a href="https://youtu.be/kayOhGRcNt4">https://youtu.be/kayOhGRcNt4</a> <a href="https://youtu.be/18emh3KK_Bg">https://youtu.be/18emh3KK_Bg</a>	Teacher-students	20	To be familiarized about how to behave during the interview
<b>Whilst speaking/interviewing</b>				
<b>Rearranging Video making dialogues .</b>				
After watching some samples of job interview and some tips in job interview through video, the teacher requires the students to create video about job interview with the following steps : Work in pair ( one acts as the interviewer and one acts as the interviewee) and do role play;	-Smartphone -Laptop -Speaker -Mobile apps	Student-student (in pair)	50	To be familiar with some questions faced in the job interview (by acting as the interviewer) and learn the

***Keeping Up with Learning Logs and Journal to Promote Learner Autonomy: ...***

Have a friend to videotaping;  
 Make a video presenting a situation of "Job Interview". The video they make should be based on the rubric of assessment.  
 The students' performance is also evaluated as it is also included in the assessment rubrics (point 4).  
 The students are free to use any apps in videotaping.

tips at the same time.  
 To practice how to face job interview in appropriate way both in oral skills (skills in answering the questions) appropriately.  
 To train their confident (soft skills) practice

**Post-Speaking**

The students are to submit the video in url.form. They might upload it can in their social media, such as Youtube channel, blog, Instagram, or Facebook account.  
 The students share their problems in videomaking  
 Follow up discussion and concluding remarks from the teacher.

-Smartphone  
 -Mobile apps.  
 -Laptop

Student-  
 student (in  
 pair)  
 Student-  
 teacher

20

To produce of an oral discourse (interviewing) of the skills and materials learned.

**TEMPLATES ON RESUME FOR JOB INTERVIEW**

**The following is an example**

I wanted a **career** in finance so I **studied** finance and economics at university. The first job I applied for was with ECO corporation in Tokyo. They **recruited** me in 2005. I left this company in 2007 and **joined** Harvard finance in 2010. The company had a lot of problems and I was **made redundant** in 2015. I **joined** my present company, Singapore accounts, two years ago. I have worked for Singapore accounts since 2017. It was a good move. I was promoted to Finance Director last year and I now earn a good salary. I'm currently working on a new financial accounting system. It will be ready soon. The downside of the job is that I work long hours and I get only **get three week's holidays**. I'm always **under pressure** and sometimes it is a bit stressful. I also spend **a lot of time** traveling. I am now taking other opportunity to join your company with my experiences I previously mentioned. You may see my attached CV and documents aforementioned.

Source: English for Socializing, Minimax- ASCD <http://ascd.org>

*Notes:*

The bold words indicate target grammar and vocabulary points emphasized. They are about simple present tense, simple past, and passive voice.



## **HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW AI? EXPLORING ENGLISH TEACHERS' FAMILIARITY AND PERSPECTIVE TOWARDS AI IN ELT**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The utilization of artificial intelligence (AI) in educational settings could be seen from different perspectives. Some might say that AI would threaten the academic sectors as it could take over some or replace the teachers' jobs. Some others say that AI could create opportunities that offer new ways of teaching and learning. The utilization of AI in language lessons is very much dependent on the perspective that teachers take concerning their daily tasks. This survey study tries to unfold the teachers' perspective on the possible utilization of AI from two different lenses; the benefit of AI for teachers and students. In order to explore the English teachers' perspective on the use of AI in English language teaching, a set of questionnaire surveys was developed. The survey was distributed to English teachers and lecturers who joined the Telegram group of Indonesia Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (iTELL). The result of the study shows that, to a certain extent, many teachers are aware of the existence of AI and perceive that AI can be beneficial for supporting their teaching process, such as in providing independent practice for the students, sharing and delivering teaching materials, and also evaluating students' performance. In addition, teachers also considered AI as useful in fostering learners' autonomy, providing flexible learning, and improving students' motivation. All in all, teachers' positive perspective towards the existence of AI show an excellent sign that AI might be one of the tools which can be used to transform language lessons in the near future.

**Keywords:** Artificial intelligent; CALL; EFL

### **INTRODUCTION**

The hype of artificial intelligence (AI) has attracted people to start using AI for many different purposes. Some might consciously utilize AI when they write their memos using speech to text or activate their personal assistance like Google Assistance, SIRI, or ALEXA. Some others might not realize that they are actually dealing with AI when they do online shopping, use fitness devices, or navigation tools. AI has started to become part of day-to-day life and help people doing things more accessible than ever before. The ubiquity of AI is due to its potential to process big data using affordable, intelligent machines and provide human-like responses. Today, it is essential to think about how education, training, and other forms of education that prepare people for their future and professional lives are influenced by AI. Luckin (2019), one of the prominent scholars in AI and education, mentioned that everybody in the educational sector should make themselves ready to embrace AI in achieving their goals and avoid the risk that might be encountered and anticipated it through the use of AI.

Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) has played a facilitative role in English language teaching. With the advancement of AI, the area of CALL has been

recently extended into ICALL (Intelligent Computer-Assisted Language Learning) – an area of research that explores and implements AI applications in language teaching and learning (Lu, 2018). AI can facilitate the transformation of language teaching paradigms which provide more adaptive and connected learning environments (Kanaan & Munday, 2018). The existence of big data and AI provide a variety of automation which can be beneficial for English language teachers and learners (Kessler, 2018). Furthermore, Kessler (2018) mentioned speech recognition as an example of AI which provides opportunities for students to practice speaking while at the same time getting automated human-like feedback. He also highlighted the way automated writing evaluation can support learners by providing suggestions for appropriate word choice or prevent them from having grammar mistakes in their writing.

Regarding this new area of research, studies have been conducted to explore the potentials of AI in English language teaching. Some studies have examined the effectiveness of certain AI apps and their significance in improving students' language skills in higher education (Alshriedeh & Mohammed, 2021; Haristiani, 2019; Suryana et al., 2020; Wang, 2020). Some others examine the extent to which AI can support learners in learning grammar (Kim, 2019) and pronunciation (Noviyanti, 2020). Besides its utilization for secondary and higher education levels, some AI tools are also applicable for younger learners. Underwood (2017), in his study that incorporates voice-driven AI for primary EFL students, found that AI has the potential to motivate and provide opportunities for children to engage in spoken interaction in the target language.

With all the promises given by AI in transforming education, it would be beneficial for English language teachers to keep themselves updated with the emerging artificial intelligent relevant to today's trends in ELT. Amidst the myriad of studies on the implementation of AI in ELT, studies which explore teachers' familiarity and perception towards the use of AI are still rare. Whereas, in the attempt to prepare teachers with AI-readiness, teachers need to be acquainted with AI tools, have a positive perception that AI can help them do their job, and assurance that AI will not replace their jobs. Thus, examining teachers' familiarity and perception towards AI can be an essential starting point to invite more teachers to get to know the potentials of AI.

The study reported here is a survey study that aims at exploring the extent to which teachers are familiar with AI tools and their perception of the use of technology tools in ELT classes. In this study, the following research questions are addressed:

- 1) What are the teachers' levels of familiarity with AI?
- 2) How do teachers perceive the benefit of AI for their job as a teacher?
- 3) How do teachers perceive the benefit of AI for their learners?

Further objectives of this study are to provide insights into ways of supporting teachers to utilize AI to assist their job and ways to support learners to utilize AI as the learning assistant.

### **What is AI?**

The term "artificial intelligence" was introduced in 1956 by a scientist named John McCarthy. Artificial Intelligence (AI) was actually a simple theory about how human intelligence is being exhibited by machines (Bini, 2018). Luckin et al. (2016) define AI as computer systems that have been designed to interact with the world through capabilities and intelligent behaviours that could be associated with humans. The computer system is actually inspired by how the nervous system works in the body and how the body can feel, learn, and act (Harkut et al., 2019). Barito (2018) explains that the clear difference between artificial intelligence and humans is that computers are limited to the so-called "signals" (logical programming languages) with memory capacities that may be greater than the capacity of human memory. However, despite the size of the computer memory, it does not have the capacity to interpret meaning.

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