Guided Learning to Improve Self-Directed Learning: A Study Among First Year Psychology Students in UNIMAS

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Introduction

- Many of studies agreed that students in higher education institution, particularly in year one are still rely on teacher-centered learning (Du Toit-Brits, 2019).

- This phenomenon was also found among UNIMAS Students particularly first year students. They are waiting for the lecturer to spoon-feed them as what they get in the secondary school.

- In industrial revolution 4.0 where knowledge is everywhere, learning is much more easier. However, learning is depend on the students themselves.

- University students should sufficiently equip with learning skills which prepared them to be more independent and self-directed in their learning.

Objective of Study

General Objective:

To improve self-directed learning among first year students by providing guided learning.

Specific Objective:

(a) to identify student's level of self-directed learning in early of the semester.

(b) to improve students ability in understanding what to learn and how to learn.

(c) to guide students identifying their preferred learning method

Literature
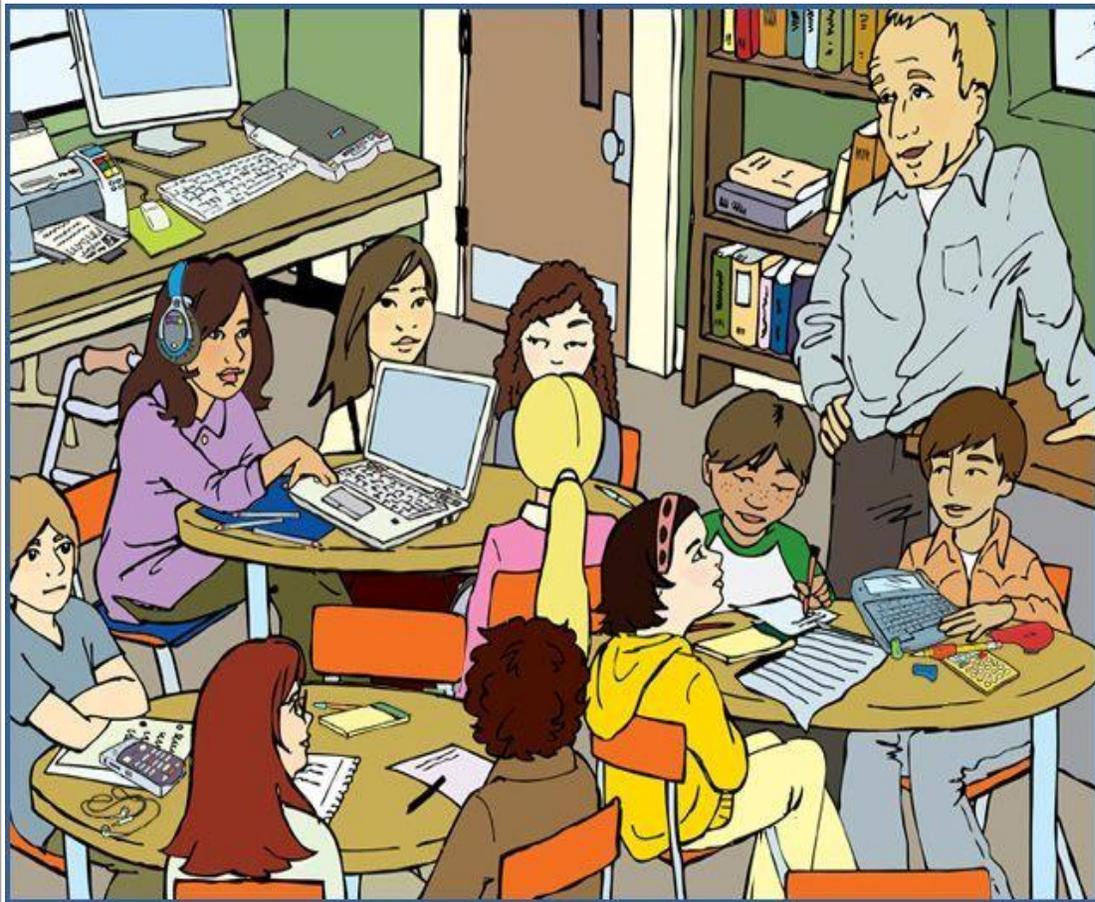
- Knowles definition of SDL explain that SDL as "a process in which individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes" (Knowles, 1975:18).

- Knowles (1975) urged that students should active in their learning, able to adapt and learn how to learn in a new and fast-changing environment. However, according to Jossberger, Brand-Gruwel, Boshuizen & Van de Wiel (2010), students are not characteristically self-directed, and SDL is a method that drive students to take initiative and think about the purpose of learning.

- There are some elements that need to be fostered to improve self-directedness among students, such as guiding them to identify what need to learn, set learning objectives, resolve problems and take responsibility for their own learning (Knowles, Holton & Swanson, 2012).

Literature

- In order to achieve self-directedness in learning, **lecturer as learning facilitator need to function as scaffold for the students to have learning skills, know how to learn so that initiative to learn will improve.**

- Furthermore, a conducive self-directed teaching environment foster positive learning experience among students (Du Toit-Brits, 2015; Knowles et al., 2012) that can be created when the **lecturer facilitate students initiative for SDL, empowering students toward SDL, create a cooperative learning environment** (Du Toit-Brits, 2019).

Methodology

- This study examines the self-directed learning skills among first year students of Psychology Program UNIMAS, particularly in class of KMY1013 (Introduction to Psychology).

- This study based on Constructivism as paradigm in teaching and learning which believe that students build their own understanding through experiencing things and reflecting on that experience.

- This study create intervention in class with a number of different teaching practices to guide students to be active in class and being active in creating and reflecting knowledge, and talk/show about what they do and how their new understanding build.

- These different teaching practices function as scaffolding in improving students self-directedness in learning.

Step by Step Procedure Conducted

1. **Pre-Test;** Measuring the level of student's self-directed learning at the beginning of semster by using Self-Directed Learning Readiness Scale (SDLRS) by Guglielmino & Guglielmino (1977).

2. Implementation of Guided Learning in Class

   In every class, these practice will be implemented:

   2.1 Introductory to the Topic - Understanding what to learn

- The lecturer explains the topic and the learning objectives briefly. After this session the lecturer ask student's opinion and/or expectation about this topic individually or in pair. Lecturer encourages students to bring up any related ideas and in this session lecturer mention that any ideas will not be judged as right or wrong.

- This session is important for the lecturer to get information about student's prior knowledge and it is also good to encourage students to express their opinions freely. At the end of this session lecturer will summarize the students ideas and link it back to the learning objectives. It will help the students being aware of "what to learn".

Step by Step Procedure Conducted

2.2 Learning - Guiding how to learn (to be more self-directed learners)

2.2.1 Introducing Learning technique and Resources

- During lecture, the lecturer provide various teaching methods included **lecturing, case study, watching movie/video/clip, drawing mind mapping, self-searching information and problem solving in group work**. Lecturer help to connect student's previous knowledge with the new knowledge through these various methods. If there is unfamiliar terms or something interesting in the topic, **lecturer will ask students to search related information through internet by using their smart phone on the spot.**

- In several times lecturer also **show how to find good learning sources** from various resources such as journals, web site, e-book, you tube, etc. Lecturer also **encourage students to utilize learning resources available** in UNIMAS CAIS, such as inter-loan library (ILL).

Step by Step Procedure Conducted

2.2.2 Incorporate Peer Learning in Class

Lecturer encourage students learn from and teach to other students to learn new material or produce new knowledge together. Learning from peer or teaching peer has several advantages such as learning more fun, easier to be understood due to same language, interest and learning tools used, it also retain knowledge longer. After one sub learning unit finish, lecturer provide a topic to be discussed in a small group (four to five students) in 15-minutes then the group upload the result in eleap or present it in front of the class so that each of students can learn from their peer. This learning activities will provide opportunities for students to learn how their peers search information, processing it and express it verbally or nonverbally.

2.2.3 Cultivating Knowledge Sharing

In class lecturer provide space and time for the students share relevant knowledge into the class by showing how he/she got it and what he/she got in front of the class. Appreciation such as verbal praise or giving bonus marks intended to reinforce and cultivate knowledge sharing among students.

3. Post-Test; Measuring the level of student's self-directed learning by using Self-Directed Learning Readiness Scale (SDLRS) by Guglielmino & Guglielmino (1977).

Findings

- Total of students participated in this study is 38 consist of 12 students classified as below average, 24 students are average and 2 students are above average.
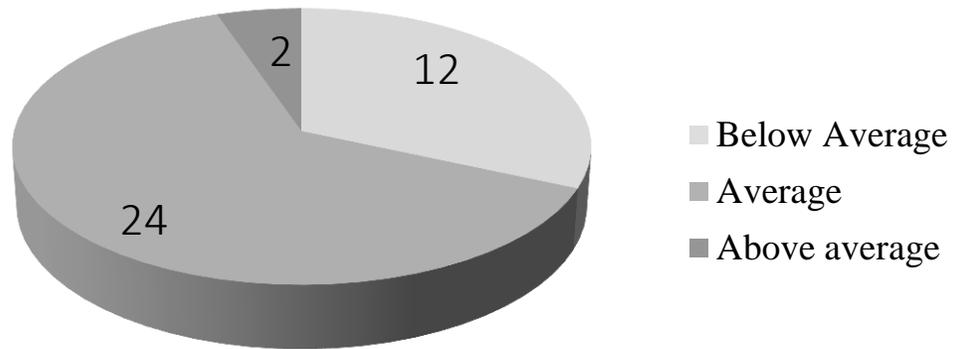
Implementation of guided learning in class-Week 3 – Week 7

WEEK	Learning Unit	Guided Learning Practiced
1	Public Holiday	-
2	Public Holiday	-
3	LU-1 Introduction to Psychology	Introductory to the Topic - Understanding what to learn - Lecturing - Video Clip - What Psychologist Do - Online Searching using smart phone - What Psychologist Do
4	LU-2 Scientific Method in Psychology	Introductory to the Topic - Understanding what to learn - Lecturing - Movie - The Stanford Prison Experiment - Online Searching about various research methods
5	LU-3 Biological Psychology LU-4 Sensation and Perception	Introductory to the Topic - Understanding what to learn - Lecturing - Video Clip - Biological Psychology - Online Searching using smart phone
6	LU-5 Human Development	Introductory to the Topic - Understanding what to learn - Lecturing - Piaget Cognitive Development - Video Clip - Piaget Cognitive Development - Self-reflection
7	LU-5 Human Development	- Lecturing - Video Clip - Erik Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development - Group work - Discuss crisis in each of the stages - Self-reflection

Implementation of guided learning in class-Week 3 – Week 7

- Implementation of guided learning in class will be continued until week 12 of the semester and at the end of class, a post intervention test will be conducted to see whether the implementation of guided learning improve the SDLRS score.

Conclusion

- Given that this study is still ongoing, the final results of the study cannot be concluded yet. However based on lecturer observation and students response verbally, they find that these guided learning in class contribute positively to equip students how to learn and it build confident for students to explore things they don't know or do deep learning.

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