

Research Article

IMPACT OF HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT ON STUDENTS' LEARNING

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Abstract

Homework has become an important issue for primary and secondary schools for over five decades. Although it has both academic and non-academic purposes, only a few studies have been investigated at the tertiary level. This study investigated the impacts of homework on students' learning. Participants were 140 undergraduates from a Thai university. A set of questionnaires and focus group interviews were used. Findings revealed that homework benefited and supported students' learning although it had some psychological impacts on their learning and affected free time management. It enabled students to acquire knowledge, developed learning skills, and increased academic achievements. Also, it promoted student's collaborative skills and speaking between teachers and students for homework clarification. Findings further indicated that internet was one of the powerful tools for students' learning and homework information. Based on the findings, this study suggests strategies and implications for teachers' instructions and effective implementation of homework for students' learning outside class.

Keywords: Homework Assignment, Homework Impact

Introduction

Homework is generally used as a learning resource for educational activities. It provides students opportunities to improve their learning habits, learning performance, and aims to increase

their academic achievements. However, students view homework differently according to their educational levels, beliefs, attitudes, and cultures. Tsai and Jiang (2013) have conducted a study on students' perceptions on homework between Chinese and American third grade students. Results revealed that the Chinese students received more homework and enjoyed doing them more than American students. They also preferred to complete homework by themselves rather than with the helps from the others when compared to American students. According to Tsai and Jiang (2013), Chinese students' practice is related to the norms of the Confucian cultures which is based on the belief that "Practice makes perfect" (p. 215). However, Letterman (2013) states that the students who view homework as "busy work" (p. 117) do not try to complete their homework tasks. Cooper (1989) reports that some of the negative effects of homework are that students do cheating by copying homework answers from the other students. For some case, teachers have little to know whether students do the assignments by themselves or have somebody does for them (Kralovec & Buell, 2003).

In addition, homework assigned for students in an inappropriate time considerably impact on their emotional conditions and attitudes. For example, I had an informal conversation with my student on Facebook in Songkran Festival (During 13th – 15th in every April), she said "Beyond Happiness in my long vacation. Don't ask me about all homework and tests". This statement strongly inspires me to find out what she really perceives about homework. I then asked her a further question about homework. She replied "It's too much for me. Although, it's my vacation, teacher still gives me a lot of homework. It destroys my feeling of happiness". This statement implies that homework assigned for students in an inappropriate time demotivates their learning. It also could make them have negative attitudes towards homework and maybe the teachers.

Checking research in the Thai-Journal Citation Index Center in Thailand, results showed that there were only nine research studies about homework assignments found in the database. It means that research of homework in Thailand are still lack. Also, there is no research of homework found at the context of the current study although it has a long history of language teaching for over four decades. Likewise, available literature show that research of students' attitudes and perceptions towards homework are remaining largely unknown (Letterman, 2013; Warton, 2001) and it is still lack in the field of foreign languages and sciences (Ramdass & Zimmerman, 2011). Thus, results of this study are expected to fulfil the gaps in the field of

homework research and to provide insightful information for teachers to reflect upon their teaching practice concerning homework assignments on students' learning.

Literature review

Previous studies have shown that homework benefits for students' learning and their achievement (Keith & Cool, 1992; Cooper, 1994; Krashen, 2005; Bembenutty & White, 2013). According to Cooper (1989), homework is the "tasks assigned to students by school teachers that are meant to be carried out during non-school hours" (p. 7). Cooper (1989) points out that the academic purposes of homework are to make students acquire factual knowledge, improve academic study skills and raise positive attitudes towards homework, and realize that learning can take place anywhere, not just only in school classroom. In addition, homework can be used to measure students' learning achievements, develop independent study skills, and advanced classroom learning preparation (Muijs & Reynolds, 2011). In terms of non-academic purposes, Cooper (1994) states that homework can foster students to have more self-direction, greater self-discipline, better time organization, more inquisitiveness, and more independence. Likewise, Ramdass and Zimmerman (2011) note that homework enhances students' self-regulation which promotes students' motivation, cognitive, and metacognitive skills in language learning. This makes students have motivation to monitor their learning and seek appropriate strategies to complete homework and achieve learning goals.

The previous literatures have shown that homework helps students learn and potentially increases their learning achievements (Cooper, 1989; Cooper, 1994; Cooper, et al., 2006; Bembenutty & White, 2013; Keith & Cool, 1992; Trautwein, et al., 2002). Homework is regularly served as a tool for checking students' understandings and their learning progress. Cooper (1994) has done a meta-analysis of three types of homework effects on students' achievement which involving research comparing achievement between two groups of students who receiving homework and receiving no homework; research comparing homework with in-class supervised study; and research correlating to students' time spending on homework with their achievement. Results showed that homework has respectively greater advantages on students' achievement when they move to higher levels of education. Good homework can help teachers predict students' academic achievement, motivate them for learning and raise self-regulation (Núñez, et al., 2015) and the more time they dedicate on homework is associated to the better

academic outcomes (Cooper, 2008; Krashen, 2005). Graded assignments are also considered to have positive impacts on students' learning and can improve their academic performance (Latif & Miles, 2011). In addition to these research results, university students perceive homework as cost and benefit and for those who perceive homework is difficult for their class will ask helps from their teacher (Letterman, 2013).

However, homework should be appropriately assigned for students. Research has shown that overloading homework does not only make students lose their academic interests, but also leads them to physical and emotional fatigue (Copper, 1994). Likewise, it impacts on students' attitudes towards homework and does not yield positive results in learning. Warton (2001) states that homework impacts on young children's emotional and creates conflicts between them and their parents. In some cases, students are unwilling to do homework since they do homework to satisfy their teachers (Paudel, 2012). Thus, the study aims to investigate the impact of homework on students' learning.

To achieve the study purposes, there are three research questions were formulated.

1. What are the students' perceptions of homework?
2. What impacts do homework have on students' learning?
3. What strategies do students use to deal with homework?

Methodology

1. Research Design

Mixed-method approach was used for the current study. According to Dörnyei (2007), mixed-method approach is combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods. It is involved with a multi-process with higher validity and reliability of qualitative and quantitative data analysis. Mixed-method approach does not only allow researchers to do multiple analysis of the data and recheck its convergence, but also compensates the weaknesses of the research methods and enables researchers to collect effective data. Based on mixed-method approach, the present study employed a set of questionnaires for the quantitative method and focus group interviews for qualitative method.

2. Participants

The participants were 140 Thai sophomore and junior undergraduates, 103 females and 37 males, enrolled in two branches of English major at a Thai university. They were selected

by using the purposive sampling technique. Their ages range was from 19 to 23 years old. They graduated from different high schools, both from different urban and rural areas. They had the passion to develop their knowledge of English language and language competence for their future careers.

3. Instruments

This study employed a set of questionnaires and the focus group interviews for data collection. Some questions in the questionnaire were adapted from MetLife, Inc. (2007), and some were designed and developed by the researchers. The questionnaire was validated by two experienced researchers, one is native English speaking teacher and another is Thai English teacher, and was piloted with the sample similar to the participants in the same context. There were 46 items in the questionnaire. The six-pointed Likert scale was used. The scales were ranged from strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), slightly disagree (3), slightly agree (4), agree (5), and strongly agree (6).

In terms of the focus group interview, researchers created 12 questions corresponding to the questions in the questionnaire. Those questions were used to elicit the participants' opinions of homework impacts on their learning. Each interview lasted 30 – 60 minutes and was audio recorded.

4. Data Collection Procedures

The researchers explained the research purposes to the participants. They were also ensured data confidentiality and abled to stop doing the questionnaire if they felt uncomfortable to express their opinions to the statements provided in the questionnaire. After that, a questionnaire was administered to the participants and they were asked to complete the questionnaire as honest as possible within 30 – 40 minutes. The students did the questionnaire in a convenient classroom without disturbance noise from the outside. The completed questionnaire was returned to the researchers. The participants who volunteered to take part in the focus group interview were asked for their contact numbers. There were 17 volunteered participants for the interview. They were grouped into 5 – 6 persons at the interview conducted by the researchers which took place in a convenient room with air condition.

5. Data Analysis

Data from the questionnaire were analyzed with Percentage. This statistical value was used to identify the proportion of the scores and interpreted the quantitative data.

In terms of the qualitative data, the transcribed data from the focus group interview were analyzed by open and axial coding techniques (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). At the first step, open

coding technique was used to name and categorize the data found in the interview texts. Later, axial coding technique was employed to put those categories into dimensions in sequence in order to report the qualitative findings.

Results

1. Students' perception towards homework

Table 1. shows that the students knew the purposes of homework (Item 2). Majority of them (74.10%) perceived the importance of homework and its necessary on their learning (Item 1) and agreed and strongly agreed (77.10%) that homework was a part of their grading scores (Item 3). However, most of them did not like to have overloading homework (Item 9). Over half of the participants also slightly agreed, agreed and strongly agreed that they preferred group, pair, and individual homework respectively (Items 8, 7, and 6).

Table 1 Students' perception towards homework

No.	Statements	Frequency					
		1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 (%)	6 (%)
1	I know that homework is very important and necessary for me.	2.90	6.40	16.40	18.40	20.70	35.00
2	I know the purposes of homework.	5.00	4.30	17.90	30.70	25.70	16.40
3	I know that homework is a part of my grade scores.	3.60	4.30	5.00	10.00	27.10	50.00
4	I think homework is not helpful for me.	50.70	24.30	9.30	7.90	2.90	5.00
5	I think homework is just busy work.	30.00	28.60	21.40	12.90	4.30	2.90
6	I like to do individual homework.	10.70	12.90	19.30	15.70	18.60	22.90
7	I like to do pair homework.	8.60	12.90	19.30	23.60	23.60	12.10
8	I like to do group homework.	10.00	15.00	15.00	19.30	20.70	20.00
9	I like to have a lot of homework.	40.70	23.60	23.60	8.60	2.90	0.70
10	I have enough time to do my homework.	14.30	15.00	28.60	25.00	10.00	7.10

Note: 1 = strongly disagreed, 2 = disagreed, 3 = slightly disagreed, 4 = slightly agreed, 5 = agreed, 6 = strongly agreed

Similarly, the qualitative findings revealed that homework was an important tool for students' learning. It developed their learning skills and helped them acquire knowledge of English writing, literature, and linguistics, particularly in areas of vocabulary and grammar. Without homework, they would pay less attention to the lessons and it consequently affected on their test scores. For example, they stated:

If we practice writing more, we will be skillful and think faster, our grammar knowledge and vocabulary will be increased. (Student C1)

... If we do not have any homework, I personally do not pay attention to read books and review them. When the tests are nearly come, I have to read my books in details seriously and it makes me receive low scores from the test. (Student B1)

Regarding homework types, the qualitative findings illustrated contradict results to the quantitative findings (Items 6, 7, and 8). Findings showed that majority of the participants initially preferred individual type of homework over pair and group types of homework. This preference was based on individual's time-management on homework and the need to fully develop self-learning potentials in English language. Some students illustrated these views:

I think I like individual homework because I can express my opinions and fully practice by myself without the interruption or objection from the other students. (Student W1)

I think individual homework is the best because we can manage our time well. (Student F1)

In addition, findings further indicated that pair and group types of homework can promote students' cooperative learning and stimulate homework discussions. However, these two types of homework can cause problems for some students due to the irresponsible and unpunctual of group members, different ideas on tasks, and unequal workloads especially in a large group. For example, a student participant stated *"sometimes there are too many group members. There are ten persons in a group, but work only five persons..."*. This statement implies that students may have lack skills in a large group management and it is ineffective for their learning. Therefore, findings suggest that group homework should be well-organized with clear working roles, responsibilities, and have appropriate group members. The students should also be taught cooperative working skills for effective group work management to achieve learning goals.

2. Students' attitudes towards the ways of teachers' giving homework

The statistics values in Table 2 demonstrate that over half of students slightly agreed, agreed, and strongly agreed that their teachers explained clear homework purposes, gave relevant homework of the courses to students, and followed up their homework (Items 1, 3, and 4). However, over half of the students slightly disagreed, disagreed, and strongly disagreed that teachers concerned about their feelings of doing homework, whereas some of them agreed to the statement (Item 6).

Table 2 Students' attitudes towards the ways of teachers' giving homework

No.	Statements	Frequency					
		1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 (%)	6 (%)
1	Teachers explain the purposes of homework clearly.	5.00	11.40	23.60	31.40	16.40	12.10
2	Some teachers give homework without explaining the purposes of homework.	6.40	20.70	25.70	22.90	17.10	7.10
3	Teachers give relevant homework of the courses for students.	0.70	2.10	17.10	26.40	37.10	16.40
4	Teachers follow up homework.	5.00	10.00	20.70	20.00	33.60	10.70
5	Teachers check homework and give it back to students quickly.	5.00	18.60	26.40	27.10	19.30	3.60
6	Teachers concern about students' feelings about doing homework.	7.90	18.60	25.70	22.90	17.10	7.90

Note: 1 = strongly disagreed, 2 = disagreed, 3 = slightly disagreed, 4 = slightly agreed, 5 = agreed, 6 = strongly agreed

Contradicting to the quantitative results showing in Table 2 (Items 1 and 2), data from the focus group interviews demonstrated that a large number of teachers rarely explained homework objectives to students or else their explanations seemed unclear. If the objectives were unclear, they would not be able to achieve what was required. However, they believed that homework had hidden objectives which aimed to develop and measure their knowledge and understanding of the lessons. For example, some students explained:

It must have the objectives of doing homework and should be explained to students to understand. Some classes I do not understand. Sometimes I do not know what teachers want to communicate or what the topics of the contents are. (Student D1)

In terms of homework objectives, I think 30% of teachers tell us the objectives, but 70% of the teachers do not tell us the specific objectives of the homework...I think every homework has hidden objectives. (Student B1)

The purpose [of homework] is to measure whether we understand the lessons or not, so teachers assign us homework. (Student N1)

Concerning homework feedback, findings revealed that students needed feedback from their teachers and realized that feedback played a critical role on their language learning. For example, Student F1 said “...When we submit our homework, feedback should be provided in order to make learning effective and homework relevant”.

However, findings showed that some Thai teachers’ feedback on homework focused on grammar points rather than the ideas organized in the materials. They would require students to revise their whole written papers if there were any errors. Also, they did not follow up students’ homework and showed concerns to students’ feelings on homework. They sometimes followed up the big project tasks such as self-study reports or daily reports.

3. Effects of homework on students’ learning achievements

Table 3 shows that homework was beneficial and important on students’ academic achievements (Item 5). Over 70% of the participants slightly agreed, agreed, and strongly agreed that homework enabled them to receive high marks from the tests and consequently raised their achievement (Items 3 and 1). In addition, over half of them believed that without homework they cannot do the tests well and that would be resulted in low marks, although some of them did not agree with it (Item 4).

Table 3 Effects of homework on students' learning achievements

No.	Statements	Frequency					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
		(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
1	When I do homework, it improves my learning achievement.	1.40	7.10	14.30	32.10	28.60	16.40
2	When I do not do homework, my learning achievements will be low.	10.70	12.90	11.40	25.00	22.90	17.10
3	When I do homework, I can do the test and get high marks.	1.40	6.40	17.10	30.00	23.60	21.40
4	When I do not do homework, I cannot do the test well and get low marks.	7.10	16.40	20.00	21.40	22.10	12.90
5	When I do homework, it has no effects on my learning achievements.	27.10	23.60	27.10	12.10	7.90	2.10

Note: 1 = strongly disagreed, 2 = disagreed, 3 = slightly disagreed, 4 = slightly agreed, 5 = agreed, 6 = strongly agreed

Similar to the quantitative results showing in Table 3, findings from focus group interviews illustrated that homework helped students learn and increased their academic achievements. It provided opportunity for them to practice and review language items and enabled them to do the test well. For example, they said:

For MS Subject [pseudonym], I understand when I study in class. When I practice homework, I also understand and it makes me pass the tests and receive higher marks than I expected. (Student A1)

I think 80% are from homework practice. This is because we can remember. Then 20% is from reading the textbooks. When we pass the tests, the test scores...will be more than the cumulative scores and that will make us get better grades. (Student B1)

4. Effects of homework on students' emotions, motivation and free time management

The statistical findings in Table 4. show that homework developed students' sense of motivation and responsibility in learning (Items 1 and 2), and it did not effect on their free time management (Item 5). Regarding Items 3 and 5, while over half of the participants slightly

disagreed, disagreed, and strongly disagreed that homework made them feel bored and restricted them from joining with social activities, however, similar number of the participants were in agreement (Items 3 and 6). Also, most students slightly agreed, agreed, and strongly agreed (59.40%) that homework made them feel stressed (Item 4).

Table 4 Effects of homework on students' emotions, motivation and free Time management

No.	Statements	Frequency					
		1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 (%)	6 (%)
1	I know that homework motivates me to learn.	1.40	7.90	18.60	20.70	28.60	22.90
2	I think homework develops my sense of responsibility.	1.40	4.30	17.10	18.60	26.40	32.10
3	I feel bored when I do homework.	9.30	20.00	23.60	20.70	12.90	13.60
4	I think homework makes me feel stressed.	5.70	10.70	24.30	22.90	23.60	12.90
5	I think homework makes me unable to manage my free time.	13.60	18.60	30.00	24.30	7.90	5.70
6	I think homework restricts me from joining with social activities.	11.40	19.30	23.60	25.00	11.40	9.30

Note: 1 = strongly disagreed, 2 = disagreed, 3 = slightly disagreed, 4 = slightly agreed, 5 = agreed, 6 = strongly agreed

Qualitative findings indicated that students were not bored with homework (See also Table 4: Item 3). In contrast, they were unsatisfied with redundant homework and the traditional teaching methods which based teachings heavily on textbooks. Students agreed that the usage of various teaching styles and techniques can increase their learning motivation. Also, homework should be used to develop their knowledge, learning skills, and critical thinking rather than the fix of right or wrong answers.

Data from the focus group interviews showed contradict results to the quantitative data (See also Table 4: Item 6) as indicated that homework restricted students from social activities

and made them sleep late at night. This made students feel pressure, stressed, and worried. For instance, students stated:

When we have activities and I know that I have homework, I will not go. I must finish my homework, so those activities are left behind. (Student P1)

Yes, it has effects. Sometimes I have an appointment with friends for a meal, to do activities, and go for exercise. But I cannot go because my homework is not finished. (Student C1)

It pressures us. Sometimes we feel stressed and sleepless at night because we have to submit homework to teachers. (Student A1)

5. Students' abilities in handling with homework

The statistical values in Table 5 show that majority of the student participants did homework by themselves and submitted it to their teachers on time (Items 1, 2, 3). Over half of them also preferred to ask helps from friends and teachers if homework was difficult, while nearly half of the students (45%) slightly disagreed, disagreed, and strongly disagreed that they would ask helps from their teachers (Item 8 and 4). Findings also revealed that majority of the students (over 65%) slightly disagreed, disagreed, and strongly disagreed that they would copy homework directly from the internet, instead, they would read and summarize the data from the internet for their homework before submitting (Items 5 and 6).

Table 5 Students' abilities in handling with homework

No.	Statements	Frequency					
		1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 (%)	6 (%)
1	I do homework by myself.	0.00	2.90	14.30	26.40	42.10	14.30
2	Another person does my homework completely.	54.30	30.70	9.30	1.40	3.60	0.70
3	I complete and submit homework to my teachers on time.	2.90	2.10	5.00	10.70	35.00	44.30
4	I consult my teachers for help in case of homework is too difficult.	5.70	14.30	25.00	24.30	20.70	10.00

No.	Statements	Frequency					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
		(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
5	If homework is difficult, I copy directly from the internet without summarizing and submit to my teachers.	12.90	27.10	31.40	13.60	10.00	5.00
6	If homework is difficult, I read and summarize from the internet before submitting to my teachers.	1.40	11.40	18.60	34.30	25.00	9.30
7	If homework is difficult, I copy from my friends and submit to my teachers.	13.60	35.00	21.40	15.70	11.40	2.90
8	If homework is difficult, I ask help and work with my friends to complete homework.	1.40	6.40	14.30	20.70	32.90	24.30

Note: 1 = strongly disagreed, 2 = disagreed, 3 = slightly disagreed, 4 = slightly agreed, 5 = agreed, 6 = strongly agreed

According to the statistical results, it implies that the participants aware that copying homework both from friends and internet (See also Table 5: Items 5 and 7) is unacceptable and ethically wrong. Asking helps from friends and consulting with teachers for difficult homework tasks are more acceptable. The qualitative findings revealed the students would initially do homework by themselves. If it was difficult, they would read more books, searched more information, sometimes consult with teachers for clarification.

Moreover, Facebook groups were created among the students for the purposes of homework discussion, and making homework appointment with friends. Findings revealed that students used internet as the main sources for homework information. They searched, read, summarized, and elaborated the data from the internet for their assignments. For example, students remarked:

We create a Facebook group. We chat when we do homework. Sometimes we make an appointment to do homework together. (Student P1)

I cannot finish it if I work alone. So, I have to work with my friends and sometimes I have to search for the information from the internet. (Student S1)

It [Phonetics] has a lot of content. If we are going to do homework, although we study very hard, we still need to read it again because it has a lot of information and very details. It sometimes is unavailable in the textbooks. We understand but we cannot explain it. So, we have to search for more information from the internet. But we have to summarize to answer the questions by using our own words clearly. (Student I1)

Dissimilar to the statistical results in Table 5 (Items 5 and 7), the qualitative findings indicated that some students copied homework answers from the internet without summarization, especially the assignments concerning culture, history of different countries, and literature which required to write approximately 10 to 20 pages long. The reasons behind these behaviors caused from the lack of knowledge of academic vocabulary and summarizing skills. Findings further showed that some students copied homework from friends. In some case, their friends were willing to have them copy homework.

However, this study strongly points out that any types of copying is unacceptable and against the ethical rules. Teachers should raise student's awareness of this principle and use homework as a tool for students' learning and develop their homework management skills. It should be also used in a way that engage students on tasks, provide opportunities for them to draw their understanding of the lessons, and learn how to complete their tasks by not to copy others.

Discussion

Results of the study revealed that homework impacts on students' learning. It helps students acquire knowledge, develops language skills, and increases the potential of testing. These findings are similar to the previous study (Cooper, 1994) as indicated that homework enables students to better retention of factual knowledge, increases understanding and critical thinking ability, and enhances concept formation in their learning. Homework could also increase students' learning outcomes and lead them to learning success (Cooper, 1994; Keith & Cool, 1992). In addition, most of the students, to those who have high intrinsic value of learning, view homework as important for their understanding of course materials (Letterman, 2013). Without homework, students would have lack motivation and opportunity to practice language skills and acquire factual knowledge.

In regard to homework feedback, students perceived that it is important for their learning. Feedback from teachers can help them learn and increase their positive attitudes towards homework. It also improves students' learning performance when they know what is right or wrong on tasks (Slavin, 2014). According to Paudel (2012), it is teachers' professional responsibilities to provide students feedback on homework. Teachers need to ensure that their feedback is useful and encourages students to learn and react to the mistakes from their comments. Like, A Union of Professionals, American Federation of teachers (2011) emphasizes that "students who receive personal, pertinent feedback about their homework errors outperform students who receive only scores on their homework assignments" (p. 4). In addition, homework feedback is not only beneficial for teachers in a way that they can reflect upon their teaching practices, but also enables them to assess students' understanding and check learning progress. However, results of this study pointed out that teachers rarely followed up and provided pertinent feedback on students' assignments. In fact, adequate feedback can make significant impacts on students' learning performance.

Internet is considered to be the powerful source of information for students' homework. Since internet allows students access to a vast of data and seek for specific information for homework questions which are unavailable from the textbooks. Using internet can also develop students' searching and summarizing skills on tasks. In addition, Facebook group was created among students for homework purposes. According to Tangjitnusorn and Sukavatee (2016), Facebook groups promote students' learning interaction, facilitate their working processes, and enable them to success in group work. Moreover, students realized that friends were one of the important factors for homework deals. They normally sat together with their friends to cope with difficult assignments. Similarly, Wilson (2012) notes that a large number of pupils (62%) in school ranked that receiving help from friends was extremely important to deal with homework demands. These findings could be argued that friends are the extrinsic motivation leading to homework success. However, some students may copy homework from friends and the internet if the assignments were too demanding and required fixed answers. Findings suggest that teachers should consider homework roles and its impacts on students' learning and raise their awareness of ethical rules and plagiarism principles in dealing with homework assignments.

Regarding homework types, most of the participants preferred individual type of homework over pair and group types of homework. Janjua, Malik, and Rahman (2011) note that

Individual type of homework provides a large opportunity for students to fully develop their own knowledge and language competence as well as non-academic skills (i.e. homework schedules management, self-responsibility, and self-regulation). In terms of pair and group types of homework, students can learn and develop cooperative learning skills. However, these two types of homework may create conflicts and problematic for some group members, especially group homework. This study underlines that teachers are the key person who can manage the effectiveness of group homework for students. They should set appropriate group members and provide each group with well-prepared assignments. In fact, a Union of Professionals, American Federation of Teachers (2011) notes that good homework need to be interesting, reinforce and encourage collaborative working, and stimulate group discussion. Also, teachers should not assign students overloading homework. It affects student's free time management and makes them encounter uncomfortable feeling. These results agree the studies of Cooper (1994) and Warton (2001) who noted that homework can cause emotional difficulties and physical fatigue for students.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The common purposes of homework are to support students' learning, provide opportunity for them to practice language skills, acquire factual knowledge, develop self-learning habits and time management skills. Homework should be used as continuing of learning for students and an important repertoire for teachers' instructions. Teachers should provide feedback to foster students' learning potentials and the growth of linguistic capacity. With this support, students will have more intrinsic motivation to approach teachers as well as to build rapport between them and teachers for ongoing learning interactions. Interestingly, overloading homework affects students' motivation in learning and makes them feel stressed. It also leads them to plagiarize homework answers both from friends and the internet. To prevent plagiarism, the present study suggests that teachers should be aware of students' social activities and plans accordingly, help them with time management, give feedback on their homework, and prevent copy others by matching abilities with available time for homework completion.

Based on the results of the present study, there are four recommendations for further research studies. First, achievement tests correlated with homework practice should be used to measure students' learning achievement. Second, teachers should listen to students' voice on

homework and ensure that homework results in motivating them instead of doing the opposite. Third, because this study pointed out that homework feedback play a critical role on students' learning, so further studies concerning this area are worthy to investigate. Finally, a particular homework type of studying should be conducted in order to explore the impact on students' learning.

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