Students' Problems for not Completing English Homework

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to describe students' dominant reason for not completing their English homework. This research was descriptive quantitative research. The population of this research were students of a senior high school in Indonesia. In this research, the researchers took the sample by using purposive sampling technique. So, the total of sample of this research were 59 students from the total number of the population. The instrument used in this research was a questionnaire. The researchers gave 8 items of statements which consisted of four indicators (behaviorism theory, constructivism theory, maturational theory, and ecological system theory). Based on the result of the research, it was found that the students' dominant reason for not completing English homework was maturational theory with the percentage was 29% with the mean 3.83 categorized into high level. The researcher concludes that the most dominant reason the students do not do the homework because the students are not developmentally ready to complete the task and do not understand the homework (maturational theory).

Keywords: *Reasons, Not completing, English homework.*

Introduction

There are many methods are used by teachers in teaching English in order to make the students can understand learning material well. One of the methods is giving homework assignment to students. Cooper (1989) as cited by Hong and Milgram (2000) defined homework as tasks given to the learners by their teachers that are to be done outside of the school time and without the direction of the teacher simultaneously. So, Homework is usually done by students at home, but it can also be done in other places either during or after school hours, or with other people such as parents or classmates.

Homework is one of the factors that affects a learning process. Darminto as cited in Arizah and Sari (2019) said there are some factors that affect a learning process, such as internal factors and external factors. The Internal factors included physical (health and physical defect), psychology (intelligence, interest, aptitude, motivation), and exhausted. While external factors included family factors (how parents taught, relationships with relatives, parents' economic and cultural backgrounds), school factors (teaching method, curriculum, teacher-student relationships, student-student relationships, tools, building, learning method and homework). Society factors (students' activity in their environment, media, peer, and community culture).

Homework is given to students in order to encourage them to participate more actively in the learning process and to gain a better understanding of the materials taught. Al-Shara & Abed (2008) as cited by Kilani (2015) said that homework is one of the most important activities given to students in the class to check the students' degree of learning and their mastering of the concepts, and to encourage their learning. So, by doing homework at home, it means that the students learn more deeply about the materials that they get from teacher in the school. So, if the students do their homework and spend their time to it, they will understand more about the English and finally they will get high score in English achievement. As Trautwein (2007) points out that homework completed and time spent on homework have a much stronger influence on achievement.

Cathy Vatterott (2010) identified five fundamental characteristics of good homework: purpose, efficiency, ownership, competence, and aesthetic appeal. The first is purpose. All homework assignments are meaningful if they have a purpose. Teachers should provide students with assignments that are relevant to them and use methods that are appropriate for their learning styles. Teachers should not give homework on a routine basis, but only if there is a specific purpose. Students must also comprehend the assignment's purpose and why it is important in the context of their academic experience (Xu, 2011 as cited in Carr 2013). It is ineffective to assign "busy work" or rote assignments. Homework should provide feedback to the teacher on their students' comprehension and thus should reinforce concepts. Homework should not be given on topics that have not been taught. Finally, students should leave the classroom with a clear sense of what they are supposed to do and how they are supposed to do it.

The second characteristic of effective homework is efficiency. Homework should not take up a lot of time and should require some thought. According to Cooper et al (2006); Shumow (2011) as cited in Carr (2013), students who spend too much time on homework (more than 90 minutes at the high school level) actually perform worse than students who spend less time. Assignments with moderate difficulty are likely to increase student motivation. Assignments that are too easy can lead to boredom, and assignments that are too difficult lead to frustration. Well-structured assignments that are moderately difficult are key. The third characteristic of effective homework is ownership. Students are motivated and will learn more if they feel connected to the content and assignments. Providing students with choices in their assignments is one way to create ownership. Linking assignments to student interests is also important to promote ownership (Warton, 2001; Xu, 2011 as cited in Carr, 2013). Getting to know students and even visiting them at home not only helps educators better create effective assignments based on student interests but also facilitates student ownership because they know their teachers care about them. As Warton (2001) in Carr (2013) have noted, it is very important for students to understand the utility of homework and view it as important. In addition, homework must be structured in such a way that students can complete it with a relatively high success rate. When students can be proud of a job well done, they feel more ownership of their work.

The fourth characteristic of effective homework is competence. Students should feel competent to complete homework. It is beneficial to abandon the one-size-fits-all model in order to achieve this. According to Vattterott (2010), homework that students cannot accomplish without help is not good homework. When students are unable to complete

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homework on their own, they become discouraged. Homework should be differentiated so that the level of difficulty is appropriate for each student. This can be achieved in various ways: different rubrics, shorter assignments (Cooper & Nye, 1994 in Carr, 2013), or more challenging requirements for gifted students. The sheer volume of work can be a big obstacle for struggling students. Furthermore, it is important that educators adequately explain the assignments in order to assure success.

Aesthetic appeal is the fifth characteristic of effective homework and is often overlooked by teachers. The way homework looks is important. "Wise teachers have learned that students at all levels are more motivated to complete assignments that are visually uncluttered. Less information on the page, plenty of room to write answers, and the use of graphics or clip art make tasks look inviting and interesting" (Vatterott, 2010). Ultimately, effective homework should be purposeful, efficient, personalized, doable, and inviting. So it can be concluded that in order for the homework to be good, the teacher must consider the ability of students, the proportion of assignments given, the form of assignments given, the tasks given must be understood by students, when to do it, how to do it, and how long the task is to be done. Furthermore, the important aspect is that homework can increase student learning motivations.

According to Killoran (2003), there are four different theories of development that describe why students do not complete their homework; behaviorism, constructivism, maturational theory, and ecological systems theory. Killoran explained these four reasons why students do not complete homework and how these theories impact student behavior, resulting in homework incompletion.

Behaviorism theory; the first reason students do not complete homework is because positive reinforcement for incompletion (behaviorism theory). Positive reinforcement is done by reinforcing some positive behavior by providing a reward for students. The example of positives reinforcement in the class includes the students is rewarded with more credit point when she/he finished the work on time. Another example is by giving verbal praise (excellent, good, etc.) or non-verbal (smile, give two thumbs, etc.) and give special present. However, teachers must be able to select form of positive reinforcement that is valuable for the students. So, positive reinforcement for incompletion means that the students do not complete their homework if the teachers do not give reward to students when they finished the homework on time. So, the category of behaviorism theory is the students who do not complete their homework because of their teacher do not give reward for them after they have completed their homework. In order to change this behavior, teachers and parents need to identify an appropriate reinforcement and present it to the student when homework is complete (Killoran, 2003). Reinforcements are defined as anything that results in a behavioral increase or staying the same.
The reinforcement can make the behavior positive or negative depending upon the student and how teachers use the reinforcement.

Constructivism theory; the second reason students do not complete homework is because students are functioning at a lower level than the homework assigned (homework is too difficult). Constructivism was developed by Jean Piaget. A constructivist could argue that the homework is not at a level in which the child can construct knowledge therefore; the student does not complete their homework. If the student is not at the same level as the homework the student will not be able to do it. So, the category of constructivism theory is

such as the tasks given by the teacher are not the same as what has been taught to the students, so homework was too difficult to complete. A solution to incomplete homework would be to give the student work that they are able to do. When students struggle to complete homework because homework is too difficult, teachers need to identify where the students" academic level is and adjust the homework level to the needs of the individual student. Teachers need to continue to structure the classroom to facilitate positive interactions that encourage students and lead them to the next level (Killoran, 2003).

Maturational theory; the third reason students do not complete homework is because they are not developmentally ready to complete the task and do not understand the assignment. Maturational theory was developed by Arnold Gesell. Maturation can be defined as changes in thinking, a sense of responsibility, and a better ability to adapt to meet successfully the daily issues. The maturation theory promotes the gift of time and encourages teachers to not push the students because they are not developmentally ready to learn the information. Students will begin to develop a negative attitude toward the specific subject and the teacher and will no longer work to their potential. Teachers should encourage students in a positive manner and assign homework students can complete. Teachers generally give the same homework to each student in the class and research states students need individualized homework to best meet their academic achievement (Killoran, 2003)

Ecological System theory; according to Killoran (2003), the final reason research states why students do not complete their homework is because the students' environment is interfering with their ability or desire to complete homework (ecological systems). These environments can be situations at school with friends and outside of school during extra-curricular events or at home. So, the categories of ecological system theory are related to the students' environment, such as their parents who do not care about their children's assignment and it also can be the students who attend a lot of extra-curricular activities so they cannot complete the homework. Teachers do not always witness or recognize the different friend and family dynamics of their students which can emotionally affect their academic performance. Teachers need to carefully identify the different dynamics in their classroom. This can be challenging with a large number of students and families. To help the students' success, teachers should build a rapport with the students so they feel comfortable asking questions about problems with the students from various environments. By identifying students that are challenged with environmental difficulties and allowing them to receive extra teacher guidance or help at school to complete the tasks, it will help build the students' confidence for future success (Killoran, 2013)

Meanwhile, according to Palardy (2003), there are some reasons students fail to complete homework assignments: 1) The reasons students fail to complete homework assignments is unknown. Understanding these causes would help teachers make needed modifications. 2) Most schools do not have a homework policy. As a result, teachers of different subjects rarely coordinate homework assignments in terms of either length and difficulty or content. One consequence of this lack of coordination is that students may have difficult and long assignments on one night and little or no homework on another (LaConte, 1981). Another consequence is that there is no carefully planned scope and sequence for homework. 3) Homework can interfere with the development of well-rounded youngsters. Out-of-school activities are vital to the all-around development of young people. Excessive amounts of homework and/or excessive amounts of time spent on homework detract from the

possibility of students" optimal growth. 4) Homework can foster undesirable student behavior. In particular, routine practice drills are of questionable value and may even be counterproductive, especially for able students. 5) Teachers too frequently assign the same homework to all the students in class. Reviews of the literature have found that in more than 50 percent of classrooms all students are given the same homework assignment. Individual student differences in capacity, rate, or style of learning are either ignored or discounted. 6) Teachers do not systematically correct, grade, and return homework. Literature reviews have found that a lack of teacher feedback on homework occurs in more than two-thirds of classes. Some proponents of minimal homework argue that teachers with less homework to grade would have a more realistic opportunity, and be more inclined to do so. Further, there is some evidence to suggest that students" achievement in a subject improves when their homework is graded and returned. 7) Much more and much better information is needed on the effects of homework (process) on student achievement (product). For example, what types and amounts of homework assignments are most effective for youngsters in different subjects at different grade and developmental levels? Without answers to such questions, homework is likely to remain one of the most haphazard pedagogical practices in the schools.

There are some previous studies about students' problems for not completing homework, such as "A Research into the Problems of Students not Completing Homework Assignments in the Middle School: The Case of Weaver Middle School in Bibb County, Georgia" (Treadwell, 2007); "Student' Perception of Homework Assignments and What Influences their Ideas" (Letterman, 2013); "What Students Say About Homework – Views from a Secondary School Science Classroom in Trinidad and Tobago" (Sharma, 2016).

Based on the previous studies, it can be assumed that most of the previous research just describe students' view about homework and the researcher has not found yet research that describes dominant reasons the students have for not completing their English homework. Based on some relevant research above, it can be concluded that the similarity between this research and the previous research is it discussed about homework. In other hand, there are some differences between this research and the relevant research above. The majority of the previous research discussed about students' perception about homework, but in this research, the researcher focuses on students" reasons for not completing homework. Furthermore, the majority of the previous research conducted at the middle school level. Meanwhile, this research conducted in the senior high school level which is in the twelfth-grade students. The setting location and the subject of this research are also different from the previous research.

Based on preliminary research done at one of senior high school in Indonesia by interviewing an English teacher and observing students, the researchers found that some of the students do not complete the homework, they are lazy in completing their homework, and they have low motivation in doing homework. So, the researcher did this research to describe the students' dominant reasons for not completing their English homework.

Methodology

This research used descriptive quantitative method with a survey research design. The target population of this research were XII social class of one of senior high school in Indonesia. In this research, the researcher took 25 % students of population for this study, so there were 59 students as the sample of this study. The researcher used purposive

sampling as a technique by choosing some students who often do not do the homework, taken from documentation of the teacher (grade book).

In collecting the data, the researchers used questionnaire. The questionnaire contained some statements dealing with the reasons the students do not complete their homework. The questionnaire was presented in the form of attitude scales. So Likert scale was used to measure the attitude or perception of students.

In analyzing the data, the researcher used the Microsoft Excel. First, through the Microsoft Excel the researcher calculated the result of the questionnaire by using formula from Sugiyono (2010). After that, the researcher calculated the mean score from the result of the questionnaire from Leech (2005). To know the criteria of mean score, the researcher used the category of level of problem through the likert scale questionnaire by Atef and Munir (2009). The last, researcher took percentage by using formula which is cited in Trismasari et.al (2016).

Results and Discussion

The formulation of the problem of this research is "How is the students' dominant reason for not completing their English homework at the twelfth grade of senior high school students?". The researchers used questionnaires to get the data to answer the research question. The questions used in the questionnaire answered the students' reason for not completing English homework. The reasons were divided into Behaviorism Theory (Positive reinforcement for incompletion), Constructivism Theory (Students are functioning at a lower level than the homework assigned/ homework is too difficult), Maturational theory (They are not developmentally ready to complete the task and do not understand the assignment), Ecological Systems Theory (The student's environment is interfering with their ability or desire to complete homework). Furthermore, in the questionnaires there were 8 statements including five answers that students had to choose namely (strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, strongly disagree).

Behaviorism Theory
Positive reinforcement for incompletion (Behaviorism Theory) is one of the reasons of students for not completing their English homework. There was one item of this theory in this questionnaire. The data below are detail of item related to behaviorism theory.

Table 1
If my teachers rewarded me for doing my homework, I would be more willing to

Scale	Alternatives	Frequency	Score	Percentage
5	Strongly Agree	10	50	17%
4	Agree	15	60	25%
3	Undecided	15	45	25%
2	Disagree	13	26	22%
1	Strongly Disagree	6	6	10%
	Total	59	187	100%
	Mean		3,17	

Based on the data above, it can be found that 10 respondents (17%) answered strongly agree, 15 respondents (25%) answered agree, 15 respondents (25%) answered undecided,

13 respondents (22%) answered disagree and 6 respondents (10%) answered strongly disagree. It can be seen that the mean score was 3.17. Thus, based on the mean score it can be showed that the level of reason of the statement was categorized into a moderate level. The researcher concluded that the majority of students agree and undecided to be more willing to do their homework if their teachers rewarded them for doing their homework.

Constructivism Theory
That homework is too difficult is one of the reasons students do not complete their homework. So, when the level of the homework is not the same as the students' level, it can make students difficult to do their homework. There were two items of this theory in this questionnaire. They were item number 2 and 3. The data below are detail of each item in the factors/reasons related to constructivism theory.

Table 2
Homework assignments are much challenging for me

Scale	Alternatives	Frequency	Score	Percentage
5	Strongly Agree	14	70	24%
4	Agree	21	84	36%
3	Undecided	13	39	22%
2	Disagree	8	16	14%
1	Strongly Disagree	3	3	5%
	Total	59	212	100%
	Mean		3,59	

Based on the data above, it can be found that 14 respondents (24%) answered strongly agree, 21 respondents (36%) answered agree, 13 respondents (22 %) answered undecided, 8 respondents (14%) answered disagree, and 3 respondents (5%) answered strongly disagree. It can be seen that the mean score was 3.59. Thus, based on the mean score it can be showed that the level of the reason of this statement was categorized into a high level. The researcher concluded that the majority of students agree that English homework assignments are much challenging for them.

Table 3
Homework was too difficult to complete

Scale	Alternatives	Frequency	Score	Percentage
5	Strongly Agree	12	60	20%
4	Agree	17	68	29%
3	Undecided	13	39	22%
2	Disagree	12	24	20%
1	Strongly Disagree	5	5	8%
	Total	59	196	100%
	Mean		3,32	

Based on the data above, it can be found that 12 respondents (20%) answered strongly agree, 17 respondents (29%) answered agree, 13 respondents (22%) answered undecided,

12 respondents (20%) answered disagree, and 5 respondents (8%) answered strongly disagree. It can be seen that the mean score was 3.32. Thus, based on the mean score, it can be showed that the level of reason of the statement was categorized into a moderate level. The researcher concluded that the majority of the students agree that English homework was too difficult to complete.

Maturational Theory
When students are not developmentally ready to complete the homework and do not understand the homework can be as reasons for the students not to complete their homework. There were two items of this theory in this questionnaire. They were item number 4 and 5. The data below are detail of each item in the factor/reasons related to maturational theory.

Table 4
I do not complete homework because I do not understand what the question is asking

Scale	Alternatives	Frequency	Score	Percentage
5	Strongly Agree	25	125	42%
4	Agree	17	68	29%
3	Undecided	6	18	10%
2	Disagree	6	12	10%
1	Strongly Disagree	5	5	8%
	Total	59	228	100%
	Mean		3,86	

Based on the data above, it can be found that 25 respondents (42%) answered strongly agree, 17 respondents (29%) answered agree, 6 respondents (10%) answered undecided, 6 respondents (10%) answered disagree, and 5 respondents (8%) answered strongly disagree. It can be seen that the mean score was 3.86. Thus, based on the mean score it can be showed that the level of reason of the statement was categorized into a high level. The researcher concluded that the majority of the students strongly agree that they do not complete their homework because they do not understand what the question is asking.

Table 5
I do not complete homework because I have difficulty understanding the vocabulary

Scale	Alternatives	Frequency	Score	Percentage
5	Strongly Agree	19	95	32%
4	Agree	21	84	36%
3	Undecided	12	36	20%
2	Disagree	3	6	5%
1	Strongly Disagree	4	4	7%
	Total	59	225	100%
	Mean		3,81	

Based on the data above, it can be found that 19 respondents (32%) answered strongly agree, 21 respondents (36%) answered agree, 12 respondents (20%) answered undecided, 3 respondents (5%) answered disagree, and 4 respondents (7%) answered strongly

disagree. It can be seen that the mean score was 3.81. Thus, based on the mean score it can be showed that the level of reason of this statement was categorized into a high level. The researcher concluded that the majority of the students agree for not completing their English homework because they have difficulty understanding the vocabulary.

Ecological System Theory
One of the reasons students do not complete their homework is because the student's environment is interfering with their ability or desire to complete homework. There were three items of this theory in this questionnaire. They were item number 6, 7, and 8. The data below are detail of each item in the reason related to ecological system theory.

Table 6
My parents are always willing to help me with my homework when I need it

Scale	Alternatives	Frequency	Score	Percentage
5	Strongly Agree	11	55	19%
4	Agree	15	60	25%
3	Undecided	22	66	37%
2	Disagree	6	12	10%
1	Strongly Disagree	5	5	8%
	Total	59	198	100%
	Mean		3,36	

Based on the data above, it can be found that 11 respondents (19%) answered strongly agree, 15 respondents (25%) answered agree, 22 respondents (37%) answered undecided, 6 respondents (10%) answered disagree, and 5 respondents (8%) answered strongly disagree. It can be seen that the mean score was 3.36. Thus, based on the mean score it can be showed that the level of reason of this statement was categorized into a moderate level. The researcher concluded that the majority of the students uncertain that their parents are always willing to help their English homework when they need it.

Table 7
My parents do not care if I do my homework

Scale	Alternatives	Frequency	Score	Percentage
5	Strongly Agree	6	30	10%
4	Agree	3	12	5%
3	Undecided	6	18	10%
2	Disagree	15	30	25%
1	Strongly Disagree	29	29	49%
	Total	59	119	100%
	Mean		2,02	

Based on the data above, it can be found that 6 respondents (10%) answered strongly agree, 3 respondents (5%) answered agree, 6 respondents (10%) answered undecided, 15 respondents (25%) answered disagree, and 29 respondents (49%) answered strongly disagree. It can be seen that the mean score was 2.02. Thus, based on the mean score it

can be showed that the level of reason of this statement was categorized into a low level. The researcher concluded that the majority of the students strongly disagree that their parents do not care if they do their homework.

Table 8
My parents asked about my homework

Scale	Alternatives	Frequency	Score	Percentage
5	Strongly Agree	7	35	12%
4	Agree	15	60	25%
3	Undecided	22	66	37%
2	Disagree	8	16	14%
1	Strongly Disagree	7	7	12%
	Total	59	184	100%
	Mean		3,12	

Based on the data above, it can be found that 7 respondents (12%) answered strongly agree, 15 respondents (25%) answered agree, 22 respondents (37%) answered undecided, 8 respondents (14%) answered disagree, and 7 respondents (12%) answered strongly disagree. It can be seen that the mean score was 3.12. Thus based on the mean score it can be showed that the level of reason of this statement was categorized into a moderate level. The researcher concluded that the majority of the students uncertain that their parents asked about their English homework.
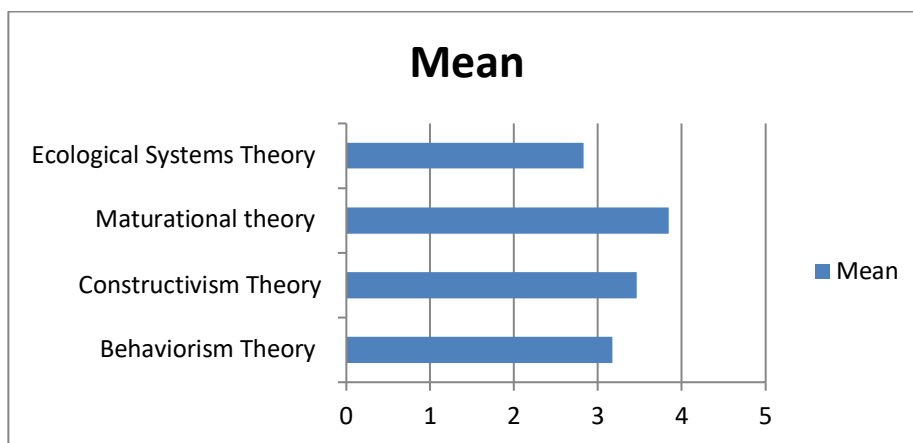
Table 9
Recapitulation of Mean and Level of Each Reason

Categories	Item Number	Mean	Level of Problem
Behaviorism Theory	1	3,17	Moderate
	Average	3,17	Moderate
Constructivism Theory	2	3,59	High
	3	3,32	Moderate
	Average	3,45	Moderate
Maturational theory	4	3,86	High
	5	3,81	High
	Average	3,83	High
Ecological Systems Theory	6	3,36	Moderate
	7	2,02	Low
	8	3,12	Moderate
	Average	2,83	Moderate

Based on the table above, it could be seen the mean and level of reason of each category. The level of reason with mean range (2.50-3.49) was categorized into a moderate level and the level of problem with range (4.50-5.00) was categorized into a high level. Thus, based on the mean score it can be concluded that the level of the reason (maturational theory)

was categorized into a high level, and the level of reasons (behaviorism theory, constructivism theory, and ecological systems theory) were categorized into moderate levels. The mean range of each factor could be seen in the following chart 1.

Chart 1
Mean Range of Each Reason

The researchers used formula from Trismasari et al (2016) to get percentage of each reason which is needed mean score of each reason is divided with sum of each reason. It can be seen in the table below.

Table 10
The Percentage of Mean Score and Sum of Each Categories of Reason

Categories of Reason	Mean score of each category	Percentage
Behaviorism Theory	3,17	24%
Constructivism Theory	3,45	26%
Maturational Theory	3,83	29%
Ecological System Theory	2,83	21%
Sum of each reason	13,28	100%

Table 10 presents data of the percentage of the mean score and sum of each category of reason. The first category of reason is based on behaviorism theory, it can be seen that the mean score related to behaviorism theory was 3.17 and percentage 24%. The second category of reason is based on constructivism theory. It can be seen that the mean score related to reason of constructivism theory was 3.45 and percentage 26%. The third category of reason is based on maturational theory, it can be seen that the mean score related to reason of maturational theory was 3.83 and percentage 29%. The fourth category of reason is based on ecological system theory, it can be seen that the mean scores related to reasons of ecological system theory was 2.83 and percentage 21%. The researcher concluded that the highest percentage was maturational theory with percentage 29 %.

Based on the data above, the study found out the different percentage among the reasons. The percentage can be seen in the following chart 2.

Chart 2
Percentage of Each Reason
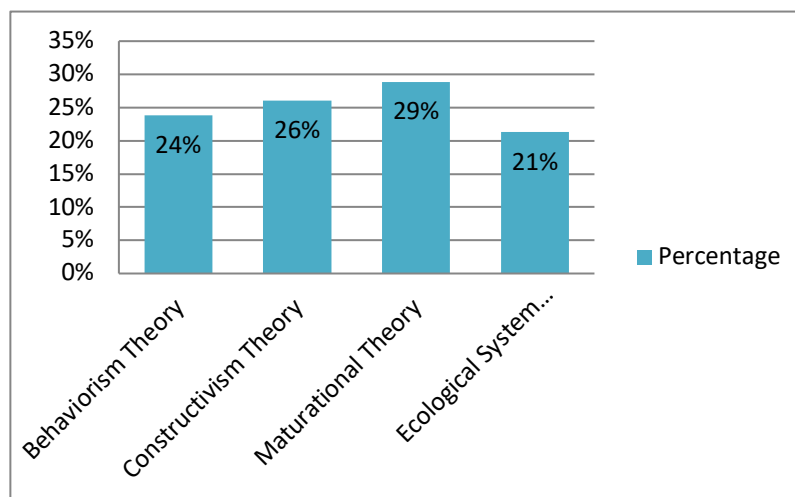
Based on the result of the research, the researchers found that students' dominant reason for not completing English homework was in maturational theory aspect, which is the students are not developmentally ready to complete the task and do not understand the homework. The next reason was in constructivism theory aspect, which is the homework is too difficult or the level of homework is not same as students' level. Then, followed by behaviorism theory aspect, which is positive reinforcement for incompletion, the last factor was ecological system theory which is the student's environment is interfering with their ability or desire to complete homework.

The result of this research is contrast to the previous research conducted by Treadwell (2007) about the reason why the students do not complete their homework because of lack of motivation and many parents do not help their children with homework either because they do not know or do not care (Ecological theory).

Conclusion
This research was conducted to describe how the students' dominant reason for not completing English homework at one of senior high school in Indonesia is. Based on the categories of reasons for students not completing English homework (behaviorism theory, constructivism theory, maturational theory, and ecological system theory), the researchers provide the conclusion that the most dominant reason the students do not complete their English homework is because the students do not understand the instruction of questions, such as they do not understand what is the question is asking and they have difficulty in understand the vocabulary. So, they do not know what they are going to do (maturational theory) with percentage 29%.

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