

**THE IMPACT OF GROUP AUTONOMY ON LEARNERS' SPEAKING
SKILL IN ENGLISH: A TASK-BASED SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVIST
PERSPECTIVE**

Alişen Demirtaş

Ph.D. DISSERTATION

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

GAZI UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

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AUTHOR:

Name : Alişen
Last Name : DEMİRTAŞ
Department : English Language Teaching
Signature :
Date of delivery : October, 2015

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Signature of the author:

Jury Approval Page

We certify that the dissertation entitled “The Impact of Group Autonomy on Learners’ Speaking Skill in English: A Task-Based Social Constructivist Perspective” prepared by Alişen DEMİRTAŞ has been unanimously / by majority of votes found satisfactory by the jury for the award degree of doctorate of philosophy in the subject matter of English language teaching at Gazi University, Department of English Language Teaching.

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. İskender Hakkı SARIGÖZ

ELT Department, Gazi University

.....

Chairman: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Paşa Tevfik CEPHE

ELT Department, Gazi University

.....

Member: Assist. Prof. Dr. Neslihan ÖZKAN

ELT Department, Ufuk University

.....

Member: Assist. Prof. Dr. Hüseyin ÖZ

ELT Department, Hacettepe University

.....

Member: Assist. Prof. Dr. Gültekin BORAN

ELT Department, Gazi University

.....

Date of dissertation defense: 09/10/2015

I certify that this dissertation has complied with the requirements of degree of Doctorate of Philosophy in the subject matter of English Language Teaching.

Prof. Dr. Servet Karabağ

Director of Institute of Educational Sciences

.....

**GRUP ÖZERKLİĞİNİN İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRENENLERİN KONUŞMA
BECERİSİNE ETKİSİ: GÖREV TEMELLİ SOSYAL OLUŞTURMACI
BİR BAKIŞ AÇISI**

(Doktora Tezi)

Alişen Demirtaş

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ÖZ

İngilizcenin yabancı dil olarak öğretildiği ülkelerde öğrencilerin İngilizce konuşma becerisini geliştirmek maksadıyla yapılan ders içi faaliyetlerden edinilen bilgi ve becerilerin ders sonrasında pekiştirilmesi ve kullanılması için çalışma yapma imkanı verecek ortam sınırlıdır. Diğer taraftan öğrencilerin öğrenme sorumluluğunun kendilerine ait olduğu gerçeği benimsememe durumu da söz konusu olduğu vakit İngilizce öğrenme çalışmaları sonuçsuz kalmaktadır. Bu durum öğretmenin öğrencilere sınıfta mümkün olduğu kadar hedef dilde doğal konuşma ortamı yaratacak görevler vermesi kadar öğrencinin de ders dışında öğrenmenin devam etmesi için çaba göstermesini sağlayacak bir anlayışı kazandırmasını gerektirmektedir. İngilizce öğretmenlerinin, öğrencilerini bir yabancı dilin nasıl öğrenileceği konusunda eğitme yoluyla öğrencilerindeki öğrenme özerkliğini geliştirerek, ve öğrenciler için anlam ifade eden, güncel yaşamları ile ilgili ve ortak çalışma yapabilecekleri görevler vererek bu süreci kolaylaştıracağı düşünülmektedir. Burada, öğrencilere anlamlı gelen görevlerin öğrencinin daha önceki bilgisi ile yeni öğrenilen arasında bir köprü oluşturması yani yapılandırmacı bir görev üstlenmesi ve diğer öğrencilerle birlikte hareket etme gerekliliğini oluşturması önemlidir. Grupla çalışan öğrenciler kendi öğrenmeleri ile birlikte gruptakilerin de öğrenmelerinin sorumluluğunu, yani grup öğrenme özerkliğini kazandıracak bu yapılandırmacı görevleri kolaylıkla

yürütebilir. Sadece sınıfta değil sınıf dışında da grupla öğrenme sorumluluğunu üstlenen öğrenciler kendi değerlendirmelerinin yanı sıra gruptaki diğer öğrencilerin de değerlendirmesini yapabilirler. Hedef dilde iletişim kurmak için fırsat yaratma isteği olan bu öğrenme özerkliğine sahip grup üyelerinin konuşma becerilerini geliştirme ihtimalleri de yüksektir. Araştırmacı, öntest-sontest deneysel desende karma yöntemli bir yapıdaki bu çalışma ile, özerk öğrenme, yapılandırmacı ve görev temelli yaklaşımlardan oluşan bir bağlamda grup özerkliğinin yabancı dil öğrenenlerin konuşma becerilerine etkisi olup olmadığını belirlemek için kullanılan yöntemleri içeren bir yaklaşımı sorgulamayı amaçlamıştır. Türkiye’de bir devlet üniversitesinden katılımcılara uygulanan bir anket ve testlerden elde edilen nicel veriler ile geriye dönük grup tartışması ve öğrenme günlüklerinden elde edilen nitel veriler bu varsayımların hayata geçirilip geçirilemeyeceğini belirlemek için değerlendirilmiştir. Araştırmada elde edilen veriler; özerk öğrenme, güncel ve interaktif görevler ve grupla çalışma prensiplerinin, başarılı uygulanması halinde, yabancı dil öğrenenlerin konuşma becerilerini geliştirmede etkili olacağını göstermiştir.

Bilim Kodu :

Anahtar Kelimeler: öğrenen özerkliği, sosyal yapılandırmacılık, görev temelli öğretim,
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ABSTRACT

In countries where English is taught as a foreign language, the setting to use and reinforce the knowledge and the skill obtained via in-class activities during English hours at school is limited in order to enhance speaking skill in the target language. Moreover, the aim of learning English becomes doomed to failure in the event that learners do not feel responsible of their own learning. This necessitates language teacher to assign learners some tasks that create maximum opportunities to use the target language in class, and to improve learner autonomy for their individual efforts to keep on learning the foreign language out of the classroom. It is considered that foreign language teachers are able to facilitate this process through enhancing learner autonomy as well as learners' speaking skills with the help of learner training on how to learn a foreign language and of the authentic tasks that learners can perform in group work format. Here, tasks that are meaningful to learners are supposed to serve as a tool for interaction and as a bridge between the prior knowledge of learners and the new one, which means constructive tasks. Groups of learners can easily work on these constructivist tasks that would lead them to take the responsibility of their own learning as well as of the group learning, that is, group autonomy. In addition to these opportunities, teachers may lead the learners to become able

to make the most of these opportunities efficiently through learner training. Then, the second half of the cake comes by groups of learners who have the responsibility of their learning to keep on learning out of the classrooms as well as of their own assessment and the learners' in the group. Members of these autonomous groups that are willing to create more opportunities to interact with each other are more likely to improve their speaking skill in the target language. The author in this study aimed to investigate an approach in which ways are used to clarify whether there was an impact of group autonomy on learners' speaking skills in a theoretical frame based on a combination of autonomous learning, task based approach, and social constructivism through a mixed-method pattern in a pretest, post-test experimental design. The quantitative data obtained from a questionnaire and tests and the qualitative data from the retrospective group discussion and learning logs of 335 participants in a state university in Turkey served to clarify whether the assumptions in the study were able to find a chance to survive. Findings through the research indicated that the successful implementation of autonomous learning principles, authentic and interactive task, and group work turns out to be very effective in enhancing foreign language learners' speaking skills.

Science Code:

Keywords : learner autonomy, social constructivism, task-based instruction, speaking skill in English as a foreign language

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Supervisor : Assoc. Prof. Dr. İskender Hakkı SARIGÖZ

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference
CLT	Communicative language teaching
EFL	English as a foreign language
ELT	English language teaching
ESL	English as a second language
FLE	Foreign language education
FLL	Foreign language learning
L2	Second language
LA	Learner autonomy
LLS	Language learning strategies
LS	Learning styles
LT	Learner training
SILL	Strategy Inventory for Language Learning
TBLT	Task-based language teaching
TEFL	Teaching English as a foreign language
TL	Target language

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The aim in this chapter is to provide a framework for the study on the impact of group autonomy on foreign language learners' speaking skills from a task-based social constructivist perspective.

At the outset of the chapter, the background reveals the study content such as the purpose of the experiment, the design and the interpretation of the results. The subsequent parts include the reasons why autonomy in groups should be emphasized in foreign language education through the aim of the study, statement of the problem as well as the significance of the study. In the following parts, the aim is to give an overview what ways were used to clarify whether there is an impact of group autonomy on learners' speaking skills. Limitations of the study are also described concisely in this chapter.

The last section of the chapter is devoted to defining some principal terminology regarding the study such as autonomy, learner autonomy, learner training, language awareness, language learning strategies, teacher autonomy, group autonomy, speaking skill, social constructivism, task-based learning.

Background to the Study

While investigating the history of learner autonomy, Smith (2008b) noted that the notion was first developed in the early 1970s by Henri Holec at CRAPEL as "ability to take charge of one's own education" (p. 6). With the development of self-access systems, autonomy-oriented classroom practices such as Leni Dam's in 1973, and the entry of new

‘centres’ the focus in books and reports seemed to be mainly on self-access learning up to the 1990s. For instance, Kohonen (1992) used the term ‘self-direction’ as ‘an attitude to learning’ in varying levels from other-directed to self-directed learning. Smith (2008a) also stated that the beginning of unification around the term ‘autonomy’ in book and reports was from 1995 onwards. As an example, Benson (2001) proposed learner autonomy (LA) as a pre-condition for effective learning of a foreign or second language. He defined LA as “the capacity to take control over one’s own learning” (p.47) similar to Smith (2008a) who labeled LA as to be able to self-direct one’s own learning. Besides, due to the facts that all knowledge is socially constructed through the use of communicative and interactive tasks as the central units for the planning and delivery of instruction (Richards and Schmidt, 2010), that the language is social and learning best happen interactively (Benson, 2001; Nunan, 1989b), and that the ability to use a second language is an indicator for the proficiency in this language (Liskin-Gasparro cited in Shrum and Glisan, 2010), the language teachers are supposed to create maximum opportunities to use the target language in the classroom (Yaman, 2014) as well as to guide learners in order to sustain a similar interactive setting out of the class. To support this, Sarıgöz (2008) stated that building learning communities in ‘synergy’ necessitated such a “classroom management that could develop cooperative interaction in the classroom” (p.57). For foreign language learning settings, Van Lier (1996) went further and explained that the class hours were the only chance that learners were busy with the language. By maintaining the idea that the language development occurred *between* lessons rather than *during* the lesson, Van Lier (1996) proposed that the students must be involved with the language *amid* lessons over and above *in* lessons. To formulate this context, Larsen-Freeman (2000) proposed teachers to teach how to learn a language that aimed to build autonomy among the learners.

When glanced at the literature, building autonomy was considered as a process in which control over and responsibility for the learning situation was gradually shifted from teacher to learner (Littlewood, 1996; Van Esch and St. John, 2003; Van Lier, 1996). Little (1996) gave his support in favor of group work as a means of developing learner autonomy. Group work in this study was more than the cooperative language learning approach, which was described by Gabler and Schroeder (2003, p. 88) as “a special subset of peer-group

techniques” or by Kessler (1992) as “a group learning activity organized so that learning is reliant on the collectively prearranged change of information among learners in groups” (p.8), even by Larsen-Freeman (2000, p. 164) as “learning students from each other in groups” but it was an expectation that creating an efficient, authentic foreign language learning environment with autonomous learners would become a solution to the never-ending problem of practice opportunity in learning a foreign language through the use of group dynamics, communicative aspects of group, and tasks that “present language learning in the form of a problem-solving negotiation between knowledge that the learner holds and new knowledge” (Candlin and Murphy cited in Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p. 144) in order to build group autonomy. As Larsen-Freeman (2000) composed in a corresponding way, cooperative learning groups could easily work on tasks from a task-based approach to language instruction, for instance. Yet cooperative learning was similar to learner strategy training as well in that both require language to teach other skills in addition to teaching language. Among the others, Scharle and Szabo (2000, p. 1) offered a number of activities that help learners become conscious of the importance of their part and develop the abilities to become autonomous on three stages;

Stage1: Raising awareness

Stage2: Changing attitudes

Stage3: Transferring roles

These stages became the roadmap for the researcher to conduct this study. Following the pre-test and questionnaire to clarify the linguistic needs and to correlate the levels of English use of the participants, awareness raising activities on learning styles, language, language learning, and language learning and communication strategies were carried out from the beginning of the work to the end. Along with two subsequent stages, self- and peer-assessment activities were also used to support to reach the endpoint of this transfer for learners to take charge of their own progress as well as to validate the change in learners’ speaking skill level within their success in the pre- and post-tests’ results. Finally, these results were analyzed to start a discussion about the impact of group autonomy on foreign language learners’ speaking skill and to suggest some educational implications.

Along the study, it was aimed to find out whether helping learners become autonomous and creating an interactive and authentic environment were effective to improve learners' speaking ability in a foreign language. It was thought that the maximum use of target language in and out of class for the foreign language learners through constructivist tasks would lead them to take the responsibility of their own learning.

Statement of the Problem

Nobody would deny that the most frequent problem faced by the foreign language learners is to be unable to use the target language in a meaningful and authentic way out of the class due to the fact that there is always a very limited opportunity (Yaman, 2014) for them to do this. Almost only opportunity to practice the target language is found within the boundaries of the classroom and with very restricted time if the teacher's approach to foreign language instruction is based on communicative principles. Otherwise, they might have the difficulty to put into action what they have learned in class even though they find this chance. Practice in the target language during in-class activities might not lead to its authentic use in the real world sufficiently however they are willing. While emphasizing the significance of authenticity in language classes, Van Lier (1996) claimed that a friendly greeting was not considered a friendly greeting once it was received in the strange language. He explained this situation as a psychological or cultural gap that might account for difficulties with group work and various kinds of communicative activities with many students.

In addition to these inadequate speaking conditions of foreign language learners, mainly related to the context, another unconstructive issue in improving speaking skill in the target language could be the learners, themselves. Learners may be very enthusiastic to speak in the foreign language. However, having the will to do something would not either to succeed it. Learners might act as the passive receivers from the teacher in the classroom and from the media such as TV broadcasting, or films in the target language out of the class. Among the others, Üstünlüoğlu (2009) and Scharle and Szabo (2000) handled this large-scale educational problem, specifically in terms of the foreign language education. According to them, learners do not take duty for their learning although they have the ability, and teachers, themselves, take on most of the responsibilities, by perceiving their

students incapable of fulfilling their responsibilities. Therefore, learners also had to be skillful enough to carry out the tasks in the right way and aware of their responsibility for their own learning.

Aim of the Study

To enhance the speaking skill of foreign language learners in the target language, creating maximum opportunities through authentic tasks leading to the effective use of the target language in and out of the classroom was one of the key tasks for the language teachers in the experiment. Therefore, forming in-class groups of learners able to manage their learning, willing to create more opportunities to interact with each other, that is, responsible for their own learning with the capacity of planning the experience process, deciding how to carry out the task at hand, and evaluating themselves through group dynamics and synergy, which pointed to autonomous groups (Dickinson, 1987; Shapiro, 2002) seemed to be the best option in order to overcome this inability of speaking in the target language, which established the aim of this study.

Significance of the Study

Through the study on the impact of group autonomy on the speaking skill in foreign language, it was expected to contribute to the debates on the authentic and effective foreign language use in groups of language learners in an autonomous way as well as on the impact of the interactivity among the autonomous learner group members to help enhance the learners' speaking skill in the target language. Besides, the members of the autonomous groups who had the responsibility for their learning were also expected to lead to keep on learning out of the classrooms towards the life-long learning and to get used to live together socially and in peace and democracy.

In the preface to their book '*A framework for freedom*', Van Esch and St. John (2003) likened researchers on learner autonomy to the travelers that "do not follow well-beaten tracks, but forge paths towards horizons they have set their sights on" and added that "those seeking personal autonomy discover new frontiers, beyond the familiar, and on the way, find the treasure of learning that lies hidden within" (p. vii). The author of this study

also set off on a journey beyond the cutting edge hopefully to find the hidden treasure of learner autonomy in groups, to highlight its importance, and to fill the research gap in this research field. To address and achieve these objectives, the following research questions were formulated:

Research Questions

In this study, the focus was mainly on two questions by investigating the ways to overcome the problems related to the foreign language learners' speaking skill;

1. Can a group exercise or develop autonomy within itself?
2. Can group autonomy help to increase the learners' speaking skills?

In order to find answers to them, the following sub-questions guided the study. The sub-questions in the first group were related to the learning styles, language learning and communication strategies used by the participants, and attitude of the participants towards the learner autonomy and group work to clarify the difference between the experimental groups of learners and the control group as listed below;

- 1.1 Is there a significant difference of learning styles, language learning and communication strategy use between autonomous groups of learners (experimental group) and learners that are exposed to traditional instruction (control group)?
- 1.2 Is there a significant difference of learning styles, language learning and communication strategy use of learners in the experimental group before and after the experiment?
- 1.3 Is there a significant difference of attitude towards learner autonomy and group work between learners in the experimental group and learners in the control group before the experiment?
- 1.4 Is there a significant difference of attitude towards learner autonomy and group work of learners in the experimental group before and after the experiment?

Within the second group, it was sought for the difference related to the speaking skills between the two groups;

2.1 Is there a significant difference of speaking ability between learners in the experimental group and learners in the control group before the experiment?

2.2 Is there a significant difference of speaking ability between learners in the experimental group and learners in the control group after the experiment?

2.3 Is there a significant difference of speaking ability of learners in the experimental group before and after the experiment?

2.4 Is there a significant difference of speaking ability of learners in the control group before and after the experiment?

Limitations and Scope of the Study

The scope of this experimental study was formed by a theme on the impact of group autonomy on the speaking skill in foreign language for the students at Gülhane Military Medical Academy in Turkey.

One of the limitations against this study is related to the duration of the process, which occupied two educational terms, to enhance autonomy in participants in this study. Growing autonomy in individual (Candy cited in Thanasoulas, 2000; Murray, 1999) as well as ability to use a foreign language and competence in speaking (Alderson and Bachman cited in Luoma, 2004) lasts too much. The uncertainty in time limit would be an issue to criticize.

Another boundary that affected the participants unfavorably was the curricular intensity of the participants' subject matters on medicine. This intensity kept their foci away from other subjects such as English even though they were aware of the significance of learning English for their future careers.

One restriction for the researcher was based on the rarity of the studies on autonomous groups of learners, which was the reason for not being seen among the well-beaten tracks, despite the redundancy of the studies on individual autonomy. Therefore, other research out of these limitations may be conducted for any other groups of learners in different settings.

Definition of Terms

Terms

Autonomy, also Learner autonomy - in language learning, the ability to take charge of one's own learning and to be responsible for decisions concerning the goals, learning processes, and implementation of one's language learning needs. This is not necessarily the same as independence, however, since we can freely choose to do what others want us to do.

Constructivism, also Social constructivism - a social and educational philosophy based on the beliefs that:

1. knowledge is actively constructed by learners and not passively received.
2. cognition is an adaptive process that organizes the learner's experiential world.
3. all knowledge is socially constructed.

Language awareness - a movement that developed in Britain in the 1980s which sought to stimulate curiosity about language and to provide links among the different kinds of language experiences children typically encountered in school, e.g. in science, in literature, and in foreign language classes. In this study, it is used to refer to the knowledge about language and language learning through learner training.

Learner-centred approach - in language teaching, a belief that attention to the nature of learners should be central to all aspects of language teaching. In learner-centred approaches, course design and teaching often become negotiated processes, since needs, expectations, and student resources vary with each group.

Learner training - in language teaching, procedures or activities that seek to raise learners' awareness of what is involved in the processes of second language learning, help learners become more involved in and responsible for their own learning, and help learners develop and strengthen their language learning strategies.

Learning centre - a location within a classroom or school which contains a variety of different learning resources for independent learning.

Learning log - the use of a notebook or book in which students write about experiences both in and out of school or record responses and reactions to learning and to learning

activities. Learning logs provide students with an opportunity to reflect on learning, and are usually shared with the teacher on a regular basis but not graded.

Learning resources - those materials and other sources of learning that are used in a language programme, such as books, computers, DVDs and CDs.

Learning strategy - an intentional or potentially intentional behaviour carried out with the goal of learning. A number of broad categories of learning strategies have been identified, including cognitive strategies such as analyzing the target language; metacognitive strategies, which include being aware of one's own learning; social strategies such as seeking out friends who are native speakers of the target language or working with peers in a classroom setting; and resource management strategies such as setting aside a regular time and place for language study.

Learning style - a particular way of learning preferred by a learner. Learners approach learning in different ways, and an activity that works with a learner whose learning style favours a visual mode of learning, may not be as successful with a learner who prefers auditory or kinesthetic modes of learning. Teachers are hence encouraged to try to recognize different learning styles among their learners.

Learning to learn - the acquisition of attitudes, learning strategies and learning skills that will be applied in future learning situations and make future learning more effective. Study skills and learning strategies are examples of the domain of learning to learn.

Speaking skill - the ability to build and share communication through spoken and non-verbal symbols.

Target language - in language teaching, the language which a person is learning, in contrast to a first language or mother tongue.

Task-based language teaching, also task-based instruction, task-based learning - a teaching approach based on the use of communicative and interactive tasks as the central units for the planning and delivery of instruction. Task-based language teaching is an extension of the principles of Communicative language teaching and an attempt by its proponents to apply principles of second language learning to teaching.

Abbreviations

CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference
CLT	Communicative language teaching
EFL	English as a foreign language
ELT	English language teaching
ESL	English as a second language
FLE	Foreign language education
FLL	Foreign language learning
L2	Second language
LA	Learner autonomy
LLS	Language learning strategies
LS	Learning styles
LT	Learner training
SILL	Strategy Inventory for Language Learning
TBLT	Task-based language teaching
TEFL	Teaching English as a foreign language
TL	Target language

Conclusion

Language has played an important role in human life. It has been needed and used almost at every minute and place in contact with the people in the society. It has come out from a need such as giving a message, at the opposite side receiving it, and served to reflect of being a part of this interaction. Therefore, it has been a social activity happening in an authentic setting. To emphasize this actuality, Chomsky (cited in Trask 2007) introduced a comprehensible distinction: he suggested that; “an individual language might itself be viewed either as a set of rules and principles in the minds of speakers; his I-language (intentional, internal and individual), or as a set of possible sentences in society; his E-language (external)” (p. 130).

Because of these specific features of language, it is meaningless to alienate it from the social and interactive environment while teaching it in the classroom. The only thing

expected to take into consideration is to create such an authentic environment that the learners should need to use in order to communicate. For this to happen, tasks selected by the instructor could be very helpful to practice the target language but they might not be sufficient to trigger the learners if they are not motivated to achieve them. Therefore, for those self-motivated learners that are aware of what and how to learn a foreign language, creating an authentic and social setting through interactive tasks becomes a must. To facilitate the interaction among the learners of target language beyond the class time, there seems a need of forming autonomous class groups that take their responsibilities for their own learning through group dynamics. Accordingly, autonomous learners willing to interact with the people around for communicative purposes would mostly create opportunities even in places where the target language is not their native language. From this point of view, it is possible to assert that speaking ability in a foreign language could be enhanced when the learners interact in in-class autonomous groups where the target language is spoken meaningfully.

In this study, researcher aimed to see whether this assertion would find a chance to survive. To reach this goal, the author attempted to implement the suggested language learner training and autonomous learning activities in group or individual formats through authentic tasks in the frame of a constructivist approach in order to answer the research questions.

Anything that a child should do and can do, and we do for them takes away an opportunity to learn responsibility.

Gene Bedley

“Self-education is, I firmly believe, the only kind of education there is.”

Isaac Asimov

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

In order to help to guide language teachers in their professional practice, Williams and Burden (1997) offered four key factors that influence the learning process; learner, teacher, task and context. They claimed that these factors brought interaction to the teaching-learning process in such a way that teacher preferred tasks matching their beliefs about teaching and learning. The task was therefore the crossing point between the teacher and learners to interact with each other within teacher's values and beliefs, and the learners' reaction influenced by the characteristics of the learners and the feelings towards the teacher. The three elements; *teacher*, *learner* and *task* were in a dynamic balance in a *context* in which the learning took place. Williams and Burden (1997) described 'context' as "the emotional environment such as, trust and belonging; the physical environment; the whole school culture; the wider social environment; the political surroundings and the cultural background" (p. 44). They proposed this process in four elements as a framework of social interactionism, essentially constructivist approach, with key elements of learning and education in a humanist approach emphasizing the whole person and the affective aspects of learning.

To satisfy the concern about a comprehensive approach to search for the impact of group autonomy on learners' speaking skill in English in a task-based social constructivist perspective through this study, author considered the term 'autonomy' as the stem cell and studied in the same study frame as Williams and Burden's approach to foreign language learning and teaching process.

To submit the literature review on autonomy, the researcher also drew on four key factors; learner, teacher, task, and context in an interbedded frame after presenting autonomy theoretically and in practice at the outset of this chapter. It was thought that this approach would help compose a comprehensive revealment of the writings. Subsequently, the review was tied up with the speaking skill in English as a foreign language part to which it was aimed to turn up and to enhance.

Autonomy

In political environments the term ‘autonomy’ was mainly used to refer ‘the right of an organization, country, or region to be independent and govern itself, or self-government and sovereignty’.

The term also denoted a good deal of personal distinctiveness such as ‘self-sufficiency, behaviour as of the will or one's actions, the ability to make your own decisions without being controlled by anyone else for the individuals, or the capacity to be one's own person, to live one's life according to reasons and motives that are taken as one's own and not the product of manipulative or distorting external forces’, as well as social states’ description like ‘independence or freedom to determine one's own actions, or a chance to do what she thinks best’ in the referential meaning (Christman, 2014; Hornby and Ruse, 1991; Oxford ESL Dictionary; Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy).

On the other hand, Trask (2007) described ‘autonomy’ as “the view that the human language faculty is independent of general mental and cognitive abilities” (pp. 27-28) among the key concepts in language and linguistics. He argued the debates on first and second language learning as well as language disability.

From the statements above, it would not be overstated if we claim that autonomy in all senses plays a leading role in people’s lives as well as in their lifelong education.

Autonomy and Learner

The findings showed that the autonomy in learners embraced the learning process such an extent that it had a deep impact on each step of the whole procedure and that the success of

the learning was seen as bound to it as both a tool and a goal (Benson, 2001; Holec, 1981; Kohonen, 1992; Littlewood, 1996; Smith 2008a). Consequently, the terms ‘autonomy’ and ‘learner’ were mostly pronounced mutually to state one of the cornerstones in education as they were going to be used along this study.

Learner Autonomy

Due to its invaluable provision to education procedure perhaps, the term ‘learner autonomy’ (LA) had numerous approaches to be expressed its meaning. The most frequently referred description of the term was made by Holec (1981) who defined LA as “ability to take charge of one’s own education” (p. 3). Altman (cited in Dickinson, 1987), on the other side, emphasized the context and described LA as “the situation in which the learner is totally responsible for all of the decisions concerned with his learning and the implementation of those decisions” (p. vii). He also added that; “there was no involvement of a ‘teacher’ or an institution in full autonomy and the learner was independent of specially prepared materials” (ibid. p. 11). To emphasize that the learning responsibility belonged principally to the learner, Scharle and Szabo (2000) defined ‘autonomous learners’ as “learners who accept the idea that their own efforts are crucial to progress in learning, and behave accordingly” (p. 3). According to them, when autonomous learners did their homework or answered a question in class, they were not doing that to please the teacher, or to get a good mark. They were simply making an effort to learn something. More comprehensively, Stefanou, Perencevich, DiCintio, and Turner (2004) moved toward and claimed that learning itself had an autonomous nature, and it was an active, self-constructed, and self-intentional process. Finally, Wang (2010) recalled that LA was ‘the desirable goal of the education’.

To demonstrate plainly autonomy classification from a broader educational and social source, Finch (2000) provided five categories by Benson and Voller;

1. *situations* in which learners study entirely on their own
2. a set of *skills* which can be learned and applied in self-directed learning
3. an inborn *capacity* which is suppressed by institutional education
4. the exercise of *learners’ responsibility* for their own learning
5. the *right* of learners to determine the direction of their own learning. (p. 5)

After all, there was a remarkable degree of consensus on the basic definition LA by Holec (1981), which denoted that autonomy entails learners taking more control over their learning.

Besides defining LA in different statements and contexts, there used to be some terms that had similar meanings such as ‘learning to learn’, ‘self-directed learning’, ‘individualization’, ‘learner independence’. Especially, the terms ‘learner autonomy, learning to learn, and self-directed learning’ were used either to define each other, or to replace in the literature on education. Learner autonomy was a problematic term because it was widely confused with self-instruction. It was also a slippery concept because it was notoriously difficult to define precisely. The rapidly expanding literature debated, for example, whether learner autonomy should be considered as capacity or behaviour; whether it was characterised by learner responsibility or learner control; whether it was a psychological phenomenon with political implications or a political right with psychological implications; and whether the development of learner autonomy depended on complementary teacher autonomy.

Holec (1981), for instance, considered ‘learning to learn’ as a component of LA in the process of teaching. He also regarded LA as an instrument to perform and maintain effective self-directed learning supported by three main skills related to self-management, self-monitoring and self-assessment of this process.

Another example was Kohonen (1992) that mixed these terms. Kohonen (1992) described self-direction as ‘an attitude to learning’ in varying levels from other-directed to self-directed learning. He clarified those levels in the following quote that showed clearly the mixture of the related terms;

“There are various degrees of *self-direction*. To the extent that the learner is able to undertake learning tasks without direct teacher control he or she displays various degrees of *autonomy*. A fully autonomous learner is totally responsible for making the decisions, implementing them and assessing the outcomes without any teacher involvement. The development of such independence is a question of enabling learners to manage their own learning. They need to gain an understanding of language learning in order to be able to develop their skills consciously and to organize their learning tasks” (p. 23).

Kumaravadivelu (2006) also used three terms in one description;

“It (*autonomy*) involves helping learners *learn how to learn*, equipping them with the metacognitive, cognitive, social, and affective strategies necessary to *self-direct* their own learning, raising the consciousness of good language learners about the language learning

strategies (LLS) they seem to possess intuitively, and making the strategies explicit and systematic so that they are available to improve the language-learning abilities of other learners as well” (p. 206).

From the same perspective, Smith (2008b) suggested that the idea of LA was new, but referred to in the field of English language teaching (ELT), previously, as ‘individualization’, then ‘learner independence’. According to Van Esch and St. John (2003), at the outset of those years,

“...a lot of efforts were made to attune the process of learning a foreign language to the personal needs, interests, and capacities of the learner (...) the changed perspectives to the individual and social dimensions of learning and especially learning a foreign language, offered fertile soil for the development of a new focus in the 80s: the autonomy of the learner” (p. 11).

Smith (2008a) defined LA as the ability to self-direct one’s own learning while Williams and Burden (1997) took that issue from a broader frame and referred to LA as a component of education “concerned not just with theories of instruction, but with learning to learn, developing skills and strategies to continue to learn, with making learning experiences meaningful and relevant to the individual, with developing and growing as a whole person” (p. 44).

As a different approach, Richards and Schmidt (2010) discriminated learning to learn from the other two terms and stated as the acquisition of attitudes, learning strategies and learning skills that would be applied in future learning situations and made future learning more effective. They proposed study skills and learning strategies as examples of the domain of learning to learn as well as of learner autonomy in fact.

Learner Autonomy and Foreign Language Education

Including more than 1,700 references in the bibliography by Reinders (2013), it would not be exaggerated to declare that LA in FLE was one of the most considered issues in latest years. The anecdote from Phil Benson would help justify this assertion. To revise his well-known book on autonomy in language learning for the second edition, Benson (2011) admitted ‘a failure of a kind’ to try to read everything written on autonomy since 2000 by being unaware of ‘what that would mean’ in his own words. Forcing to be selective, he said, three hundred new references were only the tip of the iceberg of references that could have been included.

To explain the main reason for this frequency of involvement, it would be a good idea to touch on its most referred definition. Holec (1981) defined LA as “ability to take charge of one’s own education” (p.3). As it was emphasized in that short and comprehensible definition, the learning responsibility was led to the shoulders of the learner rather than the teacher, which should be, normally, the aim in effective formal education. According to Dickinson (1987), the key element in definitions of LA was the idea that autonomy was “an attribute of learners, rather than learning situations” (p. 11) while Little (1991) stated LA as being not a particular method. LA could be handled one of the stepping stone on the way to learn a foreign language. Dickinson (1995) allocated autonomy a motivating role not only in general education but also in language learning by suggesting that autonomous learners became more highly motivated and that autonomy led to better, more effective work. Here, Dickinson (1995) described autonomy from a different angle such as “an attitude towards learning in which the learner is prepared to take, or does take, responsibility for his own learning by decision making about one's own learning” (p.169). The reason to understand autonomy as a capacity or attitude here was to be able to imagine learners retaining learning autonomy in a teacher-directed classroom setting as well as in self-access learning centres.

Littlewood (1996) also claimed that the term ‘autonomy’ concurred well with several of the central pedagogical preoccupations since language learning required the active involvement of learners, learner centered methods, and the goal of helping learners to become independent from their teachers in their learning and use of language. While defining an autonomous person, some basics that make up LA were identified by Littlewood (1996), “one who has an independent capacity to make and carry out the choices which govern his or her actions” to conclude that, “if so, the capacity to be autonomous necessitates two main components: ability and willingness” (p. 428).

Littlewood (1996) put the learners’ ability and willingness to make choices independently at the core of the notion of autonomy and claimed that language learning required the active involvement of learners. He discussed that “a person may have the ability to make independent choices but feel no willingness to do so or, a person may be willing to exercise independent choices but not have the necessary ability to do so” (p. 428). As shown in the diagram in Figure 2.1, Littlewood (1996) divided two main components into

two subcomponents. According to him, “ability depends on possessing both knowledge about the alternatives from which choices have to be made and the necessary skills for carrying out whatever choices seem most appropriate” while “willingness on having both the motivation and the confidence to take responsibility for the choices required” (p. 425). He suggested that all of these four components were needed to be present together if a person was to be successful in acting autonomously.

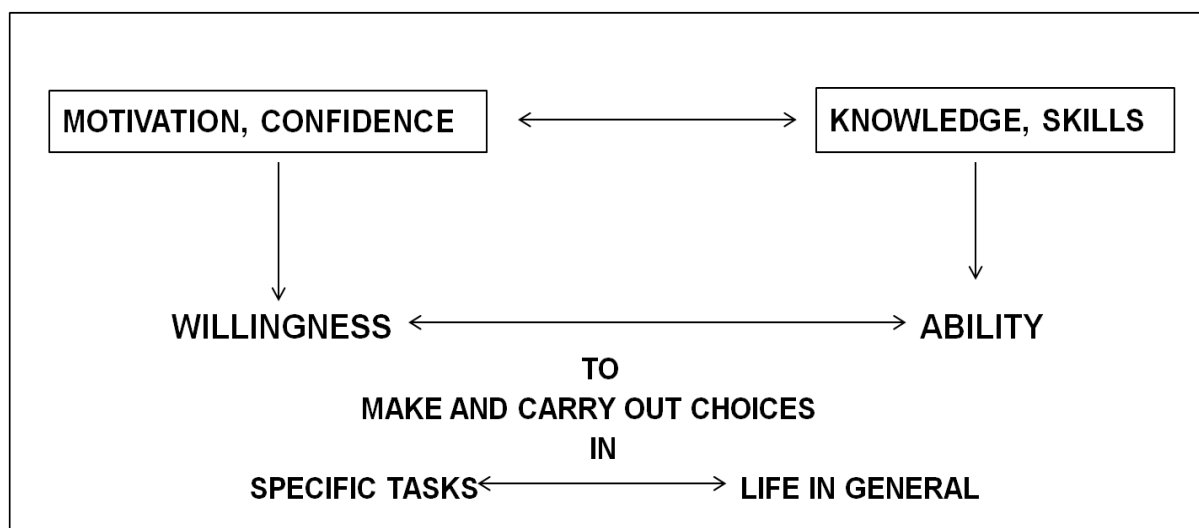


Fig. 2.1 Components of learner autonomy by Littlewood, 1996

As for another basic definition, Benson (2001) explained LA as “the capacity to take control over one’s own learning” (p. 47). According to him, LA was an attribute of the learners approach to the learning process and a pre-condition for effective learning. Little (2004) put flesh on the bones of Holec’s definition and claimed that taking charge of one’s learning was to have, and to hold, the responsibility for all the decisions concerning all aspects of this learning, i.e.:

- determining the objectives;
- defining the contents and progressions;
- selecting methods and techniques to be used;
- monitoring the procedure of acquisition;
- evaluating what has been acquired (p.16).

To explain the support between autonomy and language learning, Little (2004) stated that autonomous learners are stimulated by their intrinsic motivation when they accept

responsibility for their learning and give themselves to increase the skills of insightful self-regulation in learning. Consequently, their learning was well-organized and valuable. In this respect, Sarigöz (2008) revealed the change of focus from the teacher-centered tradition towards the individualistic approaches which “place the learners in the active zone of foreign language lessons with increasing freedom and autonomy” through taking the needs of the learner groups into account. (Sarigöz, 2008) also restated that building learning communities in ‘synergy’, energy generated by individuals working together to exercise social models of teaching necessitated such a “classroom management that can develop cooperative interaction in the classroom” (p.57).

While describing better language learners, Kumaravadivelu (cited in Wang, 2011) handled the autonomy notion from an opposite angle;

- Autonomy is not independence, that is, learners have to learn to work cooperatively with their teachers, peers, and the educational system;
- Autonomy is not context-free, that is, the extent to which it can be practiced depends on factors such as learners’ personality and motivation, their language learning needs and wants, and the educational environment within which learning take place; and
- Autonomy is not a steady state achieved by learners, that is, autonomous learners are likely to be autonomous in one situation, but not necessarily in another, and they may well very well choose to look for teacher direction at certain stages in their learning (p. 274).

History of Learner Autonomy in Foreign Language Education

A project on social practices during the development of LA in language education was initiated by Smith (2008a) as ‘the autonomy movement’ with the belief that “insights from the past can help teachers navigate their own way” (pp. 6-9). He focused on a thirty-five year period up to 2006 to bring together the records of practical work in the field of autonomy.

In that project, Smith (2008a) claimed that the notion was first developed in the early 1970s by Henri Holec. His findings included varying layers of history under the titles, ‘Published writings’, ‘International’ and ‘Local’ initiatives. As major findings in the upper layer of “Books, reports and journal special issues” Smith (2008a) noted that;

- publication in relation to learner autonomy has at least a 30-year history, i.e. the concept has been in at least some kind of ‘mainstream’ for a long period of time;
- Although the earliest publications were mainly French in origin, and/or associated with the Council of Europe, there was an early strand of work in the field of ‘individualisation’ in the

UK which was later to join up with autonomy. Indeed, the very first publication on the list was an Anglo-French collaboration;

- The focus in books and reports up to the 1990s seems to have been mainly on adult learners and self-access learning.
- Holec 1988 appears to have been an important first step in bringing together reports of practice in diverse settings such as in 'internationalising' autonomy;
- From 1989 onwards, the entry of new 'centres' where publication is concerned are seen – Trinity College Dublin, CILT, Hong Kong;
- From 1995 onwards there is a sudden rise in number of books / reports published per year and the beginning of unification around the term 'autonomy' in book and reports;
- Any centre to periphery movement in globalization of learner autonomy seems, from this timeline, to have had an unconventional aspect. It appears that the Council of Europe / non-native speaker language teachers in Continental Europe may have had far more of a role to play than, for example, the British Council or IATEFL. Hong Kong was an important centre for the dissemination of ideas from 1994 onwards;
- 1997 witnessed 'autonomy triumphant', in the sense that all titles of books published in that year had 'autonomy' as a component (p. 6).

Results from the International initiatives made available multiple details of international conferences, associations, projects. Some were:

- 1971: CRAPEL, the Rüschlikon meeting and the Modern Languages Project, and Council of Europe level thinking on lifelong learning generally;
- Until 1991 only the Council of Europe and the Nordic Workshops had emerged as important international networks concerned specifically with learner autonomy, the IATEFL Learner Independence SIG;
- In 1993 a new centre of international activity emerges: the AILA Scientific Commission on Learner Autonomy;
- The 1994 conference in Hong Kong may have been a defining moment in the 'internationalization' or 'globalization' of learner autonomy: It brought together interested parties from Europe, Asia and Australia/New Zealand, and linked the 'worlds' of modern language education and ELT;
- The Autonomy 2000 conference in Bangkok and subsequent AILA conferences in Tokyo (1999) and Singapore (2002) helped to confirm the 'rise of Asia' in the world of autonomy; a spread to Spain is reflected in the 1997 Nordic workshop being held there; in 2003 a new Australia/New Zealand based association (ILA) was formed – but without 'autonomy' in the title. Still there was little apparent interest in learner autonomy in the USA, despite the 2005 AILA conference being held there (pp. 7-8).

'Local' initiatives included:

- 1972: learner autonomy theory developed at CRAPEL as a response to a particular practical problem. Thus, when self-access systems began to be developed out of existing language labs, the need arose for enhanced understanding of what it means to be able to self-direct one's own learning;
- 1973: Autonomy-oriented classroom practice can develop as a response to difficult circumstances. Leni Dam's practice developed originally as a way to cope with apparently unmotivated teenagers. This theme is repeated in other autobiographical accounts. Much discussion in the field, though, presents things the other way round, as a question of constraints hindering the promotion of autonomy rather than autonomy-oriented practice being a means for teachers and learners to address constraints;

- 1975: The influential role of particular mentors emerges from several accounts. Gerd Gabrielsen had a very central role in supporting Leni Dam's practice in the early years, just as Leni Dam was to be influential as a mentor for many others later on; the active roles played by women, generally, emerge more strongly than in the academic, 'history of ideas' types of account.
- 1993: New, autonomy-oriented ways of organizing teacher education and facilitating teacher development emerge in Portugal (University of Minho) and Japan (JALT Learner Development SIG), respectively. (Smith, 2008a, pp. 8-9)

Significance of Learner Autonomy for Foreign Language Education

Due to its valuable motivational, cognitive, and metacognitive support in the process of learning, LA occupied a large place and was assigned to varying roles in language education. As one of the key concepts in ELT, LA was described as 'an educational goal' by Smith (2008b). To its advocates, autonomy played a pre-condition role for effective learning. When learners succeeded in developing autonomy, they not only became better language learners but they also developed into more responsible and critical members of the community in which they lived. Due to this indisputable worth in EFL or ESL, LA was under close and unending inspection by the linguists as well as the other science authorities. From its varying aspects to implementation in different contexts, it occupied ubiquitously a large place in the foreign language literature. For instance, Dickinson (1987) claimed that language learning did not necessitate being in a classroom, relying on 'teachers' to acquire mastery of their first language. She said that much of the significant learning in life, and much of the significant language learning which individuals undertook at different stages of their lives, occurred outside classroom walls unassisted by a 'classroom teacher'. In the same way, Dickinson (1995) recommended autonomy to learners because "taking an active, independent attitude to learning and independently undertaking a learning task, is beneficial to learning; and (...) personal involvement in decision making leads to more effective learning" (p. 165).

Similarly, according to Gabler and Schroeder (2003), "with self-initiated and motivated students, almost any teaching mode will harvest bounty" (p. 10). Therefore, with this influential effect in creating motivation in learners, autonomy justified being eye-catching around the language education surroundings.

From an opposite angle, it could also be suggested that an expectation for achievement in learning experience would be meaningless if there was unwillingness or inability in some

of the participants in that activity. For instance, Üstünlüoğlu (2009) explained that “learners do not take duty for their learning although they have the ability, and teachers, themselves, take on most of the responsibilities, by perceiving their students incapable of fulfilling their responsibilities” (p. 148). Therefore she stated ‘the need to recognize the requirement of learner independence’ and suggested an instruction program on autonomous scholarship included in the language curriculum in the study. Van Esch and St. John (2003) explained three reasons to strive after LA;

Firstly, given the fact that teachers cannot teach students everything they need or would like to learn, we can perhaps best serve our students by equipping them to teach themselves... it can be argued that fostering learner autonomy in our students best prepares them to pass through doors we can perhaps only take them to the threshold of, into a world where they can use their insight and strategic competence to learn what they need to know on their own.

Secondly, aiming to develop learner autonomy in our students is vital because of the unprecedented availability of sources of foreign language input, authentic materials and learning opportunities in a language learner’s everyday environment. Today, the teacher is no longer the only provider of language exposure and communicative practice... Helping learners to equip themselves with tools and strategies will empower them to take advantage of the opportunities offered by their extended “classroom”.

A third reason has to do with the nature of learning. Because learning is a personal process which can only take place efficiently when the individual learner wants and wills to learn, a teacher can never take ultimate *responsibility for a learner’s learning*. Although a teacher can help create conditions and an environment in which a learner is encouraged to become actively involved, the decision to personally engage in the learning process is crucial and can finally only be taken by the individual learner. Those who are forced to learn, learn less and less effectively essentially because they are not involved dynamically in integral parts of the learning process (p. 18).

According to Ellis and Sinclair (1989), helping learners become autonomous was supportive for the following reasons;

- Learning could be more effective when learners took control of their own learning because they learned what they were ready to learn;
- Those learners who were responsible for their own learning could carry on learning outside the classroom;
- Learners who knew about learning could transfer learning strategies to other subjects (p. 2).

Statements from Van Lier (1996) explaining the class hours as the only chance that learners were busy with the language and claiming that the language development occurred *between* lessons rather than *during* the lesson, and that the students must be involved with the language *amid* lessons over and above *in* lessons proves the significance of LA reasonably. As a support to his idea, Hawkins (1999) likened the teaching of French in British Schools to gardening in a gale;

After the teacher has succeeded in planting a few “tender seedlings” of the target language in the students’ minds, the bell rings and the students go out into the corridor, the playground, other lesson, and other places where a relentless gale of English blows these tender seedlings away again. The next time the French teacher sees the students again, the ground is just as barren as it was before. (cited in Van Lier, 1996, p.43)

From the same perspective, Birenbaum and Dochy (cited in Clegg and Bryan, 2006) suggested that “successful functioning in this era demands an adaptable, thinking, autonomous person, who is self-regulated learner, capable of communicating and co-operating with others” (p. 217). Similarly, Dickinson (cited in Balçıkanlı, 2008) provided the profile of autonomous language learners. Autonomous learners;

- understand what is being taught, i.e. they have sufficient understanding of language learning to understand the purpose of pedagogical choices.
- are able to formulate their own learning objectives.
- are able to select and make use of appropriate learning strategies.
- are able to monitor their use of strategies.
- are able to self-assess, or monitor their own learning (pp.7-8).

From all of these arguments above, it was possible to deduce that autonomy played a significant role for language learners. Each learner, based on their previous experiences, educational background, age, level, learning context, learning styles, etc. was supposed to be trained and allowed to decide the kind of activity that suited best their own goals, according to their development inside and outside their classroom, according to their language development and more important, according to their interests, likes and needs. All these alternatives could be concentrated into the domains to behold clearly.

Implementing Learner Autonomy

Some elements would actively contribute to the accomplishment, result, and process of the implications of LA in language classes. Williams and Burden (1997) explained six factors for learners to take control of learning;

1. A sense of competence which means that successful learners are those who feel competent and capable of learning. Therefore, teachers should see one of their primary functions as encouraging a positive, realistic self-image.
2. Control of behavior which means helping learners to become competent by learning the necessary skills and strategies in order to take control of their own learning.
3. Goal-setting that helps develop control behavior. Individuals need to be able to set their own goals in life and in their learning, and to plan how they will achieve them. An absence of goals can lead to aimlessness and a lack of any sense of direction. Helping learners to set their

own goals seek realistic ways of achieving them for themselves is also an important aspect of motivation.

4. Challenge which necessitates finding language learning tasks which are sufficiently difficult to provide a challenge, but are not too difficult. As a step towards autonomy, it is important also to help learners to set their own challenges.

5. Awareness of change: If individuals are to take control of their learning, it is important to develop also an awareness of change. As people learn and develop, they change in various ways. Monitoring and evaluating such changes play an important part in all learning, but are crucial in something so complex as language learning. Therefore, teacher needs to identify ways for learners to make them more aware of their own progress without needing feedback from the teacher.

6. A belief in positive outcome which means to encourage learners to have a firm belief that there is always a solution to any problem, so that they learn to be persistent rather than to give up (pp. 72-76).

Circumstances in progress in a foreign language classroom might not be able to create an environment in which autonomous learning happens. The survival of LA would also depend on some conditions. Van Esch and St. John (2003) outlined ten assertions which included a number of important conditions for successfully implementing principles of LA in the classroom.

1. To implement learner autonomy in the foreign language classroom you need a firm theoretical basis: *Applying principles of LA needs to be grounded on underlying theories, such as social constructivism, co-operative learning and communicative language learning and teaching.* Besides, there is also a need for further theoretical underpinning of LA procedures and practice which involves exploring new perspectives.

2. Teacher control is essential for implementing LA processes in the foreign language classroom: LA can only be realized and sustained through a process in which control over and responsibility for the learning situation is gradually shifted from teacher to learner.

3. LA cannot be achieved without engagement: Necessary conditions for implementing LA successfully in the foreign classroom include a high level of motivation, a positive attitude and the willingness to embark on an agreed course of action towards certain language objectives for both individual learner and the teacher. If any of these factors are missing, it will be very difficult, even impossible, to set off on a journey towards LA and activate the personal effort and cooperation needed to make progress.

4. To successfully implement LA in the foreign language classroom, teachers must also become learners: A teacher must recognize his or her limitations and be ready to adopt a learner perspective in order to learn continuously.

5. Good classroom management is required before principles of LA can be applied. If teachers don't provide structure or exhibit control in engaging, instructing and supporting their learners, LA will lead to learner anarchy. Without proper class management, it is impossible to relinquish control progressively and transfer responsibility to their learners.

6. LA cannot be introduced top-down: If the didactic thinking behind LA is not discussed thoroughly and agreed on by the teachers and learners, then working out its practical implications for the foreign language classroom is bound to fail. The process of developing LA needs to comprehend both top-down and bottom-up activity so that learners feel a genuine sense of 'owning' the learning route they have chosen.

7. To apply important principles of LA in the foreign language classroom, (future) teachers must have experienced the benefits of these principles themselves: Teachers become qualified to translate what they have personally learned about LA into their classroom practices.

8. There is a need for empirical data about changes in the perspectives of teachers and learners and in concrete teaching practice when principles of LA are applied. Research projects aimed at gathering empirical data on changes in teachers' and learners' beliefs and classroom practice are needed in order to assess, evaluate and draw conclusions from applications of learner autonomy in the foreign language classroom.

9. Teachers who cannot formulate what learners should know and do in order to carry out a task will be less successful in fostering LA than those who can: Aims, goals and objectives are becoming increasingly important in foreign language education. It is essential that teachers reflect on these and are ready to discuss what they believe 'good language learning' involves.

10. Applying principles of LA and teaching learners how to communicate in a foreign language involve a reappraisal of one's language testing practice: When learners study a language, their learning is often test-oriented. They only concentrate on those parts of the learning process that are actually tested and graded. It is therefore important that informal language tests have positive wash-back effects on what the learners learn as well as on how they learn and prepare for the tests. If test content is limited to lists of words, isolated terms, the application of grammar rules and/or translation exercises, learners never learn to communicate in a foreign language within classroom settings (pp. 73-75).

Among these conditions, specifically the first one was in accordance with the theoretical basis on which the researcher embedded in this study.

Fostering Learner Autonomy

Williams and Burden (1997) valued that each learner was an individual who must be helped to find his or her own way to become autonomous. In a recent summary of LA in language education, Benson (2001) distinguished five different types of practice to foster autonomy:

- Resource-based approaches, which emphasize independent interaction with learning materials (e.g. individualised learning or peer teaching);
- Technology-based approaches, which emphasize independent interaction with educational technologies (e.g. computers);
- Learner-based approaches, which emphasize the direct production of behavioural and psychological changes in the learner (e.g. various forms of learning strategy training);
- Classroom-based approaches, which emphasize changes in the relationship between learners and teachers in the classroom and learner control over the planning and evaluation of learning;
- Curriculum-based approaches, which extend the idea of control over the planning and the evaluation of learning to the curriculum as a whole (p. 111).

Nevertheless, to foster autonomy in learners, Wang (2010) had a different perspective and proposed 'cooperative learning' as "a language teaching and learning strategy which gets learners actively and cooperatively involved in learning a foreign language in groups"(p.3).

She suggested that learners engaged in an increasing variety of procedures formerly limited to the teacher as carrying out various cooperative activities and tasks. Therefore, they became much more responsible for their groups and their own learning. She concluded that “there is no reason for teachers to ask the learner to work in isolation. Equally, there is no compulsion for them to work cooperatively. As a teacher, what we must do is to help the learners be more autonomous through kinds of working activities. (ibid. p.6)” For the sake of the current study, the commonalities in these approaches were focused on as components of autonomy-fostering processes.

While enhancing autonomy, according to Littlewood (1996), learners showed some succeeding changes in their behaviours from ‘low-level choices which control the specific operations’ to ‘high-level choices which control the overall activity’ such as;

1. learners are able to make their own choices in grammar and vocabulary as an initial step towards “autonomous communication”;
2. learners choose the meanings they want to express and the communication strategies they will use in order to achieve their communicative goals;
3. learners are able to make more far-reaching decisions about goals, meanings and strategies;
4. learners begin to choose and shape their own learning contexts;
5. learners become able to make decisions in domains which have traditionally belonged to the teacher;
6. learners participate in determining the nature and progression of their own syllabus;
7. learners are able to use language independently in situations of their choice outside the classroom (pp. 429-430).

During this procedure, Littlewood (1996) claimed that teacher could manipulate this progression systematically so that learners gradually augment the range of their independent choices.

In order to help develop practical strategies and ways to study, Littlewood (1996) separated autonomy into three fields of knowledge and proposed them into more specific areas as presented below:

- autonomy as a communicator depends on
 - (a) the ability to use the language creatively; and
 - (b) the ability to use appropriate strategies for communicating meanings in specific situations;
- autonomy as a learner depends on
 - (a) the ability to engage in independent work (e.g. self-directed learning); and
 - (b) the ability to use appropriate learning strategies, both inside and outside the classroom;

- autonomy as a person depends (in the foreign language learning context) on
 - (a) the ability to express personal meanings; and
 - (b) the ability to create personal learning contexts, e.g. through interacting outside the classroom (p. 431).

These domains were likely to change as forms of LA in the literature as Benson's terms. Autonomy in learners could appear in diverse forms (Benson cited in Finch, 2000, pp. 5-6). This diversity was classified into three major forms for language learning:

1. Technical autonomy: He explained it as the act of learning a language outside the framework of an educational institution and without the intervention of a teacher.
2. Psychological autonomy: To him, it was a capacity which allows learners to take more responsibility for their own learning.
3. Political autonomy, which meant the control over the processes and content of learning.

To enhance the autonomy in language learners, awareness-raising on language learning through learning and communication strategies were advised as the initial steps in learner training (Benson, 2007; Chamot et al., n.d.; McDonough, 1995; Oxford, 1990; Reinders, 2013; Scharle and Szabo, 2000). Kumaravadivelu (2006, p. 206), for instance, saw promoting LA as vitally important because language learning was largely an autonomous activity. He identified the primary task of the teacher wishing to promote LA as helping learners become autonomous and bring about necessary attitudinal changes in them.

According to Kumaravadivelu (2006), this task should be combined with "strategic training that helps learners understand what the learning strategies are, how to use them for accomplishing various problem-posing and problem-solving tasks, how to monitor their performance, and how to assess the outcome of their learning" (p. 207). In the Council of Europe's Modern Languages Project (2001), learners were described as persons who have to develop the competences and strategies and carry out the tasks, activities and processes needed to participate effectively in communicative events. In the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), it was claimed that some individuals learned proactively, taking initiatives to plan, structure and execute their own learning processes while most learned reactively, following the instructions and carrying out the activities prescribed for them by teachers and by textbooks.

From the perspective of framework, advance learning had to be autonomous when formal teaching stopped and this could be promoted if ‘learning to learn’ was regarded as an integral part of language learning. To foster autonomy, teachers were also guided through three principles of learner involvement, learner reflection, and appropriate target language use in the formal educational contexts (CEFR, Council of Europe, 2001).

From Van Esch and St. John (2003)’s points of view, LA in FLL could be realized as teacher control and management was gradually given up in cooperation with the learner. This transfer implied widening scope for learners to take charge of their own progress (p.16). According to them, learners developed autonomy when they became empowered and free to choose. Independent actions that they performed and carried were advantageous to support the processes as well as the products of their own learning. Similarly, Littlewood (1996) depended on the strategies developed by teacher to help learners make choices in learning besides communication and personal life. He claimed that these strategies would form teacher’s methodology to develop autonomy in and through foreign language learning. Consequently, Littlewood (1996) offered a framework to foster autonomy in and through foreign language learning similar to Nunan (2003) that also put forward a nine-step program to enhance learner autonomy in the EFL literature. Finally, Scharle and Szabo (2000) offered teachers a number of activities that would help learners realize the importance of their contribution and to develop the abilities to become autonomous. Stages in the process of building learner responsibility were;

Stage1: Raising awareness

Stage2: Changing attitudes

Stage3: Transferring roles

A step-by-step approach such as Nunan’s (1997) nine-stage model for encouraging autonomy or Scharle and Szabo’s (2000) three phrases of development approach could be implemented for awareness raising and the slow transfer of responsibility from the teacher to the student.

For the sake of the research topic of this study, the first stage of Scharle and Szabo’s (2000) three-phrase procedure was implemented with both groups of learners, although

subsequent two stages in the experimental groups to create group autonomy as to a simultaneous increase in the learners' speaking skill and proficiency in English.

Stage1: Raising Awareness

Language awareness was described by Carter (2003) as “the development in learners of an enhanced consciousness of and sensitivity to the forms and functions of language” (p. 93). He claimed that language awareness was not only related to a focus on language but also to the cognitive advantages of reflecting upon language. Carter (2003) also emphasized the developmental value of enhanced ‘noticing’ and of ‘consciousness raising’ in relation to TL. From a more undemanding perspective, Kumaravadivelu (2006) defined a course on fostering language awareness as, in his words, “the deliberate attempt to draw learners’ attention to the formal properties of their L2” (pp. 209-213). He described two broad types of language awareness—the general one, dealing with language as system and discourse, and the critical one, dealing with language as ideology. Hawkins (1999) also defended the necessity to initiate the critical awareness for language such as the study of TV advertisements with their meaningful words and concealed convincing language to help the pupils to do things with words.

Some guidelines were presented by Benson (2002), Kumaravadivelu (2006), and Van Lier (1996) among the others. Van Lier (1996), for example, takes language awareness as a conditional factor to foster autonomy in language learners in his triad ‘Awareness, Autonomy, and Authenticity’. According to Van Lier (1996), to gain knowledge of something new, learner must initially see it. For autonomy, he mentioned that learning was the learner’s job and that teacher could not compel learning, but he could encourage and guide learner. He emphasized two features as central to autonomy: choice and responsibility. The autonomous language learner must be able to make significant decisions about what is to be learned, as well as how and when to do it. He defined authenticity as an action realized through a free choice and an expression of what a person genuinely felt and believed. Van Lier (1996) closely related authenticity to awareness and autonomy and he saw the authenticity as the result and the origin of awareness and autonomy. He suggested that autonomy would yield the authenticity as the result of acts of

authentication, a personal process of engagement, of the learning process and the language used in it, which meant higher proficiency in TL.

In a study, Benson (2002) listed some factors identified by students as being particularly important in their learning an awareness that;

- English was a medium of communication rather than simply a subject they were learning at school,
- learning English was not just a matter of learning vocabulary and grammar, but rather a matter of learning how to communicate,
- English could not be learned in the classroom alone,
- English they learned must be personally relevant in order for it to be worthwhile (para.8).

As seen in these factors, learners emphasized ‘communication’ as a common term. From this point of view, Benson (2002) resulted that the development of autonomy was “closely tied up with the development of a ‘communicative orientation’ towards learning English” (para. 15).

Lastly and customarily, LT was the common proposal as one of the crucial process headed for raising awareness on learning to learn, thus enhancing autonomy in many studies.

Learner Training for Raising Awareness

According to Bruner (cited in Williams and Burden, 1997), a balance was needed to seek between teaching aspects of TL and skills in the language, and developing the learners’ ability to analyze the language, to make guesses as to how rules operate, to take risks in trying out the language, and to learn from their errors. Due to the fact that education is a lifelong process and that one purpose of the education is to equip learners to cope in a changing world, Williams and Burden (1997) suggested helping learners to develop the attitudes for learning as a lifelong process and to acquire the skills of self-directed learning. They also supported the ideas that;

- individuals are able to learn to become more successful at learning and,
- teachers can help people to learn more effectively (p. 147).

They proposed LT through teaching learners explicitly the techniques of learning a language, and an awareness of how and when to use strategies to enable them to become self-directed in second or foreign language teaching. Williams and Burden (1997) defined

LT briefly as “teaching learners how to learn languages, so that they are equipped with strategies to learn on their own, or to learn in class as effectively as possible” (p. 73).

LT is seen as leading to greater autonomy through communication and learning strategies identified from the behaviors and strategies used by successful learners (Benson, 2007). For instance, Wang (2011) suggested that it was important that teachers were familiar with the learning styles and strategies of their learners to encourage learners to improve their learning processes and products. Similarly, Larsen-Freeman (2000) stated that the teacher helped students learn how to learn more effectively with LLS training and to continue to learn after they had completed their formal study of TL. Ellis and Sinclair (1989) also claimed that the idea of LT became a revival of interest in the dimension of language teaching and learning through the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001). According to Lehtonen (2000), the LT approach advocated that training learners in language learning and strategy-use might give them an active and responsible role in their own learning, help them gain autonomy and become better learners. Similarly, Little (1997) studied autonomy in second language learning from the language-awareness perspective. Little assumed that the individual must be trained first and foremost;

- on learning a foreign language to perform the task without assistance,
- for the aim of performing the task outside the classroom, and
- in an authentic way (pp. 102-103).

According to Ellis and Sinclair (1989), the aim of LT was to help learners consider the factors that affect their learning. Therefore, learners might become more effective learners and take on more responsibility for their own learning. According to Ellis and Sinclair (1989), LT was based on two assumptions:

1. Individuals learn in different ways and may use a variety of learning strategies at different times depending on a range of variables, such as the nature of the learning task, mood, motivation levels;
2. The more informed learners are about language and language learning the more effective they will be at managing their own learning (p. 2).

Ellis and Sinclair (1989) suggested that, with LT, it was aimed to offer the learners the informed choices about their learning such as the language itself, language learning techniques and processes, and themselves as language learners. At the end, they hypothesized that they will be in a better position to make decisions as learners become

more informed, effective and better motivated as learners. Ellis and Sinclair related LT to the learner autonomy due to the fact that it aimed to supply learners with the *ability*, to take on more responsibility for their own learning, although it did not force autonomy upon them. Instead, its aim was to *prepare* learners for self-determination.

Language Learning Strategies

Language Learning strategies were defined by Richards and Schmidt (2010) as the ways in which learners attempt to work out the meanings and uses of words, grammatical rules, and other aspects of the language they are learning. They classified the strategies in terms of use in first or second language learning. According to them, the word ‘strategy’ was sometimes used to refer to the “ways that children process language, without implying either intentionality or awareness in first language learning” (p. 515). In second language learning, a strategy was usually considered as an intended behaviour performed with the goal of learning. In a different perspective, Brown (2007) linked LLS to specific ‘attacks’ to make on a given problem by claiming that they varied considerably within each individual. As the practice of LT became more widespread in the 1980s and 1990s, it increasingly drew upon insights from research on LLS, which aimed to identify the behaviors and strategies used by successful learners. In CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001), a strategy was defined as “any organized, purposeful and regulated line of action chosen by an individual to carry out a task which he or she sets for himself or herself or with which he or she is confronted”.

Similarly, Kumaravadivelu (2006) referred LLS to what learners know and do to regulate their learning. According to Kumaravadivelu, because there were different ways of learning a language successfully, different learners would approach language learning differently. This was because individual learners not only have to consider the strategies that contributed to effective learning but, more importantly, they had to discover those that suited best their learning objectives as well as their personality traits. Therefore, he defined LLS as the special thoughts or behaviors that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information like O’Malley and Chamot (1990). Oxford (1989), on the other hand, disagreed with this generally acknowledged opinion and expanded the

definition, stating that they were “specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferrable to new situations” (p. 8). According to Oxford (1990), a strategy was useful if the following conditions were present:

- (a) the strategy relates well to the L2 task at hand,
 - (b) the strategy fits the particular student’s learning style preferences to one degree or another, and
 - (c) the student employs the strategy effectively and links it with other relevant strategies.
- Strategies that fulfill these conditions “make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations” (p. 8).

Rubin (cited in Oxford, 1990) specified the concept for language learning and put LLS as “strategies which contribute to the language system which the learner constructs and affect learning directly” (p. 23). As a practical study, Okumuş Ceylan (2014) investigated LLS for their contribution to language learning and found a positive effect on them. Williams and Burden (1997) claimed that learners used consciously or unconsciously various LLS to get help when they were confronted with a task. According to them, a learning strategy was “a series of skills used with a particular learning purpose in mind” (p. 144) in order to monitor their own learning and respond accordingly. These sources showed that learners could use several metacognitive, cognitive, social, and affective strategies to achieve their learning objectives. They also indicated that there were many individual ways of learning a language successfully, and that different learners would approach language learning differently. We further learned that more successful learners used a greater variety of strategies and used them in ways appropriate to the language learning task, and that less successful learners not only had fewer strategy types in their repertoire, but also frequently used strategies that were inappropriate to the task.

By using appropriate learning strategies, learners could monitor their learning process and maximize their learning potential. Collectively, these activities helped learners gain a sense of responsibility for aiding their own learning. While the narrow view of learner autonomy treated learning to learn a language as an end in itself, the broad view treated learning to learn a language as a means to an end, the end being learning to liberate. In other words, the former stood for academic autonomy and the latter, for liberatory autonomy. If academic autonomy enabled learners to be effective learners, liberatory autonomy

empowered them to be critical thinkers. Oxford (1990) provided a list to reveal the common features of LLS:

1. They contribute to the main goal, communicative competence.
2. They allow learners to become more self-directed.
3. They expand the role of teachers.
4. They are problem oriented. They are used in response to a particular problem.
5. They are specific actions taken by the learner.
6. They involve many aspects of the learner, not just the cognitive.
7. They support learning both directly and indirectly.
8. They are not always observable.
9. They are often conscious after the strategy training enabling learners to use appropriate strategies automatically and unconsciously.
10. They can be taught.
11. They are flexible. Learners exert choice over the way they use, combine and sequence strategies.
12. They are influenced by a variety factors such as, stage of learning, task requirements, age, sex, nationality, general learning style, personality, motivation and purpose for learning the language (p. 9).

These features helped her to put LLS into some categories in terms of functions they conduct. A number of categories of LLS was recognized as cognitive strategies such as analyzing TL and organizing information; metacognitive strategies, which include being aware of one's own learning; social strategies such as seeking out friends who are native speakers of TL or working with peers in a classroom setting; and resource management strategies such as setting aside a regular time and place for language study (Richards and Schmidt, 2010). Rubin in Oxford (1990) put strategies into three groups;

- learning strategies which include cognitive and metacognitive strategies,
- communication strategies to promote communication with others, and
- social strategies to try to increase the exposure of the language.

On the other hand, Oxford (1990) divided LLS into two main classes; direct including memory, cognitive and compensation strategies and indirect strategies including metacognitive, affective, and social strategies. Similarly, a different categorization was made by O'Malley and Chamot (1990) dividing LLS into three main subcategories; metacognitive, cognitive, and socioaffective strategies.

Metacognitive strategies require planning for learning, thinking about the learning process, monitoring of one's production or comprehension, and evaluating learning after an activity is completed. Among the main metacognitive strategies, it is possible to include advance organizers, directed attention, selective attention, self-management, functional planning, self-monitoring, delayed production, self-evaluation. According to Williams and Burden (1997), metacognitive strategies operated 'outside their learning and looking at it from outside'. These strategies include;

- an awareness of what one is doing and strategies one is employing,
- a knowledge about actual process of learning, and
- an ability to manage and regulate consciously the use of appropriate learning strategies for different situations (p. 148).

In other words, metacognitive strategies involve knowing about one's knowing.

Cognitive strategies are to specific learning tasks and they involve direct manipulation of the learning material. Repetition, resourcing, translation, grouping, note taking, deduction, recombination, imagery, auditory representation, key word, contextualization, elaboration, transfer, inferencing are among the most important cognitive strategies. Williams and Burden (1997) saw cognitive strategies as "mental strategies directly concerned with the processing of information in order to learn, that is for obtaining, storage, retrieval or use of information" (p. 148).

The socioaffective strategies are related with social-mediating activity and transacting with others. Seeking for cooperation and asking question for clarification are the main socioaffective strategies (Brown, 2007). According to Larsen-Freeman (2000), learners used affective control to assist learning through these strategies. Larsen-Freeman included two more strategies as 'creating situations to practice TL with others', and 'self-talk where one thinks positively and talks oneself through a difficult task'.

Communication Strategies

To reveal the use of LLS, Williams and Burden (1997) claimed that learners assessed the situation, planned, selected appropriate skills, sequenced them, co-ordinated them,

monitored or assessed their effectiveness, and revised the plan when necessary. They added that because learning a language was different in many ways from learning most other subjects because of its social and communicative nature, it involved communicating with other people and therefore required not only suitable cognitive skills but also certain social and communicative skills. According to Kumaravadivelu (2006), language learners also used communication strategies. He defined them as “potentially conscious plans for solving a problem in reaching a particular communicative goal” (p. 37). These were compensatory or coping strategies. Learners utilized them in order to be satisfied with their linguistic ability.

One of the taxonomies of communication strategies was proposed by Tarone cited in Ellis (1984). It included three strategies: paraphrase, involving the use of an elaborate descriptive phrase instead of a core lexical item; borrowing, involving a word-for-word literal translation from native language; or avoidance, involving the attempt to avoid using a required expression or just to give up the effort to communicate.

Strategy Instruction for Learner Training

Due to the changing variables of culture, situation, age, gender, personal learning style or teachers’ attitudes and beliefs, Williams and Burden (1997) saw the strategy training ‘far more complex’ and stated two debates on instruction of LLS; as part of a specific subject, or independently as lessons in their own right. Williams and Burden (1997) also informed the process-based instruction of LLS on five phases; assessment, orientation, strategy development, intra-task transfer, consolidation and generalization.

Being aware of LLS was of vital importance for foreign language learners, Oxford (2003) located that those strategies became a supportive toolkit for active, conscious, and purposeful self-regulation of learning when the learner deliberately chose strategies that fit his or her learning style and the L2 task at hand. Oxford emphasized that learning styles and strategies of individual students could work together with – or conflict with – a given instructional methodology. According to her,

“If there is harmony between (a) the student (in terms of style and strategy preferences) and (b) the combination of instructional methodology and materials, then the student is likely to

perform well, feel confident, and experience low anxiety. If clashes occur between (a) and (b), the student often performs poorly, feels unconfident, and experiences significant anxiety. Sometimes such clashes lead to serious breakdowns in teacher-student interaction. These conflicts may also lead to the discouraged student's entire rejection of the teaching methodology, the teacher, and the subject matter" (p. 2).

As more all-inclusive, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) brought up the Strategic Teaching Model by Jones (1987). In this model, the sequence of steps was as follows;

1. Assess strategy use with:
 - think-aloud
 - interviews
 - questionnaire
2. Explain strategy by:
 - naming it
 - telling how to use it, step by step
3. Model strategy by:
 - demonstrating it
 - verbalizing own thought processes while doing task
4. Scaffold instruction by:
 - providing support while students practice
 - adjusting support to students needs
 - phasing out support to encourage autonomous strategy use
5. Develop motivation by:
 - providing successful experiences
 - relating strategy use to improved performance (p. 158).

A procedure shaped by O'Malley and Chamot (1990) in a series of five steps; preparation, presentation, practice, self-evaluation, and expansion in succession was called 'the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach' (CALLA). In this approach, instruction was integrated in priority topics from the content curriculum, development of the language skills needed for learning in school, and explicit instruction in using learning strategies for academic tasks. The goals, here, were for students to learn essential academic content and language and to become independent and self-regulated learners through their increasing command over a variety of strategies for learning in school. CALLA's principal objectives were to assist students in:

- Valuing their own prior knowledge and cultural experiences, and relating this knowledge to academic learning in a new language and culture
- Learning the content knowledge and the language skills that are most important for their future academic success;
- Developing language awareness and critical literacy
- Selecting and using appropriate learning strategies and study skills that will develop academic knowledge and processes

- Developing abilities to work successfully with others in a social context
- Learning through hands-on, inquiry-based, and cooperative learning tasks
- Increasing motivation for academic learning and confidence in their ability to be successful in school
- Evaluating their own learning and planning how to become more effective and independent learners (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990, p. 191).

Another sequence of steps for strategy instruction was compiled by Harris and Grenfell (2004).

1. 'Awareness raising' of the strategies the learners are already using.
2. 'Modeling' of the new strategies by the teacher and 'persuasion' of the value of expanding one's repertoire of strategies.
3. 'General practice' of new strategies through whole class, pair and group work.
4. 'Action planning': identifying personal difficulties or goals and the most useful strategies to address them.
5. 'Focused practice' and fading out of reminders: gradual withdrawal of the scaffolding to the point that learners are able to select and operationalise appropriate strategies for themselves.
6. Evaluating strategy acquisition and learning: reviewing progress and identifying new goals (p. 122).

As the common point in these types of instruction, they emphasized 'the teacher's responsibilities for helping learners develop and employ appropriate learning strategies' rather than just giving a knowledge of strategies.

For an effective strategy instruction, some guidelines were supposed to be taken into consideration. One of them was whether the strategies were taught implicitly or explicitly. According to Williams and Burden (1997) direct or explicit strategy teaching was preferred to the indirect teaching in foreign or second language education and were generally sequenced as "first helping students to identify or become aware of strategies that they are already using, then presenting and explaining a new strategy, with a rationale for using it" (p. 162). At this stage, the teacher might model the strategy. This was followed by practicing it, at first with substantial support or 'scaffolding', but gradually reducing this to encourage autonomous use. Finally, students were helped to evaluate their success.

Although learning the strategies in context was suggested to be more effective than learning separate skills, according to Harris and Grenfell (2004), more recent approaches to strategy instruction added a metacognitive dimension by informing students about the purpose and importance of the strategies and providing instruction on the regulation and

monitoring of strategies. This approach was more successful in facilitating extended strategy use over time, and also the transfer of strategies to new tasks.

A principle that is worth to consider was discussed by Hismanoğlu (2000); since the factors like age, gender, etc. influence the way in which language learners gain knowledge of TL, it was not logical to maintain the idea that all language learners bring into play the same strategies or should be educated in using and developing the same strategies to become successful learners. Balçıkanlı (2008) also agreed with the different usage of LLS, and added that teachers should train learners to be conscious of LLS. It was valid to change strategies and it was part of learners' development, according to their profile of study skills. According to Balçıkanlı (2008), using effective study skills helped students develop good study habits, a positive attitude about studies; therefore, they were important tools to foster learner's autonomy.

According to Oxford (2003), numerous assessment tools existed for illuminating LLS used by second language learners. Among them, self-report surveys, observations, interviews, learner journals, dialogue journals, think-aloud techniques were common. Each one of these tools had advantages and disadvantages as well, as analyzed by Oxford (1990). The most widely used survey, the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (Oxford, 1990), was translated into many languages and used in the published studies around the world.

Learning Styles for Learner Training

Learning style is a particular way of learning preferred by a learner. Richards and Schmidt (2010) stated that “learners approach learning in different ways, and an activity that works with a learner whose learning style favours a visual mode of learning, may not be as successful with a learner who prefers auditory or kinesthetic modes of learning” (p. 331).

To emphasize the bond between learning styles and strategies, Oxford (2003) claimed that strategy use was related to style preferences of the language learners. To have more effective and efficient learning and teaching environments, it is vital to try to identify different LS among their learners. Among the different LS referred often were described by Richards and Schmidt (2010) as;

- analytic versus global learners: These learner focused on the details or concentrates on the main idea or big picture.
- visual versus auditory versus hands-on or tactile: Learners' diverse sensory preferences were considered in learning.
- intuitive/random versus concrete/sequential learning: They referred to a difference between thinking in an abstract or nonsequential way versus a focus on concrete facts or a preference to approach learning in a step by step, organized fashion.

According to Wang (2011), information needed to be presented in an interesting manner using attractive materials in foreign language education. However, it was not enough that only teachers notice different student had different learning style. It was much more important to let the students know about their own learning style if they were to take responsibility of their learning process.

In addition to awareness on learning a language, understanding on language and learner's own identity (Lamb, 2011) of language and learning style were subsequent issues to reach a complete awareness in language learning. Gabler and Schroeder (2003) proposed 'meta-awareness' as "knowledge of learning about the learning process" (p. 21) and recommended teachers to encourage learners to apply Bloom's Taxonomy as a tool to develop and strengthen their learning skills. From these points of view, it can be concluded that autonomy in foreign language learners could get initiated increasing as the learners become aware of their learning styles, levels, and needs.

Shedding light on one's style for learning a language would unlock the way to a better understanding of the difficulties on the way as well as to overcome these challenges on learning TL. Oxford (2003) claimed that the written survey was the most common type of assessment tool for foreign language learning styles. In surveys, students answered questions that revealed their particular style preferences. The VARK Questionnaire which was launched by N.D Fleming and C. Mills in 1992 was very common to identify language learning styles and had an access on line to fill out. Fleming and Mills (1992) used 'a modal preferences questionnaire' to empower students to reflect on their own sensory preferences.

Stage2: Changing Attitudes

While most practitioners in the field of FLE saw LT as leading to greater autonomy, LT was no longer confined to self-directed learning through LLS but it was viewed as a source to help learners engage more actively in classroom learning through an approach to change the attitudes of language learners towards the TL.

The work of the practitioners experimented with the idea ‘autonomy in classroom settings’ was influenced of the classroom as a ‘social context’ for learning and communication and the idea that autonomy could be developed by a shift in relationships of power and control within the classroom (Scharle and Szabo, 2000; Van Esch and St. John, 2003; Dam, 2010 among the others). Wang (cited in Williams and Burden, 1997) reviewed a number of studies which demonstrated that particular forms of classroom practice could change individuals’ attitude towards learning a foreign language, particularly when learners were taught to assume responsibility for their own learning. To foster internal beliefs about control over language, Williams and Burden (1997) suggested that language teachers could help and encourage learners to:

- identify their own attitudes towards language learning, and their strengths and weaknesses both cognitively and socially;
- develop their own individual plans for learning the language;
- take responsibility for carrying out their own plans;
- evaluate realistically their progress and the reasons for their successes and failures;
- participate in the selection of learning activities;
- take responsibility for helping each other in carrying out learning plans (p. 103).

Below are some of the activities and techniques to change the attitudes of learners towards the autonomy.

Activities to Change the Attitudes of Learners

In ‘Structured Group Exercises’ activity offered by Gibbs (cited in Dickinson, 1987), participants first thought through a problem individually, then working in pairs, shared with one other person the results of their thinking; then two or three pairs joined together to form small groups within which the decisions reached by each pair were formulated into a group response to the topic. Finally, there was a plenary session, chaired by the tutor, at

which each group reported its results. It gave everyone the opportunity to express their opinions, anxieties and so on under the least threatening conditions. In Teams-Games-Tournament activity by Slavin (1994), students, as representatives of their group, played academic games with members of other teams to show their individual mastery of the subject matter. The emphases were on the members doing their best for the team and on the team doing its best for the members. It was made up of five major components;

- Class presentations: Teacher initially introduced the material in a class presentation through lecture, discussion, or an audiovisual presentation.
- Teams: Composed of four or five students, teams prepared its members to do well on the quizzes after the presentation.
- Games: They were played at tables of three students, each of whom represented a different team. Most games were numbered questions on a ditto sheet.
- Tournament: It was the structure in which the games took place. It was usually held at the end of the week, after the teacher had made a class presentation and the teams had had time to practice with the worksheets.
- After the first tournament, the winner at each table was ‘bumped up’ to the next higher table.
- Team recognition: A newsletter was the primary means of rewarding teams and individual students for their performance.

In Dictogloss Task activity proposed by (Swain and Lapkin, 2001), students listened to a passage read twice at normal speed. Each student took notes on its content, and then worked with his partner to reconstruct the passage based on the two sets of notes. Besides, Skehan (2001) proposed teachers to stop any time during a lecture or discussion and give teams three minutes to review what had been said, ask clarifying questions or answer questions.

Stage3: Transferring Roles

The implications by Scharle and Szabo (2000) to enhance LA included a final stage. In this stage, passing some of the responsibilities related to the TL learning was carried out

between the teacher and learners. Van Esch and St. John (2003) believed that learner autonomy would happen “as teacher control and management is progressively relinquished and transferred in cooperation with the learner” (p. 16) just like Scharle and Szabo (2000) suggested. This process of control transfer is illustrated by the Figure 2.2:

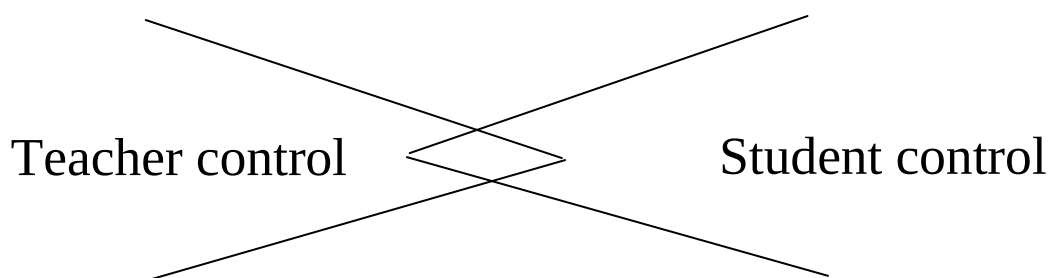


Fig. 2.2 Teacher and learner control in learner autonomy by Van Esch and St. John, 2003

As seen in the figure, the teacher’s control decreased as the learners’ control increased through empowerment and freedom to choose of learners to carry out independent actions to improve their own learning.

Cotterall (cited in Finch, 2000) directly addressed the issue of incorporating autonomy into language courses, and proposed five principles which help students and teachers attempt the transfer of responsibility for decision-making which promoted autonomous learning:

1. The course reflected learners’ goals in its language tasks, and strategies.
2. Course tasks were explicitly linked to a simplified model of the language learning process.
3. Course tasks either replicated real-world communicative tasks or provided rehearsal for such tasks.
4. The course incorporated discussion and practiced with strategies known to facilitate task performance.
5. The course promoted reflection on learning (p.11).

The following activities were suggested to help the language teacher to transfer the in-class roles that belonged to teacher to the learner on behalf of enhancing their life-long learning.

Activities to Transfer Roles

In Home – Expert Groups activity proposed by Kagan (1994), groups with four or five students were set up. Each group member was assigned some unique material to learn and

then to teach to his group members. To help in, the learning students across the class working on the same sub-section got together to decide what was important and how to teach it. After practice in those "expert" groups the original groups reformed and students taught each other.

Similarly, Lynch and Maclean (2001) suggested the Poster Carousel for an in-class speaking activity. In this activity, groups were given a different research article. They made a poster based on the article. Posters were displayed round a large room. A host stood beside the poster. Visitors asked questions clockwise in 3 minutes. Plenary discussion and feedback were given on general points.

‘Ask Me Anything’ activity was proposed by Cross (1995). The class was told to read a passage and that after reading the passage two of each group would become key characters from it. The other members of the group were allowed to ask any sort of question they wished, going well away from the text. The role players had to do their best to become the people they were playing, inventing a whole biography for themselves if necessary

Assessment in order to Transfer Roles

To reveal the significance of evaluation and assessment for developing autonomy in learners, Williams and Burden (1997) claimed that “it is equally important to foster the ability to self-evaluate if we are to produce autonomous learners” (p. 76). With the same perspective as Williams and Burden (1997), Gardner (2000) proposed “generic assessment” to teachers to get help in enhancing the learner autonomy. He mentioned that;

“If, as Holec (1981) suggests, “autonomy is the ability to take charge of one's learning”, then self-assessment is a tool which supports those with that ability. Autonomous learners decide what to learn, when to learn and how to learn. Self-assessors decide what to assess, when to assess it and how to assess it. Autonomous learners take responsibility for their learning and this includes taking responsibility for monitoring their progress” (p. 51).

In accordance with these disjunctive proposition for the terms ‘evaluation’ and ‘assessment’, Sambell, McDowell, and Sambell (2006) studied to foster autonomy through assessment. They mentioned that self-evaluation activities, peer-assessment or reciprocal peer feedback situations were valuable tools to promote, practice and develop autonomy because the learners became “realistic judges of their own performance” (pp. 158-168). Van Esch and St. John (2003) claimed that “both of the terms ‘evaluation’ and

‘assessment’ were often used interchangeably” (pp. 56-57), however they used the term *evaluation* when the learner and the assessor studied, surveyed and interpreted what had and/or what had not been learned, by asking and answering open-ended questions. Although evaluations could be done individually, Van Esch and St. John (2003) stressed the importance of dialogue and cooperation when learners evaluated and of the metacognition and metacognitive skills when foreign language learner autonomy was assessed and evaluated.

Within the principle that learners were led into taking responsibility for and ownership of their learning, Robinson and Udall (2006) used formative assessment to improve student learning through progress recording, self-assessment against outcomes, identification of questions, and critical reflection by conducting inventories. In this approach, the focus was on outcomes to make judgements. They claimed that learners could be enabled to work independently by equipping them with the skills to monitor, make judgements and critically reflect on their performance. They drew upon three key factors by Sadler cited in Robinson and Udall (2006) to establish good-quality formative assessment such as; ability to understand the goals, framework of the approach, and a method that allows students and teachers to record engagement and achievement in these learning activities.

Means and Ends for Learner Autonomy

In-class Practices

The prominent study by Dam (2010) was based on a longitudinal research project, the LAALE project (Language Acquisition in an Autonomous Learning Environment). The project aimed to provide insights into learner autonomy in the context of Danish secondary school learners. After finished a completely teacher-directed project with many bored and often inactive students, the author asked the class what they would like to do next within the possibilities and constraints given to involve learners in the planning of the next project by requesting them to come up with suggestions for what to do. The result was a success. By choosing what to do, even within the limited possibilities given, the learners took active part in their own learning. By working in groups, they were also more involved than normally in carrying out the work undertaken and they obviously felt co-responsible for its

outcome. Furthermore, their personal involvement in their own learning provided a good foundation for evaluating the process during and after the project.

After some modification in the program proposed by Scharle and Szabo (2000), Chuan (2010) intended to make the students be aware of the importance of responsible attitude and independent learning ability in Taiwanese foreign language teaching context. The aim was to develop the students' learning performance, give guidance on their learning strategies, and develop their interest in language learning. During the course, the author used the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), language proficiency test and both the methods of interview and classroom observation. Besides, students were asked to write regular journals to keep track of their learning experience. The results showed that using the content of regular school classroom teaching as a meaningful context for the development of responsibility could not only enhance the learning effect, but also saved time for the optional strategy training. According to the scores in the post-test, the experimental group had a higher mean score than the control group.

Nguyen (2012) explored actual teaching practices relating to learner autonomy in order to gain a better understanding of teacher's roles in fostering learner autonomy in language teaching and learning in Vietnam. The author carried out a project called 'Let students take control!' which aimed at stimulating students' interest in learning English and fostering their independent learning through peer-teaching. At the beginning of the course, the researcher asked students to form 6 groups and each group chose a unit to teach to their peers according to the time-table of the class. The teaching groups decided all the objectives of the lesson, the activities, and materials to teach their own lesson. The teacher acted as a facilitator in the class. She observed that the class atmosphere was extremely exciting for her as a teacher and for the students. The students were totally engaged in the lessons and enjoyed the activities carried out by their classmates. All students were engaged in the activities. The project's results indicated that when the teacher gave students more chance to be involved in class decision making, they were more active and motivated to learn, which led to a better and higher quality of teaching and learning.

As another study on the enhancement of learner autonomy, Cappellini (2013) compared autonomy to heteronomy, where pedagogical decisions were made by someone else (usually the teacher or the institution) and imposed on the learner. In the case study by

Cappellini (2013), a self-learning course was used to develop students' autonomy while learning a foreign language. During the course, learner autonomy involved five stages;

1. Determining the objectives according to one's specific needs with sentences such as "I want to be able to"
2. Defining contents and progressions, that is the materials to be used and their organization in a sequence
3. Selecting methods and techniques to be used (linked to the learner's linguistic biography and especially how she previously learned foreign languages).
4. Monitoring the procedure of acquisition (Learner decides when to study and how much time she will dedicate to those studies).
5. Evaluating what has been acquired (to what extent her results meet the initial pedagogical objectives she established. The most effective way to do this is by direct exchange with other speakers of the target language.) (pp. 207-208)

In the course process, the learner took two tests: a placement test, such as Dialang, to know her current level in the foreign language, and a test to discover her learning profile, such as SILL. Then, the learner had an individual advising session with the tutor to establish her learning objectives and consider possible Open Educational Resources (OER) and possible learning strategies to attain these objectives. During the first week after the advising session, each learner organized the possibilities emerged during the session into two learning tasks. Beside task progression, students decided the parameters of two final products they would deliver at the end of the semester and an evaluation scheme which the tutor would use to grade these products. After these first stages, learners started to work autonomously.

Each learning session ended with learners writing an entry in a logbook about their learning activities. In the logbook, learners explained their learning strategies and the OER used and they reflected on their efficiency. Learners sent their logbooks to the tutor, who would give advice about learners' choices and would ask questions in order to allow learners to analyze more deeply their practices. Three times during the semester, the tutor organized a "learning to learn" group session. During these sessions, learners shared their learning objectives and learning strategies and how they chose, used and possibly diverted OER. During the discussion, learners could discover new learning strategies from other learners and possibly decide to try these strategies. At the end of the semester, each learner had an individual self-evaluation session with the tutor. Through the sections of this case

study, it was found out that OER could be a tool for the development of learner autonomy but not sufficient.

Alternative Assessment

All assessment should be in some way for the purpose of tailoring instruction to learners (Fogarty and Stoehr, 2008; Haley and Austin, 2004; Williams and Burden, 1997). In a parallel stance, Van Esch and St. John (2003) considered *assessment* as “a measurement procedure in which a learner’s knowledge and skills were determined at a certain point in time according to set criteria” (p. 56). The assessment criteria had to be linked somehow to the course objectives and/or the personal objectives of the learners. Although language learning was affected by a number of factors such as; the goals, expectation, experiences, and motivations of the individual student, Haley and Austin (2004) suggested; “traditional paper-and-pencil tests assumed that students’ performances varied only in terms of the constructs being measured by testing” (pp. 122). As a response to these traditional testing methods, Haley and Austin (2004) discussed alternative assessments to enable teacher to attend to differences in learners in a variety of types and genres such as project work, simulations, games, portfolio, and debates. According to Haley and Austin (2004), alternative assessment techniques revealed the learners’ progress through authentic language use in tasks that required interactions similar to those in the world outside of classrooms and schools. They also proposed different ways to use alternative oral language assessment within an ESL classroom such as interviews, story retelling, and anecdotal and observational records.

While emphasizing interviews for getting insight into a student’s command of oral language, Haley and Austin (2004) suggested story retelling as a technique for measuring students’ integrated comprehension related to ‘actual literacy practices’ called upon in education and ‘genres outside of schools’. They considered retelling a story as a tool to reflect “a learner’s ability to display what was paid attention to, which requires not only listening but also involves oral production and reading comprehension being displayed and performed for authentic purposes-learning to act on his or her world and construct knowledge” (pp. 128). Haley and Austin (2004) located that story telling could be

practiced in small groups, and then reenacted in a larger group, rotating the role of the story reteller. In this assessment process, the format and the content of scoring rubric were given to students prior to use to provide useful feedback to help learners focus on the significant quality indicators. According to Clegg and Bryan (2006, p. 217), self- and peer assessment helped students learn by involving them in discussions about quality and standards provided them with better insight into the assessment process, and good assessment involved active engagement with real-life learning tasks. Clegg and Bryan discussed the 'Collaborative Learning Project' headed by John Issitt at the University of York to define the new assessment culture through the following characteristics:

- Active participation in authentic, real-life tasks that require the application of existing knowledge and skills;
- Participation in a dialogue and conversation between learners (including tutors);
- Engagement with and development of criteria and self-regulation of one's own work;
- Employment of a range of diverse assessment modes and methods adapted from different subject disciplines;
- Opportunity to develop and apply attributes such as reflection, resilience, resourcefulness and professional judgement and conduct in relation to problems;
- Acceptance of the limitations of judgement and the value of dialogue in developing new ways of working (p. 225).

The authenticity, here, was defined by the relationship of the task to the context in which it was set. If assessment tasks were representative of the context being studied and both relevant and meaningful to those involved then it might be described as 'authentic' just as Smokler (2009) recognized assessment as "authentic when the task asked students to perform was similar to a task they might have in the real world" (p. 47). Murphy (2006) suggested that authentic assessment was about a drive to look first to the curriculum in order to seek guidance about the shape and priorities for an assessment system to fit to it. He added that the challenge for all educators was therefore to seek ways to marry curriculum and assessment in such a way as to maximize student learning in relation to priority goals. According to him, range and type of different learning objectives were related to 'authentic assessment' (p. 45).

The role of teachers in self-assessment was explained by Gardner (2000) in three parts:

1. Raising awareness among learners of the benefits of self-assessment,
2. Providing guidance on, and materials for, conducting self-assessments,

3. Helping learners understand the significance of the results.

As the procedure of self-assessment, he advised teachers to develop an idea for how to do an assessment, to explain the idea clearly in a set of instructions, and to leave the learners to create their own assessments. Similar to Gardner (2000)'s 'generic assessment', Fogarty and Stoehr (2008) framed a 'tri-assessment model' for the teachers "who are moving toward more authentic assessments, but are reluctant to totally abandon more traditional measures" (p. 181). They advised to combine portfolio and performance assessments with traditional assessments. In this model, each assessment targeted a focus as well as specific features that were practical and relevant to the total picture. Portfolio assessment, on the other hand, tended to focus on the growth and development of student potential. Phases of the portfolio development process included collecting and selecting items, reflecting on the significance of the items as indicators of growth, and inspecting the portfolio for signs of progress. Performance assessment focused on the direct observance of a student's performance. Procedures for using performance assessment effectively included developing scoring rubrics and using predetermined standards, criteria, and indicators.

The European Language Portfolio

On the way to 'autonomy' or 'greater autonomy' through various approaches to implement in language classroom, one could reach numerous investigations in the same purpose but through different tools, that is, technological back-up of in-class activities as well as out-of-class use of those techniques.

The most frequently studied practice was the use of portfolios as a LA enhancing tool. As a self-assessment tool to promote learner autonomy, European Language Portfolio (ELP), which reflects the Council of Europe's concern with 'the development of language learner' (Little, 2013), is the most prominent type of portfolio around the foreign language learning environments. Cakır and Balcikanli (2012) investigated ELTstudent teachers' and teacher trainers' attitudes towards the use of the European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages (EPOSTL) in pre-service language teacher education program of a Turkish state university. After the implementation of the tool and subsequent interviews, they

found out the use of the EPOSTL was beneficial for both student teachers and teacher trainers in terms of “reflection, self-assessment and awareness” (p. 11).

Among the others, studies resulting that ELP was a valuable instrument to foster LA as well as to assess learning styles were Adamson (2014), which explored the use of portfolios and of awareness-raising of literacy networks in a CLIL lecture preparation class for first-year undergraduates in a Japanese university; Adamson and Sert (2012), which try to inform researchers about ELP use and assessment in the Turkish context, and to provide the wider research community with important local messages of issues surrounding ELP implementation in schools; Perez Cavana (2012), which concerned with the role of reflection in autonomous learning and with how learners could develop awareness of their own learning style through self-assessment by means of use of an electronic version of the European Language Portfolio (eELP) to assess learning styles; Sert, Adamson, and Büyüköztürk (2012), which reported on a pilot project with distance students in higher education and investigated the difference between perceptions among adolescents towards autonomy considering the European Language Portfolio Use (ELPU) and the effects of autonomy and ELPU on English attainment; Yıldırım (2013) that reported on the use of portfolios to develop ELT major student-teachers’ autonomy.

In addition to these researches, Balçıklı (2008) discussed LA in the context of ELP and made suggestions on LA in the EFL settings. Lastly, Little (2003) revealed nine reports from seven Council of Europe member states. All of these project and investigation reports showed that learners engaged with their own learning through self-assessment and the other reflective activities that underpinned effective ELP use. In other words, the studies proved that the ELP could support the development of learner autonomy in very different educational contexts.

Feedback and Reflection

Reflection was also considered as a tool to foster LA in FLE. To get most of the reflection, Smokler (2009) proposed the learners “to reflect at least twice on each experience; once immediately after the experience and then again that evening for homework” (pp. 48-49). This served two purposes. First, the writing allowed students personal processing time to

defend their ideas in a discussion. Also, it ensured that every single student had participated in the guided reflection. As a tool of reflection, feedback that provides comments and information on the results of the classroom instruction could be very effective to raise the learners' awareness on the way to enhance LA. According to Jenkin (1989), feedback helped;

- summarize the information gathered in the interviews and the questionnaires to present to the students around key quotations from the students, or around significant issues which had emerged, or both.
- discuss the findings focusing on reasons lying behind them, positive strategies for change through future action, e.g. talking to each other about the work helped them learn, listening to each other's ideas helps them learn (p. 20).

The following issues were some guidelines to discuss to obtain feedback to the classroom instruction;

- Everyone deserves an equal chance to talk and be listened.
- Everyone does not get this chance because ...
- What needs to be done to change this?
- What experiments can we try to find ways so that everyone working in small groups can have an equal chance?

To provide learners with feedback on their progress for the unit studied, Robinson and Udall (2006) designed formative learning activities. They supposed that the quality feedback, regular, timely, closely related to the outcomes, and driven by the learners' own enquiry, that was through critical reflection became the progress they were making. Therefore, learners developed a greater degree of ownership and responsibility through subsequent 'learning conversations' leading to greater independence and autonomy in their learning.

Through a two-way positive and shaping feedback, learners were also enabled to discover the specific, individual learning needs. Sambell et al. (2006) mentioned that mutual peer feedback situations were valuable tools to promote, practice and increase autonomy as much as self-evaluation activities, or peer-assessment because the learners became "realistic judges of their own performance" (pp. 158-168). Van Esch and St. John (2003) saw reflection as "one of the most potent forms of active processing" (p. 21). They reported that learners greatly increased their learning when they reflected on the progress

of their learning. They named it as ‘metacognition’ that allowed students to become aware of habits and beliefs that might delay their learning.

Technology

Technology became an essential part of human life at every domain as well as the language education. By adding the term ‘self-success’, Gremmo and Riley (1995) stated that developments in technology had made an undeniable contribution to the spread of autonomy. The tape-recorder, the fast-copier, TV and the video-recorder, the computer, the photocopier, magazines, newspapers, fax and e-mail, all provide a rich variety of tools and techniques for the implementation of autonomous learning. For instance, in terms of the relationship between computer literacy and foreign language learning, consequently computer-assisted language learning, Öz, Demirezen, and Pourfeiz (2015) found between computer literacy, attitudes towards foreign language learning and computer-assisted language learning.

Benson (2011) also found always a link between educational technologies and autonomy because “they had often been designed for independent use. Similarly, (Murray, 1999) asked that; "how might generally available technologies be used to transform the classroom into a learning environment that facilitates the promotion of learner autonomy?" to find out the place of the technology in order to give learners the opportunity to assume a degree of control over their learning while accepting the corresponding responsibility. This study focused on three multimedia lab classes structured according to principles of autonomous language-learning which framed on the principle that “the language-learning environment must be based on a structure that brings learners into contact with the target language while providing them with sufficient choices to enable them to assume ownership of their learning”.

At the beginning of an assignment, learners brainstormed for a topic and suitable project. To get ideas, they browsed the World Wide Web and the collection of books, magazines, and videocassettes available in the lab. Later, they used these same resources along with outside sources to research their topics.

In the preparation stage, the students had access to video equipment, a scanner, and graphics and word-processing programs. In the final stage, they generally presented their projects to the class. Evaluation procedures were based on peer and self-assessment. The

students downloaded blank assessment checklist forms from a Common File on the Server. Although they were encouraged to develop their own assessment criteria, lists of suggested criteria were also available in the common file. In the beginning, most students simply chose criteria from these lists in order to complete their assessment forms. Gradually, they modified these suggestions to suit their specific projects until they were at least developing some of their own assessment criteria. Another important aspect of the assessment process was for the students to keep learning logs where they were asked to document their learning. The learners in this study seemed to respond positively to this particular model.

Benson (2011) claimed that the most recent generations of new technologies, especially those involving the Internet, user-generated Web 2.0 content, and mobility appeared to be having a fundamental impact on the landscape of autonomous language learning. For instance, Cephe and Balçıkanlı (2012) investigated student teachers' attitude towards Web 2.0 tools in language teaching and concluded that the use of web 2.0 technologies provided students with "opportunities to exercise learner autonomy by taking responsibility for their own learning in planning, monitoring and evaluating their own learning activities online" (p. 6).

In the same direction, Arıkan and Bakla (2011) studied the effects of Web 2.0 tools like blogging on autonomous learning through the experiences of 17 preparatory class EFL learners in an eight-week period of learner-directed learning. The analyses of the questionnaires and interviews shed light on the overall experience of learning with blogging. Benson (2011) claimed that many of the most basic ideas about language teaching and learning i.e. 'best carried out in schools and classrooms' were based on the assumption that learners lack direct access to the target language and its users. Therefore, studies appeared to challenge this assumption by showing how people around the world were using online resources to learn and use foreign languages in innovative ways.

Similar to Prince (2011) that studied the elaboration and use of a story specially written as an e-learning course for non-specialist learners of English in French universities and concurred with the idea that narrative could play a role in enhancing learners' motivation, therefore to greater autonomy, Buang (2011) presented an ICT-based pedagogical approach for the learning and teaching of mother tongue languages and shared ideas for educators embarking on e-learning initiatives and introducing self-directed learning to

young children. In this study, curriculum time was structured to incorporate both teacher-facilitated and self-paced learning in the classroom through an e-learning portal available to provide a rich repository of multimedia content for extended reading and writing activities, with supporting functions and Web 2.0 tools.

Access to the portal was also available for self-directed learning beyond the classroom. With a definite advantage of the new approach, the finding was that, when a typical student of the comparison class stood at the 50th percentile, a typical student of the new approach stood at the 71st percentile.

As one of the advances in technology, the self-access learning centres went into the foreign or second language learning contexts as rooms or areas in educational institutions by containing learning resources of different kinds which students could use under supervision by Richards and Schmidt (2010).

Computers for individual student use, video and TV monitors and audio facilities, as well as print-based learning resources were available in these centres. Students might be intended for certain learning materials to complement and support regular teaching activities in a language programme. Richards and Schmidt (2010) listed a number of different systems used for the managements of self access centres:

1. Menu driven system; a dedicated self-access system in which all materials were classified and information was stored electronically.
2. Supermarket system; students could look around and choose the materials they wished to use. Materials were displayed under categories.
3. Controlled access system; a student was directed to specific materials by a tutor, usually as a follow up to class work.
4. Open-access system; the centre was part of a library open for use by students studying English as well as to other students (pp. 474-475).

To reveal the history of self-access centres, Gremmo and Riley (1995) stated that the first resource centres and self-access systems were developed in the late 1960s and early 1970s. According to Gremmo and Riley (1995), evolved directly from language labs associated with a behaviouristic approach, they were either neglected, or, sometimes, they were opened in "library mode" allowing a modest degree of self-access as a manifestation of the ideas of "autonomous" and "self-directed" learning. One of the first "tailor-made" resource centres was established by CRAPEL at the University of Nancy (Smith, 2008).

Subsequently, numerous installations of this type were set up in tertiary institutions and language schools.

To name a number of investigations on self access centres, Gardner (2011), for instance, investigated how to manage a self-access centre. According to Gardner (2011), good self-access centres fostered learner autonomy by providing a range of appropriate learning opportunities within the centre and by making the right connections to learning opportunities outside the centre. On the other hand, Law (2011) adopted a learner-centred approach to evaluating the learning gain in a self-access centre. All participants perceived themselves as having learning gains which included metacognitive knowledge and strategies, language gain and socio-affective gain. It was concluded that evidence of learning gain in a self-access centre could not be sought by traditional types of language assessments. A better alternative was learners' self-assessments based upon perceptual rather than objective data.

Del Rocío Domínguez Gaona (2011) inferred the literacy practices of university students at a self-access centre and found that practices in the centre were of two types; school and language practices which were composed of the activities performed by the students and their interaction with others and with the materials available in the centre.

Finally, Reinders and Balçıkanlı (2011) investigated to what extent teacher training courses prepared teachers for fostering autonomy, including those teachers working in self-access centres and concluded that, despite the common interest in learner autonomy, teachers were not necessarily provided with sufficient information in teacher training texts as well as in self-access centres to develop an understanding of learner autonomy.

As a consequence of the entry of computers in educational environments, some approaches gained importance to improve learner autonomy. Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) was considered as one of the approaches to language teaching and learning in which the computer was used as an aid to the presentation, reinforcement, and assessment of material to be learned. The approach usually included a substantial interactive element by Davies (Online) who traced the CALL's origins back to the 1960s. Throughout the 1980s, CALL widened its scope, embracing the communicative approach and a range of new technologies. The techniques learned in the 1980s by the developers of interactive

videodiscs were adapted for the multimedia personal computers (MPCs), which incorporated CD-ROM drives and were in widespread use by the early 1990s. After reaching the general public in 1993, the World Wide Web offered enormous potential in language learning and teaching. Lately, CALL established itself as an important area of research in higher education and the number of studies that investigated whether computers and the Internet promoted language learning as well as learner autonomy.

To state the role of CALL, for example, Mutlu and Eröz-Tuga (2013) studied the language learning environments equipped with technology as a tool to foster autonomy among the learners at a university in Turkey. The results of the study indicated that learners in experimental group displayed improvement in their usage of language learning strategies, had higher motivation, and were more willing to take responsibility for their own learning in compared to learners in control group.

From a diverse perspective, Stevens (1996) investigated the use and abuse of autonomy in computer-assisted language learning when behaviour was not monitored in a self-access centre at a university in Oman. He found that half the interactions were serious with ample evidence that the students used their budding linguistic competence in working towards solutions to the problems with an element of ‘window-shopping’ just having a look.

Autonomy and Teacher

To reveal the relationship between teacher and autonomy, Byham, Cox and Shomo (1992) claimed that empowerment in education means getting students to take responsibility for their own progress by involving them in decision making; encouraging them to think for themselves; and fostering trust, creativity, and a hunger for new challenges. But in order to empower students, they said, teachers first needed to empower themselves. “When the teachers feel capable, responsible, and valued, then they will encourage these same qualities in their students” (Byham, Cox and Shomo, 1992, p. 87).

After carrying out an action research on autonomy, like Little (2000), Nguyen (2012) concluded that the students’ ability to behave autonomously depended on their teacher who was responsible to create an autonomous learning culture. Little (2000) explained this through two reasons;

1. It is unreasonable to expect teachers to foster the growth of autonomy in their learners if they themselves do not know what it is to be an autonomous learner,
2. In determining the initiatives they take in the classrooms, teachers must be able to exploit their professional skills autonomously, applying to their teaching those same reflective and self-managing processes that apply to their learning (p. 45).

One of suggestions by Kumaravadivelu (2006) for strategic teachers was to facilitate negotiated interaction. Negotiated interaction happened as the learner was “actively involved in interaction as a textual activity, interaction as an interpersonal activity and interaction as an ideational activity” (p. 201). Kumaravadivelu (2006) proposed that teachers should facilitate the learner’s understanding and use of language as system during these interactional activities.

Teacher Autonomy

As a quick definition, Aoki (cited in Benson 2007) departed from learner autonomy to define teacher autonomy as the capacity and/or responsibility to make choices concerning one’s own teaching. From a deeper perspective, Little (cited in Lamb, 2008) described successful teachers as being autonomous because they had a strong sense of personal responsibility for their teaching, exercise via continuous reflection and analysis the highest degree of affective and cognitive control of the teaching process, and explore the freedom that was conferred. According to Thavenius (cited in Lamb, 2008), an autonomous teacher was reflective, able to change his or her role and to help learners become autonomous. Those teachers were independent enough to let learners become independent.

According to Lamb (2008), work on ‘teacher autonomy’ within the field of applied linguistics gained impetus from the work on ‘learner autonomy’. This could be noticed in the definition of ‘teacher autonomy’ by Thavenius (cited in Lamb, 2008) as the teacher’s ability and willingness to help learners take responsibility for their own learning. According to Thavenius, the capacity to improve their own teaching through their efforts was also an indication of teacher autonomy.

Teacher Roles in Autonomous Learning Setting

Van Esch and St. John (2003) classified teacher roles in autonomous learning setting into varying roles after describing a good teacher. The teacher roles were given as;

- facilitator because, from the moment teachers start to teach, they assume the role of facilitators of the learning process between two extremes in view of the ways in which they try to facilitate learning: transmission teachers vs. interpretation teachers. Teachers always try to ensure that their learners learn. They facilitate learning in their own ways. Advocates of learner autonomy tend to be interpretation teachers rather than transmission teachers in many instances of their teaching practice.
- co-learner because, in processes of change and development, teacher teaches and, either implicitly or explicitly, learns at the same time.
- cultural mediator, because every language is infused and given significance by a culture, the ability to understand messages and communicate meaning accurately in a foreign language is deeply related to comprehending its cultural context. Teacher introduces the target culture to learners of foreign language as intercultural 'connector'.
- assessor and evaluator because relative success in the teaching-learning process has to be assessed and evaluated (pp. 66-71).

According to Van Esch and St. John (2003), the teacher as facilitator was primarily a social constructivist, who is an interpretation teacher. As strategic researchers, teachers could use the framework to develop analytical capabilities required for classroom exploration. By regularly recording their own classroom performance and by using macrostrategies as interpretive strategies, they could analyze classroom input and interaction to assess how successful they were in facilitating negotiated interaction, or in integrating language skills, or in contextualizing linguistic input, and so forth. Kumaravadivelu (2006) proposed a framework to transform classroom practitioners into strategic teachers and strategic researchers. This strategic framework comprised 10 macrostrategies;

1. Maximize learning opportunities;
2. Facilitate negotiated interaction;
3. Minimize perceptual mismatches;
4. Activate intuitive heuristics;
5. Foster language awareness;
6. Contextualize linguistic input;
7. Integrate language skills;
8. Promote learner autonomy;
9. Ensure social relevance; and
10. Raise cultural consciousness (p. 201).

According to Kumaravadivelu (2006), as behaving in a strategic way, teachers spent time and effort reflecting on the processes of learning and teaching. The macrostrategic framework suggested by Kumaravadivelu (2006) had the potential to empower teachers with the knowledge, skill, attitude, and autonomy.

Teacher Training towards Teacher Autonomy

Teacher training towards teacher and learner autonomy was considered by Vieira, Barbosa, Paiva, and Fernandes (2008) as ‘an ideological, value-laden choice’. They presented three case studies where pre-service student teacher development practices were investigated in a study. At the end of the study, they concluded that a reflective approach to teacher development offered the possibility of enhancing teacher and learner autonomy as interrelated phenomena.

The aim of pedagogy in the postmethod era also was to enhance the ability of teachers to know how to develop a reflective approach to their own teaching, how to evaluate their own teaching acts, how to start change in their classroom, and how to check the effects of such changes (Wallace cited in Kumaravadivelu 2006). Therefore, teachers could improve their ability on reflection only if they had a desire and willpower to acquire and assert a fair degree of autonomy in pedagogic decision making. Kumaravadivelu (2006) described the postmethod teacher as an autonomous teacher. According to him, teacher autonomy was so central that it could be seen as defining the heart of postmethod pedagogy since postmethod pedagogy was claimed to recognize the teachers’ prior knowledge as well as their potential to know not only how to teach, but also know how to act autonomously within the academic and administrative constraints imposed by institutions, curricula, and textbooks.

Kumaravadivelu (2006) also warned the task of the postmethod teacher educator as “creating conditions for prospective teachers to acquire necessary authority and autonomy that would enable them to reflect on and shape their own pedagogic experiences, and in certain cases transform such experiences” (p. 182). In other words, it became necessary to have teacher education that did not merely pass on a body of knowledge, but rather one that was dialogically constructed by participants who think and act critically.

Balçıkanlı (2009) stated that the characteristics of successful language teachers and those of autonomous teachers overlapped, including awareness of their own teaching, creativity, and problem-solving skills. Therefore, he made some suggestions for initial training to enhance teacher autonomy;

- Student teachers must be given room to develop their own autonomy in their own initial teacher training.

- Teacher autonomy should be emphasized in initial training, as well as in-service training, through a focus on teacher reflection and taking responsibility for one's own learning/teaching processes.
- In order to help teachers develop their own autonomy, using portfolios should be required in initial teacher training. Portfolios are themselves the gradual outcome of a materials and teacher-encouraged process of cultivating and exploiting teacher autonomy in many respects, which is why they can enable student teachers to keep track of their own progress.
- Teacher logs are also a very important means of raising teachers' autonomy, as such logs provide them with a concrete record to observe themselves, become aware of what they have or have not acquired, and explore their own thinking and assumptions (p. 12).

Autonomy and Tasks

In order to articulate the relationship between 'tasks' in language classroom and 'autonomy', Shrum and Glisan (2010) expressed that foreign language teachers provided work for students through a variety of tasks in a task-based approach to language teaching. According to Lee in Shrum and Glisan (2010), this approach emphasized that communication was the expression, interpretation, and negotiation of meaning, which required two or more autonomous participants that were willing and able to complete the task focusing on the learners' use of the language. Rubdy (1998) also claimed that tasks provided a purpose for the use and learning of language and that they promoted naturalistic learning, catalysed acquisitional processes particularly when combined with group work.

According to Finch (2000), task-based instruction aimed to involve the learners at every level of the educational process, as they passed through comprehension, decision-making, implementation, preparation, rehearsal, performance and reflection. These stages had the advantage of promoting authenticity and meaning, as students 'use the language to learn the language', and could be beneficial in encouraging learners to examine their learning needs, assess themselves, and become self-directed, therefore promoting of life-long learning skills.

Tasks

Task in the language classroom is recognized as one of the components of LA enhancing process in this study. It was defined as "an activity which is designed to help achieve a particular learning goal" by Richards and Schmidt (2010, p. 539). On the other hand,

Nunan (1989) defined task as “a piece of classroom work which involved learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in TL while their attention was principally focused on meaning rather than on form” (p. 10).

In a work on task based approach to language learning, Ellis (cited in Kumaravadivelu, 2006) defined a task in a diverse meaning as “a work plan that requires learners to process language pragmatically in order to achieve an outcome that can be evaluated in terms of whether the correct or appropriate propositional content has been conveyed” (p. 95). In CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001), a task was “any purposeful action considered by an individual as necessary in order to achieve a given result in the context of a problem to be solved, an obligation to fulfill or an objective to be achieved” (pp. 157). Tasks portrayed a feature of everyday life in the changing domains and might involve more or less language activities. Various characteristics of the language learning and teaching tasks in the literature on SLA were combined by Richards and Rodgers (2001) and by Candlin (cited in Finch (n.d.)). Basic findings are combined below:

- Some tasks are more beneficial than others in learners' language development. Therefore, two-way tasks are considered more effective than one-way tasks. In two-way tasks, each participant has information to transmit in an interaction.
- Convergent tasks where one answer is sought are found to generate more language than divergent tasks where different viewpoints from participants are accepted.
- A task may be quite simple or extremely complex (e.g. studying a number of related diagrams and instructions and assembling an unfamiliar and intricate apparatus).
- A particular task may involve a greater or lesser number of steps or embedded sub-tasks and consequently the boundaries of any one task may be difficult to define.

Task Types

As one of the key concepts in ELT, Rubdy (1998) gave a brief overview on task by indicating the distinction between target or real-world tasks and classroom learning tasks. According to Rubdy (1998), the information gap task had a wide variety of uses in language teaching. It was created when each participant holds information that the other

did not already know, and must exchange it in order to complete a task. An example of this kind of task was 'Spot the difference'. Another task type that necessitated interaction among the learners was the problem-solving task, in which participants were given clues and asked to interpret them to solve a problem. Decision-making tasks were those in which participants were expected to effort towards one outcome from a number of possible outcomes. Other tasks included jigsaw, role-plays and simulations, oral discussions, and project work.

Nunan (2004) defined 'task' through the basic distinction of real-world or target tasks referring to uses of language in the world and pedagogical tasks that occurred in the classroom. Tasks were classified on pedagogic grounds, i.e. in terms of their potential to effectively structure classroom interaction processes and generate negotiation, and on psycholinguistic grounds, i.e. in terms of their potential to stimulate internal processes of acquisition.

A distinction was also made between target or real-world tasks and classroom learning tasks. CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001) indicated that 'real-life', 'target' or 'rehearsal' tasks were chosen on the basis of learners' needs outside the classroom while other kinds of classroom tasks were purposely 'pedagogic' in nature and had their basis in the social and interactive nature and immediacy of the classroom situation. These pedagogic tasks were only indirectly related to real-life tasks and learner needs, and aimed to develop communicative competence based on what was believed or known about learning processes in general and language acquisition in particular.

CEFR explained the significance of classroom tasks for foreign or second language learning settings.

Classroom tasks, whether reflecting 'real-life' use or essentially 'pedagogic' in nature, are communicative to the extent that they require learners to comprehend, negotiate and express meaning in order to achieve a communicative goal.

The emphasis in a communicative task is on successful task completion and consequently the primary focus is on meaning as learners realise their communicative intentions. However, in the case of tasks designed for language learning or teaching purposes, performance is concerned both with meaning and the way meanings are comprehended, expressed and negotiated.

A changing balance needs to be established between attention to meaning and form, fluency and accuracy, in the overall selection and sequencing of tasks so that both task performance and language learning progress can be facilitated and appropriately acknowledged (p. 158).

Rubdy (1998) pointed out that a problematic area in task design was finding clear criteria for selecting and grading of tasks. The reason was that several factors came into play in determining task difficulty, including the cognitive difficulty of the task, the amount of the language which the learner was required to process and produce, the psychological stress involved in carrying out the task, time pressure, and the amount and type of background knowledge involved.

Task Use in Language Classroom

Richards and Schmidt (2010) listed a number of dimensions of tasks that influenced their use in language teaching. Among the others, the scope of the tasks was clarified by:

- goals that teachers and learners identify for a task,
- procedures or operations which are used by learners to complete a task,
- order as the location of a task within a sequence of other tasks
- pacing presenting the amount of time that is spent on a task
- product as the outcome or outcomes students produce, such as a set of questions, an essay, or a summary as the outcome of a reading task
- learning strategy a student uses when completing a task
- assessment for how success on the task will be determined
- participation which reflects whether the task is completed individually, with a partner, or with a group of other learners
- resources as the materials and other resources used with a task
- language that the language learners use in completing a task (e.g. the mother tongue or English, or the particular vocabulary, structures or functions the task requires the learners to use) (pp. 539-540).

The use of tasks was considered by Richards and Rodgers (2001) as the core unit of planning and instruction in task-based language teaching. They proposed that planning learners with task work “offers a better context for the activation of learning processes” and “better opportunities for language learning to take place” (p. 223). According to them, language learning was believed to depend on immersing students not only in ‘comprehensible input’ but in tasks that required them negotiate meaning and engaged in naturalistic and meaningful communication. Correspondingly, Richards and Schmidt (2010) stated that the teacher’s choice of tasks determined learning goals, how learning was to take place, and how the results of learning would be demonstrated. In second language teaching, the use of a variety of different kinds of tasks was said to make

teaching more communicative since it provided a purpose for a classroom activity which went beyond the practice of language for its own sake.

According to Larsen-Freeman (2000, p. 144), learners had numerous opportunities to interact and to listen to language which might be beyond their present ability while working to complete a task. For this to happen, learners had to work to understand each other and to express their own meaning during the process. While Larsen-Freeman (2000) emphasized “the superiority of task completion as a pedagogic focus over the others” (p. 146) in task based approaches, communication was stated as an integral part of tasks in CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001).

Participants engaged in interaction, production, reception or mediation, or a combination in order to arrive at a decision on a course of action. As for an example to choose the task instruction, Sarıgöz (2008) suggested that student participation in class discussions especially in large classes could be a chaotic challenge. It was possible to overcome this problem easier to handle large groups learning foreign languages through pair work and group work. He concluded that task based learning supported learners with pre-arranged guidelines for complicated language activities. Willis cited in Finch (n.d.) offered five principles for the implementation of a task-based approach. These provided input, use, and reflection on the input and use:

- There should be exposure to worthwhile and authentic language.
- There should be use of language.
- Tasks should motivate learners to engage in language use.
- There should be a focus on language at some points in a task cycle.
- The focus on language should be more and less prominent at different times (p. 4).

Skehan (1996) also mentioned five doctrines as proposals for task-based instruction:

- Choose a range of target structures;
- Choose tasks which create appropriate conditions for learning;
- Select and sequence tasks to achieve balanced development.
- Maximise the chances of a focus on form in the context of meaningful language use.
- Use cycles of accountability. Get learners to self-assess regularly (p. 38).

As an effective factor in task use in language classroom, Finch (n.d.) emphasized the need for a structured sequence of tasks in the classroom, and offered an inventory by Candlin (cited in Finch, n.d.) to follow:

- One-way tasks should come before two-way tasks;
- Static tasks should come before dynamic ones;
- “Present time” tasks should come before ones using the past or the future;
- Easy tasks should come before difficult tasks;
- Simple tasks (only one step) should come before complex tasks (many steps) (p. 3).

As a caveat of the use of tasks in foreign language learning, Seedhouse cited in Shrum and Glisan (2010) drew teachers’ attention in terms of the frequency of task use in class by advising not to use them as the basis for the whole methodology but as “one of several strategies for engaging students in interaction, take care to integrate as much TL use as possible in a task sequence, and integrate some focus on form after the task sequence has been completed” (p. 275).

Similarly, Ellis in Kumaravadivelu (2006) pointed that a task was not inextricably linked to any one particular language teaching method. It was not a methodological construct; it was a curricular content, so there could be language-centered tasks, learner-centered tasks, and learning-centered tasks. Quite the opposite, Richards and Schmidt (2010) claimed that the concept of task was central to many theories of classroom teaching and learning, and the school curriculum was sometimes described as a collection of tasks. From this viewpoint, school work was a core of basic tasks that happened again across different subjects in the curriculum. Other reflections in varying levels of difficulty and complexity in task construction involved the incorporation of pre-task and post-task activities, the provision of visual support, and the framing of tasks for learners. The most important concerns for task design were the insertion of authentic texts and activities and the incorporation of the language skills.

Task-based Language Teaching

In the literature related to the use of tasks as a methodology, there existed diverse descriptions in focusing approximately on the same beliefs as well as naming it such as; Task-based Language Teaching, Task-based Instruction, or Task-based Approach. In this study, the term ‘Task-based Language Teaching’ (TBLT) was preferred with the aim of including all the others. Richards and Schmidt (2010) described TBLT as a teaching approach based on the use of communicative and interactive tasks as the central units for

the planning and delivery of instruction. Therefore, they claimed that TBLT was an extension of the principles of Communicative Language Teaching and an attempt by its proponents to apply principles of second language learning to teaching. These tasks were said “to provide an effective basis for language learning since they involved meaningful communication, interaction, and negotiation; and enabled the learners to acquire grammar as a result of engaging in authentic language use” (p. 540).

In a different perspective, Foster (1999) declared that TBLT had evolved in response to a better understanding of the way languages were learnt. These approaches shared a common idea: giving learners tasks to perform, rather than items to learn, provided an environment which best promoted the natural language learning process. By engaging in meaningful activities, such as problem-solving, discussions, or narratives, the learner's interlanguage system was stretched and encouraged to develop. Interactive tasks were sometimes considered particularly beneficial, especially the information-gap type, in which learners had to transfer information to a partner who did not have it. According to Brown (2007), TBLT was an approach that maintained teachers to focus on many of the communicative factors. In order to accomplish a task, “a learner needed to have sufficient organizational competence, illocutionary competence to convey intended meaning, strategic competence to compensate for unforeseen difficulties, and then all the tools of discourse, pragmatics, and even nonverbal communicative ability” (p. 243).

Williams and Burden (1997) took TBLT from the learners' side to define. They reminded that TBLT was supposed to “involve giving groups of learners tasks to engage in, allow groups the freedom to decide how they wish to work” (p. 60). Nunan (2004) claimed that TBLT strengthened the following principles and practices:

- A needs-based approach to content selection.
- An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in TL.
- The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation.
- The provision of opportunities for learners to focus on not only on language but also on the learning process itself.
- An enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning.
- The linking of classroom language learning with language use outside the classroom (p. 60).

From a broader perspective, Richards and Schmidt (2010) argued that this approach did not require a predetermined grammatical syllabus since grammar was dealt with as the need

for it emerged when learners engaged in interactive tasks. In using tasks in the classroom teachers often made use of a cycle of activities involving;

- preparation for a task
- task performance
- follow-up activities that might involve a focus on language form.

According to Nunan (2004), the danger in TBLT was that learners might be encouraged to prioritize a focus on meaning over a focus on form, and thus be led to use fluent but unchallenging or inaccurate language. Because language did not have to be well-formed in order to be meaningful, it was easy to see how learners could successfully complete a task using ill-formed or undemanding language, supplemented by gesture and intonation, rather than trying out their 'cutting edge' interlanguage. The challenge for TBLT, therefore, was to choose, sequence, and implement tasks in ways that would combine a focus on meaning with a focus on form.

Autonomy and Context

The last review component of this study on autonomy is made up of the 'context' in which all the other three elements stay alive. Departing from the motto "learning never takes place in a vacuum", learning was considered by Williams and Burden (1997) as "the result of interactions right from the birth and it always occurs within a particular context" (p. 188). From a comprehensive framework, Dunn (cited in Williams and Burden, 1997) explained four learning conditions that affected this particular context in educational settings;

- environmental (noise, temperature, lighting, etc.),
- emotional (motivation, persistence, conformity, etc.),
- sociological (preference for learning alone or with others), and
- physiological (time of day preference for learning, need for food intake, etc.) (p. 191).

In a study, Murphy (2011) found that participants in distance language learning course programs demonstrated the capacity to manage their learning, evaluated aspects of their learning environment and made decisions based on their needs, preferences and goals to

differing extents by drawing on a longitudinal study of the experiences of individual language learners at the Open University (UK). On the other hand, Benson (2001) emphasized the classroom as a ‘social context’ for learning and communication. To him, autonomy could be developed by a shift in relationships of power and control within the classroom. Similarly, Kumaravadivelu (cited in Wang, 2011) claimed that autonomy was not independence, that is, learners had to learn to work cooperatively with their teachers, peers, and the educational system. As a proposal of autonomous context, Larsen-Freeman (2000) mentioned a task-based approach that aimed to provide learners with “a natural context for interactive language use to facilitate language acquisition” (p. 144). As a result from such approach-based beliefs to enhance autonomy, researcher claims that providing learners with the kind of interactive learning environments which enable them to learn how to learn help them foster a life-long learning habit and integrate in different social contexts and that discussing the context around autonomous learning is supposed to be explored first in the approaches focused on LA from the broadest frame, that is ‘schools of thought’, to the smallest entity, ‘group work’ on the way to enhance the speaking skills of the foreign language learners. Subsequently, various auxiliary components related to ‘context’ for LA could be discussed.

Theory for Context in Autonomous Learning

Learning involves learners making their own sense of information or events and when learners are actively involved in constructing their own personal understanding of things; this understanding becomes different for different people. In this point of view, Williams and Burden (1997) exemplified schools of thought in educational psychology, and they mentioned humanistic approaches, such as Erik Erikson, Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, the Silent Way, Suggestopedia, and Community language learning in particular, for language education.

According to Williams and Burden (1997), these approaches elucidated some principles with strong relations with constructivism for the language teacher for a communicative classroom such as;

- Create a sense of belonging,

- Make the subject relevant to the learner,
- Involve the whole person,
- Encourage a knowledge of self,
- Develop personal identity,
- Encourage self-esteem,
- Involve the feelings and emotions,
- Minimize criticism,
- Encourage creativity,
- Develop a knowledge of the process of learning,
- Encourage self-initiation,
- Allow for choice,
- Encourage self-evaluation (p. 30-38).

Therefore, it could have a powerful influence on the design and execution of purposeful tasks for language learning.

Constructivism

Constructivism was defined by Richards and Schmidt (2010) as a social and educational philosophy. According to them, constructivists believed that there were no enduring, context-free truths, that researcher bias could not be eliminated, that multiple, socially constructed realities could only be studied holistically rather than in pieces, and that the possibility of generalizing from one research site to another was limited. Probably with most advocates of autonomy, Breton (1999) shared a belief in a ‘constructivist’ approach to learning. Learning was seen as “involving reorganization and reconstruction” and it was through these processes that “people internalized knowledge and perceived the world” (p. 126). In language teaching, constructivism led to a focus on learning strategies, learner beliefs, teacher thinking and other aspects of learning which stressed the individual and personal contributions of learners to learning.

According to Williams and Burden (1997), constructivism was “a cognitive information processing approach that placed emphasis upon the ways in which individuals sought to bring a sense of personal meaning to their worlds” (pp. 21). They referred to Jean Piaget, Jerome Bruner, and George Kelly among others, who claimed that individuals were actively involved right from the birth in constructing personal meaning from their

experiences, that the process of education was at least as important as its product, and that people carried out their own personal experiments, constructed hypotheses and actively sought to confirm or disconfirm them. To draw the frame in this approach, Gagnon and Collay (2006) enlightened four epistemological assumptions at the heart of constructivist learning from the work of Dewey, Montessori, Piaget, Bruner, and Vygotsky among others as historical precedents for constructivist learning theory. In this frame, students engaged in active learning were making their own meaning and constructing their own knowledge in the process. Therefore, they formed 'Constructivist learning Design' assuming that learning took place as students reflected on what was taught and constructed their own meaning as they studied with peers or apply new learning outside of school."

Gagnon and Collay (2006) outlined the "Constructive Learning Design" that emphasized six elements: Situation, Groupings, Bridge, Questions, Exhibit, and Reflections. In this integrated design, teachers developed the situation for students to explain, selected a process for groupings of materials and students, built a bridge between what students already know and what they want them to learn, anticipated questions to ask and answer without giving away an explanation, encouraged students to exhibit a record of their thinking by sharing it with others, and solicited students' reflections about their learning. In this context, Gagnon and Collay (2006) considered assessment as an integral part of every step that teachers designed. To apply the design, they proposed an active engagement of students in situations that involved collaboratively considering their own explanations for phenomena, resolutions to problems, or formulation of questions. Students were asked to actively construct their own knowledge by making meaning out of the situation by themselves with support and guidance from the teacher.

Following a study on constructivism and autonomy, Wang (2011) concluded that knowledge and truth are constructed by the learner and do not exist outside of his mind in the constructivist belief and constructivist instructional developers value collaboration, learner autonomy, generativity, reflectivity and active engagement. Vygotsky, with his emphasis on the social context in learning and his stress on children creating their own concepts as constructivist to the core, considers an individual's cognitive system to be a direct result of and inseparable from social life. At a similar stance, Van Esch and St. John (2003) mentioned a number of important implications of constructivism, which were

compatible to autonomous learning and to social constructivist approach such as authenticity, learner-centered instruction, group work, or self-evaluation, and therefore to the context in this study:

1. Authenticity, complexity, reality, relevance and the richness of the learning environment are essential characteristics. There is a definite need for learning activities which are related to realistic problems, embedded in relevant contexts and approached from multiple perspectives.
2. The prior knowledge, experiences and beliefs of the learner are the departure points of the learning process. There is a need for learner-centered instruction the challenges the prior knowledge, experiences and beliefs of the learner in order to construct new knowledge, experiences and beliefs.
3. Learning is viewed as a social event: learning needs to be embedded in social experiences, instructional goals, objectives and content should be negotiated and not imposed; learners should work primarily in groups and most of the learning outcomes result from cooperation.
4. The learner is viewed as the 'owner' of the learning process: he has to be in control of and responsible for that process, so he needs to have a voice in deciding what to learn and how to learn it.
5. Assessment and evaluation are continually interwoven with teaching and learning; self-evaluation and peer-evaluation are important aspects and facilitated by using tools like journals and portfolios. Continuous feedback on errors is given for the purpose of increasing learners' understanding and awareness of their progress (p. 20).

Social Constructivism

Van Esch and St. John (2003) suggested that social constructivism grasped both the individual and the social proportions of an individual's language learning process. It explored "prior knowledge, experiences and beliefs of the learner as the departure points of the learning process" (p. 25). It also stressed that learning needed to be surrounded by social experiences and that cooperation was an essential part of the learning process. Thus, interaction with others was very important to construct valuable knowledge. Furthermore, social constructivism implied fundamental changes in the roles of learner and teacher. Learners needed to be the 'owners' of their learner processes and teachers were more guides than instructors. According to Van Esch and St. John (2003), social constructivism offered starting points for learner autonomy approaches in foreign language teacher training around six key areas: Learning by doing, the role of the learner, the role of the teacher, cooperative interaction, learning to learn, and assessment and evaluation. In the basic belief of constructivism as "each individual constructs his or her own reality and therefore learns different things in very different ways even when provided with what seem

to be very similar learning experiences” (pp. 2-3), Williams and Burden (1997) proposed a framework emphasizing the whole person and affective aspects of learning in Figure 2.3.

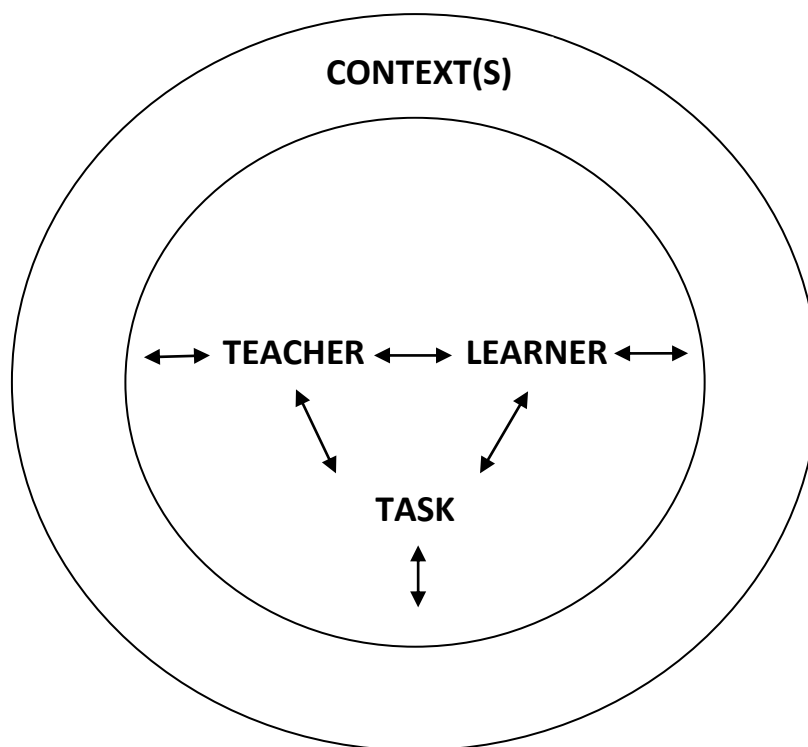


Fig. 2.3 Social constructivist model by Williams and Burden, 1997

As seen in the figure, the key elements were learner, teacher, task, and context in this process and a dynamic nature of the interplay between teachers, learners and tasks provided a view of learning as arising from interactions with others by recognizing the importance of the learning environment or context within which the learning took place.

Social factors played an important part in our increasing competence as language users and added that it became common to set up communicative activities to complete the task in language teaching classrooms (Williams and Burden, 1997, p. 43). While describing a social interactionist framework, essentially constructivist approach to learning, they presented ten basic propositions for language teachers;

1. There is a difference between learning and education. In order to be of value, a learning experience should contribute to a person's whole education as well as to their learning of an aspect of the language. It helps learners perceive the value of the task or themselves and their own development.
2. Learners learn what is meaningful to them. Each individual will construct a different message from the input provided. For language teachers it is important to be aware of the fact

that whatever language input is provided, we cannot predict what each individual will learn, or how the learner's language system will develop. Individuals will tend to learn what they think is worth learning, but this will also differ from one person to another. Unless teachers have a sound grasp of what their learners see as important and meaningful, they will not possess all the information they need to make their courses truly motivational.

3. Learners learn in ways that are meaningful to them. Each learner is different, and will bring to the learning process a unique set of personal attributes, preferred ways of language learning strategies. It is important that teachers realize the need to help learners to shape their learning strategies in ways that are meaningful to them, to encourage them to find their own style, to identify their own strengths, and to develop their own self-knowledge.

4. Learners learn better if they feel in control of what they are learning. For teachers, there is a need to encourage learners to talk about their aims and set goals for themselves regarding learning language, to help them to make choices and to encourage a sense of personal responsibility for actions. For language learners this might involve selecting books or texts to read, finding ways to record and learn vocabulary, seeking out opportunities to use and practice the language, making use of grammar references, monitoring their own progress against their goals, or discussing their aims in learning the language.

5. Learning is closely linked to how people feel about themselves. If a person has a negative self-concept as a language learner, then it is likely that he or she will feel a sense of embarrassment at using the language and will avoid risk-taking situations or initiating conversations in the second language.

6. Learning takes place in a social context through interaction with other people. Using language is essentially a social activity, and interaction in TL is an integral part of the learning process. Particularly, the nature of the interaction in TL will influence the quality of learning that language.

7. What teachers do in the classroom will reflect their own beliefs and attitudes. Whatever methodology teachers purport to adopt, whatever course book or syllabus they are following, what goes on in their classrooms will be influenced by their beliefs about the learning process. Even if a country or an institution adopts a communicative syllabus and course books, what actually goes on in the classroom will reflect a combination of teachers' and learners' beliefs about learning the language and the ultimate purpose of education, as well as the unique way in which a particular lesson is socially constructed by teacher and learners.

8. There is significant role for the teacher as mediator in the language classroom. The teacher is vital in fostering the right climate for learning to take place, for confidence to develop, for people's individuality to be respected, for a sense of belonging to be nurtured, for developing appropriate learning strategies, and for moving towards **learner autonomy**.

9. Learning tasks represent an interface between teachers and learners. The learning activities that teachers select, and the way in which they present them, reflect their beliefs and values; learners in turn will interpret these activities in ways that are meaningful to them. Thus learning tasks represent an interface between teachers and learners. They are more than simply what is provided by the course book or the syllabus. Tasks are continuously reinterpreted by teachers and learners so as to render the making of any generalization about different types of language learning tasks extremely difficult. Nevertheless, teachers need to be clear in their minds what their learning goals are, and attempt to implement these through the tasks they provide.

10. Learning is influenced by the situation in which it occurs. The whole context (the immediate context of the classroom, learning centre; the broader social, educational and political context; the cultural background of the learners) has a significant influence on any learning that takes place (pp. 204-208).

Dam (2010) and her colleagues, Little (2004), and Olsen and Kagan (1992) also supported the idea of interdependence and collaboration to develop autonomy as a psychological

capacity. While supposing the language learners to be freed from the direction and control of others to enhance their individual autonomy, Breen and Candlin (cited in Benson, 2001) developed views of the classrooms as a social context for learning and communication.

Social Interactionism

According to Vygotsky, “learning begins from the starting point of the child’s existing knowledge and experience and develops through social interaction” (p. 40). Vygotsky (cited in Williams and Burden, 1997) proposed that efficient learning was generated in the environment of the shared communication among people and emphasised the importance of language in interacting with people; not just speech, but signs and symbols as well. It was by means of language that culture was transmitted, thinking developed and learning occurred.

Central to the psychology of both Vygotsky and Feuerstein was the concept of *mediation*. It referred to the part played by other significant people in the learners’ lives, who enhanced their learning by selecting and shaping the learning experiences presented to them. In a similar stance, Sarıgöz (2008) related “the authenticity of the social interaction created in the class and the other settings to a factor that may directly affect participants’ enthusiasm” (p. 59).

In one of his own studies, Nunan (1989b) found out that “social interactions at home and with friends helped learners to facilitate the learning process” and that “language taught inside the classroom is not sufficient to make a person a competent speaker in the real world” (p. 48). An interesting point he discovered from this study on forty-four ‘good’ language learners was that one of the least helpful experiences was ‘learning by myself’.

In interaction at least two individuals participated in an oral and/or written exchange in which production and reception alternated and might in fact overlap in oral communication. Not only might two interlocutors be speaking and yet listening to each other simultaneously. Even where turn-taking was strictly respected, the listener was generally already forecasting the remainder of the speaker’s message and preparing a response. Learning to interact, thus, necessitated more than learning to receive and to produce utterances. High importance was generally attributed to interaction in language

use and learning in view of its central role in communication (CEFR, Council of Europe, 2001).

As a parallel stance, Gabler and Schroeder (2003) advised “a dynamic course highlighting decisive communication and the application of facts in authentic situations to promote learning from the constructivist perspective” (p. 4). They referred to peer-group learning techniques “allowing students to work together in at least semiautonomous groups ... to accomplish an academic task” (p. 88). As a significant factor in language education, Wang (2011) advocated the interaction needed to happen among the learners of TL. According to him, constructivist foreign language teaching promoted learner autonomy by putting the learner in the center.

Social interactionism provided a framework which encompassed the insights provided by cognitive and humanistic perspectives. Two of the most well-known psychologists of this school of thought, Vygotsky and Feuerstein were considered by their application to language teaching. For social interactionists, children were born into a social world, and learning occurred through interaction with other people, which showed a much-needed theoretical underpinning to a communicative approach to language teaching, where it was maintained that we learned a language through using the language to interact meaningfully with other people (Williams and Burden, 1997, p. 39). Cross (1995) described interactional activities as communicative activities that held involved, forced immediate reactions and made talk purposeful and meaningful. He claimed that, in those activities, the supralinguistic features of authentic interaction were apparent, with natural intonation patterns, eye contact, and body signals and turn taking. As another major feature of these kinds of activities, he explained that they helped create learner independence and interdependence because learners were put in a position of trust. According to him, checking on randomly chosen pairs or groups after each activity through public performances served to make students work seriously.

Group Work

Group was defined by Johnson (cited in Forsyth, 2006) as a system in society that necessitated habitual communication among learners. Heller (1998) described groups as an

alive, continually changing, active force in which a number of people come together to work and added that there was no boundary to the potential of a good team. Similarly, Surowiecki (cited in Frey, Fisher and Everlove, 2009, p. xiii) described 'group' in a promising way; "Groups are smart. From the earliest interest in how groups work at the beginning of the 20th century to research today, evidence gathered has shown that under the right circumstances, groups are remarkably intelligent, and are often smarter than the smartest people in them".

According to Homans (cited in Forsyth, 2006), a group should be constituted by people who are in touch with one another, often over duration of time, and who are not many so that each person is able to converse with all the other.

Preferring rather the term 'team', AbiSamra (n.d.) stated that high performance teams did not emerge in a flash. They were grown, nurtured and exercised. It took a lot of hard work and skill to blend the different personalities, abilities, and agendas into a cohesive unit willing to work for a common goal. AbiSamra (n.d.) added that behind every great team was a strong and visionary leader. In addition to this, Jaques (1991) defined a group with qualities that it possessed:

- Collective perception: members are collectively conscious of their existence as a group.
- Needs: members join a group because they believe it will satisfy some needs or give them some rewards.
- Shared aims: members hold common aims or ideals which to some extent bind them together. The achievement of aims is presumably one of the rewards.
- Interdependence: members are interdependent inasmuch as they are affected by and respond to any event that affects any of the group's members.
- Social organization: a group can be seen as a social unit with norms, roles, statuses, power and emotional relationships.
- Cohesiveness: members want to remain in the group, to contribute to its wellbeing and aims, and to join in its activities.
- Membership: two or more people interacting for longer than a few minutes constitute a group (p. 13).

He added that "none of these characteristics by itself defines a group but each indicates important aspects."

To provide empirical evidence on the impact of autonomous work group membership upon employee attitudes and behavior, a study was conducted by Corderly, Mueller, Smith (1991) at a newly initiated and an established minerals processing plant over a two-year

period. They wanted to create a plant organizationally different from those it currently had operating. A choice of organization design was centered on the operation of autonomous work groups in the processing area.

The work groups were assigned to the areas of collective decision-making responsibility; they include such aspects as allocating work, including work group administrative roles, maintaining safety and housekeeping standards, planning shift operations, determining work priorities, ordering operating supplies, and making recommendations on the hiring of new work group members. Supervisors were to provide minimal direction to the teams on day-to-day activities, with responsibility for daily operational decisions resting with the work groups. This study confirmed the positive influence of autonomous work groups on a range of member attitudes. Given powerful economic and technological forces driving organizations toward flatter, more flexible work structure, evidence of this kind was encouraging.

Features of Groups

As the motivating forces in a group, Heller (1998) counted some fundamental features of successful teams;

- strong and effective leadership,
- the establishment of precise objectives,
- making informed decisions,
- the ability to act quickly upon these decisions,
- communicating freely,
- mastering the requisite skills and techniques to fulfill the task at hand,
- providing clear targets for the team to work toward, and
- finding the right balance of people prepared to work together for the common good of the team (p. 6).

On the way to creation of group feature, Le Bon cited in Freud (1949) described the transformation of individual into the group;

“Whoever be the individuals that compose it, however like or unlike be their mode of life, their occupations, their character, or their intelligence, the fact that they have been transformed into a group puts them in possession of a sort of collective mind which makes them feel, think, and act in a manner quite different from that in which each individual of them would feel, think, and act were he in a state of isolation” (p. 6).

As a supplementary to this view, Freud (1949) described the characteristic of a group; “if the individuals in the group are combined into a unity, there must surely be something to unite them, and this bond might be precisely the thing” and added that “it is easy to prove how much the individual forming part of a group differs from the isolated individual, but it is less easy to discover the causes of this difference” (p. 7).

From a similar perspective to describe groups, Jaques (1991) listed some dynamics from Banet and Hayden (1977) as authority, responsibility, boundaries, projections, organization and large group phenomena. To clarify the authority, he claimed that a group was likely to experience authority problems whenever decisions had to be made about process or the allocation of tasks and that a group might find itself dependent or counter-dependent on a designated ‘authority person’ that existed. Jaques (1991) suggested that the teacher’s role when authority conflicts occurred would seem to be the aid the students’ growth by refusing to join the battle, and to help them understand the consequences of their action. For the responsibility, he proposed that “there is a feeling in groups where visible authority is present that the ultimate responsibility for each person’s action and its consequences resides in the figure of authority.”

Johnson and Johnson (1985) classified eleven internal norms of cooperative learning groups into three general clusters:

1. Cognitive process variables, including quality of learning strategy, controversy, and oral rehearsal;
2. Social variables such as peer regulation, encouragement and feedback, active involvement, support and acceptance, and positive attitudes; and
3. Instructional variables, such as the type of learning task, the time on the task, the ability levels of the group members, and the fairness of the grading. , p. 113

Norms were defined by AbiSamra (n.d.) as generally the unwritten, unstated rules that governed the behavior of a group and that were socially enforced through social sanctioning. Norms were often passed down through time by a culture or society. They were intended to provide stability to a group and only a few in a group would refuse to abide by the norms.

A group might hold onto norms that were no longer needed, similar to holding on to bad habits just because they were always part of the group. Often groups were unaware of the unwritten norms that existed. New people to the group had to discover those norms on their

own over a period of time and might face sanction just because they did not know a norm existed.

Classroom Climate in Group Process

The reason for teacher to put forward the group work in language class could be to get students actively identified with learning so that they naturally express their curiosity and pursue their interests via communication with others. Emphasis here is placed not only on what is learned but also on allowing students to learn how to learn and give greater control to students over what is to be learned and how it is to be learned.

Under the term ‘self-directed learning’, Kohonen (1992) suggested; “learners will find school motivating to the extent that it satisfies their needs” (p. 18). He explained that satisfying work would give them feelings of belonging, sharing, power, importance and freedom regarding what to do, and it would also be fun. If they felt no sense of belonging to their school and no sense of commitment, caring and concern, they would lose their interest in learning.

In the same direction, Glasser (cited in Kohonen, 1992) noted that discipline problems were less likely to occur in classes in which learners’ needs were satisfied and where they had a sense of importance allowing them to feel accepted and significant. This was conducive to learner commitment and need-fulfilling for them. As a pedagogical solution, he suggested the use of cooperative learning techniques, or learning teams as he called them. A well-functioning team was a need-fulfilling structure that led to successful learning. Kohonen (1992) also emphasized the cooperative learning group activities such as the learners’ self- and peer-assessments of their own learning to develop the learner’s competence that “entails an internalization of the criteria for success” (p. 23).

According to Kohonen (1992), competence developed through confidence and language learning needed the ability and courage to cope with the unknown, to tolerate ambiguity and, in a sense, to appear childish and make a fool of oneself when making mistakes. He concluded that a person with a reasonably balanced self-concept could cope with these demands better.

As a significant part of classroom climate, Dickinson (1987) emphasized the meaning of “being a member of a group of peers who are all striving towards similar ends, and who are struggling with similar difficulties and problems” (p. 103) in order for learners to maintain morale, and motivation. Freeman (1992) had a diverse approach to the philosophy in language classes. According to Freeman (1992), two elements inside the classroom, participation and humor, were essential and intimately related to a teacher’s teaching. Humor was a vehicle for participation.

On a deeper level, both humor and participation shared a common root, which referred to ‘energy’, central to the view of teaching. When asked to define this ‘energy’, Freeman (1992) simply called it ‘the willingness to speak’. Energy was created through interaction; the teacher’s job was to use it for learning. “Limiting what went on to acceptable, ‘on-task’ interactions would be akin to ‘shutting down the reactor’ which was the source of this natural social force” (p. 62).

According to Lehtonen (2000), a group might act, among other things, as an arena for metacognitive discussion and for reflection during a course. Through the course included group work, students staying in the same heterogeneous groups would get to know each other relatively well. In this climate, conscious reflection on learning experiences and the sharing of such reflections with other learners in cooperative groups makes it possible to increase one’s awareness of learning.

Raising the awareness of learner’s own learning and gaining an understanding of the process involved are important keys to the development of autonomous learning. The teacher’s task is to provide learners with the necessary information and support at suitable points. Such learner guidance involves knowledge about learning strategies and, at a higher level of abstraction, metacognitive knowledge about learning.

To emphasize the classroom climate, Williams and Burden (1997) suggested that language classrooms particularly needed to be places “where learners are encouraged to use the new language to communicate, to try out new ways of expressing meanings, to negotiate, to make mistakes without fear, and to learn to learn from successes and failures, that is, an environment that enhances the trust needed to communicate and which enhances confidence and self-esteem” (p. 195). According to them, building a cooperative group

atmosphere through pair work and group work in language classrooms helped enhance language learning and developed the self-image and motivation of the group members.

After an investigation into teachers' concerns in the classroom, Hadfield in Williams and Burden (1997) described a successful group;

- members have definite sense of themselves as a group.
- there is positive, supportive atmosphere; members have a positive self-image which is reinforced by the group, so that they feel secure enough to express their individuality.
- members of the group listen to each other and take turns.
- the group is tolerant of all its members; members feel secure and accepted.
- members co-operate in the performance of tasks and are able to work together productively.
- the members of the group trust each other.
- Group members are able to empathise with each other and understand each other's points of view even if they do not share them (p. 195).

Williams and Burden (1997) listed three factors to foster social development; sharing, individuality, and encouraging a sense of belonging. According to them, sharing and working co-operatively were a vital part of our social existence and ways of interacting which needed to be taught.

At the same time as learning to co-operate, people needed to be individuals, to feel that they legitimately think and feel differently from others, to develop and exercise their own personality. They also discussed developing a feeling of belonging to a community or a culture and teachers needed to encourage in their classrooms a sense of belonging to a team or community.

Group Interaction and Autonomous Learning

The autonomy process was denoted by Van Esch and St. John (2003) to a journey that progresses in small but significant steps as travelers entered into cooperative interaction and personal effort. Similarly, Dickinson (1987) mentioned 'the abundance of opportunities' for the development of autonomy in language teaching/learning;

"if we accepted that autonomy grows through, inter alia, individuals being given practice in taking decisions and so accepting responsibility for their own learning, through co-operating with others in groups to work on problems and to produce a mutual solution, through exchanging ideas and opinions with others, and through discovering about authority figures and autonomous individuals through reading" (p. 28).

To clarify more, Little (cited in Benson, 2001) supposed that the principal argument in favor of group work as a means of developing learner autonomy was Vygotskian in origin: collaboration between two or more learners on a constructive task could only be achieved by externalizing and thus making explicit, processes of analysis, planning and synthesis that remain largely internal, and perhaps also largely implicit, when the task was performed by a learner working alone (Little cited in Benson, 2001).

Richards and Rodgers (2001) also informed that ‘interaction’ was fundamental to theories of second language learning. In the interactional view, language was considered as “a vehicle for the realization of interpersonal relations and for the performance of social transactions between individuals” (p.21). It was described as a tool for the creation and maintenance of social relations. In terms of cooperative structures in language classes, Williams and Burden (1997) discussed the classroom structure on three forms of organisation for learning experiences. According to them, co-operative structures led learners to become “dependent upon each other in order to achieve success” and this resulted “individual perceptions of their own ability and their feelings of satisfaction and self-esteem” (pp. 192).

From a different point of view, Lippit (in Schmuck, 1985) described the differences between cooperation and competition, which were linked to the goals of the participants in each of the situations; According to Lippit, in a cooperative situation, the goals are so linked that everybody sinks or swims together while in the competitive situation if one swims, the other must sink To take a historical and social look at the interaction in language class, Schmuck (1985) claimed that current social changes pushed human being to live closer and closer together and to learn the importance of cooperating. In the same perspective, Vygotsky (1989) explained; “learners learn more in groups than individually, since cooperative social interaction produces new, elaborate, advanced psychological processes that are unavailable to the organism working in isolation” (p. 61).

According to Haley and Austin (2004), “when people interact they do so for a purpose and in ways that are socially conventionalized for personal development and interpersonal cooperation” (p. 13). They claimed that language was learned and used through interactions in which people established their identity and maintained relationships, and avoided or negotiated conflicts and learned. They drew upon five attributes of interaction:

Meaningful interaction: An active learner who has a purpose in a particular interaction and who must use language to communicate that purpose negotiates meaning.

Authentic interaction: Rather than being a pedagogic exercise to rehearse linguistic skills, authentic interactions here would have the learners involved in purposeful social action using language that potentially offers them opportunity to transform their reality.

Relevant interaction: Through an analysis of functions and notions deemed important to the settings in which the learners are expected to interact, teachers decide the relevance of interactions for learners.

Reflection and Action: By becoming aware of one's thinking, feelings, and actions, students can use their efforts for greater monitoring and control of these processes. To develop this type of reflection, instructing learners about cognitive and metacognitive strategies is important.

Feedback: Rather than attending to correct language forms to evaluate the learners language ability, feedback is given to help learners complete tasks. If feedback balances the need to encourage learners to express their thoughts as they learn to manage their language production, learners become aware of the need to refine their language use as a means of communication their feelings, understanding and new knowledge to a variety of audiences for a variety of purposes. Thus they are shaping their own identities through communication (pp. 16-17).

Therefore, Webb (1985) explained the key feature distinguishing cooperative settings from other learning settings as "the opportunity for interaction among the students" (p. 147). In five studies conducted by the author and focused on student interaction and learning of topics, the relationship between student interaction and achievement was assessed by means of correlations and the results suggested that it was clear that student interaction was important for achievement in small groups.

According to Kagan (1985b), the groups increased student learning tremendously probably because they allowed student communication on topics of mutual interest; the sharing of references, resources, and ideas; and increased involvement in and investment in learning. Similarly, the effects of the cooperative methods were studied in two principal areas; student achievement and student social relationships, anticipated positive effects on achievement because in a cooperative group, students were likely to encourage and help one another to learn Slavin (1985, p. 9). On the same track, Kagan (1985a) suggested that cooperative learning usually;

- 1) enhances student achievement, especially the achievement of minority and low-achieving students;
- 2) improves cross-ethnic relations;
- 3) aids in the successful mainstreaming of handicapped students;
- 4) facilitates the maintenance of minority cultural values;
- 5) promotes positive social relations and prosocial development; and
- 6) increases the liking among students for class, school, learning, and self (p. 67).

In addition to those benefits of group work for interaction, Sarıgöz (2008) warned that student participation in class discussions especially in large classes could be a chaotic challenge. He suggested, therefore, handling large groups learning foreign languages through pair work and group work.

Work Analysis in Groups

A proposal on analyzing the group work was made by Scharle and Szabo (2000). The point of this activity was to make students think about working as a group. As a follow up to an activity that involved loosely structured group work, teacher could ask students to put a number as an answer to the following (or similar) questions, as appropriate to the task:

How many people are there in the group?

During the previous activity how many of them

- spoke only in the foreign language?
- took notes or wrote things down?
- asked questions connected to the activity? (pp. 40-41)

Teacher would ask students which question got the lowest and the highest figure as an answer. On the blackboard, a student would fill in the chart for the class. Teacher would follow with a discussion on why these actions were important in group work and whether students thought they would need more or less of any of these when they worked in a group next time (Scharle and Szabo, 2000). For the same purpose, Jenkin (1989) prepared a tool to find out the small group efficiency in Figure 2.4.

Through the tool, Jenkin (1989) proposed some ways of assessing what happens in small group work and offered teachers a framework of structure and direction for classroom practice, observation and experimentation in small group work by;

- Taking up to half a term to work through depending on timetabling constraints,
- Sampling a section for the first try,
- Allowing for flexibility to suit teacher's and the pupils' needs, the subject and resources that can be adapted to all age groups, and
- Allowing two or three weeks with the class to experiment, but keeping the experimental work fairly intensive and fast moving (p. 24).

GROUP-OMETER	At any time when your pupils work together in small groups or informally ...	Yes	No
1.	- Do the same pupils always work together?		
2.	- Do the girls (some pupils) generally talk less than the boys (the others)?		
3.	- Do the boys (some pupils) generally test out their ideas more confidently than the girls (the others)?		
4.	- Do the girls (some pupils) generally listen more than the boys (the others) do?		
5.	- Would some pupils benefit from being encouraged to talk more confidently?		
6.	- Would some pupils benefit from developing greater competence in listening?		
7.	- Would any pupils benefit from working with others they don't usually choose to work with?		

Fig. 2.4 A tool for the small group efficiency by Jenkin, 1989

Developing Group Learning

In terms of developing group learning, the most effective way to give learners opportunities to use TL communicatively was to separate the class into pairs or small groups (Dickinson, 1987, p. 34-35). In doing this, the teacher was releasing learners from complete control over what they said and how they said it, and since the teacher could be present at to only one group at a time, the learners themselves had to take on many responsibilities for their own learning.

To have the groups be truly productive, Frey, Fisher and Everlove (2009) claimed that creating the 'right circumstances' was "the key to getting the most out of group work" (p. 6). They added, in productive group work, all students were occupied with the academic content and with each other, and the end product was consolidated and extended for all. According to Frey et al. (2009), to support the gradual release of responsibility model of instruction, teacher began by modeling the desired learning. Over time, students assumed more responsibility for the task, moving from being participants in the modeled lesson, to

apprentices in shared instruction, to collaborators with the peers, and finally, to independent performers. The framework's components were;

1. Focused lesson
2. Guided instruction
3. Collaborative learning

Some guidelines were suggested by Shrum and Glisan (2010) for structuring cooperative learning and interactive activities:

1. Ensure that students do, in fact, need to cooperate in order to complete the task. They should not be able to complete it without interaction.
2. Keep the group size small; start with pair activities. Groups are most effective when they are no larger than five.
3. Set the stage; motivate the activity with drama, actions, or visuals.
4. Set clear goals; describe outcomes clearly for the students.
5. Make sure the students have the TL they need to accomplish the activity, that they know how to say what they will need to say.
6. Give exact directions for every step of the task. Model the sequence of the activity in precise steps.
7. Set a time limit to help sts feel accountable and to make the best use of the time available. Use a kitchen timer with a loud bell or buzzer to provide a neutral timekeeper and a clear signal for the end of the activity.
8. Circulate among the sts throughout the activity. This will enable to monitor use of the TL, offer assistance, and check progress.
9. Establish a system for directing the attention of the students back to you, e. g., a hand signal such as a raised right hand, dimming the lights.
10. Elicit responses at random from each group after the activity, which will hold sts accountable for staying on task (p. 276).

While explaining human success with the ability to apply the intelligence to cooperating with others to accomplish group goals, Slavin (1985) offered some instructional methods called cooperative learning such as Student Team Learning consisting of Student Teams-Achievement Divisions (STAD), Teams-Games-Tournament, and Jigsaw II as alternatives to the traditional competitive classroom. All of the methods involved having the teacher assign the students to four- to six-member heterogeneous learning groups like a microcosm of the class, working toward a common goal. To increase the general knowledge and the basic skills of students in class, Kagan (1985a,) explained the aim of education implied by STAD, TGT, and Jigsaw as a product orientation. In contrast, Group-Investigation and Co-op Co-op, although concerned with achievement, could be described as having also a strong process orientation. The concern was not only about how many facts or basic skills

the students acquired, but also about the students developed as persons. Kagan (1985b) described Co-op Co-op as “a flexible technique for cooperative learning to increase the involvement of learners through topic teams” (p. 437). Through topic teams, groups of learners covered closely interrelated topics and developed a coordinated presentation to the whole class. In Co-op Co-op, it was assumed that “following one’s curiosity, having new experiences that modified one’s conception of oneself and the world, and sharing these experiences -especially with one’s peers- were inherently satisfying, and that no extrinsic reward was needed to get students to engage in these activities, which were the most important forms of learning (ibid. p. 439).”

Kagan (1985b) listed ten steps to increase the probability of success of the method;

Step 1: Student-centered class discussion

At the beginning of a class, the students are encouraged to discover and express their own interest in the subject covered, therefore to become more intrinsically motivated and to increase their sense of internal control.

Step 2: Selection of student learning teams

The students may be assigned to teams or may be allowed to select their teams, depending on the goals of the class.

Step 3: Team building

Co-op Co-op cannot proceed successfully until the members of the student teams feel that they are “on the same side,” that is, until they have a strong, positive team identity. Two of the team-building techniques are Interview and Roundtable Brainstorming. Interview done by members of the team in a turn is to introduce students to each other. In Roundtable brainstorming, teams are presented with a very simple problem having numerous correct solutions related to the academic content of the class. The students write as many correct answers as they can in one minute. Students must each take a turn, passing the paper and pencil around their roundtable in a circle. Members are not allowed to skip a turn without trying for at least 10 seconds to produce a correct answer. Following the race, teams count the number of correct solutions and teacher interviews the most successful/improved team and sets them up as a model for the other teams. Within a few trials, teams will become amazingly cooperative and efficient. This technique quickly produces a strong, positive team identity, a willingness to work in teams, and a sense of mutual interdependence of the teammates and the need for cooperative interaction.

Step 4: Team topic selection

After the team members have developed trust and communication skills sufficient for them to work together, they are allowed to select the topics related to the interests of the class.

Step 5: Minitopic selection

Each team divides its topic to create a division of labor among teammates with the approval of the teacher and evaluation of their fellow teammates. Each minitopic must provide a unique contribution to the team effort.

Step 6: Minitopic preparation

The students gather resources in an attempt to learn as much as possible about their particular minitopics, aware that they are responsible for their particular minitopics and that the group is depending on them to cover an important aspect of the team topic.

Step 7: Minitopic presentations

Students present what they have learned or created to their teammates. The minitopic materials are discussed to further research and /or rethink to integrate the new material into the team presentation that is the sum of minipresentations.

Step 8: Preparation of team presentations

The format of the team presentation emerges naturally as the students gain closure on their topic. Once understanding is obtained, communication of that understanding is the natural next step. Depending on the level of the students, formal practice sessions may be useful. Teams may make arrangements with other teams to give them feedback following a formal practice presentation, with the aim of improving their presentation to the whole class.

Step 9: Team presentations

During the time allotted for the team presentation, the teacher gives control of the classroom to the team. The team members become responsible for how the time, the space, and the equipment of the classroom are to be used during their presentation.

Step 10: Evaluation

Evaluation in Co-op Co-op occurs at several levels: teacher and class evaluation of team presentations; student/or teacher evaluation of individual contributions to the team effort; and teacher evaluation of the individual paper or project of each student on his or her minitopic. Following each team presentation, the teacher may guide a class discussion of the strongest and weakest elements in the content and the format of the presentation. A more formal evaluation of the team presentation may be made in writing by the classmates and/or the teacher (pp. 440-441).

In addition to these techniques, Slavin (1985) proposed the Group-Investigation method from Sharan as the most complex of all the cooperative learning methods. It called for students in small groups “to take substantial responsibility for deciding what they would learn, how they would organize themselves to learn it, and how they would communicate what they had learned to their classmates” (p. 8). Sharan and Shachar (1988) sought to provide some response to the question whether students who studied in classrooms conducted with the Group-Investigation method achieved more, academically, in both informational (low-level) and analytic/synthetic (higher-level) kinds of knowledge than students who studied with the Whole-Class method and displayed more extensive verbal interaction with their peers and whether the students’ verbal interaction in groups was related to their academic achievement. They found that students displayed a relatively high level of motivation and involvement in their learning activities when the Group-Investigation method was implemented with a reasonable degree of competence and that the academic achievement levels of the students from the Group-Investigation classes were

far superior to those from the Whole-Class method on sets of questions that assessed both low and high-level uses of knowledge.

Kagan (1985a,) listed six stages through which students progressed in Group-investigation:

Stage I: Identifying the topic and organizing the pupils into research groups. Various techniques are used to have students identify and classify topics to form inquiry groups. The students join the group of their choice within the limits of forming three- to six-member groups.

Stage II: Planning the learning task. Group members or pairs of group members determine subtopic for investigation.

Stage III: Carrying out the investigation. The students gather information, analyze and evaluate the data, and reach conclusions.

Stage IV: Preparing a final report. The group must engage in activities that culminate in a report, an event, or a summary. The steering committee, consisting of representatives of each group, meets and is active in coordinating time schedules, reviewing requests for resources, and ensuring that the ideas of the groups will be realistic and interesting. The groups decide the content and the method of their presentation.

Stage V: Presenting the final report. The final presentation may take various forms, including exhibitions, skits, debates, or reports.

Stage VI: Evaluation. Assessment of higher level learning is emphasized, including applications, synthesis, and inferences. Affective experiences should be evaluated also, including the levels of motivation and involvement. Various forms of evaluation are possible. Teachers and pupils can collaborate on evaluation, including the formulation of exams (p. 73).

As a significant factor in developing group learning, assessment was emphasized by Bryan (2006) valuing co-operation and group dynamics on developing and acquiring important collaborative skills such as communication, negotiation, self-initiative, resourcefulness and conflict management, and consequently the improved performance grades of the learners. The problem was the students' unease feeling when prepared to work in groups and complain of "the time wasted through arguments and general poor management of the group and the consequent need to seek tutor intervention" (p. 150). She studied them to answer whether;

- they could devise assessment methods to assess group processes,
- the assessment differentiate between individual and group contribution,
- the assessment act as sufficient motivation to improve students' general ability to work as effective group members.

Bryan (2006) claimed that, because peer grading created an opportunity for refinement of students' judgement-based learning in and from groups", grading individually of each group member division and full discussion of the variances should not be seen as time

consuming. A further innovation by Bryan (2006) was made through the assessment with two or three participants volunteer standing outside the group and observing the process, making notes and providing feedback at the end. It had several advantages; First, it enabled the observers to devote their full and undivided attention to the group dynamics. Secondly, it allowed observers to be more objective. Third, it offered a model in which students practiced giving and receiving feedback as two distinct processes.

Group Formation

While Heller (1998) preferred ‘the great power’ of friendship to strengthen a team, Vale and Feunteun (1995) proposed “group formation activities” which were performed in TL. According to them, these activities generated also a sense of belonging to the group.

To form groups, Jacobs and Hall (2002) discussed the size in using cooperative learning activities in EFL/ESL classes. According to them, the smaller the group, the more each member talked and the less chance there was that someone would be left out. They advised the larger groups for doing big tasks and ended the discussion with the recommendation of groups of four, where students first worked in pairs, and then the two pairs of the foursome interacted with one another.

In terms of group size, Slavin (in Shrum and Glisan, 2010) claimed; “the most effective way to arrange small groups is to put together four students who represent a cross section of the class in terms of level of past performance in the subject area, race or ethnicity, and sex” (p. 275). Slavin advised that students should be assigned to groups by the teacher, since they tended to choose partners who were like themselves, and that teachers should occasionally consider grouping students more homogenously, particularly so that more advanced learners could challenge each other and be pushed to exceed their current abilities. Although such teacher-selected groups were suggested best on cooperative learning, random grouping was also one of the suggested methods because it was quick and easy to give the idea that one could work with anyone. The most common way for randomizing groups was counting off. The number of students in the class was divided into the desired number of students per group. Lastly, students counted to the group number.

Additionally, Murray (1992) proposed that the group had to have a leader (Heller, 1998) and a scribe for each of the tasks, usually determined by the group.

Benefits of Group Work

To help teachers to develop active participation of students, Jenkin (1989) proposed small group work. According to Jenkin (1989), students would have the opportunity to;

- talk and listen in groups as skillfully as possible,
- cooperate so that they can work together with mutual respect,
- acquire the language with which to evaluate and negotiate their roles in small group work. Therefore, learning in groups;
- heightens pupils' motivation, sense of purpose, involvement,
- improves understanding and grasp of a wide range of materials, communication skills and oral confidence, skills of assessing material critically,
- helps pupils relate learning to their own experiences, shift the teacher's role from that of instructor,
- encourages cooperative learning and mutual respect, exploration and modification of a range of ideas, independence and autonomy of learning and- maximizes pupils' opportunities to learn through talking and listening (p. 9).

According to Jenkin (1989), working in groups helped students;

- share and build ideas
- get more work done more quickly and easily
- make better decisions
- get ideas going without the teacher interfering
- have a clearer idea of what they were doing
- learn to respect what others thought (p. 22).

AbiSamra (n.d.) preferred the term 'team' and claimed that all teams were groups of individuals but not all groups of individuals necessarily demonstrated the cohesiveness of a team. Teams outperformed individuals because teams generated a special energy which developed as team members worked together combining their personal energies and talents to deliver tangible performance results.

There were a number of benefits for teamwork, among them were:

- Distributing the workload
- Reinforcing individual capabilities
- Creating participation and involvement

- Making better decisions
- Feeling like we play a part in the work being done
- Generating a diversity of ideas, etc.

Autonomous Learning in Groups

The most effective way to give learners opportunities to use TL communicatively was advised by Dickinson (1987) as to divide the class into pairs or small groups. To Dickinson (1987), in doing this, the teacher was releasing the learners from detailed control over what they said and how they said it, and since the teacher could concentrate on only one group at a time, the learners themselves had to take on many responsibilities for their own learning although Williams and Burden (1997) claimed that “cooperative group work would not necessarily produce autonomous, self-directed learners” (p. 194).

Langfred (2005) predicted that the interaction between individual- and team-level autonomy influenced team performance and that their combined effects were contingent on the level of task interdependence. Multiple regression analysis of data from 89 teams in a manufacturing setting confirmed these expectations, demonstrating that team performance depended on the combination of individual and team autonomy.

According to Williams and Burden (1997, p. 194), learners were individuals who had to be helped to find their own ways to become autonomous as well as members of a social world, to be given opportunities to work co-operatively with others to be successful. They also added that a healthy competition with oneself and between groups could be highly motivating in the short term and could provide added zest to any classroom. Therefore, teachers must surely find ways of providing a flexible structure in the language classroom which effectively incorporates all.

Learner Autonomy for Speaking Skill

To emphasize the relationship between learner autonomy and speaking skill in a foreign language, Aagard and St. John (2003) claimed; “the development of a speech is a process which has an enormous potential for supporting learner autonomy and which produces

many valuable opportunities for improving trainees' speaking skills (p. 167). This process was made far more efficient by the collaborative participation of peers. A speaking course could reduce and even get rid of the type of hindrances preventing a person from speaking freely and effectively in front of others.

Typical difficulties on the way to speak in a foreign language included by Aagard and St. John (2003) were lack of ideas about what to speak about, fear of speaking/exposure in front of an audience and the subsequent nervous tension, lack of self-confidence about achieving speaking goals, not knowing the words/structures with which to express ideas. Such difficulties could be effectively overcome by helping students select suitable speech topics, progressively building a speaking platform so that their 'exposure' levels were gradually increased, involving the students cooperatively rather than competitively in every stage of the speech process, and incorporation of reflection and personal responsibility rather than repetition and restriction as key ingredients in developing effective speaking.

Speaking

Speaking was defined by Fulcher (2003) as "the verbal use of language to communicate with others for innumerable purposes" (p. 23). He differentiated it from written language in terms of its less formal use of vocabulary, fewer full sentences, repetitions, repairs and more conjunctions. From a diverse point of view, Freeman (1992) claimed; "speech was about making choices" (p. 56). Learners had to choose how to interact in expressing themselves and forming social relationships through speech. To emphasize the significance of speech in classes, Lemke (1985) linked classroom education to talk. "It is the social use of language to enact regular activity structures and to share systems of meaning among teachers and students" (pp. 1-2). According to Fulcher (2003), speaking was language organized in particular ways. Openings and closings of topics or conversations and turntaking, types of interaction such as greetings, invitations, offers, apologies and so on, were often fairly fixed.

From a different point of view, speech was a product of biological evolution, standing as the most obvious, and arguably the most important, of our species-typical behaviors

(Liberman (1997). Reading/writing, on the other, did not evolve biologically, but rather developed as a secondary response to that which evolution had already produced. A consequence was that humanbeings were biologically destined to speak, not to read or write, accordingly, all good at speech, but disabled as readers and writers. The outer manifestation of speech was described as sound by Fulcher (2003). The speaker had to first make a decision about what to say, be able to articulate the words, and create the physical sounds that carried meaning. There were also more general ‘rules’ of speech that were related to the context of the talk. Linguistic descriptions of spoken language were also presented by Luoma (2004) as speaking as interaction, and speaking as a social and situation-based activity. While describing spoken language, she firstly mentioned ‘the sound of speech’ to refer to “features of the speech stream such as individual sounds, pitch, volume, speed, pausing, stress and intonation” (p. 9).

The second issue she covered was ‘spoken grammar’. According to her, a major difference between speech and writing was that speakers did not usually speak in sentences. Rather, speech could be considered to consist of idea units, which were short phrases and clauses connected with ‘and, or, but or that’, or not joined by conjunctions at all but simply spoken next to each other, with possibly a short pause between them. The grammar of these strings of idea units was simpler than that of the written language with its long sentences. Idea units were therefore usually about two seconds or about seven words long, or shorter.

According to Luoma (2004), well-chosen phrases could be used to make descriptions bright. Besides, very simple and usual words were also common in normal spoken discourse. There was also a core of phrases and expressions that were highly typical for speaking, which contributed to the listener’s impression of the speaker’s fluency. Speakers also needed to know words, phrases and strategies for creating time to speak. These were sometimes called fillers or hesitation markers, and they included expressions such as ‘*ah, you see, kind of, sort of*’, and ‘*you know*’, as well as whole expressions such as ‘*That’s a good question*’, or ‘*Now let me see*’. Luoma (2004) suggested; “normal speech contained a fair number of slips and errors such as mispronounced words, mixed sounds, and wrong words due to inattention” (p. 19). Therefore, in terms of accuracy and fluency, these two terms were part of the vocabulary of language teaching. Even classroom activities were often classified as ‘fluency’ or ‘accuracy’ based. Lack of fluency was therefore said to be

‘slow and uneven speech’. The concepts of ‘accuracy’ and ‘fluency’ were related through the notion of automaticity. If speech was going to be fluent, the process of planning what to say, retrieving the necessary grammar and vocabulary, and speaking, needed to be automatic.

Speaking and Interactivity

In interaction, according to Smokler (2009), “students actively process together, they discuss, consider, and struggle and, sometimes, they rethink their original ideas and positions, all activities that help strengthen neural connections and increase learning” (p. 19). In this context, attention is paid to the social environment of the classroom, to ensure that all students feel safe rather than suffer from social interaction. As a model to this environment, Luoma (2004) described a typical spoken interaction;

“Two or more people talk to each other about things that they think are mutually interesting and relevant in the situation. Their aim can be to pass the time, amuse each other, share opinions or get something done, or they can aim to do several of these and other things at once. The point in their interaction is that they do things together. Each participant is both a speaker and a listener; they construct the event together and share the right to influence the outcomes (p. 20).

Similarly, Hughes (2002) claimed that if one spoke with someone with whom he or she was ‘on the same wavelength’, communication would be easier than with someone with whom he or she felt they had little in common and added that;

“Whether a candidate is asked to interact with an examiner or with another student, the interactive nature of speech and the level of personal involvement which even formal speaking will lead to mean that it is extremely due to the fact that good oral communication is founded on one speaker actually having an effect on another, and on the reactions and responses which take place between interlocutors” (p. 79).

Aspects of speech were listed by Jenkin (1989) as the spoken form of a language below;

- Context dependent
 - Unplanned
 - Transient
 - Oral/aural
 - Dynamic
- } Spoken discourse

According to Jenkin (1989), most important and generally least considered in a linguistic discipline dominated by texts and recording of texts, was the fact that “the spoken form of

any language is fundamentally transient” (p. 10). When a word was spoken this event happened within the ‘co-ordinates’ of a particular place and moment and these could never be reduplicated, although we could now record the word via several different media.

Hughes (2002) explained that a second factor behind the nature of speech, and affecting the type of language choices was its delivery via the oral/aural channel. Whether in face-to-face situations or via televisual or other media, language which was spoken to be heard was quite different from texts created to be read. “One of the commonest problems in oral presentations is information overload for listeners as they try to process densely informative language which has been prepared via a written text” (p. 12). The huge mass of spoken material was unprompted, face-to-face, informal conversation. This kind of discourse was generally unplanned, dynamic and context dependent. Hughes (2002) proposed that the spoken form had generally been regarded as “the primary form of language upon which the written form was essentially dependent” (p. 13). One of the essential reasons for this was that in the absence of a pathological reason to prevent it, all humans developed the capacity for speech and it was only later in literate societies that the skill of writing developed.

Modes of Communication

Speaking was described as “one of the four skills used ‘in concert’ for communicative ability” by Shrum and Glisan (2010, p. 178). According to them, communication occurred within a specific set of cultural perspectives that governed patterns of interaction among individuals and interpretations of the message through cognitive processes. They defined communication by means of three modes as interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational in terms of ‘the context and purpose’. Interpersonal mode was a two-way oral or written communication and negotiation of meaning among individuals. All four skills were involved in this mode. In the interpretive mode, the focus was on the interpretation of the oral or printed text such as listening to radio news broadcast, reading news, or watching a film. According to Shrum and Glisan (2010), this mode included listening, reading, and viewing skills not only literal comprehension of a text but also the interpretation of it among the others such as predicting, reaching conclusions, giving opinions and

explanations. This mode referred to a component of daily communication and a vehicle for language acquisition.

The presentational mode was a one-way communication to an audience of listeners or readers. It involved speaking and/or writing skills. There was no direct opportunity for active negotiation of meaning between the presenter and audience. Some of the examples of this kind of mode of communication were ‘giving a speech or oral report’, ‘preparing a paper or story’.

Integrating Three Modes: Interactive Model

According to Shrum and Glisan (2010), the three modes of communication could represent the ‘four skills as working in an integrated fashion’. They presented a model, naming ‘interactive model’ in Figure 2.5 below, to develop students’ communicative skills. They integrated three modes of communication in one framework to make students engaged in interaction with oral, printed, and video texts.

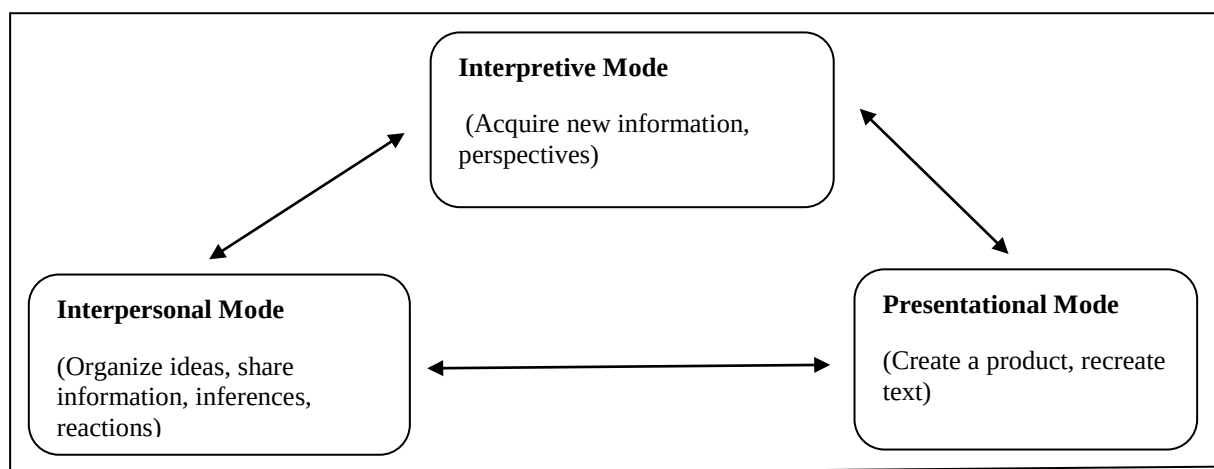


Fig. 2.5 Integrating three modes of communication by Shrum and Glisan, 2010

It reflected the phases through which learners should be guided; pre-reading, initial reading for global ideas, rereading to identify and reproduce textual messages, rereading to express messages, and rereading to create discourses that express an independent viewpoint (Swaffar and Arens in Shrum and Glisan, 2010) beyond the traditional ‘listen-to-a-text-and-answer-questions’ format (Bern in Shrum and Glisan, 2010).

Three modes of communication were adapted to a series of four-phase subsequent activities for a reading class. By previewing the text, establishing a purpose, predicting meaning, activating background knowledge students were prepared for the task through whole-class discussions and small group discussions activities in the preparation phase. Comprehension phase was for students to skim for the gist, to scan for specific information. During this phase, students created a list of main ideas and matched them to sections of text.

They also matched main ideas to key details in pair- or small group collaboration. The first two phases were suggested to satisfy the interpretive mode of communication by Shrum and Glisan (2010). For the interpretive and interpersonal mode, the interpretation/discussion phase were offered to interpret the text, to use the context to construct meaning, to discuss cultural products, practices, perspectives, to interpret inferences and share reactions, and to personalize and evaluate information and ideas in text.

Pair- or small-group collaboration and whole class discussion were the formats of activities in this phase. The last phase was for the interpersonal and presentational modes of communication. Named as the creativity phase, students participated in open-ended role-plays, created a written summary of text, and/or design an oral/video presentation or a specific audience. They used new information to create a follow-up product such as a letter, advertisement, brochure, new beginning or ending for text.

Adair-Hauck (cited in Shrum and Glisan, 2010) saw the creative extension activities as critical because they helped learners use the new feature to form their own thoughts in the foreign language by providing learners with the opportunity to collaborate and cooperate in meaningful, interpersonal contexts. Alvermann (cited in Shrum and Glisan, 2010) proposed ‘discussion webbing’ as “a critical thinking activity to be carried out collaboratively and cooperatively suggesting that some of the best thinking results in a group’s collaborative efforts” (p. 234). Learners were guided to discuss the reason rather than what happened. Groups of learners tried to find the best reason to share with the class for a whole class discussion.

Speaking in Foreign Language Learning

According to Haley and Austin (2004), “the most challenging and also the most rewarding aspects for many second and foreign language learners were to have their own utterances convey their intentions and be understood by their audiences” (pp. 188-189). They claimed that learners began to feel that they could do something with this ‘other’ language when the second language represented their interior worlds. Boran (2015) explained this in principle that ‘well-formed sentences’ by the learners might not be “comprehensible enough because they fail in highlighting the new information (unfamiliar information) and deemphasizing the given (old) information” (p. 199). He advised teachers to give a place and time on how to utilize intonation, sentence stress and pitch when speaking English as well as syntactic constructions in order to call attention to new information and deemphasise given information.

From a similar point of view, Sion (2001,) claimed that our task as teachers was “to find the key that creates and unlocks the students’ need to communicate and that students do have something to say; that, just like ‘real people’, they enjoy talking about themselves, their families, their interests, backgrounds, jobs, plans, dreams and frustrations; about what they have for lunch, where they do their shopping...; genuine interaction about a common interest as a small talk” (pp. 8-9). He suggested that small talk was a necessary ingredient in deepening social interaction. It was a first step towards ‘big’ talk. Conversation needed to be drawn out of students rather than pumped into them. For foreign language learners, speaking was generally “pushed” through instructional approaches and methods (Yaman, 2014; Rahimi, 2015) although many learners stated their goal as ‘to learn how to speak the language’ on learner preference survey in this study. To find a way to overcome the inability of communicating in foreign language, Haley and Austin (2004) suggest;

“By examining with our students the ways people communicate with each other, we can uncover cues to the values they have: how they see the world, and most of all, how they see themselves. Teachers who utilize this fact can find evidence of the social bases of second language learning in the types of language that their students begin to use spontaneously” (p. 198).

Tarone in Ellis (1984) listed such suggestions as strategies for speaking. According to Tarone, learners use achievement strategies when they wish to express themselves but have problems because they lack the knowledge of the language (grammar or vocabulary) to communicate. The learner tries to overcome this lack of knowledge

by finding ways around the problem. The following list represents the most common achievement strategies:

- Overgeneralisation/morphological creativity: /-ed/ past tense marker used the past tense of the verb 'buy' as 'bayed' instead of 'bought'.
- Approximation: using 'went' for 'drove'.
- Paraphrase: If a learner cannot remember vocabulary immediately, it is common to paraphrase by using a lexical item that is a near synonym for the word needed.
- Word coinage: Sometimes, learners invent a new word for the unknown word.
- Restructuring: After a learner has said something and realizes that it has not been understood, it is common to begin again and try to communicate the same message using different words.
- Cooperative strategies: In face-to-face communication it is possible for a learner who is having difficulty communicating to get help from the listener.
- Code switching: If a learner is speaking to someone with whom he or she has a language in common, a word or phrase taken from the common language may be used to overcome a communication difficulty.
- Non-linguistic strategies: Speakers usually share a common physical environment, unless they are communicating over the telephone. The learner can use gestures or mime, or point to objects in the surroundings in order to elicit language or help with communication.

Unlike achievement strategies, avoidance strategies are used by learners who try to avoid having to use language over which they do not have control. Avoidance strategies are usually classified into Formal and Functional avoidance.

- Formal avoidance: If a learner does not use passive voice, even where passive would be more appropriate, this can only be seen through the overuse of the active voice.
- Functional avoidance: Much more serious than formal avoidance, its extreme forms can be seen in clear cases of topic avoidance and abandoning conversations.

Assessing Speaking

According to Alderson and Bachman (cited in Luoma, 2004), the ability to speak in a foreign language was at the very heart to be able to use a foreign language and ability in

speaking took a long time to develop. They assert; “to speak in a foreign language, learners have to master the sound system of the language, have almost instant access to appropriate vocabulary and be able to put words intelligibly with minimal hesitation” (p. ix). In addition, they had to also understand what was being said to them, and be able to respond properly to maintain friendly relations or to attain their communication goals.

Speaking was also the most difficult language skill to assess reliably. Compared to testing the other skills, Underhill (1987) claimed that little space was devoted to oral testing. This was partly because of the difficulty of treating oral tests in the same way as other more conventional tests. In a genuine oral test, this order of priorities was reversed. Real people meet face to face, and talk to each other. According to O’Malley and Pierce (1996), because oral communication involved the negotiation of meaning between two or more persons, it was always related to the context in which it occurred. Hughes (2002, p. 74) expressed that speaking meant negotiating intended meanings and adjusting one’s speech to produce the desired effect on the listener. A person’s speaking ability was usually judged during a face-to-face interaction, in real time, between an interlocutor and a candidate. Luoma (2004) discussed speaking as meaningful interaction and suggested two implications to design speaking assessments:

Firstly, we must analyze the kind of speaking that we need to assess in a particular assessment context in terms of social and situational needs.

Secondly, we must remember that speaking is interactive when we design rating criteria and procedures, and reward examinees when they repeat or mirror the other speaker’s phrases and structures or develop topics by referring to earlier turns and building on them, because this shows that they know how to work interactively with other speakers. (pp. 27-28)

In language use, all the skills were often used more or less at the same time, and even in teaching and testing learners might be asked to read or listen to something before they start to interact with each other. Two approaches to speaking assessment were proposed by Luoma (2004, p. 42); construct-based approach, which the primary focus was on the construct of language ability without the effect of listening or reading ability, and task-based approach to speak about the examinees’ ability to deal with the demands of the situations and tasks that were included in the test. The difference between them was the position of tasks in designing assessments. If they were used for judging the level of the examinees’ speaking skills in general, the primary design principle should be the construct. Strongly task-based assessment was useful when TL-use situation was easy to define, as in

the case of professional qualification examinations or entrance tests for study or employment, and also in teaching situations when teaching had been focused on a certain type of task and the teacher needed information about how well the students had learned the relevant skills. Buttler et al (2000) explained; “It is important to recognize that a test imposes certain constraints on the character of the interactions that are created in the assessment and thus on the validity of generalizations from performances on the test to performance in ordinary interactions outside the test (p. 2). Success in spoken interaction was determined by;

- (a) the nature of the tasks that the interaction requires and the roles in the interaction;
- (b) the conditions under which the participants are required to perform; and
- (c) the resources the individual brings to the interaction. (ibid. p. 78)

Speaking Assessment in Large Classes

O’Sullivan (n.d.) proposed a three-phase small group design to test the speaking ability of a large class in a single period as Underhill (in Güllüoğlu, 2004) described this in learner-group format in Figure 2.6.

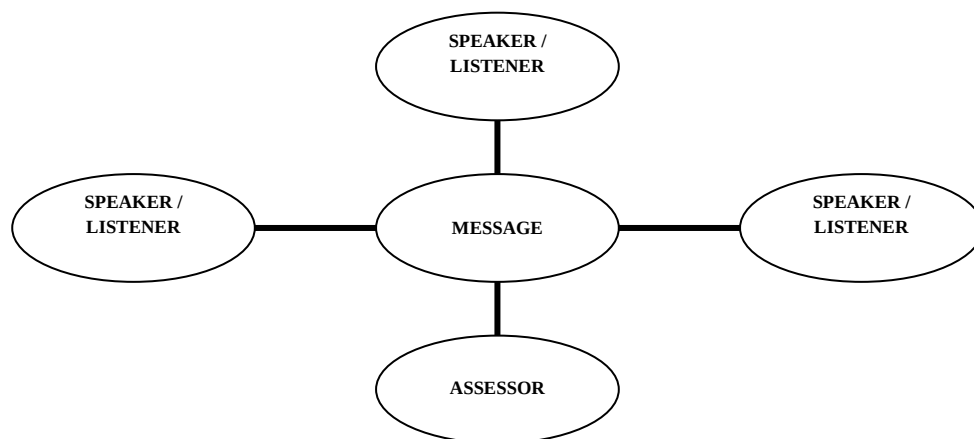


Fig. 2.6 Learner-group format by Underhill, 1987

Slightly different from Underhill, O’Sullivan (n.d.) decided to involve the students in the development of the test tasks and the scoring criteria to give more responsibility and autonomy. In first phase of the test, each student assumed a role.

- The Examiner decided on the task versions to use, and was responsible for asking all questions.
- The Candidate listened to the questions and responded appropriately.
- The Manager was in charge of timing – reminding the Examiner to wind up tasks and to end the test event within the allocated time. The manager was also responsible for ensuring that the score sheets were completed.

During the second and last phases, the students swapped roles in a predetermined order and acted as in Phase 1. The additional role of the Manager in the final phase was to gather all the score sheets, staple them together and present them to the teacher. To identify the tasks, teacher got together with the students. After the discussion three task types are identified; personal information exchange, picture description, decision making. Students were also asked to devise tasks while working in groups both in and out of the class. It also became clear that students would need to be trained in the delivery of the test so that they would be familiar with the expectations of the different roles before any administration. The final pieces of the jigsaw were the scoring criteria and the rating procedure. For this, main criteria were identified through discussions with the students as;

Criterion	Description	Score: not so good-great			
Grammar	The language used was accurate, with very few if any mistakes	1	2	3	4
Vocabulary	A lot of different and interesting words were well used	1	2	3	4
Presentation	Eye-contact and gestures were used to get the message across. There were few if any times when the examinee had stop speaking	1	2	3	4
Content	What the examinee said was very interesting and kept our attention	1	2	3	4

Fig. 2.7 Peer-assessment scales against the speaking ability by O’Sullivan, (n.d.)

Grammar (accuracy), Vocabulary (appropriacy), Presentation (‘naturalness’ – things like fluency of speech and the use of non-verbal strategies such as eye contact to aid communication), and Content (is it interesting?).

They also agreed to award scores from 1 (not so good) to 4 (great). O’Sullivan (n.d.) emphasized that the students expressed a keen interest in these criteria, and were very well aware of their importance to the test, and to their own preparation for the test. The scale

contained written descriptions of what each level of each criterion actually meant as the final scale is shown in Figure 2.7. Students and teachers were all asked to award scores for each task they witnessed. This meant that for each event, a student would be awarded two sets of peer-awarded scores and one set of self-awarded scores. This introduced to the students the concepts of peer and self assessment. Offering a similar activity as ‘Topic talks’, Cross (1995) explained a way to evaluate the learners and their speaking skills in a limited period of lesson hour like;

- Agree a short list of topics with the class.
- Each member chooses one of the topics.
- Following week they all prepare their own short talk.
- On ‘topic day’, group members take turns to make a presentation. The others ask questions and offer opinions after each talk.
- All five topics are covered in the space of about half an hour.

Language Proficiency versus Speaking Proficiency

In terms of a critical view against the speaking tests to measure contradictorily language proficiency, Hughes (2002) informed; “testing processes are founded on test criteria” (p. 76). Whether carried out via an external observer/rater, an interactive examiner, or self-assessment test, performance was held up against a set of beliefs about ‘better’ or ‘worse’ or ‘more effective’ or ‘weaker’ language use. A key aspect of naturally occurring spontaneous speech was that interlocutors did not focus on the mechanics of their interaction but on the ideas/emotions/information being conveyed. Currently, the nature of language testing meant that a strong focus tended to be put on the actual samples of language used: their range, variety, complexity, or accuracy in relation to pre-decided criteria. This was a primary cause of tension between test design criteria and natural oral production.

Additionally, though speaking was naturally people focused rather than language, Hughes (2002) claimed that language testing was not naturally people focused but by its nature would tend to be language focused. To give an example, many native speakers were

extremely hesitant in their speech delivery, particularly when being asked to do something such as forming an opinion ‘on the hoof’. However, the listener would not tend to notice the pausing, um-ing and er-ing in their interest to hear the answer to their question or the opinion of the speaker. According to Hughes (2002), spontaneous interactive speech would be full of hesitations, false-starts, grammatical inaccuracies, have a limited vocabulary, tend towards repetition and be structured around short thought units or quasi-clauses based on the constraints of breath and of spoken language processing (p. 77). It took a considerable change in preconceptions about language proficiency for, for example, single word answers to be regarded as ‘good’.

Conclusion

By means of modeling the four key factors that influenced the learning process; learner, teacher, task, and context by Williams and Burden (1997), the critical points of current knowledge and the main published work in diverse sources related to ‘autonomy’, ‘constructivism’, ‘task-based instruction’, and ‘speaking skill’ in foreign language education were considered in this chapter. The main goals were to situate the current study within the body of literature and to provide context for the reader in the form of a critical discussion. It included substantive findings, as well as theoretical and methodological contributions on the way to search for the impact of group autonomy on foreign language learners’ speaking skill in a social constructivist and task-based approach. When reviewed social constructivism, group work, task-based approach, and assessment for autonomous learning and speaking skill in terms of foreign language education, it was concluded that the framework for the further work could be summarized as below to satisfy this aim of this study;

- Due to the fact that a successful implementation of the principles of learner autonomy in the classroom necessitated having ‘a firm theoretical basis’ (Van Esch and St. John, 2003), the theoretical frame of the experimental teaching program in this study could be based mainly on a social constructivist approach comprehending both the individual and the social dimensions of an individual’s language learning process; exploring prior knowledge, experiences and beliefs of the learner as the departure points of the learning process. While supposing the language learners to be freed from the direction and control of others to

enhance their individual autonomy, Breen and Candlin cited in Benson (2001) developed views of the classrooms as a social context for learning and communication. As a parallel stance, Gabler and Schroeder (2003) advised a dynamic course highlighting decisive communication and the application of facts in authentic situations' to promote learning from the constructivist perspective. Like Van Lier (1996), they explained peer-group learning techniques as for allowing students to work together in groups to accomplish an academic task. In the same direction, Van Esch and St. John (2003) mentioned a number of important implications of constructivism, which were compatible to autonomous learning and to social constructivist approach such as authenticity, learner-centered instruction, group work, or self-evaluation, and therefore compatible to the context in this study.

- Van Lier (1996) defined 'authenticity' as an action realized through a free choice and an expression of what a person genuinely felt and believed. It was the result and the origin of awareness and autonomy. To gain knowledge of something new, learner had to initially see it. For autonomy, he mentioned that learning was the learner's job and that teacher could not compel learning, but he could encourage and guide learner. The autonomous language learner had to be able to make significant decisions about what was to be learned, as well as how and when to do it (Van Lier, 1996). Here, two features were central to autonomy: choice and responsibility. He suggested that autonomy would yield the authenticity as the result of acts of authentication, a personal process of engagement, of the learning process and the language used in it (Van Lier, 1996, p. 128), which meant higher proficiency in target language.

- According to Homans cited in Forsyth (2006), 'group' stood for people in touch with one another over duration of time and not many so that each person able to converse with all the other. To foster autonomy in learners, group learning was proposed by Wang (2010) as a language teaching and learning strategy which had learners actively and cooperatively involved in learning a foreign language in groups. Dam (2010) and her colleagues, Dickinson (1987), Kohonen (1992), Olsen and Kagan (1992), Little (2004), Sarıgöz (2008), and Wang (2011) also supported the idea of interdependence and collaboration to develop the learner's competence that entailed an internalization of the criteria for success and autonomy as a psychological capacity. Therefore, the teacher was freeing the learners from exhaustive control over what they said and how they said it, and since the teacher

could attend to only one group at a time, the learners themselves had to take on many responsibilities for their own learning. Similarly, Dickinson (1987) mentioned the abundance of opportunities for the development of autonomy in language teaching/learning if we accepted that autonomy grew through, *inter alia*, individuals being given practice in taking decisions and so accepting responsibility for their own learning, through co-operating with others in groups to work on problems and to produce a mutual solution, through exchanging ideas and opinions with others. By maintaining the idea that the language development occurred *between* lessons rather than *during* the lesson, Van Lier (1996) proposed that the students had to be involved with the language *amid* lessons over and above *in* lessons. Therefore, Frey, Fisher and Everlove (2009) proposed creating the 'right circumstances' as the key to getting the most out of group work and to have the groups be truly productive.

- In this respect, Sion (2001) tasked teachers to find the key that would create and unlock the students' need to communicate and that students would have something to say; that, just like 'real people', they would enjoy talking about themselves, their families, their interests, backgrounds, jobs, plans, dreams and frustrations; about what they had for lunch, where they did their shopping; genuine interaction about a common interest as a small talk. Small talk was a necessary ingredient in deepening social interaction. It was a first step towards 'big' talk. Conversation needed to be drawn out of students rather than pumped into them (Sion, 2001). Similarly, Williams and Burden (1997) suggested that language classrooms particularly needed to be places where learners are encouraged to use the new language to communicate, to try out new ways of expressing meanings, to negotiate, to make mistakes without fear, and to learn to learn from successes and failures, that is, an environment that enhances the trust needed to communicate and which enhances confidence and self-esteem. According to them, building a cooperative group atmosphere through pair work and group work in language classrooms helped enhance language learning and develop the self-image and motivation of the group members. Cross (1995) described interactional activities as communicative activities that grab interest, force quick reactions and make talk purposeful and meaningful. He claimed that, in those activities, the supralinguistic features of authentic interaction are obvious, with usual intonation patterns, eye contact, and body signals and turn taking. As another major feature of these kinds of

activities, Cross (1995) explained that they helped create learner independence and interdependence because learners were put in a position of trust. According to him, checking on randomly chosen pairs or groups after each activity through public performances served to make students work seriously. On the same track, Haley and Austin (2004) explained language and nonverbal cues as an important part of the communication system for the interactions. Language was learned and used through interactions in which people established their identity and maintained relationships, and avoided or negotiated conflicts and learn.

- Slavin (1985) explained human success with the ability to apply the intelligence to cooperating with others to accomplish group goals and offered some instructional methods called cooperative learning such as Student Team Learning consisting of Student Teams-Achievement Divisions (STAD), Teams-Games-Tournament, Jigsaw II, and Group-Investigation method from Sharan as alternatives to the traditional competitive classroom.

- To configure small groups, literature showed that the most effective way is to put together four students who represent a cross section of the class in terms of level of past performance in the subject area, race or ethnicity, and sex (Slavin in Shrum and Glisan, 2010). According to Jacobs and Hall (2002), the smaller the group, the more each member talked and the less chance there was that someone would be left out. Although teacher-selected groups were suggested best on cooperative learning, random grouping was also another suggested method because it was quick and easy to give the idea that one could work with anyone. Additionally, Murray (1992) proposed that the group had to have a leader and a scribe for each of the tasks, usually determined by the group.

- In terms of the connection between task-based approach and the other dynamics in this study, Rubdy (1998) stated that tasks provided a purpose for the use and learning of language and that they promoted naturalistic learning, catalyzed acquisitional processes particularly when combined with group work. According to Lee in Shrum and Glisan (2010), task-based approach highlighted that communication as the expression, interpretation, and negotiation of meaning, which required two or more autonomous participants that were willing and able to complete the task focuses on the learners' use of the language. Finch (2000) supported task-based instruction by claiming that it encouraged learners become self-directed. As a proposal, Larsen-Freeman (2000) mentioned a task-

based approach that aimed to provide learners with a natural context for interactive language use to facilitate language acquisition while Sarıgöz (2008) suggested that student participation in class discussions especially in large classes could be a chaotic challenge and it was possible to overcome this problem easier to handle large groups learning foreign languages through pair work and group work. He concluded that task based learning supported learners with pre-arranged guidelines for complicated language activities. Nunan (2004) claimed that TBLT had strengthened an emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in target language, the introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation, and an enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning. It had also provided the linking of classroom language learning with language use outside the classroom. In terms of task use in language classes, Candlin cited in Finch (2000) proposed some principles to follow such as;

- One-way tasks should come before two-way tasks;
- Static tasks should come before dynamic ones;
- 'Present time' tasks should come before ones using the past or the future;
- Easy tasks should come before difficult tasks;
- Simple tasks (only one step) should come before complex tasks (many steps).

According to Richards and Schmidt (2010), in using tasks in the classroom teachers often made use of a cycle of activities involving;

- preparation for a task
- task performance
- follow-up activities that may involve a focus on language form.

The challenge for task-based approach, therefore, was to choose, sequence, and implement tasks in ways that would combine a focus on meaning with a focus on form.

As a caveat of the use of tasks in foreign language learning, Seedhouse cited in Shrum and Glisan (2010) drew teachers' attention not to use as the basis for an entire methodology but use tasks as one of several strategies for engaging students in interaction, take care to integrate as much target language use as possible in the task sequence-a follow-up or reporting back phase might be an effective avenue for eliciting more language from learners, and integrate some focus on form after the task sequence has been completed.

- To foster autonomy in learners among other forms of evaluation, it was claimed that alternative types of assessment such as self-assessment or peer-assessment played a vital role. In this perspective, fostering the ability to self-evaluate was equally important if we were to produce autonomous learners. In order to become willing and capable of taking more responsibility for helping themselves to learn, learners needed to be able to monitor and assess their own progress (Clegg and Bryan, 2006; Gardner, 2000; Robinson and Udall, 2006; Sambell et al., 2006; Williams and Burden, 1997; Van Esch and St. John, 2003). According to Haley and Austin (2004), alternative assessment techniques revealed the learners' progress through authentic language use in tasks that required interactions similar to those in the world outside of classrooms and schools. While Gardner (2000) proposed 'generic assessment', Fogarty and Stoehr (2008) framed a 'tri-assessment model' for the teachers who are moving toward more genuine assessments, but are unwilling to totally discard more conventional measures. They advised to combine portfolio and performance assessments with traditional assessments.

The role of teachers in self-assessment was explained by Gardner (2000) in three parts:

1. Raising awareness among learners of the benefits of self-assessment,
2. Providing guidance on, and materials for, conducting self-assessments,
3. Helping learners understand the significance of the results.

As the procedure of self-assessment, he advised teachers to develop an idea for how to do an assessment, to explain the idea clearly in a set of instructions, and to leave the learners to create their own assessments.

To sum up, implications of constructivism are compatible to autonomous learning and to social constructivist approach such as authenticity, learner-centered instruction, group work, or self-evaluation exploring prior knowledge, experiences and beliefs of the learner as the departure points of the learning process.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter reveals the methodological approach to this study in order to investigate the impact of group autonomy on foreign language learners' speaking skill. After giving an overview about the research design, the study participants, and the instruments that were used to carry out the study, the chapter presents three procedures that were pursued to put the theory of the study into practice; data collection process, experimental teaching program, and data analysis process as practical elements.

Research Design

This work aimed to scrutinize the impact of group autonomy on foreign language learners' speaking skill. The methodological frame in this study was drawn by a learner-based approach which emphasizes the direct production of behavioral and psychological changes in the learner (e.g. various forms of learning strategy training) among the others such as; resource, technology, classroom, or curriculum-based approaches (Benson, 2001). Through this approach, it was aimed to outline an atmosphere to help foster three fields of knowledge described by Littlewood (1996);

“autonomy as a communicator to use the language creatively and appropriate strategies for communicating meanings in specific situations, autonomy as a learner to engage in independent work and to use appropriate learning strategies, both inside and outside the classroom, and autonomy as a person to express personal meanings and to create personal learning contexts, e.g. through interacting outside the classroom” (p. 431).

The end point of this study was based onto the development of speech ability in foreign language as a process which has an enormous potential for supporting learner autonomy

(Aagard and St. John, 2003) or vice versa. Through the opportunities created by interactive tasks for the collaborative participation of peers, it was aimed to make the process far more effective in improving learners' speaking skills as well as autonomous learning in groups of learners.

To satisfy the requirements of this framework, researcher went after a mixed-method pattern through a pretest and post-test design, which came about in three diverse procedures; data collection process, experimental teaching program, and data analysis process as interwoven phases of the research to investigate the impact of group autonomy on English learners' speaking skill.

Mixed methods research helps achieve an elaborate and comprehensive understanding of both quantitative research and the qualitative research, trying to minimize the weaknesses (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 164).

As seen in Figure 3.1, the study included the following instruments; a **pretest, a questionnaire, an experimental teaching program with group discussion sessions, learner logs through self- assessment form and peer-assessment rubrics, and a post test** within three interrelated and nearly successive processes.

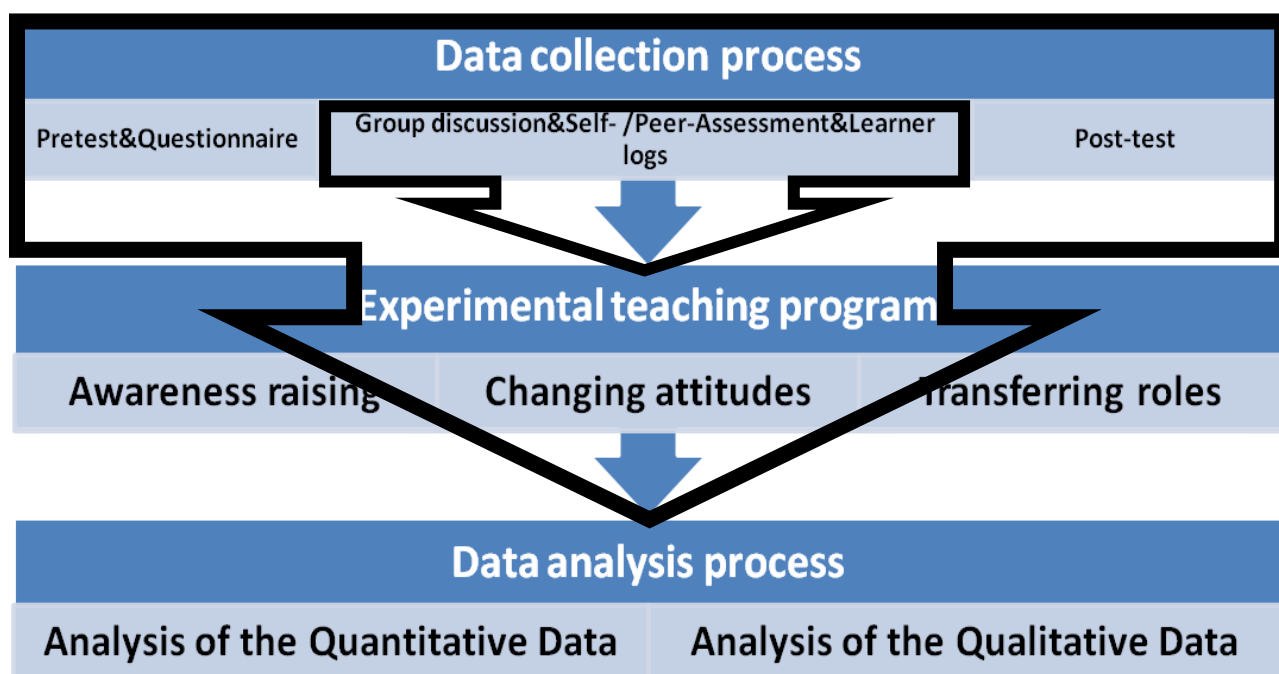


Fig. 3.1 Procedures of the research in successive phases

Participants

The sample of this study included 335 medical and nursing students at Gülhane Military Medical Academy in Turkey. They were 201 female and 134 male students between 21 and 23 years old in three different grades of the two faculties of the university. Of the female students in the nursing school, 124 participants were in the first grade and 70 participants in the third grade.

Although the control and experimental group were assigned randomly, the sample of the present study is the convenience or opportunity type. According to Dörnyei (2007), in convenience sampling, “an important criterion of sample selection is the convenience of the researcher whether they meet certain practical criteria, such as geographical proximity, availability at a certain time, easy accessibility, or willingness to volunteer” (p.98).

Seven female and 134 male participants from the medical faculty were in the first grade. The first graders in the nursing school received 128 hours General English in 32 weeks as four hours although third graders attended nursing English courses at the same amount.

The freshmen in the medical faculty attended Medical English lessons 192 hours in 32 weeks as six hours per week in an academic year. Turkish was the language of instruction at the university. The students who got a right to register for the Faculty of Medicine or Nursing were given a standard proficiency or placement test on entry since they came from different educational background and their level of English varied greatly. Then, they were grouped and had courses in two levels in terms of their scores in the English placement test. Regarding the evaluation of the course, students’ achievement was assessed through four mid-term exams during the course and a final exam at the end of the course. The achievement test scores were calculated by adding %40 of the mean scores from four mid-term test scores to the %60 of their achievement test scores. These exams were prepared and undertaken by class coordinators and class representatives, and evaluated in optic scanners.

During the study, eight teachers of English working with varying years of experience in teaching English at the university assisted the researcher voluntarily. The teachers were oriented before the study about the tasks to be used during the teaching program and how

to implement speaking activities as well as how to deliver the speaking tests including the instruments in the study within the guidelines presented in Appendix F.

Instruments

The current study that was carried out within three processes to search for the impact of group autonomy on foreign language learners' speaking skill included the following instruments; a questionnaire, a pretest, an experimental teaching program with group discussion sessions, learner logs in the company of self-assessment forms, peer-assessment rubrics, and a post test.

Instrument (1) Group Autonomy Questionnaire

Nunan (1989b) points out that the questionnaires can offer a great deal of information in an economical form. He also puts forward to try to obtain information in TL from low-proficiency learners. He advises for those participants to have one's questionnaire translated, or obtain bilingual assistance during the data-collection phase. Therefore, the questionnaire was written in Turkish and piloted by the researcher and edited by three experts from the education field. From the statistical results of the questionnaire at the end of the pilot study, it was found a reliability of .904 of 51 items of the questionnaire among 171 participants. Item total statistics showed that Cronbach's Alpha would improve if three items (ogstil3 (corrected item-total correlation -.033), ilestra4 (-.136), and ilestrat8 (-.076)) were deleted'.

In the first part of the questionnaire, 10 statements were related to the participants' personal information and opinion about learning English. In the second part, with 51 statements on Likert 5-scale, it was aimed to elicit the attitude of participants towards the autonomous learning and group work in addition to foreign language, foreign language learning, language learning strategy use and their study skills. First nine items in questionnaire were involved in different learning styles such as analytic versus global learners, visual versus auditory versus hands-on or tactile, intuitive/random versus concrete/sequential learning by Richards and Schmidt (2010). The following part was constituted of the most widely used ten strategies by Turkish learners of second language

from Deneme (2008) by means of the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (Oxford, 1990) translated into Turkish. The subsequent items were to collect data related to use of communication strategies (Tarone cited in Ellis, 1984) and to the attitude towards autonomous learning (Dickinson, 1987; Littlewood, 1996) and group work (Jenkin, 1989; Mineishi, 2010) of the participants. The questionnaire is presented in Appendix A.

Instrument (2) Test of Speaking in English

Before and after the treatment, a speaking test was administered to the study participants to clarify the levels of speaking in English of the participants as well as to compare the difference between the control and experimental group at the outset and end of the teaching period. It consisted of a face-to-face interview with a team of two examiners on the topics linked to units in their course books at their levels.

Due to time limit, and practicality problem, the technique preferred in this test was “description of a conversation or lecture”. The scripts of listening (Frazier and Mills, 2009) used in the test of students are in Appendix B. In terms of the current study performances in individual or group work, test scores were obtained from the mean scores after the calculation of two scores awarded by teams of two examiners via the same assessment rubrics formed by O’Sullivan and his students in O’Sullivan (n.d.) provided by researcher in Appendix C.

Instrument (3) Group Discussion

To collect data related to the participants’ strategy use in this study, a group discussion session (Sharle and Szabo, 2000) as a retrospective investigation over their use of strategies while studying foreign language was used to help raise awareness of the language learning and communication strategies as well.

During the first two weeks of the course in addition to each session needing topic-related learner training, the strategies for foreign language learning by Oxford (1990) and for communication by Tarone in Ellis (1984) were reviewed and discussed to become familiar with.

To support the learners in becoming capable of doing so, Dam cited in Little (2004) proposes involving the learners in a non-stop quest for good learning activities, which were shared, discussed, analyzed and evaluated with the whole class and requiring her learners to set their own learning targets and choose their own learning activities, and these too were subjected to discussion, analysis and evaluation. Similarly, Jones (1987) offers some steps in the Strategic Teaching Model. These activities also provided the researcher with valuable data to check any potential change in students' attitudes towards autonomy through the discussion reports.

Instrument (4) Learner Logs

Keeping a 'language learner diary or log' is also an important source of obtaining data and an instrument to improve autonomy in learners (Adamson, 2014; Adamson and Sert, 2012; Balçıkanlı, 2008; Little, 2003; Perez Cavana, 2012; Yıldırım, 2013 among the others). 'Learner log' is described as "the use of a notebook or book in which students write about experiences both in and out of school or record responses and reactions to learning and to learning activities" by Richard and Schmidt (2010). It offers students opportunity to reflect on learning and usually shared with the teacher on a regular basis but not graded.

Learner logs are used as a way of establishing a dialogue between teacher and student. As a procedure of self-assessment, Gardner (2000) advises teachers to develop an idea for how to do an assessment, to explain the idea clearly in a set of instructions, and to leave the learners to create their own assessments. He also mentions the unreliability as one of the most obvious pitfalls of the self-assessment tests but it is not one which should prevent self-assessments from being tried and he adds that teachers would feel more confident about self-assessment if they conducted their own research on its reliability within their own contexts.

Nunan (1989b) claims that they give insights which could be difficult to obtain in any other way. The self-assessment form is provided in Appendix D. Divided into four parts, self-assessment form was consisted of titles 'What I have done', 'What I have learned', 'Reflections', and 'Future plans' as a record of their work.

Instrument (5) Assessment Rubrics for Speaking

Assessment or Peer-assessment instrument by O’Sullivan (n.d.) was the quantitative data source to evaluate the levels of speaking in English of the study participants as well as to enhance group autonomy in group-work sessions. Especially, in a three-phase small group design offered by O’Sullivan (n.d.) and by Underhill (cited in Güllüoğlu, 2004) the instrument was to test the speaking ability of large classes in a single period as a group work activity.

The focus of assessment in oral presentation was on four main aspects of speech such as grammar, vocabulary, presentation, and content after a negotiation session among the learners and the teacher in O’Sullivan (n.d.). The rubrics are provided in Appendix C.

Data Collection Process

In order to search for the impact of group autonomy on foreign language learners’ speaking skill, the process to collect data was carried out during three periods in this study; before, during, and after the teaching programs by means of a questionnaire, a pretest, peer-assessment rubrics, learner logs, and group discussion sessions during experimental teaching program, and a post test.

Period 1 – Questionnaire and Test of Speaking in English

As the first step in the data collection process of the study, Group Autonomy Questionnaire was delivered to both of the groups, control and experiment, of learners to obtain the learners’ attitudes towards autonomous learning as well as language learning strategies and their own learning styles in one session of English course. Subsequently, the test of speaking in English was administered to clarify the speaking ability levels and to correlate the beginning levels of English use of the participants.

After a short interview by means of questions to introduce themselves, their family, hobbies, and free time activities as a warm-up activity, students listened to a part of a conversation or lecture from the course book planned to use in the basic teaching program. The conversation or lectures scripts (Frazier and Mills, 2009) are presented in Appendix B.

Students were able to take notes while listening to conversation. Then, they were asked a question about what they had heard. Preparation Time (15 seconds) and response time (2 minutes) were given before answering. The whole interview lasted for approximately 10 minutes. Their response was scored through the assessment rubrics in Appendix C.

Period 2 – Group Discussion, Learner Logs, and Peer-assessment

In terms of collecting data related mainly to the activities of the experimental teaching program in the study, second period consisted of individual records of learning and information of language learning strategy use by the participants both serving to autonomous learning as well as the results obtained from the speaking assessment activities, all of which serve to satisfy the reasons for a ‘tri-assessment model’ by Fogarty and Stoehr (2008).

On behalf of this model, Dörnyei (2007) also claims that the respondents’ engagement tends to be rather shallow and therefore complex meaning cannot be explored with the questionnaires. Thus, three diverse data sources were used to collect data in addition to the questionnaire and to the pretest.

The group discussion technique was used to collect data related to the participants’ strategy use while studying foreign language, and to raise awareness of language learning and communication strategies in learners during the first two weeks of the course. Discussion was led by teacher who dispensed learners a list of language learning strategies (Oxford, 1990) and communication strategies (Tarone cited in Ellis, 1984) in Appendix G. Students were asked to state two kinds of data;

- types of strategies that they knew well and used in the past, and
- strategies that they wanted to learn to use.

When discussion ended, a short report about the group was formed. Strategies that are needed to review were handled through some steps offered by Jones (1987) in the Strategic Teaching Model. Additionally, the strategies for foreign language learning were discussed at each session when needed topic-related learner training.

In addition to the previous techniques used to collect data, the students were invited to keep learner logs in order to file their learning experiences during the research process. The use and importance of the use of learner logs were shared with the students prior to teaching programs.

Learner logs were kept by learners by means of self-assessment forms in order to help enhance learner autonomy. They recorded the evidence of their learning, including their learning plans in the assessment form proposed by Gardner (2000) in Appendix D. They also provided the researcher with valuable data to check any potential change in students' attitudes towards autonomy.

Peer-assessment took place specifically to evaluate the speaking ability of participants in individual or oral presentations in groups. In terms of assessing the speaking ability of the participants, Luoma (2004) proposes, first of all, to analyze the kind of speaking that is needed to assess in a particular assessment context in terms of social and situational needs.

The participants in this study are in an intensive need of presenting medical topics for and during their future profession. Therefore, students' speaking ability was assessed in format of the presentational mode of three modes of communication by Shrum and Glisan (2010). In a study by Prichard and Ferreira (2014), poster presentations and class presentations and their effects on 75 low-proficiency speakers of English at a Japanese college were investigated. Findings showed that poster presentations would lead to an increased rate of speaking, more vocabulary retention, and better affective effects and that second language instructors should consider when planning oral presentations.

To provide useful feedback and to help learners focus on the significant quality indicators, the format and the content of scoring rubrics in Appendix C were given to students prior to use.

During the process, they were tasked individually or in groups to give short oral presentations, and to instruct the topics adapted from the themes at each unit of their course books in Medical English course (Glending and Howard, 2007), in the course of English for Nursing (Allum and McGarr, 2008), and in the Basic English course (Frazier and Mills, 2009) for nursing students until the end of the first term of educational year while they

were tasked to teach their peers and evaluate their levels at the unit topics for the mid-term preparation in the second term. Themes and tasks are listed in Appendix E.

The structures, vocabulary items and functions covered in the course books were handled in advance as the pre-task activities during the program in order for students to get prepared for their tasks. After a research and preparation period, the tasks were performed from five to ten minutes as the post-task activity.

Notes or reference materials were allowed to help them during their presentation; however, reading aloud was discouraged. The students used visual materials such as pictures and diagrams during their performance. At the end of the tasks, the students had to deal with the questions asked by either the teacher or the students in the class. Learners were graded against the assessment scores from 1 (not so good) to 5 (great) from the scoring rubrics in Appendix C.

Period 3 – Achievement Test and Questionnaire

As the final period in the data collection process, the same speaking test was used to assess and compare the difference between the two groups and the two phases, beginning and ending, of the English speaking levels at the end of the semester.

The questionnaire that had been used to obtain the learners' attitudes towards autonomous learning as well as language learning strategies and styles to both of the groups of learners at the outset of the experimental process was delivered again to the experimental group to check whether there had been a difference of use of learning styles and strategies, communication strategies, of attitude towards autonomous learning and group work at the end of the process.

Experimental Teaching Program

Experimental teaching program in this study was carried out in order to reach two goals; one of goals was related to the formation and improvement of individual autonomy in all participants, and group autonomy in experimental group of learners. Second goal was the

enhancement of speaking skill of all the participants through authentic tasks and group work activities in a social constructivist perspective.

By going after Benson (2001)'s approach for the aim of Sion (2001) in the frame of Van Esch and St. John (2003) through the 'Constructivist Learning Design' by Gagnon and Collay (2006) in three stages of Scharle and Szabo (2000), it was aimed to create a context for autonomous groups of learners in genuine interaction through authentic tasks in and out of the classroom. Thus, the teaching program was based on a number of interrelated pillars underneath one frame as seen in Figure 3.2.

Pillars of the Program

In this part, autonomous learning, social constructivism, group work and task based approach to language teaching as the vital pillars underneath the basis of this study were given details in relation-based groups as the media serving to enhance group autonomy as well as speaking skill in English in the course of the study program.

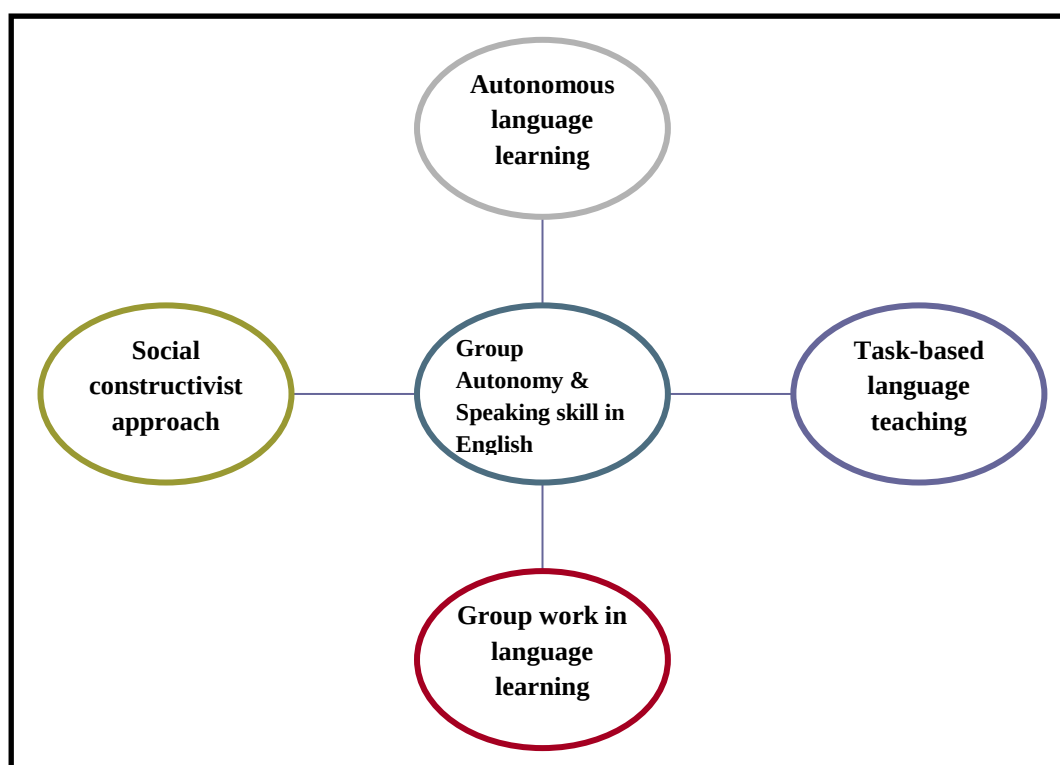


Fig. 3.2 Pillars of the experimental teaching program

Contemplated from the literature review above, five principles became guidelines to follow in order to meet the needs of this study. These were;

1. To gain knowledge of something new, learner must initially see it. The autonomous language learner must be able to make significant decisions about what is to be learned, as well as how and when to do it.

Two features are central to autonomy: choice and responsibility. Autonomy grows through individuals being given practice in taking decisions and so accepting responsibility for their own learning, through co-operating with others in groups to work on problems and to produce a mutual solution, through exchanging ideas and opinions with others.

2. Group learning as a language teaching and learning strategy gets learners actively and cooperatively involved in learning a foreign language in groups. Building a cooperative group atmosphere through pair work and group work in language classrooms allow students to work together and help enhance language learning and develop the self-image and motivation of the group members while accomplishing an academic task.

3. In task-based approach, communication is the expression, interpretation, and negotiation of meaning, which requires two or more autonomous participants that are willing and able to complete the task focuses on the learners' use of the language.

By providing a purpose for the use and learning of language, tasks promote naturalistic learning, catalyze acquisitional processes particularly when combined with group work, and by linking of classroom language learning with language use outside the classroom, task-based instruction encourages learners become self-directed. On the other hand, teachers should find the key that creates and unlocks the students' need to communicate and that students do have something to say; that, just like 'real people', they enjoy talking about themselves, their families, their interests, backgrounds, jobs, plans, dreams and frustrations; about what they had for lunch, where they do their shopping; genuine interaction about a common interest as a small talk.

Small talk is a necessary ingredient in deepening social interaction. Interactional activities as communicative activities that seize interest, force speedy reactions and make talk purposeful and meaningful. In those activities, the supralinguistic features of genuine

interaction are evident, with natural intonation patterns, eye contact, and body signals and turn taking.

4. To configure small groups, the most effective way is to put together four students who represent a cross section of the class in terms of level of past performance. Although teacher-selected groups are suggested best on cooperative learning, random grouping is also another suggested method because it is quick and easy to give the idea that one can work with anyone. The smaller the group, the more each member talks and the less chance there is that someone will be left out. The group must have a leader and a scribe for each of the tasks, usually determined by the group.

5. In a 'new assessment culture', students discuss criteria and engage in self- and/or peer assessment as a framework within which learners can make judgements about their performance. A 'tri-assessment model' for the teachers would help combine portfolio and performance assessments with traditional assessments for more authentic assessments.

These alternative assessment techniques reveal the learners' progress through authentic language use in tasks that require interactions similar to those in the world outside of classrooms and schools. As the procedure of self-assessment, teachers firstly raise awareness among learners of the benefits of self-assessment. Then, they provide guidance on, and materials for, conducting self-assessments. Finally, teachers help learners understand the significance of the results. Teachers are advised to develop an idea for how to do an assessment, to explain the idea clearly in a set of instructions, and to leave the learners to create their own assessments.

Stages of the Program

In the light of the principles above, the experimental procedure in this study aimed to produce, first of all, the necessary courses of action to form autonomy in all participants, then the additional variables to create an environment susceptible to autonomy in groups of learners. As seen in Figure 3.3, courses of action were followed in three dimensions by Scharle and Szabo (2000) during a two-term period of educational year;

- raising awareness through learner training activities to increase participants' ability to learn English, serving consequently to enhance individual autonomy,

- changing the attitudes towards EFL, and
- transferring the teacher's roles to participants through alternative assessment techniques and task based activities in group work format for forming group autonomy in order to sustain learners' willingness.

Table 3.1 Study teaching program and techniques

Teaching		Program			
Period		First Term		Second Term	Whole year
Group	Stage	Stage 1 Strategy Instruction	Stage 2 Changing attitudes	Stage 3 Transferring roles	Assessment
		Strategic Teaching Model	Group- Investigation in group or individual format	Home – Expert Groups Poster Carousel	Self-assessment Peer-assessment in groups Self-assessment Peer-assessment in pairs
Experimental					
Control					

Following the awareness-raising sessions at the outset of the first term, in terms of satisfying the program technique to enhance and evaluate the speaking ability in English, teachers were requested to use the presentational mode of communication by Shrum and Glisan (2010) for the research tasks in Appendix E at the end of each unit during the first term. As the reason to prefer this mode of communication, it could be considered as the easiest, simplest, and one-way task (Candlin cited in Finch, 2000) among the others.

Although the first term was mainly related to the changing attitudes of the participants towards learning autonomously as well as in groups for the experimental group, gradual transfer of the roles of teacher to the learner planned for the second term of educational year.

To keep the pace and stay in touch with researcher and teachers, at every unit outset, teachers reviewed or modified tasks and activities to be conducted for each unit based on previous observations, class experiences, and reflections.

Stage 1 Raising Awareness

As the first step in the experimental teaching program, 'raising awareness' was mainly formed through learner training on language learning and communication strategies that offer learners the *informed choices* about their learning, language learning and communication techniques, and processes to be in a better position to make decisions and then more likely to be more effective and better motivated as learners. Learner training was conducted firstly through a group discussion session with the help of a hand-out of language learning strategies by Oxford (1990) and communication strategies by Tarone in Ellis (1984). Students were asked to state the types of strategies that they knew well and used before, and they wanted to learn to use. At the end of the discussion, a short report about the group was formed.

After current strategy use by students was assessed with a thinking-aloud discussion session during the first two weeks preceding the treatment, the strategies that learners wanted to find out were taught explicitly by requiring learners to set their own learning targets and choose their own learning activities in the sequence of following steps from the Strategic Teaching Model by Jones (1987);

1. Teacher explained strategies by naming them and telling how to use them, step by step after a presentation about English language, language learning, and language learning and communication strategies,
2. Teacher modeled strategies by demonstrating them and verbalizing own thought processes while doing task.
3. Instruction was scaffold by providing support while students practice, adjusting support to students needs, phasing out support to encourage autonomous strategy use.
4. Teacher tried to develop motivation by providing successful experiences and relating strategy use to improved performance.

Stage 2 Changing Attitudes

In terms of satisfying the program technique to enhance autonomous learning, instructional method aiming to change the attitudes of learners to group learning was the Group-Investigation method from Sharan used in both experimental and control groups for the

traditional classroom instruction. It called for students in small groups to take substantial responsibility for deciding what they would learn, how they would organize themselves to learn it, and how they would communicate what they had learned to their classmates through six steps:

Step 1: Choosing the research topics in Appendix E adapted from their course books and organizing into research groups by joining the group of their choice within the limit of forming four-member groups.

Step 2: Planning the learning task. Group members determined subtopic for investigation.

Step 3: Carrying out the investigation. The students gathered information, analyzed and evaluated the data, and reached conclusions.

Step 4: Preparing a final report. The group engaged in activities that culminated in a report, an event, or a summary.

Step 5: Presenting the final report through an oral presentation in front of the class.

Step 6: Evaluation.

Assessment of higher level learning is emphasized, including applications, synthesis, and inferences. Affective experiences should be evaluated also, including the levels of motivation and involvement. Various forms of evaluation are possible. Teachers and pupils can collaborate on evaluation, including the formulation of exams. In terms of the individual activity during the traditional instruction, the Group-Investigation method was adapted to use individually in the study on behalf of changing attitudes of learners towards learning English autonomously.

Stage 3 Transferring Roles

Activities within the last stage of teaching program had two aims; enhancing group autonomy among the groups of learners in the experimental group, and improving learner autonomy in the participants in the control group.

In experimental groups, an activity called ‘Home – Expert Groups’ by Kagan (1994) was the main technique to enhance group autonomy. It also created opportunities to carry out

the authentic tasks in an interactive manner which is considered as a medium to improve speaking in English.

In this activity, groups with four or five students were set up. Each group member was assigned some unique material to learn and then to teach to his group members. To help in, the learning students across the class working on the same sub-section got together to decide what was important and how to teach it. After practice in these "expert" groups, the original groups reformed and students taught each other.

In control groups, another activity called ‘the Poster Carousel’ by Lynch and Maclean (2001) was the technique used to enhance learner autonomy as well as speaking in English.

In this activity, learners were given a different research article. They made a poster based on the article. Posters were displayed round a large room. The host stood beside the poster. Visitors asked questions clockwise in 3 minutes. Plenary discussion and feedback were given on general points.

Assessment during the Program

The assessment of the teaching program was based on the ‘tri-assessment model’ by Fogarty and Stoehr (2008) by combining portfolio and performance assessments with traditional assessments.

As for traditional assessment, students’ achievement was assessed through four mid-term exams during the course and a final exam at the end of the course. These exams were prepared and undertaken by class coordinators and class representatives, and evaluated in optic scanners. Students were informed about the results the very same day.

Performance assessment part was conducted by the audience in class after public performances. Before the performances, the course books along with their syllabi were examined by the researcher in terms of the research topics to be chosen by learners. The topics covered in the course books (Glending and Howard, 2007; Allum and McGarr, 2008; Frazier and Mills, 2009) were adapted to the forms of authentic tasks and listed in order to propose the learners to choose. Themes and tasks are listed in Appendix E. During the process, they were tasked individually or in groups to give short oral presentations on

research topics adapted from the themes at each unit of their course books in format of the presentational mode of three modes of communication by Shrum and Glisan (2010), also referred to as ‘Oral Report’ or ‘Short Talk’. The presentations lasted from five to ten minutes. Notes or reference materials were allowed to help them during their speech; however, reading aloud was discouraged. The students used visual materials such as pictures and diagrams during their performance. At the end of the presentation, the students had to deal with the questions asked by either the teacher or the students in the class. Subsequently, peer-assessment aimed specifically to evaluate the speaking ability of participants in oral presentations as well as to enhance group autonomy in group-work sessions. Especially, in a three-phase small group design offered by O’Sullivan (n.d.) and by Underhill (cited in Güllüoğlu, 2004), the instrument was to test the speaking ability of a large class in a single period as a group work activity. After a negotiation session among the learners and the teacher in O’Sullivan (n.d.), the focus of assessment in oral presentation was on four main aspects of speech such as grammar, vocabulary, presentation, and content through four criteria described below;

- The language used was accurate, with very few if any mistakes
- A lot of different and interesting words were well used
- Eye-contact and gestures were used to get the message across. There were few if any times when the speaker stopped speaking
- What the speaker said was very interesting and kept our attention

To provide useful feedback and to help learners focus on the significant quality indicators, the scoring rubric were given to students prior to use. The scores obtained from this instrument were added to their traditional four mid-term test scores at a predetermined portion. 20 points for presentation from peer evaluation out of 100 were added to the four mid-term examinations that had 80 points.

As a component of portfolio assessment in addition to group discussion carried out through the steps of the Strategic Teaching Model by Jones (1987), participants in the groups were asked to use self-assessment form by Gardner (2000) throughout the teaching program to help create an autonomous learning-enhancing setting. This procedure consisted of individual records of learning and information of language learning. Students were invited

to keep learner logs in order to file their learning experiences during the research process after the use and importance of the use of learner logs were shared with the students prior to teaching programs. Learner logs were kept by learners by means of self-assessment forms in order to help enhance learner autonomy. They recorded the evidence of their learning, including their learning plans in the assessment forms. They also provided the researcher with valuable data to check any potential change in students' attitudes towards autonomy.

Data Analysis Process

Findings from the data sources in the study that aimed to examine the impact of group autonomy on learners' speaking skills were analyzed and offered under two headings; analysis of the quantitative data from three diverse sources and analysis of the qualitative data from group discussions and learner logs.

Analysis of the Quantitative Data

Quantitative data obtained from three data sources in the study; a questionnaire, a pre-test, and a post test, was analyzed through statistical programs to investigate the difference of attitude towards autonomous learning in group and speaking skill in English between experimental group and control group at the outset and end of the teaching program.

Data in the first part of the two-part questionnaire was related to the participants' personal information and opinion about learning English. In the second part, the aim was to undertake a deeper analysis in order to find out two groups of participants' attitudes towards group autonomy.

To further examine the results in relation to the five factors of the Group Autonomy Questionnaire, namely learning styles, language learning strategy use, communication strategy use, attitude towards the autonomous learning, and towards group work, these two groups were scrutinized in terms of measurements before the experiment between two groups of learners as well as each group between before and after the experiment.

The quantitative data obtained from the pre- and post-test applied before and after the treatment to assess English levels of the participants was analyzed in terms of the research questions of the study. The quantitative data was analyzed statistically using independent and paired samples t-tests.

Analysis of the Qualitative Data

Quantitative data in this study was collected through two data sources in the study to measure learner attitudes towards group autonomy:

- Group discussion, and
- Learner logs during the teaching programs for experimental groups and control groups.

Within the analysis of the qualitative data, the data from the discussion reports and the self-assessment rubrics was firstly transformed into textual forms. Texts were studied to analyze and to group under the same content for the content analysis.

In group discussion sessions, students were asked to state types of strategies they knew well and used before, and they wanted to learn to use among the strategies through a hand-out of language learning strategies by Oxford (1990) and communication strategies by Tarone cited in Ellis (1984). At the end of the discussion, a short report about the group was formed by the teachers in a two-heading classification.

As for keeping learner logs, the self-assessment rubrics, consisting of four parts under the titles of 'What I have done', 'What I have learned', 'Reflections', and 'Future plans', by Gardner (2000) were proposed to help enhance autonomous learning as well as supporting researcher with qualitative data as a record of their work at the end of each unit in the teaching program. Among the others, reflections by the students were the data seen worth to pursue the improvement in the learners' attitude towards group autonomy. Students' records were classified into three groups as those who have positive attitude, negative attitude, and neutral attitude towards group work.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

In this chapter, findings from the data sources in the study that aimed to examine the impact of group autonomy on learners' speaking skills are offered under two headings; quantitative findings from three data sources; Group Autonomy Questionnaire results, pre-test, and post-test scores and qualitative findings from group discussions and learner logs.

As one of the main data source, the questionnaire offered significant findings in relation to five factors in the Group Autonomy Questionnaire, namely learning styles, language learning strategy use, communication strategy use, attitude towards the autonomous learning, and towards group work in addition to findings related to the background information about participants' attitude towards studying and learning English to form their profile.

Data on the levels of participants' oral use of English was collected by means of pre- and post-tests. Tests helped researcher compare the level of speaking in English of participants in two groups; control and experimental, as well as the shift between the beginning and end of the study program.

Along with the findings, discussion over the findings from other studies on the same topic is offered before the conclusion part of this chapter.

Quantitative Findings from Group Autonomy Questionnaire

Participants' Attitude towards Learning English

The participants in the study were asked to evaluate themselves in terms of their level of English in the first part of the questionnaire. They stated their levels of English as indicated in Table 4.1:

Table 4.1 Comparison of Students in the Control and Experimental Groups in terms of Their Levels of English

Level			Group		Total
			Control	Experimental	
A	n	6	11	17	
	%	35.3%	64.7%	100.0%	
B	n	88	94	182	
	%	48.4%	51.6%	100.0%	
C	n	73	63	136	
	%	53.7%	46.3%	100.0%	
Total	n	167	168	335	
	%	49.9%	50.1%	100.0%	

As it could be inferred from the table above, there was no significant difference between both groups of students in terms of evaluating themselves in English proficiency.

In total, 17 participants saw themselves at the highest level of English although 182 of the participants thought that their levels belonged to the B level, which meant intermediate. 136 participants thought that they were at the lowest level of English.

To illustrate, 41% of the students considered their level of English at low, 54% at moderate level, and 5% at high level.

According to the scores from the pre-test at the beginning of the experimental teaching program, 3% of the students (n=10) got the highest scores while 12% were at the intermediate level (40-60). The majority of the students (85%) got a score below 40 which meant the lowest level of ability to use English orally. The mean score of the test results above was 30.83.

To set a background of information about the participants' opinion towards learner responsibility, participants were asked to state the principal role player in the process of building their level of English. The results are as in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Effective Factor at the Level of English of Participants

Role players for your level of English		Group		Total
		Control	Experimental	
Myself	n	71	63	134
	%	53.0%	47.0%	100.0%
Teacher	n	27	28	55
	%	49.1%	50.9%	100.0%
School	n	52	47	99
	%	52.5%	47.5%	100.0%
Course	n	3	4	7
	%	42.9%	57.1%	100.0%
Context	n	14	26	40
	%	35.0%	65.0%	100.0%
Total	n	167	168	335
	%	49.9%	50.1%	100.0%

With statistics of 40%, 134 participants declared themselves as the responsible in achieving his/her level of English while 16% of the total number of participants, only 55 of them, stated their teachers as the effective factor in their levels. Of the 335 students who participated in the study, 99 thought that school was more effective in learning English than the others with a percentage of 40%. 7 students depended their success in English on courses with a 3% and 40 students declared their success was the result of other factors at a 12%. This percentage which showed the active factors of participants' current levels of English according to their beliefs indicates the level of autonomy in them as well. Almost 60% of the participants put the success or failure in their level of English, or the responsibility to learn English on other factors rather than themselves.

Participants were also requested to write their goals to learn English in the third item of the first part. They stated their goals to learn English as listed in Table 4.3. As it could be seen in the table, they stated 11 kinds of goal to learn English.

Table 4.3 Goals of the Participants to Learn English

My goal to learn English is for		Group		Total
		Control	Experimental	
Success in English as a subject (EM)	n	1	5	6
	%	16.7%	83.3%	100.0%
Plan for future (IM)	n	3	0	3
	%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Necessity (EM)	n	54	55	109
	%	49.5%	50.5%	100.0%
Communication (IM)	n	1	1	2
	%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
Career necessity (EM)	n	17	12	29
	%	58.6%	41.4%	100.0%
Individual development (IM)	n	38	50	88
	%	43.2%	56.8%	100.0%
Career development (IM)	n	10	5	15
	%	66.7%	33.3%	100.0%
Particular interest (IM)	n	9	6	15
	%	60.0%	40.0%	100.0%
Visit abroad (EM)	n	1	0	1
	%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
No aim	n	19	16	35
	%	54.3%	45.7%	100.0%
Do master degree (EM)	n	14	18	32
	%	43.8%	56.3%	100.0%
Total	n	167	168	335
	%	49.9%	50.1%	100.0%

When classified according to the types of motivation as intrinsic (IM) or extrinsic (EM) (Deci and Ryan cited in Dickinson, 1995), 123 students as 37% of 335 students were motivated intrinsically for ‘plan for future, communication, individual development, career development, and particular interest’ while 177 students as 53% had an external pressure

or promise of reward for studying English. Some of the students stated that they had no aims to learn English.

To clarify the participants' attitudes towards planning their work while studying English as an important factor in learner autonomy as well as in success in life, they were asked to state their planning habit related to study English in three alternatives of attitudes as no plan, a daily or weekly plan, and a long-term plan.

The answers are shown in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4 Planning of the Participants to Learn English

To achieve my objective, I have ...	Group		Total
	Control	Experimental	
no plan	n 57	63	120
	% 47.5%	52.5%	100.0%
a plan on a daily or weekly basis	n 40	37	77
	% 51.9%	48.1%	100.0%
a long-term plan	n 70	68	138
	% 50.7%	49.3%	100.0%
Total	n 167	168	335
	% 49.9%	50.1%	100.0%

Of all the participants in the study, 36% had no plan to study English although 64% had a plan to study English on daily or weekly basis as well as a long-term. Therefore, it could be concluded that the majority of the participants were aware of having a plan to achieve their goals.

To collect the data related to the time spent to learn English by the participants, they were asked the amount of time except the obligatory course hours. The answers can be seen below in Table 4.5. 64% of the students did not spend time to study English although 34% of them spent one hour or more.

The findings from this item showed almost completely opposite to the time spent (36% with no plan and 64% a plan on daily or weekly basis to study English) in the previous statement, which meant they could not spend enough time to follow their plan.

Table 4.5 Amount of Time Spent by Participants to Learn English

Amount of time spent to learn English		Group		Total
		Control	Experimental	
No time	n	104	109	213
	%	48.8%	51.2%	100.0%
One hour	n	44	44	88
	%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
Two hours or more	n	19	15	34
	%	55.9%	44.1%	100.0%
Total	n	167	168	335
	%	49.9%	50.1%	100.0%

Participants were also asked to indicate their favorite way of study among the three common ways of study while studying English. The distribution of the preferred style to study English among the learners was almost even in terms of two groups, control and experimental, in the study. Answers related to the students' preferred study style can be seen in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6 Preferred Styles by Participants while Studying English

What is your preferred style to study?		Group		Total
		Control	Experimental	
Individual	n	78	77	155
	%	50.3%	49.7%	100.0%
Pair work	n	55	50	105
	%	52.4%	47.6%	100.0%
Group work	n	32	39	71
	%	45.1%	54.9%	100.0%
No specific style	n	2	2	4
	%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
Total	n	167	168	335
	%	49.9%	50.1%	100.0%

In terms of total range on preferred style to study English, 46% of the students preferred to study alone while 53% of the students liked to study together with friends or others as pair work or group work.

To get information about the attitude of the participants towards the assessment of their level of English, they were requested to indicate their preference on by whom their level of English should be assessed.

As an important component of autonomous learning environments, assessment preference of the learners would indicate their attitude towards learner autonomy. Therefore, this item was asked to collect data about the learners' attitude towards autonomous learning. Of all the participants, 22% preferred self- or peer-evaluation rather than to be evaluated by teacher or institution (65%). The evaluation on preference of participants in terms of their level of English can be seen in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7 Evaluation Preference of Participants in terms of Their Level of English

In your opinion, who should evaluate your English level?		Group		Total
		Control	Experimental	
Learner	n	26	30	56
	%	46.4%	53.6%	100.0%
Peer	n	13	6	19
	%	68.4%	31.6%	100.0%
Teacher	n	91	94	185
	%	49.2%	50.8%	100.0%
Institution	n	18	16	34
	%	52.9%	47.1%	100.0%
All	n	19	22	41
	%	46.3%	53.7%	100.0%
Total	n	167	168	335
	%	49.9%	50.1%	100.0%

To clarify the willingness and motivation level of the participants, they were asked to describe their level of desire to learn English. They stated their level of willingness to learn English as seen in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8 Motivation Level of Participants to Study English

How would you describe in terms of willingness in learning English?	Group		Total
	Control	Experimental	
overzealous	n 41	31	72
	% 56.9%	43.1%	100.0%
Willing	n 108	118	226
	% 47.8%	52.2%	100.0%
Reluctant	n 18	19	37
	% 48.6%	51.4%	100.0%
Total	n 167	168	335
	% 49.9%	50.1%	100.0%

Most of the students were willing to learn English at a rate of 89% although there were some reluctant students to learn English. These findings were contradictory once it was compared to their future plan and amount of time spent to learn English.

Participants' Learning Styles and Strategies

In the second part of the questionnaire, the participants in the study were asked to evaluate themselves in terms of their learning styles, language learning and communication strategy use while learning English.

The reason to collect data related to the participants' learning styles and strategy use was that being aware of their learning styles and using strategies at a moderate level while learning English were considered as indicators of being autonomous.

The findings from this part of the questionnaire aimed to find answers to the research questions related to the first problem in the study: Can a group exercise or develop autonomy within itself? The reason to ask the following questions that were inquiring the differences of learning styles, language learning and communication strategy use of the

participants were that those factors played significant roles in fostering LA as the main components. The findings to those questions were as followed;

Research question 1.1: Is there a significant difference of learning styles, language learning and communication strategy use between autonomous groups of learners (experimental group) and learners that are exposed to traditional instruction (control group) before the experiment?

Whether there was a significant difference of learning styles, language learning and communication strategy use between learners in the experimental group and learners in the control group before the experiment was investigated through independent samples t-test.

Before the experiment, means of learning style ($\bar{X}=3.71$), language learning strategy ($\bar{X}=3.30$), and communication strategy ($\bar{X}=3.37$) use of learners in the control group were found higher than the means of learners in the experimental group.

Nevertheless, statistically, learning style, language learning strategy, and communication strategy use of learners in the control group means did not vary significantly with the means of learners in the experimental group before the experiment ($p>0.05$). Results are presented in Table 4.9:

Table 4.9 Independent Samples t-Test Results of Groups in terms of Learning Styles, Language Learning and Communication Strategies before the Experiment

Before the experiment	Group	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	p
Learning styles	Control	167	3.71	0.48	1.926	0.055
	Experimental	168	3.61	0.47		
Language learning strategies	Control	167	3.30	0.59	1.040	0.299
	Experimental	168	3.24	0.54		
Communication strategies	Control	167	3.37	0.51	-1.396	0.164
	Experimental	168	3.35	0.47		

Research question 1.2: Is there a significant difference of learning styles, language learning and communication strategy use of learners in the experimental group before and after the experiment?

Whether there was a significant difference of learning styles, language learning and communication strategy use of learners in the experimental group before and after the experiment was investigated through paired samples t-test. Results are seen in Table 4.10:

Table 4.10 Paired Samples t-Test Results of Experimental Groups in terms of Learning Styles, Language Learning and Communication Strategies before and after the Experiment

Experimental group		Mean	Std. Deviation	t	p
Learning styles	Before experiment	3.61	0.47	1.675	0.096
	After experiment	3.63	0.44		
Language learning strategies	Before experiment	3.24	0.54	-0.270	0.787
	After experiment	3.32	0.61		
Communication strategies	Before experiment	3.35	0.47	0.364	0.717
	After experiment	3.45	0.46		

Means of learning styles ($\bar{X}$ =3.63), language learning ($\bar{X}$ =3.32) and communication strategy use ($\bar{X}$ =3.45) of learners in the experimental group before the experiment were found higher in comparison to the measurement results after the experiment. However, statistically, difference measured between before and after the experiment in terms of the learning styles, language learning and communication strategies of autonomous groups of learners was not found significant ($p>0.05$).

In a study on autonomous learning through three stages of program proposed by Scharle and Szabo (2000), Chuan (2010) intended to make the students become aware of the importance of responsible attitude and independent learning ability in Taiwanese foreign language teaching context. The aim was to develop the students' learning performance, give guidance on their learning strategies, and develop their interest in language learning as it was in this study. The results showed that using the content of regular school classroom teaching as a meaningful context for the development of responsibility could not only enhance the learning effect, but also saved time for the optional strategy training. According to the scores in the post-test, the experimental group had a higher mean score than the control group. Similar to the present study, Okumuş Ceylan (2014) also

investigated LLS for their contribution to language learning through a learner training period on language learning strategies for a defined period of time. She found a positive effect of LLS on autonomous learning and concluded that training students on language learning strategies might lead to better foreign language proficiency and that the more strategies the students employed or more frequently more autonomous they became by starting to shoulder the responsibility of their own learning process.

Participants' Attitude towards Autonomy and Group Work

In addition to the building blocks of learner autonomy such as being aware of their learning styles and using language learning and communicative strategies while learning English, some items of the questionnaire aimed to draw together some data related to the participants' attitude towards learner autonomy and group work as the main components of this study's theoretical and practical framework. The findings were also used to answer the sub-questions as constituents of the first question that asked whether a group could exercise or develop autonomy within itself. These questions and findings were as follows;

Research question 1.3: Is there a significant difference of attitude towards learner autonomy and group work between learners in the experimental group and learners in the control group before the experiment?

Whether there was a significant difference of attitude towards learner autonomy and group work between learners in the experimental group and learners in the control group before the experiment was investigated through independent samples t-test. Results are presented in Table 4.11:

Table 4.11 Independent Samples t-Test Results of the Control and Experimental Groups in terms of the Learner Autonomy and Group Work Measured before the Experiment

Before experiment	Group	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	p
Learner autonomy	Control	167	3.58	0.66	1.504	0.134
	Experimental	168	3.48	0.62		
Group work	Control	167	3.93	0.69	1.032	0.303
	Experimental	168	3.85	0.68		

The levels of attitude of the control groups of learners towards the learner autonomy ($\bar{X}=3.58$) and group work ($\bar{X}=3.93$) were found higher than the measurement results of learners in the experimental group before the experiment.

However, statistically, the difference of attitude towards the learner autonomy and group work between two groups of learners was not found significant before the experiment ($p>0.05$). Consequently, it could be claimed that participants in both groups moved toward learner autonomy and group work in similar feelings before the experiment.

Research question 1.4: Is there a significant difference of attitude towards learner autonomy and group work of learners in the experimental group before and after the experiment?

Table 4.12 Paired Samples t-Test Results of the Experimental Groups in terms of the Attitude towards Learner Autonomy and Group Work before and after the Experiment

Experimental group		Mean	Std. Deviation	t	p
Learner autonomy	Before experiment	3.48	0.62	0.859	0.392
	After experiment	3.52	0.68		
Group work	Before experiment	3.85	0.68	-0.453	0.651
	After experiment	3.96	0.67		

Whether there was a significant difference of attitude towards learner autonomy and group work learners in the experimental group before and after the experiment was investigated through paired samples t-test. Results are presented in Table 4.12.

The attitude towards the learner autonomy ($\bar{X}=3.52$) and group work ($\bar{X}=3.96$) of learners in the experimental group after the experiment were found higher in comparison to the measurement results before the experiment.

However, statistically, the difference of attitude towards learner autonomy and group work of autonomous groups of learners before and after the experiment was not found significant ($p>0.05$). On the other hand, the study in Dam (2010) was based on a longitudinal research project aiming to provide insights into learner autonomy in the context of Danish secondary school learners. By working in groups, the learners were more

involved than normally in carrying out the work undertaken and they obviously felt co-responsible for its outcome. Furthermore, their personal involvement in their own learning provided a good foundation for evaluating the process during and after the project. The project's results indicated that, when the teacher gave students more chance to be involved in class decision making, they were more active and motivated to learn, which led to a better and higher quality of teaching and learning. Although the changing-attitudes and transferring-roles activities during the last two phases of this study had also an intention to give chance in class decision making, the finding showed that these chances were not sufficient. To promote learner autonomy, Balçıkanlı (2006) also studied the activities to be exploited at Gazi University Preparatory School and found that the learners instructed with the autonomy implementation in the experimental group scored higher and showed more autonomy than the control group.

Similarly, Cappellini (2013) compared autonomy to heteronomy, where pedagogical decisions were made by someone else and imposed on the learners. In this case study, a self-learning course was used to develop students' autonomy while learning learners took two tests: a placement test to know her current level in the foreign language, and a test to discover her learning profile. Through the sections of this case study, it was found out that Open Educational Resources could be a tool for the development of learner autonomy but not sufficient.

Quantitative Findings from Tests' Results on Speaking Skills

As a pioneer study about the impact of autonomous group learning on learners' speaking ability in English as a foreign language, the data on the levels of participants' ability to use English orally was collected by means of pre- and post-tests to check the level of speaking in English and the shift between the beginning and end of the study program. Four research questions were leading the discussion on participants' speaking skills.

Research question 2.1: Is there a significant difference of speaking ability between learners in the experimental group and learners in the control group before the experiment?

Whether there was a significant difference of speaking ability between learners in the experimental group and learners in the control group before the experiment was investigated through independent samples t-test. Results are presented in Table 4.13:

Table 4.13 Independent Samples t-Test Results of the Control and Experimental Groups in terms of Speaking Skill before the Experiment

	Group	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	p
Pretest	Control	167	30.62	10.44	-0.370	0.712
	Experimental	168	31.06	11.15		

The speaking ability mean score ($\bar{X}$ =31.06) of learners in the experimental group was slightly higher than the mean score ($\bar{X}$ =30.62) of learners in the control group before the experiment. However, statistically, speaking ability between learners in the experimental group and learners in the control group before the experiment do not vary significantly ($p>0.05$). This finding ensured that the two groups of participants were equal in terms of speaking ability in English before the experiment.

Research question 2.2: Is there a significant difference of speaking ability between learners in the experimental group and learners in the control group after the experiment?

Whether there was a significant difference of speaking ability between learners in the experimental group and learners in the control group after the experiment was investigated through independent samples t-test. Results are presented in Table 4.14:

Table 4.14 Independent Samples t-Test Results of the Control and Experimental Groups in terms of Speaking Skill after the Experiment

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	p
Posttest	Control	167	54.29	12.44	-2.047	0.041*
	Experimental	168	56.99	11.63		

* $p<0.05$

The speaking skill mean score ($\bar{X}$ =56.99) of the autonomous groups of learners was found higher than the mean score ($\bar{X}$ =54.29) of the learners that were exposed to traditional

instruction (control group) after the experiment. Statistically, speaking skills measured after the experiment varied significantly between autonomous groups of learners (experimental group) and learners that were exposed to traditional instruction (control group) ($p < 0.05$). This significant difference was an indication of positive answer to the second question of this research, which questioned whether group autonomy could help increase the learners' speaking skills. The groups had different class activities to improve their speaking skills in English; students in the control group were assigned with tasks to be performed individually whereas the experimental group learners carried out the same tasks cooperatively through their own decisions including the evaluation activities.

In terms of this finding, it could be claimed that group autonomy was effective to improve the foreign language learners' speaking skills. The following findings were related to the last two questions and they showed the difference in the speaking skills of participants in groups before and after the experiment.

Research question 2.3: Is there a significant difference of speaking ability of learners in the control group before and after the experiment?

Whether there was a significant difference of speaking ability of learners in the control group before and after the experiment was investigated through paired samples t-test.

Table 4.15 Paired Samples t-Test Results of Control Group in terms of Speaking Ability after the Experiment

Group		Mean	Std. Deviation	t	p
Control	Pretest	30.62	10.44	-23.427	0.000*
	Posttest	54.29	12.44		

* $p < 0.05$

The speaking ability mean ($\bar{X} = 54.29$) of learners in the control group after the experiment was found higher than the speaking skills ($\bar{X} = 30.62$) measured before the experiment. Statistically, speaking ability of learners in the control group varied significantly before and after the experiment ($p < 0.05$). Results are presented in Table 4.15.

Research question 2.4: Is there a significant difference of speaking ability of learners in the experimental group before and after the experiment?

Whether there was a significant difference of speaking ability of learners in the experimental group before and after the experiment was investigated through paired samples t-test. The mean score of speaking ability ($\bar{X}=56.99$) of learners in the experimental group after the experiment was found higher than the mean score ($\bar{X}=31.06$) before the experiment. Statistically, speaking ability of learners in the experimental group varied significantly before and after the experiment ($p<0.05$). Results are presented in Table 4.16:

Table 4.16 Paired Samples t-Test Results of Learners in the Experimental Group in terms of Speaking Ability before and after the Experiment

Group		Mean	Std. Deviation	t	p
Experimental	Pretest	31.06	11.15	-24.554	0.000*
	Posttest	56.99	11.63		

* $p<0.05$

The last two findings indicated that the speaking skills of learners of English as a foreign language could be improved via in-class speaking activities but group work could be more efficient in developing speaking in English once the finding to the question 2.2 in this study was taken into consideration. Altay (2004) and Kasap (2005) also studied the effectiveness of task-based instruction in improving students' speaking skills at two different state universities and the findings demonstrated that students had neutral or partially positive reactions to the treatment tasks but found these in-class activities helpful in developing their oral skills although the t-tests results revealed no significant differences in any of the comparisons between the control and experimental groups.

Qualitative Findings from Group Discussions

After gathering data from the reports in the group discussion sessions on language learning and communication strategy use of the participants, the content analysis related to group discussions revealed that;

- Participants had similar habits and limited use of language learning strategies.

- The most frequently used strategies by participants were mainly preferred from the cognitive strategies changing in terms of the aim of the learners.
- Especially metacognitive strategies were needed to work on to train learners.
- More motivated students used strategies more frequently, and not all strategies were used by all learners.

The Most Frequently Used Strategies by Participants

In group discussion sessions on language learning and communication strategies, learners reported more often the use of the following strategies:

- I use new English words in a sentence so I can remember them. (Memory)
- I use flashcards to remember new English words. (Memory)
- I watch English language TV shows spoken in English or go to movies spoken in English. (Cognitive)
- I review English lessons often. (Cognitive)
- I try to find patterns in English. (Cognitive)
- I say or write new English words several times. (Cognitive)
- When I can't think of a word during a conversation in English, I use gestures. (Compensation)
- I pay attention when someone is speaking English. (Metacognitive)
- If I do not understand something in English, I ask the other person to slow down or say it again. (Social)

Strategies to Be Worked On

Due to the lack of awareness of LLS or false attitude towards them by misunderstanding, strategies below needed to be clarified or corrected;

- I try to find out how to be a better learner of English.

- I have clear goals for improving my English skills.
- I plan my schedule so I will have enough time to study English.
- I think about my progress in learning English.
- I first skim an English passage then go back and read carefully.
- I read English without looking up every new word.
- I try to talk like native English speakers.
- I try to learn about the culture of English speakers.
- I practice English with other students.
- I write down my feelings in a language learning diary.
- I encourage myself to speak English even when I am afraid of making a mistake.
- I use new English words in a sentence so I can remember them.
- I try not to translate word-for-word.

To sum up, the findings showed that the most frequently used or preferred strategies by participants were six direct strategies (cognitive (4), memory (2)) as mostly general practising strategies. These findings were in harmony with Algan (2006) and Gökgöz (2008) who found an average LLS use among the preparatory school students at different universities. Consequently, in terms of enhancing learner and group autonomy, participants in this study needed to be trained on a number of strategies that were considered to help them learn English easier such as metacognitive and affective strategies. In addition to this, Atik (2006) aimed to investigate the impact of strategy training in the use of strategies for speaking in English. The research findings showed the usefulness of training learners in the use of speaking strategies and raising their awareness through strategy training.

Qualitative Findings from Learner Logs

Participants in the study recorded what they had done to describe activities and their reflections on how useful and enjoyable their activities were after the class hours in their self-assessment forms. The noteworthy findings from these logs are presented below.

Positive Reflections after Group Work

- Effect of group work is extremely good. I noticed that I learned better and lasted longer.
- Group work was useful. If all the participants contribute to the activity, group work becomes more fun and gainly.
- Group work causes more effective information flow. In my opinion, it is favorable.
- Students are more active in group work. However, the task could be challenging for some because not everybody is on the same level of English.
- Group work helps class become more active. The worst side is the crowd and the noise.
- Group work became rewarding. Communication is easier because students participated actively.
- It was active and successful. However, it necessitated more support.
- I joined the group work actively.
- Not in every topic was informative or amusing, but through group work, everybody was ensured to join the activity.
- Group work provided with good learning through effective participation.
- In group work, share of knowledge and skill with friends was very useful.
- Group work is good and effective from time to time, but it shouldn't be used frequently.
- Group work forced us to do something/to learn something/to participate in class actively.
- Group work can be advantageous when formed at the same conditions and with the same effort by the people in the group.

Negative Reflections

- I don't think group work is efficient. It causes disorder.
- Not everybody provided their support at the same amount; many people did not care about it. Besides, they didn't show respect the people who care the activity.

- I don't like group work very much.

Reflections on Both Directions

- It depended on the kind of the subject. Sometimes, it was worthwhile, other times boring.
- It depended on the topic. The good sides are in majority.

Conclusion

Based on the Group Autonomy Questionnaire, English pre- and post-tests, the quantitative data was analyzed through statistical package programs. After manual data input was done, the background information and opinion about learning English of the participants in the first part of the questionnaire and their attitude towards learning English as well as towards autonomous learning and group work were analysed through descriptive and t-tests in order to compare the differences between the groups.

The findings from the instruments in the study revealed that group autonomy formed by group work and autonomous learning activities had a significant impact on foreign language learners' speaking skill. Moreover, it was concluded that the assessment of levels of speaking ability of participants by themselves and their own reflections over the learning experiences through self-assessment rubrics had a significant role on enhancing autonomy in learners.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Introduction

This chapter provides a quick summary of the study and the procedures so far. In the summary, an overview of the background, data collection, and data analysis procedures are presented briefly. Moreover, the conclusions from the findings in this study and investigations on developing LA and speaking skills of foreign language learners are discussed in the following part of this chapter. Finally, in the light of the data gained, and within the frames provided by the study, implications and some suggestions for further research are made.

Summary of the Study

In this study, researcher aimed to investigate the impact of group autonomy on foreign language learners' speaking skill from a task-based and social constructivist perspective. Starting with the term "autonomy" as the core concept, the focus of the research field was directed to "autonomous learning in groups". In this approach, authentic tasks, group work, and peer- and self-evaluation exploring prior knowledge, experiences and beliefs of the learner were the departure points of the experimental teaching process used to make a three-stage comparative study of traditional and autonomous learning in groups of learners in a mixed-method design. The three steps to enhance autonomy, raising awareness, changing attitudes, and transferring roles, in learners were followed to improve their speaking ability in English. The interaction brought by social constructivist and task-based

approaches in group work format was also an important tool in trying to improve the speaking ability in a foreign language.

In practice, after the submission of the questionnaire on autonomous learning in groups and the pre-test to check the level of speaking ability of participants, learner training on language learning and communicative strategies was carried out to raise awareness in all participants as the first stage of experimental teaching process. Subsequently, ‘changing-attitudes’ and ‘transferring-roles’ stages were conducted by means of related techniques such as ‘Home – expert group’, ‘The poster carousel’ and authentic tasks adapted from the units in the students’ course books. Along those stages, self- and peer-assessment were used to rate the oral presentations by participants and to collect data for the study as well as to improve autonomous learning in learners. Finally, the same questionnaire and post-test were applied to see whether there were differences between the results from two groups of participants.

Conclusions

Conclusions to be handled in this part are guided by the framework of the experimental teaching program in three stages proposed by Scharle and Szabo (2000). The same framework was also used by Chuan (2010) in a study on autonomous learning intending to make the students become aware of the importance of responsible attitude and independent learning ability in Taiwanese foreign language teaching context. The aim was to develop the students’ learning performance, give guidance on their learning strategies, and develop their interest in language learning. The results showed that using the content of regular school classroom teaching as a meaningful context for the development of responsibility could not only enhance the learning effect, but also saved time for the optional strategy training. According to the scores in the post-test, the experimental group had a higher mean score than the control group. Incidentally, Okumuş Ceylan (2014) also investigated LLS for their contribution to language learning through a learner training period on language learning strategies for a defined period of time as followed in this study. She found a positive effect of LLS on autonomous learning and concluded that training students on language learning strategies might lead to better foreign language proficiency, particularly

in lower levels, and that the more strategies the students employed or more frequently more autonomous they became by starting to shoulder the responsibility of their own learning process. Besides, students were asked to write regular journals to keep track of their learning experience. Similarly, Cappellini (2013) compared autonomy to heteronomy, where pedagogical decisions were made by someone else and imposed on the learner. In this case study, a self-learning course was used to develop students' autonomy while learning a foreign language. In the course process, the learners took two tests: a placement test to know their current level in the foreign language, and a test to discover their learning profiles. Through the sections of this case study, it was found out that Open Educational Resources could be a tool for the development of learner autonomy but not sufficient. In the same perspective, the Group Autonomy Questionnaire in Turkish was conducted on 335 first- and third-year students at the medical and nursing faculties of a state university in Turkey to discover the participants' learning profiles, and their language learning and communication strategy use. The questionnaire indicated that;

- the majority (95%) of 335 participants considered their level of English at moderate level, or lower although the pretest mean scores of speaking skill of participants in both groups were very close (Control Group ($\bar{X}$ =30.62) vs. Experimental group ($\bar{X}$ =31.06) measured before the experiment. This was an indication of the equivalent level of English between two groups of participants before the experiment.

- Almost half of the participants (46%) preferred to study English alone while 53% liked to study together with friends. 40% of the participants declared themselves as the responsible in achieving this level of English and 60% of them stated that the other factors were more effective in their levels. Although these findings did not indicate any significance in terms of the participants' attitude towards the learner autonomy, the majority of the students preferred to be evaluated in English by teacher, institution, and all (78%) except 22% of the students, which might be a sign of inadequacy of autonomous learning in participants.

- in terms of level of motivation, 37% of the students was motivated intrinsically while 53% felt an external pressure or had promise of reward for studying English even though there were some students with no reasons to learn English. To reach their goal, even though 36% had no plan to study English and 64% had a plan to study English on daily or weekly basis as well as a long-term, 64% of them did not spare time to study English. This

was contradictory to the findings related to the willingness and motivation level of the participants to learn English because most of the students were willing to learn English at a rate of 89% although there were some reluctant students to learn English. Only 34% of the students spent one hour or more, which showed the intensivity of their majors on medicine.

Conclusions related to Findings on Group Autonomy

After analyzing the results of the qualitative data and classifying into the same content groups, texts related to group discussions revealed that;

- The most frequently used or preferred strategies by participants were direct strategies (cognitive (4), memory (2)) as mostly general practising strategies although Deneme (2008) and Demirel (2012) found an average level of language learning strategies through using mostly compensation merely memory strategies by the university students via the same tool as SILL (Oxford, 1990).
- In terms of enhancing learner and group autonomy, participants in this study needed to be trained on a number of strategies that were considered to help them learn English easier such as metacognitive and affective strategies.

Learner log records indicated that;

- Most students (75%) had positive attitude towards group work while 15% of the students felt uncomfortable with group work. Only 10% of the participants attributed the group work to the kinds of the theme or subject in the course.
- They liked group work because they were more active in group work and considered it helpful to learn English. The disorder and noise were the negative sides while doing activities together.
- Students' active, reasonable, and even participation to group work were also mentioned as an important factor to consider and advised not to be used frequently.

The data obtained from the second part of the questionnaire was used in search for the answers to research questions 1.1 and 1.3 which asked whether there were any significant difference between autonomous groups of learners and learners that were exposed to traditional instruction in terms of learning styles, language learning and communication

strategies, and the attitude towards the learner autonomy and group work before the experiment. Through the analysis of the mean scores, it was found that learning style, language learning strategy, communication strategy, and the attitude towards the learner autonomy and group work means of learners in control groups were found higher than the means of learners in experimental groups before the experiment. Nevertheless, statistically, these means did not vary with the means of learners in experimental groups before the experiment.

The data was also used to find out whether there were any significant difference in terms of the learning styles, language learning, communication strategies, and the attitude towards the learner autonomy and group work of autonomous groups of learners before and after the experiment (Research questions 1.2 and 1.4).

Although the mean scores of learning styles, language learning and communication strategies of autonomous groups of learners before the experiment and the attitude towards the learner autonomy and group work of autonomous groups of learners after the experiment were found higher in comparison to the measurement results, difference measured between before and after the experiment was not found significant statistically, which meant a negative answer to the first question of the study; a group cannot exercise or develop autonomy within itself. However, Dam (2010) claimed that the learners took active part in their own learning by choosing what to do, even within the limited possibilities given. They were also more involved than normally in carrying out the work undertaken by working in groups.

In spite of the positive attitude towards the group work in participants' learner logs, the qualitative findings from group discussion reports reflecting the inadequacy of efficient use of language learning and communication strategies (only six strategies out of 54; cognitive (4), memory (2)) in accordance with Algan (2006) and Gökgöz (2008) could also be the expression for the same result. Another reason could stand for one of the limitations in this study. This limitation was related to the time limit open to the arguments due to the fact that building and fostering learner autonomy took time (Candy cited in Thanasoulas, 2000; Murray, 1999).

Conclusions related to Findings on Speaking Skill

The quantitative data analyzed statistically through independent and paired samples t-tests sought for an answer to research question 2.1 that asked whether there were any significant difference between autonomous groups of learners and learners that were exposed to traditional instruction in terms of speaking skills before the experiment.

The speaking skill mean score of learners in the experimental group before the experiment was slightly higher than the mean score of the learners that were exposed to traditional instruction. However, statistically, speaking skills mean measured before the experiment did not vary between autonomous groups of learners and learners in the control group.

Research question 2.2 was to investigate whether there were any significant difference between autonomous groups of learners and learners that were exposed to traditional instruction after the experiment in terms of the speaking skills. The speaking skill mean score of autonomous groups of learners after the experiment was found higher than the mean score of the learners that were exposed to traditional instruction. Statistically, speaking skills mean score measured after the experiment varied significantly between autonomous groups of learners and learners that were exposed to traditional instruction.

Through research question 2.3, it was questioned whether there were significant differences measured between before and after the experiment in terms of the speaking skills of learners that were exposed to traditional instruction. The speaking skills measured after the experiment of learners that were exposed to traditional instruction were found higher than the speaking skills measured before the experiment. Statistically, speaking skills measured before and after the experiment varied significantly.

Research question 2.4 was to see whether there were any significant differences in terms of the speaking skills of autonomous groups of learners before and after the experiment. The speaking skills of autonomous groups of learners after the experiment were found higher than the speaking skills measured before the experiment. Statistically, speaking skills measured before and after the experiment of autonomous groups of learners varied significantly.

To reach the underlying causes of the phenomenon, to gather qualitative data to support the quantitative findings before, and to complete the mixed methods research design of the study, a group discussion session, and self- and peer-assessment rubrics were in use.

Implications

In the light of the findings and interpretations of the research, this study suggested that autonomous learning principles, authentic and interactive task, and group work be used as much as possible as it turned out to be very effective in enhancing foreign language learners' speaking skills. English teachers should take the learner as well as group autonomy into consideration training learners how to learn a foreign language and change of responsibility towards the learner. On this way, the most helpful tool to be used was authentic task in group work format.

Group work is favorable if it is used reasonably. Besides, teachers should not fail to notice the impact of self- and peer- assessment during this process. Learners who take the responsibility of learning would be supported with the assessment of their levels by themselves and by their peers without the anxiety to be assessed. This context would give rise to an enhancement of their language use capacity orally but to have group autonomy.

Suggestions for Further Study

Though the current study answered its research questions, further studies may be conducted in different settings due to the limited number of studies on group autonomy. Time limit for the duration of the process occupied two educational terms to enhance autonomy in the experimental groups of learners in this study. Studies lasting longer would help find answers with more significant differences to the questions in the study. Future studies may also investigate the effectiveness of group autonomy on the other skills of learners such as reading or writing skills.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – Group Autonomy Questionnaire in Turkish

Sevgili öğrenciler,

Bir yabancı dili öğrenmenin derste edinilen bilgi ve becerilerin ders dışı zamanlarda pekiştirilmesi, geliştirilmesi ve kullanılması ile kolaylaşacağı dile getirilmektedir. Bu düşünceden yola çıkarak İngilizce ders içi ve ders dışı çalışmalarınızın etkin ve verimli kullanımı konusunda bir çalışma yapmaktayım. Bu maksatla hazırlanan ve iki bölümden oluşan bu anketin ilk bölümünde sizlerin İngilizce ile ilgili kişisel bilgi ve düşüncelerinizi öğrenmeye yardımcı olacak sorular bulunmaktadır. İkinci bölüm ise İngilizce öğrenme sürecinde öğrenme stilinizi ve strateji kullanma durumunuzu belirlemek, kendi başına öğrenme ve İngilizce öğrenirken grupla çalışma konularındaki düşüncelerinizi açığa kavuşturmak amacıyla oluşturulmuştur.

Ankete katılarak bu çalışmaya verdiğiniz destek için teşekkür ederim.

A- KİŞİSEL BİLGİLER

1- Okulunuz: HYO1 HYO3 ATF1

2- İngilizce Seviyeniz (Kurunuz): A (İleri) B (Orta) C (Başlangıç)

3- Seviyenizin Sorumlusu: Kendim Öğretmen Okul Kurs Çevre

4- İngilizceyi öğrenme amacım

5- Amacıma ulaşmak için

- herhangi bir planım yok - günlük planlama yaparım. - uzun vadeli planım var.

6- Dersler hariç İngilizce öğrenmek için haftada ayırdığınız süre

- Ders dışında pek zaman ayıramıyorum. - Bir saat civarında - İki saatten fazla

7- Derslerde size en uygun çalışma şekli hangisidir?

- Tek başına - İkili - Grupla - Yok

8- İngilizceyi öğrenip öğrenmediğinizi sizce kim değerlendirmelidir?

- Öğrenci - Sınıf arkadaşı - Öğretmen - Okul - Hepsisi

9- İngilizce öğrenme konusunda kendinizi nasıl betimlersiniz?

- Çok istekli - İstekli - İstekli değil

10- Sizce ideal bir İngilizce dersi nasıl olmalıdır?

B- ANKET: Lütfen sizin için uygun olan bölümlere –X- işareti koyunuz.

1= Kesinlikle katılmıyorum 2= Katılmıyorum 3= Kararsızım 4= Katılıyorum 5= Kesinlikle katılıyorum

	1	2	3	4	5
1. İngilizceyi sınıf dışında, doğal, yüz yüze iletişim içinde daha iyi öğreniyorum.					
2. İngilizceyi sınıfta alıştırma, test ve sınav gibi ders içi aktivitelerle daha iyi öğreniyorum.					
3. Bazı İngilizce kuralları öğrenmekte zorluk çekiyorum.					
4. Sorulan bir soruya cevap verirken çabuk ve tahmin etme yolunu sık sık kullanırım.					
5. Bana verilen bir görevi yapmak için öncelikle karşılaşılabileceğim güçlükleri bulmaya çalışırım.					

6. Bir konuyu okuyarak, tablo, çizim veya grafik yardımı ile daha iyi anlıyorum.					
7. Dersi dinleyerek daha iyi anlıyorum.					
8. Derslerin gösterilerek ya da fiziksel aktivite yoluyla anlatılması daha iyi öğrenmemi sağlamaktadır.					
9. Konunun özelliklerine göre öğrenme stilimi değiştirebilirim.					
10. İngilizce bildiklerimle yeni öğrendiklerim arasında ilişki kurarım.					
11. Televizyonda İngilizce programlar ya da İngilizce filmler izlerim.					
12. Bilmediğim kelimelerin anlamını, tahmin ederek bulmaya çalışırım.					
13. Yaptığım yanlışların farkına varır ve bunlardan daha doğru İngilizce kullanmak için faydalanırım.					
14. İngilizcemi kullanırken tedirgin ve kaygılı olduğum anlar rahatlamaya çalışırım.					
15. Herhangi bir şeyi anlamadığımda, karşımdaki kişiden daha yavaş konuşmasını ya da söylediklerini tekrar etmesini isterim.					
16. Konuşurken karşımdakinin yanlışlarımı düzeltmesini isterim.					
17. Okulda arkadaşlarımla İngilizce konuşurum.					
18. Derste İngilizce sorular sormaya gayret ederim.					
19. İngilizce konuşanların kültürü hakkında bilgi edinmeye çalışırım.					
İngilizce konuşurken kullanmak istediğim kelimeyi hatırlayamadığım zaman	1	2	3	4	5
20. yakın anlamdaki başka bir kelime kullanırım.					
21. özelliklerini, işlevini söz ya da vücut dilini kullanarak anlatırım.					
22. bazen Türkçe kelime kullanırım.					
23. ses veya biçim olarak benzeyen Türkçe kelime kullanırım.					
24. geçebilecek bir başka İngilizce kelime kullanırım.					
25. bir süre sessiz kalırım.					
26. cümlemi veya bir kısmını değiştiririm.					
27. cümlemi tamamlamaktan vazgeçerim.					
28. başkasından yardım isterim.					
29. jest, mimik ya da ses taklidi yaparak iletirim.					
30. zaman kazanmak için “İıh”, “Bir dakika”, gibi sessizlikleri kapatacak ifadeler kullanırım.					

31. İngilizce derslerinde öğretilenlerin dil öğrenmede yerini ve amacını anlıyorum.					
32. Kendi İngilizce öğrenme hedeflerimi belirleyebilirim.					
33. Hedeflerime uygun çalışma konularını ve sürecini belirleyebilirim.					
34. İngilizce öğrenmemi kolaylaştıracak bana uygun stratejileri seçip kullanabilirim.					
35. İngilizce kendimi ifade etmek istediğimde iletişim stratejileri kullanarak amacıma ulaşırım.					
36. Sınıf içi tartışma, problem çözme, gibi aktivitelerle ilgili amaçlar, içerik ve kullanılacak stratejiler konularında önceden planlarım.					
37. Sınıf dışında öğrenmek veya iletişim kurmak için kendimin belirleyeceği ortamlarda İngilizce kullanabilirim.					
38. İngilizce bir konu anlatırken veya kısa konuşmalarda, kullanacağım dilbilgisi kuralı ve kelime seçimini yapabilirim.					
39. Bir konuda çalışma yaparken bilgiye ulaşma araçlarını ve çalışma ortamını seçip şekillendiririm.					
40. Bir konuyu öğrenmek için öğretmenden bana ödev vermesine ya da kaynak belirtmesine ihtiyaç duymadan kendi görev ve çalışma araçları ile ilgili kararlarımı verebilirim.					
41. Kendi öğrenmemi gözlemleyip öz değerlendirme yapabilirim.					
42. Ortak bir hedef için çalışan bir grubun üyesi olduğum etkinlikleri severim.					
43. Grupla çalışırken uyumun sağlanmasına katkıda bulunmak isterim.					
44. Başarılarım birlikte çalıştığım grubun hedeflerine ulaşmada katkıda bulunduğu vakit çalışmak için daha fazla motive oluyorum.					
45. Herhangi bir grup çalışmasında mümkün olduğunca düşüncelerimi dile getirmeye çalışırım.					
46. Grup çalışmaları daha iyi kararlar vermeme yardım eder.					
47. Grup çalışmaları öğretmen olmadan da bilgi edinmeme yardım eder.					
48. Grup çalışması başkalarının düşündüklerine saygı göstermeyi öğrenmeme yardım eder.					
49. Grup çalışması daha çok işi daha çabuk ve daha kolay yapmama yardım eder.					
50. Grup çalışması yapmamız istendiği zaman genellikle yakın arkadaşlarımı tercih ederim.					
51. Genellikle konuşkan kimselerle grup çalışması yapmak isterim.					

Group Autonomy Questionnaire in English

Dear students,

It is suggested that learning a foreign language gets easier when the class activities are supported with out-of-class activities. Therefore, I am investigating the ways that will make your efforts efficient in and out of class. On behalf of the study, this questionnaire is to gather your personal information in the first part and your preference of study type and strategy use to learn English in addition to your attitude towards learner autonomy and group work in the second part.

I sincerely thank you to spend time for your participation.

A- PERSONAL INFORMATION

1- School: HYO1 HYO3 ATF1

2- English Level: A (Advanced) B (Intermediate) C (Beginner)

3- Active role player in your level: Myself Teacher School Course Context

4- My goal to learn English

5- To reach my aim

- I have no plan - I have a daily plan. - I have a long-term plan.

6- Time I spare to learn English except the classroom hours.....

- I cannot spare any time. - Around one hour - More than two hours

7- How do prefer to study?

- Alone - With a friend - In group - No style

8- Who should evaluate your English level?

- Myself - Peer - Teacher - Institution - All

9- How do you describe yourself in terms of your will to learn English?

- Overzealous - Willing - Reluctant

10- How would you describe a favorite English class?

.....

B- QUESTIONNAIRE: Please tick the option which you consider the most appropriate.

1= I strongly disagree 2= I disagree 3= I'm not sure 4= I agree 5= I strongly agree

	1	2	3	4	5
1. I learn English better through face-to-face interaction out of class.					
2. I learn English better through in-class activities such as exercises, tests and examinations.					
3. I have some difficulties with some English grammar rules.					
4. I often use the way of quick-guessing while answering to a question.					
5. I try to find out the probable problems before carrying out my task.					
6. I can understand better when I read or with the help of tables, drawings or graphs.					

7. I understand better when I listen to the subject.					
8. Visualizing or narrating the topic through physical activities helps me learn better.					
9. I can change my learning style in accordance with the theme.					
10. I think of relationships between when I already know and new things I learn in English.					
11. I watch English language TV shows spoken in English or go to movies spoken in English.					
12. To understand unfamiliar words,I make guesses.					
13. I notice my English mistakes and use that information to help me to do better.					
14. I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English.					
15. If I do not understand something in English, I ask the other person to slow down or say it again					
16. I ask English speakers to correct me when I talk.					
17. I practise English with other students.					
18. I ask questions in English.					
19. I try to learn about culture of English speakers.					
When I don't remember the English word I want to use, ...	1	2	3	4	5
20. I use another word with similar meaning.					
21. I use my gestures or body language.					
22. I sometimes use Turkish words.					
23. I use Turkish words with similar sounds or forms.					
24. I replace another English word with a similar meaning.					
25. I stay silent some time.					
26. I change my whole sentence or some parts.					
27. I give up completing my sentence.					
28. I ask for help.					
29. I use gestures or mimes to send my messages.					
30. I use some gap fillers such as "İııh", "well".					
31. I notice the significance and the aim of what is taught in English lessons.					
32. I can state my own objectives.					

33. I can adjust my study themes and process in accordance with my objectives.					
34. I can select strategies suitable for me to help learn English easier.					
35. I use communication strategies to express myself in English.					
36. I plan the aim, content and strategies before the activities such as class discussions, problem solving, etc.					
37. I can use English in places where I state to learn or communicate out of the classroom.					
38. I can choose vocabulary and grammar rules while telling a story or speaking in English.					
39. I can choose and structure the study context and media to reach the data while studying a theme.					
40. I can decide on my duty and study tools to learn a subject without needing the teacher's delivery of assignment or data sources.					
41. I can evaluate myself by checking my own level.					
42. I like the activities when I work for a goal as a member of a group.					
43. I'd like to contribute the harmony while studying in a group.					
44. I feel more motivated to study when my achievement contributes to reach group goals.					
45. I try to voice my opinions as much as possible in a group work.					
46. Group work helps me decide better.					
47. Group work helps me decide well even in the absence of the teacher.					
48. Group work helps me respect others' opinions.					
49. Group work helps me do better jobs easier.					
50. I generally prefer my close friends in a group work.					
51. I generally prefer to do group work with talkative people.					

APPENDIX B – Audioscript of Listeners in Tests of Speaking in English

UNIT 1 - WHAT'S MY JOB?

Host: Good afternoon everybody, and welcome to What's My Job? - the game show about offbeat jobs. I'm your host, Wayne Wonderful. Today's first contestant is Rita, a secretary from Chicago, Illinois.

Rita: Hi, Wayne. I'm so happy to be here! Hi, Mom. Hi, Dad. Hi, Joe...

Host: OK, Rita. Let's get started. You're going to meet some people who will describe their jobs. Then you can ask three questions to guess each person's job. You can win \$1,000 for each job you guess correctly. Are you ready? Let's welcome our first guest, Peter. OK. Peter, can you tell us little about your job?

UNIT 2 - A NEW-URBANIST COMMUNITY

Host: New urbanist communities are designed to be different from typical suburbs. But how are they different? To find out, we sent Roy Martinez to a new suburban community called Kentville...Roy?

Roy: Thanks, Joanne. I'm here today in Kentville with the woman who designed this community, Elizabeth Jones. So, tell us, Elizabeth, why did you want to make a different kind of suburb? I mean, what's wrong with the typical suburb?

UNIT 3 - A BARTER NETWORK

Woman 1: Good morning, everyone. Let's get started...My name is Carol, and I'd like to welcome you to the City Barter Network. I'm glad you could come to today's meeting. And I'm really happy to see so many people interested in joining our network. Now, there are a few things I'd like to do this morning.

UNIT 4 - ROGER'S STORY

Roger: I recently got out of prison after 25 years. Now, you might not want to hear about that; maybe you think I should have been in prison. Maybe you think I did something wrong and I was guilty. But the truth of it is I didn't do anything wrong. I spent 25 long years in prison for something I didn't do. I was innocent; I didn't commit the crime they said I did. Can you imagine being in prison for 25 years when you're innocent? My name is Roger and I want to tell you my story.

UNIT 5 – WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO MANNERS?

Host: Today our guest is Sarah Jones who recently did a survey of manners. I'll let her explain what she did. Welcome.

Sarah Jones: Thank you. It's great to be here.

Host: So, tell us what you did.

Sara Jones: Well, it seems lately that many people are complaining that people are becoming very rude. So, we thought we'd try to find out if that's true. Basically, we did a survey of manners.

Host: Hmm, I see. It seems that it'd be hard to test manners. How did you do it?

UNIT 6 – ENTERTAINMENT FOR ALL

News Anchor: And now for some local news. Reporter Michelle Singh is down at the convention center where there's a gaming expo happening this weekend. Michelle?

Michelle: Hi Brad. We're having a lot of fun down here at the electronic games expo. This is a big event. Electronic game companies are showing all their latest games to the public. There are also gaming competitions and a video game rock concert. We're here talking to some people...so what do you think of the expo?

UNIT 7 – STREET TALK

Larry: Mmm, it tastes delicious. What's in it?

Dan: Well, thanks. I hope it works. I'll try anything.

Larry: On the radio? No, thanks.

Dan: Oh, my girlfriend just left me, and now I'm all alone.

Barbara: Are you kidding? I'm in a big hurry. I don't have time for this!

UNIT 8 – AN UNUSUAL VACATION

Recorded Voice: Thank you for calling the Swedish travel telephone hotline. We have information about transformation, lodging, and tourist activities in Sweden. For information about transformation, press 1. For lodging, press 2, and for tourist activities, press 3.

You've pressed 2 for information about lodging in Sweden. To hear more about campsites, press 1. For small inns, press 2, for large hotels, press 3, and for information about a special hotel in Sweden, press 4.

You've pressed 4 for a special hotel in Sweden. If you'd like to hear recorded information, press 1. If you'd like to talk with an agent, press 2.

You've pressed 2. Please hold...

UNIT 9 – THIN-FAST

Man: So don't wait another minute. You should try Thin-Fast Diet Tea today. To order your Thin-Fast, call 1-800-555-THIN. That's 1-800-555-8446. Call today and get eight weeks of Thin-Fast for only \$39.99. Yes, that's only \$39.99 for the best weight-loss product money can buy. Call now and become happy, healthy, and thin!

UNIT 10 – LANGUAGE LOSS

Professor: Good morning, everybody. Today, I'd like to talk about endangered and dead languages. So...who did the reading for today? Hmm...I see...some of you did...Then, who can tell me what a dead language is?

(Frazier and Mills, 2009)

APPENDIX C - Assessment Rubrics on Speaking Ability

Peer-Assessment on Speaking (For individual performances)

Speaker Name:

Criterion	Description	Score: not so good----great				
Grammar	The language used was accurate, with very few if any mistakes	1	2	3	4	5
Vocabulary	A lot of different and interesting words were well used	1	2	3	4	5
Presentation	Eye-contact and gestures were used to get the message across. There were few if any times when the speaker stopped speaking	1	2	3	4	5
Content	What the speaker said was very interesting and kept our attention	1	2	3	4	5
Suggestions		Total Score				

O'Sullivan (n.d.)

Peer-Assessment on Speaking (For group work)

Assessor Name:

Criterion	Description	Score: not so good----great	Speaker School No			
Grammar	The language used was accurate, with very few if any mistakes	1 2 3 4 5				
Vocabulary	A lot of different and interesting words were well used	1 2 3 4 5				
Presentation	Eye-contact and gestures were used to get the message across. There were few if any times when the speaker stopped speaking	1 2 3 4 5				
Content	What the speaker said was very interesting and kept our attention	1 2 3 4 5				
Suggestions		Total Scores				

Self Assessment (A Record of Work)

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APPENDIX E – Unit Themes and Research Topics for Basic English Course

UNIT	THEME	SPEAKING	RESEARCH TOPICS	ADAPTED FORM FOR THE STUDY
1	Work	- Express and defend opinions - Make small talk - Talk about skills and characteristics	Would you like to find an offbeat job? Follow these steps: Step1 Work in small groups. Brainstorm some offbeat jobs and make a list. Step2 Now, work alone. Choose one offbeat job you would like to have. Go to the library, look on the Internet, or interview someone who does the job to get information about it. Take notes. Your notes should include this information: ... Step3 Report your information to the class.	Would you like to study your favorite medical branch? Follow these steps: Step1 Think about the medical branches and make a list. Step2 Choose one medical branch you would like to have. Go to the library, look on the Internet, or interview someone who does the job to get information about it. Take notes. Your notes should include this information: ... Step3 Report your information to the class.
2	The country and the city	- Classify negative and positive information - Share opinions - Talk about your community	You're going to research the ways that your community has changed over the years. Follow these steps: Step1 Find someone who has lived in your community or a nearby community for many years. It could be an older relative, friend, or neighbor. Step2 Interview the person about the way your community is different now compared to many years ago. Use the following questions or think of your own: Step3 Report your findings to the class and compare your answers.	You're going to research the ways that your community in GATA has changed over the years. Follow these steps: Step1 Find someone who has lived in your school for many years. It could be an older relative, friend, or neighbor. Step2 Interview the person about the way your community is different now compared to many years ago. Use the following questions or think of your own: Step3 Report your findings to the class and compare your answers.
3	Money	- Share opinions and experiences - Use vocabulary in conversation - Compare products and services	Before you buy something, it's a good idea to do comparison shopping. Practice comparison shopping for something you would like to buy. Follow these steps: Step1 Think of something you would like to buy, such as a camera, or a television. Then go to a store and compare two different kinds. Take notes and write the information in the chart. Step2 Report back to the class, telling which item you	Before you buy something, it's a good idea to do comparison shopping. Practice comparison shopping for something you would like to buy. Follow these steps: Step1 Think of something you would like to buy, such as a car, or a cell phone. Then go to a store and compare two different kinds. Take notes and write the information in the chart. Step2 Report back to the class, telling which item you

			would like to buy and why.	would like to buy and why.
4	Justice	Share opinions and experiences Conduct an interview Compare products and services	Many countries now have DNA databases, You're going to research information and report about it to the class. Follow these steps: Step1 Go to the library or go on the internet to find answers to these questions. a. Does your country have a DNA database? b. Is everyone's DNA in the database or just people who have committed a crime? Step2 Report back to the class with your findings.	Many countries now have DNA databases, You're going to research information and report about it to the class. Follow these steps: Step1 Find answers to these questions. a. Does your country have a DNA database? b. Does your school have a study to support a DNA database? Step2 Report back to the class with your findings.
5	Etiquette	Express opinions Talk about etiquette Debate the rudeness of certain behaviors	Do a survey like the one you heard about in Listening One. Do a door test, a paper drop, and a customer service test. Follow these steps: Step1 Go to a local café that has a variety of customers such as students and business people. Two students can do the study, and two can observe. Take turns. Step2 Fill in the chart with your results. Then compare your results in Listening One. Step3 Present your results to the class.	Do a survey like the one you heard about in Listening One. Do a door test, a paper drop, and a customer service test. Follow these steps: Step1 Go to your mess hall or dormitories. One/Two students can do the study, and two can observe. Take turns. Step2 Fill in the chart with your results. Then compare your results in Listening One. Step3 Present your results to the class.
6	Games	Share opinions Debate the value of video games	You're going to research a video or computer game and report about it to the class. Follow these steps: Step1 Think of a video game you want to learn about. Step2 Go on the internet and find information about the game. Step3 Report your findings to the class.	You're going to research a video or computer game and report about it to the class. Follow these steps: Step1 Think of a video game you want to learn about. Step2 Go on the internet and find information about the game. Step3 Report your findings to the class.
7	Food	Express opinions Compare and discuss solutions	Interview someone you know about moods and foods. Ask him or her the questions from the chart. Offer the person your suggestions. Report information about your interview to the class.	Interview a medical personnel you know about moods and foods. Ask him or her the questions from the chart. Offer the person your suggestions. Report information about your interview to the class.
8	Travel	Express opinions Survey classmates Talk about travel Express likes and	The Ice Hotel is an unusual place to stay. You're going to research other unusual places to stay or visit. Follow these steps: Step1 Go to a travel agency, a tourism office, or look	The Ice Hotel is an unusual place to stay. You're going to research other unusual places to stay or visit in Turkey. Follow these steps: Step1 Go to a travel agency, a tourism office, or look

		dislikes	on the Internet for information about an unusual place. Write a list of questions to get information about the topics listed in the card below. Step2 One of you asks the questions. The other one fills out the card. Step3 Make a brochure with information about this unusual place. Step4 Show your brochure to the class and tell them about this amazing and unusual place.	on the Internet for information about an unusual place. Write a list of questions to get information about the topics listed in the card below. Step2 One of you asks the questions. The other one fills out the card. Step3 Make a brochure with information about this unusual place. Step4 Show your brochure to the class and tell them about this amazing and unusual place.
9	Health problems and treatments	Express concern about health problems Give and receive advice about health problems Interview people about health practices	Are people's activities healthy or unhealthy? Find out by interviewing three people outside of class about their activities. Work with a partner. Follow these steps: Step1 Write at least five questions about healthy and unhealthy activities. Use the activities from the lists you made in Section 1B. Write the questions in the chart. Step2 Now interview three people. One of you asks the questions. The other one writes down the answers. Step3 Report back to the class. Then discuss these questions. ...	Are people's activities healthy or unhealthy? Find out by interviewing three people outside of class about their activities. Work with a partner. Follow these steps: Step1 Write at least five questions about healthy and unhealthy activities. Use the activities from the lists you made in Section 1B. Write the questions in the chart. Step2 Now interview three people. One of you asks the questions. The other one writes down the answers. Step3 Report back to the class. Then discuss these questions. ...
10	Endangered cultures	Share personal history Express opinions Make predictions	You're going to research an endangered language and culture. Follow these steps: Step1 Go to the library or use the Internet. Find out about an endangered culture and language. Step2 Report to the class. Tell them about this language and its future.	You're going to research an endangered tradition in your community. Follow these steps: Step1 Go to the library or use the Internet. Find out about an endangered tradition. Step2 Report to the class. Tell them about this tradition and its future.

Unit Themes and Research Topics for Medical English Course

UNIT	THEME	SPEAKING	RESEARCH TOPICS	ADAPTED FORM FOR THE STUDY
1	Health and Illness	Asking about health	What advice do you give people for keeping fit and well?	What advice do you give people for keeping fit and well?

		Sickness		
2	Parts of the body 1	Parts of the body Referring to parts of the body	Make a list of the words from A opposite that you find it hard to remember or that you need most often. Try to learn at least one of them every day.	Describe radiation of pain you or a friend of you experienced lately.
3	Parts of the body 2	The abdomen The chest The pelvis	Many patients do not know the location or function of the spleen or the pancreas. How would you explain them to a patient?	Many patients do not know the location or function of the spleen or the pancreas. How would you explain them to a patient?
4	Functions of the body	Eating The five senses Other functions	You think a patient may have diabetes. Think of five questions you can ask the patient to investigate further. Try to use the question types presented in this unit.	Find a patient who has diabetes. Ask five questions to the patient to investigate further. Try to use the question types presented in this unit.
5	Medical practitioners 1	Practitioners Specialties Choosing a specialty	Re-read what Dr Jill Mathews says about surgeons in section C. Make a list of the qualities she thinks are needed to be a good surgeon. Then make a similar list of qualities for another specialty.	Choose a specialty that you want to study best and explain your reasons.
6	Medical practitioners 2	Hospital staff Medical teams Shifts	How does the hospital training of doctors in your country differ from the British system? How would you explain it to a colleague from another country?	How does the hospital training of doctors in GATA differ from the British system? How would you explain it to a colleague from another country?
7	Nurses	Nursing grades Support workers Specialization	What kinds of tasks do nurses carry out in your country? Are nurse's responsibilities increasing? What are the implications of this?	What kinds of problems do nurses experience in GATA? What are your proposals to overcome these problems?
8	Allied health professionals	Community health Technicians Prosthetics and orthotists Opticians	Britain is introducing a new member to the healthcare team, called a medical care practitioner (MCP), similar to the physician assistant in the United States and other countries. What are the advantages and disadvantages of this in your opinion?	Do you think a medical care practitioner (MCP) is practice in Turkey? What are the advantages and disadvantages of this in your opinion?
9	Hospitals	Introduction to a hospitals Outpatients	How do hospitals in your country organize admissions? How would you explain this procedure to a colleague from another country?	How does Gülhane hospital organize admissions? How would you explain this procedure to a colleague from another country?
10	Primary care	The National Health Service	Describe a typical day for a GP in your country or in the country where you work.	Describe a typical day for a GP in GATA.

Unit Themes and Research Topics for English for Nursing Course

UNIT	THEME	SPEAKING	RESEARCH TOPICS	ADAPTED FORM FOR THE STUDY
1	Patient admissions	Taking a patient history Explaining how the heart works Putting a patient at ease Giving a nursing handover	Is the process for taking a patient history the same in your country? What strategies do you use for putting a patient at ease? What difficulties have you encountered with anxious patients? What role does cultural sensitivity play when putting a patient at ease?	Is the process for taking a patient history the same in GATA? What strategies would you use for putting a patient at ease? What difficulties could be encountered with anxious patients? What cultural sensitivity do the nurses in GATA consider when putting a patient at ease?
2	Respiratory problems	Educating patients about asthma management Giving instructions effectively	What techniques do you find most useful when giving instructions? Have you ever encountered problems when giving instructions to a patient? Are family members permitted to stay with a dying patient in hospital in your country?	What techniques do you find most useful when giving instructions? Have you ever encountered problems when giving instructions to a patient? Are family members permitted to stay with a dying patient in GATA?
3	Wound care	Discussion wound management Describing wounds Using a wound assessment chart	What advice would you give diabetics about footwear? What may occur as the consequence of diabetic ulcers? Do you follow the same process for wound bed preparation? What are the advantages of following the wound bed preparation protocol?	What advice would you give diabetics about footwear? What may occur as the consequence of diabetic ulcers? Do you follow the same process for wound bed preparation in GATA? What are the advantages of following the wound bed preparation protocol?
4	Diabetes care	Discussion diabetes management Giving advice sensitively	What sort of information do elderly patients with diabetes need? How could you best help an elderly patient with diabetes management?	What sort of information do elderly patients with diabetes need? How could you best help an elderly patient with diabetes management?
5	Medical specimens	Explaining pathology tests Asking for clarification Checking	How do you ensure privacy for your patients? What cultural issues are important in providing privacy? Why is it important to identify the organism which causes infection?	How do you ensure privacy for patients in GATA? What cultural issues are important in providing privacy? Why is it important to identify the organism which causes infection?

		understanding	Why is the overuse of antibiotics a problem?	What do you think about the overuse of antibiotics?
6	Medication	Administering medication Doing a medication check Working as part of a team	What do you understand by the term 'team nursing'? What nursing styles are you familiar with? Do you follow the same procedure for checking medication in your country? What are the advantages or disadvantages of having a single designated nurse for the medication round?	Do you think 'team nursing' is practicle in GATA? Explain your reasons. What is the procedure for checking medication in GATA? What are the advantages or disadvantages of having a single designated nurse for the medication round?
7	Intravenous infusions	Reviewing IV infusions Passing on instructions to colleagues Assessing IV cannulas	What protocols do you follow for checking IV infusions? What protocols do you follow for the care of IV cannulas? How are messages passed on to the other staff members in your workplace?	What protocols do you follow for checking IV infusions in GATA? What protocols do you follow for the care of IV cannulas? How are messages passed on to the other staff members in GATA?
8	Pre-operative patient assessment	Doing pre-operative checks Giving pre-operative patient education Preparing a patient for surgery	Is patient education an important nursing focus in your country? Have you been involved in patient education in your country? What pre-operative procedures are you familiar with? Are procedures different in your country?	Is patient education an important nursing focus in GATA? Have you been involved in patient education in GATA? What pre-operative procedures are you familiar with? Are procedures different GATA?
9	Post-operative patient assessment	Doing a post-operative handover Checking a post-operative patient on the ward	What kind of pain could each of these words describe? Aching cramping crushing throbbing radiating What can happen if pain remains untreated? Do you think pain is experienced differently in different cultures?	What can happen if pain remains untreated? Do you think pain is experienced differently in different genders?
10	Discharge planning	Attending the ward team meeting Telephone skills Explaining the effects of a stroke	Do you have the same privacy rules regarding patient information in your country? How else are patient records kept confidential? What assessment tools do you use in your country when transferring patients from a hospital to another healthcare facility?	Do you have the same privacy rules regarding patient information in GATA? How else are patient records kept confidential? What assessment tools do you use in GATA when transferring patients from a hospital to another healthcare facility?

APPENDIX F –Teaching Program Brochure for Teachers

Dear teachers,

As seen in Table 1 below, the activities planned commonly or in two different formats for two groups of students are supposed to last during two terms of education at three stages.

Table 1 - Study teaching program and techniques

Teaching		Program			
Period		First Term		Second Term	Whole year
Group	Stage	Stage 1 Strategy Instruction	Stage 2 Changing attitudes	Stage 3 Transferring roles	Assessment
	Experimental	Strategic Teaching Model	Group- Investigation in group or individual format	Home – Expert Groups	Self-assessment Peer-assessment in groups
	Control			Poster Carousel	Self-assessment Peer-assessment in pairs

In the subsequent reading, you will find instructions on how to follow this program.

Instructions for the activities

Stage 1 Strategy Instruction

- During the first two weeks of the course, strategies for foreign language learning by Oxford (1990) and for communication by Tarone in Ellis (1984) at the end of this hand-out will be delivered, reviewed, and discussed to become familiar with as the first step in this stage. Two starting points are practical to carry out this activity. These are;

- strategies that they knew well and used in the past while studying English, and
- strategies that they want to learn to use.

- During the discussion, the data related to the students will be recorded.

- Second step in this stage will be performed through teaching strategies explicitly by following steps from the Strategic Teaching Model by Jones (1987) and by requiring learners;

- to set their own learning targets and
- choose their own learning activities.

1. Teacher explains strategies by naming them and telling how to use them,
 2. Teacher models strategies by demonstrating them and verbalizing own thought processes while doing task.
 3. Instruction is scaffold by providing support while students practice, adjusting support to students needs, phasing out support to encourage autonomous strategy use.
 4. Teacher tries to develop motivation by providing successful experiences and relating strategy use to improved performance.
- Strategy instruction is supposed to be repeated at each session needing topic-related learner training.

Stage 2 Changing attitudes

- Activity planned at the end of each unit until the ending of the first term is ‘Group-Investigation’ method from Sharan in six steps. Although ‘Group-Investigation’ activity is normally carried out in groups of learners as in the experimental groups in this study, it will be adapted also for individual activity for learners in control groups on behalf of the study;

Step 1: Choosing the research topics in Appendix E adapted from their course books and organizing into research groups by joining the group of their choice within the limit of forming four-member groups.

Step 2: Planning the learning task. Group members determined subtopic for investigation.

Step 3: Carrying out the investigation. The students gathered information, analyzed and evaluated the data, and reached conclusions.

Step 4: Preparing a final report. The group engaged in activities that culminated in a report, an event, or a summary.

Step 5: Presenting the final report through an oral presentation in front of the class.

Step 6: Evaluation. Assessment of higher level learning is emphasized, including applications, synthesis, and inferences.

- Performance evaluation part will be conducted as peer-assessment by the audience in class through the assessment rubrics by O’Sullivan (n.d.) in Table 2 after the presentation. But, to provide useful feedback and to help learners focus on the significant quality indicators, the scoring rubric will be given to students prior to use.

Table 2 Peer-Assessment on Speaking

Speaker Name:

Criterion	Description	Score: not so good-----great				
		1	2	3	4	5
Grammar	The language used was accurate, with very few if any mistakes					
Vocabulary	A lot of different and interesting words were well used					
Presentation	Eye-contact and gestures were used to get the message across. There were few if any times when the speaker stopped speaking					
Content	What the speaker said was very interesting and kept our attention					
Suggestions	Total Score					

- The presentations are supposed to last from five to ten minutes. Notes or reference materials are allowed to help them during their speech; however, reading aloud is discouraged. The students may use visual materials such as pictures and diagrams during their performance.

At the end of the presentation, the students had to deal with the questions asked by either the teacher or the students in the class.

- The scores obtained from these performances will be added to their traditional mid-term test scores. A score of 20 points for presentation from peer evaluation out of 100 will be added to the two mid-term examinations in the first term.

Stage 3 Transferring roles

- An activity called 'Home – Expert Groups' by Kagan (1994) is planned in experimental groups as the main technique to enhance group autonomy during the second term of educational year. It also creates opportunities to carry out the authentic tasks in an interactive manner which is considered as a medium to improve speaking in English.
- In this activity, groups with four or five students will be set up. Each group member will be assigned some unique material to learn and then to teach to his group members. To help in, the learning students across the class working on the same sub-section get together to decide what is important and how to teach it. After practice in these "expert" groups, the original groups reform and students teach each other.
- In control groups, another activity called 'the Poster Carousel' by Lynch and Maclean (2001) is the technique to be used to enhance learner autonomy as well as speaking in English.
- In this activity, topics related to the units in their course books are put into the sub-topics and offered each learner to choose one. Then, they will make a poster based on the topic. Posters will be displayed round a large room. The host will stand beside the poster. Visitors will ask questions clockwise in 3 minutes.
- Evaluation will be conducted through the collaboration with the 'expert' and 'host' students on the formulation of exams. Unit questions collected from those students that are responsible of teaching will be used in order to formulate the tests aiming the preparation for the mid-term exams of the students in class.
- The scores obtained from these performances will be added to their traditional mid-term test scores. A score of 20 points for presentation from peer evaluation out of 100 will be added to the two mid-term examinations in the second term.
- As a component of portfolio assessment, students will also be invited to keep learner logs in order to file their learning experiences during the research process after the use and importance of the use of learner logs is shared with the students. Learner logs will be kept by learners by means of self-assessment forms by Gardner (2000) in order to record the evidence of their learning, including their learning plans.

APPENDIX G – Language Learning Strategies in Turkish (Oxford, 1990)

1. İngilizce’de bildiklerimle yeni öğrendiklerim arasında ilişki kurarım.
2. Yeni öğrendiğim kelimeleri hatırlamak için bir cümlede kullanırım.
3. Yeni öğrendiğim kelimeleri akılda tutmak için kelimenin telaffuzuyla aklıma getirdiği bir resim ya da şekil arasında bağlantı kurarım.
4. Yeni bir kelimeyi o sözcüğün kullanılabileceği bir sahneyi ya da durumu aklımda canlandırarak, hatırlarım.
5. Yeni kelimeleri aklımda tutmak için, onları ses benzerliği olan kelimelerle ilişkilendiririm.
6. Yeni öğrendiğim kelimeleri aklımda tutmak için küçük kartlara yazarım.
7. Yeni kelimeleri vücut dili kullanarak zihnimde canlandırırım.
8. İngilizce derslerinde öğrendiklerimi sık sık tekrar ederim.
9. Yeni kelime ve kelime gruplarını ilk karşılaştığım yerleri (kitap, tahta ya da herhangi bir işaret levhasını) aklıma getirerek, hatırlarım.
10. Yeni sözcükleri birkaç kez yazarak, ya da söyleyerek, tekrarlarım.
11. Anadili İngilizce olan kişiler gibi konuşmaya çalışırım.
12. Anadilimde bulunmayan İngilizce’deki “th /θ / hw ” gibi sesleri çıkararak, telaffuz alıştırmaları yaparım.
13. Bildiğim kelimeleri cümlelerde farklı şekillerde kullanırım.
14. İngilizce sohbetleri ben başlatırım.
15. T.V. ‘de İngilizce programlar ya da İngilizce filmler izlerim.
16. İngilizce okumaktan hoşlanırım.
17. İngilizce mesaj, mektup veya rapor yazarım.
18. İngilizce bir metne ilk başta bir göz atarım, daha sonra metnin tamamını dikkatlice okurum.
19. Yeni öğrendiğim İngilizce kelimelerin benzerlerini Türkçe’de ararım.
20. İngilizce’de tekrarlanan kalıplar bulmaya çalışırım.
21. İngilizce bir kelimenin, bildiğim kök ve eklerine ayırarak anlamını çıkarırım.
22. Kelimesi kelimesine çeviri yapmamaya çalışırım.
23. Dinlediğim ya da okuduğum metnin özetini çıkarırım.
24. Bilmediğim İngilizce kelimelerin anlamını, tahmin ederek bulmaya çalışırım.
25. İngilizce konuşurken bir sözcük aklıma gelmediğinde, el kol hareketleriyle anlatmaya çalışırım.
26. Uygun ve doğru kelimeyi bilmediğim durumlarda kafamdan yeni sözcükler uydururum.
27. Okurken her bilmediğim kelimeye sözlükten bakmadan, okumayı sürdürürüm.
28. Konuşma sırasında karşımdakinin söyleyeceği bir sonraki cümleyi tahmin etmeye çalışırım.

29. Herhangi bir kelimeyi hatırlayamadığımda, aynı anlamı taşıyan başka bir kelime ya da ifade kullanırım.
30. İngilizcemi kullanmak için her fırsatı değerlendiririm.
31. Yaptığım yanlışların farkına varır ve bunlardan daha doğru İngilizce kullanmak için faydalanırım.
32. İngilizce konuşan bir kişi duyduğumda dikkatimi ona veririm.
33. “İngilizce’yi daha iyi nasıl öğrenirim?” sorusunun yanıtını araştırırım.
34. İngilizce çalışmaya yeterli zaman ayırmak için zamanımı planlarım.
35. İngilizce konuşabileceğim kişilerle tanışmak için fırsat kollarım.
36. İngilizce okumak için, elimden geldiği kadar fırsat yaratırım.
37. İngilizce’de becerilerimi nasıl geliştireceğim konusunda hedeflerim var.
38. İngilizcemi ne kadar ilerlettiğimi değerlendiririm.
39. İngilizcemi kullanırken tedirgin ve kaygılı olduğum anlar rahatlamaya çalışırım.
40. Yanlış yaparım diye kaygılandığımda bile İngilizce konuşmaya gayret ederim.
41. İngilizcede başarılı olduğum zamanlar kendimi ödüllendiririm.
42. İngilizce çalışırken ya da kullanırken gergin ve kaygılı isem, bunun farkına varırım.
43. Dil öğrenirken yaşadığım duyguları bir yere yazarım.
44. İngilizce çalışırken nasıl ya da neler hissettiğimi başka birine anlatırım.
45. Herhangi bir şeyi anlamadığımda, karşımdaki kişiden daha yavaş konuşmasını ya da söylediklerini tekrar etmesini isterim.
46. Konuşurken karşımdakinin yanlışlarımı düzeltmesini isterim.
47. Okulda arkadaşlarımla İngilizce konuşurum.
48. İhtiyaç duyduğumda İngilizce konuşan kişilerden yardım isterim.
49. Derste İngilizce sorular sormaya gayret ederim.
50. İngilizce konuşanların kültürü hakkında bilgi edinmeye çalışırım.

Communication Strategies (Tarone cited in Ellis, 1984)

1. İngilizce bir kelimeyi hatırlayamadığım zaman yerine açıklayıcı ifadeler kullanırım.
2. İngilizce bir kelimeyi hatırlayamadığım zaman Türkçe kelime çevirisini kullanırım.
3. İngilizcede bir ifadeyi hatırlayamadığım zaman o ifade ile ilgili konuşmaktan kaçınırım.

Language Learning Strategies (Oxford, 1990)

1. I think of relationships between when I already know and new things I learn in English.
2. I use new English words in a sentence so I can remember them.
3. I connect the sound of a new English word and an image or picture of a situation in which the word might be used.
4. I remember a new English word by making a mental picture of a situation in which the word might be used.
5. I use rhymes to remember new English words.
6. I use flashcards to remember new English words.
7. I physically act out new English words.
8. I review English lessons often.
9. I remember new English words or phrases by remembering their location on the page, on the board, or on a street sign.
10. I say or write new English words several times.
11. I try to talk like native English speakers.
12. I practise the sounds of English.
13. I use the English words I know in different ways.
14. I start conversations in English
15. I watch English language TV shows spoken in English or go to movies spoken in English.
16. I read for pleasure in English
17. I write notes, messages, letters, or reports in English.
18. I first skim an English passage (read over the passage quickly) then go back and read carefully.
19. I look for words in my own language that are similar to new words in English.
20. I try to find patterns in English.
21. I find the meaning of an English word by dividing into parts that I understand.
22. I try not to translate word-for-word.
23. I make summaries of information that I hear or read in English.
24. To understand unfamiliar words, I make guesses.
25. When I can't think of a word during a conversation in English, I use gestures.
26. I make up new words if I do not know the right ones in English.

27. I read English without looking up every new word.
28. I try to guess what the other person will say next in English.
29. If I can't think of an English word, I use a word or phrase that means the same thing.
30. I try to find as many ways as I can to use my English.
31. I notice my English mistakes and use that information to help me to do better.
32. I pay attention when someone is speaking English.
33. I try to find out how to be a better learner of English.
34. I plan my schedule so I will have enough time to study English.
35. I look for people I can talk to in English.
36. I look for opportunities to read as much as possible in English.
37. I have clear goals for improving my English skills.
38. I think about my progress in learning English.
39. I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English.
40. I encourage myself to speak English even when I am afraid of making a mistake.
41. I give myself a reward or treat when I do well in English.
42. I notice if I am tense or nervous when I am studying or using English.
43. I write down my feelings in a language learning diary.
44. I talk to someone else about how I feel when I am learning English.
45. If I do not understand something in English, I ask the other person to slow down or say it again.
46. I ask English speakers to correct me when I talk.
47. I practise English with other students.
48. I ask for help from English speakers.
49. I ask questions in English.
50. I try to learn about culture of English speakers.

Communication Strategies (Tarone cited in Ellis, 1984)

1. I try to explain when I don't remember a word in English.
2. I use Turkish translation when I don't remember a word in English.
3. I avoid using it when I don't remember a word in English.