

THE IMPACT OF LEARNER AUTONOMY ON THE SUCCESS OF LISTENING COMPREHENSION

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ABSTRACT

In the area of Teaching English as a Foreign Language there have been many changes during the years. These changes directly affected both the specialists who are the applicants of the teaching process and also the language learners. Over the last two decades, the concept of learner autonomy has gained a very important place and it is sometimes named as “The ABC’s of learner empowerment” (Sharader, 2003: 1). In fact the source of learner autonomy concept is the Communicative Language Teaching approach which became a very popular language teaching approach after the mid-1960’s.

The impact of autonomous learning on the success of listening comprehension in foreign language learning classes is the main aim of this study. The research may contribute to the listening courses and the teachers on how listening skill can be improved by the help of the autonomous learning with a strategy based teaching in listening comprehension classes.

The results of this study are of importance to second/ foreign language teachers specifically who are enrolling listening classes. Considering the difficulties that most of the teachers face when teaching foreign languages the findings that are shown in this study may give them some ideas in teaching listening in order to help their students to achieve success. With the help of the autonomous learning applications and the strategies as it is applied in our study, the teachers can help their students to improve their success in listening.

Key Words: Autonomy, autonomous learning, listening, listening strategies, independent learners, success.

Başlık: Öğrenen Özerkliğinin Duyduğunu Anlama Derslerinde Başarıya Etkisi
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ÖZET

Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizcenin Öğretimi alanında son yıllarda pek çok değişiklik göze çarpmaktadır. Bu değişiklikler temelde öğretme sürecinin uygulayıcıları olan uzmanları doğrudan etkilediği gibi yabancı dil öğrenenlerini de etkilenmektedir. Son yirmi yılı aşan bir süre zarfında öğrenen özerkliği kavramı oldukça önemli bir yer tutar olmuş ve “öğrenen yetilerinin ABC’si” (Sharader, 2003:1) olarak adlandırılmaya başlanmıştır. Aslında öğrenen özerkliği kavramının temeli 1960’lı yılların ortalarından sonra popüler olan ve dil öğretiminde yaygın olarak kullanılmaya başlayan İletişimsel Dil Öğretimi Yaklaşımına dayanmaktadır.

Bu çalışmanın temel hedefi yabancı dil öğrenimi derslerinde öğrenen özerkliğinin duyduğunu anlama becerisi başarısına etkisini göstermektir. Araştırma dinleme stratejileri tabanlı öğretim ile öğrenen özerkliğinin kullanıldığı öğretimin duyduğunu anlama becerisi başarısına nasıl bir etkide bulunduğunu göstermek açısından hem bu dersin uygulamalarına hem de uygulayıcıları olarak öğreticilerine katkıda bulunacaktır.

Bu araştırmanın sonuçları özellikle ikinci/ yabancı dil derslerini yürütmekte olan öğretmenler için oldukça önemli veriler içermektedir. Pek çok öğretmenin yabancı dil öğretimi sürecinde karşılaştıkları zorlukları göz önünde bulundurduğumuzda, bu çalışmanın bulguları duyduğunu anlama derslerinde öğrenen başarısını arttırmak için öğretmenlerimize önemli bazı fikirler verecektir. Bu çalışmada bahsedilen ve çalışılan dinleme stratejileri ve öğrenen özerkliği tabanlı öğretimin uygulanması ile öğretmenler öğrencilerinin başarılarının yükselmesine yardımcı olabilirler.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Öğrenen özerkliği, öğrenen özerkliği tabanlı öğrenme, duyduğunu anlama becerisi, dinleme stratejileri, bağımsız öğrenen, başarı.

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CHAPTER 1

THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

In the area of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) there have been many changes during the years. These changes always directly affected both the specialists who are the applicants of teaching process and also the foreign language learners. Over the last two decades, the concept of learner autonomy and independence has gained a very important place and it is sometimes named as “The ABC’s of learner empowerment” (Sharader, 2003: 1). In fact the source of learner autonomy and independence concepts is the Communicative Language Teaching Approach (CLT) which became very popular and widely preferred language teaching approach after the mid-1960’s.

The use of CLT was in a way a kind of rejection to Audiolingualism after the Situational Language Teaching in the late 1960’s where language was taught by practicing the basic structures in meaningful situation-based activities. However, it was seen that teaching foreign language (TFL) on the basis of situational events would not help learners with the real life situations where the speakers or the writers of the target language (TL) intend to use the utterances with the meanings coming from their own needs and intentions. The CLT with its specific emphasis on functions as well as the structures started to gain importance. In the application process of CLT, the learners were studying mostly in groups and learning the language via some problem-solving tasks. With the use of these tasks meaning has started to become the paramount and communicative competence was the desired goal where the ability to use the linguistic system effectively and appropriately became the essence of learning languages. Language learning was considered as the process of struggling to communicate, so the use of linguistic system would be more effective and can be learned easily in a

meaningful context. The responsibility of learning started to be shared by the learners and the learners started to have the chance to be in the centre of the learning process. The main role of the teacher was to motivate the learners by working on the language and communicate with their peers in the TL. While trying to interact in the TL the teachers were enabling the learners to use their own creativity, so the learners started to be independent from the teacher. Although this situation had many positive effects in the language learning process, there was a factor that could be named as the lack of control of the teacher during the teaching- learning process. Because the teachers could not exactly have the chance to know directly what the learners were doing in the use of language anymore. But, the most important part of the CLT was the issue of motivating the learners to learn and communicate in the TL, and as mentioned before what to use was the responsibility of the learners not the teachers.

In this sense, the need of communication started to drive the learners to have their self-control and self-esteem to use the language without being directly dependent on the teacher or just being a mimic who is imitating and repeating the given patterns by the teacher. This new approach to language teaching puts the learner in the center and makes him/her to be aware of what s/he needs to learn and use, or what to do with the TL. They start to be autonomous in the learning process.

As Thanasoulas (2000: 1) mentioned in his article on learner autonomy, the autonomous learners are expected to assume greater responsibility for, and take their own learning. Thus, autonomy has also been defined with some other synonyms as “*independence* (Sheerin, 1991), *language awareness* (Lier, 1996; James and Garret, 1991), *self-direction* (Candy, 1991), and *learners’ willingness* (Holec, 1993)” (Thanasoulas, 2000: 1-2). But this never means that the teacher becomes redundant in the learning process, on the contrary, in order to help the learners to assume greater control over their own learning, it is important to help them to become aware of and identify the strategies they already use or could potentially use (Thanasoulas, 2000: 1).

Holec (1993) describes autonomy as “the ability to take charge of one’s learning” (In Thanasoulas, 2000: 1) which has to be used in at least five ways (Benson and Voller 1997: 2):

- for situations in which learners study entirely on their own;
- for a set of skills which can be learned and applied in self-directed learning;
- for an inborn capacity which is suppressed by institutional education;
- for the exercise of learners responsibility for their own learning;
- for the right of learners to determine the direction of their own learning

Also within the context of education the characteristics of autonomous learners are defined as follows by Omaggio (In Thanasoulas, 2000: 2):

1. autonomous learners have insights into their learning styles and strategies;
2. take an active approach to the learning task at hand;
3. are willing to take risks, i.e., to communicate in the target language at all costs;
4. are good guessers;
5. attend to form as well as to content, that is, place importance on accuracy as well as appropriacy;
6. develop the target language into a separate reference system and are willing to revise and reject hypotheses and rules that do not apply; and
7. have a tolerant and outgoing approach to the target language.

Related to the preceding list we should admit that the characteristics of autonomous learners mentioned above, may really work for an effective learning and teaching process; yet some other factors such as, motivation, learner needs, learning strategies, and language awareness may also be needed for the development of the learner autonomy and success in language learning

In order to enhance the development of autonomous learning and have more autonomous learners some appropriate conditions will also be required in classroom applications. One of the most important conditions for the achievement of autonomous

learning is the use of strategies -mainly cognitive and metacognitive strategies- in language learning. Because, the strategies may help to improve motivation, positive attitudes to language learning and knowledge about language learning. But, this never means that, autonomous learning process is a matter of teacherless learning. Because the learners will be in need of a guide in order to learn how to learn the target language by using their own creativity and language capacity. As Benson and Voller mentioned “teachers have a crucial role to play in launching learners into self-access and in lending them a regular helping hand to stay afloat” (1997:63).

1.1 The Problem

In this research in the light of the importance of the self-assessment, language awareness and autonomous learning in general, it is aimed to find out the impact of autonomous learning on the success of listening comprehension by the use of listening strategies and if there is a direct relation between the autonomous learning and success in listening comprehension in foreign language learning classes. The reason of studying this issue is based on the difficulty of developing the success in listening classes only by using the Strategy Based Learning (SBL) and teaching. Although the SBL has been very effective and helpful in the advancement of listening comprehension, the impact of learner autonomy was aimed to be experienced in order to see if there was a direct relationship between learner autonomy and success. The reason of the application of learner autonomy in the research was, if the learner autonomy could be used as an additional factor to the use of listening strategies to achieve success in listening comprehension. The students mostly don't have a tendency of sharing the responsibility of improving their listening comprehension with the teacher and they are not eager to assess their own language abilities and their own performances. When the autonomous learners' characteristics are considered, we may say that the learners maybe lead to take active participation in the learning process if they start to have a leading role in assessing their own improvement. To our knowledge, in our country the effect of learner autonomy on the improvement of listening skills has not been studied so far. In this sense in listening classes of preparatory year, it was aimed to encourage the learners on self-directed learning by using self-assessments sheets (ALTE Can Do Descriptors-

CEF) regularly to find out the relationship between autonomy and the success and also the effect of autonomous learning on the success of listening comprehension.

1.2 Aim

This research aims to identify the impact of autonomous learning on the success of listening comprehension in foreign language learning classes strategy based teaching and. To this purpose the listening level of the learners were determined after the pre-test (Mock CAE Advanced Listening Comprehension Test) and the test results were adapted to the levels indicated by the European Commission and Common European Framework (CEF). During the application of the study the learners assessed their listening comprehension abilities by the help of ALTE Can Do Descriptors regularly. The aim of the use of ALTE descriptors was to enable students to advance autonomy on their own learning process by assessing themselves after the teaching of each unit.

1.3 Research Questions

The main aim of the study is to identify the effect of the explicit listening strategy training and autonomous learning on the success in listening comprehension classes. With the respect to this main aim two research questions were stated:

1. Does explicit strategy training have an effect on the learners' listening comprehension success?
2. Is there a significant relationship between the autonomy and the listening comprehension success?

1.4 The Significance of the Study

Since listening comprehension skill is one of the most difficult skills and the learners face many problems in the improvement of this skill, the teachers of listening

classes have many responsibilities in choosing the materials, designing the courses and choosing the most appropriate methods and strategies in the teaching process. The main reason of living all these obstacles in listening comprehension at university preparatory classes, is sourced by the procedure followed by the teachers of foreign language classes in the high schools where mostly the learners encounter with and start to learn the English language for the first time. The main schedule followed by the high school teachers is to study linguistic structures intensively during the high school years and ignore the foreign language skills, since they need more time and challenge in the teaching process. That is the main reason why the ELT learners enroll the universities without having a good competence on the foreign language skills such as: reading, writing, listening and speaking. Therefore the foreign language skill courses in preparatory years of the ELT departments become a challenge both for the learners and the teachers.

Finally, it must be considered that the improvement of the foreign language skills needs more attention and a specific education or training during the preparatory years of the ELT departments. This research mainly focused on how listening skill can be improved by the help of the autonomous learning via a strategy based teaching in a listening comprehension class. In the research the existence of a significant relationship between the autonomous learning and success of listening comprehension is also analyzed.

1.5 Assumptions and Restrictions

The assessment of the language abilities of the learners in listening comprehension class was based on pre-post tests prepared to assess their listening comprehension success (Mock CAE Advanced Listening Comprehension Test). Also the ALTE Can Do Descriptors were used to help the learners evaluate their own progress in listening. The learners of the experimental group were expected to assess themselves via the Can Do Descriptors and in this case the objectivity of the students and the abilities of assessing themselves can be seen as a restriction if they cannot handle the process appropriately and have a full interest and motivation to assess themselves autonomously. Since, the

learning and teaching behaviors that the learners bring with themselves to university preparatory classes after graduating from high school don't basically rely on being an autonomous learner; most of the students don't have any idea of being autonomous and having the responsibility of assessing their own achievement. So, the assessments of the learners were a considerable restriction because of their previous learning behaviors.

1.6 Terms and Concepts

Learner Autonomy: "The ability to take charge of one's own learning and to have, and to hold, the responsibility for all the decisions concerning all aspects of this learning" (Holec, 1981:3). The terms self-awareness, learner empowerment, language awareness, self-direction, self-monitoring and self-assessment will be the key concepts for learner autonomy where learners are responsible to monitor their own achievements and have the ability and responsibility to assess their own development in one specific language skill or skills.

Listening Comprehension: Listening is always considered as a receptive skill and the objective of the listening skill is mentioned as "to train the learners to understand and respond appropriately to the kind of language they are most likely to hear in normal use" (Demirel, 2004: 52).

Learning Strategies: Conscious steps or behaviors used by language learners to enhance the acquisition, storage, retention, recall, and use of new information (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990: 1). The conscious use of language learning strategies has been found to be one of the characteristics of good language learners (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990:2). Skehan (1989) considered language-learning strategies as one of the most important factors accounting for individual differences in language learning. Proficient language learners use more learning strategies and more types of strategies than less proficient language learners and are better able to choose strategies appropriate to the task. As Oxford mentioned (1989) the types of language learning strategies used by different learners vary according to many variables including motivation, gender,

type of task, age, subject matter, level of L2, learning style, and cultural background (Griffiths, 2003:369).

Listening Strategies: There are two main strategies used in listening process; these are: cognitive and metacognitive. Cognitive strategies identified in the literature include inferencing, elaboration, prediction, translation, contextualization (O'Malley et al., 1989; Oxford, 1990; Young, 1997; Ross, 1997) and visualization (DeFillipis, 1980). Cognitive strategies are used to process utterances directly by transforming them into mental representations that could be stored and recalled. Through cognitive strategies many learners can make associations between new and old information. Some of these strategies will have clear benefits. When informants use contextualization strategies they will be less preoccupied with getting the exact meaning of words. Instead they will be more interested in constructing the big picture in terms of local cohesion (within the text) and global cohesion (with information outside the text) (Goh, 2002: 186).

Metacognitive strategies include self-monitoring, comprehension monitoring, selective attention and self-evaluation (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990; Bacon, 1992; Young, 1997). These strategies are used to manage complex cognitive processes before, during and after processing the information. For example pre-listening preparation tactics can prepare informants both cognitively and affectively. By anticipating contents, content words and rehearsing their sounds, learners can come over the word recognition problems and can process the input more quickly. By actively encouraging themselves to relax during listening, they can also lower their anxiety in what many learners would agree to be a stressful activity (Goh, 2002: 197-198).

ALTE (Association of Language Testers in Europe) Can do Descriptors of Common European Framework (ALTE): ALTE can do descriptors are provided for reception, interaction and production. There may not be descriptors for all sub-categories for every level, since some activities cannot be undertaken until a certain level of competence has been reached, whilst others may cease to be an objective at

higher levels. (The Common European Framework in its Political and Educational Context.)

1.7. Abbreviations

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching

SLA: Second Language Acquisition

SLL: Second Language Learning

FLL: Foreign Language Learning

SL: Second Language

FL: Foreign Language

CEF: The Common European Framework

ALTE: Association of Language Testers in Europe

GTM: Grammar Translation Method

DM: Direct Method

TL: Target Language

TFL: Teaching Foreign Language

CAE: Cambridge Advanced Exam

SBL: Strategy Based Learning

1.8. Literature Review

Much of the current debate about autonomy in FLL/ SLL has its origin in Henri Holec's *Autonomy and Foreign Language Learning* (first published in 1979). He takes as his starting point the argument that the purpose of adult education should be to prepare the individual learner for participation in the democratic process.

However, it is during the last three decades that autonomous learning has become a major research area. In Great Britain, Smiles (1859) published a book entitled Self-Help, which mentioned the value of personal development. (Hiemstra, R., 1994)

Autonomous learning is a new subject that gained importance at the end of the 1970's and became very popular in the last 30 years. Despite of its popularity the

studies on this subject are not enough to show the content of autonomous learning in the field of language learning with its all dimensions. When we are looking for the researches showing the relationship between the autonomy and success in general and the relationship between listening success and autonomous learning in special, we couldn't reach any study that is measuring these issues directly.

Groundwork was laid through the observations of Houle (1961) (University of Chicago, Illinois). He interviewed 22 adult learners and classified them into three categories based on reasons for participation in learning: (a) goal-oriented, who participate mainly to achieve some end goal; (b) activity-oriented, who participate for social or fellowship reasons; (c) learning-oriented, who perceive learning as an end in itself. It is this latter group that resembles the self-directed learner identified in subsequent research.

The first attempt to understand learning-oriented individuals was made by Tough, a Canadian researcher and one of Houle's doctoral students. His dissertation effort to analyze self-directed teaching activities and subsequent research with additional subjects resulted in a book called The Adult's Learning Projects (1979). This work has stimulated many similar studies with various populations in various locations.

In parallel scholarship during this same time period, Knowles popularized in North America the term, "andragogy" with corresponding adult instructional processes. Knowles (1975) publication, Self-directed Learning, provided foundational definitions and assumptions that guided much subsequent research:

- (a) self-directed learning assumes that humans grow in capacity and need to be self-directing;
- (b) learners' experiences are rich resources for learning;
- (c) individuals learn what is required to perform their evolving life tasks;

(d) an adult's natural orientation is task or problem-centered learning;

(e) self-directed learners are motivated by various internal incentives, such as need for self-esteem, curiosity, desire to achieve, and satisfaction of accomplishment.

Another important research effort was Guglielmino's (1977) dissertation. She developed the Self-Directed Learning Readiness Scale (SDLRS), an instrument subsequently used by many researchers to measure self-directed readiness or to compare various self-directed learning aspects with numerous characteristics. Spear and Mocker's (1984) work on organizing circumstances showed how important it is to understand a learner's environmental circumstances in promoting self-directed learning.

Establishment of an annual International Symposium on Self-Directed Learning in 1987 by Long and his colleagues completes this historical picture. The Symposia have spawned many publications, research projects, and theory building efforts by researchers throughout the world.

Benson and Voller in their book *Autonomy and Independence in Language Learning* (1997) gave place to many researchers studies and articles on self-directed learning, self-access and autonomous learning. For example Dickinson (1992) associates autonomy with the idea of learning alone. So this leads learners to be independent from the teachers and have the responsibility to learn how to learn and assess their own learning.

Chamot, Dale, O' Malley and Spanos investigate the problem solving approaches –the strategic approaches that the students use in problem solving- of the ESL students through a performance assessment. The result indicated that significantly more students in high implementation classrooms were able to solve the problems correctly than the low implementation classrooms. This study represents the effect of the strategy use in language learning success.

Another research *Listening Comprehension: The Learner's Perspective* done by Graham (2006) on listening comprehension showed some similarities with our study regarding the role played by ineffective listening strategy use or skill applications. This study gives some suggestions for the problems regarding how students listen and their attitudes towards listening comprehension.

The study, *The Relationship between EFL learner's Beliefs and Learning strategy Use* done by Yang (1999) investigates the strategy use from a wider perspective. In his study Yang tried to answer the question of "how are foreign/ second language learners beliefs about language learning related to their strategy use?". As a result of the study, Yang indicated that there is a cyclical relationship between learner's beliefs and strategy use. This implies that if the learners are autonomously aware of what they are doing and what they want to do with the information they are acquiring with a high possibility may tend to find out solutions for their problems of learning.

As Cotteral stated in her article, *Developing a Course Strategy for Learner Autonomy* (1995), learners who are autonomous might take responsibility for their own learning by setting their own goals, planning practice opportunities, or assessing their progress (1995: 219). But as the results of our study demonstrate promoting learner autonomy sometimes can be difficult because the teacher may not always be available to assist the students during the application of the curriculum or the learner's perception of being autonomous might not be a contributing factor in language learning.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In this chapter the second/ foreign language acquisition theories and the contribution of the modern approaches to the learning and teaching process have been proposed.

2.1. A Brief History of Foreign/ Second Language Learning and Teaching

Since the 17th century there have been many changes in the field of English Language Learning (ELL) and English Language Teaching (ELT). The history of foreign language learning goes back to the Latin and Greek and it is said to have begun in the late 1800s with François Gouin, a French teacher of Latin. In that century it was believed that learning a foreign language Latin or Greek promoted their speaker's intellectually. As we shall see in the continuing parts, the changing process of foreign language learning had started with the need of learning the grammatical rules, syntactic structures and also the vocabulary of the new learned language by the help of memorization for the translation of literary texts of Latin and Greek. This was the core of the Grammar Translation Method and also the English Language Teaching Methodology which was directly based on the Structuralist View and the Behaviorist Approach. During these years there was no provision for the oral use of the languages under study; after all, both Latin and Greek were not being taught for oral communication but for translation. Late in the nineteenth century, this Classical Method came to be known as the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) and as Brown mentioned at the end it had a certain name as a method, which offered very little beyond an insight into the grammatical rules attending the process of translating from the second to the native language. Prator and Celce-Murcia listed the major characteristics of GTM as in the following (Brown, 2001: 18-19):

- Classes are taught in the mother tongue, with little active use of the target language.
- Much vocabulary is taught in the form of lists of isolated words.
- Long, elaborate explanations of the intricacies of grammar are given
- Grammar provides the rules for putting words together, and instructions often focus on the form and inflection of words.
- Reading of difficult classical texts is begun early.
- Little attention is paid to the content of texts, which are treated as exercises in grammatical analysis.
- Often the only drills are exercises in translating disconnected sentences from the target language into the mother language.
- Little or no attention is given to pronunciation.
- Accuracy is the predominant part not the fluency.
- Since the teacher is the only authority and the only source of information and accurate knowledge of grammar the students are considered as passive doers of the routed learning materials.
- There is no active creativity or individual attributive participation of the students.

It is really a bit controversial why GTM is still in use but it is not so difficult to understand its popularity and long breath. It requires only few specialized skills on the part of teachers and also it doesn't require a wide range of materials except the grammar, vocabulary and translation materials, so it saves time to teachers to be ready for the classes and still it preserves its' popularity.

As mentioned above, the modern foreign language teaching methodology is assumed to have begun with François Gouin, but Gouin is not considered as the founder of language teaching methodology because Charles Berlitz, the popular German founder of Direct Method (DM) had also influenced the foreign language teaching field being one of the contemporaries of Gouin. Direct Method which reached to the peak of popularity at the beginning of the 20th century was based on the belief that second language learning should be more like first language learning. In this case comparatively to GTM,

DM gives importance to oral interaction, spontaneous use of the language, no translation between first and second languages, and little or no analysis of grammatical rules. According the list of Richards and Rodgers the principles of the DM are (Richards and Rodgers , 1986:9-10):

- Classroom instruction was conducted exclusively in the target language.
- Only everyday vocabulary and sentences were taught.
- Oral communication skills were built up in a carefully traded progression organized around question-and-answer exchanges between teachers and students in small, intensive classes.
- Grammar was taught inductively.
- New teaching points were taught through modeling and practice.
- Concrete vocabulary was taught through demonstration, objects, and pictures of abstract vocabulary were taught by association of ideas.
- Both speech and listening comprehension were taught.
- Correct pronunciation and grammar were emphasized.

Although there was a decline of the popularity of DM, the broke out of the World War II became the end for this short-lived movement. In the mids of 20th century, the American army was in need of soldiers who were orally proficient in the languages of both their allies and their enemies. The US military started intensive language courses that focused on aural and oral skills and they became to known as the Army Specialized Training Programme or as Army Method. The world-wide name of this army method is Audiolingual Method (ALM) and it is mainly based on linguistics and behavioral psychology. Brown has mentioned the characteristics of ALM as in the following (Brown, 2001: 23):

- New material is presented in dialogue form.
- There is dependence on mimicry, memorization of set phrases, and over-learning.
- Structures are sequenced by means of contrastive analysis and taught one at a time.

- Structural patterns are taught using repetitive drills.
- There is little or no grammatical explanation. Grammar is taught by inductive analogy rather than by deductive explanation.
- Vocabulary is strictly limited and learned in context.
- There is much use of tapes, language labs, and visual aids.
- Great importance is attached to pronunciation.
- Very little use of the mother tongue by teachers is permitted.
- Successful responses are immediately reinforced.
- There is a great effort to get students to produce error-free utterances.
- There is a tendency to manipulate language and disregard content.

For a long time ALM was very popular in second/foreign language teaching methodology and still some of the techniques of this method is still being adapted to other language teaching methods and preserves its popularity.

In 1970's with the beginning of the new decade, due to Chomskyan Revolution in linguistics, cognitive learning gained importance in second/ foreign language learning methodology. This learning was named as Cognitive Code Learning and it affected some new methods. One of these methods is Community Language Learning (CLL) which is directly based on the social dynamics and the psychological moods of learners because they were considered as whole persons and not only the behavioral or physical abilities were engaged in learning, but also their psychological readiness and needs were taken into consideration. CLL was namely "*a counseling-learning model*" as Charles Curran (1972) mentioned (Brown, 2001: 25). In his Counseling Learning Theory Curran tried to apply counseling techniques into learning/ teaching process. In this method the main objective of learning is using the language and language patterns for the sake of communication. It is believed that the interaction between learners can create a native like environment and with the help of the teacher transfer of knowledge the learners can reach to the mastery. Beside the efficacies to foreign/ second language learning methodology there were some deficiencies also. One of them was the nondirective teacher, since most of the students are used to be taught in a directive manner and having a counselor teacher might sometimes cause confusion in the classroom. The

second was the inductive way of learning because the students are familiar with being told the rules all the time and it is supported that if the learners can improve their own learning autonomy this kind of learning will be more efficient. But if they can not handle their self-control of learning this may result in unsuccessful learning. With all these advantages and drawbacks of CLL, it was the first method which gave importance to students-centeredness and autonomy so it was a very efficient method in FLL and SLL.

In 1979 Georgi Lazanov after searching the learning process and the deficiencies of this process, mentioned about a new method that aims to depart the psychological barriers restricting the effective learning. This method named as Suggestopedia, and this name was coming from the suggestion that this method tries to help the learners what to do in order to keep themselves away from the barriers that make them feel restless and also creates fear during the learning process. Drawing on insights from Soviet psychological research on extrasensory perception and from yoga, Lazanov created a method for learning that capitalized on relaxed states of mind for maximum retention of material. Music, mainly Baroque music, was the most important element of this method; because Lazanov claimed that Baroque music with its 60 beats per minute and its specific rhythm can create a relaxed atmosphere for a full concentration which can help “superlearning” of the students. According to him, the soft Baroque music can activate the alpha brain waves and decrease the blood pressure and pulse rate which is sourced by anxiety and negative feelings or barriers that hinders effective learning. Also students are asked to have the roles of different foreign identities and to feel as a child as much as possible with the purpose of avoiding the fear of making mistakes as for the children have the right to make mistakes not the adults. Like the other methods Suggestopedia also became popular for a while by showing the importance and power of brain to the foreign language teaching media. Still it is used as a cognitive model and mostly preferred in teaching language to adults.

Another cognitive based method the -Silent Way- was found by Caleb Cattegno. Silent Way, is a kind of problem solving method under the influence of humanistic approach and provides learners teacher independence more than the other methods and

the student self-learning is supported with the activities prepared before the lessons by the teachers. Richards and Rodgers summarized the theory of the method as in the following (Richards and Rodgers, 1986:99):

1. Learning is facilitated if the learner discovers or creates rather than remembers and repeats what is to be learned.
2. Learning is facilitated by accompanying (mediating) physical objects.
3. Learning is facilitated by problem solving involving the material to be learned.

Silent Way is directly based on the theory of Ausubel's Discovery Learning and in a way it became one of the methods which were based on self-directed learning or autonomous learning. The founder, Cattegno, believed that learners should develop independence, autonomy and responsibility at the same time in order to solve the problems to discover how to learn to solve one should cooperate with the others. The teacher is only a stimulator and the students are the active learners.

Although the principles of Silent Way are still valid, because of being found too difficult to be applied in the classroom, it never gained popularity in foreign language learning area. Since it needs more preparation of the teacher before coming to class in order to make the students active during the classes, it was considered as time consuming and a bit hard to be applied every day. Today the principles of Silent Way and mainly the "Discovery Learning Approach" of Ausubel became the underlying concept of strategic learning and mainly autonomous learning.

In the 1960's James Asher began experimenting Total Physical Response; a new method based on the motor activities engaged in the language learning process. He mainly observed the children who are acquiring their mother tongue and believed that the second/ foreign language learner may follow the same procedure. His methods gave importance to the right brain activities which precede left brain language processing. In his observations he witnessed the children's' physical behaviors that accompany the language at the same time of the verbal utterances. So he designed many listening and acting activities and he believed that these acting activities may provide over learning

and encourage students to follow the same process of acquiring a language. It is not mainly a teacher-independent model. On the contrary it is teacher dependent and there is nearly no verbal feedback coming from the students. For this reason this was seen as a limitation of the method which discourages direct verbal communication which is mostly seen as the main goal of language learning. Although it cannot be named very popular in adult language learning environment, it is still seen very effective with young learners and all the applications show that it works with the youngsters.

In the late 1980's and 1990's communicative properties of language became the most important thing in language learning and the teachers started to design their classes by authentic materials, real-world simulations and meaningful tasks which aimed to bring the real world of the target language into the classroom environment. The method called Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) was the one which brought all these elements into language classes. Today all the fundamental factors of communication are still preserving their popularity. As communication is the main aim of language learning it is very popular for different reasons, yet the main purpose is to follow the raising trends in every area of the developing world, such as technology, economy, politics, etc. The main aim of learning a language is providing communication in that language through out the life .The characteristics of this current method was described by Brown as in the following (Brown, 2001: 43):

1. Classroom goals are focused on all of the components of communicative competence. Goals therefore must intertwine the organizational aspects of language with the pragmatic.
2. Language techniques are designed to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes. Organizational language forms are not the central focus, but rather aspects of language that enable the learner to accomplish those purposes.
3. Fluency and accuracy are seen as complementary principles underlying communicative techniques. At times fluency may have to take on more importance than accuracy in order to keep learners meaningfully engaged in language use.

4. Students in a communicative class ultimately have to use the language, productively and receptively, in unrehearsed context outside the classroom. Classroom tasks must therefore equip students with the skills necessary for communication in those contexts.
5. Students are given opportunities to focus on their own learning process through an understanding of their own styles of learning and through the development of appropriate strategies for autonomous learning.
6. The role of the teacher is that of facilitator and guide, not an all-knowing bestower of knowledge. Students are therefore encouraged to construct meaning through genuine linguistic interaction with others.

Besides these benefits there are also some drawbacks. The first and the most important one is the nonnative speaker teachers. It is not easy for a nonnative speaker to provide a fluent and totally accurate pronounced language example for the learners in order to help them to have comprehensible input for an accurate production. Also at the very beginning of the learning it may be a bit difficult for the teachers to make the students active participants of the learning process. Despite these drawbacks, communicative language teaching is still very popular and it also became the base of other many contemporary approaches such as, task- based, content- based, strategy-based, cooperative learning, etc.

2.2. Defining Learning and Teaching

In literature, it is possible to find various definitions of learning however, most pedagogues seem to reach to a consensus on the definition as in the following: “a change in student behaviour, which takes place as a result of being engaged in an educational experience ”or it is “the acquisition of capacities or tendencies through action or experience. The capacities involved in formal education include concepts, knowledge, understanding and skills. Also the tendencies may include attitudes, values and ways of behaving” (Yüksel, 2007: 1)

Gagne (1985) based the condition of learning into five main areas (Nicholls, 2001: 22):

1. Intellectual Skills: These relate to ‘knowing how’ rather than ‘knowing that’.
2. Verbal Skills: These are associated with knowing names, places, and recalling principles and generalisations.
3. Cognitive Strategies: These are ways in which students manage the mental processes (e.g. thinking and memorising).
4. Attitudes: These are concerned with students’ emotions, and the social and cultural approaches to the subject and learning.
5. Motor Skills: These are required for the physical tasks of learning, such as being able to use IT, chemical equipment or laboratory material.

The elements put forward by Gagne are a starting point in considering the role of theory of learning and student learning outcomes. Learning is complex, and psychological factors play a significant role in the development of learning, learning strategies and styles. Understanding the underlying principles of learning may help the teachers in planning and giving space and opportunity to their learners to be responsible of their own learning and consider alternative approaches and hypotheses to enhance their learning process. This means that the learners may be engaged in the learning process more actively, and the teachers will be considered as a facilitator not only as a knowledge provider. While defining learning, Ausubel (1968) mentioned about this issue of the independent and responsible learners as “ the most important single factor influencing learning is what the learner already knows; ascertain this and teach him/her accordingly” (Nicholls, 2001: 23). In this definition we may encounter with the two aspects of learning: reception (rote) learning and discovery (meaningful) learning.

“**Reception learning** requires that the entire content of what is to be learned is presented to the learner in its final form; the student is required to internalise or incorporate the material presented. This type of approach is often found in the standard lecture where the lecturer transmits all the information”. “**Discovery**

learning requires the student to be actively involved in learning by engaging and discovering what is to be learned through specific learning activities” (Nicholls, 2001: 23).

Considering the definitions on learning it might be concluded that discovery learning is a pushing factor that helps students to be the only responsible agents of their own learning process, but at the same time this learning may be more meaningful and long lasting. Since the learners are active and trying to get the meaning on their own, it may be very difficult for them to forget it easily after spending such a tough effort. To make the learners active is also considered very important in the learning process, and this is the duty of the teachers. According to Nicholls (2001: 37), “good teaching does not necessitate effective learning but it should go a long way towards assisting the learning process”. In respect to his definition, encouraging self-directed learning or providing autonomous learners are the most important element of an effective learning-teaching process. What will be the results of a good teaching process?

1. high-quality student learning;
2. active engagement with subject content;
3. engaging with students at their level of learning;
4. explaining material plainly;
5. making clear what has to be understood; at what level and why;
6. respect for students and encouraging student independence;
7. giving high-quality feedback on student work;
8. learning from students about the effects of your teaching and how it can be improved. (Nicholls, 2001: 37)

Starting with the results the definition of a good teaching process we must have a look to the definition of teaching and its properties in relation to learning in the learning-teaching equilibrium. In 1980 Holec mentioned the main purpose of language teaching as “to help the learner acquire the linguistic communicative abilities he has defined for himself” (Finch, 2001: 7). When we consider this definition of language learning, we may obviously see that the learning process needs an autonomy which can be handled by the learners not by the teachers. The role of teachers in the learning

process is limited to show them the way how to get (acquire) the information in an appropriate way which will be more effective and long lasting or as the motto of strategic learning “life long lasting”.

For Kenny and Little (1993; 1996), autonomy implies a wider perspective of holistic education in which learners are encouraged to value their own opinions as well as taking on responsibility for learning. This approach leads them to have a more independent learning style and puts the learner in the heart of the learning process. Parallel to the ideas of Kenny and Little, Nunan and others (Oxford 1990b; Sinclair & Ellis 1992), however, stress the need for learners to be “systematically educated in the skills and knowledge they will need in order to make informed choices about what they want to learn and how they want to learn” (Finch, 2001: 7). Also Nunan (1996) claims that “a degree of autonomy can be fostered in any learners and in any learning environment”. Brookes & Grundy (1988) see it as “axiomatic” and says “learner autonomy should be the goal of every learner and every teacher” (Finch, 2001(b): 7), while Little claims that “genuinely successful learners have always been autonomous”, and that educators must “help more learners to succeed” rather than following learner autonomy as an explicit goal (Little, 1995:175).

An essential aspect of autonomous learning is that, the learner develops awareness of language and learning. Developing awareness is not a natural process and it is not inborn. It needs a conscious effort and practice; also it needs some specific skills and techniques that are mainly named as learning strategies recently. Also for Kelly (1953) “learning processes are individual, based on the learner’s pre-knowledge and can only be monitored by the learner himself and meaning is applied by the individual who interprets, we differ from each other in the way we construct events and we have different ways of perceive the same events” (Anne-Brit Fenner, 2000: 2). It means that each learner show difference from one another and may look to the learned material and comprehend the meaning from his/her point of view. This can be described with the term “scaffolding” which was first mentioned by Bruner in 1994. Scaffolding is the basic term used for Cognitivist Psychological Theory which considers learning as an ongoing process to make sense of the world around us based on our previous

experience and pre-knowledge. According to the scaffolding process, Bruner mentions that in the learning context the support and assistance are given to the child by the adults at the very beginning to learn all the necessary items. As the time passes the support is removed gradually as the child manages to take charge. This will be the same for the learners in the classroom environment. Since the awareness of self-learning is not natural and needs to be developed by a professional, the same scaffolding approach can be applied to raise the awareness and independency of the individuals in order to help them to be autonomous learners. According to the autonomy definitions of Holec and Kelly, learner and his choice is the centre of autonomous learning. The individual aspect and personal choice of what to learn and how to learn are essential for autonomous learning.

According to Anne-Brit Fenner (2000: 3) “knowledge is not an objective entity that can be passed and controlled by the teacher. Only the learner himself has insights into his own pre-knowledge and is, therefore, the only person who is capable of establishing the necessary relationship between what he already knows and the new material presented to him. This necessitates a shift in the classroom from teaching to learning and from teacher to learner”. In this case, when the learner is given the opportunity to take charge of the learning situation in an autonomous learning environment, he may take charge of all kinds of material and use them to enhance his own learning. But what is very important is, the learners must be shown the ways to explore this freedom of personal choice and independence in learning and understand what freedom of choice entails. In this way they can learn to make use of every teaching material, approaches and methods which can help them to learn better and long lasting in their lives.

2.3. Learner Autonomy in Language Learning:

When we consider the learning process and ask a person the elements of learning we may encounter with the same answers: teachers, learners, school, books, etc. Mostly the main elements of learning will be the teacher and then the learners. The teachers were and are always be the only people who are responsible to convey all the information which is necessary for the learners on the learned item and they were seen as the

information (informant) agents and have always been presenting, explaining, encouraging, setting standards for this piece of knowledge and assessing them. They are responsible with all of the learning process and the learners. They have to supply the knowledge, present the knowledge, set the standards of the knowledge or learning and also motivate the learners to absorb the knowledge and at the end assess the success of the learners meanwhile assess themselves as the information provider after such a long and tough journey. When we look at the responsibilities of the learners we may see that their main role is to seek the information, display understanding and skill, apply the knowledge into practice and achieve the standards set by the professionals. So, it is very clear that in the formal setting the main and most important element is the teacher. Related to this issue in the learning-teaching medium the main responsibility has a great pressure on the shoulders of the teachers.

With the changing world and the variables as technology, social values, life standards, etc. the role of teachers has changed. A new term-“self-directed learning”- or –“autonomy”- has emerged nearly at the end of 1970’s. In fact, self-directed learning has existed even from classical antiquity. For example, self-study played an important part in the lives of Greek philosophers as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. Other historical examples of self-directed learners included Alexander the Great, Caesar, Erasmus, and Descartes. Social conditions in Colonial America and a corresponding lack of formal educational institutions necessitated that many people learn on their own. Early scholarly efforts to understand self-directed learning took place some 150 years ago in the United States and Craik (1840) documented the self-education efforts of several people.

In language teaching Holec is one of the thinkers who mostly prefers to use the word *autonomy* instead of the other words such as *self-directed learning* used for autonomy and he sees the movement of autonomy as an irreversible trend in the late 1960’s in industrially advanced Western countries to define social progress in terms of improvement in the quality of life, giving rise to various kinds of social awareness. One of the improvements is education and mainly adult education. In Holec (1980) it is stated that “adult education becomes an instrument for arousing an increasing sense of

awareness and liberation in man, and in some cases, an instrument for changing the environment itself. From the idea of man ‘product of his society’, one moves to the idea of man ‘producer of his society’ (Finch,2001:2).

In second language learning, this humanistic trend leads the researchers, educationalists, philosophers, etc. to various kinds of investigations in different fields in the 60’s and 70’s such as: socio-linguistic disciplines, ethnomethodology, ethnolinguistics, the ethnography of communication, language in education and the sociology of language. The main point of all these researches based language was the pragmatic vision of language as a ‘tool for communication’ –the rationale for the ‘Communicative Approach’ to language learning and teaching. (Finch, 2001:2)

Another outcome of humanists, cognitive psychology and sociolinguistics was ‘deschool movement’ of the 1970’s as Rogers, Illich and Freire mentioned (Rogers 1969; Illich 1973; Freire 1976). Related to this movement a number of learner-centered approaches took place in 1980’s and in 1990’s which mainly included autonomy as the basis of their curriculum. These are briefly learner training (Ellis and Sinclair 1989; Dickinson 1992), the learner-centered curriculum (Nunan 1988c), learning-strategy training (Oxford 1990b; Wenden 1991a), the project-based syllabus (Legutke and Thomas 1991), and learner-based teaching (Campbell & Kryszewska 1992). All these approaches are named by many of the researchers as the early work on learner autonomy which was developed in 1980’s by Strevens, Holec Allwright, Dickinson, Wenden and Rubin, Little, Devitt and Singleton, etc (Finch, 2001: 2).

Autonomy started to become popular in foreign language teaching with the pedagogical concerns on ‘learner-centered’ aims and methods. The aim was mainly focusing on the independent learner and how they think, learn and behave. According to Benson and Voller, “Such an approach is often characterized by tensions between responsibility and freedom from constraint; between the individual and the social; and between the view of language learning as a means to an end (autonomy for language learning) and as an end in itself (language learning for autonomy)” (1997: 5). In the definition of autonomy always there was a duality. Some of the researchers like Holec,

Dickinson and Kohonen mainly focused on the learner autonomy as a primary requisite of learning beyond school in democratic societies where as Wenden and Rubin, Chamot & Kupper, Oxford and Nyikos tried to solve the secret of good learner by focusing on the learner strategies and the notion of learning to learn (Finch, 2001:3).

In the last 25 years learner autonomy gained attention and started to become popular and it was defined by Little (1991:2) as the ‘buzz-word’ of the 1990’s in second language learning field. Although autonomy has become very popular in the last 25 years, there always has been a misconception on its definition and terminology. But the usage preference of the word is commonly accepted as self-directed learning.

There are a number of terms related to ‘self-directed learning’ that can be distinguished from it in various ways. The main and commonly used one and also the most popular nowadays is “autonomy”. Most people now agree that autonomy and autonomous learning are not directly the synonyms of , ‘self-directed’, ‘self-instruction’, ‘self-access’, ‘self-study’, ‘self-education’, ‘out-of-class learning’ or ‘distance learning’. These terms basically describe various ways and degrees of learning by yourself, whereas autonomy refers to abilities and attitudes (or whatever we think the “a capacity to control your own learning”). The point is, then, that learning by yourself is not the same thing as having the capacity to learn by yourself. Also, autonomous learners may be better than others at learning by themselves, but they do not necessarily have to learn by themselves. Over the last few years, for example, more and more research is coming out on autonomy in the classroom and ‘teacher autonomy’. The terms ‘independent learning’ and ‘self-directed learning’ also refer to ways of learning by yourself. But these terms are very often used as synonyms for autonomy.

What is autonomy then? It is a difficult question to answer for many of the researchers because most people who tried to define autonomy handled the issue from their own perspectives and also from their own research point of view. But mostly in the field of learning or specifically language learning, we may encounter with many definitions made by many researchers or thinkers as in the following:

The figure representing the definitions of autonomy made by different thinkers is adopted from Finch (2001: Appendix 1-2).

	NAME	DEFINITION
1	Shrader, S.R. (2003)	Self-directed learning or a shift of responsibility for learning from teacher to student.
2	Fenner, A. (2000)	An attitude or even a philosophy than a methodology.
3	Holec (1981)	The ability to take charge of one's own learning... This ability is not inborn but must be acquired either by "natural" means or (as most often happens) by formal learning, in a systematic, deliberate way.
4	Cotteral, S. (2000)	Autonomy is an incontrovertible goal for learners everywhere, since it is obvious that no students, anywhere, will have their teachers to accompany them throughout life.
5	Little, D. 1.(1989) 2.(1991)	The goal of all developmental learning and , is, moreover, fundamental to its processes. Acceptance of responsibility for one's own learning. A capacity for detachment, critical reflection, decision making and independent action.
6	Kelly, G. (1963)	A person's processes are psychologically canalized by the ways in which he anticipates events.
7	Wenden, A. (1991)	In effect, successful or expert or intelligent learners have learned how to learn. They have acquired the learning strategies, the knowledge about learning, and the attitudes t enable them to use these skills and knowledge confidently, flexibly, appropriately and independently of a teacher. Therefore they are autonomous.
8	Benson, P. 1.(1996)	The concept of autonomy is indeed beginning to enter the

	2.(1996)	mainstream of language learning methodology. Autonomization is necessarily a transformation of the learner as a social individual... autonomy not only transforms individuals, it also transforms the social situations and structures in which they are participants.
	Kant (1991)	Foundation of human dignity.
	Allwright (1990)	A constantly changing but at any time optimal state of equilibrium between maximal self-development and human interdependence.
	Hunt, Gow and Barnes (1989)	Decision-making process involved in identifying problems and making relevant decisions for their solution through access to sufficient sources of information.
	Legutke and Thomas (1991) and Littlewood (1996).	An ability that has to be acquired (learning how to learn) and is separate from the learning that may take place when autonomy has been acquired.
	Young (1986)	Authoring one's own world without being subject to the will of others.
	Dickinson 1. (1987) 2. (1992)	Complete responsibility for one's learning, carried out without the involvement of a teacher or pedagogic materials. An attitude towards learning in which the learner is prepared to take, or does take, responsibility for his own learning.
	Boud (1988)	Students take some significant responsibility for their own learning over and above responding to instruction.

Figure 1: Description of Autonomy

As it is obviously seen with the definitions, autonomy is tried to be explained in five main categories:

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 supposed 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. (Benson and Voller 1997:1)

2.4. The Importance of Autonomy and Autonomous Learning

There are many for and controversial ideas for the promotion of autonomy, but mostly in recent times with the studies and the classroom applications of learner strategies and the benefits on individual enhancement in learning process many educationalists tried to rationalize autonomy and how to support their learners to be autonomous. Dickinson (1987) provides five main reasons for supporting self-instruction (Finch, 2001: 5):

1. Practical reasons,
2. Individual differences among learners,
3. Educational aims,
4. Motivation,
5. Learning how to learn foreign languages

Cotteral, Benson and Voller, Brooks and Grundy, Little, Kelly and many other names also advocated for autonomy or namely self-instructed learning and commonly agreed on the issues that are mentioned below:

1. a resulting increase in enthusiasm for learning (LITTLEJOHN, 1985);

2. taking an active, independent attitude to learning and independently undertaking a learning task is beneficial to learning; personal involvement in decision making leads to more effective learning (Dickonson 1995);
3. when the learner sets the agenda, learning is more focused and purposeful, and thus more effective both immediately and in the longer term (cf. Little 1991; Holec 1981; Dickonson 1987);
4. when responsibility for the learning process lies with the learner, the barriers to learning and living that are found in traditional teacher-led educational structures need to arise (Little 1991; Holec 1981; Dickonson 1987);
5. without such barriers, learners should have little difficulty in transferring their capacity for autonomous behavior to all other areas of their lives, and this should make them more useful members of society and “more effective participants in the democratic process.” (Little 1991);
6. “...much of the significant language learning which individuals, for variety of reasons, undertake at different stages in their lives, occurs outside classroom walls unassisted- some would state unencumbered- by a classroom teacher” (Finch, 2001: 6).

In 1985 Wenden claimed that “learner strategies are the key to learner autonomy, and that one of the most important goals of language training should be the facilitating of that autonomy” (Brown 1994: 124).

2.5. Language Learning Strategies

The literature on learning strategies in second language acquisition emerged from a concern for identifying the characteristics of effective learners. The main focus is on the “good language learner” and the features of the good language learner. According to Anderson (1983; in O’Malley and Chamot, 1990: 42), learning strategies cannot be distinguished from the cognitive processes. Learning strategies are considered as learned skills, and the processes by which strategies are stored and retrieved for future use must be identified. “Strategies can be represented the same way as any other complex skill, and described as a set of productions that are compiled and fine-tuned

until they become procedural knowledge” (Anderson, 1983 in O’Malley and Chamot, 1990: 43). Learning strategies, according to Weinstein and Mayer, have learning facilitation as a goal and are intentional on the part of the learner. The goal of strategy use is to “affect the learner’s motivational or affective state, or the way in which the learner selects, acquires, organizes, or integrates new knowledge” (Weinstein and Mayer 1986: 315 in 1986, in O’Malley and Chamot, 1990: 43).

Learning Strategies may include any of the following:

- Focusing on selected aspects of new information
- Analyzing and monitoring information during acquisition
- Organizing or elaborating on new information during the encoding process
- evaluating the learning when it is completed
- assuring oneself that the learning will be successful as a way to ally anxiety (O’Malley and Chamot, 1990: 43).

Learning strategies are classified into three categories:

1. Metacognitive Strategies: They are higher or executive skills that may entail planning for, monitoring, or evaluating the success of a learning activity (Brown et al. 1983; in O’Malley and Chamot, 1990: 44). They involve exercising ‘executive control’ over one’s language learning through planning, monitoring and evaluating. Some effective strategies were also included in this metagocnitive group because these strategies would generally help learners to gain control over their emotions and motivations related to language learning through self monitoring, self-reinforcement, and relaxation Metagocnitive strategies can be applied to many learning tasks such as. (Nae-Dong Yang, System 27, 1999: 527):

a) *Selective attention:* Focusing on special aspects of a learning task as in planning to listen for key words or phrases;

- b) *Planning*: Planning for the organization of either written or spoken discourse;
- c) *Monitoring*: Reviewing attention to a task, monitoring comprehension for information that should be remembered, or monitoring production while it is occurring, and
- d) *Evaluation*: Checking comprehension after completion of a receptive language activity, or evaluating language production after it has taken place.

2. Cognitive Strategies: Cognitive strategies involve direct analysis, transformation, association, or synthesis of the target language, which, whether intentionally or not, will consequently facilitate the memory process. They operate directly on incoming information, manipulating it in ways that enhance learning. Yang identified them as in the following (1999: 528):

1. Rehearsal: Repeating the names of items or objects to be remembered.
2. Organization: Grouping and classifying words, terminology, or concepts according to their semantic or syntactic attributes.
3. Inferencing: Using information in text to guess meanings of new linguistic items, predict outcomes, or complete missing parts.
4. Summarizing: Intermittently synthesizing what one has heard to ensure the information has been retained.
5. Deducing: Applying rules to the understanding of language.
6. Imagery: Using visual images (either generated or actual) to understand and remember new verbal information.
7. Transfer: Using known linguistic information to facilitate a new learning task.
8. Elaboration: Linking ideas contained in new information, or integrating new ideas with known information.

Cognitive strategies may be limited in application to the specific type of task in the learning activity.

3. Social-affective Strategies: Social strategies are actions that involve other people. The social-affective strategies represent a broad grouping that involves either

interaction with another person or ideational control over affect. They may include specifically:

1. Cooperation: Working with peers to solve a problem, pool information, check notes, or get feedback on a learning activity.
2. Questioning for clarification: Eliciting from a teacher or peer additional explanation, rephrasing, or examples.
3. Self-talk: Using mental redirection of thinking to assure oneself that a learning activity will be successful or to reduce anxiety about tasks.

In the light of the descriptions mentioned above it can be understood that for an effective language learning environment training learners how to learn with the use of learning strategies became crucial in order to provide a “life-long learning” learning process. Teachers can benefit from an understanding of what makes learners successful and unsuccessful, and establish a classroom environment for the realization of successful strategies. “Teachers cannot always expect instant success in that effort, since students often bring with them certain preconceived notions of what ‘ought’ to go on in the classroom” (Bialystok 1985 in Brown 1994:124). Teaching students some technical “know-how about how to tackle a language” are well advised by many of the great names of the educational pedagogy (Brown 1994: 124).

2.6. Teaching Listening Comprehension to EFL/ ESL Students

According to many researches and the teachers of ESL or EFL the first question that should be asked about teaching listening is ‘What is listening?’ Over the past several years there were many definitions of listening but the definition of the process of listening has always been hard for the researchers. The foremost important reason was its being an invisible mental process. Thus the researchers have tried to describe it by using indirect analogies and metaphors. Rost defines listening as ‘getting what the speaker says’ or related to the psychologists it is a sensitive imagery ‘being open to what is in the speaker’ and he determines it in four main categories (2002: 1):

1. Receptive: Listening is what the speaker actually says.

- Listening means catching what the speaker has said.
- Listening means getting the speaker's idea.
- Listening means decoding the speaker's message.
- Listening means unpacking the speaker's content.
- Listening means receiving the transfer of images, impressions, thoughts, beliefs, attitudes and emotions from the speaker.

2. Constructive: Listening is constructing and representing meaning.

- Listening means figuring out what is in the speaker's mind.
- Listening means finding something interesting in what the speaker is saying.
- Listening means finding out what is relevant for you.
- Listening means reframing the speaker's message in a way that's relevant to you.
- Listening means understanding why the speaker is talking to you.
- Listening means noticing what is not said.

3. Collaborative: Listening is negotiating meaning with the speaker and responding.

- Listening is coordination with the speaker on the choice of a code and context.
- Listening means responding to what the speaker has said.
- Listening is the process of negotiating shared information or values with the speaker.
- Listening means acting interested while the speaker is talking.
- Listening is signaling to the speaker which ideas are clear and acceptable to you.

4. Transformative: Listening is creating meaning through involvement, imagination and empathy.

- Listening is involvement with the speaker, without judgment.
- Listening is creating a connection between the speaker and the listener.
- Listening is empathizing with the speaker's motivation for speaking.

- Listening is imagining a possible world for the speaker's meaning.
- Listening is the process of creating meaning in the speaker.
- Listening is the completion of communication.
- Listening is feeling the flow of consciousness as you pay attention to things.
- Listening is the process of altering the cognitive environment of both the speaker and the listener.

Wong-Fillmore (1991) identified the role of listening in second language acquisition by stating the conditions required to learn a second language as in the following (Rost 2002: 91):

1. A learner who realizes the need to learn the second language and is motivated to do so;
2. Speakers of the target language who know it well enough to provide the learner with access to the spoken language and the support (such as simplification, repetition, and feedback) they need for learning it;
3. A social setting which brings the learner in frequent enough and sustained enough contact with target language speakers to make language learning possible.

Listening is required mainly in two of these conditions and it seems vital to master the target language. First one is the environment which provides linguistic input in the form of listening and interaction opportunities embedded in social and pedagogic situations. In the acquisition process the need for the understanding of input and the form of the language is seen essential for the learner. The second one is the purpose of message comprehension for language acquisition. The learner must gain access to the spoken language code. This is directly related with the "comprehensible input" the amount and the type of input must be appropriate for language acquisition of the learner. According to Krashen's 'Input Hypothesis' (Rost, 2002:93):

"There is a relationship between input adjustments and message comprehension. Development from the learner's current stage of interlanguage development can

be achieved only by the learner's comprehending language that contains linguistic items (lexis, syntax, morphology) at a level slightly above the learner's current knowledge ($i+1$). Comprehension is necessary in order for input to become 'intake' – language data that is assimilated and used to promote further development. The ability to understand new language is made possible by speech adjustment made to learners, in addition to the learner's use of shared knowledge of context.

After Krashen, Swain mentioned about 'Comprehensible Output Hypothesis' which claims that listening proficiency may be gained by 'semantic-pragmatic means' making it unnecessary for the listener to struggle to process unfamiliar structures (syntax and lexis) in full. That is the effort of composing new utterances, rather than comprehending new utterances (Rost, 2002:94). Related to these definitions the role of input in L2 acquisition is directly based on meaningful input. That means that the meaningful input rely on some factors such as; interests, time, needs, age, sex, etc. Meaningful input can provide learners a better L2 acquisition and this input can be obtained basically with the listening skill that takes place in the natural context. So the importance of listening in L2 is starting with the point of success in the acquisition process of a L2.

CHAPTER 3

THE RESEARCH

3.1 Research Method

This study aims to identify the impact of autonomous learning on the success of listening comprehension in foreign language learning classes. The study is a quantitative research type. Therefore, the data gathered from pretest and posttest results, and these results were statistically analyzed.

3.2 Research Model

The study design is based on the pretest-posttest control group model and the assessment of ALTE Can Do Descriptors identified by the CEF. In the light of this design, the research design of our study is shown in Table 2.

Table 1: Study Design

Groups	Tests	Procedure	Tests
Group A	Pretest	Strategy-based Listening Skill Teaching/ Autonomous assessment via ALTE Can Do Descriptors	Posttest
Group B	Pretest	Listening Skill Teaching	Posttest

Group A and Group B indicate that both groups were assigned randomly as experimental and control group. Group A, assigned as the experimental group, received training of listening strategies and are asked to assess themselves with the application of ALTE Can Do Descriptors of CEF. Group B, assigned as the control group, did not receive any training on listening strategies and followed the classes via standard listening skill teaching. Both groups were given pretest and posttest.

3.3 Population and Sampling

The population of this research covers the learners of ELT Department preparatory year listening course students of Trakya University , EDİRNE, TURKEY. 57 subjects contributed in the study (Group A: 29, Group B: 28) and the groups were assigned randomly. In control group the improvement of the 28 learners were analyzed and in the experimental group 29 learners were used for the application of the study.

Table 2: The gender and the mean age of the experimental and control groups

Subjects

Groups	M	F	Total	Mean Age
Group A	3	26	29	18
Group B	15	13	28	18

Before the study, without any implementation, both groups were given a listening comprehension test -mock “CAE Listening Comprehension Test”- as the pretest and results were statistically analyzed using *Will-coxon Signed Ranks Test*. analysis. No significant difference was found between the groups ($p = .857$, $p > .05$). Thus, two groups were determined to be equivalent and they were assigned as experimental and control randomly.

Table 3: Pretest results of the experimental group and the control group

	n	\bar{X}	Mean Rank	p
Group A	29	16,7	15,13	.857
Group B	28	17,7	13,10	

After the statistical analysis of pretest, the average class level of the subjects were determined in respect of the CEF; “*Common Reference Levels*” of both groups was determined as B2. (CEF, 2001:26).

Level B2 represents a new level as far above B1 (Threshold). It is intended to reflect the Vantage Level specification. The metaphor is that, having been progressing slowly but steadily across the intermediate plateau, the learner finds he has arrived somewhere, things look different, he/she acquires a new perspective, can look around him/her in a new way. This concept does seem to be borne out to a considerable extent by the descriptors calibrated at this level. They represent quite a break with the content so far. For example at the lower end of the band there is a focus on effective argument: account for and sustain his opinions in discussion by providing relevant explanations, arguments and comments; explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options; construct a chain of reasoned argument; develop an argument giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view; explain a problem and make it clear that his/her counterpart in a negotiation must make a concession; speculate about causes, consequences, hypothetical situations; take an active part in informal discussion in familiar contexts, commenting, putting point of view clearly, evaluating alternative proposals and making and responding to hypotheses. Secondly, running right through the level there are two new focuses. The first is being able to more than hold your own in social discourse: e.g. converse naturally, fluently and effectively; understand in detail what is said to him/her in the standard spoken language even in a noisy environment; initiate discourse, take his/her turn when appropriate and end conversation when he/she needs to, though he/she may not always do this elegantly; use stock phrases (e.g. ‘That’s a difficult question to answer’) to gain time and keep the turn whilst formulating what to say; interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without imposing strain on either party; adjust to the changes of direction, style and emphasis normally found in conversation; sustain relationships with native speakers without unintentionally amusing or irritating them or requiring them to behave other than they would with a native speaker. The second new focus is a new degree of language awareness: correct mistakes if they have led to misunderstandings; make a note of ‘favorite mistakes’ and consciously monitor speech for it/them; generally correct slips and errors if he/she becomes conscious of them; plan what is to be said and the means to say it, considering the effect on the recipient/s. (CEF, 2001:34-35).

3.4 Data and Data Collection

In the study two different data collection tools were used. The data related to the first research question was collected via a mock CAE test. In order to collect the data for the second sub-research question a questionnaire was developed by the researcher. ALTE Can Do Descriptors were taken as a model in the development of the questionnaire.

3.4.1 Data Collection Tools

The process of collecting data started with application of a pre-test to both groups of the research population (experimental and the control group) in order to assess their general success in listening comprehension. The applied test was the mock “CAE Advanced Listening Comprehension Test” of English for Speakers of Other Languages. Since, the test was an internationally recognized standard test no validity and reliability measurement was done. The test was applied twice as pre and post test.

The second data collection tool, *Autonomy Assessment Questionnaire for Listening Comprehension Skill*, was a five point Likert Scale Questionnaire developed by the researcher (see Appendix 1). The questionnaire developed by adopting the ALTE Can Do Descriptors of listening. For the content validity of the questionnaire experts were consulted. The questionnaire items were restated and necessary changes were done in the view of the experts. The questionnaire was used as a self-assessment tool at regular intervals (after each unit).

3.4.2. Research Procedure

The research was conducted with 57 preparatory year students of Trakya University in 2006-2007 academic year Spring semester. Both groups were lectured by the researcher and with the same course content. Group B -the control group- were educated on listening comprehension with the following of the same course book of the group A –the experimental group- but didn’t have any explicit training on listening

strategies and *Autonomy Assessment Questionnaire for Listening Comprehension Skill* was not administered as well. Group A –the experimental group- were given explicit training on listening strategies. For the determination of the strategies pre-test results were used and the students were given training on the problematic strategies.

The problematic strategies are chosen from the questions of the pre-test that more 50 % and more students over 29 students could not manage to answer correctly. These were shown in the following table:

Table 4: Study Strategies

QUESTION	STRATEGY
1	Cognitive key word Listen for direct and indirect detail (where)
3	Cognitive key word Listen for direct and indirect detail (preposition)
4	Cognitive key word Listen for direct and indirect detail (how-situation)
5	Cognitive key word Listen for direct and indirect detail (how-situation)
6	Cognitive key word Listen for direct and indirect detail (what)
7	Cognitive key word Listen for direct and indirect detail (what)
8	Cognitive key word Listen for direct and indirect detail (what)
9	Cognitive key word Listen for direct and indirect detail (what)
10	Cognitive key word Listen for direct and indirect detail (what)
11	Cognitive key word, cognitive note-taking Draw conclusions about who, what, where, when
12	Cognitive key word, cognitive note-taking Draw conclusions about who, what, where, when
13	Cognitive key word, cognitive note-taking Draw conclusions about who, what, where, when
14	Cognitive key word, cognitive note-taking Draw conclusions about who, what, where, when
15	Cognitive key word, cognitive note-taking Draw conclusions about who, what, where, when
16	Cognitive key word, cognitive note-taking Draw conclusions about who, what, where, when

17	Cognitive key word, cognitive note-taking Draw conclusions about who, what, where, when
18	Cognitive key word, cognitive note-taking Draw conclusions about who, what, where, when
20	Cognitive making inference Listen for expressions of uncertainty
21	Cognitive making inference Listen for expressions of uncertainty
25	Cognitive key word Listen for negative expressions
26	Cognitive making inference Draw conclusion (judgment)
27	Cognitive making inference Draw conclusion (judgment)
30	Cognitive key word, cognitive note-taking Draw conclusions about who, what, where, when
31	Cognitive key word, cognitive note-taking Draw conclusions about who, what, where, when
32	Cognitive key word, cognitive note-taking Draw conclusions about who, what, where, when
33	Cognitive key word, cognitive note-taking Draw conclusions about who, what, where, when
34	Cognitive key word, cognitive note-taking Draw conclusions about who, what, where, when
35	Cognitive making inference Listening for expressions of uncertainty and suggestions
36	Cognitive making inference Listen for almost negative expressions
37	Cognitive making inference Listen for almost negative expressions
38	Cognitive making inference Listen for almost negative expressions
39	Cognitive making inference Listening for expressions of uncertainty and suggestions

3.5 Data Analysis

For the Statistical analysis of the data collection, SPSS 11.0 software (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) was used. The following statistical techniques were used.

Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test: This test was used to determine the difference between pre-post tests of both groups.

Spearman Correlation Test: This test was used to measure the relationship between the autonomy and the listening comprehension success.

To determine the strategies used by the subjects the mean and frequencies were calculated.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Results

This chapter identifies the findings and discussions of the findings. Data collected by the CAE Listening Comprehension Exam and Autonomy Assessment Questionnaire for Listening Comprehension Skills were statistically analyzed and the findings were given in relation to the research questions.

4.2 Research Question 1

The first research question is “Does explicit strategy training have an effect on the learners’ listening comprehension success?”.

In order to answer this question, the pre and post tests results of the control and experimental groups were analyzed. The statistical analysis showed us a significant increase in the listening comprehension success of the both groups (Table 5, 6).

Table 5: Comparison of Group A pre-post test results

	n	\bar{X}	Mean Rank	p
Pre-test	29	16,7	,00	.000
Post-test	29	43,13	15,00	

Table 6: Comparison of Group B pre-post test results

	n	\bar{X}	Mean Rank	p
Pre-test	28	17,71	7,3	.000
Post-test	28	28,71	15,90	

As seen in the tables 5, 6 there is a significant difference between the pre and post test results of the experimental and the control groups. This was an expected result since both groups had an education on listening comprehension for fifteen weeks. The post test given to both groups were analyzed by Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test. However when the post test results of both groups were compared, statistically significant difference was found between the post tests results of both groups. The mean value of Group A was higher than that of Group B (14, 44 and 8, 50, respectively) (Table 7).

Table 7: Post-test results of the experimental group and the control group

	n	\bar{X}	Mean Rank	p
Group A	29	43,13	14,44	.000
Group B	28	28,71	8,50	

4.3 Research Question 2

The second research question is “Is there a significant relationship between the autonomy and the listening comprehension success?”.

In order to answer this question the relationship between the Autonomy Assessment Questionnaire for Listening Comprehension Skill and the post test results of group A were compared statistically by using Spearman Correlation Analysis. No significant relationship was found between the autonomy and the success ($p > .05$; $p = .533$) (Table 8).

Table 8: The Correlation between Autonomy and the Success

		Questionnaire 2	Post-test
Questionnaire 2	Correlation	1,00	,121
	co-efficient sig. (2-tailed)	,00	,533
	N	29	29
Post-test	Correlation	,121	1,00
	co-efficient sig. (2-tailed)	,533	,00
	N	29	29

4.4 Discussion

At the beginning of the study, with the aim of determining the listening comprehension success level of the subjects, the findings related to the results of pre test were analyzed statistically. Related to the findings of the analysis, it was seen that the success of listening comprehension skill of both groups were the same in average. Also in Table 5, it was shown that there was no statistically significant difference between the groups. The result was indicating that both groups have no significant difference in respect of their previous education on English language listening comprehension skill. Both groups were at the same CEFR listening level- *level B2*- and they were not able to use most of the listening strategies for an effective listening comprehension. This was one of the requirements of the research model. So, both groups were determined suitable for the application of the study and assigned as experimental and control groups randomly.

The difference between the pre-post test results of the groups A and B have shown a significant difference after the fifteen-week-listening lecture. The mean value of the success between both groups were significantly different as it was indicated in Table 7 .The Mean Rank of Group A was higher than that of Group B (14,44 and 8,50, respectively). This was an expected result in the light of the study *-Learning and*

Problem Solving Strategies of ESL Students- done by Chamot, Dale, O' Malley and Spanos. In their study they investigate the problem solving approaches –the strategic approaches that the students use in problem solving- of the ESL students through a performance assessment. The result indicated that significantly more students in high implementation classrooms were able to solve the problems correctly than the low implementation classrooms. In our research the same results are indicated the subjects trained explicitly on and asked to apply listening strategies to understand the listening texts used in the classroom, showed a significant difference than the subjects who were not trained on strategies.

Another research *Listening Comprehension: The Learner's Perspective* done by Graham (2006) on listening comprehension showed some similarities with our study regarding the role played by ineffective listening strategy use or skill applications. This study gives some suggestions for the problems regarding how students listen and their attitudes towards listening comprehension. The ineffective use of strategies, or as in our research, no use of strategies leads the learners to face some difficulties in listening comprehension. So, by this study of Graham our research results on strategy use as the answer of our first research question is seen to be supported.

In our second research question, the significant relationship between the autonomy and the listening comprehension success is tried to be analyzed. Related to our study, similar researches which can help us to direct and support our study are searched but in fact any study which has researched the same items was found. Some of the studies that are mentioned in the following show some similarities with our study considering the autonomous learning and learners and also the language learning strategy use of the learners. The study, *The Relationship between EFL learner's Beliefs and Learning strategy Use* done by Yang is investigating the strategy use from a wider perspective. In his study Yang (1999) tried to answer the question of “how are foreign/ second language learners beliefs about language learning related to their strategy use?”. The similarity of our research and this research is the impact of awareness of the self-learning and motivation on language learning success. In order to succeed in language learning or specifically in language skills learning the students are trying to find some solutions to the difficulties they have in learning such as the use of appropriate

strategies. As a result of the study, Yang indicated that there is a cyclical relationship between learner's beliefs and strategy use. This implies that if the learners are autonomously aware of what they are doing and what they want to do with the information they are acquiring they with a high possibility may tend to find out solutions for their problems of learning.

As Cotteral stated in her article, *Developing a Course Strategy for Learner Autonomy*, learners who are autonomous might take responsibility for their own learning by setting their own goals, planning practice opportunities, or assessing their progress (1995: 219). But as the results of our study demonstrated promoting learner autonomy sometimes can be difficult because the teacher may not always be available to assist during the application of the curriculum or the learners perception of being autonomous might be a contributing factor in language learning. This component of being autonomous encourages the learners to set realistic objectives, and find appropriate solutions to the problems they face. But, there will be some factors that can effect the prevention of the autonomy such as; previous behaviors of education, lack of motivation in setting goals, and inadequate assistance of the teacher to help the learners both to be independent and how to learn learning individually. The research result indicates that there was no significant relation between autonomy and success. Since, the previous learning behaviors of the subjects were not appropriate for autonomous learning; it was difficult for them to have the responsibility of assessing their own improvements in regular intervals. In order to help them to acquire the behavior of being autonomous learners, much time is needed to provide the wanted behavior.

Another study held by Harris (1997), is discussing the issue of self-assessment of the learners. He claims that self-assessment is a key learning strategy for autonomous language learning, enabling the students to monitor their progress and relate learning to individual needs. In our study trying to encourage the learners for self assessment via the *Autonomy Assessment Questionnaire for Listening Comprehension Skill* share the same idea with Harris. But as he continues stating in his article (1997: 1), students are often passive in their approach to learning, and may become demotivated if they cannot see any clear progress. But improvement in language is matter of time and also this time can change from one learner to another related to the ability and capacity. If the learners

are not aware of their individual differences or they are inadequate in applying certain strategies that can help them to solve their problems in learning process, they may be easily demotivated and won't be eager for an autonomous learning medium. In our study as the listening being a difficult and time taking language skill to develop, when some of the students had some difficulties they lost their motivation and self-belief for being successful. Since being demotivated the self assessments of these learners are not applied appropriately and as a command of the researcher this matter of fact affected the results of the relationship between autonomous learning and success of listening comprehension.

One of the studies which mentions about self-learning or self access is the study of Littlewood "*Self-access: why do we want it and what can it do?*" (In Benson and Voller, 1997:91). He claims that self access is a means of encouraging autonomy in learning and communication but it has also some limitations. Although self-access is strong both in the domain of receptive and productive skills the process of developing self-access or autonomy in learning process needs teacher involvement until the students are seen to be ready for being independent. In this phase, in our study the background of our students were not adequately appropriate for self-assessment. So, advancement of autonomy will be another topic to be developed with anew study.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter includes the conclusions based on the findings and interpretations of the study, and some suggestions will be proposed.

5.1 Conclusion

This study has aimed to search the effect of autonomous learning on listening comprehension. As mentioned before in Chapter 3 Research Procedure section, a strategy based teaching approach is applied to enhance the listening abilities of the learners and after each teaching application the learners are asked to assess themselves via the *Autonomy Assessment Questionnaire for Listening Comprehension Skill*. The main findings that emerged from the study represents the following conclusions:

1. The results responding the first research question show that the application of the listening strategies has affected the success of the learners significantly. Although, there was a development in both groups listening comprehension the experimental group represents a significant difference than the control group. So, we may conclude that the language learning strategies have a considerably positive affect on the development of the success of listening comprehension.
2. Additionally, the results of the second research question identifies that there is no significant relation between autonomous learning and listening comprehension success. This result emerges from the inadequate knowledge and motivation of the learners for autonomous learning. The learning behaviors that the learners brought from their previous habits and education process didn't provide them an autonomous environment. Critical thinking applications which are seen as the source of the autonomous learning process were not used in their classrooms. So, they were not too much willing in the application of the learning strategies and

self assessment. Since, they are used to do repetitive drills and traditional learning activities in their classrooms, applying different strategies to learn something new and assessing their own improvements were very unfamiliar for them and sometimes they faced difficulties. In some proportion this situation has affected the results of the second research question.

The results of the study are of importance to second/ foreign language teachers specifically who are enrolling listening classes. Considering the difficulties that most of the teachers face when teaching foreign languages the findings that is shown in this study may give them some ideas in teaching listening in order to help their students to achieve success. It must be admitted that the mostly ignored language skills in teaching foreign languages are listening, speaking and writing. Most of the language teachers prefer not to focus on these skills because to develop them needs a real struggle and time. Since, it consumes time and needs a special effort mainly listening are considered as a neglected skill. But, with the help of the strategies as it is applied in our study these teachers can help their students to improve their success in listening.

5.2 Suggestions

With respect to the findings of the study mentioned so far, these suggestions can be given to the academicians, researchers, program designers and teachers dealing with teaching foreign language.

As it is mentioned before the main elements of learning are the teachers The teachers were and are always the only person who is responsible to convey all the information which is necessary for the learners on the learned item and they were seen as the information providers. They are presenting, explaining, encouraging, setting standards of knowledge and assessing them. They are responsible with all of the learning process and their learners. So, considering all these mass responsibilities of the teachers the studies done on different subjects can lit a light in their teaching process to help them lessen their difficulties of teaching. Our study is one that can give some ideas on

teaching listening and the use of listening strategies and learner autonomy in teaching. When we look at the responsibilities of the learners we may see that their main role is to seek the information, display understanding and skill, apply the knowledge into practice and achieve the standards set by the professionals. So, the teachers may help their learners to be more independent and autonomous to realize their responsibilities.

In the light of the findings related to the relation of autonomy and success it can be suggested that a new study can be applied in order to search how teachers can help learners to be more autonomous. Because in our study we try to measure only the impact of being autonomous on the success but we couldn't find time to train our students how to be autonomous. So, a new study can be handled to design a new programme that helps the learners to acquire autonomy.

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Autonomy Assessment Questionnaire for Listening Comprehension Skill

Autonomy Assessment Questionnaire for Listening Comprehension Skill		ALWAYS	USUALLY	SOMETIMES	RARELY	NEVER
1.	I have no difficulty in understanding any kind of spoken language, whether live or broadcast, delivered at fast native speed.					
2.	I can understand enough to follow extended speech on abstract and complex topics beyond his/her own field, though he/she may need to confirm occasional details, especially if the accent is unfamiliar.					
3.	I can recognize a wide range of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms, appreciating register shifts.					
4.	I can follow extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signaled explicitly.					
5.	I can understand standard spoken language, live or broadcast, on both familiar and unfamiliar topics normally encountered in personal, social, academic or vocational life. Only extreme background noise, inadequate discourse structure and/or idiomatic usage influence the ability to understand.					
6.	I can understand the main ideas of propositionally and linguistically complex speech on both concrete and abstract topics delivered in a standard dialect, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialization.					
7.	I can follow extended speech and complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar, and the direction of the talk is sign-posted by explicit markers.					
8.	I can understand straightforward factual information about common everyday or job related topics, identifying both general messages and specific details, provided speech is clearly articulated in a generally familiar accent.					
9.	I can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure etc., including short narratives.					
10.	I can understand enough to be able to meet needs of a concrete type provided speech is clearly and slowly articulated.					
11.	I can understand phrases and expressions related to areas of most immediate priority (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment) provided speech is clearly and slowly articulated.					
12.	I can follow speech which is very slow and carefully articulated, with long pauses for him/her to assimilate meaning.					
13.	I can easily follow complex interactions between third parties in group discussion and debate, even on abstract, complex unfamiliar topics.					
14.	I can keep up with an animated conversation between native speakers.					
15.	I can with some effort catch much of what is said around him/her, but may find it difficult to participate effectively in discussion with several native speakers who do not modify their language in any way.					
16.	I can generally follow the main points of extended discussion around him/her, provided speech is clearly articulated in standard dialect.					
17.	I can generally identify the topic of discussion around him/her, when it is conducted slowly and clearly.					
18.	I can follow specialized lectures and presentations employing a high degree of colloquialism, regional usage or unfamiliar terminology.					
19.	I can follow most lectures, discussions and debates with relative ease.					
20.	I can follow the essentials of lectures, talks and reports and other forms of academic/professional presentation which are propositionally and linguistically complex.					
21.	I can follow a lecture or talk within his/her own field, provided the subject matter is familiar and the presentation straightforward and clearly structured.					
22.	I can follow in outline straightforward short talks on familiar topics provided these are delivered in clearly articulated standard speech.					
23.	I can extract specific information from poor quality, audibly distorted public announcements, e.g. in a station, sports stadium etc.					
24.	I can understand complex technical information, such as operating instructions, specifications for familiar products and services.					
25.	I can understand announcements and messages on concrete and abstract topics spoken in standard dialect at normal speed					

26.	I can understand simple technical information, such as operating instructions for everyday equipment.					
27.	I can follow detailed directions.					
28.	I can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements.					
29.	I can understand simple directions relating to how to get from X to Y, by foot or public transport.					
30.	I can understand instructions addressed carefully and slowly to him/her and follow short, simple directions.					
31.	I can understand a wide range of recorded and broadcast audio material, including some non-standard usage, and identify finer points of detail including implicit attitudes and relationships between speakers.					
32.	I can understand recordings in standard dialect likely to be encountered in social, professional or academic life and identify speaker viewpoints and attitudes as well as the information content.					
33.	I can understand most radio documentaries and most other recorded or broadcast audio material delivered in standard dialect and can identify the speaker's mood, tone etc.					
34.	I can understand the information content of the majority of recorded or broadcast audio material on topics of personal interest delivered in clear standard speech.					
35.	I can understand the main points of radio news bulletins and simpler recorded material about familiar subjects delivered relatively slowly and clearly.					
36.	I can understand and extract the essential information from short, recorded passages dealing with predictable everyday matters which are delivered slowly and clearly.					
37.	I am aware of the implications and allusions of what is said and can make notes on them as well as on the actual words used by the speaker.					
38.	I can take detailed notes during a lecture on topics in his/her field of interest, recording the information so accurately and so close to the original that the notes could also be useful to other people.					
39.	I can understand a clearly structured lecture on a familiar subject, and can take notes on points which strike him/her as important, even though he/she tends to concentrate on the words themselves and therefore to miss some information					
40.	I can take notes during a lecture which are precise enough for his/her own use at a later date, provided the topic is within his/her field of interest and the talk is clear and well-structured					
41.	I can take notes as a list of key points during a straightforward lecture, provided the topic is familiar, and the talk is both formulated in simple language and delivered in clearly articulated standard speech					
42.	I can summarize information from different sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation of the overall result.					
43.	I can summarize long, demanding texts.					
44.	I can summarize a wide range of factual and imaginative texts, commenting on and discussing contrasting points of view and the main themes					
45.	I can summarize extracts from news items, interviews or documentaries containing opinions, argument and discussion					
46.	I can summarize the plot and sequence of events in a film or play.					
47.	I can collate short pieces of information from several sources and summarize them for somebody else.					
48.	I can paraphrase short written passages in a simple fashion, using the original text wording and ordering					
49.	I can pick out and reproduce key words and phrases or short sentences from a short text within the learner's limited competence and experience.					
50.	I can copy out short texts in printed or clearly handwritten format.					
51.	I can copy out single words and short texts presented in standard printed format.					