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Enhancing Learner' Listening Comprehension through Autonomous Learning:

The case of Second-Year Licence Students of English at the University of 08 Mai

1945, Guelma

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my great father "El Chrif ", my mother "Messaouda", My grandmother " Mama Beldiya " and my grandfather "Mabrok" who have a big help and support in my studies and life.

To my sisters and brothers Hanen, Hassna, Razika, Fares and Adlen. I thank God for being my family.

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Dedication

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Abstract

Autonomy is an important way that helps EFL learners improve their listening comprehension. But, students give a little attention to its importance. The main concern of the current research is to investigate the existence of a positive relationship between autonomous learning and listening comprehension. Thus, we hypothesize that: student's autonomy would increase their listening comprehension. The present study conducted through a quantitative descriptive-analytic method in which a questionnaire was administered to 152 second-Licence student at the department of English of 8 Mai 1945 University in order to find the different problems that learners face with listening and how autonomous learning can be an appropriate solution. The findings showed that learners face many problems during listening comprehension like accent, and unfamiliar vocabulary of the language. From these results it is concluded that there is a positive link between autonomous learning and listening comprehension when students are aware about the importance of autonomy in enhancing listening comprehension. As well as, teachers should provide students with techniques and give them the opportunity to learn independently in order to improve their listening comprehension.

List of Abbreviations

CaLL: Computer assisted Language Learning.

CMC: Computer Mediated Communication.

EFL: English Foreign Language.

FL: Foreign Language.

L2: Second Language.

LMD: License- Master – Doctorate

SAC: Self-access center

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General Introduction

Learning a foreign language is a complex process that requires the improvement of the four language skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening. Listening is the most important part of communication, which allows learners to participate and engage in different situations. Listening is a complex process, it is not only receiving spoken messages, but it exposes learners to use their prior knowledge and non-verbal communication in order to comprehend the intended meaning. Therefore, learners should be aware enough about what may affect their listening comprehension and hence adopt different strategies as autonomy to improve it. As a result, learners ought to be autonomous and develop their own learning independently without the guidance of the teacher.

Autonomous learning or learner autonomy is a powerful help, which aid learners to achieve their learning freely. Researchers have addressed many advantages of autonomy in listening process, which raises students' attention and motivation to improve their listening comprehension as well as develop their learning progress. In addition, autonomous learning gives learners the opportunity to be responsible and take charge of their own learning. The present study tends to investigate the importance of autonomous learning in improving learners' listening comprehension due to its significant function in foreign language communication.

1. Statement of the Problem

In most English foreign language learning classrooms both teachers and students focus more on developing writing, speaking, and reading skills and neglect the importance of listening. However, despite the importance of listening comprehension, many learners have a bad listening comprehension. This is may be the case with most students at the English Department, university of Guelma who have difficulties in listening comprehension; this may be due to several factors, mainly the lack of autonomy. Regardless that Learner autonomy has

recently acquired interest in the field of foreign language learning, students are restricted by teacher-centred syllabus, which may reduce their autonomy. That is, learners' dependence may influence their listening negatively and lower their motivation towards listening comprehension. It is crucial that learners should be autonomous and enhance their listening comprehension. As a result, when students focus on their own learning they will be pushed to improve their listening skills independently. Hence, this research addresses the main following question:

Does autonomous learning help in enhancing students' listening comprehension?

2. Aims of the Study

Autonomous learning is very efficient in language learning, which may lead to high listening comprehension. Learners who are aware about the importance of autonomy in enhancing language learning have the ability to improve their listening comprehension. Hence, the aims of this research are:

1. To enhance learners' listening comprehension.
2. To raise learners' awareness towards autonomous listening.

3. Research Hypothesis

Autonomy is one of the important and effective ways in enhancing student's listening comprehension. Many students are not aware of the effectiveness of autonomy in improving their listening comprehension. Autonomous learners tend to comprehend more efficiently because they self-direct, assess and achieve their own listening. Thus, we hypothesize that:

(H1): If students are autonomous, their listening comprehension will increase.

The null hypothesis implies that no relation exists between the two variables:

(H₀) : If students are autonomous, their listening comprehension will not improve.

4. Research Methodology and Design

4.1. Research Method

The research has been conducted through the quantitative descriptive method aiming at confirming the research hypothesis. Students' questionnaire has been distributed to students at the English department of the University of Guelma, which has provided us with quantitative data about learners' different views concerning how they enhance their listening comprehension through autonomous listening.

4.2. Population of the Study

The sample has been chosen randomly, it consists of Second year License students at the English Department of 8 Mai 1945 University, Guelma. We have selected second year students because they need to be active listeners and comprehends. Therefore, they are supposed to have control over language learning and autonomous listening. Following Krejcie and Morgan sampling table, 152 questionnaire have been administered because the whole population of second year students includes 250 students.

4.3. Data Gathering Tools

To prove the research hypothesis, students' questionnaire provided us with worthy information about students' ability to enhance their own listening, and the most important aspect which is autonomous listening.

5. Structure of the Dissertation

The Dissertation is divided into three chapters. The first chapter “listening comprehension” has been devoted to the definition of listening, basic skills of listening, its importance in foreign language learning, approaches to teaching listening and factors that affect listening.

The second chapter is entitled “Autonomous learning”; it explores the history and definition of autonomy, characteristics of autonomous learner and factors which affect autonomy. Finally, it tackles the issue of autonomous listening.

The third chapter is entitled “Field investigation”; it includes a description of learners' questionnaire and its administration. Then, it analyses data driven from the questionnaire. After that, it interprets the results according to the research questions and hypothesis. Finally, in the general conclusion we mention a summary of the three chapters.

Chapter One

Listening Comprehension

Introduction

Listening is the most crucial communication skill. It has a significant role in developing students' language proficiency. Because attention has been given to the other three language skills (reading, writing and speaking), listening is considerably a neglected skill by most foreign language learners. However, usually learners face various problems in listening comprehension when they listen to foreign language (FL) speakers. Therefore, the following chapter will highlight some theoretical assumptions about Listening Comprehension, mainly its definition, processes, phases, importance in foreign language learning and teaching, and strategies to its development.

1.1. Definition of Listening Skill

Pardy and Borisof (1997) defined listening as the ability of understanding what we listen from the sounds around us. It is the process of receiving, constructing meaning from, and responding to spoken and /or nonverbal messages (p.6). Similarly, Oxford (1993) stated that listening: "is a complex problem solving skill and it is more than just perception of the sounds. Listening includes comprehension of meaning words, phrases, clauses, sentences, and connected discourse" (p. 206). This means that listening is not just hearing sounds it is also the understanding of these sounds.

In addition, according to Barker (1971, p. 17), listening is "the selective process of attending to hearing, understanding, and remembering aural symbols". This means that listening is the process in which the listener has the capacity to comprehend, recall and take the meaning. Also, Brown and Yule (1963, p. 58) explained listening comprehension as follows:

Listening comprehension could mean that a person understands what he has heard. However, in EFL teaching, it often is taken to mean that the listener can repeat the text even though the listener may reproduce the sound without real comprehension. “If he could actually learn the text as he heard it, it would probably be said to have understood it” (as cited in Cheung, 2010).

Therefore, listening is the process of comprehending spoken speech, when the listener acquires new information and can produce the information learned from what he /she hears. Moreover, in EFL teaching the listener can repeat the text even though he can reproduce the sound without understanding.

More important, Vendergrift (2002) stated that the listening skill is an invisible mental process, which is hard to describe. He argued: “it is a complex, active process in which the listener must discriminate between sounds, understand vocabulary and grammatical structures, interpret stress and intonation and retain and interpret it within the immediate as well as the larger socio-cultural context of the utterance” (p. 168). That is, listening is a mental process of decoding speech sounds to get an appropriate understanding of what is said.

To sum up, the listening skill does not just help students to get information or learn something from the teachers or speakers, it also enables them to store memories much vocabularies and items, which help them in improving or mastering their language.

1.2. Nunan’s Phases of Listening

Listening is a six-staged process that consists of Hearing, Attention, Understanding, Remembering, Evaluating, and Responding (Nunan, 2009). These stages occur in sequence and quick succession.

1.2.1. Hearing

The first stage is hearing which is a physiological process depends on the success of the safety of the ear and its ability to capture different oscillations, which needs to do with the

reaction caused by sound waves without paying attention. i.e., hearing is a natural process which is responsible about catching sounds with the ear that attract listeners 'attention. (Nunan, 2009)

1.2.2. Attention

In this stage, the listener gives special attention to all what he receives from the speaker. Attention usually is known as selective perception, an important requirement for effective listening which demands concentration and refers to a selection that our brain focuses on.

1.2.3. Understanding

In the understanding stage, the listener tries to learn and analyze the symbols and words to get the meaning of the message, which is not easy because if the learner does not understand the message clearly it will, be difficult to get the correct message. It also, includes establishing links between what the listener knows before and the new information given by the speaker.

1.2.4. Remembering

Here, the listener is not just receiving and understanding the intended meaning, but also remembering the information and data and storing them in the memory. This process is an important part of listening because if you cannot remember what was said, you might not have been listened effectively.

1.2.5. Evaluating

After the listener "has received, understood, and have the message in his memory, he needs to evaluate or judge the value of the message, this evaluation can vary from one listener to another depending on the listeners' different background, information and experience". In other words, evaluating is deciding whether this message is valued or not, and attempt to give its advantages and disadvantages.

1.2.6. Responding

It is the final stage and after the listener evaluates the message, he is likely to respond in some way and of course the speaker expects a response. Responding is a form of feedback when the listener provides verbal or nonverbal feedback about the message, because the speaker has no other ways to determine if the message has been received.

1.3. The Importance of Listening in Foreign Language Learning

Listening is a basic skill that has a great role in language learning and is a key element in communication that needs attention and development. For this reason, many researchers emphasised on the importance of listening. Sabouri (2016) indicated that listening is a very important skill that makes students communicate and develop the target language and it overcomes the problems and struggles that learners face in communication and interaction with others. In the same vein, Rost (2009) noticed that: "Listening helps us to understand the world around us and is one of the necessary elements in creating successful communication".

Moreover, Jafari and Hashin (2015) emphasized that : "listening is a channel for comprehensible input and more than 50 percent of the time of learners spend in learning a foreign language is devoted to listening" (p.127). This means that students spend about half of the time in listening, which indicate that listening is an essential skill in foreign language process compared by other skills. In addition, Rubbin (1995) claimed that : " for second language / foreign language learners, listening is the skill that makes the heaviest processing demands because learners must store information in short term memory at the same time as they are working to understand at the information. In other words, listening is a process where the learner should focus and pay attention in order to understand the meaning, furthermore, our short memory is even shorter in learning foreign language which make us forgotten quickly what we heard and listening is an important step to overcome this problem .

To sum up, Listening is the most used skill inside as well as outside the classroom. The development of that skill will increase the students' reaction toward the language, they will be familiar with the language system, and find it easier to master its skills.

1.4. Brown's Types of Classroom Listening Performance

Brown (2001, p. 255) stated that there are six types of listening performance that aid teachers to teach the listening skills: reactive, intensive, responsive, responsive, selective, extensive and interactive.

1.4.1. Reactive

First this type requires learners to listen to some utterances on the surface structure to be frequently repeated including pronunciation. Reactive listening is not concerned with generating meaning but to respond to a specific stimulus to communicate. (Brown,2001, p. 255)

1.4.2. Intensive

Intensive listening requires students to understand the meaning of each discourse and ultimately, to understand every sentence and word, and its purpose is to build basic listening skills. Teachers use different listening strategies that focus on the speakers' utterance components (phonemes, words, intonation, etc) to permit their students to select parts of spoken language. In order to fix the important elements in the students' mind, the teacher repeats them on purpose. Then, he presents the learners to a listening task and asks them to recognize intonation, stress, or grammatical structure in a sentence (Brown, 2001, p.255)

1.4.3. Responsive

Responsive listening involves listening to a small amount of a language such as a command, question, or greeting. In a certain task, the teacher evaluates his learners' responses

by providing them with a part of his talk and expecting them to replay. I.e. asking them to do a task or controlling their understanding through questioning. (Brown, 2001, p.255)

1.4.4. Selective

During listening to a longer passage of language, students are not obliged to deal with everything that is said, however, they choose the necessary ideas. i.e., they will select only specific data as names of people, dates, events, locations etc. (Brown, 2001, p.255)

1.4.5. Extensive

There is a difference between extensive performance and intensive one in terms of comprehension. The extensive process deal with longer passages and cover a global understanding through some interactive skills such as note taking, whilst, in the intensive one, it is impossible to study each element separately in lengthy stretches. (Brown, 2001, p.255)

1.4.6. Interactive

This type acts as a combination of the five previous types. It is the interchangeable communication between the speaker and the listener. It refers to listening in collaborative conversation, in which learners interact with each other or with native speakers; it requires students to display signs of partnership and understanding to fulfill their roles as successful participants in the discourse. (Brown, 2001).

As a conclusion, in order to achieve students' listening skill and improve the comprehension of the spoken language learners ought to be aware about these six listening types and use them in their learning process.

1.5. The Listening Process

Listening comprehension is considered in theory as an active process in which people focus on aspects of the spoken input, form meaning, from passages, and link what they listen with the current knowledge. Buck (2001) stated that the listener does not just listen at the purpose of hearing, because there are different strategies that help him in understanding the

exact message given by the speaker, when they are in the position of talking (p. 3). In other words, when listening to somebody, we use various strategies in order to comprehend the message. From this, there are three main processes of the listening skill.

1.5.1. Bottom up Process

Flowerdew and Miller stated that “Listeners build understanding by starting with the smallest units of the acoustic message: individual sounds, or phonemes. These are then combined into words, which, in turn, together make up phrases, clauses, and sentences. Finally, individual sentences combine to create ideas, concepts, and relationships between them” (Flowerdew and Miller, 2005). In other words, the bottom up process concentrates more on what is heard. Learners study each linguistic element separately (sounds, phrases, words, and clauses). Then, they link them to get the intended meaning.

1.5.2. Top down Process

It is the use of background knowledge in understanding the meaning of a message, this process moves from general to specific. It is based on hearing as listeners interpret what is heard depending on their background knowledge. So, the Top down process is related to learners’ previous knowledge in order to understand a given message. Because of this background information, it is easy for them to predict what is coming next. (Remulhart, 1980, P.41).

As comparison between the two processes, the top down listening is more effective than the bottom up, because in the first one the listener will decode the meaning of the passages depending on his previous knowledge. Otherwise, the second one, the listener will take a long time in moving from the smallest units to the longest ones to attain comprehension.

1.5.3. Interactive Process

According to interactive processing, top down and bottom up listening processing ought to be combined together to improve listening comprehension. Relying on previous knowledge

and linguistic data, the understanding and interpretation of the message will be simple and easy.

When the listener is familiar with the content of the material, he tends to use his prior knowledge and predicts what is coming next. If the information of the listening passage is unfamiliar, he will be able just to use his linguistic knowledge, the lexical and syntactical knowledge to understand the input (Peterson, 1991, P. 110). Therefore, the interactive process has an important note to satisfy learners' learning styles, since experienced learners are more comfortable with the top down process due to their mastering of the basic linguistic system focusing on applying the schematic knowledge, while others prefer bottom up model.

1.6. The Stages of Listening in EFL Classrooms

In any listening session, listening is divided into three stages, where both teachers and students have many roles to do.

1.6.1. Pre-listening Stage

Underwood stated that pre-listening is the stage in which teachers help students to prepare themselves for listening tasks and gives a general overview about what they are going to do in the next stage. (Underwood, 1989, P.31). He added that in pre-listening stage, the teacher has activate the schema theory that helps students to link, focus, and revive previous knowledge through brainstorming. This stage helps students to focus their minds on the content of the topics. They are expected to hear from the speakers, this means that when the teacher gives them background information, certain words, and phrases, students can be able to create many ideas about the topic to know how they are going to expect, react and make certain kind of response. The use of pictures, which plays a large role in helping to activate the theory of the schema and build expectations for the coming information, is used in this stage. In addition to this, opening dialogues about certain topic and seeking to find solutions to it, and all of that

can be done by a question and answer session or by general group discussion (Underwood, 1989).

Wilson (2008) shared another similar idea concerning the pre-listening activities, which consists of asking the participating students before listening to do research on their own about a topic or certain content, to help them understand what they should do before listening and encourage learners to anticipate what they will hear next.

1.6.2. During Listening Stage

During listening or while listening is the stage in which students are in time to practice listening and do all the tasks required during the time that they are listening to the text. This stage is considered as one of the most important stages of listening because it helps the student to listen to the meaning accurately and focus to understand the main ideas, verify and review their predictions through performing several activities (Underwood, 1989). Rixon (1986) pointed out that in the listening stage, the student must focus meticulously on listening in order to understand the message of the necessary information without taking into account the need to interpret long questions or to give a complete answer. The goal is how to understand and to catch only the important and main information, and to reach this goal, students should do the listening task through interesting for clear understand of the message, that can make them can feel desiring to listen more and do all the activities without worry or boredom.

1.6.3. Post-listening Stage

(Pierce, 1989, p.43) argued that this stage is the final stage in the process of listening. In this stage, students will be able to link their previous knowledge with what they have listened to and will be able to check their understanding and what they need to understand through several methods and tasks that the teacher gives to them. Such tasks include group discussions for the oral answers or for the other answers which are presented by the teacher on the

board. Asking questions in order to encourage students to open discussions, in addition to enhancing writing and reading activities and focusing more on language functions, stress and intonation, for better acquirement of knowledge and more expanding of their cognitive abilities (Pierce, 1989, p.43)

1.7. Listening Difficulties

Learners encounter many problems that reduce their comprehension before and during the process of listening. Both teachers and learners should give a specific attention to the factors that influence the processing of speech negatively. According to Bingol et al. (2014), the sources of these difficulties can be summarized in the following:

1.7.1. Quality of the Recorded Materials

In some classes, teachers use recorded materials with a bad quality because they have not new teaching equipments like computers, data projector, etc, or they pose useless materials. Therefore, when students listen to these recorded or videos of weak sound system, their understanding will be influenced (Bingol et al, 2014, p.3).

1.7.2. Cultural Differences

The cultural knowledge of language has an important affect on the learners' comprehension; therefore, learners should be familiar with it. If the listening activity contains full distinct cultural materials, here learners may face barriers in their understanding. Moreover, it is teachers' duty to donate a reach background information about the listening tasks previously (Brown, 1994).

1.7.3 Accent

Munro and Derwing (1999) expressed that many accented utterances can result a significant lowering in comprehension (as cited in Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016). Which means that listening to various accents cause a misunderstanding of the speech. According to Goh (1999), 66% of learners denoted a speakers' accent as one of the most important factor that influence

listener comprehension. In other words, strange accents can make serious problems in listening comprehension but knowing an accent aids learners in their hearing. In addition, Buck (2001) indicated that when listeners hear an unfamiliar accent such as Indian English for the first time after studying only American one will encounter critical difficulties in listening; this will certainly interrupt the whole process of listening at the same time unfamiliar accents make the comprehension impossible for the listeners.

1.7.4. Length and Speed of Listening

According to Bingol et al (2014): “the level of students can have a significant role when they listen to long parts and keep all information in their mind” (as cited in Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016). This means that less advanced learners find it difficult to understand lengthy listening texts and keep ideas in their minds. So, shorter ones make their understanding easier. Moreover, as Underwood (1989) stated, “Speed can make listening passages difficult.” (p.16) In other words, listeners fail to catch all the important words as the speaker goes faster when speaking and this may create gaps in their listening comprehension.

1.7.5. Unfamiliar Vocabulary

Listening to certain passages includes familiar words that will be very easy for students. However, when learners face unfamiliar words they will not recognize them because of their limited vocabulary, consequently they will find barriers in interpreting the intended meaning and they will fail to put the words in their appropriate context. (Hung, 1998)

1.7.6. Physical Condition

Often the trouble of classrooms influence students' listening comprehension in the big classrooms, students who are staying on the back or near the window may not hear the recording like students stay in front. In this case, the teacher should take into consideration all these conditions. In addition to that, the size of the classroom plays an important role which means that the teacher finds it difficult to manage and control all the class during group

activity. Another factor that makes listening comprehension difficult is the temperature of the class, like classes that do not have air condition or heater will be very hot in summer and too cold in winter (Bingol et al, 2014, P.4).

1.7.7. Lack of Concentration

Listening comprehension is affected by students' motivation, which is a crucial factor; it can be hard for students to keep concentrating in a foreign language learning classroom. In listening comprehension over a short period of absent-mindedness may destroy understanding. However, if students appreciate the topic of the listening text, comprehending would be very easy from this, concentration needs a large amount of effort in order not to miss the meaning, consequently, and students find listening very boring even if they are interested in the topic (Bingol et al, 2014, P.4).

1.8. Listening Comprehension Strategies

In the process of language learning, listening comprehension is considered one of the hardest skill for students to be developed quickly. Consequently, many EFL students face a variety of listening constraints that hinder them to accomplish listening task. Rahimirad and Zare-ee (2015) asserted that any foreign language student encounters difficulties while listening to English at the first stage of learning process. For this reason, students are supposed to use many of listening comprehension strategies in order to reach communicative goals. Listening comprehension strategies are important, which can guide learners and evaluate their own comprehension (Vandergift, 1999, p. 176).

Oxford, Chamot and O'Malley (2009) have distinguished between three different types of listening strategies, which are cognitive, metacognitive and socio-affective.

1.8.1. Cognitive Listening Strategies

A cognitive listening strategy is used to comprehend linguistic input and obtain information. Learners often do not catch the meaning of the words and they do their best to

get the meaning from the context. The cognitive strategies are linked for understanding and stacking input in short term memory or long-term memory for later access. Comprehension begins with the received information, which analyzed as successive levels of organization sounds, words as a process of decoding. Cognitive strategy is a problem solving technique that students use to do their learning activity and facilitate the earning of knowledge. Example of Cognitive strategies: repeating to memorize and summarizing (Bingol et al, 2014, P.2).

1.8.2. Metacognitive Listening Strategies

In this strategy, students are attentive during listening to a certain passage. It deals with learning how to plan, monitor and assess the gathered information from the listening part and the same as pre listening activities. According to Oxford (1990), conscious use of metacognitive strategies aids students to get their attention back when they lose it. Furthermore, Vandergift (2003) stated that metacognitive strategies are used twice as elementary listeners use by advanced listeners.

Metacognition is thinking about one's own thinking which means students may put available learning methods according to the actual situation. In addition to that, Chamot considered monitoring as the most important task in the metacognitive listening strategies by saying "Learners need to learn to continually monitor their degree of comprehension and try to define what the source of difficulty can be" (1995, p. 158). In other words learners should be aware about the areas of difficulty in L2 listening by controlling the degree of understanding. Wenden (1998) suggested some advantages of the meta-cognitive strategies like: implementing the strategies in their learning comprehension, improving their problem solving skills and making listening process faster and easier. As a result, these strategies should be taught because they help students to obtain listening comprehension as well as enriching their experience in goal setting, planning, monitoring errors and self evaluation.

1.8.3. Socio-affective Listening Strategies

According to Vandergift (1997), socio-affective strategies are put to describe the learning process. It is the situation when learners use asking question strategy to discover new areas in the text or to look for further clarification. Besides, they work in pairs or groups to secure anxious ones, exchange information and motivate them to develop a positive attitude toward the listening task, as he cited (1999, p. 170).

Consequently the above strategies should be taught by teachers to facilitate listening comprehension for students and to improve their listening skill using different materials.

Conclusion

To conclude, listening is important not only in language learning but also in daily life communication. Consequently, it is considered as a highly integrative skill. It plays an effective role in second language learning and teaching, due to this importance, learners ought to be aware about the effectiveness of the listening comprehension strategies that help students to understand language content they are receiving. In addition, teachers' role in teaching the strategies and how to apply them is very efficient.

Chapter Two

Autonomous Learning

Introduction

Language teaching is seen nowadays, not as an ability to teach, but as an ability to make learners learn. For this reason, learners become the centre of classroom setting. Also, the change in the view of language learning from a set of rules to be transmitted by the teacher to learner, to a process in which the learner takes the responsibility in learning. Through this, the learner becomes autonomous in language learning. Autonomy is a term that covers many areas that is related to different aspects of life. For further understanding, this chapter will provide its meaning, importance, its main principles, and its contributions to the learning process and mainly to listening comprehension of a foreign language.

2.1. Definition of Autonomous Learning

According to Gardner and Miller (2002), it is difficult to get a consensus on the definition of “learner autonomy” or “autonomous learning” because “first, different writers have defined the concept in different ways. Second, there are areas of ongoing debate. Third, these concepts have developed independently in different geographical areas and therefore they have been defined using different (but often similar) terminology” (p.5). In other words, autonomous learning is viewed according to researchers from many and various points of view in terms of its definition and its meaning.

Chan (2001) also stated that “the literature suggest different interpretation of the concept in different context” (p. 505). Which means that many researchers mainly define learner autonomy. Holec (1981) firstly, defined learner autonomy as “the ability to take charge of one’s own learning” (p.3), which was further explained as taking charge meant being responsible for deciding learning management and organization, i.e., setting up learning objectives, having the right to decide learning content and selecting suitable learning methods,

and making evaluation on what had been acquired. In this respect, learner autonomy is an ability to know how to learn rather than how to acquire this ability.

Little (1991) further developed Holec's definition. According to Little (1991), learner autonomy is "essentially a matter of the learners' psychological relation to the process and content of learning... a capacity for detachment, critical reflection decision making, and independent action" (p. 4). That is to say, learners ought to have some psychological preparations for their learning process and learning content, as Benson (2007) argued that this definition assumed " the capacity to manage one's own learning depends upon certain underlying psychological capacities" (P. 23). In addition, little (1994) pointed out that autonomy also meant that learners could enjoy freedom in their learning, but this freedom was restricted by other factors, because "as social beings our independence is always balanced by dependence" (P. 81).

Furthermore, Nguyen (2014) defined learner autonomy as "learner's willingness and ability to take responsibility, to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate his/her learning with tasks that are constructed in negotiation with and support from the teacher" (p. 21). In other words, learners' interaction and communication with their teachers in autonomous learning are also emphasized. So, learners must have a strong willingness to engage into their learning, which means that they should be active and positive towards their studies.

Dickinson (1987, p.11) said that autonomy "describes the situation in which the learner is totally responsible for all the decisions concerned with his learning and the implementation of those decisions. In full autonomy there is no involvement of a teacher or an institution and the learner is independent from the teacher and has all the freedom to choose which material can use in his learning programme". Moreover, Ushiod (1996) argued that autonomous learners are motivated learners this due to autonomy that develops our motivation and can be as a solution for less motivated learners.

To sum up, learners are able to take charge, direct themselves and being responsible about their own learning. They ought to find flexible and effective ways for their educational system and take control concerns their learning.

2.2. Levels of Autonomy

In the late of 1990's a number of writers claimed that the notion of autonomy is a matter of levels. Nunan's (1997 as cited in Benson, 2006) attempt involves a model of five levels of autonomy in the learner action. They are classified as follows:

Awareness: In this stage, learners start identifying the main goal of each lesson, and recognize content of the learning materials that are used by the teacher inside classroom.

Involvement: Students are more involved in their learning process. They have more opportunities to choose their own goals and decide their learning path to improve their level.

Intervention: This stage refers to students 'ability to select and decide the activities that are practiced inside the classroom. They can also be involved in choosing the content of the learning programme.

Creation: Students are able to set their own learning goals. They take the initiative role and are responsible for their learning achievement.

Transcendence: In the last stage, students can be described as autonomous learners. They can study outside formal setting effectively, and improve their learning without guidance or help.

2.3. Autonomy inside the Classroom

In non-autonomous learning situations, failure or success seems to depend on the teacher. He is considered as the only source of knowledge inside the classroom. In this case, learners will be only receptive and passive elements in the learning process. Whereas, autonomous learning provides many chances for learners to share responsibility, be involved, and take the initiative role for their learning.

2.3.1. Teacher's Role in the Classroom

There was a misconception that autonomous learners learn by themselves without the teacher's help; however, "autonomous learning is by no means teacher less learning" (Xhaferri et al, 2015, p. 56). Thus, in autonomous learning, as Little (1994) observed, giving independence to learners does not mean abandoning one's responsibility as a teacher and having no role to play in the language classroom. In fact, negotiation and cooperation between teachers and learners are necessary in autonomous learning. As a result, for learners to be autonomous they need the teacher's support.

According to Bound (1995), there are four stages of the process of autonomy: the Entry stage, the Reactive stage, the Proactive stage, and the Integrative stage. For the first stage, The Entry Stage: this is the beginning point of the process where learners enter a situation which is unfamiliar with them. The teacher's role here is to create a reliable environment which supports learners through providing them with the necessary directions in learning. Secondly, the Reactive Stage: a learner enters this stage, when he becomes able to act independently within a particular situation or when he encounter unsupportive environment, which reflect on his learning needs and objectives. Here the teacher needs to encourage individuals to express their opinions and feelings. Next, the Proactive Stage: in this stage the learner grows confidence in himself. He is more likely to demonstrate willingness and active involvement in-group activities. For this reason, the role of the teacher is to encourage and accept cooperative behaviours while providing immediate feedback according to the objectives. Finally, the Integrative stage, teachers encourage learners to share information, feelings and values through developing internal standards to guide personal behaviour.

In addition, Boud, and Voller (1997) stated that in autonomous learning teachers' role is generally considered to be a facilitator, counsellor or resource. For him both roles provide psychological and technical support (as cited in Xhaferri, et al. 2015)

- **The teacher as a facilitator:** The teacher's role is to manage the activities in the classroom and help learners plan their learning both for the long and short term. The teacher has to be able to create collaboration relationship with the learners and make sure that all learners are aware of their duties all time
- **The teacher as a counsellor:** The position of the teacher is to help learners to be familiar with their learning style and to develop awareness to the different learning strategies presented to them in order o guide them to appropriate learning materials.

It is important to note that teachers need to be aware of the various levels of autonomous learning. There are learners who need more guidance than others and there are tasks where learners are dependent on the teacher.

2.3.2. Learner's Role in the Classroom

Learner autonomy is "the ability to take charge of one's own learning" (Holec, 1981, p.3). From Holec's perspective, the role of autonomous learners would be the following, taking responsibility for determining their own learning objectives, choosing the contents of their learning, selecting the methods and strategies to be used and evaluating what had been learned. In addition, Benn (1976) also described an autonomous learner as the one "whose life has a consistency that derives from a coherent set of beliefs, values and principles and who engages in a still –continuing process of criticism and re-evaluation" (as cited in Candy, 1991: 102). In other words, learner's role to achieve autonomy is related by a set of actions which involve cognitive factors and which are driven by their beliefs, principles and views about language learning. Therefore, learners not only need to be motivated an how they should learn the language, they needs also to develop their learning strategies and seek to understand themselves, their needs, objectives and difficulties.

As a conclusion, autonomous learners need to be motivated and ready to take charge of their learning. Moreover, autonomous learning requires active learners who work independently and in cooperation with others.

2.4. Psychological Factors Influencing Learner Autonomy

The field of psychology has been recognized as a key point in the process of learning. On their base, three main psychological elements have a great influence on the way individuals learn and the way they respond to learning experiences. These factors are motivation, anxiety and beliefs.

2.4.1. Motivation

The study of motivation in the field of learner autonomy has attracted much attention from scholars. It has been considered as an active factor in the process of autonomy, Ushioda (1996) contended, “without motivation, there is no autonomy” (as cited in Liu, 2015). Which means that to be an autonomous learner, you must be motivated. Also, more motivated language learners tended to engage in more autonomous learning practice outside the classroom. Learners can be motivated in different ways which are shaped by the individuals’ specific needs and wants. Similarly, Harlow (2007) stated that motivation is dependent according to students’ interests, successes, and it changes from one class to another from one teacher to another, and from one day to another.

To conclude, the process of motivation is changeable, which can be affected by different aspects in life.

2.4.2. Anxiety

Anxiety is considered as the second psychological factor which has an effect on learning. Here learning learners will feel worry especially in learning foreign language. As Horwitz claims that:

Not only is it intuitive to many people that anxiety negatively influences language learning. It is logical because anxiety has been found to interfere with many types of learning and has been one of the most highly examined variables in all of psychology and education. (Horwitz, 2001, p. 113, as cited in Savaskan, 2017)

In other words, it is noted that anxiety is a psychological factor that affects learners' performance in negative way.

Some researchers have stated that most students consider language classes the most anxiety-provoking courses of all subjects and a threat to their self-concept. Accordingly, foreign language anxiety occurs when lack of personal confidence, self-esteem, willingness, and motivation which can be seen as a barrier in front of learner autonomy. In addition, Boud (1985) viewed that elements like anxiety or lack of confidence are strongly prevent learners to make their decisions concerning their learning process.

2.4.3. Beliefs and Preferences

Beliefs and preferences are the third factor in addition to the two factors that have been mentioned earlier. They are concerned only with language learning, so, different principles and ancient thoughts about the process of language learning can influence learners' reactions and attitudes towards the field of language learning are influenced by different beliefs. (Benson, 2001, p.73)

2.5. Characteristics of Learner Autonomy

According to Mynard and Sorflaten (2002) independent learners are the ones who are self-reliant, motivated and capable of learning without a teacher which means that autonomous learners are responsible and have the capacity of learning without the guidance of the teacher (as cited in Al-saadi, 2011, p. 99). They illustrated some characteristics of learner autonomy as follows:

- Are self-reliant:Which indicates that autonomous learners are responsible about their learning, also they depend on themselves without the help of others.
- Can make informed decision about their learning: here learners are aware and attentive about all the problems and barriers that way face in learning which reinforce them to make the right decision about.
- Are aware of their strengths and weaknesses:They know about their internal side, and try to preserve their strong points as well as work to improve the weak ones.
- Connect classroom learning with the real world: In other words, independent learners link what they dealt with in the classroom with real life situations.
- Take responsibility for their own learning and know about different strategies for learning:i.e., learners are always responsible about their learning and they choose the appropriate learning strategies to apply them in order to get what they want.
- Plan their learning and set goal:Autonomous learners ought to select the learning programme and set their goals to achieve their learning process.
- Are intrinsically motivated by making progress in learning:They are internally motivated and feel exited develop their learning.
- Often reflect on the learning process and their own progress:That is to say, that autonomous learners have the ability to compare or to give their opinions towards the learning process as well as their learning a progress.

As a conclusion, learner autonomy should have the ability to enhance his/her learning process and control their learning process but this will not be achieved without communication and interaction with others.

2.6. Importance of Autonomy

Crabbe (1993) reminded that society can not give the important resources to all its members in every field of learning, in this situation, learners should satisfy their learning

needs, either through learning individually or in groups, thus, they can obtain the knowledge and skills they want. According to Benson (2011), autonomy learning is more effective than non-autonomous learning, i.e., taking charge own learning without relying on others guidance is more sufficient and valued than dependent learning.

Little (2001) stated that there are two causes of trying to make learners autonomous. First, “if learners are reflectively engaged with their learning, it will be more efficient and effective because it is more personal and focused”. This means that the effectiveness of autonomous learners is appeared when the knowledge and skills acquired in the classroom can be applied to situations outside the classroom. Second, if learners are proactively committed to their learning, the problem of motivation is solved. Autonomous learners will be responsible for their own learning this will motivated them to improve their learning process.

So, autonomous learning was appreciated in recent years, as well as it is accepted since it helps students to be independent, knowing their needs and fixing their goals. Teachers also ought to support them to improve their learning process through autonomy.

2.7. Approaches to Foster Learner Autonomy

The role of autonomy is clear and crucial in learning a foreign language. So, language learners who desire to acquire language are obliged to have autonomy in high level in order to develop their learning. Teachers also are necessary in helping students to get autonomy in language learning. According to many scholars in the field, autonomy cannot be taught, Benson (2003) argued that "autonomy can be fostered, but not taught" (p.290). In this same context, Benson (2011) proposed six different approaches in developing autonomy (as cited in Kashefian and Kouhpaym, 2020).

2.7.1. Resource-Based Approach

Resource-based approachis concerned with learners’ independent interaction with learning materials. The latter give learners responsibility of how much to use as well as the ways of

using the materials (Edge and Wharton, 1998). According to Benson (2001), there are a number of key concepts with regard to this approach, which are self-access and distance learning. Which means that resources-based approach promotes autonomous learning through self-access center (SAC) such as library, computers, laboratories...etc and learning in distance or independently.

2.7.2. Technology-Based Approach

This approach includes some forms such as Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL), computer mediated communication (CMC), etc. In this approach, researchers see that there is a strong relationship between CMC and learner autonomy in which learner autonomy was viewed from the aspect of sociocultural perspectives that focuses on interaction between students and their environment. (Arikan & Bakla, 2011) investigated the role of blogs in promoting autonomy. The learners in an eight-week period developed blog by uploading the materials they read and wrote. They give opinions and make decisions about the content, choose what they read and write. From this example, learner autonomy will be fostered through this approach and without forgetting the role of teachers in giving students prior knowledge about the use of technology.

2.7.3. Curriculum-Based Approach

The curriculum-based approach seeks to promote autonomy by attempting to involve learners in decision-making processes at the curriculum level. Learners are encouraged to choose learning content and method. Consequently, when learners feel that their choices and decisions are valued, they will show more motivation to participate in the learning process and the curriculum too (Sekhan, 1998, p.262).

2.7.4. Teacher-Based Approach

Teachers play an important role in fostering autonomy. They can help learners to satisfy their needs, set goals and evaluate themselves in order to encourage learners to do their

autonomy learning. Moreover, they aide learners to develop awareness of the learning process and how being responsible for their choices (Kashefian & Kouhpaym, 2020).

2.7.5. Learner-Based Approach

Learner based approach focuses on the behavioral and psychological changes that are important for learners to be able to control over their learning. In addition, this approach concerns with learner development and training in skills and strategies as well as proposes ways to incorporate these elements into the process of language learning (Kashefian & Kouhpaym, 2020).

2.7.6. Classroom-Based Approach

This approach can promote autonomy by letting learners working with their classmates and teachers in classroom setting. Also, it focuses on the changes happen in the relationship between learners and teachers. It provides students to select and decide over the classroom tasks and evaluate their learning progress. Furthermore, teacher should be aware and prepared a training to help learners to foster learner autonomy (Benson, 2001, p.151).

2.8. The Impact of Autonomous Learning on Listening Comprehension

Listening is one of English language skills where students are able to acquire how to pronounce the sound and interpret the message to understand the intended meaning. For that reason, listening is considered as the most important skill of communication, which affects the comprehension of learners. Thus, learners should develop their ability in listening skill through autonomous learning.

According to authors Dickinson,et al, to be an autonomous learner would be beneficial for students because they are taking their own charge without the guidance of teachers in all the time, and they have the ability to decide what can influence their learning process positively. Some other researchers like Barfiel, Kumaravadivelu, and Little have argued that, learners can

not be autonomous learners, if teachers do not promote their attitude through various strategies into consideration students' needs and interests.

According to authors Cross, et al, Listening is a very important skill in the process of learning a second language. It assists with a large amount in developing language learning even it is very complex, also, it is the most skill that students of foreign language learning face many barriers in, and thus teachers always do their best in order to solve this problem. On one part, we have benefits of autonomous learning. On the other part, we have the problems that students face in the development of listening comprehension in foreign language learning, when we put them together, autonomous learning could solve listening problems. According to Cross (2004)" learning to listen a second language (L2) essentially still takes place in classroom environment. Teachers typically manipulate and control the text as they see fit to enable learners to listen a number of times; complete the given comprehension tasks, and produces the necessary response" (p.8). In other words, students have more chances to practice their listening skill outside the classroom, due to this teachers should provide students with strategies that make listening process more effective as well as they can provide them with technological tools that facilitate listening for them. Cross (2014, p.9) argued that the use of technology can be very beneficial in fostering students' autonomous listening, it enables students to improve their listening independently.

To conclude, learner autonomy can be very beneficial, since it allows them to take charge of their own learning process. They can set their goals, use various learning strategies and monitor their process. In general, autonomous learning is an effective way in developing listening comprehension process.

Conclusion

Learner autonomy ought to be actualized for gaining self-access in order to help learners to enhance their level in learning, and take responsibility. Autonomous learning can be achieved

through adopting its characteristics and following certain approaches that will develop learner autonomy specifically in listening as learners will rely on themselves and use the technology devices in listening and practices independently. Nowadays, autonomous learning has a great significance in learning a foreign language. Thus, Autonomy gives the opportunity for learners to control their own learning and motivates them to enrich their foreign language.

Chapter Three

Field Investigation

Introduction

To investigate the relationship between listening comprehension and autonomous learning, the prior two chapters tackle the main researchers' views about the importance of listening and how it can be improved through autonomous learning. The present chapter is concerned with the description and analysis of students' questionnaires to support the theoretical part, so that it could be possible to confirm or reject whether autonomous learning affects positively listening comprehension skill. In this study, researchers have depend on one data gathering tool, students' questionnaires of Second year LMD students in the English department of Guelma University; who have been chosen as a sample of this research, so their attitudes and views are taken into account to better investigate the relationship between listening comprehension and autonomous learning.

3.1. Research Method

The present research has been conducted through the quantitative - analytical method as an appropriate way to confirm the already put hypothesis, since it attempts to give a general description of both listening skill as a learning problem, and autonomy as a technique in reducing its difficulties. Tayie (2005, p. 50) stated that this method is composed of two types of surveys, the first (a descriptive method) aims at visualizing and reflecting others attitudes and opinions about current problems faced by learners. The second, (an analytic method) aims at describing and explaining reasons behind the existence of certain situations so, descriptive-analytic method helps researchers to prove the relationship between the variables and explain how they influence each other.

3.2. Students' Questionnaire

To collect data, a students' questionnaire was distributed and administered to second year LMD students at the Department of English in the University of Guelma. It provides us with valuable information about students' listening comprehension ability and proficiency as well as their tendency to be independent listeners.

3.2.1. Aim of Students' Questionnaire

The aim of students' questionnaire is to check students' attitudes towards the topic under investigation "Enhancing Students' Listening Comprehension through Autonomous Learning". That is, the main aim is to investigate whether students are aware about the importance of autonomy in enhancing their listening comprehension and to what extent they are autonomous listeners.

3.2.2. Participants of the Study

The subjects who participated in this study consisted of 152 students who were chosen randomly from second year Licence classes of the Department of English at Guelma University. They were selected from a population of 250 students. The sample was chosen because second year students are at an elementary and are not able to be proficient in the listening tasks but they can be aware of certain ways of learning listening independently.

3.2.3. Administration of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire has been distributed on June 3rd, 2021, in normal classroom situations where the students spend nearly from 15 to 20 minutes to answer. It is worthy to mention that all students answer and hand back their questionnaires. The questionnaire was distributed in a very comfortable atmosphere, teachers were very helpful, they give us the permission to enter the class during the course and at the end of the session, and they collect for us and return the questionnaires back. The questions involved were clear and easy for the students.

3.2.4. Description of the Questionnaire

Students' questionnaire conceptualized and described the theoretical part of the current research. It consists of twenty two (22) questions in three major sections. Most questions are closed-ended in which students are asked to select from the pre-determined opinions. In addition to this type we have used follow-up questions in the form of clarification such a "please specify".

The first section (General Information) consists of six (6) questions, which represent background information about the students, mainly their age, gender, years of English language study, importance of English language study, their motivation to learn English, and their level in English language.

Section two (from Q7 to Q13) aims at gathering learners' views about listening comprehension; its importance, difficulties, and if they comprehend what they hear. Furthermore, it attempts to find out students' problems and ways of learning in relation to the listening skill.

Section three is entitled "Autonomous listening" (from Q14 to Q 22). It is concerned with questions that seek information about the students' views about autonomy and their awareness and acceptance of autonomous listening. That is, if they are independent learners and henceforth listeners, if they assess their listening comprehension, if their teachers ask them to self-listen to native speakers at home, and their awareness if autonomy can enhance their listening comprehension.

3.3.Data Analysis and Interpretation of the Questionnaire

Section One: Background Information

Question 1: Age

Table 3.1

Students' Age

	Number	Percentage
18	3	1.97%
19	54	35.54%
20	61	40.13%
21	20	13.16%
22	6	3.95%
23	3	1.97%
24	3	1.97%
25	2	1.31%
Total	152	100%

Concerning students' age, most of the students age 19, 20, and 21 years old (35.54%, 40.13%, and 13.16% respectively). Some age 18 years old (1.97%), 22 years old (3.95%), 23 years old (1.97%), and 24 years old (1.97%). Still two students who are 25 years old (1.31%). These indicate that the research sample includes different age variations.

Question 2: Gender

Table 3.2

Students' Gender

	Number	Percentage
Male	31	20.4%
Female	121	79.6%
Total	152	100%

The obtained results that deal with students' gender show that nearly the whole population of the research 79.6% are females. Whereas, 20.4% of them are males. This indicates that females like to study foreign languages where males usually prefer scientific branches.

Question 3: How long have you been studying English?

Table 3.3

Years of Studying English

Number		Percentage
2	78	51.4%
3	6	3.94%
8	4	2.63%
9	52	34.21%
10	12	7.89%
Total	152	100%

Concerning the years of studying English, most of students (51.4%) opted for two years others for nine years (34.21%). [This indicates that the former have mentioned only the years of study at the university while the latter have mentioned the years of study from middle school to university]; what is noticed is that both did not face failure of English language study. In addition, 3.94% have counted their repeated years, mainly arguing 3 years of English language study at the university while 7.89% written that they studied English for 10 years from middle school to university; thus, both of them have loosed one year, which may be the bachelorette one. Moreover, 2.63% said that they studied English for eight years, which may indicate that they faced failure in many years or have studied it in other institutions. Generally, the results show that most students are serious in their English language study.

Question 4: How important do you consider the learning of English language?

Table 3.4

The Importance of Learning English Language

NumberPercentage		
Very important	115	75.65%
Important	37	24.35%
Not important	00	00%
Total	152	100

According to the obtained results in table 3.4, the majority of students (75.65%) considered English as a very important language that should be learned which implies that most students are aware about the benefits of learning a foreign language and are motivated to study English language.

Question 5: How is your motivation to learn English language?

Table 3.5

Students' Motivation to Study English

NumberPercentage		
Very high	52	34.21%
High	52	34.21%
Average	47	30.92%
Low	01	0.66%
Verylow	00	00%
Total	152	100%

Concerning students' motivation in English, The majority of students (34.21%) opted for very high and equal for high(34.21%). This implies that learners are motivated in English and they appreciate its basics, rules and principles, whereas (30.92%) of students have chosen average, which indicates that they do not have much capacity or ability to be motivated in English.

Question 6: How is your level in English?

Table 3.6

Students' Level in English

Number	Percentage
Very good	14 9.21%
Good	83 54.6%
Average	52 34.21%
Bad	3 1.97%
Verybad	00 00%
Total	152 100%

As indicated in table 3.6, students are asked about their level in English, most of them (54.6%) chosen good, and some (9.21) have declared that their level is very good, this shows that they master the language and know its basics and rules. In the other side, (34.21%) of students opted for average this implies that they still face difficulties in learning English.

Section Two: Listening Comprehension**Question 7:** Do you consider listening skill as important?

Table 3.7

The Importance of Listening Skill

Number	Percentage
Very important	114 75%
Important	38 25%
Not important	00 00%
Total	152 100%

Concerning the importance of listening skill, students viewed it as follows (75%) of students considered listening skill as a very important skill, (25%) of students considered it as

important. so , students are aware about the necessity of mastering the listening skill in order to improve their English language proficiency.

Question 8: Do you have listening activities inside the classroom?

Table 3.8

Listening Activities inside the Classroom

Number	Percentage
Yes	102 67.2%
No	50 32.9%
Total	152 100 %

According to the obtained results in table 3.8, the majority of students (67.2%) said that they have listening activities inside the classroom, this means that teachers give much attention to this important skill. Others (32.9%) opted for “No”; this implies that learning inside the classroom ignore the importance of listening activities to enhance comprehension.

Question 9: Do you comprehend what you listen to ?

Table 3.9

Students' Listening Comprehension

Number	Percentage
Yes	135 88.81%
No	17 11.18 %
Total	152 100%

Concerning students' comprehension during listening courses, (88.81%) of them have chosen "Yes" which means that have acceptable English proficiency level. However, (11.18%) of students have opted for "No", this shows how listening skill is difficult.

Question 10: If no, what makes listening difficult for you?

Table 3.10

Obstacles in Listening Comprehension

	Number	Percentage
Noise	7	41.2%
Attention	4	23.53%
Receiver Biases	3	17.64%
Listening or Receiver Apprehension	3	17.64%

The results in table 3.10 present the obstacles that students faced during listening. So, (41.2%) of them have mentioned that noise is the first problem that they suffer from during listening. while, (23.53%) of students have chosen attention which is an important element during listening.

Question 11: Does your teacher give you feedback about listening comprehension ?

Table 3.11

Teachers' Feedback

	Number	Percentage
Yes	113	74.34%
No	39	25.65%
Total	152	100%

Concerning teachers' feedback, the majority of learners (74.34%) opted for "Yes", which indicates that there are [teachers who have the ability to teach and give previous knowledge to their student]. Whereas, (25.65%) of students have chosen "No" this implies that teachers are restricted with a certain syllabus that should be done in a given time or that teachers do not consider feedback in.

Question 12: Do you listen to English language outside the classroom?

Table 3.12

Listening to English Language outside the Classroom

Number	Percentage
Yes	142 93.42%
No	10 6.58%
Total	152 100%

The obtained results from table 3.12 show that most of students (93.42%) listen to English outside the classroom; that indicates how learners are motivated to learn that language and they depend on themselves to master the listening skill. Others(6.58)do not listen outside classes, this may be due to the lack of motivation or attention towards that language skill.

- If yes, which materials you use?

Table 3.13

Materials used in Listening to English outside the Classroom

	Number	Percentage
Radio	8	5.63%
TV	64	45.07%
Computers	85	59.86%
Others	40	28.16%

For students who are practicing listening outside classroom, there are several used material, the most used one is computers (59.86%) then TV (45.07%). Others (28.16%), specifiedthat they use phones to watch movies and listening music. Whereas Radio is used by (5.63%) of students. Consequently, new technological tools are the most used materials, which make students more comfortable and help them in improving the listening skill.

Question 13: Which context you think can improve your listening comprehension?

Table 3.14

The Best Context to Improve Listening Comprehension

Number	Percentage	
Inside classroom	46	30.26%
Outside classroom	106	69.74 %
Total	152	100 %

Concerning listening inside or outside the classroom, which one can improve listening comprehension, the majority of students (69.74%) opted for listening outside the classroom. This implies that students feel free at home to listen and repeat using any material they prefer in order to develop their level in listening skill as well as the fact that they are independent listeners. However, (30.26%) of learners have chosen listening inside the classroom this may be justified by students' preference to develop their learning inside the classroom with teachers and colleagues.

Section Three: Autonomous Listening**Question 14:** Are you an independent (autonomous) learner?

Table 3.15

Students' Autonomy

	Number	Percentage
Yes	126	82.89 %
No	26	17.11 %
Total	152	100%

The percentages in table 3.15 showed that most of students (82.89%) preferred learning independently without the guidance of teachers, which means that they can rely on

themselves, and develop their ability autonomously. Whereas, (17.11%) of learners choose to study under the guidance of the teacher.

Question 15: Do you have ability and willingness to learn alone?

Table 3.16

Ability and Willingness to Learning Alone

	Number	Percentage
Yes	120	78.95%
No	32	21.05%
Total	152	100 %

Concerning students' ability and willingness to learn alone, (78.95%) of them selected "Yes" which implies that they have the ability to take charge of their own learning. Otherwise, (21.05%) of students say "No" that is to say they are not able or motivated to learn alone.

Question 16: Do you take responsibilities of your own learning?

Table 3.17

Students' Responsibilities of their Learning

	Number	Percentage
Yes	135	88.82 %
No	17	11.18 %
Total	152	100 %

As indicated in table 3.17, the majority of learners (88.82%) opted for "Yes" concerning taking responsibilities of their own learning i.e.; students have the ability to control and be

responsible for their learning process, but, (11.18%) of them have chosen "No" which means that their learning is only dependent on teachers.

Question 17: Do you plan your lesson, and do your activities?

Table 3.18

Lesson Planning

Number	Percentage
Yes	104 68.42%
No	48 31.58%
Total	152 100%

According to the obtained results in table 3.18, (68.42%) of students are active ones and plan their lessons, this is due to their motivation and spirit of competition to master their language. Whereas (31.58%) of them have chosen "No" this may indicate that those students prefer to learn only inside classroom or they do not give much attention to planning lessons and making activities.

Question 18: Do you assess your learning?

Table 3.19

Assessment of Learning

Number	Percentage
Yes	122 80.26%
No	30 19.74%
Total	152 100 %

The statistics in table 3.19 show that, mostly all students have picked out for "Yes" (80.26%) concerning the evaluation of their learning. This due to their ability and willingness to enhance their learning and take control about their educational progress and their tendency towards self-assessment. A little proportion (19.74%) of learners have selected "No" i.e.; they are not interested in assessing their learning development; they just learn to pass or succeed not to master a particular material.

Question 19: How important do you consider working independently to enhance your listening comprehension?

Table 3.20

Importance of working independently to Enhance Listening Comprehension

Number	Percentage
Very important	77 50.66 %
Important	74 48.68 %
Not important	01 0.66 %
Total	152 100 %

According to the previous table (3.20) which presents statistics about the importance of working independently, half of the students (50.66%) said that working independently is very important. Equally, a very near proportion (48,68%) of learners have argued that learning autonomously is important, this implies that learning independently has a great role in achieving language learning. Only one student has opted for "No".

Question 20: Do you work independently to enhance your level in listening?

Table 3.21

Working Independently to Enhance Listening

Number	Percentage
Yes	136 89,47%
No	16 10,53 %

Total	152	100 %
-------	-----	-------

Concerning independent work to enhance listening comprehension, (89.47%) of students pick out for "Yes". This means that most students fell free outside classrooms especially the shy ones who cannot improve their learning in a classroom context; they prefer to learn alone to catch all the necessary skills. In addition, the matter of time in classes, there is no much time to achieve all the needed skills where at home they have all the time. However, sixteen (16) students from 152 students have chosen "No" which indicates that they need guidance of the teacher.

-If yes, how do you work independently to raise your comprehension listening?

Table 3.22

Ways of used independent learning to enhance listening comprehension.

	Number	Percentage
Through listening to native speakers	88	64.7%
Through listening audio passages	37	27.2%
Through technological tools	66	48.53%
Through self-assessment	24	17.65%
Others	14	10.29%

Students were asked about the most used materials for them in autonomous listening. The majority (64.7%) have chosen listening to native speakers, (27.2%) have selected listening to audio passages, 48.53% picked out for technological tools, (17.65%) have opted for self-assessment and (10.29%) have voted for phones. The variability in using different materials develops students own learning and motivated them to learn independently. In addition, every student can use more than one of those materials in his/her learning.

Question 21: Does your teachers advise you to listen independently?

Table 3.23

Teachers' Advice to Listen Independently

Number	Percentage
Yes	129 84.87%
No	23 15.13%
Total	152 100%

Table (3.23) illustrates students' responses about "If their teachers advise them to listen independently or not?" The majority of them (84.87%) have argued that they were advised to practice listening outside, whereas, there is a small proportion of learners (15.13%) who have selected "No". This implies that every student has his way of learning, whether inside or outside the classroom.

Question 22: What can enhance your listening comprehension?

Table 3.24

Enhancing listening comprehension

Number	Percentage
Classroom listening	40 29.56%
Listening independently	112 70.44%
Total	152 100%

Concerning what can enhance students' listening comprehension whether by a teacher or independently, the majority of students (70.44%) have picked out for outside classroom where they feel free to listen or learn what they want in any time they desire. Otherwise, (29.56%) of them have chosen that learning inside the classroom under teachers guidance and with classmates can enhance their listening comprehension.

Question 23: Please, if you have extra information about this topic, you can add.

Few students have answered this by giving their opinions about listening independently or inside the classroom. Mostly students have argued that both ways of listening are good to enhance their listening comprehension and this shows students' awareness and ability to develop their listening whatever the way is. Others have suggested some recommendations like; teachers should give more attention to listening skill and provide learners with new teaching materials.

3.4 Summary of Results and Findings from students' Questionnaire

In the previously mentioned results from the students' questionnaire, the questionnaire covered the students' general information, in addition to listening comprehension and autonomous listening. It showed that most of the students (40, 13%) are 20 years old, the majority of them (79, 6%) are females and most of learners have been studied English (51, 4%) for two years. This indicates that students are serious in their English language studies. Furthermore, (75, 65%) of students considered English as a very important language learning, this may imply that most of learners give attention and are aware about the benefits of learning foreign language, as well as their high motivation in learning English.

Moreover, concerning listening comprehension, more than half of the students (75%) have claimed that listening is a very important language skill. Also, the majority of students (67, 2%) have argued that they have listening activities inside the classroom, which means that teachers give much attention to this skill. In the same context, nearly the whole students (88, 81%) have argued that they comprehend what they listen. Additionally, (41, 2%) of students have claimed that noise is the most faced problem by them during listening. Furthermore, the majority of students (74, 34%) have said that teachers give them feedback; this may indicate that there are teachers who have the ability to teach and give their students previous knowledge. In addition, nearly the whole of students (93, 42%) listen to English outside the

classroom, this indicates that learners have much motivation to improve that language and master English language. 59, 86% of students use computers to listen to English outside classroom. In addition to, 69, 74% have claimed that the best context to improve listening comprehension is learning outside classroom, this indicates that the majority of students feel free outside classes in order to achieve their listening skill.

As far as autonomy is concerned, the majority of students (82, 89%) have claimed that they prefer learning independently without the guidance of teachers, this indicates that students can rely on themselves and develop their ability autonomously. Also, (78, 95%) of them have said that they have the ability and willingness to learn alone, which implies that most of students have to take charge of their own learning. In the same means, (88, 82%) of students have argued that they have the responsibility of their own learning, i.e., learners can control their learning process. In addition, the majority of students (88, 82%) have claimed that they plan their lessons and do their activities; this implies that they are active and motivated. Moreover, the majority of students (80, 26%) have evaluated their learning this may indicate that most of students have the ability to improve their learning and assess it. Half of students (50, 66%) have claimed that, working independently to enhance listening comprehension is very important which means that learning independently has a great role in achieving language learning. Most of them (89, 47%) preferred to work independently in order to enhance their listening comprehension through listening to native speakers with a proportion of (64, 7%). Furthermore, the majority of students (84, 87%) claimed that their teachers always advise them to listen independently, this means that every teacher has his or her method in teaching and taking control over his/her learners. As well as, most of students (70, 44%) claimed that they can enhance their listening independently this due to their ability and willingness to take charge of their own learning. Finally, students who gave their opinions about listening

comprehension and autonomous learning suggested some recommendations to improve listening skill through autonomous learning.

The present study tended to explore the role of autonomy in improving listening comprehension skill. Results should the relationship existing between learner autonomy and listening skill. Thus, we can claim that the hypothesis of the research is confirmed and autonomous learning can improve listening comprehension.

Conclusion

The current chapter gives an explanation about the research methodology and design and reports its results. It attempts to analyse and shed light on the importance of the listening comprehension, mainly autonomous listening in EFL learning. This chapter is based on learners' contribution in which they have provided their various opinions and attitudes towards listening comprehension, autonomous learning, and its influence on the development of listening comprehension. Consequently relying on researchers' views in the theoretical part (chapters 01 and 02) and the practical one (chapter 03), it can be proved that autonomous learning has a positive impact on the listening comprehension skill. Thus, learners are aware about its importance to achieve their learning and mastering skills of the target language.

General Conclusion

1. Concluding Remarks

The present dissertation is an attempt to investigate the efficiency of autonomous learning in achieving EFL students' listening comprehension. To support the research objectives, a literature review was reviewed mainly on discussing listening process, strategies, difficulties and barriers that students can face during listening, and the impact of autonomous learning in improving listening comprehension. The current study relied on students' questionnaire of second year students for the aim of collecting their attitudes and views about both autonomous learning and listening comprehension. From the obtained result, it was concluded that learners are aware that autonomous learning could improve their listening comprehension and have enough motivation to control their own learning. Overall, this obtained result confirmed the hypothesis put at the beginning of the research, in which it is assumed that autonomous learning has a positive impact on enhancing students' listening comprehension.

2. Pedagogical Implications

The main purpose of the research is to enhance learners' listening comprehension through autonomous learning. The following are some pedagogical implications that might significantly contribute to further research.

Students should be autonomous, taking charge for their own learning, attempting to solve their problems in learning and especially in listening autonomously. Using self-access is necessary to control their learning development; this will help them to identify the problems that they face in listening comprehension. So, students need to be attentive, autonomous and responsible for their own learning, this will aid them to identify the points of strengths and weaknesses and search for the available solutions in order to improve their listening skill.

For learners to be autonomous, they should set their goals clearly, create them and give themselves the opportunity to present their opinions.

Moreover, the use of technological materials which are very helpful in improving their listening skill. Therefore, students should listen a lot to native speakers outside the classroom using different listening materials.

Furthermore, teachers ought to support learners in order to develop their learning process and determine what to learn and how to learn. As well as, students should rely on their own ways and strategies under the support of teachers with the respect of their choices in learning, and this help them to be a good decision makes.

3. Research Perspectives and Limitations

The research has limitations, it investigates how learner autonomy can enhance students' listening comprehension in a small number of second- year LMD students of English, and thus it cannot be generalized over the other levels. The other limitation is time constraints, to deal with a large sample of students, longer time would help us, and also, it would give the results in various dimensions.

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Appendix1
Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

This questionnaire is part of a research work entitled “Enhancing Students' Listening Comprehension through Autonomous Learning” for accomplishing a master dissertation. We would be grateful if you could answer the questions to provide us with introductory information about your listening comprehension and autonomy. Your answers are crucial for the validity of the research.

Please, feel free to cross the appropriate box (x) Which indicates your choice, and to specify your answer when needed.

MESSAOUDIA Sara

BESSAKLIA Radhia

Department of Letters and English Language

University of 8 Mai 1945 Guelma

Section One: General Information

1. Age:Years

2. Gender: male female

3. How long have you been studying English? Years

4. How important do you consider the learning of English language?

Very important

Important

Not important

5. How is your motivation to learn English language?

Veryhigh

High

Average

Low

Verylow

6. How is your level in English?

Very good

Good

Average

Bad

Verybad

Section Two: ListeningComprehension

7. Do you consider listening skill important?

Very important

Important

Not important

8. Do you have listening activities inside the classroom?

Yes

No

9. Do you comprehend what you have listened?

Yes

No

10. If no, what makes listening difficult for you? (One option or more)

Noise

Attention Span

Receiver Biases

Listening or Receiver Apprehension

If others, specify:

.....

11. Does your teacher give you feedback?

Yes

No

12. Do you listen to English language outside the classroom?

Yes

No

- If yes, which materials you use?

Radio

TV

Computers

others

13. Which context you think can improve your listening comprehension

**Listening to English inside the
classroom**

**Listening to English outside the
classroom**

- Specify why
-

Section Three: Autonomous Listening

14. Are you an independent (Autonomous) learner?

Yes

No

15. Do you Have ability and willingness to learn alone?

Yes

No

16. Do you take responsibility of your own learning?

Yes

No

17. Do you Plan your lesson and make your activities?

Yes

No

18. Do you assess your learning?

Yes

No

19. How important do you consider working independently can raise your listening comprehension?

Very important

Important

Not important

20. Do you work independently to enhance your level in listening?

Yes

No

-If yes, how do you work independently to raise your level in listening? (One or more options)

Through listening to native speakers

Through listening to audio passages

Through using technological tools

Through self-assessment

Others

- If others specify:

.....
21. Do your teachers advice you to listen outside the classroom?

Yes

No

22. What can enhance your listening comprehension?

Listening by the teacher

Listeningindependently

23.Please, if you have extra information about this topic, you can add.

.....
.....

Thank you for your collaborations

Résumé

Autonomie est une importante manière qu'elle aide les étudiants de la langue Etrangère Anglaise pour améliorer leur compréhension orale. Cependant, les étudiants donnent un peu d'attention à son importante. Par conséquent, la présente étude est d'examiner s'il ya une relation positive entre l'apprentissage autonome et compréhension orale.

La recherche actuelle a été menée par une méthode descriptive quantitative dans laquelle un questionnaire pour les apprenants a été administré dans le but de trouver les différents problèmes que les apprenants sont confrontés pendant les tâches d'écoute et comment l'apprentissage autonome peut être une solution appropriée.

La recherche est menée par un échantillon de 152 étudiants d'une population de 250 du département Anglais de 08 Mai 1945 Université (Guelma), dans laquelle ils ont été choisis par hasard. Les résultats ont conclu que il ya un lien entre l'apprentissage autonome et la compréhension de l'oral, s'il les étudiants sont attentive autour l'importance de l'autonomie on argument la compréhension de l'orale. Ainsi que, les enseignants devraient procurer étudiants avec des techniques et les donnent la chance pour étudier indépendant et d'améliorer leurs compréhension de l'orale.

ملخص

الاستقلالية هي طريقة مهمة تساعد متعلمي اللغة الاجنبية الانجليزية على تحسين فهمهم اثناء الاستماع ومع ذلك فإن المتعلمين لا يعطون إلا القليل من الإعتناء لأهميتها. وهذا ما جعل الهدف الأساسي لهذه الدراسة هو معرفة إذا كانت هناك علاقة إيجابية بين التعلم الذاتي والفهم أثناء الاستماع. لقد اعتمد في هذا البحث على طريقة كمية وصفية تحليلية تتمحور حول طرح أسئلة على المتعلمين بغرض إيجاد مختلف المشاكل التي تواجه المتعلمين أثناء الإستماع للدروس وكيف يمكن أن يكون التعلم الذاتي حلا مناسباً. أجريت الدراسة على عينة مكونة من 152 طالبا سنة ثانية من أصل 250 بقسم اللغة الانجليزية بجامعة 08 ماي 1945 (قالمة), وقد تم اختيارهم عشوائياً. بينت نتائج الإستبيان أن المتعلمين يواجهون العديد من الصعوبات أثناء الإستماع بما في ذلك صعوبة اللفظة والمفردات الصعبة للغة المدرسة .

من خلال هذه النتائج, نستنتج أن هناك صلة إيجابية بين التعلم الذاتي والفهم أثناء الإستماع إذ أدرك المتعلمين مدى أهمية هذه الطريقة في تحسين قدرة الفهم . كما أنه من واجب المعلمين دعم المتعلمين بالتقنيات المطلوبة واعطائهم فرصة للتعلم باستقلالية لتحسين الفهم أثناء الإستماع .