A Relationship between Guided Digital Learning and Autonomous Learning

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Abstract

This study examines learner autonomy characteristics in a virtual learning environment called "Webquest" used to teach English to Turkish students at Istanbul Medipol University. The elements of the Guided Online Educational blog project were grouped into work-cycles. These work-cycles are as follows: planning and negotiation, decision-making, project, and evaluation. Those parts of the work cycle are appropriate for autonomous teaching methods. In this study, work-cycles were utilized to improve autonomous learning, construct educational objectives, enhance engagement, and group interaction. In this context, this study investigates the consequences of a class blog project in the educational process as well as the effects of work-cycles due to the incorporation of technology. The focus of the research is to use work-cycles to determine as to if digital learning improves autonomous learning by implementing the class blogging project. This study looked into how to use CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) to promote independent learning. The usefulness of Online Learning class blogging tasks in efficient autonomous second language learning using a work-cycle paradigm is also asserted in this study. The study involved students enrolled in the English Language Preparatory Program at Istanbul Medipol University's School of Foreign Languages (Turkey). This research involved 24, A1 learners. The results of the study showed that the students were satisfied with the guided digital learning via class blog projects which were offered them thanks to Webquest and Blogger digital online learning sites. It is believed that the interpretation of this study helped the students to become more autonomous and more competent regarding the digital learning environment.

Keywords: Work cycles, Digital Learning, Autonomous Learning, Blogging

1. Introduction

In the 1970s and 1980s autonomous learning and self-directed learning were not common at all. Self-directed learning has become popular since the 1970s. Recent literature has started to associate the term "self-directed learning" with the idea of learner autonomy in the field of learning.

At that time, autonomous learning and self-directed learning were not effective due to the fact that computer use and online education were not common. Students were generally able to search in encyclopedias and books from the library. Autonomous learning was not effective due to the lack of audio-visual resources. In other words, students could not learn autonomously using only books. Furthermore, students were afraid of using computer technology. According to Guernsey (1998: 7), students without prior computer technology encountered difficulties in using and accessing information on the internet leading to frustration. In a similar study, Guernsey (1998:7) also discovered that using a computer made the web-based learning experience difficult. In recent years, self-directed learning has grown in popularity. Henri Holec who is the "Father of Learner Autonomy," coined the phrase in 1981. According to Holec (1981: 3), autonomous language learning is the learner's ability to self-direct and self-regulate their educational process. It is also related to having clear goals, selecting strategies, materials, identifying students' progress and focusing on the learning results. Holec (1981:3) defines learner autonomy as the ability to control one's own learning. According to Holec (1981:3), the ability to act independently must be developed, either naturally or formally.

Autonomous learning has started to develop with people accessing information more easily by using resources such as YouTube, Google and social media. Information and communication technology affect most of the education areas. YouTube, Gmail and Dropbox are significant information conduits. These kind of technological resources are crucial for autonomous learning. Self-directed and autonomous learning, according to Jones (1993, Candy,1991:186), serve as the basic organizing elements for educational practice. Jones underlined that an autonomous person can set goals,

exercise freedom of choice, reason, and self-control and self-discipline. Teaching students to think critically, how to learn, and how to be in charge of their own education process is at the center of both philosophies (Kocak 2003: 14). Student participation in the educational process is increased through the use of autonomous learning techniques. Furthermore, this approach requires a framework in which students determine the learning process and make decisions on the content leading to increased student engagement and motivation. Little describes learner autonomy as self-reflection, independent judgment, and active engagement (Little,1991: 4). A learner develops the content of his learning in this autonomous process. According to Little (1991:4), the term "autonomy" refers to freedom from external supervision. The notion of learner autonomy shows that a learner enjoys a high level of independence.

In this view, researchers and teachers have found learner autonomy to be a significant problem. In many countries, teachers apply autonomous learning curricula. Fostering autonomy is one of the major issues to control the language learning process and set goals for a lifelong learning perspective for students. It is difficult to expect students to develop autonomous learning in a traditional classroom atmosphere in which they do not take responsibility for their own learning and they are not aware of what they learn. With the introduction of this approach, the concept of autonomy has been always an issue in a foreign language learning. Mutlu & Tuga (2013:109) claim that it is difficult to develop autonomy in a traditional classroom where the teacher dominates the process so learners cannot take responsibility for their own learning in this kind of traditional classroom. They also underline that autonomous learning is both independent and interdependent. Taking responsibility, setting goals, and assessing their own learning progress are interdependence. They define learner autonomy as obtaining learning strategies in this independent and interdependent learning process and these tactics motivate students to study and communicate in the target language while also demonstrating their ability to manage their own learning. It suggests that learner autonomy allows students to demonstrate their capacity to plan their own knowledge acquisition using the target language. It is reasonable to assume that independent learners are self-assured in their ability to learn and are driven to take some risks for their education. In a traditional classroom where teachers direct the students, students cannot develop their autonomy in learning, making it impossible for them to be in charge of their own learning. Autonomous learners set objectives and monitor their own learning by taking ownership of their education. Tutunis (2011:165) states that teachers must encourage students to absorb concepts on their own and develop learner-centered classes in which students make choices. They must assist their pupils to manage their own education. When teachers attempt to teach, learning does not take place. On the contrary, it occurs when the students want to learn. If teachers encourage students to comprehend things on their own, students can take responsibility and govern their education process. In an autonomous classroom, learners are independent of the teacher and have control over the learning process. Learners can take responsibility for their own learning and they can make decisions independently.

Autonomous learning is connected to critical reflection and decision making. It is also independence from the control of others. Learners can enjoy this high degree of independence in their learning process. Little defines learner autonomy (2003:2) as the ability to reflect, as well as the ability and willingness to manage oneself and communicate with others. It engages with the cognitive, metacognitive, affective and social dimensions of language learning. In other words, autonomous learners understand their learning goals, plan, and evaluate their learning activities. They can manage their learning process and interact with their peers. A learner who is capable of social interaction is considered autonomous. It denotes that an independent learner is involved in the cognitive skills, and social aspects of language acquisition. There is a connection between autonomous learning and digital learning. With the ability to share experiences with peers, digital learning gives students a way to be independent in their learning, which is referred to as self-directed learning. Multimedia offers language learners a path to construct their own knowledge with the opportunity to practice with media, work at their own pace, choose their own route through the materials, and receive feedback (Jeong-Bae Son 2014: 2). Well designed digital courses enable students to do collaborative tasks and make their learning personalized according to their needs and goals. If students can have personalized learning, they will have intrinsic motivation and they will have their own route to study language. Intrinsically motivated learners can have higher academic performance and learners can have growth-oriented nature (Deci& Ryan,1985: 245). It is also clear that intrinsically motivated learners have the opportunity to have self- directed language learning.

In 21st century, online learning has been rising at a constant rate. Online courses have been so popular that they enable learners to have comfort at home or in their office. Online learning is a new way of distance education. Learning in the 21st century revolves mostly around technological advancement. Thus, learning constitutes an interactive technological environment. Educational technology has several advantages for learners. Learners can study wherever and whenever they want. E- learning has become more convenient than face to face lessons with the advent of digital learning. Students can engage with online learning and reach the materials easily. When compared with face-to- face learning, online courses can be accessible easily. Online lessons are effective to learn new skills and to improve learners' comprehension. Technology motivates learners to participate in lessons more actively than before. Technology turns

passive students into active learners. Online learning turns traditional classes into an environment in which students can discuss, share and create.

However, face- to- face learning cannot promote active learning with attractive online resources. Face- to- face classrooms can have a passive learning environment. With the instructions of the teachers, students try to understand the lessons. Students attend to the lessons in a physical environment. On the other hand, students can have active learning environment by attending to the lessons in online learning classroom through their interaction in online lessons. It is a crystal clear fact that the face -to- face classroom (traditional classroom) has got several disadvantages in English language learning. According to Shaykina and Minin (2018:244), the following are the disadvantages of traditional English: (1) due to a lack of desire for cognitive engagement, students often rely on direct communication with a teacher; (2) increasing the amount of information while keeping the instructional time constraint; (3) difficulties working independently with course boks; (4) the prevalence of verbal teaching methods creates conditions for the development of communication skills.

Students cannot be in charge of their own education in the traditional classroom. They cannot self- direct their learning. Students cannot determine their learning path. It means that students cannot choose their learning methods and materials and they cannot take active roles in this process. If they can not control and determine their own learning, there is a restriction with the self-determination process and learner autonomy. The traditional classroom restricts decision making and limits autonomous learning. On the contrary, autonomous learning can be supported by digital learning materials. Autonomous students can determine learning strategies, set their learning goals and needs for their suitable learning. Thanasoulas (2000: 10) supports this and says "It is possible to reconsider and reshape methods and procedures for the purpose of promoting learning and for optimal learning when one is aware of their own methods, needs, and objectives as learners and can identify these needs and goals''. Egbert & Hanson-Smith (1999: 448) suggest eight conditions for optimal language learning environments:

1. There are possibilities for learners to interact and negotiate meaning.
2. Students participate in real-world tasks.
3. Students are exposed to and encouraged to use a wide range of language.
4. Learners can engage in social interactions and negotiate meaning.
5. Students have sufficient time and feedback.
6. Learners are encouraged to pay close attention to the learning process.
7. Learners work in an environment that is low in tension and anxiety.
8. Learner autonomy is encouraged.

Egbert & Hanson-Smith (1999: 448) claim that learner autonomy is one of the optimal language learning conditions. Autonomous learning can improve through online learning. If students have opportunities to interact through digital learning and they are involved in authentic tasks, learner autonomy flourishes thanks to online learning materials. Digital learning enables students to identify learning strategies, needs and goals for optimal learning. Guided Digital Learning provides students an autonomous and active learning environment. If the learners are given an opportunity to achieve their learning goals at home with information technologies, face to face learning drawbacks can be solved. However, in face- to -face classrooms, the teacher explains the theoretical part and leaves the practices as extracurricular activities. Andrade & Coutinho (2016: 1115) underline that in a conventional teaching, the teacher uses class time to discuss conceptual and theoretical content and leaves practices and exercises to extra - curricular activities. Marsh (2012: 4) supports online learning and says that the increased use of learning tools and online learning offer language teachers and students with numerous chances to experiment with the best combination of learning strategies for a particular task. Computer-assisted language learning provides guidance and draws learners' interest. Web-based communication and computer assisted language learning can present many learning styles for students. Teachers can blend face- to- face learning with online computer assisted language learning process. Marsh (2012:12) emphasizes that blended learning's online system gives students the flexibility to learn where and when they would like. Without being constrained by set classroom hours, it gives students total freedom over when they study. Online education can motivate students to pursue independent learning.

In 21st century skills, learner autonomy is significant to give motivation to learners. Stanley (2013: 25) states that using technology engages students in learning process and allows learner autonomy thanks to blogging, virtual environment, Web 2.0 tools, networking sites. He thinks that virtual learning encourages students to have autonomous learning. According to Motteram, Slaouti, Stelma and (Motteram et al., 2013: 84), internet literacy, online communication skills, and ICT skills promote experience of life as a learner-centered practice; that is, learners understand why they are learning and what goals they hope to achieve. Using these interactive technology devices motivates students. Digital learning is one of the student-centered learning approaches in which students construct new information outside the

classroom and practice with their peers in problem solving activities. Digital learning allows students to conduct e-learning activities in a variety of learning contexts.
The following advantages of digital language learning are provided by Marsh. Marsh (2012: 5) underlines that digital language learning offers a more individualized experiential learning, actively encourages cooperative and group learning, boosts student involvement in the learning process, incorporates different teaching methods, and offers flexible study environment.

Online learning can provide personalized learning support, increases student engagement and help students develop 21st century learning skills by presenting different learning environments. Digital learning has positive impacts on students. Students can take responsibility for their own learning and they get self-discipline. Online learning also increases the students' motivation and academic performance in the learning process. Digital learning allows the students to be responsible for their own learning through videos, blogs, online materials, online small group activities. Furthermore, by increasing student- teacher interaction, digital learning creates an interactive and dynamic learning atmosphere because students turn into active and creative learners. " Trainees are no longer considered as recipients of knowledge, but as constructors of it through active engagement in the learning process," states Dikilitas (2015: 47). Furthermore, they are given opportunity to take charge of their learning. Thanks to this individualized and constructivist learning, online learning gives opportunity to study in a flexible way. Digital classrooms brings many benefits for students and teachers, and teachers can take advantage of rich, ready-to-use content, so it is a great opportunity for self-centered learning and student-oriented teaching to engage the students. Online learning promotes active learning process and improves the teacher-student interaction by providing an autonomous learning in a student centered atmosphere. It also improves communicative competence with teacher-student and student-student interaction. By blending the online- based engagement with the communicative opportunities, digital learning improves cognitive and critical thinking skills. If the students learn according to their independent learning styles by solving problems independently outside the classroom with the information they learnt at home, they make sense of real cognitive learning. Eppard and Rochdi (2017: 37) provide thorough information on cognitive theory as it relates to learning new information. They underline that learners are not immediately given information that they are expected to understand and apply in order to obtain new knowledge. The alternative is for students to build their own knowledge. Through experience, they gain knowledge. They can develop schemas or mental concepts thanks to experiences. Assimilation and accommodation are two complementary processes that expand, and increase the sophistication of these schemas. These principles are practiced in digital classrooms. Students construct their own knowledge through experiences. Experiences create schemas and these schemas can change through assimilation and accommodation. With the interaction of peers, students reach a higher level of learning. Digital learning benefits from online learning materials through videos, blogs and technological devices. Online learning speeds up the adoption of technology because of social media, hybrid or peer-learning. Students learn through project-based activities that foster their critical thinking and becoming autonomous learners. This collaborative learning can enhance self-determined autonomy, motivation and competence in critical thinking. These activities enable students to interact with their peers and construct self-determined and self-directed learning.

The current research aim is to improve the quality of learner autonomy and independent learning by using online and interactive resources with the work-cycle approach. Studies in this field show that the work-cycle approach is used for enhancing autonomous, active and student-centered learning. The work-cycle approach overcomes time limitation, enhances motivation and autonomous learning. Viewed in this light, it is important for teachers to conduct the work-cycle approach in digital blog projects for a student-centered atmosphere in which autonomous learning fosters. Work cycles lead to self-directed learning by fostering autonomous learning. The students start with the planning phase /negotiating phase in which they can make plans about their projects. They make decisions after negotiation (Legenhausen,2003: 68). They also need to research about their projects as guided digital materials. After working on class projects, there is an evaluation phase with processes and products. In this respect, an autonomous learner can direct, regulate, set goals, choose materials and methods, define their learning pace and their learning process with the work cycle phases. Work-cycles, according to Sadaghian, Marandi, and Iravani (Sadaghian et al., 2020:77) are effective in implementing the basic tenets of autonomous learning as well as fostering positive attitudes toward technology in an independent educational environment. Legenhausen (2003:68) asserts that the cycle begins with a negotiation phase in which the teacher and students negotiate classroom activity possibilities. For the students, decision-making and freedom of choice go together. The teacher encourages students' efforts by incorporating them in the assessment procedures. The instructor's responsibility is to ensure that this work cycle is completed with effort from all learners. We can conclude that as a result of these work cycle phases by using guided digital classrooms, students become aware of their learning and they can plan, make decision, research, document, publish, reflect and evaluate their ideas on their studies. Therefore, this study was designed to show guided digital learning increases

students' engagement and their autonomy in the learning process. This research was concerned with the theoretical framework of learner autonomy relation to guided digital learning and work-cycles.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Digital Learning

2.1.1. The definition of Digital Learning

English is the world language all around the world. However, teaching English methodologies are not in the same line with technology. Many teachers in the world are aware of the fact that traditional teaching turns the students into passive learners. In the traditional EFL classrooms, practice of English is not enough in the classes. Technology is so important that teachers all over the world want to integrate it into their lessons. Technology can give better virtual opportunities for EFL classes. Due to this reason, teachers are in search of a better education environment.

As Evely Doman and Marie Webb (2016:105) indicate, there are mechanical (substitutions, drills), meaningful (dialogue, role play) and communicative practices with real information in a communicative language teaching classroom. However, in Turkey, students just take notes as passive learners and focus on the drill exercises because there is a problem with the lesson time and teachers need to keep up with the syllabus. In this respect, digital learning can give new perspectives to the traditional classrooms. That is why, digital learning is so significant: this model creates a limitless and virtual class. Digital Learning model provides flexibility to have an interactive learning atmosphere. Students have the option to spend time both in and out of classroom whenever they want thanks to digital learning.

Students are aware of the fact that there are online video facilities on the internet. Thus, they expect more from the teachers because the lecture hall is not enough for them. As a result, technology integrated platforms and online systems help the teachers to teach today's students.

2.2. Using Web-quests for Fostering Autonomous Learning

WebQuest can be utilized for activities in the work cycle and can be used in an independent investigation for the learners to acquire the data from the web. Zunal (http://zunal.com/index.php) hosts the WebQuests. There is an introduction page, a task, a process, an assessment, and a page for teachers in the WebQuest. Work-cycle incorporates several learner autonomy basic tenets, such as setting objectives, content and format selection, self-evaluation, and ability to reflect. Work-cycle is described as a learner-centered approach that focuses metacognitive skills, which raises students' awareness of their own process of language learning. WebQuests are ideal for the work-cycle approach used in online courses that promote autonomy. WebQuests are helpful online resources for introducing students to online resources and activities. Sadaghian and Marandi (2016 :406) note that the sections of a WebQuest; introduction, task, process and evaluation provided learners with clear guidelines for the rest of the work-cycle. A WebQuest's introduction, task, process, and evaluation sections gave students clear instructions for the rest of the work cycle. They also underlined that WebQuest was deemed helpful because it allowed students to save time on their online research. This shows the development of critical thinking skills because students discuss the possibility of synthesizing the information available for the best learning in WebQuest.

2.3. Learner Autonomy

Guided Digital Learning can improve learner autonomy in classes. If students personalize their own learning, they will gain responsibility for their own learning. That is, they are not passive in their learning, on the contrary they take an active role. As a result of this process, students become autonomous beings. Holec (1981:3) defines learner autonomy as learners accepting control of their own learning. Teachers in the class environment give more responsibility to the students in terms of having self-awareness. Thus, students become independent learners and they can decide on their own learning goals. According to Uguten (2009:4) learner autonomy can be defined as; self - directed learning does not imply that students are isolated from the classroom environment. Independent language learning should be encouraged in the classroom, with teachers aiming to give students more authority over their education. Learners must choose their goals, learning strategies, and even self-assessment methods.

Learner autonomy gives power for the learners to study in an independent way. Thus, students can create their knowledge on their own. Surma (2004: 2) supports this idea by saying that learner autonomy therefore stresses an individual's active involvement in the creation of their knowledge, compared to passive absorption via listening to a lecturer. As a result, the autonomous learner must cultivate an understanding of human differences and establish tolerance and empathy within themselves. From this position, they can develop the ability to start debating, and negotiating with the teacher and other students. In summary, building self - directed learning requires interaction with

cognitive, metacognitive, emotional, and social aspects, as well as an emotional and academic intelligence. Surma (2004:13) points out that autonomy is vital for leaning to be successful.
While autonomy develops learners are not only improving their language skills, but also becoming more critical and responsible embers of the communities they inhabit.

2.4. The Work Cycle Approach for Autonomous Learning

A work-cycle begins with the setting of personal learning goals and negotiation phase and students decide on the project in the decision-making phase. Students need to complete the project in the project phase. At the end of the project, they have the evaluation phase. The phases of the work-cycle are suitable for an autonomous learning framework and the work-cycle framework allows for the principles of learner autonomy.

The current study uses WebQuest as an idea and activity bank based on a work-cycle to introduce it as a practical framework for implementing autonomy in online courses (Legenhausen,2003:68). Work-cycle design is defined as a learner-centered strategy that integrates metacognitive knowledge, which enhances students' knowledge and awareness of their own language learning process, strong points, and weak points. It includes many independent learning fundamental concepts, such as goal setting, content and layout selection, self-evaluation, and the capacity to reflect in action (Ter Haseborg, 2012: 63). In the highest part of a work cycle, the concept and activity bank enables learners to organize and begin negotiating, make a decision, collaborate on projects, and analyze their learning. As a result, the current article contends that WebQuest support the work-cycle approach in online learning environments and it was designed to foster autonomy due to its flexibility and accessibility. What's more, the current study's results suggest that WebQuest assists students to develop learner autonomy and stimulate analytical reasoning. Work- cycles (Figure 1) were used to organize the principles of work- cycle for online learning (Legenhausen, 2003: 68).

Figure 1. Work-cycles for Autonomous Learning (adapted from Legenhausen, 2003, p. 68)

3.Methodology

The research was conducted with an A2 Level class in Istanbul Medipol University Preparatory School. This study was carried out via the quantitative model. Analyzing and comparison of the data was designed with the quantitative data randomly. The design of the research uses sequential exploratory design (Diler, 2016: 98). The quantitative stage begins with the outcomes of the investigation, with the major findings being tested and generalized.

3.1. Participants

The students who study in the English Language Preparatory Class at the School of Foreign Languages, Istanbul Medipol University (Turkey) are the participants of the study. This study was carried out with 24 students. They learn English at Istanbul Medipol University School of Foreign Languages.

3.2. Tasks

The principles of autonomous learning and work cycles were taught to the students. They completed a class blog project based on their goals and needs. They set their goals according to their needs and they designed a work cycle. The students were be asked to write an online blog on “Blogger”. The researcher used “ WebQuest” to assign the class blog projects and students learned the content form “ WebQuest”. The students interacted with each other in a collaborative way to write a class blog project on the digital platform. They edited and made comments on their blogs

every week. The assigned project topics did not force them to have strict assessment for the evaluation part in the work-cycle framework.

They did not feel that they were under pressure to write something extra for their guided digital learning process. The students' projects were evaluated by their teachers and peers in a cooperative way; they made comments on their blogs and they had group discussions. When they finished their projects, they had online interviews.

4. Results

Table 1. Descriptive Statistical Findings Regarding the Pre- and Post-Tests of the Scales Applied to the Students

Scale and sub-dimensions			N	Av.	S.D	Min.	Max.	Median
Autonomy in Foreign Language Learning	Pre Test	Autonomous beliefs	24	1,42	0,34	1,00	2,50	1,40
		Autonomous Behaviors	24	1,76	0,22	1,40	2,30	1,70
		Group Cohesiveness	24	1,20	0,33	1,00	2,00	1,06
		Group norms	24	1,61	0,32	1,00	2,40	1,50
	Post Test	Autonomous beliefs	24	3,73	0,30	2,90	4,00	3,80
		Autonomous Behaviors	24	3,78	0,28	2,80	4,00	3,90
		Group Cohesiveness	24	3,23	0,41	2,44	4,00	3,22
		Group norms	24	3,49	0,27	2,60	4,00	3,50

Min.: Minimum, Max.: Maximum, Av.: Average, S.D. : Standard deviation

When the pre-test scores of the students participating in the study regarding the Attitudes to Autonomy in Foreign Language Learning are examined, Autonomous Beliefs mean score is 1.42, Autonomous Behaviors mean score is 1.76, Group Cohesiveness mean score is 1.20, and Group Norms mean score is 1.61.

Table 2. Students' Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores on Autonomy in Foreign Language Learning

*p<0,05, **p<0,01, t: Paired Sample T Test, z: Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

Scale and subdimensions		N	Av.	S.D	Median (Min.-Max.)	t or z value	p
Autonomous beliefs	Pre Test	24	1,42	0,34	1,40 (1-2,5)	-4,290	**0,000****
	Post Test	24	3,73	0,30	3,80 (2,90-4)		
Autonomous Behaviors	Pre Test	24	1,76	0,22	1,70 (1,40-2,30)	-4,297	**0,000****
	Post Test	24	3,78	0,28	3,90 (2,80-4)		
Group Cohesiveness	Pre Test	24	1,20	0,33	1,06 (1-2)	-4,289	**0,000****
	Post Test	24	3,23	0,41	3,22 (2,44-4)		
Group Norms	Pre Test	24	1,61	0,32	1,50 (1-2,40)	-25,323	**0,000****
	Post Test	24	3,49	0,27	3,50 (2,60-4)		

When the post-test scores of the students participating in the study regarding Attitudes to Autonomy in Foreign Language Learning are examined, Autonomous Beliefs mean score is 3.73, Autonomous Behavior mean score is 3.78, Group Cohesiveness mean score is 3.23, and Group Norm mean score is 3.49.

As seen in Table 2, Autonomous Beliefs, Autonomous Behaviors, Group Cohesion and Group Norms differed before and after the training application ($p<0.05$). It was observed that the Autonomous Beliefs, Autonomous Behaviors, Group Cohesion and Group Norm scores of the students increased after the training application.

Autonomy Level		Pre Test		Post Test			
		Av.	S.D	Av.	S.D	t	p
How Responsible for	1.Identify my own strengths and weaknesses	1,79	0,83	3,83	0,48	-10,478	**0,000****
	2. Set up my own learning goals	1,46	0,72	3,63	0,58	-13,000	**0,000****
	3. Decide what to learn outside the classroom	1,46	0,72	3,83	0,64	-12,596	**0,000****
	4. Evaluate my own learning and process	1,25	0,44	3,63	0,71	-13,291	**0,000****
	5. Stimulate my own interest in learning English	1,54	0,72	3,79	0,42	-13,883	**0,000****
	6. Learn from my peers, not just from the teachers	1,17	0,38	3,67	0,57	-16,956	**0,000****
	7. Become more self directed in my learning	1,25	0,44	3,75	0,53	-20,767	**0,000****
	8.Offer opinions on learning materials	1,38	0,71	3,67	0,70	-13,075	**0,000****
	9.Discover knowledge in English on my own rather than waiting for knowledge from the teacher	1,63	0,50	3,88	0,45	-20,735	**0,000****
	10. Offer opinions on what to learn in the classroom	1,33	0,70	3,63	0,65	-12,366	**0,000****
To What Extent	11.Identify my own strengths and weaknesses	1,83	0,48	3,79	0,66	-11,896	**0,000****
	12. Set up my own learning goals	2,00	0,42	3,75	0,53	-10,798	**0,000****
	13. Decide what to learn outside the classroom	1,79	0,42	3,92	0,28	-19,397	**0,000****
	14. Evaluate my own learning and process	1,92	0,50	3,75	0,44	-12,795	**0,000****
	15. Stimulate my own interest in learning English	1,96	0,55	3,75	0,61	-9,422	**0,000****
	16. Learn from my peers, not just from the teachers	1,25	0,44	3,71	0,69	-13,629	**0,000****
	17. Become more self directed in my learning	1,71	0,69	3,83	0,64	-11,569	**0,000****
	18.Offer opinions on learning materials	1,92	0,41	3,58	0,78	-11,632	**0,000****
	19.Discover knowledge in English on my own rather than waiting for knowledge from the teacher	1,58	0,72	4,00	0,00	-16,506	**0,000****
	20. Offer opinions on what to learn in the classroom	1,61	0,84	3,78	0,42	-11,130	**0,000****

Table 3. Group/autonomy questionnaire

Group/autonomy questionnaire		Pre Test		Post Test			
		Av.	S.D.	Av.	S.D.	t	p
Group Cohesiveness	21. Compared to other classes, I feel my class is better than most	1,13	0,34	3,21	0,59	-14,229	**0,000****
	22. . If I were in another class, I would want that class to have students very similar to the classmates I have now	1,13	0,34	3,21	0,59	-15,609	**0,000****
	23. This class is composed of people who fit together	1,13	0,34	3,13	0,54	-16,613	**0,000****
	24. There are some people in this class who do not like eachother	1,17	0,48	3,50	0,89	-10,892	**0,000****
	25. I am satisfied with my class	1,21	0,51	3,13	0,54	-13,091	**0,000****
	26. I feel very comfortable working with this class	1,25	0,61	3,50	0,89	-9,572	**0,000****
	27. If I had a choice, I would want to learn English in the same class again	1,38	0,65	3,13	0,54	-10,122	**0,000****
	28. My classmates don't seem to care about each other very much	1,13	0,34	3,13	0,54	-16,613	**0,000****
	29. I know most of my classmates and we all get along very well	1,29	0,62	3,13	0,80	-8,917	**0,000****
Group Norms	30. Come to the class on-time	1,58	0,78	3,54	0,72	-8,862	**0,000****
	31. Help my classmates with their schoolwork	1,67	0,48	3,42	0,58	-10,798	**0,000****
	32. Hand in assignments on- time	1,67	0,76	3,58	0,65	-10,112	**0,000****
	33. Be well prepared (for example preview the lesson) before the class	1,38	0,65	3,17	0,82	-12,173	**0,000****
	34. Fully participate during the class,for example,answer teacher's questions voluntarily	1,50	0,72	3,25	0,79	-8,307	**0,000****
	35. Speak only English in the class all the time	1,42	0,78	3,25	0,68	-8,558	**0,000****
	36. Spend as much time as I (we) can on assignments in order to do a good job	1,75	0,74	3,42	0,50	-9,405	**0,000****
	37. Absolutely no chatting with classmates when the teacher is lecturing	1,50	0,83	3,54	0,51	-10,478	**0,000****
	38. Ask teacher questions whenever we have questions or problems	2,04	1,04	3,88	0,34	-8,239	**0,000****
	39. Assist the teacher with setting up the equipments for the class	1,58	0,78	3,88	0,34	-13,075	**0,000****

Table: 3 (cont.) Group/autonomy questionnaire

Findings showed that learners in a group increased their level of autonomous learning.

The results for these items showed significant changes in this study about the increase in the students' level of autonomy in foreign language learning. The influences of Group Processes on Learners' Autonomous Beliefs and Behaviours questionnaire and the interview which aimed to explore the students' beliefs and behaviours in autonomous

learning and group norms and group cohesiveness showed that using work cycles as teaching techniques led to an increase in the students' level of autonomy in foreign language learning.

5. Conclusion and Discussion

The influences of the Group Processes on Learners' Autonomous Beliefs and Behaviours questionnaire by Chang (2007: 333) was used to answer the research question: '' Does using work cycles as teaching techniques lead to an increase in the students' level of autonomy in foreign language learning? ''

Identifying their own strengths and weaknesses, setting up learning goals, deciding what to learn outside the classroom, evaluating their own learning and progress, learning from peers not just from the teachers, discovering knowledge in English on their own rather than waiting for knowledge from the teacher are significant stages of the work cycle approach.

Students had an engaging and supportive learning environment among their group members by using work cycle stages. They could engage in autonomous activities with their group members. There was a dynamic increase in the level of autonomous learning. Students had cohesive group interaction. This finding is in line with Dörnyei and Murphey (2003: 62) who explain that one feature of cohesive groups is that students ''make each other welcome and show signs of mutual affection". They could take responsibility for their own learning by engaging learning thanks to work cycle stages. This situation overlaps with the study carried out by Little (1995: 175) who explains, ''the basis of learner autonomy is that the learner accepts responsibility for his or her learning''. It also can be concluded that group cohesiveness and group norms led the increase of autonomy level.

This finding also supports L.Ya-Hui Chang's (2007: 332) research finding that " Having motivated, easy to get along with, and supportive classmates means students are learning in a 'good' group which in turn promotes autonomous behaviors".

To sum up, the instructor in this study was able to start encouraging students' engagement. The teacher could concentrate on intrinsic drive and encouraging pupils to believe in their abilities. All of these pushed learners to engage for their own purposes. This means that the instructor incorporated engaging activities into this digital classroom that emphasized a learner centered approach as a prerequisite to autonomous learning.The results of the study showed that the students were satisfied with the guided digital learning via class blog projects which were offered them thanks to the WebQuest and Blogger digital online sites. It is believed that the interpretation of this study helped the students to become more autonomous and more competent regarding the digital learning environment. In conclusion, the results based on the questionnaire underlined the importance of guided digital learning using work- cycles in teaching English as a second language. It was also concluded that the students were satisfied with the responsibility they took for their own learning in digital learning by using blogs.

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