

Assignment Six

Language autonomy is defined as 'the ability to take charge of one's learning' Holec (1981: 3, cited in Benson & Voller, 1997: 1). It is important to note that this does not mean the teacher is redundant or even unnecessary but rather the teacher takes on a different role relative to the learner. Traditionally the teacher is often seen as the centre of knowledge and the teacher then imparts this knowledge onto the students. This puts the student in a very dependent relationship with the teacher. What is learned by the student is left up to the teacher.

A more autonomous learner is a learner that is more enabled, one that is more actively engaged in his or her learning. A good learner should be independent, conscientious, task-focused and goal orientated. When it comes to learning a language the autonomous learner should be willing to make mistakes, set and review goals, monitor his or her own progress and most importantly seek help when needed.

Language learning has two main strategies, that is, cognitive and meta-cognitive. Cognitive learning strategies are those learning strategies that directly use the language. It is any learning strategy that requires the learner to be engaged at the raw level of language use. The second, meta-cognitive is any learning strategy that has the learner "thinking about the learning" that is any type of strategy that is ontologically/metaphysically one level above the raw and immediate use of the language.

Examples of cognitive learning strategies are sub-vocalization, repetition, note-taking, translation and so on. These involve the use of the language at raw level. Examples of meta-cognitive strategies are directed attention (deciding in advance on what to concentrate on), selective attention (paying attention to specific tasks), self-monitoring and self-evaluation. All of these strategies require the students to think about what they are about to do.

The use of Metacognitive and Cognitive strategies is vital in being a successful learner of English. It has been shown that students require the use of both strategies in order to fully and efficiently improve and expand their English Language skills.

(http://www.readingmatrix.com/articles/april_2012/khezrlou.pdf)