Enhancing EFL Learners' Communicative Competence through Autonomous Learning Model; a Literature Review

Abstract. Communicative competence is crucial for language learner since this is the goal of language learning. A teacher should master learning strategies and learning model in order to enhance students' communicative competence. One of the teaching models which can be used to enhance learners' communicative competence is Autonomous Learning Model (ALM) which is also known as student-centered learning, the students are given more opportunities to actively communicate to their collagues.One of the ALM used worldwide is Nunan's Autonomous Language Learning Model (NALLM). However, there are limited studies providing the relation between communicative competence and autonomous learning model. Thus, this article tries to elaborate how NALLM can hypothetically enhance students' communicative competence.

Keyword: Communicative Competence, English Language Teaching, Autonomous Learning Model

1 Introduction

Communicative knowledge is a pivotal competence everyone needs to master in order to communicate effectively to other people; it may enable ones to utilize the right language in the right context and situation. However, it is always challenging to enhance ones' communicative competence, especially in foreign language communication context. Therefore, many arguments have been raised against designing language courses and programmes for foreign language contexts to achieve.

The ability of people to reach their goals in social life depends to a large extent on their communicative competence. The term communicative competence was stated by Hymes [1] to emphasize that the ability of speaking language and communicating is not only about knowledge of grammatical rules. It is believed in many societies that good communication has many constraints and that one of the most important constraints is the underlying ability of the interlocutors. Several competences are required in order to have good communicative competence, especially for English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners which are language competence, strategic competence, pragmatic competence and sociolinguistic competence.

Since communicative competence is very crucial in EFL learning, the teachers of EFL should master learning strategies and learning model to be able to enhance students' communicative competence. The challenge is the way of enhancing the communicative competence in order to communicate effectively. There are several ways which can be utilized by language teachers to enhance students' communicative competence, one of which is Autonomous Learning Model (ALM) since it allows students to communicate more in the real communication context. One of the ALM used worldwide is Nunan's Autonomous Language Learning Model (NALLM). Nevertheless, there is limited study about how ALM can enhance students' communicative competence. Therefore, this article attempts to showcase how ALM can enhance students' communicative competence through literature study.

2 Communicative Competence

2.1 Basic Concept of Communicative Competence

According to Hymes [1] communicative competence is the mastery and the ability of utilizing grammatical competence a several communicative situations. Competence is different from capacity; competence, such as communicative competence is the insight of linguistic and sociolinguistic conventions. In other hand, capacity is the ability to utilize insight as means to create the meaning of a language. According to him, ability is not a part of competence. Widdowson is believed as the first who in his reflections on the relationship between competence and performance gave more attention to performance or real language utilization [2].

Communicative competence is understood as a synthesis of an underlying system of knowledge and skill required for communication. In their concept of communicative competence, knowledge refers to the (conscious or unconscious) individual's insight about language and about other aspects of language utilization [3]. Knowledge is divided into three parts, they are grammatical principles knowledge, knowledge of language utilization in a social context in order to fulfil communicative functions and knowledge of combining utterances and communicative functions with respect to discourse principles. In addition, their concept of skill refers to how an individual can use the knowledge in actual communication [4].

2.2 Models of Communicative Competence

There three models of communicative competence: Canale and Swain's model, Bachman and Palmer's model, and the model provided by Common European Framework (CEF).

Canale and Swain's model [3] consists of grammatical, sociolinguistic, strategic, and discourse competence [4]. Grammatical competence is concerned with mastery of the linguistic code (verbal or non-verbal) including vocabulary knowledge as well as knowledge of morphological, syntactic, semantic, phonetic and orthographic rules [3]. This competence enables the speaker to use knowledge and skills required to understand and express the literal meaning of utterances.

In line with Hymes's belief about the appropriateness of language use in a variety of social situations, the sociolinguistic competence in their model includes knowledge of rules and conventions which underlie the appropriate comprehension and language use in different sociolinguistic and sociocultural contexts.

Discourse competence as mastery of rules which determine ways in which forms and meanings are combined to achieve a meaningful unity of spoken or written texts. The unity of a text is enabled by cohesion in form and coherence in meaning. In the first model, strategic competence is composed of knowledge of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that are recalled to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to insufficient competence in one or more components of communicative competence. These strategies include paraphrase, circumlocution, repetition, reluctance, avoidance of words, structures or themes, guessing, changes of register and style, modifications of messages etc.

Many traits of language users such as some general characteristics, their topical knowledge, affective schemata and language ability influence the communicative language ability. The crucial characteristic is their language ability which is comprised of two broad areas – language knowledge and strategic competence [5].

Language knowledge consists of two main components which are organisational knowledge and pragmatic knowledge which complement each other in achieving communicatively effective language use.

The second model introduced by Bachman and Palmer [5] consists of organisational knowledge, which is knowledge about formal language structures, such as of grammatical and textual knowledge. Grammatical knowledge consists of knowledge of vocabulary, morphology, syntax, phonology, and graphology. Those knowledge enable recognition and production of grammatically correct sentences and comprehension of their propositional content. Textual knowledge enables production and comprehension of both spoken and written texts. It includes the knowledge of combining sentences or utterances into texts, i.e. knowledge of cohesion (ways of marking semantic relationships among two or more sentences in a written text or utterances in a conversation) and knowledge of rhetorical organisation (way of developing narrative texts, descriptions, comparisons, classifications etc.) or conversational organisation (conventions for initiating, maintaining and closing conversations).

Pragmatic knowledge is the ability to create and interpret discourse. It consists of knowledge of pragmatic conventions to express acceptable language functions and to interpret the power of utterances or discourse (functional knowledge) and knowledge of sociolinguistic conventions to create and interpret appropriate language utterances for particular context of language utilization (sociolinguistic knowledge).

Strategic knowledge is a set of metacognitive components enabling language user involvement in goal setting, planning, and assessing communicative sources. Goal setting covers identifying a set of possible tasks, selecting one or more of them and deciding to attempt to complete them or not. Planning includes deciding how to make use of language knowledge and other components involved in the process of language utilization to successfully complete the selected task. Assessment means language utilization context is related to other areas of communicative language ability, such as topical knowledge and affective schemata.

It can be concluded that the model of communicative language ability by Bachman and Palmer is more complex, comprehensive, and cleared that Canale and Swain's model because of its detailed and organisational description of basic components of communicative competence.

The last model is the model of communicative language competence in the Common European Framework (CEF) [6], the model which is intended for assessment and languages learning and teaching. In the CEF, communicative competence is conceived only in terms of knowledge. It includes three basic components which are language competence, sociolinguistic competence, and pragmatic competence. So, strategic competence is included as componential part. Each component of language knowledge is explicitly defined as knowledge of the contents and the ability to apply the language. In short, language competence or linguistic competence is the knowledge of language resources and the ability to use it to form well-structured messages. The subcomponents of language competence are lexical, grammatical, semantic, phonological, orthographic and orthoepic competences.

Sociolinguistic competence is the possession of insight and abilities for appropriate language utilization in a social context. The following are the aspects this competence: language elements, rules of appropriate behaviour, and expressions of peoples' wisdom, differences in register and dialects and stress.

The last part in this model is pragmatic competence including two subcomponents: discourse competence and functional competence. A part of both of these competences is the planning competence which is sequencing of messages in accordance with interactional and

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transactional schemata. Strategic competence is mentioned in the part the CEF dedicated to a discussion of communicative language utilization. The stress is put on the utilization of communication strategies which can help to overcome the lack in a particular area of language knowledge and the utilization of all varieties of communication strategies. The utilization of strategies is comparable with the application of metacognitive principles (planning, achieving, controlling and correcting) on different forms of language activity, such as reception, interaction, production and meditating.

Based on the models provided above, it can be stated that communicative competence consists strategic competence, language competence, pragmatic competence and sociolinguistic competence. In general, the basic concept of communicative competence can be seen on the figure below.

Fig. 1 Basic Concept of Communicative Competence

There are several ways to enhance students' communicative competence, one of which is Autonomous Learning Model (ALM) which provides students more chance to communicate to their peers, teachers and people around them. It may improve their language and sociolinguistic competence because they would communicate to other people in different social context. Their pragmatic competence would be enhanced due to the strategy they used in order to communicate to others.

3 Autonomous Learning Model (ALM)

3.1 The Basic Concept of ALM

The Autonomous Learning Model (ALM) was introduced by Betts and Kercher in giving more power to students. In fact, this model was developed with the input of students. This

model aims to take the power to learn away from the teacher as a "dispenser of knowledge" and give that power to the students.

ALM tries to teach students how to discover information on their own. Several skills which are needed in navigating the increasingly complex world of learning are provided by ALM. Students will enhance positive self-esteem, responsibility, interpersonal skills, decision-making and problem-solving skills, critical and creative thinking skills, and a passion for areas of learning that interest them through ALM.

Dickinson stated that autonomous learning is the situation on which the responsibility of all the decisions related to the learning and the implementation totally belongs to the learners themselves [7]. In autonomous learning, the learners decide the aims, materials, task, exercise and method of learning. The term autonomy was described by Benson and Voller into these following ways [8]:

1. for situations in which learners study on their own entirely;
2. for a set of skills which can be learned and applied in self-directed learning;
3. for an inborn capacity which is emphasized by institutional education;
4. for the exercise of pupils' responsibility for their own learning;
5. for the right of students to determine the direction of their own learning.

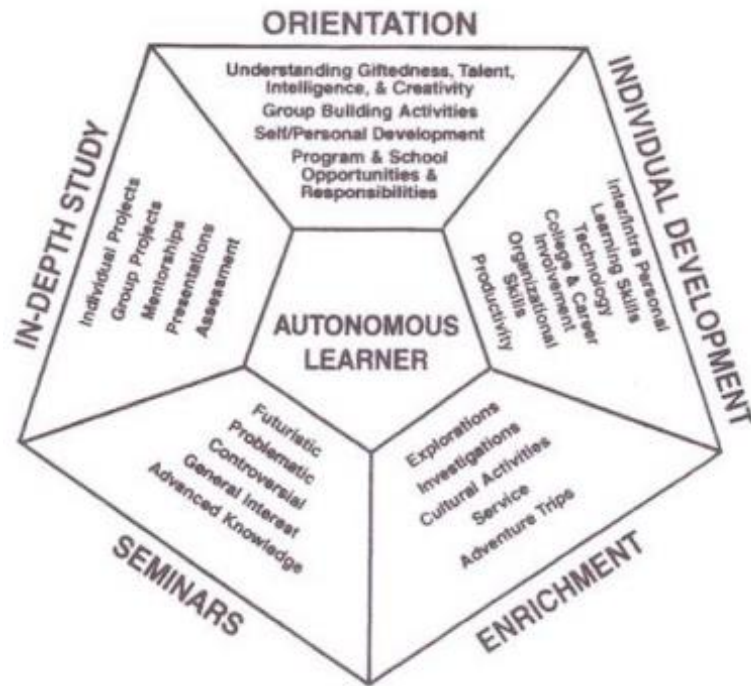Autonomous learning model is distinctly illustrated in the following picture:

Fig. 2 Autonomous Learning Model

Orientation is the first component of ALM encouraging the students to reflect on what intelligence is, how their school is helping them use their intelligence through various programs and teaching methods, and how they can play an important role in guiding their future.

The next step of this model is individual development. Students obtain the tools which are needed to be independent learners during this stage. Teachers facilitate the acquisition of skills needed to gain knowledge through research and technology, an understanding of university and career goals, and the organizational and productivity strategies necessary to accomplish their goals.

Enrichment can take on many different forms. Students will be pursuing knowledge based in real world experiences, whether they will be exploring new ideas, investigating phenomena, taking part in a cultural activity, doing service work, or taking an adventure trip.

Seminars in ALM are not taught by teachers or professionals. Instead, students create and oversee seminars that demonstrate the knowledge and ideas they have acquired during the ALM process. Normally, students work in small groups to create these seminars.

The ultimate stage of autonomous learning is the In-Depth Study. This can take the form of an individual or group project, a mentorship, a presentation, or an assessment. This is considered the highest level of autonomous learning. In this stage, students synthesize the information, abilities, and strategies they have learned to show what they have learned largely on their own. Teachers can choose to complete a full ALM cycle with their class or a specific group of students. Teachers can also select to focus a lesson on one aspect of ALM. It is adaptable for various utilizations, nevertheless, it is most beneficial with gifted students who usually have the ability to work independently and have the emotional maturity to reflect on themselves as gifted individuals and learners.

3.2 Implementation of ALM

The 9-step ALM which is called Nunan's Autonomous Language Learning Model (NALLM) can be implemented by teachers who are willing to use ALM model in his/her class, especially English class [9]. The 9 steps are:

Step 1: Make the instructional goals clear to the learners
The teacher has to make the instructional clear in order to make the learners actively involved to the learning process.

Step 2: Allow learners to create their own goals
The students asked to evaluate their laerning needs and motivation in order to create their own learning goals. Having created their own learning goals, it expected that the learners will be very much motivated to achieve them.

Step 3: Encourage learners to use English inside and outside the classroom
A teacher has to encourage the learners to use English inside and outside the classroom by the reason the achieve their own learning goal they have created themselves.

Step 4: Raise awareness of learning processes
It is not an easy work to make students become autonomous learners as it needs their awareness and motivation to get involved actively in the learning process and to use their English ability to communicate inside or outside the classroom, and to raise the learners' awareness of their own appropriate learning strategies is one of a teacher's duty.

Step 5: Help learners identify their own preferred styles and strategies
A teacher should know that every learner has different learning style and has to help them to realize that in order to make them learn more effectively on their own.

Step 6: Encourage Learner choice
The notion of student choice possibly unfamiliar in some foreign language contexts. He further elaborates that in this case, it is better to engage the learners in a relatively modest level of decision-making in the first instance [9]. Thus, if the data for a lesson include a reading passage and listening test, learners might be asked to decide which they

would rather do first, the reading or the listening but if some disagree or the teachers are uncomfortable with the idea of students doing different things at the same time, it can, then, put to a class vote.

Step 7: Allow learners to generate their own task

A teacher asks the learners to create their own learning task by modifying and adaptingthe classroom task.

Step 8: Encourage learners to become teachers

Having passed the previous steps, the learners then asked to teach other, in this step, a teacher should be creative and innovative as the learners hates traditional teaching model which is full of explanation. A teacher may ask the students to create a creative presentation material to use to teach their friends in the class.

Step 9: Encourage learners to become researchers

Finally, it is possible to teach students to become language researchers [9]. A teacher gives them opportunity to work together outside the classroom as a community of ethnographers, collecting, interpreting, and building a data bank of information about language in their worlds [10].
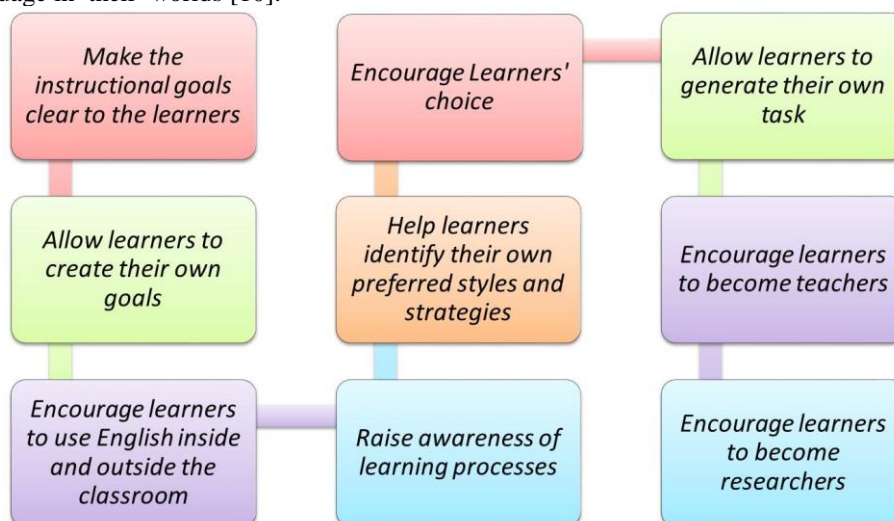
Fig 3. Nunan's Autonomous Learning Model

3.3 How ALM Enhances Students' Communicative Competence

In this section, how Auotonomous Learning Model can hypothetically enhance students' communicative competence will be discussed. Based on the model of communicative competence provided above which is discussed in this section, it consists of language competence, strategic competence, sociolinguistic competence and pragmatic competence. The dicussion is presented by presenting the ALM implementation which is adapted form Nunan's Autonomous Language Learning Model (NALLM) and how the model can hypothetically enhance language competence, sociolinguistic competence, and pragmatic competence respectively and collectively. Hypothetically, every step of NALLM is effective to enhance students' strategic competence, Language competence, pragmatic competence, and sociolinguistic competence respectively and collectively.

In order to ease the understanding of NALLM, the author attempts to divide the steps into three main parts which are planning, while-learning and become autonomy, the main parts can be seen in the figure below:
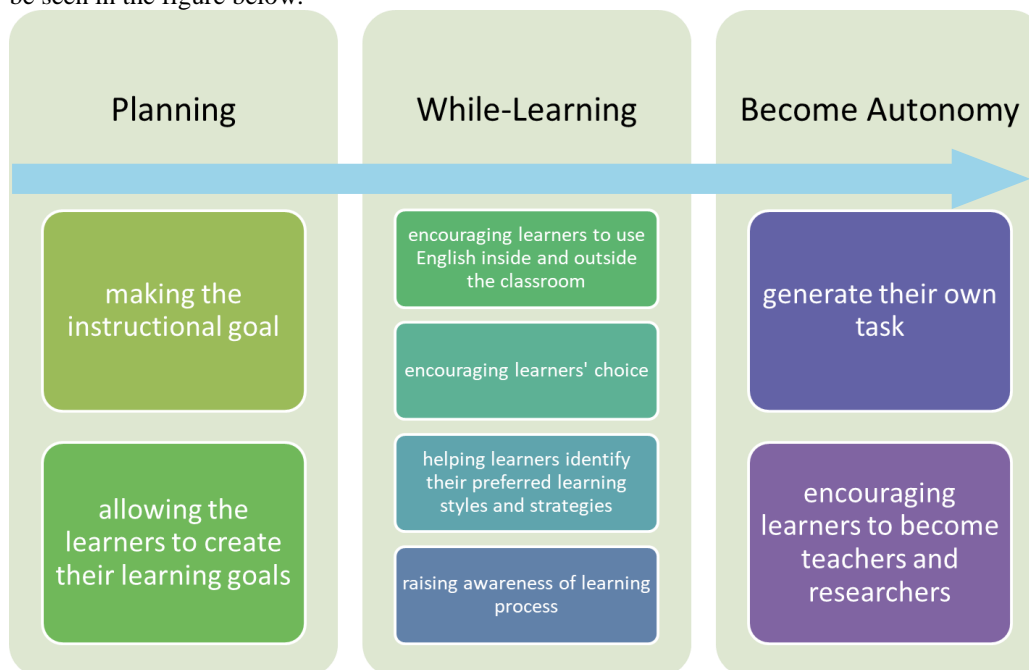
Planning	While-Learning	Become Autonomy
making the instructional goal	encouraging learners to use English inside and outside the classroom	generate their own task
allowing the learners to create their learning goals	encouraging learners' choice	encouraging learners to become teachers and researchers
	helping learners identify their preferred learning styles and strategies	
	raising awareness of learning process	

Fig 4. Main Parts of NALLM

The process begins from making learning goal and plan which consists of making the instructional goal and allowing the learners to create their learning goals. In this part, the learner may enhance their strategic competence by making learning plan. The next part is the while-learning step which consists of encouraging learners to use English inside and outside the classroom, encouraging learners' choice, helping learners identify their preferred learning styles and strategies, and raising awareness of learning process. This part enables learners to enhance their language, pragmatic and sociolinguistic competence because they need to use language to communicate in the real communication context. The final part is become autonomy which includes allowing learners to generate their own task, encouraging learners to become teachers and researchers. This part enables learners to enhance their strategic, language, pragmatic and sociolinguistic competence as they need to plan, learn and use the language respectively and collectively. The table below elaborates every step of NALLM and the competence can be enhanced on the process of learning through the model step by step.

Table 1. How NALLM enhance communicative competence

NALLM Steps	Competence can be enhanced
Make the instructional goals clear to the learners	Strategic competence
Allow learners to create their own goals	Strategic competence Language competence
Encourage learners to use English inside and outside the classroom	Language competence Pragmatic competence Sociolinguistic competence
Raise awareness of learning processes	Strategic competence
Help learners identify their own preferred styles and strategies	Strategic competence Language competence
Encourage Learner choice	Strategic competence Language competence
Allow learners to generate their own task	Strategic competence Language competence
Encourage learners to become teachers	Strategic competence Language competence Pragmatic competence Sociolinguistic competence
Encourage learners to become researchers	Strategic competence Language competence Pragmatic competence Sociolinguistic competence

ALM enhances students' communicative competence because it provides the students more chance to speak and communicate to their peers, teachers and people around them, it makes them involved in the real communication context which then improve their sociolinguistics and pragmatics competence. Having done their own learning strategy and goal stimulate them to improve their grammatical competence. Thus, ALM may enhance the students' communicative competence by the process of learning.

4 Conclusion

Having reviewed several studies related to communicative competence and autonomous learning model, it is believed that ALM is suitable to implement in order to enhance students' communicative comp etence because it provides students more opportunity to communicate to other people in several contexts which are beneficial for students' sociolinguistics and pragmatics competence. In a nutshell, the enhancement of students' communicative competence occurs on the process of language learning.

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