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Developing Learner Autonomy Strategies in EFL Classes

A Case Study: Master one students Department of English at Biskra University

**A thesis submitted for partial fulfillment for requirements of Master Degree in
Sciences of Language**

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Pedagogical Implications

The focus of this study was not to create new curricular nor to recommend a particular methodology, but to more thoroughly elaborate on the nature of learner autonomy strategies, and offer suggestions for fostering it:

- Autonomy implies not only that learners attempt to take control of their own learning from time to time but that they possess the capacity to do so systematically.
- Fostering autonomy does not imply that teachers simply leave learners to their own devices, but they actively encourage and assist them to take control of their learning in ways that will be effective in terms of goals.
- Learning autonomy can be inside and outside the classroom; therefore, students should take this point in consideration.
- Responsible and self-reliant learners are more likely to develop autonomy so as to control and direct their own learning.
- Integrating ICTs in our language classroom has a very considerable amount of interest to enhance autonomy among students.
- Learner-centered classrooms provide ideal conditions for developing learner autonomy.
- The teacher has an important role to play in supporting autonomy where he/she acting as a counselor, manager, or a guide.
- Teachers need to ask students to list what should be discussed inside the classroom by using their own agendas.
- Teachers need to encourage their students to use their own directive skills by making e-mail of friends from foreign countries so as to share ideas and experiences, using videos, and Google documents.

- The University as an administrative power should take decisions and provide students with more specialized teachers, and laboratory rooms, in addition to the necessary materials leading to the development of autonomy.

Appendices

Literature Review

Field Work

Dedication

I would like to thank ALLAH who gave me the health to finish this work

*I dedicate this modest work to my dear father "SMATTI" who educated me on
the good principles; to be honest; kind and respectful*

To my dear mother "RAHMA Zebicha"

To my dear brothers: Hamada, Hamza, and Amrau

To my dear sisters from Fatima to Souad.

To my dear supervisor Miss. HANANE Saihi to whom I am grateful.

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Abstract

The present work aims to identify and describe learner autonomy in English as a foreign language classes that influences Master one students department of English at Biskra University. Along this study, we begins with chapter one which presents an overview about learning principles. While, in the second chapter we have focused on the understanding and strategies of learner autonomy. Also, we have attempted to investigate data and to suggest appropriate solutions to learners' obstacles; we rely on two tools of research: students' questionnaire and teachers interview which administered to master one students Department of English at Biskra University, and to their teachers of all modules. The data gathered tools revealed that students find difficulties in maintaining engagement in classroom activities and in directing their own path of learning. Furthermore, this study proved that the role of the teacher is not ignored. Thus, we have suggested some qualities and characteristics of autonomy for both teachers and learners so as to develop it in our classes.

الملخص

يهدف هذا العمل إلى تحديد ووصف التحكم الذاتي في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية التي تخصص طلبة أولى ماستر جامعة بسكرة. هذا المفهوم يعرف عادة بمدى قدرة الطالب على الاعتماد على نفسه لإدارة تعلمه الخاص. بدأنا هذا العمل بالفصل الأول الذي يتناول مفهوم التعلم وأهم مبادئه في حين ركزنا في الفصل الثاني على التحكم الذاتي في التعلم فهما واستراتيجيات. حاولنا أيضا دراسة حالة ميدانية و كذا اقتراح حلول من اجل مساعدة المتعلمين اعتمادا على وسائل البحث التالية : استبيان موجه لطلبة السنة أولى ماستر و كذا مقابلة مع أساتذتهم في جميع المقاييس. كل المعطيات المتحصل عليها أكدت أن معظم الطلبة يواجهون صعوبات في المشاركة في مختلف النشاطات المعتمدة داخل الفصل الدراسي، بالإضافة هذه الدراسة أثبتت أن دور الأستاذ لا يمكن تجاهله لأنه يعتبر حجر الأساس لعمليتي التعليم والتعلم. لهذا اقترحنا بعض الميزات و السمات التي يمكن أن تكون ذات فائدة للأستاذة و الطلبة على حد سواء من أجل تنمية سمة التحكم الذاتي في التعلم في فصولنا الدراسية.

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List of Abbreviation

I.e.: It means

STM: short term memory

LTM: long term memory

L1: First Language

ID: Individual Differences

L2: Second Language

LS: Learning Strategies

LLS: Language Learning Strategies

CALL: Computer-assisted Language learning

ICTs: Information Communication Technologies

ESP: English for Specific Purposes

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

M.A: Magister

M1: Master One

PHD: Doctorate

General Introduction

Teaching English is not a matter which concerns only teachers; on contrary learners are involved as well. However, it usually connected with learning processes. The teacher has to determine which method he/she is going to follow according to students/learners needs and requirements. On the other hand, the learner should also take into account such procedures and strategies: for instance learning autonomy which is needed to improve students and teachers level of the two aspects.

Furthermore, we think that it is one of the key learning factors that determine the rate of success of FL attainment. Learner Autonomy is referring to learners' role in directing their own processes, views, perceptions, techniques and strategies in learning. However, it has different definitions which we are going to discuss in details in our study.

English autonomy learning has become popular at abroad and instructors start to pay more attention on in order to make a full use of it. Our study attempts to provide both teachers and students with the necessary data regarding that crucial issue to enhance students' contributions inside and outside the classroom.

Statement of the problem

The subject was chosen to be under study out of our interest in the domain of learning-teaching processes and its relation with learners and teachers perspective toward that procedure.

Learner autonomy is a perplexed concept since each researcher sees it from a specific angle. However, we find that the most important one is the one relates to students achievement. To be autonomous learner does not mean rejecting others thoughts and experiences that is to say students of English are not an isolated persons;

hence they may influence others and at the same time they may be influenced by others.

Recent studies reveal that learners will get many advantages and better findings when they are independent and autonomous in their own learning. Thus, involving students in language classroom has become obligatory for an effective teaching especially in EFL classes.

Research Questions

As any scientific investigation our study was guided by certain questions which we attempt to answer after collecting data and analyzing it. Therefore this study aims at answering the following questions:

Are M1 students able to direct their own learning?

To what extent learner autonomy is applied?

Are M1 students using autonomous strategies in learning English as a foreign language?

Hypotheses

The research general hypothesis turns around the idea that the more students are autonomous learners the more they acquire the ability to direct their own path of learning. It posits that a high level of autonomy would correlate significantly with taking responsibility; in other words:

We hypothesize that our students are autonomous students if they have the ability to direct their own learning

Students will be autonomous learners if they take their own responsibilities in getting knowledge.

Aim of the study

This study aims at investigating whether M1 students are applying the appropriate strategies in fulfilling their achievement of being autonomous learners.

However, we want teachers to pay more attention and give more opportunities to students to be active learners by taking their own responsibilities in learning process.

Significance of the study

Learning autonomy or learner autonomy is a concept which is studied recently because of the influence it can have on both learning and teaching processes.

This study will be of a considerable interest to learners and teachers of English classes since the negative impact of students dependency in EFL classes not only reflect negatively on their achievement (M1 student of English at Biskra university) , but also on teachers perceptions of language learning as well. Therefore, this study is also significant with respect to its application in our educational pedagogy.

Indeed, maintaining autonomy learning over the year is almost the learner role in collaboration with teacher guidance in order to elicit a higher quality of student' engagement in classroom activities. Moreover, we attempt to determine whether the process is adoptable in EFL classes or not.

Chapter One

Learning Understanding and Principles

Introduction

Learning is not a set of easy steps that can be programmed. Therefore, it requires a total involvement by utilizing physical, intellectual, and emotional capacities. Since it is a highly active process, learners and teachers should take into account such procedures in order to get better insights about learning theories. Learning is viewed as a process whether by conceiving new experience or by changing a behavior that is to say it does not happen at all once; no one wakes up morning having a language but gradually encountering challenges, making mistakes, and even committing errors among the long way.

Definition of Learning

Learning is a conscious, active process implies storage systems, memory, and cognitive organization.

Brown (2007) defined learning as "acquiring, or getting knowledge of a subject or skill by study, experience, or instruction"

Behaviorists see learning as "a relatively permanent change in behavioral potentiality that occurs as a result of reinforced practice" Kimble (1991) cited in (Olson & Hergenhahn, 2009, p.64)

This change is always observable that is to say if no observable change happens no learning occurs.

On the other hand, cognitivists see it from another perspective. Schunk (2009) stated that learning is "an enduring change in the capacity to behave in a given fashion which results from practice or other forms of experience"(p.2)

Unlike behaviorists view, we do not observe directly the change in behavior but through its outcomes and products. The important here there is a modification, a new knowledge, skill....This change must last for a long duration hence, information which remain few seconds do not classified as learning , this latter occurs through experience and practice.

In addition, Pritchard (2008, p.1) stressed a very fruitful definition of learning

Learning is not exclusive to the domain of an education system. Learning begins a very long time before school; continues for even longer after school; and happens rapidly, and in parallel with school, in a great number of different ways and settings. Learning proceeds in a number of different ways, and has been described and explained by many different interested researchers and opinion-makers over many years.

Most psychologists would agree that learning means gaining knowledge. In this respect, oxford dictionary (2010) defined it as " knowledge that you get from reading or studying"

The American Heritage Dictionary defines the verb to learn as " to gain knowledge, comprehension, or mastery through experience or study" cited in (Olson & Hergenhahn, 2009, p.6).

As an end result, learning may be defined according to two main perspectives: the cognitive perspective and the behavioral one. The former sees it as unobservable

mental and internal activity. While, the latter assumes that learning is an observable change in behavior as a result of external events.

Learning Theories

A theory is a set of specific principles and thoughts in which a subject is based.

Oxford dictionary (2010) defined theory as "a formal set of ideas intended to explain why something happens or exists". In the same respect, psychologists have been categorized and explained the process of learning under two main Theories, or schools: Behaviorism and Cognitivism.

Behaviorism.

Behaviorism is an approach of psychology which explains learning in terms of conditioning. It has been born after the wave of industrial revolution in 1960 and the separation of positivism from the church.

As its name suggests it has a direct connection with behavior; and it is mainly considered as the essential link between stimulus/response by claiming a scientific basics (laboratory experimentation). The behaviorist theory has been developed through different periods of time:

The classical Conditioning.

Classical behaviorists believe that the learner simply responds to external stimuli. According to them stimulus/response means action/reaction.

In 1903 the Russian physiologist Ivan Pavlov(1849–1936) published the results of experiment on conditioning after originally studying digestion. All of us

know Pavlov's study on dogs which illustrated clearly the assumption of classical conditioning.

Pavlov noted that the smell of food led dogs to salivate. This is an "unconditional response" because the dog reacted naturally to the food "unconditional stimulus". He began ringing a bell "conditional stimulus" immediately prior to providing the food, and he discovered that after a certain number of repetitions the bell alone was sufficient to cause salivation (Jordan, Carlile, & Stack, 2008).

Moreover, when the conditional stimulus the bell is repeatedly presented without the associated unconditional stimulus "the food" the conditional response "salivation" declines until it is nonexistent.

Classical conditioning is also influential for explaining such phenomena of fears and phobias. For instance, a person who is bitten by a dog may become afraid of that dog or even of all dogs. Jordan et al.(2008).

For a precise definition of classical conditioning we must quote Glassman and Hadad "Classical conditioning is the study of learning which involves reflex responses in which a neural stimulus comes to elicit an existing reflex response" (2008, p.116)

Furthermore, classical conditioning as expressed by Jordan et al.(2008, p.24) is "learning in which a subject comes to respond to a conditional stimulus repeatedly presented along with an unconditional stimulus"

In 1913 John B. Watson (1878–1958) based on Pavlov's observation he launched the behavioral school of psychology "classical conditioning". He believed that all individuals' differences in behavior were due to different experiences of learning.

Waston (1926) famously said

Give me a dozen healthy infants well-formed, and my own specified world to bring them up in and I will guarantee to take any one at random and train him to become any type of specialist. I might select a doctor, lawyer, artist, merchant-chief and, yes, even into beggar-man and thief, regardless of his talents, penchants, tendencies, abilities, vocations, and race of his ancestors cited in (Schunk,2008,p.40).

Operant Conditioning.

In 1930 the American psychologist Burhus Frederic Skinner (1904–1990) brought what is called operant conditioning. His theory of operant conditioning was based on the work of Edward Lee Thorndike.

Skinner with "operant" introduced a new term "reinforcement". For him, a behavior which is reinforced tends to be repeated (i.e. strengthen) and the behavior which is not reinforced tends to be extinguished (i.e. weaken)

Operant conditioning as expressed by Jordan et al. (2008, p.26) is "the process of shaping behavior by following it with reinforcement that increases in frequency"

In fact Skinner did not provide specific rules or principles to follow so as to know what would be an effective reinforcer. As cited in(Olson, & Hergenhahn , 2009,p.76)

Skinner (1953p.72) stated:

In dealing with our fellow men in everyday life and in the clinic and laboratory, we may need to know just how reinforcing a specific event is. We often begin by noting the extent to which our own behavior is reinforced by the same event. This practice frequently miscarries; yet it is still commonly believed that reinforcers can be indentified apart from their effects upon a particular organism. As the term is used here, however, the only defining characteristics of a reinforcing stimulus is that it reinforces"

Contiguous Conditioning.

Guthrie (1940) stated that learning principles reflect associationism. He introduced the idea of contiguity regarding Movement and Acts, Associative Strength, Rewards and Punishments, Habits Formations and Change. Cited in Schunk (2009).

Briefly, Guthrie's perspective towards contiguity included all explanations of learning by association. Most precisely, the principle of contiguous conditioning explains that if two sensations occur together other often they will become associated(Stimulus/response)

In drawing conclusion about behaviorists' theory you may find such positive and negative sites. On the one hand, behaviorism principles are very useful in promoting learning. They still valid and interesting for teachers and learners since many human behaviors had been explained in relation to that principles. On the other hand, we cannot deny its negative sites:

Behaviorism emphasized the role of environmental stimuli in determining the way we act but neglecting internal and mental activities that a human being

possesses. Furthermore, language is based on a set of structures and rules which could not be worked out simply by imitating individual utterances. All in all, we can say that behaviorism limitations paved the way for further researchers to find answers that which behaviorists tended to avoid.

Cognitivism.

Cognitivism came as a reaction to behaviorism focusing on the inner mental activities. The term cognition derived from the Latin word *cognocere* which means to know, to conceptualize or to recognize.

(Prichard,2009,p.17) defined cognitive psychology as "the scientific study of mental processes such as learning, perceiving, remembering, using language, solving problems". Cognitivism's aim is studying the mind. Therefore, they created what is called the science of mental life since the mind is living, changing, and developing from home, society, and school.

In fact, Cognitivism replaced behaviorism in 1960 by considering that individuals are not "Programmed-Animals" that respond to environmental stimuli. Cognitivists studied the mind differently; and from two main perspectives:

-Information Processing Theory (Informationists)

-Constructive Theory (Constructivists)

Information processing theory.

Informationists believe that when the mind is learning in fact is getting and receiving information. They compare human mind with a machine(computer) i.e. you receive the information, store it in memory then recall it if you need like the computer

creates a file, store it, and when you need that file you can introduce. Information processing theorists are less interested with the external and environmental conditions for storing the information. They focused only on internal and mental activities. Learners are active seekers of information. They are able to take the information, process it, and relate the new knowledge to the existing one, then acting upon it so as making it meaningful. Mayer (1996) in (Schunk, 2009, p.132)

According to Informationists there are three main factors that every human learner requires: Attention, Perception, and Memory.

Attention.

The word "Attention" is often heard in educational setting because many students do not pay attention to such instructions demonstrated by teachers.

Grale(1986) argues that "attention can refer to a limited human resource expended to accomplish one's goals and to mobilize and maintain cognitive processes" (Schunk 2009, p.138)

Our attentional capacities are limited; we can attend to a few things at once, and this makes attention selective since it lets only some messages. In this respect Broadbent(1958) proposed a model of attention known as "Filter Theory"; paying attention means filtering out the most important information. (Schunk,2009,p.138)

Perception.

Perception is the process of attaining awareness or understanding of sensory information. The word perception comes from the Latin word *Perceptio* which means receiving action.

Jordan, et al. (2008) stated that perception is the own interpretation of the things that are presented to our senses involving:

–Pattern recognition

–Object recognition

–Bottom–up or top down processing

Memory.

Many researchers called memory a warehouse. Therefore, it is a storage element of memorization. Educationists are interesting with ways of ensuring information in order to be reused, or reproduced. In this respect, psychologists have been stated two main sorts of memory: Short Term Memory "STM", and Long Term Memory "LTM". Atkinson and Shiffrim (1986) suggested a model including the two in which we may memorize something by seeing(visual memory) hearing(audio–memory)....They called this act as "Sensory Register" i.e. by using senses. Jordan et al. (2008)

STM is the usual model of memory which has a limited capacity(few seconds).Thus, a teacher should also limit the number of items to be remembered, using repetition to retain information for a short period. He should take into account the interference which may happen between different types of items to be learned. Jordan et al. (2008).

On the other hand, LTM is the main way in which we store information and it lasts over hours, weeks, months, and even years; it has a very large capacity. Therefore, a teacher should link materials to cues that can be used to recall them,

encouraging learners to use their own styles, and exploring their talents, and capacities. Jordan et al. (2008)

Constructive Theory.

Constructivists claim that human mind capacity exceed computer ones. A human being is able to construct his/her own knowledge since he/she is actively involved in the process of learning. In order to have completely a new output it must be a combination between what you have and what you take (mental construction).

The main figures have contributed to the constructivist approach are John Piaget(1896–1980) and Lev Vegotsky. Piaget described the cognitive development of children that goes on through four stages:

- Sensory Motor Stage(Birth to about two years)
- Preoperational Stage (from two to seven years)
- Concrete Operations Stage (from seven to twelve years)
- Formal Operations Stage (from twelve till fifteen years)

(Olson & Hergenhahn, 2009)

Lev Vegotsky studies in psychology is considered as a great contribution to that field. In his theory, he suggested that human development is the results of interaction between individuals and society. Jordan et al. (2008)

To conclude cognitivism adds a very useful dimension to human learning theories which is "The Mind" this latter makes human being different from animals systems. They study is from different perspectives so as to suggest a range of useful strategies for both learners and teachers. However, we cannot neglect recent studies

which reveal that mental capacities are insufficient to build knowledge since human mind is not only a process of learning.

Learning styles

Definition of learning styles.

Learning styles are a preferred ways of learning and studying; for example, using pictures instead of text, working in groups as opposed to working alone, or learning in a structured rather than an unstructured manner.

Learning styles are not fixed traits which an individual will always display. Learners are able to adopt different styles in different contexts. For most of us, one or two styles are preferred above the others.

According to the standard definition, they refer to “an individual’s natural, habitual, and preferred way(s) of absorbing, processing, and retaining new information and skills” (Dornyei, 2005, p.121).

Types of learning styles.

Learners have different ways of learning by adopting many styles that making them special from one to another. Thus, there are particular learning styles which have been categorized under seven main types which we are going to discuss them briefly.

Visual Learning Style.

Visual learners prefer to learn by seeing. They have good visual recall and prefer information to be presented visually, in the form of diagrams, graphs and maps. They like to draw, build, design and create things, look at pictures and slides, watch films and play with machines. They are good at imagining things, sensing changes, puzzles, and reading maps and charts. These learners learn best by visualizing, dreaming, and working with pictures. Visual learners are often use hand movements when describing objects or recalling events.

Aural/Auditory Learning Style.

Auditory learners prefer to learn by listening. They are characterized by a good auditory memory, they profit from conversation, lectures, hearing stories and audio tapes. They like sequence, repetition and summary. (Pritchard,2008). They benefit from discussion, lectures, and interviewing. In addition, auditory learners like repetition and summary and when recalling memories tend to tilt their head, and use level eye movements.

Verbal Learning Style.

Verbal learners Likes to read, write and tell stories, they work with riddles. They are good at using descriptive language, memorizing places, dates and trivia. They learn best by saying, hearing and seeing words both in speech and writing.

Physical Learning Style.

Physical learners prefer to use their body, hands and sense of touch. They like to move around, touch, talk, use body language and perform. They are good at physical activities and crafts. These learners learn best by touching, moving, interacting with space and processing knowledge through bodily sensations.

Logical Learning Style.

Logical learners prefer to use logic, reasoning and systems. They like doing experiments, work things out, work with numbers, ask questions and explore patterns and relationships. These learners are good in Math, problem-solving. They also learn best by categorizing, classifying, and with abstract patterns.

Social Learning Style.

Social learners prefer to learn and work in groups or with other people. They like having lots of friends, solve problems and join groups. They are good at understanding other people's feelings, leading others, organizing and communicating. These learners learn best by sharing, comparing, relating and talking.

Solitary Learning Style.

Solitary learners prefer to work alone, pursue own interests and use self-study. They are in understanding self, focusing inwards on feelings and dreams, and following instincts. These learners learn best by working alone, individualized projects, self-paced instruction and having own space.

Multiple Intelligences

Definition of multiple intelligence.

Howard Gardner viewed intelligence as "the capacity to solve problems or to fashion products that are valued in one or more cultural settings". Gardner (2002, p. 3).

It is when we observe and see where people are gifted and talented whether it is learned or innate, and then we come to the point of the development of this facility and capacity. It differs from one person to another, and these factors help in learning anything. It is rarely to find one person acquired with all of them

Types of Multiple Intelligence.

The current Multiple Intelligences Theory outlines eight intelligences.

Visual/ spatial intelligence.

Learners' ability to recognize, form, space, color, line, and shape and to graphically represent visual and spatial ideas. They include pictures, diagrams, art, videos and charts. It is the enjoyment of construction games, and tactile puzzles. This kind of intelligence usually includes questions such as: how can I include pictures and diagrams, colors, and graphs?

Verbal/ linguistic intelligence.

The ability to use language and words effectively both orally and in writing. It is the enjoyment of reading, poetry, and all things both literary and linguistic. Verbal intelligence often includes questions like: how can include reading, writing, and speaking?

Musical/rhythmic intelligence.

Musical intelligence is the ability and the enjoyment of recognizing rhythm, and pitch. It includes music, sounds, rhyme and dance. It is the enjoyment of listening, playing, and perhaps composing melody often associated with questions like: how can I include music, sounds, rhyme, rhythms, and dance?

Logical/Mathematical Intelligence.

The ability to use numbers effectively, logic and reason as well. It includes the use of classification, critical thinking and calculations. It is the enjoyment of mathematics, science, and any logic-based pursuits. Thus, mathematical intelligence is often associated with questions like: How can I include the use of numbers, classification, and calculations?

Bodily/Kinesthetic Intelligence.

Bodily or kinesthetic intelligence as many called is referring to the ability to use the body to express ideas and feelings and to solve problems. It is related to the physical movements and actions. It is the enjoyment of activities that involve movement, sport, and any other practical activities. Kinesthetic intelligence often includes practical equipment, drama, art, and craft.

Interpersonal Intelligence.

It is the ability to understand another person's feelings, motivations, and intentions and to respond effectively related to relationships with others and various means of communication. It is the enjoyment of other people communication, and leadership, and working in small groups. Interpersonal intelligence often includes questions like: how can I include group work, peer sharing, and discussion.

Intrapersonal Intelligence.

It is the ability to know about and understand oneself and recognize one's similarities to and differences from others. It is related to self-reflection and self-awareness. Intrapersonal intelligence is the enjoyment of self-motivation, no dependence on others, awareness of one's own feelings more than those of others. It includes questions like: How can I include private learning time and choice?

Naturalist Intelligence.

It is the ability to recognize and classify plants, minerals, and animals. This intelligence is related to observation and awareness of the natural world and the patterns to be found there. (Gardner, 2002). Naturalist intelligence is the enjoyment of natural world with ability to recognize patterns and classification.

Individual Differences

Definition of individual differences.

They are characteristics or traits in respect of which individuals may be shown to differ from each other. They concern anything that marks a person as a distinct and unique human being. For example, someone's tendencies to wear a brightly colored T-shirt or a bow tie. Dornyei(2005,p. 3). One of the most important factors which have traditionally been treated as keys f individual differences is learning styles and language learning strategies. Thus, ID has been researched in L2 studies making the area one of the most studied psychological aspect of foreign language acquisition.

Types of individual differences.

It has been long observed that there is a particularly wide variation among language learners in terms of their ultimate success in mastering an L2 and therefore the study of individual differences which consists of many types.

Age.

To achieve a native like competence in L2, it requires that you should begin learning as a child to help the process of acquiring another language because it is assumed that immigrant children will speak their L2 better than their parents especially that foreign language programs begin earlier in schools. Sanz,(2005, p.119).Therefore, the importance of age has been widely recognized in educational contexts and a great deal of research has been conducted in educational psychology on how to adopt instruction to the strengths, weaknesses, and preferences of learners.

Sex/Gender.

Using various listening and vocabulary measures, some studies have found advantages for males and others for females, and still others have found no differences between the sexes.

Sanz (2005) argued that some studies revealed that women use more learning strategies than men, and they even use them more often. In general, it was also reported that females may be more motivated to learn a L2 and can have more positive attitudes to its speakers.

Without any doubt, gender is one of the most individual characteristics of a human being, and therefore it very important to distinguish between males and females for instance, in terms of attitudes and motivation in dealing with a second language acquisition, or foreign one.

Prior experience.

It is a known idea that multilinguals learn languages better than monolinguals; they are experienced as language learners which give them an edge when they come to learn other languages. It represents the structural relationship between the learner's L1 and L2. In this respect Sanz (2005) stated that people, who have this prior knowledge, look for extra sources concerning the input, make efforts to use the new language, show positive attitude to the task. Thus, prior experience is one characteristic or trait in respect of which individuals may be shown to differ from each other.

Intelligence.

Students are classified according to the test of intelligence and other tests. After they pass the test performance, they will have grades of above average, average, and below average. Later on, they will have a taped interview in which question are asked about different matters. According to Spolsky (1989) These tapes are going to be studied by two native speakers separately based on five measures which are listening comprehension, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and fluency. We generally find a noticeable relation between the intelligence test score and formal school language test results. Therefore, we all have various levels if intelligence across a range of intellectual areas, and the most commonly used tests often do not allow those tested to demonstrate what they are really good at or where their intelligence lies.

Learning strategies

Definition of learning strategies.

Different learning strategies definitions have been used in second or foreign language learning context. Weinstein & Mayer (1986) defined learning strategies broadly as “behaviors and thoughts that a learner engages in during learning” which are “intended to influence the learner's encoding process” (p.315). Later, Mayer (1988) more specifically defined learning strategies as “behaviors of a learner that are intended to influence how the learner processes information” (p.11). Weinstein et al. (1988) outlined LS in more detail:

Learning strategies are considered to be any behaviors or thoughts that facilitate encoding in such a way that knowledge integration and retrieval are enhanced. More specifically, these thoughts and behaviors constitute organized plans of action designed to achieve a goal. Examples of learning strategies include actively rehearsing, summarizing, paraphrasing, imaging, elaborating, and outlining (p.291)

Therefore, we can say that there has been a prominent shift within the field of language learning and teaching over the last twenty years with greater emphasis being put on learners and learning rather than on teachers and teaching. In parallel to this new shift of interest, how learners process new information and what kinds of strategies they employ to understand, learn or remember the information has been the primary concern of the researchers dealing with the area of foreign language learning.

Types of learning strategies

Cognitive strategies.

Are mental strategies the learner uses to make sense of learning. They enable the learner to manipulate the language material in direct ways. When manipulating cognitive strategies, the learner is involved in practicing, receiving and sending messages, reasoning, analyzing, note-taking, summarizing, synthesizing, outlining, reorganizing information to develop stronger schemas (knowledge structures), practicing in naturalistic settings, and practicing structures and sounds formally.

They refer to the steps or operations used in learning or problem-solving. Rubin identified five main cognitive strategies which are monitoring, memorization, practice, deductive reasoning and inductive inference. (Wenden & Rubin, 1987).

Cognitive strategies enable learners to practice English sounds like native speakers, use known words in different ways, like watching TV shows and movies in English.

Metacognitive strategies.

They are essential for the learner to plan, monitor and evaluate learning. They are employed for managing the learning process. Learners are required to centre, arrange, plan and evaluate their learning.

According to Brown (1982) these strategies are generally applicable to a variety of learning tasks, including learning while it is taking place, and evaluating learning after it had occurred. Moreover; Metacognitive strategies includes seeking many ways to use English, noticing mistakes and learn from them, paying attention when someone is speaking, having clear goals for improving English skills, and thinking about the progress in learning.

Memory-related strategies.

They are used for storage of information. They help learners link one second or foreign language item or concept with another but do not necessarily involve deep understanding. Learners are to be given the chance for linking mental images, applying images and sounds, reviewing well, and employing action. (Ellis, 1994).

Therefore, they enable learners to use new English words in sentences, and connect words to mental picture of situation.

Compensatory strategies.

They help the learner make up for missing knowledge. Examples of such strategies include guessing from the context in listening and reading, using synonyms and “talking around” the missing word to aid speaking and writing and strictly for speaking, and using gestures or pause words. (Ellis, 1994).

Affective strategies.

It is evident that good language learners employ distinct affective strategies. Language learning can be frustrating in some cases. In some cases, the feeling of strangeness can be evoked by the foreign language. In some other cases, L2 learners may have negative feelings about native speakers of L2. Good language learners are more or less conscious of these emotional problems. Good language learners try to create associations of positive affect towards the foreign language and its speakers as well as towards the learning activities involved. Learning training can help students to face up to the emotional difficulties and to overcome them by drawing attention to the potential frustrations or pointing them out as they arise. Stern(1992).

Affective Strategies enable learners to relax when afraid of using English, encouraging self to talk, and noticing when tense or nervous in using English.

Social strategies.

Social strategies are those activities learners engage in which afford them opportunities to be exposed to and practice their knowledge. Although these strategies provide exposure to the target language, they contribute indirectly to learning since they do not lead directly to the obtaining, storing, retrieving, and using of language. Rubin & Wenden (1987). They enable learners asking others to slow down or to repeat in the case of confusing or misunderstanding, asking to be corrected when talking, practicing English with other learners, and asking for help from English speakers.

The Importance of Language Learning Strategies for Students

The goal of strategy use is to “affect the learner's motivational or affective state, or the way in which the learner selects, acquires, organizes, or interacts new knowledge” (Weinstein and Mayer 1986, p.315). According to Oxford et al (1990), the language learner can benefit from strategy training which seeks to encourage greater responsibility and self-direction in the learner.

Within the recent trends in foreign/second language teaching the ‘Communicative Approach’ is seen as the suitable way for learners to develop their communicative competence. The language learning strategies (LLS) can help them do this. However, we should notice the differences between LLS and communicative strategies. Communicative strategies are intentionally and consciously used by speakers to cope with the difficulties in communicating in a foreign/second language. Language learning strategies, on the other hand, are the strategies the learners use to develop

their learning strategies, in general, in the target language, and communication strategies are just one type of LLS.

Conclusion

To conclude, it is better to take into account all what is suggested whether by behaviourist psychologists or cognitivists / ones since their principles are very fruitful in learning and teaching. Moreover, teachers have to study their teaching context before applying strategies in their classroom. They are supposed to take into account students' cultural context, as there is a relationship between strategy preferences and learners' cultural background, which can have an impact on strategy choice and training.

Chapter Two

Learner Autonomy Understanding and Strategies

Introduction

In the past, students believe that there is one right answer and interpretation that the teacher has. He has the duty to impart knowledge to them, and their duty as learners is to memorize it. However; recent studies reveals that a shift happens when the focus is directed to learners since they take more advantages and benefits by being independent in getting knowledge. Therefore, researchers start to pay more attention to the so-called Learner Autonomy. This latter comes to enhance their determination to be self-reliant in their learning and to break down the traditional mode which view teachers as the only deliver of knowledge. In fact the term "Learner Autonomy" is widely perplexed concept which is difficult to define precisely. Such psychologists considered it as a goal and an effective element of learning and teaching. While others viewed it as a capacity which must be acquired either by informal or formal learning. These varieties make us eager to know more about that problematic issue which we are going to discuss it deeper in this chapter.

Definition

Learner Autonomy is not originally a language learning concept. However, it has been influenced by a variety of approaches:

The educational reform.

Educators noticed that learners receive the same instructions from the same teachers, with the same materials, and gain different levels of success. Therefore, such concept like self-instruction, independent learning, and self-directed learning come to take place; hence all of them carry a nuance of learner autonomy. John Dewey (1859-1952) his contribution to the idea of autonomy lies mainly in three areas: the relationship between education and social participation, education as problem solving, and classroom organization (Benson, 2001). Dewey's educational views emphasizes the combination of education and social life where learners have the ability to participate in their classroom organization in which they worked together so as to solve a shared problem.

An adult education.

In the early 1960s adult educators began to study what is called self-instruction, and in 1970s numerous studies were published on the nature of self-directed. (Benson, 2001). That is to say learner autonomy has been emerged through different periods where it traced over forty years ago beginning with its broadest meaning which was covering all the aspects of life particularly the social one till the narrowest meaning which is concerning the teaching and learning today.

The psychology of learning.

Constructivists believed on the idea that learners are actively involved in the process of learning since knowledge cannot be taught learners who construct it. Lev Vygotsky is one example; his contribution to the emergence of autonomy lies in the notion of self-directive inner speech (Benson, 2001). Vygotskyan perspective stressed the importance of social interaction in learning and self-direction

Political philosophy.

Learner autonomy traced back to the political sense in which the conditions of cities in ancient Greece citizens were governed according to their own laws. (Benson, 2001). When you go back with the concept of autonomy you will find its origins has a great relationship with politics where citizens have the right and the freedom to manage their lives.

In fact, the concept of autonomy entered the field of language teaching through the Council of Europe's Modern Language Project, and Yves Chalon is considered as the corner stone of that theory. Chalon died in 1972 and the leadership was passed to Henry Holec who remains a prominent figure within the field of autonomy today (Benson, 2001). Therefore; educators consider him as the father of that philosophy because of his great contribution in order to enrich this concept whether by publishing books or by managing different conferences.

Learner autonomy as defined by (Oxford Dictionary 8th ed, 2010) is: “1. The freedom for a country, a region or an organization to govern itself independently” 2. “The ability to act and make decisions without being controlled by anyone else”. In

this case and according to that definition we can say that autonomy is treated as a political issue freedom and at the same time is a psychological one making decisions

According to Benson autonomy (2001) is defined as "the capacity to take charge of, or responsibility for, one's own learning". And he also defined it as a "multidimensional capacity that will take different forms for different individuals and even for the same individual in different contexts or at different times" (Benson, 2001, p.47).

This means that learners will not develop autonomy unless they are willing to take responsibility for their learning.

In addition, (Scharle, Szalio, 2000, p.2) described it as "the freedom and ability to manage one's own affairs, which entails the right to make decisions as well"

Briefly, Sainclair (2000) cited in (Borg, & Al-Busaidi, 2012, p.5) suggested the following aspects in which autonomy is defined. Firstly, autonomy is a construct of capacity which involves taking responsibility where it is not necessarily innate. Secondly, complete autonomy is an idealistic goal since there are degrees of autonomy which are unstable. Thirdly, autonomy is not a matter of being independent but being aware of the process of learning is too important. Moreover, autonomy can be inside and outside the classroom in which it has four main dimensions: individual, social, political, as well as psychological. Finally autonomy is interpreted differently by different cultures.

Teacher's and Learner's perspectives on Autonomy

The term "perspective" is usually referred to a way of viewing a phenomenon. However, the underlying assumption is that the teachers and learners view of autonomy process.

Teacher's perspective.

From the teachers' perspective autonomy is primarily concerned with institutional and classroom learning arrangement within established curricula which is mainly focusing on the learner's capacity as Benson (1997) stated "I have described this as a false dilemma, however, because both may be required for the achievement of personal autonomy" cited in (Lamb, & Reiders, p.25). What Benson finds problematic is the sense in which classroom-oriented conceptions of autonomy are connected to the idea of personal autonomy. The teacher will need to create a classroom learning environment that is supportive of learner autonomy. We can say that the teachers' perspective is the starting point which is needed in developing and supporting a learner's existing autonomy. Being autonomous does not mean learning alone without the supervision of the teacher. On construct the role of the teacher is very important for the development of autonomy among learners. The teacher should play the role of manager by involving students in decision-making, as a resource person by motivating them to be active, and as counselor by providing them with guidance and advice so as to monitor their own learning inside and outside the classroom.

Learner's perspective.

Learner's perspective on autonomy lies in the possibilities that learners can have or do in order to autonomous learners in a much broader sense and its relationship to their lives beyond the classroom. In light of that Benson (1997) as cited in (Lamb et al, 2008, p.26) said "learners as people generally wish to lead their lives autonomously and that they have an interest in the contribution that their learning makes to their personal autonomy"

We might say that learners are typically more concerned with learning what they need to learn for the achievement of these life goals. Benson (1997) affirms that "personal autonomy is often a condition for the achievement of life goals, rather than an explicit goal in its own right" as cited in (Lamb et al, 2008, p.26). This simply implies that learners' perspectives on autonomy are always contextualized within particular experiences of learning and life. Students are better to decide what is better and what is important. In other words, learners should have the desire to be responsible by trying to act independently fear from being constrained with teachers and institutional support; and this is only not only in the case of learning since learners should be socially aware in their lives and of those around him/her.

Learner Autonomy Characteristic

Learner autonomy is not a readymade product to be used; on the contrary it could be achieved only if such characteristics are met which we are going to deal with the most essential ones.

Self- management in learning.

The study of learner autonomy has been a major area of interest in foreign language teaching and learning for over thirty years, including some practical studies investigated how adults continue their learning. Self-management allows students to use their directive skills; and monitoring their own learning according to the needs they require.

Benson (2001) maintains that “Control over learning management can be described in terms of the behaviors that learners employ in order to manage the planning, organization and evaluation of their learning” (p.76).Management over learning is considered an integral element leading to a successful autonomous. Therefore, it is one of the key themes in the field of foreign language learning. In this case learners without any doubt need such materials relying on to manage their learning.

Learner agendas in the classroom.

Learners come to classrooms with different perspectives and different background. Therefore they have specific needs and goals, that is to say learners are likely to continue coming to class if those goals will be achieved. One of the most interesting and revealing areas of debate has been the focus on the relationship between learning and instruction in the classroom settings which has been suggested

that even in the classroom learners tend to follow their own agendas rather than those of their teacher. In this respect Nuanan (1995) as cited in (Benson, 2001, p.65) said:

I should like to argue that the principal reason for the mismatch between teachers and learners, which gives rise to a disparity between what is taught and what is learned, is that there is a mismatch between the pedagogical agenda of the teacher and that of the learner. While the teacher is busily teaching one thing, the learner is very often focusing on something else.

That means to say that what the teacher gave is not always what learners exactly need or want. Thus, self-agenda in the classroom situation is very important for achieving good results.

Corder (1967) and Dakin (1973), argued that “though the teacher may control the experiences of the learner is exposed to, it is the learner who selects what is learnt from them” cited in (Benson, 2001,p.66).In this case the teacher is considered only as an observer and learners by themselves construct the language lessons. According to Ellis (1994) cited in (Benson, 2001, p.67) language learning takes place in the classroom according to learners' construction, and to which they are exposed to. However, the teacher may provide much of the input, the learners who decide what is processed and learned.

Strategies to foster learner autonomy

Fostering learner autonomy is considered as a move from teacher-directed teaching environment to a possible learner- directed environment. The main juncture in this study is focusing on what the learners can do to be autonomous in their own learning. Practices associated with the development of autonomy can be classified under two broad headings:

Resource-based approaches emphasize independent interaction with learning materials.

Technology-based approaches emphasize independent interaction with educational technologies

Resource-based approaches.

This kind of learning is usually referred to learners' independent interaction with learning resources. In this paper we are going to shed light on two main materials which are often associated with the issue of fostering autonomy in language learning. They are:

Self-access.

Sheerin (1991) defines self-access as “ a way of describing materials that are designed and organized in such a way that students can select and work on tasks on their own”(Benson,2001,p.114)

Gardner and Miller (1999) maintain that self-access language learning is associated with learning and not with teaching which seen as a collection of materials and

sometimes as a system for organizing resources. Therefore, it can be seen as an integration of a number of elements leading to learners own interaction.

cited in (Benson,2001).

Again (Benson, 2001) argued that self-access centre has been considered as the corner stone of learner autonomy over time since. It provides learners with the major resources which are directly made for them. These resources typically include audio, videotapes, computer workstations, and a variety of printed materials.

As a result from what has been said before, in promoting autonomy the role of self-access lies in the designing of materials for independent use by learners.

Self-instruction and distance learning.

Although the self-instructional materials industry is a significant sector within the foreign language teaching and learning little research on has been carried out concerning its effectiveness.

According to Moore (1991, p.76) distance education is defined as “The family of instructional methods in which the teaching behaviors are executed apart from the learning behaviors...so that communication between the learner and the teacher must be facilitated by print, electronic, mechanical, or other devices”

Moreover, Wedmeyer (1981) suggested a system of distance education that includes such characteristics which emphasize learner independence. The instructional system should to:

-Place greater responsibility for learning on the students;

-Offer students' wider choices (more opportunities) in courses, formats, and methodologies;

-Use all teaching media and methods proven effective;

-Permit students to start, stop, and learn at their own pace. (Cited in Holmberg, 1995, p.8)

From what has been stated we understand that unlike self-instruction, distance learning is an institutional form of learning involving teachers, and at the same time both of them are considered as a key strategies to learner autonomy inside and outside the classroom. More importantly, some people used distance learning, and self-instruction as synonyms because of the great contiguity between them; therefore, to make it clear we must quote what has been stated by Little (1990) on what autonomy is not:

Autonomy is not a synonym for self-instruction; in other words, autonomy is not limited to learning without a teacher. In the classroom context, autonomy does not entail an abdication of responsibility on the part of the teacher, it is not a matter of letting the learners get on with things as best they can. On the other hand, autonomy is not something that teachers do to learners; that is, it is not teaching method. And autonomy is not a steady state achieved by learners cited in (Benson, 2001, p.64).

This saying indicates that the concept of autonomy is perplexed with other notions which seem to many scholars the same; but it is not as stated by Little above.

Technology-based approaches.

With the rapid growth of technology, many educational institutions began to use technology in teaching. The use of technology is an important fact of today's language instruction that promoting learner autonomy. Technology-based approaches are different from resource-based approaches in their focus on the technologies used to access resources. They make students acquire important computer skills apart from students learning, creating more options exercises for them to connect with course content as well as to other learners. In this paper we will concern with discussing two crucial technological tools for integrating in language learning so as to promote learner autonomy which are: Computer-assisted language learning, and the Internet.

Computer-assisted language learning (CALL).

Technology in language teaching and learning is not new used medium in educational institutions; it has been contracted with the processes for centuries. Computer based materials referred to CALL (Computer-assisted Language Learning) appeared in 1980s with the emergence of the so-called learner autonomy.

One of the best known activities of CALL programs is that text reconstruction by typing in words. In addition, the computer provides the learners feedback; correct the answer if it is incorrect to provide more sophisticated feedback, and pointing out the learners the remedial activities. (Dudeny, & Hockly, 2008). That is to say, very important part within the theory of learner autonomy, therefore it becomes as natural as the use of books or pens by students since it affects positively their achievement.

The Internet.

One of the most important ways to enhance learners' role to become autonomous is the use of the internet. It is an important medium either in homes, or at internet café. Moreover, it is becoming increasingly used to learners since the internet nowadays is a part of life which the younger learner has to develop and integrate. It offers excellent opportunities for collaboration between who are geographically separated. The internet provided learners with published materials; such as: resource books and course books for teachers, in addition to giving us new ways for practicing language, and assessing performance. Of course this world is very dilating that is why we are going to deal only with its main areas

The Email.

Results from studies on language learning reveal that the e-mail is one from the most important tools used around today. It is used inside and outside class time. First, e-mail allows learners to keep in touch with other teachers around the world. Another important advantage of e-mail is the easiness when using it since almost learners are familiar with it, with taking into account the kind of language used.

E-mails have its special advantages like a numerous applications; learners do not need to be required to meet with teachers or classmates in a specific time. They can learn any time of the day or night, and the instructor can communicate with them using e-mail, discussion board and on-line chat at any convenient time. Zhao(2003)

The use of E-mails in language learning and teaching are becoming as natural as the use of books or pens and papers learners, and it will affect positively on their

education. Thus, E-mails are increasingly important in language classroom, that is why learners are needed it more and more.

Multimedia.

For the past several decades, multimedia has had a long history in learning. There are two principal ways that multimedia can be used. Firstly, it augments availability of data and resources to learners via the conveyance of distribution of programs and activities such as: laboratory experiments, library tools, exhibition visits....through an electronic medium. Secondly, it facilitate at present time to improve research and experience on learning in any domains of educational setting (Edinburgh, 1996).In other words Multimedia software that enables the user to create or access visual images like: Movie, Microsoft Maker, and Microsoft Power Point. Students learn at different rates, and have different learning styles. The use of Multimedia helps teachers reach all students in different ways; it helps to relate the curriculum to life outside the classroom like: interaction activities, interpersonal exchanging, and problem solving projects. Thus, the use of Multimedia adds many dimensions to foreign language learning. In addition, it gives students opportunities to use their productive and receptive abilities for real purposes such as: publishing a newsletter, or writing interactive journals.

To conclude, Multimedia has a great influence on learner autonomy idea. In addition it enhances learners to deal successfully with difficult attitudes and skills that they bring from an external side.

Social Computing.

Social computing or social software is the basic and the most important of web. It is the use of technologies such as blogs, wikis, and podcasts by learners. Those social software allows learners to connect, to communicate, and collaborate online in an e-learning context, with social computing learners can generate and create ideas individually, and they can use it to share their experience and help on assignments and projects. (Harper, 2008)

Finally, we release that the task of making technology appears more and more for learners so as to become an ordinary part of their learning may provide the issue of autonomy with a great amount of success.

The Importance of Learner Autonomy in EFL Classes

Autonomy has a great amount of interest in individuals' life in general and in learning as a particular case. Learning autonomy permits students to control their own learning giving them the opportunity to express themselves; and showing their mental abilities. Furthermore, learners who possess this capacity or attribute generally are very motivated and well-formed students, having the desire to act independently .Autonomous students are those learners who are involved in making classroom decisions, setting goals, and selecting materials which lead to a great success of leaning. Another important element justifying the importance of autonomy is the use ICTs which are the basis of that concept; learners who are familiar with these technologies are automatically updated and active students.

Learner autonomy is very important idea whether at the level of theory or empirically where both teachers and learners have the opportunity to be involved in the process of learning and teaching. Add fostering autonomy.

Conclusion

By the end of this chapter, we can deduce that Learner Autonomy is used interchangeably with other concepts, for instance: long life learning, independence learning. This problematic point may diminish its importance somehow. However, we acknowledge that many more missing pieces this study attempt to shed light on the most interesting areas of debate concerning the issue of learner autonomy.

Methodology

Introduction

This chapter is devoted to data analysis in which we are going to analyze and show the results. we attempt to investigate data by relying on two tools of research :(a) students □ questionnaire and (b) teachers □ interview. The former administered to M1 students departement of English at. Biskra University. While the latter is devoted their teachers of all modules.

Participants

The technique that we followed is random sampling in which there is a high level of objectivity .On the one hand , our participants of the questionnaire represented 25 students from 180 students what equates 13 ,88% from the hole population; they take about 45 minutes to answer the questionnaire's statements which were collected to be analyzed later on. Thus, we cannot neglect their collaboration and help for getting fruitful results. On the other hand, we find ourselves obliged to distribute the interview to teachers with a written form because of time limitations. All of them accepted to answer. Moreover, they have found all the questions clear that is why they have provided us with full responses.

Instruments

In dealing with work instruments, the survey included a short definition of learner autonomy to provide participants with a clear idea of the topic. In addition the order of questions was taken into consideration so as to avoid confusion in participants mind and to make the investigation coherent. Both the questionnaire and the interview were very important to this topic since they gave useful information about learner autonomy in our classes.

Students' Questionnaire

The questionnaire was distributed on 25 students of master one department of English at Biskra University and we handed back all the papers. This questionnaire includes two types of questions: tick the appropriate answer, and yes/no questions in addition to an open ended question provided to students for their suggestions. The questionnaire also divided into three sections. The first section was about students' background information (gender, age); the second one includes four questions was about learning principles (the reason behind studying English, learning experience...). The third section which includes nine questions was about learning autonomy among them.

Teachers Interview

The procedure with teachers was much easier than that with learners. We had only to explain for them the idea (hypothesis that our piece of research turned around, and then we asked them to give us their points of view, by answering the statements of the interview. So, five English language teachers accepted to complete the interview because they consider our hypothesis as an interesting idea to be discussed and get results to be focused on while learning and teaching.

Data collection and Analysis

In any investigation the questionnaire should be designed and developed in the way that it provides global analyses of learners' needs and language learning objectives since there is a variation among students in terms of age, gender, attitudes, and interests. This questionnaire aimed to identify and to investigate whether our students are taking charge of their own learning or not. Whereas, the interview aims at identifying the qualifications, periods of teaching, and opinions about the application of learner autonomy of English language teachers at Biskra University, It aims also, to

know to various difficulties that students encounter in acquiring a foreign language, and the reasons behind these difficulties. Moreover, we want to know the degree of autonomy achieved by M1 students.

Administration and Analysis of the Students' questionnaire.

Item1: Students' Gender.

a-Female

b-Male

Questions	A	B
Respondents	16	9
Percentage %	64	36

Table1: Gender distribution

We noticed that the majority of the respondents who learn English are females with a percentage of 64% since they have the desire to acquire more than one language. In contrast, we find only 36% are males who they generally tend to choose scientific branches rather than literary ones.

Item2: Age

Age	21→25	26→30
Respondents	15	10
Percentage%	60	40

Table2: Students' age

Age is regarded, and as it is mentioned above most of the students or about 60% are between 21→25 years while 40% of them are between 26→30. This means that the majority are still young who think that English is the language of technology, and they have been exposed to it through media whether by watching movies or by exploring the internet as a result they will find themselves very familiar with it.

Item3: Why have you chosen English to study at University?

The reason	Love	To get a job	To travel	To master it	1+2
R	4	2	0	15	4
P%	16	8	0	60	16

Table3: The reason for studying English at university

60% of the participants said that their main objective is mastering English as a foreign language that is why they have chosen it to study at university thinking that it is obligatory for every one since they find English wherever they go(channels, internet café, computing sciences, products....).While, other students or about 16% replied that only love and desire which lead them to choose the English language as a specialization. On the other hand, we have found 8% of the respondents need English to get a job thinking that their diploma may improve their financial situation(to get a job)

The ambition of traveling, and getting a job is presented by 16% from the whole sample because they think that English is studied today for two reasons no more. The first one is traveling abroad in order to negotiate with foreigners and native speakers; while the second reason is getting a job and being a successful teachers.

Item4: Are you satisfied with your level?

	Yes	No	I do not know
R	7	15	3
P%	28	60	

Table4: Students' opinion about their level

We asked students' about their level whether they satisfied with it or not.28% of them said that they are satisfied since they do their best in order to improve the level and getting better results. While 60% of them replied that they are unsatisfied because they cannot communicate fluently, and they do not understand native speakers...., we have found also 12% of the respondents do not know whether they are satisfied or not since they still ignoring many things related to English as they said. Therefore, they cannot evaluate their level.

Item5: How do you feel about your experience of learning English?

	Positive	Negative	Pleasant	Stressful	1+3
R	15	2	4	1	3
P%	60	8	16	4	12

Table5: Students opinion concerning their experience of learning English

Tackling another element, we asked students about their experience of learning English.60% replied that they consider their experience very positive; they said that every day they learn new things, and their level is improving day after day. Moreover, they know new modules which they have never heard before like: ESP, and methodology. In the second place, 16% of them said that their experience is not just positive but more than that it is pleasant since they enjoy learning English where there is a space for entertainment and freedom for expressing whatever they want. While

only 8% of the respondents answered negatively thinking that they do not achieve any advance or development; hence, learning English is very difficult for them in addition to the lack of teachers as they said. On the other hand, other students or about 4% said that their experience is not totally negative but stressful since they do not feel comfortable inside the classroom. Others or around 12% see another thing; they claim that their experience is very satisfactory; it is positive and pleasant at the same time.

Item6: How do you prefer to learn English?

	Teacher-learner interaction	Learner-learner interaction	Reading handouts	1+2
R	16	3	2	4
P%	64	12	8	16

Table6: Their opinion about the preferable way to learn English

From students' answers we have found that 64% prefer to learn English through teacher-learner interaction. In their opinion this way contributes in developing the communication between the teacher and the learner, and provides students with the right information since the teacher is supposed knowing more. About 12% prefer to learn with their peers since only the students who can overcome the difficulties that encounter them inside the classroom as fear, shame as an example. Whereas 8% of the participants are supporters of reading handouts; they claim that with this way they feel free to absorb the necessary information. This latter given in the handouts is sufficient as they said. The rest or about 16% prefer to learn with their peers and at the sometime reading handouts to exchange ideas and check the difficult words in order not to forget them later on; in their opinion this way is very beneficial leading to an effective learning.

Item7: Learner autonomy gives you the opportunity to direct your own learning. Do you think that is?

	Too important	Not important
R	24	1
P%	96	4

Table7: Their opinion concerning the importance of learner autonomy

The majority of the participants and with a percentage of 96% agree with the idea saying that learner autonomy is very interesting in our classes thinking that is the time to shift the responsibility to students so as to direct their own learning. Moreover, we noticed that almost the students are against teachers' dominated classroom discussion and the passivity of learners who merely listen to their teachers while he /she interprets everything.

Item8: In your opinion learner autonomy involves.

	Active learning	Using critical thinking	Individual learning	All of them
R	2	2	5	16
P%	8	8	20	64

Table8: Their perception about learner autonomy

Concerning the question about their perception of learner autonomy notion; we have found 8% defined it as a process which involves active learning where there is a high amount of vivacity and activeness they possess. Only 2 students and with a percentage of 8% claim that learner autonomy requires only one thing which is critical thinking where they find ourselves obliged to use all abilities of the brain as they said. Whereas around 20% of them consider the individual learning and independence as the most important quality leading to an autonomous learner this on the one hand. On

the other hand, we noticed that the majority of the participants or around 64% believe that all the qualities have been mentioned are include thinking that learner autonomy requires the involvement of all the human intellectual abilities.

Item9: Do you think that learner autonomy enhance?.

	Curiosity	Self-reliance	Responsibility	Nothing	1+3	1+2+3
R	0	11	10	0	2	2
P%	0	44	40	0	8	8

Table9: Their perception about learner autonomy advantages

44% of the participants believe that learner autonomy enhances students' determination by being self-reliant so as to abandon the traditional mode of teaching which depends on the flow of information only from the teacher to students and rarely from students to the teacher. While 40% replied that taking responsibility is the most important quality which the learner autonomy may foster. We have found also 8% answered that autonomous learners are those who are not only responsible in directing their own learning but also curious for knowing more and more; and each time asking for further information.

On the other hand, only 8% replied that the three qualities i.e. curiosity, responsibility, and self-reliance are fostered as a result of being an autonomous learner thinking that the enrichment of students' level is the product of their freedom to express themselves and manipulate the language which involves all the qualities have been mentioned above.

Item10: Which type of technology you use?

	E-mails	Web quests	Google documents
R	7	3	15
P%	28	12	60

Table10: The types of technology students' use

Asking about the types of technology they use, we have found that 60% of the participants prefer to use Google documents since it is very easy to use, and beneficial for them in order to get better insights about the subjects they need. While others or around 28% prefer e-mails; in their opinion e-mails are the suitable type for a productive communication, sharing ideas, exchanging experiences, and cultures between friends and even native speakers. Some students or around 12% of them prefer the use of web quests as the table indicates above.

Item11: Do you have e-mail of friends from English speaking countries?

	Yes	No
R	5	20
P%	20	80

Table11: Students' e-mail friends

Tackling another element, we have asked students whether they have e-mail friends from English speaking countries or not. 80% of the respondents have not e-mail friends this may refer to the lack of materials through which they can connect with others like computers, internet. However, 20% of them have e-mail friends; this proves that those students are interested to exchange thoughts, ideas, and experiences with foreigners.

Item12: Do your teachers use data show in teaching?

	Yes	No	Sometimes
R	/	17	8
P%	/	68	32

Table12: Teachers use of data show in teaching

We have asked students whether their teachers use data show in teaching. The majority of them and with a percentage of 68% replied negatively; they said that almost all the modules are as boring because of the lack of technological tools and the data show as one of them. Whereas, 32% assure that their teachers sometimes use the data show providing them with the necessary information and being updated.

Item13: As a learner and as a future teacher do you agree with the idea of autonomy in learning?

	Yes	No	I do know
R	24	/	1
P%	96	/	4

Table13: Their perception about learner autonomy in language classroom

Tackling another element we have asked students if they are supporters of autonomy as learners and future teachers. The majority of them or about 96% answered positively thinking that students have the right to direct their own learning and at the same time they have the duty to acquire that attribute. Whereas, we have found 4% replied that autonomy is not clear in our classes that is why they are not sure whether they agree or disagree with.

Item14: Do you feel that you are an autonomous learner?

	Yes	No	I do not know
R	7	14	4
P%	28	56	16

Table14: Their opinion about autonomy as an attribute which they possess

The table indicates that 56% of the participants acknowledged that they are far from the application of autonomy strategies since they have not the ability to monitor, direct, and control their own learning. However, we cannot deny a rate of 28% of the sample responded with yes thinking that being autonomous students is very necessary condition leading to a successful learners, and fruitful results.

Item15: As a student, what would you like to suggest in order to fostering learner autonomy in our classes?

The final question addressed to students was to suggest some solutions which would be important to foster learner autonomy in EFL classes. According to their suggestions, we deduce that teachers should give more researches to students in all modules and presenting them. They said that teachers should give only the key terms and letting the deep investigation for learners so as to take their own responsibility relying on themselves. In addition to the necessity of a great efforts and hard work which is students' role. Finally, others assure that enhancing autonomy requires a harmony and collaboration between three parts no more: the administration, the learner, and the teacher.

Administration and Analysis of Teachers' Interview

Section one

Question1: it is concerned with how many years teachers have been teaching the English language.

Asking teachers about the period of teaching English, we have found that almost of their answers varied between 8 and 10 years. We have asked this question to know whether they are experienced teachers or not so as knowing more about teaching and learning processes and since we want to know the obstacles which may have been faced them whether on the part of teachers or by University as an administrative power. During the way of teaching, teachers may follow several methods and techniques depending on learners' requirements and aptitude toward the learning process. As a result; we expect that 10 years of experience in the domain of teaching English as a foreign language at University is a considerable period of time so as to know how to deal with learners; in addition to the different psychological aspects they possess and knowing how to treat them successfully to get fruitful results. Moreover, an experienced teacher means that he/she is aware about the main factors leading to failure or success.

Question 2: Teachers' qualification.

We have five teachers from different background and they are mixed between females and males. The highest qualification of most of them is M.A degree therefore that the majority of them approximately have the period of teaching(between 8 and 10 years as it is mentioned above).This proves also; however, the teachers of Biskra University are in different age but almost of them are at the same level, and reveals the absence of the PHD degree.

Question 3: The difficulties that students encounter in acquiring a foreign language.

Students encounter many difficulties in acquiring a foreign language the English language. Some teachers agree with the lack of linguistic background including vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation are the most important challenges facing them and these are because of a several reasons we are going to mention.

Question4:the reasons of these difficulties.

Asking them about the reasons in which these difficulties are created. Some teachers stated that: the first reason is the lack of motivation and appropriate atmosphere. Logically, if students are set in well-air conditioned classes, well-arranged seat, calm and clean classroom they will feel comfortable and at ease, therefore their achievement will be better. In addition to the small number of competent and experienced teachers results with the organization of lectures with a huge number of students. Furthermore, the possibilities for the students to have a direct contact with native speakers of English are very rare. While, one teacher said that watching English movies, listening to English songs, and reading are very productive to the process of EFL acquisition.

Section Two

Question5:Students efforts so as to develop autonomy.

It is true that learner autonomy is highly personal, but this does not mean that student's autonomy is associated with isolation; it makes the student more social because autonomy encourages them to interact with peers and exchange views with them. We have asked teachers about students' efforts so as to develop autonomy. The majority of them conclude that students depend

entirely on their teachers in a classical organization of the studies, only a small number who are doing their best to be autonomous.

Question6: Teachers perspective toward students autonomy.

Being autonomous means taking responsibility to direct, monitor, and control one's own learning. All teachers said that a very large number of students are not motivated to do so at all. There are two main reasons: the difficulty for teacher to apply this kind of approach and the total lack of initiative on the part of students. On the other hand, one teacher said that this procedure may vary from one class to another and from one student to another.

Question7: Teachers view about students' persistence.

Autonomous learners are those students who are not satisfied with only what is given to them; they always look for further information. We ask teachers if their students have this attribute and the reply was as follows. Most of them are not satisfied and at the same time they do not do much to change the situation. Other teacher said that students do not look for extra readings since they prefer to stick to the lesson only. Moreover, whenever they required undertaking research or grouping work, the results are not satisfactory.

Question8: Teachers interpretation concerning autonomy as a goal.

Learner autonomy is taking responsibility of his/ her own learning inside and outside the classroom situation where the teacher acts as a facilitator or a guider instead of knowledge imparter. It may highlight the progress of learners with special educational needs and give them a sense of control over their learning; we have asked teachers about autonomy on the part of its comprehension. They respond that the problem is not in the interpretation or understanding of the concept but the creation of the appropriate conditions to put it into application and to make decisions about what

they will focus on and how much time they will spend on learning both inside and outside the classroom.

Question9: Learner autonomy as " an acquired capacity".

Discussing autonomy as an acquired capacity we have asked teachers if their students possess or not. All most of them agreed that there are a small number of students who acquire that capacity depending on their motivation and level of awareness but unfortunately the majority of them want to receive everything having nothing to produce .Another teacher indicated that students do not take any kind of personal initiative learning to improve their level of proficiency.

Question10: Learning responsibility between teachers' domination and students' one.

Learner autonomy means taking responsibility and this latter means learner dominated while the learning process is taking place. We have asked teachers about this point. All of them replied that at the level of our University (local situation) the teaching learning processes still totally teacher–centered because of many reasons such as: the lack of motivation, overcrowded classes, lack of resource materials...

Question11: Students' perspective toward their teachers.

In fact, learner autonomy is a process and an attribute which requires active, ambitious, and curious students who are aware about the direction of their own learning, in this case the teacher stand only as a manager. We have asked our teachers if students are learning according to that perspective. Almost all of them agree with saying that students are very passive, they leave all the activities to the teacher. Furthermore, some teachers have tried to encourage students' autonomy but

unfortunately the results are not really positive since they still seeing the teacher as the only reference or source of information.

Question12:Students exploration of that right (learner autonomy).

If we discussed autonomy from the educational reform perspective, we will find that being autonomous is a duty which a student must bear in mind and at the same time a right which he/ she should take advantages of it. When we have asked teachers about this point they replied that at our University students do not want to benefit from this right because it implies responsibility; in other words students do not even know how to draw their path because of their dependency to teachers. On the other hand, one teacher said that only students who are really motivated, able to plan, able to make self-evaluation, and seeking to change their situation are taking advantages of that right but they present a small number of the whole population.

Question13:Learner autonomy application among students.

Learner autonomy is very good idea in theory but it needs great resolution and determination to realize empirically and putting it into practice. The majority of the respondents stated that the field reality indicates that the question remains at the level of theory and no concrete-empirical work has been undertaken. Furthermore, learner autonomy is not clear in our classes and conditions.

Question14: Students abilities for creating situations of learning.

Autonomy allows students to participate in classroom decisions and creating appropriate situation for them so as leading to a fruitful results. We have asked teachers if their students are able to do so. We have found that the majority of them

answered negatively, they said that they try to make them using this ability but it is not completely workable thinking that the question depends on many factors namely the teachers' role, the students' motivation, the educational situation, and even the socio-cultural condition.

Question 15: The degree of autonomy among students

Discussing the degree of learner autonomy with teachers here are some points of view: almost all of them said that the degree of autonomy among their students is very low, it may be just 20% from the whole population who are seeking to be autonomous by making personal efforts and relying on themselves. However, other teacher said that students have such obstacles which we find them very important to address. First, teachers cannot deal with all students one by one because of the large number, but students think that their teachers are not doing their job. Secondly, teachers could be afraid of handing over some responsibility to their learners for fear of losing control. More importantly, there are other constraints which may limit the progress of autonomy among students like the lack of ICT materials, air-conditions, and overcrowded classes.

Results and Discussion

Students' Questionnaire Results

From the study reviewed, it is found that no matter whether males or females all of them were very helpful with us 98% of them responded the questions given to them. We also noticed that M1 students are aware about the importance of autonomy but they still need the assistance of their teachers to obtain better results. In addition, new instruments need to be developed, and more research about the application of autonomy strategies needs to be done. After analyzing the questionnaire addressed to M1 students department of English at Biskra University we remark that all most all the students are unsatisfied with being only as receivers by the contrary; they have the willing to breakdown this traditional notion in which they view teachers as the only delivers of knowledge rather than themselves and this is the cornerstone of learner autonomy but there are always many constraints and obstacles which they face them like the lack of motivation, lack of ICTs tools. Moreover, the students supposed some suggestions to develop learner autonomy which we have already stated; this proves that there is a will to change the situation needing a way to fill the empty vessel.

Teachers' Interview Results

The design of the interview was done to answer a specific assumptions related to the concept of learner autonomy in our classes. Teachers were chosen as a sample to ensure the results which we are going to obtain. All the data collected from them are showed that learner autonomy is too beneficial for students so as to buildup and improve their levels, but unfortunately they are not taking advantages of that right and duty at the same time. Teachers showed learning autonomy is a process which encourages taking responsibility, higher order thinking, curiosity, and self-reliance, but students are not ready to make the first move to acquire knowledge instead of

absorbing it from the teacher and forgetting it after taking tests. However, teachers argue that being responsible does not mean the total exclusion of teachers' contribution as guiders, and managers leading to an effective learning at the end of the procedure. Actually, when this collaboration between teachers and learners happens, undoubtedly we will get very productive fruitions.

Conclusion

Finally, we can say that both teachers and students were very helpful with us conducting this research, and they agree with us that the subject under study has a great amount of interest in respect of language learning and teaching. We must acknowledge that time limitation was the main challenge obliging us to orient the interview to teachers with a written form instead of recording; fortunately, all of them answered us very clearly which added a kind of reliability to our study.

Pedagogical Implications

The focus of this study was not to create new curricular nor to recommend a particular methodology, but to more thoroughly elaborate on the nature of learner autonomy strategies, and offer suggestions for fostering it:

- Autonomy implies not only that learners attempt to take control of their own learning from time to time but that they possess the capacity to do so systematically.
- Fostering autonomy does not imply that teachers simply leave learners to their own devices, but they actively encourage and assist them to take control of their learning in ways that will be effective in terms of goals.
- Learning autonomy can be inside and outside the classroom; therefore, students should take this point in consideration.
- Responsible and self-reliant learners are more likely to develop autonomy so as to control and direct their own learning.
- Integrating ICTs in our language classroom has a very considerable amount of interest to enhance autonomy among students.
- Learner-centered classrooms provide ideal conditions for developing learner autonomy.
- The teacher has an important role to play in supporting autonomy where he/she acting as a counselor, manager, or a guide.
- Teachers need to ask students to list what should be discussed inside the classroom by using their own agendas.
- Teachers need to encourage their students to use their own directive skills by making e-mail of friends from foreign countries so as to share ideas and experiences, using videos, and Google documents.

- The University as an administrative power should take decisions and provide students with more specialized teachers, and laboratory rooms, in addition to the necessary materials leading to the development of autonomy.

General Conclusion

The findings of this study appear to corroborate other studies in suggesting that autonomy can positively affect the language learning experience in numerous ways that enhancing autonomy seems to increase language acquisition, self-evaluation, and learner motivation. Therefore, it is suggested that awareness of learning autonomy strategies be heightened and taken seriously by teachers and students alike.

Our research attempted to examine and to describe learner autonomy strategies in EFL classes (a case study M1students department of English Biskra University).In this work, we shed light on learner autonomy as an acquired attribute. To answer the questions stated at the beginning, we have investigated this problem relying on different data gathered from a questionnaire oriented to M1 students, and an interview oriented to their teachers.

From this research we suggested some solutions that can be achieved with association of the efforts of some sides, and we hope that would help students in their hard work. First of all, he/ she should be ambitious and highly motivated because this represents a source of powerful reasons to do better, and to succeed being an autonomous learner. Besides, the student needs to be able to get rid of fright and shyness as obstacles on his way. Then, he has to bear responsibility by learning independently, in addition to his teachers' assistance. Finally, we advise students to work in groups because this way contributes to exchange skills and information.

The teacher should be in a good psychological state since this may affect his students. He needs also to be experienced and competent; this leads students to benefit from his courses and to be interested in what he/she teaches them. On the one hand, he had to create a good atmosphere in the classroom. On the other hand, he needs to know his students difficulties, and correct their errors in an appropriate way because this may strengthen the trust between them. More importantly, some teachers focuses on delivering information to students; therefore, this makes them relying on the teacher the thing which prevents them from being autonomous students.

The University as an administrative power has the responsibility to provide learners with good programs besides to competent teachers. Furthermore, technological materials such as: videos, computers linked to Internet. Finally, we cannot neglect the role of the seminars with experts in the field of learning from all the world will be interesting tools to develop learner abilities so as to take their own responsibility and being autonomous.

Appendix one

Master one Students' Questionnaire

Dear students

You are kindly invited to fill in the following questionnaire which is a part of a master research that aims at investigating learner autonomy in our classes. This concept is usually defined as a process in which learners rely on themselves in order to acquire knowledge. Your contribution is too important for the validity of this research.

Please tick the answer you find it appropriate.

Section one: Background information

1. Gender:

a- Female

b- Male

2. Age

Year

Section Two: Learning Principles

3. Why have you chosen English to study at university?

a. You love it

b. To get a job

c. To travel abroad

d. To master it

4. Are you satisfied with your level?

a. Yes

b. No

c. I do not know

5. How do you think about your experience of learning English?

a- Positive

b. Negative

c. Pleasant

d. Stressful

Whatever the answer is state why

.....
.....
.....
.....

6. How do you prefer to learn English?

a. Teacher-learner interaction(questions/answers)

b. Learner-learner interaction(workshop)

c. Reading handout

Section Three: Learner autonomy among students learning

7. Learner autonomy gives you the opportunity to direct your own learning. Do you think that is

a. Not important

b. Too important

8. In your opinion learner autonomy involve

a. Active learning

b. Using critical thinking

c. individual learning

d. All of them

Others,

specify.....

.....
.....
.....

9. Do you think that learner autonomy enhance?

- a. Curiosity
- b. Self-reliance
- c. Responsibility
- d. Nothing

10. Which type of technology do you use?

- a. E-mails
- b. Web quests
- c. Google documents

In both cases state why

.....
.....

11. Do you have e-mail friends from English speaking countries?

- a. Yes
- b. No

12. Do your teachers use data show in teaching?

- a. Yes
- b. No

13. As a learner and as a future teacher do you agree with the idea of autonomy in learning?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. I do not know

14. Do you feel that you are an autonomous learner?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. I do not know

15. As a student, what would you like to suggest in order to foster learner autonomy in our classes?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Thank you for your contribution

Appendix Two

Teachers' Interview

We are doing a study on learning autonomy where it is defined as the capacity to take charge of responsibility of one's own learning, and we want to know if our students (M1 students) are autonomous learners or not. So, could you help us conducting this research?

Section one.

1-How many years have you been teaching English?

2-What is your educational degree?

3-According to your experience, what are the difficulties that students encounter in acquiring a foreign language?

4- In your opinion what are the reasons in which these difficulties are created?

Section two.

5 - According to the definition provided above .Do you think that your learners -i.e. M1 students- are developing a sense of autonomy in their current study?

6- Learner autonomy is a process that is developed in different ways depending on teachers' interpretations, beliefs, and educational setting. As a teacher do you think that your learners are far from being autonomous?

7- Do you think that your students are satisfied with only what you gave them?

8- Do you think that learners' autonomy is something abstract i.e. ideal in which your students cannot fulfill?

9- The concept of learner autonomy has many areas of debate concerning its definition. However almost researchers viewed it as "an acquired capacity" .Do you think that your students possess it?

10- As a teacher. Do you think that learning responsibility is shifted from teacher-centered to learner-centered?

11-Autonomous students are those learners who consider the teacher only as a counselor, manager, and guide to an effective learning. Do you think your students are learning according to that perspective?

12- Learner autonomy allows students to determine the direction of their own learning. Do you think your students take advantages of that right?

13-Researchers have increasingly argued that there is an intimate relationship between autonomy and an effective learning. Do you think your students have largely been explored this relationship empirically or only at the level of theoretical support?

14- Autonomous learners are able to create situations of learning for them. Do you think that your students are able to do so?

15-As a teacher, to what extent do you consider your students as an autonomous learners?

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