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***Investigating the Role of Teachers in
Promoting Learner Autonomy***

The Case of EFL Teachers and Third Year Students at the Department of
English at Ghardaia University

**A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirement for the Degree of Master in Didactics**

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DEDICATION

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds, and may His peace and blessings be upon the noblest of the Prophets and Messengers, our Prophet Muhammed.

It would be an honor to dedicate this compilation to my beloved parents the reason of what I become today, I will never finish thanking your efforts, your support and your love.

To my husband, my daughter JIHAN, my twins and my brothers, I am really grateful to you all.

To my best friend, Wafa, and my classmates who shared their words of advice and encouragement with me to finish this work.

Nour El Houda BEDJADJ

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds, and may His peace and blessings be upon the noblest of the Prophets and Messengers, our Prophet Muhammed.

With a special feeling and gratitude, I dedicate this piece of work to my loving parents, who have been my source of inspiration, strength, and love to reach my dreams. All these ended with a good outcome, what I say can't fulfil or reward you.

To the best brothers ever Mohammed, Sami, Raid and Abd el-Nour: Thank you for all the things you have done for me.

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Abstract

The main aim of the present study is to investigate the role of the teachers in promoting learners' autonomy. A major problem of students at Ghardaia University is the lack of independence. The problem may be related to students not knowing the importance of autonomy in university and the positive influence of this skill on their academic success and lifelong learning. We adopted a descriptive design with both quantitative and qualitative approach (mixed method) to obtain the necessary and relevant data. To answer the research questions, we have chosen two questionnaires as tools to collect the research data. Our study is conducted in Algeria, specifically Ghardaia University in the Department of English. Our population consists of eight (8) EFL teachers and 80 Third Year LMD students. However, the researchers have chosen a sample of 25 students during the academic year of 2022-2023. The obtained results from both questionnaires raise the idea that teachers should encourage autonomous learners in their classrooms by implementing different teaching strategies which demonstrate the four roles: a facilitator, a guide, a counselor, and a resource, among which the most used role is a facilitator. In addition, teachers are facing some difficulties including learners' lack of independence in learning. Consequently, this lack of autonomy among students has influenced negatively their performance in their study. As a conclusion, it is suggested that, formative days should be conducted in order to shed the light on the relationship between autonomy and language development. Furthermore, we hope that teachers of English at Ghardaia University will recognize their significant role in helping learners be autonomous inside and outside classroom.

Key words: Language Development, Language Teachers, Learner Autonomy, Teacher's Role, Teaching Strategies, Third Year LMD Students

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List of Abbreviations

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

LA: Learner Autonomy

LMD: Licence – Master - Doctorat

Q: Question

SDL: Self-Directed Learning

TEFL: Teaching English as a Foreign Language

General Introduction

Recently, in language teaching and learning, there has been a significant shift toward the focus on learners and learning rather than on teachers and teaching. Learner autonomy is considered to be one of the major changes accompanying this shift because it gives the importance to the role of the learner rather than the role of the teacher (Jacobs & Farrell, 2003). Today, learner autonomy is considered as a desirable goal in language education, as it helps learners see learning as a lifelong process and a way to learn independently.

1. Background of the Study

Since the 1970s, the field of language teaching and learning has made great strides thanks to psychology, humanistic pedagogy, communicative approaches, and constructivism. These methods and approaches have flourished with a new concept that emphasizes the essential role teachers play in helping students exercise their autonomy. By guiding the learner through different strategies and accompanying him /her with the most suitable methods in the autonomous learning, the learner is no longer seen as an empty vessel filled with information (Harmr, 2001). Researchers have created a concept called Self-Directed learning (SDL) or learner autonomy (LA) that marks a turning point in the field of foreign language teaching. Various educational systems around the world have recognized that the lack of independence in learning is a serious problem and finding a solution to this problem has become a necessity. In terms of higher education, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, university teachers were forced to teach online to cope with the demands of the period.

2. Statement of Purpose

Besides considering autonomy, our study is concerned with the role of teachers in promoting learner autonomy and its relation to the improvement of the learning process. Our major goal will be to consider autonomous learning as a skill that should be acquired among students of English in the university and be improved by one of the most powerful components in the teaching - learning process which is the teacher. In addition, our research is interested in the role of teachers in promoting learner autonomy and its relationship with improving the learning process. Our main goal is to see independent learning as a required skill in English language students at the Department of English at Ghardaia University. Another purpose of this study is to increase the understanding and recognition among teachers and learners about the importance of emphasizing self-directed learning in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom.

3. Statement of Problem

Learner autonomy is one of the most vital innovations proposed by the new “learner-centered” model. In other words, shifting the focus from teacher to learner requires a radical change in the roles of teachers and learners. Despite the fact that teachers play an important role in developing learner autonomy, research has focused more on other aspects such as why we need to foster learner autonomy and its implication for teaching and learning (Borg, 2012). In our research, we will analyze the influential impact of the teachers’ role on learners’ autonomy, as well as, bridge the gap between the theoretical meaning of learners’ autonomy and the way in which learner autonomy is concerned with its learning process and how teachers can contribute in its practical enhancement.

4. Motivations

As all English language teachers know, how much practice students do outside of classroom, affects how quickly they reach their language goals. Teachers are curious about the way they can promote learners' self-direct learning in order to improve the quality of their teaching and help their students become more independent. Little (1996) states that learners often do not automatically take responsibility for their own learning, but they need teachers to help them do so. Teachers should have roles other than just a source of knowledge for students. Learning Autonomy is a great way to do this by providing a wide range of strategies and resources such as applications so that students can take control of their learning and get better results.

5. Research Questions

Dealing with such a kind of research will lead to the following crucial questions:

- 1) Are EFL university students autonomous?
- 2) Do teachers promote autonomy among students in higher education environment?
- 3) What strategies do university teachers provide in order to support their learners to become more autonomous?

6. Hypothesis

In response to these research questions, the present study hypothesized that: EFL learners have a negative attitude towards learner-based approach. EFL teachers from the Department of English at Ghardaia University empower learners to learn English as a foreign language. They provide learners with the right opportunities, methods and strategies to promote autonomy in their learning.

7. Structure of the Dissertation

This research deals with an introduction, two main parts and a general conclusion. The general introduction of the topic under study deals with the background of the study, statement of purpose and statement of problem, research questions and hypotheses. In addition, in this part, we mention what motivated us to choose this topic and the limitations we face in tackling it. We have also define some important terms related to this study.

Part one represents the theoretical part. It is divided into two chapters. Chapter one deals with learners' autonomy along with all its concepts while the second chapter discusses the role of teachers in promoting it in EFL context. Part two represents the practical part of the present study. It includes the methodology, the research instruments, the results and the discussion of these results, some implications and suggestions for further research. The dissertation ends with a general conclusion which summarizes the findings of the study and the research questionnaires.

8. Limitations of the Study

While conducting our research, we were faced by many difficulties and limitations which can be summarized as follow:

The first limitation is the lack of reliable sources concerned with TEFL books in the library at Ghardaia University. Therefore, we relied on a great number of electronic books, and journal articles.

Another encountered problem occurred when the questionnaire was handed to students. The respondents do not always show their real attitude. Further, some of them refused to fill it in while others did not give it back or they did not answer all the required questions.

Conducting a questionnaire using Google form with busy teachers is a challenging task. The questionnaire was done at the end of the year. The teachers were

under great pressure to finish the program and to prepare for their exams. Thus, they did not have time to answer it. Moreover, some of them did not give it back which obliged us to rely on a few number. We intended to use another data instrument, but time constraints hinder us to do so.

9. Definition of Terms

- **Teachers' roles:** The different teaching techniques and practices in an autonomy based classroom.
- **Teacher's Role in Promoting Learner Autonomy:** According to Voller (1997), the teacher's roles in promoting autonomous learning are facilitator, counselor and resource. Because the decision of incorporating autonomy in language learning usually comes from the teacher, autonomy fostering depends essentially on the teachers' redefinitions of their own role (Hill, 1994).
- **Learner's roles:** The ways in which autonomous learners behave inside and outside of the classroom.
- **Learner Autonomy:** is the ability to take charge of one's own learning (Holec, 1981, as cited in Bonson, 2001). However, learner autonomy does not mean to learn alone without the help of the teacher because the latter has a crucial role in developing learner autonomy.

Part One:

The Theoretical Part

Chapter One:

Autonomy in the Teaching-Learning Context

Introduction

In the last decades, language teaching has witnessed numerous changes that affected positively the teaching and learning process. One of these prominent changes is the shift in focus from teacher-centered mode of teaching to learner-centered mode. Putting it differently, there was a change in the view of how to teach the language from transmitting rules by the teacher to the students to giving the learners the responsibility to take charge of their own learners. As a result, this new realm came with a novel concept to the field of education namely learner autonomy which deemed to be one of the bases on which learner-centeredness stands on. The teacher's role within this new mode of teaching is not marginalized, but he/she plays a greater role in promoting their learners' autonomy by being facilitators and guides.

1.1. Definition of Learners' Autonomy

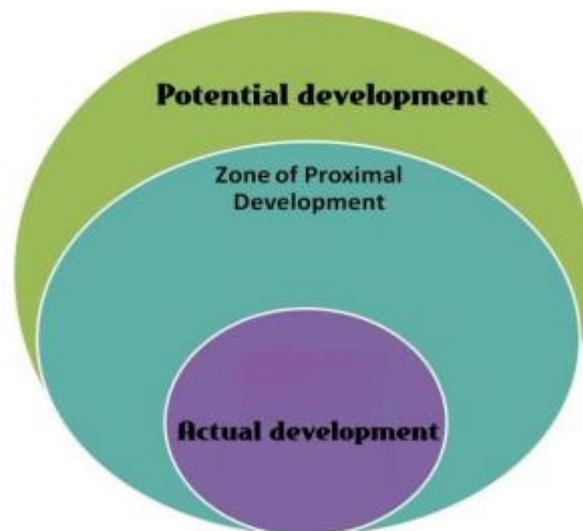
Generally speaking, the concept of autonomy refers to the state of being independent in managing one's own matters. As defined in the Oxford Wordpower Dictionary (2006), autonomy is: "the right of an organization, region ... etc. to govern or to control its own affairs" (p.46). In the same line of thoughts, autonomy is also defined as "the ability to act and make decisions without being controlled by anyone else: giving individuals greater autonomy in their own lives" (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2010, p.84).

In the field of language teaching and learning, there was a wealth of research about the importance and significance of learners' responsibility in their own learning. It was proved that when learners make efforts in learning by their own, their motivation as well as their performance will be increased. Holec (1981) defined learner autonomy as "the ability to take charge of one's own learning" (p. 3). Similarly, Little (2007) noted that "the

essence of learner autonomy is the ability to take charge of one's own learning" (p. 15). Thus, it is agreed that autonomous learners are those who have the ability to learn by themselves without being dependent on the teacher. Furthermore, Vanijdee (2003) claimed that "the definition of learner autonomy is one which views autonomy as a capacity—a construct of attitudes and abilities—which allows learners to take more responsibility for their own learning" (p.76). In simpler words, learner autonomy refers to the individuals' beliefs about their own abilities to learn without the constant help of the teacher.

Figure 1

Zone of Proximal Development of Learner Autonomy



Note. Adapted from "Language learner autonomy", by Little, D., 2007, p. 21.

Figure 1 shows levels of learner autonomy that can be attained by learners. A zone of proximal growth can be regarded as the space between the circles. According to Little (200), "[i]n any extended process of learning, the autonomy that we achieve at one stage provides an essential springboard to the next" (p. 21).

Teachers can effectively support and encourage autonomous learning by expanding on what students are currently capable of doing. This approach allows students to increase their level of autonomy.

1.2. The Importance of Autonomy in the Teaching-Learning Context

Achieving autonomy is deemed to be one of the ultimate goals in the teaching-learning process. It is of utmost importance to teach students how to be autonomous and independent. As aptly stated by Agadzhanova (2020):

Cultivating students' autonomous learning ability is the need of social development in this new era since we are confronted with a great number of unprecedented challenges, such as the fantastic development of science and technology, the frequent change of career, and the fast speed and high frequency of knowledge update. (p. 4)

In the same line of thoughts, Jiao (2005) suggested four fundamental reasons for the significance of learner autonomy for English learning. First and foremost, it promotes the learner's motivation and leads to more effective learning. Second, it provides learners with more opportunities for English communication in a non-native environment. Third, it caters to the individual needs of learners at all levels. Finally, it has a lasting influence. In essence, students who have the ability to be autonomous and take charge of their own learning are more likely to be able to set their own learning goal, choose their preferred learning styles and strategies, monitor their progress, and evaluate their performance by themselves.

1.3. The Historical Background of Learner Autonomy

In the field of language teaching, several learning theories were used as a theoretical support for setting out the principles of the teaching methods. Each language

teaching method was based on a specific learning theory. In this regard, the concept of learner autonomy has gained much of interest since the emergence of Learner-centered approach in the 1980s in relation to the effect of humanistic-oriented approaches to learning and teaching (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). In fact, this latter is a major contribution of Social Constructivism which emphasizes that learners are at the heart of the learning process and that knowledge is constructed by the teacher and the learners rather than transmitted only by teachers.

1.3.1. Behaviorism

Behaviorists do not believe in learner autonomy. Rather, they emphasize the role of external factors in determining the learners' behaviors. As a matter of fact, the basic premise of the behaviorist theory is that rewards and reinforcements play a focal role in shaping the behavior. According to Skinner (1971), "the environment presents stimuli to which an organism responds. Responses that are reinforced tend to be strengthened; responses that are not reinforced tend to be weakened" (p. 11). Couched differently, learners are presented with a stimulus and they are asked to respond. If the response is correct, they will be reinforced and if the response is incorrect, they will be corrected through feedback. Therefore, the aforementioned tenets of the behaviorist theory do not leave room for learner autonomy.

1.3.2. Cognitivism

In the cognitivist theory, autonomy refers to the extent to which learners are capable of taking control over their own learning. Bandura (1986) reported that learner autonomy is a fundamental element in his social cognitive theory. In essence, individuals are not just passive recipients of environmental influences. They are active agents who transform the environments they encounter to fit their own proclivities and goals.

Moreover, individuals do not simply react to external stimuli, they construct meaning from them (Bandura, 1997). Hence, it can be concluded that the traces of autonomy can be found in cognitivism.

1.3.3. Social Constructivism

The social constructivist theory of learning is the major academic trend in last decades. Its basic tenets are represented in that experience is essential in learning and that knowledge is constructed by teachers and learners. By the same token, Wang (2014) asserted that the theory advocates the fact that “learning is not passive receiving. Learning a subject should proactively be perceived and created from personal experience and construct personal meaning” (p. 1552). In simpler words, the constructivists encourage the active participation of the learners in the learning process; this latter is a major characteristic of autonomous learning.

Wang (2014) also affirmed that constructivism forms a theoretical support to learner autonomy and they complement each other. Putting it differently, learner autonomy refers to the application of constructivist principles in classroom setting. He claimed that:

With the constructivist learning theory as a theoretical support, learner autonomy advocates learner-oriented study [and emphasizing learners' role of cognitive subject. Knowledge is not passed on by the teacher but learners' acquiring it through meaningful construction with the help of necessary learning materials and others (including teachers and study partners) under certain situations (socio-cultural background). (p. 1553)

On the whole, the social constructivist theory developed by Vegotsky is deemed to be a prevalent theory that neglects the teacher-centered approach to language teaching. Rather, it supports the learners' centrality and active role in the learning process.

1.4. Levels of Learner Autonomy

In 1997, Nunan proposed a model that elucidates the stages of developments of learner autonomy. This model is deemed to be an optimal model to explain the phases in which the learners go through until they become autonomous. In essence, Nunan (1997) suggested that learners need to be conscious about their own learning goals and recognize their specific learning strategies. Then, they apply them in classroom. Subsequently, they adjust them to suit their preferences. The model is well explained in the following table.

Table 1

Five-level model of learner autonomy

Level	Learner Action	Content	Process
1	Awareness	Learners are made aware of the pedagogical goals and content of the materials they are using.	Learners identify strategy implications of pedagogical tasks and identify their own preferred learning styles/strategies.
2	Involvement	Learners are involved in selecting their own goals from a range of alternatives on offer.	Learners make choices among a range of options.
3	Intervention	Learners are involved in modifying and adapting the goals and contents of the learning program.	Learners modify/adapt tasks.
4	Creation	Learners create their own	Learners create their own tasks

		goals and objectives.	
5	Transcendence	Learners go beyond the classroom and make links between the content of classroom learning and the world.	Learners become teachers and researchers.

Note. Adapted from “Designing and adapting materials to encourage learner autonomy”, by Nunan, D., 1997, p. 195, London: Longman

As aptly stated by Benson (1996), three main categories of autonomy can be identified; technical autonomy, psychological autonomy, and political autonomy.

- Technical autonomy: the act of learning a language outside the framework of an educational institution and without the intervention of a teacher;
- psychological autonomy: a capacity which allows learners to take more responsibility for their own learning; an internal transformation that may be supported by situational autonomy without being dependent on it
- Political autonomy: control over the processes and content of learning.(Benson 1996, as cited in Finch, pp. 5-6)

1.5. Characteristics of Autonomous Learning

1.5.1. Active Learning

According to Meyers and Jones (1993) “active learning involves providing opportunities for students to meaningfully talk and listen, write, read, and reflect on the content, ideas, issues, and concerns of an academic subject” (p.6). Putting it differently, active learning denotes giving the students chances to actively participate in all classroom

interactions. It emphasizes that learners are required to construct knowledge by their own. The aforementioned facts are associated with the main principles of learner autonomy which put learners at the heart of the learning process.

Thus, active learning affects positively, to a great extent, autonomous learning (Prince, 2004). With constructivism as a theoretical support, the major aim of active learning is to exceed passive modes of learning, and hence, putting the students in challenging learning situations through which they can promote higher-order thinking skills (Bonwell & Eisen, 1991).

1.5.2. Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning is another crucial method used in learner-centered classes and supported by social constructivism. Johnson and Johnson (1999) defined it as “the instructional use of small groups in which students work together to maximize their own and each other’s learning.” (p. 73). As a matter of fact, cooperative learning is proven to be an effective way to make students collaborate with their classmates and emphasize their fundamental role in the learning process, and thus, develop their autonomy. Additionally, David W. Johnson (2018) stated that cooperative learning eases the process of learning in which it provides the students the opportunities to benefit from each other by putting their skills, knowledge, experiences and capacities all together to do activities, work on projects, or solve problems.

1.5.3. Experiential Learning

Experiential learning was developed by Kolb in 1989 advocating the importance of students’ experience as the central role in the learning process. Similar to constructivism, experiential learning refers to the principle in which experience plays a focal role in learner’s development (Armstrong & Fokami, 2008). According to Kolb (1989), learning

requires several phases starting by an experience. First, the learner must reflect on the experience, followed by understanding the new knowledge, then conceptualizing it and testing the new information in novel situations. Thus, the implementation of experiential learning in the EFL context demands the teacher to rely on ample activities and techniques that are associated with the principles of the method such as role plays, projects, simulation...and so on.

1.6. Factors Affecting Learner Autonomy

Learner autonomy is the state in which learners feel independent to learn by their own. This ability can be affected by several factors; internal, external, or affective. These factors can have either a positive or negative impact on the students' willingness to be autonomous. Numerous studies have shown that learner autonomy is influenced to a great extent by the affective factors (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Oxford, 1990, 2011). This latter is presented by Krashen (1985) as Affective Filter Hypothesis, which manifests the learner's motivation, attitude, anxiety and self-esteem as the main affective factors which influence learners' autonomy. Besides, learner autonomy is a significant contribution in language teaching. In this respect, Qian (2022) declared that, "Learner autonomy is influenced by factors such as motivation, anxiety, self-esteem, and attitude" (p. 106).

1.6.1. Motivation

The concept of motivation is widely used in the field of language teaching. Research in the field manifested that motivation has a great impact on students' performance and academic achievement as stated by Marie J. Guilloteaux and Zoltán Dörnyei (2008). Equally important, various studies on learner autonomy have indicated that motivation is enhanced when learners take more control over their learning (Lamb, 2002; Sakui, 2002; Ushioda, 2003, 2007). As a matter of fact, there was a serious debate

about whether motivation is resulted from autonomy or it is a factor that promotes it (OKUMUS, 2021).

In the same line of thoughts, it was proved through research that when students take charge of their own learning, their motivation is increased (Lamb 2001; da Silva 2002; Sakui 2002). Similarly, OKUMUS, (2021) found that “there is moderate positive correlation between motivational beliefs and sections of autonomy” (p.156). By the same token, Ushioda (2006) noted that autonomous learners can be indicated as motivated learners; as a sign to the correlation between autonomy and motivation. This latter is further proved by Dörnyei (1998) who stated that students who are able to set learning-oriented goals and select the activities and objectives by their own are deemed to be intrinsically motivated.

1.6.2. Anxiety

Anxiety is a serious problem faced by EFL learners because it influences negatively their academic achievement when learning the language. As a matter of fact, anxiety is also proved to have an impact on learner autonomy. Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) stated that learner autonomy is affected negatively by anxiety. Habtom’s study (2015) elucidated that foreign language classroom anxiety significantly intervenes between autonomy and English language achievement. Thus, classroom anxiety and learners’ autonomy have a notable relationship. In a similar study, Kabiri (2018) affirmed that learners’ anxiety is aligned with autonomy levels. It was portrayed that there is a negative correlation between the variables when high levels of anxiety were associated with low levels of autonomy. Desta (2020) found that “there is a relation between autonomy and language anxiety among university students” (p.314).

In this respect, Negan (2014) proposed that one optimal way to reduce anxiety is to provide guidance to students. Putting it differently, the teacher plays a focal role in

reducing the students' anxiety by encouraging them to be autonomous through guidance. He added, "It is possible to deduce that anxiety is viewed as an important factor which debilitates the extent to which students tend to experience and develop their sense of autonomy in language learning setting" (as cited in Desta 2020, p. 315). Therefore, teachers are recommended to select appropriate tasks that lead to make learners more autonomous and less anxious.

1.7. Issues and Problems

The implementation of learner autonomy in EFL classes is a challenging task to be accomplished as it is encountered by several issues. One of the prominent issues faced in this situation is the relationship between the teacher and the students. Begum and Chowdhury noted that reaching learner autonomy is conditioned by the focal role of the teacher since it is fulfilled through the teacher guidance and help. Being a new concept to some teachers, autonomy is hard to be understood. Teachers are ill – prepared and reluctant to allow students to take over their own learning (2016). In simpler words, if the EFL teachers fail in mastering the effective techniques and strategies that lead to encouraging the learners to be autonomous, they stay dependent on the teacher throughout their whole learning process. Rather, if the teacher succeeds in encouraging the students to be autonomous by selecting the appropriate classroom techniques and activities, they gradually become independent in their learning.

Chapter Two:

Teachers' Role in the Teaching- Learning Context

Introduction

In the traditional mode of teaching, the teacher was seen as the authority in the classroom. He/She was the provider and the transmitter of knowledge whereas the learners are only passive receivers. As reported by Baghoussi (2021), the teacher-centered approach to language teaching lasted for a long period of time and numerous teaching methods were relying on this approach. However, with the emergence of communicative approaches to language teaching and with the support of the constructivist theory, the learner gained the principle role in the teaching learning process. In simpler words, the learner became at the center of the learning process.

In this regard, it is worth noting that with these changes, the teacher's role was not marginalized. The teacher, still, plays a focal role in promoting learner autonomy within this new realm. As reported by Almusharaf (2020), "In order for learner autonomy to develop, the teacher's role must be shifted from teacher-focused to student-focused instruction. The teacher must still be engaged, but her or his role changes when choosing appropriate methods to promote learner autonomy" (p. 2).

2.1. The Major Roles of Teachers

In EFL context, one of the focal teachers' roles is fostering and promoting learners' autonomy (Boudouaia et al., 2022). EFL teachers need to encourage their students to be part of the learning process by teaching them how to select their preferred learning strategy and work to develop it. In this regard, three prominent roles must be performed by the teacher to develop learners' autonomy:

2.1.1. *Organizer and Manager*

In the learner-centered approach to language teaching, the teacher plays a focal role in managing and organizing the classroom lesson and activities in a way that engages the

students in the learning process. In other words, the teacher should organize a set of activities that allow the students to actively interact in the lesson. For doing this, the teacher should select appropriate materials that fit the aforementioned primary goal. As stated by Yan (2012), “In a learner-centered system the teacher should take the responsibilities of organizing various kinds of activities and games which are appropriate, effective and relevant to the classroom teaching and which will best meet the students’ needs and expectations” (p. 560).

Similarly, Boudouaia et al. (2022) noted that being a manager requires being “an effective planner, manager of assessment methods, and developer of the learning environment, assisting learners in clarifying their decision-making and improving their meta-cognitive strategies” (p. 3). In other words, teachers’ desirability to involve learners in decision-making and assist them in developing skills for learning how to learn outweighs their feasibility.

2.1.2. Facilitator

According to Dornyei (2001), if teachers want their students to be autonomous in their learning, they have to shift their role from lecturers and providers of knowledge to facilitators. As a matter of fact, in language learning, the learners will perform better when they are given a degree of independence alongside with some degree of support and help from the teacher. It is proved that the learners need some help from the teacher in order to consolidate their performance. The aforementioned fact is supported by Chiu (2005) who noted that a facilitator of learning is usually to be a helper who makes learning easier to happen.

2.1.3. Counselor

Another crucial role acted by the teacher is to be a counselor. In such a case, the teacher is assumed to provide a kind of guidance to the learners whenever they need it.

Richards and Rodgers (1986) claim that “[A] teacher-counselor is expected to exemplify an effective communicator seeking to maximize the meshing of speaker intention and hearer interpretation, through the use of paraphrase, confirmation, and feedback.” (p.78). Putting it differently, counseling requires being effective communicators and more importantly providing feedback to students at all stages. Furthermore, Boudouaia et al. (2022) asserted that being a counselor means being a partner in the classroom and accompanying the students through the whole learning process, providing meaningful answers to their questions, and assisting learners with their needs.

2.2. Approaches to Fostering Learner Autonomy

Advocates and practitioners have taken a wide variety of techniques to foster autonomy. For Esch (2010), learner autonomy promotion:

[is] the provision of circumstances and contexts for language learners that will increase the likelihood that they take control - at least temporarily - of all or a portion of their language learning programme, and that are more likely to help rather than hinder learners from exercising their autonomy. (p37)

In this regard, Benson (2011) divides autonomy development into six categories. The first approach is known as the resource-based approach. This approach places an emphasis on learners' capacity to shape their own learning, primarily through engagement with and choice of the materials offered. The second approach is the technology-based. It emphasizes the value of individual use of, and engagement with, technological resources during the learning process. Learner-based approaches comprise the third approach. In here, the focus is placed on the student's capacity to direct his/her own learning inside the classroom. It focuses on fostering the growth of autonomous learning abilities and learner autonomy.

The fourth approach is the classroom-based technique. By empowering students to be accountable and capable of managing their own learning, this approach emphasizes students' influence over the learning process inside the classroom.

Curriculum-based approaches, on the other hand, encourage students' participation and ownership of the lesson plan in addition to teacher's management. The agreement is reached by the teachers and the students. Lastly, the teacher-based approaches assert that teachers who have received the proper training and education are more likely to increase students' autonomy. In conclusion, it is evident that learner involvement, learner reflection, and proper target language use all contribute to the development of learner autonomy.

2.3. Promoting Learner Autonomy

With the emergence of communicative methods to language teaching, teacher-centred approach faced tremendous challenges. The main challenge was the shift in focus from teacher to learners. In simpler words, the new mode of teaching is based on the learner centrality and active learning. As a consequence, teachers and stakeholders are requested to support and encourage learners to be more independent and to take charge of their own learning. Couched differently, it is essential for teachers to understand how to effectively promote learner autonomy. In essence, promoting learner autonomy requires recognizing that responsibility is a never-ending effort to comprehend what is meant by learning, why an individual should learn, and how learning can be effective and successful (Little, 1999).

In this regard, the learners must be taught about learning how to learn as an effective way to guide them to be self-directed (Padmadewi, 2016). Equally important, the teacher should allow the students to be agents; in the meaning of making them able to be the doers rather than the recipients of learning action, in order to help them preserve their motivation (Harmer, 2007). By the same token, the teachers should encourage the students

to get involved in the classroom by giving them more opportunities to communicate and interact with their classmates.

Another effective technique to make the learners more autonomous as stated by Takad Ahmed Chowdhury (2021) is to give them more projects to do by their own or in collaboration with their peers since it allows them to activate their prior knowledge and work to solve the new activities. Hence, promoting learner autonomy is primary accomplished through the use of methods and materials that allow the learners to be active in the learning process.

2.4. Strategies for Implementing Autonomy

In the process of teaching and learning, teachers face a serious challenge in exercising student autonomy in the classroom. In this regard, teachers are asked to select appropriate strategies and activities in the classroom to help students become self-reliant in learning with guidance and support from the teacher.

In a study conducted to explore teacher strategies to promote learner autonomy in English teaching practice, Anisatul (2020) proposed a set of strategies that can help learners' independence in learning. A first strategy is to make students aware of learning goals: teachers must encourage students to be aware of their goals in order to clearly visualize what they will encounter in the learning process. A second suggested strategy is to conduct self-evaluation. Students must be taught how to self-assess themselves since self-evaluation is a pivotal feature of learner autonomy. In other words, self-assessment helps students become aware of their strengths to maintain and their weaknesses to improve.

Encouraging students to work collaboratively is another effective strategy as it is widely recognized that teamwork has a positive effect on learner autonomy. It is very useful because it allows students to help and evaluate each other. Finally, accomplishing

tasks individually is a recommendable strategy. In some cases, it is advisable for students to work individually and make an effort to complete certain tasks. This strategy helps students build self-reliance when recalling memories, studying information, or checking notes.

2.5. Teachers' Attitudes toward Learner Autonomy

In the last decades, learner autonomy became a crucial goal in language classrooms. Many, scholars, teachers, and stakeholders alike are aware that introducing learner autonomy and encouraging the students to be autonomous is inevitable and essential. According to Candy (1991), effective learning entails involving learners in making decisions and choices about what to learn and how to learn. In simpler words, the teacher is supposed to involve and encourage the students to take their own decisions and be trained to choose the right choices for effective learning. To elaborate, Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012) examined teachers' beliefs and practices about learner autonomy in language classes in university. It is worth noting that the target population for this study was teachers who are conscious about the concept of learner autonomy but are not implementing it. As far as the study results are concerned, the teachers claimed that “the extent to and manner in which learner autonomy is promoted in language learning classrooms will be influenced by teachers' beliefs about what autonomy actually is, its desirability and feasibility” (p. 60). Couched differently, the principles that teachers hold and believe in affect to a great extent the implementation of learner autonomy in their classes.

Part Two:
The Practical Part

Chapter Three:

Research Methodology

Introduction

The second part of this study aims to collect data regarding students' perception of the concept of autonomy as well as its meaning and importance in the learning process. It also indicates their opinions toward the relationship between teachers' roles and learners' autonomy as an effective tool to improve their learning skills. In addition, this chapter examines teachers' views and opinions on enhancing learner autonomy through the use of some strategies, as well as, their evaluations of students' levels and participation in class and to develop autonomy in the learning process. This chapter attempts to analyze data that has been collected from teachers and students questionnaires, taking into account the stated research questions and hypotheses that determine the positive impact polarity of teachers' role in improving students' autonomy and self-reliance.

3.1. Research Design

As presented in the previous chapter, the aim of the study is to investigate EFL teachers' role in promoting learners' autonomy in relation to their understanding of language learning, their roles, learners' roles and what they do to promote learners' autonomy. The appropriate design for the study is mixed methods. That is, it is both qualitative and quantitative approach. Therefore, to achieve the research goal, two questionnaires have been used to collect relevant data.

Regarding the organization of this chapter, it is divided into two parts. The first section describes the method used: includes the population and sample, as well as, the data collection tools which describe the questionnaires in detail. The second part, first, elucidates the analysis of the results of the research instruments starting with the students' questionnaire highlighting its aims and its organization and concludes with a discussion of

the obtained results. Teachers' questionnaire comes next where the same procedures followed in the students' questionnaire are applied here.

3.2. The Sample

This study's population consists of 25 EFL Third Year students and 8 EFL teachers from the English Department of Ghardaia University. The students' sample consists of six (6) males and nineteen (19) females who were randomly chosen from a population of 80 Third Year L.M.D students. However, the teachers' sample consists of 8 teachers of different teaching experience, different Degrees (Master, Magister, Doctorate), and different specialties (Didactics, Literature, Culture and Civilization and Applied Linguistics), and different learning experiences.

Table 2

Population and Sampling

Population and sampling	Number	Percentage
Population	80	100
Sample	25	32

The objective for selecting Third Year LMD students is deliberately attributed to the fact that they already have a good education and substantial university experience in terms of independence and self-reliance.

3.3. Data Collection

In order to investigate teachers' beliefs about learners' autonomy and their role in promoting it, a questionnaire was administered to eight EFL teachers at the Department of English, University of Ghardaia. Furthermore, another questionnaire was administered to

students to investigate learners' ways to find the suitable methods and strategies that facilitate their learning process and how they become more autonomous.

3.4. Data Analysis

3.4.1. *Students' Questionnaire*

3.4.1.1. Aim of the Questionnaire. We have designed a questionnaire for Third Year LMD students of English to collect data about their background knowledge about autonomy, attitudes toward classroom activities and their opinions about teachers' role in promoting learners' autonomy to improve their learning skills.

3.4.2. Description of the Questionnaire. The students' questionnaire has been given to eighty Third Year students, however only 25 were chosen in the end. Basically, the questionnaire has been divided into sections. Section One consists of three questions that aim to gather personal information about the students' sexes, ages, levels in English and motives for studying English. Section Two consists of five questions about students' familiarity with the concept of learning autonomy, their roles during the sessions, their opinions about the importance of autonomy and the extent to which learning they consider themselves self-directed learners.

Section Three, on the other hand, consists of nine questions that deal with the students learning practices and how often they do these activities to develop their English level. Section Four consists of three questions in which the students were asked about the responsibilities their teachers assign them to, whose responsibility it is to promote autonomy in the classroom and whether they think their teachers should involve them in making decisions about their learning process.

3.4.3. Analysis of the Questionnaire.

Section One: Personal information

Q1. Sex

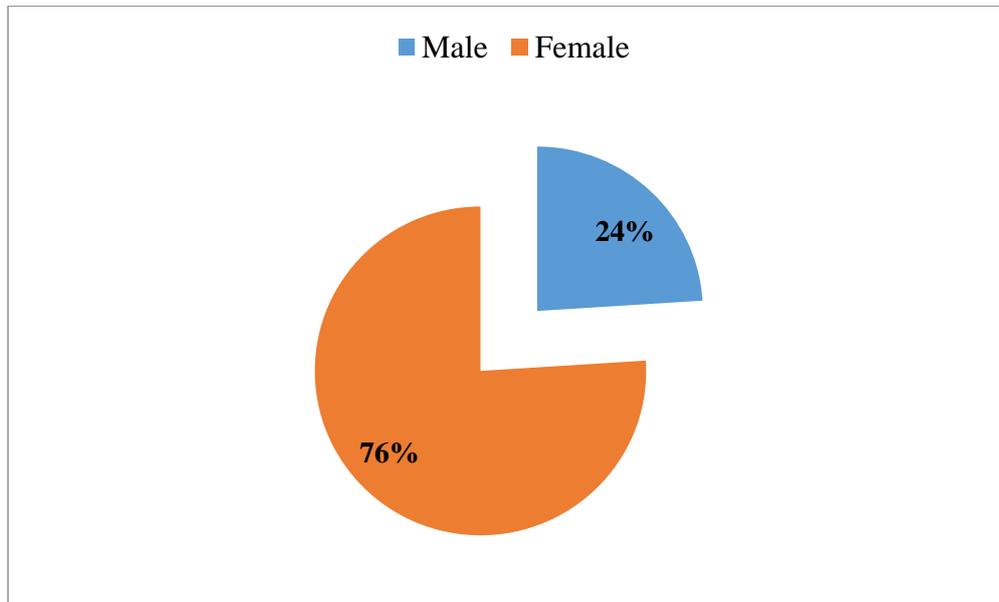
Table 3

Students' Sexes

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Males	6	24
Females	19	76

Figure 2

Students' Sexes



The percentage of each participant's sex is depicted in the graph above. 76% of the participants are females while 24% of them are males.

Q2. Age:

Table 4

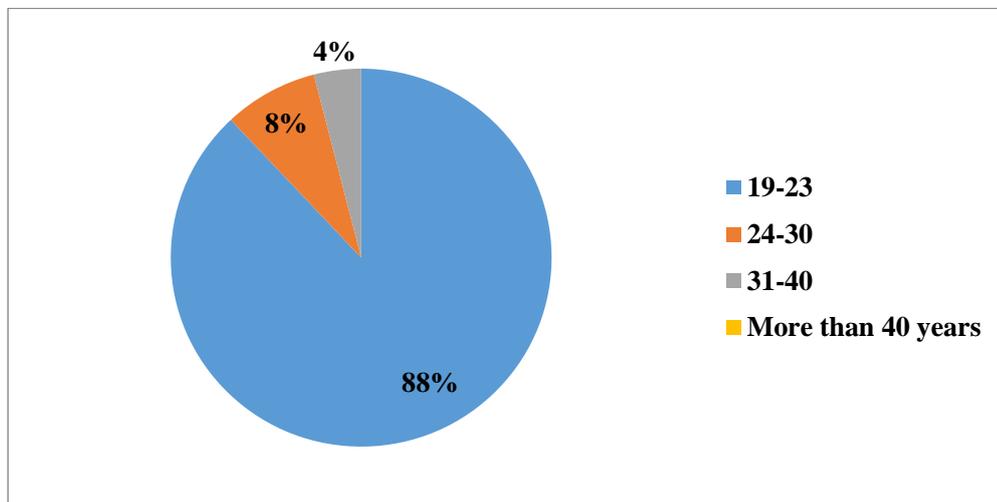
Students' Ages

Number	Percentage (%)
---------------	-----------------------

19-23	22	88
24-30	2	8
31-40	1	4
More than 40 years	0	0

Figure 3

Students' Ages



According to the responses of the participants, 88% of the students are between 19 and 23 years old. Only two students, accounting for 2% of the total, stated they are between the age of 24 and 30, one, representing a percentage of 4%, whose age ranges from 31 to 40 while none of them is more than 40 years as shown in both table (4) and the figure following it.

Q3. Studying English is due to:

Table 5

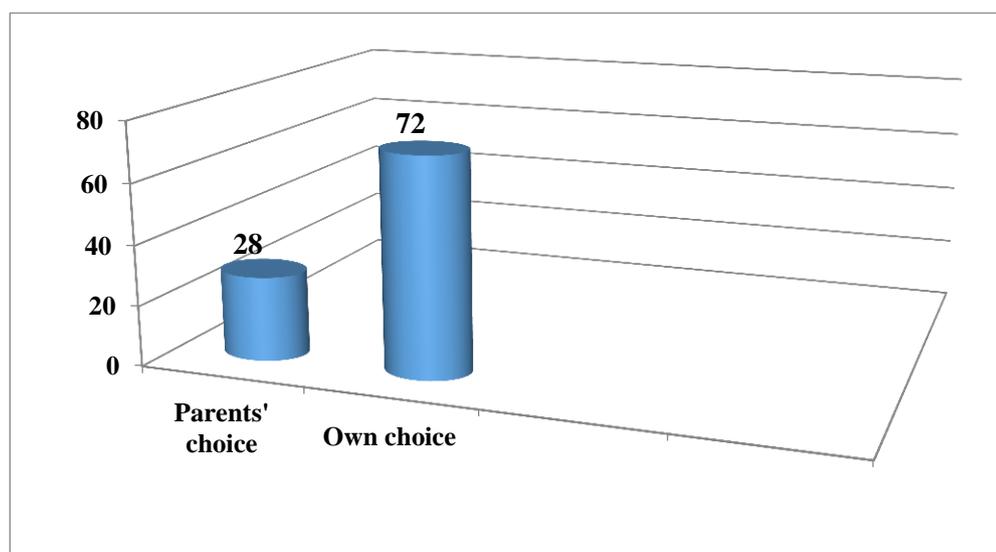
Students' Choices for Studying English

	Number	Percentage (%)
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Parents' demand	7	28
Own choice	18	72

Figure 4

Students' Choices for Studying English



The results above show that 72% of the whole sample has chosen deliberately and personally to study English in university because they like it. However, 28% did not choose it themselves but it was their parents' choice.

Q4. I am interested in learning English to:

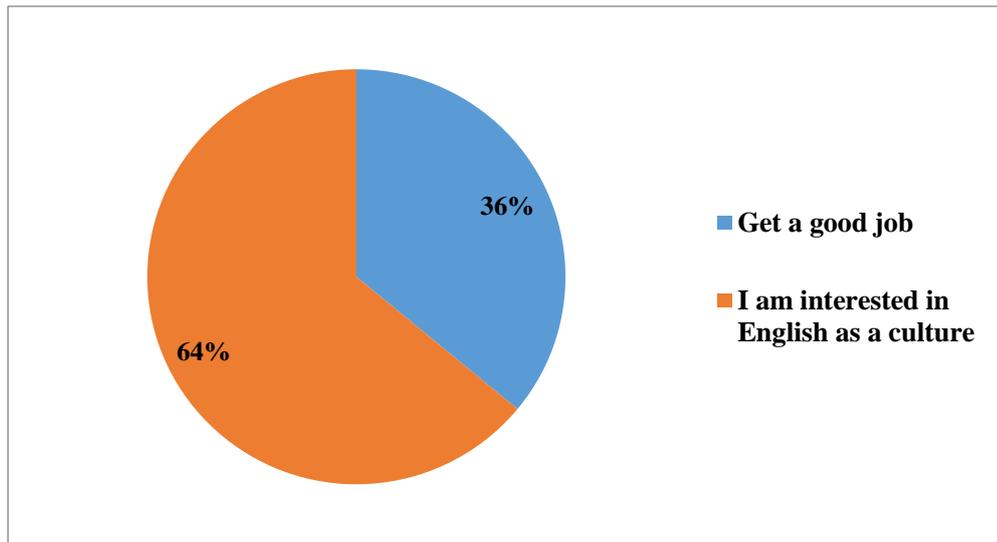
Table 6

Students' Reasons for Learning English

	Number	Percentage (%)
Get a good job	9	36
I am interested in English as a culture	16	64

Figure 5

Students' Reasons for Learning English



Through this figure, it can be noticed that the majority of the students, accounting for 64% of the total population, learn English because they are interested in it as a culture while the rest of them said that they have chosen English to get a good job.

Q5. Describe your level in English

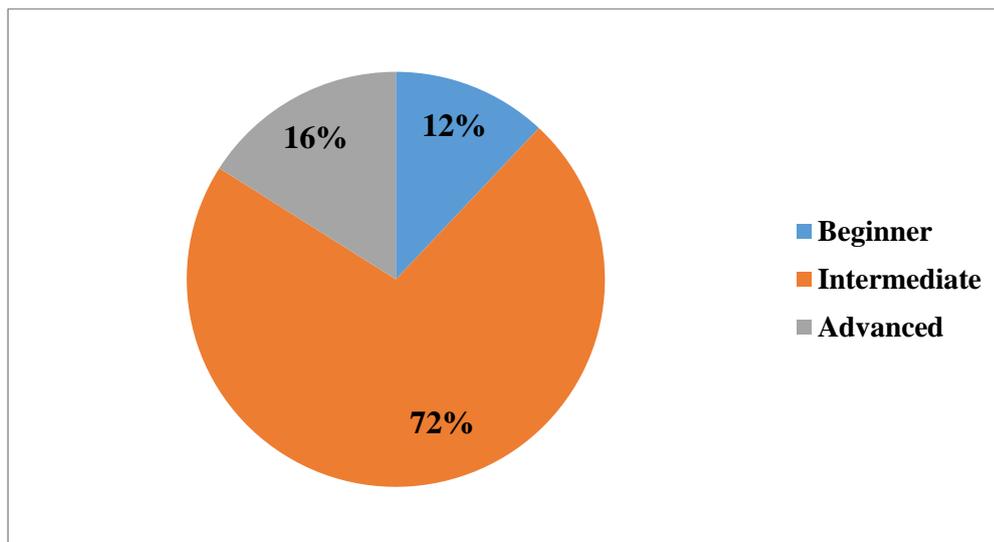
Table 7

Students' Level in English

	Number	Percentage (%)
Beginner	3	12
Intermediate	18	72
Advanced	4	16

Figure 6

Students' Level in English



More than half of the students (75%) said they have an intermediate level in the English language. 32% evaluated their level to be advanced and only 12% revealed to have a beginner level in English.

Section two: Learners’ Perceptions on Learning Autonomy

Q1. Have you ever heard of the term “autonomy”?

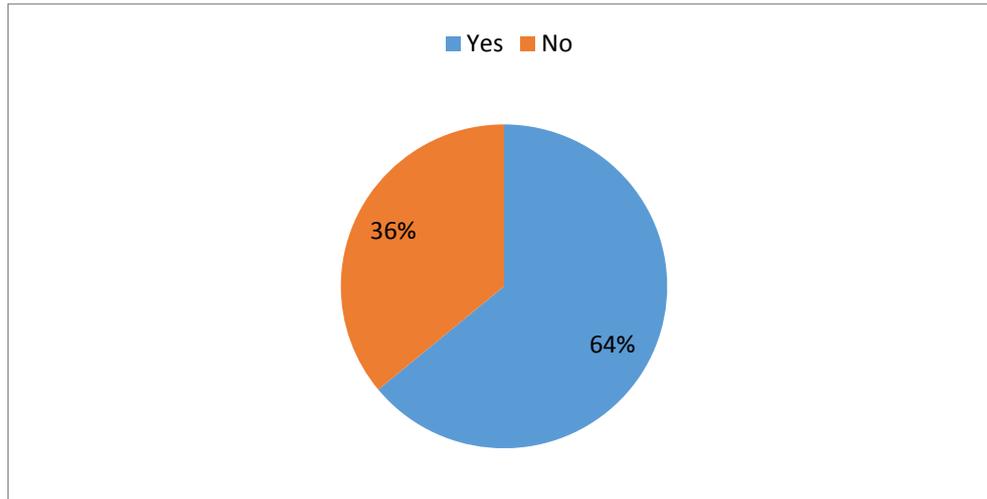
Table 8

Students’ Perceptions about the Term “Autonomy”

	Number	Percentage (%)
Yes	16	64
No	9	36

Figure 7

Students’ Perceptions about the Term “Autonomy”



The figure above shows that 64% of the students have not heard of the term ‘learning autonomy’ before whereas 36% revealed the opposite. This means that the majority of students at university need to know about autonomy, its importance and impact on their learning process.

Q2. Learning autonomy is:

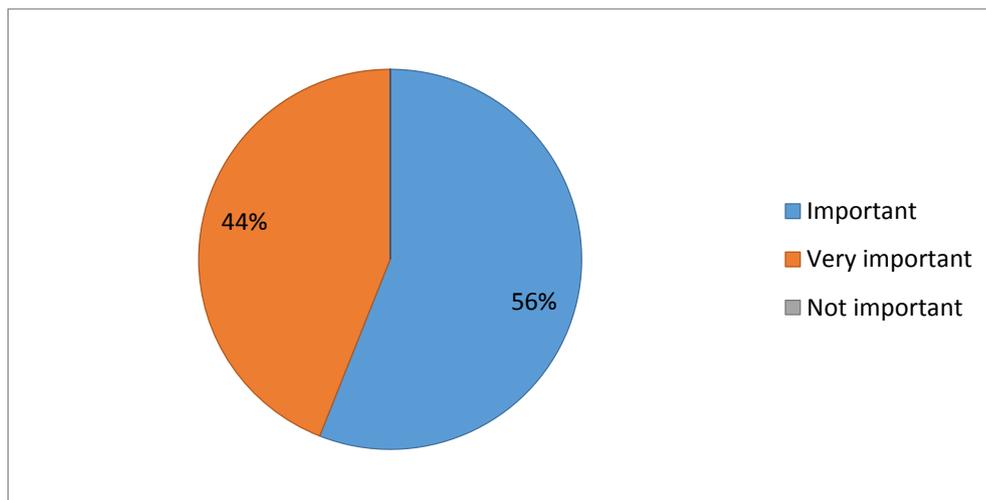
Table 9

Students’ views about Learning Autonomy

	Number	Percentage (%)
Important	14	56
Very important	11	44
Not important	0	0

Figure 8

Students’ Views about the Importance of Learning Autonomy



Out of the whole sample, 14 students believe learning autonomy is important, 11 believe it is important, while none stated it is not. This means that the majority of students know about the importance and the impact of learning autonomy on their learning process.

Q3. Do you consider yourself a self-directed learner (a learner with the ability of being independent in managing his/her own matters)?

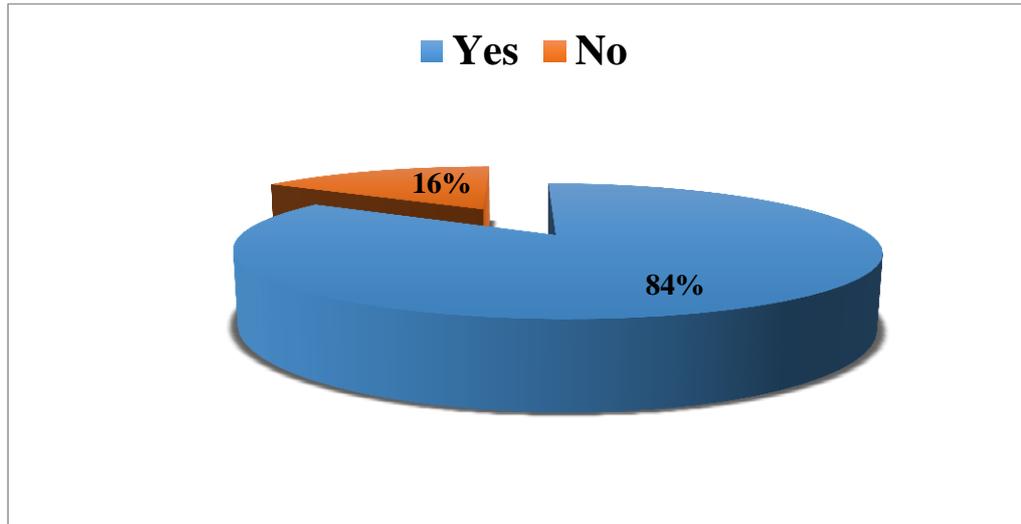
Table 10

Students' Attitudes on Being Self-directed Learner

	Number	Percentage (%)
Yes	21	84
No	4	16

Figure 9

Students' Attitudes on Being Self-directed Learners



When asking the students about whether they consider themselves self-directed learners or not, 84% out of the total sample said they are self-directed learners whereas four, accounting for a percentage of 16, think the opposite.

Q4. What is your role during the sessions?

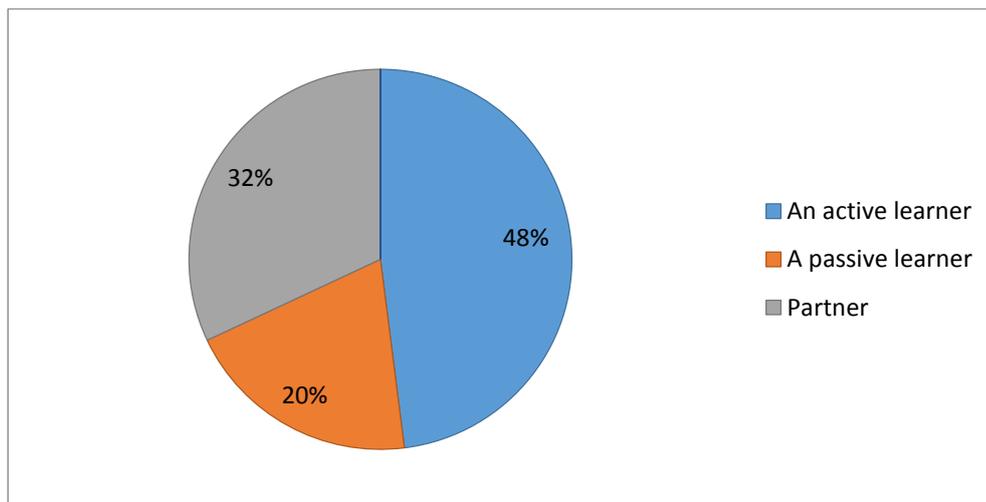
Table 11

Students' Roles during the Sessions

	Number	Percentage (%)
An active learner	12	48
A passive learner	5	20
Partner	8	32

Figure 10

Students' Roles during the Sessions



The figure above show that 48% of the students consider themselves active learners; they like to practice English in the classroom, which means they want to speak and use the target language and learn more about it. 32% said they were partners. However, 10% said they are passive learners; they do not participate and do not use the language (at least not enough) in class. We assume this will hinder their progress in language learning.

Q5. What kind of learning forms did you meet during your learning?

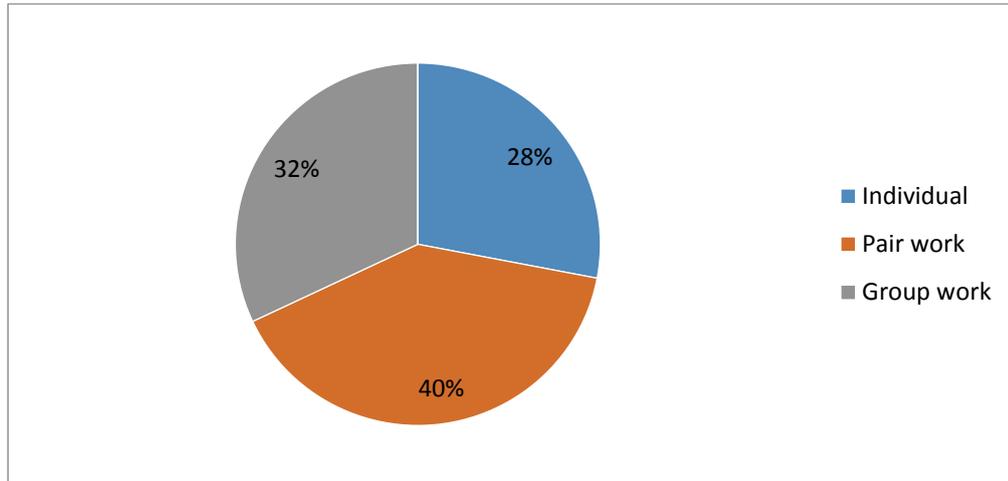
Table 12

Kinds of Learning Forms

	Number	Percentage (%)
Individual	7	28
Pair work	10	40
Group work	8	32

Figure 11

Kinds of Learning Forms



It can be observed that students prefer pair work (40%) in comparison to all other kinds of learning forms suggested to them in this question. Some of them, representing 32%, chose group work and 28% preferred to learn individually.

Q6. How often do you rely on your teacher to help you learn?

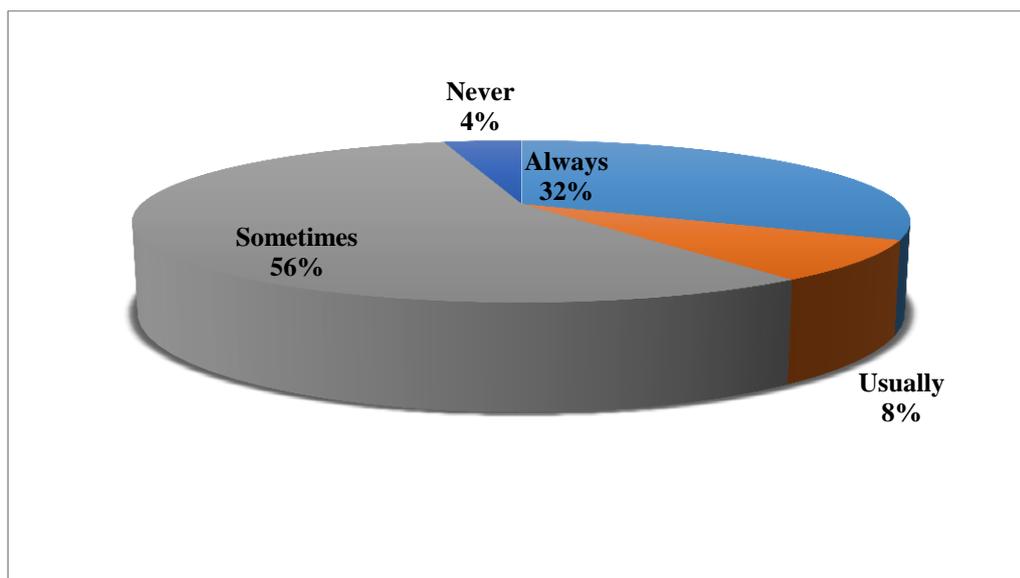
Table 13

Students' Levels of Reliance on their teachers to learn

	Number	Percentage (%)
Always	8	32
Usually	2	8
Sometimes	14	56
Rarely	0	0
Never	1	4

Figure 12

Students' Levels of Reliance on their teachers to learn



The results above show that 56% of our sample are trying to be autonomous in learning which means that they do not rely completely on their teacher but they search for information by themselves outside the classroom. 32%, however, do not consider themselves autonomous and do not try to enrich their learning relying on themselves. 8%, confessed to depend totally on the teacher who is the one who delivers information, explains, assesses, and corrects.

Section three: Autonomous Teaching-Learning Practices

Q1. How often do you do the following things?

Table 14

Students' Engagement Frequency in Certain Activities Related to Learning English

Item	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
1.a- Read English textbooks on your own	0%	36%	36%	20%	8%
1.b- Do non-compulsory	4%	40%	36%	12%	8%

assignments.					
1.c- Do non-required revision by your teacher.	16%	28%	40%	12%	4%
1.d- Use the internet to learn English.	64%	24%	8%	4%	0%
1.e- Talk to a native speaker.	16%	40%	28%	12%	8%

Based on the responses on the questions regarding their engagement frequency in certain activities related to learning English, several observations can be made:

a) Reading English textbooks on their own: The majority of respondents indicated that they sometimes or often engage in this activity with a percentage of 36% for both of them. However, a significant portion of 20% reported that they rarely read English textbooks while the remaining 8% confessed they have never read such textbooks.

b) Doing non-compulsory assignments: The responses show that a significant proportion of the participants frequently or often complete non-compulsory assignments accounting for 40% and 36% of the whole population respectively. This indicates a positive inclination toward taking initiative and going beyond the required coursework. However, it is worth noting that a small percentage of 4% reported they have never done non-compulsory assignments, suggesting a potential opportunity for fostering a greater sense of self-motivation and curiosity among these learners.

c) Doing non-required revision by their teacher: The findings reveal that the majority of participants reported their engagement in non-required revision by their teacher

to some extent. The highest percentage of 40% falls under the category of often, followed by sometimes with 36% and rarely with 12% out of the whole population. This indicates that the teachers' efforts in providing additional revision materials are being utilized by the students, albeit with some variability in frequency.

d) Using the internet to learn English: The data highlights a high level of internet usage for learning English with a significant majority of 64% indicating that they always use the internet for this purpose. Smaller percentages reported often (24%), sometimes (8%), or rarely (4%) using the internet. None of the respondents reported to never using the internet for learning English. This underscores the importance of digital resources and online platforms in supporting language learning.

e) Talking to a native speaker: The responses indicate that a substantial proportion of participants frequently (40%) or often (28%) engage in conversations with native speakers. Additionally, 16% reported always talking to a native speaker, suggesting a strong desire for authentic language practice. However, a notable percentage reported that they have sometimes (12%), rarely (12%), or never (8%) been engaged in such conversations, indicating potential limitations or barriers in accessing native speakers.

All in all, the analysis reveals a range of engagement levels in different language learning activities. While some areas demonstrate active participation, others show room for improvement. These findings can inform educators and curriculum developers in designing strategies to promote consistent self-study, encourage voluntary assignments, provide effective online resources, and create opportunities for interaction with native speakers to enhance language learning outcomes.

Q2. Do you like to decide what to study and when to study it?

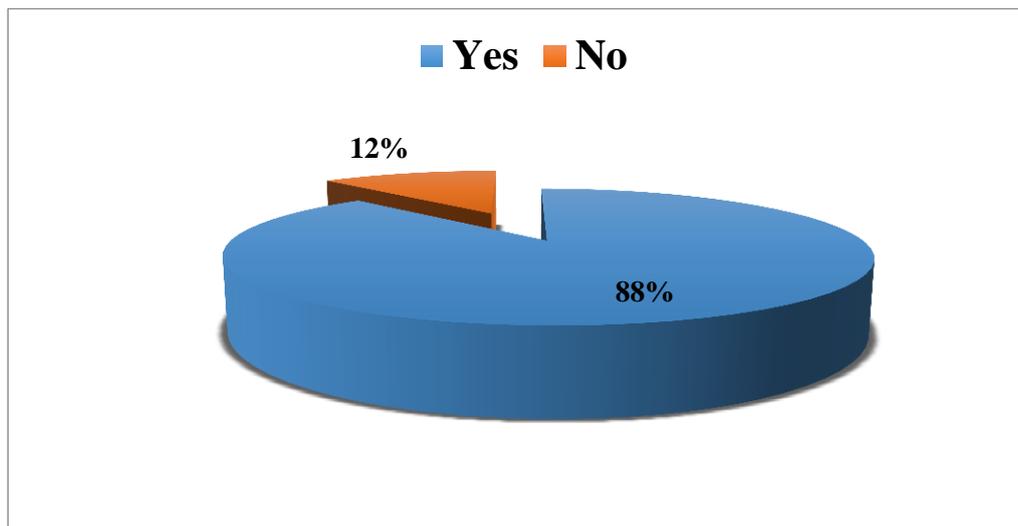
Table 15

Students' Preferences about their Learning Decisions

	Number	Percentage (%)
Yes	22	88
No	3	12

Figure 15

Students' Preferences about their Learning Decisions



When students were asked if they liked the decision of where and when to study, most of them answered with results showing that a large percentage (88%) of students think that they usually study well most as long as they want and not necessarily in class.

Q3. Is it important to receive feedback from the teacher about how you are progressing?

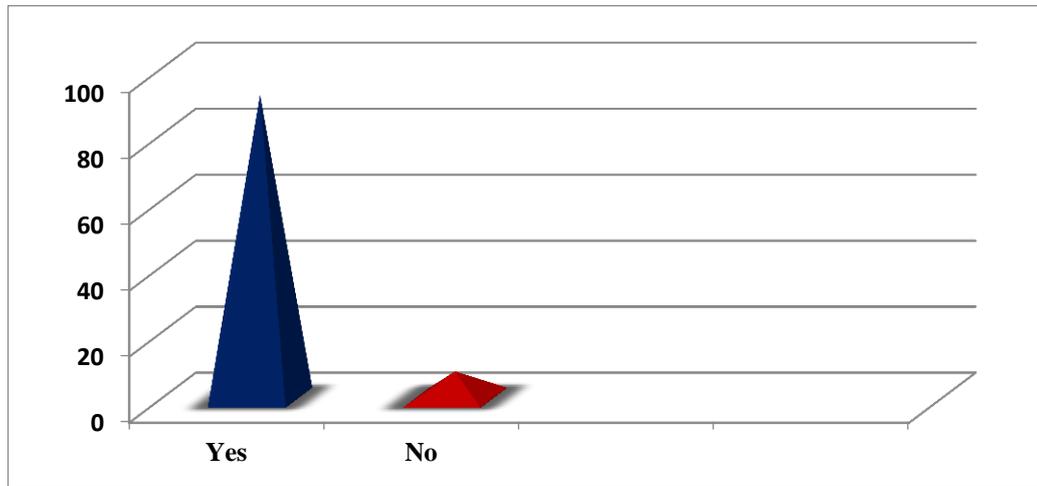
Table 16

Students' Views about the Importance of Feedback

	Number	Percentage (%)
Yes	23	92
No	2	8

Figure 16

Students' Views about the Importance of Feedback



The graph above represents whether teachers' feedback is important for learners while they are progressing or not. 92 % stated that it is important. On the other hand, 8 % affirmed that it is not. These results show that teachers' feedback is highly anticipated. It should be provided by teachers in multiple forms including formative, summative and self-assessment for learners' progression.

Section Four: Promoting learners' Autonomy

Q1. What responsibilities does your teacher assign you to do in the class?

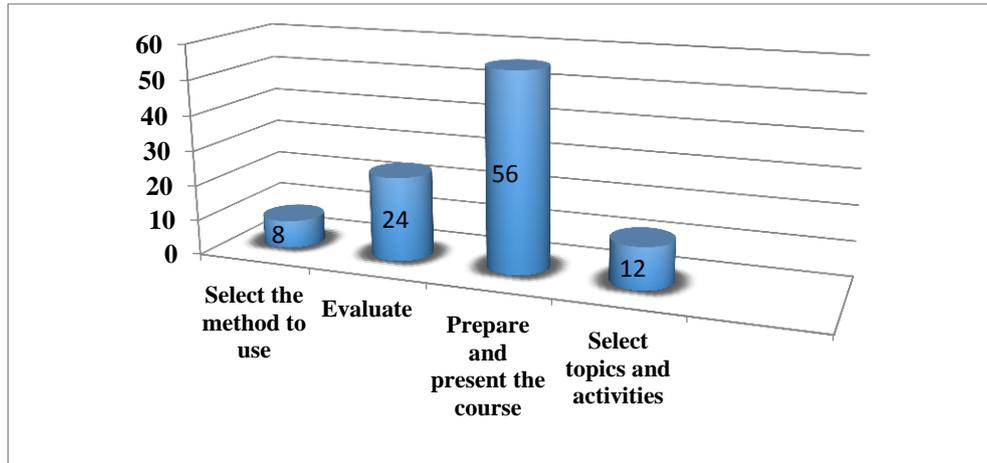
Table 17

Students' Responsibilities in the Class

	Number	Percentage (%)
Select the method to use	2	8
Evaluate	6	24
Prepare and present the course	14	56
Select topics and activities	3	12

Figure 17

Students' Responsibilities in the Class



Students were asked to give answers about the type of responsibilities their teachers gave them in the classroom. The majority (56%) of the total students said they prepared and presented the course. 24% said they rated it, 12% responded by choosing topics and activities and about 8% said were asked to select method they would use. Thus, it can be said that the teacher plays a fundamental role in the learner's autonomy.

Q2. Do you think that developing the learning process is?

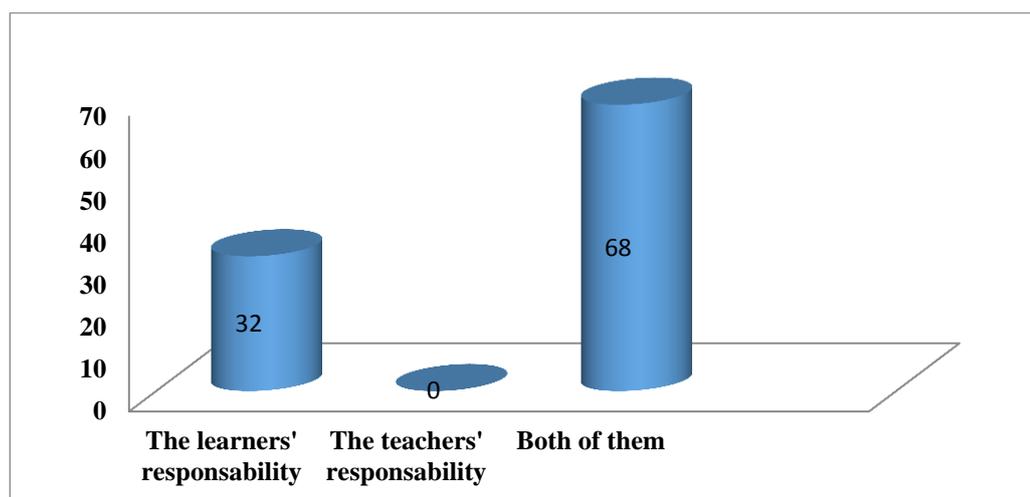
Table 18

Students' Opinions about the Development of the Learning Process

	Number	Percentage (%)
The learners' responsibility	8	32
The teachers' responsibility	0	0
Both of them	17	68

Figure 18

Students' Opinions about the Development of the Learning Process



When asked to give their opinions about who they think is responsible in the learning process, the majority of the participants with a percentage of 68% agreed that the development of the learning process is the responsibility of both teachers and students whereas 32% claimed that it is the learners' responsibility and none of them said that it is the teachers' responsibility

Q3. Do you think that your teacher should involve you in making decisions about the following?

Table 19

Students' Attitudes toward their Involvement in Making Decisions

Item	Choices	Frequency	Percentage (%)
3.a- The objective of a course	Yes	17	68
	No	8	32
3.b- The materials used	Yes	20	80
	No	5	20
3.c- The kinds of tasks and activities to do	Yes	19	76
	No	6	24
3.d- The topics discussed	Yes	19	76

	No	6	24
3.e- How learning is assessed	Yes	18	72
	No	7	28
3.f- The teaching methods used	Yes	18	72
	No	7	28

For this question, the analysis of the provided data indicates a clear trend among the students regarding their involvement in decision-making within their learning experience. Across all the items examined, a significant majority of students expressed a desire to have a say in various aspects of their education. Regarding the objective of a course, 68% of students believed they should be involved in determining the course's goals. Similarly, 80% of students expressed a desire to participate in the selection of materials used for their learning.

When it came to deciding the kinds of tasks and activities to engage in, as well as the topics discussed, 76% of students believed they should have a role in decision-making. Additionally, a substantial 72% of students wanted to be involved in determining how their learning is assessed and the teaching methods employed. Overall, these findings highlight the students' strong inclination toward actively participating in shaping their learning journey, indicating a desire for increased autonomy and involvement in decision-making processes.

3.4.1.4. Discussion of the Students' Questionnaire. The learners' questionnaire indicated varying levels of awareness and understanding of autonomy. While some students had a clear understanding of autonomy and its benefits, others were less familiar with the concept. This highlights the need for explicit instruction and guidance on autonomy to ensure all students grasp its significance. In addition, the learners' responses

demonstrated that autonomy-supportive practices positively influenced their learning experiences. Students reported feeling more engaged, motivated, and empowered when given opportunities to make choices, take ownership of their learning, and exercise independence.

Moreover, the findings suggested a positive correlation between learner autonomy and academic performance. Students who perceived higher levels of autonomy support from their teachers also reported improved learning outcomes, such as increased confidence, deeper understanding of subject matter, and enhanced critical thinking skills. Last but not least, many learners expressed a desire for more autonomy in their learning process. They felt that greater autonomy would enable them to explore their interests, develop problem-solving skills, and foster a sense of responsibility for their own learning journey.

3.4.2. Teachers' Questionnaire

3.4.2.1. Aim of the Questionnaire. The teachers' questionnaire aims to answer questions related to teachers' perceptions of the concept of 'learning autonomy' and the role of teachers in learning while giving students autonomy in the classroom. Also, it aims to identify the importance of teachers' role in enhancing learners' autonomy, in improving their learning skills and in encouraging them to use the suitable learning strategies.

3.4.2.2. Description of Teachers' Questionnaire. The questionnaire is divided into four sections. Section One aiming at gathering information about the modules they actually teach. Section Two comprises five questions that deal with teachers' perceptions on learners' autonomy. It investigates teachers' familiarity with the term autonomy, their opinions on the importance of learning autonomy and the distinctions

between teacher-centered and learner-centered models. The penultimate question addresses the role of promoting learners' autonomy, whether it is primarily the responsibility of the teacher or the learners themselves. The final question in this section examines whether Third Year Licence students of English at Ghardaia University are considered autonomous and, if not, the reasons behind it.

In Section Three, eight questions about teachers' roles and autonomous learning and the importance of self-directed learning in improving foreign language learning are asked. In addition, the activities used by teachers inside the classroom to enhance learners' autonomy.

All in all, this questionnaire aims at gathering valuable insights from EFL teachers regarding their understanding of autonomy, its significance in learning, instructional models, roles in promoting autonomy, and specific practices they employ in fostering autonomous learning in the classroom.

3.4.2.3. Analysis of the Questionnaire.

Section One: General information

Q. Which subject(s) do you teach?

This open-ended question is designed to inquire about the subjects or modules that the teachers are currently teaching. The purpose of this question is to gather information about the range of subjects taught by the participating teachers, as their responses may indicate a variety of subjects being taught. The subjects are as follow: Literature, Culture and Civilization, Translation, Linguistics, Written Expression, Didactics, ESP, Psychopedagogy, Methodology... etc. Also, there are some teachers that teach more than two subjects.

Section two: Teachers' Perceptions on Learners' Autonomy

Q1. How can you define autonomy?

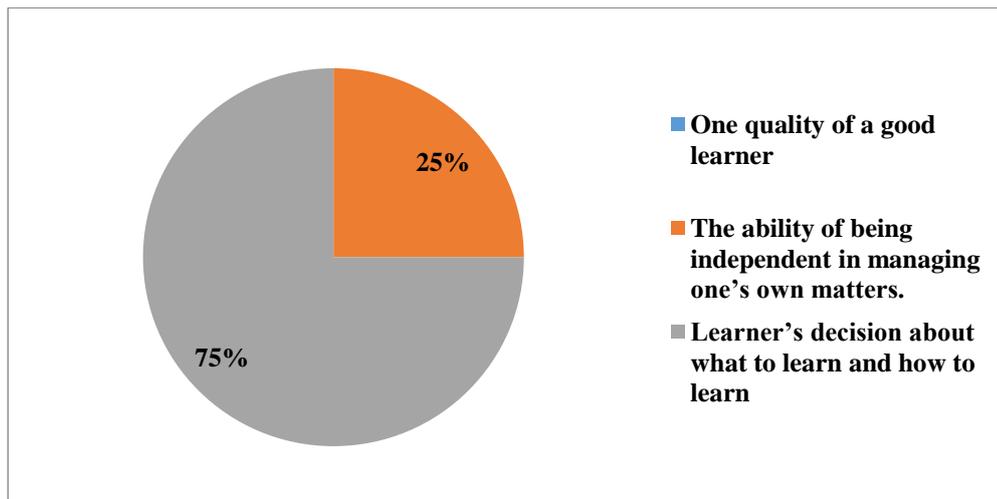
Table 20

Teachers' Opinions about Autonomy as a Term

	Number	Percentage (%)
One quality of a good learner	0	0
The ability of being independent in managing one's own matters.	2	25
Learner's decision about what to learn and how to learn	6	75

Figure 19

Teachers' Opinions about Autonomy as a Term



The majority of teachers (75%) considered autonomy as the learners' decision about what to learn and how to learn while the rest of them (25%) defined it as the ability of being independent in managing one's own matters, but none of them defined it as the quality of a good learner.

Q2. Learning autonomy is?

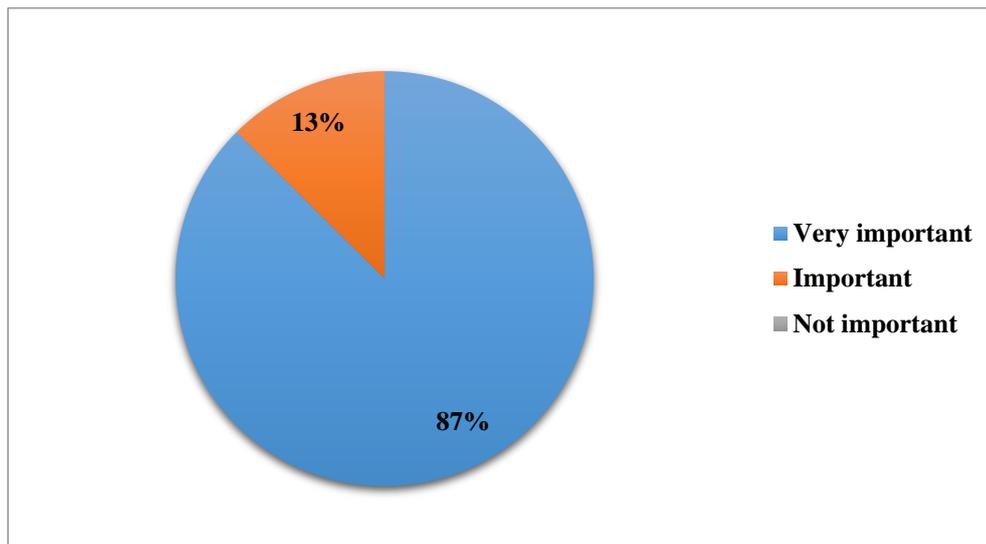
Table 21

Teachers' Views about the Importance of Learning Autonomy

	Number	Percentage (%)
Very important	7	87.5
Important	1	12.5
Not important	0	0

Figure 20

Teachers' Views about the Importance of Learning Autonomy



87.5% of the teachers claimed that learning autonomy is very important while 12.5% stated that it is important and none of them claimed it is not.

Q3. What is the difference between ‘teacher- centered’ model and ‘learner-centered’ model?

According to the respondents, teacher-centered model is authoritative where the teacher is the core of learning process, the former, the monitor and the provider of knowledge. By contrast, learner-centered is creative with multiple-purposes where the students are aware of the learning objectives, are more encouraged, and feel accountable about their own learning.

When asked about which they think is the best, most of the teachers stated that the best one is the learner-centered model while others claimed that it depends on objectives and other factors for effective learning and teaching.

Q4. Do you think that promoting learners' autonomy is:

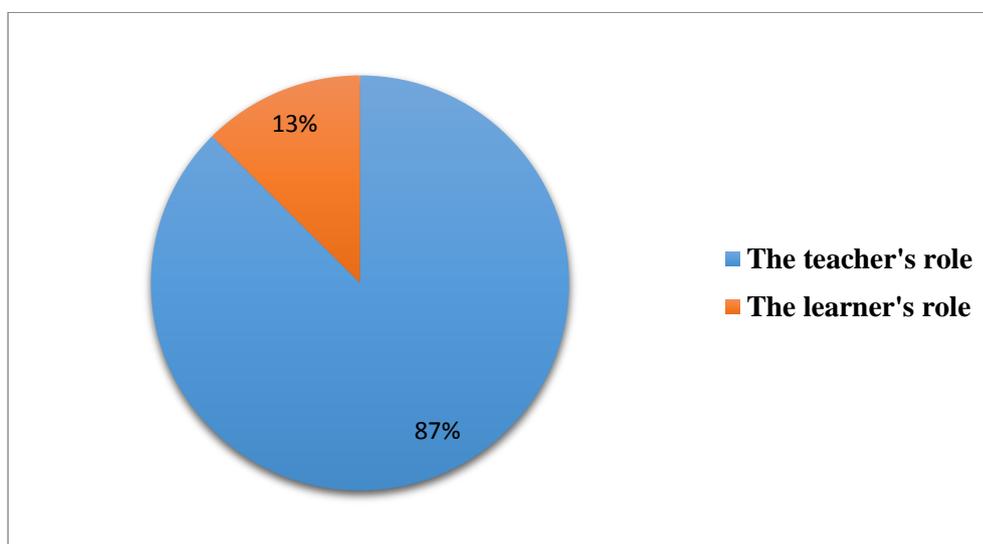
Table 22

The Role of Promoting Learners' Autonomy in Education

	Number	Percentage (%)
The teacher's role	7	87.5
The learner's role	1	12.5

Figure 21

The Role of Promoting Learners' Autonomy in Education



The majority of the teachers (87.5%) think that it is the role of the teacher to promote learners' autonomy while the rest (12.5%) think that it is the role of the learner himself.

Q5. a. Are Third Year Licence students of English at Ghardaia University considered autonomous?

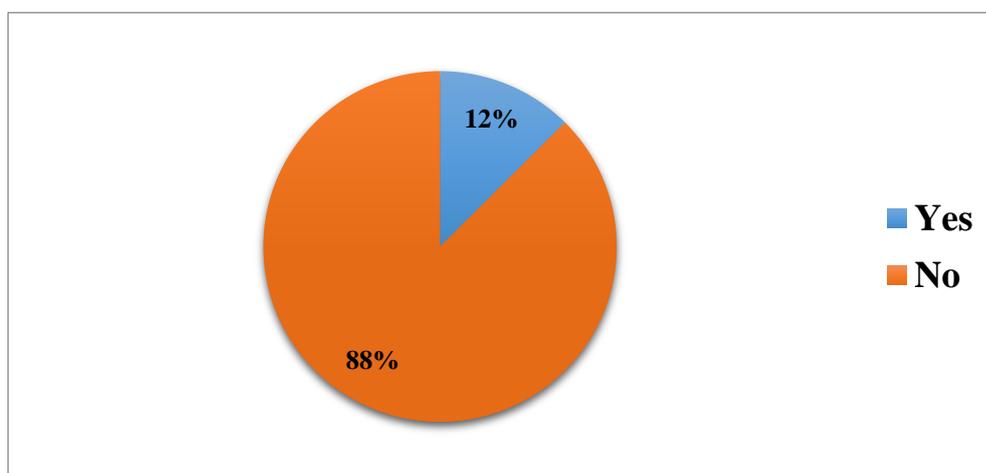
Table 23

Teachers' Perceptions toward Third Year Licence Students

	Number	Percentage (%)
Yes	1	12.5
No	7	87.5

Figure 22

Teachers' Perceptions toward Third Year Licence Students



88% teachers believe that their students are not autonomous in class whereas 12% see their students autonomous and take responsibility over their learning.

Q5. b. If not, why?

Table 24

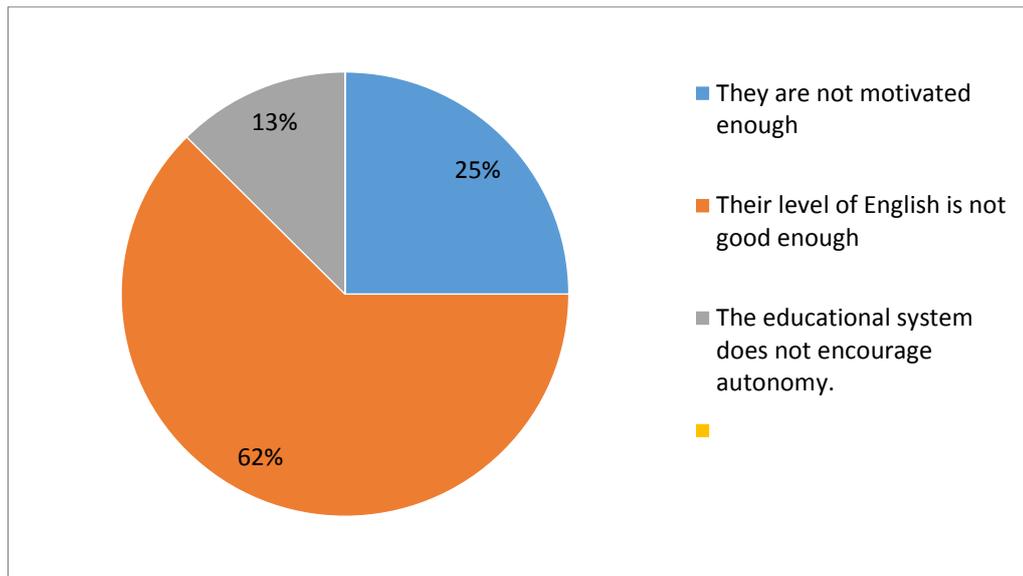
Teachers' Perceptions toward Third Year Licence Students 2

	Number	Percentage (%)
They are not motivated enough.	2	25
Their level of English is not good enough.	5	62.5

The educational system does not encourage autonomy.	1	12.5
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Figure 23

Teachers' Perceptions toward Third Year Licence Students 2



62.5% of the teachers claimed that Third Year Licence students are not autonomous because their level in English is not good enough whereas 25% claimed that they are not motivated enough and 12.5% stated that the educational system does not encourage autonomy.

Section Three: Autonomous Teaching to Promote Learners' Autonomy

Q1. Could you define these teachers' roles?

Based on the teachers' answers the following definitions can be provided. An organizer is a teacher who takes responsibility for planning and arranging learning activities, resources, and materials to ensure a structured and purposeful learning environment. Organizers establish clear objectives, create schedules, and coordinate classroom logistics. They ensure that students have access to the necessary resources and

set up a framework for effective teaching and learning. For example, an organizer may develop a lesson plan, arrange seating arrangements, prepare materials in advance, and establish routines to maximize instructional time.

A facilitator, on the other hand, is a teacher who guides and supports students' learning by creating opportunities for active engagement, collaboration, and critical thinking. They promote student-centered learning by encouraging students' participation, fostering discussion, and providing guidance as needed. A facilitator focuses on creating an interactive and inclusive learning environment that allows students to explore concepts, solve problems, and construct knowledge together. For instance, a facilitator may design group activities, encourage peer interaction, ask thought-provoking questions, and provide feedback to facilitate students' understanding and growth.

Finally, counselors are teacher who play a supportive role in students' personal and academic development. They provide guidance, emotional support, and mentorship to help students navigate challenges and make informed decisions. A counselor creates a safe and trusting environment where students can discuss their concerns, seek advice, and receive encouragement. For example, a counselor may have one-on-one meetings with students, offer guidance on study skills, provide mentorship for personal growth, and facilitate conflict resolution among students.

Q2. Teachers' roles vary from one teacher to another. Could you say what role is yours?

Table 25

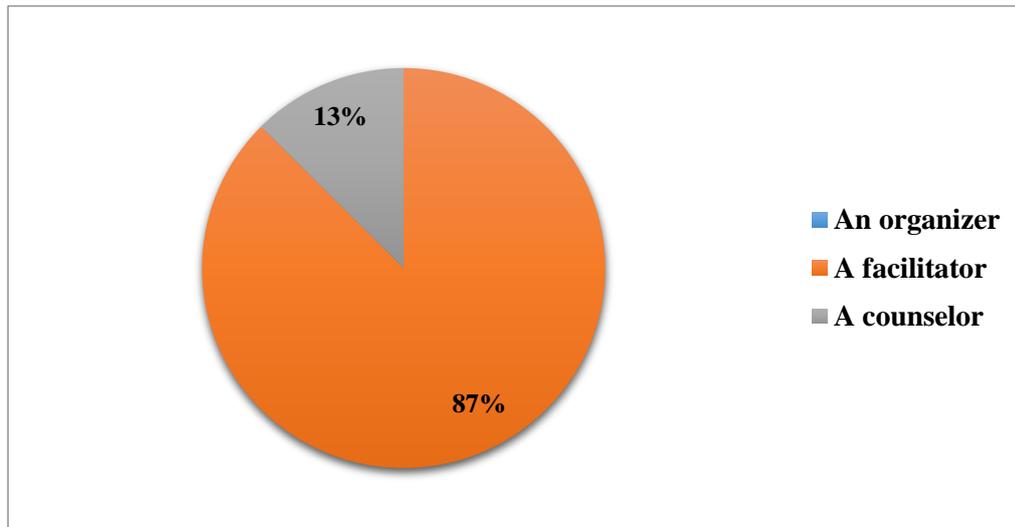
Teachers' Role in the Classroom

	Number	Percentage (%)
An organizer	0	0

A facilitator	7	87.5
A counselor	1	12.5

Figure 24

Teachers' Role in the Classroom



When asked about their roles, the majority of the respondents, representing 87.5% of the total population, claimed that they are facilitators, whereas only one informant, representing the percentage of 12.5%, claimed that he/she is a counselor and none of them said that they are an organizer. When asked to provide other roles they perform in the classroom, teachers reported a variety of answers ranging from material designers, monitors and cooperators to managers of their up-to-date learning and skills and designers of students' future.

Q. Involving your learners in making decisions about:

Table 26

Teachers views about Certain Situations

Item	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

3-Individuals who lack autonomy are not likely to be effective language learners:	0%	75%	0%	25%
4-Autonomy can develop most effectively through learning outside classroom:	0%	50%	37.5%	12.5%
5-Involving learners in decisions about what to learn promotes learner autonomy:	0%	75%	0%	25%
6-Co-operative group work activities support the development of learners' autonomy	75%	25%	0%	0%
7-Out-of-class tasks, which require learners to use the internet, promote learners' autonomy	12.5%	75%	12.5%	0%

Based on the teachers' answers of the sub-questions, the following results can be deduced: When asked to judge whether individuals who lack autonomy are not likely to be effective language learners, the majority of respondents, 75%, believe so while 25% of

them stated they strongly disagree with such a conclusion. This indicates that they recognize the importance of autonomy in language learning. Autonomy refers to learners' ability to take control of their learning process and making decisions about what, when, and how they learn. The agreement suggests that the teachers understand that learners who lack autonomy may struggle to engage actively in the learning process and may not fully benefit from language learning opportunities.

Moving to the next question which asked whether autonomy can develop most effectively through learning outside the classroom, half of the respondents (50%) indicated an agreement with the statement. This suggests that these teachers acknowledge the significance of out-of-class experiences and self-directed learning in fostering learner autonomy. Learning outside the classroom provides opportunities for learners to explore their interests, set their learning goals, and take responsibility for their learning process. However, a significant portion, representing 37.5% and 12.5% of the respondents respectively, expressed a disagreement or a strong disagreement, indicating that they may perceive in-class activities and instruction as essential for developing learner autonomy.

Upon asked to indicate if learners' involvement in decisions about what to learn promotes their autonomy, most of the respondents, accounting for 75% of the population, agreed. This indicates that these teachers recognize the value of learner involvement and learner-centered approaches in fostering autonomy. By giving learners a voice and allowing them to have a say in their learning content and goals, teachers can empower them to take ownership of their learning process, leading to increased autonomy.

“Cooperative group work activities support the development of learners' autonomy” was the next question and the aim was to see whether teachers support collaboration among students as a means to fostering their autonomy. All teachers either agreed or strongly agreed, making up a percentage of 75% and 25% respectively. This suggests that

these teachers believe in the benefits of collaboration and peer interaction for fostering learner autonomy. Cooperative group work encourages learners to take on shared responsibilities, engage in meaningful discussions, negotiate meaning, and make decisions together. Through collaboration, learners can develop their autonomy by actively participating in the learning process, expressing their ideas, and taking collective ownership of their learning outcomes.

The last question aimed to investigate whether teachers believe that out-of-class tasks, which require learners to use the internet, promote learners' autonomy or not. Again, a notable proportion of respondents (75%) agreed with the statement. This implies that these teachers recognize the potential of internet-based tasks in fostering learner autonomy. Internet-based tasks provide learners with opportunities to explore resources independently, conduct research, and engage in self-directed learning. By utilizing the internet, learners can access a wide range of authentic materials and engage in activities that align with their interests and learning goals, enhancing their autonomy.

As a whole, the responses indicate that the surveyed teachers value learner autonomy and recognize the significance of various factors, such as learner involvement, cooperative group work, and out-of-class activities, in promoting learner autonomy. Their perspectives align with the idea that autonomy plays a crucial role in effective language learning, allowing learners to become more self-directed and motivated in their language learning journey.

Q8. Out of these methods, which supporting method do you usually use in the classroom?

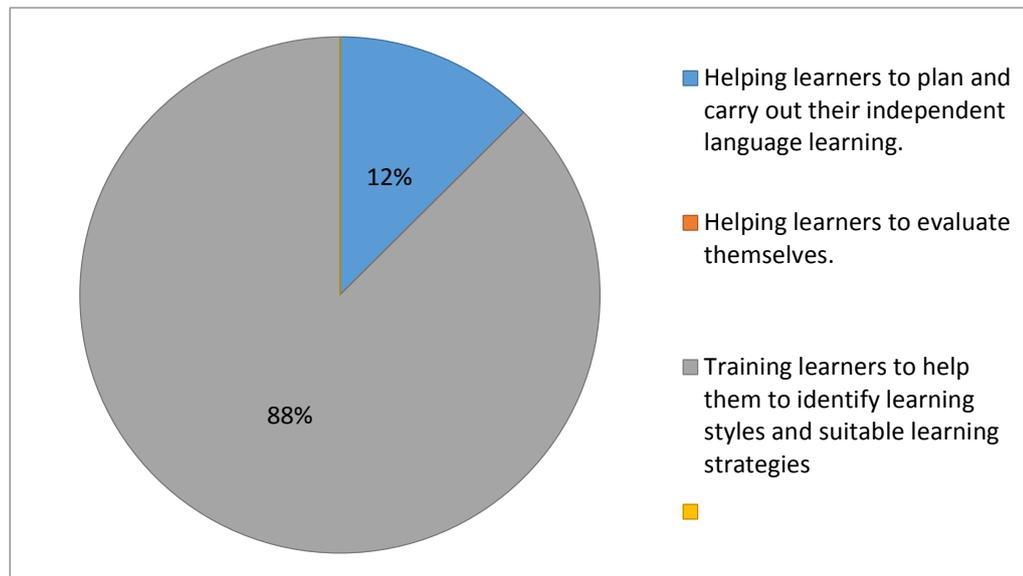
Table 27

Methods Used by Teachers to Support the Learning Process

Methods	Number	Percentage (%)
Helping learners to plan and carry out their independent language learning.	1	12.5
Helping learners to evaluate themselves.	0	0
Training learners to help them to identify learning styles and suitable learning strategies	7	87.5

Figure 25

Methods Used by Teachers to Support the Learning Process



The results show that 88% of the teachers help learners by training them to identify appropriate learning methods and styles while 12% asserted that helping learners plan and implement independent language learning is their usual method of support implemented in the classroom.

Q1. Involving your learners in making decisions about:

Table 28

Teachers' Attitudes toward Involving Students in Decision Making

Items	Undesirable	Slightly undesirable	Quite desirable	Very desirable
1-The objective of a course is:	0%	12.5%	12.5%	75%
2-The materials used is:	0%	12.5%	75%	12.5%
3-The kinds of tasks and activities they do is:	0%	0%	87.5%	12.5%
4-The topics discussed is:	0%	0%	62.3%	37.5%
5- How learning is assessed is:	37.5%	12.5%	25%	25%
6-The teaching methods used is:	0%	12.5%	75%	12.5%

The majority of the participants (75%) rated involving learners in deciding the objective of a course as very desirable. Yet, a proportion of 12.5% declared this as quite desirable and an exact same proportion stated that it is slightly undesirable. This indicates that they recognize the importance of learner input in shaping the direction and focus of the course. By involving learners in determining the course objective, teachers can increase learner engagement, motivation and ownership of their learning journey.

Involving learners in decision making concerning the materials used generated desirability with a percentage of 87.5% whereas 75% of the respondents declared that such a procedure is quite desirable and 12.5% of them believe that it is very desirable. This suggests that these teachers value learner's input in the selection of learning materials. By

involving learners in material selection, teachers can cater to their interests, preferences, and learning styles, fostering a more personalized and engaging learning experience.

In addition, the overwhelming majority of respondents (87.5%) rated involving learners in deciding the kinds of tasks and activities as highly desirable. This highlights the importance of learner's engagement and empowerment in shaping their learning experiences. When learners have a say in the types of tasks and activities they engage in, they are more likely to be motivated, actively participate, and find relevance in their learning.

When asked about the discussed topics in the classroom, the majority of respondents (62.5%) rated involving learners in deciding the topics discussed as quite desirable. This indicates that these teachers recognize the value of learner autonomy and relevance in topic selection. When learners have the opportunity to choose topics of interest, they are more likely to be engaged, motivated, and invested in their learning.

The responses for how learning is assessed question were more varied. 37.5% of respondents rated involving learners in the assessment process as undesirable while 12.5% considered it slightly undesirable, 25% considered it desirable, and 25% said it is very desirable. This suggests that there may be differing views on the extent of learner involvement in assessment decisions. Some teachers may prefer to have more control over assessment methods and criteria, while others recognize the value of including learners in the assessment process to promote self-reflection, self-assessment, and metacognitive skills.

A significant majority of respondents (75%) rated involving learners in deciding the teaching methods used as quite desirable. This highlights the importance of learner engagement and preferences in instructional approaches. By involving learners in deciding

teaching methods, teachers can create a learner-centered environment that caters to diverse learning styles and preferences, enhancing learner motivation and engagement.

To sum up, the analysis reveals a general inclination among the surveyed teachers to involve learners in decision-making processes related to course objectives, materials, tasks, topics, and teaching methods. This indicates a recognition of the benefits of learner autonomy, motivation, and engagement in the language learning process. However, there may be variations in views regarding learner involvement in assessment decisions, reflecting different perspectives on the balance between teacher guidance and learner agency in the assessment process.

3.4.2.4. Discussion of the Questionnaire. This study aimed to investigate the teachers' role in promoting learners' autonomy. The findings highlighted various aspects of the teacher's influence on learners' autonomy and provided valuable insights for educational practitioners.

The teachers' questionnaires revealed that a majority of educators demonstrated a solid understanding of learner autonomy. They acknowledged its importance in fostering independent learning and believed it to be an essential skill for lifelong learning. They recognized their role in promoting learners' autonomy and considered it a crucial responsibility. They believed also that autonomy empowers students to take ownership of their learning, enhances motivation, and leads to better educational outcomes.

In addition, the findings indicated that teachers employed a range of supportive practices to promote learner's autonomy. These practices included providing choices in learning tasks, encouraging self-reflection, offering guidance rather than direct instructions, and facilitating opportunities for independent decision-making. Moreover, some teachers identified challenges in promoting learner autonomy. These challenges included time constraints, curricular demands, and concerns about maintaining control in

the classroom. These factors often limited the extent to which teachers could fully embrace and implement autonomy-supportive practices.

To sum up, the findings from both teachers and students' questionnaires provide valuable insights into the teacher's role in promoting learners' autonomy. The study highlights the importance of teachers' understanding and perception of autonomy, as well as, their implementation of autonomy-supportive practices. It also emphasizes the positive impact of learner autonomy on students' motivation, engagement, and academic performance.

However, the study also identifies challenges and barriers faced by teachers in promoting autonomy, including time constraints and concerns about maintaining control. These challenges suggest the need for professional development opportunities and support for teachers to effectively implement autonomy-supportive practices.

In conclusion, this research underscores the significance of the teacher's role in fostering learner autonomy. By understanding the findings and addressing the identified challenges, educators can create an environment that empowers students to become independent learners, leading to enhanced educational outcomes and lifelong learning skills.

Learner autonomy is the most important educational goal that needs to be developed in learners, especially at university level. In an effort to explore how EFL teachers at the English Department of the University of Ghardaia understand learner autonomy as it relates to their interpretations of language learning, their role, the role of learners and what they do to promote learner autonomy, two questionnaires were used to collect the necessary data.

First, the results of the teachers and students' questionnaire provide valuable insights into the role of teachers in promoting learner autonomy. The research highlights the importance of teachers' understanding and perception of autonomy, as well as, their implementation of activities that promote autonomy. It also highlights the positive impact of learner autonomy on student motivation, engagement, and learning outcomes.

Second, when speaking about the role of the teacher, teachers interpret their role in teaching learner autonomy as facilitators, guides, counselors and source providers. Although these roles are important in a learner-centered approach, their understanding of the term is still very general. Acting as a facilitator not only motivates learners to find information, but also helps them to acquire necessary skills like setting objectives, choosing materials that suit the learning process and promoting their self-assessment.

However, there are some roles that are considered basics of learner autonomy that are not performed by many teachers such as: setting course objectives, selecting materials, and implementing learning strategies. More than that, to improve learner's autonomy, teachers must not only have knowledge of the characteristics of autonomous learners but they must acquire these skills to improve autonomy among learners.

Fourth, as far as the practice of promoting learners' autonomy is concerned, EFL teachers encourage learners to do research and they do not give learners everything to motivate them to find information on their own. Besides, they engage learners to work in pairs and in groups. All

of these practices lead to the development of learner autonomy, but are not sufficient as there are many other practices that are necessary to develop learner autonomy such as teaching learners strategies of learning and involving them in making decisions about all aspects of their learning process.

Recommendations:

1. Emphasizing learner-centered approaches: Teachers should shift from a traditional teacher-centered approach to a learner-centered approach, where students take an active role in their learning process. They should also encourage self-reflection, goal-setting, and independent decision-making to foster autonomy.

2. Providing choice and autonomy-supportive environments: teachers should offer students choices in selecting learning materials, tasks, and activities and create a supportive classroom environment that values students' opinions, encourages critical thinking, and allows for self-directed exploration.

3. Foster metacognitive skills: teachers should teach students strategies for self-assessment, reflection, and self-regulation and help them develop awareness of their learning preferences, strengths, and areas for improvement. They should also encourage them to set goals, monitor their progress, and adjust their learning strategies accordingly.

4. Cultivate collaborative learning opportunities: Promoting peer interaction and group work where students can learn from and with each other is another suggestion. Teachers must encourage students to take leadership roles, collaborate on projects, and engage in cooperative problem-solving activities.

5. Provide guidance and feedback: Acting as a facilitator and guide, offering constructive feedback, support, and scaffolding when needed are all necessary roles for the teachers to perform. By doing this, students will be encouraged to seek help, ask questions and actively engage in dialogue with their peers and the teacher.

6. Encourage self-assessment and reflection: it is advised also to incorporate regular opportunities for students to reflect on their learning progress, strengths, and areas for improvement. Teachers must provide students with strategies on how to assess their own work, set personal learning goals, and evaluate their achievements.

7. Support autonomy in assessment: Offering students choices in assessment methods and allowing them to contribute to the assessment criteria can foster their autonomy. When teachers provide opportunities for self-assessment and peer assessment, they will enable students to take ownership of their learning outcomes.

8. Professional development for teachers: Providing ongoing professional development for teachers to enhance their understanding of autonomy and its role in education is an advisable suggestion. Offer training on strategies for promoting learner autonomy, effective communication skills, and creating autonomy-supportive learning environments are highly recommended.

9. Collaborate with stakeholders: Fostering collaboration among teachers, parents, and administrators to create a shared understanding of the importance of learner autonomy will help in promoting autonomy among students. When parents are involved in supporting students' autonomy outside the classroom, teachers' job will become much easier.

10. Continuous reflection and improvement: Regularly evaluating the effectiveness of strategies implemented to promote learner autonomy is recommended. Seeking feedback from students, reflecting on classroom practices, and adapting approaches based on students' needs and feedback will help teachers in improving their strategies.

By implementing these recommendations, teachers can play a pivotal role in empowering students, fostering their autonomy, and cultivating lifelong learners who are motivated, self-directed, and capable of taking ownership of their learning journey.

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APPENDIX A

Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear EFL teachers,

This survey is being conducted to gather information for the fulfillment of a master's dissertation. It seeks to investigate teachers' perspectives on learners' autonomy and how it can be promoted in English language teaching in tertiary level, precisely Third Year students of English at Ghardaia University. According to your experiences with this skill in the classroom, you are kindly requested to respond to the following questions by putting a tick or comment if needed. We would like to assure you that the answers provided will be kept confidential and will only be used for research purposes.

Section One: Personal Information

-Which subject(s) do you teach?

.....

Section Two: Teachers' Perceptions on Learners' Autonomy

1-How can you define autonomy?

- One quality of a good learner.
The ability of being independent in managing one's own matters.
Learner's decision about what to learn and how to learn.

2- Learning autonomy is?

- Very important Important Not important

3-What is the difference between 'teacher- centred' model and 'learner-centred' model?

.....

In your opinion, which one is the best?

.....

4-Do you think that promoting learners' autonomy is:

- The teacher's role.
The learner's role1

5- Could you define these teachers' roles?

Organizer.....

Facilitator.....

Counselor.....

6-Teachers' roles vary from one teacher to another. Could you identify what role is yours?

APPENDIX B

Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

This survey is being conducted to gather information for the fulfillment of a master's dissertation. It seeks to examine students' perspectives on learners' autonomy and how independent you are in English language learning. It will be highly appreciated if you can spare few minutes from your time to respond to the following questions by putting a tick or comment if needed. Rest assured that your answers will be kept confidential and will only be used for research purposes.

Section One: Personal Information

1-Sex

- Male
- Female

2- Age

- 19_23
- 24-30
- 31-40
- More than 40 years

3-Studying English is due to:

- Parents' demand
- Own choice.

4- I am learning English to

- Get a good job
- I am interested in English as a culture (films, sports, music...etc)

5-Describe your level in English?

- Beginner
- intermediate
- advanced

Section Two: Learners' Perceptions on Learning Autonomy

1-Have you ever heard of the term 'autonomy'?

- Yes
- No

If "yes", how can you define it?

- One quality of a good learner.
- The ability of being independent in managing one's own matters.

1-What responsibilities does your teacher assign you to in the class?

- Select the method to use.
- Evaluate or correct yourself.
- Prepare and present the course.
- Suggest topics and activities.
- Other responsibilities:

.....

2-Do you think that developing the learning process is?

- The learner's responsibility
- The teacher's responsibility
- Both of them

-Could you justify your answer?

.....

3-Do you think your teacher should involve you in making decisions about the following?:

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 3.a-The objectives of a course | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.b-The materials used | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.c-The kinds of tasks and activities to do | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.d-The topics discussed | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.e-How learning is assessed | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.f-The teaching methods used | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |

Résumé:

L'objectif principal de cette étude est d'investiguer sur le rôle des professeurs dans la promotion de l'autonomie des étudiants. Le problème majeur des étudiants à l'université de Ghardaïa est le manque de l'indépendance. Le problème peut être lié au fait que les étudiants ne connaissent pas l'importance de l'autonomie à l'université et l'influence positive de cette compétence sur leur réussite formelle et leur apprentissage tout au long de la vie. Nous avons adopté un modèle de questionnaire descriptif avec une approche à la fois quantitative et qualitative (méthode mixte) pour obtenir les données nécessaires et pertinentes, et pour répondre aux questions de la recherche. Pour cela, nous avons choisi deux questionnaires comme outils de collecte des données de recherche. Notre étude est menée en Algérie plus précisément à l'université de Ghardaïa dans le département d'anglais. Notre population est composée de 8 professeurs d'ALE et 80 étudiants de troisième année licence en langue anglaise. Cependant, nous avons choisi un échantillon de 25 étudiants au cours l'année académique 2022-2023. Les résultats obtenus à partir des questionnaires des professeurs et des étudiants soulèvent l'idée que les professeurs devraient encourager les étudiants autonomes dans leurs classes en mettant en œuvre les différentes stratégies d'enseignement qui démontrent les quatre rôles : un facilitateur, un guide, un conseiller et une ressource et le rôle le plus utilisé est celui du facilitateur. En outre, les enseignants sont confrontés à certaines difficultés, notamment le manque de compétences d'apprentissage autonome chez les étudiants.

Mots clé: l'autonomie de l'apprenant, le développement de la langue, le rôle de l'enseignant, l'enseignement des langues, les stratégies d'enseignement, les étudiants de troisième année.

الملخص:

الغرض من الدراسة الحالية هو تقصي دور الأساتذة في تعزيز التعلم الذاتي لدى المتعلمين. إنَّ المشكل الرئيس لدى المتعلمين

في جامعة غرداية هو الإفتقار إلى الاستقلالية وقد يرتبط المشكل ربما بعدم معرفة تأثيره الإيجابي على نجاحهم في مشوارهم

وتعلمهم مدى الحياة. اعتمدنا في هذه الدراسة على التصميم الوصفي باستعمال كلا المنهجين، الكمي والنوعي (المنهج

المختلط) للوصول إلى بيانات أساسية متطابقة. وللإجابة على أسئلة البحث قمنا باختيار استبيانين كأداة لجمع معطيات

البحث. تمت دراستنا في الجزائر وبالتحديد في جامعة غرداية في كلية اللغة الإنجليزية. مجتمع البحث لدينا يتكون من ثمانية

أساتذة للغة الانجليزية و80 طالب ليسانس ولكن الباحثين اختارتا 25 طالبا ممن يزولون دراستهم في السن الجامعية 2022-

2023. النتائج المتحصل عليها من خلال استبائناي الأساتذة والطلبة أوجبت الفكرة المطروحة بأنه على الأساتذة تشجيع التعلم

الذاتي في أفسامهم وذلك بتطبيق مختلف الاستراتيجيات التعليمية التي تمثلها أدوارهم الأربع: ميسر، مرشد، مستشار ومصدر؛

حيث الدور الأكثر استعمالا هو الميسر. إضافة إلى ذلك فقد خلصت الدراسة إلى أن الأساتذة يواجهون بعض الصعوبات والتي

تشمل افتقار المتعلمين لمهارة التعلم الذاتي، وقد أدى نقص هذه المهارة إلى التأثير سلبا على تحصيلهم في الدراسة. وختاما،

فقد تم اقتراح إجراء أيام تكوينية لتسليط الضوء على العلاقة بين التعلم الذاتي وإنماء اللغة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تطور اللغة، أساتذة اللغة، إستقلالية المتعلم، دور الأستاذ، إستراتيجيات التعليم، طلبة ثالثة

ليسانس.