



*An Inquiry into EFL learners' Inclinations towards Autonomous
Language Learning*
*Une enquête sur les inclinations des apprenants EFL vers l'apprentissage
autonome des langues*

Samira Mohdeb^{1,*}, Salah Kaouache²

¹ Laboratoire Approche Pragmatique et Strategies du Discours, University of
Mohamed Lamine Debaghine, Setif 2 (Algeria), s.mohdeb@univ-setif2.dz

² University of Mentouri Constantine 1 (Algeria), Skaouache-@live.fr

Received: 14 / 01 / 2022

Accepted: 17 / 03 / 2022

Published: 05 / 04 / 2022

Abstract:

A noticeable recognition for the concept of learner autonomy and how to foster autonomous learning behaviors in language classes has been marked in the recent years; however, the individual learner's attitudes about the concept are yet decisive. In this study, the author aims at exploring the extent to which learners are prepared for autonomous language learning; thus, a number of sixty learners of English as a foreign language at the department of English language, university of Jijel were involved in a survey about learner autonomy readiness. The questionnaire was designed to study each learner's attitudes in three areas of perceptions. The findings obtained suggest that their readiness level for learner autonomy is yet moderate. There is still lack of confidence and responsibility with regard to certain aspects in the learning process.

Keywords: *Autonomous language learning; Language classes; Learner' attitudes; Questionnaire; Readiness level; Responsibility.*

* Corresponding Author

I. INTRODUCTION

In line with the significant shift in the teaching programs and methods from teacher-centered to learner-centered, the issue of Learner Autonomy (LA) had become increasingly compelling in the recent language teaching and learning literature. Such a captivating interest comes from the fact that learner autonomy approach to language learning is decidedly essential and is of big value for learners' better academic achievement; it is also seen as an effective component in the development of individual learners (Dam, 2001; Benson, 2001; Sinclair, 2000; Smith, 2000; Little, 1991). More importantly, this notion is considered as a desired pedagogical goal that is located in the core of student-centered approach to teaching and learning (Little, 1999; Wenden, 1987). That is why it is argued that the notion deserves more application in teachers' programs and courses inside the classroom. In addition, the concept is viewed as one of the demands of higher education in the sense that it infers a gradual shift of responsibility from the teacher to the students who are required to work hard so as to develop the necessary new skills of learning to assess and control their own progress independently. That is to say, compared to school education, university education commonly adopts an autonomous approach to the teaching/learning process regarding this approach to learning as much more appropriate and more fruitful at many levels, a fact that must be recognized by all learners.

- **Statement of the problem**

It is a widely held belief among students that arriving and studying at the university fosters autonomous language learning because the nature of university studies dictates that students must involve more self-reflection on their learning process. However, language learning autonomy is much more a matter of attitudes and experience; some learners may view self-access time as an optional extra for which they may discard (Breeze, 2002). In this vein, Little (1990) pointed out, "autonomy may be the last thing learners want." Hence, the present paper argues that before any mediation occurs, it is important to determine the preparation of learners for the changes in behavior that autonomous learning entails (Cotterall, 1995). According to Horwitz (1987), wrong views about language learning may lead to the disposition of less effective strategies. At this point, unless these attitudes are challenged, the progress of the learners may be hampered. In the current research paper, it is claimed that attitudes and perceptions of learners about the notion of learner autonomy in the language learning process must be discovered and taken into consideration as a preceding important step towards raising awareness and developing this construct among learners of English as a foreign language.

- **Aims of the study**

In order to investigate the readiness for language learning autonomy among learners of English as a foreign language at the university of Jijel, the two following general research aims were prepared:

- a. To find out the perceptions held by learners of English as a foreign language about their own and their teacher's responsibilities inside the classroom.
- b. To see the extent to which those learners show readiness for the demands of autonomous language learning.

1. Defining the Concept

There is an ongoing talk about the definition and implications detained by the term learner autonomy, but its exact meaning is still open to discussion and still is a matter of debate (Benson, 2013). Cited by Ho and Crookall, 1995, "autonomy is not easily defined in a concrete and tangible manner; nevertheless, certain kinds of knowledge, skills and attitudes can be said to characterize and/or lead towards autonomous learning" (p.236). In language learning, LA indicates one's ability to take control of aspects in the learning process (Benson, 2011; Holec, 1981). The earliest and most cited definition of LA is found in Holec's seminal work (1981) as the "ability to take charge of one's own learning" (p.3); this denotes learners' capacity to hold responsibility for learning inside and outside the classroom in order to reach the purpose of the learning process with less reliance on their teachers. Besides, Holec (1981) had emphasized the crucial involvement of the learners in setting the learning objectives of the language course. This may be done through some special training to gradually achieve the desired state of autonomy.

In the words of Little (2007), autonomy is defined as "a learner's willingness and ability to

take responsibility, to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate his/her learning with tasks that are constructed in negotiation with and support from the teacher.” (p.6); this definition seems to summarize many other definitions because it includes different components like capacity, willingness, readiness, responsibility, involvement, evaluation and self-direction with an acknowledgement of the teacher’s facilitating and helping role (Tebib, 2017). In order to understand the term better, Little (1994, p.81) noted on four misconceptions of learner autonomy; it is not:

- a) A synonym for self-instruction; in other words, autonomy is not limited to learning without a teacher.
- b) A matter of letting the learners get on with things as best they can; autonomy does not entail an abdication of responsibility on the part of the teacher.
- c) Something that teachers do to learners; that is, it is not another teaching method.
- d) A single, easily described behavior.
- e) Steady state achieved by learners.

2. What differentiate Autonomous Learners?

As for the different interpretations and explanations associated with the term learner autonomy, many educators tried to sort what makes an autonomous learner:

Cotterall (1995, p. 200) stated that “autonomous learners are likely to be individuals who have overcome the obstacles which educational background, cultural norms and prior experience may have put in their way”. This inspires students’ learning awareness of the process that will lead them to work on their own goals and match any encountered difficulty. Also, Dam (1994, p. 505) assumed that, “An autonomous learner is an active participant in the social processes of classroom learning, but also an active interpreter of new information in terms of what she/he already and uniquely knows (...) an autonomous learner evolves an awareness of the aims and processes of learning and is capable of the critical reflection which syllabuses and curricula frequently require but traditional pedagogical measures rarely achieve. An autonomous learner knows how to learn and can use this knowledge in any learning situation she/he may encounter at any stage in her/his life.” Interestingly, these are the skills to characterize learners who request to be autonomous members in their educational setting.

Dickinson (1993), on the other side, believed that autonomous learners are people who are characterized in five ways:

- (1) They are able to identify what has been taught.
- (2) They are able to formulate their own learning objectives.
- (3) They are people who can and do select and implement appropriate learning strategies.
- (4) They are able to identify strategies that are not working for them.
- (5) They are able to monitor their own learning.

This occurring variation in portraying autonomous language learners reflects the multidimensional nature of the concept; however, all of those people agree on its essence, which is assuming serious responsibility for learning.

3. Studies on Learner Autonomy Readiness:

A search for relevant databases was conducted for studies published over the last period examining readiness for autonomous learning in higher education settings.

Cotterall (1995) saw that before any intervention occurs, it is important to determine the preparation of learners for the changes in behavior and values that independence entails because “These beliefs are likely to reflect learners' "readiness" for autonomy” and can either lead to or impede the growth of their autonomy potential. The author worked in the year of 1999 with 131 learners of English applying a 90-item questionnaire in order to investigate learner beliefs about six key variables: (1) the role of the teacher, (2) the role of feedback, (3) the learner’s sense of self-efficacy, (4) important strategies, (5) dimensions of strategies-related behavior, and (6) the nature of language learning. Results showed that the views of the learners about these six variables had significant effects on their autonomous behaviour. In 1995, she administered a questionnaire on learner beliefs about language learning and concluded by restating the importance of investigating the beliefs which learners hold.

Chan (2001) conducted the research with a group of undergraduates in the Hong Kong Polytechnic University in 1998–1999. The study's main goal was to explore the degree to which learner independence in tertiary classroom in Hong Kong can function. He came to the following, “Complete autonomy, is an achievable, but idealistic goal.” because various factors

have an impact on the extent to which the learner is able to use the knowledge and skills acquired with confidence, flexibility, appropriateness and independence of the teacher. He also supposed that Chinese students see information as something that the instructor can relay rather than discover on its own.

Breeze (2002) worked with a group of Spanish university EFL students in a self access center. Students said they took charge of their own learning and enjoyed some independent work, They also had a high degree of dependence on teachers and felt that without a class they could not improve. For him, the ideal solution would be to incorporate aspects of apprenticeship training and greater autonomy into existing structures. In his words, "Although a shift towards greater independence in language learning is positive, it would be unwise to promote this aspect at the expense of the traditional teacher-class structure."

Januin (2005) has argued that before any intervention occurs, it is essential to delve into the learners' readiness for autonomy, his study involved 45 Malay students learning English as a second language at the University of Malaysia Sabah (UMS); the learners appear to not show an adequate level of readiness for language LA. This discovery is critical because it affects ways of promoting the independence of learners to be included in all English syllabuses.

Yıldırım (2008) also saw that it is important to identify students' readiness for learner autonomy before designing or adapting activities to promote autonomous learning. Therefore, his study investigated 103 learners' perceptions of teacher and learner responsibilities, their opinions about their own abilities to act autonomously, and the frequency of actual autonomous language learning activities they employ. Results indicated that in many areas of the language learning system, learners appear able to assume more responsibility.

Razeq and Ahmed (2014) worked on investigating the readiness of university students for autonomous learning of English as a foreign language with the help of questionnaires and interviews across three dimensions: a) learners' perceptions of their educational responsibilities; b) learners' abilities related to autonomous learning and c) the actual autonomous English activities that were practiced by the participants while learning English. Analysis of the findings suggested that as a result of previous educational experiences, the learners were "habituated" by their past educational experiences to place the responsibility for the success or failure of their language acquisition on their teachers.

Khalymon & Shevchenko (2017) explored "Readiness for learner autonomy of prospective teachers minoring in English." They made a survey study of investigating the level of learner autonomy among prospective English-language teachers at Nizhyn Mykola Gogol State University in Ukraine. The domains associated with learner autonomy that were examined were, willingness to take learning responsibilities, self-confidence to learn autonomously, motivation to learn English, capacity to learn autonomously. The research indicated that the overall level of learner autonomy of prospective teachers is medium, while mean values fluctuate dramatically from item to item. They are highly motivated and willing to take responsibility for their learning; however, their ability and self-confidence to learn independently are temperate.

All the aforementioned studies indicate that investigating readiness for LA comes first because the findings are to be taken into account before designing an autonomous approach to language learning. Hence, such awareness will form the basis of any attempt to promote learner autonomy later on (Cotterall, 1995).

II. Methods and Materials:

1. Participants:

For the current research study, students who have studied at the university for more than one year were chosen as they are more experienced in learning English and they are more likely to take the questions in a serious and conscious manner. Said differently, it is in order to investigate whether those students are prepared to direct and monitor their own learning process with their two-years university study experience. Accordingly, the participating subjects were in their second, third, and master one years. The number was 60 from a whole population of about 500 learners of English as a foreign language at the university of Mohammed Seddik Benyahia, Jijel.

2. Research Instrument:

The study is based on quantitative research. The main research tool was the questionnaire aimed to find out the level of students' readiness for learner autonomy so as also to target the most important principles of learner autonomy approach evoked above as far as the teaching of English is concerned. The questionnaire was administered in the classroom under the teachers' supervision. The students spent about 15-20 minutes answering the questions. The whole questionnaire contains 32 items, which are divided into four main parts. The first part which includes five items, refers to students' perceptions to their teachers' role. The second part is for their perceptions to their own role, and the third part which contains twenty item already divided into three sections is for general readiness for learner autonomy, classroom work and content selection, "As the aim of the research is to measure people's attitudes and beliefs, Likert Scale is used to collect the attitudinal data through getting people's reactions to statements." Khalymon & Shevchenko (2017).

The respondents, however, were not informed of these categories and were asked only to score their agreement with each claim (agree, not sure, disagree). Questionnaire items were totally adapted from two sources who are in fact pioneers in the area of readiness for autonomy, Breeze (2002) and Chan (2001).

First, Breeze' questionnaire comprises forty-five items to be answered using a Likert scale, the questions are divided into eight groups but the researcher took only groups one, two, three, and six for the purpose of avoiding much repetition of the items and in order to guarantee the respondents' not being tedium with the big number of the items. Group One: questions concerning general readiness to engage in self- directed learning. Group Two: general attitudes to language learning without the presence of a teacher. Group Three: evaluations of the teacher's role. Group Six: views concerning responsibility for selection of content. Second, Chan's questionnaire survey comprised five headings which are the following, (1) Learning English: aims and motivation. (2) The teacher's role. (3) The learner's role. (4) Learning preferences. (5) Learner autonomy and the autonomous learner. Again, only parts two and three were taken by the researcher for the previously mentioned reasons.

3. Data Collection:

The questionnaire was completed anonymously in May 2019 by sixty respondents who were studying in their second, third and master one years. The questionnaire was administered in the classroom under the teachers' supervision and the students spent about 15-20 minutes answering the questions. Among sixty participants, only two returned their questionnaires empty.

4. Data Results and analysis:

Subjects' responses were analyzed descriptively by calculating percentages. The results of this analysis are discussed below.

I. Part I

Table (1): Teacher's Role

Item	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Total (%)
1. I like the teacher to explain what and how I am learning.	46 (79%)	8 (14%)	4 (7%)	58 (100%)
2. I like the teacher to give me problems to work on.	36 (62%)	12 (21%)	10 (17%)	58 (100%)
3. I like the teacher to let me find my own mistakes.	29	15	14	58

	(50%)	(26%)	(24%)	(100%)
4. Generally, I consider my English teacher to be:				
(a) a resource person who provides language input	24 (a) (41%)	36 (b) (62%)	15 (c) (26%)	58 (100%)
(b) someone who gives information				
(c) a facilitator				

It is noticed here that the learners have the traditional high expectations about their teacher's role, his responsibility of explaining the process of learning and the teaching content presented inside the classroom. In the item "I like the teacher to explain what and how I am learning" and the item "I like the teacher to give me problems to work on", the percentage of agreement was 79%, 62% successively. This is correspondent with the last item in the table where students were asked to show how they perceive their teachers' roles, they opted for all the choices nearly equally but the biggest proportion was for the teacher being much more a source of information who always provides input. From their answers also, they appear to be less familiar with the role of facilitator (only 26%); however, when it came to this item, "I like the teacher to let me find my own mistakes" more than the half were equally divided between uncertainty (26%) and disagreement (24%) while 50% were in total agreement. These answers imply that students like to be given enough space by the teacher to work on their language learning through spotting mistakes and working in turn on finding solutions for the encountered problems. The responses also might be indicative of their big appreciation to teacher initiative associated with his traditional role inside the class but they also want to be considered and involved.

Although the results show a tendency to be teacher dependent, this sample of students showed clear desires to be independent and self-reliant. The fifth question reveals the multiple roles of the teacher that are perceived by students; students assume that he must be someone who is competent enough, motivator, counselor, and showing fairness as well. This is correspondent with Chan 2002 who stated that "He/she had the multiple duties to raise motivation and language awareness level, while at the same time teach and instruct."

II. Part II

Table (2): Learner' Role

Item	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Total (%)
1. I have a right to be involved in selecting the course content.	25 (43%)	25 (43%)	8 (14%)	58 (100%)
2. I have a right to be involved in selecting learning tasks and activities.	32 (55%)	20 (34%)	6 (10%)	58 (100%)
3. I have ideas about learning which should be considered in developing learning programmes.	36 (62%)	8 (14%)	14 (24%)	58 (100%)
4. I like to be responsible for my own learning.	33 (57%)	14 (24%)	11 (19%)	58 (100%)
I am basically interested in learning English in order to communicate, rather than learning the language for its own sake.	32 (55%)	10 (17%)	16 (28%)	58 (100%)

6. I like to assess my own progress.	41 (71%)	14 (24%)	3 (5%)	58 (100%)
7. I can be a more effective learner if I develop the knowledge and skills about the learning process.	40 (69%)	18 (31%)	/	58 (100%)

In general terms, it is seen from the answers that students hope for a productive and active role inside the classroom. Good proportions opted successively for having the right to be involved in selecting learning tasks and activities (55%), belief that they had ideas about learning which should be considered in developing the learning programmes (62%), willingness to be responsible for their own learning (57%), and understanding the goal of learning a language (55%). However, when it came to the item “I have a right to be involved in selecting the course content”, they were fairly divided between agreement (43%) and uncertainty (43%) while only 14% disagreed with this statement. In addition, a great majority (69%) anticipated that they could become more effective learners if they developed the knowledge and skills about the learning process and it was noticeable that no body denies this fact (0%). Almost the same big amount (71%) stated that they have the ability to assess their own progress while the others were unsure (24%). It is suggested from the answers that students like to be responsible for their learning but many of them are uncertain whether they have the right to participate in content selection and to choose the learning activities as well. Here, they are displaying an inclination to autonomous learning because they like to be given the chance to contribute in the learning process through access to these particular areas especially self-assessment which is basic to learning autonomy. The last and before the last items received no disagreement thus, developing the necessary skills that will lead them later to become effective learners who can assess their own progress is undebatable for this sample of students.

II. Part III

Table (3): General Readiness for Self-directed Learning

Items	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Total (%)
1. If I don't learn, it's my fault	13 (22%)	12 (21%)	33 (57%)	58 (100%)
2. I learn a lot working by myself	8 (14%)	14 (24%)	36 (62%)	58 (100%)
3. I prefer classes where I can decide what will be learnt, how	11 (19%)	15 (26%)	32 (55%)	58 (100%)
4. I know what I want to learn	12 (21%)	14 (24%)	32 (55%)	58 (100%)
5. Dislike questions with not just one right answer	26 (45%)	13 (22%)	19 (33%)	58 (100%)
6. When I see something, I don't understand, I stay away	44 (76%)	8 (14%)	6 (10%)	58 (100%)
7. I expect the teacher to tell me exactly what to do	19 (33%)	14 (24%)	25 (43%)	58 (100%)

8. If I get a good mark, I don't worry if I still have Questions	33 (57%)	9 (16%)	16 (28%)	58 (100%)
--	-------------	------------	-------------	--------------

In the first item in this table, a big percentage of students (57%) admitted that it is their responsibility to learn whereas the remaining sum was similarly divided (21% and 22%); the same large proportion (55%) said that they knew what they wanted to learn and also the same number (55%) showed preference to classes where they decide what to be learned; though, many of them were unresolved (26%). When it came to the item “I learn a lot working by myself” the majority (62%) showed tendency to do so, in addition, a very large proportion (76%) expressed those things they did not understand will not discourage them or oblige them stay isolated. Also, for a significant number (57%), getting good grades was not a reason to stop inquiring for knowledge. However, they were fairly divided on the issue of teacher responsible for saying and explaining everything” I expect the teacher to tell me exactly what to do” 43% agreed, 33% disagreed, and 24% were uncertain yet. In dealing with questions that have more than one right answer, students were also alienated among them, 33% said that they dislike it and 45% said the opposite, while the remaining could not decide.

The answers may be very indicative of some degree of readiness for autonomy but the many students who were uncertain about for whom the responsibility of learning, whether they knew what to learn, and the good number who showed that what mattered more is getting good grades must be taken into consideration because their views clearly hinder the move towards the desired autonomy.

Table (4): Independent Work in Language Learning

Items	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Total (%)
1. LL involves lot of self-study	5 (9%)	10 (17%)	43 (74%)	58 (100%)
2. In LL I enjoy tasks where I can learn on my own	11 (19%)	9 (16%)	38 (65%)	58 (100%)
3. If L class is not useful, I can learn on my own	17 (29%)	13 (22%)	28 (49%)	58 (100%)
4. I would enjoy learning a language on my own	14 (24%)	17 (29%)	27 (47%)	58 (100%)

An overwhelming number of students (74%) admitted that language learning involved a lot of self-study, but when asked about their actual feeling concerning this process, a big number also (65%) expressed that they enjoyed performing tasks where they can learn on their own, 19% disagreed and only 16% were unsure. However, when it came to whether they totally enjoy language learning individually, students were noticeably divided, although the biggest number showed agreement (47%), the others were undecided (29%) and even in disagreement (24%). Participants were not completely sure about their ability to learn individually if they found that language class is not useful, 49% said that they could, 29% said no, and 22% stayed neutral; in fact, this may be an indicative of some degree of class dependence. Although students are in favor of the concept of self-study, they do not really enjoy taking the initiative even if they saw that their class is not useful sometimes.

Table (5): Importance of Class and Teacher

Item	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Total (%)
1. I don't feel I could improve without a class	20 (34%)	21 (36%)	17 (29%)	58 (100%)
2. A lot of Language Learning can be done without a teacher	15 (26%)	16 (28%)	27 (46%)	58 (100%)
3. You have to have a teacher to learn effectively	10 (17%)	16 (28%)	32 (55%)	58 (100%)
4. I feel I can only improve with a teacher to help	19 (33%)	22 (38%)	17 (29%)	58 (100%)

In the second item from this table, although many students (46%) agreed that a lot of language learning could be done without a teacher, the rest were divided between 28% who were unsure and 26% who showed disagreement, but what is really eye-catching is that a big proportion (55%) acknowledged that you have to have this teacher to learn effectively. This highly denotes their dependence on the teacher although knowing that his presence is not very crucial to language learning. When it came to their ability to improve without a class, they were equally distributed, 34% disagreed with the statement “I don't feel I could improve without a class,” 29% agreed, whereas the biggest number (36%) was uncertain; the last item “I feel I can only improve with a teacher to help” which is very similar in meaning with the first item did not reproduce any change in the students' responses. They were very typical in their answers and were confused in the same way about their aptitude to the exclusive improvement with a class, so, 33% disagreed, 29% agreed whereas 38% were not sure. Among this sample of students, the results exhibited a real high gratitude and dependence on teacher and class.

Table (6): Selection of Content

Item	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Total (%)
1. Teacher should decide on course content for L classes	17 (29%)	16 (28%)	25 (43%)	58 (100%)
2. I want to choose my own material for L classes	15 (26%)	25 (43%)	18 (31%)	58 (100%)
3. I know exactly kind of material I like to work on	11 (19%)	26 (45%)	21 (36%)	58 (100%)
4. Not students' responsibility to decide on course content	10 (17%)	20 (34%)	28 (48%)	58 (100%)

In all the four items in this part, it is noticed that students were divided in the same manner showing a clear tendency to agreement with items like (Teacher should decide on course content for L classes) and (Not students' responsibility to decide on course content). This may indicate how it is a firm belief among students that content selection is not their job probably because they have been always kept out of the decision-making process. When they were asked about whose responsibility content selection was, many of them (43%) agreed that it was teacher's

one, 28% were uncertain, and 29% saw that it is not always the teacher's one. Nearly the same results were obtained with the item "Not students' responsibility to decide on course content". Many students who felt they wanted to decide on the choice and sort of material to be used, they seemed to know also how to achieve that; 31% said that they want whereas 43% stayed neutral. 36% said they know how and 45% remained neutral. This reflects the sense of indecision those students have concerning the choice and kind of language learning material employed.

III. Results and discussion :

With this sample of university students, the results emerged are analogous in some respect to that obtained by Breeze (2002) and Chan (2001). Although they were conducted in different contexts, there were some small differences in certain areas in terms of the number of students who opted for specific items. The results are also consistent with those obtained from Razeq and Ahmed, 2014; Januin, 2005). The above views have several implications for pedagogical practice and the creation of language curricula. Essentially, it seems that students are conscious of their goals behind learning the language (table 2, item 5); something that is regarded as central and basic to the notion of learner autonomy. They showed some positive inclinations and readiness for autonomous learning; nevertheless, the pattern evolving from this analysis highlights their inherited dependence on the teacher, accompanied by their hesitancy to work alone and to participate in the selection of learning content in general and choice of material in particular.

Concerning the necessity of class and teacher, students expressed themselves in more neutral terms, this designates that are less self-confident in their ability to learn alone and still feel attached to the traditional classroom framework that is highly appreciated.

Furthermore, students appear to be in support for teacher traditional role as the dominant feature and the one who holds the biggest share of responsibility, whereas they see themselves as receivers of knowledge primarily. Based on their answers, many of those learners are not yet ready to pose their inquiries and ask for clarification about their responsibilities inside the classroom; something that does not fit the profile of an autonomous learner.

Therefore, learners are in need to look at the teacher from other angles like a monitor and motivator. According to Chan (2002), "if the learner does not understand the reasons and benefits of autonomous learning, he/she may refuse the extra responsibility for and involvement in the learning process. So, we need to convince our learners of the gains and practical implications of such learning at the very beginning", this strongly recommend that there must be enough genuine involvement for the learner in the process from the early years of the language learning process.

A point that emerged clearly from this line of analysis is that students showed, to some extent, that they are motivated by factors other than examinations and grades noticeably when they were asked whether to remain aside and stop asking questions if getting good marks in the exams (table 3, item 8). Thus, teachers and students must invest in this advantage because may be things are not about rejecting responsibility but because they are influenced by teacher teaching approach and other under searched factors. Otherwise, those students think that this is the way learning is working because they may lack awareness about this concept as an approach to learning.

Broadly speaking, the results are not very surprising if we considered the practice of spoon-feeding in teacher centered instruction throughout the educational system for a long time over the three stages of primary, middle, and high school; in fact, teachers themselves are adopting the spoon-feeding teaching style they are used to without trying to make changes. Therefore, a clear gap exists between students' desires and their actual practices. They value granted opportunities but they do not know how to proceed with it.

As a concluding word of recommendation, it is important to raise the level of confidence of students and to rearrange the innate learning methods that have long prevented any attempt to learn independently and act autonomously. There must be an awareness raising to the many responsibilities that students are in charge of, like the role of researchers and risk takers.

IV. Conclusion:

This study is not comprehensive or extensive, and it has covered only one general dimension of the whole study which is readiness. There are more dimensions yet to be explored here. These other dimensions include the influencing factors such as the role of the student's prior language learning experience, strategy use, and learner's motivation. The present paper used two adapted questionnaires to provide an initial picture of language learning attitudes relating to learner autonomy with learners of English as a foreign language at the university of Jijel. Another intention was to compare the results obtained with some previous similar studies. The attitudes that learners hold and the way they perceive their responsibilities must be treated seriously. Students still regard themselves as passive receivers of the teaching instructions although hoping to take part in the decision-making process which includes mainly setting goals and selecting the content, and assessing one's development. Nevertheless, there is a certain level of readiness among learners when it comes to the requirements of autonomous learning like consciousness about the goal of learning a foreign language in addition to willingness to actively participate and negotiate with the teacher inside the classroom. The task now is how to make use of the findings of the study in classroom pedagogy for the benefit of both teacher and learners.

- **References:**

• **Books:**

- Benson, P. (2001). *Teaching and researching autonomy in language learning*. Harlow: Longman.
 - Benson, P. (2013). *Teaching and researching autonomy*. (2nd ed). New York: Routledge.
 - Benson, P. (2011). *Teaching and researching autonomy*. (2nd ed). Great Britain: Routledge.
 - Holec, H. (1981). *Autonomy in foreign language learning*. Oxford: Pergamon.
 - Horwitz, E. (1987). Surveying Student Beliefs about Language Learning. In Wenden, A & J Rubin (Eds), *Learner strategies in language learning*. Englewood Cliffs: NJ PrenticeHall. P. 119-129.
 - Little, D. (1990). *Learner Autonomy in Practice*. *Autonomy in Language Learning*. Ed. I. Gathercole. London: CILT. P. 7-15.
 - Little, D. (1991). *Learner Autonomy 1: Definitions, Issues and Problems*. Dublin: Authentik.
 - Little, D. (1999). *Learner autonomy is more than a western cultural construct*. In S. Cotterall & D. Crabbe (Eds.), *Learner autonomy in language learning: Defining the field and effecting change* (pp. 11-18). Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.
 - Sinclair, B. (2000). *Learner autonomy: The next phase?* In B. Sinclair, I. McGrath & T. Lamb (Eds.), *Learner autonomy, teacher autonomy: Future directions* (pp. 4-14). Harlow: Longman.
 - Smith, R.C. (2000). *Starting with ourselves: Teacher-learner autonomy in language learning*. In B. Sinclair, I. McGrath and T. Lamb (eds.) *Learner autonomy, teacher autonomy: Future directions*. London: Longman.
 - Wenden, A. L. (1987). *Conceptual background and utility*. *Learner strategies in language learning*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall International.
- Journal articles:

• **Journal articles:**

- Breeze, R. (2002). Attitudes towards learner autonomy among Spanish university students. *Atlantis*, 24 (1), p. 23-36.
- Chan, V. (2001). Readiness for learner autonomy: What do our learners tell us? *Teaching in Higher Education*, 6 (4), p. 505-518.
- Cotterall, S. (1995). Readiness for autonomy: investigating learner beliefs. *System*, 23(2), p.195-205.
- Cotterall, S. (1999). Key variables in language learning: what do learners believe about them? *System* 27, p. 493-513.
- Dam, L. (1994). How Do We Recognise an Autonomous Classroom? *Die Neueren Sprachen*, 93(5), p. 503-527.
- Dam, L. (2001). Learner autonomy: New insights/Autonomy de l'apprenant: nouvelle pistes. *Special Issue of AILA Review*, 15.
- Dickinson, L. (1993). Talking shop: aspects of autonomous learning: An interview with Leslie Dickinson. *ELT Journal*, 47(4), p. 330-336.
- Ho, J., & Crookall, D. (1995). Breaking with Chinese cultural traditions: Learner autonomy in English language teaching. *System*, 23 (2), p. 235-243.
- Januin, J. (2007). Exploring Readiness for Language Learning Autonomy among Distance Learners in Sabah, Malaysia. *Asian Journal of Distance Education*, 5(1), p. 16-26.
- Khalymon, I. & Shevchenko, S. (2017). Readiness for learner autonomy of prospective teachers minoring in english. *Advanced Education* 8, p. 65-71.
- Little, D. (1994). Learner autonomy: a theoretical construct and its practical application. *Die Neuere Sprache* 93 (5), p. 430-442.
- Little, D. (2007). Language learner autonomy: some fundamental considerations revisited. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching* 1(1), p.14-29.
- Razeq, A. (2014). University EFL Learners' Perceptions of Their Autonomous Learning Responsibilities and Abilities. *RELC Journal* 45 (3), p. 321-336.
- Tebib, DJ. (2017). Fostering Learner Autonomy through a Creative-Writing Project. *Al-jamie journal in psychological studies and educational sciences* 2 (7), p. 5-20.
- Yildirim, O. (2008). Turkish EFL Learners' Readiness for Learner Autonomy. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies* 4 (1), p. 65-80.

Appendices

Appendix I:

Autonomous Learning Questionnaire

Dear Student,

Thank you for agreeing to help with this survey, which is part of a Ph.D. research study. Please indicate the degree of agreement with each of these statements about your language learning by putting a tick next to the option which matches your answer. There are no right or wrong answers to these statements. Your answer depends on your point of view, and we are interested in what you think.

I.

Agree Not sure Disagree

1. I like the teacher to explain what and how I am learning.
2. I like the teacher to give me problems to work on.
3. I like the teacher to let me find my own mistakes.
4. Generally, I consider my English teacher to be:
 - (a) a resource person who provides language input
 - (b) someone who gives information
 - (c) a facilitator
5. I think the English teacher should

.....

II. As a learner,

Agree Not sure Disagree

1. I have a right to be involved in selecting the course content.
2. I have a right to be involved in selecting learning tasks and activities.
3. I have ideas about learning which should be considered in developing learning programmes.
4. I like to be responsible for my own learning.
5. I am basically interested in learning English in order to communicate, rather than learning the language for its own sake.
6. I like to assess my own progress.
7. I can be a more effective learner if I develop the knowledge and skills about the learning process.

III.

Items	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
If I don't learn, it's my fault			
1 learn a lot working by myself			
I prefer classes where I can decide what will be learnt, how			
1 know what 1 want to learn			
Dislike questions with not just one right answer			
When I see something I don't understand, 1 stay away			
I expect the teacher to tell me exactly what to do			
If I get a good mark, I don't worry if I still have Questions			
LL involves lot of self-study			
In LL I enjoy tasks where I can learn on my own			
If L class is not useful, I can learn on my own			
I would enjoy learning a language on my own			

I don't feel I could improve without a class

A lot of LL can be done without a teacher

You have to have a teacher to learn effectively

I feel I can only improve with a teacher to help

Teacher should decide on course content for L classes

I want to choose my own material for L classes

I know exactly kind of material I like to work on

Not students' responsibility to decide on course content

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION