Integrating Self - directed Learning into EFL: The Case of Third Year EFL Students Enrolled at the University of Badji Mokhtar Annaba (Algeria)

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Received: 24/10/2016 **Revised:** 03/12/2017 **Accepted:** 12/12/2017

Abstract
Focus was laid, in this area of significant development in telecommunication technologies, on implementing new educational orientations in higher education that favour the cultivation of positive self - beliefs and learning strategies which commensurate effectiveness and competence development. This goes through articulating a broad educational philosophy that promotes the development of new self - directed modes (or habits) of learning that foster strategic, sophisticated, "self-referential learners". This study aims at investigating the effects that self - directed strategies have on third year EFL students, performance scores in psychology.

Key words: Self - beliefs, self - directed modes of learning, self - referential learners.

إدماج التعلم المسيّر ذاتيا لتعليم الإنجليزية: حالة طلبة السنة الثالثة إنجليزية. جامعة باجي مختار عنابة

ملخص
يهدف هذا المقال أساسا إلى دراسة تأثير استعمال استراتيجيات التسيير الذاتي من طلبة اللغة الإنجليزية باعتبارها لغة أجنبية في مادة علم النفس لطلبة السنة الثالثة (LMD)، يدخل هذا البحث في إطار تحقيق رؤية جديدة لاستراتيجية تعليمية ترمي لتهيئة المتعلم الجزائري كي يواجه الحياة العملية بصورة فعالة وناجحة. إن عصر الثورة التكنولوجية والمعلوماتية يستوجب تفعيل ميكانيزمات جديدة في الجامعة أكثر تداخلا وانسجاما مع حال العولمة وتفرض استحداث أطر لبناء طالب جزائري يملك قدرات وآليات تسمح له بضبط وتطوير نفسه ومجتمعه.

كلمات المفاتيح: استراتيجيات التسيير الذاتي، أنماط التعلم المسيّر ذاتيا، المتعلّمون المسيّرون ذاتيا.

L'intégration de l'apprentissage autodirigé en anglais langue étrangère: Cas des étudiants de 3'éme année d'anglais à l'Université Badji Mokhtar, Annaba.

Résumé
Cette étude étudie le concept d'auto-direction dans le domaine de l'apprentissage de la langue Anglaise comme langue étrangère. Les courants de pensée actuels dans le domaine de l'éducation démontrent un intérêt aigu pour la nécessité d'engager l'apprenant pleinement dans le processus d'apprentissage en développant en lui des aptitudes qui lui permettent d'être «autoréférentiel», autonome et efficace. Cet article s'inscrit dans le cadre d'une réflexion sur les effets que les stratégies d'auto - direction ont sur la performance des étudiants d'Anglais (3eme année) dans le module de psychologie.

Mots-clés: Stratégies d'auto - direction, mode d'apprentissage dirigés, apprenants auto référentiels.

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Introduction:

Higher educational institutions can be regarded as a significant carrier of social change and a genuine generator of prosperity within their local communities. By promoting research and knowledge, they vehicle values and ideas of social entrepreneurial activities and pave the path for learners to comply with the needs and aspirations of the industrial and commercial networks acting in their socio-economic environment. (Burbules & Torres)**(1)**

In an endeavor to respond to the pressing needs of globalization, the Algerian university has undertaken a series of educational transformations known under the label of 'LMD' reforms (Idri)**(2)**. One of the most significant goals of these reforms is to promote academic competency and achieve excellence. Nevertheless, the sector of higher education in Algeria, in Abi - Ayad's**(3)** view, has encountered many difficulties that hindered the implementation of these objectives and rendered the success of the LMD project a very complex mission!

As a matter of fact, a growing dissatisfaction has been recorded by many university teachers and researchers as regards 'the underachievement' phenomenon that characterize the local national educational arena. This has generated, in Sakor's vision **(4)**, a failure to meet national educational expectations namely, fostering a 'powerful' generation that resembles the 'Yuppies'(i) in United States in the mid 80's.

The declining quality of performance noticed, illustratively in the area of learning and teaching English as a foreign language, has stimulated the present researcher to ponder over the integration of 'self-directed learning' strategies into Algerian LMD system implemented since 2004. The current investigation aims in fact to explore how Algerian EFL learners perceive self - directed learning strategies and whether they use them or not in the course of their learning in EFL. The assumption underlying this research work is that students who make use of self - directed learning strategies are likely to be more successful in comparison to those who do not incorporate such strategies into their EFL learning.

The rationale behind implementing 'a self-directed learning model' in Algerian Higher education is to breed 'heutagogical' professional learners, capable of meeting the ever-increasing complexities of the current era characterized by the unprecedented advent in telecommunication technologies and on - l ine learning. In this respect, Blaschke and Hase**(5)** eloquently emphasized the need to nurture holistic attributes so as to be in tune with the new forms of learning characterizing the present era: "we are in the age of knowledge and skill emancipation. There are no barriers to learning, and the skills required to be an effective learner in the twenty - first century have changed dramatically, as the learner evolves from passive recipient to analyst and synthesizer" (p 26).

Heutagogy has been defined by Gazi**(6)** in her paper entitled "Issues Surrounding a Heutagogical Approach in Global Engineering Education as "a word that originates from the Greek word 'self' as the study of truly self-determined learning, which builds on humanistic theory and approaches to learning described in 1950" (para. 1) and is considered by Blaschke**(7)** as a 'a continuum' of 'pedagogy' referring to strategies used for teaching children and 'andragogy' which is a concept used to depict strategies for teaching adults.

Heutagogy is a form of self - determined learning that is profoundly immersed in humanistic and constructivist views of human functioning and emphasizes the role of 'agency' (Little et al)**(8)** that is, doing action intentionally so as to achieve the desired goal. Following the heutagogical vision, learners take charge of their own learning: the learners enjoy high levels of autonomy in that they are free to control their learning; take decisions about what to learn and the manner in which it should be learned; deciding about the learning strategy that they perceive as appropriate for their assignments; diagnose their needs and set out their plans and self - assess their own outcomes (Brookfield)**(9).** It seems clear that the learner is put at the centre of the learning process and teachers sustain students with judicial guidance and appropriate resources.

Competency beliefs as an essential component of Heutagogy:

The construct of capability is intimately related to the heutagogical approach. In this vein, Blaschke (ibid) expands the notion of competence and highlights the attributes related to 'capable' learners as "those who know how to learn: are creative, have a high degree of self - efficacy; can apply competencies in novel as well as familiar situations; and can work well with others". In this respect, Blaschke and Hase (ibid) summarized the principles of Heutagogy as being associated with skills and qualities that are related to "capability, self - reflection, metacognition, double - loop learning, and non - linear learning and teaching processes". Table (1), taken from the future of ubiquitous learning, provides a precise description and explanation of what they depicted as 'the essentials' of this approach.

Principles	Description	References
Learner-centered and learner-determined	The role of human agency in learning is a fundamental principle. The learner is at the center of all heutagogic practice. The learner is self-motivated and autonomous and is primarily responsible for deciding what will be learned and how it will be learned and assessed	Hase and Kenyon (2000, 2007, 2013b), Hase (2009), Deci and Flaste (1995), Deci and Ryan (2002), Long (1990), Pink (2009)
Capability	Capability is characterized by the following: being able to use one's competencies in unfamiliar as well as familiar circumstances, learner self-efficacy, communication, creativity, collaboration (teamwork), and positive values	Cairns (1996, 2000), Stephenson and Weil (1992), Gardner et al. (2008), Hase and Kenyon (2000, 2003, 2007)
Self-reflection and metacognition	Within heutagogy, it is essential that reflection occurs in a holistic way. This translates to the learner reflecting not only what she or he has learned, but also the way in which it has been learned—and understanding how it is learned (metacognition)	Schön (1983, 1987), Mezirow and Associates (1990), Blaschke and Brindley (2011)
Double-loop learning	Double-loop learning requires that learners are both psychologically and behaviorally engaged. They reflect on not only what they have learned, but also the way in which this new knowledge and the path to learning have influenced their values and belief system	Argyris and Schön (1978), Eberle and Childress (2009), Eberle (2013)
Nonlinear learning and teaching	As learning is self-determined, the path to learning is defined by the learner and is not established by the teacher. As a result of learners choosing their own path, learning happens in a nonlinear format	Peters (2002)

Table (1): The principles of Heutagogy (Blaschke &Hason, ibid)

Heutagogy and academic achievement (success):

Academic achievement (success) can be considered, according to Muraina and Oyadeiy**(10)**, as the ultimate output (product) of the effective interaction of many factors, some of them are tied to personal characteristics of learners; some other factors are related to the instructional pedagogical environment and others even stretch beyond the boundaries of university to include socio cultural variables related to family dynamics and cultural beliefs and practices. Failure to achieve success may result from a dysfunction in one of these factors and sometimes from confounding influences of a net of salient factors that could not be easily dissociated from each other.

The issue of academic achievement has increasingly dominated research educational agendas both at the global and local scene. In effect, many teachers, researchers and policymakers have granted a peculiar attention to learners' academic performance in higher education because of its potent role in shaping the future trajectories of youths and determining their status and positions in their local social and cultural environments. Students

who excel in their studies are likely to have better professional prospects and are likely thus to be more influential economical and social 'agents' than those who fail in their academic careers.

This might imply that a genuine understanding of the underachievement phenomenon would require, amongst many other factors, a thorough analysis of the Algerian educational arena and more specifically a holistic analytical approach that delves deeper into the learners' mind to understand the nature of needs, attitudes and beliefs that they hold *vis à vis* themselves as learners in general and towards English language learning, in particular. Many theorist have asserted, on the basis of a plethora of research investigations, that the type of beliefs that students develop about their academic capacities in a given domain have a significant bearing on their level of achievement that they finally attain in that domain (Folk)**(11)**. This stems from the fact that self-efficacy exerts a profound influence upon learners' motivational and self - management approaches and their degree of commitment and resiliency in learning.

Hence the findings of the current study might contribute to the related literature through portraying the type of perceptions that Algerian EFL learners hold about the use of some heutagogical strategies in their EFL learning. Besides, matching their perceptions about the use of self-directed strategies to the level of their attainment in EFL in the module of psychology would provide invaluable insights to language teachers and practitioners. This research investigation seeks to bring an answer to the following research questions:

1- Can students' readiness to use self-directed learning strategies predict their performance outcomes in psychology?

2- Can students' differences in achievement outcomes in psychology be related to differing perceptions about their readiness to use self-directed learning strategies?

The underlying hypothesis is that third year learners of English will enhance their achievement quality if they know how to make use of self-directed learning strategies. This can be formulated differently: if teachers of English assist EFL learners in becoming self-directed, heutagogical' learners, they will achieve higher academic outcomes in EFL. This hypothesis is built on the measurable and observable variables: students' perceptions of their use of self - directed learning (independent variable) and overall average year scores in psychology (Dependent variable), with no manipulation exerted over the independent variable.

Methodology:

Population, sample and sampling procedure:

The research design used in this research investigation is descriptive in nature aiming to check the influences that students' use of self-directed learning yield on their achievement scores in psychology. The population of the current study consists of eight (8) groups of third year students preparing a ,licence' (bachelor's) degree within the LMD system, enrolled at the University of Badji Mokhtar Annaba during the academic year 2015 - 2016.

A sample of eighty (80) participants have been randomly selected from the target population i.e. third year EFL learners which comprises 240 students spread over eight groups. Ten(10) students have been selected from each group, which entails approximately thirty(30) students, according to alphabetical order. The ratio of male to female learners was, yet, disproportionate (6 boys versus 74 girls). This may be explained by the fact that English learning as a foreign language in the department of English in Badji Mokhtar University seems to be dominated by the female Gender. This tallies, in effect, with certain clichés and 'stereotypes' nurtured by learners that perceive language arts as being 'a feminine domain' as contrasted with other fields like mathematics or physics, for instance, that are regarded as a more 'masculine-oriented' areas. (Wiegfield &Eccles)**(12)**

Variable	Frequency	Percentage

Gender		
Male	06	7.5
Female	74	92.5
Total	80	

Table 1: Demographical profile of the sample

Pilot study:

Prior to stating the study, the research instrument has been subjected to pilot testing on a sample of twenty students to ensure the clarity of the instrument. The pilot study has enabled the adjustment of the original version of the self-directed readiness scale to be concordant with the actual context and aims of the study. A bank of items have been disregarded from the study as they do not reflect the field under investigation namely, EFL. Hence, the items that have been included in the study are solely those that gauge personality characteristics deemed relevant to the EFL contextual learning. Attention was paid when modifying the self-directed learning items to opt for a simplified language style and avoid using unclear and confusing double-barreled items that lead to inaccurate responses.

Instrumentation:

The self - directed learning readiness scale (SDLRS):

The self - directed learning was initially developed, according to Fisher &Tague[(13)], by Guglielmino for nursing educational contexts and aims at gauging students' self - directed learning readiness which is defined by Wiley (1983) [quoted in Fisher & Tague, ibid] as "the degree to which the individual possesses the attitudes, abilities and personality characteristics necessary for self - directed learning".

The original version has undertaken several changes by many researchers in the literature and a bank of items have been omitted from the original version as a result of some validation techniques of scale items such as the 'Delphi technique', through which a panel of experts in the field assess the internal consistency of scale items and construct validity. In this vein, Fisher & Tague (ibid) have reported, in their modified version which comprises forty - two 42 items, an alpha Cronbach's coefficients in the three subscales of the instrument which are greater than 0.70. Ten items have been dropped from the primary version as they displayed a low internal consistency with a coefficient of less than 0.30.It is worth noting that a coefficient of 0.70 is often regarded as a threshold for accepting a scale as internally consistent in the literature. (Stockburger)[(14)]

As far as the present investigation is concerned, the scale used to measure learners' self-directed readiness in EFL has been adapted from Fisher's et al scale. However, several omissions and modifications have been made in Fisher's et al scale in order to render it suitable to the current research context and aims. This is due to the fact that students' readiness for self - directed learning is domain - related that is, it may vary from across different areas and is contingent basically on the amount of knowledge the learner has in that domain (Fisher, ibid).

In fact, the self - directed learning readiness scale used in the current study (see the appendix) entails (13) items, anchored on five-points based Likert scale ranging from (1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree): Six items (6) pertain to assess learners' self-monitoring abilities often known under the label of self - management in EFL which represent personal behavioral tactics implemented by learners to reach their goals. A sample item is (1.2): **"I set strict time frames for my studies in EFL"**. Besides, three (3) items tap students' desire for learning which refers to students' willingness to acquire new information as a result of their need to satisfy their curiosity and the pleasure they get from integrating new data into their existing knowledge. A sample item is (2.1): **"I enjoy studying psychology in EFL"**. In addition to that, four (4) items assess students' self - control, that is, the self - restraint they exercise over their cognitions, feelings and emotions in order to attain a desired goal. A sample item is (3.3): "I **am responsible for my own decisions and actions in EFL**.

Academic Performance in Psychology:

Students' academic performance in psychology has been operationalized as students' second-semester exam scores obtained in the subject of psychology. Students' marks represent the achievement index against which is gauged students' self-directed learning readiness in EFL. The marks recorded for the sample range between (6.00 and 12.50): scores ranging between [06.00 - 09.99] denote low performance (or failure) and scores ranging between [10.00 - 12.50] denote a high performance in psychology (or success).

Procedure for Data Collection:

The administration of the scale was undertaken by the researcher and took place at the beginning of the second semester prior to second-semester examination of psychology. The choice of the timing of the scale administration is deemed crucial by the researcher since leaving the scale after the students' examination would make the primary goal of this study senseless as it would fail to unravel the effects that self - directed strategy use yields on their second-semester achievement scores in psychology in EFL.

Data Analysis:

The Pearson chi square test of statistical significance (X^2) investigates whether distributions of categorical variables differ from one another. It is used in the current study with the aim of measuring the degree to which the two groups in the sample that is, the high-performers and the low - performers in psychology differ in their self - beliefs, cognitions and affect that we can generalize to the larger target population namely, third year EFL learners.(Stockburger, ibid)

Results:

After analyzing and debriefing students' responses recorded on the self-directed learning readiness scale, students have been classified into two (2) categories on the basis of their second-semester exam marks in psychology. It has not been possible because of convenience considerations to compare students' self-appraisals to overall average second semester scores and thus students' self-ratings were assessed in relation to the second semester exam marks they scored in psychology. Table (2) illustrates the frequency of achievement for the sample in the subject of psychology in EFL.

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Level of performance		
High performers	51	63.75
Low performers	29	36.25
Total	80	

Table (2): Frequency of achievement of third year students in psychology in EFL

Research questions and Hypotheses:

1- Can students' readiness to use self-directed learning strategies predict their performance outcomes in psychology?

2- Can students' differences in achievement outcomes in psychology be related to differing perceptions about their readiness to use self - directed learning strategies?

Self - management Items

	1.1 I'm self - disciplined in my studies in EFL					
	SD	**D**	**NS**	**A**	**SA**	
High perf Ss	3 7.65 (2.83)	5 7.01 (0.58)	13 14.66 (0.19)	15 10.84 (1.60)	15 10.84 (1.60)	**51**
Low perf Ss	9 4.35	6 3.99	10 8.34	2 6.16	2 6.16	**29**

	(4.97)	(1.02)	(0.33)	(2.81)	(2.81)	
	12	**11**	**23**	**17**	**17**	**80**

χ^2 = 18.731, df = 4, χ^2/df = 4.68, P(χ^2 > 18.731) = 0.0009

	1.2. I set strict time frames for my studies in EFL					
	SD	**D**	**NS**	**A**	**SA**	
High perf Ss	5 7.65 (0.92)	7 8.93 (0.42)	16 16.57 (0.02)	13 9.56 (1.24)	10 8.29 (0.35)	**51**
Low perf Ss	7 4.35 (1.61)	7 5.08 (0.73)	10 9.43 (0.04)	2 5.44 (2.17)	3 4.71 (0.62)	**29**
	12	**14**	**26**	**15**	**13**	**80**

χ^2 = 8.118, df = 4, χ^2/df = 2.03, P(χ^2 > 8.118) = 0.0874

	1.3. I can be trusted to pursue my own studies in EFL					
	SD	**D**	**NS**	**A**	**SA**	
High perf Ss	5 7.01 (0.58)	10 10.20 (0.00)	21 17.21 (0.83)	10 9.56 (0.02)	5 7.01 (0.58)	**51**
Low perf Ss	6 3.99 (1.02)	6 5.80 (0.01)	6 9.79 (1.47)	5 5.44 (0.04)	6 3.99 (1.02)	**29**
	11	**16**	**27**	**15**	**11**	**80**

χ^2 = 5.552, df = 4, χ^2/df = 1.39, P(χ^2 > 5.552) = 0.2352

	1.4. I prioritize my own learning in EFL					
	SD	**D**	**NS**	**A**	**SA**	
High perf Ss	5 5.74 (0.09)	11 10.20 (0.06)	20 16.57 (0.71)	9 8.93 (0.00)	6 9.56 (1.33)	**51**
Low perf Ss	4 3.26 (0.17)	5 5.80 (0.11)	6 9.43 (1.24)	5 5.08 (0.00)	9 5.44 (2.33)	**29**
	9	**16**	**26**	**14**	**15**	**80**

χ^2 = 6.050, df = 4, χ^2/df = 1.51, P(χ^2 > 6.050) = 0.1954

	1.5. I prefer to plan my own learning in EFL					
	SD	**D**	**NS**	**A**	**SA**	
High perf Ss	9	13	18	6	5	**51**

	7.65 (0.24)	12.75 (0.00)	14.66 (0.76)	7.65 (0.36)	8.29 (1.30)	
Low perf Ss	3 4.35 (0.42)	7 7.25 (0.01)	5 8.34 (1.34)	6 4.35 (0.63)	8 4.71 (2.29)	**29**
	12	**20**	**23**	**12**	**13**	**80**

χ^2 = 7.346, df = 4, χ^2/df = 1.84, P(χ^2 > 7.346) = 0.1187

The null hypothesis is that the probability of using self-management skills in EFL is the same for the low-performers and the high-performers in psychology. The alternative hypothesis to be tested is that the likelihood of making use of self-management skills in EFL is not the same for the low-performers and the high-performers in psychology.

With four degrees of freedom (df= 4) the observed values of Yates' chi square in table (4) **χ^2 = 18.73** is higher than the critical value **(9.49)** for the .05 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho) of equal distributions could therefore be safely rejected. Yet, the chi square values recorded in table (5) **χ^2 =8.11**; in table (6) **χ^2 =5.55**; in table (7) **χ^2 =6.05;** in table (7) **χ^2 =7.34** are lower than **(9.49)** for the .05 level. Hence, the hypothesis of equal distribution is maintained.This also means that the alternative hypothesis- that is a difference between the two groups of students as regards their use of self-management strategies in EFL- could not be accepted.

Desire for Learning Items

	2.1. I enjoy studying psychology in EFL					
	SD	**D**	**NS**	**A**	**SA**	
High perf Ss	4 *4.46* (0.05)	10 *9.56* (0.02)	7 *5.74* (0.28)	10 *8.93* (0.13)	20 *22.31* (0.24)	**51**
Low perf Ss	3 *2.54* (0.08)	5 *5.44* (0.04)	2 *3.26* (0.49)	4 *5.08* (0.23)	15 *12.69* (0.42)	**29**
	7	**15**	**9**	**14**	**35**	**80**

χ^2 = 1.972, df = 4, χ^2/df = 0.49, P(χ^2 > 1.972) = 0.7409

	2.2. I have a need to learn psychology in EFL					
	SD	**D**	**NS**	**A**	**SA**	
High perf Ss	6 *7.01* (0.15)	10 *10.84* (0.06)	10 *10.20* (0.00)	9 *8.29* (0.06)	16 *14.66* (0.12)	**51**
Low perf Ss	5 *3.99* (0.26)	7 *6.16* (0.11)	6 *5.80* (0.01)	4 *4.71* (0.11)	7 *8.34* (0.21)	**29**
	11	**17**	**16**	**13**	**23**	**80**

χ^2 = 1.098, df = 4, χ^2/df = 0.27, P(χ^2 > 1.098) = 0.8946

	2.3. I enjoy being challenged in psychology in EFL	

	SD	**D**	**NS**	**A**	**SA**	
High perf Ss	10 *7.65* (0.72)	3 *7.01* (2.30)	13 *14.03* (0.07)	12 *11.47* (0.02)	13 *10.84* (0.43)	**51**
Low perf Ss	2 *4.35* (1.27)	8 *3.99* (4.04)	9 *7.97* (0.13)	6 *6.53* (0.04)	4 *6.16* (0.76)	**29**
	12	**11**	**22**	**18**	**17**	**80**

χ^2 = 9.788, df = 4, χ^2/df = 2.45, P(χ^2 > 9.788) = 0.0441

The null hypothesis is the probability that the low-performers and the high performers develop similar desire about their learning in the context of EFL. The alternative hypothesis to be tested is that the low-achievers and the high - achievers in psychology hold different levels of commitment as regards their learning in EFL.

With four degrees of freedom (df = 4), the observed calculated Yates' chi square value in table (8) **χ^2 = 1.97** and table (9) **χ^2 = 1.09** are lower than the critical value **(9.49)** for the predetermined alpha level of significance .05. Therefore, the null hypothesis of equal distribution could not be rejected. However, the chi square value recorded in table (10) **χ^2 =9.78** exceeds (9.49). The alternative hypothesis could be thus confirmed that is, the two categories of students differ in their desire for learning in EFL.

Self - control Items

	3.1. I critically evaluate my own performance in EFL					
	SD	**D**	**NS**	**A**	**SA**	
High perf Ss	14 14.03 (0.00)	13 9.56 (1.24)	8 9.56 (0.26)	10 8.29 (0.35)	6 9.56 (1.33)	**51**
Low perf Ss	8 7.97 (0.00)	2 5.44 (2.17)	7 5.44 (0.45)	3 4.71 (0.62)	9 5.44 (2.33)	**29**
	22	**15**	**15**	**13**	**15**	**80**

χ^2 = 8.751, df = 4, χ^2/df = 2.19, P(χ^2 > 8.751) =0.0676

	3.2. I need minimal help from my teachers in EFL					
	SD	**D**	**NS**	**A**	**SA**	
High perf Ss	11 8.29 (0.89)	15 12.11 (0.69)	11 14.66 (0.91)	5 6.38 (0.30)	9 9.56 (0.03)	**51**
Low perf Ss	2 4.71 (1.56)	4 6.89 (1.21)	12 8.34 (1.61)	5 3.62 (0.52)	6 5.44 (0.06)	**29**

	13	**19**	**23**	**10**	**15**	**80**

χ^2 = 7.781, df = 4, χ^2/df = 1.95, P(χ^2 > 7.781) = 0.0999

	3.3. I am responsible for my own decisions/actions in EFL					
	SD	**D**	**NS**	**A**	**SA**	
High perf Ss	10 *8.29* (0.35)	16 *13.39* (0.51)	8 *11.47* (1.05)	7 *7.65* (0.06)	10 *10.20* (0.00)	**51**
Low perf Ss	3 *4.71* (0.62)	5 *7.61* (0.90)	10 *6.53* (1.85)	5 *4.35* (0.10)	6 *5.80* (0.01)	**29**
	13	**21**	**18**	**12**	**16**	**80**

χ^2 = 5.449, df = 4, χ^2/df = 1.36, P(χ^2 > 5.449) = 0.2443

	3.4. I need to be in control of what I learn in EFL					
	SD	**D**	**NS**	**A**	**SA**	
High perf Ss	13 11.47 (0.20)	11 10.20 (0.06)	10 11.47 (0.19)	12 12.11 (0.00)	5 5.74 (0.09)	**51**
Low perf Ss	5 6.53 (0.36)	5 5.80 (0.11)	8 6.53 (0.33)	7 6.89 (0.00)	4 3.26 (0.17)	**29**
	18	**16**	**18**	**19**	**9**	**80**

χ^2 = 1.520, df = 4, χ^2/df = 0.38, P(χ^2 > 1.520) = 0.8232

The null hypothesis is that the likelihood of using self-control strategies during their learning in EFL is the same for the low - achievers and the high - achievers in psychology. The alternative hypothesis to be tested is that the likelihood of including self-control tactics in their learning in EFL is not the same for the low - achievers and the high - achievers in psychology.

With four degrees of freedom (df = 4), the calculated observed chi square values in table (11) **χ^2 =8.75**; table (12) **χ^2 = 7.78**; table (13) **χ^2 =5.44** and table (14) **χ^2 =1.52** are lower than the criterion value **(9.49)** for the alpha level of significance .05. Thus, the null hypothesis- that there is no difference between the low-achievers and the high - achievers as regards their self-control skills during their learning in EFL - could not be rejected.

Discussion of Findings:

The results of data processing and analysis revealed that the high-achievers and low - achievers in psychology differ from each other on the basis of two items only related to self - management (item 1.1) and to desire of learning EFL (2.3). Yet, the other self - management and desire for learning items failed to predict students' achievement scores in psychology. Besides, the self - control items (3.1, 3.2, 3.3 & 3.4) did not display differences between the responses of high - achievers and the low - achievers in the self - directed learning readiness scale. This may be due, to some extent, to the 'proclivity' that characterize most of self - reports which is 'overrating'. It could be also that some students (low achievers) may have developed positive 'faulty' views about themselves that have detrimental effects in their ultimate academic outcome. (Weiner, Schinka &Velicer)**(15)**.

These findings do not correspond to some research studies in the literature that confirm the positive association between students' self - directed strategies and their academic achievement. Ikwumelu & Ogene[(16)] asserted, illustratively, that students who are taught self-directed strategies attain better achievement scores than those who are taught with traditional methods. They explained the philosophy behind introducing self - directed methods into: "It means that as human beings, we are responsible for our own lives. Our behavior is a function of our decisions, not our conditions. That is to say, we can subordinate feelings to value; we have the initiative and responsibility to make things happen because a touchstone of effective learning is that students are in charge of their own learning: essentially, they direct their own learning process".

Conclusion:

The results of this study revealed that the instrument used predicted, on the basis of three items, students' performance scores in psychology. This might imply a further revision of the scale and testing of its validity on other target populations in EFL. We trust that self-directed learning strategies should be implemented in classroom language environments in higher education because of their crucial role in fostering 'critical thinking' and 'decision making' to pave the path for 'a self - referential' type of learning in EFL. We deem that, in the current era of 'digital revolution' characterized by various modes of learning and new forms of knowledge, helping learners to develop 'survival' skills and 'adjustment' mechanisms to manage their learning environments is more than a must for effective learning. It is our conviction that when learners possess self-control and self-management competencies, they are likely to be more 'endorsed' in their learning' and more efficient when facing the multitudes of unexpected and challenging situations they are bound to come across in their 'learning journey'. Therefore, being academically successful requires necessarily the cultivation of both a strong 'skill set' and a positive 'mind set'. Academic success becomes thus, in this case, no more than the sheer, subtle and intelligent combination of competencies and capabilities.

(i)**'Yuppies'** stands for "young urban professional and was used by the first time in 1980 by Dan Rottenberg to describe highly competent and self-determined youth possessing a highly distinguished 'entrepreunial' spirit

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Appendix

The Self - Directed Learning Readiness Scale (SDLRS)

"Dear Student, Students have many different ideas about learning in EFL.
Please tell us how true each of the following ideas are for you.
There are no right or wrong answers. The right answer is the answer that is most true for you.
Nobody will judge you about what you say. Thank you!"

Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements. In answering each question, use a range from (1) to (5) where (5) stands for strongly agree and (1) stands for strongly disagree. Please tick only one response choice per statement.

	SD 1	**D 2**	**NS 3**	**A 4**	**SA 5**
I am self-disciplined in my studies in EFL					
I set strict time frames for my studies in EFL					
I can be trusted to pursue my own studies in EFL.					
I prefer to plan my own learning in EFL					
I prioritize my own learning in EFL					
6. I critically evaluate new ideas					
2.1. I enjoy studying psychology in EFL					
2.2. I have a need to learn psychology in EFL					
2.3. I enjoy being challenged in psychology in EFL					
3.1. I critically evaluate my own performance in EFL					
3.2. I need minimal help from my teachers in EFL					
3.3. I am responsible for my own decisions/actions in EFL					
3.4. I need to be in control of what I learn in EFL					