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**Tracing the Effects of E-learning on Promoting Students Autonomy :
Case of First year Master EFL Students at Belhadj Bouchaib University**

*An Extended Essay Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for a
Master's Degree in Didactics and Applied Languages*

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Dedications

*In the Name of **Allah**, the most Merciful, the most Gracious, full praise and profound gratitude to the Almighty **Allah** for granting me the strength, patience, and willingness to undertake and successfully complete this study.*

I dedicate this work to

*My wonderful **mother** who has always reminded me that I can make it ;who helped me with her prayers and gave me strength while doing my research*

*My beloved **father** who show me support in all forms*

*To my sister **CHAHRA** for being there when I needed her*

*To my brothers **AYMEN** and **RAYAN***

To everyone who helped achieve this research work

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Abstract

The emergence of E-learning has revolutionized the educational landscape, providing learners with unprecedented flexibility, convenience, and access to a wide range of resources. However, the success of this mode of learning is heavily dependent on the learners' ability to take charge of their own learning process, a concept known as learner autonomy. This notion of autonomy represents a crucial first step towards self-reliance and personal achievement, leading to a significant focus on self-directed learning among students and language instructors. The major aim of this study is to look at the impact of e-learning in encouraging autonomous learning. Additionally, it aims at providing an understanding about the thoughts and attitudes of EFL learners and teachers about the concept of autonomy and the incorporation of e-learning into their studies. To reach these ends, the researcher opted for a descriptive case study. A students' questionnaire and a teachers' interview were employed to gather data. These tools allow for the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data. The sample for this investigation consists of forty-two (42) Master One students and five (05) teachers from the English department at Belhadj Bouchaib University, Ain Temouchent. The findings support the main hypotheses and indicate that both teachers and students have positive attitudes towards the integration of E-learning. They believe that it can enhance learners' autonomy by giving them more control over their learning experience. Based on these results, it is highly recommended to use E-learning to foster students' autonomy at the university level, as it can contribute to their academic and professional success.

Key words: EFL Learners and Teachers, E-learning, Learner Autonomy.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

CALL : Computer Assisted Language Learning

CMC : Computer Mediated Communication

CMS : Course Management System

COVID-19: Corona Virus Disease 2019

CRAPEL : Centre de Recherche et d'Applications en Langues

CSFs : Critical Success Factors

EFL : English as a Foreign Language

E-Learning: Electronic Learning

HEIs : Higher Education Institutions

ICT : Information and communication technology

LMS : Learning Management Systems

Moodle : Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment

OER : Open Education Resources

SACs : Self-access centers

SDL : Self-directed learning

SDT : Self Determination Theory

UK: United Kingdom

General Introduction

General Introduction

In today's world, language teaching is no longer seen as simply delivering information to students, but rather as a skill to help students become active learners i.e shift from teacher-centered approaches to learner-centered ones, where students are placed at the center of the classroom and viewed as active participants in the learning process. This shift is partly due to the increasing interest in the concept of autonomy, which can be defined as the ability to take charge of one's own learning.

The perspective on language learning has accordingly, transformed from teachers transmitting rules to students, to a process where students take on more responsibility for their own learning and with the rapid advancement of technology, particularly the widespread adoption of E-learning platforms, learners have a powerful tool at their disposal to enhance their autonomy. This shift towards E-learning environments provides unique opportunities to empower students to take control of their learning journey, engage with course materials at their own pace, and develop essential skills for lifelong learning.

The use of educational technology has become increasingly important for many countries, with e-learning now playing a crucial role in higher education. During the COVID-19 pandemic, e-learning emerged as a vital tool for continuing education, especially at the tertiary level when traditional face-to-face classes were disrupted. The rapid spread of the virus led teachers and students worldwide to shift towards online education, facing the challenges of transitioning from traditional learning to a digital learning environment. This transition highlighted the significance of adapting to new learning methods and using technology to ensure educational continuity during times of crisis.

Despite the growing recognition of the importance of learner autonomy in language teaching and learning, particularly in EFL classrooms, there is a lack of comprehension and

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implementation of this concept among teachers , resulting in learners struggling to develop the necessary skills to become autonomous learners. This situation is partly attributed to the lack of effective strategies and tools to promote learner autonomy , especially in E-learning contexts . Moreover, there is a need for a better understanding of the role of teachers in fostering learner autonomy, as well as the challenges and opportunities that E-learning presents for both learners and teachers to promote autonomy.

This research seeks to investigate the impact of e-learning on promoting learners' autonomy. Additionally, it aims to gain insight into the thoughts and attitudes of EFL learners and teachers regarding autonomy and the incorporation of e-learning into their studies. Furthermore, the study explores the impact of e-learning on learners' motivation, engagement, and academic performance, and highlight the potential of e-learning in promoting learner autonomy.

Accordingly, to reach these objectives, the following research questions are raised:

- 1/ Does the incorporation of E-learning into education enhance EFL learners' autonomy?
- 2/ What is the perspective of EFL teachers regarding the influence of E-learning on the autonomy of learners?

The following hypotheses have been put forward :

- 1/E-learning has the potential to increase learners' autonomy.
- 2/The impact of E-learning on learners' autonomy can be well-understood by the teachers.

To answer the above questions and determine the validity of the research hypotheses, the researchers chose to conduct a descriptive case study. This study uses a mixed-method approach by combining quantitative data obtained from a questionnaire given to Master One

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students with qualitative data gathered from interviews conducted with EFL teachers at the English department of Belhadj Bouchaib University in Ain Temouchent. The sample for this investigation consists of forty-two (42) Master One students and five (05) teachers. The quantitative approach is employed to collect statistical data on the learners' perspectives and perceptions regarding the impact of E-learning on their autonomy. On the other hand, the qualitative approach aimed to gather non-statistical data, focusing on the teachers' viewpoints, opinions, and attitudes towards the same topic. By using these diverse research tools, the study's validity is enhanced, and the expected outcomes are strengthened.

The research is structured into three chapters. The first chapter focuses on the theoretical aspects of the two variables being investigated. It covers the history, definition, and levels of autonomy, as well as explores the factors that can influence the ability of autonomous learners. Additionally, it provides insights into e-learning, including its definition, advantages, disadvantages, and delivery modes and platforms. The second chapter is dedicated to the implementation of the research and involves conducting student questionnaires and teacher interviews. This chapter also includes the analysis of the data collected. The third chapter offers suggestions and recommendations based on the research findings.

Chapter One: Literature Review

1.1.Introduction

The advancement of technology has led to a significant shift from traditional to more modern methods of teaching and learning language. The widespread availability of internet access has given rise to online education, which inherently emphasizes autonomous learning approaches. In this context, it is crucial to foster learners' autonomy through the strategic use of e-learning tools and platforms. To gain a deeper understanding of the concept of autonomy, its importance and its impact on the learning process, this chapter will explore the origins of autonomy, provide a definition, discuss its different levels, and discusses the possible factors that may influence autonomy development. Additionally, it will offer insights into e-learning, including its advantages and disadvantages, as well as its delivery modes and platforms. Lastly, this chapter will address the barriers to the adoption of e-learning.

1.2.History of Autonomy

Historically, the term autonomy originated in the early seventeenth century. It is derived from the Greek word *autonomia*, which itself comes from *autonomos*, where “autos” refers to “self” and “nomos” represents “law” (Self-law). The term describes someone or something that lives according to their own rules. Autonomy also pertains to self-determination in ancient Greek philosophy, it has been present in both Eastern and Western philosophies for a long time, it was introduced to the field of language learning in the twentieth century as a Western concept. This concept gained recognition in various disciplines such as philosophy, psychology, and education.

Although the concept of autonomy was not introduced to language learning until the 1970s, it has existed for a long time. Benson (as cited in Riihimäki, 2013, p. 9) gives a well-known quotation from Galileo regarding teaching and learning, stating that "you cannot teach a man anything; you can only help him find it within himself". Galileo's expression

demonstrates that the concept of autonomy existed centuries before the implication of the term, which claims that a person's ability to learn comes within themselves and that they only require direction.

In order to fully understand the origins of autonomy, it is crucial to explore its emergence and development in the field of language learning. According to Benson (2011, p. 9), “The concept of autonomy first entered the field of teaching through the Council of Europe’s Modern Languages Project, established in 1971”. This project eventually led to the establishment of the Centre de Recherche et d’Applications en Langues (CRAPEL), which became a prominent research center in the field of autonomy. Yves Châlon, the first president of CRAPEL, is widely recognized as the pioneer of autonomy in language learning. Following Châlon’s untimely death, Henryolec succeeded him and became an influential figure in the promotion of learner autonomy. During the 1980s, autonomy was primarily associated with adult education and self-access learning. However, in the early 1990s, there was a growing interest in learner-centeredness, which led to the integration of autonomy into the field of language learning and teaching (Little, 2007).

This development, as described by Little, “brought an important shift of emphasis: learner autonomy now seemed to be a matter of learners doing things not necessarily on their own but for themselves”. Autonomy became such a powerful concept that Little (1991, p. 2) referred to it as the “Buzz-word” of the 1990s.

1.3. Definition of Autonomy

Research on the literature indicates that defining autonomy is challenging due to the various perspectives presented by different scholars and researchers (Dickinson, 1987; Holec, 1981; Little, 1991) (as cited in Benson, 2006).

The initial definition that marks an important turning point in the study of autonomy, was put forth by Holec (1981) as : “To say of a learner that he is autonomous is that he is capable of taking charge of his own learning and nothing more...to take charge of one’s learning is to bear responsibility for all the decisions concerning all aspects of this learning.” (p. 3). This means that an autonomous learner possesses the ability to independently manage his learning. Holec emphasized that autonomy in learning entails not just taking control, but also assuming complete responsibility for all decisions pertaining to the learning process. Essentially, an autonomous learner is someone who takes charge of their own learning, taking initiative and responsibility for every aspect of their educational journey. This includes setting goals, monitoring progress, and determining the most effective methods of learning.

According to Holec (1981) “Autonomous learners assume responsibility for determining the purpose, content, rhythm, and method of their learning, monitoring its progress, and evaluating its outcomes.” (p. 3). It means that autonomous learners have the ability to take on the full responsibility of their own learning. They can assume the role of the teacher by independently selecting the materials, content, and learning methods that suit them best. Additionally, they are capable of monitoring and evaluating their own learning progress. There are other researchers who disagree with Holec and argue that his explanation of learner autonomy overlooks “the cognitive abilities necessary for effective self-management of learning.” (Benson, 2000, p. 49). Little (1991) also acknowledges this limitation in Holec’s definition and states that: “Autonomy is a capacity - for detachment, critical reflection, decision making, and independent action. It entails that the learner will develop a particular kind of psychological relation to the process and content of his learning.” (p. 3). This definition highlights that an autonomous learner not only manages their learning but also develops a specific psychological relationship with the learning process and content.

Little (1991) introduces a new aspect that was not previously included in the definition of autonomy. This aspect, which relates to psychology, includes important psychological characteristics that are central to the concept of learning autonomy. Benson (2001) supports Little's definition and argues that it adds a crucial psychological aspect to Holec's definition by describing autonomy as a cognitive and self-management process in learning.

Autonomous learning can be accomplished when specific conditions are met. These conditions encompass psychological aspects such as learning strategies, motivation, and attitudes of the learner. As well as environmental factors like appropriate task design, optimal learning environments, and a political power structure (Hamilton, 2013; Oxford, 2008). This perspective on learner autonomy recognizes that autonomy "is learned at least partly through educational experiences [and interventions]" (Candy, 1991, p. 115). This quote suggests that autonomy is developed, at least partly, engaging in critical reflection, making independent decisions, and taking action within educational settings. This perspective emphasizes that learners have the ability to cultivate autonomy through their interactions with educational environments, teachers, and learning experiences. It highlights that autonomy is a skill that can be developed and reinforced through intentional educational methods.

Benson (2001) provides a comprehensive definition of autonomy that aims to offer a clear understanding of the term. According to Benson, autonomy is "a multidimensional capacity that will take different forms for different individuals, and even for the same individual in different contexts or at different times" (p.47). This definition encompasses both personal and contextual aspects of autonomy and emphasizes that learner autonomy is not a 'steady state' Little (2003), but rather a capacity that develops over time.

According to Dickinson (1987) autonomy is "a mode of learning; one in which the individual is responsible for all the decisions connected with her learning and undertakes the

implementation of these decisions.” (p. 27). In this perspective, learners have complete freedom and are solely responsible for their learning process, allowing them to make and execute their own decisions.

Autonomy in learning has been a topic of much debate and continues to be. While researchers have attempted to define this concept, there is a general agreement that autonomy refers to the ability to control one’s own learning by developing certain capacities. Additionally, autonomy is closely tied to decision-making, as it involves active participation from learners in determining their own learning process. Furthermore, autonomy is associated with learners taking responsibility for their learning by employing necessary strategies.

1.4 Levels of Autonomy

In the late 1990s, several researchers argued that autonomy can be understood in terms of different levels (Benson, 2006). Nunan’s (1997) model proposes five levels of autonomy in learner action. These levels are categorized as follows:

In the awareness stage, learners begin to identify the primary objectives of each lesson and recognize the content used by the teacher in the classroom.

During the involvement stage, students become more engaged in their learning process. They have the opportunity to choose their own goals and determine the path they want to take to improve their level.

The intervention stage refers to students’ ability to select and decide on the activities practiced in the classroom. They can also be involved in choosing the content of the learning program.

In the creation stage, students have the opportunity to establish their own learning objectives. They take on an initiative role and are responsible for their own learning achievements.

Finally, in the transcendence stage, students become autonomous learners. They are capable of effectively studying outside of formal settings and improve their learning without guidance or assistance.

Whereas, as cited by Benson (2006), Littlewood's three-stage model, encompasses dimensions and aspects of language acquisition, learning approach, and personal development. Autonomy in language acquisition refers to the ability to operate independently with the language and use it for communicating personal meanings in real and unpredictable situations (autonomy as a communicator). Autonomy in the learning approach involves learners taking responsibility for their own learning and use active and personally relevant strategies (autonomy as a learner). Furthermore, autonomy in a broader context encompasses the higher-level goal of achieving greater generalized autonomy as individuals (autonomy as a person) (Benson, 2006).

Littlewood's model attempts to establish a connection between different contexts where varying degrees of autonomy exist. This can be achieved either by subconsciously acting independently through language use in natural settings to interact and express personal ideas, or by actively and autonomously taking responsibility for learning in an instructional environment (Benson, 2006).

According to Littlewood (1999; 2002), there are two main levels of autonomy: reactive and proactive. Reactive autonomy is seen as a necessary step towards achieving proactive autonomy. On one hand, reactive autonomy refers to a learning situation where the teacher is responsible for determining the learning direction. In this case, learners follow a

predetermined direction but independently organize instructional materials and resources to achieve their goals. On the other hand, proactive autonomy represents a situation where learners have control over both the learning direction and the regulation of resources. Proactive learners take charge of their own learning, without relying on teacher intervention. They initiate and regulate activities, organize resources, and evaluate their progress and learning outcomes. Littlewood (2002) suggests that in order to transition from reactive to proactive autonomy, classrooms should replace cooperative learning by collaborative learning. The former pertains to learning that is guided by teachers or syllabuses while the latter refers to learning that is directed, monitored, and regulated by learners themselves.

1.5. Factors Affecting Learners' Autonomy

The expansion of learners' autonomy has been influenced by a variety of factors, which can have both positive and negative effects. These factors are divided into two main categories: internal and external. Internal factors consist of psychological aspects, habits and strategies, positivism, constructivism, critical theory, cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, as well as the development of skills and awareness. Conversely, external factors encompass the role of teachers, the nature of tasks, and the learning environment.

1.5.1. Internal Factors

When considering the internal factors that impact learners' autonomy it is essential to explore the psychological, cognitive, and metacognitive aspects that play a significant role in shaping how individuals engage in the learning process.

1.5.1.1. Psychological Aspects

The level of autonomy in learners can be influenced by various personality traits, such as attitudes, motivation, inclinations, and anxiety. According to Wenden (1998), the attitudes and self-beliefs of learners have a significant impact on their learning efficiency. If students

believe that they lack the ability to learn, they may not put in the necessary effort, which hinders their growth in the learning process. Qin (2016) supports this by suggesting that excited learners have a positive outlook, leading them to invest more time in studying and setting learning goals. This, in turn, boosts their morale.

Additionally, many researchers agree that motivation plays a crucial role in fostering learners' autonomy as Ushioda (1996) who argues that “without motivation, there is no autonomy” (p.18). Dickinson (1992), also stated that having a source of motivation is necessary for students to become autonomous.

On the other hand, the anxiety connected with learning seems to have a negative impact on learners' autonomy. According to Zaqiri (2015), learners become less independent as their level of anxiety increases. This could be due to their predisposition to be reserved and dependent on their teachers, consequently, they avoid taking risks.

1.5.1.2. Learning Habits and Learning Strategies

According to Begum and Chowdhury (2016), learners have diverse learning styles and learning approaches ; consequently, these study habits and methods may either support or hinder learners' autonomy.

1.5.1.3. Critical Theory

Leaver et al. (2005), agree that analytical thinking offers several benefits to learners' autonomy because this approach promotes critical analysis and the willingness to bring about change rather than simply aiming to understand and explain concepts. So, students are empowered to learn independently and develop their own ideas. This allows them to look at the subject from various perspectives, which can assist them in determining whether they should delve deeper into it or not.

1.5.1.4.Cognitive Strategies

These strategies, such as repetition, resourcefulness, translating, note-taking, deduction, contextualization, transferring, inference, and clarifying inquiries, play a crucial role in language learning as they allow learners to apply cognitive functions. Once learners have mastered the use of these strategies, they become self-sufficient in their language learning journey, (Leaver et al., 2005).

1.5.1.5.Metacognitive Strategies

According to Leaver et al. (2005) the implementation of planning, critical thinking, monitoring, and analyzing an individual's learning capacity , is crucial for enhancing learning autonomy ; when these tactics are applied, learners become more engaged and self-directed in their learning journey, demonstrating greater self-regulation.

1.5.2.External Factors

In order to establish an educational environment that promotes independence and enables students to take charge of their own learning, it is crucial to comprehend and tackle these external factors.

1.5.2.1. Teachers

Little (1996), state that learners are capable of being self-regulated , but this does not mean they will do so independently of teachers. Kemala (2016) and Leaver et al. (2005) argue that teachers not only help students understand how to define learning objectives and select appropriate learning resources , but also provide them with the opportunity to make their own decisions.

1.5.2.2.Tasks

Tasks that need to be completed can have a significant impact on learner autonomy, either positively or negatively, as stated by Kemala (2016). When students are presented with interesting and challenging tasks, their motivation to learn tends to increase. Conversely, students may feel less motivated when they are faced with repetitive tasks.

1.5.2.3. Environment

According to Benson (2001), the development of learners' autonomy is heavily influenced by environmental factors, including situational and social aspects. The social aspect of learning, which involves parents, siblings, relatives, friends, and teachers, contributes to the learning environment by promoting collaboration among students in the classroom. This collaboration makes it easier for students to work together effectively. Moreover, as Kemala (2016) points out, when students feel engaged with their peers, they become more motivated to learn. Group work offers opportunity for participants to share ideas, learn from each other, and provide mutual support and encouragement.

1.6.Importance of Autonomy

Autonomy plays a crucial role in language learning, as it enhances the effectiveness of the learning process and empowers learners to take control of their own learning. Benson (2006) states that autonomous learners possess the necessary learning strategies, knowledge about learning, and attitudes that enable them to confidently, flexibly, appropriately, and independently use these skills and knowledge without relying on a teacher. So, they actively participate in their own learning journey, and the construction of knowledge is based on their specific learning needs.

Benson (2006) argues that learners' autonomy plays a crucial role in enhancing the learning process, as it enables the acquisition and development of effective strategies. These

strategies, in addition to the required knowledge, contribute to the improvement of learning outcomes. Benson further suggests that learners eventually reach a stage where they can independently use these strategies, making them the primary regulators of their own learning process.

Little (2016) presents three main arguments in favor of promoting learners' autonomy, particularly in the context of foreign language learning. The first argument highlights the significant impact of learners' reflective involvement in the learning process on its success and achievement. The second argument points that if learners are aware of and responsible for their own learning, the issue of lack of motivation becomes less prominent ; even when learners are not initially enthusiastic, their developed autonomy enables them to continue learning and overcome motivational obstacles. The third argument, specifically relevant to second/foreign language learning, focuses on the influence of autonomy on effective communication in the target language. Little emphasizes that language use is a crucial aspect of effective communication, and learners with high autonomy possess the necessary skills to internalize these communication aspects. In summary, autonomy is essential in learning as it equips learners with the skills needed to facilitate learning and enhance educational outcomes.

From a psychological perspective, Candy (1991) argues that “effective learning occurs when learners are given the opportunity to make decisions about what and how they learn” (p.24). Moreover, Knowles (1975) asserts that research provides compelling evidence that individuals who take the initiative in their learning tend to acquire more knowledge and skills compared to those who passively rely on teachers for instruction.

In light of these valuable insights concerning learner autonomy, the realm of e-learning emerges as a formidable platform that effectively supports individuals in taking control of their own learning journeys.

1.7. Historical Development of E-learning

The rise of e-learning began in the 1980s due to advancements in technology, faster message transmission, and extensive research and studies. According to Itmazi (2010), in the 1970s, international universities incorporated television technology and video tapes into their educational systems. Subsequently, in the 1980s and 1990s, several European universities adopted e-learning technology, with four universities established initially and over twenty universities following suit.

Itmazi (2010) classified e-learning into three generations: the first generation emerged in the early 1980s until the mid-1990s when educational courses and lessons were delivered through CD-ROMs. This period predates the use of the internet. The second generation began in the 1980s and lasted until 2000 when internet usage became prevalent (Ismail et al., 2009). The most recent generation emerged after 2001, coinciding with the technological revolution that occurred in the late 1990s.

This new generation incorporated multimedia elements such as digital pictures and presentations, and witnessed the emergence of the virtual world and satellite communication. As a result, e-learning has evolved into what it is today, utilizing modern technologies. With the introduction of communication and messaging services, as well as voice and animation technologies, e-learning has developed and acquired various names including online education, distance education, and virtual education.

1.8. Definition of E-learning

Today, the way of learning, understanding, and engaging with new information is vastly different compared to a decade. As far as the EFL context is concerned, there have been significant changes in the techniques used in English language education (Patil, 2020).

Numerous theories on language learning and teaching have been proposed, leading to adjustments in teaching methods tailored to meet learners' needs. The learning materials themselves have also undergone transformations ; traditional printed resources, like papers, no longer effectively convey information in a dynamic manner (Huang, Wu, & Chen, 2012). As a result, alternative materials, such as videos with motion or continuous movement, have been chosen (Kuhl, Scheiter, Gerjets, & Gemballa, 2011).

E-learning is a broad term that refers to the use of electronic technology for learning purposes. It is commonly used in higher education, where students heavily rely on computers for their studies. Itmazi (2010) defines E-learning as a method of teaching that leverages modern communication mechanisms, computer networks, and multimedia to deliver information to learners efficiently and effectively. It is closely linked to information and communication technology (ICT). According to Clarke (2004), e-learning encompasses various approaches that all share the use of ICT.

E-learning refers to the process of taking a course online by accessing academic course materials through a computer, phone, or handheld device using a modem, wireless, or cable connection (Governors University 2008, as cited in Sangrà et al., 2012). Similarly, Guri-Rosenbli (2005), (as cited in Sangrà et al., 2012) defines E-learning as the use of electronic media for various educational purposes, ranging from supplementary functions in traditional classrooms to complete substitution of face-to-face meetings with online interactions.

Additionally, e-learning is often seen as a medium for communication, engagement, and cooperation, with its other aspects and functionality taking a secondary role. According to Bermejo (2005), (as cited in Sangrà et al., 2012), E-Learning refers to the use of computerized communication systems as a means of education facilitating communication, information exchange, and interaction between students and instructors. Wan et al. (2008) defines it as “a

virtual learning environment in which a learner's interactions with materials, peers and instructors are mediated through information and communication technologies.”

In simple terms, E-learning refers to a type of learning that does not necessarily happen within traditional educational institutions. Instead, it is a self-directed form of learning where students are not reliant on their teachers and can handle their own learning using devices like laptops, smartphones, and tablets; this can be done either synchronously or asynchronously. According to Alonso et al. (2005), e-learning involves the use of multimedia technologies and internet to enhance the quality of learning by providing access to resources, services, and facilitating remote exchange and collaboration. Jereb & Šmitek (2006) further define e-learning as educational processes that use information and communications technology to facilitate both synchronous and asynchronous learning and teaching activities.

1.9. Advantages of E-Learning

E-learning is widely recognized as a valuable and advantageous learning system that contributes to the educational advancement of any country. It provides opportunities for educational growth by fostering a new generation of teachers and learners who are not confined to traditional classroom settings.

This type of educational delivery overcomes the constraints of time and location that are typically associated with traditional face-to-face classrooms (Serim, 2007). According to Clarke (2004), learners have the freedom to choose the most suitable place, pace, and time for their studies. Similarly, Lipshitz & Parsons (2008) argue that “the main advantages of e-learning are its flexibility, convenience, and the ability to study at one's own pace, anywhere and anytime with an internet connection” (p. 64). Therefore, e-learning offers convenience and flexibility, allowing users to learn from home, work, or while traveling. Additionally, the

course is always accessible and does not require physical attendance as long as the necessary equipment is available.

Furthermore, the learning process can be customised to accommodate both slow and quick learners, resulting in reduced stress and increased satisfaction. Additionally, learners have the freedom to choose content, tools, and materials that align with their interests, needs, and skill levels. This allows them to adapt their learning style and utilize these resources accordingly (Hall, 1997).

According to Collis and Moonen (2001), E-learning is a valuable technique that use modern technology such as computers, the internet, multimedia, and electronic libraries to provide learners with necessary information. This saves time and effort for the learner. Additionally, online learning offers the opportunity for students to interact with teachers and their peers, creating a joyful and pleasant learning experience. This interaction promotes self-learning and the improvement of technical and vocational skills (Dargham et al., 2012). Social learning, teamwork, or other types of interpersonal connection all play important roles in fostering autonomy.

1.10. Disadvantages of E-Learning

According to Asaqli (2020), e-learning can potentially limit social and cultural interaction, impede communication through body language, eliminate peer-to-peer learning, and lead to impersonality issues. When learners rely on online platforms for education, they may find it challenging to establish social connections since they are not physically present in a classroom setting. This lack of human interaction can result in feelings of isolation and dissatisfaction , which negatively impact both intellectual and social learning development and success.

Another disadvantage of e-learning is the limited assessment options available to students, which are crucial for measuring their progress. Currently, the assessment system for online courses heavily relies on “closed” exams such as multiple choice exams, assignments, and the use of text analysis software to evaluate the quality of “open” questions. However, there is still ongoing debate about the reliability of these tools. Additionally, E-learning offers a virtual learning environment where learners can only receive guidance and direction online. However, this can result in a lack of teacher supervision that is typically provided in traditional teaching methods (Wang, 2007).

1.11.E-Learning Platform

E-learning platform, as defined by the U.K. Department for Education and Skills (2005), is a collection of ICT systems used to deliver and support learning. It should include communication and collaboration tools, a secure online workspace, customisable content for teachers, student progress tracking, and the ability to access the platform anytime and anywhere . As far as Algeria is concerned, the platform Moodle is currently the most widely used platform in the field of E-learning. Additionally, platforms such as Zoom and Google Meet have also gained popularity for facilitating e-learning and virtual meetings in Algeria, offering diverse options for teachers and learners to engage in remote learning activities.

1.11.1. Moodle

Moodle (Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment) is an online portal developed by Martin Dougiamas at Curtin University of Technology in Australia in 2002 (Kurti, 2008). According to Dharmendra et al. (2011), Moodle is a Course Management System (CMS) software package designed to assist educators in creating high-quality online courses. Similarly, Oproiu (2015) describes Moodle as an open-source learning management software that establishes a collaborative and virtual learning environment for online education.

Teachers can use this e-learning application for free to develop online courses and establish an engaging learning environment with their students. The platform offers communication tools such as chat rooms and forums, enabling teachers to interact with their students effectively. On the other hand, students can take advantage of this platform to enroll in classes, access various activities, assessments, and tests uploaded by their instructors, and collaborate with their peers on assignments. According to Bouguebs (2019), Moodle's flexibility in allowing students to study at their own pace enhances their motivation to learn.

The rapid technological advancements of Moodle have led to its widespread use as the primary platform for establishing internet-based learning systems in higher education institutions worldwide. Even in Algeria, numerous universities have incorporated Moodle to take full advantage of modern technologies and create an e-learning interface.

University of Ain Temouchent, like other Algerian universities, has also implemented the Moodle learning system. This decision was particularly important when e-learning became necessary during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown. Through the use of Moodle's features, such as online tests, quizzes, and interactive activities, the university has been able to enhance teaching and learning practices effectively. The university's e-learning platform can be accessed through their official academic website: <https://e-learning.univ-temouchent.edu.dz/>

1.11.2.Zoom

Zoom has become a widely used video conferencing platform for online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. It offers various features such as immersive view, focus mode, live translation, and visual effects that can greatly enhance the online learning experience, especially for foreign language courses. Additionally, it provides students with more interactive and engaging virtual classes, which can foster learner autonomy.

1.12.3. Google Meet

Google Meet is another video conferencing tool that can be easily integrated into e-learning platforms through plugins like "Google Meet for Moodle." This allows instructors to create virtual meeting rooms directly from the learning management system and share recordings with students. It offers a more seamless distance learning experience for students, enabling them to take more control of their learning process.

The University of Ain Temouchent has embraced Google Meet and Zoom to enhance the virtual learning experience for students. These video conferencing platforms have facilitated seamless communication, collaboration, and engagement in online classes, thereby improving the overall quality of education at the university. The use of these e-learning tools showcases the university's dedication to leveraging technology to support student learning and autonomy.

By incorporating platforms such as Moodle, Google Meet, and Zoom, the university of Ain Temouchent has created a dynamic and interactive online learning environment that benefits both students and educators, fostering a culture of innovation and excellence in education.

1.12.E-Learning Delivery Modes

E-learning encompasses two modes of delivery: synchronous and asynchronous modes. These two modes of e-learning are distinguished by the level of interaction between learners and facilitators. They are typically offered through virtual learning environments facilitated by learning management systems (Piskurich, 2004).

1.12.1. Synchronous E-Learning

Synchronous mode of e-learning, also known as direct e-learning, operates on the principle that students and lecturers can engage in real-time online communication and discussions, regardless of their physical location. This mode closely resembles traditional teaching, as it allows for direct interaction between the teacher and students through verbal lectures, presentations, and sometimes even through the use of cameras (Snart, 2010). To facilitate this type of e-learning, a virtual classroom is often used, which leverages electronic tools such as video conferencing, chat rooms, whiteboards, and audio conferencing. These tools are typically integrated into learning management systems like Moodle, enabling seamless course delivery (Rice, 2011).

Synchronous e-learning involves real-time online presence and a good technology ; it is a type of learning that requires learners to be in front of computers in order to engage in discussions or conversations with each other or with their teachers. This can be done through chat rooms or virtual classrooms, allowing them to any questions or concerns regarding the course material during the lesson. Additionally, this learning environment eliminates the need for a physical school, as the learning material is directly accessed through the internet. Many experts also believe that synchronous e-learning can be implemented within a traditional classroom setting, with the use of computer technology and internet under the guidance and supervision of the teacher (Clark & Mayer, 2003; Snart, 2010).

1.12.2. Asynchronous E-Learning

Asynchronous e-learning (indirect learning) , is a form of learning that does not require the simultaneous presence of teachers and learners. It involves students independently working through a set of course objectives by accessing online resources and engaging with each other and the instructor through e-learning tools like discussion forums, email, and

bulletin boards. This type of e-learning allows students to work at their own pace within a specified timeframe (Snart, 2010). Additionally, asynchronous e-learning promotes cognitive participation through increased reflection and the exchange of complex information (Hrastinski, 2007).

1.13. Barriers to E-Learning Adoption

The incorporation of e-learning into traditional teaching and learning systems is a complex process that can encounter various complications and challenges, known as e-learning barriers.

1.13.1. Personal Barriers

Personal barriers most commonly mentioned include difficulties with managing time, where external distractions disrupt the ability to find time for studying. Moreover, language barriers arise when learning materials are not consistently available in the local language. Other personal factors that can impact the adoption of e-learning are the personal characteristics of the teacher, such as age, gender, attitude towards e-learning, and their beliefs or teaching philosophy. Furthermore, individual learning styles or preferences play a role, as learners may prefer either passive or active learning approaches (Mungania, 2003; Rogers, 2000).

1.13.2. Technological Barriers

Technological barriers encompass accessibility and usability issues that can hinder the learning process. Limited access to course materials and learning websites can have a negative impact. Additionally, the lack of technical support can pose challenges for learners, especially when it comes to registering for online courses and mastering new skills like using online tools and effectively communicating, as well as dealing with specific procedures such as passwords and permissions (Baldwin-Evans, 2004; Mungania, 2003).

1.13.3. Pedagogical Barriers

Pedagogical aspect of e-learning focuses on the process of teaching and learning. It deals with issues such as analyzing content, understanding the audience, defining goals, evaluating media, designing approaches, organizing information, and employing learning strategies (Khan, 2005). In a similar vein, Lloyd et al. (2012) highlight the lack of adequate pedagogical skills as a major obstacle to online teaching in e-learning. They argue that barriers to teaching online at the higher education level also include: a lack of compensation for time and large class sizes, additional responsibilities, difficulty in interpreting visual feedback from students, concerns about content quality, ownership of developed courses, insufficient training and resources, increased workload, and a lack of experience with online teaching.

1.13.4. Institutional Barriers

In Khan's (2005) study, institutional issues are classified into three categories: administrative affairs, academic affairs, and student services. Administrative affairs encompass various aspects such as budgeting, course information catalog, financial aid, course timetables, registration, information technology services, and instructional design. On the other hand, academic affairs address policies, instructional quality, staff support, and intellectual property rights. Lastly, student support services aim to provide assistance in creating a conducive e-learning environment.

1.14.E-Learning during the Covid-19 Pandemic

The rise of e-learning, along with the remarkable advancements in Information and Communication Technology (ICT), has revolutionized the field of education. Consequently, higher education institutions have made significant progress in implementing e-learning into their programs. In fact, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused the most significant disruption

to education systems in history (Mailizar et al., 2020), resulting in the closure of educational institutions worldwide. To adapt to these circumstances, the world has shifted towards online education to ensure that students do not miss out on their education during this crisis and to prevent the further spread of the disease (Hijazi & AlNatour, 2021). During the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a significant shift from traditional face-to-face education to e-learning. This transition requires the use of improved technology and teachers who are ready to adapt to new working environments (Hijazi & AlNatour, 2021). According to Radha et al. (2020), the education sector has entered a digital age during the COVID-19 epidemic, with teachers virtually connected to their students. Consequently, the integration of e-learning in education during this pandemic crisis has become more crucial than ever before. Additionally, UNESCO (2020) emphasizes that many academic institutions are now implementing online education as a solution to the Coronavirus crisis.

Different countries experienced varying challenges in the process of shifting to online education, with none of them being fully prepared. However, the level of difficulty in this transition differed based on the technical capabilities of each country. Over the past decade, some universities have gradually transitioned their programs to online platforms, moving away from traditional face-to-face delivery (Bao, 2020). Algeria is also undergoing pedagogical transformations to improve the quality of education by incorporating e-learning and offering training programs (Ghounane, 2020). In response to the measures taken by the Algerian President, the Ministry of Higher Education has made the decision to implement online education in light of the Covid-19 crisis. An educational plan has been approved for Algerian universities, which includes guidelines for conducting online courses and completing studies (Guemide & Maouche, 2020). As a result, some universities in Algeria have started implementing distance education through their websites and the use of the MOODLE platform.

1.15. Conclusion

In conclusion, autonomy has been observed in various fields and linked to different aspects of an individual's life. It has particularly demonstrated its effectiveness in the realm of education, especially in language learning ; and by embracing e-learning, learners can create dynamic learning environments that empower them to become active participants in their own language learning journey, set goals, manage time efficiently, and use resources effectively. This chapter focuses on the literature review of learner autonomy and its various associated aspects. Numerous theories emphasize the significance of promoting learner autonomy in foreign language classrooms, and numerous studies highlight the importance of e-learning to enhance learners' autonomy. The next chapter encompasses the practical part , it contains the methods used for gathering data and analyzing the main findings.

Chapter Two: Field Investigation

2.1.Introduction

In light of the previous chapter's exploration of autonomy and E-learning, currently, it is feasible to examine the perspectives and attitudes of learners and teachers regarding the relationship between these two variables. To accomplish this, the current chapter presents a summary of the questionnaire administered to students and the interviews conducted with teachers. It contains mainly eight parts: first, research objectives ; second research design followed by population of the study ; then, data collection instruments and data analysis ; finally interpretation and conclusion. The aim is to analyze and interpret these findings in order to gain a deeper understanding of the context. These findings will help in either confirm or refute the main hypotheses and effectively address the research questions.

2.2.Research Objectives

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between e-learning and learners' autonomy. It mainly aims at looking at the impact of E-learning in encouraging autonomous learning. It also aims at providing an understanding about the thoughts and attitudes of EFL learners and teachers about the concept of autonomy and the incorporation of E-learning into their studies.

2.3.Research Design

The current research requires the use of a case study due to its compatibility with such kind of research. A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context (Yin, 2003). For this reason, a descriptive exploratory case study will be employed to investigate the issue under investigation and gather the perspectives of teachers and students.

2.4. Sample of the Study

Sampling is widely used in academic researches as a means of gathering useful information about a population (Thompson, 1992). There are two primary types of sampling methods: probability sampling and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling involves random selection, allowing for strong statistical inferences about the whole group. It includes techniques such as simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling, and cluster sampling. On the other hand, non-probability sampling involves non-random selection based on convenience or other criteria, and it includes methods such as convenience sampling, voluntary response sampling, purposive sampling, snowball sampling, and quota sampling. The sample of the current research is convenience sampling ; where participants are selected based on their availability and accessibility to the researcher.

2.4.1. Students' profile

The current research is focused on Master One students enrolled in the English department at Belhadj Bouchaib University, Ain Temouchent. This particular group has been chosen because Master students are expected to have a sufficient background knowledge and competence to identify their educational level and share their opinions without any hesitation. Additionally, they have already received at least three years of university instruction, which has undoubtedly shaped their learning experience. Moreover, their insights into the impact of E-learning on their learning abilities, specifically their autonomy, would be invaluable as they have already experienced studying through E-learning platforms and are assumed to have a solid background and significant experience in using them during the pandemic. Considering these factors, a sample of 42 students has been selected 33 of them are girls and 9 are boys.

2.4.2. Teacher's profile

To gain a comprehensive understanding of the impact of E-learning on fostering autonomy, an interview was conducted with EFL teachers at the department of English,

Belhadj Bouchaib University, Ain Temouchent. This interview aims to gather insights into the teachers' perceptions on the learners' autonomy through E-learning and to explore their views and attitudes. It is important to note that the teachers selected for this interview are responsible for teaching Master's one level students and were chosen based on specific considerations and standards; taking into account their awareness of their students' proficiency level and their autonomy to learn ; they also possesses prior experience in teaching online.

2.5. Instrumentation

In order to investigate the impact of E-learning on EFL learners' autonomy , the study will adopt a mixed-method approach ; combining quantitative data from a questionnaire with qualitative data from interviews. The quantitative approach helps to gather statistical data on learners' perspectives and perceptions regarding the impact of E-learning on their autonomy. while qualitative approach is to gather non-statistical data, focusing on teachers' views, opinions, and attitudes towards the same topic. The use of these diverse research tools enhances the validity of the study and strengthens the expected outcomes; a thorough description of the two research instruments used is offered in what follows:

2.5.1.Questionnaire

A questionnaire serves as an instrument for gathering the primary data (Cohen, 2013). It is a widely used research method due to its convenience in collecting information from a large number of people over a specific period of time. The questionnaire is carefully designed to achieve specific goals predetermined by the researcher. Essentially, it consists of a set of written questions that aim to capture the perspectives and viewpoints of participants. As Dornyei (2003,p.101) highlights : “the popularity of questionnaires is due to the fact that they are relatively easy to construct, extremely versatile, and capable of gathering a large amount of information, quickly in a form that is readily possible”. Additionally, questionnaire

provides an effective means for participants to freely express their thoughts and feelings. Furthermore, it assists in translating research hypotheses into specific questions. There are many types of questions ; the most common ones are : Closed-ended, Open-ended, Multiple choice.

Closed-ended questions are designed to obtain straightforward responses, such as "yes" or "no" ,which are simple to analyze as respondents can be categorized based on their chosen answers. In contrast, open-ended questions allow participants to express their thoughts using their own words, providing valuable insights, but analyzing the results can be challenging, especially when respondents provide similar responses, as it requires time to group them into different categories. Multiple choice questions are widely used and popular due to their ease of understanding for respondents, who can choose from various options with minimal effort, and the ease of analyzing the results. Including an "Other" option is considered a best practice for multiple choice questions because it enables respondents to provide alternative answers if none of the provided options suit them, helping to ensure the accuracy of the results by preventing random answers.

2.5.1.1. Description of Students' Questionnaire

The questionnaire design is based on the research questions and hypotheses of the current study . It consists of sixteen (16) questions organized into two main sections. Most of the questions are close-ended, meaning they provide a set of predetermined options, which allows for primarily quantitative findings. It is necessary to point out that this questionnaire is intended as a starting tool for investigating students' thoughts and opinions about the impact of E-learning on their autonomy. Therefore, it improves the research's validity. The first two main questions gather general information about the students, such as their English proficiency level. Section one includes six questions (from Q3 to Q8), which focus on the use of E-learning in the learning process . Section two consists of eight questions (from Q9 to

Q16) that address autonomous learning in general. This section covers questions such as learners' autonomy, dependency levels, teacher roles, characteristics of an autonomous learner, and factors influencing the development of autonomy. The total number of the questionnaires collected is 42 copies.

2.5.2. Interview

An 'interview' is typically a face-to-face conversation between a researcher and a participant involving a transfer of information to the interviewer (Cresswell, 2012). In qualitative research, interviews serve as a primary method of gathering information. During interviews, researchers pose open-ended questions to one or more participants and record their responses.

Karasar (2015) categorizes interviews into structured, semi-structured, and unstructured. Unstructured interviews offer flexibility as researchers can generate new questions based on the participant's responses. They are commonly used in exploratory research such as ethnography, participant observation, and case studies.

On the other hand, structured interviews are more standardized, with predetermined questions. The interviewer maintains control, making them suitable for larger groups and survey studies. Semi-structured interviews strike a balance between the two. While they have a predetermined list of questions to be explored, the questions are less structured, allowing for more flexibility. The flow of the interview is planned in advance, enabling researchers to ask different questions based on the participant's answers. The present interview is a semi-structured interview that consists of seven (07) questions in total.

2.5.2.1. Description of Teachers' Interview

In the course of conducting interviews, a total of five teachers were asked a series of seven open-ended questions. The data collected from these interviews primarily consisted of

qualitative information. The questions were designed to collect data on different aspects of the subject under investigation, namely, enhancing learners' autonomy through E-learning.

The purpose of the first question is to gather information about the number of years the interviewed teachers have been teaching English. This will provide an overall understanding of their experience level. The second question aims to investigate the perspectives of teachers on the significance of learners' autonomy. Question three explores how teachers support student autonomy and the strategies they use to achieve so. Question four aims to explore teachers' views towards the integration of E-learning in EFL classrooms, the subsequent two questions attempt to examine teachers' attitudes regarding the impact of E-learning on teachers' roles and learners' autonomy. The final question provides an opportunity for teachers to share additional comments, suggestions, or recommendations regarding the current topic.

2.6.Data Analysis

The data collected from the two research tools will be carefully discussed in the following part :

2.6.1. Analysis of Students' Questionnaire

The questionnaire started with an informative question asking about the gender of the participants. The aim here was just in order to draw the profile of the informants because gender is not a significant variable in the present study.

Question number two seeks to ascertain whether students have the ability to evaluate themselves by asking them about their proficiency level.

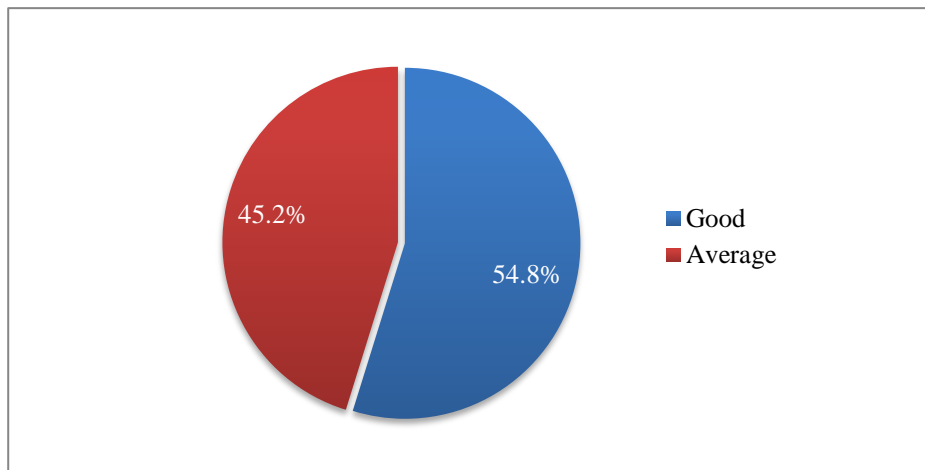


Figure2.1 Evaluation of English Proficiency

As it is noticed in the figure number one ; the majority of students (54.8 %) declare that they have good level , whereas (45.2%) of them find that they have an average level. No students (0%) indicate that their English level is bad.

Section one : E-learning experience

The first question in this section aims at assessing whether students prefer using E-learning while learning.

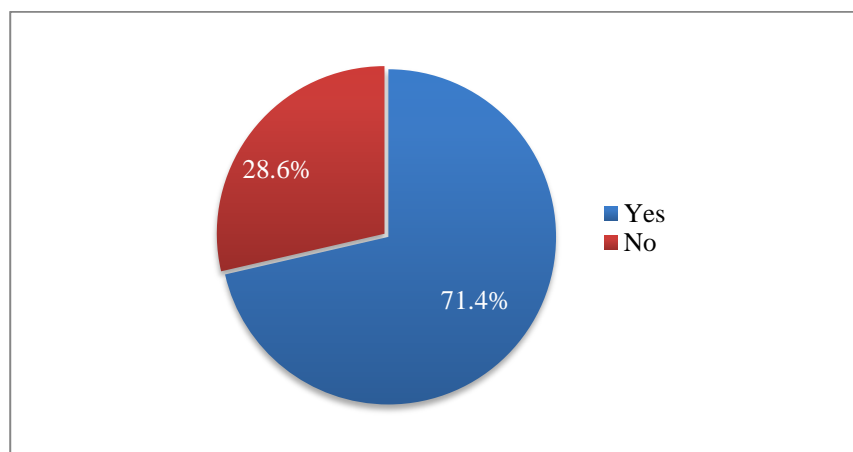


Figure2.2. Students' preferences on the use of E-learning

According to the responses , the majority (71.4%) expressed their support for using E-learning in their education , while only a minority (28.6%) opposed it.

The aim of question two is to determine students' understanding of the importance of including E-learning into their studies.

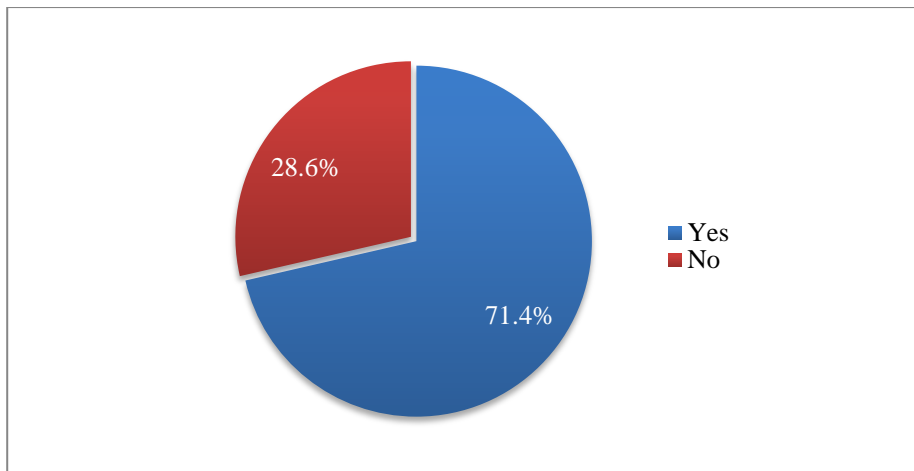


Figure 2.3. The importance of E-learning in the success of the educational process

Concerning the importance of E-learning in the success of the educational process a significant percentage of students (71.4 %) replied positively. Only (28.6 %) of learners responded negatively.

The purpose behind question three is to understand the frequency in which various E-learning materials (online courses, e-books, websites, videos) are used.

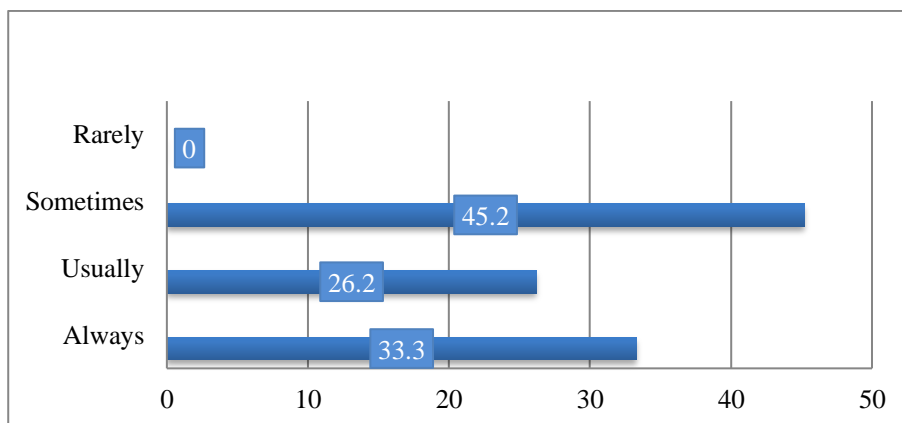


Figure.2.4. The use of E-learning materials

Based on the data presented in the figure , it can be observed that (33.3%) of the students consistently use online courses, e-books, websites, and videos in their learning.

Additionally, (26.2%) of the students stated that they usually make use of these materials, (45.2%) of the students mentioned that they occasionally work with these materials. none of the students reported rarely using these materials. This data implies that the majority of the students incorporate online courses, e-books, websites, and videos into their learning process, at least occasionally. Conversely, a smaller percentage of students (33.3%) use these materials consistently.

The objective behind the fourth question is to investigate the role of e-learning in motivating students throughout their E-learning experience .

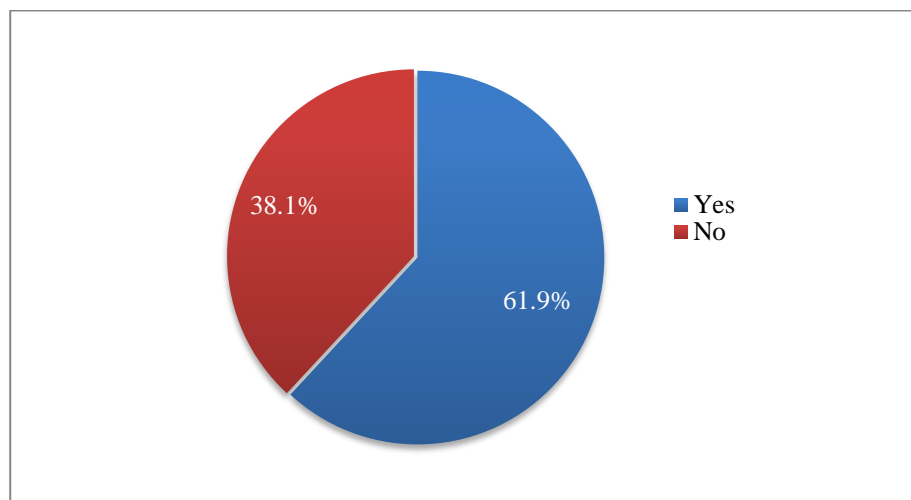


Figure2.5.The role of E-learning in motivating students

According to the results shown in figure number five, a large percentage of learners (61.9%) find E-learning motivating for learning engagement, whereas (38.1%) found the opposite.

The fifth question aims at comprehending the possible impact of e-learning on reducing anxiety.

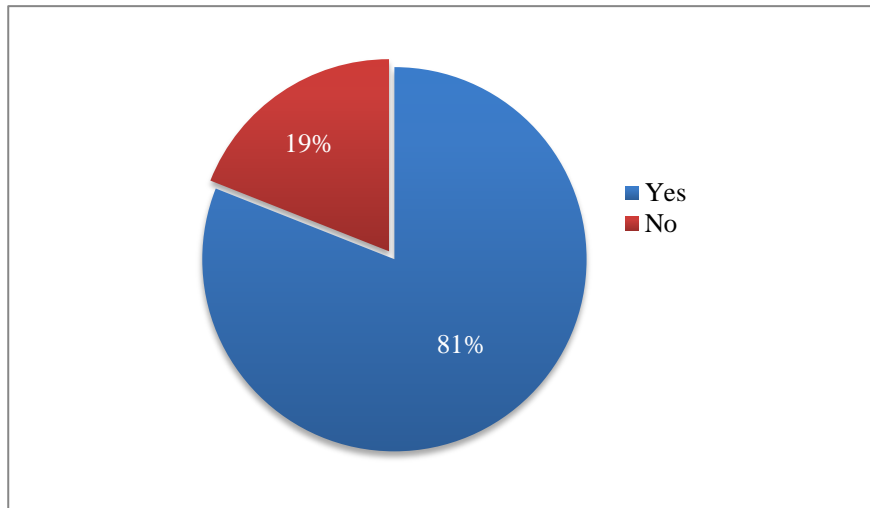


Figure2.6.The role of E-learning in reducing anxiety

Based on the search results, it can be determined that (81%) of students believe that e-learning helps in reducing anxiety, while (19%) still feel anxious in the e-learning environments.

The purpose of the sixth question is to gather students' overall impressions about their E-learning experience.

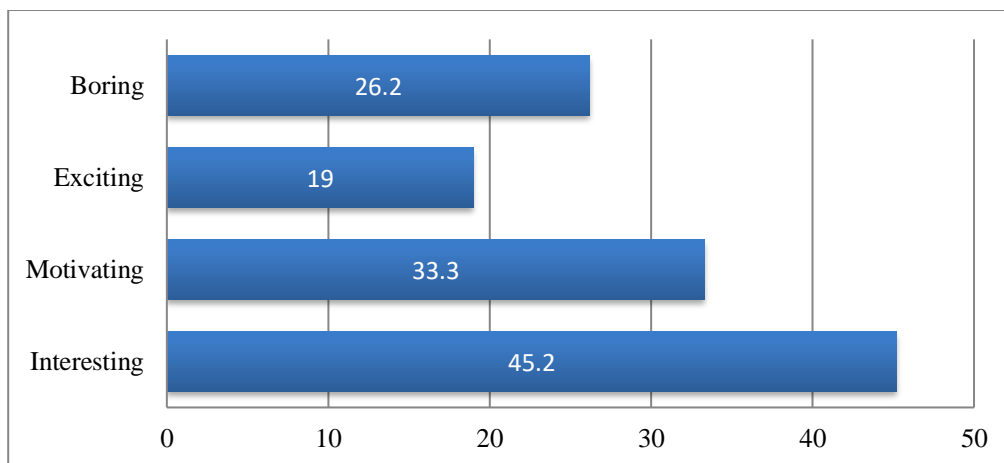


Figure 2.7.Evaluate the E-learning experience

The data in the figure indicates that (45.2%) of students found their E-learning experience interesting, while (33.3%) found it motivating. On the other hand, (26.2%) of students found it boring, and (19%) found it exciting.

Section two : Autonomy in E-learning

The purpose behind the first question in this section is to determine whether students rely only on the information provided in the classroom or seek additional information on their own.

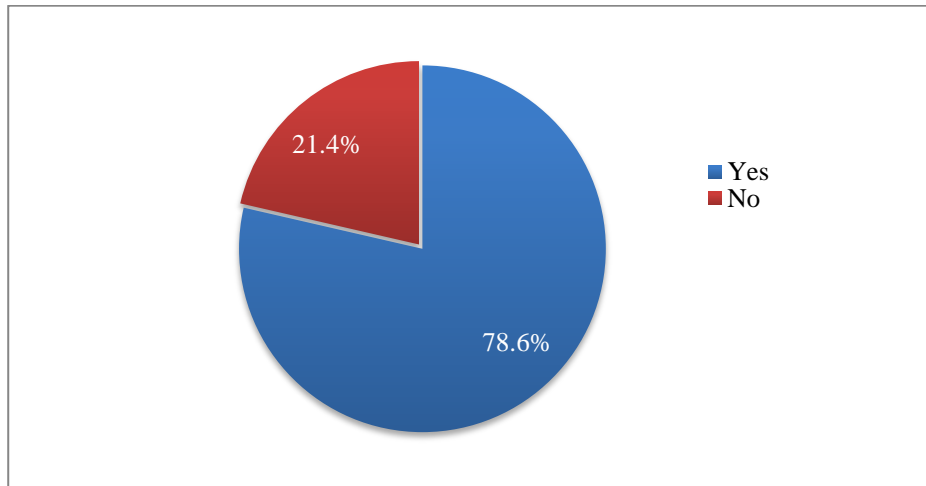


Figure 2.8. Students' reliance on classroom information

According to the results mentioned above, the majority of students (78.6%) depend on the information provided in the classroom for their learning. A smaller percentage of students (21.4%) search for additional information on their own.

Question two seeks to discover whether students rely solely on the teacher for their learning or not.

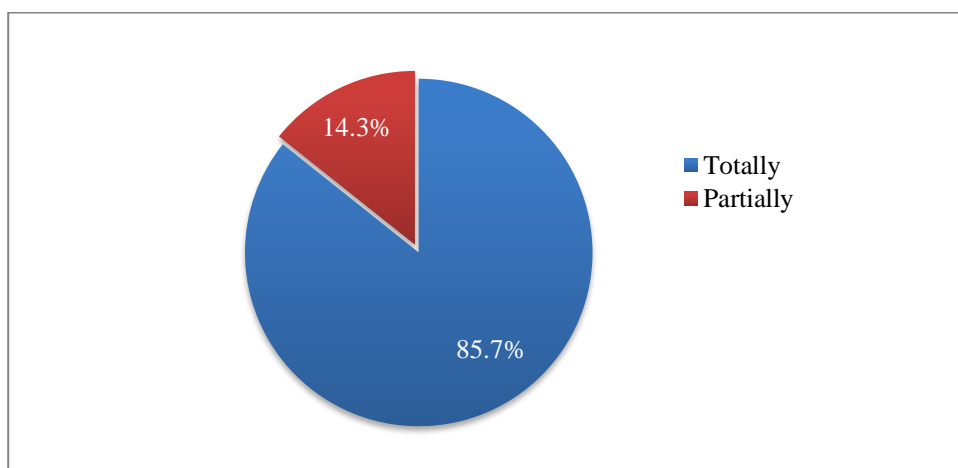


Figure 2.9. The extent to which students depend on teachers

Based on the gathered answers, the majority of students (85.7%) rely solely on their teachers as their primary source of information. However, a small percentage (14.3%) of students do not depend on their teachers and seek information from other sources as well.

The aim of the third question is to understand the characteristics of autonomous learners according to students .

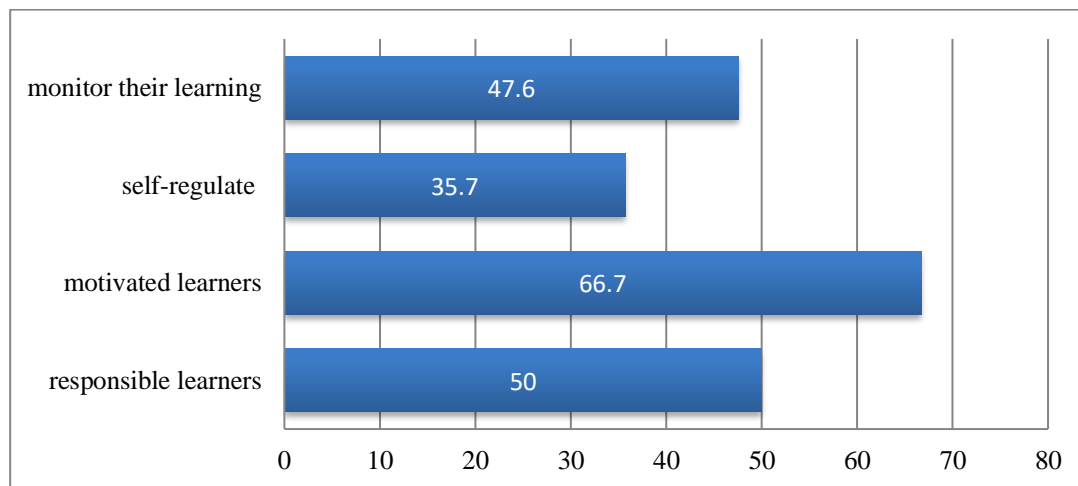


Figure 2.10.Characteristics of Autonomous Learners

According to the figure above, (50%) of students agree that autonomous learners are responsible. This indicates that learners understand the significance of responsibility and how it impacts their ability to take control of their learning, rather than relying only on teachers. The majority of students, (66.7%), opts for motivation. This suggests that autonomous learners possess a strong level of motivation, enabling them to actively engage in the learning process. Additionally, (35.7%) of students indicate that autonomous learners regulate their own learning, demonstrating their awareness of the importance of selecting and manipulating what they learn, and how it influences their independence. Lastly, (47.6%) of learners choose self monitoring, indicating their understanding of the value of keeping track of their learning activities.

The purpose of the fourth question is to determine whether students are independent learners or not.

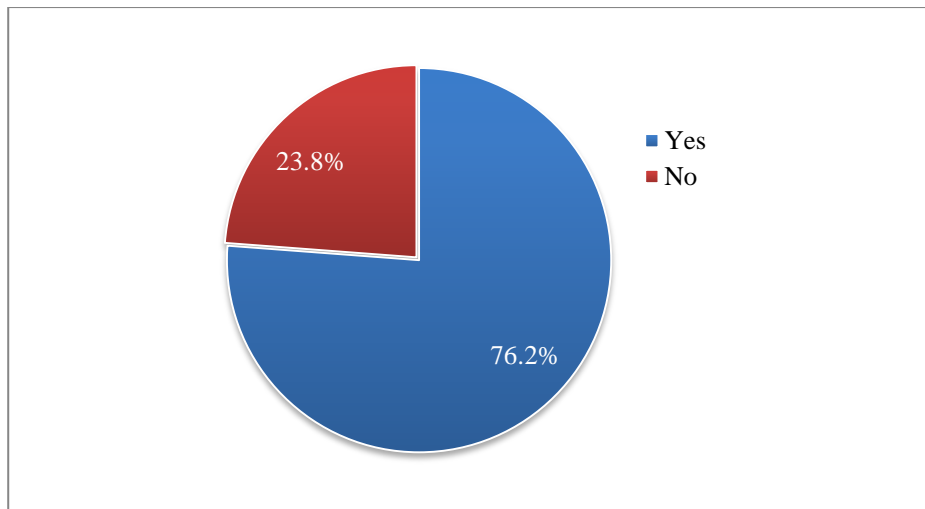


Figure2.11.Learners' autonomy

Based on the data acquired, a large percentage of students (76.2%) consider themselves as autonomous learners. The remaining students (23.8%) stated that they are not independent learners.

The aim of the fifth question is to determine whether the teacher allows students to participate in the learning process and supports them to be autonomous learners.

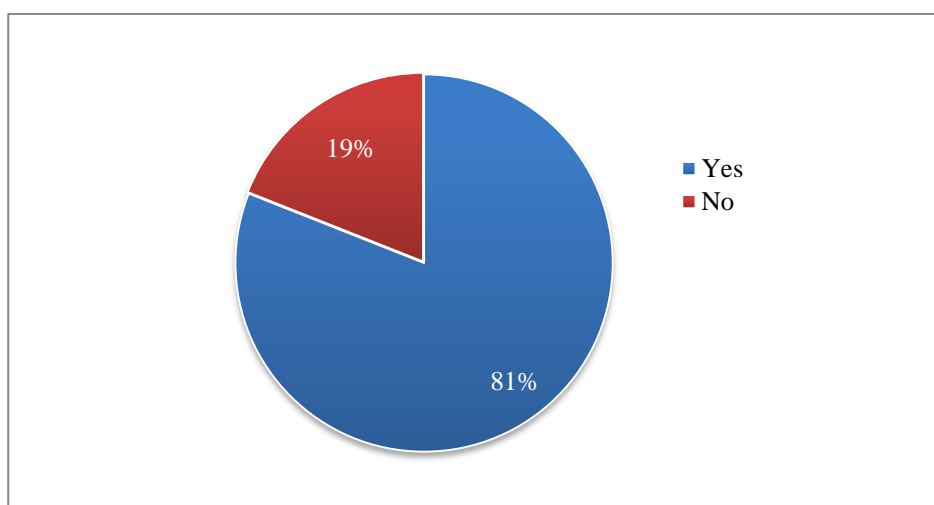


Figure2.12.Teachers' motivation

As it is shown in the figure above (81%) of students feel motivated by their teachers to actively participate and make decisions about their own learning, the remaining (19%) of students expressed that their teachers do not provide them with the necessary motivation to be autonomous in their learning.

The purpose of the sixth question is to explore the various roles that teachers fulfill within their classrooms.

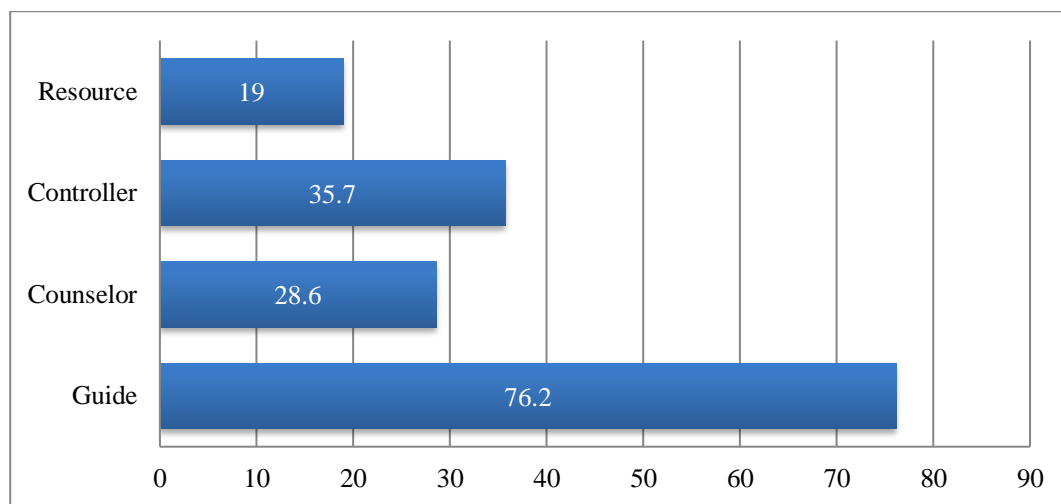


Figure2.13. Teachers' roles

According to the figure, the majority of students (76.2%) agree that teachers act as guides. This shows that teachers understand the important role they play in guiding students towards success in the learning process; (35.7%) of students state that their teachers act as controllers. This suggests that EFL classrooms still rely somewhat on the traditional teacher-centered approach. Additionally, (19%) of students agree that teachers act as resources, indicating that many learners do not actively seek out information on their own. Finally, 28.6% of students choose counselor, implying that teachers may not fully recognize the importance of providing guidance to students on learning issues.

The objective of the current question is to determine whether students believe that autonomy can be fostered by E-learning.

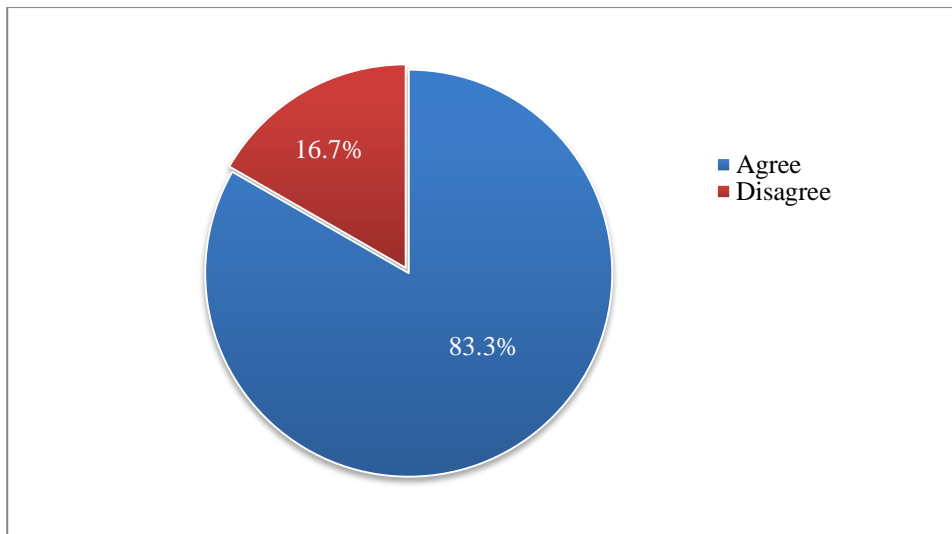


Figure2.14. Fostering Autonomy through e-learning

According to the figure above , the majority of students (83.3%) agree that autonomy can be promotable through E-learning . A smaller percentage (16.7%) of students believe that autonomy cannot be fostered by e-learning.

The goal of the coming question is to determine which features of autonomy E-learning increases.

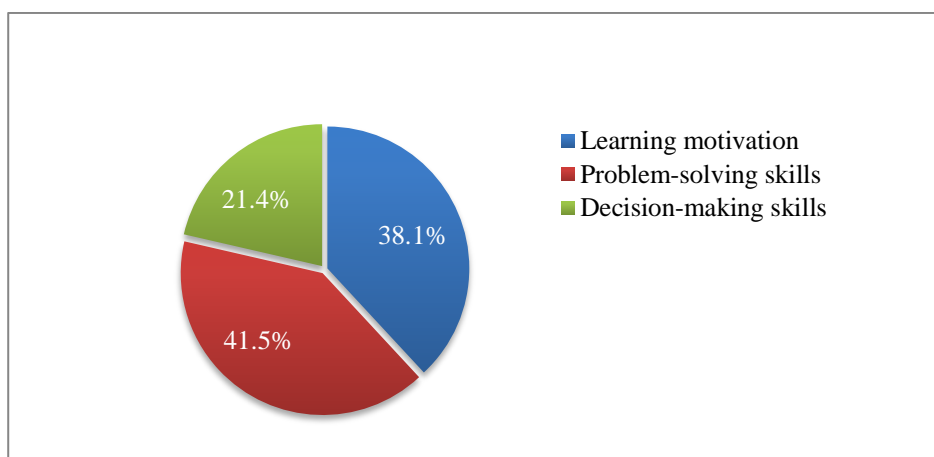


Figure.2.15.The features of autonomy that E-learning enhance

According to the data presented, (41.5%) of students expressed that E-learning has a positive impact on their problem-solving abilities. Additionally, (38.1%) of students mentioned that E-learning boosts motivation. The (21.4%) of students indicated that E-learning enhances their decision-making.

2.6.2. Analysis of teachers' interview

1/Teachers' experience

The first question was an informative one aiming to explore the experiences of the interviewed teachers. Out of the five teachers, three claim to have taught English for more than five years. This suggests that they have a decent amount of experience, having taught at least three generations of learners (assuming each generation spends three years at university). Two teachers have been teaching for less than five years, indicating that they are newly hired and likely possess some experience. Overall, the interviewees appear to belong to different categories, which enhances the validity of the findings of the current investigation as teachers with diverse teaching backgrounds are likely to offer different perspectives.

2/Teachers' thoughts about the importance of autonomy to EFL learners

Taking into account that autonomy is a fundamental aspect of the current research, it is important to get feedback from teachers regarding its significance for EFL learners. All teachers commonly agree on the importance of autonomy for EFL learners. However, they provide different justifications for this significance. Two teachers emphasize the necessity of self-reliance, as teachers alone are insufficient. Furthermore, teachers cannot teach students how to learn. Another teacher asserts that autonomy is crucial because it allows students to take charge and responsibility for their own learning process. Similarly, two other teachers state that learners' autonomy enhances their self-evaluation skills, enabling them to

effectively select, evaluate, and correct information when necessary. In summary, all teachers agree that autonomy holds great importance for EFL learners.

3/Teachers' promotion of autonomous learning in their classrooms and the methods used

This question shifts from the perspectives and opinions of teachers to a more contextual situation. It aims to determine whether teachers value learners' autonomy and if they employ specific methods to achieve this goal.

All the interviewed participants affirm that they actively promote learners' autonomy, indicating their recognition of its importance. However, they use different approaches and tools to accomplish this. In summary, the methods employed by teachers to foster autonomy include the following:

- Shifting the teaching approach from deductive to inductive can be beneficial when it comes to teaching grammar, vocabulary, and writing. This change allows for a more student-centered learning experience.
- Collaborative activities or projects can be a great way to encourage independent work and give students a sense of responsibility for their own learning. These activities promote a natural learning environment.
- Self-assessment should be encouraged to empower students to evaluate their own progress and take ownership of their learning journey.
- In-class presentations and performances can help shift the focus from the teacher to the students. Assigning presentations on chosen topics allows students to take charge of their learning and demonstrate their knowledge.
- Providing individual feedback, advice, and guidance can greatly assist students in their improvement.

- Assigning writing assignments and homework can further enhance the learning experience and reinforce the concepts taught in class.
- Use technology-based learning, such as online platforms, educational apps, and games, can make the learning process more engaging and interactive for students.
- Dependence on the task-based approach , Focus on real-world tasks and break down learning into real-world projects that require students to apply their knowledge and skills to solve problems.
- Discussions and debates that push students to think critically.

4/Teachers' perceptions about the integration of e-learning in the EFL classroom

This question explores teachers' perceptions regarding the implementation of E-learning in EFL classrooms. It is evident that all the teachers are in favor of incorporating E-learning in EFL classrooms and believe it has numerous positive impacts. The teachers provide various arguments and justifications, emphasizing the essential and advantageous nature of E-learning in facilitating successful teaching and learning. Some teachers also associate the use of E-learning tools with learners' increased motivation, as they feel more in control of their own learning. Additionally, the respondents agree that E-learning allows teachers to overcome traditional teaching methods, save time, and enhance communication and interaction. These perceptions demonstrate the teachers' strong interest in E-learning and their awareness of its diverse benefits.

5/Teachers' beliefs about the effects of e-learning on their roles in the classroom

This question is directly related to the issue under investigation in the current research . It aims to gather teachers' perspectives on the impact of E-learning on their roles and whether this impact grants learners with more access, direction, and regulation.

All respondents agree that E-learning has a positive effect on teachers' roles. Teachers provide different justifications for their answers. Some argue that E-learning allows learners to have more freedom, in that way transforming the teacher into a guide. This implies that E-learning contributes to creating a learner-centered classroom, which is a fundamental aspect of the LMD system. Other teachers believe that E-learning "reduces the need for extensive explanations" and transforms learning into a "shared, easy, and interactive process," moving away from traditional teaching methods that often result in students losing focus after twenty minutes.

6/The role of the integration of e-learning in increasing learners' autonomy

All participants agree that E-learning has the potential to enhance learners' autonomy. One teacher supports this statement based on personal observation, stating, "I have personally witnessed the development of my students' autonomy by incorporating E-learning into my teaching approach. Since students enjoy learning with technology, why not use smartphones, PCs, and internet connectivity when available? This way, they can enjoy the learning process and feel motivated."

7/Additional comments and suggestions related to the issue under investigation

The majority of teachers have submitted additional feedback and suggestions, which are outlined below:

- This investigation should be regarded seriously, particularly in the Algerian context, which suffers from teacher-dependency.
- Students should be more aware of the importance of autonomy and should actively seek knowledge about E-learning.
- Teachers should begin adopting E-learning in their classrooms.

These suggestions demonstrate that teachers are open to change and are willing to transform their teaching methods by integrating E-learning in EFL classrooms. Their comments also indicate their understanding of the importance of learners' autonomy.

2.7. Interpretation of the main results

The results from the questionnaires completed by students and the interviews conducted with teachers offer a comprehensive understanding of the issue under investigation.

It is important to note that the level of autonomy among students varies. While some students are more dependent on teachers, others demonstrate a higher degree of independence. Students perceive their teachers as motivators for autonomy, they also view them as controllers and guides with limited roles. The majority of students have a positive impression of E-learning, stating that it motivates them, reduces anxiety, and improves their engagement in learning.

Teachers emphasized the importance of e-learning and they suggest it as one of the methods used to enhance autonomy. Additionally, students indicate that E-learning enhances their motivation and problem-solving skills, which directly impacts their autonomy. Moreover, some teachers also associate the use of E-learning tools with learners' increased motivation, as they feel more in control of their own learning. These findings support the hypothesis that E-learning has a positive impact on students' autonomy and learning experiences.

All teachers value the incorporation of E-learning in EFL classrooms ; they believe that E-learning reduces their workload, makes learning more enjoyable and interactive, and leads to increased interest, motivation, and engagement. They actively strive to develop students' autonomy through various approaches, such as assigning writing tasks, providing homework, and facilitating discussions and debates. The teachers' efforts to promote autonomy through

E-learning reinforce the hypothesis which state that teachers can understand the impact of E-learning on learners' autonomy.

Teachers' perspectives align with the results of the student questionnaires, indicating agreement on the importance of autonomy for EFL learners. The findings suggest that E-learning plays a significant role in enhancing students' learning experiences and fostering their autonomy. The alignment between teachers' efforts to promote autonomy and students' experiences with autonomy in E-learning environments indicates a cohesive approach towards fostering independent learning practices. The connection between teachers' strategies and students' perceptions emphasizes the vital role of autonomy in EFL education and highlights the effectiveness of integrating E-learning to enhance learners' ability to learn on their own, resulting in more engaged, motivated, and independent learners.

2.8. Conclusion

This chapter aims to explore the perspectives and attitudes of learners and teachers towards the role of e-learning in promoting learner autonomy. It discusses the research design, instrument, and population involved in the study. It aims to answer the research questions by analyzing both the questionnaires completed by the learners and the interviews conducted with the teachers. The study findings provide support for the proposed hypotheses. Based on these findings, the third chapter will offer suggestions and recommendations for both teachers and students on the research topic.

Chapter Three: Suggestions and Recommendations

3.1.Introduction

In order to improve the autonomy of EFL learners using E-learning, it is important to examine different approaches that can effectively promote autonomy in language learning. This chapter aims to investigate various strategies and methodologies that can empower EFL learners to take charge of their learning process, thus encouraging autonomy and self-directed learning. Additionally, it discusses key factors for successful implementation of E-learning , explores the impact of E-Learning on learner autonomy and provides suggestions and recommendations for enhancing learner autonomy in EFL classrooms through E-learning. The chapter also acknowledges the limitations of the study.

3.2. Approaches to Foster Autonomy

Autonomy is considered crucial in the learning process, leading many researchers to seek a structured approach to enhance it. However , it is essential to understand that autonomy is not something that can be directly taught or acquired; rather, it is an innate capability that can be cultivated and developed. The interviewed teachers said that they use certain methods to enhance autonomy in their classrooms. However, fostering autonomy requires collaboration from different parties. Benson (2011, pp. 124-196) outlines six main approaches to fostering learners' autonomy: resource-based, curricula-based, technology-based, classroom-based, learner-based, and teacher-based.

3.2.1.Resource-based Approaches

Focus on giving learners the opportunity to take charge of their own learning by individually interacting with the provided materials (Le, 2009). This means that learners have control over the learning process and can independently choose and manipulate the materials. Self-access centers (SACs) are a common form of this approach and are effective in promoting learner autonomy. The Algerian educational system in general and univesities in

particular need to provide such centers to enhance autonomy among students. According to Gardner and Miller (2011), the main objective of promoting self-access learning is to foster autonomous learning.

3.2.2. Curriculum-based Approach

This approach promotes the collaboration between teachers and learners to determine the content of instruction (Le, 2009). This approach expands the concept of learner control to encompass the entire curriculum (Smith, 2015). Le (2009) identifies two main variations of the curriculum-based approach: the weak version involves learners taking charge of project work and making decisions about content and methods by themselves, while the strong version entails teachers and learners jointly selecting, organizing, negotiating, and revising the syllabus. In other words, learners have the authority to decide on content in the weak versions, while syllabus design is a collaborative effort between teachers and learners in the strong version. This is not really affordable in the case of EFL students at university because the syllabus is already dictated from above. However, there can be some discussions aiming at adapting the content depending on the students' needs and preferences.

3.2.3. Technology-based Approach

Technology-based approach highlights the importance of independent use of technological tools in the learning process (Smith, 2015). The primary forms of this approach include Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and Computer Mediated Communication (CMC). The use of technology, such as computers and the internet, can assist in promoting learner autonomy by granting access to authentic materials for independent learning outside of the classroom. This aligns with the issue under investigation, as it emphasizes the role of technology in promoting independent learning and eliminating the constraints of traditional teacher-centered. According to Le (2009) there is “still insufficient

research in the field of educational technology to prove its positive impact on learners' autonomy.”(p. 66).

3.2.4.Classroom-based Approach

This approach emphasizes the learners' control over the learning process within the classroom. This approach aims to change the dynamic between teachers and learners by empowering learners to take responsibility and have control over the learning process, its objectives, and the evaluation of their learning outcomes (Le, 2009). As stated by Smith (2015, p. 87), “teachers should negotiate control and responsibility with learners, particularly when it comes to setting goals, managing the learning process, and determining evaluation and assessments” . The current research findings indicate that teachers attempt to foster learners' autonomy in a variety of ways , by giving homeworks and putting students to work on writing projects .

3.2.5.Learner-based Approach

It differs from previous approaches by concentrating on learners' independence, by allowing them to take control of the learning process (Le, 2009). This approach aims to empower learners and make them better language learners by providing them with skills, techniques, and strategies that lead to behavioral and psychological changes (Smith, 2015).

3.2.6.Teacher-based Approach

This last approach emphasizes that learners' autonomy can be enhanced through appropriate teacher development and education. In order to promote autonomy in the learning context, it is important for teachers to understand its significance and its impact on the overall learning process (Le, 2009, p. 73). Little (1995) argues that learners' independence relies heavily on teachers' autonomy, which highlights the need for teachers' education to be taken seriously.

Benson's six approaches aim to determine the most suitable method for promoting learners' autonomy. Each of these approaches addresses a specific aspects that can be applied in various forms. It is challenging, to determine the most successful approach among them. According to Benson (as cited in Riihimäki, 2013, p. 27), "it is likely that autonomy will be fostered most effectively through a combination of approaches." Therefore, instead of sticking to a single approach, it is advisable to adopt an eclectic approach that selects and applies different aspects from these approaches.

3.3. Assisting Students to be Autonomous

According to Rousseau (as cited in Candy, 1991, p. 102), an autonomous learner is the one who "is obedient to a law that he prescribes to himself". In light of Rousseau's definition , it is understood that an autonomous learner is someone who makes decisions regarding the key aspects of the learning process. They also take responsibility for choosing appropriate educational resources and ultimately evaluate their own progress due to their high level of self-awareness.

Autonomous learners possess six key characteristics that can be summarized as follows: self-direction, self-determination, self-regulation, self-monitoring, self-assessment, and responsibility for learning.

3.3.1. Self-direction

Self-directed learning (SDL) is a key characteristic of autonomous learners, it refers to the processes through which learners take control of various aspects of their learning. Knowles (1975) describes SDL as: "A process in which individuals take initiative, with or without the help of others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes"(p. 18). Empowering

learners to take charge of these aspects enhances their awareness and engagement in the learning process, leading to improved outcomes. In summary, SDL promotes learners' independence by granting more freedom in the major components of the learning process.

3.3.2. Self-determination

Self-determination is a crucial feature that deserves attention when considering the characteristics of autonomous learners. The Self Determination Theory (SDT), developed by Deci and Ryan, has greatly influenced research in this area. Self-determination is an intrinsic form of motivation that is driven by a natural desire for personal growth and fulfillment of psychological needs. Self-determined learners strive to fulfill three essential needs: competence, autonomy, and psychological relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000). It is important to note that self-determination is closely linked to autonomy. Supporting students' basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness in the classroom has been found to increase their internal motivation to learn and encourage them to engage more independently in their studies (Niemic & Ryan, 2009). In other words, learners become more motivated and independent when their classrooms address these three fundamental needs.

3.3.3. Self-regulation

Self-regulation is another aspect of learners' autonomy. It refers to the thoughts, feelings, and actions that learners generate themselves in order to achieve specific educational goals (Zimmerman, Bonner, & Kovach, 1996). Similarly, Zimmerman (1989) describes self-regulated learners as active participants in their own learning process, being mindful, motivated, and taking appropriate actions.

Zimmerman's perspective is rooted in the understanding that learners who possess the ability to regulate themselves actively contribute to the learning process in three key ways :

Firstly, they engage in metacognition by organizing their thoughts , setting goals and monitoring their progress, they periodically evaluate their performance through self assessment. Secondly, they are motivated by expressing their interest and desire to learn, striving to complete tasks, and taking responsibility for their successes or failures due to their high level of confidence and self-efficacy. Lastly, they exhibit the desired behavior of creating a favorable learning environment that enables them to perform more effectively (Zimmerman, 1986, 1989). Thus, self-regulation plays a vital role in the development of autonomous learners as it facilitates their independence through metacognitive, motivational, and behavioral processes.

3.3.4. Self-monitoring

Self-monitoring falls under the category of self-regulation and is a skill commonly possessed by high achievers. It involves learners intentionally observing both explicit and implicit aspects of their learning outcomes (Zimmerman, Bonner, & Kovach, 1996). Essentially, self-monitoring is the process of individuals recording data about their own behavior in order to make adjustments as needed (Coleman & Webber, 2002). Chang (2010) highlights the significant role of self-monitoring in influencing learners' self-regulation, as well as its impact on the speed and success of learning. As a result, self-monitoring is considered as a key component of autonomy, where learners document their learning achievements.

3.3.5. Self-assessment

Autonomous learners also possess the valuable skill of self-assessment, which indicates their control over learning (Holec, 1981). According to Cooker (2012, p.53), “self-assessment is a beneficial tool that promotes autonomy in second language learners. It allows them to establish their own standards for judging the quality of their performance, rather than relying

on external evaluation”. Self-assessment and autonomy together form what is known as autonomous assessment. This type of assessment primarily aims to foster learners’ independence (Lamb, 2010). More significantly, “self-assessment enables learners to monitor their progress and achievements, providing valuable feedback on the effectiveness of their learning strategies and methods” (Gardner, 2000, pp. 51-52). Through the process of self-assessment, learners have the opportunity to reflect on their own learning journey, recognize areas that require improvement, and make well-informed decisions on how to enhance their overall learning experience.

3.3.6. Responsibility for Learning

Responsibility is widely recognized as a fundamental aspect of autonomous learning. According to Holec (1981, p. 3), being able “to take charge of one’s learning means taking responsibility for all decisions related to the learning process”. Autonomy and responsibility are closely linked, as the development of autonomy relies on the presence of responsibility. Little (2007) suggests that autonomous learning begins when learners accept responsibility, acknowledging that successful learning is a result of their own efforts. In essence, autonomy and responsibility go hand in hand, encouraging learners to actively participate in their own learning. Therefore, fostering learner autonomy involves nurturing their sense of responsibility (Scharle & Szabo, 2000). The present research findings reveal that the informants are aware of certain points from the above characteristics, yet they need teachers’ guidance to develop them further.

3.4.Roles of Teachers and Learners in Promoting Learners Autonomy

The implementation of e-learning in higher education has led to a shift in students’ responsibilities. Rather than being passive recipients of knowledge from instructors, students are now expected to actively engage in the learning process and actively process information (Cohen & Nycz, 2006). Additionally, Cohen and Nycz (2006) note that students often acquire

this information from various online platforms and sources, for which instructors are responsible for providing. According to Anderson (2005), the roles of teachers have been transformed by ICT, shifting them from being “agents on stage” to “guides on the side” (p. 3). In an online teaching setting, it is clear that instructors have transitioned from actively transmitting knowledge to acting as tutors, providing guidance, support, motivation, and introducing students to the necessary technical tools for learning. In this context, teachers and learners are assigned specific roles to transition from complete dependence on the teacher to a more self-reliant approach to learning. As the focus transitions from teaching to learning, there is a notable shift from a teacher-centered approach to a learner-centered approach, this fundamentally alters the roles of both the teacher and the learner in the learning process.

3.4.1 Teachers’ Role

It is widely recognized that learners should be autonomous and able to take responsibility for their own learning. However, this does not mean that the teacher’s role in promoting independent learning is eliminated. In fact, the teacher plays a crucial role in fostering autonomy by providing opportunities for learners to make important choices and decisions about their learning (Nunan, 2003) . Without the teacher’s intervention, this process would not occur.

According to Ganza (2008), “learner autonomy is achieved through the interaction between the learner and the teacher ” (p. 65) (as cited in Tham and Sirinthorn , 2014, p. 130). This implies that without the assistance and guidance of the teacher, the whole process may be less efficient or even fall into disorder (Yan, 2012).

In the process of becoming autonomous, learners require the support of teachers to achieve the highest level of success. As Little (1994) notes, giving learners independence does not imply abandoning one’s responsibilities as a teacher or having no role to play in the

language classroom. Therefore, negotiation and cooperation between teachers and learners are essential in autonomous learning. Learner autonomy does not emerge spontaneously from within the learner, but rather develops through the learner's dialogue with the surrounding world (Little, 1994). That was actually highlighted in teachers' responses, denoting that they are aware of the importance of interaction between the teacher and the students to promote autonomy.

To cultivate students' autonomy, teachers must assume various roles. According to Richards and Rodgers (1986), these roles can be divided into three types: teacher as a manager and organizer, teacher as a facilitator, and teacher as a counselor .

- Teacher as manager and organizer: the role of the teacher as a manager and organizer is crucial in the classroom setting. It is the teacher's responsibility to effectively organize a variety of activities that are suitable, impactful, and relevant to the students' educational needs and expectations.

- Teacher as a facilitator: the role of the teacher as a facilitator is to effectively manage classroom activities and assist learners in planning and executing their independent learning. Additionally, the teacher should support learners in self-evaluation and help them overcome any uncertainties or anxieties they may encounter during the learning process.

- Teacher as a counselor: teachers who take on the role of counselors must effectively guide their students in selecting the most effective learning strategies. In order for learners to become more self-aware, they need to be given the opportunity to experiment with different strategies and determine the best one for each situation. It is important for teachers to avoid subtly influencing students towards their preferred strategies.

It is worth noting that teachers must be mindful of the varying degrees of autonomous learning. Some learners require more guidance than others, and there are tasks where learners

rely on the teacher for support. As learning is dependent on social interaction, learners also play a role in contributing to their own autonomy, as demonstrated in the following section.

3.4.2 Learners' Role

According to Little (1993), autonomy is a universal capacity that all humans have, unless there are restrictions preventing it. As a result, learners in the classroom tend to pursue their own agendas and take responsibility for their own learning. This means that their actions play a role in their autonomy as they actively participate in the learning process.

According to Holec (1981, as cited in, Stefanou, et al., 2004, p. 99) autonomous learners are expected to fulfill a set of roles. These roles include:

- Defining the content and progression.
- Choosing the method and techniques to be used.
- Monitoring the process of acquisition.
- Assessing the acquired knowledge.

In a learner-centered approach, students are viewed as active and valuable individuals who have the ability to take responsibility for their own learning. This includes tasks such as planning, selecting materials, evaluating language learning, and monitoring progress (Holec, 1981) (as cited in Benson, 2006). Therefore, students' role goes beyond simply receiving and recalling information given by the teacher. Their role also involves identifying their own learning styles, needs, and preferences, as well as developing appropriate strategies and techniques to overcome learning difficulties and engage in classroom activities and tasks.

According to Benn (1976), an autonomous learner is someone who possesses a consistent life that stems from a coherent set of beliefs, values, and principles, and who engage in a process of criticism and re-evaluation (cited in Candy, 1991). To achieve

autonomy, learners must take specific actions influenced by their beliefs, principles, and perspectives on language learning. Thus, it is not enough for learners to be motivated and understand language and learning strategies; they must also strive to understand themselves, including their needs, preferences and difficulties.

Autonomous learners must possess motivation and a readiness to assume control of their own learning, acknowledging the positive impact it can have on their educational journey. Additionally, autonomous learning necessitates active participation from learners, both independently and in collaboration with others. This participation involves planning, monitoring, and evaluating their own learning progress. As a result, autonomous learners must consistently reflect on their learning experiences and make the necessary decisions to enhance their learning outcomes.

The move towards e-learning in higher education has led to a significant transformation in the teaching and learning environment. However, it is crucial to investigate the difficulties encountered by students and teachers during the implementation of e-learning and to explore the complexities and challenges that emerge when adjusting to this new educational model.

3.5.Challenges with E-Learning implementation

The significance of e-learning and its effectiveness in teaching and learning cannot be underestimated. However, several challenges associated with e-learning have been identified and discussed in various studies , these challenges can be summarized as follows:

Lack of technical proficiency among educators and students: Both teachers and learners often lack the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively use the available technological tools for e-learning (Hijazi & Al Natour, 2021). To address this, researchers emphasize the importance of providing training, such as computer courses, to ensure e-learning is beneficial for teachers and students in their educational practices (Bates, 2001). As far as Algeria is

concerned, the university of Constantine has implemented a training strategy since 2012 to develop the skills of newly recruited teachers in E-learning and pedagogical practices. This techno-pedagogical innovation aims to improve teaching quality and meet the demands of training offers in the digital age. The training focuses on developing teachers' competencies in educational technologies to enhance their teaching practices, introducing them to various mechanisms of university pedagogy in both distance and face-to-face teaching, and ensuring high-quality hybrid teaching that meets the requirements of society. The training is delivered through the Télé-Université frères Mentouri (TELUM) e-learning platform, which offers an easy way for teachers to access and use teaching resources via the Internet, and facilitates course management mainly e-learning courses.

Negative attitudes and resistance from instructors: Instructors who lack e-learning knowledge and skills tend to have a negative attitude towards incorporating this innovation into their teaching, especially if they have had unpleasant past experiences (Pelgrum, 2001).

Lack of expertise to resolve technological issues: Instructors may lack the necessary expertise to troubleshoot technological difficulties, which can lead to feelings of embarrassment and concerns about their professional standing (Van Fossen, 1999). Additionally, a lack of knowledge and proficiency in using e-learning applications can result in unfavorable perceptions of these programs and poor performance in practice (M, Cox et al., 1999; Preston et al., 2000).

Insufficient, unreliable, and outdated e-learning equipment: The use of e-learning is often unsatisfactory due to a lack of organizational support for providing adequate and up-to-date software and hardware (Preston et al., 2000).

Increased workload and time constraints: Integrating e-learning can be time-consuming and add to the workload of instructors, leading some to argue that the training is burdensome (UNESCO, 2006).

At Ain Temouchent university, the implementation of e-learning presents challenges that are similar to the ones mentioned above. Both teachers and students often lack the necessary technical skills to effectively use e-learning tools. Additionally, Belhadj Bouchaib university faces obstacles related to inadequate, unreliable, and outdated e-learning equipment.

However, in recent times, the challenges of accessing online education have diminished as both students and educators have become more familiar and engaged with various educational technology tools. Especially after the experience gained from the period of the pandemic contemporary learners with their extensive exposure to virtual and digital realms, are better equipped to actively engage with e-learning opportunities.

To assist new teachers in adjusting to online learning and evaluation procedures, Constantine University offers training programmes that connect them with e-learning technologies and methodology. Teaching students how to use e-learning platforms is equally important because it gives them the tools they need to take charge of their education, access materials from a distance, and adjust to new educational technologies.

3.6.Critical Success Factors for implementing E-learning

The successful implementation of e-learning in higher education institutions (HEIs) requires the consideration of various critical success factors (CSFs) derived from extensive literature. These CSFs are categorized into seven components: student's dimension, instructor's dimension, pedagogical factor, technological factor, institutional factor, social

interaction factor, and e-learning environmental factor. Each component of the framework is discussed as follows:

3.6.1.Student's Dimension

Students are the primary target audience of e-learning, so it is crucial to design the implementation in a way that keeps them engaged throughout the learning experience. One effective way to engage students in an online classroom is to encourage collaboration and interaction with other course participants through various activities (Mozelius & Hettiarachchi, 2017). However, it is important to note that achieving social presence does not necessarily guarantee student satisfaction, as argued by Kim, Kwon & Cho (2011). Student satisfaction is linked to several outcomes, including persistence, retention, course quality, and overall student success (Kuo et al., 2013). This means that the factors influencing student satisfaction in online education encompass various forms of engagement (such as interactions between students, instructors, and course content), individual confidence in using the internet effectively, and the practice of self-regulated learning.

3.6.2.Instructor's Dimension

In an online setting, the role of a teacher differs significantly from that in a traditional face-to-face environment as it requires the acquisition of new skills and competencies (Ammenwerth, 2017). Baran (2012) emphasized the need for teachers to adapt their teaching methods when transitioning from traditional to online instruction . In an online setting, a teacher assumes the role of a facilitator, fostering a student-centered approach to learning (Arah, 2012). This empowers students to take responsibility for their own learning and encourages collaboration with their peers.

3.6.3.Pedagogical Factor

Effective pedagogy is crucial for success in any educational environment. Stone & Perumean-chaney (2011) notes that the pedagogy used in a traditional classroom may not be as effective in an entirely online setting. The transition from face-to-face to online teaching does not necessarily require a complete overhaul of pedagogical approaches but rather an adaptation to suit the online environment. When adjusting their online teaching methods, teachers often draw heavily on their face-to-face teaching experience and apply similar traditional pedagogical strategies in the online realm (Baran et al., 2013). Yet, each context has its specificities.

3.6.4. Technological Factor

Technology plays a vital role in the success of online learning. Factors such as quality, reliability, and the richness of the medium are essential considerations when implementing online learning technology (Volery & Lord, 2000). The Internet, a fundamental component of technology, is heavily relied upon in online education. It provides access to a wealth of Open Education Resources (OER) across various disciplines, facilitating course delivery in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) (Porcello & Hsi, 2013). The integration of technology in higher education has increased flexibility for students, allowing them to attend classes from any location at their convenience (Mbodila et al., 2019). Additionally, the use of Learning Management Systems (LMS) and OER offers students a diverse range of materials to enrich their learning experience.

3.6.5. Institutional Factor

In order to achieve satisfaction, institutions must deliver high-quality services (Brown & Chin, 2004). Institutional factors are crucial for implementing e-learning in higher education successfully. Institutions need to meet specific requirements to facilitate a successful implementation process. These requirements encompass financial preparedness,

cultural alignment, technical infrastructure, support from management for training, strategic leadership, and readiness of educational content (Masoumi, 2006).

3.6.6.Social Interaction Factor

Interaction between students and instructors is vital for successful e-learning. As previously discussed, students' engagement can be enhanced through interaction between students and their instructor. To ensure the success of e-learning, a systematic process that facilitates interaction between students themselves and with their instructor is essential. Social interaction can take the form of evaluation ; while student evaluation is significant in a traditional classroom setting, it is equally important or even more critical in an e-learning environment as it serves as an indicator of student achievement (Kuo et al., 2013). Students' evaluation is not limited to the instructor providing feedback on students' assessments but also extends to students' evaluation of teaching and course content. Considering students' evaluations of teaching and learning can positively impact the improvement of course delivery and the promotion of student-centered classrooms (Steyn et al., 2019).

3.6.7.E-Learning Environment

For the successful implementation and enhancement of e-learning systems, HEIs must be adequately prepared to support its functions. The e-learning infrastructure is an important component of the e-learning environment, ensuring smooth operations related to teaching and learning. Mehlinger and Powers (2002) suggest that educators are more likely to integrate technology into their teaching when the necessary infrastructure is provided. An effective e-learning environment relies heavily on e-learning infrastructure, so obtaining support from the institute and receiving training are important factors in convincing educators to utilize technology in their teaching (Teo, 2011).

These critical success factors (CSFs) are vital for enhancing the performance of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and ensuring the success of e-learning implementation.

3.7. Impact of E-Learning on Learner Autonomy

E-learning has been instrumental in developing a workforce that is adept in technology and capable of continuous autonomous learning. It offers learners greater accessibility to information and resources (Kandies & Stern, 1999; Nycz & Cohen, 2007).

In a study conducted by Wedawati et al. (2020), it was shown that e-learning, through the use of Zoom, a virtual platform for delivering lessons, can foster a certain level of independence and satisfaction among learners.

According to Zhong (2018), students, with the help of technology, can become critical consumers of various online resources, collaborate effectively in e-learning environments, and better manage and organize their online learning experiences. These qualities, which are essential for learner engagement and autonomy, are often exhibited by autonomous learners.

E-learning not only promotes engagement but also offers both linguistic and non-linguistic input, crucial elements for language learning practice and improvement (Benson, 2001). Particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, virtual learning has played a pivotal role in fostering student-faculty contact, cooperation among students, and active learning (Baldwin & Jesus, 2017, p. 1).

The impact of E-Learning on learner autonomy is an important aspect of modern education, especially in Algerian universities. E-Learning has played a crucial role in developing a workforce that is skilled in technology and capable of continuous independent learning. It provides learners with better access to information and resources, which helps foster independence and satisfaction among them.

In the context of Ain Temouchent University, the current research has shown that E-Learning can significantly contribute to promoting learner autonomy. It increases learners' sense of responsibility, motivation, and independence in their learning process. The present study conducted at Ain Temouchent University found that the majority of students have a positive perception of E-Learning. They believe that it motivates them, improves their engagement in learning, and enhances their problem-solving skills, all of which directly influence their autonomy.

Moreover, teachers at Ain Temouchent University have shown positive attitudes towards using e-learning to promote learner autonomy. They recognize its potential to enrich students' learning resources and make them more motivated and independent in finding relevant materials.

3.8.Recommendations

In reality, individuals do not naturally possess the ability to learn independently. However, students have the potential to develop their autonomy and become self-directed learners. Encouraging learner autonomy is crucial in the field of language teaching as it positively impacts students' ability to manage and control their own learning. This, in turn, helps them become independent and successful individuals in society. The findings of this study demonstrate a significant improvement in students' level of autonomy through the use of e-learning . Essentially, students' understanding of the concept of autonomy indicates their awareness of the importance of taking responsibility for their own progress in order to foster autonomous learning. Based on these results, the following recommendations are proposed:

1/ Students are advised to assume full responsibility for all decisions related to their learning journey. It is important for them to have a clear understanding of their learning situation, pinpoint their requirements, establish their objectives, and choose the most suitable

methods and strategies for effective outcomes. Furthermore, learners should work on building their self-confidence, which is crucial in guiding them towards taking responsibility for learning and becoming autonomous learners.

2/ Students should focus on enhancing their digital literacy skills by using E-learning , which includes the ability to effectively search, evaluate and integrate information from various sources. Additionally, they should learn how to communicate and collaborate efficiently online. By doing so, students can broaden their knowledge and cultivate independence in a flexible and easily accessible learning environment.

3/Teachers are expected to incorporate various strategies, such as individual assignments and research projects, to develop students' self-directed skills and promote their autonomy. Additionally, they should make students aware of the importance of autonomy and how it can benefit their personal growth. It is also important for teachers to let up part of their control over the teaching/learning process, allowing students to become familiar with self-directed learning and encouraging their freedom to choose and set their own goals. Furthermore, teaching syllabuses should be designed to incorporate new approaches that emphasize students' active and creative involvement in the classroom.

4/Teachers should aim to improve their proficiency with E-learning technologies in order to effectively incorporate them into their teaching practices. Participating in the training offered by the University of Constantine is beneficial, however, teachers need to always make use of what has been learned in this training in their classrooms. In doing so, teachers can offer students a more engaging and interactive learning experience, as well as expand their access to a wide range of resources and tools.

3.9.Limitations of the study

The current investigation faced various limitations that negatively affected its successful implementation, potentially affecting the study's findings and overall validity. These limitations include :

The first limitation is the unavailability of authentic and comprehensive academic resources, both in libraries and online platforms. This scarcity of resources hinders the ability of the researcher to thoroughly enrich her background knowledge, as she was forced to rely on limited e-books, articles, and journals from websites.

The second limitation of this study is the time constraint. Investigating learner autonomy requires a significant investment of time, effort, and information. Consequently, conducting the study with a large number of subjects within a three-month timeframe is quite challenging.

The third limitation is the lack of collaboration from some students, as many did not answer all questions, while others provided incomplete responses, leading to their exclusion and replacement by other participants. This issue, combined with the small number of students willing to participate in the questionnaire (only 42), significantly impacts the sample's representativeness, potentially compromising the study's validity and generalizability.

3.10.Conclusion

In conclusion , this chapter has delved into various approaches , techniques and strategies to enhance EFL learners' autonomy through E-learning, along with essential elements for successful E-learning implementation, and provided recommendations to strengthen learner autonomy in EFL classrooms via E-learning. By integrating these

understandings, educators can establish captivating learning environments that cultivate autonomy and empower EFL learners through the use of E-learning .

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

The concept of learner autonomy has become increasingly prominent in the field of language teaching and learning in recent years. This growing emphasis on autonomous learning can be attributed to several key factors that have shaped the educational environment. One of the primary drivers behind the rise of interest in learner autonomy is the rapid advancements and innovations that have occurred in the realm of educational technology particularly the emergence of e-learning platforms. These platforms have transformed the way language education is delivered and experienced , by allowing for more personalized, flexible, and self-directed approaches to language learning. As a result, placing greater responsibility and control in the hands of the learners themselves.

Furthermore, E-learning plays a pivotal role in supporting learner-centered pedagogies and fostering learner autonomy . Instead of the traditional approach where the teacher is the main source of knowledge and guidance, there is now a growing recognition that effective language learning requires students to play an active role in managing their own learning process, using e-learning platforms and tools, they can access a wealth of resources, engage in interactive activities, set goals, and regulate their progress autonomously. This shift aligns with the principles of learner autonomy, which highlight the importance of empowering students to become self-directed and independent in their language learning journey. Additionally, fostering autonomous learning through the use of E-learning can bring various benefits. Studies have demonstrated that by leveraging E-learning , students can create dynamic and engaging learning environments that promote autonomy, enhance motivation, develop lifelong learning skills , provide personalized learning experiences, and improve language proficiency and performance. Consequently, many educational institutions have made E-learning a key component , recognizing its potential to enable students to develop the

General conclusion

autonomy and independence necessary for successful language acquisition and its role in enhancing the overall effectiveness and quality of language learning. By empowering students to take charge of their own learning, autonomous approaches can better cater to the unique needs and preferences of individual language learners, leading to more meaningful and successful learning outcomes.

The major aim of the study was to investigate the impact of e-learning on the autonomy of EFL learners. The researchers sought to examine the concept of autonomy among both EFL learners and their teachers, and how the utilization of e-learning influences learners' autonomy.

To achieve these objectives, the researchers sought to address the following inquiries:

- 1/ Does the incorporation of E-learning into education enhance EFL learners' autonomy?
- 2/ What is the perspective of EFL teachers regarding the influence of E-learning on the autonomy of learners?

Based on these research questions, the following hypotheses were formulated:

- 1/E-learning has the potential to increase learners' autonomy.
- 2/The impact of E-learning on learners' autonomy can be well-understood by the teachers.

To address the research questions and test the hypotheses mentioned above, the researcher chose to conduct a descriptive case study. The sample population in the study was master one students and their teachers in the English department at Belhadje Bouchaibe University in Ain Temouchent. The study used a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data collected through a questionnaire and qualitative data gathered from interviews.

General conclusion

The study was structured into three chapters. The first chapter delved into the theoretical aspects of the variables under investigation, exploring the history, levels, and characteristics of autonomous learners, along with factors influencing their abilities. Additionally, it examined e-learning, encompassing its definition, advantages, disadvantages, and diverse delivery methods and platforms. The second chapter focused on the research methodology, involving student questionnaires, teacher interviews, and data analysis. Finally, the third chapter presented recommendations and suggestions derived from the research outcomes.

The results obtained from the questionnaires completed by students and interviews conducted with teachers affirmed that both students and teachers understood the importance of autonomy in EFL learning environments. The majority of students had a positive view of e-learning, stating it motivated them, reduced anxiety, and improved engagement, while also enhancing their motivation and problem-solving skills. These findings supported the hypothesis that E-learning had a positive impact on students' autonomy and learning experiences. Additionally, teachers unanimously agreed on the importance of autonomy and valued incorporating e-learning, believing it reduced their workload, made learning more enjoyable and interactive, and led to increased interest, motivation, and engagement on the part of the learners. These results provided evidence in support of the hypothesis that teachers possess the ability to comprehend the impact of E-learning on the autonomy of learners. The alignment between teachers' efforts to promote autonomy and students' experiences with autonomy in e-learning environments indicated a cohesive approach towards fostering independent learning practices, emphasizing the vital role of autonomy in EFL education and the effectiveness of integrating e-learning to produce more engaged, motivated, and independent learners.

General conclusion

The present study was hampered in its effective implementation by a number of limitations, including a lack of authentic academic materials, time restrictions, and insufficient student cooperation. Researchers had to depend on restricted e-books, articles, and journals, and had to exclude and substitute students who had failed to respond to all questions or had provided incomplete answers. The study's validity and generalizability had been significantly impacted by these issues.

This research was focused on the potential of e-learning to create interactive learning environments, allowing learners to actively participate, set their own goals, and ultimately become more autonomous learners. One area for future research is the exploration of how e-learning platforms can better integrate self-reflection and self-assessment tools. The idea would be to explore how regularly providing learners with opportunities to evaluate their progress, identify their strengths and weaknesses, and then adjust their learning strategies accordingly, could really help contribute to developing their autonomy.

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APPENDICES

Appendices

Appendix A : Students' Questionnaire

This questionnaire aims to collect data for the completion of a research dissertation for a master degree. It aims to investigate EFL Learners' autonomy through E-learning. We would be so grateful if you would spare some of your time to answer it and share your experiences. Please keep in mind that your participation would be greatly appreciated, and your personal and honest responses will be treated with complete confidentiality in accordance with study ethics. Thank you for your help.

- Gender : Are you:

- Male

- Female

- How do you assess your English language proficiency?

-Good

-Average

-Bad

Section one : E-Learning Experience

1/ Do you prefer to use E-learning in your learning process?

-Yes

-No

2/Do you believe that using E-learning is essential for the success of the educational process ?

-Yes

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-No

3/ How often do you use online courses,e-books,websites and videos in your learning ?

- Always

- Usually

- Sometimes

- Rarely

4/ Does e-learning motivating you to become more involved in your learning?

-Yes

-No

5/ Does E-learning help you in reducing your anxiety?

-Yes

-No

6/ How do you evaluate your overall E-learning experience ?

- Boring

- Exciting

-Motivating

-Interesting

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Section two : Autonomy in E-Learning

7/Do you depend only on the information which has been given inside the classroom?

-Yes

-No

8/ To what extent do you depend on teachers?

-Totally

-Partially

9/ How do you describe autonomous learners? (More than one option)

-They are responsible learners.

-They are motivated learners.

-They self-regulate their learning.

-They monitor their learning.

10/ Do you describe yourself as an autonomous learner?

-Yes

-No

11/ Do your teachers encourage you to be an autonomous learner?

-Yes

-No

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12/ What role does your teacher play in the classroom?

-Guide

-Counselor

-Controller

-Resource

13/ Do you agree that E-learning foster learners' autonomy?

-Agree

-Disagree

14/ Which aspects of autonomy does E-learning enhance?

-Learning motivation

-Problem-solving skills

-Decision-making skills

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Appendix B : Teacher's Interviews

This research is about the autonomy of EFL learners using E-learning. This interview will be crucial to our study since it will provide us with answers concerning our topic . You are kindly requested to participate in this brief interview, which will be recorded based in your permission.

1-How many years have you been teaching English?

2-Do you think that autonomy is essential to EFL learners? Can you explain ?

3-Do you promote autonomous learning in the classroom? If yes, what methods do you use to achieve this?

4-What are your perceptions about the integration of E-learning in EFL classrooms?

5-Do you believe that E-learning affects teacher roles and gives more control to learners?

6-Do you think that integrating E-learning in EFL classrooms increase learners autonomy?

7-Do you have any comments, suggestions or recommendations?

الملخص:

لقد أدى ظهور التعلم الإلكتروني إلى تغيير طبيعة التعليم من خلال تزويد الطلاب بمرونة غير مسبوقة وإمكانية الوصول إلى مجموعة واسعة من الموارد. ومع ذلك، فإن نجاح هذا الأسلوب في التعلم يعتمد إلى حد كبير على قدرة الطلاب على تحديد مسار التعلم الخاص بهم؛ ويُعرف هذا المفهوم باستقلالية المتعلم. ويمثل مفهوم الاستقلالية خطوة أولى مهمة في التعلم والإنجاز الشخصي، ويؤدي إلى التعلم الذاتي، خاصة لدى الطلاب ومدرسي اللغة. ويهدف هذا البحث إلى تسليط الضوء على آراء وأفكار الطلاب والمعلمين حول مفهوم الاستقلالية ودمج التعلم الإلكتروني في تعليمهم. الهدف الرئيسي هو دراسة آثار التعلم الإلكتروني على استقلالية الطالب. كما يهدف إلى تقييم أثر التعلم الإلكتروني في تعزيز التعلم المستقل. ولتحقيق هذه الأهداف يقوم الباحث باختيار دراسة حالة وصفية. تم استخدام "استبياناً للطلاب ومقابلات مع المعلمين" لجمع البيانات. تتيح هذه الأدوات جمع بيانات كمية و نوعية شاملة. تتكون مجموعة البحث من اثنين وأربعين (42) طالب سنة أولى ماستر وخمسة (05) مدرسين من قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة بلحاج بوشعيب بعين تموشنت. وتدعم النتائج الفرضيات الرئيسية وتشير أن المعلمين والطلاب لديهم اتجاه إيجابي نحو إدماج التعلم الإلكتروني. وهم يعتقدون أنه يمكن تعزيز التعلم من خلال منح الطلاب مزيداً من التحكم في خبرتهم التعليمية. ووفقاً للنتائج، يوصى بشدة باستخدام التعلم الإلكتروني لزيادة استقلالية الطلاب على المستوى الجامعي لأنه يمكن أن يساهم في عمليات التعلم الأكاديمية والمهنية.

Le résumé :

L'essor de l'apprentissage en ligne a changé la nature de l'éducation en offrant aux étudiants une flexibilité et un accès sans précédent à davantage de ressources. Cependant, le succès de ce style d'apprentissage dépend en grande partie de la capacité des apprenants à diriger leur propre processus d'apprentissage ; Ce concept est connu sous le nom d'autonomie de l'apprenant. Ce concept d'autonomie représente un premier pas important vers l'indépendance et la réussite personnelle, conduisant à un apprentissage indépendant parmi les étudiants et les enseignants de langues. Le but de cette étude est de donner un aperçu des points de vue et des attitudes des étudiants et enseignants concernant le concept d'autonomie et l'intégration de

l'apprentissage en ligne dans leur éducation. L'objectif principal est d'étudier l'impact de l'apprentissage en ligne sur l'autonomie des étudiants. Il vise également à évaluer l'impact de l'apprentissage en ligne sur la promotion de l'apprentissage indépendant. Pour atteindre ces objectifs, le chercheur opte pour une étude de cas descriptive. Un questionnaire des élèves et une entrevue des enseignants ont été utilisés pour recueillir des données. Ces outils permettent de collecter des données quantitatives et qualitatives. L'échantillon de cette étude est composé de quarante-deux (42) étudiants de Master Un et de cinq (05) enseignants du département d'anglais de l'université Belhadj Bouchaib d'Ain Temouchent. Les résultats soutiennent les principales hypothèses et montrent que les enseignants et les étudiants ont une perception positive de l'apprentissage en ligne intégré. Ils croient que les étudiants peuvent améliorer leur autonomie en leur donnant le contrôle de leurs expériences d'apprentissage. Sur la base de ces résultats, le recours à l'apprentissage en ligne pour promouvoir l'autonomie des étudiants au niveau universitaire est fortement recommandé, car il peut contribuer à la réussite et à la carrière des étudiants.