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**Developing Learner Autonomy at
University Level:
An Evaluation of the Study Skills Course
at the Licence Degree**

Dissertation submitted to the Department of English as a partial
fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master in Language
Studies

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Abstract

Recently, the concept of autonomy symbolizes a starting point towards self-reliance and individual achievement. Hence, a considerable attention is devoted to self-directed learning by a number of educationalists and language teachers. The aim of this study was to explore second year 'Licence' students' and their teachers' perceptions of autonomy. In addition, an evaluation of the contribution of the study skills course to the promotion of students' independent learning was proceeded to. To reach these objectives, a questionnaire was addressed to forty students, and another one was designed for three teachers who are in charge of the study skills module. The results revealed that, both teachers and students considered autonomous learning as a basic tenet of a successful learner who can manage his learning. They stated that, autonomy was not solely an essential characteristic of a good learner, but also the expected behavior of any university student. Furthermore, teachers and students asserted that the study skills course was important in maximizing the students' autonomy, and providing them with a range of techniques and strategies that would enhance their learning. To conclude, developing students' autonomy at university level is crucial for their academic and professional success.

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List of Abbreviations

AF: Absolute Frequency.

EFL: English as a Foreign Language.

ICT: Information Communication Technologies.

RF: Relative Frequency.

General Introduction

It is widely acknowledged that autonomous learning has spread its broader lines in the literature of foreign language teaching and learning. Hence, the notion of autonomy conceptualizes the sought after plethora of characteristics of a self determined perspective that leads to take responsibility of one's own learning. Accordingly, there is a coeval belief which denotes the importance of autonomy in higher education, particularly in the English language domain. However, Algerian EFL students do not truly perceive autonomy as a pivotal tenet of a university student due to being accustomed to the teacher's knowledge provision.

The purpose of this study is to shed light on the students' and teachers' perceptions of the concept of autonomy in the foreign language framework. It also tends to evaluate the main contribution of the study skills course to promote self-directed learning, and more importantly illuminate its crystallized realm in order to reach the needed insights, and enhance its process. From the above connotations two research questions are put forwards:

- 1- How do teachers and students perceive autonomous learning?
- 2- To what extent does the study skills course promote EFL students' autonomy?

The following hypotheses spring out from these pre- mentioned research questions:

- 1- Both teachers and learners may perceive autonomous learning as a basic tenet of successful learning.
- 2- The study skills provide students with a range of techniques that may foster their independent learning.

In order to undertake this study, the researcher has opted for two questionnaires; one is addressed to forty second year 'License' students and the other one to their study skills course teachers. The present work embodies three chapters. The first one is theoretical; It provides some previous research findings related to the concept of autonomy, and a set of key topics such as: the perspectives of learner autonomy, the basic teaching approaches for the development of autonomy and the teacher's techniques to spread up the notion of independent learning. In addition, it refers to the study skills course insights at university level. The second chapter is practical; It outlines the analysis of the obtained data gathered from both teachers' and learners' questionnaires. In a nutshell, the third chapter mirrors

some suggestions and recommendations to promote learner autonomy via the study skills course, through emphasizing its importance and clarifying some beneficial techniques to teach it successfully.

Chapter One

The Literature Review

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Definition of Learner Autonomy
- 1.3 Perspectives of Learner Autonomy
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- 1.9 Conclusion

1.1 Introduction

The first chapter is outlined mainly to introduce a literature closely related to the concept of autonomy. Constructively, it provides some insights of the previous research background linked to the current study. It deals majorly with the definition of autonomy, and a set of key terms used in this exploratory work such as: the perspectives of learner autonomy, the basic teaching approaches for the development of autonomy and the teacher's techniques to spread up the notion of independent learning. In addition, a general glance is mirrored about the study skills module at university level by giving reference to the department of English at Tlemcen University where this course is mainly taught. Ultimately, a broader line is given to the processes required for the acquisition of any given leaning skill.

1.2 Definition of Learner Autonomy

Learner autonomy is a consensual concept in the literature of foreign learning and teaching. It's basically derived from the Greek term "autonomia", that was particularly directed for the domain of politics. At that time, this term highlighted the perspectives of different parties of the Greek parliament. After that, concerted attention was vividly devoted for autonomy in educational framework, merely by the foundation of "le Centre de Recherches et d'applications Pédagogiques en Langues (CRAPEL), at the University of Nancy in the 1970's. Cooperatively, a group of educationalists, and language researchers have given a plausible acterization to the term in relation to the learning process. In parallel, a sizable proportion was taking by the key figure Henry Holec who defines learner autonomy as "*the ability to take charge of one's own learning*" (1979:04). He acknowledges that the learner is responsible to take control over his objectives, progress and self-assessment.

From the centrality of this concept, the notion of individuality is yielding several insights of self directed learning. Crucially, the learner is supposed to be an active participant in the learning process, through which, he can behave adequately in "out of class setting". Dicknson (1987:11) has emphasized that "*the situation in which the learner is totally responsible for all decisions*". This indicates that the learners are independently

required to be fully self-reliant, and decide completely about what to learn, and how to be assessed. Moreover, David Little's perception is confirming the previous proliferation of this concept by adding that "*autonomy is a capacity for detachment, critical reflection, decision making and independent action*". (1991: 04). Informationally, the sole ingredient for academic success is bridged under the umbrella of critical thinking and the ability to decide about what to learn and acquire. Through the following title, the investigator tries to highlight the main perspectives of learner autonomy via several dimensions.

1.3 Major Perspectives of Learner Autonomy

Learner autonomy is mirrored through several insights and connotations that are taking roots from the field of language teaching and learning. It is vividly characterized through different perspectives that highlight the main frameworks of this concept; significantly defined as follows according to Benson et al. (1997):

1.3.1 Technical Perspective

The technical perspective is highly referred to the set of skills and strategies that promote autonomous learning such as: the appropriate classroom environment and the needed teaching aids. Eventually, it symbolizes an adequate framework, which serves to develop the learners' meta-cognitive processes. A consensual description of this concept affirms the teachers' tools given through the learning training. Additionally, such technique reflects the implementation of a self-regulated climate in the classroom setting.

1.3.2 Psychological Perspective

The psychological state of the learners is essentially said to be the pivotal characteristic of their desire in learning. In order to spread independent learning among them, a conceptualized image can be drawn to increase their motivation and self-belief in their capacities. In a part, the American socio-psychologist Edward Deci states that "*in order to have a sense of self-fulfillment, we need to be autonomous or volitional in our actions*". (1996:66). His thoughts explain the role of internal abilities and their relation to independent learning.

1.4 Teaching Approaches for the Development of Autonomy

The concept of autonomy highlights the principles of self-regulated learning that acknowledges the learner's own responsibility in the learning process. Hence, the teacher's

role in promoting autonomy is said to be crucial. With the aim of building a plausible identification for the development of autonomy; several teaching approaches have been put forward in order to increase independent learning.

1.4.1 Individual- Centered Approach

This approach is explicitly encompassed with the tenet of “individuality”. Knowles and his associates (1986) have worked elaborately on this term, by emphasizing the role of the individual himself. Hence, teachers are majorly in charge to help their learners identify their goals, and what processes to be followed. Crucially, they tend to provide assistance and support, but generally they serve no specific role. A typical example can be pictured through giving individual assignments, through which learners can be engaged in learning as “self-participants”. Moreover, they perform their tasks under the supervision of the teachers who are in a good position to assess their own progress.

1.4.2 Group- Centered Approach

The major concern of this approach crystallizes several needs of a definite group of learners. Individuals tend to interact between each other, share views and feedback, vividly, under the dimension of “collectivity”. The principles of any given group are noticeably, measured according to the skills of each individual; through giving an attention to their contribution and personal fulfillment. What needs to be borne in mind at this level, is the direction of learners to one definite goal that sums up their needs, progress and involvement as well. Herons (1974 :2) acknowledges that the materials taught during the lectures should meet the learners’ individual needs by trying to unify them into one single dimension; that is the notion of group.

1.4.3 Project- Centered Approach

It overrides a pivotal consideration in comparison to individual and group- centered approaches. It denotes a practical involvement and orientation in learning. In practice, project work is said to be one of the basic activities undertaken in almost all disciplines. As pointed out in Morgan (1983:66):

An activity in which students develop an undertaking of a topic, through some kind of involvement in an actual real life problem or issue, and in which they have some degree of responsibility is designing their learning activities

From the footnotes above, Morgan clarifies the importance of project work, by acknowledging the possible issue that can be dealt with, in harmony with the impetus of learning. Additionally, the development of autonomous learning introduces a bunch of ways that are discussed in the following paragraphs.

1.5 Development of Autonomous Learning

The development of autonomous learning have been elaborately an essential concern to be concentrated on. Sizable pieces of literature emphasized the importance of promoting learners' autonomy. The idea of enhancing the principles of spreading up the sense of self regulated learning is merely essential. Particularly, Scharle & Szabó (2000:09) suggest some techniques that can develop learner autonomy.

1.5.1 Raising Awareness

Within the diversity of terms directly associated with learner autonomy, a straightforward route towards its development is commonly grounded. The teacher tends to share some bits and pieces of responsibilities with the learners themselves. Particularly, the guidance and assistance that could be established in order to raise awareness among learners about the importance of self –renewal in the learning process. Purposefully, the teacher stimulates his students to be critical thinkers and get out the concept of passivity from their repertoires. Then, the aims are settled after showing what coverall endings can be expected by being independent learners. In this respect, Santrock (2006: 315) agrees that “teachers *serve as facilitators and guides rather than directors and moulders of learning*”. This definition denotes the teacher’s functions in learning. Moreover, the students need to be fully aware of their own responsibilities.

1.5.2 Changing Attitudes

The core assumption that has dominated the learners' perspectives, is that teacher is supposed to be the knowledge- provider. Eventually, a total reliance on him was no more giving a perfect-reaching ending. A great depth is now advocated for changing the learners' attitudes, merely not through eliminating the teacher's role away from the classroom setting, but majorly, by identifying the marshaling principles of self regulated dependence. As Little (1990:07) suggests “*autonomy is not a synonym of self instruction, it's not limited to learning without a teacher*”. For him, the teacher remains the map designer; inspirationally,

his collaboration mirrors the insights of assistance, leadership and more importantly a source of motivation.

1.5.3 Transferring Roles

In apart, the teacher's role in any given autonomous atmosphere needs to be essentially determined according to the learners' needs, as well as, giving them the opportunity to decide about what to be tackled. Merely, spreading up the notion of learner-centeredness. One alerted, in the classroom setting, the teacher is required to foreground the essential touchstones of his plausible contribution in regard to adopting new skills and strategies which define his adequate roles. From this point, Dam (2003:136) claims "*learner autonomy develops[.....] in the teacher's own development and awareness, as regard to his or her role in the whole process*". Clearly, the teacher's awareness about his /her roles, determines a spiral approach in harmony with self related learning and its marshaling characteristics. From the pre-mentioned footnotes, the researcher has given an illuminated concern to the study skills course in harmony with the domain of English language teaching and learning, explicitly discussed in the following titles.

1.6 Study Skills in Relation to the English Language Teaching Context

Elaborately, the EFL teachers have assumed that the majority of their students cannot cope adequately with the diversity of basic tasks such as: organizing their notebooks, the use of dictionaries, and more importantly relying on themselves in learning. In a part, any language teacher is responsible of finding the successful ways to promote a suitable learning of the study skills. Nevertheless, the study skills do not symbolize solely the plethora of techniques followed, but necessarily taking a general glance at the students' own abilities, deficiencies and competences as well. In order to reach a general generalization of methods, we need to give a sizable attention to the following factors :

1.6.1 Cognitive Factors

Each learner processes an individual thinking surface, and the ability to function properly in a set of tasks that vary according to their own capacities and cognitive potentials. The difference in terms of acquiring and learning knowledge is explicitly determined by the process of assessment.

1.6.2 Affective Factors

The learners' extent of involvement in learning is promptly based on their level of motivation, readiness and desire. The affective factors are highly important to check the learners' psychological presence.

1.7 Study Skills at University Level

The Study skills module at university level symbolizes a plausible platform towards academic success. Pictorially, it develops the students' capacities to make use of effective learning styles and strategies. Constructively in this module, a knowledge based collection of tasks are shaped through writing an essay; note taking, writing performance and assessment. In addition to oral presentation that may enhance the students' speaking skill. Via learning the needed skills, a competence is vividly built upon the acquisition of several tips and pieces of knowledge. Particularly, this course aims at promoting autonomy in university learning environment, and more importantly having the notion of long term effect that serves students positively in their future academic and professional lives.

1.7.1 Study Skills at the English Department of Tlemcen University

The implementation of the study skills course has shaped the plausible efforts that aim at teaching the needed skills in a concrete manner. This course is vividly designed according to the students' needs and requirements, in addition to their level of proficiency. In the context of foreign language teaching, several considerations are to be taken into account, merely the students' abilities of acquiring the essential skills and strategies that better their learning process. Particularly, in the department of English at Tlemcen University, the study skills module is directed to first and second year 'Licence' students. Once alerted, these two years denote a starting point of the students' academic life, through which the skills taught fossilize some basic knowledge platforms that facilitate the learning of the other modules.

1.7.2 Study Skills Course of the First Year 'Licence' Degree

The study skills course of the first year represents the basic step towards learning the necessary skills academically. Firstly, the main target of the module is to familiarize students with the notion of being a university student, basically figure out their roles and responsibilities. It sets out to introduce a plausible image about the lectures, seminars, team

work and online activities. Secondly, the concept of autonomy is given a sizable proportion via this module, eventually proving students with the necessary tips and how to be an independent learner by raising their motivation and maximizing their participations during the sessions. Thirdly, reading, writing and listening skills are conceptualized through a bunch of techniques that emphasize their effectiveness and learnability, in addition to exams preparation and time management procedures.

1.7.3 Study Skills Course of the Second Year ‘Licence’ Degree

The study skills course of the second year license degree mirrors a direct completion of what was taught during the first year. The current focus is shaped through giving much concern to academic writing, generally how to write an essay and deal with a research paper. Moreover, the students are exposed to learn how to use footnotes, quotations and also appendices. At this level, the teacher collaboratively introduces the notion of group work in a more elaborative way, basically providing them with the necessary skills to manage their collective work. As far as the process of learning is concerned, the use of technology is said to be essential. The students get a variety of ideas about the concept of ICT in harmony with learning and also how to prepare a powerpoint presentation, by giving reference to their oral performance in parallel. Ultimately, reflective learning is interpreted through learning journals and personal planning.

1.8 Process of Learning a Skill

The process of learning a skill is promptly introduced by Ur (2002). It carries out a three stage process that is mirrored up through: verbalization, automatization, and autonomy.

1.8.1 Verbalization

Verbalization is generally regarded as “a presentation”. It allows the teachers to implement new strategies and skills that can be easily grasped and perceived by the learners. In addition, the process of verbalization requires the learners to develop intelligence, and wider attention from the course. It tends also to trigger their sub conscious schemata. In order to reach an effective contribution of verbalization, the teacher needs basically to shed light on the following concepts:

1.8.1.1 Attention

The teacher can get his learners' attention, only if the provided skills are interesting and correspond their own learning preferences and choice. This may serve to increase their motivation and interest as well. The materials usually provided during the sessions highlight the degree of learners' involvement. The teacher's role is basically directed to blur confusion, demotivation and lack of interest.

1.8.1.2 Perception

This type of verbalization can be effectively reached through repeating what was already provided by the teacher; with the aim of ensuring the correct perception of information or other types of materials. Through following this process, the learners build a kind of schemata that serve them to learn new materials and it also behaves as pre-source of knowledge that paves the way to acquire and perceive information.

1.8.1.3 Understanding

A reliable top down model of understanding requires the teacher to make a clear connection between what's taught and the previous knowledge acquired, merely through the use of illustrations and other sorts of exemplification. The process of understanding mirrors the correct reception of the already taught materials. The teacher's objective is to enhance the learners' understanding abilities through exposing them to a variety of tasks that are highlighted through a concrete representation.

1.8.2 Automatization

It embodies the realms of practice with the sake of achieving mastery in a given skill. Hence, the process of automatization requires the teacher to give a sizable proportion to the types of activities dealt with. Eventually, they mirror validity and correctness, in order to be fossilized by the students in an adequate way. The more learners are successfully engaged in doing activities, the more they become proficient. Besides, the average level of the students is to be taking into account for the effectiveness of this process. Informationally, variability is an essential component to get the students' interest and involvement, since the repetition of the same materials can be boring and redundant.

1.8.3 Autonomy

After the materials have been adequately automatized, the students can independently begin to take charge of their own learning practice activities. Moreover, making reliable connections of the studies objects and connect them to previous materials already looked for. Presumably, through time, learners develop a self reliance perspective, through which the needs for the teacher are decreased. Autonomous learning is highly shaped via the bunch of tasks that could be done repeatedly. Additionally, it leads to reach mastery and proficiency that are much more desirable to be gained.

1.9 Conclusion

This chapter has basically reviewed the theoretical framework of autonomy, including its definition, the major perspectives of learner autonomy in the EFL context. In addition to some plausible teaching approaches and techniques that pave the way to self regulated learning among learners themselves. Furthermore, an overview about the study skills in harmony with language learning at University, in parallel, the processes needed for acquiring the learning skills.

The following chapter is rather practical. It presents the research design of the current study. It also embodies the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data gathered from the research instrument utilized with second year 'Licence' students and their teachers of the study skills course at the faculty of Tlemcen.

Chapter Two

Data Collection and Interpretation

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Research Methodology

2.2.1 Research Design

2.2.2 Sample Population

2.2.2.1 Teachers

2.2.2.2 Students

2.2.3 Instrumentations: Questionnaire

2.3 Data Analysis

2.3.1 Students' Questionnaire

2.3.1.1 Questionnaire Procedure

2.3.1.2 Results

2.3.2 Teachers' Questionnaire

2.3.2.1 Questionnaire Procedure

2.3.2.2 Results

2.4 Summary of the Main Results and Discussion

2.5 Conclusion

2.1 Introduction

The second chapter is inspirationally a practical framework of this present research. Its concerted attention realms a definite research methodology, in order to gain valuable insights of this work. To reach this preliminary aim, two questionnaires have been administrated to both teachers and students that are used as a research instrument, to gather the needed data and the necessary information.

Informationally, the investigator has given a pivotal consideration to second year 'Licence' students, about whom the research is concerned, also their teachers of the study skills course-at the level of the university of Tlemcen- who are in a good position to answer the researcher's inquiries.

2.2 Research Methodology

With the aim of achieving a reliable piece of research, the investigator needs to choose an adequate research method, which purposefully denotes a specific acterization of plausible data and pivotal results. From the lightfoot above, Nunan (1992) vividly acknowledges nine types of research in Applied Linguistics which are : experimental, ethnography, case study, classroom observation, introspective, elicitation, interaction analysis, and program evaluation. In part, these research methods, usually delve into different dimensions in terms of aims and perspectives, as well as, their foci and marshaling characteristics. The research methodology used in this study is discussed in the following titles.

2.2.1 Research Design

The nature of this research is merely a case study, known as "a monograph". It indicates a straightforward investigation of an entity, a group, a definite process, organization and also a phenomenon. In this respect, Yin (1993:11) defines the case study as: "*it refers to an event, an entity, an individual, or even a unit of analysis. It's an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence*". Accordingly, there are three types of case study: case

study according to the purpose of research, case study in terms of the number of cases, case study according to the units of analysis.

The case study according to the purpose of research includes three sub-categories: descriptive, exploratory and explanatory. Firstly, the descriptive case study focuses on describing an object of phenomenon; it gives a wider attention to the characteristics of a certain issue. It has to answer the question “what”? Secondly, the explanatory case study studies the reasons behind a definite problem, more importantly, it explains why it happens. It attempts to answer the question “why”? Thirdly, the exploratory case study aims at studying a given problem, and also, undertaking a specific issue in order to look for ways through which the existing situation that can be improved. It answers the question “what”? and “how”?

The case study according to the number of cases, vividly includes single and multiple case studies. The former; focuses on one case, and it generates two kinds that are: intrinsic, and instrumental. Adequately, the intrinsic case study gives much more realm to the internal component of the study itself, without giving references to the notion of generalization. On the other hand, instrumental case study attempts to discuss something general through the study of a specific case. It aims at generalizing the research findings. Moreover, the multiple case study also named as “the collective case study”, denotes the study of several cases under one research background.

The case study according to the unit of analysis, this category includes holistic and embedded case studies. The holistic case study focuses on one unit of analysis. Moreover, a glanced view is basically provided about the nature of the studied object that directs the case to function as a single unit of analysis. A part from this, the embedded case study is divided into multiple units that are individually analyzed in a separate way to come up with unified results about the main case. Additionally, the several sub-units are commonly mirrored up to provide pieces of information about the various aspects of the case.

The present investigation is a descriptive exploratory case study. It’s major concern is to focus on the concept of autonomy and the current perception of both teachers and students towards it. In addition to the extent to which the study skills course can promote students’ self regulated learning at university, more precisely for second year License students.

2.2.2 Sample Population

It's eventually acknowledged that the sample is a major tenet in any given research. Since it illuminates the tidbit of information dealt with in the practical part. Additionally, it shapes the selection of some parts of the whole population. It's noticeably distinguished from what is called "observational investigations". By trying to unify this definition under one single dimension, the sample should clearly generate a set of characteristics such as: representativeness, generalizability, and homogeneity. In this current research, a sample was chosen from second year License students at the department of English at Tlemcen University, basically mirrored up through the use of a questionnaire as a research tool, in parallel, another one was addressed to their teachers, who are in charge to teach them the study skills course.

2.2.2.1 Teachers

The investigator has elaborately designed a questionnaire for three teachers, who are majorly concerned with teaching second year license students the study skills module, promptly about whom the case study is illuminated.

2.2.2.2 Students

In nearly all, the researcher has partially selected 40 students out of 192, which is the equivalent of 22% from the whole students' number of second year license degree. Particularly, the study skills course is a newly implemented module within the curriculum. Besides, those students have already experienced some insights of the study skills course in the first year. In addition, the investigator has vividly looked out to blur the content of the course in the second year and eventually linked it to the notion of "autonomy".

2.2.3 Instrumentation: Questionnaire

From the centrality of any piece of research, the use of primary and secondary sources is plausibly sanctioned into the importance of reliability and organization of the data collection phase. The secondary sources are highlighted through the theoretical background. Vivaciously, the primary sources are pictured through the research instruments utilized such as: classroom observation, questionnaires, journals, portfolios...ect. Furthermore, in the current study the researcher has made use of a questionnaire for both teachers and students.

The questionnaire is adequately designed to meet certain goals, already planned by the researcher. It's basically a set of written questions that symbolize a definite inquiry sought after, in order to reach the participants' perspectives and standpoints. In addition, it's commonly regarded as the most utilized research instrument, since, it's easier to be designed and it gathers a large amount of data. As Dornyei (2007:101) pointed out : "*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*". Questionnaire are said to be utilized as a research instrument due to their easier design and formulation. In addition they can truly sum up a considerable bunch of questions and items.

2.3 Data Analysis

In order to gain a comprehensive insight of the research, data analysis crystallizes the plausible findings of the study that are elaborately analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The former involves basically the use of descriptive statistics that reflect percentages, frequencies, tabulations and graphic representations. Whereas, the latter denotes a realistic background of all answers required, and more importantly the content they provide. Reasonably, the two types are tidily related to each other in the process followed in any given research since "*using more than one type of analysis is believed to provide more reliable research findings since the latter are not compressed into a single dimension of measurement*" (Hamzaoui 2006 : 130)

2.3.1 Students' Questionnaire

The present questionnaire contains ten items, classified in terms of rubrics, according to their research questions. It consisted of three types of questions: closed-ended that contain a definite set of answers to choose from and open ended ones gather the possibility for participants to answer without a subjective influence of the researcher. Ultimately, multiple choice questions give the respondents a variety of choices that are already designed by the investigator.

2.3.1.1 Questionnaire Procedure

The questionnaire aimed at collecting students' attitudes and perceptions towards the study skills course, and at seeking for their own opinions and standpoints. Additionally, the

questionnaire was particularly addressed to forty second year EFL students. During three days of work, the researcher gave the questionnaires to the students under the supervision of the study skills teachers during their official sessions, by asking them to answer all the questions designed truthfully. He waited them until they finished to be sure of gathering the total number of questionnaires.

The framework of the students' questionnaire unified the investigator's inquiries under a single dimension, which is clearly mirrored through a set of definite objectives. Purposefully, the questions designed sought for the contribution of the study skills course in the development of learners' autonomy, and what perspectives could be cleared up in order to gain evidence and weighted information as well. The questionnaire used shaped a set of aims that were interpreted, through the items already designed.

The objective of each question is as follows :

Question 1 An inquiry into students' autonomy.

Question 2: Students' definition of independent learning.

Question 3: The advantages of being an independent learner.

Question 4: The students' reliance on the teacher as a primary source of knowledge.

Question 5: Students' behavior when encountering obstacles in learning.

Question 6 : Students' assessment of their own progress in learning.

Question 7: Students' perceptions towards the study skills course.

Question 8:The goals of the study skills course.

Question 9: The contribution of the study skills course in promoting autonomy.

Question 10: The activities done during the study skills course.

2.3.1.2 Results

Question 1: An inquiry into students' autonomy.

Students were asked whether they are independent learners or not. The above table shows that the majority of students are self- directed learners in their principle, since the ratio given is 62.5%. The remaining students that are about 37.5% confirmed that they are

not self-directed learners; this merely indicates their total reliance on their teachers in the learning process.

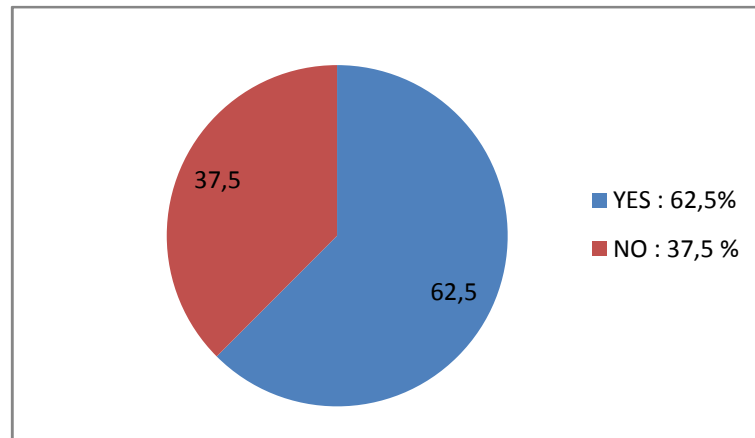


Figure 2.1 An inquiry into students' autonomy

Question 2: Students' definition of independent learning.

This question was basically interested in getting students' selected definitions of independent learning, by choosing what corresponds their perspectives towards this concept. A great number of students that is 50% of them regard independent learning as a total reliance on themselves. Eventually, it's mirrored as a self responsibility of the learners to be fully involved in learning, and merely, highlights a pivotal connotation of individualistic efforts. Additionally, about 15% have chosen the second proposition, which denoted the act of seeking for answers without asking the teacher. Promptly, this definition symbolizes a part of autonomy, by which students prefer relying on themselves when looking for answers. Moreover, the remaining students that are about 35% define independent learning as the ability to decide about what to be learnt, particularly, mentioning the importance of their choice in correspondence to autonomous learning.

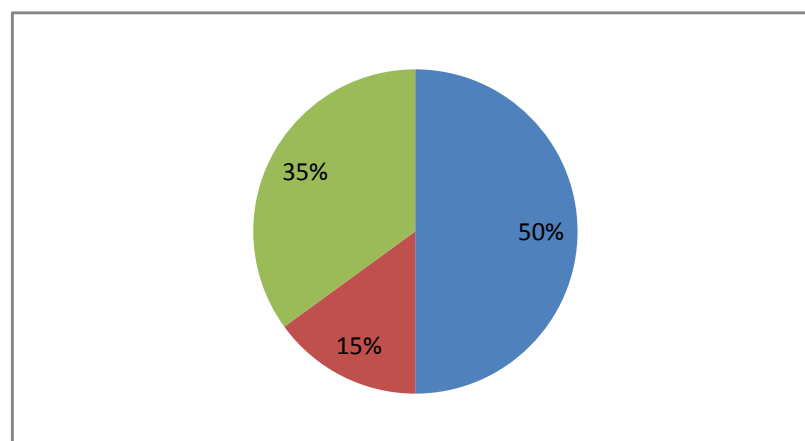


Figure 2.2 Students' definition of independent learning

Question 3: The advantages of being an independent learner.

In part, the students have proposed some benefits of being autonomous learners, pointing out that the key of mastering a language requires a self-reliance perspective, since the teacher cannot constantly give all needed knowledge; otherwise students will remain very limited by brief ideas and insufficient information. In addition to that, being an independent learner will boastfully lead to highly motivated and creative students who handle their own responsibilities, which allow learning what they desire and choose. Moreover, they added that, autonomous learning pushes them to search for extra sources of learning, which may enhance their level and proficiency as well. Once alerted, one participant has acknowledged that, autonomy is a pivotal sign of any successful future teacher.

Question 4 : the students' reliance on the teacher as a primary source of knowledge.

This question attempts to know whether students regard the teacher as the first source of input or not. The majority of participants that is about 65% have confirmed that they don't solely rely on the teacher in learning, but basically consult other knowledge paths such as: the internet, books, and documents, in addition to groups' coordination among classmates. They denoted that in our era, the teacher's role has been limited to serve as a guide or merely a motivator in the learning sphere. The remaining number of students that represents 35% still depend on their teachers who are considered as the first key of assistance and guidance, in regard to their fruitful experience and knowledge that are essential for learners.

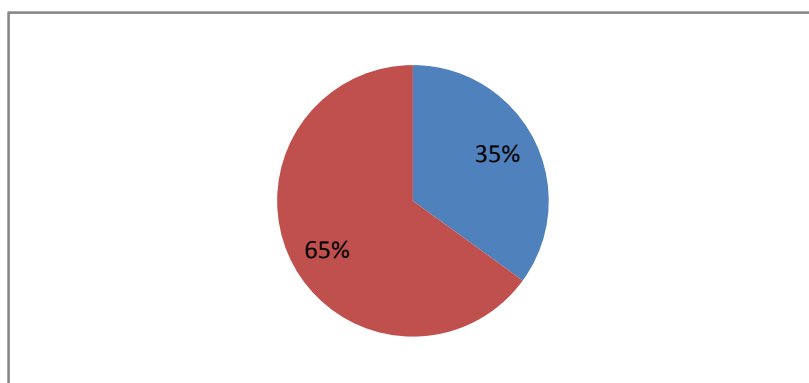


Figure 2.3 Students reliance on their teachers

Question 5: students' behavior when encountering obstacles in learning.

This question seeks to know the students' behavior when encountering obstacles in learning, merely, when they don't understand a word or a meaning seems ambiguous. 60% of the students stated that they prefer to depend on themselves if they face any kind of misunderstanding, or if a concept seems to be hardly grasped from its context. Then a similar ratio has been shared between both asking the teacher and the classmates, as the best choice.

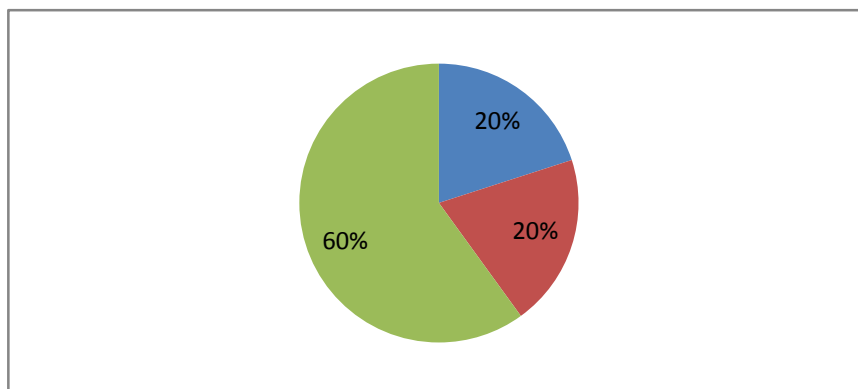


Figure 2.4 Students' Behavior when Encountering Obstacles in Learning.

Question 6: students' assessment of their progress in learning.

This question tended to know whether the students are evaluating their own progress in learning. 57.5% of the students confirmed that they don't assess their level of proficiency and its development, since they regard exams as the sole way of assessment. In addition, 42.5% of them have answered by "yes" and this reflects their concern and responsibility as language learners. Furthermore, they check their capacities through doing several tasks out of the classroom setting, merely as routine exercises. Moreover, students prefer to be joined into groups and choosing a definite topic to speak about, in parallel, asking each other a set of questions for the sake of evaluation.

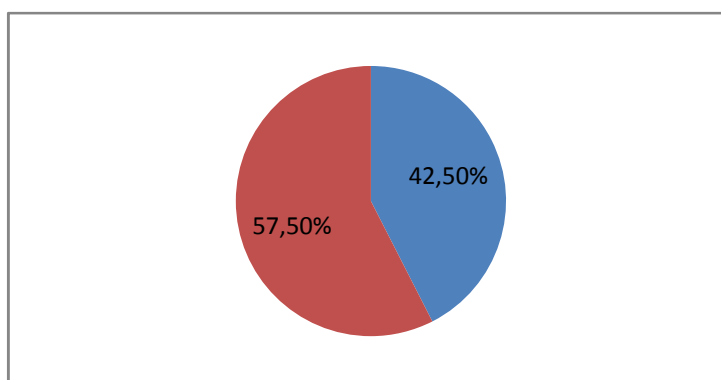


Figure 2.5 Students' Assessment of their Progress in Learning.

Question 7: students' perceptions towards the study skills course.

It's preferable to ask students about their perceptions towards the study skills course, since; the basic tenet of this research is to evaluate its role in promoting autonomous learning among second year license students. Vividly, a great number of students 50% have clearly pictured that the study skills course has a noticeable importance in comparison to other modules. Furthermore, some students represented in 2.65% of the sample advocated explicitly that the study skills course is very important due to its interesting principle that aims at developing their levels and enriching their knowledge via learning new skills and essential tips. Moreover, around 35% of the respondents argue that such course carries no important role, since it's redundant and does not embody any addition to them, mainly; the knowledge provided is too familiar to them. They added that its importance decreases because there is no specialized teacher who can handle the course appropriately. Then, one participant has proposed that this module should be replaced by ICT or Grammar.

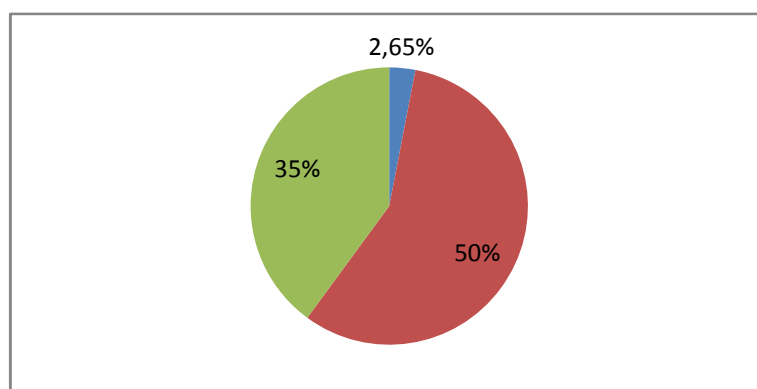


Figure 2.6 Students' perception towards the study skills course

Question 8: the goals of the study skills course.

The major aim behind this question was to explore the students' perceptions towards the possible goals of the study skills course. First, around 12.5% of the answers were directed towards fostering independent learning. Once alerted, the students may not be aware of such aim and few of them believe that this course is an open window towards autonomy. However 25% of the selection was merely devoted for the development of time management skills, through which learners attempt to acquire the necessary skills as note taking and how to deal with the notion of time during exams. The weakest ratio which is 2.5% was associated with the idea of learning a wide range of techniques and strategies,

surprisingly, the students did not choose this proposition. Although, the study skills course is said to teach the students the needed techniques to develop their proficiency. Additionally, 22.5% of the students went to the use of learning resources like: the internet, which is widely used for the accessibility of information. Moreover, the ratio of 20% of the respondents claim that the study skills course grounds a major tenet for the development of students' strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, the remaining percentage that is about 17.5% was generated from the idea of understanding instead of memorizing; constructively this what the study skills course is aiming at.

| The students' answers | AF | RF |
|---|----|-------|
| Fostering independent learning | 5 | 12.5% |
| Developing time management skills. | 10 | 25% |
| Learning a wide range of techniques and techniques. | 1 | 2.5% |
| Using learning resources such as : the internet | 8 | 20% |
| Understanding instead of memorizing | 7 | 17.5% |
| Developing students' strengths and weaknesses | 9 | 22.5% |
| Total | 40 | 100% |

Figure 2.6 the Goals of the Study Skills Course.

Question9: the contribution of the study skills course to promote autonomy.

This question inquired about the contribution of the study skills course to promote autonomous learning. The above table paves the way to provide a clear distinction between two different perspectives in terms of numbers. Additionally, the majority of participants 60% claim that the scope of the study skills course delves into spreading up the notion of autonomous learning, through learning some basic strategies like: being aware of time management and note taking. In addition to making research and how to write academically, not least conveying the necessary skills that build the footsteps towards autonomy and self-reliance. On the other hand, the remaining students acknowledged that the course represents no pivotal importance in its realm. They argued that autonomy can't be conducted by some courses, it is not teachable and its insights are not well visible in this course. According to them, the module is not taken seriously by the teacher, who is supposed to generate bits and pieces of what corresponds students' needs, rather than repeating some redundant content that is closely related to ICT and Grammar.

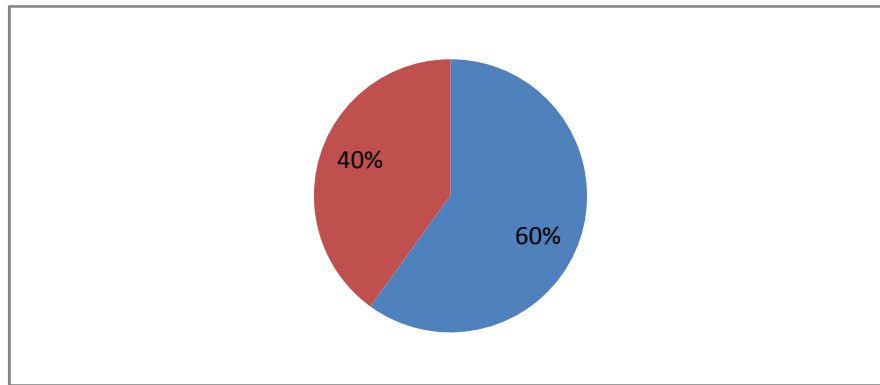


Figure 2.8 The contribution of the study skills course to promote autonomy

Question 10: the activities done during the study skills course.

The major target of this question was to explore the types of activities that may develop students' autonomy. Informationally, most students advocated that most activities were normally linked to assignments and more importantly oral presentations; by giving reference to the use of ICTs, and how to deal with any type of research. They added that the first year course was much richer and variant in terms of content and quality.

2.3.2 Teachers Questionnaire

The present questionnaire contains twelve items, classified in terms of rubrics, according to their research questions. It consisted of three types of questions: open ended , closed ended and multiple choice questions. It was mainly addressed to second year teachers of the study skills course.

2.3.2.1 Questionnaire Procedure

The questionnaire was addressed to three teachers who are in charge to teach the study skills course to second year 'licence' students. The researcher gave the questionnaires to the teachers after their sessions in order to explain the rationale of the research, at the same time to get more evidence and feedback about the module itself since it had not yet implemented in his first and second years of study. In a part, the investigator tried to bridge his attention at the different answers in order to evaluate the under-testing hypotheses.

Adequately, the questionnaire tried to identify the content of the study skills course, as well as, the types of activities devoted during the sessions. Furthermore, it aims at getting a sizable proportion about the concept of autonomy in harmony with the study skills course.

The questionnaire used in this current study consists of twelve questions, each having a specific objective.

Question 1: the importance of autonomy in language learning.

Question 2: the definition of autonomy.

Question 3: students' self-reliance in learning.

Question 4 : the teacher's role in the classroom setting.

Question 5: teachers' encouragement of their students towards autonomy.

Question 6: assignments that promote autonomy.

Question 7: the reasons behind the students' over reliance on the teachers.

Question 8: the teachers' own definition of the study skills course.

Question 9: the main goals of the study skills course according to the teachers.

Question 10: students' awareness of the study skills major goals.

Question 11: the types of activities that develop autonomy.

Question 12: teachers' perceptions of the study skills course to foster autonomy.

2.3.2.2 Results

This questionnaire constructively aims at collecting the basic bit of information about the study skills course and its relation to the notion of autonomy in language learning. It was distributed to three teachers who are particularly teaching second year license students this module. Consequently, all teachers have given back their questionnaires. In a nutshell, the investigator has noticed a plausible variety of answers that may be effective in the data analysis phase.

Question 1: Do you think that autonomy is important in language learning?

This question inquires about the teachers' opinions about the importance of autonomy in the domain of language learning. Moreover, all teachers have elaborately agreed on the important contribution of autonomy in the development of students' proficiency level as well as their responsibilities in learning.

Question 2: According to you, what is autonomy?

The main target of this question was to generate the teachers' selected definitions of autonomy. Basically, two teachers confirmed Holec's definition of autonomy which states that autonomy is "the ability to take charge of one's own learning", is the most appropriate conceptualization that could be inspirationally agreed about. Particularly, one teacher regarded autonomy as an essential characteristic of a good learner, in other words, the successful student is the one who directs his own learning as well as its starting and end points.

Question 3: how can you mirror the students' self reliance in learning?

This question aimed at collecting the teachers' assessment of the students' self reliance in learning. Eventually, two teachers confirmed that the students' self-dependence in the learning process is merely average. This answer relies on the total exploration done by the teachers on a daily basis. The remaining teacher, admits that such reliance is simply "low".

Question 4: in the classroom, what role do you usually take?

This question tried to mirror up the usual teachers' role during the study skills sessions. The first teacher assumed that he is taking the roles of both the leader and participant. In other words, he is the one who directs their way of learning and what kind of activities to be chosen. He also mentioned that taking part in oral and written task. Additionally, the second teacher considered his contribution through the shape of spreading motivational feedback among his students. Furthermore, the third one claims that being as "a leader" is much more desirable to be followed.

Question 5: how do you encourage students to be autonomous learners?

The basic goal of this question was to discover the way by which teachers encourage autonomy among their students. All teachers have selected the proposed propositions. Clearly, individual assignments and the use of the internet are highly considered. The teachers are explicitly in depth to make the students acquire new learning strategies that may embody a long term advantage. Tremendously, a constructive feedback is a key component of aiding their learning's gaps and weaknesses.

Question 6: what assignments do you give in order to promote autonomy?

This question highlighted the types of assignments given with the aim of promoting the sense of autonomy among students. The teachers have elaborately advocated that doing research on interesting topics can increase the students' desire and self reliance as well. Individual work could be pictured up in terms of portfolios or written presentations. Also, students can consult different electronic and printed courses independently.

Question 7: according to you, what are the reasons behind students' over reliance on the teacher?

The aim behind this question was to clear up the researcher's vision about the real reasons that keep students blindly dependent on their teachers. Accordingly, the teachers acknowledged that cultural factor and beliefs govern the students' opinions towards the learning process, they believe that the teacher is supposed to provide every single information to them. In addition, the students' laziness and low motivation affect negatively their own progress. Another opinion revealed that, the majority of university students are not aware of major responsibilities that could be held by a "student", by keeping the traditional vision of simply a secondary school pupil.

Question 8: on the basis of your experience, what kind of definition can you deliver to the study skills course?

The major target behind this question was to discover the possible definitions of the study skills course provided by the teachers. Conventionally, this course symbolizes a methodological guide for a better learning experience. In addition, it sums up the needed approaches, methods and techniques that better the students' learning process.

Also, it denotes a constructive contribution for enhancing the students' language skills, through a wide range of activities, which can explicitly be fruitful.

Question 9: what are the main goals of the study skills course?

This question aimed at exploring the main goals of the study skills course, which could be chosen by the teachers. Once alerted, all teachers have selected the goals already listed by the researcher, fostering autonomy and developing time management skills, and also learning a wide range of techniques, not least, use of ICTs for the sake of research and doing assignments.

Question 10: are the students aware of the goals of the study skills course?

The investigator wanted to know whether second year licence students are aware of the main goals behind studying the study skills module. Mainly, two teachers have argued that their students are conscious about the study skills course connotations, since the content itself is successfully transmitted to them. Only one teacher assumed that the students have not yet grasped the usefulness this course.

Question 11: what kind of activities which develop your students' autonomy do you do during the study skills course?

The pivotal aim behind this question was to know what type of activities is usually followed in order to develop the students' independent learning. A general perspective of teachers mirrored that individual assignments can vividly improve the students' writing and speaking skills, which serve them positively to acquire the motives of self reliance. Then, oral presentations reflect the efforts of each student to learn and prepare individually. Group work is also said to encourage lazy students to take part during the lectures.

Question 12: do you think that the study skills course is a basic starting point towards autonomy?

This question inquired about the teachers' opinions towards the study skills course, particularly, in fostering learners' autonomy. All teachers have agreed on one common answer, which is "yes". According to them, the course is adequately designed to develop a more student centered approach. They stated that the majority of students do not seem to have a real understanding of their roles as language learners, besides their lack of motivation. Therefore, the study skills course is helping them to find the reasons behind learning, and more importantly, it paves the way for acquiring the needed skills not only at university level, but also for their future academic and professional lives.

2.4 Summary of the Main Results and Discussion

The main goal behind this study was to evaluate the major contribution of the study skills course in promoting second year 'Licence' students' autonomous learning. In addition to the way in which teachers and students perceive independent learning in relation to English learning domain. With the aim of crystallizing a reliable piece of research, the

investigator opted for two questionnaires used as a research instrument, for both teachers and learners, to collect the needed data and necessary information.

Regarding the first hypothesis which states that autonomy may be considered as a basic tenet of any given learning context, all teachers to whom the questionnaires were addressed argued that the notion of autonomy symbolized a key factor of a successful learner who manages his learning bits and pieces. In addition, independent learning is not basically a total separation from the teachers' guidance and assistance, but it indicates the ability of students to develop their skills and abilities outside the classroom setting. Moreover, the majority of students stated several advantages of being an independent learner like: the improvement of their proficiency level and their eagerness to go beyond what is taught to them during the lectures. It increases also their motivation and creativity by being exposed to extra sources of knowledge. Consequently, the first hypothesis was confirmed.

Concerning the second hypothesis which stipulates that the study skills course may provide students with a wide range of techniques that promote their autonomy. The teachers emphasized that the study skills course provides a plethora of techniques that help students develop their learning skills. Additionally, the module paves the way for learners to acquire and grasp some basic strategies such as: working in groups, and using their background schemata to deal with their current pieces of research. Moreover, reading and witting techniques help students enhance their proficiency level. Furthermore, the study skills course stressed the importance of self-reflection, taking into account the students' own responsibilities in the learning process. These results confirmed the second hypothesis.

2.5 Conclusion

The second chapter is devoted mainly to the description of the research design, instrument and population. It also reports the analysis and interpretation of the data collected from the questionnaire with Second year 'Licence' teachers who are in charge to teach the study skills course, and from another one that was administrated to their students.

The main findings revealed that both teachers and learners are fully aware of the pivotal role of autonomy in language learning sphere. In addition; the study skills course is generally regarded as a concrete starting point towards independent learning. After the

interpretation of the current results, the third chapter will mirror some suggestions and recommendations nearly related the concepts dealt with.

Third Chapter

Suggestions and Recommendations

3.1 Introduction

3.2 Importance of Study Skills

3.3 Objectives of Teaching Study Skills

3.3.1 To Improve Background Knowledge

3.3.2 To Develop and Enhance Schemata

3.3.3 To Increase Meta-Cognition

3.3.4 To Implement Learning Strategies

3.4 Objectives of Study Skills Activities

3.4.1 Raising Awareness of the Weaknesses

3.4.2 Training in Specific Techniques

3.4.3. Transferring New Knowledge and Skills to One's Own Experience

3.4.4 Evaluating One's Own Level of Performance

3.5 Study Skills in the Learning Process

3.5.1 Preparing to Learn

3.5.2. Acquiring and Processing Information

3.5.3 Applying Learning

3.5.4 Monitoring and Evaluating

3.6 Study Skills : Classroom Instruction

3.6.1 Time Management Model

3.6.1.1 Scheduling

3.6.1.2 Checklists

3.6.1.3 Contacts

3.7 Conclusion

3.1 Introduction

From the outcomes of the data obtained via the questionnaires, the investigator finds out that, despite the confirmation of the hypotheses suggested, the notion of autonomy is still considered to be secondary in comparison to the reliance on the teacher. Thus, some students are not yet aware of the basic goals of the study skills course, since they suppose that the content of the study skills course gathers similar aims of the one of ICT module. In addition, the study skills activities do not seem to be well directed and identified to meet the learners' needs and requirements. In this chapter, the researcher will attempt to shed light on the major tenets of the study skills course; covering some dimensions that may contribute positively to this study.

3.2 Importance of Study Skills

Study skills encompass the needed strategies that enable learners to learn more effectively and purposefully. They tend to develop the learners' abilities and language skills not only to prepare them for exams and other sorts of assessment, but basically to serve them for everyday life. Accordingly, gathering these skills can enable learners consult a dictionary, summarizing, note taking, reading and data- searching as well. Furthermore, study skills increase the learners' self reliance through following a selected approach that successfully suit their capacities. From this respect, Anderson (2002:01) highlights the contribution of study skills as follows:

- Knowing multiple ways of doing things.
- Have increased self-esteem.
- Become responsible.
- Become more engaged in the learning process.
- Improving self-performance.

3.3 Objectives of Teaching Study Skills

Study skills are said to be the starting platform towards a better understanding and monitoring of the learning process. Learners need to acquire the necessary skills which help them act adequately whenever they are required to do a task or an activity. The goals of teaching study skills differ according to the learners' needs and requirement, particularly providing students with what they think it is appropriate for them. In this respect, Wood et

al. (1995) have cooperatively designed four objectives of teaching the study skills that are expected and explained below:

3.3.1 To Improve Background Knowledge

Study skills basically serve to provide new knowledge for the learners. The awareness of up-dated skills and techniques introduces an additional platform of information for them. The more learners are active and involved in learning, the more they become autonomous.

3.3.2 To Develop and Enhance Schemata

The acquisition of new learning materials denotes a great connection between what is learnt and the existing knowledge. Promptly, the learners' schemata are triggered through learning what was not designed before and also building an effective knowledge for future use.

3.3.3 To Increase Meta-Cognition

With the aim of involving students in the learning process, study skills enhance their meta-cognition through a diversity of functions like: planning, controlling and monitoring. Admittedly, learning characterizes the individual contribution of each learner. It is merely, a self-management and reflection own their own strengths and weaknesses.

3.3.4 To Implement Learning Strategies

Study skills are grounded through the learning aids and strategies used in. mainly, the implementation of new materials can engage learners within new opportunities to be applied in their academic life. Hence, learning strategies nourish the learners' autonomy and behave as a pivotal motive to build their own acquisition and learning backgrounds.

3.4 Objectives of Study Skills Activities

The study skills activities denote a pivotal footstep towards learning techniques and strategies. Implicitly, they are designed to fulfill some basic requirements to enhance the learners' own abilities. Each study skill task or activity is directed by a pre- designed aim. Mariani (1987) has proposed four objectives that are explained as follows:

3.4.1 Raising Awareness of the Weaknesses

Through taking a specific learning task, the learner can individually recognize his weaknesses. What is widely needed in the classroom atmosphere is majorly a constructive awareness of what could be done easily. What can be seen hardly difficult to handle. Basically, once the learners figure out a clear image about their deficiencies in managing a definite skill, they can effectively find a remedial solution of it through teachers' assistance and their own efforts.

3.4.2 Training in Specific Techniques

The acquisition of a new set of techniques is widely shaped through the tasks delivered to learners. The variety of exercises highlights a possible choice for learners to reach what corresponds the general dimensions of the activity itself. The alternation of techniques as reading and writing procedures, note taking and concentration may provide a fruitful addition to the task, more precisely through the answers proposed and the feedback devoted. By accomplishing a specific training for a given technique, the learners become more familiar with the necessary skills and use them for future evaluations.

3.4.3. Transferring New Knowledge and Skills to One's Own Experience

Once students acquire the necessary learning skills and strategies, they can successfully use them away from the classroom sphere. Essentially, the learners can cope with any obstacle they may encounter, so that they develop a sense of autonomy in themselves. It is noteworthy that, independent learning is mostly built upon a plausible platform of skills and competences that pave the way to self-reliance perspective and learning preferences.

3.4.4 Evaluating One's Own Level of Performance

The process of assessment mirrors the usefulness and efficacy of the strategies already learnt. Through individual, pair, and group evaluation, the teacher can draw up a clear glance about the utilization of skills and learners' performance development. In nearly all, what is still needed to be accomplished could be elaborately recognized. The teacher's vision about the demands of learning are captured through assessing answers and how they are handled.

3.5 Study Skills in the Learning Process

Study skills in its theoretical dimension is not similar to its practical part. The application of a certain skill carries a specific objective to be reached. The teacher's main concern is to make the study skills appear more concrete and affective as well. Kerka (2007) acknowledges some basic characteristics of study skills that are discussed thought out the following sub titles:

3.5.1 Preparing to Learn

Accordingly, study skills teaching embodies several marshaling angles. Firstly, the physical characteristics which gather the nature of the environment, the teaching aids used to deliver a definite skill, and the use of books, homework planners. Secondly, the mental characteristics which include the students' attitudes, goals and priorities.

3.5.2. Acquiring and Processing Information

Learners tend to have different learning styles, organization and acquisition. The teacher's task is limited to visualize the basic elements that serve the learners positively when dealing with skills activities. The variation of strategies may constructively offer a wide range of possible choices for students. For instance they may choose one of the following:

- Effective reading is a key factor for acquiring new information.
- Note taking to gather the necessary reviewed materials dealt with in the class.
- Outlining and summarizing to help them detect the relationships between a set of concepts.

3.5.3 Applying Learning

The application of learning can be achieved through the overwhelming precise assignments, mainly, writing or oral tasks are included such as :delivering a presentation about a given topic, or writing an essay about the role of education. In a part, what was learnt previously by the learners can be figured out through the work provided. Successful tests give an important attention to both content and procedural knowledge.

3.5.4 Monitoring and Evaluating

The study skills application mainly lead to a self monitoring perspective. Anderson(2002) suggests that while using a definite learning strategy, students generally ask themselves : what am I trying to accomplish? These types of questions indicate a self directed thinking that is noticeably grounded with a meta- cognitive process.

3.6 Study Skills : Classroom Instruction

Backman and Anderson(2002) have elaborately acknowledged some basic rules in order to teach study skills in an effective manner. They suggest what follows:

1. Explain the strategy and its purpose; why it is important and when and how to use it.
2. Provide time for existing practice.
3. Promoting self-monitoring, so that students become more aware of how a definite strategy works.

There are several techniques and strategies used to enhance the classroom instruction environment, in addition to some models that can serve positively the study skills learning process. The following model is inspired by Bos & Vaughn, 1998 for time management skills.

3.6.1 Time Management Model

Bos & Vaughn, 1998 have proposed a model of time management since it is considered as important for learners to take control over their preparation, time, and organization. Time management symbolizes a pivotal notion of any subject learning area. It tends to govern the timing for activities and asking questions.this model gathers three main elements that are: scheduling, checklists and contacts.

3.6.1.1 Scheduling

In order to reach organization and effective learning, students need to create their own schedule so that they can merely spend their time successfully and constructively. The teacher's role is pictured through helping his students manage their time procedures like : tasks preparation, breaks, presentation timing and so on.

3.6.1.2 Checklists

The major checklists can summarize the students' short and long term calendar. Through these tools the learners can consult their time planners to do several activities according to their priority and importance. Checklists need to be used routinely with all concerned subjects in order to reach a balanced timing framework.

3.6.1.3 Contacts

They are physical prompts for self – management and goal planning. The students are required to prepare a given assignment for a definite period of time. The result of the contact can be a reward or another consequence for not meeting the planned goal. The needed materials that are used to meet the goals can be mini deadline planners, or a an abbreviation such as : MARKER

M = Make a list of goals, set the order, set the date.

A = Arrange a plan for each goal and predict your success.

R = Run your plan for each goal and adjust if necessary.

K = Keep records of your progress.

E = Evaluate your progress toward each goal.

R = Reward yourself when you reach a goal, and set a new goal.

These tips can give a sizable addition to learners through which they can independently manage their time and their procedures as well.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter contains some suggestions and recommendations that the researcher has reached thanks the basis of the main findings. The major aim behind these suggestions is to confirm the importance of the study skills course, the main teaching practices, and activities that can serve constructively for this current research.

Via the third chapter, the teacher can vividly draw a clear image about the study skills module, and what types of tasks need to be included. Additionally, the investigator has stressed the crystallized notions of the study skills, by pointing out some ways that would make it independent from the other modules in terms of content.

General Conclusion

The concept of autonomy has increasingly become a noticeable topic in the domain of English language teaching and learning. Particularly, the different perspectives devoted to the term commonly overlap according to both teachers and learners' perspectives.

The present study is an investigation of the conception of autonomy among second year 'Licence' students in the department of English at Tlemcen University, and their teachers of the study skills course. Another aim of this research is to explore and evaluate the role of the study skills module in promoting self regulated learning among the students.

In order to undertake this study two research questions were raised :

- 3- How do teachers and students perceive autonomous learning?
- 4- To what extent does the study skills course promote EFL students' autonomy?

The following hypotheses spring out from these pre- mentioned research questions:

- 3- Both teachers and learners may perceive autonomous learning as a basic tenet of successful learning.
- 4- The study skills provide students with a range of techniques that may foster their independent learning.

This work was divided into three chapters; the first one is a literature review closely related to the concept of autonomy and its teaching and learning process. The second one is rather a practical framework where the research design and procedure are described with the analysis of the collected data. The third chapter outlines some suggestions and recommendations with the aim of clarifying the importance of the study skills and the possible teaching techniques that would be followed.

The case study was opted for using a questionnaire that was administrated to second year license students and another one to their teachers who are teaching them the study skills module. The collected data were analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively.

The results of the students and teachers' questionnaires revealed that autonomy is basically essential in learning any given language. They also stressed the importance of this idea by adding that independent learning is tidily related to a better academic achievement. In addition, they consider the study skills as a basic component for the development of a wide range of techniques that push learners to work in an individual and more responsible

manner. It also helps learners develop a sense of self- monitoring and reflection upon their own progress and learning abilities. It mirrors also the improvement of their skills and overcoming their weaknesses as well.

With the sake of confirming the importance of the study skills course, the investigator has elaborately proposed some techniques that go in favor with the enhancement of this module.

The researcher had some limitations when undertaking this research. First, the notion of time was not in favor with her inquiries and expectations. The current subject needed more amount of hours to be perfectly analyzed.

Second, the literature review of autonomy and study skills is somehow limited, and finding fruitful references was challenging.

This present piece of research can be considered as a constructive beginning to further research where more focus and importance would be devoted for the improvement of the study skills course and its syllabi in harmony with autonomy.

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Appendix A

Teachers' Questionnaire:

Dear teachers,

This questionnaire is designed to gather some of your opinions about autonomy, and the contribution of the study skills course in promoting self-directed learning. You are kindly requested to answer the following questions, and comment when necessary.

How do teachers and students perceive autonomous learning?

1- Do you think that autonomy is important in language learning?

Yes No

2- According to you, autonomy is :

- The ability to take charge of one's own learning
- Learner's ability to decide about what to be learnt
- An essential characteristic of a good learner

3- How can you mirror your students' self-reliance in learning?

High average low

4- In the classroom, what role do you take usually?

The leader (directing the way they learn, and what kind of activities to be done)

The participant (taking part during activities, merely, in verbal and written tasks)

The motivator (trying to maximize students' desire in learning)

5- How do you encourage students to be autonomous learners?

- By giving them individual assignments
- By encouraging the use of the internet
- By teaching them new learning strategies
- By using feedback to aid their learning

6- What assignments do you give in order to promote autonomy?

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7- According to you, what are the reasons behind students' over reliance on the teacher?

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To what extent does the study skills course promote EFL students' autonomy?

8- On the basis of your experience, what kind of definition can you deliver to the study skills course?

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9- What are the main goals of the study skills course?

- Fostering independent learning
 - Developing time managements skills
 - Learning a wide range of techniques and strategies
 - Using learning resources like : the internet
 - Understanding instead of memorizing
 - Developing students' strengths and addressing their weaknesses

10- Are the students aware of the study skills course goals?

Yes No

11- What kind of activities which develop your students' autonomy do you do during the study skills course?

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12- Do you think that the study skills course is a basic starting point towards autonomy?

Yes No

Why?

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Learners' Questionnaire

Dear students,

This questionnaire is designed vividly to seek for your perceptions and attitudes towards your own learning, and to what extent you are ready to be autonomous learners. You are kindly requested to answer these questions, and to comment when necessary.

How do teachers and students perceive autonomous learning?

1- Are you a self-directed learner (a learner who depends mostly on himself in learning)?

Yes No

2- According to you independent learning is :

- a total reliance on yourself in the learning process
- the act of seeking for answers without asking the teacher
- the ability to decide about what to learn

3- What are the advantages of being an independent learner?

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4- Do you rely on the teacher as the source of knowledge?

Yes No

If no, what are the other sources?

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If yes, what are the main reasons behind your reliance on the teacher?

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1- When you do not understand a word, or a meaning seems ambiguous, you :

- Ask the teacher
- Ask your classmates
- Check it by yourself

2- Do you frequently assess your own progress in the learning process?

Yes No

If yes , how?

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To what extent does the study skills course promote EFL students' autonomy?

3- How do you perceive the study skills course?

- Very important important not important

Why?.....

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4- What are the goals of the study skills course?

- Fostering independent learning
- Developing time management skills
- Learning a wide range of techniques and strategies
- Using learning resources such as : the internet
- Understanding instead of memorizing
- Developing students' strengths and weaknesses

5- In your opinion, does the study skills course help you to become autonomous learners?

- Yes No

Why?

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6- What kind of activities which develop your autonomy do you do during the study skills course?

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