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Fostering EFL Learners' Autonomy Through E-learning:

Master Students of the Department of English,at Adrar University as a Case Study

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment for the Requirement of a Master Degree in Linguistics and Didactics

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- امضاء المشرف:

ادرار في :.................

مساعد رئيس القسم:

Dedication

To my parents

To my sisters and brothers

To my study mates and colleagues

To all my Dear friends.

Acknowledgments

First of all, thanks and praise be to Allah for all the strength he gave me to achieve this work.

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Abstract

Learner's autonomy paves the way for self-reliance and individual achievement in learning.Therefore, There has been a considerable growth of interest in autonomous learning from many educationalists and language teachers.The present work aims at investigating EFL teachers' and learners' readiness for autonomous learning and their views and perceptions towards the impact of E-learning on EFL learners' autonomy. Throughout this study, we wanted to know if Master students are autonomous learners. In addition, we attempted to contribute to promoting learner autonomy by raising students' and teachers' awareness regarding the importance of autonomy in EFL classrooms. For this purpose, the descriptive method has been adopted to confirm the research hypotheses. To collect data, a questionnaire was addressed to Master students of English at Adrar University, and another one was designed for their teachers. The findings of students' and teachers' questionnaires reveal that teachers and students hold positive attitudes towards the integration of E-learning and its impact on learners' autonomy. According to these findings, using E-learning to develop students' autonomy at the university level is highly recommended for its impact on their academic and professional success.

Keywords: Autonomy, E-learning, ICT, EFL Learners.

Résumé

L'autonomie de l'apprenant ouvre la voie à l'autonomie et à la réussite individuelle dans l'apprentissage. Par conséquent, il y a eu un intérêt croissant pour l'apprentissage autonome de la part de nombreux pédagogues et professeurs de langues. Le présent travail vise à étudier la préparation des enseignants et des apprenants d'EFL à l'autonomie l'apprentissage et leurs points de vue et perceptions quant à l'impact de E-learning sur l'autonomie des apprenants EFL. Tout au long de cette étude, nous avons voulu savoir si les étudiants en Master sont des apprenants autonomes. De plus, nous avons tenté de contribuer à promouvoir l'autonomie des apprenants en sensibilisant les étudiants et les enseignants à l'importance de l'autonomie dans les classes EFL. A cet effet, la méthode descriptive a été adoptée pour confirmer les hypothèses de recherche. Pour collecter les données, un questionnaire a été adressé aux étudiants en Master d'anglais à l'Université d'Adrar, et un autre a été conçu pour leurs enseignants. Les résultats des questionnaires des élèves et des enseignants révèlent que les enseignants et les élèves ont des attitudes positives envers l'intégration de l'apprentissage en ligne et son impact sur l'autonomie des apprenants. Selon ces résultats, l'utilisation du E-learning pour développer l'autonomie des étudiants au niveau universitaire est fortement recommandée pour son impact sur leur réussite scolaire et professionnelle.

Mots-clés: Autonomie, E-learning, TIC, Apprenants EFL.

الملخص

تمهد استقلالية المتعلم الطريق للاعتماد على الذات والإنجاز الفردي في التعلم ، لذلك كان هناك نمو كبير في الاهتمام بالتعلم المستقل من قبل العديد من التربويين ومعلمي اللغة ، ويهدف العمل الحالي إلى التحقق من استعداد معلمي ومتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية للاستقلالية وآرائهم وتصوراتهم تجاه تأثير التعلم الإلكتروني على استقلالية متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. خلال هذه الدراسة ، أردنا معرفة ما إذا كان طلاب الماستر متعلمين مستقلين. بالإضافة إلى ذلك ، حاولنا المساهمة في تعزيز استقلالية المتعلم من خلال زيادة وعي الطلاب والمعلمين بشأن أهمية الاستقلالية في الفصول الدراسية لتعليم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. ولهذا الغرض تم اعتماد المنهج الوصفي لتأكيد فرضيات البحث. لجمع البيانات ، تم توجيه استبيان إلى طلاب ماستر اللغة الإنجليزية في جامعة أدرار ، وتم تصميم استبيان آخر لمعلميهم. تكشف نتائج استبيانات الطلاب والمعلمين أن المعلمين والطلاب لديهم مواقف إيجابية تجاه تكامل التعلم الإلكتروني وتأثيره على استقلالية المتعلمين. وفقًا لهذه النتائج ، يوصى بشدة باستخدام التعلم الإلكتروني لتطوير استقلالية الطلاب على المستوى الجامعي لتأثيره على نجاحهم الأكاديمي والمهني.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الاستقلالية ، التعلم الإلكتروني ، تكنولوجيا المعلومات والاتصالات ، متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

BL.   Blended Learning

CALL.   Computer-Assisted Language Learning

CMS.   Course Management System

EFL.   English as a Foreign Language

F2F.   Face to Face

FL.   Foreign Language

ICT.   Information and Communications Technologies

MOOCs.   Massive Open Online Courses.

ZPD.   Zone of Proximal Development.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

With the technological development in the last decades, The striving to achieve effectiveness in the domain of language teaching led to a shift from teacher-centered approaches to learner-centered ones, where the focus is mostly on the learner and the psychological dynamics of the classroom that can help him to reach his full potential. Therefore, there has been a considerable growth of interest in the concept of autonomy in recent years. In fact, the latter has been at the heart of research on FL teaching and learning due to its direct relation to motivation.

A detailed review of the rapidly expanding literature on learner autonomy reveals the complexity and multidimensionality of the concept. Accordingly, it is worth exploring the conceptual roots of learner autonomy to define what it is and its development over the years, clarify the role of students and teachers, and provide a rationale for promoting it through E-learning.

The present study is an attempt to shed light on EFL students' and teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards the concept of autonomy and the integration of E-learning into their learning. It also tends to examine the impact of E-learning in promoting autonomous learning. Therefore, the present research attempts to answer the following questions:

1-Are Master students at the department of English autonomous learners?

2- Does E-learning enhance EFL learners' autonomy?

3- What are EFL learners' and teachers' attitudes towards the impact of E-learning on autonomous learning?

The pre-mentioned questions led the researcher to propose the following hypotheses:

1- Master students at the department of English may have a lack of autonomy.

2- E-learning may have a positive impact on promoting learners' autonomy.

3- Teachers may manifest good perceptions towards the effect of E-learning on their students' autonomy.

Aiming at testing the research hypotheses, the researcher designed an exploratory case study. To collect data, the investigator has administered two questionnaires; one is addressed to Master students and the other one to their teachers. Thus, the results will be analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively.

The present study is divided into two chapters. Chapter one reviews the two variables under investigation. It consists of two sections. The first section is devoted to the history, definition, and levels of autonomy, the psychological factors that affect it. In addition to some approaches to promote it. The second section reviews the literature related to educational technology, its types, and the various modes of instruction, mainly E-learning, and their impact on autonomy. The second chapter is practical. It outlines the analysis of the collected data and some suggestions and recommendations to promote learner's   autonomy.

CHAPTER ONE: Literature Review

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Chapter one:

The literature review

1.1 **Introduction:**

The present section is an attempt to shed light on the definition of learner's autonomy and its conceptual roots in the field of education and to trace its development over the years to provide a rationale for promoting it in and outside the classroom, and finally to identify how both teachers and learners can benefit from it since both of them are parts of autonomy in English teaching/ learning process.

1.2 **Historical Origin of Autonomy:**

The etymological origin of the word can be traced back to the Greek word "auto–nomus", autos means "self" and nomos stands for "law" (Self-law). The whole word refers to someone or something which lives by his/its own rule. It also refers to self-determination in ancient Greek philosophy.

The concept continued to develop in the modern period with the decrease of religious authority and the increase of political liberty and henceforth was associated to politics by Aristotle and Socrates who claimed for citizens' right to self-government.

In the realm of language teaching, the substantial growth of interest in autonomous learning as an educational goal can be identified in changes that occurred in the twentieth century in social sciences, psychology, philosophy, and political science. According to Gremmo and Riley (1995) "the rise of autonomy in language learning in the 1970s and 1980s was connected to a rejection of behaviorist assumptions about the nature of second language acquisition" (p152).

The term made its appearance to the contemporary language teaching and learning rhetoric firstly in Holec's paper 'Autonomy and foreign language learning' published in the Council of Europe's modern language project. Ever since it underwent a wide process of reconceptualization as well as an increasing level of complexity and new research directions on autonomy have emerged.

1.3 **Definition of Autonomy:**

Despite the broad agreement on learner autonomy as a prerequisite for success in learning, there is little consensus in terms of its definition; As stated by Boud (1988) "the notion of autonomy in learning is a many-faceted one and is subject to much debate" (p. 17). It has been for long described to be fluid and dynamic that it takes a variety of different forms depending on learning context, learning content, the process of learning, and learner characteristics.

The earliest definition was proposed 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)

Holec (1981) identifies autonomous learning as a 'capacity' or personal trait that an individual possesses; While he completely neglected other environmental variables such as the learning contexts and the role of teachers. He states that " Autonomous learners assume responsibility for determining the purpose, content, rhythm, and method of their learning, monitoring its progress, and evaluating its outcomes" (p. 3).That is, autonomous learners can assume full responsibility for their learning and take over the functions of the teacher in selecting the objects, the contents, and the methods of learning as well as monitoring and evaluating the learning process.

This view of autonomy has been widely criticized by Illés (2012) who states that " Most of the characteristics and traits attributed to the autonomous learner would merely represent a romantic ideal which does not align with reality." (p. 30). Other views of autonomy regard it as a relative rather than a complete term. In parallel, Benson (2007) contends that autonomy is not a ready-made product for use or merely a personal quality but a process.

It is argued that autonomous learning is achieved when certain conditions are obtained. These include psychological factors (e.g. learning strategies, motivation, and attitudes, etc.) on the part of the learner and also environmental factors like an appropriate task design, optimal learning environments, a political power structure, etc. (Hamilton, 2013; Oxford, 2008). This view of learner autonomy acknowledges that autonomy "is learned at least partly through educational experiences [and interventions]" (Candy, 1991, p. 115).

Aiming to offer a clear notion of the term, Benson (2001) offers, to a large extent, the most comprehensive definition of autonomy as: "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 includes both personal and contextual dimensions of autonomy and highlights the fact that learner autonomy is not a *"steady state" Little (2003),* but rather a capacity that develops.

David Little (2004) developed the concept of learning autonomy further by integrating it to Vygotsky's theory on child development and the zone of proximal development. He argues that as with other higher psychological functions such as thinking and speaking "our psychological autonomy derives from social interdependence" (p. 20).

Therefore, the guidance of teachers and collaboration with peers are essential for the development of learner's autonomy. Moreover, the latter has to be developed by the learner in a continuous process and as an ultimate goal of the learning process. He uses Vygotsky's zone of proximal development to illustrate his views as follows:

Zone of Proximal Development
of Learner Autnomy

Potential development

Zone of Proximal
Development

Actual development
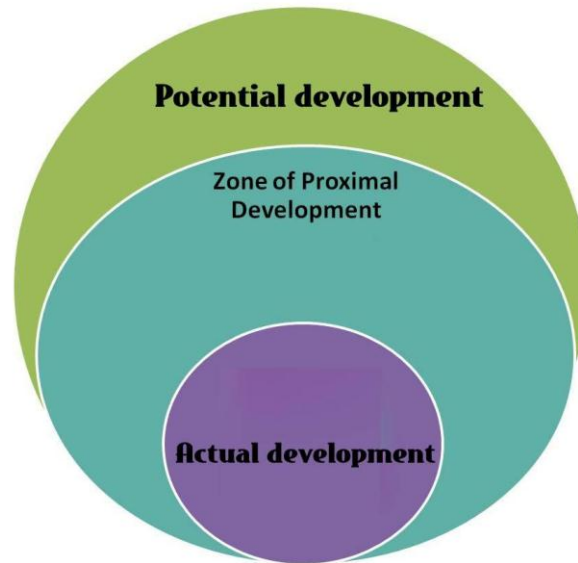
Figure 1.1: ZPD of learner autonomy (Little, 2004,p21).

The circles in Figure 1.1 are levels of learner autonomy that can be reached by the learner; While the distance between the circles can be interpreted as a zone of proximal development.*"[I]n any extended process of learning, the autonomy that we achieve at one stage provides an essential springboard to the next" (Little, 2004, p. 21).*

In this process, the learners extend their autonomy by building on what they already are able to do and teachers should play an effective role in fostering and encouraging autonomous learning.

1.4 **Levels of Autonomy:**

According to Nunan (1997), autonomy has five levels in language learning: awareness, involvement, intervention, creation, and transcendence. At the awareness level, learners are expected to be aware of the different aspects of their pedagogical materials such as their goals and content. The involvement and the intervention are the levels at which learners' strategies of autonomous learning are identified and used by the

learners. Finally, at the awareness level, they are supposed to exercise full and total autonomy as teachers and researchers.

On the other hand, Littlewood (1997) proposes a multidimensional model which consists of three levels, the first one is autonomy as a communicator which implies operating independently with language and use it to communicate personal meanings in real-life situations. The second level is autonomy as a learner which involves the ability to take responsibility for learning. The last one which is autonomy as a person involves a higher-level goal of greater generalized autonomy as individuals.

Littlewood's views of levels of autonomy is summarized in the table below:

Table1.1: Littlewood's Levels of Autonomy (Littlewood ,2002, p. 35)

Activities for communicative development	Activities for communicative and cognitive development	Activities for communicative, cognitive and personality development
Students work independently towards objectives defined by teacher or curriculum	→	Students work independently towards objectives they themselves have defined
Cooperative learning techniques, e.g., jigsaw learning	→	Collaborative learning techniques, e.g. project work

Littlewood's model is similar to the one proposed by Macaro (1997) which consists of three stages involving autonomy of language competence, autonomy of language learning competence, and 'autonomy of choice and action.

1.5 Roles in Autonomous Learning:

Learner autonomy is not theoretical only but a practical concept that can be used in the language classroom, where certain roles are attributed to teachers and learners to move from total dependency to more self-reliance in learning.

1.5.1 Teachers' Role:

It is a misconception to say that teachers' roles are no longer part of autonomous learning. As stated by (Xhaferri et al. (2015) "autonomous learning is by no means teacherless learning" (p56). Learners in the process of becoming autonomous need teachers' support to reach the highest possible achievement.

In order to foster students' autonomy, teachers need to perform a variety of roles, which are, according to Richards and Rodgers (1986), classified into three categories: teacher as manager and organizer; teacher as facilitator; teacher as a counselor (p.77).

- **The teacher as manager and organizer:** The teacher's role as manager and organizer is considered to be the first and foremost role teacher has to play in class. He should take the responsibility of organizing various kinds of activities that are appropriate, effective, and relevant to the classroom teaching and which will best meet the students" needs and expectations.
- **The teacher as a facilitator:** the teacher's role is to manage the activities in the classroom and to help the learners to plan and carry out their independent learning. He also has to help learners in evaluating themselves, and in getting rid of the uncertainty and anxiety to overcome the obstacles during their learning.
- **The teacher as a counselor:** teacher as counselor needs to show the learners how to choose the best learning strategies so that they can achieve more efficient learning. Learners have to be more self-monitoring. This means having time to experiment with the strategies to select the appropriate one for each situation. Teachers must be aware to not guide the learners indirectly to the strategies they prefer.

1.5.2 Students' Role:

Little (1993) claims that autonomy is universal human capacity, that is all learners are autonomous unless they are prevented by any kind of restrictions. Hence, learners attempt to take a part of the responsibility to grasp knowledge by themselves.

This affects their learning outcome since they learn better when they take an active role in their learning process.

Autonomous learners need to be motivated and ready to take charge of their learning bearing in mind the benefits of this on their learning. Furthermore, autonomous learning requires learners' active involvement through working independently and in cooperation with others. This involvement also includes their planning, monitoring, and evaluation of their learning. Thus, autonomous learners need to reflect continuously on their learning and take the necessary decisions to improve it.

Benn (1976) describes an autonomous learner as the one "whose life has a consistency that derives from a coherent set of beliefs, values, and principles and who engages in a still-continuing process of criticism and re-evaluation"(cited in Candy, 1991:102). Accordingly, the learner's role to achieve autonomy is governed by a set of actions including cognitive factors and which are driven by their beliefs, principles, and views about language learning. Therefore, learners not only need to be motivated and make sense of language and how they should learn it, but also to know their needs, preferences, and difficulties.

1.6 Psychological Factors Affecting Learners' Autonomy:

The field of psychology has been recognized as a key point in the process of learning. On this basis, three main psychological elements have a great influence on the way individuals learn and the way they respond to learning experiences. These factors are motivation, anxiety, and beliefs.

1.6.1 Motivation:

According to Gardner (1985), motivation stands for *"the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favourable attitudes toward learning the language" (p. 10).* In this respect, there have been many studies on motivation in the field of learner autonomy. As a matter of fact, It has been considered as

an active factor in the process of autonomy as Ushioda (1996) contends*: "without motivation, there is no autonomy" (p. 18).*

Learners can be motivated in different ways which are shaped by the individual's specific needs and wants. Masgoret and Gardner (2003) maintain that a motivated learner can be described as studious, attentive, and depends on strategies in learning. From this perspective, motivation has been classified into two different parts which are, Firstly, the intrinsic motivation that is related to learners who are interested in doing activities and who learn just for the sake of pleasure. The second one is extrinsic motivation which involves learners who are imposed to learning or who want to be rewarded for learning.

The process of motivation is changeable. It is recognized as an unstable power that can be affected by different aspects of life. With this in mind, there is a clear link between motivation and autonomous learning as both notions build upon the same characteristics. In Fact, both notions appear to affect each other remarkably. Similarly, Ushioda (1996) points out that "*autonomous language learners are by definition motivated learners*" (p. 2). In short, autonomy has a direct relationship with motivation that they have a reciprocal influence.

1.6.2 Anxiety:

The second psychological factor which affects learner autonomy is anxiety. The latter has been one of the most examined variables in psychology and education. Additionally, it has been considered as a key factor inhibiting successful language learning. Anxiety is the feeling of tension and worry in FL learning. It appears as a lack of personal confidence, self-esteem, willingness, motivation, which can act as a barrier to learner autonomy. (Onwuegbuzie et al.,1999). Some researchers have stated that it affects learners' performance negatively. Daubny (2005) claims:

> "not only is it intuitive to many people that anxiety negatively influences language learning, but it is also logical because anxiety has been found to interfere with many types of learning In this view, it must be noted that "generally speaking, language anxiety has been viewed as a particularly

negative psychological factor in the language learning process by many of the researchers and academics who have considered its impact on learners" (p17).

Good language learners control their attitudes and emotions about learning and understand that negative feelings retard their learning,as Oxford (1990) states" good language learners are often those who know how to control their emotions and attitudes about learning 'by using effective strategies such as lowering anxiety, encouraging themselves, and 'taking their emotional temperatures". (p140)

1.6.3 Beliefs and Preferences:

Learners' beliefs and preferences are said to have a wide effect on autonomy. learners tend to hold a variety of beliefs concerning language and language learning which influence their learning attitudes and behaviour. Kalaja and Barcelos (2003) consider these beliefs as *"dynamic, contextually situated, and often contradictory" (p13)*. Thus, learners may change their beliefs and preferences according to new information or changes in their learning environments and consider the existing beliefs untenable. There has been much research on learners' beliefs and preferences. These researches have stated that they change over time, and thus their effect on autonomy changes.

1.7 **Theories to foster Autonomy Approaches in Languages Learning:**

There has been a profusion of approaches to promoting autonomy by proponents and practitioners. Esch (2010) describes the promotion of learner autonomy as:

the provision of circumstances and contexts for language learners which will make it more likely that they take charge - at least temporarily - of the whole or part of their language learning program, and which are more likely to help rather than prevent learners from exercising their autonomy. (p37)

In this respect, Benson (2011) classifies six major approaches to developing autonomy which are:

A. Resource-based approaches: emphasize the ability of learners to direct their own learning mainly through interaction and selection of the materials provided.

B. Technology-based approaches: stresses the importance of the independent manipulation and interaction with technological tools during the learning process

C. Learner-based approaches: emphasize the learner's ability to take charge of his learning inside the classroom. It focuses on the development of independent learning skills, and strategies that promote learner's autonomy.

D. Classroom-based approaches: highlight learners' control over the learning process inside the classroom by enabling them to be responsible and able to take charge of their learning.

E. Curriculum-based approaches: support the learner's contribution and control over the instruction content in addition to the teacher's ones. the negotiation between teachers and learners to decide

F. Teacher-based approaches: proclaim that teacher's appropriate development and education is more likely to improve learners' autonomy.
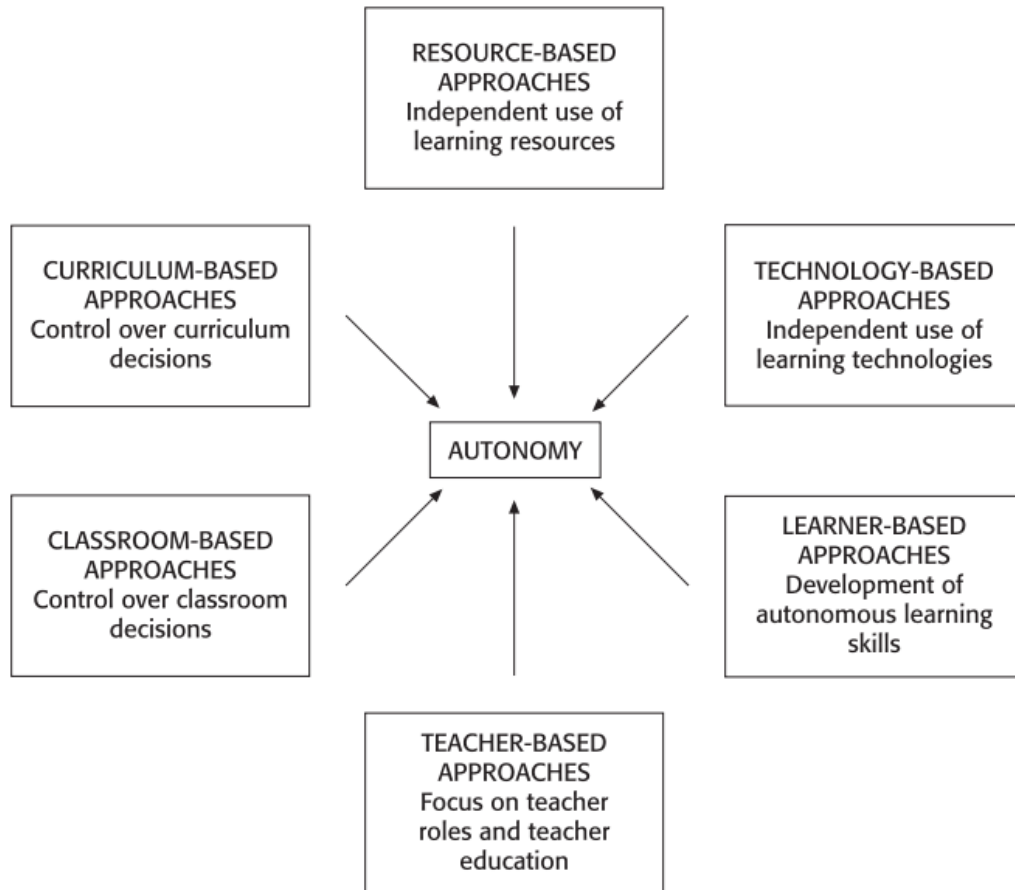
Figure1.2: Benson's Approaches to Promote Autonomy(Benson, 2001, p.112)

In conclusion, It is clear that the development of learner autonomy is determined by learner involvement, learner reflection, and appropriate target language use.

1.8 Conclusion:

This section tackled the theoretical framework of learner's autonomy in the field of language education, including its origin, its definition, its levels, and the roles of both teachers and learners in autonomous classrooms. Furthermore, it provided an in-depth look into the psychological factors that affect learner's autonomy and the approaches that promote it.

2. Section Two: Instructional Material and Learner Autonomy

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2. Instructional Material and Learner Autonomy:

2.1 Introduction:

In this ever-changing world, pedagogical practices rapidly evolve under the pressure of technological innovation. There has been an idealistic advancement in educational tools with the development in the area of technology, the advent of the PC and the Internet greatly contributed to making technologies for learning more available, opening up new learning opportunities for learners.

The integration of modern educational technologies promotes autonomous learning by exposing learners to a digital, social environment where they can interact with native speakers. This section deals with the use of educational technology in teaching
English and its impact on learner's autonomy.

2.2 Information and Communications Technology (ICT):

ICT is a set of materials that have been introduced in language teaching and learning since the 1980s, with the aim of improving efficiency in the educational process. It reflects the importance of computers and the web in education. It provides technological tools that help the learners to obtain information, to increase their level, to be more motivated, and to interact with each other.

ICT in modern EFL classroom allows learners to develop their language awareness, since students engage in real communication, in which they have the freedom to decide what topics to discuss according to their language needs. For this reason, learning via ICTs, for many students, may appear to be motivating and interesting.

Recent studies emphasize that the importance of ICT in education is unquestionable. Benson (2001) found that the use of ICT tools such as the internet, email, blogs had a significant effect on learners' autonomy. ICT has proved its effectiveness in fostering learners' autonomous behavior, since it enhances intrinsic motivation and

facilitates self-access in learning, giving learners more opportunities to self-direct their learning.

2.3 Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL):

Computer Assisted Language Learning or CALL is considered a part of information and communication technologies (ICT). It refers to the use of computers and similar media in language learning and teaching. It permits learners to learn on their own and helps them develop and control their learning through the use of different tools such as email, electronic books, and dictionaries. CALL is also used as an aid to the teacher to facilitate the English language learning process.

According to Benson (2001), CALL is essential since it has two important features: individualized learning and bidirectional learning. In addition, it can be used to reinforce what has been learned in the classroom or as remedial to help learners with limited language proficiency.

Using CALL is claimed to promote learner's autonomy, since "CALL in EFL classrooms holds many kinds of computer technologies such as word processing, software, compact disks, authoring tools and software, e-mail, chat, discussion forums, videoconferencing, the World Wide Web, etc. (Reima, Al-Jarf. 1995,p.5).''. It helps learners to be more motivated and, thus, accelerates their autonomy by providing them with various learning tools.

2.4 Online learning:

Online learning is a form of study which includes learning with the assistance of the Internet and a personal computer. The importance of this mode is that it gives students time and space flexibility, allowing them better management that suits their educational needs. Online learning has opened up rich opportunities for unlimited, life-long learning. It has extended learners' access to learning at their own pace. Additionally, it helps students to get rid of classroom anxiety and rigid timetable.

Another feature of Online learning is webinars which allow learners to participate in virtual seminars and engage in discussions of different topics by using technologies like Skype, Google talk, social media.

Goulão (2010) states that online learning allows learners to play a more active role in the construction of their knowledge. In an online education system, the aspects related to self-regulation gain particular relevance. There is an emphasis on the idea of the learner as a constructor of his knowledge. An online learner, being separated from school and instructor by space and time and at the center of his learning, gains the benefits of a convenient self-study environment, individual learning style, the flexibility of scheduling, together with active participation in the construction of his knowledge.

2.5 Blended learning

Educational systems around the world undergo continuous changes to cope with technological and scientific development in the world, and to fulfill the demands of the new generations. The analysis of both the traditional and online modes of the teaching-learning process shows that they both have merits and demerits. That is, they both fulfill the different needs, demands, and expectations of learners. Kiran & Dangwal (2017). Therefore, the solution is to provide an approach that incorporates the main features of both traditional learning and online learning such as Blended Learning.

According to Kiran & Dangwal (2017), Blended learning is an innovative concept that embraces the advantages of both offline learning and online learning. Blended learning incorporates different modes of delivery, most frequently online and traditional face-to-face learning. It allocates a portion of class time to F2F instruction, another portion for online learning.

Blended learning is important because it reinforces the collaborative learning style. Kaur (2012) proclaims that blended learning breaks down the teacher-centeredness of traditional teaching and gives students more independence in their learning, where they can take decisions, think creatively, and explore as well as solve problems they face in

learning. At the same time, teachers can only be facilitators, supervisors, and organizers of the learning process.

Thanks to blended learning, students gain the advantage of both online learning and F2F learning without losing the human touch and social interaction of traditional learning. The latter allows learners to develop social skills like sharing, cooperation, communication. This way, learners' have more chances to foster their abilities to learn independently.

2.6 E-learning and language learning:

Nowadays, learners are very competent users of smartphones and the Internet, so that administering an online course has become a simple affair, Social Media and various means of online communication offer learners a wide range of learning materials, from which they could select what is worth doing and suits their needs.

2.7 Educational technologies in E-learning:

2.7.1 MOOCs:

According to Cormier and Alexander (2013), the acronym MOOC, short for Massive Open Online Courses, refers to "the most common form of open online education which is characterized as online courses, open to all with an Internet connection, without requirements for prior knowledge, and without costs involved to access the learning materials"(UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education).

Due to their open nature, MOOCs may have a noticeable effect on learners' autonomy and motivation since learners can have access to courses that are taught by famous teachers of the most privileged Universities in the world. Besides, In the absence of a curriculum, MOOC learners have the freedom to decide the pace of their studying, what parts of a MOOC to study, and when to study.

2.7.2 Social-media:

In the 21st century, language learning develops in tandem with technology. Social media became a significant constituent of everyday life as they can influence students' learning.

According to Boyd and Ellison (2007), Social media refer to "web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system" (p. 1).

Du and Wagner (2006) classify these sites based on their nature into three categories. For example, Facebook and LinkedIn allow their users to discuss, collaborate and chat via different tools. Another example is the use of blogs which help users to post particular content, communicate and comment on others' websites, Moreover, Twitter, which can be considered a micro-blogging service that places a limitation on posts.

One clear advantage of using such media is that they impact learning positively and improve autonomous learning since they increase students' motivation to learn, help them to communicate easily, and to learn independently at their own pace.

Social media also transform the role of the teacher from a content provider to a content interpreter. In addition, The learning environment becomes more fluid, and students able to give feedback and exchange information.

2.7.3 Moodle Platform

Moodle is a widely used web-based course management system (CMS) designed by Martin Dougiamas. It serves as an e-learning system for delivering content. It adopts a flexible modular design, which is according to Unal (2011) user friendly, easy to manage, and technically easy.

Moodle was developed based on constructivist principles with a focus on social constructivism which regards learning as a social activity. Social constructivism places the learner, as an active member, at the center of the learning process and highlights the importance of social and cooperative learning with the construction of personal knowledge (Brandl, 2007; Brown, 2007; Papastergiou, 2006; Tam, 2000).

Abdelraheem (2012) describes Moodle as a dream tool for teachers integrating a wide range of resources and assessment strategies and is powerful in content creation.As stated by Ayse (2008), it is unwise to ignore the pedagogical impact of moodle as it allows users to be active learners, who actively participate in the online learning process.

2.7.4 Zoom and Google Meet:

Zoom and Google Meet are synchronous computer-mediated communication (SCMC) applications that include live online chat and videoconferencing. They are user-friendly and allow virtual, real-time unlimited audio and video recording sessions for pairs and groups.

According to the Sociocultural theory and the Interactionist theories, traditional face-to-face (F2F) interaction promotes learner autonomy and the development of spontaneous conversation skills as an aspect of L2 learning. With the technologies that are available for the 21st-century learner, collaborative opportunities for L2 learners are available through SCMC environments (Reinders & White, 2016) and have shown to be as equally effective as F2F interaction (Rassaei, 2017).

2.8 Conclusion:

This section provided an overview of the instructional technologies and the different tools and materials that are used to facilitate the teaching process. It first introduced the definition and the different types of ICTs. Then, it sheds light on CALL. Afterwards, it summarized the different modes of learning including online, blended, and E-learning with much focus on the educational technologies in E-learning and their impact   on   learner's   autonomy.

Chapter Two: Field Investigation

CHAPTER Two: Field Investigation

Section One: Participants and Data Collection

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Section Two: Discussion and Recommendations

3.6 Discussion of the Results

3.7 Suggestions and Recommendations

3.8 Limitations of the Study

Section One: Participants and Data Collection

3.1 Introduction:

This chapter endeavours to investigate the impact of autonomy in learning EFL at the University of Adrar. Then it presents the results of the conducted field work and analyzes and interprets the findings. To this end, two questionnaires have been administrated to both teachers and Master students in the department of English at Adrar University. The goal is to provide convincing answers to the research questions that would help us confirm or reject the main research hypotheses.

3.2 Research Methodology:

The selection of an adequate research method is axiomatically crucial for achieving reliable research work; this depends mostly on the type of the research and the context as well. The research methodology used in this study is discussed in the following sections.

3.2.1 Research Design:

The scope and the context of our research imply the use of the case study as it is the most suitable for such type of research. David Nunan (1997) defines the case study as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context". More precisely, according to the purpose of our research. The descriptive exploratory case study will be used to conduct the research since our major concern is to explore the concept of autonomy and the attitudes of both teachers and students towards it. In addition to the way E-learning can be used to foster it.

3.3 The Participants:

In this research, Master students at the department of English at the University of Adrar were targeted based on the fact that they presumably possess the sufficient knowledge and competence that enable them to recognize their educational level and to provide insights into the integration of E-learning into their FL learning and its impact on

their autonomy. In this respect, a random sample consisting of Master students and their teachers has been selected and required to fill in questionnaires that would serve as tools of data collection.

3.3.1 The Students:

The overall number of the students who have been selected is 40 students out of 136, which equals 29.4% of the whole Master students' population, and since they are resuming a partially research-based Master degree, they are eventually supposed to carry out research projects and therefore are more expected to demonstrate skills related to autonomy. Besides, those students have already experienced studying using E-learning platforms and supposedly have a good background and considerable experience in using them.

3.3.2 The Teachers:

The study also concerned teachers of English to Master classes at Adrar University. The number of the teachers involved in the study is 10. Their teaching experience varies. They are in charge of different modules in the Department of English. It was preferable to choose Master teachers based on the assumption that they are aware of their students' level of autonomy and they play a significant role in raising it.

3.4 Data Collection Tools: Questionnaire:

Research on autonomy according to Oxford (2003) "should combine as many perspectives as possible and no perspective should be considered antithetical to any other."(p90). Therefore, in order to understand both teachers' and learners' perception of learner autonomy and since the present study employs quantitative research methods, the research instrument utilized is a questionnaire for EFL learners as well as for their teachers. A questionnaire is a powerful instrument for data collection since it saves time and effort and thanks to it, one can collect a huge amount of information in a short time and data processing can be fast and relatively straightforward. Besides, it allows the informants to answer freely and express their feelings and thoughts. Moreover, it helps to translate the research hypothesis into questions.

3.5 Data Analysis:

To ensure a better treatment of the collected data, both qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis are used. The former involves the use of descriptive statistics that reflect percentages, frequencies, and graphic representations. While the latter denotes a realistic background of all the answers required, and more importantly their content. In this regard, Hamzaoui (2006) states that "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" (p130).

3.5.1 Students' Questionnaire :

3.5.1.1 Description of Students' Questionnaire:

The layout of the present questionnaire is grounded on the theoretical part of the research. It consists of twenty questions structured under three types:

-Closed-ended questions that include an already specified set of options to choose from.

-Mixed questions provide the ability to share further insights and choosing one of the suggested possibilities.

- Open-ended questions give chance to students to share their ideas and opinions. In this questionnaire, almost all questions are closed-ended as they include a set of options that lead to quantitative findings

The questionnaire is divided into two main sections. The first section is devoted to gathering data about learners' attitudes towards E-learning, it contains twelve questions. The four first questions are set to collect information about students' impressions about their learning process and the use of internet for their learning. Furthermore, students are asked to give their perceptions about the integration of E-learning and their favourite types of learning. Section two tackles learners' attitudes towards autonomy. It encompasses eight questions. This part deals with autonomous learning in general as it covers questions that investigate learners' autonomy, teachers' support to foster

autonomy. Remarkably, this section also questions Master students' perception towards their autonomy and the impact of E-learning on learners' autonomy in EFL classes.

3.5.1.2 Administration of Students' Questionnaire:

The administration of the questionnaire was completely online through Google Forms. It targeted Master students of the department of English at Adrar University. The questionnaire has been sent by email to 40 Master 2 students and has been posted in Master 1 students' Facebook group. It has been answered by 40 students in about 2 weeks. Students welcomed the administration of this questionnaire and they showed a noticeable cooperation.

3.5.1.3 Questionnaire Analysis :

Section one: Learners' attitude towards E-learning:

Question1: Gender distribution: Are you: A –Male   B- Female

The aim behind this question was to examine the possible impact of gender on the present study.

Answer	Number of Students	Percentages (%)
Male	8	20%
Female	32	80%
Total	40	100%

Table2.1: Gender distribution

Table2.1 shows that 80% of the whole sample are females, whereas only 20% are males. From these numbers, we can assert that the present study is based on females. Thus, the factor of gender is not taken into consideration.

Question 2: Age distribution: How old are you:

The pivotal aim behind this question was to examine the possible influence of age on the present study.

Answer	Number of Students	Percentages (%)
20 → 25	30	75%
Older than 25	12	25%
Total	40	100%

Table2.2: Age distribution
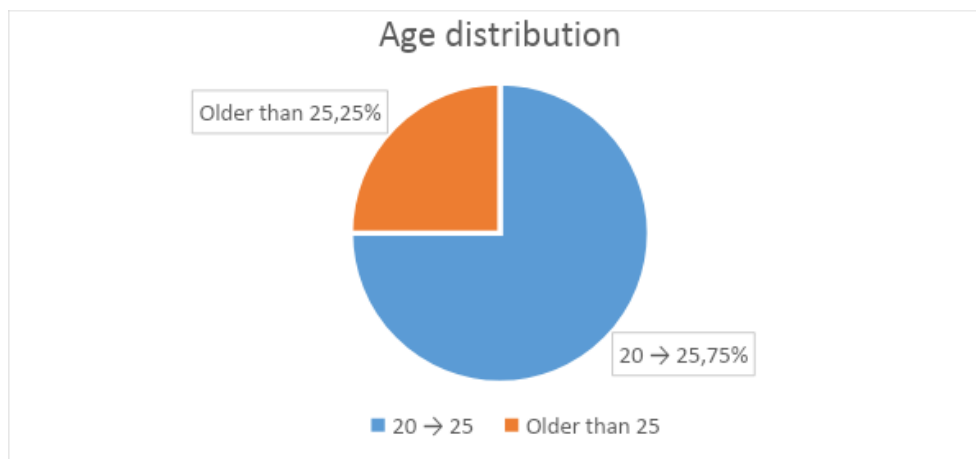
Figure 2.1: Age distribution

As it is indicated above, a vast majority of students, (75%) are younger than 25 years, whereas only (25%) of them are older than 25 years. This means that the majority are young learners and they belong to the generation who are proficient users of Social media, which can be used as E-learning tools.

Question 3: How do you evaluate your level in the English language?

Since self-evaluation is one of the traits of autonomous learning, the aim behind this question is to see if students possess this trait and are, therefore, able to evaluate their level in English.

Answer	Number of Students	Percentages (%)
Good	26	65%
Average	10	25%
Poor	4	10%

Total	40	100%

Table 2.3: Evaluation of English Level
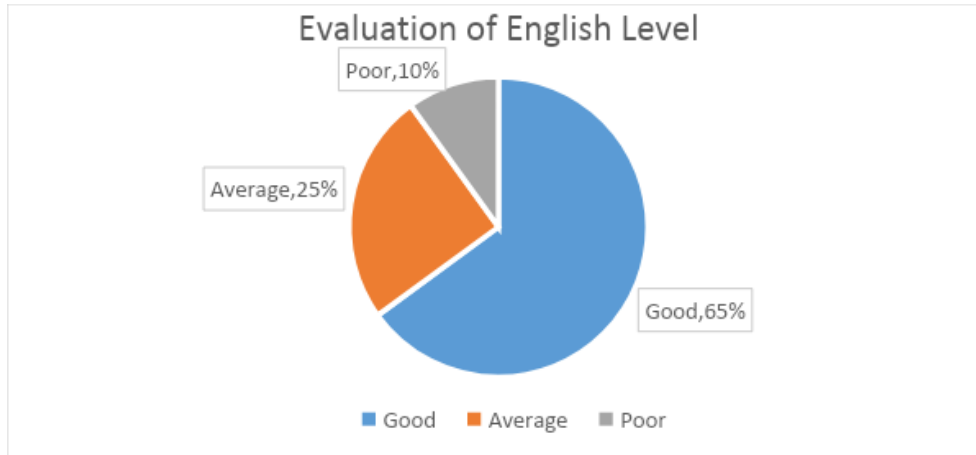
Figure 2.3: Evaluation of English Level

From the table above, we notice that more than half of the students (65%) said to have a good level of English language, whereas 25% of them find that they have an average level. The other 10% replied that their level is poor. In general, students' level varies from average to good which makes this sample suitable for the topic under investigation.

Question 4: Are you with or against using E-learning in your learning process?

This question is an attempt to check the students' satisfaction with the integration of E-learning in their learning process

Answer	Number of Students	Percentages (%)
with using E-learning	32	80%
against using E-learning	8	20%
Total	40	100%

Table 2.4: with or against using E-learning
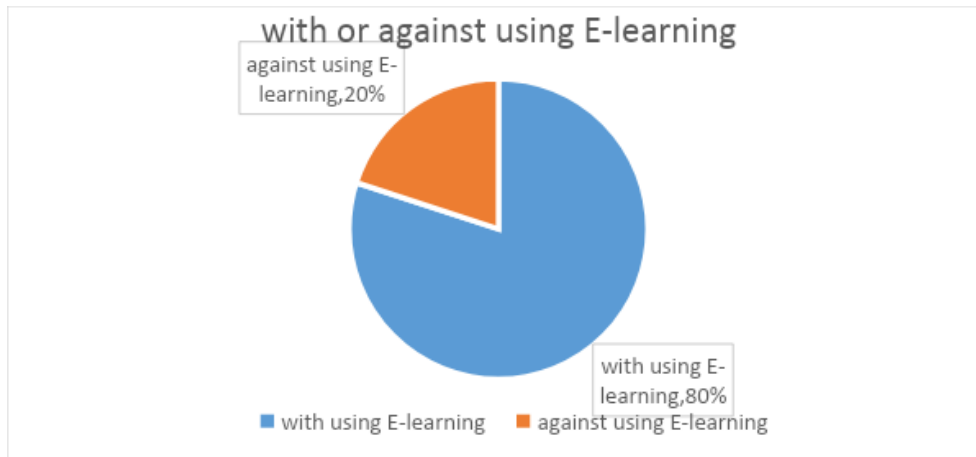
Figure 2.4: with or against using E-learning

Asking whether students are with or against using E-learning in their learning, the majority (80%) of them said that they are with whereas only (20%) responded that they are against E-learning.

Question 5: Which of the following types of learning do you prefer?

The question aims at discovering the students' preferences in terms of learning types and in what type they feel and learn better.

Answer	Number of Students	Percentages (%)
Face to face learning	11	27.5%
Online Learning	6	15%
Blended learning	23	57.5%
Total	40	100 %

Table 2.5: Learning types preference
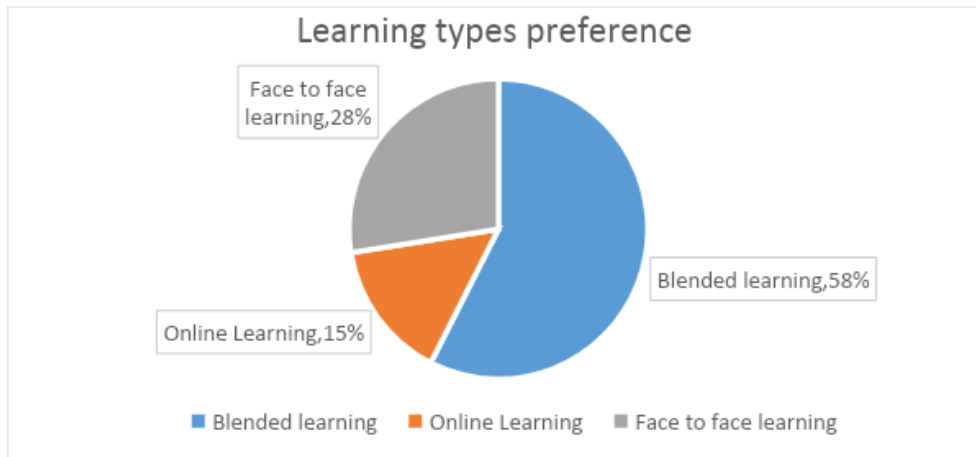
Figure 2.5: Learning types preference

As indicated in the table (2.3), blended learning is preferred by 57.5% of the students. Traditional F2F learning comes after with 27.5% of the informants while the rest 15% of them prefer online learning.

Question 6: Does e-learning motivates you to become more engaged in learning?

Through this question, we tried to measure the students' motivation during their E-learning journey, since motivation is a crucial component of their autonomy.

Answer	Number of Students	Percentages (%)
Yes	28	70%
No	12	30%
Total	40	100%

Table2.6: Does e-learning motivates you to become more engaged in learning?
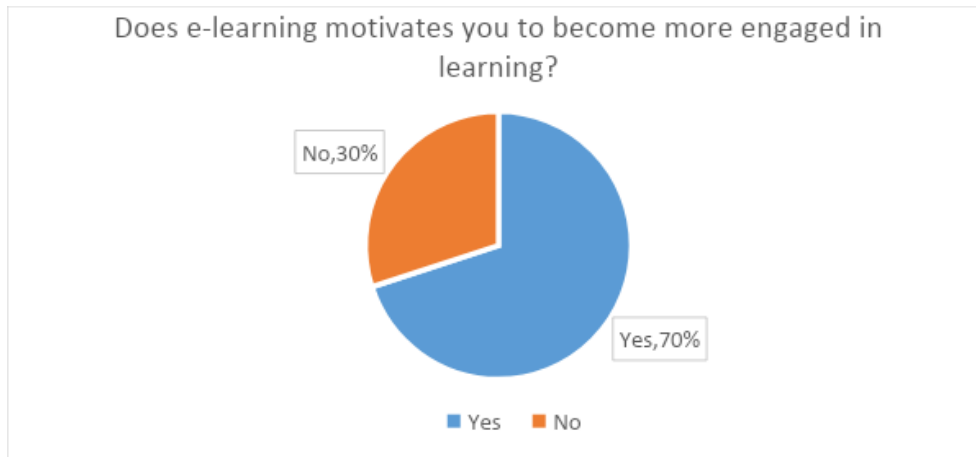
Figure 2.6: Does e-learning motivates you to become more engaged in learning?

According to the findings displayed in the preceding table, the vast majority of the learners (70%) find E-learning motivating for learning engagement while only 30% found the opposite.

Question 7: Did E-learning help you to solve the problem of anxiety?

Since E-learning is said to help learners to get rid of anxiety, we tried to test this hypothesis by posing this question to students.

Answer	Number of Students	Percentages (%)
Yes	22	55%
No	18	45%
Total	40	100%

Table2.7: Anxiety in E-learning.
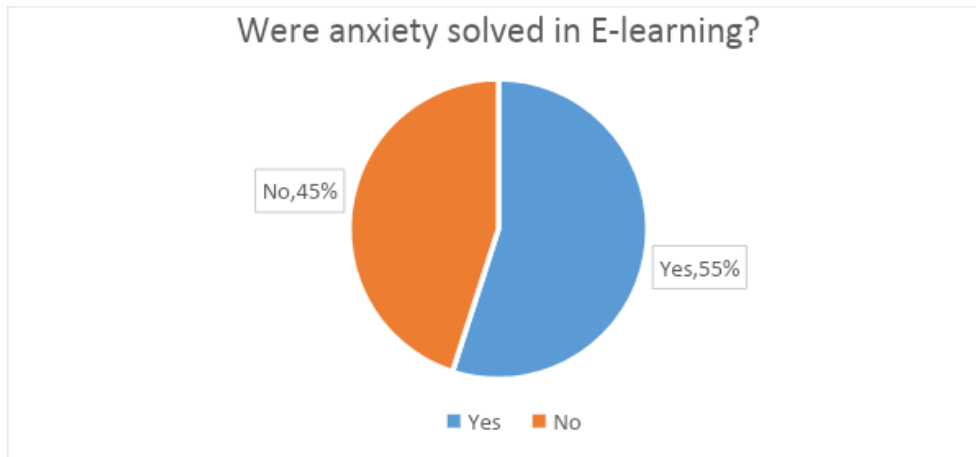
Figure2.7: Anxiety in E-learning.

Figure 2.7 shows that a percentage of 55% replied with yes, whereas 45% assure that they still feel anxious in E-learning.

Question 8: Do you agree that using E-learning is crucial for the success of the learning process?

The reason behind asking this question is to discover if the students are aware of the importance of integrating E-learning into their studies and to what extent they are benefiting from it.

Answer	Number of Students	Percentages (%)
Agree	13	32.5%
Disagree	27	67.5%
Total	40	100%

Table 2.8: E-learning is crucial for the success of learning
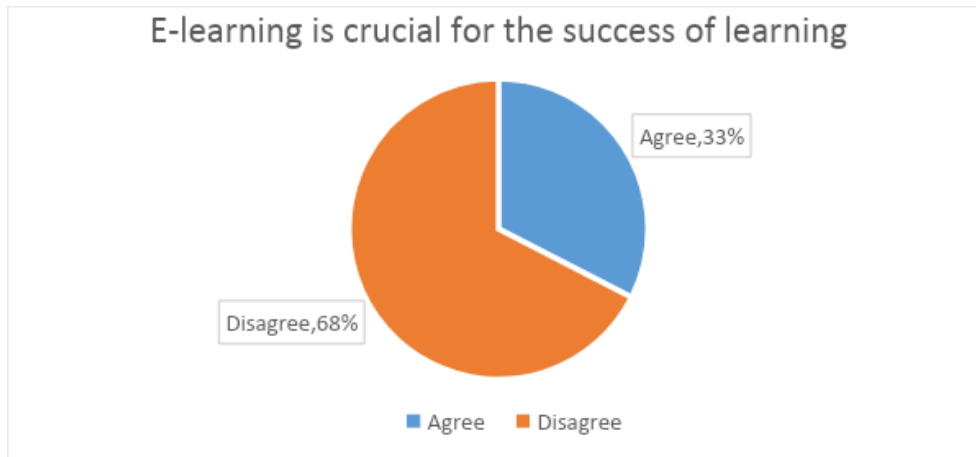
Figure 2.8: E-learning is crucial for the success of learning

Referring to the importance of E-learning, a significant percentage of students (67%) choose to agree while (32%) opt for disagreeing.

Question 9: Do your teachers suggest online courses and quizzes, e-books, videos, websites for your learning?

The aim behind this question to figure out the role of teachers in implementing and encouraging their students to use E-learning tools.

Answer	Number of Students	Percentages (%)
Yes	30	75%
No	10	25%
Total	40	100%

Table2.9: Teachers suggesting E-learning tools.
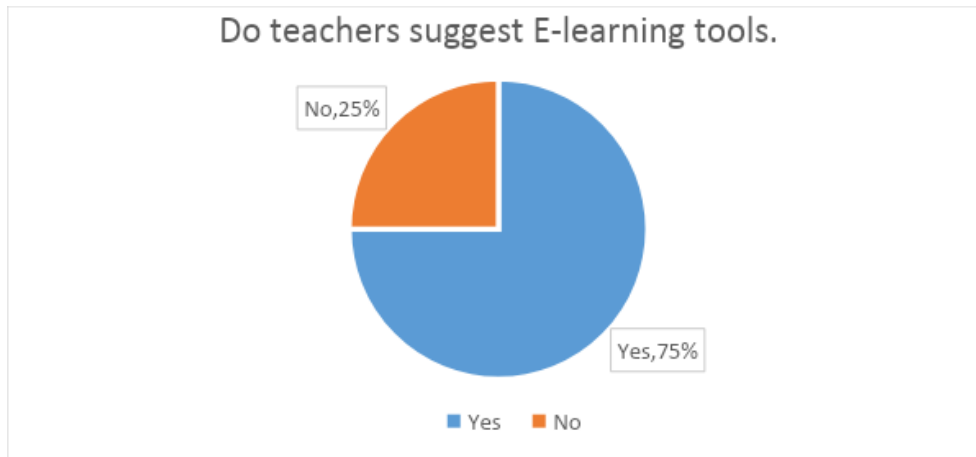
Figure2.9: Teachers suggesting E-learning tools.

The results above show that the majority of students (75%) admit that their teachers sometimes suggest E-learning tools like e-books, and websites. By contrast, only (25%) of students confess that their teachers do not.

Question 10: On a scale of 1 to 5, to which extent do you think the Facebook group of your class is beneficial?

The main purpose behind this question is to measure students' appreciation of the role of the Facebook group of their class as an E-learning tool.

Answer	Number of Students	Percentages (%)
2/5	5	5%
3/5	10	25%
4/5	14	35%
5/5	11	27.5%
Total	40	100%

Table2.10: Appreciation of the role of the Facebook group.
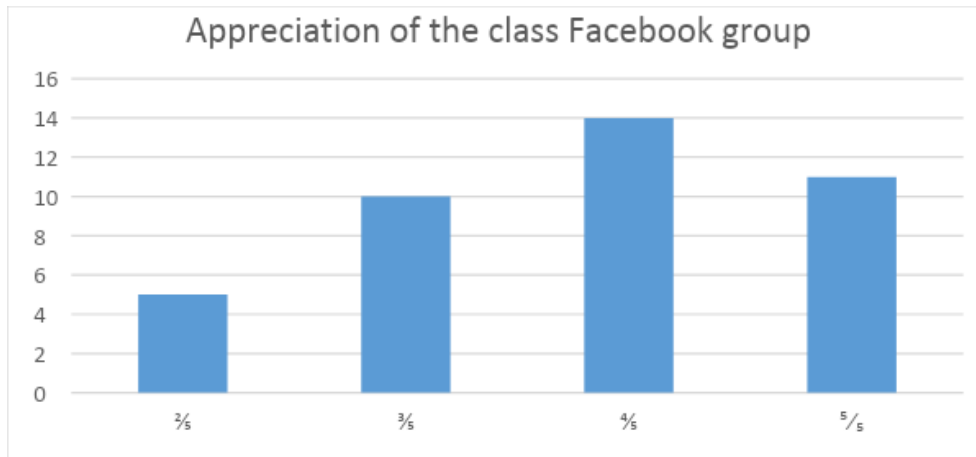
Figure 2.10: Appreciation of the role of the Facebook group.

Figure 2.10 illustrate that the Facebook group has a high degree of beneficiality, according to more than the half of students. The group was evaluated with (4/5) from (35%) of the students and (5/5) from (37.5%) of them. The rest (25%) of them gave an average evaluation (3/5) . Whereas only (5%) gave a low evaluation (2/5) to the group.

Question 11: How do you evaluate your E-learning experience during the pandemic?

This question was asked to know the general impression of students on their E-learning experience during the Corona Pandemic and were they satisfied with it.

Answer	Number of Students	Percentages (%)
Boring	8	20%
Exciting	8	20%
Motivating	8	20%
Interesting	16	40%
Total	40	100%

Table2.11: E-learning experience evaluation.

Figure 2.11: E-learning experience evaluation.

Table 2.11 illustrates that (40%) of the students have had an interesting E-learning experience whereas the experience of the remaining (60%) of them was equally divided between boring, exciting, and motivating.

Question 12: Experimenting E-Learning in Algerian universities for the first time was a successful teaching and learning experience.

This question is an attempt to know to which extent the integration of E-Learning in Algerian universities was successful.

Answer	Number of Students	Percentages (%)
Agree	24	60%
Disagree	16	40%
Total	40	100%

Table2.12: Evaluation of the E-Learning in Algerian universities

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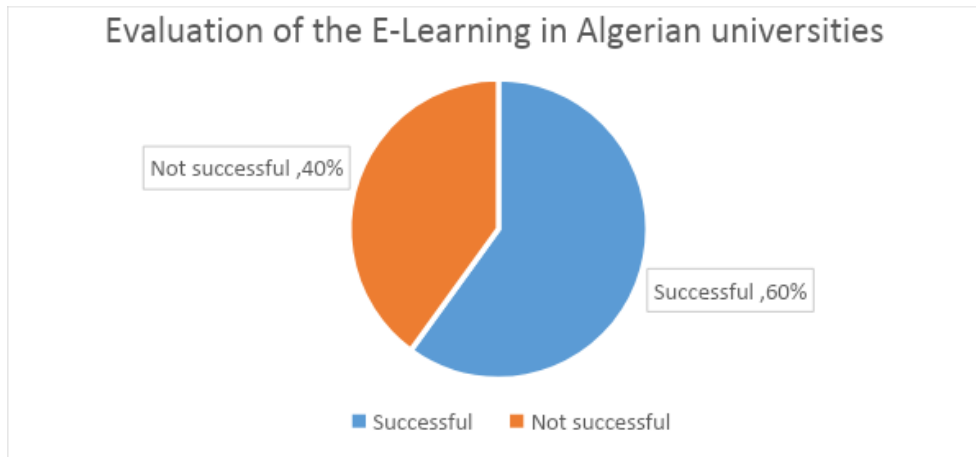
Figure 2.12: Evaluation of the E-Learning in Algerian universities.

Table 2.12 illustrates that only (15%) agree with the statement that the integration of E-Learning in Algerian universities was successful whereas half of the students (50%) disagree with it. Moreover, the remaining (35%) took a neutral stance.

Section Two: Learners' attitude towards Learner's Autonomy:

Question 13: Do you describe yourself as an autonomous learner?

This question is an inquiry into students' autonomy. Its purpose is to show whether students are independent learners or not.

Answer	Number of Students	Percentages (%)
Yes	30	75%
No	10	15%
Total	40	100%

Table2.13: Students' autonomy.
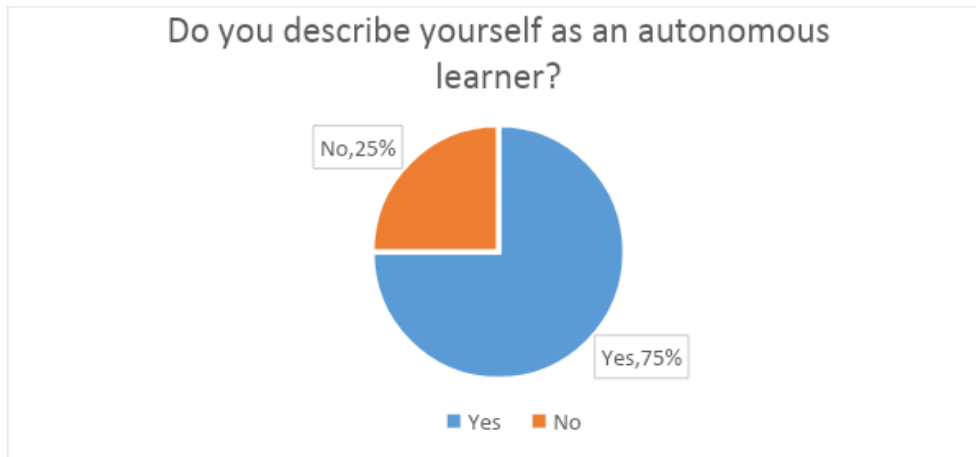
Figure 2.13: Students' autonomy.

According to the information gathered, the majority(75%) of students are autonomous learners in their principal. The remaining (25%) of students confirmed that they are not autonomous learners.

Question 14: To what extent do you depend on teachers?

This question attempts to uncover whether students depend on the teacher as the sole source of knowledge or not.

Answer	Number of Students	Percentages (%)
Totally	13	32.5%
Partially	27	67.5%
Total	40	100%

Table2.14: Students' dependence on teachers.
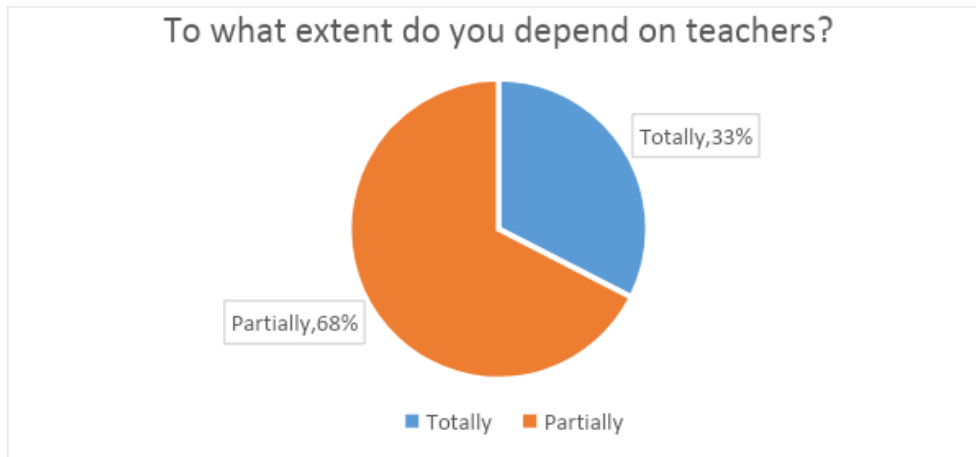
Figure 2.14: Students' dependence on teachers.

According to the information gathered, 68% of students do not depend just on their teachers. However, 32% of them confessed to depending totally on the teacher as the only source of information.

Question 15: What is the role that your teachers play in the classroom?

The objective of this question is to investigate the roles which teachers play in their classrooms.

Answer	Number of Students	Percentages (%)
Resource	7	17.5%
Controller	16	40%
Guider	13	32.5%
Counselor	4	10%
Total	40	100%

Table2.15: Teachers' roles.
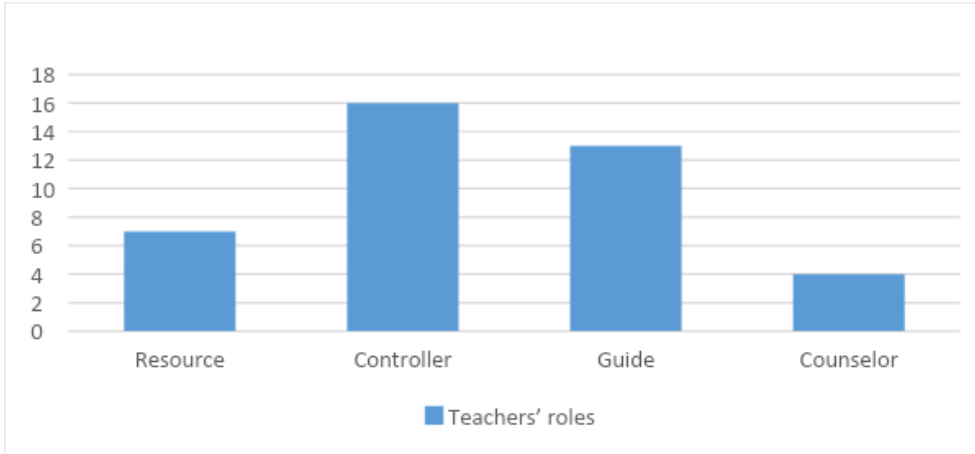
Figure 2.15: Teachers' roles.

Question 16: What is the role that you think your teachers should play?

This question aimed at knowing the roles which teachers are expected to play in the classroom according to their students.

Answer	Number of Students	Percentages (%)
Resource	5	12.5%
Controller	3	7.5%
Guide	17	42.5%
Counselor	15	37.5%
Total	40	100%

Table2.16: Teachers' expected roles.
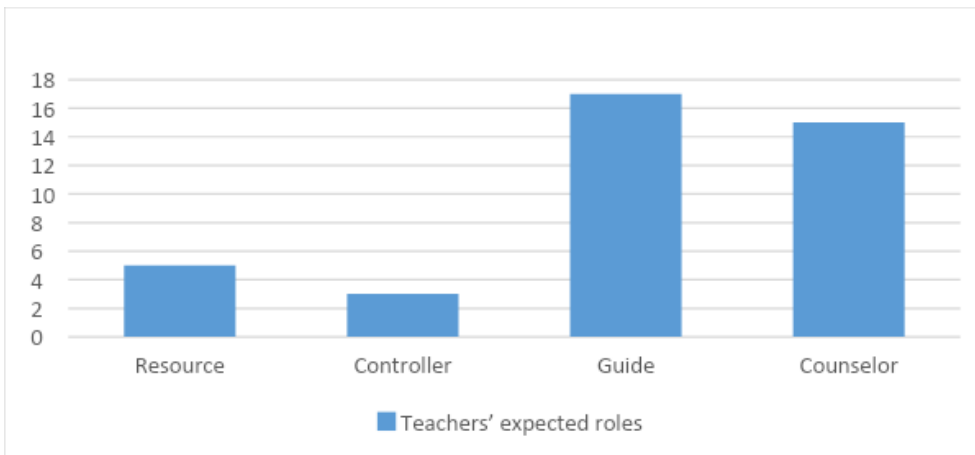
Figure 2.16: Teachers' expected roles.

Question 17.a: Do your teachers motivate you to be an autonomous learner?

The objective of this question is to know if the teacher is allowing the students to be part of the learning process, and eventually, encourage them to be autonomous learners. This question is divided into two parts: the first is a closed question and the second is an open question where informants have to state their answers.

Answer	Number of Students	Percentages (%)
Yes	24	60%
No	16	40%
Total	40	100%

Table2.17.a: Teachers' motivation for autonomous learning.
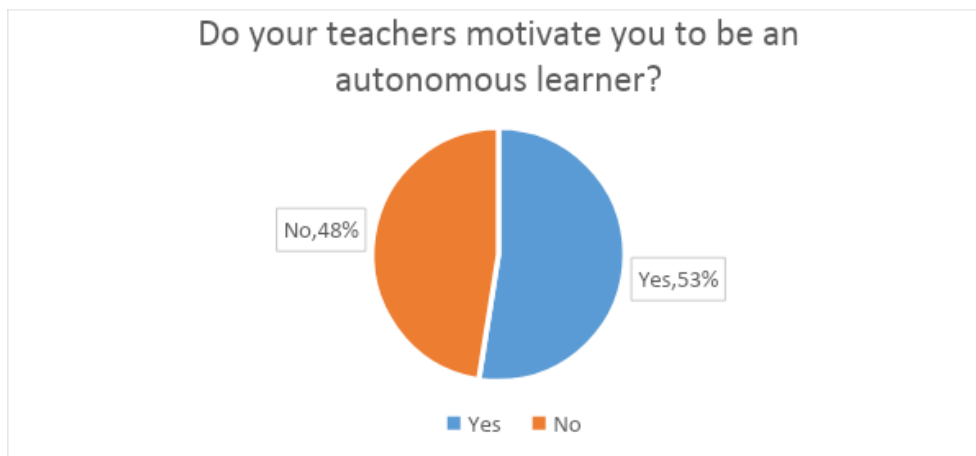
Figure 2.17.a:Teachers' motivation for autonomous learning.

Concerning teachers' contribution to encourage autonomous learning, 60% of students assert that their teachers motivate them to participate and make a decision about their learning. The remaining 40% of them said that their teachers do not motivate them to be autonomous.

Question 17.b: How do your teachers motivate you to be an autonomous learner?

Answer	Number of Students	Percentages (%)
Research and assignments	21	52.5%
Suggesting online courses	14	35%
Suggesting books	5	12.5%
Total	40	100%

Table2.17.b: How do teachers promote autonomy.
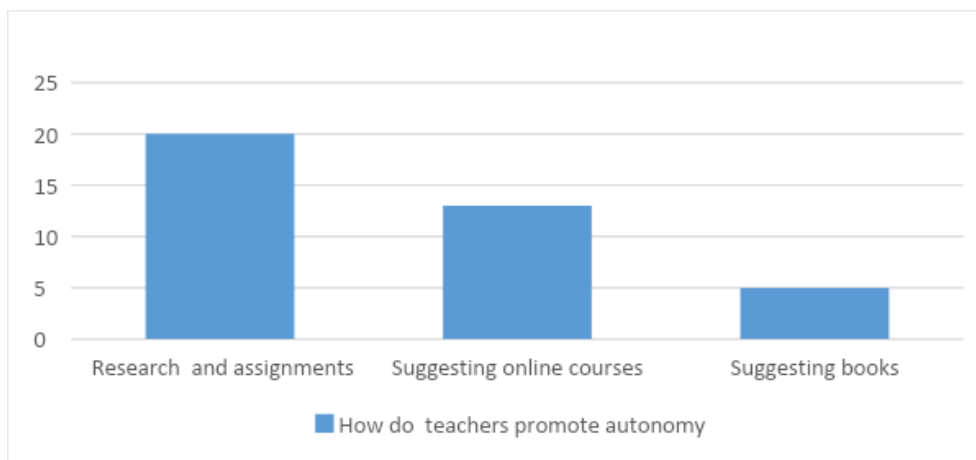
Figure 2.17.b: How do teachers promote autonomy.

Concerning teachers' strategies to promote their learners' autonomy, 52% of them rely on research and assignments as a strategy. While 35% of them suggest online courses to their students and the remaining 12.5% of them use books to promote autonomous learning.

Question 18: Do you think that your autonomy can be fostered?

The reason behind asking this question is to discover if the students think that autonomy is fosterable or not.

Answer	Number of Students	Percentages (%)
Yes	28	70%

No	12	30%
Total	40	100%

Table2.18: Do you think that your autonomy can be fostered?.
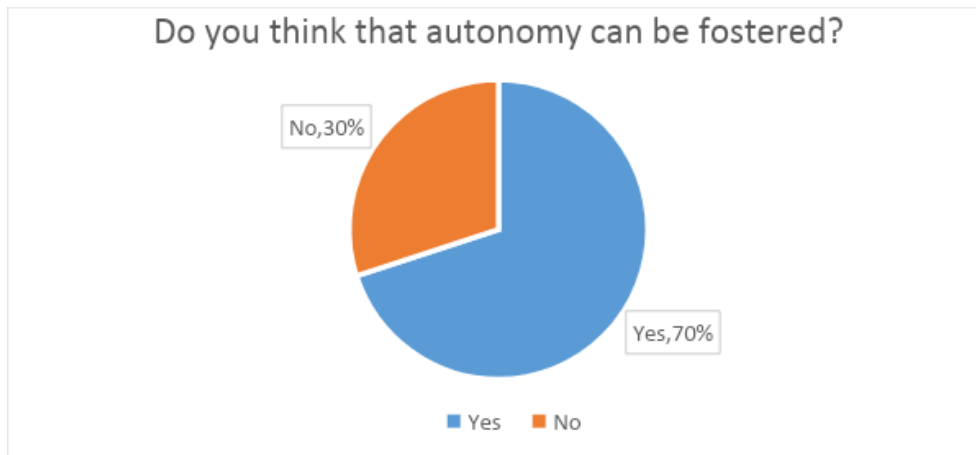
Figure 2.18: Do you think that your autonomy can be fostered?

When asked about whether their autonomy can be fostered or not, the majority of students (70%) argued that learning autonomy is promotable. While only a few students (30%) stated that autonomy can not be fostered.

Question 19: Does E-learning foster learners' autonomy?

Answer	Number of Students	Percentages (%)
Yes	35	87%
No	5	12.5%
Total	40	100%

Table2.19: Does E-learning foster learners' autonomy?.
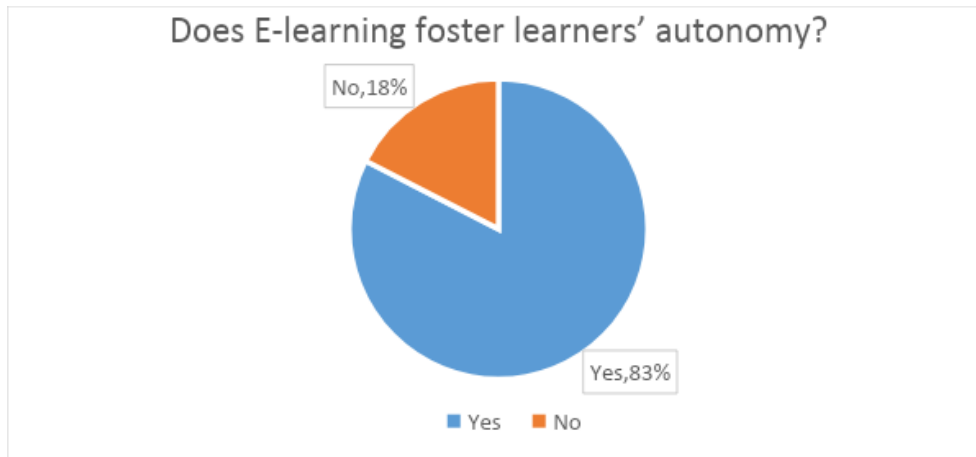
Figure 2.19: Does E-learning foster learners' autonomy?.

When asked about whether E-learning fosters their autonomy or not, a vast majority of students (82%) argued that E-learning does foster their learning autonomy. While only a few students (18%) stated that E-learning doesn't foster their autonomy.

Question 20: What aspects of autonomy does E-learning improve?

The pivotal aim behind this question was to find out what aspects of autonomy does E-learning improves.

Answer	Number of Students	Percentages (%)
Motivation to learn	16	40%
Problem-solving skills	16	40%
Decision-making skills	8	20%
Total	40	100%

Table2.20: the aspects of autonomy that E-learning improves.
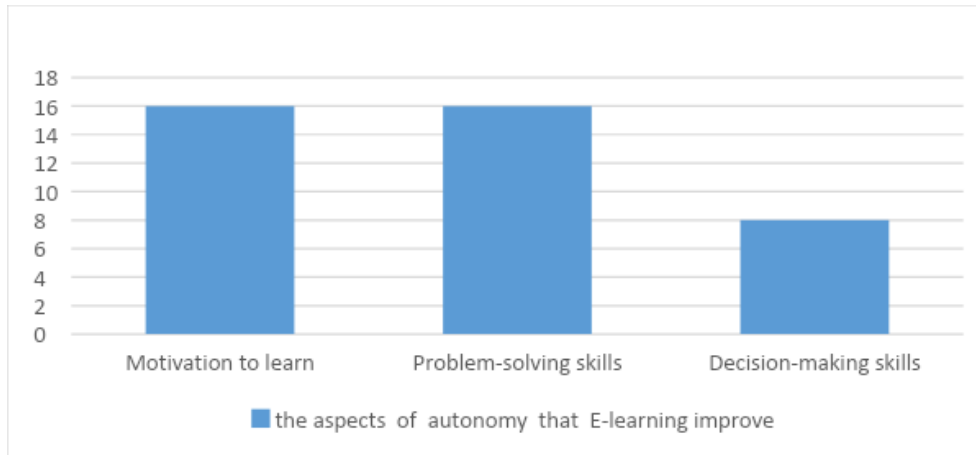
Figure 2.20: the aspects of autonomy that E-learning improves.

As it is shown above, a considerable percentage of students (40%) indicated that E-learning improves learners' motivation and problem-solving skills. The remaining (20%) of students stated that E-learning improves their decision-making skills.

3.5.1.4 Summary of Results and Findings of Students' Questionnaire:

Concerning learners' attitudes towards E-learning(section one), the majority of students express good impression about integrating E-learning to their learning process, These findings show students' high appreciation to the integration of internet during their learning. Similarly, the vast majority of students declare that E-learning motivates them to become more engaged in learning and helps them to get rid of their anxiety in learning which implies the stimulating nature of this type of learning. However, they prefer the concept of mixing F2F instruction and online learning instead of opting for E-learning alone. Moreover, the vast majority of students admit their teachers' contribution to implementing E-learning elements through suggesting various online courses, e-books, and websites which affirms that their teachers are willing to help them overcome their learning hinders. Additionally, almost all students pinpoint that the use of E-learning tools is crucial for the success of the learning process. This indicates that they are really aware of the importance of these tools. Equally important;They consider their Facebook group to play a major role and as one of the most used E-learning tools during their learning. Besides, the vast majority of learners hold a good impression about their E-learning experience which suggests that they are, to some extent, satisfied about their

educational environment. Along similar lines, a considerable percentage of students declared that the E-learning experience in Algeria was successful which insinuates that this type of instruction is receiving a growing interest from decision-makers.

Concerning autonomous learning (section two), the majority of students assert that they are autonomous. However, they have varying levels of autonomy from partially dependent to very dependent on teachers but they are not ready to take full charge of their learning. The analysis of the actual teacher roles (Table 2.15) and the expected teacher roles (Table 2.16) indicates that teachers are still playing the role of controllers, which contradicts autonomous learning and leads to a passive learning attitude. Instead, the majority of students advocate minor teacher roles such as Counsellors and guiders. A considerable percentage of students declare that their teachers motivate them to be autonomous. In light of their previous answer, students indicate the strategies that teachers rely on to promote their autonomy. The majority of teachers adopt research works and assignments while a significant percentage of them suggest online courses and books as a way of fostering students' autonomy.

Almost all students indicate that their autonomy is promotable. They assert that E-learning improves their autonomy. Concerning the aspects of autonomous learning, the majority of students indicated that E-learning improves learners' motivation and Problem-solving skills. Therefore, it is clear that E-learning has a direct impact on learners' autonomy as it improves their willingness to take charge of their learning.

3.5.2 Teachers' Questionnaire

3.5.2.1 Description of Teachers' Questionnaire

Since the use of E-learning platforms and their impact on fostering autonomy is not the concern of students only, a second questionnaire was designed and targeted to their teachers to investigate the research questions and hypotheses by exploring their views and attitudes.

The questionnaire designed for EFL teachers contains 12 questions of three types: open-ended, closed-ended, and multiple-choice questions. These questions are classified

under two sections, the first one is about the teachers' attitudes toward learner's autonomy, the second one deals with E-learning and its impact on the autonomy of their students.

3.5.2.2 Administration of Teachers' Questionnaire :

The present questionnaire was administered by sending an electronic version of it by Email to 10 teachers of the department of English of Adrar University, who are in charge of Master Students. Fortunately, all the teachers welcomed and answered the questionnaire despite its shortcomings.

3.5.2.3 Questionnaire Analysis:

Section one: Teachers' attitudes towards learner's autonomy:

Question1: How do you evaluate the level of Master students?

The main target of this question was to study teachers' general impression about the level of master students of English

Answer	Number of Teachers	Percentages (%)
Perfect	3	30%
Good	5	50%
Acceptable	2	20%
Total	10	100%

Table2.21: Students' level
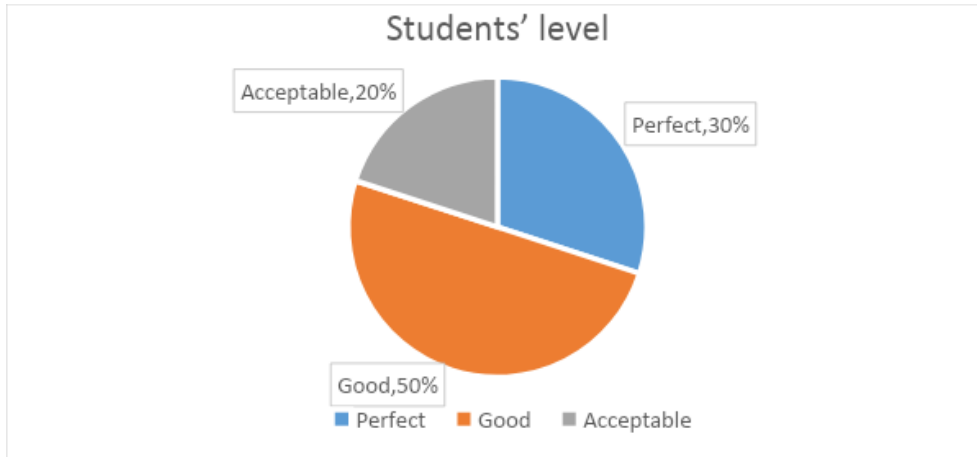
Figure 2.21: Students' level

As Figure 2.21 demonstrates, the majority of teachers with a percentage of 50% think that Master students have a good level. The others with a percentage of 30% answered that their learners have a perfect level whereas the minority (20%) claimed that students have an acceptable level.

Question2: What is your perception (understanding) of the concept of learner autonomy in English learning?

This question aimed at generating the teachers' selected definitions of learner's autonomy.

students are responsible for their own learning; they are active learners

The learner should be able to learn and practice the language on his own. He should engage in extra-curricular activities outside the classroom and independently from the teacher.

his reliance on Methodology classes as these classes are set to allow students to be self-dependent

Where the teacher acts as a guide

Students are able to learn independently i.e. without techers' interference.

To be able to conduct a research work without calling for help from anyone.

For me, it is the fact that students do not rely/depend exclusively on their teachers to acquire knowledge about a given subject.

Autonomous students

Table2.22: Teaching experience

Findings in figure two show that 30% of teachers confirmed Holec's definition of autonomy, which is "the ability to take charge of one's learning", the other definitions revolve around the same idea.

Question3: Do your students rely only on what you give them in the class?

The aim behind this question is to collect the teachers' assessment of the students' self-reliance in learning.

Answer	Number of Teachers	Percentages (%)
Yes	8	80%
No	2	20%
Total	10	100%

Table2.23: Students' reliance on teachers
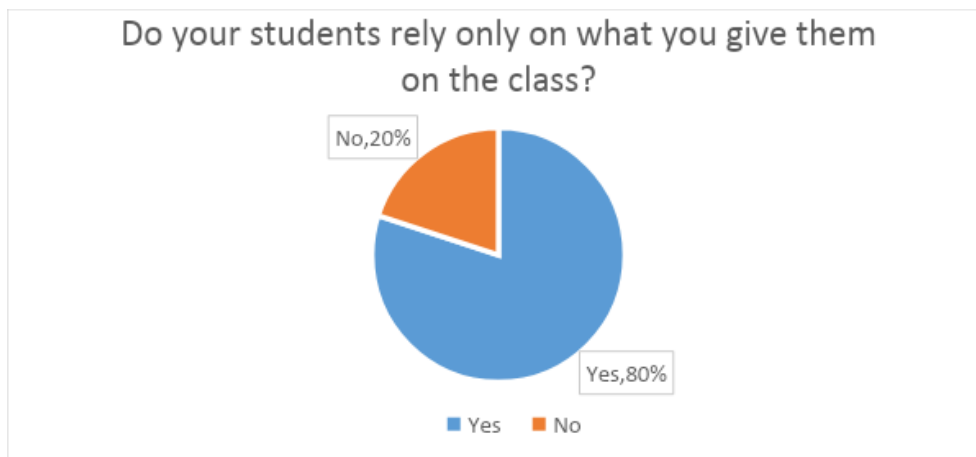
Figure 2.23: Students' reliance on teachers

The results obtained are displayed in the pie chart above. On one hand, the vast majority of teachers (80%) responded that learners rely only on the information given in the classroom. However, 20% of them said that students do not rely only on what is given during lectures.

Question4: Do you think that autonomy is indispensable in language learning?

This question aims to get teachers' views about the indispensability of EFL learners' autonomy.

Answer	Number of Teachers	Percentages (%)
Yes	10	100%
No	0	0%
Total	10	100%

Table2.24: is autonomy indispensable?
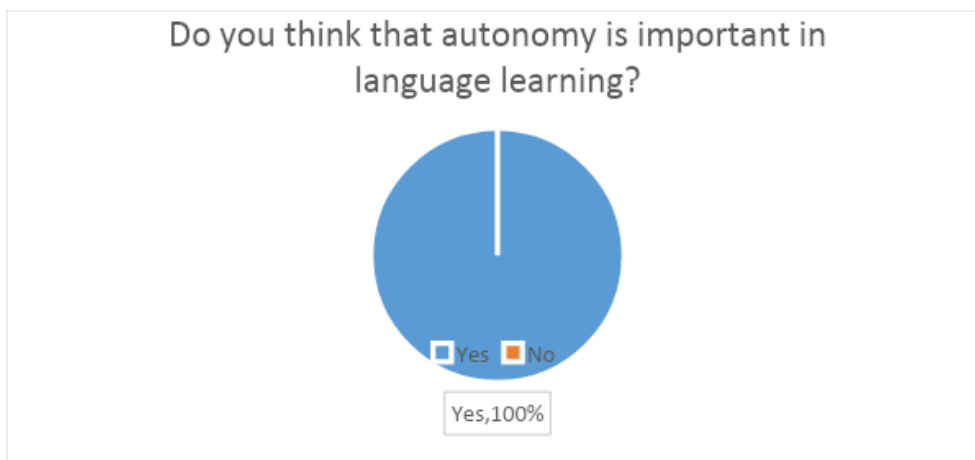
Figure 2.24: is autonomy indispensable?

As figure 20 shows, all teachers have elaborately agreed on the importance of autonomy in regard to EFL learners.

Question5: Do you consider Master students to be autonomous?

The basic goal of this question was to discover whether autonomy is present within Master students or not.

Answer	Number of Teachers	Percentages (%)
Yes	2	20%
No	8	80%
Total	10	100%

Table2.25: are students autonomous?
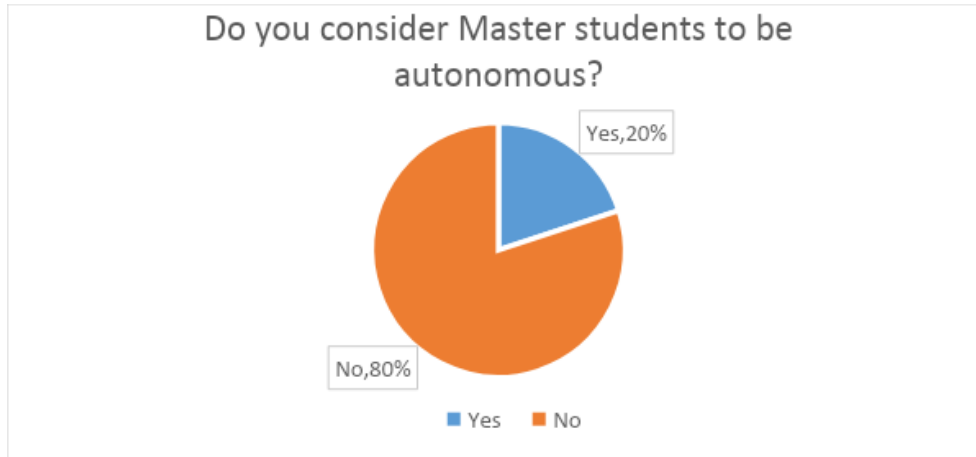
Figure 2.25: are students autonomous?

As seen in Figure 2.25, the majority of teachers have a negative attitude when it comes to the autonomy of their learners, (85%) of the teachers said that Master students are not autonomous in their learning, and (20%) said that the students are autonomous.

Question6: What role (s) do you usually take in the classroom?

This question inquires about the roles that teachers take in their classrooms to see whether they are giving opportunities to students to step towards autonomy or they are still the controller of the teaching/learning process.

Answer	Number of Teachers	Percentages (%)
Assistant	2	20%
Facilitator	7	70%
Collaborator	1	10%
Controller	0	0%
Total	10	100%

Table2.26: teachers' roles in the classroom.
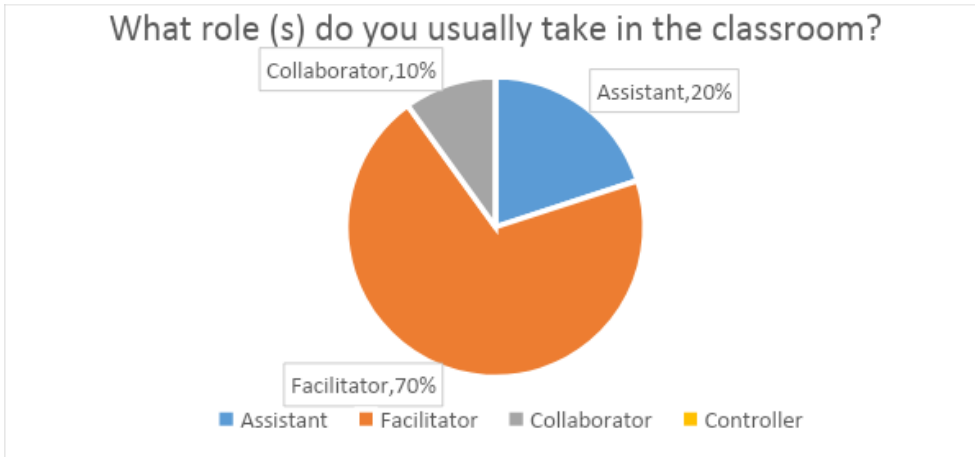
Figure 2.26: teachers' roles in the classroom.

According to the collected answers, (60%) of the teachers affirmed that they see themselves as facilitators. Whereas (20%) of them see themselves as Assistants, (10%) of them as collaborators and the remaining (10%) as controllers.

Question7: Do you encourage students to be autonomous learners?

Answer	Number of Teachers	Percentages (%)
Yes	8	80%
No	2	20%
Total	10	100%

Table2.27: teachers' encouragement to students.
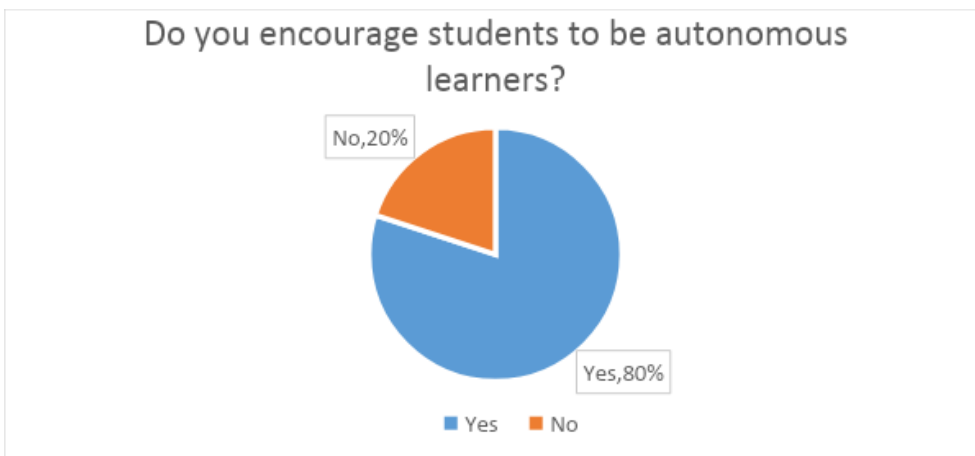
Figure 2.27: teachers' encouragement to students.

Question8: 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.

Suggestions	Number of Teachers	Percentages (%)
Readings and exercises	4	40%
Individual assignments	3	30%
Research works	3	30%
Total	10	100%

Table2.28: how do you encourage students' autonomy?
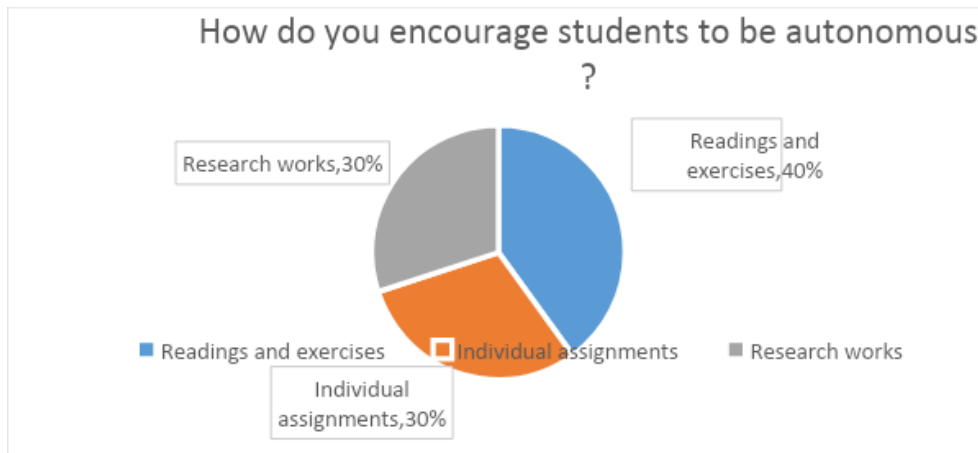
Figure 2.28: how do you encourage students' autonomy?

According to the results shown above, (40%) of teachers said that using readings and exercises can potentially encourage learners to be autonomous. While (30%) said that giving students individual assignments can encourage them to be autonomous learners. Besides, (30%) of them said that giving their students' research works is an effective way to promote their autonomy.

Section Two: Teachers' attitudes towards E-learning :

Question9: Do you use online resources and materials in your teaching?

The question was asked to know to which extent online teaching materials are integrated into the teaching/learning process.

Answer	Number of Teachers	Percentages (%)
Yes	7	70%
No	3	30%
Total	10	100%

Table2.29**:** Do you use online materials?
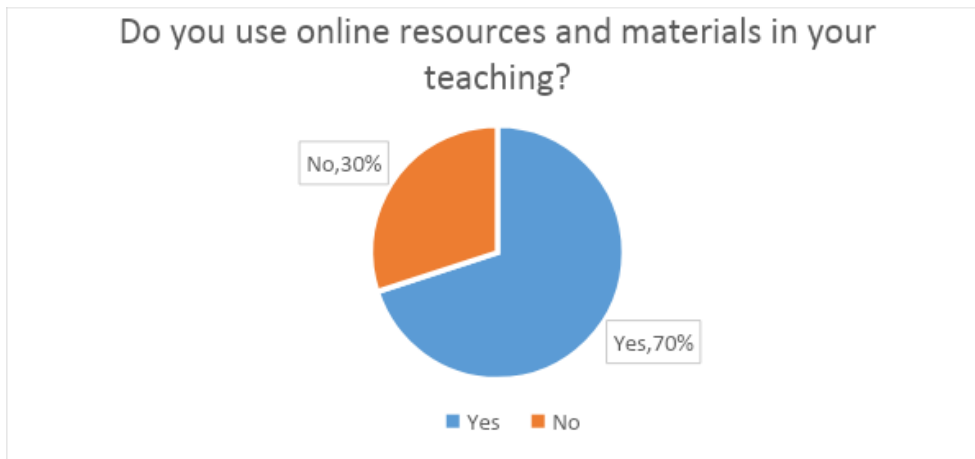
Figure 2.29: Do you use online materials?

As it is shown in table 2.29, most of the teachers (70%) admitted that they make use of different online resources and materials in their classrooms. Only 30% of them opted for no.

Question10: Which of the following types of learning do you prefer?

The main purpose of this question was to see the teachers' favorite type of learning.

Answer	Number of Teachers	Percentages (%)
Face to face learning	7	70%
Online Learning	0	0%
Blended learning	3	30%

Total	10	100 %

Table2.30**:** learning types preferences.
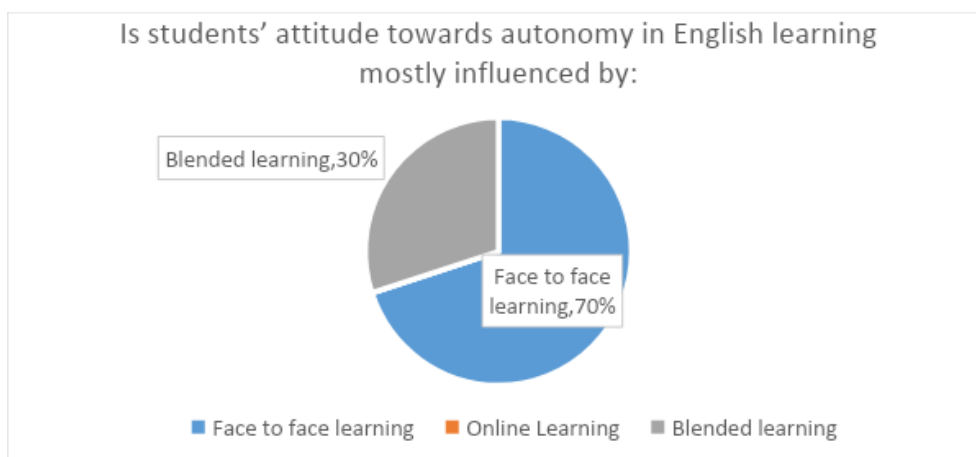
Figure 2.30: learning types preferences.

The data displayed above show that (70%) of the teachers considered traditional F2F learning as their favorite type while (30%) of them see Blended Learning as their suitable teaching setting.

Question11: What are the main E-learning tools that you mostly use in your EFL classes?

The aim behind this question was to clear up the researcher's vision about the most used E-learning tool by teachers in their classes.

Answer	Number of Teachers	Percentages (%)
Moodle	1	10%
Google Meet	5	50%
Zoom	2	20%
Social Media	2	20%
Total	10	100%

Table2.31**:** the most used E-learning tools.
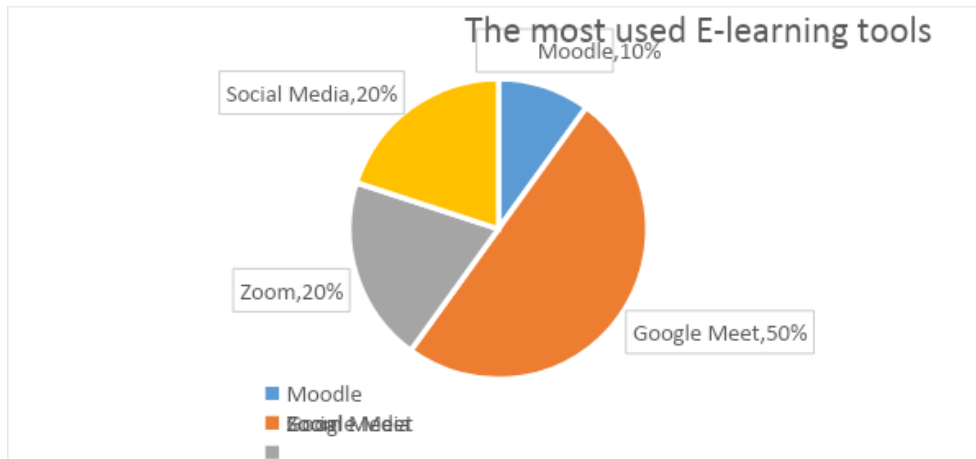
Figure 2.31: The most used E-learning tools.

The findings shown in figure (3.22) reveal that (50%) of teachers use Google Meet in their teaching, whereas both Social Media and Zoom are used by (20%) of them. Only (10%) of them consider Moodle platform as their preferable tool.

Question12: Does E-learning contribute to promoting autonomy among learners?

This question aims to investigate teachers' attitudes towards the impact of E-learning on EFL learners' autonomy.

Answer	Number of Teachers	Percentages (%)
Yes	10	100%
No	0	0%
Total	10	100%

Table2.32**:** E-learning contribution to promoting autonomy.
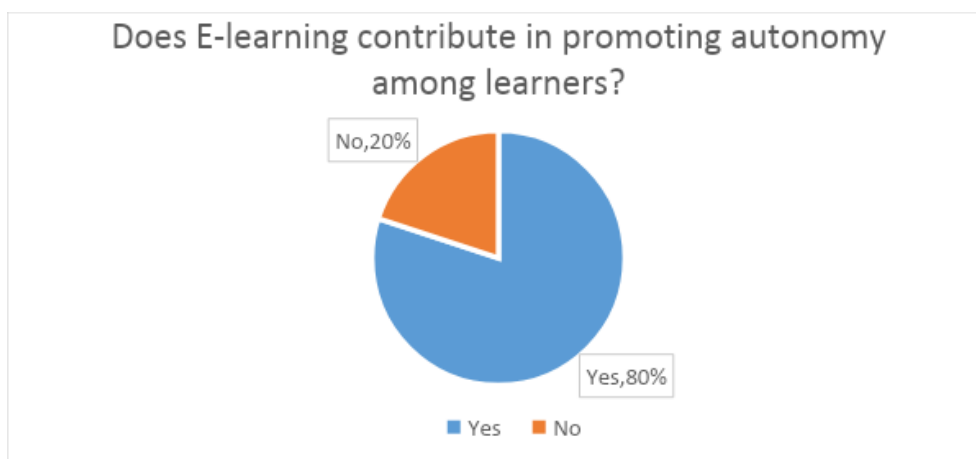
Figure 2.32: E-learning contribution to promoting autonomy.

The findings in figure 16 reveal that all teachers agree that E-learning contributes to developing EFL learners' autonomy.

3.5.2.4 Summary of Results and Findings of Teachers' Questionnaire

According to the results gathered in the teachers" questionnaire, all of them hold a positive attitude towards autonomy, they agree on the importance of it and how crucial it is in learning. However, many of them have a misconception of learner autonomy as they consider it as a process in which learners learn on their own without any intervention from their part. They view autonomy as the learner"s ability to take charge of his learning. Surprisingly; the vast majority of teachers do not consider their students autonomous as they rely only on the information given in the classroom.

All of the teachers claimed that they do not dominate the teaching/learning process in the classroom; They consider themselves only as facilitators and assistants; they give more consideration to learner-centered teaching approaches as they embrace individual assignments and research works to foster autonomy. Yet, they should be more aware that it is their role to develop autonomous behavior in their classrooms through guidance and facilitating the empowerment of their learners.

When asked about their attitudes towards E-learning (section two), teachers were all in favor of E-learning as a suitable tool for the promotion of learners' autonomy, they claimed that these tools offer learners beneficial learning environments which increase

student's interests and motivation and help them to hone their learning skills. This is the reason why they widely use different E-learning resources to support their teaching.

Almost all of them admit that they use E-learning tools such as Google Meet, Social Media, and Zoom in their classes and they advise learners to use them outside the classroom to develop their autonomy.

Section Two: Discussion and Recommendations

4.1 Discussion of the results:

The results of the collected data demonstrate that despite all their efforts to attain autonomous learning, Master students at Adrar University have a lack of autonomy in learning English as a foreign language, they are not really aware of the importance of autonomy and they always need the assistance of their teachers to achieve their learning goals. The reasons behind this are the lack of motivation and the over-reliance on teachers. This result confirms our first hypothesis that students are not autonomous although they have access to technologies such as E-learning. Unfortunately, students do not know the importance of these tools which play an important role in developing learner autonomy among them.

Our second hypothesis is confirmed since the findings prove that E-learning is suitable for the promotion of learners' autonomy as it increases learners' responsibility, motivation, and independence towards their learning. Therefore, it is clear that E-learning has a direct impact on learners' autonomy by improving learners' willingness to become more engaged in learning and to take charge of their learning activity.

Teachers manifest good perceptions towards the effect of E-learning on their student's autonomy. These results prove the third hypothesis on teachers' awareness of the importance of E-learning for achieving independent learning. The latter is proved when all teachers confirm that E-learning enhances EFL learners' autonomy since it offers more activeness to learners against a minimized teacher role, which makes learners motivated, less anxious, and more self-reliant.

4.2 Suggestions and Recommendations:

In the light of the research work, we suggest the following points be taken into consideration:

-Teachers should raise their students' awareness about the importance of learners' autonomy and how they will benefit from it to develop learners' independence.

-Teachers need to adopt certain teaching strategies such as individual asignements and research works to foster the autonomy of their students.

- Teachers should allow learners to set their own goals and involve them gradually in the classrooms activities.

- Teachers should try to minimize their control over the teaching/learning process to acclimatize learners to self-directed learning.

- Teachers should do their best to improve their familiarization with E-learning technologies.

-Students need to conduct their learning more and more by using E-learning tools and to be aware of the appropriate ways to utilize them effectively, to widen their knowledge.

-Students need to be more responsible, independent, active, enthusiastic, determined, and critical.

- Students need to develop the habit of reading for their interests and needs to enjoy reading.

4.3 Limitations of the Study:

The main limitations that faced the present research are as follows:

-The lack of authentic resources and material (books, articles, etc.).

-The number of students who accepted to answer the questionnaire is very small which affects the representativeness of the sample.

-Many students gave incomplete or random answers.

-The data gathered could not give a complete idea about autonomy, due to the complexity of the concept under research. Therefore, a wider scope of research is needed to ensure a better exploration of the concept.

-Time constituted another constraint when conducting the research, due to the complexity of the topic under investigation.

4.4 Conclusion:

This chapter tackled the description of the research design, instrument, and population. It was also an attempt to answer the research questions through the analysis of both the learners' and teachers' questionnaires. It has confirmed the proposed hypotheses. Furthermore, it contains some suggestions and recommendations that the researcher has reached thanks to the basis of the main findings.

GENERAL CONCLUSION:

Learner autonomy has become the latest buzzword in the realm of language teaching and learning to the extent that it has become one of the objectives of education now. This growth of interest in autonomous learning as an educational goal can be linked to the changes and innovations that have taken place in recent years, especially in the field of educational technology.

The present study was designed to investigate the conception of autonomy among EFL learners and their teachers, in addition to the use of educational technology, mainly E-learning and its influence on learners' autonomy.

The sample selected for this study is Master students at the department of English, University of Adrar, and their teachers for the academic year 2020/2021. The field investigation was opted for using two questionnaires that were administered to students and their teachers. The collected data were analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively.

The results of the students' and teachers' questionnaires revealed that both teachers and students hold positive attitudes towards E-learning and its impact on the development of learners' individual learning skills in general, and their self-independent learning in particular. They also stressed that learner autonomy is basically essential for effective language learning since it enables learners to develop a sense of responsibility, awareness, and self-reliance where they can manage to study on their own. In addition, both teachers and students appreciate the integration of E-learning, in which students are more active and engaged, highly motivated, and given the opportunity to take responsibility and self-direct their learning. While teachers keep a minor contribution as observers and guides to students. Therefore, the research hypotheses are confirmed.

This study has limitations. Due to the lack of authentic resources and material. The literature review of autonomy is somehow limited, and finding references presented a challenge. Second, the sample population can not be considered representative, due to the small number of participants. Despite these limitations, this study is a beginning to further studies and investigations.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Students' questionnaire

Fostering learner's autonomy through E-Learning-Students' questionnaire

Dear students,

This questionnaire is a part of a research work to obtain information needed for the accomplishment of a Master dissertation. it aims at collecting information about your perception of the concept of learner autonomy and your attitudes and beliefs about the impact of using E-learning in EFL classrooms on autonomy. Therefore, You are kindly requested to answer this questionnaire by putting a tick on the answer you think more appropriate ,and make comments where necessary.

Thank you for your cooperation

Section one: Learners' attitude towards E-learning:

Question1: Gender: Male ☐   Female ☐

Question 2: How old are you: ………………

Question 3: How do you evaluate your level in the English language?

  a-Very good ☐   b-Average ☐   c-Poor ☐

Question 4: Are you with or against using E-learning in your learning process?

  a-With ☐   b-Against ☐

Question 5: Which of the following types of learning do you prefer?

a- Face2face learning ☐ b- Online Learning ☐ c- Blended learning ☐

Question 6: Does e-learning motivates you to become more engaged in learning?

  a-Yes ☐   b-No ☐

Question 7: Did E-learning help you to solve the problem of anxiety?

a-Yes ☐   b-No ☐

Question 8: Do you agree that using E-learning is crucial for the success of the learning process?

a-Agree ☐   b-Disagree ☐

Question 9: Do your teachers suggest online courses and quizzes, e-books, videos, websites for your learning?

a-Yes ☐   b-No ☐

Question 10: On a scale of 1 to 5, How do you evaluate the role of the Facebook group of your class? ………………………………

Question 11: How do you evaluate your E-learning experience during the pandemic?

a- Boring ☐   b- Exciting ☐   c- Motivating ☐   d- Interesting ☐

Question 12: Experimenting E-Learning in Algerian universities for the first time was a successful teaching and learning experience.

a-Agree ☐   b-Disagree ☐

Section Two: Learners' attitude towards Learner's Autonomy:

Question 13: Do you describe yourself as an autonomous learner?

a-Yes ☐   b-No ☐

Question 14: To what extent do you depend on teachers?

a-Totally ☐   b-Partially ☐

Question 15: What is the role that your teachers play in classroom?

a- Resource ☐   b- Controller ☐   c- Guide ☐   d- Counselor ☐

Question 16: What is the role that you think your teachers should play?

a- Resource ☐   b- Controller ☐   c- Guide ☐   d- Counselor ☐

Question 17.a: Do your teachers motivate you to be an autonomous learner?

a-Yes ☐   b-No ☐

Question 17.b: How do your teachers motivate you to be an autonomous learner?? a-
Research and assignments ☐   b- Suggesting online courses ☐

c- Suggesting books ☐

Question 18: Do you think that your autonomy can be fostered?

a-Yes ☐   b-No ☐

Question 19: Does E-learning foster learners' autonomy?

a-Yes ☐   b-No ☐

Question 20: What aspects of autonomy does E-learning improve?

a- Motivation to learn ☐   b- Problem-solving skills ☐

c- Decision-making skills ☐

Thank you for your cooperation

Appendix 2: Teachers' questionnaire

Fostering learner's autonomy through E-Learning-Teachers' questionnaire

Dear teachers,

You are kindly invited to answer the following questionnaire which is a part of research work to gather information needed for the accomplishment of a Master dissertation. The questionnaire aims to gather your attitudes toward Learners' autonomy and how can it be fostered through e-learning. Thank you in advance for your input.

Your cooperation is much appreciated.

Section one: Teachers' attitudes towards learner's autonomy:

Question1: How do you evaluate the level of Master students?

a-Perfect ☐   b-Good ☐   c-Acceptable ☐

Question2: What is your perception (understanding) of the concept of learner autonomy in English learning?

……………………………………………………………………………….

Question3: Do your students rely only on what you give them in the class?

a-Yes ☐   b-No ☐

Question4: Do you think that autonomy is indispensable in language learning?

a-Yes ☐   b-No ☐

Question5: Do you consider Master students to be autonomous?

a-Yes ☐   b-No ☐

Question6: What role (s) do you usually take in the classroom?

a- Assistant ☐   b- Facilitator ☐   c- Collaborator ☐   d- Controller ☐

Question7: Do you encourage students to be autonomous learners?

a-Yes ☐   b-No ☐

Question8: How do you encourage students to be autonomous learners?

Research and assignments ☐   b- Suggesting online courses ☐

c- Suggesting books ☐

Section Two: Teachers' attitudes towards E-learning :

Question9: Do you use online resources and materials in your teaching?

a-Yes ☐   b-No ☐

Question10: Which of the following types of learning do you prefer?

a- Face2face learning ☐   b- Online Learning ☐   c- Blended learning ☐

Question11: What are the main E-learning tools that you mostly use in your EFL classes?

a- Moodle ☐   b- Google Meet ☐   c Zoom ☐   d Social Media ☐

Question12: Does E-learning contribute to promoting autonomy among learners?

a-Yes ☐   b-No ☐

Thank you for your cooperation