# Classroom Management Centeredness: Teachers or Learners, Master 1 Students of Didactics Classroom Performances

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**Abstract**

There have been various attempts to amend the Algerian educational system toward autonomy in the university setting. The point is that this procedure has become a truncated perspective because it has not met its expectations and objectives. This study is based on the constructivist learning theory. The major concern of this research is the continuous domination of teachers as the only source of knowledge, causing learners to be passive recipients. The current research aims to explore the need for balancing teachers' knowledge delivery and learners' free thinking for a reciprocal teaching/learning process. To attain this objective, the researcher used a descriptive-analytic method, in accordance with both qualitative and quantitative data collection tools. The former concerns an interview conducted with the teacher of the didactics module for more reliable information. The latter involves administering a questionnaire to 100 second-year Master's students of Didactics at the Department of English, Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret. The findings of the research draw attention to the dominance of teachers as the most trusted and knowledgeable persons in the classroom. The absence of equilibrium in learners' classroom performance is another symptom detected by the researcher. In the end, recommendations are made for better ongoing management of the classroom environment.

*Keywords:* Classroom centeredness, equilibrium, higher education, learners as active participants, reforms, teachers' performance

## ملخص

لقد كانت هناك محاولات مختلفة لتعديل النظام التعليمي الجزائري، على سبيل المثال: حقن الاستقلالية كعنصر أساسي في محيط الجامعة. والمقصود أن هذا الإجراء أصبح منظورًا مبتورًا لأنه لم يحقق توقعاته وأهدافه. تعتمد هذه الدراسة على نظرية التعلم البنائية. القلق الرئيسي لهذا البحث هو الهيمنة المستمرة للمعلمين باعتبارهم المصدر الوحيد للمعرفة، مما يجعل المتعلمين متلقين سلبيين. يهدف البحث الحالي إلى استكشاف الحاجة إلى تحقيق التوازن بين توصيل المعرفة من قِبل المعلمين والتفكير الحر للمتعلمين من أجل عملية تدريس/تعلم متبادلة. ولتحقيق هذا الهدف، استخدم الباحث المنهج الوصفي التحليلي، وفق أدوات جمع البيانات النوعية والكمية. يتعلق الأول بمقابلة تم إجراؤها مع مدرس وحدة didactique للحصول على معلومات أكثر موثوقية. أما الثاني، فيتعلق بتوزيع استبيان على 100 طالب من طلبة السنة الثانية ماستر أصول تربية، بقسم اللغة الإنجليزية، جامعة ابن خلدون تيارت. ولفتت نتائج البحث الانتباه إلى هيمنة المعلمين باعتبارهم الأشخاص الأكثر ثقة ومعرفة داخل الفصل الدراسي. ويُعد غياب التوازن بين أداء المعلمين والمتعلمين في القسم من الأعراض الأخرى التي اكتشفها الباحث. وفي النهاية، تم وضع توصيات لتحسين التسيير المستمر لبيئة الفصل الدراسي.

**كلمات مفتاحية**: تمحور القسم الدراسي، التوازن، التعليم العالي، المتعلمون كشركاء نشطين، الإصلاحات، أداء المعلمين.

## Introduction

Numerous attempts have been interested to amend the Algerian higher education system, especially the teaching/learning of a foreign language. More specifically, these research attempts targeted teaching a foreign language by emphasising English. The present exploration focuses on investigating the possible factors behind the absence of a partnership in terms of teachers' presentations and students' free thinking. The case concerns teachers' domineering roles in the classrooms, causing learners to be passive rather than acting as active participants in the management of the learning process. The worry is about the teacher's attitude towards giving room for learners' initiative to share their classroom daily performances with him. The whole research process revolves around teachers' readiness to let part of their authority over every single element and step in classroom management to promote learners' role as researchers who can search for the information and discuss it.

The teacher's flexible formula to break down routines and act as agents of change is the target of the current research. The process can be carried out only by changing their classroom performances. The process implies helping learners exhibit what they can do by exercising their autonomy and controlling their learning process. The exploration is strongly related to the constructivist learning theory, which implies learners' initiative and ability to construct information and rebuild it in new patterns with guidance from their teachers. The matter also concerns learners' skills to manipulate the language networking system for creativity and innovation in information gathering and use in both the university setting and outside it.

As a path for exploring the previously stated worry, the following subsequent questions are raised:

1. What are teachers' attitudes towards learners' autonomy?
 a. How can teachers embrace learners' autonomous character?
 b. Why do learners struggle to be autonomous?

Plausible responses for the previously set questions could be the following hypotheses under test:

2. Teachers are doubtful about learners' maturity to be autonomous.
 a. Teachers reject learners' autonomy.
 b. Learners do not want to be autonomous.

## Literature Review

### Overview of Authority in Teaching

Before embarking on any procedure, it is required to deal with the concept of authority. This quality has been a crucial challenge for innovation, especially in the field of education. Authority is *"Authority is the power to influence people because of inspiring respect, having a special knowledge or expertise"* (Concise Oxford English Dictionary, 1996, p. 68).

### Authority and Teachers' Character

Teachers' authority is classified into two major categories, separating the behavioral side from the intellectual one, namely, authoritative and authoritarian characters.

### Teachers' Authoritative Character

This type of authority was dealt with by Freire (1972) when stating that: "Education is suffering from narration sickness" (p. 42). This part of authority is embodied in the form of roles performed by teachers. Learners think of their teachers as the sole wise persons who know

everything. Consequently, teachers' way of delivering knowledge is based on memorisation and learning by heart. Holding such intellectual *"capital knowledge"* makes the teacher the most reliable source of information. Moreover, the teacher is the one who possesses the ability and the skills for classroom management, which causes learners to be passive and untrusted of any further actions related to designing classrooms. The case also concerns teachers who are the sole persons holding the power to manage the teaching/learning process and decide about any single simple procedure as stated by Freire (1972): "In the banking concept of education, knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing" (p. 46).

Consequently, teachers become enslaved to the designed syllabus and its time allocation. Then, teachers end up functioning as a detriment to renovation and change. *Teachers' Authoritarian Character.* Being authoritarian refers to classroom management in terms of the interactional environment comprising both teachers' and so for learners-learners' interactions. These interactions are evidence of how much space is given for learners to participate in the teaching/learning process. If the teacher is more dominant, learners become less involved. Authoritarian Character, also known as *"personality capital"*, is considered an emotional bank account (Covey, 1995). Most of the time, teachers are security agents or discipline keepers, rather than motivators, by enhancing learners' initiative to be active participants. The case has caused learners to be reticent and negatively charged towards their teachers. EFL learners face severe challenges due to the detrimental related of teachers' character and roles in their classrooms, causing students to be sometimes depressed and frustrated about the classroom environment. The situation results from teachers' daily practices. These performances lead learners to be passive and hopeless about their roles within a teaching/ learning environment. The worry was tackled by Harmer (2001) in "Calls for the presentation of unpleasant or harmful stimuli or the withdrawal of reinforcement" (p. 62).

Teachers' friendly relations with their learners can be fruitful by embracing their worries and fears. The criterion was exposed by Harmer (2001), who stated that the teacher should take into consideration how much distance he should keep with his students (p. 15). He also maintained that some learners may feel embarrassed if their teacher is so close to them, while others think that by keeping their distance from learners, a teacher is careless about their learners' needs and worries. The point is highlighted in the following statement:

> Teachers should consider how close they want to be to the students they are working with. Some students resent if the distance between them and the teacher is too small. For others, on the other hand, distance is a sign of coldness. (Harmer, 2001, p.15)

One can state that by being distant from their students, teachers maintain their dominance in all classroom procedures. Therefore, there will be a disequilibrium between teachers' authority and learners' autonomy that leads to minimised interactions between both partners. The other decisive variable about teachers' domineering roles and learners' activeness or passiveness is the criterion of audibility, as stated in:

> How we speak and what our voice sounds like have a crucial impact on classes. Clearly, teachers need to be audible. But, audibility cannot be divorced from voice quality: a rasping shout is always unpleasant. Teachers do not have to shout to be

audible. In fact, in most classrooms, there is a danger of the teacher's voice being too loud. (Harmer, 2001, pp.16-17)

Teachers' voice has a significant influence on their relations with their learners. The louder the voice is, the further the teacher is and the opposite. Learners should be careful when talking to their teachers in a loud voice. Moreover, they feel a sense of intimacy with a lower voice.

## *Monotonous Learning as a Consequence of Authority*

When a teacher spoon-feeds his learners, they become passive. In all cases, they become enslaved to their teacher's will, as they just digest the ready-made information provided by the lecturer without any sign of criticism. The case is well highlighted in that " More students work at storing the deposits, less they develop the critical consciousness and they accept the passive role imposed on them" (Freire, 1972, p. 47). The previously stated situation leads to banning learners' initiative and silencing students by making them more reliant on their teacher. Teachers do not give space for learners' active participation and voluntary work. The consequence is that learners' dependence on their teacher unfolds in the classroom atmosphere and leads to an absence of creativity. Therefore, learners' role as salutary ignorants prevails.

## *Definition of Autonomy*

Learners' autonomy is defined as follows: "The ability to take charge of one's learning" (Holec, 1988, p. 03). To take charge of the learning process means responsibility for every aspect or element of the classroom environment. This process implies consulting learners about what and how to learn, their needs and objectives.

## *Learner-Centered Classrooms as Part of Autonomy*

Within a learner-centered classroom or autonomous learning, students are more active by playing new roles, indicating their involvement as participants in the classroom environment. The matter implies acknowledging learners as the most important people around whom every single step or procedure rotates. It means learners dominate the scene with guidance from the teacher. Acting as a guide means interposing to clarify confusions or complete the incomplete. The idea is maintained in the following statement:

As a teacher, I see my role as being twofold. One is yes, I am teaching, but I feel my other very important role is to assist learners in the management of their learning. We have to prepare them so that their learning continues beyond the length of the course. (Nunan, 1991, p. 185)

No one denies that if autonomy is introduced again within the learning process, teachers are required to let part of their authority or control over the classroom for their learners. Learners should be active participants and share all procedures and tasks with their teacher as a partnership for the teaching/learning process. Then, a teacher should work on promoting learners' efforts and voluntary work as part of their autonomy exhibition. So, the teacher is an agent of change with certain flexibility. This ingredient enables the teacher to show positivity towards learners' maturity to hold control over their learning. Learners should be encouraged in their initiative to be a source of knowledge rather than consuming it.

Teachers can provide learners with sufficient space for learners to be autonomous. They can also provide their learners with a positive feeling toward being autonomous by embracing the change of their previous roles in the classroom. Learners should play new active roles as researchers and self-assessors by employing the necessary tenets to search for knowledge and face challenges to cope with the contextual use of language to solve problems and adapt to

unexpected situations, as noted: "in addition to the distributed control and the sharing of information, studies pointed to several elements which play a role in the emergence of autonomy, like space, place, feelings and embodiment, change, and imagination" (Murray, 2020, p.106). Students should possess the necessary skills to use the information in different circumstances by adapting before adopting the prerequisite knowledge to face new cases.

Reid (1995) claimed that teachers and learners should work together as the teaching style is required to meet the learning patterns. In this case, it becomes the teachers' task to offer different techniques for learners to exhibit their efforts. One should not deny the necessity of an interactive process that is presented as: "the interactive process occurs as a pattern of behaviors. The behaviors are formed by combining our cognitive, conative, and affective tendencies. These tendencies converge to form the basis of our thought processes, mode of action, and feelings" (Johnston, 1996, p. 36).

One can deduce that there is a need for interactive cognition (information processing), conation, and affectation (self-esteem and self-confidence). Another criterion that is very important for promoting learner autonomy is motivation. The idea is made clear in the following statement: "Only motivated and confident students are likely to take charge of their learning" (Scharle & Szabo, 2000, p. 48). Kimura (2022) is another scholar who concluded that "one way to encourage autonomy may be to develop students' motivation to learn" (p.376). This statement emphasises motivation as a crucial procedure to foster learner autonomy.

An undeniable influential motive influencing autonomy development is the support from the entourage, as far as the administration is concerned. This requirement is well interpreted: " Of course, another possibility is that faculty want to give students more autonomy but lack tools for doing" ( Cullen & Oppenheimer, 2024, p.08). If learners are offered the right supportive environment, they will be motivated to be autonomous, and vice versa. Another important variable that is so efficient is learners' affective state, as when the psychological side is taken into consideration by teachers in dealing with learners. The second one is a change in beahviors as learners' practices thrive with guidance from the teacher and control over them. The third factor that influences learners' autonomy progress is the set of detriments against students' autonomy that should be uprooted. Number four is the external motivation and support from the surroundings. The idea is mentioned in the following statement. In this regard, it is claimed that "four focal factors are related to the development of learner autonomy, these being: learners' affective state and regulation, learners' behavioral change, learners' constraints, and external push and support"(Tung & Huang, 2022, p. 348).

### *Symptoms of Autonomous Learning*

When learners are autonomous, social learning becomes a key learning criterion for cooperation and exchange of what and how to learn. Learners engage in a thinking process while learning. They discuss and negotiate the knowledge they face. Henry Holec managed to a large extent to define the concept of autonomy in learning. Nevertheless, he could not come up with what was pointed out in "The nature of the cognitive capacities underlying effective self-management of learning" (Benson, 2011, p. 49).

Meta-cognitive quality for learners is considered to be an indispensable ingredient in learning, autonomously monitoring as highlighted in the following piece: "Autonomy is displayed both in the way the learner learns and in the way he or she transfers what has been learned to wider contexts" (Little, 2003, p.4). Autonomous learning is concerned most with learning transfer, which is not restricted to what they are learning within the school walls. Learning is a sort of continuity at the outset of school. The process implies learners' ability to

make use of the knowledge they acquired inside the school in their real life or daily practices in their social life. The process is not about shaping a good learner, but rather about a future-qualified person who is capable of facing challenges and coping with probable difficult situations. When assimilating knowledge construction with the learning process, learners become free and capable of monitoring their learning, as stressed: "All genuinely successful learning is in the end autonomous" (Benson, 2011, p. 40).

As a learning ingredient, autonomy is a set of accumulated habits gained through experiences and previous sufficient exposure to challenges that arise the tendency to do things by one's efforts as a sign of confidence as pointed by " (Hiver, 2022, p. 06) in" autonomy may thus be a function of initial environmental conditions, such as early learning experiences.

In addition to learners' awareness, Ellis and Sinclair (1999) highlighted that language awareness, learning process awareness, and social awareness are meant to be developed in tandem with students' metacognitive awareness for better achievements (p. 85).

Other scholars highlighted a crucial point that is about the contribution of classmates in fostering each other's learning autonomy if they share the same interests and objectives when saying: "Just a teacher can support learner's autonomy, so can a peer. This is especially true in those cases in which learners interact with peers who have similar interests and goals" (Mynard & Shelton-Strong, 2022, p. 39).

## Methodology

Teachers-learners' daily performances within an autonomous learning process at the university are the concern of the current research. The option of a case study is set as the most adequate research pattern. In this respect, the researcher used an analytic descriptive method. This option requires two tools of research, which are: a questionnaire delivered to learners and an interview conducted with a teacher.

### *Participants*

The random sampling of this research comprises 100 first-year Master's didactics students of English at Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret for the academic year 2023-2024, with different ages and genders. As previously mentioned, 100 respondents were asked to fill out the questionnaire. The reason behind choosing this sample is that these students dig deeper into language use. They have voluntarily chosen to explore English and be future practitioners as they have been learning didactics as a module. Now, they are doing it as a speciality.

Another reason is that Master 1 students of didactics are future teachers who are offered better choices. Then, the researcher interviewed the teacher in charge of didactics.

### *Research Instruments*

As stated before, the researcher used two different research instruments; First, conducting a semi-structured interview with an EFL teacher to elicit attitudes and aptitudes for both teachers and learners. Second, a questionnaire for students to drill for their perception of autonomy and readiness to exercise it. Learners' opinions about autonomy and their aptitude to be autonomous are the axis around which all questions rotate. The tool comprises close-ended questions formulated for informants to choose one item among the stated choices. The researcher set a group of mixed questions for students to tick one of the suggested responses and justify their choice. The last rubric in the questionnaire is a set of open-ended questions for

the respondents to express their opinions about the subject under investigation.

*Piloting*

The dilemma of classroom-centeredness between teachers and learners is the concern of the current investigation. The research is carried out attentively to collect reliable data that can help give room for change in both teachers' daily performances. As a piloting step, the questionnaire was handed to students during a lecture. This process concerns thinking deeply about the investigation tool to avoid any sort of confusion. The questionnaire responses were collected during the period of exams. The step aims to ensure sufficient response for the validity of the sample representativeness.

Concerning the interview, the interviewer kept a close eye on the interviewee to compare his body language with the verbal responses. The interviewer was neutral about the respondent's answers and showed efficiency for the interviewee to feel comfortable. The researcher tried to encourage the respondents by nodding their heads. The other technique that proved its usefulness is probing. The researcher made the respondents' responses the basis for reformulating his questions so that he could gather valuable data and provide a communicative continuum.

## Results

The following step discusses the research findings in terms of implications and reasons behind the lack of autonomous learning in the university setting.

### *Findings of the Questionnaire*

The questionnaire comprises a set of queries revolving around the depiction of learners' aptitude and readiness for being autonomous.

### *Item1. Students' mastery of English*

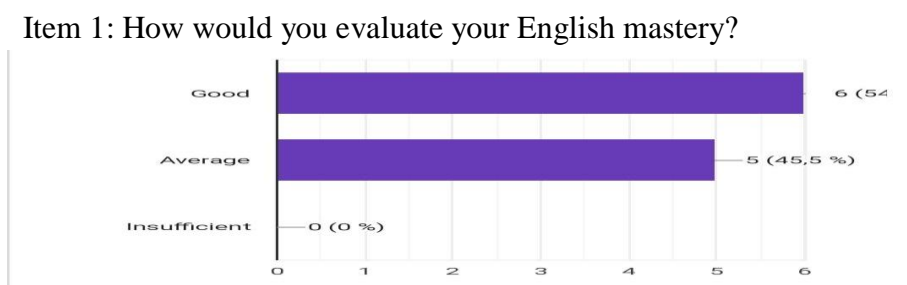Item 1: How would you evaluate your English mastery?



*Figure 1.* Mastery of English

According to the above bar graph, more than half of the respondents (54.5%) admitted their adequate mastery of English. Forty-five percent of the respondents showed that they are average in English. They have been given enough exposure to the English language throughout their learning process.

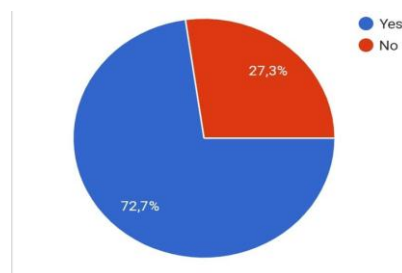*Item 2.  Are you acquainted with the notion of learner autonomy?*



*Figure 2.*  Acquaintance with autonomy in learning

From the above pie chart, one can deduce that the majority (72.7%) of the learners are acquainted with "learner autonomy" as the process of holding responsibility over their learning, and only 27.3% of the students admitted their unfamiliarity with it. Results confirm the majority exhibition of awareness of the quality of being autonomous. The reason is that it is part of the syllabus of the didactics module in the third year of study for a Bachelor's degree.

*Item 3: Which of the following options is better for learning?*
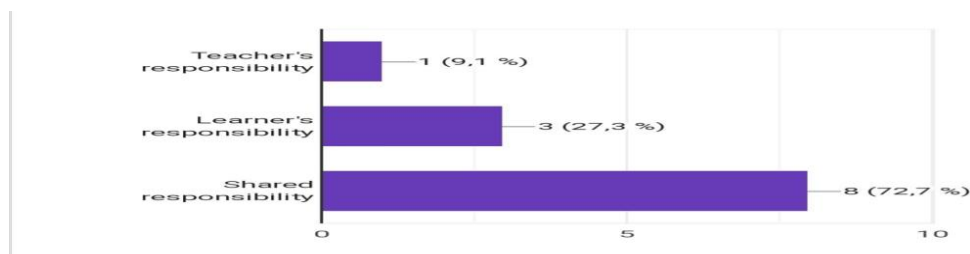


*Figure 3.*  Attitude towards responsibility for learning

While examining the graph, at first glance, we see that most respondents (72.7%) consider the learning process as a partnership of teachers and students. One-third of the students admitted their control over the learning process, and 9.1% of the respondents opted for the teacher as the only one responsible for classes and the trustworthy learning process. These responses are the result of habitual subjection to teachers' domineering role over knowledge delivery in the course of their learning process.

*Item 4: Do you happen to be a self-directed learner*
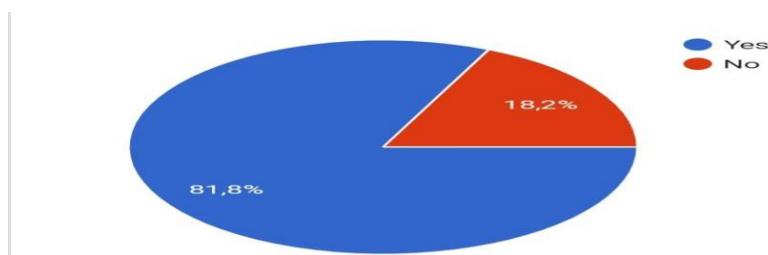


*Figure 4.* Self-directed learning

As shown in the above pie chart, the majority of students acknowledged being self-directed learners. Eighteen point two percent of the respondents indicated an avoidance behavior to be a

self-directed learner; The point is that learners trust their teacher, and see him as the knowledgeable one on whom they should depend. Teachers do not give learners a chance to exhibit their skills.

*Item 5: What is independent learning, according to you?*
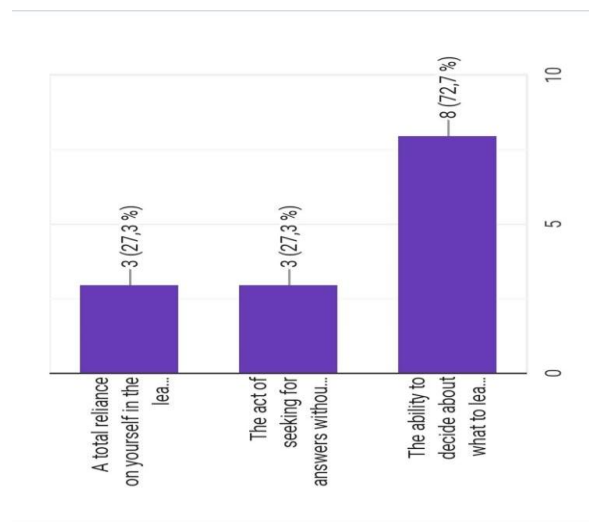


*Figure 5*. Independent learning

The majority (72.7%) think that independent learning is freedom from the teacher and self-reliant in their learning process. On the contrary, (27. 3%) opted for figuring out answers without depending on the teacher. Twenty-seven point three percent perceived independent learning as the act of taking their own decisions about the learning material, as a sort of self-reliance. The perception is the result of the dominant idea about autonomy as freedom from the teacher. This view about independent learning results from learners' fear of being left alone without guidance.

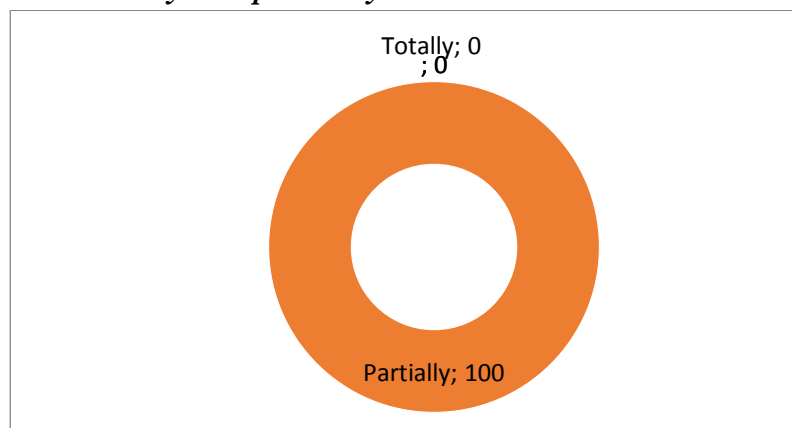*Item 6: To what extent do you depend on your teacher?*



*Figure 6*. Dependence on the teacher

Concerning the above figure, one can state that none of the students exhibited dependence on the teacher. The situation can be a positive sign for learners' initiative to be self-reliant and a foundation stone for being autonomous about their learning process by being a source of knowledge and not blind consumers.
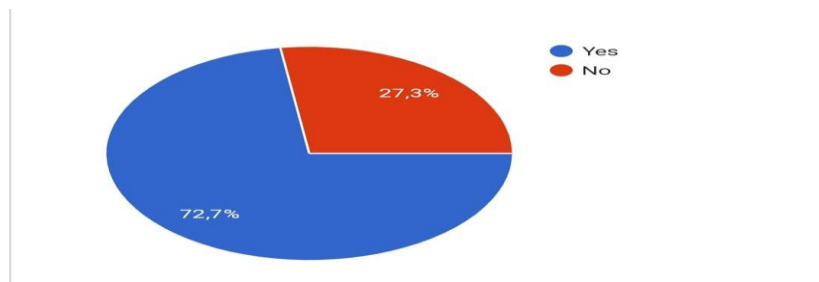
*Item 7: Which of the following roles do you play?*



*Figure 7.* Favourite roles

The above findings indicate that the majority (72.7%) acknowledge that their teacher gives them opportunities for an active role in the classroom as he shares the management with them. The share of (27.3%) stated their neglect by the teacher as they are made passive. The situation implies silencing learners because teachers are doubtful about learners' ability to share the teaching/learning process with them.

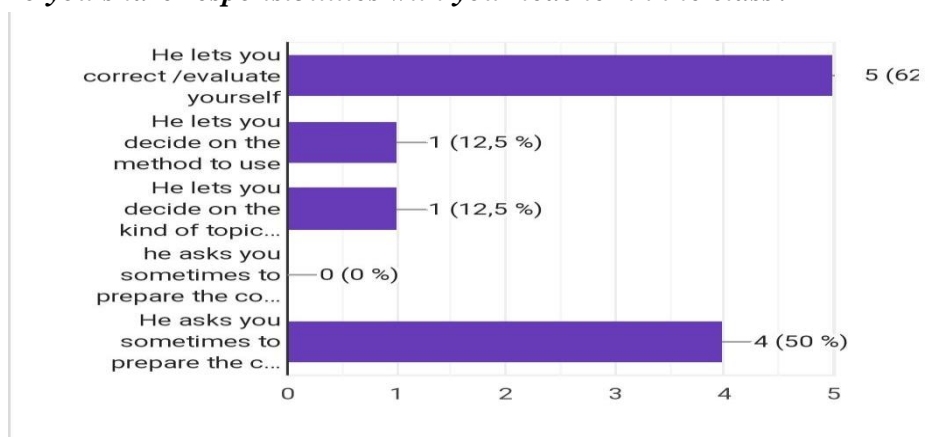*Item 8: Do you share responsibilities with your teacher in the class?*



*Figure 8.* Teacher-student' partnership

According to the figure above, 62% of the respondents acknowledge teacher-student allowance self-evaluation. Twelve percent of them acknowledge that their teacher consults them about the method applied to learning. The same percentage for sharing course preparation, which represents a lack of trust. The other positivity towards learners' autonomy reactivation is that (12.5%) of them acknowledged their teacher's consultation about topics of interest. The problem is that some learners do not dare to ask their teacher about what they like. Dealing with universalities is also a technique the teacher employs when dealing with generalities.

***Item 9: Which of the following  roles do you perform in the classroom***
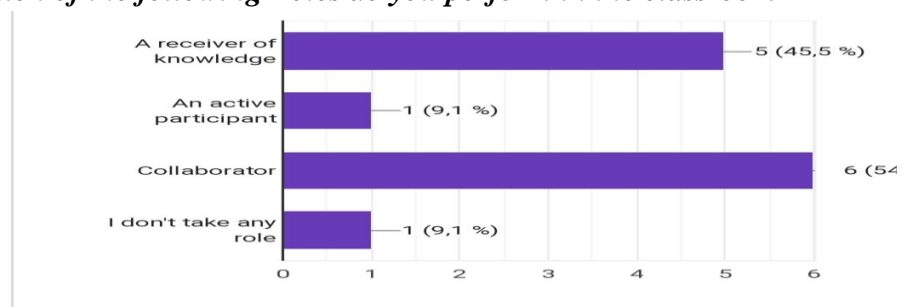


*Figure 9.* Students' roles in the classroom

Data in the bar graph confirms that (54.4%) of learners exercise partnership with their teacher through collaboration. Forty-five point five percent highlighted suffering from passiveness in the classroom as a consequence of marginalisation and lack of trust in their teacher. The minority (9.1%) of learners admitted total passiveness without being offered any role. Concerning learners' active role in the classroom, only a minority (9.1%) seem as active participants.

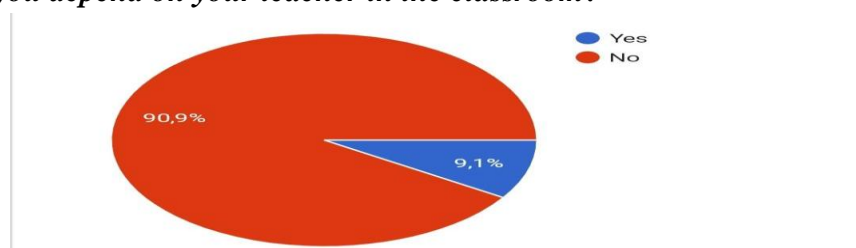***Item 10: Do you depend on your teacher in the classroom?***



*Figure 10.* Dependence on classroom information

Findings in the figure above highlight that most (90.9%) respondents expressed their rejection of total reliance on teachers' knowledge delivery in the classroom. The present attitude is justified by students' efforts outside the university as researchers. Nine point eleven percent acknowledged their total reliance on their teacher.

***Analysis of the Interview Findings***

***Item 01: What can you say about learner autonomy?***

The interviewee's responses provide us with deeper insights about autonomy as an approach that enhances learners' total or partial control and monitoring of their learning process. The interviewee emphasises the type of method and content to learn in classrooms.

***Item 02: How important is learners' autonomy in the university setting?***

The interviewee considers learners' autonomy an indispensable learning ingredient, with its necessity for learners to be more involved and consulted about shaping the teaching/learning process. This is the foundation stone of an autonomous learning process by raising motivation and awareness to be autonomous learners. The process implies an urgent consideration of autonomy as an essential conductive means for effective learning. The respondent added that autonomy is an adequate criterion for making learners more competent and raising their self-reliance and self-esteem. The case can lead to giving learners more room to hold control over their learning. At this stage, learners will have a passion for evolution by breaking down routines through what and how to learn and discover more ways to solve problems related to learning.

### Item 03: Are EFL Students ready to embrace learner autonomy?

According to the interviewee, Master 1 learners of English are not as autonomous as they should be. Excellent students show great aptitude to be autonomous in performing self–study tasks and voluntary efforts as an initiative. The action results from students' old belief in their teacher as the competent authority that controls all classroom procedures and knowledge delivery. The result is that learners are inclined to teachers as the most knowledgeable people.

### Item 04: How do EFL students appreciate learners' autonomy?

The interviewee emphasised the need for pedagogical participants or instructors, as well as decision-makers in the educational system, to acknowledge learners' achievements and praise their efforts by offering more motives to be autonomous. As a sample step, teachers' flexibility is required to provide space for learners' initiative and voluntary work through motivation and reward. It's high time teachers reduce their authority over the teaching/learning process procedures by expanding room for learners' personal efforts, projects, workshops, or homework. Teachers' role as a guide in the classroom should be maintained.

### Item 05: How efficient are project works for learner autonomy?

The interviewee emphasises the pivotal role of project work as a procedure in fostering learners' autonomy to a large extent. The action is an efficient and practical procedure closely related to natural or daily frequent practices for learners. This step is significantly practical for the learning process. Learners are in a situation where they face their real worries and can act as problem solvers. Once autonomous, learners become equipped with the necessary skills to bridge the gap between the theoretical basis of learning and its practical one by using what they have learned to cope with the frequent and real situations in their lives. This case indicates that learners make more efforts to prepare themselves for integration into society as active citizens.

### Item 6: What procedures can foster learners' autonomy?

Home and family roles are essential in shaping the autonomous construct of learners. They are the basis of learning for the quality of autonomy. These challenges are the concern of the interviewee. He insisted on the parents' crucial role in sowing the seed of autonomy in their children and preparing them to embrace it in their future school life. From a perspective, it is the parents' responsibility of the initiative to initiate bringing up their children with the quality of autonomy. The quality should be consolidated in children's minds as a principle of life and prosperity.

### Item 07: Can the teaching/learning environment embrace autonomy implementation?

The interviewee's responses confirmed the teaching/learning environment's resistance against autonomy implementation. Teachers are doubtful about learners' maturity to be autonomous. They have experienced learners' avoidance through total reliance on ready-made knowledge presented by lecturers. This is the consequence of learners' high fidelity to their teacher as the most trusted and reliable source of information due to their experience. The situation is a result of worries among teachers, including learners' immaturity in defining their needs and objectives. The reality is that learners have a short vision about how and what to learn. So, they cannot be involved in a long-term perspective about the teaching/learning process that is beyond their reach due to short and limited experience in the educational setting. Evaluation is another worry among teachers since learners do not hold the necessary qualifications to assess and evaluate their learning correctly.

## Discussion

The findings of the questionnaire indicate that learners are not entirely dependent on their teacher. There are signs of learners' willingness to rely on themselves to make personal efforts, which are learners' initiative to be autonomous. Most importantly, teachers are doubtful about learners' maturity to hold control over their learning.

The implication is that by being partially self-reliant, learners try to gain the teacher's confidence in their maturity to hold control over the learning process. The accumulated insights highlight a sense of self-directed learning. Most importantly, most students perceive the learning process as a reciprocal one based on the exchange of roles between the teacher and their students as far as being a researcher and knowledge provider is concerned.

Learners emphasise the need for cooperation as a vital ingredient in improving the teaching/learning process. We can say that there is a strong need to break down the routine and introduce innovation in daily classroom practices. The idea was tackled by (Tung & Huang, 2022, p. 348) when stating that learners need external push and support from teachers and other educational participants that leads to a change in behavior. The issue is well manifested in learners' rejection of a total reliance on their teacher's spoon-feeding. At the same time, learners show signs of willingness or struggle to be autonomous, exhibit what they can do, and show the teacher that they merit his confidence. Students try to convince the teacher to offer room for their voluntary efforts to manage classroom procedures and elements.

Some points in the questionnaire are considered crucial to amend the current learning situation. First, reducing learners' reliance on the teacher by giving them room for their initiative to act as researchers. The teacher is required to equip learners with techniques of research. He should also provide them with some guidelines to direct their efforts throughout their search for knowledge. This process relies much on educationalists and decision makers who seem to marginalize any supportive action for both teachers and learners to practice their autonomous learning as stated in "Our evaluation of resources from over a dozen prominent university teaching and learning centers revealed almost no advice for implementing autonomy-supportive policies in undergraduate classrooms" ( Cullen & Oppenheimer, 2024, p. 45). This finding confirms the aforementioned issue in our literature review.

The use of a semi-structured interview is because it enables the interviewer to introduce any changes as far as questions are concerned. This type of interview leaves space for dealing with any probable 'snafus. ' The interviewee is comfortable when he states his worries, opinions, and justifies them. We can state that open-ended questions are the most effective tenets for gathering qualitative information about attitudes and perspectives.

The teacher was recommended to answer seven questions (see Appendix B). The first four questions concern teachers' attitudes about learners' autonomy implementation in the university setting. The following question concerns the interviewee's perception of the project and its effectiveness in promoting learners' autonomy. Number six targeted collecting information about students' independence from their teachers. Question number seven explored the learning situation in the Algerian university setting in terms of being qualified and ready to embrace the quality of autonomy in English language teaching.

Teachers are highly recommended for their flexibility and for trusting their learners. Teachers should encourage learners to do things gradually, even if mistaken initially. Tolerating learners' mistakes here becomes an indispensable characteristic for teachers.

## Pedagogical Implications

The large sample reflects representativeness that leads to the applicability of the investigation insights to more extensive groups as a prior advantage. As a case study of autonomy in a non-particular classroom, sociocultural and personal elements outside this constrained environment were considered. Some of the problematic areas are based on learners' self-reports and can be biased.

Some possible factors (motivation, personality, attitudes, aptitude, etc.) that could influence learners' initiative to be autonomous were looked at in detail. Being autonomous could not be compared to a baseline or control situation. Because subjective responses as attitudes, were put under quantitative measurement. Consequently, several parts of the findings were interpreted. Certain factors, namely: anxiety, frustration and willingness, were also investigated as essential variables that influence and determine the status of learners' autonomy.

## Conclusion

The current study explores teachers' attitudes toward autonomy as a learning ingredient and learners' aptitude to be autonomous. There is no doubt that autonomy is the most recent learning quality in the Algerian educational context. Thus, both partners (teachers and learners) should undergo psychological and informational recycling to embrace the learner's autonomy. Furthermore, there should be severe procedures to eliminate the detrimental impeding of learners' autonomy reactivation. It is worth stating that some hypotheses are confirmed. The matter concerns the teacher's hesitation to give room for learners' extensive participation and involvement in the monitoring of the teaching/learning environment. Another emphasised hypothesis concerns learners' fear of being autonomous since they have been reliant on their teachers.

Consequently, learners face challenges in changing their knowledge about the diversity of learning styles into daily practices rather than just a theoretical background. The main factor behind this situation is the habitual spoon-feeding teaching process deep-rooted in the university setting. These symptoms have exhibited an urgent need for autonomy in the learning process. At this stage, the most efficient procedure is putting the teaching/learning elements and procedures in the hands of students. The same thing for teachers to make autonomy part of their daily performances. One should not deny the need for the immense efforts of all participants in the educational system to engage in this project. Teachers need to change their authoritative practices over what happens in the classrooms, which leads to the exclusion of learners.

Finally, one can state that the findings of the research emphasised teachers' neglect of autonomy as an essential criterion for learners' involvement in the teaching/learning process. The situation pushed the majority of Master's students of English to exhibit rejection of autonomy for several reasons, namely: First, teachers' attitude toward autonomy by depriving learners of the initiative to control their learning process. Second, there is the absence of motivating tasks to encourage students' autonomy. Then, the university that neglects autonomous learning is required to provide motives for teachers and learners to embrace this essential criterion.

## Recommendations

Being autonomous in learning has become a necessary target for educationalists and researchers. There is a matrix of ingredients that should be changed into accurate practices to foster autonomous learning as far as motivation is concerned. It is evident that if learners are sufficiently motivated, they can take the initiative to become autonomous. The point is that teachers should use their diverse motivational techniques as a foundation procedure to encourage learners to exhibit what they can do. This procedure is emphasised by Chan et al. (2002) when stating that Motivation is vital either to impede or foster autonomy in learning (p. 262). Most importantly, learners should be subjected to more recycling opportunities to be acquainted with this learning criterion.

Another suggestion concerns maintaining the teacher's role to raise learners' interest in being responsible for their learning process. Most importantly, teachers should let down part of their authority for learners' initiative to be gradually involved in classroom management.

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### Declaration of AI Refined

This document has benefited from the application of AI-driven tools, including Grammarly and Scholar AI Chat, to refine its linguistic aspects. These tools were utilised to correct grammar and spelling and improve the overall writing style. It is acknowledged that the use of these technologies may introduce certain AI-generated linguistic patterns. However, the core intellectual content, data interpretation, and conclusions presented remain the sole work of the authors.

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The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest related to the research, findings, or recommendations presented in this paper. All conclusions drawn are independent and unbiased.

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## Appendices
## Appendix A
## Learners' Questionnaire

This questionnaire collects data about learners' perception of learners' autonomy and their readiness to be autonomous.

Please answer the following questions.

1- What is your level of English?

    Good ☐         Average ☐         Bad ☐

2- Have you heard of " learner autonomy"?

    Yes ☐                     No ☐

If yes, what can you say about it?

……………………………………………………………………………………………

3- Do you think that learning is:

- The teacher's responsibility ☐
- Learner's responsibility ☐
- Shared responsibility ☐

4- Are you a self-directed learner (who relies on himself in learning)?

    Yes ☐                     No ☐

5- What is independent learning, according to you?

- A total reliance on yourself in the learning ☐

- The act of seeking answers without the teacher □
- The ability to decide what to learn □

6- To what extent are you dependent on your teacher?

     Fully □           Partially □

7- Does your teacher offer you any responsibilities inside the class?

     Yes □           No □

If yes, it is because

- He lets you evaluate yourself □
- He lets you decide on the method to use □
- He lets you decide on the kind of topics/activities to use □
- He sometimes asks you to prepare the course and present it □
- Others: ………………………………………………………………

8- Which role do you take during the sessions?

- A receiver of knowledge □
- An active participant □
- Collaborator □

9- Do you depend on only the classroom information?

     Yes □           No □

If "no", what other sources do you use?

                         Thank you for your collaboration

## Appendix B
## Semi-structured interview

1. What does learner autonomy mean to you?

2. Is autonomy essential to learning the English language at the University? Why? Why not?

3. Are EFL students autonomous?

4. How do you see EFL students' attitude towards learning English independently inside/outside the classroom?

5. Do project works help EFL students to be autonomous? If not, how?

6. How can students be encouraged to become autonomous in and outside the classroom?

7. Does the teaching/learning environment help or hinder autonomy? In what ways?