People's Democratic Republic of Algeria

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

8 MAI 1945 UNIVERSITY / GUELMA	جامعة 8 ماي 1945 \ قالمة
FACULTY OF LETTERS AND LANGUAGES	كلية الآداب و اللغات
DEPARTMENT OF LETTERS & ENGLISH LANGUAGE	قسم الآداب و اللغة الانجليزية

Option: Linguistics

THE IMPACT OF SCAFFOLDING STRATEGY ON PROMOTING EFL LEARNERS' AUTONOMY

A Case Study of First Year LMD Students at the Department of Letters and English Language, University of 8 Mai 1945- Guelma

---

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Letters and English Language in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master in Anglophone Language, Literature,

and Civilization.

Submitted by: **Supervisor:**

BENYOUB Hana.   Ms. SERHANI Meriem.

BOARD OF EXAMINERS

Chairman: Mr. CHETTIBI Mohammed Walid.   **MAB**   **University of 8 Mai 1945- Guelma**

Supervisor: Ms. SERHANI Meriem.   **MAA**   **University of 8 Mai 1945- Guelma**

Examiner: Ms. TABOUCHE Imene.   **MAA**   **University of 8 Mai 1945- Guelma**

June 2017

Dedication

I dedicate this humble work to:

My beloved family, particularly my parents **Benyoub Noureddine** & **Belahouane Dalila.**

My dear brother and sisters: **Abderraouf, Aya & Doua**

My friends without exception

& everyone who supported

and believed in me.

May God bless you all.

Benyoub Hana.

Acknowledgements

Abstract

The present study aims at investigating the importance of scaffolding strategy in raising students' awareness about autonomous learning, and teachers' readiness to implement this strategy in English as a foreign language classes. Students of English as a foreign language are facing different challenges that make their learning not efficient; a major problem is the lack of using effective teaching strategies that could raise students' skills and develop their independent learning. Thus, we hypothesize that there could be a correlation between using scaffolding strategy and promoting learners' autonomy. To put it differently, implementing the instructional scaffolding strategy may lead to fostering students' autonomous learning. To prove this hypothesis, a quantitative descriptive study has been conducted. It involves two samples: First year students and their teachers. Two questionnaires have been conducted; a different questionnaire for each sample to collect information about the actual use of scaffolding strategy and learner autonomy. The analysis of the gathered data from both questionnaires has revealed that students over rely on their teachers, which means that they are not autonomous. Also, it has shown that teachers frequently use scaffolds in teaching and that they really attempt to promote their students' autonomy. The results of this study have confirmed that a linear relationship exists between applying scaffolding strategy appropriately and the promotion of autonomy. Thus, it is recommended to raise teachers' awareness about the significance of scaffolding strategy in foreign language teaching and learning; i.e. to its crucial role for developing students' skills and orienting them towards autonomous learning.

List of Tables

List of Figures

List of Abbreviations

CEMLP	**Council of Europe's Modern Languages Project**
CRAPEL	**Centre de Recherches et d'Applications Pédagogiques en Langues**
EFL	**English as a Foreign Language**
EL	**English Language**
FL	**Foreign Language**
FLT	**Foreign Language Teaching**
LMD	**License, Master, Doctorate**
MKO	**More Knowledgeable Other**
ZAD	**The Zone of Actual Development**
ZCD	**The Zone of Current Development**
ZPD	**The Zone of Proximal Development**

Contents

Introduction

Learner-centred approach is highly emphasized in foreign language teaching, where learners are viewed as active participants. In other words, they are more autonomous and more motivated and engaged in the process of learning, i.e. they are responsible for their own learning. This fact made autonomy a key element in achieving language proficiency.

Autonomous learners are likely to be aware of their learning styles and the suitable strategies that fit their styles; to improve their skills; to set their learning goals; so they become more creative and self-directed learners. Therefore, teachers' role is very crucial to foster learners' independent learning, since there are different techniques and methods that have a direct or indirect impact on activating autonomy.

From a cognitive perspective and based on sociocultural theories, there are several strategies that develop thinking and complex processes of the individuals' minds. In this respect, teachers are recommended to use such strategies to develop learners' cognitive skills (involving the use of language in communication, solving problems through logic and reasoning, retrieving stored information from memory and others) through promoting their autonomous learning. Consequently, teachers have to consider a variety of aspects for the selection of effective strategies, such as individual differences, learners' needs and the drawn objectives to achieve better learning outcomes. In our dissertation, we will investigate the effectiveness of applying the scaffolding teaching strategy in English as a foreign language context, and its impact on promoting learners autonomy.

1. Statement of the Problem

In teaching EFL, teachers need to provide students with some specific instructional support in order to help them accomplish a certain complex task by their own. Those instructional scaffolds should be used appropriately, i.e. when, what and how to use them in order to decrease ambiguity and enhance the cognitive skills of students. So, the role of the teacher in this context is to use the effective strategies by providing temporary help and facilitations to orient students towards autonomous learning. Moreover, some teachers may use ineffective strategies in teaching, so, students understanding would be low as well as their learning progress, which will affect negatively their self-directed learning. In other words, teachers often do not use effective techniques. For instance they are supposed to adopt a useful strategy like scaffolding, especially when students are faced with hard and unfamiliar tasks. If not, they would have difficulty, anxiety and hesitation about how to deal with that given task. And here is the responsibility of teachers to take into account the most influential teaching strategies to enhance students' comprehension and promote their autonomous learning. Consequently, teachers are required to use effective teaching strategies and techniques which have great emphasis for their adoption in FLT, but the problematic issue is whether teachers are aware of the importance of such strategies and their impact on learners' autonomy or not.

2. Aims of the Study

Teaching strategies are very important in education. Autonomy is a central skill in language teaching. Thus, there is a high emphasis on using the most suitable strategies in the right context to establish a successful learning atmosphere, the matter that would have an effective influence on directing students towards autonomous learning. Hence,

the aim of this research is three-fold:

1. To know the readiness of teachers for using scaffolding to reach autonomy.

2. To emphasise the importance of instructional scaffolding strategy in FLT in relation with autonomy.

3. To raise students' awareness about autonomous learning.

3. Research Hypothesis and Questions

Scaffolding teaching strategy is one among the most important strategies in the process of language teaching and learning, because it is very effective in developing the cognitive skills of students and consequently it could influence their language proficiency and autonomous learning. So, we hypothesize that:

- If scaffolding strategy is applied effectively in FLT, then learners' autonomy will be promoted. (H_1)

The null hypothesis implies that there is no relation between the two variables; i.e. scaffolding strategy and learners' autonomy.

- If scaffolding strategy is applied effectively in FLT, then learners' autonomy will not be promoted. (H_0)

Hence, our research addresses the following main question:

- Could scaffolding strategy promote FL learners' autonomy, and so their language proficiency/ academic achievement?

4. Research Methodology and Design

The titles below show the followed plan to conduct this study:

4.1. Research Method and Data Gathering Tools

This research was conducted through the quantitative descriptive method which focuses on objectivity in making the statistical analysis of the collected data through one or more research tools. In order to test the hypothesis, two questionnaires were administered to both students and teachers. From where a sufficient wide range of data provided us with information that was analyzed carefully in order to get credible results about the effectiveness of scaffolding strategy on promoting learner's autonomy.

4.2. Population of the Study

Our study was conducted on First year LMD students at Letters and English Language Department of 8 Mai 1945 University (Guelma). This choice is due to the fact that the first year in learning EFL is the starting point to orient learners towards independent learning and activating their autonomy. Since it is a sensitive year for them, it is important to study their case. In addition, teachers of this level were involved too, because they are concerned with the implementation of scaffolding strategy and fostering their students' autonomy.

5. Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation is divided into three chapters. The first chapter is about Autonomous learning, it includes background history of autonomy, its definition, what makes an autonomous learner, the importance of autonomy and approaches related to autonomy. Whereas, the second chapter is about Scaffolding strategy, it contains the

origins of scaffolding strategy, its definition, its types, as well as its advantages and disadvantages. And finally, the third chapter, Field investigation, contains the analysed data from both students' and teachers' questionnaires and followed by an interpretation and summary of the findings. In addition, recommendations and limitations of the research are proposed.

CHAPTER ONE: LEARNER AUTONOMY

Introduction

Learner autonomy has been the concern of many scholars and researchers over decades. This notion has been marked as controversial in the literature, only because of the variety of views and perspectives in this respect. Thus, different studies and researches have been conducted to investigate its significance in the field of education; and their findings revealed the importance of that concept in developing learning. Accordingly, learner autonomy became a fundamental concern in FL learning, in which autonomous learners are likely regarded as good and successful ones. However, to foster autonomous learning some influential factors need to be taken into consideration by the teacher whose role is quietly effective.

This chapter will shed lights on the concept of autonomy in language learning. Hence, it discusses ways of promoting learner autonomy, its levels, its importance and features of autonomous learners.

1.1. History of Autonomy

Centuries ago, the notion of autonomy was recognized specially in the field of philosophy, for instance, Dryden (2010) argued that the works of Kant (1787) *The Critique of Practical Reason* and John Stuart Mill (1859) *On Liberty* were the basis for the development of the idea of moral and personal autonomy. This latter is one of the major human needs in life, since from childhood humans show individual attempts and dispositions for achieving their goals. As mentioned in Benson (2011, p. 27), autonomy is not recent in the field of education. Thanks to the educational reform that the concept of autonomy has developed for the sake of promoting independent learning. In this regard, Benson illustrated with Galileo's well-known saying that: "you cannot teach a man anything; you can only help him find it within himself". Not so far, Rousseau as

well had common beliefs in this concern, focusing on the learner's responsibility for learning as the key idea of autonomy (Benson, 2011).

In the contemporary time, the beginning of autonomous language learning roots back to the 1970s. The departure was originated with the work done with adult learners by Henry Holec, who was the leader of the Centre de Recherches et d'Applications Pédagogiques en Langues (CRAPEL). This latter is the outcome of the Council of Europe's Modern Languages Project (CEMLP) (Smith, 2008; Benson, 2007). Another significant figure that helped the foundation of autonomy's theory and practice in language learning is Knowles, who conducted research on adult self-direct learning in 1975, claiming that the process of education for adults depends on accepting responsibility for all the decisions in their learning (Benson, 2001).

During the 1980's, it was not easy to provide an apparent definition for the concept of autonomy in the field of language learning. This problematic issue is referred to as "identity crisis" (Benson, 2011, p. 14). In general, learner autonomy was only thought to be equal to independent learning. At that time, individualization was another notion in parallel with autonomy, in which both concepts emphasized learners' needs. Individualization was regarded as a part of self-direct learning. At first, learners are to define their needs and learn for that reason. Then, individualization changed its principle giving the teacher the opportunity to take decisions instead of learners. Consequently, individualization was highly criticized because this case learners lack the most influential factor for the development of autonomy which is "freedom of choice" (Riley, 1986, p.26). Likewise, autonomous learners argued that collaborative work and interdependence are much more important than individualization.

Dickinson (1987) made a distinction between autonomy and self-direct learning; in which in the former, learners are completely responsible for taking decisions about

everything concerning their learning and their realizations. Whereas, in the latter, learners do accept being responsible for their learning decisions, but not compulsory implementing them. Therefore, to practice self-direct learning in a good manner, learners were provided with self-access language learning centers which encompass a variety of materials (Gardner & Miller, 1999). Accordingly, self-access learning was regarded as equivalent to autonomous learning, because it is assumed that autonomy is best achievable through self-access work. Hence, there was a great focus on conducting studies and research to improve the effectiveness of self-access centers. In this concern, Wright and Piper (1995, as cited in Ürün, 2013) made a project in which they equipped learners with well designed materials in order to develop strategies and skills to be able to manage their own learning independently.

Little (1991) provided definition to autonomy in which he described it as the new "buzz word" (p. 2) in language learning, because of the large interest about that concept in the beginning of the 1990's. At that time, Dam's (1995) work in the Danish school had a great role for developing autonomous language learning methods that achieved highly successful results. Also, his influential work helped in the transition of autonomous language learning from adult context to school context. Benson (2007) claimed that in the 21st century lights were highly shed on autonomy in which there was a boom in publications about it more than it was before. Kumaravadivelu (2003) divided autonomy into two parts. A narrow one dealing with approaches that focus on the pedagogical side of autonomy, that is to say; to help learners to learn. And the other is broad which emphasizes the idea that autonomy gives people more freedom and power. Farrell and Jacobs (2010) considered autonomy as necessary in language teaching and a basic goal in that field of FLT. Also, Ushioda (2011) had lots of works in this concern focusing on autonomous language learning and motivation.

1.2. Definition of Autonomy

Autonomy has always been a controversial concept; it encompassed a variety of definitions. As it is argued by Little (2003): "**Learner autonomy** "[emphasis in original]." is a problematic term because it is widely confused with self-instruction. It is also a slippery concept because it is notoriously difficult to define precisely" (Definitions, para. 1). Learner autonomy has been debated since its emergence in the field of education. For instance, scholars could not decide whether to consider it as a 'capacity' or a 'behavior', and is it about learner's 'responsibility' or learner's 'control'. Additionally, they could not draw its direction due to its correlation with psychology and politics, nor affirm the effectiveness of the integrated role of teacher autonomy in promoting learners' autonomy.

Gardner and Miller (1999) claimed that terms such autonomy in learning are difficult to define because of the different views of scholars in this respect. According to Benson (2012), the answer for the most difficult question 'what is autonomy in language learning?' is a matter of subjectivity from each one's perspective. In this context, Benson believed that autonomy is about the learner taking more control over the aims, purposes and ways in which the language is being learnt. The most working definition for autonomy in the field of education is that of Holec (1981): "learner autonomy is the ability to take charge of one's own directed learning" (p. 3). Mainly, 'ability' and 'capacity' are used interchangeably in Holec's definitions, in addition to 'take responsibility for' with 'take charge of' (as cited in Benson, 2007, p. 22). As a result, it is clear that autonomy is about the abilities and attitudes of learners towards their own learning which they develop gradually.

The focus of the concept of learner autonomy is threefold: the process of learning, the active role of the learner, and setting their own goals for learning (Farrell and

Jacobs, 2001). Consequently, autonomy is "an attribute of learners" (Dickinson 1987, p. 11). In this regard, Littlewood (1996) stressed the fact that learner's willingness and capacity to take control of his own learning differ from one student to another and from one context to another; as illustrated by Benson (2001, p. 47) who stated that autonomy is "multidimensional capacity that will take different forms for different individuals and even for the same individual in different contexts or at different times".

Littlewood (1996) assumed that willingness is the focal notion in autonomy which goes hand in hand with motivation to learn independently. As it is argued by Breen (1991) that learning is best achieved as long as learners make the initiative to learn by themselves at the first place (as cited in Benson, 2011). Littlewood (1996, p. 428) combined Little's and Holec's definitions in which he stated that an autonomous learner is the one who "has an independent capacity to make and carry out the choices which govern his or her actions". According to him, this capacity is associated with two factors: ability and willingness. The former consists of knowledge and skills, and the latter includes motivation and confidence. Those factors are influential to recognize autonomy in a given context. In this concern, Scharle and Szabó (2000, p. 2) stated that autonomy is "the freedom and ability to manage one's own affairs, which entails the right to make decisions as well", and they see that" In language teaching, teachers can provide all the necessary circumstances and input, but learning can only happen if learners are willing to contribute" (p. 4).

1.3. Promoting Learner Autonomy

Promoting learner autonomy is a central focus in the field of FL learning. Thus, the main concern is encouraging learners to acquire specific skills which help in fostering their abilities as independent learners. Holec (1981) set up some required aspects for

learners to promote their autonomy in language learning as follows: set goals, contents, methods and paces of their learning, in addition to monitoring its processes and assessing its results (as cited in Balçıkanlı, 2010). Similarly, on the general sense, Little (1991) stressed the necessity of developing ones' own abilities of independent working, reflective engagement and self-determination. That is to say, to promote autonomy in language learning, the learner must be encouraged to set up the directions of the learning process. Little (1994) and Chan (2003) called this as establishing a "personal agenda for learning" (as cited in Balçıkanlı, 2010, p. 90).

Studies on learner autonomy have shown that once the degree of learner responsibility and control is raised, self-determination level will be increased accordingly. And consequently, interferes in increasing motivation for developing autonomous learning (Chan, 2001). This implies the significant role of decision making as an influential factor to foster autonomy in language learning.

Edward Deci, an American social psychologist argued that autonomy is a major human need for the sake of achieving 'self-fulfilment'. In his view, Deci considered autonomy equally with "volitional in our actions" (Deci, 1996, p. 66; as cited in Little, 2010, p. 28); that is to say, to have a sense of independency from others. In formal contexts of learning, autonomy is seen as part of learners' cognitive system, and it is regarded as beneficial to develop this competence to be 'volitional' in learning which requires following a personal agenda. However, learners may not be aware of the notion of autonomy, therefore, developing 'conscious reflection' is necessary for implementing autonomy in learning.

Little (2010, p. 29) proposed the "operationalisation" of three complemented pedagogical principles in order to reach effective autonomous learning (*Figure1.1*). The first principle is "learner involvement" which requires supporting learners to be actively

and totally engaged in the learning processes. The second is "learner reflection", this principle is implicitly combined with the previous one; it requires helping learners to deal with the content and process of their learning through their reflective engagement. And the third one is "target language use"; this principle is about supporting learners to make use of the target language as a means of performing tasks. Furthermore, these principles take into consideration other dimensions of learning the FL like: the metacognitive, metalinguistic, affective and communicative aspects of language.
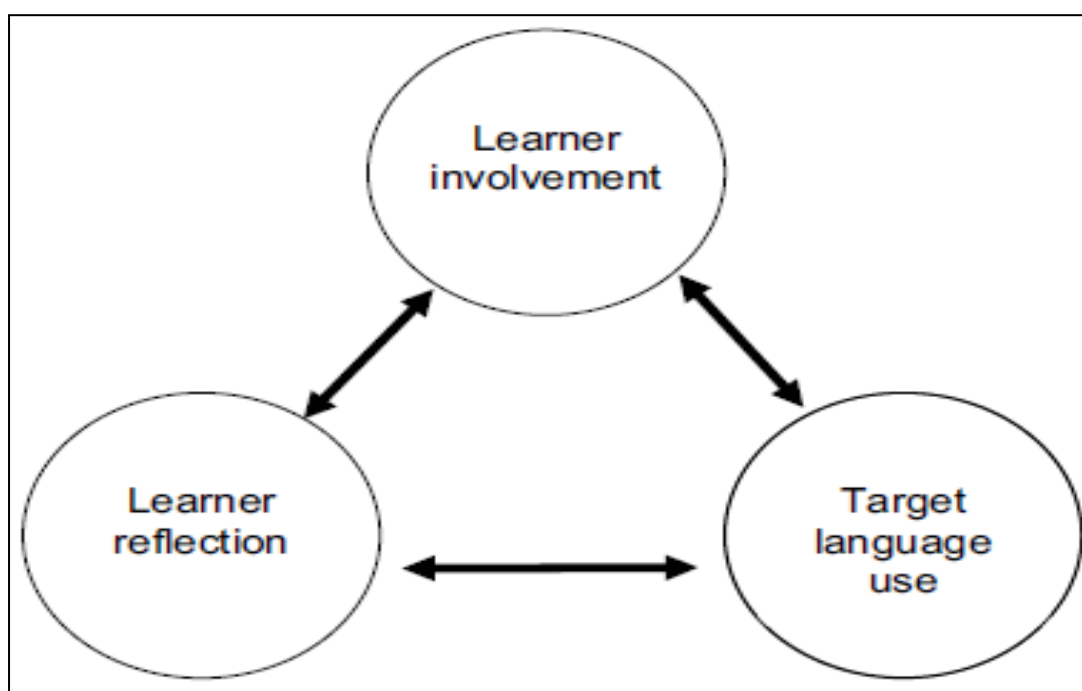
Figure 1.1 Three pedagogical principles for learner autonomy. This figure illustrates the main integrated elements for reaching autonomous learning. **Adapted from Little (2004, p. 119)**

1.4. Features of Autonomous Learner

Nunan (2003) pointed out that autonomous learners are those who decide about their learning's direction and the selection of the tasks and activities; i.e. to have an active role in managing the process of learning.

Chan's study (2001), explored some featured characteristics of autonomous

learners in which they are seen as organized and hard workers; which means to have an active role as flexible learners with goal setting, and willingness to inquire and learn more. Besides being very enthusiastic, motivated and initiative learners who benefit every opportunity to enhance their learning and make better achievements. Lowes and Target (1999, as cited in Xhaferri & Waldispühl, 2015, p. 53) assumed that an autonomous learner is a successful learner, what makes "willingness" to learn independently a major quality in learner autonomy. Additionally, Boud (1988) claimed that the main feature of autonomy in learning is when students respond to instructions based on their responsibility for their learning.

Illés (2012) advocated that autonomous learners are those who are competent users of the FL. In other words, autonomous learners are the good performers of the target language; who are qualified to use the linguistic criteria and other materials by their own. Besides, they are capable of showing their productivity and creativity effectively.

From constructivist perspective, autonomy is demonstrated within the view which emphasizes the role of active learners in constructing the knowledge, since it is believed that knowledge cannot be taught unless there is contribution from the learner's part. Autonomous learners are those who possess the capacity to make decisions by their own and learn independently, make critical reflection, set their objectives, decide about the content and method of their learning, monitor their progress and evaluate their achievements (Holec 1981; Little, 1991).

1.4.1. Self-assessment

In line with self-monitoring, autonomous learners tend to assess their performance as well. Xhaferri and Waldispühl (2015, p. 150) stated that learners are required to establish their own standards to measure the "quality" of their work; to be able to

recognize their strengths and weaknesses and to be independent from the teacher. In this scope, Farrell and Jacobs (2010, p. 20) asserted that in order to promote their autonomous learning, learners need to develop some "internal criteria" which enable them to make their own decisions, and evaluate their work quality and degree of proficiency by themselves away from any external dependency.

Pioneers like Holec (1981) highly supported the idea that learners' own choice of the criteria of evaluation of their learning is strongly emphasized in order to develop autonomous learning. Similarly, from this perspective, Gardner (2000, p. 52) stressed the significant role of self-assessment in providing learners with "personalized feedback" about their learning strategies, methods and materials. Consequently, it helps students to monitor and design conclusions about their language learning.

1.4.2. Self-monitoring

Wang and Peverly (1986) and O'Malley et al. (1990) among others considered self-monitoring as a specific feature of autonomous and successful learners. Stern (1975) stated that good language learners "consciously monitor their performances" (as cited in Cotterall, 1995, p. 199). Self-monitoring is the ability of those learners to observe and follow their progress in their learning regarding the underlined goals. So, feedback is not merely the role of the teacher anymore, but also due to this act of self-monitoring, autonomous learners can provide feedback about their performance which is very important in evaluating their language learning proficiency. Haughton and Dickinson (1988) argued that the ability of learners to evaluate their quality of learning is a very significant factor. Blanche (1988) added that as a condition to reach an efficient learning, it is important for learners to make an evaluation of their abilities and their progress in learning, in addition to taking advantage of the acquired skills.

1.5. Autonomy and Socio-cultural Theory

The fact that autonomy's focal point is independence, made learner's autonomy interpreted erroneously as studying it in isolation, where students depend completely on themselves and learning only by their own. In contrast, this is not correct; Wenger (2010) stated that people are social creatures dependent on each other in order to learn. This entails that learning takes place in specific "social and cultural setting populated by specific individuals at a given historical time" (Oxford, 2003, p. 86). Thus, this makes the concept of independence regarding learner autonomy relative because this one cannot be total. Because learner autonomy is always restricted and constrained by inevitable conditions such as interdependence; which focuses on working with others like teachers and peers in order to achieve common goals.

Accordingly, autonomy is seen as "a capacity and willingness to act independently and in cooperation with others, as a social, responsible person" (Dam et al., 1990, as cited in Smith, 2008, p. 396). This views autonomy as the act of taking responsibility in both cases: either individually or with others. In this respect, the pioneer Lev Vygotsky made relevant contributions in the field of autonomy, mainly with the notion of "The Zone of Proximal Development" (ZPD). According to Little (2007) this notion entails the characteristics of autonomous learning; like problem solving and learning independently; in addition to higher focus on the importance of expert guiding which is considered as significant social interaction in learning.

Chan (2001) asserted the significance of expert guidance for students oriented towards autonomous learning, by which their motivation is increased and their learning strategies are developed. Little clearly focus on the notion of interdependence in order to promote autonomous learning: "Learner autonomy does not arise spontaneously from within the learner but develops out of the learner's dialogue with the world to

which he or she belongs." (1994; as cited in Lamb & Reinders, 2008, p. 117).

Smith (2008, p. 396) claimed that *"The supportive engagement"* "[emphasis in original]." of learners' existing autonomy is of a great importance. So, the role of the teacher in this respect is to provide relevant support to learners, which contributes in promoting their psychological features and practical abilities regarding autonomy. Some scholars and researches claim that learners' lack of autonomy need to be trained to be autonomous, however, others argue that all is needed is to foster their inner capacity towards autonomy, since learners have the ability to take responsibility of their learning to some extent.

1.6. The Role of the Teacher

Teacher-centeredness is an old fashioned approach that does not really count nowadays. Still, the role of teacher in learning is not totally eliminated due to its significance in fostering learner autonomy. (Holec 1981; Little 1991; Dam 1995; Benson 2001) agreed that promoting learner autonomy in language learning is not merely the result of out of class own learning (without a teacher), but also is the outcome of classroom practice under the teacher's guidance.

Generally, most students believe that their role is restricted to solely receiving information; since they consider the teacher as the complete authority in the classroom. This implies that learners' readiness for autonomy became lower and tied to few ones. Nunan (2003; as cited in Wagner, 2014, p. 131) asserted that it's the role of teachers to enlighten their learners about learner-centeredness, and help them evolve their skills and abilities to become autonomous by engaging them in the process of learning.

Constructive interaction between the teacher and his learners is highly demanded in autonomous classroom; thus, surely it influences the learners' attitudes towards

autonomous learning. The teacher's role in this regard is either as 'a counselor' or a 'facilitator'.

1.6.1. The Teacher as a Counselor

The teacher is the most knowledgeable part in the classroom; his role is to provide learners with the needed help to achieve the learning objectives and increase their proficiency. Little (2000) argued that the development of learner autonomy is from two dimensions: the content and the process of learning results in reaching a successful learning; hence, to make progress in autonomy, 'stimulus, insight and guidance' of the teacher is required accordingly (as cited in Xhaferri & Waldispühl, 2015).

Barfield et al. (2001) argued that "the ability to behave autonomously for students is dependent upon their teacher creating a classroom culture where autonomy is accepted" (as cited in Balçıkanlı, 2010, p. 91). That is to say, teachers have to make learners familiar with the notion of autonomy in their learning, and make them aware about its importance for short or long-terms. In raising learners awareness, Dam (2000, p. 18) claimed that "What we can do is give our learners an awareness of how they think and how they learn – an awareness which hopefully will help them come to an understanding of themselves and thus increase their self-esteem". It is meant to say that the teacher's role here is to guide learners towards independent learning and to objectively teach them about the learning strategies and let them decide about the best that suits them. And therefore, to increase their self-confidence in their decisions and raise their appreciation to what they achieved in their own learning.

1.6.2. The Teacher as a Facilitator

The teacher's role as the only source of information is no more acceptable under learner-centered approach. In autonomous learning classrooms, the role of the teacher

as a facilitator requires the teacher providing learners with the needed help to develop their skills and abilities; to put what they have learnt into practice. Additionally, they have to make appropriate learning atmosphere including the best teaching methods, and significant activities and tasks. Similarly, Camilleri (1999) and Tudor (1993) advocated the idea that it's the teachers' responsibility to raise their learners' awareness about different learning styles, strategies, and goals to develop their self-awareness as language learners and to enhance their learning process.

A major part of implementing autonomy in the formal contexts of learning is the teacher's role in orienting learners towards autonomous learning. For instance, teachers as the experts in the classroom are required to make "collaboration with learners" and definitely assure that all learners really know their roles very well (Lowes & Target, 1999, as cited in Xhaferri & Waldispühl, 2015, p. 56). This view is supported by the results of Lefever study (2005, as cited in Xhaferri & Waldispühl, 2015) in which learners declared that giving them the responsibility to provide feedback to their peers made them be more focused and pay more attention to the presentations. In fact, this helps in increasing their sense of responsibility and encouraging them to be actively involved in the process of learning. The following figure shows the teachers' roles in corporation with learners' roles to promote autonomous learning.
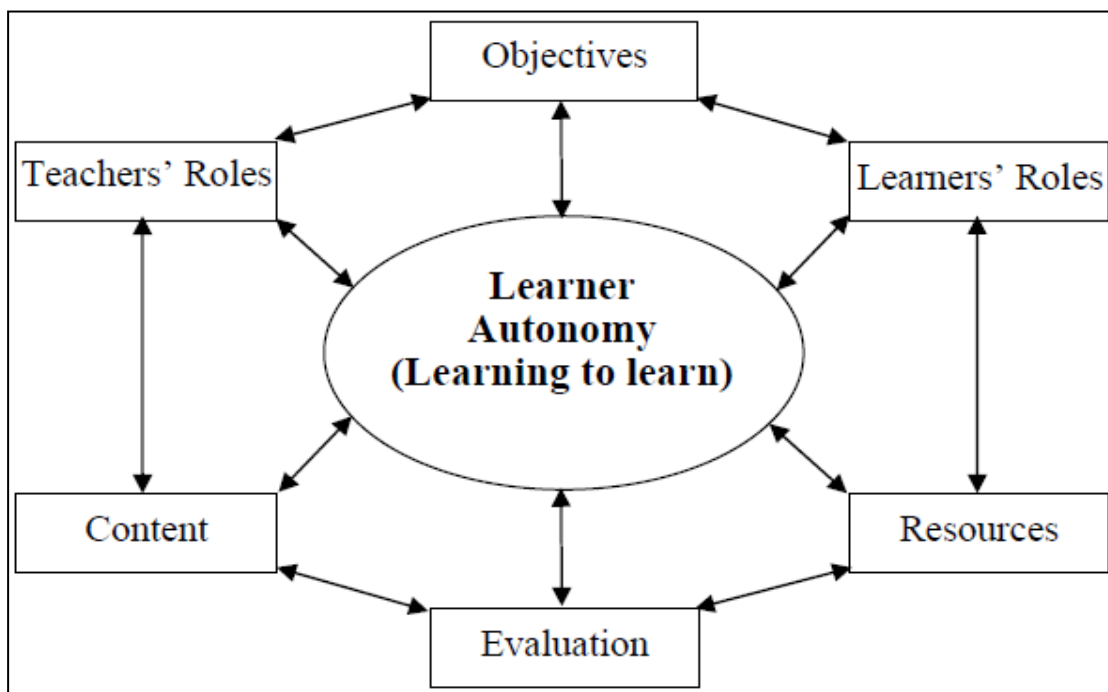
Figure 1.2 Model of autonomous classroom teaching. This figure shows the interrelated roles of learners and students for promoting learner autonomy. **Adapted from. Naizhao & Yanling (2004, p. 7)**

1.7. Levels of Autonomy

Nunan's model of autonomy included five levels of learner performance that indicates the learner's development of autonomous learning from a grade to another; those are "awareness", "involvement", "intervention", "creation" and "transcendence", and which comprise of two main dimensions: "content" and "process" (as cited in Benson, 2007, p. 23). This model sought to raise learners' awareness of the pedagogical goals, purposes and content of curriculum; be actively involved in activities and tasks and be able to identify their appropriate learning styles and strategies which interfere in enhancing the process of learning independently; consequently came to be autonomous learners who can make connection between their learnt knowledge and the world.

Littlwood (1997, p. 81) introduced a model of three stages with great emphasis on specific dimensions of "language acquisition, learning approach and personal

development". This model's main concern is to achieve autonomy in three contexts; the first is when learners become fluent language users who are able to exploit the linguistic resources to attain successful communication in real and unexpected situations. The second context is about learners' capacity to take responsibility over their own learning, in addition to using the most suitable strategies and be actively involved in the process of learning. The third context is at a broader scope, it deals with higher level of setting goals and autonomy as a part of the individuals' life, that is to say personal autonomy. In short, this model is meant to achieve autonomy as a communicator, as a learner and as a person.

From other side, a distinction between two types of autonomy was made by Littlewood (1999, p. 75). The researcher found that in "proactive" autonomy learners are able to establish their own directions to a certain extent. However, in "reactive" autonomy directions are already set; learners manage the resources independently to achieve their goals. Also, Scharle & Szabó (2000, p. 1) identified a three-stage model including "raising awareness", "changing attitudes" and "transferring roles". Whereas, for Benson (2001), levels of autonomy are set under the act of taking control over learning and teaching processes, including those three aspects: learning management, cognitive processing and the content of learning.

Scholars claimed that learner autonomy can be gradually developed from 'lower' to 'higher' levels for each of those models. Still, it is a problematic issue which Kumaravadivelu (2003) explained as follow; "it would be a mistake to try to correlate the initial, intermediary, and advanced stages of autonomy . . . with the beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels of language proficiency" (p. 144). Because being at a given stage of a given target language does not mean to be in parallel with levels of autonomy, in other words, the level of proficiency of a language does not necessary go

in hand or equals the degree of autonomy for that person.

1.8. The Importance of Autonomy

Many researchers emphasized the crucial role of learner-centeredness and learner autonomy as key factors for the effectiveness of FLT and learning processes. Little (1991), Holec (1981), and Dickinson (1987) (as cited in Mohanty, 2010) among others argued that learners setting their own agenda are likely to keep focused on their learning aims and objectives. In addition, autonomous learners are motivated to learn independently and do not depend completely on the teacher. In this context, Smith (2003), Scharle and Szabo (2000) stressed the importance of learners' responsibility or learner autonomy in achieving successful learning. Furthermore, Little (2007) asserted that the absolute purpose of language learning is 'autonomous language use'; the matter which makes learner autonomy a goal by itself with focus on the successful communicative use of language (as cited in Lamb, 2008, p. 271).

Reynard (2006, p. 1) declared that Knowles' (1975) work was the starting point of giving more interest to adult self-directed learning which expressed the necessity for "ongoing" learning. That is to raise their readiness to act independently regarding the contemporary changes in society. Accordingly, Benson (2007) claimed that works on autonomy are valuable for two reasons; the first is about the fact that language teachers and researchers main concern about autonomy is related to its effectiveness in different aspects of social life, and the second is that autonomy has been a controversial concept. Hence, it is an opportunity to learn more about its theories and implementations in language learning and its relevance in society.

Jiménez Raya and Sercu (2007) argued that recently, young people should be prepared to adjust their pace with the developing surrounding world. Thus, they are

required to learn how to learn and to develop new skills which enable them to be flexible and dynamic with the changes around them. Therefore, they are likely to be independent learners who learn autonomously; be creative and use different learning strategies to improve their level of proficiency, raise questions, make links between what they learned and the new updated knowledge, and be able to manage new communicative situations in real life. Also, research evidence showed that autonomous learners are successful ones with the ability to adopt the learned knowledge and acquired skills in other contexts and situations else than the usual formal learning settings (Little, 2006).

Likewise, Elsen and St John (2007) advocated that learner autonomy has a major role for human development. They illustrated with Kenny's (1993, p. 440) view in this context, in which autonomy is not just about giving learners responsibility and taking decisions in their learning, but rather it is about supporting them to express themselves, their thoughts and their plans through the initiatives they undertake. Significance of learner autonomy lies under the need for 'lifelong learning' as a requirement of the present 'knowledge-based' societies (Elsen & St John, 2007, p. 18).

Conclusion

Nowadays, autonomy is vital in learning and in language learning specifically; hence, a major role of teachers and learners is needed to achieve learner autonomy in EFL learning context. Basically, it is bounded by reciprocal interaction and collaborative work. Teachers are responsible for raising learners' awareness and orienting them towards autonomy to achieve a successful learning and efficient language proficiency.

CHAPTER TWO: SCAFFOLDING STRATEGY

Introduction

Scaffolding strategy has been a controversial concept over decades. Many researchers and scholars have tackled this notion from different perspectives. Scaffolding strategy is a metaphor that resembles those items used in order to support the construction of buildings. A key element of this strategy is its interdisciplinary nature. It has been implemented in different domains and fields including sociology, psychology and learning. Particularly, in education, a central aspect of this instructional scaffolds is their temporally nature; scaffolds are gradually removed as long as the scaffoldee acquires some skills and masters the task in hand.

This chapter will discuss the origins of this strategy in addition to its definition and related theories. Also, principles, characteristics, advantages, challenges and importance of implementing scaffolding in learning will be handled.

2.1. Origins of Scaffolding Strategy

The term scaffolding is the outcome of the socio-cultural theory of the Soviet psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1962); who highlighted the importance of interaction in the process of learning. However, the metaphor of scaffolding was first originated in Wood, Bruner and Ross's paper: *The role of tutoring in problem solving* (1976). The metaphor was primarily used to describe the reciprocal interactions between children and adults (the more knowledgeable other (MKO), for example parents or teachers). This assistance is regarded as essential since it "enables a child or novice to solve a problem, carry out a task or achieve a goal which would be beyond his unassisted efforts" (Wood et al., 1976, p. 90).

Mainly, for Wood et al., effective scaffolding was thought to result in successful comprehension and completion of the task by which the learner is concerned. Still, scaffolding is gradually removed with less need to it to accomplish tasks with the same instructions. Hence, the aim here was not merely the completion of a particular task but, rather, the conceptualization of the task in hand with the procedures of its accomplishment. Accordingly, they stated that "comprehension of the solution must precede production" (Wood et al., 1976, p. 90). This means that the role of that assistance is to understand the way of achieving the needed goal from a given task, then simulating new solution models for other tasks.

The late of the 1970's witnessed high use of the notion of scaffolding especially in developmental psychology whether in theory generating or studies on adult-child interactions (Stone, 1998). Moreover, Cazden (1979) made a direct link between scaffolding and Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal development (ZPD) which is defined as: "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86) . Thus, the researcher extended the scope of using scaffolding metaphor not only in adult-child interactions, but rather to teacher-student interactions in formal learning context. And thanks to her, in the late of 1980's, the founders of the concept of scaffolding recognized its relation with Vygotsky's ZPD (Bruner, 1986; Wood, 1988, as cited in Stone 1998).

2.2. Definition of Scaffolding Strategy

The concept of scaffolding in learning had many interpretations over time. But, mainly all of its definitions included terms such as help, aid, support or assistance

(Amerian & Mehri, 2014). Puntambekar and Hübscher (2005, p. 1) stated that "the scaffolding construct is increasingly being used synonymously with support" (Cited in Van de Pol et al., 2010, p. 272). Graves, Watts and Graves defined scaffolding as: "a temporary supportive structure that teachers create to assist a student or a group of students to accomplish a task that they could not complete alone" (1994, p. 44). In addition, Ellis (2003, p. 180) said that scaffolding is "the dialogic process by which one speaker assists another in performing a function that he or she cannot perform alone" (as cited in Samana, 2013, p. 339). Graves and Graves (2003) asserted that scaffolding can provide students with help to feel at ease, consume time and accomplish a task successfully.

Holton and Clarke (2006) considered scaffolding as: "an act of teaching that (i) supports the immediate construction of knowledge by the learner; and (ii) provides the basis for the future independent learning of individual." (p. 131). In other words, scaffolding instructions help the learner to better understand the task in hands and easily manage it. In this regard, Rogoff (1990, p. 30) claimed that scaffolding is seen as "supported situations" that helps in developing the learners skills and knowledge to a "higher level of competence".

Clark and Graves (2005, p. 183) argued that "The way that scaffolding is implemented in the classroom depends on students' abilities. Varying levels of support are possible, and the more complex a task is, the more support students will need to accomplish it". That is to say that learners' current abilities and the task's difficulty are the basis under which the suitable scaffolding strategy is chosen. Also, they added "What makes scaffolding so effective is that it enables a teacher to keep a task whole, while students learn to understand and manage the parts, and presents the learner with just the right challenge" (2005, p. 183). Students are challenged to complete a particular

task; this latter should be beyond their level of competence. As a way of implementing scaffolding, for instance the teacher can provide students with models or examples which are small pieces of the whole picture. This way the teacher guides learners to independently solve problems through extending their skills and constructing knowledge. Teacher's support and instructions lies within the learner's ZPD.

Form a socio-cultural view, Vygotsky believed that teacher-student interactions and active participation are key elements in learning. This latter which first begins at a social level then develops to reach the individual one (Verenikina, 2003). In other words, communication between participants plays crucial role in shaping mutual understanding (intersubjectivity) then building one's own knowledge; learning starts from an intermental level then goes to individuals' intramental level. The importance of this socio-cultural setting lies within Vygotskey's (1978, p. 86) "Zone of Proximal Development".

2.2.1.   The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

Vygotsky's socio-constructivist theory (1978) defined the ZPD as the distance between what a learner cannot do by his own and what he can do or achieve with a MKO's (more knowledgeable others) assistance. "MKO means the process of helping is conducted by someone who has better skills than the learner to complete a particular task, process or concept" (Santoso, 2010, p. 49). This MKO, either teachers or peers supposed to be competent and capable of providing the needed help.

The ZPD was the basis for developing scaffolding concept. Hammond (2001) argued that "Scaffolding is both challenging and supportive, thereby enabling students to work within their zone of proximal development" (p. 34). Accordingly, Wilhelm et al. (2001) said that "Scaffolding must begin from what is near to the student's

experience and build to what is further from their experience." (Zones of Development, para. 8). This means that scaffolding can be implemented in challenging situations where the maintained task exists in the learner's Zone of Potential Development; that is a one step beyond his experience and actual level. This latter is known as the Zone of Current (or Actual) Development (ZCD/ZAD) where the learner possesses higher-order abilities to solve problems unassisted.

Vygotsky (1978), Berk and Winsler (1995) suggested that due to interaction with MKO, the individual can construct and internalize knowledge that used to be beyond his reach and which is likely to be his new ZCD. i.e. the role of the more capable other is to help the learner reach the potential level of development that would become later his actual level of development. In this regard, Vygotsky (1978) claimed that what is the zone of proximal development now will be the actual developmental level tomorrow. This makes the limits or the extent of the potential developmental level that a learner can reach determines his new ZCD as shown in *Figure 2.1*
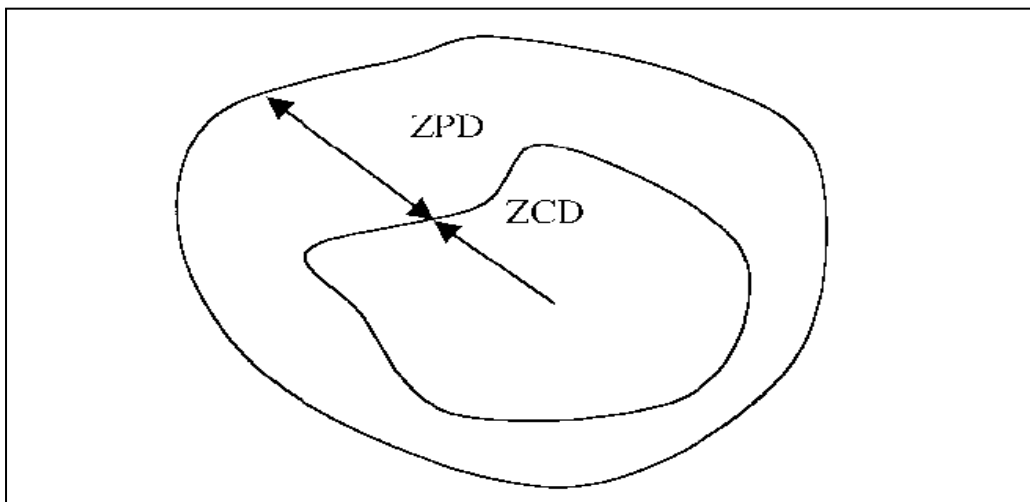
Figue 2.1 The zone of current development and the zone of potential development. This figure demonstrates that the borders of the learner's ZPD would be the extent of his ZCD latter. **Adapted from Harland (2003, p. 265)**

Accordingly, Gillani (2003, cited in Santoso, 2010, p. 48) confirmed Vygotsky's view about the Zone of Proximal Development and learning. The researcher proposed a four step model for the ZPD. He emphasized the idea that learners progress from their actual level of development to reach their potential developmental level. This model as shown in *Figure 2.2* is divided into two levels: the first is the external plane which is called the social or intermental level; this stage includes i) "Reliance on others" and ii) "Collaboration with others". Learners are likely to benefit from the communicative exchanges with others in their learning setting. Consequently, in these two phases, scaffolding by the more knowledgeable other is very significant for the construction of knowledge. Then, learners moves to the internal plane also known as individual or intramental level of learning. This stage encompasses two phases: iii) "Self-reliance" and iv) "Internalization". In this level, learners depend on their efforts and works by their own until they internalize what they have learnt. Mainly, passing through those four phases would help learners construct their knowledge effectively.
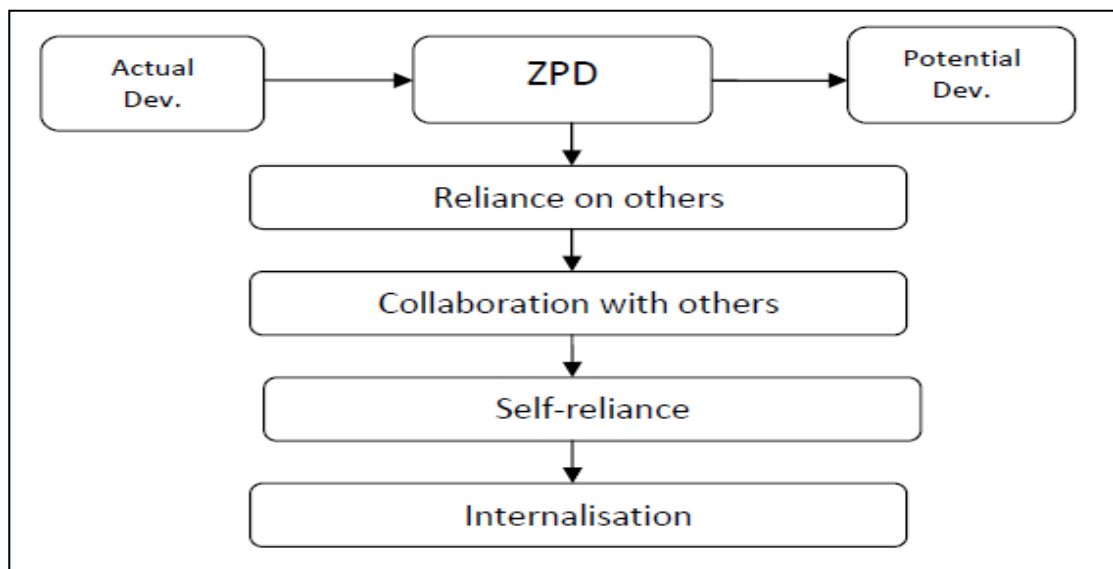
Figure 2.2 Phases of the Zone of Proximal Development. This figure illustrates the stages of learning proposed by Gillani, starting from the learner's ZAD to internalization of knowledge. **Adapted from Gillani (2003, p. 85, as cited in Santoso, 2010, p, 48)**

2.2.2. Principles of Applying Scaffolding Instructions

Van Lier (1996, p. 196) provided six pedagogical principles for implementing scaffolding in the process of learning with more focus on the field of language learning as follow:

1. *Contextual support:* in which the learner feels at ease despite of the challenging learning atmosphere; since errors and mistakes are tolerated as a sign of learning;

2. *Continuity:* which emphasizes the balanced occurrence of a set of actions through time; between the regularly repeated ones and variant new ones;

3. *Intersubjectivity:* that asserts the importance of reciprocal participation and support; interrelated and integrated thinking in common contexts;

4. *Contingency*: which is intended to show that scaffolding is based on the learner's reactions; in which aspects of assistance are subject to addition, change, deletion, repetition, etc.;

5. *Handover/Takeover:* it is meant to say that the learner's ZPD closes once he becomes able to manage similar tasks by his own;

6. *Flow*: this which counts for the natural way of communication (not forced). (as cited in Riazi & Rezaii, 2011, p. 56; Walqui, 2006, p. 165)

Stone (1998) stressed the importance of considering the following aspects for successful discussions when providing scaffolds: a perceptual, cognitive and affective component; that is to say to identify task features, decrease in freedom, and frustration control respectively. Those which are some common aspects with Wood et al.'s (1976) six functions of scaffolding that are: 1) Recruitment which implies attracting the students' attention to the task. 2) Reduction of degrees of freedom which is about

simplifying the task to be easy to handle. 3) Direction maintenance which requires keeping the student concentrated on the task. 4) Marking critical features which means providing feedback about the scaffoldees' performance. 5) Frustration control which refers to assisting students to avoid frustration. And 6) Demonstration.which is about modeling and correcting the scaffoldees' performance.

As well, Tharp and Gallimore (1988) suggested two main key construct for implementing scaffolding, namely are intentions and means. Hence, they proposed five intentions for scaffolding: 1) Direction maintenance: refers to keeping the learner focused on the objectives of learning. 2) Cognitive structuring: implies the teacher's use of explanatory structures that provide more justification and organization to learners' understanding. 3) Reduction of the degrees of freedom: this intention requires the teacher to remove task parts that is so far beyond the learner's ability. 4) Recruitment: this refers to taking learners' attention to the task and guiding them to get its instructions. And finally 5) Contingency management/Frustration control: this aspect is concerned with reinforcing learners' performance through reward or punishment and keeping them motivated through preventing and lessening causes of frustration and boredom. Mainly each of these intentions is concerned with either learners' cognition, metacognition or affect.

In addition, means of scaffolding are divided into six elements. The first is feeding back which refers to giving the learner information about his performance. The second is hints which implies the inclusion of clues to guide the learner's thinking. The third is instructing that entails the teacher giving instructions about how, what and why to do something. The fourth is explaining which is concerned with the teacher's provision of more justification and clarification. The fifth is modeling that entails giving a pattern for imitation. And finally, the sixth which is questioning that focuses on asking

questions which answers' show the learner's cognitive and linguistic capacities (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988).

2.3. Theories and Classifications of Scaffolding

The concept of scaffolding as a strategy for assisting learning has been widely studied by different scholars and researchers over time. Therefore, various theories showed the significance of this strategy in facilitating the process of learning, and providing learners with the needed support for achieving particular objectives. The following are some those influential theories in the field of learning cited in Santoso (2010, pp. 51-58):

- Bell and Davis (1996) identified two types of scaffolding. The first is metacognitive scaffolding which focuses on improving learner's comprehension through providing prompts in activities or for self-monitoring. However, the second is conceptual scaffolding which implies providing hints and frameworks for expressing and organizing the evidence.

- Hannafin, Land and Oliver (1999) suggested four kinds of scaffolding: i) Conceptual scaffolding: students receive instructions about what to take into consideration when thinking. ii) Metacognitive scaffolding: providing guidance about the way of understanding a given problem. iii) Procedural scaffolding: aims at assisting learners' use of materials and resources. iv) Strategic scaffolding: guide learners with techniques and methods for problem-solving.

- Brush and Saye (2002) proposed soft and hard scaffolding. The former is about the more knowledgeable other who provides flexible and specific helps at each given situation in the process of learning. While the latter is identified as an already expected, planned and fixed supports based on learner's difficulties with

a task.

- Holton and Clarke (2006) discussed the concept of scaffolding from a domain and agency perspectives. In terms of domain, scaffolding includes two types: conceptual and heuristic. The first implies providing scaffolds for the sake of developing understanding and conceptualization of knowledge, whereas the second refers to guidance on how to find solutions for particular problems. In terms of agency, three kinds of scaffolding are proposed:

  1. *Expert scaffolding:* this type of scaffolding requires an expert in a specific field who shows responsibility for guiding learners to construct their knowledge.

  2. *Reciprocal scaffolding:* this process requires working cooperatively with others. For instance, learners work collaboratively with their peers on a given task. This implies exchange of information and mutual understanding in order to construct knowledge.

  3. *Self-scaffolding:* this type is also known as metacognition. Here the learner provides himself with scaffolds which can be as inner speech, internal conversations and/or reflective thinking; raising questions and interrogations in his search for knowledge.

- Yelland and Masters (2007) suggested three kinds of scaffolding. Firstly, cognitive scaffolding is considered for promoting understanding. Secondly, technical scaffolding is given for technology use. And finally, affective scaffolding is regarded as emotional assistance.

- Reingold, Rimor and Kalay (2008) differentiated between four types of scaffolding. The first is technical scaffolding that is considered as instructional support for technology use. The second, content scaffolding which is given to

treat the information (addition, explanation, correction, etc). The third, procedural scaffolding that is concerned with assisting in data (researching, organization, representation, etc). Finally, metacognitive scaffolding that is provided when dealing with tasks which require reasoning.

2.4. Characteristics of Scaffolding Strategy

Different definitions of scaffolding mainly have some shared characteristics which determine the nature of this learning strategy. The following *Figure 2.3* shows the key features of scaffolding strategy:
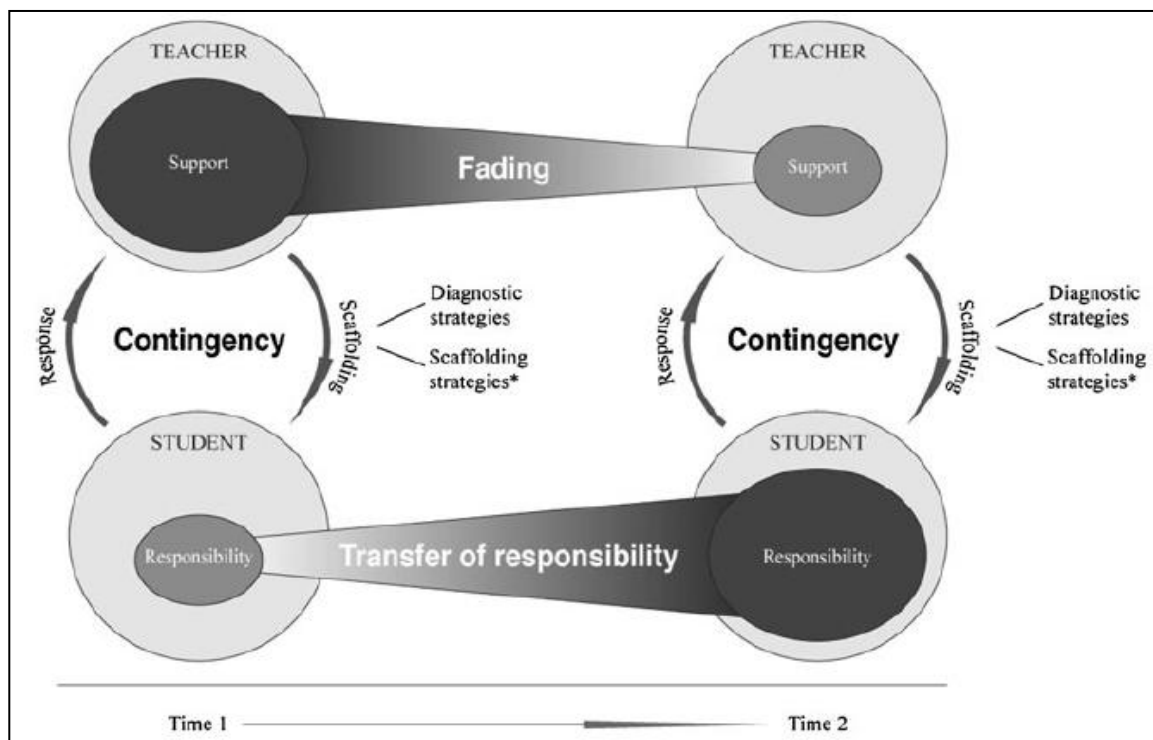
Figure 2.3 Conceptual model of scaffolding. This model shows the key features of scaffolding strategy which are contingency, fading and transfer of responsinility. **Adapted from Van de Pol et al. (2010, p. 274)**

- *Contingency*

This aspect is the main characteristic of scaffolding strategy since it is the starting point for providing the exact scaffolds that are needed. Contingency is mainly concerned with learners' responsiveness and well designed supports. It is the teacher's role to specify and select the appropriate support for his learners. As a result, in order to do so, Van de Pol (2010, p. 275) stated that "The teacher's support must be adapted to the current level of the student's performance and should either be at the same or a slightly higher level". In this respect, Pea (2004) claimed that students' performance should be measured in order to determine their actual abilities. Thus, one effective way for this is diagnostic strategies (Bliss et al., 1996). This diagnosis can be made through different assessments types such as: dynamic assessment, formative assessment, online diagnosis, etc. Also, Van de Pol (2010) emphasized the significance of questioning as a means of not merely directs learners, but also helps the teacher to determine the learner's level before and after scaffolding. Furthermore, Amerian and Mehri (2014) declared that "One of the mostly used strategies to discover the current level of the learners is the question and answer in the course of interaction" (p. 758).

- *Fading*

Another key feature that characterizes scaffolding is fading. This latter is meant to indicate the temporary nature of scaffolding; which implies the gradual removal of support as long as the learner develops his skills and competence. In other words, when providing learners with scaffolds, the teacher keeps checking their level so that he withdraws the scaffolding in a gradual way. Pea (2004) argued that "If the support does not fade, then one should consider the activity to be distributed intelligence, not scaffolded achievement" (p. 432).

- *Transfer of Responsibility*

This third element is strongly interrelated with the previous one. Transfer of responsibility comes gradually as a result of the gradual fading of scaffolding. The teacher transfers the responsibility to learners so that they take charge over their learning and work independently. This responsibility can be identified by learners' activities (cognition, metacognition and affect). As it is illustrated by Van de Pol (2010) "While fading the support, the teacher can also transfer the responsibility to the student so that the learner will take more and more control over his/her learning" (p. 275).

Furthermore, the idea of high challenge and high support proposed by Mariani (1997) is another important aspect that characterizes the implementation of scaffolding strategy (*Figure 2.4*). This idea entails challenging learners with tasks, those which need to be beyond their level of competence. Consequently, a high support is required for assisting learners' understanding and constructing of knowledge. This high challenge/high support is a powerful medium for raising learners' motivation and progress in learning. Gibbons (2015) illustrated that "For EL students, a high-challenge, high-support classroom suggests a very different orientation to learning … all learners, including EL learners, need to be engaged with authentic and cognitively challenging learning tasks" (p. 18).

However, the case could be different where students may be involved in a high challenge tasks but with low support, Wilson and Devereux (2014) claimed that "If students feel that the task is impossible or unreasonable, they may become frustrated, lose confidence, lose interest, and possibly resort to "short-cut" strategies including various forms of plagiarism" (p. 93). Moreover, Hammond (2001, p. 16) believed that students who are provided with a low support in high challenge classrooms are likely to be less motivated to learn, express boredom, frustration and failure. Also, with low

challenge and high support, learners will keep in their "comfort zone" and consequently will not progress in their learning.
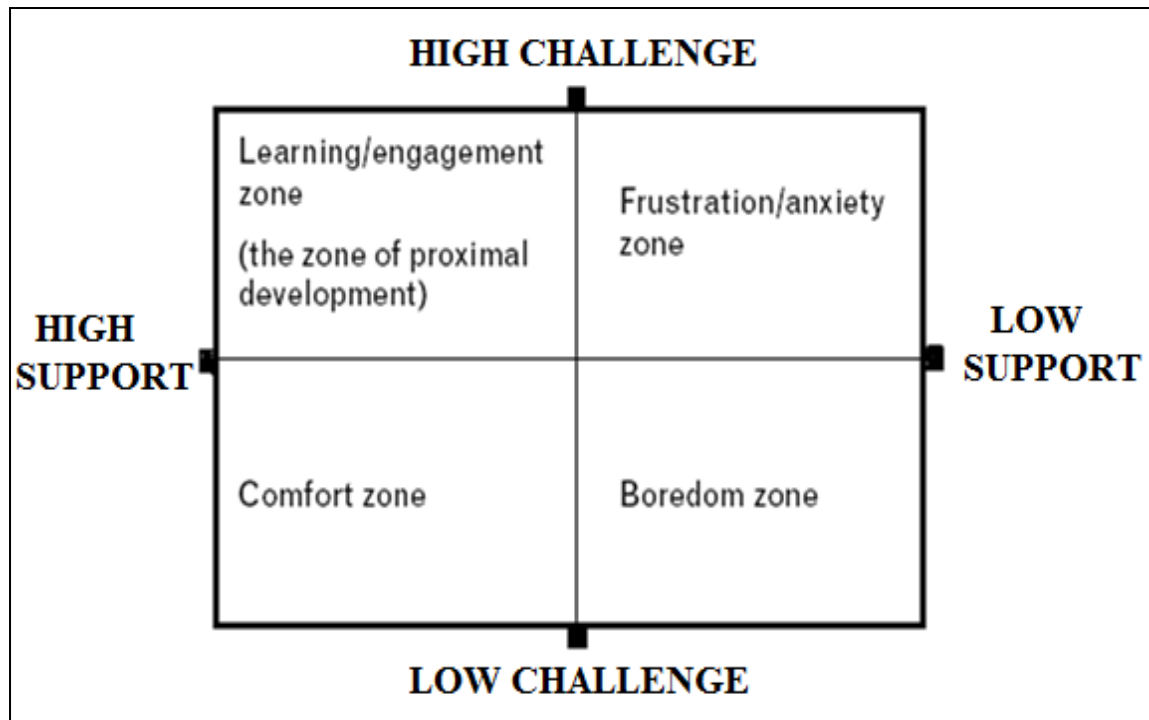
Figure 2.4 Learning situations regarding degrees of challenge and support. This figure shows the outcomes of different types of support that could be provided to learners depending on the degree of challenge. **Adapted From Mariani (1997)**

2.5. Strategies of Scaffolding

Alibali (2006, as cited in Instructional Scaffolding to Improve Learning, nd., p. 2) Suggested a variety of scaffolding strategies that can be used to assist learners. Those instructional ways are meant to be customized and specific for each new situation. From this perspective, Van de Pol et al. (2010) emphasized that "scaffolding does never look the same in different situations and it is not a technique that can be applied in every situation in the same way" (p. 272). The following **Table 2.1** identifies different types of scaffolds to help learners:

Scaffold	Ways to use Scaffolds in an Instructional Setting
Advance organizers	*Tools used to introduce new content and tasks to help students learn about the topic:* Venn diagrams to compare and contrast information; flow charts to illustrate processes; organizational charts to illustrate hierarchies; outlines that represent content; mnemonics to assist recall; statements to situate the task or content; rubrics that provide task expectations.
Cue Cards	*Prepared cards given to individual or groups of students to assist in their discussion about a particular topic or content area:* Vocabulary words to prepare for exams; content-specific stem sentences to complete; formulae to associate with a problem; concepts to define.
Concept and mind maps	*Maps that show relationships:* Prepare partially completed maps for students to complete or have students create their own maps based on their current knowledge of the task or concept.
Examples	*Samples, specimens, illustrations, problems:* Real objects; illustrative problems used to represent something.
Explanations	*More detailed information to move students along on a task or in their thinking of a concept:* Written instructions for a task; verbal explanation of how a process works.
Handouts	*Prepared handouts* that contain task- and content-related information, but with less detail and room for student note taking.
Hints	*Suggestions and clues to move students along:* "place your foot in front of the other," "use the escape key," "find the subject of the verb," "add the water first and then the acid."
Prompts	*A physical or verbal cue to remind—to aid in recall of prior or assumed knowledge.* Physical: Body movements such as pointing, nodding the head, eye blinking, foot tapping. Verbal: Words, statements and questions such as "Go," "Stop," "It's right there," "Tell me now," "What toolbar menu item would you press to insert an image?", " Tell me why the character acted that way."
Question Cards	*Prepared cards with content- and task-specific questions* given to individuals or groups of students to ask each other pertinent questions about a particular topic or content area.
Question Stems	*Incomplete sentences which students complete:* Encourages deep thinking by using higher order "What if" questions.
Stories	*Stories relate complex and abstract material to situations more familiar with students.* Recite stories to inspire and motivate learners.
Visual Scaffolds	Pointing (call attention to an object); representational gestures (holding curved hands apart to illustrate roundness; moving rigid hands diagonally upward to illustrate steps or process), diagrams such as charts and graphs; methods of highlighting visual information.

Table 2.1 Types of scaffolds.

Adapted from Alibali (2006, as cited in NIU, nd, p.2)

2.6. Importance of Scaffolding in Learning

Over time, various research studies were conducted to explore the components of scaffolding strategy and test its effectiveness. The metaphor of scaffolding has proved its significance in different disciplines and especially in the field of learning. McKenzie (1999, Characteristics of Educational Scaffolding, para. 1) highlighted the importance of this strategy in learning process:

1. *Scaffolding provides clear directions:* 'step by step directions' provided in order to show students what to do; thereby they reach the objectives of the learning activity successfully. Also, instructors try to be aware of and predict possible problems that learners may face in order to prevent confusion and uncertainty.

2. *Scaffolding clarifies purpose:* it ensures students' motivation and pursuing their learning objectives. Additionally, they understand the reason behind doing a particular task so their work remains 'purposeful'.

3. *Scaffolding keeps students on task:* the scaffolded task or lesson helps learners keep on track and focused on the results. The guidance provides students with less anxiety and more confidence to construct their new knowledge independently.

4. *Scaffolding offers assessment to clarify expectations:* through provided scaffolds, students clearly deduce what is expected from them to achieve. These examples of excellent 'quality work' they encounter enlighten them to move forward and progress more in their learning.

5. *Scaffolding points students to worthy sources:* learners are provided with the best available sources to avoid confusion and time wasting. However, their role is to decide which reliable source to use.

6. *Scaffolding reduces uncertainty, surprise and disappointment:* scaffolded lessons or tasks are verified carefully to find what problems learners may encounter. Those elements of distraction are to be eliminated to maximize learning efficiency

7. *Scaffolding delivers efficiency:* scaffolding lessons or tasks is a very centered and focused work, to the point that it orients the learner towards the exact objectives.

8. *Scaffolding creates momentum:* guidance provided by scaffolding directs learners' efforts in a way that constructs their momentum. This centered orientation is a pushing force or motivational factors for learners to progress in their learning.

2.7. Advantages of Scaffolding Strategy

Scaffolding strategy has a variety of benefits that help in enhancing the process of learning. Many researchers have advocated the advantages of this strategy. Van Der Stuyf (2002) emphasized that a major benefit of scaffolding instruction is learner engagement, in which he is actively connecting his prior knowledge with the newest one. In addition, it reduces learners' frustration and raises their motivation towards learning. An article by University of Northern Illinois "Instructional Scaffolding to Improve Learning" shed lights on the advantages of this learning strategy, advocating that challenging students to deep learning and discovery motivates them to be autonomous learners who seek learning to learn. This strategy gives opportunity to students to play the role of teacher in peer scaffolding. Also, scaffolding is a welcomed strategy that increases learners' perception of learning expectations. In scaffolding environments, learners are involved in collaborative discussions and provided with

customized instructions. Moreover, scaffolds are dynamic items that can be adopted for different learning situations. Gibbons (2015) asserted that "The goal of this kind of learning is to go beyond simply learning items of knowledge to being able to use that knowledge in other contexts" (p. 14). In other words, scaffolding does not merely teach learners what to think, but instead it enlightens them about how to think independently.

2.8. Disadvantages of Scaffolding Strategy

Although scaffolding has numerous advantages, it involves some challenges that characterize its specific nature. Generally, it is agreed that implementing scaffolding strategy is very demanding and time consuming; since it requires a careful selection of the appropriate scaffolds for each different situation and based on learners' actual abilities. Besides, it is quite hard to know the exact time for withdrawing the scaffolds. Accordingly, it is illustrated in Larkin (2002). Also, the researcher advocated the importance of teacher patience and practice of generating possible prompts once the initial scaffolds do not succeed, since "The first prompt you give to a student may fail, so you may have to give another prompt or think of a different wording to help the student give an appropriate response" (p. 4).

Ellis and Worthington (1994, pp. 45-46) set out some crucial limitations of scaffolding. First, it is considered as "Labor Intensive" because it needs huge teacher efforts for its implementation; the teacher may encounter difficulties in determining his students' ZPD, since it differs from one to another. Second, it requires an 'Empathetic Teacher' for effective scaffolding which entails the teacher's awareness about students needs and abilities. Third, it requires a "Skilled Teacher" which implies the teacher's proficiency in "dialogical and mediated learning techniques"; where he is able to use different interactive strategies to reach successful communication with students. Fourth,

teachers may have "Difficulty with the Degree of Error that Occurs in the Initial Phases of Scaffolded Instruction" in which they cannot tolerate the errors committed by learners at the primary phases of scaffolding. Finally, the scaffolding "Does Not Readily Lend Itself to Teacher-Manuals, Curriculum Guides, etc" that entails the absence of addressing the recursive key feature of the scaffolded instructions in the leaning program.

Conclusion

What make scaffolding strategy very important in learning are its specific characteristics and principles. Instructional scaffolds are so influential elements which aim at developing learners' competence and skills to achieve self-regulated learning. Since, scaffolding strategy involves well planned, designed and selected items that are specific for each given situation; classrooms where scaffolded instructions are provided are regarded as appropriate environment for orienting learners towards independent learning. Therefore, these scaffolds are temporary supports that assist learners until they become self-dependent and construct their own knowledge.

CHAPTER THREE: FIELD INVESTIGATION

Introduction

This chapter is devoted to present the results obtained from the statistical analysis of students' and teachers' questionnaires. It shed lights on students and teachers perception and awareness about the importance of scaffolding strategy in EFL classes, and its effectiveness in fostering learner autonomy. For both questionnaires, questions are analyzed in tables including number of respondents, percentages and followed by interpretation of the findings. In addition to the analysis of the questionnaires, the present chapter will include a summary of their results and findings and a general conclusion.

3.1. Students' Questionnaire

The questionnaire is a very important research tool that is used to collect statistical data from informants; the following is a description of the questionnaire that was conducted among students.

3.1.1. Population and Sample of the Study

The first chosen population for this study is First year LMD students at the Department of Letters and English Language, University of 8 Mai 1945(Guelma), that enrolled for the academic year 2016/2017. The aim behind this selection of freshmen is that first year students are beginners in learning EFL. Thus, they are supposed to encounter difficulties which require provision of the right guidance. Furthermore, this level is the crossroad for freshmen to be oriented towards autonomous learning. Our sample was selected randomly, in which two thirds (2/3) of the theoretical population (N=240) were taken (i.e. S= 160). So, this large sample could be representative for the whole population.

3.1.2. Description of Students' Questionnaire

This questionnaire is conceptually designed; it is based on the presented review in the theoretical parts of this study. The questionnaire is more structured and closed because the sample size is large (Cohen et al, 2007, p. 320). To reduce ambiguous answers, different types of closed-ended questions are provided such as dichotomous, multiple choices and Likert rating scale questions. So, depending on each question, participants are required to choose one or more answers upon various pre-determined possible options. Yet, a follow-up question has accompanied almost all questions like 'justify your answer, please' and 'any comments?' which aim at providing more clarification, further information or additions. It involves (20) questions divided between three main sections.

The first section is 'General Information' which includes four questions about respondents' age, level etc…. The second section, from **Q5** to **Q10,** is about the dependent variable 'Learner Autonomy'; it aims at investigating students' views concerning their learning process. And finally, the third one, from **Q11** to **Q20,** is about the independent variable 'Scaffolding Strategy' and its relation with learner autonomy. This section is set up to collect information about the use of scaffolding strategy in learning EFL and to highlight the students' beliefs regarding its impact on promoting learner autonomy.

3.1.3. Administration of Students' Questionnaire

The questionnaire has been administered at the Department of Letters and English Language, University of 8 Mai 1945 (Guelma), to First year LMD students during three days: April, 3rd, 4th, and 5th, 2017. Students were very excited to participate in this study since it is the first time they are asked to answer a questionnaire. They were very

cooperative so that they answered all the questions in less than half an hour. Also, it is worth mentioning that the researcher was present while students were answering to provide them with needed explanation and avoid ambiguity.

3.1.4. Analysis of Findings of the Students' Questionnaire

The following is the analysis of the students' responses to the questionnaire's questions:

Section One: General Information

Question One: How old are you?

Table 3.1

*First Year Students' Age*s

	Number	**Percentage**
17	3	1.9%
18	43	26.9%
19	48	30%
20	42	26.3%
21	12	7.5%
22	4	2.5%
23	5	3.1%
24	1	0.6%
35	1	0.6%
44	1	0.6%
Total	160	100%

Concerning students' ages, the sample is ranged between 17 and 44 years old. In which students with the age of 19, 18, 20 (30%, 26.9%, 26.3%) respectively are the dominant in the First year. Followed by 7.5% of 21 years old, 3.1% of 23 years old, 2.5% of 22 years old, 1.9% of 17 years old and only 0.6% of 24, 35 and 44 years old. This implies that the sample is not homogeneous.

Question Two: Why did you choose to study English?

Table 3.2

Students' Aim behind Studying EFL

	Number	**Percentage**
1) It's my parents' choice.	14	8.8%
2) Because I love English language.	106	66.3%
3) To get a job.	38	23.8%
4) To travel abroad/ communicative purposes.	56	35%
5) Other.	4	2.5%

    Table 3.2 shows students aims behind choosing to study EFL. The majority of students (66.3%) opted for the second option which is "because I love English language". This reflects their positive attitudes towards English and thus their internal motivation to learn this FL. Fifty-six students (35%) said that they have chosen to study English to travel abroad or for communicative purposes, which implies the importance of learning the worldwide spoken language 'English' for successful communication with others. However, 23.8% of students (38) chose 'to get a job' which indicates that they are learning English for occupational purposes. In other words, learning EFL here is due to extrinsic motivation where students believe that English is instrumental in achieving their goals. In addition, fourteen students (8.8%) said that studying English is their parents' choice. This fact may cause frustration and boredom for learning something not of their interests. Finally, only four students (2.5%) opted for "Other" including ameliorating the level, or because of the baccalaureate average that automatically oriented them to study English.

Question Three: Do you think that learning English as a foreign language is necessary?

Table 3.3

The Necessity of studying English as a Foreign Language

	Number	Percentage
Yes	157	98.1%
No	3	1.9%
Total	160	100%

While asking students whether studying EFL is necessary or not, almost all students (98.1%) said that it is necessary as displayed in **table 3.3**. This indicates their awareness of the benefits of learning EFL. Whereas, only three students (1.9%) said that it is not; which may imply their ignorance of the advantages of learning a FL, and/or their negative attitudes towards learning foreign languages or learning about foreign cultures.

Question Four: How could you describe your level in English?

Table 3.4

Students' Appreciation of Their Level

	Number	Percentage
Very good	14	8.8%
Good	76	47.5%
Average	62	38.7%
Bad	7	4.4%
Very bad	1	0.6%
Total	160	100%

Table 3.4 indicates students' appreciation of their level, in which 8.8% (14) of students said that their level is very good and 47.5% of students (76) claimed that their level is good. This indicates that they may face fewer difficulties in learning the FL.

However, 38.7% of students considered their level as average, the fact that requires from them more efforts to ameliorate their level. While seven students (4.4%) claimed that their level is bad and only one student (0.6%) considered it very bad. This small number of students should work very hard to overcome their weaknesses and develop their level.

Section Two: Learner Autonomy

Question Five: Are you familiar with the concept of learner autonomy?

Table 3.5

Students' Familiarity with the Concept of Learner Autonomy

	Number	**Percentage**
Yes	77	48.1%
No	83	51.9%
Total	160	100%

Concerning students' familiarity with the concept of autonomy, 48.1% (77) of the students claimed that they know this notion, which implies that they may be aware of its importance in learning. Whereas, eighty-three students (51.9%) said that they are not familiar with the concept. This may reflect their ignorance of the significant role of autonomy in their learning.

Question Six: Are you an autonomous learner?

Table 3.6

Asking Students if They Are Autonomous Learners

	Number	**Percentage**
Yes	100	62.5%
No	60	37.5%
Total	160	100%

In this question, students were asked to say whether they are autonomous learners or not. More than half the students (62.5%) claimed that they are autonomous learners.

which makes them self-dependent and more responsible of their learning. However, the rest of students (37.5%) said that they are not autonomous learners. This implies that those students lack the qualities of an autonomous learner which are key features for shaping their independent learning.

Question Seven: Do you think that learner autonomy is important in EFL?

Table 3.7

Students' Opinion about the Importance of Autonomy in EFL

	Number	Percentage
Yes	148	92.5%
No	12	7.5%
Total	160	100%

Question seven is about students' opinion concerning the importance of autonomy in EFL. In this regard, as shown in **table 3.7** almost the majority of students (92.5%) said that it is important, whereas the rest (7.5%) said that it is not. The majority of the students are conscious of the positive impact of learner autonomy in EFL, while unfortunately the rest are not.

Question Eight: How do you prefer to learn?

Table 3.8

Students' Preferences in Learning

	Number	Percentage
1) Independently without a teacher (at home via books or internet).	33	20.6%
2) Independently but with the teacher's guidance.	125	78.1%
3) Independently and in cooperation with peers.	22	13.8%
4) Completely dependent on the teacher.	9	5.6%
5) Other	0	0%

Table 3.8 shows students' preferences in learning. The majority of students (78.1%) opted for the second option of learning 'independently with the teacher's

guidance' which shows their responsibility in learning. Also, it demonstrates their awareness of the crucial role of the teacher in guiding and facilitating their learning. Thirty-three students (20.6%) opted for the first option about learning 'independently without a teacher' which indicates the students' over dependence on themselves and their ignorance about the teacher's important role in their learning. Whereas, 13.8% of students opted for the third option related to learning 'independently and in cooperation with peers'. Actually, this choice indicates that they are independent learners who enjoy collaborative work with others which is a key feature of the autonomous learner. Finally, only nine students (5.6%) said that they prefer learning 'completely dependent on the teacher' which indicates their over reliance on the teacher. In other words, they are teacher centered and do not take charge of their own learning. No one (0%) opted for 'Other' which implies that students do not think of other learning preferences to add.

Question Nine: Please tick the appropriate answer about the teacher and learner's roles for each statement?

Table 3.9

Teacher and Learner's Roles

	Teacher		Learner	
	Num.	Per.	Num.	Per.
1) To motivate you in learning English (stimulation)	122	76.3%	56	35%
2) To identify your weaknesses in English	106	66.3%	71	44.4%
3) To set the objectives of your courses	109	68.1%	61	38.1%
4) To decide about the activities and tasks to do in the classroom	137	85.6%	28	17.5%
5) To decide about the activities and tasks to do outside the classroom	48	30%	133	83.1%
6) To decide about the materials and methods to use in learning	98	61.3%	88	55%
7) To evaluate your learning progress	110	68.8%	68	42.5%

As it is shown in **table 3.9**, 76.3% of students (122) thought that it is the teacher's role to motivate them in learning, which means that they need influential extrinsic factors to raise their motivation. However, 35% of students (56) said that it's their role, which means that they need intrinsic factors to be motivated to learn. For the second item, 66.3% of students (106) opted for 'teacher's role' which implies that they prefer the teacher's feedback concerning their weaknesses. But, 44.4% of students (71) thought that it's their role to determine their own weaknesses. These students have self-awareness about their capacities and deficiency, what makes them identify their weaknesses for the sake of monitoring their learning.

Concerning the third item, more than the half of students (68.1%) favored the 'teacher' option for setting objectives of the courses; however, 38.1% of students saw that it's their role to do so. This indicates that the former depend on the teacher to set the objectives of the courses, and the latter depend on their selves to set the objectives based on their learning needs. Additionally, the majority of students (85.6%) agreed that it is the teacher's role to decide about the activities and tasks to do inside the classroom, which entails the teacher's authority and decision-taking concerning class activities. Only 28 students (17.5%) believed that it's rather the learner's role to do that, which shows their motivation to lessen the teacher's authority and be involved in taking decisions concerning their activities inside the classroom.

From other side, forty-eight students (30%) thought that it's the teacher's role to decide about activities to do outside the classroom, which indicates that this proportion prefers to be instructed about what do precisely rather than depending on themselves. Yet, 83.1% of students said that it's their role to decide about activities and tasks outside the classroom, which implies seeking more freedom in decision-making and taking charge of their own learning. And concerning decisions about the materials and

methods to use in learning, 61.3% of students said that it's the teacher's role whereas, 55% of students claimed it's the learner's role. This denotes that the first group depends on the teacher's choice concerning the ways of teaching process, but the other group of students prefers to have the opportunity to decide about the suitable ways and means for their learning.

Finally, more than the half of students (68.8%) thought that the teacher is the one responsible for evaluating their learning progress, this implies that they believe that it's the teacher's role to provide his students with feedback concerning their learning. However, 42.5% of students claimed that it's their role to evaluate their learning progress; this indicates that those students depend on themselves for the provision of feedback and assessment (self-evaluation) of their own learning.

Concerning this question, the following are some comments provided by the respondents about the teacher and learner's roles that should be integrated for better learning:

> *"For best learning and good results the teacher and learner must cooperate to achieve the aims".*

> *"The teacher can help us to evaluate our learning progress and show us the methods to use in learning".*

> *"I think that all the work emphasizes on the teacher and students must follow the teacher guidance".*

> *"In our study we should not depend on our teacher only, we should have role too".*

> *"Materials and methods should be suggested by teachers but decided by learners".*

Question Ten: Please say yes or no to the following statements

Table 3.10

Students' Usual Activities

	Yes		No	
	Num.	**Per.**	**Num.**	**Per.**
1) Do assignments and activities that are not compulsory.	61	38.1%	99	61.9%
2) Learn and look for new words and meanings (e.g. in dictionaries…)	148	92.5%	12	7.5%
3) Use English with friends (chat, conversations …) and to talk to foreigners.	132	82.5%	28	17.5%
4) Ask the teacher questions when I don't understand	129	80.6%	31	19.4%
5) Activate my prior knowledge when studying and make links with the new one	110	68.75%	50	31.25%
6) Take notes, do mind-maps and/or brain storming… when studying.	124	77.5%	36	22.5%
7) Work cooperatively in groups or pairs (collaborative work).	78	48.75%	82	51.25%
8) Preview before the class (search and prepare the lesson and read previous one)	82	51.25%	78	48.75%
9) I review after the class (summarize and revise what I learnt)	78	48.75%	82	51.25%
10) Identify my own strengths and weaknesses	105	65.6%	55	34.4%
11) Try to make self-tests (e.g. online tests…)	78	48.75%	82	51.25%
12) Be exposed to English outside the classroom (books, songs, TV programs…)	141	88.1%	19	11.9%
13) Evaluate and monitor my learning by my own	111	69.4%	49	30.6%
14) Don't do any of the above, why should I do so?	0	0%	160	100%

　　Table 3.10 shows statistics about students' usual activities. Only 38.1% of students said that they do assignments and activities that are not compulsory which shows their willingness to learn independently. Whereas, more than the half of students (61.9%) said that they do not do non-compulsory activities which indicates the lack of initiative to learn by their own. Almost all the students (92.5%) claimed that they learn and look for new words and meanings, and this shows their initiation to enrich their linguistic

competence. But only twelve students (7.5%) said that they do not do so, this implies their lack of motivation to develop their linguistic competence.

Concerning the use of English with friends and talking with foreigners, the majority of informants (82.5%) said that they do so. This implies putting the language into practice with the learnt knowledge to develop their performance, which is not the case of the 17.5% of students who said that they do not use English in informal settings (i.e. outside the classroom). Also, the majority of students (80.6%) claimed that they ask the teacher questions when they don't understand. This means that those learners do not hesitate to ask for clarification to avoid ambiguity and reach comprehension. However, just 19.4% of informants said that they do not so, which denotes their anxiety and/ or shyness from asking the teacher; the matter that should be overcome for better understanding. One hundred and ten students (68.75%) said that they activate their prior knowledge and make links with the new one; this implies the exploration of their cognitive capacities for the construction of knowledge.

Nonetheless, fifty students (31.25%) said that they do not make links with their prior knowledge, which indicates that they are not flexible learners. 77.5% of students claimed that they take notes, do mind-maps and/or brain storming when studying. This shows their use of different important learning strategies that would improve their learning proficiency; unfortunately it is not the same for the 22.5% of students who said that they do not use such strategies. Moreover, seventy-eight students (48.75%) said that they work cooperatively in groups or pairs, which indicates their sense of intersubjectivity and appreciation of the collaborative work. Whereas, 45.75% of students said that they do not work in collaboration with others, the matter that makes this proportion lacks the constructive reciprocal interaction which is very important for developing the analytical and critical thinking.

Moreover, 82 informants (51.25%) claimed that they preview before class, this shows their active role and readiness to learn, however, 78 students (48.75%) said that they do not do so. Controversially, the same number of students (78) said that they review after class including summarizing and revising what they learnt, but the rest of informants said that they do not do. This makes those students who review apply one of the effective techniques for organizing information and facilitating the process of internalization. Although 34.4% of students said that they do not identify their own strengths and weaknesses, more than the half of informants (65.6%) claimed that they do so; this implies most importantly that they are able to highlight their deficiency that could hinder their learning progress.

Furthermore, 51.25% of participants said that they do not make self-tests, whereas 48.75% of them claimed that they do. This indicates that these students are aware of the importance of self-assessment using different diagnostic strategies such as online tests or others. Concerning exposure to English outside the classroom, the majority of the participants (88.1%) said that they are usually exposed to English in their daily life; this shows their motivation to practice the target language in order to improve their competence. Only nineteen students (11.9%) said that they are not exposed to English. It means that they are not motivated to use the language. Additionally, 30.6% of students said that they neither evaluate nor monitor their learning by their own, but 69.4% of them claimed that they do both self-evaluation and self-monitoring, which indicates their capacities for providing constructive feedback by which they can overcome their weaknesses and develop their level forward. Concerning the last item, obviously, no one opted for it since all participants have chosen some activities that they do.

Section Three: Scaffolding Strategy and Learner autonomy

Question Eleven: Do you think that scaffolding strategy is useful in EFL classes?

Table 3.11

Students' Opinion about the Usefulness of Scaffolding Strategy in EFL Classes

	Number	Percentage
Yes	154	96.3%
No	6	3.7%
Total	160	100%

As indicated in **table 3.11**, almost all students (96.3%) agreed that scaffolding strategy is useful in EFL classes. Informants provided a lot of comments to justify their agreement concerning the usefulness of scaffolding strategy; mainly they argued that this strategy has a great impact on increasing their understanding, improving their skills, raising their self-confidence and independency in learning. The following are some illustrations:

"The responsibility of teachers is to help the students when they face difficulties and let them reach the solution by themselves".

"It's useful because a lot of students need a kick start at first, but the more experienced they become the less dependent on others they will be."

"I think that this strategy is very useful especially when students provide this help to each other, because they understand better from each other".

"To guide the learner think correctly".

"Because working with your friend or teacher can be a great help, just till you can understand and do the task on your own".

"Because it motivates the learner to search more and not completely depend on the teacher".

"Because the learner needs some guidance at first to know how to do his research and how to learn effectively and after this guidance he will become capable of doing everything by his own".

"English being a foreign language will pose difficulties that require the help of the teacher but that is removed to teach students to depend on themselves".

"At the beginning of learning a new language it's so useful to get some help for overcoming some problems. This will surly encourage the learner to continue and certainly an improvement will be obvious".

However, only six informants (3.7%) denied the usefulness of scaffolding strategy in EFL classes. Basically, their rejection was the outcome of their misunderstanding of the concept of scaffolding strategy, since most of their justifications emphasized the idea that students over rely on the teacher; which is totally the opposite of this notion. This implies their ignorance of the significance of this strategy. Accordingly, those students need to learn more about this strategy and its implications in EFL learning.

Question Twelve: How often is scaffolding used in your classroom?

Table 3.12

The Frequency of Using Scaffolding Strategy

	Number	Percentage
Always	24	15%
Sometimes	136	85%
Never	0	0%
Total	160	100%

Question twelve dealt with the frequency of using scaffolding strategy in EFL classes by the teachers. Surprisingly, according to **table 3.12** no one opted for the last option 'Never'; this implies that students are usually provided with scaffolds in their study. Mainly, almost all informants (85%) said that scaffolding strategy is used 'Sometimes', however, 15% of them said that it is used 'Always'. This indicates that scaffolding strategy is commonly used with first year students, and its average of recurrence depends on some factors.

Question Thirteen: What are the types of scaffolding that your teachers frequently use?

Table 3.13

Frequency of Scaffolding Types Usage by Teachers

	Number	**Percentage**
1. Hints	39	24.4%
2. "Wh" questions	99	61.9%
3. Tag questions	37	23.1%
4. Explanations	120	75%
5. Modeling	33	20.6%
6. Providing half the answer	39	24.4%
7. Reducing choices	32	20%
8. Prompts	23	14.4%
9. Handouts without details	75	46.9%
10. Other	3	1.9%

Question thirteen tackled some types of scaffolds that are frequently used by their teachers. According to the informants' responses displayed in **table 3.13**, the highest percentages go to 'Explanations', 'Wh Questions', and 'Handouts without details' with 75%, 61.9%, and 46.9% respectively. However, the rest of rates were approximately close to each other; thirty-nine students (24.4%) agreed that 'Hints' and 'Providing half the answer' is commonly used rather than 'Tag questions', 'Modeling', 'Reducing choices', and 'Prompts' which took the following rates respectively: 23.1%, 20.6%, 20% and 14.4%. Additionally, only three informants (1.9%) opted for 'Other', they claimed that their teachers may also use "*opposites and synonyms to make the meaning clear*", "*stories and morals*", and even *"challenges"*. These rates indicate the most used strategies that occur in different situations and settings during the learning process.

Question Fourteen: When are you provided with scaffolds?

Table 3.14

Cases Where Scaffolds Are Provided

	Number	Percentage
1. In oral discussions	116	72.5%
2. In writing tasks	74	46.3%
3. In oral presentations	53	33.1%
4. In grammar tasks	56	35%
5. In new and difficult lessons	94	58%
6. In group/ pair work	50	31.3%
7. Other	0	0%

Concerning the cases where scaffolds are frequently provided, as shown in **table 3.14,** the majority of students (72.5%) said it is in oral discussions, 58% said in new and difficult lessons, 46.3% said in writing tasks, 35% in grammar tasks, 33.1% in oral presentations, and 31.3% in group/pair work. This reveals that scaffolding strategy is commonly used in different courses. No one opted for 'Other' which implies that they do not think of other cases or they may be bored to answer and explain.

Question Fifteen: Do your peers provide you with effective scaffolds in collaborative work?

Table 3.15

Effectiveness of the Scaffolds Provided By Peers in Collaborative Work

	Number	Percentage
Yes	107	66.9%
No	53	33.1%
Total	160	100%

As shown in **table 3.15**, more than half of the students (66.9%) said that scaffolds provided by their peers in collaborative work are effective and 33.1% of them claimed that they are not. These findings reveal that some students are skilled and capable of

providing the needed guidance for their peers. Whereas others may not be qualified enough to provide effective scaffolds or maybe students do not really trust their peers' skills and abilities.

Question Sixteen: Do scaffolds help you to understand or accomplish a hard task easily and raise your motivation to learn?

Table 3.16

The Usefulness of Scaffolding in Improving Students' Understanding, Completion of Tasks and Motivation to Learn

	Number	Percentage
Yes	148	92.5%
No	12	7.5%
Total	160	100%

Table 3.16 shows that almost all students (92.5%) claimed that scaffolding is useful for improving their understanding, helping them complete difficult tasks and raise their motivation to learn. This indicates that scaffolding strategy is very helpful for FL learners. Only 12 students (7.5%) found it not effective, which implies that either they are not aware of the impact of this strategy, or they ignore its significance. Moreover, the failure of this strategy could be the effect of some other influential factors.

Question Seventeen: Does scaffolding strategy make you use different language learning strategies?

Table 3.17

The Effect of Scaffolding Strategy on Students' Use of Different Language Learning Strategies

	Number	Percentage
Yes	127	79.4%
No	33	20.6%
Total	160	100%

Concerning the seventieth question, the majority of informants (79.4%) as displayed in **table 3.17** claimed that implementing scaffolding strategy makes them use different learning strategies. This means that scaffolding strategy has an implicit role for orienting students towards the use of different language learning strategies. Still, 20.6% of them rejected the relation of scaffolding strategy with using those strategies. This implies the inadequate use of this strategy so that students did not benefit from it. In other words, scaffolding strategy highly proved its effectiveness in developing students' learning skills and thus their use of language learning strategies. So, these findings may point out that this strategy could not be applied appropriately.

Question Eighteen: Do you believe that scaffolds are extrinsic motivation which develop your….?

Table 3.18

The Influence of Scaffolds as extrinsic Motivation on Students

	Number	Percentage
1. Self-confidence	105	65.6%
2. Metacognitive skills (identifying your own learning style preferences and needs, making evaluations, monitoring mistakes….)	86	53.8%
3. Problem-solving skills (explore the details of a problem to reach solution through the use of analytical or critical thinking skills…)	102	63.7%
4. Other	1	0.6%

As shown in **table 3.18**, 65.6% of students claimed that scaffolds are extrinsic motivational factors which have a high impact on promoting their self-confidence. This implies that scaffolding strategy can build and/ or improve students' self-confidence and raise their beliefs in and appreciation of their capacities. In addition, it can raise their sense of responsibility towards achieving their goals, avoiding anxiety and

hesitation, taking risks, making initiatives, and learning independently. Likewise, 63.7% of students said that scaffolding strategy can develop their problem-solving skills; this indicates the significance of this strategy in helping them reach solutions and draw conclusions, likely through improving their reasoning, analytical and critical thinking. Also, 53.8% of students claimed that this strategy interferes in developing their metacognitive skills; which indicates its significant role in raising learners' awareness about their higher-order cognitive skills, learning styles, making evaluations, monitoring, etc. Furthermore, only one student (0.6%) opted for "Other" option, in which he said that *"it helps me be a good scaffolder and help others"*, which means that implementing scaffolding strategy in classes teaches learners how and when to provide scaffolds to guide others in different settings.

Question Nineteen: Do you think that scaffolding strategy can promote your autonomy?

Table 3.19

The Effectiveness of Scaffolding Strategy in Promoting Students' Autonomy

	Number	Percentage
Yes	150	93.75%
No	10	6.25%
Total	160	100%

Concerning the effectiveness of scaffolding strategy in promoting students' autonomy, almost all students (93.75%) confirmed its effectiveness. This indicates that students find this strategy very useful and efficient in fostering their autonomy. The majority of this category provided sufficient justifications to illustrate their positive answers. The following are some extractions of their comments:

> *"By exploring new learning strategies that surely help me understand and also rely on my own ways"*.

"Scaffolding strategy helps you develop your metacognitive and problem solving skills, so after a while you become able to learn on your own independently".

"The scaffolding strategy is very helpful because of that it makes you have self-confidence too trust on yourself and choice and that led you to have autonomy".

"It can do so by giving me a chance to develop my learning ability and understand even more and better".

"I think that scaffolding strategy can promote my autonomy because it is very important to make self-confidence".

"After the scaffolding I will be able to learn effectively by myself".

"It will probably guide me to the correct answer or the right way to solve any type of task".

"Scaffolding provides a certain amount of help yet allows the students to feel they arrived to the answer themselves which motivates them to seek ways to improve and to completely take control of their learning".

"It gives us self-confidence and makes us rely on ourselves and be more responsible of our study".

"Yes, because it gives us more self-confidence that we can rely on ourselves an be responsible for our work. Also it gives us a sense of responsibility yet independence".

"When the teacher helps me to solve problems by time I will depend on myself".

"This strategy obliges us to think and suggest answers, so instead of finding directly the answer this strategy let us make answers in our mind and try to find solution".

"Because scaffolding strategy is about relying on yourself".

However, only a small proportion (6.25%) claimed the opposite, which means that they think that scaffolding strategy may not promote their autonomy. Mainly some of them justified their answers as if this strategy would make them more dependent on the teacher whom they supposed would provide them with solutions for their learning problems. This implies their misunderstanding of the concept of scaffolding strategy. So, it is worth mentioning that they would believe in the effectiveness of scaffolding if

they could have understood the notion correctly. The following are examples of their sayings:

> *"No because in the future I will face some problems at that time nobody will be there to give me solutions".*

> *"Because the student will depend on the teacher".*

> *"It may make us count a lot on the teacher, so we can't understand when we are alone, so we can't learn by ourselves".*

Question Twenty: Could you add further information about this topic, please?

This question is open-ended; it is about further information concerning the impact of scaffolding strategy on promoting EFL learners' autonomy. Only 17 students out of 160 participants (10.6%) added suggestions, those which can be outlined as follows:

> *"If the teacher helps students to solve some problems they will depend on themselves. But if they're not helping them and let them alone maybe they will not be able to know the way for depending on themselves".*

> *"Scaffolding strategy allows you benefit from the experiences and skills of your fellow students and teachers, and after collecting enough skills and developing your own metacognitive skills you will be qualified to learn independently".*

> *"Scaffolding gives us self-confidence by identifying our own way to learn and with that we can answer or solve any problem, also it is very useful for developing different skills".*

> *"This strategy should be used more often in classes, because it can boost up the students' self esteem and confidence, and persuade them more into working and learning and loving the language even more".*

> *"Scaffolding strategy is a good way that helps and motivates us to have a lot of confidence and love what we study and feel like we are doing our own work and it makes us want to study".*

> *"Not most of teachers use the scaffolding strategy, but some of them do. I think that they should use it because it boosts students' confidence about solving tasks or anything else and guide them to the right learning technique".*

> *"Scaffolding is a sort of "training wheels" it helps the learner's progress yet encourages them to try hard to improve in order to remove them".*

To sum up, it seems from the above suggestions that students are aware about the importance of the implementation of scaffolding strategy in EFL classes. Accordingly, they likely acknowledge the strong impact of this strategy on fostering learner autonomy.

3.1.5. Summary of Results and Findings from Students' Questionnaire

The first section about general information shows that the majority of students have chosen to study English because they love it. This implies that they are interested and motivated to learn EFL. Likewise, they also had a very appreciable level in English, which means that they have considerable capacities that allow them to learn more and develop their level. Additionally, it is worth mentioning that almost all the students find that EFL learning is necessary; which indicates their awareness about the significance of learning a FL.

Concerning learner autonomy, the second section demonstrated that more than half of the students are familiar with the concept of autonomy. This shows that despite the fact of being freshmen, they are enlightened about such a revolutionary notion which is a proof of their diligence. Also, a very interesting and encouraging finding is that almost the same proportion claimed their self-dependency, which means being autonomous learners. And almost all students confirmed the importance of autonomy in EFL and the majority preferred to learn independently but with the teacher's guidance. This indicates their recognition of the teacher's crucial role; in addition to their appreciation of independent learning that are key features in autonomous learning. The analysis of students' responses showed a kind of preservation for the teachers' role, especially regarding aspects of assessment and authority in the classroom. In this concern, the majority of students gave the teacher different roles like motivating

learners to learn, deciding about activities inside the classroom, evaluating their progress, setting the courses' objectives and identifying their weaknesses. Yet, they believe that it's the learner's role to choose tasks to do outside the classroom and decide about which materials and methods to use in learning. Some believed that the teacher's and learner's roles should be complemented, in which they have to work cooperatively to achieve the learning aims. Also, as presented in **Table 3.15**, most of students highly emphasized their application of a set of independency related activities like for instance the use of learning strategies, putting the language into practice, making links with prior knowledge, etc.

The analysis of section three revealed that almost all students find scaffolding strategy beneficial in EFL classes. This result confirms the students' awareness about the positive consequences of implementing this strategy. Concerning its use in their learning context, they said that it is frequently used. In this respect, explanations, 'wh' questions and handouts without details are argued to be the most used types of scaffolds rather than others. Those scaffolds are highly claimed to be used specially in oral discussions, in new and difficult lessons and in writing tasks among other situations where students face difficulties. From other side, more than half the students thought that their peers could provide them with effective scaffolds. Students' success in assisting their peers is one of the main characteristics of autonomous learning. Additionally, almost all students agreed that scaffolds can help them understand and/or accomplish a hard task easily by their own and raise their motivation to learn. This implies the direct effect of scaffolding strategy on orienting students towards independent learning. Also, the majority claimed that this strategy helps them to use different language learning strategies, which is one of the most influential principles of learning. Moreover, the majority of students claimed that scaffolds are considered as

extrinsic motivation that develops their self-confidence, metacognitive and problem-solving skills. This implies that scaffolding strategy influences the learners' cognitive, metacognitive and affective dimensions. Finally, almost all students confirmed the fact that scaffolding strategy can promote their autonomy. This indicates that they know how much important and influential is this strategy for directing them towards self-dependency in learning the FL.

3.2. Teachers' Questionnaire

The following tittles describe the teachers' questionnaire and the objective behind choosing the teachers' sample to collect information.

3.2.1. Population and Sample of the Study

Teachers of First year LMD for the academic year 2016/2017 at the Department of Letters and English Language, University of 8 Mai 1945 (Guelma) are the second chosen population for this study. The aim behind this selection is that this research is case study of First year LMD students at the same department. Accordingly, those teachers are supposed to use different methods and strategies to help freshmen to overcome some encountered difficulties in learning the FL. Also, their role is very crucial for directing learners towards independent learning. Our sample was selected by purpose, in which all teachers (S= 16) of oral expression, grammar and written expression, i.e. teachers of language based courses were selected. This is only because learners are likely expected to face some difficulties especially in such modules that include different types of tasks and activities to practice the language.

3.2.2. Description of Teachers' Questionnaire

Like the students' questionnaire, the teachers' questionnaire is also conceptualized based on the theoretical review of this study. As well, this questionnaire is a more structured one; which includes different kinds of closed-ended questions where participants are asked to answer by selecting either one or more options that are already pre-determined. Also, follow-up questions are provided to seek further information or justifications for their answers. With a total of sixteen questions, this questionnaire is divided into three sections:

General information section involves two questions about teachers' educational degree and their years of experience in teaching. The second section from **Q3** to **Q9** contained questions about learner autonomy: its characteristics, its importance, its challenges, etc. The last section contains six questions from **Q10** to **Q16** which tackled the relationship between learner autonomy and scaffolding strategy in EFL classes.

3.2.3. Administration of Teachers' Questionnaire

This questionnaire has been administered with two ways: First, at the Department of Letters and English Language, University of 8 Mai 1945 (Guelma), and second, through sending electronic versions to some teachers who were absent the days of distributing the questionnaire in the first week of April 2017. Mainly, teachers with the printed versions took around 15 to 20 minutes to answer the questions. Unfortunately, out of the 16 teachers who compose our sample, only one teacher did not give back his questionnaire, the fact that reduced our sample to 15 participants. Hopefully, all the participants answered all the questions without exception and some of them provided justifications and further information too, which is very significant for of this study.

3.2.4. Analysis of Findings of the Teachers' Questionnaire

The following is analysis of the results gathered in response to the 16 questions described previously.

Section One: General Information

Question One: What is your educational degree/ high qualification?

Table 3.20

Teachers' Educational Degree

	Number	Percentage
License	0	0%
Master	0	0%
Magister	15	100%
Doctorate	0	0%
Other	0	0%

The analysis of the teachers' responses concerning their educational level showed that all the teachers (100%) have Magister degree.

Question Two: How many years do you have as English language teacher?

Table 3.21

Teachers' Years of Experience

	Number	Percentage
3 - 8	11	73.3%
9 - 16	4	26.7%
Total	15	100%

Teachers' years of experience is ranged between 3 and 16 years. Thus, they are likely to be proficient enough in teaching the FL; also this implies their mastery of a set of teaching techniques and methods.

Section Two: Learner Autonomy

Question Three: How much do you think that learner autonomy is important for effective language learning proficiency?

Table 3.22

Importance of Autonomy for Language Learning Proficiency

	Number	Percentage
Very important	11	73.3%
Important	4	26.7%
A little	0	0%
Not at all	0	0%
Total	15	100%

Concerning the importance of autonomy for language learning proficiency, the majority of teachers (73.3%) said that it is 'very important'; likewise, the rest of teachers (26.7%) claimed that it is 'important'. This indicates teachers' awareness about the significance of learner autonomy for developing learners' skills and levels.

Question Four: What do you think are the qualities of autonomous learner?

Table 3.23

Teachers' Opinion about the Qualities of Autonomous Learner

	Number	Percentage
1) Self-confidence	7	46.7%
2) Self-dependence	9	60%
3) Self-evaluation/ assessment	6	40%
4) Self-monitoring	4	26.7%
5) Identify their weaknesses and strengths	4	26.7%
6) Use different learning strategies	3	20%
7) Enjoy cooperative work with classmates	4	26.7%
8) Reciprocal interaction with the teacher	7	46.7%
9) All above	4	26.7%
10) other	0	0%

Table 3.13 shows teachers' opinions about the qualities of autonomous learner. In this concern, the majority of teachers (60%) selected 'self-dependence'; this shows their awareness about the importance of self-dependence as a key element for learner

autonomy. 46.7% of informants chose 'Self-confidence' and 'Reciprocal interaction with the teacher'. This tells that those elements are regarded as significant aspects of autonomy. Additionally, 40% of them said it is 'self-evaluation/ assessment', which is, in fact a major feature of autonomous learners who take charge in evaluating their own learning progress. 26.7% of informants agreed that 'Self-monitoring', 'Identify their weaknesses and strengths' and 'Enjoy cooperative work with classmates' are essential qualities for an autonomous learner. These latter qualities imply that autonomous learners are supposed to be able to determine their lacks and strengths in order to monitor their own progress; besides their appreciation of collaborative work which is a basic element for their reciprocal interaction. However, only four teachers said that all the above items are the characteristics of autonomous learners. This denotes that they acknowledge the importance of each element and its integral role with the other ones. No one opted for 'Other' which may mean that they do not think of other qualities of autonomous learners.

Question Five: To what extent do you agree that the teacher's role is very significant for promoting learners' autonomy?

Table 3.24

Importance of the Teacher's Role in Promoting Learner Autonomy

	Number	**Percentage**
Highly Agree	8	53.3%
Agree	7	46.7%
Unsure	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Highly Disagree	0	0%
Total	15	100%

Table 3.24 shows the responses of teachers concerning their appreciation for the teacher's role in promoting learners' autonomy. Mainly, more than the half of participants (53.3%) said that they 'highly agree' and 46.7% said that they 'Agree'

about the importance of the teacher's role. This implies their consciousness about the significance of their role in directing learners towards independent learning

Question Six: Do you think that you are attempting to promote your learners' autonomy?

Table 3.25

Teachers' Attempts to Promote Learner Autonomy

	Number	Percentage
Yes	15	100%
No	0	0%
Total	15	100%

The teachers have been asked about whether they attempt to promote their learners' autonomy or not, all of them (100%) claimed that they do so. So, they are supposed to follow particular teaching approaches and use different teaching strategies to ensure fostering their learners' autonomous learning.

Question Seven: How do you think that you are fostering your learners' autonomy?

Table 3.26

Ways of Fostering Learners' Autonomy

	Num.	Per.
1) I am not sure if I am promoting my learners' autonomy.	0	0%
2) Raise students' awareness about autonomy and its importance.	4	26.7%
3) Encourage learners to be independently engaged in learning.	13	86.7%
4) Provide collaborative work activities in classroom which promote autonomy.	12	80%
5) Give them opportunity to monitor and evaluate their learning progress.	5	33.3%
6) Give them out of class assignments which require using their own resources.	10	66.7%
7) Provide learners with choice about the kind of activities they would do.	6	40%
8) Other	0	0%

Concerning ways of fostering learners' autonomy, no one of the informants opted for the first option, since all of them claimed their attempt to promote their learners'

autonomy (as shown in **Table 3.25**). In this respect, only four teachers (26.7%) said that they 'Raise students' awareness about autonomy and its importance', this implies that they are applying one of the very first steps for orienting learners towards autonomous learning. Almost all teachers (86.7%) said that they 'Encourage learners to be independently engaged in learning', so they are supposed to use different teaching strategies and methods to involve their students in independent learning, for this, one teacher commented: "*I do engage them in pair work and group work activities to make them learn how to work with classmates (their peers of their same level) that would enhance their learning alone as well as evaluating their own work.*".

Furthermore, the majority of them (80%) claimed their provision of certain activities that require collaborative work in order to promote learners' autonomy. This reflects their appreciation of the role of cooperative work with others (mainly their peers). Only five teachers (33.3%) said that they give students the opportunity to monitor and evaluate their learning progress. This makes those teachers aware of the importance of both self-evaluation and self-monitoring in autonomous learning, whereas, the rest of them ignored that fact. More than half of teachers (66.7%) insisted that they give their students out of class assignments which require using their own resources. This implies increasing students' responsibility and control over their own decisions and choices concerning their learning. Only six teachers (40%) said that they 'Provide learners with choice about the kind of activities they would do'. This means that those teachers engage their students in decision-making that could raise their sense of responsibility and self-confidence for their own learning, in this concern, one teacher said: "*I always ask my students to do home works, but I do not oblige them to choose the same topic and give them freedom to choose. I.e. they feel more relaxed when doing free topics*". No one opted for 'Other' option, which indicates that teachers do not think

of other ways to promote learner autonomy.

Question Eight: What decisions do you involve your learners in (i.e. 'Supportive engagement')?

Table 3.27

Teachers' "Supportive Engagement" for Learners

	Number	Percentage
1) Why to involve learners in decision making? I do not do so.	0	0%
2) To set the objectives of the courses.	1	6.7%
3) To decide about the activities and tasks to do in the classroom.	8	53.3%
4) To decide about the activities and tasks to do outside the classroom.	9	60%
5) To decide about the materials and methods to use in learning.	7	46.7%
6) To provide feedback about their performance.	8	53.3%
7) To provide feedback about their peers performance.	5	33.3%
8) Other.	0	0%

As indicated in **table 3.27**, no teacher opted for the first option, which means that all of them think that they engage students in decision making. Concerning setting the objectives of the courses, only one teacher (6.7%) said that he/she gives students the opportunity to set the objectives. This means that this teacher takes into account learners' needs when designing lessons or activities. Eight teachers (53.3%) claimed that they let their students decide about the activities and tasks to do in the classroom. This implies that this proportion is aware about the importance of lessening the teacher's authority inside the classroom and asking students for their propositions concerning class activities. Likewise, more than the half of teachers (60%) claimed that they give students the chance to decide about tasks to do outside the classroom. This demonstrates teachers' awareness about the significance of giving learners out of class activities where they feel free and responsible to practice based on their interests. Consequently, this would raise their motivation to learn independently. Additionally,

46.7% of teachers said that their students take charge of deciding about the materials and methods to use in learning. This implies that students are given the opportunity to choose the most suitable teaching methods based on their learning styles and preferences. 53.3% of them said that they let their students provide feedback about their own performance; this shows that students are required to make self-evaluation in order to improve their performance. In this regard, they can use checklists or self-tests to evaluate their understanding or mastery of certain skills to be able to monitor and improve their learning. Also, 33.3% of them said that their students have the chance to provide feedback about their peers' performance. This way, teachers are making students pay more attention to their classmates' performance in order to be able to give them constructive feedback, so that they monitor their learning progress. No teacher opted for 'Other' option which indicates that they do not think of other ways of supportive engagement to involve learners in decision-making.

Question Nine: What are the difficulties that you encounter when promoting your learners' autonomy?

Table 3.28

Difficulties that Teachers Encounter When Promoting Learners' Autonomy

	Number	Percentage
1) Learners are not accustomed to independent learning.	9	60%
2) Learners lack skills and capacity of independent learning.	9	60%
3) Learners lack motivation to learn independently.	10	66.7%
4) Learners lack willingness to learn independently.	9	60%
5) Learners lack learning English outside the classroom.	6	40%
6) Learners' over reliance on the teacher.	11	73.3%
7) Learners focus on scores rather than 'learning to learn'.	9	60%
8) Lack of the needed materials and resources for both teachers and learners.	3	20%
9) Fixed curricula which cannot be modified upon the learners' or teachers' needs.	1	6.7%
10) I lack strategies to promote my learners' autonomy.	1	6.7%
11) I don't expect learners to have the ability to become autonomous.	0	0%
12) Other.	0	0%

Table 3.28 shows that 60% of teachers thought that 'learners are not accustomed to independent learning'. This means that learners were not familiar with the teaching approaches that require them to work independently and rely on themselves. Also, the same proportion thought that 'learners lack skills and capacity of working independently'. This implies that they lack self-dependency, and that they do not know how to work by their own. This facts make teachers think of suitable techniques to develop those skills. Moreover, 66.7% of informants said that 'learners lack motivation to learn independently', so teachers need to inquire about their learners' attitudes towards independent learning and use the appropriate methods to raise their motivation towards learning by their own. And 60% of them thought that 'learners lack willingness to learn independently'. This problem may be related to intrinsic motivation of those learners what makes them lack initiative in their learning. Also, 40% of informants said that 'learners lack learning English outside the classroom', mainly this issues is related to their motivation to learn and initiation to do activities that are not compulsory. The majority of informants (73.3%) believed that learners over rely on the teacher; this implies that learners view learning from a teacher-centered perspective that is in contrast with autonomous learning approaches.

Additionally, 60% of them saw that 'Learners focus on scores rather than 'learning to learn''. This problem is very challenging because students merely count for scores which do not really reveal their real levels. As a result, teachers need to raise their learners' appreciation of the knowledge they are learning, the proficiency they acquired and the importance of independent learning. Some teachers (20%) claimed that 'lack of the needed materials and resources for both teachers and learners' is an obstacle for promoting learner autonomy. This shows that they need sufficient equipments and resources that help in facilitating the process of teaching/ learning and fostering learner

autonomy. Only 6.7% claimed that the fixed curriculum which cannot be modified upon the learners' or teachers' needs is a challenge to the promotion of autonomy. This means that both learners and teachers are restricted by pre-determined objectives and lessons, i.e. they are not able to adjust it freely. Also, the same proportion said that they lack strategies to promote their learners autonomy, and this implies that those teachers need to be trained about the different strategies that help them promote their students' autonomous learning. Finally, no one (0%) opted for the last two options, which means that all of them expect that learners have the ability to become autonomous and that they do not think of other difficulties that can be faced when promoting learners' autonomy.

Section Three: Scaffolding Strategy and Learner Autonomy.

Question Ten: Are you familiar with the concept of 'scaffolding strategy'?

Table 3.29

Teachers' Familiarity with the Concept of Scaffolding Strategy

	Number	Percentage
Yes	7	46.7%
No	8	53.3%
Total	15	100%

Question ten tackled teachers' familiarity with the concept of scaffolding strategy, in which more than the half of teachers (53.3%) said that they are not familiar with the concept. This reflects their lack of awareness of the importance of this strategy in FLT, but still they may be using many techniques related to scaffolding. However, 46.7% of them confirmed their familiarity with that notion. This indicates their awareness about its significance in learning. Teachers who answered by 'yes' were required to define the concept of scaffolding strategy. But, only some of them provided definitions that are suitable with those theoretical ones in the literature. Teachers' definitions are illustrated

as follow:

> *"The teacher shows the way and how to solve problems; teacher is a supervisor".*

> *"Providing help for learners only when necessary. I.e. whenever, students become self-reliable, the help disappeared".*

> *"Discovery learning process, which aims at providing the learner with help to do different tasks and to learn independently".*

> *"Helps students to accomplish a given task or facilitates learning certain concepts".*

> *"Helping students to learn according to certain strategies, when the teacher feels that students grasped the learning at certain stage, the instructions will be removed gradually".*

Question Eleven: Do you believe that scaffolding strategy is important in EFL?

Table 3.30

Teachers' Opinion about the Importance of Scaffolding Strategy in EFL

	Number	Percentage
Yes	15	100%
No	0	0%
Total	15	100%

The analysis of the question eleven showed that all the teachers (100%) confirmed the importance of scaffolding strategy in EFL. Also some of them justified their answer as follow:

> *"Because learners need the teacher's help mainly when they are beginners learning a foreign language".*

> *"EFL learners, and language learners in general need scaffolding strategy, to learn how to develop their learning strategies, how to learn by their own in order to develop their communicative skills. Language learning requires individual learning and more practice".*

> *"To make student gain self-confidence through finishing their tasks and contributing to the lesson achievements".*

> *"It helps students be familiar with/ aware of the difficulties they face hence*

avoid them. It also helps students create an environment of motivation. Through scaffolding strategy, students spend more time on learning new concepts instead of looking for solutions and alternatives to deal with learning obstacles".

"It provides self-motivation as well as raising learning process and goals".

"It is an important strategy for all learners not only those of EFL. It helps students get over difficult activities and learn how to overcome such obstacles of learning. It makes them feel comfortable and keeps their learning process going".

As a general comment, teachers see that scaffolding strategy is an effective strategy for overcoming difficulties that learners may face in learning the foreign language. Also, they think that it is beneficial for developing certain skills like self-confidence and self-motivation, in addition to being actively involved in the process of learning.

Question Twelve: What kind of scaffolds you usually provide learners with?

Table 3.31

Types of Scaffolds that Are Frequently Used by Teachers

	Number	**Percentage**
13) Hints	13	86.7%
14) "Wh" questions	7	46.7%
15) Tag questions	5	33.3%
16) Explanations	12	80%
17) Modeling	5	33.3%
18) Providing half the answer	4	26.7%
19) Reducing choices	6	40%
20) Prompts	2	13.3%
21) Handouts without details	5	33.3%
22) Other	0	0%

Concerning types of scaffolds that are frequently used by teachers, the majority of them (86.7%) said that they use 'hints', and 80% said 'explanations' what makes those two the most used strategies to scaffold learners. Also, 46.7% of teachers chose 'wh questions', 40% said 'reducing choices', 33.3% chose 'tag questions', 'modeling' and 'handouts without details' , 26.7% chose 'providing half the answer' and only 13.3%

of teachers said that they use 'prompts'. This indicates that those types are less used by teachers depending on the situation to use each of them. No one (0%) opted for 'other' option which may indicate that they do not use other types of scaffolds with their learners. It is worth to noting here that students' answers do not match much teachers' answers.

Question Thirteen: When do you usually provide your learners with scaffolds?

Table 3.32

Cases Where Teachers Frequently Provide Scaffolds

	Number	**Percentage**
1) In oral discussions	13	86.7%
2) In writing tasks	8	53.3%
3) In oral presentations	4	26.7%
4) In grammar tasks	7	46.7%
5) In new and difficult lessons	11	73.3%
6) In group/ pair work	7	46.7%
7) Other	1	6.7%

Table 3.32 shows that the majority of teachers (86.7%) frequently use scaffolds in oral discussions, 73.3% said in new and difficult tasks, and 53.3% said in writing tasks. This makes those three the common situations where scaffolds are usually used. Also, 46.7% of teachers chose 'grammar tasks' and 'group/ pair work', and only 26.7% chose 'oral presentations'. This implies that those latter are second ranked situations where scaffolding strategy is implemented. However, only one teacher (6.7%) opted for 'Other' option, in which s/he said that first year students usually encounter difficult words so they need explanation for such difficult words. It is worth noting that these answers match to great extent the ones of learners.

Question Fourteen: What difficulties do you encounter when you use scaffolding strategy with your students?

Table 3.33

Difficulties that Teachers Encounter When Implementing Scaffolding Strategy

	Number	Percentage
1) Implementing scaffolds is time consuming.	12	80%
2) Do not know the appropriate scaffolds to use.	2	13.3%
3) Do not know when exactly to use scaffolds.	0	0%
4) Do not know when exactly to remove scaffolds.	0	0%
5) Do not know students' level.	2	13.3%
6) Do not know students' learning styles.	2	13.3%
7) Large number of students in the class.	10	66.7%
8) Other.	0	0%

As indicated in **Table 3.33**, the majority of teachers (80%) thought that implementing scaffolds is time consuming. This may imply that teachers know that scaffolding strategy needs a lot of time for its efficacy. In addition, 66.7% of teachers considered the large number of students in classes as an obstacle for implementing scaffolding strategy. This shows that this strategy is best used with small classes where it can be used effectively in which every student is given enough time and attention. Besides, 13.3% of teachers claimed that not knowing students' level and their learning styles are regarded as challenges for using that strategy. This means that they are aware about the importance of those factors for the effectiveness of this strategy. Mainly, no teacher (0%) opted for the third and fourth options, which means that they really know when exactly to use and remove scaffolds. However, only one teacher (6.7%) opted for 'Other' option, in which s/he said: *"we can add also familiarity, according to time, if the students are well familiar with the teacher and vise versa, the teacher could easily apply scaffolding".* Mainly, familiarity means knowing everything about students and providing a more relaxed atmosphere where the teacher can implement scaffolding

strategy appropriately and make learners benefit the maximum from that strategy.

Question Fifteen: Do you think that scaffolding strategy is effective in promoting learner autonomy?

Table 3.34

Teachers' Beliefs about the Effectiveness of Scaffolding Strategy in Promoting Learner Autonomy

	Number	Percentage
Yes	15	100%
No	0	0%
Total	15	100%

Concerning teachers' beliefs about the effectiveness of scaffolding strategy in promoting learner autonomy, all of them (100%) confirmed its efficacy. This indicates their certainty about the positive results of this strategy if implemented appropriately in learning contexts. To justify their answers, some teachers provided the following illustrations:

> *"Helping students does not necessarily mean spoon feeding, in addition the help is not permanent, it is used to guide students only".*

> *"It gives the students space to think and depend on themselves".*

> *"It is so effective because it trains learners to become independent, as they receive help gradually from the teacher. I.e. Step by step they rely on themselves".*

> *"It is a help for learners acts as a kind of encouragement to be involved in classroom activities".*

> *"Yes it is effective because it makes the learner engaged in the learning process and improves his skills".*

> *"Because the teacher intervenes to enable the learner depend on himself in the coming tasks".*

> *"It is very important in terms of raising motivation of learning and providing students with confidence to learn alone".*

Question Sixteen: Can you add further information or suggestions to the topic, please?

This question is open-ended, teachers were asked to provide further information about the impact of scaffolding strategy on promoting EFL learners' autonomy. Mainly, only two teachers (13.3%) added suggestions which are quoted below:

"I hope that all teachers will pay attention when teaching using this strategy".

"Learners' autonomy and scaffolding are very important, I can say that if the teacher leaves the opportunity to students to learn alone by raising their motivation scaffolding process will decrease and when it so, it means that we/I reached a good level of teaching but should not forget "learner's individual capacities and motivation to learn" a question that always needs discussion".

From the mentioned comments of teachers, it is clear that they think that scaffolding strategy is very useful in EFL classes since they wish that it is widely used by all teachers who should take into considerations learners' individual differences and other factors to ensure its effectiveness. Accordingly, they see that this strategy is very influential for directing learners towards independent learning i.e. learner autonomy.

3.2.5. Summary of Results and Findings from Teachers' Questionnaire

The first section of teachers' questionnaire "General Information" shows that all the teachers have a Magister degree and a considerable experience in teaching EFL, which is ranged between 3 and 16 years. This means that they are experienced enough to teach beginners who face different kinds of difficulties in learning the FL.

The analysis of section two revealed that all the teachers agreed about the importance of autonomy for language learning proficiency. This shows their appreciation for developing learner autonomy. Concerning the qualities of autonomous learner, they thought that self-dependence comes at the first place, followed by self-confidence, self-evaluation/ assessment and reciprocal interaction with the teacher at the second place. And finally, comes self-monitoring, identifying own weaknesses and

strengths, using different learning strategies and enjoying cooperative work with classmates at the last place. However, only few teachers saw that all the mentioned features altogether make the characteristics of an autonomous learner; this means that this minority is very aware about the importance of all those qualities complemented to shape the real meaning of autonomy.

From other side, all the teachers agreed about the importance of the teacher's role in promoting learner autonomy, in which all of them claimed their attempts to promote their learners' autonomy. This shows the teachers' readiness to use different teaching strategies and methods to orient their learners towards independent learning. In this concern, the majority of teachers said that they encourage their learners to be independently engaged in learning; provide them with activities that require cooperative work; and give them out of class assignments that need the use of their own resources. A few teachers said that they provide their students with the opportunity to choose the kind of activities they would like to have, as well as the opportunity to evaluate and monitor their learning progress. In addition, they claimed raising students' awareness about the importance of autonomy in language learning. This shows that teachers use several ways to activate their learners' autonomy.

Moreover, more than half of teachers insisted that they let their students decide about the methods and materials to use in learning, and the kinds of activities to do inside and outside the classroom, also, they are provided the chance to make personal feedback about their performance. By contrast, only some teachers said that they give learners the opportunity to set the objectives of the courses and provide feedback about their peers' performance. In other words, teachers use various ways to make their learners actively participate in the process of learning which is known as "Supportive Engagement". Yet, teachers said that they face some challenges that prevent promoting

learner autonomy. The majority of teachers reported that learners over rely on them, owing to the fact that they are not accustomed with independent learning; to lack motivation, willingness, and skills and capacities of independent learning; and to their focus on scores rather than 'learning to learn' and depend on themselves to improve their level. Furthermore, some teachers found that the lack of the needed materials/ resources, the fixed curricula and lack of teachers' training about the use of effective strategies to direct learners to independent learning go against promoting learner autonomy.

The third section demonstrates that half of teachers are not familiar with the concept of scaffolding strategy, which means that they do not know the effectiveness of this dynamic strategy in helping students. However the rest of them claimed that they are familiar with that concept which indicates that they know the principles of using this strategy and its significant outcomes on improving learners' levels. Concerning applying this strategy in EFL classes, all the teachers confirmed its importance and provided some comments to illustrate their answers. Mainly they see that this strategy is influential since it helps developing learners' skills and overcoming some learning difficulties. Most importantly, all teachers believed that scaffolding strategy is effective for promoting learner autonomy, mainly through fostering some important learning skills. Additionally, teachers claimed that they frequently use scaffolds such as hints, explanations, "wh" questions among other types especially in oral discussions, in writing tasks and in new and difficult lessons in addition to other situations. However, the majority of teachers said that they encounter some difficulties when implanting scaffolding strategy like time consuming, large classes and not knowing learners' level and learning styles, what makes it hard to decide about the appropriate scaffolds to use.

Conclusions

The analysis of students' questionnaire revealed that the majority of students are interested in EFL learning and find it necessary. On average, they have an acceptable level that needs to be developed for better learning proficiency. Although the majority claimed their autonomy and their independency in learning with the teachers' guidance, they showed a kind of over reliance on the teacher when asked about the role of each of them. Mainly, students over rely on their teachers because they are not accustomed with learner-centered approach in their learning, they used to be passive (i.e. receptive) in the classroom and the whole work is devoted to their teachers, who were regarded as the only authority to take decision about everything in learning. In this concern learners need to be aware about the importance of independent learning, its principles and the characteristics of an autonomous learner.

The analysis of teachers' questionnaire showed that all the teachers find autonomy very effective for language learning proficiency. Also, they all agree about the significance of the teacher's role in promoting autonomy. They claimed their readiness and attempts to foster their students' autonomy, and for this sake they used a variety of techniques, including their supportive engagement in decision making concerning their learning. Still, teachers frequently encountered some difficulties that prohibit reaching autonomy, those which are mainly about learners' lack of motivation, willingness and skills of independent learning. These results are strongly in accordance with the obtained ones about learners' over reliance on the teacher. Consequently, teachers need to find suitable methods and techniques to encourage learners to develop their self-dependency in learning, and raise their awareness about the importance of autonomous learning.

The findings of this study highly support the significance of scaffolding strategy in promoting learners' autonomy. Interestingly, all the teachers agreed about the effectiveness of this strategy in promoting EFL learners' autonomy. Likewise, students also believed that this strategy is useful for promoting their autonomy. In this regard, scaffolding strategy needs to be implemented in EFL classes to achieve independent learning, and for this reason, it is important to make this strategy as a part of the educational curricula so that all teachers use it in all modules. Yet, despite its advantages in developing learners' skills and directing them towards responsible learning, some challenges need to be taken into account and overcome for best results of this strategy.

To sum up, the teachers' role is very influential in promoting learners' autonomy, especially through the use of scaffolding strategy. The only matter about this teaching strategy is that it requires a set of conditions for its success, for instance the teacher should know the current level of the student(s) before deciding about what, when and how to apply scaffolds effectively. The teacher is the expert scaffolder who is supposed to assist his learners and guide them to improve their learning skills to be able to take charge of their own learning. In other words, by implementing this strategy in EFL classes, teachers can motivate and direct their students to learning to learn independently in order to be responsible for the construction of their own knowledge i.e. to become autonomous learners.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

1. Concluding Remarks

FL learning is a never-ending process, for this reason it is important for FL learners to become autonomous learners. In this concern, EFL learners particularly need to be autonomous so that they can take control of their own learning. For this sake, it is indicated earlier in this study; only learners who possess some qualities like self-dependence, self-confidence, self-evaluation / assessment, self-monitoring, self-awareness, and responsibility are likely to be autonomous learners. Accordingly, the teachers' role is very crucial in promoting learner autonomy; and consequently, scaffolding strategy is a suitable technique that helps developing learners' skills and fostering their autonomy.

2. Pedagogical Implications

The main focus of the research is to investigate teachers' readiness for applying scaffolding strategy in EFL classes, and its effectiveness in orienting learners towards independent learning and promoting their autonomy. The results of this study demonstrated that there are some problematic issues that teachers encounter when applying scaffolding strategy when aiming at achieving learner autonomy.

Basically, teachers need to overcome the difficulties which go against reaching autonomous learning. For problems related to students, such as their lack of motivation, skills and willingness to learn independently, teachers are required to use different teaching strategies and methods to investigate the reason behind this problem. As a result, teachers can decide about the ways to raise their students' motivation and monitor their learning. Furthermore, teachers should increase students' awareness about the learner-centered approach and the teacher's role as facilitator. Also, they are

required to motivate them to take control over their own learning. In addition they need to support students to do out of class activities of their choice to challenge their capacities and develop their skills. Concerning other problems like the lack of the needed materials teachers and learners have to ask the institution to provide the needed resources. Concerning the fixed curricula, they have to underline the course contents that need to be changed as well as proposing their recommendations for a flexible curriculum that can be modified upon the learners' needs. Also, teaching strategies that are proven to foster autonomy need to be a part of the curricula so that teachers who lack mastery of such strategies can benefit from its guidelines and put it into practice.

Challenges that teachers face when using scaffolding strategy are interrelated. For example, since the students' level, their learning styles and other factors are the basis for the selection of scaffolds, teachers may wonder how to deduce the former and/ or how to decide about the latter. Thus, for the first issue, teachers can use observations, diagnostic strategies like formative assessment or checklists for instance where they check the students' understanding and mastery of the skills i.e. their current level and individual differences. For the second, concerning the selection of the appropriate scaffolds and knowing when exactly to use and remove them, teachers need to learn more about each strategy and its implementations. Also teachers can be trained about the ways of using scaffolding strategy if the institution includes such professional training for teachers to develop their teaching techniques. From other side, the problem of large classes that require lots of time (i.e. time-consuming) for using effective scaffolds, teachers can frequently involve collaborative work (in groups or pairs) to be able to assist all the students. In addition, the teacher can divide groups according to students' levels, so the more knowledgeable students can be the leaders of groups in order to scaffold their peers and minimize the teachers' assistance.

3. Research Perspectives, Limitations and Recommendations

Actually this study has some limitations. Mainly, the research investigated the effectiveness of implementing scaffolding strategy on promoting learners' autonomy: the case of First year LMD students of English, what makes it limited in scope and cannot draw generalization from its results to other levels. Also, only a small number of teachers mainly of three courses (Grammar, oral expression and written expression) participated in this study, however a larger sample would help collect more data about the topic at hand. Another limitation that is worth mentioning is time constraint; in which a longer period of time would enable us using different research tools like observations, tests and/ or experiments. Consequently, this study needs to be reiterated to seek generalization and validity of results. So, for further research, it is recommended to extend the sample to include lecturers of different courses (i.e. in addition to language based courses, it is better to add content based courses such as linguistics, literature, etc.) and a larger number of students, in addition to using different research methods and/ or data collection procedures.

REFERENCES

References

Amerian, M., & Mehri, E. (2014). Scaffolding: Definition, steps, features, conditions, tools, and effective considerations. *Scientific Journal of Review*, *3*(7), 756-765.

Balçıkanlı, C. (2010). Learner autonomy in language learning: Student teachers' beliefs. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 35(1), 90-103.

Benson, P. (2001). *Teaching and researching autonomy in language learning.* London: Longman.

Benson, P. (2007). Autonomy in language teaching and learning. *Language teaching*, *40*(01), 21-40.

Benson, P. (2011). *Teaching and researching: Autonomy in language learning* (2nd ed). Great Britain: Pearson Education.

Benson, P. (2012). Autonomy in language learning, learning and life. *Synergies France*, *9*, 29-39.

Berk, L. E., & Winsler, A. (1995). *Scaffolding children's learning: Vygotsky and early childhood education*. Washington DC, USA: National Association for the Young Children. Retrieved from: https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ed384443

Blanche, P. (1988). Self-assessment of foreign language skills: Implications for teachers and researchers. *RELC Journal, 19*(1), 75-93. Retrieved from : http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/003368828801900105

Bliss, J., Askew, M., & Macrae, S. (1996). Effective teaching and learning: Scaffolding revisited. *Oxford review of Education*, *22*(1), 37-61.

Boud, D. (1988). Moving towards autonomy. In Boud, D. (Ed) *Developing student autonomy in learning*, Kogan Page, London. Retrieved from: https://books.google.dz/books/about/Developing_Student_Autonomy_in_Learni ng.html?id=txq4TIjm874C&redir_esc=y

Camilleri, G. (Ed.). (1999). *Learner autonomy: The teachers' views*. Council of Europe.

Cazden, C. (1979). Peekaboo as an instructional model: Discourse development at home and at school. Papers and Reports on Child Language Development, No. 17. *Stanford University Department of Linguistics.*

Chan, V. (2001). Readiness for learner autonomy: What do our learners tell us?. *Teaching in higher education*, *6*(4), 505-518.

Clark, K. F., & Graves, M. F. (2005). Scaffolding students' comprehension of text. *The Reading Teacher*, *58*(6), 570-580. Retrieved from: http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1598/RT.58.6.6/full

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education.* Routledge

Cotterall, S. (1995). Readiness for autonomy: Investigating learner beliefs. *System*, *23*(2), 195-205.

Dam, L. (1995). *Learner autonomy 3: From theory to classroom practice.* Authentic Language Learning Resources.

Dam, L. (2000). Why focus on learning rather than teaching? From theory to practice. In D. Little, L. Dam, & J. Timmer (Eds.), *Focus on Learning Rather Than Teaching: Why And How?* (pp. 18-36). Dublin: Trinity College Dublin.

Dickinson, L. (1987) *Self instruction in language learning.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dryden, J. (2010). Autonomy. *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy.* Retrieved from: http://www.iep.utm.edu/autonomy/

Ellis, E. S., & Worthington, L. A. (1994). *Research synthesis on effective teaching principles and the design of quality tools for educators*. Technical Report No.

5. National Center To Improve the Tools of Educators,Eugene, University of Oregon

Elsen, A. H. M., & St John, O. (2007). Learner autonomy and intercultural competence.In Jiménez-Raya, M.;Sercu, Lies (ed.), Challenges in teacher development: Learner autonomy and intercultural competence, (pp. 15-38). Frankfurt am Main : Peter Lang Verlag

Farrell, T. S. C & Jacobs, G. (2001). Paradigm shift: Understanding and implementing change in second language education. *TESL-EJ*, *5*, 1. Retrieved from: http://www.tesl-ej.org/ej17/a1.html

Farrell, T. S. C. & Jacobs, G. (2010). *Essentials for Successful English Language Teaching*. London: Continuum International Publishing. Retreived from: https://books.google.dz/books/about/Essentials_for_Successful_English_ Langua.html?id=T7R1z9bLFDMC&source=kp_cover&redir_esc=y

Gardner, D., & Miller, L. (1999). *Establishing self-access: From theory to practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gardner, D. (2000). Self-assessment for autonomous language learners. *Links & Letters*, (7), 49-60.

Gibbons, P. (2015). *Scaffolding language, scaffolding learning: Teaching second language learners in the mainstream classroom*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Graves, M. F., Watts, S., & Graves, B. B. (1994). *Essential of classroom teaching: Elementary reading*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Graves, M.F. & Graves, B.B. (2003*). Scaffolding reading experiences: Designs for student success*. 2nd Ed. Christoper-Golden Publishers. Inc.

Hammond, J. (2001). *Scaffolding: Teaching and learning in language and literacy education*. Primary English Teaching Assoc., PO Box 3106, Marrickville, New South Wales, 2204, Australia.

Harland, T. (2003). Vygotsky's zone of proximal development and problem-based learning: Linking a theoretical concept with practice through action research. *Teaching in higher education*, *8*(2), 263-272.

Haughton, G. & Dickinson, L. (1988) Collaborative assessment by masters' candidates in a tutor based system. *Language Testing* 5, 233-246.

Holec, H. (1981). *Autonomy and foreign language learning.* Oxford: Pergamon. Retrived from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/245577589_ Autonomy_and_Foreign_Language_Learning

Holton, D., & Clarke, D. (2006). Scaffolding and metacognition. *International journal of mathematical education in science and technology*, *37*(2), 127-143. Retrieved from: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/ 00207390500285818?needAccess=true

Illés, E. (2012). Learner autonomy revisited. *ELT Journal*, 66(4), 505-513. Retrieved from: https://fr.scribd.com/document/262280272/Learner-Autonomy-Revisited

Instructional Scaffolding to Improve Learning, (n,d). Faculty development and instructional design center, *Northern Illinois University (NIU).* Retrieved from:http://niu.edu/spectrum/archives/scaffolding.shtml

Jimenez Raya, M., & Sercu, L. (2007). *Challenges in teacher development: Learner autonomy and intercultural competence. 10*. Peter Lang GmbH, Frankurt am Main, Germany.

Kumaravadivelu, B. (2003). *Beyond methods: Macrostrategies for language teaching*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Lamb, T. (2008). Learner autonomy and teacher autonomy: Synthesizing an agenda. *Learner and teacher autonomy: Concepts, realities and responses*, 269-285.

Lamb, T., & Reinders, H. (Eds.). (2008). *Learner and teacher autonomy: concepts, realities, and response* (Vol. 1). John Benjamins Publishing.

Larkin, M. (2002). Using scaffolded instruction to optimize learning. ERIC Digest.

Little, D. (1991). *Learner autonomy: Definitions, issues and problems*. Dublin: Authentik.

Little, D. (2003). Learner autonomy and second/foreign language learning. *LLAS Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies*. Retrieved from: https://www.llas.ac.uk/resources/gpg/1409#ref14

Little, D. (2004). Democracy, discourse and learner autonomy in the foreign language classroom. *Utbildning & Demokrati*, *13*(3), 105-126.

Little, D. (2006). Learner autonomy: Drawing together the threads of self-assessment, goal setting and reflection. *European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML, Hrsg.), Training teachers to use the European Language Portfolio*.

Little, D. (2007). Language learner autonomy: Some fundamental considerations revisited. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching* 1/1: 14-29.

Little, D. (2010). Learner autonomy, inner speech and the European Language Portfolio. *Advances in Research on Language Acquisition and Teaching: Selected Papers*, 27-38.

Littlewood, W. (1996). "Autonomy": An anatomy and a framework. *System*, *24*(4), 427-435. Retrieved from: https://fr.scribd.com/document/152887474/ AUTONOMY-AN-ANATOMY-AND-A-FRAMEWORK

Littlewood, W. (1997). Self-access: Why do we want it and what can it do? In Benson & Voller (eds.), 79–92.

Littlewood, W. (1999). Defining and developing autonomy in East Asian contexts. *Applied Linguistics* 20.1, 71–94.

Mariani, L. (1997). Teacher support and teacher challenge in promoting learner autonomy. Perspectives, 23(2). Retrieved from: http://www.learningpaths.org/papers/papersupport.htm

McKenzie, J. (1999). Scaffolding for success. *The Educational Technology Journal*, *9*(4), 12. Retrieved from: http://fno.org/dec99/scaffold.html

Mohanty, D. A. (2010). Implementing learner autonomy in Indian language classroom. *MJAL, 2 (5), 334-345.*

Naizhao, G., & Yanling, Z. (2004). An empirical investigation of learner autonomy in some EFL classes in China. In *AARE annual conference, Melbourne, Australia*

Nunan, D. (2003). The connection between autonomy and communicative teaching. In *Conference proceedings, JALT*,196-209.

O'malley, J. M., & Chamot, A. U. (1990). *Learning strategies in second language acquisition*. Cambridge university press.

Oxford, R. L. (2003). Toward a more systematic model of L2 learner autonomy. In Palfreyman & Smith (eds.), *Learner autonomy across cultures: Language education perspectives* (pp. 75–91). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Pea, R. D. (2004). The social and technological dimensions of scaffolding and related theoretical concepts for learning, education, and human activity. *The journal of the learning sciences*, *13*(3), 423-451.

Reynard, R. (2006). The internet as a tool in the development of learner autonomy at the college level. In *Eleventh Annual Instructional Technology Conference 2*.

Riazi, M., & Rezaii, M. (2011). Teacher-and peer-scaffolding behaviors: Effects on EFL students' writing improvement. In *CLESOL 2010: Proceedings of the 12th*

National Conference for Community Languages and ESOL, 55-63.

Riley, P. (1986). Who's who in self-access. *TESOL France News*, 6(2), 23-35.

Rogoff, B. (1990). *Apprenticeship in thinking: Cognitive development in social context*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Samana, W. (2013). Teacher's and students' scaffolding in an efl classroom. *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, *2*(8), 338.

Santoso, A. (2010). *Scaffolding an EFL (English as a foreign language)'effective writing'class in a hybrid learning community* (Doctoral dissertation, Queensland University of Technology).

Scharle, Á. & Szabó, A. (2000). Learner autonomy: A guide to developing learner responsibility. *Cambridge: Cambridge University Press*.

Smith, R. (2003). Pedagogy for autonomy as (becoming-) appropriate methodology. In D. Palfreyman & R. C. Smith (Eds.), *Learner autonomy across cultures: Language education perspectives* (pp. 129-146). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Smith, R. C. (2008). Learner autonomy (Key concepts in ELT). *ELT Journal,* 62 (4), 395-397.

Stone, C. A. (1998). The metaphor of scaffolding its utility for the field of learning disabilities. *Journal of learning disabilities*, *31*(4), 344-364.

Tharp, R. G., & Gallimore, R. (1988). *Rousing minds to life: Teaching, learning, and schooling in social context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tudor, I. (1993) Teacher roles in the learner-centred classroom. *ELTJourna147,* 22-31. Retrieved from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/249252355_Teacher_ roles_in_learner-Centered_classrooms

Ürün, M. F. (2013). *A study on ELT high school teachers 'practices to foster learner*

autonomy in Izmir (Doctoral dissertation, Middle East Technical University)

Ushioda, E. (2011). Why autonomy? Insights from motivation theory and research. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching* 5 (2), 221-232. Retrieved from: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17501229.2011.577536

Van de Pol, J., Volman, M., & Beishuizen, J. (2010). Scaffolding in teacher–student interaction: A decade of research. *Educational Psychology Review*, *22*(3), 271-296.

Van Der Stuyf, R. R. (2002). Scaffolding as a teaching strategy. *Adolescent learning and development*, *52*(3), 5-18.

Verenikina, I. (2003). Understanding scaffolding and the ZPD in educational research. *Reasearch Online*.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1962). *Thought and language*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Vygotsky, L.S. (1978) *Mind in Society: the development of higher mental processes.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Retrieved from: https://books.google.dz/books/about/Mind_in_Society.html?id=RxjjUefze_oC &redir_esc=y

Wagner, A. (2014). Investigating learner autonomy through self-directed study programs. *The Bull. of Keiwa Coll*, *23*, 129-147.

Walqui, A. (2006). Scaffolding instruction for English language learners: A conceptual framework. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, *9*(2), 159-180.

Wang, M. C., & Peverly, S. T. (1986). The self-instructive process in classroom learning contexts. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *11*(4), 370-404. Retrieved from: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/ 0361476X86900317

Wenger, E. (2010). Communities of practice and social learning systems: the career of a concept. In *Social learning systems and communities of practice*. Springer London.179-198.

Wilhelm, J., Baker, T., & Dube, J. (2001). Strategic reading: Guiding students to lifelong literacy. *New Hampshire: Heinemann*.

Wilson, K., & Devereux, L. (2014). Scaffolding theory: High challenge, high support in Academic Language and Learning (ALL) contexts. *Journal of Academic Language and Learning*, *8*(3), A91-A100.

Wood, D., Bruner, J., & Ross, G. (1976). The role of tutoring in problem solving. *Journal of Child Psychology and Child Psychiatry*, 17, 89−100.

Xhaferri, B., & Waldispühl, M. (2015). *Promoting Learner Autonomy in Higher Education*. South East European University.

APPENDICES

Appendix « A » Students' Questionnaire

Appendix « B » Teachers' Questionnaire

Appendix « A » Students' Questionnaire

Dear Students,

   The following questionnaire is a part of a study being conducted on first year students. Please, kindly, answer the following questions as honestly and as accurately as possible. There are no "right" and "wrong" answers, and the questionnaire is anonymous.

- **Please DO NOT write your name on the questionnaire**

Thank you in advance for taking the time to complete this questionnaire, your efforts are very much appreciated.

University of 8 Mai 1945 Guelma
Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of Letters and English Language

Benyoub Hana.

Section One: General Information

1) How old are you?………years
2) Why did you choose to study English?

- It's my parents' choice.
- Because I love English language.
- To get a job.
- To travel abroad/ communicative purposes.
- Other.

   If other, specify please: ....
   ....

3) Do you think that learning English as a foreign language is necessary?

- Yes
- No

4) How could you describe your level in English? (only one option)

- Very good
- Good
- Average
- Bad
- Very bad

Section two: Learner Autonomy

5) Are you familiar with the concept of learner autonomy?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐ **(If 'No' see its definition in the last page)**

6) Are you an autonomous learner?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

7) Do you think that learner autonomy is important in EFL?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

8) How do you prefer to learn? (One or more options)

- Independently without a teacher (at home via books or internet). ☐
- Independently but with the teacher's guidance. ☐
- Independently and in cooperation with peers. ☐
- Completely dependent on the teacher. ☐

9) Please tick the appropriate answer about the teacher and learner's roles for each statement? (One or both options)

I think it is the role of…	Teacher	Learner
To motivate you in learning English (stimulation)		
To identify your weaknesses in English		
To set the objectives of your courses		
To decide about the activities and tasks to do in the classroom		
To decide about the activities and tasks to do outside the classroom		
To decide about the materials and methods to use in learning		
To evaluate your learning progress		

Any comments?...

………………………………………………………………………………………..

10) Please say yes or no to the following statements: (**only one** option for each)

In my study, I usually…………..	Yes	No
Do assignments and activities that are not compulsory.		
Learn and look for new words and meanings (e.g. in dictionaries…)		
Use English with friends (chat, conversations …) and to talk to foreigners.		
Ask the teacher questions when I don't understand		
Activate my prior knowledge when studying and make links with the new one		
Take notes, do mind-maps and/or brain storming… when studying.		
Work cooperatively in groups or pairs (collaborative work).		
Preview before the class (search and prepare the lesson and read previous one)		
I review after the class (summarize and revise what I learnt)		
Identify my own strengths and weaknesses		
Try to make self-tests (e.g. online tests…)		
Be exposed to English outside the classroom (books, songs, TV programs…)		
Evaluate and monitor my learning by my own		
Don't do any of the above, why should I do so?		

Any comments? ....
……………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………….

Section three: Scaffolding strategy and learner autonomy

Scaffolding strategy is a teaching technique that is used by the teacher (or peers) to provide temporary help to students when they face a difficult task. Moreover, this help is gradually removed as far as the learner can accomplish the task by their own.

11) Do you think that scaffolding strategy is useful in EFL classes?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Justify your answer please: ………………………………………………………………..
……………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………..

12) How often is scaffolding used in your classroom? (**Only one** option)

- Always ☐
- Sometimes ☐
- Never ☐

13) What are the types of scaffolding that your teachers frequently use?(One or more options)

- Hints ☐
- "Wh" questions ☐
- Tag questions ☐
- Explanations ☐
- Modeling ☐
- Providing half the answer ☐
- Reducing choices ☐
- Prompts ☐
- Handouts without details ☐
- Other ☐

If other specify please: ………………………………………………………………………..
………………………………………………………………………………………………………

14) When are you provided with scaffolds? (One or more options)

- In oral discussions ☐
- In writing tasks ☐
- In oral presentations ☐
- In grammar tasks ☐
- In new and difficult lessons ☐
- In group/ pair work ☐
- Other ☐

-If other, specify please………………………………………………………………………….
………………………………………………………………………………………………………..
………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

15) Do your peers provide you with effective scaffolds in collaborative work?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

16) Do scaffolds help you to understand or accomplish a hard task easily and raise your motivation to learn?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

17) Does scaffolding strategy make you use different language learning strategies?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

18) Do you believe that scaffolds are extrinsic motivation which develop your….? (one or more options)

Self-confidence	
Metacognitive skills (identifying your own learning style preferences and needs, making evaluations, monitoring mistakes….)	
Problem-solving skills (explore the details of a problem to reach solution through the use of analytical or critical thinking skills…)	
Other	

If other, specify please: …………………………………………………………………………………
…….

19) Do you think that scaffolding strategy can promote your autonomy?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Justify your answer please: (How?)…………………………………………………………………..
………
……..

20) Could you add further information about this topic, please?

………
………
………
………
………
………
……

Thank you for your cooperation.

Definition: Learner autonomy can be defined as the learner's ability to take control over his own learning. In other words it is the learner's responsibility and independence in the learning process.

Appendix « B » Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear Teachers,

The following questionnaire is a part of a study being conducted on first year students. Please, kindly, answer the following questions as honestly and as accurately as possible. There are no "right" and "wrong" answers, and the questionnaire is anonymous.

- **Please DO NOT write your name on the questionnaire**

Thank you in advance for taking the time to complete this questionnaire, your efforts are very much appreciated.

University of 8 Mai 1945 Guelma
Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of Letters and English Language

Benyoub Hana.

Section one: General information

1) What is your educational degree/ high qualification?

License ☐   Master ☐   Magister ☐   Doctorate ☐   other ☐

2) How many years do you have as English language teacher? ……… years.

Section Two: Learner Autonomy

3) How much do you think that learner autonomy is important for effective language learning proficiency? (only ONE option)

- Very important
- Important
- A little
- Not at all

4) What do you think are the qualities of autonomous learner? (One or more options)

- Self-confidence
- Self-dependence
- Self-evaluation/ assessment
- Self-monitoring
- Identify their weaknesses and strengths
- Use different learning strategies
- Enjoy cooperative work with classmates
- Reciprocal interaction with the teacher
- All above
- Other

If other, specify please: ……………………………………………………………………..
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………

5) To what extent do you agree that the teacher's role is very significant for promoting learners' autonomy? (only ONE option)

- Highly Agree
- Agree
- Unsure
- Disagree
- Highly Disagree

6) Do you think that you are attempting to promote your learners' autonomy?

- Yes
- No **(If 'No', skip question 7 and 9)**

7) How do you think that you are fostering your learners' autonomy?(One or more options)

- I am not sure if I am promoting my learners' autonomy.
- Raise students' awareness about autonomy and its importance.
- Encourage learners to be independently engaged in learning.
- Provide collaborative work activities in classroom which promote autonomy.
- Give them opportunity to monitor and evaluate their learning progress.
- Give them out of class assignments which require using their own resources.
- Provide learners with choice about the kind of activities they would do.
- Other

If other, specify please: ……………………………………………………………………..
………………………………………………………………………………….……………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

8) What decisions do you involve your learners in (i.e. 'Supportive engagement')?
- Why to involve learners in decision making? I do not do so.
- To set the objectives of the courses.
- To decide about the activities and tasks to do in the classroom.
- To decide about the activities and tasks to do outside the classroom.
- To decide about the materials and methods to use in learning.
- To provide feedback about their performance.
- To provide feedback about their peers performance.
- Other.

If other specify please:………………………………………………………………………………..

………………………………………………………………………………………………......

9) What are the difficulties that you encounter when promoting your learners' autonomy?

- Learners are not accustomed with independent learning.
- Learners lack skills and capacity of independent learning.
- Learners lack motivation to learn independently.
- Learners lack willingness to learn independently.
- Learners lack learning English outside the classroom.
- Learners' over reliance on the teacher.
- Learners focus on scores rather than 'learning to learn'.
- Lack of the needed materials and resources for both teachers and learners.
- Fixed curricula which cannot be modified upon the learners' or teachers' needs.
- I lack strategies to promote my learners' autonomy.
- I don't expect learners to have the ability to become autonomous.
- Other.

If other, specify please: …………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………...………..
…………………………………………………………………………………………………….

Section three: Scaffolding strategy and learner autonomy

10) Are you familiar with the concept of 'scaffolding strategy'?

- Yes
- No   **(If 'No', see its definition in the last page)**

If yes, scaffolding strategy is: ……………………………………………………….……..
……………………………………………………………………………………………......
…………………..……………………………………………………………………………

11) Do you believe that scaffolding strategy is important in EFL?

- Yes
- No

Justify your answer please:………………………………………………………………..
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………

12) What kind of scaffolds you usually provide learners with? (one or more options)

- Hints
- "Wh" questions
- Tag questions
- Explanations
- Modeling
- Providing half the answer
- Reducing choices
- Prompts
- Handouts without details
- other

If other specify please: …………………………………………………………………………..
………………………………………………………………………………………………….
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………

13) When do you usually provide your learners with scaffolds? (one or more options)

- In oral discussions.
- In writing tasks.
- In oral presentations.
- In grammar tasks.
- In new and difficult lessons.
- In group/ pair work.
- Other.

If other, specify please:…………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………

14) What difficulties do you encounter when you use scaffolding strategy with your students? (one or more options)

- Implementing scaffolds is time consuming.
- Do not know the appropriate scaffolds to use.
- Do not know when exactly to use scaffolds.
- Do not know when exactly to remove scaffolds.
- Do not know students' level.
- Do not know students' learning styles.
- Large number of students in the class.
- Other.

If other, specify please:…………………………………….……………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………..

15) Do you think that scaffolding strategy is effective in promoting learner autonomy?

- Yes
- No

Justify your answer please:………………………………………………………………………….
…………… ....
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
…

16) Can you add further information or suggestions to the topic, please?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………

Thank you for your cooperation.

Scaffolding strategy is a teaching technique that is used by the teacher (or peers) to provide temporary help to students when they face a difficult task. Moreover, this help is gradually removed as far as the learner can accomplish the task by their own.

الملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى التحقق من أهمية استراتيجية السقالات (الدعم المؤقت) في رفع مستوى الوعي لدى الطلبة و جعلهم على بينة فيما يعرف بالتعلم الذاتي أو المستقل . هذا إلى جانب التحقق من استعداد الأساتذة لتطبيقها في تدريس الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية. يواجه طلبة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية تحديات مختلفة تجعل تعلمهم غير فعال. وتتمثل المشكلة الرئيسية في عدم استخدام استراتيجيات تدريس فعالة و التي يمكن أن ترفع مهارات الطلاب و تطور تعلمهم المستقل . لذلك فإننا نفترض أنه يمكن أن يكون هناك علاقة بين استخدام استراتيجية السقالات وتعزيز استقلالية المتعلم وبالتالي ، فإن تطبيق استراتيجية السقالات التعليمية قد يؤدي إلى تعزيز التعلم الذاتي للطلاب. ولإثبات هذه الفرضية، أجريت دراسة كمية وصفية شملت عينتين: طلبة السنة الأولى جامعي وأساتذتهم. وقد أجري استبيانان؛ استبيان مختلف لكل عينة لجمع المعلومات حول الاستخدام الفعلي لاستراتيجية السقالات واستقلالية المتعلم. و قد كشف تحليل البيانات التي تم جمعها من الاستبيانين أن الطلاب شديدوا الاعتماد على أساتذتهم، مما يعني أنهم ليسوا متعلمين مستقلين. كما تبين أن الأساتذة كثيرا ما يستخدمون السقالات في التدريس وأنهم يحاولون حقا تعزيز استقلالية طلابهم. وقد أكدت نتائج هذه الدراسة وجود علاقة طردية بين تطبيق استراتيجية السقالات بشكل مناسب و تعزيز استقلالية المتعلم .وبالتالي، فمن المستحسن رفع وعي المعلمين حول أهمية استراتيجية السقالات في تعليم وتعلم اللغة الأجنبية ؛ أي دورها الحاسم في تنمية مهارات الطلاب وتوجيههم نحو التعلم الذاتي المستقل.

Résumé

Le but de cette recherche est d'étudier l'importance de la stratégie d'échafaudage pour sensibiliser les élèves à l'apprentissage autonome. Aussi elle vise à étudier la volonté des enseignants pour la mettre en œuvre dans l'enseignement d'Anglais (comme une langue étrangère). Les étudiants d'Anglais comme langue étrangère confrontent des différents défis qui rendent leur apprentissage inefficace. Un problème majeur est le manque d'utilisation de stratégies d'enseignement efficaces qui pourraient augmenté les compétences des étudiants et développer leur apprentissage indépendant. Ainsi, nous supposons qu'il pourrait y avoir une corrélation entre l'application de la stratégie d'échafaudage et la promotion de l'autonomie de l'apprenant ; l'application de la stratégie d'échafaudage d'instruction peut conduire à favoriser l'apprentissage autonome des étudiants. Pour prouver cette hypothèse, une étude descriptive quantitative a été réalisée. Notre étude comportait deux échantillons: étudiants de première année et leurs enseignants. Deux questionnaires ont été menés; un questionnaire différent pour chaque échantillon pour recueillir des informations sur l'utilisation réelle de la stratégie d'échafaudage et l'autonomie de l'apprenant. L'analyse des données rassemblées des questionnaires a révélé que les étudiants dépendent de leurs enseignants, ce qui signifie qu'ils ne sont pas autonomes. En outre, il a montré que les enseignants utilisent souvent des échafaudages dans l'enseignement et qu'ils tentent vraiment de promouvoir l'autonomie de leurs étudiants. Les résultats de cette étude ont confirmé qu'il existe une relation linéaire entre l'application de la stratégie d'échafaudage de manière appropriée et la promotion de l'autonomie. Ainsi, il est recommandé de sensibiliser les enseignants à l'importance de la stratégie d'échafaudage dans l'enseignement et l'apprentissage des langues étrangères; C'est-à-dire son rôle crucial pour développer les compétences des élèves et les orienter vers l'apprentissage autonome.