

**Culture and Learner Autonomy**  
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### **Abstract**

Recent reforms in Algerian higher education couple with challenges related to difficult working conditions especially a very high student-teacher ratio to require that learners assume higher responsibility for their own learning. Learning is a complex phenomenon that does not occur in a vacuum. Whether formal or informal, face-to-face or at a distance, learning takes place in a specific cultural and educational context. Culture determines the roles learners and teachers can take in educational settings; i.e. their duties and rights in the learning activities, who should do what, when and how. In this paper, the researcher explores the relationships between culture, both general and educational, and autonomous learning from the standpoint of teachers and learners. The present research discusses data collected via a review of relevant literature and a field study. The study consisted of the development and administration of a survey questionnaire to thirty five teachers and one hundred and thirty students from the English department at the University of Blida 2, Algeria. The results seem to indicate that the surveyed teachers and students hold positive attitudes and conception of learner autonomy and its effects on EFL students' academic achievement. Nonetheless, some uncertainty among teachers and learners emerged from the questionnaire data about the role of the English department (educational culture) and the wider Algerian culture in developing learner autonomy. The researcher attempts to argue that general culture as well as educational culture must be taken into consideration in the preparation and implementation of reforms in education. This paper closes with some implications related efforts to consider fostering learning autonomy for EFL learners.

**Keywords:** General culture, educational culture, learner autonomy, teachers' perceptions, teachers' attitudes, learners' perceptions, learners' attitudes

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### **Introduction**

The field of language teaching and learning has in the last three decades seen an increased interest and discussion of the concept of **learner autonomy**. This new or renewed interest in the ability of learners to assume more responsibility in planning, executing and assessing their own learning recognizes changes that affected how knowledge is conceived and consequently teaching and learning. For some decades, there has been a paradigm shift in Algerian higher education, i.e. attempts have been made to depart from teacher-led classes working in a uniform fashion towards common goals to more individualized and more learner-centred learning. The present study examines the role of general and educational culture in promoting or stifling learner autonomy in Algerian university departments of English.

## 1. Theoretical Background

### 1.1 Definition of Learner Autonomy

Learner autonomy may be a relatively new academic research interest but probably an old human issue of survival; Thousands of years ago, human groups who independently learnt to harness available resources like taming fire, animals and earth for agriculture, etc. survived and thrived. Autonomy of learners may, in this age of rapid growth of knowledge and skills, be critical for success in academia and life at large. The first challenge in a discussion of 'learner autonomy' relates to defining the term. Researchers may use different terms to mean the same construct or slightly different aspects of it (see for example Little 2002). A detailed and in-depth historical discussion of the various definitions given to the concept by researchers is presented by Bensemmane (2008). As there is no scope here for a discussion of the variety of definitions proposed in the literature, in this work, the term 'learner autonomy' is used in the following sense: **the capacity for and actual practice by learners of the primary responsibility for planning, executing, monitoring and evaluation of their own learning**. This definition can be rephrased using another term used in the literature; i.e. 'self-regulated learning' or the degree to which the learners are able to manage their learning themselves (with help from environment when deemed effective) especially in defining learning objectives, work procedures and assessment of learning outcomes.

### 1.2 Developing Learner Autonomy as An Educational Goal

Developing learner autonomy may be an essential mission for education as recognised by many educationalists (Piaget 1965, Kenny 1993, Cotterall 2000, Jiménez 2009, etc.). Piaget (1965), for instance, argued that the ultimate goal of education is "for the individual to develop the autonomy of thought to create new, original ideas rather than just recycle old ones" (Cited in Jiménez 2009). According to Kenny, "Education is about empowerment and what it empowers is people's autonomy. This allows them opportunities to generate knowledge, as opposed to being passive consumers of it." (1993, p. 431). Besides, autonomy in learning is considered as very important to the development of Lifelong Learners (Jiménez 2009). Education, as dynamic sub-culture, can achieve such mission through clearly stated educational objectives that provide for the development of learner autonomy. These objectives need to be reflected in the practice of teaching and learning via appropriate syllabi.

### 1.3 Factors Underpinning Learning Autonomy

Understanding (how to develop) learner autonomy requires substantive knowledge about this concept. Following is a brief analysis of the concept to explore the factors underlying autonomous learning. We need first to acknowledge, as Benson noted, that there seems to be disagreement between researchers about what abilities and attitudes compose learner autonomy (2006). Nevertheless, one reasonable way for considering this issue consists of looking at three types of factors:

1. Learner intrinsic factors – the skill / strategy sphere;
2. Learner intrinsic factors – the psychological / personality sphere;
3. Learner extrinsic factors: General culture, educational culture, syllabi, instruction, and teachers.

### 1.3.1 Factors for Learning Autonomy – The Skill / Strategy Sphere

The more visible sphere of autonomous learning consists of observable tasks and strategies done by learners. According to our review of the literature, autonomous learning may require learners to be *willing* and *able* to undertake such tasks as:

**1.3.1.1 Taking an active part in setting their own learning objectives** (Little, 2002; Cotterall 2008, Azevedo and Witherspoon 2009): Cotterall says that learner autonomy is essentially a *capacity* for decision-making (2008:111). Autonomous learners make proposals to modify course contents and work method as they see fit (See for example Cotterall's students 2008:111). To set goals, learners need to possess some ability to identify their learning needs and, as Little insists, understanding the purpose of their learning (2002). But primarily, autonomy necessitates the ability to **make decisions** (see for instance Cox et al. 2010)

**1.3.1.2 Making decisions about learning goals** belongs in a broader ability; i.e. (Taking an active part in) **planning one's learning and mobilising resources**. A major aspect of autonomous learning consists of taking an active part in planning one's learning. Planning for learning, according to Azevedo and Witherspoon also involves analysing the learning context in order to determine which learning strategies to use and find out the resources in the context which could be used to enhance learning (2009:319).

**1.3.1.3 Monitoring and self-assessing** their learning achievement: Autonomous learners monitor and evaluate their learning. They are aware and better able to assign success and failure to specific factors, which is pre-requisite for remedial work and to adjust learning plans. They "regularly review their learning and evaluate its effectiveness" (Little, 2002).

**1.3.1.4 Self-Motivating:** Autonomous learners must primarily rely on themselves for creating and sustaining their own motivation to learn and overcome difficulties and failures in the learning process. They would not wait for external motivators although they may make use of them.

**1.3.1.5 Self-Management Skills** (managing time, emotions and staying on task). With the advent of entertainment technologies like digital game devices, audio and video players, TV, etc. learners, especially younger ones, are faced with a new challenge: How to stay focused on their learning tasks. Skills to manage one's time and balance learning and recreation have never been more important.

**1.3.1.6 Collaboratively learning with and from peers** and other people: Autonomous learners are expected to "determine how much social support (if any) may be needed to perform the task" (Azevedo and Witherspoon 2009:319). Learning benefits from the ability for effective help seeking from the environment. Help-seeking has been found by Lynch and Dembo 2004 to be a predictor of academic achievement. Other people represent another form of resources that could be mobilised for learning.

**1.3.1.7 Effective communication skills:** Collaboration with people that might contribute to one's learning calls for good communication skills. The ability to communicate with other people is a key support skill that intervenes in most learning tasks. Effective learning requires learners to be able to express their needs clearly and ask for precise assistance. Collaboration can succeed only if communication is efficient between team members.

**1.3.1.8 Conflict resolution skills** are necessary to tackle tensions that may arise while working with others. Autonomy in one of its manifestations comes in the form of recognising problems and acting to resolve them. Learners who possess this skill will not wait for external intervention and will use strategies to resolve conflicts.

**1.3.1.9 Critical thinking:** Some researchers (Little 1991 and Cotterall 2008) recognise the role of critical thinking in learning autonomy. For instance, in planning learning or revising plans, autonomous learners rely on critical reflection to assess their and others' decisions about learning goals, materials, tasks, assessment, etc. Critical attitude towards the flow of input knowledge, one's knowledge, decisions and actions is pre-requisite to evaluation and adjustment towards higher efficiency.

**1.3.2 Factors for Learning Autonomy – The Affective/Personality Sphere:** The skill requirements for autonomous learning that have been discussed in the previous section are probably underpinned by a number of factors that pertain more to the learner's personality / affective sphere. These include:

**1.3.2.1 Learner's Beliefs / Attitudes:** There has recently been much discussion of the role of learner's beliefs in strategy use and autonomy (Cotterall 1995, Wenden 1999, White 1999, Carter 2000, Tillema 2000, T. Lamb 2008, Bown and White 2010, Yilmaz 2010, Reinders and Lazarro 2011). T. Lamb, for instance, found that the development of learner autonomy significantly depends on both learners and teachers' beliefs about the roles and responsibilities in teaching and learning (2008). More specifically, according to Wenden (1998), "two kinds of attitudes are crucial: attitudes learners hold about their role in the learning process, and their capability as learners ...if learners labour under the misconception that learning is successful only within the context of the "traditional classroom," where the teacher directs, instructs, and manages the learning activity, and students must follow in the teacher's footsteps, they are likely to be impervious or resistant to learner-centred strategies aiming at autonomy" (52, cited in Thanasoulas 2000). Beliefs and attitudes can determine what learners can and will do to learn. A positive learner attitude towards autonomy is necessary to maximise their readiness for undertaking the complex tasks involved in autonomous learning.

**1.3.2.2 Self-Efficacy:** Beliefs underlie motivation and self-efficacy; i.e. if learners believe they cannot do a task, they will not have a go. According to Bandura (1997), learners will not engage in learning and adopt learning goals unless they feel ready for a successful performance (cited in Ponton et al. 2005). Then, it may be expected that self-efficacy should precede autonomous learning (Ponton et al. 2005). This was supported by Weisi and Karimi whose research has shown that personality characteristics such as motivation and self-confidence are good predictors of attitude towards self-assessment (2013:736).

**1.3.2.3 Motivation:** According to Dornyei, most scholars (See Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993; Kraemer, 1990; Machnick and Wolfe, 1982; et al. cited in Thanasoulas 2000) seem to agree that motivation [an outcome of attitude] is "one of the key factors that influence the rate and success of second or foreign language (L2) learning. Motivation provides the primary impetus to initiate learning the L2 and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process" (1998:117, cited in Thanasoulas 2000). Learning autonomy requires higher motivation from learners (Zimmerman and Moylan 2009:313). On the other hand, gains in motivation are actually put forward as a common justification for autonomy in education. Autonomous learners are motivated and do more effective work (Dickinson 1995).

**1.3.2.4 Resilience:** According to Wang, resilient individuals are characterised in the literature for having high self-esteem, a clear sense of purpose, the ability to successfully plan, modify their environment, and strong problem-solving skills (1997:263, cited in T. Lamb 2008). Because autonomy often means a high level of responsibility for success and failure, autonomous learners need to be resilient and adaptable to survive setbacks and obstacles that they are certain to encounter in their learning journey.

**1.3.2.5 Agency (Taking responsibility for one's learning):** Learners and people in general vary in terms of readiness to assume responsibility of their own lives. Requirements for learner autonomy start with a *sense of responsibility* for their own learning (Holec 1979, Little 1991). Researchers agree that autonomous learners accept responsibility for their learning (Little, 2002). Only when learners act as agent in their learning that they will take initiative in planning, managing and executing their activities learning.

**1.3.2.6 Self-awareness and Reflectivity:** Autonomous learning requires learners to be aware of their own experience of learning (Chik and Breidbach 2011). In Bensemmane, most surveyed teachers underscored the need for learners to possess '**metacognitive awareness**' (2008:256). This awareness is prerequisite for the reflection autonomous learners need to do on all aspects of their learning.

### 1.3.3 Learning Autonomy and Culture

The third sphere of factors that can impact the development and exercise of learning autonomy consists of factors which generally surround learning. The general culture, the educational culture and syllabi and instruction determine, to a significant extent, what can and does happen in the learning process.

The term culture has been widely discussed in the literature. Various definitions were proposed. In this paper, the term 'culture' is used to mean, among other things (this is not meant to be an all-encompassing definition), **all the social codes shared by a community of people that define roles for its members and appropriate social conduct**. Culture also 'dictates' the roles learners and teachers can take in educational settings; i.e. their duties and rights in the learning activities, who should do what, when and how.

In practice, autonomous learners are more or less able and willing to undertake such learning-related tasks as:

- 1) Setting their own learning objectives
- 2) Self-assessing their learning achievement
- 3) Motivating themselves for learning
- 4) Learning from peers and people other than teachers

These dispositions and abilities may need to be developed and fostered in (young) citizens / learners through education.

#### 1.3.3.1 Learner Autonomy and *General Culture*

Learning takes place in cultural contexts. It is difficult even for the most liberated minds to escape the straps of cultural contexts. There has been a debate over the issue of the impact of culture on learner autonomy. An interesting direction of research explores the role of culture in autonomous learning; in other words, whether different cultures impact the development and practice of learner autonomy in different ways. Mason for instance wondered about a

possible impact of culture especially in Asian countries on knowledge and learning. “Might the liberal ideal of the independent and autonomous individual clash with communitarian values of identity in relationship? ... How might one reconcile the phenomenon, well documented among many Asian students, of learning by induction from rote memorization ... with western ideals of learning and of the growth of knowledge by critical questioning? ...” (2008:1). Such position seems over simplistic as it opposes a supposedly ‘free-thinking’ western world to an authoritarian eastern world. Little (2002) holds a more moderate position as he states that research on learner autonomy has been grappling with the question whether learner autonomy is an exclusively western cultural construct, which makes it foreign to learners in other **cultures**. The author concludes that although evidence seems to support the position that learner autonomy can be a universal construct, culture always impacts on learning (Little, 2002:12). As Pierson (1996) argues, social structure in education is thought to influence learners’ propensity for autonomy (Cited in Aoki 2000).

In a specific Asian context, Ahmad and Abdul Majid looked at the relationship between learners’ readiness for autonomy and the Malay cultural values. Their study indicated that culture influenced the development of the respondents’ readiness for learner autonomy. It has the capacity to either inhibit or encourage learning autonomy (2010:262-3). “In a collectivist society such as Malaysia..., members of groups do not speak up, or even express a contradictory point of view, instead social harmony is maintained and it is the hidden goal of every communication (Beamer and Varner, 2008)...” (Ahmad and Abdul Majid 2010:255). Dang studied EFL learner autonomy in Vietnam from sociocultural perspective and found out that “...learner autonomy can be either fostered or hindered deliberately within various community constraints” (2010)

Probably in all contexts, culture can stifle, allow or promote learner autonomy to the extent that it stifles, allows or promotes the attitudes and skills underpinning learner autonomy (discussed above under 1.3.1 and 1.3.2). In other words, a culture could be considered learner autonomy friendly if it allows, or better, encourages its members to: 1. assume primary responsibility for their lives; 2. Take decisions for themselves; 3. collaborate with others for better performance in tasks, etc.

### **1.3.3.2 Learner Autonomy and *Educational Culture***

Educational culture can be defined as a set of beliefs held by and practices of the stakeholders and participants in education especially learners, teachers and managers. It also includes regulations that determine what goals and methods should be used in teaching/learning.

Learner autonomy may not be desired or welcome by all people and in every context. “Despite the ever-expanding literature, learner autonomy remains a minority pursuit, perhaps because all forms of 'autonomisation' threaten the power structures of educational culture” (Little 2002). Following a study on teachers’ perspectives on innovations in Dutch schools, Könings et al. found out that teachers were reserved about student autonomy (2007:985). In some cultures, autonomous generally younger learners might be perceived by teachers as rebellious and not respectful of their authority of elders. Therefore, we should acknowledge that teachers’ readiness for autonomy is affected by their beliefs. Their attitudes toward learner autonomy can be expected to influence whether and how they might seek to develop their learners’ learning autonomy. Borg insists that we need to listen to the voices of teachers and tap their beliefs and attitudes (2013) if we wish education to target learner autonomy.

Educational philosophy, as reflected in the stated or implicit mission of educational institutions and policy, influence what happens in schools. More specifically than general culture, educational culture impacts learning experiences. Jiang and Smith claim that “teachers or parents can be significant mediators who pass on learning strategies to the younger generation through education or child-rearing...” (2009:297). Previous educational experiences (earlier learning) can have an impact on the learners’ readiness and willingness to assume more responsibility of their own learning. Carter states that learners’ educational background constrains their potential for autonomy (2000). “Learners’ attitude towards, or affect associated with, autonomy may also have its root in the institutional environment that surrounds the place where learning actually takes place...” (Aoki 2000)

The main component of educational culture is the curriculum. Traditional curriculum usually requires that teachers to work at a certain pace and use certain materials (See for instance Snodin 2013:15). A curriculum can make clear provision for the development of learner autonomy, pay lip-service to or overlook it. In many countries in the world especially those ranking high in international classifications (Finland, Canada, United Kingdom, South Korea, etc.), autonomy of learning is explicitly incorporated in curricular objectives. A curriculum that aims to promote students as independent learners should be learner-centred. Since nowadays knowledge and skills quickly become obsolete (They used to stay useful for 40-50 years), Brown recommends that we better teach learners dispositions to network, update their knowledge, and seek information, etc. (2012).

With or without educational objectives and syllabi that are favourable for autonomous learning, teachers can generally contribute or impede the development and practice of learning autonomy especially through the type of control they exercise. Teaching may be the strongest element in the learning culture. In most educational environments, teachers still play significant roles. What they do or not do affects learners in different tangible ways. The roles of teachers’ in promoting students’ learner autonomy has become an important venue of research in this field (Little 1995, T. Lamb 2008, Reinders and Lazarou 2011, Fumin and Li 2012). According to Candy, control over the learning process is better seen as a continuum from teacher-control to learner-control (1991:205, cited in Thanasoulas 2000).

Teaching that fosters learner autonomy does make some requirements. In Jiménez (2011) words, pedagogy for autonomy requires “a re-conceptualisation of the teaching-learning process. When teachers are encouraged to foster learner autonomy in their everyday teaching ... they are asked to have different understandings of their role as modern language teachers, to create a different relationship with their students...”(p. 159). Jiménez underlines here a necessity for reforming educational culture to tolerate and eventually foster learner autonomy. Teachers can encourage autonomous learning by showing willingness to give away some control to learners. Teachers who are usually held accountable for the success or failure of the learners may be expected to show some reluctance to loosen their control over what happens in the classes. According to Kumaravadivelu, “teachers have to determine the degree of control they are willing and able to yield to their students in terms of curricular aims and objectives, selection of tasks and materials, and assessment of learning outcomes” (2003: 155).

A recent direction in research on learner autonomy consists of exploring teacher autonomy and its links to learner autonomy (Little 1995; Tort-Moloney 1997; T. Lamb 2008; Lamb and Reinders 2008; M. Lamb 2011; Fumin and Li 2012). What is teacher autonomy? According to M. Lamb, teacher autonomy has been defined as:

- a. “The extent to which teachers have the capacity to improve their own teaching through their own efforts (through reflective or research-oriented approaches)” (Smith 2000 and McGrath 2000):
- b. “the freedom to be able to teach in the way that one wants to teach is also a manifestation of teacher autonomy (see, for example, Webb 2002).”
- c. Ability for self-direction and self-development,
- d. “capability of making decisions regarding one’s own professional learning needs” (M. Lamb 2008)

Teachers as autonomous learners and autonomous persons are probably needed as role models for students. Autonomous teachers always seek ways to improve themselves and impact their learners in a positive way and do not wait for opportunity to be granted to them (self-empowerment). For T. Lamb, a teacher autonomy-learner autonomy relationship requires that:

1. “The teacher learns how to (and has, or claims, the freedom to) develop autonomously as a professional, through critical reflection
2. The teacher has a commitment to empowering his/her learners by creating appropriate learning spaces and developing their capacity for autonomy
3. The teacher introduces interventions which support the principles and values which underpin their own and their learners’ autonomy” (2008)

Little maintains that learner autonomy depends on teacher autonomy (1995). He explains that only teachers that are themselves autonomous (Practice in their teaching reflective and self-managing processes) and who know what it is to be an autonomous learner can be expected to foster learner autonomy (2000:45, cited in M. Lamb 2008). Autonomous teachers do display their autonomy by organising learning in new ways, in learning of how to teach, or the self-management of their own classroom practice to be in a position to foster learner autonomy (M. Lamb 2008).

Like the general culture, an educational culture (regulations, curriculum and teaching) can stifle, allow or promote learner autonomy to the extent that it stifles, allows or promotes the perceptions, attitudes and skills underpinning learner autonomy (discussed above under 1.3.1 and 1.3.2). In other words, a culture of learning could be considered learner autonomy friendly if it allows, or better, encourages learners to 1. Assume primary responsibility for their learning; 2. Take decisions concerning their own learning as much as their expertise allows; 3. Collaborate with peers and teachers for better performance in learning tasks, etc.

## **2. The Study**

### **2.1 Purpose of the Study**

Changes and reforms to education may not bear expected fruits when the culture (general and educational) especially as reflected in the attitudes and perceptions of all the stakeholders is not adequately taken into consideration. Teachers and learners’ attitudes in particular can have a positive or negative effect on the implementation of reforms as they are the main agents and beneficiaries of most organizational or curricular changes in education. Therefore, Cotterall (1995) recommends assessing learners’ readiness for autonomous learning before shifting from teacher-centered to learner-centered paradigm in formal education.



Algerian higher education has witnessed since year 2004 significant restructuring known as the LMD (licence/bachelor, master, and doctorate) system. In parallel and for decades, a huge increase in the numbers of student enrolled in higher education has not been matched by increase in infra-structure and teaching, management and support staff. Increasing numbers of students in classes has meant a significant reduction of the time a learner can hope to obtain to interact and get counsel face-to-face with their teachers. In the same time, distant or online teacher-learner interaction has yet to become a standard practice in Algerian education. Learners will therefore have to learn to survive and thrive mostly independently or at least with lesser guidance from their teachers. In other words, they must become increasingly autonomous learners.

The present study aims to collect data to answer the following research questions:

**Research Question One:** Does the Algerian culture promote learner autonomy?

**Research Question Two:** Does the Algerian educational culture (educational policies / regulations and organisation, curriculum and teaching) encourage or impede development of learner autonomy?

## 2.2 Method of the Study

### 2.2.1 Data Collection Procedures

This research is a tentative attempt to investigate the attitudes and perceptions of EFL teachers and students regarding the roles of general and educational culture in developing 'learner autonomy'. A survey questionnaire was used to collect data from teachers and learners. The teacher questionnaire (See Appendix 1) consists of eleven questions, three of which are open-ended, one is of the closed type and seven items mix the two types; i.e. invite respondents to explain their answer which is selected from four to six set possible answers. The learner questionnaire (See Appendix 2) contains eleven mixed-type questions.

The questionnaire items are meant to collect data about university EFL teachers and learners' beliefs and attitudes towards learner autonomy. More specifically, the questions elicit insights about (LQ = Learner Questionnaire; TQ = Teacher Questionnaire)

- a. The respondents' views about the effect of developing learner autonomy on the students' academic success (LQ item 1; TQ items 3, and indirectly items 4, 8, 9);
- b. The respondents' views about the effect on the learners' academic success of the use of some learning strategies (student self-assessment of their own learning, students setting their own learning objectives, etc.) (LQ items 2 through 7);
- c. The respondents' perception of the role of culture, environment and family in developing their learner autonomy (LQ items 10 + 11; TQ item 5)
- d. The respondents' perception of the role of education in general, teachers and students in developing learner autonomy (LQ items 8, 9; TQ items 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11)

The items of both questionnaires are not sequenced in any logical order. Such order is reversed on purpose to prevent monotonous and mechanistic responses. Paraphrased questions are meant to check each other.

### 2.2.2 The Participants

A random sample of one hundred and sixty five (165) informants participated in our study: one hundred and thirty (130) students and thirty five (35) teachers. Table 1 (Participants in the Survey Questionnaire) displays the detailed numbers of each category of participants. Teachers' category falls into three sub-categories: senior teachers (abbreviated ST) have more than five years in teaching English as a Foreign Language, junior teachers (JT) have less than five-year experience in EFL teaching and pre-service teachers (PST). The latter group consists of students in their final year of the Master degree in didactics (M2). Most of the teachers and all of the students who were surveyed come from the Department of English at the University of Blida 2, Algeria (UB).

**Table1. The Participants in the Survey Questionnaire**

					<b>Total Num</b>
<b>Teachers</b>	<b>ST</b>	<b>JT</b>	<b>PST (M2)</b>		<b>35</b>
	<b>11 (6 UB)</b>	<b>7 (5 UB)</b>	<b>17 (All UB)</b>		<b>28 UB</b>
<b>Learners</b>	<b>L1</b>	<b>L2</b>	<b>L3</b>	<b>M2</b>	<b>130</b>
<b>Male</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>14</b>		<b>All UB</b>
<b>Female</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>35</b>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>16</b>	
<b>All Respondents</b>					<b>165</b>

The teachers who participated in the survey were randomly approached according to their availability in the premises of the English department at Blida University, Algeria or by email for teachers from other Algerian English departments. As for the learner questionnaire, the randomisation of participants was stratified. The questionnaire was administered to students who attended regular classes at the English department of Blida University, Algeria. A sample was selected from each level of study in the department; i.e. L1: 1st year of the 3-year English degree; L2: 2<sup>nd</sup> year; L3: 3<sup>rd</sup> year; and M2: 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the Master degree.

NB: For some teacher questionnaire items, an additional number of sixteen Master students joined as pre-service teachers.

### 2.2.3 Procedure

The administration of the questionnaires took place in December 2012. Students completed the Learner Questionnaire during regular classes. The researcher offered participants help when needed. As for Teacher Questionnaires, they were sent out by emails or handed over face-to-face. The questionnaire was emailed to over one hundred (100) teachers in Algerian English departments in December 2012. Thirty three (35) teacher questionnaires were completed and returned within due time.

### 2.2.4 Data Analysis Procedures

For every questionnaire item, responses were aggregated so as to allow trends, if any, to emerge in the responses. Responses to teacher questionnaires were collated for pre-service, junior and senior teacher sub-categories (See Appendix 3 for the collation of data collected). Responses to learner questionnaires, however, were aggregated according to level of study (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the English Bachelor Degree or 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the Master's degree).

### 2.2.5 Presentation of the Data Collected

Appendix 3 (Data Collected) presents the responses obtained from the administration of TQ (Teachers' Questionnaire) to eleven STs (senior teachers), seven JTs (junior teachers), and seventeen PSTs (pre-service teachers) and the LQ (Learners' Questionnaire) to fifteen L1 (1st year of the 3-year English degree, fifty L2 (2<sup>nd</sup> year), forty-nine L3 (3<sup>rd</sup> year), and sixteen M2 (2<sup>nd</sup> year of the Master degree) students.

The responses to each questionnaire items have been laid out in tables. The highest line of each table contains the scales or possible responses from which respondents were to select one answer. The second line contains the sub-categories within each major category of respondents (teachers or learners). As for the third line, it shows the number of answers for each scale selected by sub-category out of the total number of respondents in that sub-category. Those numbers are turned into percentages.

The numbers of responses for every scale (possible answer to a given question) are put side-by-side to allow comparison of the response tendency between sub-categories of respondents; i.e. compare teachers with different professional experience and learners at different levels of study.

## 3. Key Findings of the Study: Discussion and Interpretation of the Data

In the following discussion, we shall to use the data collected in this study to attempt to find answers to each question.

### 1. The respondents' views about the effect of developing learner autonomy on the students' academic success

All teacher surveyed agree that autonomous learners succeed better in their studies. 87 % of the responses by students share the same attitude. Benefits of autonomy may extend beyond academia to society at large. Indeed, in a similar study with teachers in Algiers University, Algeria, Bensemmane reports that "Teachers believe that university prepares for life in society and agree that an autonomous learner has more chances to adapt to a changing society; 14/15 teachers think that an autonomous learner will become an effective citizen in a democratic society" (2008, p. 257). There is apparently a general agreement about the positive contribution of learner autonomy to academic achievement in Algerian higher education.

### 2. The learners' views about the effect on the learners' academic success of the use of some learning strategies (student self-assessment of their own learning, students setting their own learning objectives, etc.)

Students participating in the present study were asked about the effect of seven strategies relevant to autonomous learning. On average 87 % of the responses stated that those strategies have a positive effect on the academic success of students. The statistics came as follows:

1. Making decisions about what they should learn: 99%
2. Self-assessment: 81%
3. Making decisions about what they need to learn especially outside class: 90%
4. Reflecting on what they are doing in class to learn: 87%
5. Reflecting on their own learning strengths and weaknesses: 91.5 %
6. Motivating themselves: 83 %
7. Learning from other people (like friends, etc.) besides teachers: 79 %.

### **3. the respondents' perception of the role of culture, environment and family in developing their learner autonomy**

The issue of the role of culture in fostering or inhibiting the autonomy of individuals is a moot point according to the responses obtained. 60 % of the students surveyed agree that in general, the Algerian culture, society and family do **prepare** students to make decisions for themselves and be responsible of their lives. But up to 40 % of the respondents said culture does not prepare them to be autonomous. On a related question, when asked whether Algerian culture, society and family **encourage** students to be autonomous learners, 76% of the teachers surveyed disagreed. On the contrary, 70 % of the students agree that the Algerian culture, society and family do **encourage** students to make their own decisions. The discrepancy between students' responses to both questions and the responses of the teachers may stem from relatively limited life experience and analytical capacity in comparison to teachers. This variance in responses can be used to allot more weight in terms of validity to teachers' responses without amounting to an invalidation of data from the students.

Although globally the vast majority of students are convinced of the benefits of learning autonomously, a few students especially from the third year category hold a negative attitude towards tasks pertaining to learner autonomy particularly **motivating oneself and learning from other students**. This issue may be ascribed to culture or previous learning experience predominantly controlled by teachers.

One of the questions that could be asked about the relationship between culture and learning autonomy is 'How much freedom does culture allow to its members to take initiatives, make decisions, question authority, act differently from the groups, etc.?' Cultural contexts can encourage autonomous learning to occur in it to the degree it permits freedom for learners to make their choices. Cultures with a strong authoritarian tendency may be expected to inhibit autonomy as reflected in individuals making their own decisions without counsel from the people in authority or elders and choosing pathways other than those preferred by the community.

### **4. The respondents' perception of the role of education in developing learner autonomy**

If the participants in the present study (students and teachers in an Algerian English department) seem to be convinced of the usefulness of learner autonomy, do they perceive a need for promoting learner autonomy as an educational goal in their EFL departments? When asked about the level of autonomy in their students, 61% of teachers said only some or a few of their students seem to be autonomous learners. 36% of Master students reported that none or few of their classmates seem autonomous. The statistics indicate that the majority of the students may not be autonomous enough; which calls for intervention in the form of training to increase learner autonomy among EFL students. Insufficient learning autonomy can be ascribed to educational culture. Bensemmane's data point to this explanation; "With respect to the students' earlier educational experience (from primary school to university) ... all teachers agree that this school learning background is likely to impact negatively on the students' attitudes towards learning. They blame the parents and family for supporting and encouraging this form of learning, thereby preventing them or reducing their capacity to become autonomous." (2008:257)

The need for intervention to foster learner autonomy is reflected in the response obtained for the question whether education should aim at developing learner autonomy. Indeed, 94% of the teachers (strongly) support the idea that education should aim at developing learner autonomy. Besides, all the teachers said they agree or strongly agreed that developing learner

autonomy **should** be one of the educational objectives of the English department reflecting a strong attitude in favour of an autonomous-learning English department. However, 51% of the teachers said that developing learner autonomy is **not** one of the objectives of their English department's curriculum or that they did not know whether it is an objective. Not knowing is similar, though definitely not the same, to believing their department does not target learner autonomy.

The educational context in Algerian EFL seems to inhibit autonomy in managing learning for both learners and teachers. Most decisions relating to the management of learning like learning objectives, syllabus, examinations are taken by top managers. This was confirmed by Bensemmane who notes that context allows for limited autonomy to all participants. All the teachers that the author surveyed agreed that their learners' school background, the parents and family may have affected negatively their capacity to become autonomous learners (2008:257). Educational context may not give teachers enough freedom to allow autonomous learning especially under the pressure of tight requirements for completion of the national syllabus and high-stake standardised examinations like the secondary school certificate.

Especially when institutional policy does not provide learner autonomy, the role of teachers becomes crucial. Pedagogy for autonomy requires teachers to have a different concept of their role as teachers in order to be ready to teach towards higher autonomy of the learners. In the English department at Blida 2 University, 84% of the teachers said that they usually seek to develop their students' learning autonomy. The students go along teachers' responses as 94.5 % of the said that teachers seek to develop their students' learning autonomy.

Nonetheless, care should be exercised with self-report data. Although the responses obtained from the teachers who participated in this study are very positive about learner autonomy, these data need to be double checked via other research tools like classroom observation. Bensemmane's research in an Algerian context yielded suspicion expressed by a few teachers regarding autonomy turning into a non-productive goal in the Algerian context (2008:257)

In conclusion of this discussion of the findings in the present study, it is notable that most of the surveyed teachers and students seem to agree to the importance of learner autonomy for academic success. However some of the open-ended responses from both students and teachers underscore we probably cannot simply assume that because students in EFL classes are sensitized to take responsibility of their own learning, they possess the tools to do so, or that because teachers adhere to learner autonomy, this will fully be reflected in the practice of their teaching. Nakata (2011) investigated teachers' readiness for promoting learner autonomy among EFL students in Japanese high schools and found that many Japanese EFL high school teachers, although they understood the importance of autonomy, were not ready to promote their learners' autonomy. Although most of them seem to adhere to the importance of learning strategies, they used them much less than would be expected in practice. Nakata (2011) ascribes the mismatch between attitude towards autonomy and actual practice of it to the social/cultural context which sets limits to both learners and teachers' autonomy (p. 900). The larger social culture can socialise both teacher and learners to become indifferent or even opposed to taking initiative and self-regulation. Therefore, there is need for further research to investigate the readiness of both teachers and learners to engage in learner autonomy. Research needs to explore further the role of culture, general and educational, in preparing participants in education for autonomous learning.

#### **4. Some Implications**

On the basis of insights gained through the review of the literature and the study within the present research, it may be appropriate to make consider the following implications. Culture (General and educational) especially parents / teachers will foster autonomy in the (younger) citizens / learners by helping them

1. Take an active part in setting life/learning goals and develop a capacity for decision-making; identify their learning needs and understand the purpose of their learning;
2. Take an active part in planning one's life / learning and mobilise resources;
3. Monitor and self-assess their life / learning performance, assign success and failure to specific factors, and adjust plans;
4. Self-Motivating to overcome life / learning challenges and set-backs;
5. Manage their (learning ) time, emotions and stay on task despite distractions of modern life;
6. Collaborate with (to learn with and from ) other people and determine how much social support (if any) may be needed to perform the task;
7. Communicate efficiently especially to collaborate;
8. Resolve conflicts that may arise while working with others; recognise problems and act to resolve them;
9. Think critically to assess their and others' decisions about learning goals, materials, tasks, assessment, etc.
10. Hold positive beliefs / attitudes towards being an autonomous person / learner;
11. Hold good and reasonable self-confidence;
12. Be resilient and adaptable to survive setbacks and obstacles they are certain to encounter in their Life / learning journey;
13. Take responsibility for their life / learning in order to take initiative in planning, managing and executing life / learning plans; Curricula should be adjusted to create a culture of self-regulation (Egan 2011);

Besides, changes and reforms to education may not bear expected fruits when the attitudes and perceptions of all the stakeholders are not adequately taken into consideration. Teachers and learners' attitudes in particular can have a positive or negative effect on the implementation of reforms as they are the main actors and beneficiaries of most organizational or curricular changes in education.

## Conclusion

Recent reforms in Algerian Higher Education seem to underscore the importance of developing students' learner autonomy. The new English department curriculum has integrated study skills and research methodology courses. Yet one might ask a question about the readiness of teachers and learners to shift to a more autonomous learning paradigm. Since human actions tend to be affected by their perceptions and attitudes, do teachers and learners adhere to this paradigm change at least at the level of attitude and concept?

Sometimes educational changes, despite good conception, fail to prepare the field they target to reform before implementation. Algerian higher education has witnessed fundamental organisational changes which seem to call for higher autonomy from managers, teachers and learners. The purpose of the present study was to explore Algerian EFL students and teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards the importance of culture, EFL department and society at large in fostering learner autonomy. This endeavour underscores the need to understand learners and teachers' cultural readiness, educational contexts and working conditions before educational reforms are implemented to increase chances of success.

The present research represents a first step in an attempt to explore the relationship between culture, both general and educational, and autonomous learning from the standpoint of teachers and learners. Any general conclusions from this study remain tentative. Therefore, further research is needed to investigate whether teachers and learners in Algerian departments of English are in practice adhering to learning autonomy. The data collected via a survey questionnaire administered to thirty five teachers and one hundred and thirty students from the English department at the University of Blida 2, Algeria seem to indicate that the surveyed teachers and students hold positive attitudes towards learner autonomy and its effects on EFL students' academic achievement. Nonetheless, some uncertainty among teachers and learners emerged from the questionnaire data about the role of the educational culture and the wider Algerian culture in developing learner autonomy. The researcher attempted to argue that general culture as well as educational culture must be taken into consideration in the preparation and implementation of reforms in education. This paper suggested some strategies especially for parents (general culture) and teacher (educational culture) that may help foster learning autonomy for EFL learners.


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## Appendix 1 - Teacher Questionnaire

Study on EFL Learner Autonomy - Teacher Questionnaire

Sir/Madam, please complete the following questionnaire. Space is available if you wish to explain your answers or add comments. Thank you

I have been teaching EFL for \_\_\_\_\_ year (s)

1. According to you, what is a brief definition of ‘**learner autonomy**’?  
.....  
.....
2. Please circle the choice closest to you opinion in the following  
*All – most – some – a few – few - none* of my students seem to be autonomous learners?
3. Autonomous learners succeed better in their studies. I *strongly disagree – disagree – agree - strongly agree*. (Why?) .....
4. Developing learner autonomy should be one of the objectives of education. I *strongly disagree – disagree – agree - strongly agree*. (Why?) .....
5. Algerian culture, society and family encourage students to be autonomous learners. I *strongly disagree – disagree – agree - strongly agree*. (Why?) .....
6. Is developing learner autonomy one of the objectives of your department’s curriculum? (*Yes / No / Don’t Know*)

7. In my teaching, I *do not - rarely - sometimes - usually - always* seek to develop my students' learning autonomy. (Why?) .....

8. Developing learner autonomy should be one of the educational objectives of the English department. I *strongly disagree – disagree – agree - strongly agree*. (Why?) .....

9. Teachers should seek to develop learner autonomy in their students. I *strongly disagree – disagree – agree - strongly agree*. (Why?) .....

10. How can your students develop their learning autonomy?  
.....  
.....

11. How can teachers develop their learners' autonomy?  
.....  
.....

Thank you for your valuable contribution

### Appendix 2 - Learner Questionnaire

Study on EFL Learner Autonomy - Learner Questionnaire

Dear student, please circle the choice closest to your opinion in the following statements. Thank you

Please circle the right information about yourself: I am a (1<sup>st</sup> / 2<sup>nd</sup> / 3<sup>rd</sup> year / Master1 / Master2) student.

1. If I learn how to make decisions about what I should learn, how to learn, where, when, etc., it will have a *very negative - negative – neutral - positive - very positive effect* on the success of my studies because .....

2. Besides teachers' exams, if I evaluate my learning and progress, it will have a *very negative - negative – neutral - positive - very positive effect* on the success of my studies because .....

3. If I make decisions about what *I* need to learn especially outside class, it will have a *very negative - negative – neutral - positive - very positive effect* on the success of my studies because .....

4. If I think about and discuss what we are doing in class to learn, it will have a *very negative - negative – neutral - positive - very positive effect* on the success of my studies because .....

5. If I try to find my own learning strengths and weaknesses, it will have a *very negative - negative – neutral - positive - very positive effect* on the success of my studies because .....

6. If I motivate myself to keep studying for success, it will have a *very negative - negative – neutral - positive - very positive effect* on the success of my studies because .....

7. If I try to learn from other people (like friends, etc.) besides my teachers, it will have a *very negative - negative – neutral - positive - very positive effect* on the success of my studies because .....

8. My teachers *develop* my ability to do the tasks above (1-7). I *strongly disagree – disagree – agree – strongly agree* because .....

9. My teachers *encourage* me to do the tasks above (1-7). I *strongly disagree – disagree – agree – strongly agree* because .....

10. In general, the Algerian culture, society and family *prepare* me to make decisions for myself and be responsible of my life. I *strongly disagree – disagree – agree – strongly agree* because .....

11. The Algerian culture, society and family *encourage* me to make decisions for myself and be responsible of my life. I *strongly disagree – disagree – agree – strongly agree* because.....

Thank you for your valuable contribution ☺

### Appendix 3 - Data Collected

**Abbreviations:** TQ = Teachers’ Questionnaire, LQ = Learners’ Questionnaire, ST = senior teachers (> 5 years teaching EFL), JT = junior teachers (> 5 years teaching EFL), PST = pre-service teachers (2<sup>nd</sup> year of the Master degree in teaching EFL), L1 = 1st year of the 3-year English degree, L2 = 2<sup>nd</sup> year, L3 = 3<sup>rd</sup> year, and M2 = 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the Master degree

*Autonomous learners succeed better in their studies. (TQ Item 3)*

strongly disagree			disagree			agree			strongly agree		
ST	JT	PST	ST	JT	PST	ST	JT	PST	ST	JT	PST
1 / 11	0 / 7	0 / 0	0 / 11	0 / 7	0 / 0	3 / 11	6 / 7	0 / 0	7 / 11	1 / 7	0 / 0
1 / 18 (5 %)			0 / 18 (0 %)			9 / 18 (50%)			8 / 18 (45%)		

*In general, the Algerian culture, society and family prepare students to make decisions for themselves and be responsible of their lives. (LQ Item 10)*

strongly disagree				disagree				agree				strongly agree			
L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2
3 / 15	12 / 50	6 / 47	0 / 0	1 / 15	11 / 50	11 / 47	0 / 0	7 / 15	8 / 50	23 / 47	0 / 0	4 / 15	19 / 50	7 / 47	0 / 0
21 / 112 (19 %)				23 / 112 (20.5 %)				38 / 112 (34 %)				30 / 112 (26.5 %)			

*In general, the Algerian culture, society and family encourage students to be autonomous learners. (TQ Item 5; LQ Item 11)*

strongly disagree			disagree			agree			strongly agree						
ST	JT	PST	ST	JT	PST	ST	JT	PST	ST	JT	PST				
3 / 11	2 / 7	0 / 15	6 / 11	5 / 7	9 / 15	2 / 11	0 / 7	4 / 15	0 / 11	0 / 7	2 / 15				
5 / 33 (15 %)			3 / 33 (61 %)			6 / 33 (18 %)			2 / 33 (6%)						
strongly disagree				disagree				agree				strongly agree			
L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2
4 / 15	6 / 48	3 / 47	0 / 12	3 / 15	9 / 48	8 / 47	3 / 12	6 / 15	25 / 48	28 / 47	7 / 12	2 / 15	8 / 48	8 / 47	2 / 12
13 / 122 (11 %)				23 / 122 (19 %)				66 / 122 (54 %)				20 / 122 (16 %)			

**Developing learner autonomy should be one of the objectives of education (TQ Item 4)**

strongly disagree			disagree			agree			strongly agree		
ST	JT	PST	ST	JT	PST	ST	JT	PST	ST	JT	PST
0 / 11	0 / 7	0 / 33	1 / 11	0 / 7	2 / 33	2 / 11	3 / 7	17 / 33	8 / 11	4 / 7	14 / 33
0 / 51 (0 %)			3 / 51 (6 %)			22 / 51 (43 %)			8 / 51 (51 %)		

**Developing learner autonomy should be one of the educational objectives of the English department. (TQ Item 8)**

strongly disagree			disagree			agree			strongly agree		
ST	JT	PST	ST	JT	PST	ST	JT	PST	ST	JT	PST
0 / 11	0 / 7	0 / 31	0 / 11	0 / 7	1 / 31	3 / 11	3 / 7	29 / 31	8 / 11	4 / 7	1 / 31
0 / 49 (0 %)			1 / 49 (2 %)			35 / 49 (78 %)			10 / 49 (20 %)		

**Teachers should seek to develop learner autonomy in their students. (TQ Item 9)**

strongly disagree			disagree			agree			strongly agree		
ST	JT	PST	ST	JT	PST	ST	JT	PST	ST	JT	PST
0	0	0	0	0	2	3 / 11	4 / 7	19 / 33	8 / 11	3 / 7	12 / 33
0 / 51 (0 %)			2 / 51 (4 %)			26 / 51 (51 %)			23 / 51 (45 %)		

**Is developing learner autonomy one of the objectives of your department's curriculum? (TQ Item 6)**

Yes			No			Don't Know		
ST	JT	PST	ST	JT	PST	ST	JT	PST
4 / 11	3 / 7	18 / 33	3 / 11	1 / 7	4 / 33	4 / 11	3 / 7	11 / 33
25 / 51 (49 %)			8 / 51 (16 %)			18 / 51 (35 %)		

**Teachers seek to develop their students' learning autonomy (TQ Item 7 + LQ Item 8)**

do not			rarely			sometimes			usually			always		
ST	JT	PST	ST	JT	PST	ST	JT	PST	ST	JT	PST	ST	JT	PST
0 / 11	0 / 7	0 / 0	0 / 11	0 / 7	0 / 0	1 / 11	2 / 7	0 / 0	5 / 11	5 / 7	0 / 0	5 / 11	0 / 7	0 / 0
0 / 18 (0 %)			0 / 18 (0 %)			3 / 18 (17 %)			10 / 18 (56 %)			5 / 18 (28 %)		

strongly disagree				disagree				agree				strongly agree			
L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2
0 / 15	2 / 50	0 / 47	0 / 0	0 / 15	0 / 50	4 / 47	0 / 0	10 / 15	36 / 50	42 / 47	0 / 0	5 / 15	12 / 50	1 / 47	0 / 0
2 / 112 (2 %)				4 / 112 (3.5 %)				88 / 112 (78.5 %)				18 / 112 (16 %)			

**Teachers encourage students to use strategies for autonomous learning (LQ Item 9)**

strongly disagree				disagree				agree				strongly agree			
L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2
0 / 15	0 / 50	2 / 47	0 / 0	1 / 15	3 / 50	0 / 47	0 / 0	9 / 15	36 / 50	33 / 47	0 / 0	5 / 15	11 / 50	12 / 47	0 / 0
2 / 112 (2 %)				4 / 112 (3.5 %)				78 / 112 (69.5 %)				28 / 112 (25 %)			

**The effect of learners making decisions about what they should learn, how to learn, where, when, etc., on their academic success (LQ Item 1)**

very negative				negative				neutral				positive				very positive			
L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2
0 / 15	0 / 50	0 / 49	0 / 0	1 / 15	0 / 50	0 / 49	0 / 0	0 / 15	0 / 50	0 / 49	0 / 0	8 / 15	26 / 50	37 / 49	0 / 0	6 / 15	24 / 50	12 / 49	0 / 0
0 / 114 (0 %)				1 / 114 (1 %)				0 / 114 (0 %)				71 / 114 (62 %)				42 / 114 (37 %)			

***The effect of self-assessment on the learners' success in their studies (LQ Item 2)***

very negative				negative				neutral				positive				very positive			
L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2
1/15	0/50	0/49	0/0	1/15	2/50	5/49	0/0	3/15	4/50	5/49	0/0	9/15	15/50	21/49	0/0	2/15	28/50	18/49	0/0
1 / 114 (1 %)				8 / 114 (7 %)				12 / 114 (11 %)				45 / 114 (39%)				48 / 114 (42%)			

***The effect of learners making decisions about what they need to learn especially outside class on their academic success (LQ Item 3)***

very negative				negative				neutral				positive				very positive			
L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2
0/15	0/50	0/49	0/0	1/15	2/50	2/49	0/0	0/15	4/50	2/49	0/0	5/15	19/50	31/49	0/0	9/15	25/50	14/49	0/0
0 / 114 (0 %)				5 / 114 (4 %)				6 / 114 (4 %)				55 / 114 (48%)				48 / 114 (42%)			

***The effect of learners thinking about what they are doing in class to learn on the success of their studies (LQ Item 4)***

very negative				negative				neutral				positive				very positive			
L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2
0/14	0/50	0/47	0/0	1/14	0/50	4/47	0/0	1/14	6/50	3/47	0/0	3/14	26/50	22/47	0/0	9/14	18/50	18/47	0/0
0 / 111 (0 %)				5 / 111 (4 %)				10 / 111 (9 %)				51 / 111 (46%)				45 / 111 (41%)			

***The effect of learners finding out their own learning strengths and weaknesses on their academic success (LQ Item 5)***

very negative				negative				neutral				positive				very positive			
L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2
0/15	0/50	0/49	0/0	0/15	3/50	1/49	0/0	2/15	4/50	0/49	0/0	5/15	13/50	17/49	0/0	8/15	30/50	31/49	0/0
0 / 114 (0 %)				4 / 114 (3.5 %)				6 / 114 (5 %)				35 / 114 (31%)				69 / 114 (60.5%)			

***The effect of learners motivating themselves to keep studying for success on the success of their studies (LQ Item 6)***

very negative				negative				neutral				positive				very positive			
L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2
0/15	0/50	0/47	0/0	0/15	3/50	6/47	0/0	2/15	4/50	4/47	0/0	2/15	13/50	21/47	0/0	12/15	30/50	16/47	0/0
0 / 112 (0 %)				9 / 112 (8 %)				10 / 112 (9 %)				35 / 112 (31 %)				58 / 112 (52 %)			

NB: 3 non-responses

***The effect of learners learning from other people (like friends, etc.) besides teachers on their academic success (LQ Item 7)***

very negative				negative				neutral				positive				very positive			
L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2	L1	L2	L3	M2
0/15	0/50	0/47	0/0	1/15	1/50	5/47	0/0	3/15	8/50	6/47	0/0	10/15	19/50	30/47	0/0	1/15	22/50	6/47	0/0
0 / 112 (0 %)				7 / 112 (6 %)				17 / 112 (15 %)				59 / 112 (53 %)				29 / 112 (26 %)			