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***THE IMPORTANCE OF CRITICAL THINKING ON
DEVELOPING LEARNERS' AUTONOMY***

***A CASE STUDY OF MASTER ONE STUDENT AT BISKRA
UNIVERSITY***

**A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Foreign Languages as Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirement for Masters' Degree in Sciences of Language**

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Dedication

This work is dedicated:

To my parents who devoted their life to my education.

To my beloved brother, sisters and dear friends who always supported me

To my lovely Princess and Princes : SONDOUS, MOHAMED,

RIMASS, LOUJAIN, YOUNES, AYOUB.

To my all teachers for their competence,

qualitative efforts and priceless advices.

To my Grandmother , uncles, Aunts and especially my dear Aunt

‘ZAHIRA’

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Abstract

The major problems within Algerian university students are student' passivity inside classroom, mindless and the lack of independency . These problems can be the result of teachers'ignorance of student'role inside classroom and of students'neglect of the significance of being critical thinkers, active and autonomous at the university as well as the unawareness of the positive effect of these skills on their achievement and longlife learning. The present investigation aimed to identify and describe how much critical thinking skills are important on developing learner' autonomy in English as a foreign language classes of Master one students at Biskra University. Thus, we hypothesized that if we train students to think critically, then their autonomous learning will develop. To confirm this hypothesis, a questionnaire has been administered to a sample of Master one students (N=54) as well as another one for teachers (N=07) from the same level to gain more information about their opinions towards the importance of critical thinking on developing learner autonomy.The Results have shown the great will of the student to be critical thinkers, reflective and autonomous learners. Besides, they revealed that teachers use varied activities in class to develop students' thinking skills in order to make them autonomous learners. They support the shifted paradigm from teacher-centred to learner-centred learning. To conclude, making students evaluate, decide, predict, and contribute in classroom tasks will increase their control over their learning process.

List of Abbreviations

EFL: English as Foreign Language

EC : Emails Communication

E-WCTEST : Weir Critical Thinking Essay Test

CALL : Computer-assisted Language Learning

CCTEST : California Critical thinking test

CCTDI : California Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory Test

CL : Cooperative learning

LMD: Licence/ Master/ Doctorate

N : Numbers

P : Participants

(p) : page

TBL : Team-Based Learning

W-GCTA :Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal

%: Percentage

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General Introduction

1 Statement of the Problem

In the last decades, the concept of teaching and learning have seen significant changes. The focus shifted from teacher “teacher centred approach “ to the learner-centred approach . The teachers express their own bias without allowing the students to interact, evaluate and analyse their problems. They do not train them to think critically even if the skill of critical thinking is not considered as an intrinsic part of instruction at any level, in the other hand the students sometimes neglect the importance of being critical thinker, active and autonomous in university .

In fact the traditional teaching-learning paradigm neglected the use of student’s mind and his/her role in the whole process as result of his/her passivity inside classroom. It does not promote and support the learner’s autonomy. The autonomous learning focus on the student reflection in which the learner is involved in the decision-making and problem-solving. In EFL classroom the learner needs to depend on his own to determine how and why he/she will use the language. The integration of critical thinking skills into EFL classroom will promote the use of student mind and support him to depend more on himself in order to select and determine the goals, the ways, the techniques and the procedures he needs in learning process so that he can become more reflective, and autonomous learner.

2 Aims of the Study

The current study aimed to investigate if the EFL students are acquiring and applying critical thinking skills to be autonomous learners.

To be more specific we can list the following research study objectives:

- ✓ To show how much critical thinking skills are useful in directing learners autonomy.
- ✓ To find out techniques and strategies that help to develop critical thinking skills.
- ✓ To clarify how much important both processes,critical thinking and autonomous learning for the student learning .
- ✓ To find out the strategies that might help to develop autonomous learning..

3 The Research Questions

- ✓ Are Master One' Biskra university students critical thinkers ?
- ✓ Are Master One' Biskra university students autonomous learners ?
- ✓ Are critical thinking skills develop learners' autonomy ?

4 Research Hypothesis

If we train students to think critically , then their autonomous learning will develop.

5 Research Methodology

5.1 Research Method

This study investigate the importance of critical thinking on developing learners' autonomy . In this case, descriptive method was used in order to describe the phenomenon and to provide more information about it . Therefore, we investigated why and how much critical thinking skills are important for EFL classroom, which techniques and strategies teachers should follow to make their students think critically, how much it is significant in developing learner autonomy, what are the strategies that promote autonomy in learning and to clarify and identify the different issues concerning critical thinking and autonomy.

Also we examined the hypothesis through statistical analysis of the numerical representation of the findings in the study that gained from the questionnaire tool.

5.2 Population / Sample

The representative population of this study was EFL master one students at Biskra University. Because the huge number of the population, the sample consisted of fiftyfour (**54**) students who were chosen randomly from (**242**) students to be given a questionnaire. In addition to a questionnaire which was conducted with seven (**7**) teachers. we choose master one students as a case of study because they are more conscious toward their learning techniques and strategies.

5.3 Research Tools

In order to answer the research questions and to confirm the hypothesis, we used a questionnaire as a techniques for collecting data . The questionnaire was administered to a sample of(54) Master one students of English and to seven (7) teachers in order to gain further information about the importance of the critical thinking on developing learner' autonomy as well as the solutions of the research question .

6 Structure of the Study

The dissertation was divided into two parts : the theoretical and practical one. The first part provided the conceptual framework constituted from the literature review which includes two chapters. In the first one we dealt with the important issues about critical thinking , we discussed the different critical thinking definitions, and how it has developed over years ,it's importance, the strategies used to promote it and also its assessment process ; however, the second chapter was to speak about the dependent variable “**the autonomous learning**”, we discussed its definition, its characteristics and its importance, also we identified the different strategies that promote autonomous learning. In the other hand, The second part is completely practical since it devoted to analyze and describe the student and teachers questionnaire with some recommendations for both in order to be more aware of the importance of practicing thinking skill inside the classroom in order to develop students autonomous level.

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Chapter one

General Overview on Critical Thinking Skills

Introduction

The issue of critical thinking opened an area of debate among researchers throughout time ,however, most of them agreed that it refers to a process that leads to pleased outcomes or solves problems . This chapter will discuss the different researchers' views toward critical thinking and how much this concept is related to Bloom's taxonomy and metacognitive theory that are playing great role in understanding critical thinking and distinguishing it from other assumptions and concepts ,however, the understanding of the nature of critical thinking is not sufficient to make student think critically , therefore, this chapter introduce the most important strategies which are suggested by many researchers enable the teacher to achieve the desirable objectives . In addition, this chapter investigate the most used assessments tools to evaluate students level of thinking as well as its importance in students learning life . Critical thinking has guaranteed benefits for student lifetime where it helps him in education as well as in the world of work.

1.1 Definition of Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is one of the main issues that provoked a great debate among philosophers , educators and researchers. It is why, we find various views and definitions that cover the process of critical thinking . One of the first researchers who identified critical thinking was Ennis who defined it as "**reasonable , reflective thinking that is focused on deciding what to believe or do** " (1987, p. 10). His definition highlights the quality of reasoning reflectively and its relation with actions and beliefs that we aspire to achieve , so he identifies both sides "**the behavioural aspects and the aims of critical thinking** " (Nieto, &Saiz, 2011). John Dewey (1933) used the term of reflective thinking rather than critical thinking , he describes it as the competence that enables the person to think and reflect on the complex issue for solving problems. In the same breath, Siegel(1997) noted that a critical thinker is the one who makes a decision after reasonable thinking .He also indicates that critical thinking includes a kind of critical spirit, therefore, Stapleton (2001) asserted that his definition involves a set of dispositions, such as attitude or habit of mind that inspire the person to analyse the evidence before taking a decision .

There are a lot of researchers who differentiate between both concepts; they stated in their studies that the critical thinker who possesses or masters such critical thinking skills such as the ability to analyse, interpret, infer etc are not sufficient for him because he needs to be motivated or disposed to apply them. That opinion is defended by most of the theorists in the field, such as Ennis, **1987, 1987**; Halonen, **1995**; Halpern, **1998**; Mckeck, **1981**. So critical thinking requires skills as well as attitudes which mean to be a critical thinker, you should have a desire or an internal motivation towards developing thinking abilities besides the ability to master different thinking aspects to engage in problems and make a right decision.

For more clear explanation Facione (**1990, p. 3**) stated that critical thinking "is a purposeful, self-regulatory judgement which results in interpretation, analysis, evaluation and inference as well as an explanation of the evidential, conceptual, methodological, criteriological or contextual considerations upon which that judgement is based". In another word he asserted in his definition that the process of critical thinking is based on mastering certain skills such as analyzing, interpreting, evaluating ideas and information to produce a sound judgement. Lim (**2002**) also tends to be clear and straightforward in identifying critical thinking skills as well as educationalists do; he stated that critical thinking includes certain skills such as recognizing the source of information, analyzing its validity, thinking about the suitability of the information with the previous knowledge, and bringing out result that is based on critical judgement. Whether Lim or Fcione stated that critical thinking refers to mastering certain cognitive skills from analyzing and interpreting till inferring and evaluating.

Kernedy et al (**as cited in Lai, 2011**) noted that Bloom's taxonomy is considered as a source for educational practitioners when it comes to identifying the process of critical thinking and that taxonomy's levels "analysing, synthesis and evaluation" are usually said to represent critical thinking which means that the concept of critical thinking requires a development of thinking from lower to the higher level that is described in Bloom's taxonomy in order to solve problem, in fact, bloom's taxonomy helps the students in understanding and mastering a higher order of thinking as well as teachers, it demonstrates them when they come to train their student to think critically where they needs to follow Bloom taxonomy levels to achieve a critical thinking classroom.

In the cognitive psychological approach, they tend to define critical thinking by "**the types of actions or behaviours that critical thinkers do**" rather than present a set of

characteristics and standards of higher order thinking whether for the thought itself or for the critical thinker (Lewis&Smith as cited in Lai, 2004) . From the definitions that are included under the cognitive psychological approach, the definition of Seternberg (as cited in Leavitt&Wisdom, 2015, p. 326) stated that critical thinking is **"the mental process ,strategies,and representations people use to solve problems,make decisions,and learn new concepts "** .Similarly , Halpern (1998, p. 450) defined it as **"the use of those cognitive skills or strategies that increase the probability of a desirable outcome"** .Both of them are focusing on the consequences that the students achieve , as a result of thinking critically and using certain procedures or cognitive skills that enable them to reach the desirable objectives.

Among the researchers who give a different views about critical thinking, Browne and Keeley(as cited in Moore, 2010, p.5) pointed out that critical thinking is a gradual process which means it begins with argument and develop and progress toward a precise evaluation due to three interrelated activities : **a)** asking questions **.b)**answering those questions. **C)** showing the ability to apply a solution of those questions . This definition introduces critical thinking hierarchically as it starts from bottom base till it reaches the top aimed result.

To sum up, each one of the researchers gave his opinion and view in defining critical thinking although their debate are not finished yet but at least now we can draw an image in our mind about the concept of critical thinking ;however , the term of critical thinking is used interchangeably throughout time , some of the researchers prefer to use higher order thinking or reflective thinking or even problem-solving .

1.2 Approaches Related to Critical Thinging

Many researchers and educators proposed different views toward critical thinking , and they identified how much critical thinking related to Bloom's taxonomy and the metacognitive theory that are playing a great role in understanding that issue and distinguishing it from other assumptions and concepts.

1.2.1.Bloom 's Taxonomy of Cognitive Domain

Bloom taxonomy considered as beneficial tool in education , according to Munzenmaier and Rubin (2013), **"Bloom's taxonomy emerged from a series of informal discussions with colleagues that began at the American Association in 1948"** . Where

the goal of Bloom taxonomy was "to develop a classification system for three domains :the cognitive ,the affective and the psychomotor system .The cognitive domain is referred to as bloom's taxonomy of the cognitive domain ".The affective and the psychomotor domains are developed by other taxonomies (**Bloom, Englehart, Furst, Hill, & Krathwohl as cited in Huitt, 2011**) .

Bloom 's taxonomy set out six levels of thinking :

knowledge,comprehension,application ;analysis,synthesis and evaluation (**Bloom, 1984, p.18**) as it is shown below :

Major categories in the cognitive domain of the taxonomy of educational objectives (**Bloom, 1956**)

- 1. Knowledge.** Knowledge is defined as the remembering of previously learned material. This may involve the recall of a wide range of material, from specific facts to complete theories but all that is required is the bringing to mind of the appropriate information. Knowledge represents the lowest level of learning outcomes in the cognitive domain.
 - 2. Comprehension.** Comprehension is defined as the ability to grasp the meaning of material. This may be shown by translating material from one form to another (words or numbers), by interpreting material (**explaining or summarizing**), and by estimating future trends (**predicting consequences or effects**). These learning outcomes go one step beyond the simple remembering of material and represent the lowest level of understanding.
 - 3. Application.** The application refers to the ability to use learned material in new and concrete situations. This may include the application of such things as rules, methods, concepts, principles, laws, and theories. Learning outcomes in this area require a higher level of understanding than those under comprehension.
 - 4. Analysis.** Analysis refers to the ability to break down material into its component parts so that its organizational structure may be understood. This may include the identification of the parts, analysis of the relationships between parts, and recognition of the organizational principles involved. Learning outcomes here represent a higher intellectual level than comprehension and application because they require an understanding of both the content and the structural form of the material.
 - 5. Synthesis.** Synthesis refers to the ability to put parts together to form a new whole. This may involve the production of a unique communication (**theme or speech**), a plan of operations (**research proposal**), or a set of abstract relations (**scheme for classifying information**). Learning outcomes in this area stress creative behaviors, with major emphasis on the formulation of new patterns or structures.
 - 6. Evaluation.** Evaluation is concerned with the ability to judge the value of material (**statement, novel, poem, research report**) for a given purpose. The judgments are to be based on definite criteria. These may be internal criteria (**organization**) or external criteria (**relevance to the purpose**) and the student may determine the criteria or be given them. Learning outcomes in this area are highest in the cognitive hierarchy because they contain elements of all of the other categories plus value judgments based on clearly defined criteria .
-

Figure 1.1 : Descriptions of the Major Categories in the Cognitive Domain (1956)

Bloom, in his taxonomy, suggests such arrange of thinking that reflects "the cognitive process work" when solving problems , making decisions or acquiring new information ,its

taxonomy organized in a systematic hierarchical way from the lowest level of thinking "knowledge ,comprehension"to the higher order of thinking "application,analysis,synthesis,and evaluation ",in fact, it is very helpful tool for both whether for student in guiding them in managing their thinking and learning process or for the teachers in facilitating for them the way they transmit and present instructions (Sulaiman, 2011), Bloom's taxonomy considers as a basic source for critical thinking issue .We can notice that the six levels complete each other,each level complete the next one in another word mastering of given level needs the mastery of the previous one, each level in the taxonomy used as a basic step to exceed to the next level , each level paved the way to the next and higher one.

According to Brown(2004, p. 76), Bloom's taxonomy is important in promoting critical thinking which directs students " **to establish clarity and accuracy,assess the relevance,and demonstrate the ability to think in depth**" . It is essential also because it guides student learning outcomes through ordered levels or steps toward achieving a high order of thinking. Anderson(1994) noted that in order to access student critical thinking teachers can use Bloom's taxonomy as reference for lesson plan, asking questions of students and for stating writing learning goals ;however , the teachers and the learners faced such confusion in some terms that are included in blooms taxonomy where they effect their efforts that aim to improve the use of Bloom's hierarchy (Krathwole, 2002) which lead to the establishment of Revised Bloom's taxonomy .

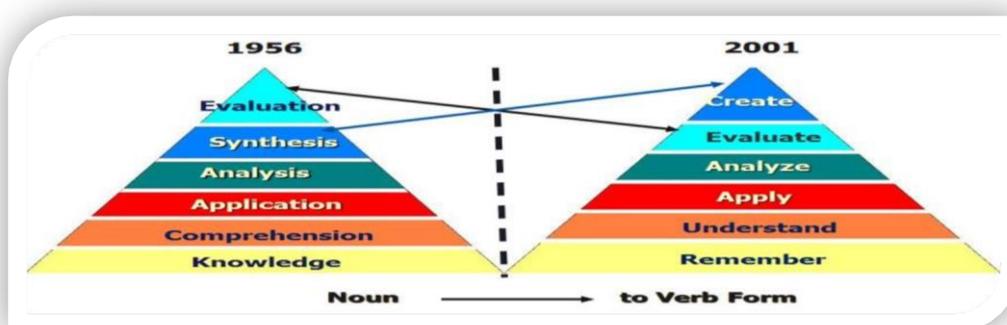


Figure 1.2 : Revised Bloom Taxonomy (Krathwole, 2002)

The change that took place did not affect the number of levels as shown in Figure 2,it remained as it is but it affected the order of the last two categories and it replaced synthesis level by creativity , the names of the categories retained but changed to verbs form to fit the

way they are used to achieve the objectives. This Revised Bloom's Taxonomy reflects a more active form of thinking and more accurate explanations for the classification of cognitive process dimension of thinking (Krathwole, 2002) . Using Bloom's taxonomy as a tool in teaching is very essential in education, thus, the teacher may have a clear idea of critical thinking when it associated with the cognitive domains of Bloom's taxonomy(Paul, 1985) where he can prepare an organised plan to the courses especially those that involve or focus on thinking skills .

1.2.2 Metacognition

Metacognition is process used to make control over one's thinking ; According to Flavell(1979, p. 906) metacognition refers to « **knowledge and cognition about cognitive phenomenon** » , however, Livingston (2003, p. 2) defined it as « higher order thinking that involves active control over the cognition process engaged in learning » in another word ,metacognition has relation with higher intellectual function of mind that involve learner's control over his ability to acquire,represent and recall information.Since Metacognition is defined by flavell (1979, p.906) as simply « **thinking about thinking** » it seems obviously that it has strong relationship with critical thinking therefore Kuhn(1999) considered critical thinking as a form of metacognition which includes "metacognitive knowing (**thinking that operates on declarative knowledge**),meta-strategic knowing (**thinking that operates on procedural knowledge**) and epistemological knowing (**encompassing how knowledge is produced**)" .

Martinez and Flavell assumed that critical thinking is included under Metacognition approach , while Martinez(2006, p. 697) believed that critical it is one of the metacognitive types beside metamemory and problem solving. He defined critical thinking as "**evaluating ideas for their quality, especially judging whether or not they make sense** ".However all of Kuhn and Hennessee(1999) linked between the both concepts where the former equates between them while the later stated a list of metacognitive skills that are similar to critical thinking skills ,such as considering the basis of one's beliefs and considering the relationship between one's conceptions and any evidence that might or might not support those conceptions which mean the both concepts meet in some points unlike Kuhn who equate between them.

In the same breath Halonen (1995) and Halpern(1998) argued that metacognition is like the ability of monitoring thinking ;however ,Halpern mentioned that it also refers "to the strategy use by asking the following questions : **What do I already know ? what is my goal ?How will I know when I get there ? Am I making progress ?**" ; in the other word ; Metacognition is considered as the process that demonstrates the one's thought and controls the quality of critical thinking . On another hand, some argued that both concepts are distinct from each other as Lipman(1988) who clarified that "metacognition is not necessarily critical " because the person can think about one's thought in an unreflective manner.

Metacognition is also referred to « **awareness and management of one's own thought** » which needs " inquiry ,analysis,inference and argument " in its process ,all of that aspects are essential in critical thinking (Dean & Kuhn, 2003, p. 3) which reflects the nature of the relationship between the both concepts "**critical thinking and metacognition**". The knowledge in metacognitive could be very effective for selfreflective learning ,and also for their academic performance and personal development (Joeseph, 2010), thus, students and teachers get many benefits from that process « **metacognitive** » even in promoting and enhancing their thinking skills(Sulaiman, 2012), however, teachers neglect the use of metacognitive process when the curriculum instructions are based on subject rather than thought (Joseph, 2010) although it is considered as one of the main approaches that have important role in enhancing student critical thinking (Sulaiman, 2012) .As conclusion Metacognitive could be considered as "**a supporting condition for critical thinking**"when it is working on controlling one's thought to achieve higher order thinking (Lai, 2011) ,since metacognition refers to the ability to monitor the one 's thought it serves as aiding procedure for the person in order to be critical thinker.

1.3 Strategies To Promote Critical Thinking

There are a lot of researchers who identified a number of strategies that improve and promote critical thinking skills such as cooperative learning, case method and asking questions and so on . In any level of education, there are lessons involving higher order thinking skills which need special deal to improve student comprehension abilities ,reducing ambiguity and confusion that holds the thinking tasks .

1.3.1 Cooperative Learning

The term cooperative learning (CL) refers to « ... students working in team on an assignment or project under conditions in which certain criteria are achieved , including that the team members be held individually accountable for the complete content of the assignment or project » (Brenet&Selder, 2007, pp 34 53) and also it is defined as « ...is instructions that involve students working in team to accomplish a common goal ... » or in simple meaning cover the both definitions, cooperative Learning is a style of learning involve more than one member where they work together, each one with his view in order to achieve the same team goal.

Cooper (as cited in Nabih, 2014, P. 211) argued that putting students in a group learning situation is the suitable way to foster and develop critical thinking where he noted that "In properly structured cooperative learning environments, students perform more of the active critical thinking with continuous support and feedback from other students and teachers ". In the same breath all of Nazami, Asagari, and Dinarvand (2014) found that both gender who receive a cooperative learning their critical thinking skills will increase and enhance rather than those who receive the traditional way of learning ; in the other word ; their results show that learning through cooperative learning develop the critical thinking skills .Learning through teams allows them to interact with each other where each one proposes his arguments and tries to improve it for the others, and here we notice also the rise of asking questions and other standards that contribute to enhance critical thinking skills. Also Carmichael (2009, p. 54 61) found that team-based learning students (TBL) responded to exam questions that included data –interpretation significantly with more accuracy than the lecture based on classroom students which indicates increasing in critical thinking skills, even at the end of the semester ,the survey also indicates that the students from the TBL class demonstrated more critical thinking ability than the students in the lecture-based environment. So cooperative learning is an area which enables students to interact with each other ,share knowledge and thoughts, solve problems,evaluate and analyse information to achieve the desirable objectives ,better scores and at the same time developing their critical thinking skills.

1.3.2 Using Questions

The question, in general, meaning, refers to interrogative sentences which are used to seek information ,however, the teacher questions are defined as « **instructional cues or stimuli that convey to students the content elements to be learned and directions for**

what they are to do and how they are to do it » .Asking questions to promote critical thinking skills can be a powerful tool at the condition that should be appropriate for the students level, experience and objectives (Atherton, 2010). Zepeda(2009) stated that questions can elicit student 's responses which can enable them to think through an organised process from simple recall of information to abstract process of applying ,synthesizing,and evaluating information . In another word, the questions are modes and ways that contribute in bringing out the student's response , and the more important is that the act of thinking is often driven by questions (Elder & Paul, 1998, PP. 297 331) therefore, the process of questioning that is used by teachers have great contribution in aiding students to build understanding and think creatively and critically . good thinking is achieved and developed by good questions rather than correct answers (Feng, 2013) because asking good questions means provoking the interaction between internal thoughts , previous knowledge and the faced problems which lead to developing thinking process rather than receiving answers at any ambiguous point where the mind uses to deal with presented fact does not try to go beyond that fact.

William Glasser (1969) emphasised the importance of questions on developing the critical thinking process in his book "*Schools without Failure*" , he suggested two techniques for applying the questioning process which are :

a) **Class meeting** : where the questions are planned for the greatest impact on the construction of thoughts and their subsequent application such as "**define, personalize, challenge**" ,and also are designed to help learners to explore the questions which are related to Glasser's "**want, do,evaluate ,plan**" model ,therefore the learners through the questioning process could practise and develop their critical thinking skills because according to him to answer the class meeting questions learners must consider their present knowledge if it is accurate or no , also they should be aware of how they might apply this knowledge in the future and explain their arguments to the others .

b) **Individual Conferences** : this model is used to help the students "**to realize the importance of self-evaluation and reflection in the production of quality work**" (Glasser, 1969) which means that the student through this process became more aware of his own capacities and depend on more on himself in solving problems.

According to Feng (2013) developing critical thinking skills is one of the most important education goals and for pursuing it. The teacher should have the ability to ask good

questions and using appropriate strategies because the high level of questions lead to develop a higher critical thinking abilities ,also it enables students to go beyond surfaces and forcing them to deal with complexity . Critical thinking abilities have great impact wethers on the educational or on the social life of student as Feng (2013) said "**if EFL students can strengthen their critical thinking skills at school today ,they will became a qualified citizen tomorrow to solve any thought problem** ",(pp. 147 153)which mean if we train today students to think critically they will be a qualified citizen tomorrow, because working on using mind and provoking internal thoughts at schools will build a strong student's personality that can deal with any problem in outside classroom life.

1.3.3 The Case Method

The case method is one of the most important methods or strategies that the teacher should apply or follow in the classroom to enhance the students achievement in general and promote critical thinking skills in particular . According to Collins,Falcon,lodhia and talcott(2011) « **...the case method teaching offers creative , applied classroom exercises for students to explore real-life situations and social problems, which are based on fictional scenarios** », they also argued that it promotes students-centered and participatory learning and it is important for students to practise analysis and problemsolving . For a more clear explanation about this method ,Mcdade(1995) simplifies it as when the teacher presentes a case « **story** » to the class without a conclusion ,using prepared questions , he then leads students through discussion ,allowing them to construct a conclusion for the case .Thus, make them think critically while they solving that problem ,they use their capacities of conceptualizing , applying ,analyzing, reflecting and then evaluating the results that they achieve. Hence, the student learn the both class content and how to learn because they practice their knowledge while performing a certain case (**Collins,Falcon,lodhia & talcott, 2011**) ,in fact, Mcdade gave a very clear illustration of case method , where the student engages in the lessons, get the objectives of the courses and at the same time they think critically toward the problem they face ,thus case method considers as an area in which student bring out his input, analyze information and get a desirable and evaluated conclusion.

According to Brooke (2006) « **in using cases students became active, similar to the Ban House method** », which means learning by doing ; it is an active learning strategy. In the other word the use of the case, the method gives the students opportunities to express their points of view ,thoughts,ideas where they play the active role in the learning process.

In addition ,Brook (2006) noted that the case method is designed to enhance student understanding of core concepts of the courses as well as to encourage critical thinking , he means that the case method makes the student understands what exactly the lessons are planning to achieve as well as developing the student critical skills that involving conceptualizing , analyzing ,evaluating results.

Freeman and Herreid (2004) stated that the best case technique is the "**Interrupted Case Method**", according to them it starts when the instructor or the teacher gives the student a problem or issue already faced by real researchers "normally they work in groups"and then ask them to come up with tentative approach and report them , after doing that task the teacher provides them with what the real researchers did when they faced that problem .After that, they give them additional difficulties and asks them to brainstorm solutions and repeat the same process . The goal of this technique as he asserted is making students challenge each others ,they will see different alternative approaches to the problem and at the same time, they will see model behaviour from the experts which allow them to practise their critical thinking skills to report their approaches and views.So case method paved the way for students to use and develop their analytical and strategic thinking they will read ,visualize,think ,realize and obtain alternative or the needed solution.

1.4 Assessment of Critical Thinking

The main purpose of assessing instruction for critical thinking is enhancing the teaching of the discipline based on higher order of thinking . The challenge of assessing critical thinking has been referred to different views about the nature of critical thinking and the likelihood about its teachability (**Kanik, 2010**).

1.4.1 Assessment Recommendations and Methods

Academic institutions and educational schools that involve and implement critical thinking in their curriculum and programs must assess their students on the critical thinking skills which are learned during their school term to ensure their program that is meeting the needs of critical thinking instruction .According to Paul (1995) who began with determining what should be the main objectives of the assessment process, he argued that there are four standardized tests such as California Critical Thinking Test (**CCTEST**), California Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory Test (**CCTDI**) ,Watson-Glaser Critical

Thinking Appraisal (**W-GCTA**) and Ennis-Weir Critical thinking Essay Test (**EWCTET**), but it has not proposed to focus just on them for the assessment of student’s critical thinking skills .

On the other hand there is variety of approaches and views in critical thinking assessment which include discussions, open –ended ,essay questions and so on (**Kanik, 2010**) which mean that the institutions and schools programs do not limit the evaluation process in that kind of assessment tests and try to involve other ways as open-ended questions , therefore it provides the test takers with opportunities to exercise their critical thinking skills in different areas and alternative methods. However Reed (**1998**) claimed that those kind of tests such as CCTEST, CCTDI and the W-GCTA (**Murphy, Conoley, &Impara, 1994**) can be included under commercially available general knowledge standardized tests approach that is related to multiple choice responses which test a main critical thinking aspects such as interpretation , analysis, inference , recognition of assumptions and so on .

Table1.1 presents these most popular assessments tools of critical thinking “ CCTST (**Facione, 1990**), California Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory (**CCTDI; Facione & Facione, 1992**), Watson–Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal (**WGCTA; Watson & Glaser, 1980**), Ennis–Weir Critical Thinking Essay Test (**Ennis & Weir, 1985**)”.

Test	Format	Themes/topics
California Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory (CCTDI)	Selected-response (Likert scale— extent to which students agree or disagree)	This test contains seven scales of critical thinking: (a) truth-seeking, (b) open-mindedness, (c) analyticity, (d) systematicity, (e) confidence in reasoning, (f) inquisitiveness, and (g) maturity of judgment (Facione, Facione, & Sanchez, 1994)
California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST)	Multiple-choice (MC)	The CCTST returns scores on the followingscales:(a)analysis,(b)evaluation, (c)inference, (d) deduction, (e) induction, and (f) overall reasoning skills (Facione, 1990a)
Ennis–Weir Critical Thinking Essay Test	Essay	This assessment measures the following areas of the critical thinking competence: (a) getting the point, (b) seeing reasons and assumptions, (c) stating one's point, (d) offering good reasons, (e) seeing other possibilities,and (f) responding appropriately to and/or avoiding argument weaknesses (Ennis & Weir, 1985)

Watson–Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal tool (WGCTA)	MC	The WGCTA is composed of five tests: (a) inference, (b) recognition of assumptions, (c) deduction, (d) interpretation, and (e) evaluation of arguments. Each test contains both neutral and controversial reading passages and scenarios encountered at work, in the classroom, and in the media. Although there are five tests, only the total score is reported (Watson & Glaser, 2008a , 2008b) Measures and provides interpretable subscores for three critical thinking skill domains that are both contemporary and business relevant, including the ability to: (a) recognize assumptions, (b) evaluate arguments, and (c) draw conclusions (Watson & Glaser, 2010)
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Table 1.1: Assessment Format

Ou Lydia Liu, lois Frankel, &Katrina Crotts Roohr, 2014

O. L. Liu et al discussed the popular assessment tools of critical thinking that are based on online or paper&pencil test, the table describes the assessment format from different angles where they determine the format of each tool such as multiple choice , essay, Likert scale. However they show what does exactly assessor in another word how critical thinking operationally defined in this used assessment where the assessment involves a number of critical thinking themes such us : reasoning, analysis, argumentation, and evaluation.

Facione (1986) pointed out that these assessments instruments are the easiest from the writing material one because the way of its scoring , but they can not test the student ability to produce a well-reasoned arguments , Moreover some researchers stated that the kind of multiple choice tests are not adequate indicators for critical thinking assessment because the test taker has limitation in applying their own evaluation criteria (Keeley&Brown, 1986) . On another hand, all of Ennis and Weir (1985) showed that the standardized essays tests "**the Ennis-Wierd Critical thinking Essay test**"could be developed as an alternative to multiple-choices formats in order to assess the student ability to produce a well-reasoned argument .

One from the suggested authentic assessment methods the open-ended measures which considered as « **a form of authentic assessment and allows students to use a higher order of thinking skills through a variety of content areas** » (Machado, 2011) .He noted that the nature of open-ended questions allows assessing different aspects such as conceptual understanding ,writing and thinking skills as the ability to analyze ,to evaluate and to solve the problem . Similarly , Ku (2009) said that open-ended measures are better than multiple-choice measures because they give more consideration to the dispositional aspects of critical

thinking ,however, he propose to use mixed item format (**multiple choice and open-ended measures**).

Some others prefer to use other different manners to achieve the validity and accuracy in capturing critical thinking such as written assessments, interviews and observations(**Pik, 2001 ;Wagner, 1999**) however Ennis (**1993**) showed that the use of these instruments are more expensive although they may give higher validity when applying it to small-scale scenarios.As a conclusion a valid assessment of the student critical thinking skills is very important in learning process because it determines the level of thinking that the student achieves especially when it includes a different assessment format where to enable the teacher to evaluate student from different aspects .

1.4.2 Purposes of Critical Thinking Assessment

Assessing critical thinking according to Smith(**1991**) and Shepard(**1991**) can be considered as a motivated tool for the student to learn the material they expect to be covered on the test because when the test omitted , the student will neglect the understanding and learning the content of those materials .

Ennis (**1993**) believed that developing or analyzing a test does not need just knowing a comprehensive knowledge about critical thinking, but it should know the objectives for which the test is used . He set out many objectives such as : diagnosing the levels of student 's critical thinking where we use the test to make the students release their strength and weakness such as the ability to identify assumptions ,therefore they can easily improve even in a better way as a result of their awareness of their weakness points. According to him also, the teacher can use the test as a way to discover to what extent their strategies of promoting critical thinking effect on students , in the same way, tests could be used as a way to motivate the student and promote them to learn about what asking to cover .

Assessing critical thinking means assessing and measuring certain cognitive skills that reflect the improvement of making a decision and solving the problem .

1.5 The Importance of Critical Thinking

To achieve the goal of being critical and autonomous learner , the students should be supplied with critical understanding and adaptability before crossing the practical life (**Fostering Critical Thinking Competence in EFL Classroom, 2013**) the critical thinking skills has a great effect on the students whole life. Critical thinking helps the individual to identify and check one's own assumptions and those of others(**Brookfield, 2012 ; Paul, 1993**), so it provides the learner with the ability to evaluate and estimate the reliability and the validity whether of their own view or of the others assumptions ,thus, critical thinking « **represents a major qualification for people in deciding what to do or believe** »(**Young & Chou, 2008, p. 683**) . We can say that critical thinking is considered as competence that learners possess in order make decisions.

Brookfield and Kong (**as cited in Rais, B et al., 2014**) remarked that critical thinking is considered vital in modern education especially in higher education . Thinking critically leads to reliable results ,and gaining a relevant knowledge.When a learner thinks critically ,he will possess the ability to ask appropriate questions ,gather relevant information,reason logically which result to a reliable and worth conclusion(**Fostering Critical Thinking Competence in EFL Classroom, 2013**).« **a skilled in critical thinking also will be more likely to apply it in his or her personal life as well** »(**Beyer, 1995**) , the student who are equipped with critical thinking skills will help them to move in the word of work (**Hove, 2011**) which mean the one who use to think critically about different learning issues will be a qualified person in the word of work where he tries to solve any problem they face and make a right decisions at the right place , thinking critically make you using your mind actively in any situation you put in .

Coughlin (**2010**) asserted that high school needs to be "a place that involves students in rich ,authentic,collaborative work ; that takes responsibility for building 21-century skills , and that uses a diverse program of assessment to document students growth in such skill". According to Hove (**2011**) the challenge that schools face is to remain relevant to the world changes or in the other word, to be still relevant to student needs ,they are obliged to teach them skills that enable them to navigate in the modern world in a successful way, this skills include « broad concepts such as creativity , innovation, problem-solving , communication, collaboration, teamwork and critical thinking as well as media and technology literacy, financial literacy, health literacy and global literacy » (**Senechal, 2010, p. 5**) , which means

that the students should be sustained with thinking power because it plays as a guarantee success in the collegiate world where he can deal with accelerating change of the developed world . Paul and Elder (2008, p. 88) stated that critical thinking « **provides a vehicle for educating the mind** » in another word critical thinking provides us with the ability to analyse,adapt to a new situation (Hove, 2011).Critical thinking process means acting actively towards any problem , it provides you with an ability in which you be a flexible te deal with newly generated problems because thinking critically make you go beyond fact which provokes you to ask a new question and faces new problems .

For mastering those powerful skills ,Mendelman (2007, p. 300) asserted that « if reading the world can be parallel to reading the text, then literature offers an ideal vehicle for teaching the critical skills necessary in analysis » where students be able to discuss moral and ethical matters that reflect the real life situation.Mendelman noted to the importance to the parallel between the content of tasks and real life situation because it considers as a condition for teaching the student how to think critically .

As a conclusion , Islam (2015) claimed that possessing critical thinking means « **the ability to think clearly and rationally** » which reflects our decisions in everything we do,it enhances comprehension and performance abilities , thinking critically « **improve the way we express our ideas** » and understanding the others views and assumptions . Moreover it is considered as the main step toward creativity .critical thinking plays a crucial role in evaluating new ideas, selecting the best ones and modifying them if necessary .

Conclusion

Critical thinking is a process of thinking that enables the person to analyse and synthesize information in order to make decisions and solve problems,however we can build a solid comprehension about critical thinking when it is associated with the cognitive domains of bloom's taxonomy because it has proven to be a very beneficial tool . For making students good thinkers , the teacher should follow certain strategies and assessment procedures that enable him to make them use higher order thinking and to check their progress and their quality of thinking .

Chapter Two

General Overview on Autonomous Learning

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Chapter Two

General Overview on Autonomous Learning

Introduction

In the last decades, the students had a passive role in the classroom, their duty was just memorizing information that are given by the teacher, however ; nowadays learners depend more on themselves ,managing ,controlling and evaluating their own learning, therefore, the role of the teacher changed into a facilitator or controller from time to time. He would like to be the person who provides his learners with positive environment in which they can develop their autonomous level.

In this chapter a key terms and concepts will be presented to provide a broad view of their meaning such as:teacher and learner autonomy . As well as , issues concerning the characteristics of autonomous learner and ways to promote it. After that, the levels of autonomous learning will be discussed, stressing the importance of autonomous learning inside and outside the classroom.

2.1 Definition of Concepts

For giving more clarification about the notion of autonomous learning the following concepts that are relevant to this topic will be defined .

2.1.1 Autonomy

Many definitions are available among them, Oxford dictionary (2008, p. 25) gives an overlap one for autonomy where it is defined as the ability to perform actions without the need of the help of the others so, is not limited to a specific field ; it highlights the independency in all aspect of life rather than limit it . In the same stream Cobuild (1995, p.38) stated that it is '**the ability to make your own decisions about what to do rather than being influenced by someone else or told what to do**' . The both definitions discuss autonomy from the general view and do not limit it to a specific area. More particularly Cook (1997, p.45) considered autonomy as developing techniques and procedures in order to encourage and promote 'individual self-development' ; in the other words autonomy in his view is like developing materials and strategies that make us depending more on ourselves in taking decisions which result in developing self-directed ,

On the other hand , in the educational issues, we can notice that the concepts of autonomy is limited to the teaching-learning process .One of the earliest who defined Autonomy in the educational circle is Holec (1979) who consider it as **‘the ability to take charge of one’s own learning’** which means taking responsibility for all decisions that concern all learning process aspects such as : determining the learning objectives, selecting the suitable techniques and strategies , evaluating the acquired information. He also noted that this ability is not inborn which means we can develop and acquire it from life experiences .According to Benson (2006) **‘autonomy in learning’** occurs when the learners take control over their own learning inside and outside the classroom, However Autonomy in language for him is when people take control over the objectives and the ways for which and in which they learn a language. According to his definition we can notice that autonomy is a matter of control or in other word it is the ability to manage and control the learning process . Benson (2006) also noted that the terms **‘independent learning and self-directed learning’** refer to ways of learning by ourselves, however, they are often used as synonyms for autonomy but not always . From this point of view, we also find Little(1990) who asserted that autonomy does not mean self-instruction or in other word, it does not refer to learning without teacher especially the capacity to taking charge of one’s own learning is innate ability as we mentioned before , it needs a guidance for developing and acquiring it. As conclusion, autonomy in learning take various shapes, it was used interchangeably throughout time as results of the developments of world and the change of researchers views and beliefs.

2.1.2 Learner Autonomy

In general , learner autonomy refers to all possibilities that learners can do or capacities that they have in order to become autonomous whether inside or outside the classroom . **‘learner autonomy ‘** is referred to the 1980 year , when the father of autonomy Henri Holec introduced a project to offer the adults with life-long learning opportunities, because the concept of learner autonomy is not limited to just inside classroom; it has broader effect on the whole life-learner. We can say that learner acts autonomously the inside classroom to achieve independently outside life goals and of course does not mean neglecting the surrounding of social factors .

In the case of language learning and according to Bocanegne and Haidl (1999) learner autonomy is considered as new field of study , where it emerged and developed thanks to the

new shift of interest in the process of language learning , where learners are seen more and more as procedures rather than learners of a system imposed on them by society which mean that they have the right in making their own decisions rather than being imposed to them. Littlewood (1996) offers a model of autonomy where he describe the factors that create autonomous learner

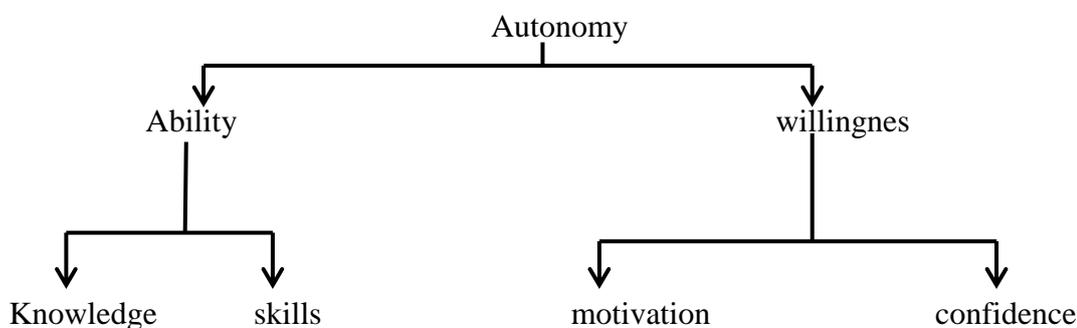


Figure 2.1 : Littlewood Model of Autonomy (1996, p. 428)

In this model ,he defined it simply as the one who **‘has an independent capacity to make and carry out the choices which govern his or her actions’**(Littlewood, 1996, p. 428), However, for him this capacity depends on two important factors such as : ability and willingness where each one of them is divided into two components as is shown in figure2-1 , so he showed that the ability component consists of knowledge and skills, and willingness consist of motivation and confidence . For being autonomous, the learner should have or reach all those components ,thus to work autonomously you should have the desire ,the skills and knowledge that are needed within a motivating environment.

Gardner and Miller (1999, p. 5) pointed out that learner autonomy concepts have been used in different geographical areas and thus they have been defined using different terminology. on the light of this view ,a great debate emerged among researchers about the exact definition of learner autonomy , for instance we find Little (2002) who noticed a confusion between two terms learner autonomy and self-instruction because according to Dickinson (1987, p. 11) the self-instruction defined as a term which refers to situation in which there is no need to the guidance of the teacher which means the learner is working without a need of the teacher control. The same confusion also happened with the selfdirect concept where she noted to that it refers to a particular attitude to learning task where the learner is partially responsible for all the decisions concerned with his learning and the implementation of those decisions.

According to Dickinson (1987) self-direct is to be responsible of learning, which does not mean that you undertake the implementation of that decision unlike autonomy which is at the total responsibility of learning decision and its implementation .

Moreover Knoxles's(1975) who use the term self-direct as the same meaning of selfinstruction as well as self-planning , self-education, self-teaching, self-study and autonomous learning (as cited in Dickinson, 1987, p. 15). As conclusion to that debate , learner autonomy depends on himself in itself ,his ability and desire to work autonomously with a certain control that differs according to the degree of the autonomous learner level .

2.1.3 Teacher Autonomy

Shifting from teacher-centred learning into learner-centred learning does not mean we neglect the role of the teacher which it might be reduced into a facilitator and controller from time to time. Benson (2006) showed that the concept of teacher autonomy was suggested firstly by Allright(1999) and then developed by Little (1995), thus teacher autonomy according to him refers to the capacity of taking responsibility of their decision and its implementation inside classroom and the need to have the capacity to use certain skills such as reflecting and self-managing. In addition to that Dam(2011, p. 43) argued that in the traditional paradigm of teaching-learning '**the teacher-centered learning**' , the teacher asks himself : 'How do I best teach this or that ? However in learner-centred learning environment , the teacher asks himself : ' How do I best support my learners in learning this or that ?from this point of view we see clearly the change of the role of the teacher in an autonomous classroom , from the total control to a monitor and facilitator . Moreover Nunan (1997, p. 194) adds that learner autonomy needs the learners to make a right decision according to its objectives in study , therefore, he needs a certain help in order to make that decision at least in the beginning, because the teacher autonomy is considered as starting point of autonomous learning.

To sum up, teacher autonomy, is the one who follow cognitivism approach rather than behaviorism , responsible towards his learning'views and beliefs, take the right decisions in teaching process. And also the one who have the ability to manage successful classroom, focus in planning lessons on how he will involve his learners in tasks. Thus he will teach them how they will be autonomous in the future . As a result, if you want to obtain autonomous learners you should start from the teacher.

According to Kumaravadivelu (2003, p. 144), autonomy ‘**requires teachers who are willing to let go and learners who are willing to take hold**’ Based on this view ,the teacher autonomy has an important contribution in autonomous learning or in other words autonomy will be achieved by the cooperation the between the learner and teacher autonomy, so the learner could not learn independently unless the permission and the help of the teacher . as a conclusion an autonomy teacher is the one who has the ability to choose the right decisions at the right place independently. He should be responsible of his own teaching by offering a positive environment where he can promote learner ‘s autonomous levels, and although his/her learners act independently , he should continue controlling them and giving them instructions at the right time . In the teacher perspective , Little (2007, p. 27) argued that ‘‘ it is unreasonable to expect teachers to foster the growth of autonomy in their learners if they themselves do not know what it is to be an autonomous learner’’ which means that the teacher should have experience on what it is needed to be an autonomous learner , in order to foster autonomy among learners.

2.2 Characteristics of Autonomous Learner

Learner autonomy is not an innate capacity on the contrary it could be achieved through experience of life ,thus to be autonomous learner , you should have certain characteristics ; many of researchers suggested various characteristics that the autonomous learner can hold such as Louis (2005) who asserted that the autonomous learners is the one who has the ability to control his own learning , motivated towards his learning , aware enough by his own learning styles and strategies with appropriate selection of the right, and he should pay attention to materials and methods . So the autonomous learner try to play the active role and depend more on himself. Holeo (1982) agreed with Louis with those characteristics but he added that to be autonomous you should choose your objective and set your goals independently . However , according to Moore (2010) stated four conditions such as : "**stance towards learning**" where the learners orient his learning by choosing appropriate learning style and strategies , "**willingness to learn**" is about the motivation towards learning, and also (management) where the learner should acquire certain skills such as : planning and evaluation skills , self –assessment to be able to monitor his learning and achieving a pleased results .

In addition to that Dicknson (1993) stated four characteristics for autonomous learners First ,they need to be aware by what is happening inside their classes ; in other word, they

recognize what is going on .Secondly they need to be set out their goals and objectives in parallel with the teacher's objective or even without , because for example we can find today a learner does extraordinary effort outside classes to develop languages for communication as chatting with native speakers or watching movies in the target language ; all of that is considered as a part of their own learning objectives. The third characteristic talk about an autonomous learner as having the ability to select the appropriate methods and learning strategies. The last feature of the autonomous learner is the capacity he has to modify and adjust his learning strategies according to his needs and objectives as in tests when the learners releases his weakness and tries to improve it through other effective ways and strategies. Thus Dickinson (ibid.) provides fundamental and basic characteristics that shape the autonomous learner and make him involve and engage actively in the learning process.

Chan (As cited in Shakerine, 2012) suggested the characteristics of autonomous learner in the following features such as highly motivated . goal oriented, well organized ,hard working , initiative, enthusiastic about learning, flexible,active, willing to ask question,making use of every opportunities to improve their learning. In fact he agrees with the previous characteristics mentioned ; however, he added the notion of 'willing to ask questions' because the autonomous learner does not satisfied with the given information ,he always seeking more information . The most of researchers agree in several point in describing the autonomous learner however self-management considered as the main features that characterize the learner autonomy .

2.2.1 Self-management in Learning

One of the main characteristics of learner autonomy is the learner's ability to manage his learning . Self-management refers to the ability to manage and monitor his own learning , however self-management has big confusion with other terms such as : selfregulation, self-direction wherein most of the time considered as synonyms . For example we find Zimmerman(2002) defined self-regulation as "the selective use of specific process, including task analysis, self-motivation, self-control ,self observation,self judgement and self reaction which means it refers to the learner ability to select the qualified and suitable use of certain process that include :how do you react , motivate , judge and control the faced conditions . Benson (2001, p. 76) stated that "**control over learning management can be described in terms of the behaviours that learners employ in order to manage the planning , organization and evaluation of their learning** ". In other word ; self-

management skills refer to what the learner do in order to monitor, control and manage his own learning, thus; the effective management of learning process leads to successful autonomous learning so for that, it is considered as the main characteristic that the learner should hold to achieve being autonomous learner.

Rubin(2005) set out a set of steps in self-managed planning which include: setting goals, setting criteria to measure goal achievement, task analysis and setting a timeline. So, an effective self-manager for him is the one who specifies his objective and the period of time that is needed to achieve that goals as writing paragraph which contains ten new, then setting the criteria is about establishing certain measures to evaluate the extent of achieving goals, task analysis is about determining the objectives of the task and identifying its characteristics in which learners decide task demands as the strategies and the skills they need to achieve it and finally the self-managed learner need a time line to accomplish the task. As conclusion, self-management covers certain skills of evaluating monitoring and planning; the effective self-managed learner is the one who possess the ability to use those skills in suitable way in order to be a successful autonomous learner.

2.3 Levels of Autonomous Learning

In the late 1990s a number of researchers discussed the notion of autonomy in term of degrees and levels (Directorate-General for Education and Culture, 2007), the degree of autonomy that concerns schools is divided into four broad sections such as: **Full Autonomy**: It concerns when schools takes decisions within the limits of the law or general regulatory framework for education, without the intervention of outside bodies here the degree refers to the higher level of autonomy of schools. In addition **Limited Autonomy** which includes a less freedom where the decisions are taken under certain conditions which are predetermined by higher education authority. **Schools without Autonomy** are those who “do not take decision in a given area” which mean there is no responsibility in taking any decision. The last degree is concerned with “the organizational structures of some education systems” because in some countries the local authority have hand in the schools decisions. This concerns schools autonomy but particularly, we find a several models of autonomous learning according to student levels.

Nunan (1997) proposed a model that includes five levels of autonomy such as: awareness, involvement, intervention, creation and transcendence which reflect “the

sequencing of learner development activities in language textbook “ (Benson, 2001) , they are organized from the less to the higher level of autonomy as described in the **Figure 2.3** below .

Level	Learner action	Content	Process
1	Awareness	Learners are made aware of pedagogical goals and content of the materials they are using	Learners identify strategy implications of pedagogical tasks and identify their own preferred styles/strategies
2	Involvement	Learners are involved in selecting their own goals from a range of alternatives	Learners make choices among a range of options
3	Intervention	Learners are involved in modifying and adapting the goals and content of the learning program	Learners modify and adapt tasks
4	Creation	Learners create their own goals and objectives	Learners create their own learning tasks
5	Transcendence	Learners go beyond the classroom and make links between the content of classroom learning and the world beyond the classroom	Learners become teachers and researchers

Figure 2.3 : Levels of Autonomous Learning (Nunan, 1997, p. 195)

The model shows a gradual development that classified autonomy in stages , it start from making student aware of their pedagogical goals till become independent researchers Each category describes the extent to which the student could act autonomously in the learning-teaching process . Another model suggested by Little wood (1997, p. 81) includes three dimensions of autonomy depending on the action that the person do autonomously . First dimension is about language acquisition where he refers to the ‘**ability to operate independently with the language and use it to communicate personal meaning in real , unpredictable situations**’(autonomy as communicator). The second one is about the context of classroom organization a ‘**the ability to take responsibility for their own learning and to apply active , personally relevant strategies** ‘ (autonomy as learners) . The third stages refers to a broader context ‘**a higher level goal of ... greater generalized**

autonomy as individual ‘(autonomy as individual) .(as cited in Benson, 2001). Little wood propose a very simple description of autonomy levels from different angles and areas that the learner involve in , such as autonomy as communicator, he limit the content of that level on using language autonomously or independently in order to communicate or to generate language according to the situation depending on ourselves. In the last stage concerns a broader shape, which involve long-life learning that covered person’s life in general when he act in his life independently.

In the same stream , Macro (1997, pp. 170-172) suggest a model for autonomy stage which is somewhat similar to Little wood. His model involves : ‘**autonomy of language learning competence and also autonomy of choice and action** ‘ his model as little wood model discuss different related areas and it is obvious that he start from the specific ‘**using language** ‘ to **general autonomy** ‘the broader meaning of autonomy in making decisions.

In addition to that a model by Schaller and Szalo (2000, p. 1) proposed three stages such as : ‘**Raising Awareness**’ where you be aware of all the conditions around you and about decision that you will try to do . According to (2000, p.9), the learner in this stage still needs guidance ‘**he needs to be told what to do** ‘ . In that phase they focus on teacher encouragement for the student ‘to bring the inner process of their learning to the conscious level of their learning’ which means we support them to bring out their internal thinking debate ,then the following stage is ‘**Changing Attitude**’ is when you undertake an attitude independently without the influence of others, it is like practising what we mentioned in the previous stage . The last stage is about ‘**Transferring Roles** ‘ that stage needs a considerable change in classroom so it turn around giving more freedom to student in deciding about tasks and other classroom activities . We can notice that autonomy stages are related to each other, each one one complete the other it is like following chronological order of applying activities . Finally ,Each one of the researchers classified autonomy in his point of view according to certain condition .

2.4 Strategies for Promoting Learner autonomy

In last decades, many strategies and techniques suggested in order to promote learner autonomy because the learners are engaged actively in meaningful learning if they depend on their own volition . A lot of researchers support the shift from teacher directed teaching environment to a learner-directed environment , many strategies and approaches have been suggested focusing on what the learner can do in order to be an autonomous one . they are :

resource –based approach that emphasized the independent interaction with learning materials considered as the main approach that contribute in fostering learner autonomy ,however nowadays with that huge development in all fields it seems more easy to learn independently than before , as depending on the technology –based approach .

2.4.1 Resource-based Approaches

Learning independently is related with student's independent interaction with learning resources and materials . However there are two main materials that are often related with the notion of fostering learner autonomy such as : self-access and learning distance

2.4.1.1 Self-access

Self-access resource are those materials that are designed for the independent use by students . According to Sheerin (1991) self-access is 'a way of describing materials that are designed and organized in such a way that students can select and work on tasks on their own ;in the other word, it is considered as a collection of materials that are organized in a way that facilitate the selection for student when he wants to depend on his own . Gardner and Miller (1999) claimed that self-access language learning is related with learning rather than teaching .

Benson (2001) argues that self-access considered the main resource for autonomous learners since it provides them with material that are immediately made for them such as the printed materials ,for instance, in the Algeria universities : the example of the hands out which are distributed in classes used by learners to understand the courses, even sometimes without the explanation of the teacher and other examples such as audio ,videotapes ...ect. Self- access centers were established as an effort to foster learner autonomy , the goals of use these centres according to Benjamin, McMurry and Tanner are to facilitate the autonomous learning which includes books audiovisual equipment and tutors. So, they emerged to complete the teacher instruction ;however, students can go to those centers and benefit as they can as participating in activities that are ranging from class homework to developing their autonomous learning. Therefore those centers provide opportunities to the learners to learn independently but they are found just in few areas in Europe, United state and Asia.

2.4.1.2 Self-instruction and Distance Learning

Distance learning and self-instruction are the main strategies that the learners follow in order to be autonomous learners, where the focus is on self-instructional materials, the most of study at home or at any other place rather than educational centers where the learners may spend little or not in the educational institutions (Benson, 2011, p. 133). He also claimed that distance learning involves self-instructional while the latter is considered as outside learning without the influence of the educational institutions where the material are organized by the learners themselves outside any formal education, however we find distance learning needs certain contact with the teacher although **'the teacher is not available to set up and oversee learning activities and to intervene when problems are struck'**(White, 1995, p. 208). This means that in distance learning the intervention of the teacher may occur even without his physical absence. So this does not prevent his intervention in solving problems.

For Moore (1991, p. 76) distance education defined as **'the family of instructional methods in which the teaching behaviors are executed apart from the learning behaviors...so that communication between the learner and the teacher must be facilitated by print, electronic, mechanical, or other devices'**. he noted to that even if there is no direct connection between teacher and learner, it should be facilitated, through different ways. Learning distance has great effect on fostering learner autonomy because according to White's comparison (1995) of strategies that the learners use in distance and classroom learners at New Zealand university, those who use distance learning made greater use of self-management strategies rather than others. So it stimulates the development of learner autonomy where the learner use to depends on his own in designing materials solving problems and modifying his learning strategies according to his needs and objectives.

Both self-distance and self-instruction are considered as key strategies for autonomous learners inside and outside the classroom, however, there are some researchers who clarified that both concepts are synonyms for the sensitive interference between them, Little (1990) claimed that autonomy is not the synonym for self-instruction which means autonomy that is not limited to learning without teacher.

2.4.2 Technology-based Approach

With the vast change in the world development beside the significant development in the technological field, many studies focus on the contribution of technology into education

to support both teaching and learning .Thus, the technology-based approach is considered one from the main approaches that promote learner autonomy . Unlike the resource based approach the technology-based approach depends on the technologies used to assess resources . There was two important technological tools to promote autonomous learning such as : Computer-assisted language learning and the Internet that is already embedded under computer-assisted language .

2.4.2.1 Computer-assisted Language Learning (CALL)

Integrating technology in language teaching and learning has been proposed for many years. According to Levy (1997, p. 1) the CALL refers to "**the search for and study of applications of the computer in language teaching and learning** " which means learning using certain computer systems in language teaching. Unlike Levy who propose very broader meaning Beatty (2003) defined it as the process in which learners use the computer in order to improve their language level however the applications of CALL can involve word processing ,computer games , corpus linguistics and personal Digital Assistants . One of the common activities of the CALL system is the text reconstruction by typing in words. In addition the computer can provide learners with worth feedback as correcting the incorrect answers or provide them with remedial activities (Dudeny &Hockly, 2008). Thus the CALL has a great role in promoting learners autonomy where it give a certain freedom to the learners to self-correction .

Ken and Warschauer (1980) believed that the views toward the CALL differ from the old generation to the actual one , where the latter generation look to the computer as a tool that they can control rather than an expert that controls them . thus reflects the development of using computer by students ,where they used to create their own micro world (Papert, 1980) in which learners solve problems ,constructing new concepts based on the previous knowledge . computer assisted learning involves many applications that can serve as tools to promote learning independently such as : emails and the internet .

2.4.2.1.1 The Internet

The internet makes us living in small village , it is considered as one of the main important ways that contributes in enhancing learner autonomous level . Nowadays it become a necessary part in our life, it provide the learner with various sources ,published materials and applications that can help him in improving his learning level and offer him

opportunities to keep connecting with whatever he wants over the world. It fosters and stimulates learning independently . from the most common application offered by the Internet to develop learner autonomy is the electronic emails and the different media social network.

According to Buettner, R (2016) social media are **"computer-mediated tools that allow people or companies to create , share, or exchange information, career interests, ideas and pictures/videos in virtual communities and networks"** . It refers to free spaces where the learners exchange with each other different views without any kind of limitation ; therefore it promote online learning . To support this view also Dewing (2010) defined it as **"the wide range of the internet-based and mobile services allow users to participate in online exchange , contribute user-created content, or join online communities"**, in usual the term of internet always related to social media , however Jacka and Scott (2011, p. 5) claimed that the social media is like collection of web based on broadcast technologies that offer people the ability to be publishers rather than consumers of material content .

The most common social media network that are used are :

- Facebook
- Twiter
- Skype

In fact, each year there are many of other sites which emerge, but we can say that the facebook , twitter and skype are considered as the most used among learners to share information and materials that they need in study or to communicate and chat with different persons that speak the target language, this may lead them to improve their language proficiency since social media considered as platform to share views about different social fields all of that electronic behaviours can develop individual learning . As conclusion the internet is like window to the world provides the learner with different access to be an autonomous learner.

2.4.3.1.2 Emails

Nowadays, we can say that the majority of the student have personal 's electronic email used them whether to texting others or saved them to see its content later on . The application of emails enables users to send and receive messages ,store and forward emails

,attach a document file...(LeLoup & Ponterio, 1995) in other word, emails application is considered as an area in which learners can contact each other or even with teachers from other countries in the case of distance learning or in the case of preparing a research paper where you need guidance or at least an advice from teachers around the world to continue your work; thus it stimulate the sense of learner autonomy where the learner depend partially or totally in himself.

Also Zaho (2003) believed that emails are like any other application that the learner use as tool to break down certain obstacles faced inside classroom . So, thanks to emails learners can contact their teachers at any time they want . According to Bloch (2002), emails interactions noted to that cyberspace communication can break down the problems in time and space that the traditional classes impose on the learners .

However Tella (1992) in her investigation of the analysis of electronic mail communication where the study examined email exchanges between different countries ; we can summarize the result of that investigation in the following points :

- ✓ Emails communication (EC) lead student to focus on the content rather than form because EC provide them a kind of freedom that make their ideas flow.
- ✓ Using language for real purposes with real audience leads to improving their writing skills
- ✓ By introducing emails in the foreign language classroom ,the focus change from teacher-centred into learner-centred working environment .

Because of the interaction in the classroom environment associated with certain limitation as the curriculum programs and the time of the course , we find the level of student language proficiency less than those who interact in free spaces as emails communication.

2.5.The Importance of Autonomous Learning

Autonomy has a great effect in learn life in general and in learning in particular ; for that reason many researchers suggest several methods and strategies to learner autonomy .

Crabbe (1993, p. 446) noted that autonomous learning makes the student aware of their needs and they can set their goals , because if the learner works independently and becomes aware of the problems that he faces and recognize his needs he will immediately set and determine the objectives that he wants to achieve . In autonomous classes requires a change in roles and responsibilities . Accepting that noticeable change it should be such generate emotional climate between teacher and student there is certain emotional climate

between the teacher and student involve expressing trust and appreciation from the teacher to student abilities and point of view (Ikonen , 2013) according to Kohonen (1992, p. 32) if the learners feel appreciated and trusted they can feel more responsible towards his own learning . Autonomous learning considered as an active and successful mode of learning because learners who act actively towards their learning which mean depending their selfdevelop their learning more effectively than those who all the responsibilities on the teacher (Knozles, 1975, p.14;Hedge, 200, p 83).

Benson ,(2001, p.01) noted that autonomy effect not only the learning process , but also in the whole social life , because learning autonomously makes you use to depend more on yourself in solving any problem you face and whatever you are . Benson (2003, p. 131) also asserted in his research that the main objective of autonomy in learning is the learner's independency and aid him to progress effectively in learning , the learner who is aware of his own weakness and strength will select the suitable methods and strategies that meet his needs and take the right decision in his learning which reflect positively in his achievement. Thus Kumaravadivelu (2003, p. 131) believed that supporting learners to be autonomous learners means to give them more opportunities to be successful .however ; there are some researchers who believe that being autonomous is an innate capacity as Thom san (1996, p. 56) argues that learners have an inborn capacity for controlling and monitoring their own learning and he proved that in the case of young children when acquiring their mother tongue . Therefore his autonomy can be developed on the objectives that they have drawn for themselves and it will provide then with confidence that effect even their real social life decisions.

In addition to that Crabbe (1993, p. 443) set out three arguments of the significance of promoting learner autonomy where he means that learning autonomously provides the learner with certain freedom to take decisions in his learning he will bear whatever the result is , the second reason, the common one among researchers, is that the learn takes control and responsible on his learning he will prefer better. the third argument is that the institutions or society does not have the resources that meet all student levels of personal instruction in every area in learning.

According to Dickinson (1987, p. 18-35) an autonomous learner is a person who is motivate to be active in learning, therefore they get rid of the sense of less confidence and inferiority , in other word when the learner depend on himself, he will feel more confidence by his own capacities which make motivated more and more towards learning .

As a final conclusion , autonomy in learning has a great effect on student life either the social or educational or political life. It provide him with opportunities for the learners to express themselves ,to show their internal thoughts ;it also makes them eager for more knowledge, they depend on their own to solve any problem they face even with consultation of the teacher . All of that contributes in establishing a very active , motivated and effective autonomous learner .

Conclusion

By the end of this chapter, we can infer that autonomous learning or Learner Autonomy is used interchangeably with other concepts, for instance: long life learning, and independence learning. Autonomous learning is an innate capacity that the learner can develop and foster through different strategies . Learner Autonomy has great effect in learner life ‘inside or outside classroom’ it may began inside classroom with the help of the teacher . It effect positively the social life as well as educational life .

Chapter Three

The Analysis of the Results: Students' Questionnaire / Teachers' Questionnaire

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Chapter Three

The Analysis of the Results: Students' Questionnaire / Teachers' Questionnaire

Introduction

This study is an attempt to investigate the importance of critical thinking on developing learner autonomy. We involved Master one's year students and teachers of different modules to gather their views and their attitudes toward our topic. Therefore, this chapter is devoted to the presentation and the analysis of the data gained from both students' and teachers' questionnaires. First we gave precise description of the methodology that we follow in our investigation where we introduce the choice of method, the population and the way we select our sample, moreover we presented the data gathering tools, where we used questionnaire which help us in accepting / rejecting the research hypothesis. One for the students and other for teachers, we clarify the aim, describe, interpret, and analyse the results of each one.

At the end, we mention recommendations to develop autonomous learning through training student to think critically .

3.1 Research Design and Methodology

3.1.1 Choice of the Method

Our research is descriptive study focus on precise issues, where we emphasize on showing the importance of critical thinking skills on developing learner's autonomy . we investigated different issues concerning critical thinking skills as how much are important to integrate critical thinking skills in EFL classroom, which techniques and strategies teachers should follow to make their students think critically, and also to clarify and identify other issues concerning autonomous learning. However we examined the hypothesis through statistical analysis of the numerical representation of the findings in the study that will be gained from the questionnaire tool . Moreover, this method provides a great help in proving the effective role of critical thinking on promoting learners' autonomy .

3.1.2 Sample of the Study

The population of our investigation is Master one LMD students , at the University of Biskra department of Foreign Languages Section of English. we have worked with a limited sample of students because the limited time and the huge number of students, where we dealt with sample of (54 members) from 242 students of Master one what equates 22 ,31% from the whole population, we selected the sample randomly. It is mixed between males and females from two section, each section includes two groups, however they take 25 minutes in answering it at the end of the lecture , because they found all the questions are clear ,and also that is why they provide us with full answers unless the part of justification where we found the most of them do not fill it , but we can not neglect their collaboration and help .The technique that we followed is random sampling in which there is a high level of objectivity and we can represent the result for the whole population. In fact we have a conscious reasons for choosing that sample :

- ✓ Because they have considerable experience in university in term of autonomy in learning.
- ✓ They are more aware towards their own objectives and aware towards the pedagogical goals of what they learn.
- ✓ They are aware enough about which style of learning is working with their level of thinking.

In the other hand, we select randomly 7 teachers to participate in our investigation who teach different modules, we do not interest by which module they teach because our investigation do not limited to certain skill,however, the most of them have considerable experience in teaching. In fact because of the limitation of time and because they were busy with their work, we obligated to disturb the half of the questionnaire papers in form of google forms and we found it effective in gaining the desirable answers.

3.1.3 Data Gathering Tools

The aim of the data gathering tools was related to the center aim of this research,where it aims to show how much critical thinking skill is important on developing learner autonomy, to see the student's level of higher order of thinking and their independency in their learning, and to see what is the effective strategies that the student follow to promote their autonomy and to develop their way of thinking .According to that we have used one data gathering tool :a questionnaire, given to teachers and students which include clear idea

about the topic with ordered questions to avoid confusing the participants in giving their opinion and attitudes towards the topics . the both questionnaires were too significant to this investigation, since they gave useful information about critical thinking and learner autonomy in our classes.

3.2 Students' Questionnaire

3.2.1 Aim of the Students' Questionnaire

A questionnaire has been administrated for Master one students of English section to collect data about their views and opinions concerning the issues of autonomy and critical thinking skill. In particular, to see whether they are autonomous learners or not, and if they are really critical thinkers, also to know about their opinions on which effective activities improving their thinking skill and promoting their autonomous learning outside the classroom. . The questionnaire aimed to test the hypothesis saying that if we train our students to think critically, their autonomous level will develop.

3.2.2 Description of the Students' Questionnaire

Students' questionnaire has been administered to fifty-four participants of Master one students, this questionnaire includes (28) questions which organized in logical way. They are either closed questions "answer "yes" or "no"" and open questions requiring from them to give their own views and justification, and finally to tick the appropriate answer from the number of choices. We classified all of these types of questions into three sections: "general information" which is composed of (03) questions, it aims at gathering background information about the student: choice of studying English, level in English and how they prefer to learn English.

The second includes (11) questions about learners' attitudes towards critical thinking issues , and about their ability to think critically , their opinions about their method and techniques used in classroom to evaluate and promote their critical thinking skill. At the and we ask them in this section : if training them to think critically effects positively on their autonomous level.

Finally, the third . It consists of (13) all deals with autonomy in classroom; how students perceive their level in this skill, if they are autonomous in their learning or not, also to see their opinion about the effect of technology in their autonomous level, and how they

see the relationship between the process of thinking critically and autonomous learning. As a conclusion question, we ask them to give their suggestions concerning our topic.

3.2.3 Piloting

Piloting the questionnaire was of a great importance since it permitted to bring the important correction in students' questionnaire, so, it was administered to six Master one students at the department of foreign languages, section English.

We have made some modifications in it: deleting, adding, and reformulating some questions such as we added question about autonomy in classroom , we change some types of questions for instance when we add justification to the last closed question of the third section because the participants do not satisfied by selecting yes or no, they felt that they need to express their opinion toward that question . As well as we delete some questions which have the same meaning until we reached the final copy.

3.2.4 Analysis of the Results

Section One: General Information

Question 2

➤ Is learning English your choice?

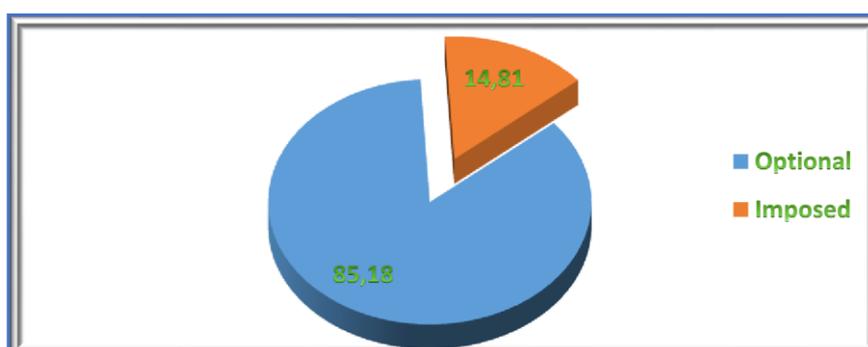


Figure 3.1: Students' Choice to Study English

From the table above we observe that 85,18% of the whole sample has chosen deliberately to study English in university because they like to learn this language and they have a desire to choose English language as their future branches in university without any kind of obligation . However, 14,81% of the master's one population confessed to have been imposed that speciality and that they did not chose it by themselves, they study English for certain reason not for their real desire.

Question 2

➤ How would you describe your level in English ?

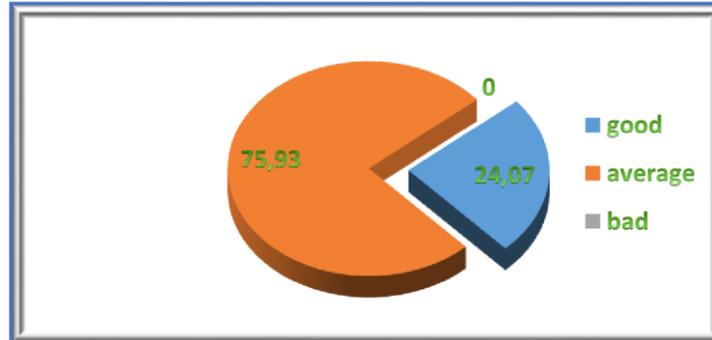


Figure 3.2: Students' Level in English

The result above show that 13 student from the whole population (24,07%) believe that they have a good level in English language, 41 student consider their level in English as 'average' where they represent 75,93 % of the whole sample. However, there is no one claim that he has bad level in English.

Question 3

➤ How do you prefer to learn English ?

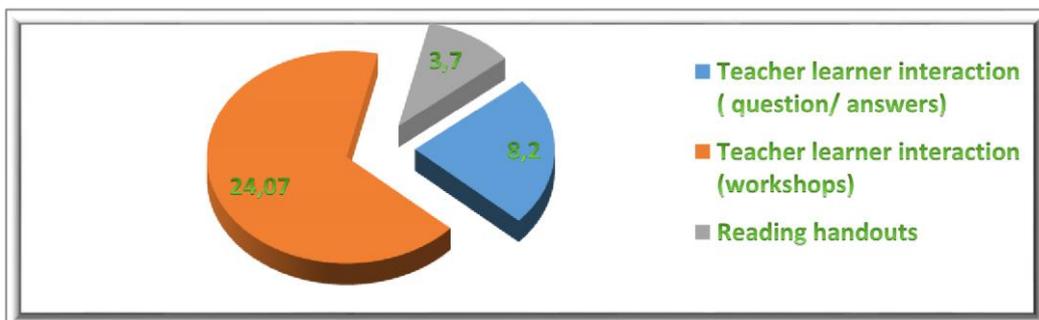


Figure 3.3: Students' Opinion about The Preferable Way to Learn English

We asked student about the way they prefer to learn English, 72,22% of them replied that they prefer the first option 'Teacher-learner interaction (question/answer), the way that involve in developing the communication between the teacher and the learner which effect positive their level in learning English, and about 24,07% prefer to learn English through peers interaction 'learner-learner interaction' where they overcome many problem and difficulties that might face in learning as anxiety and fearing of doing mistakes or shames

when they want to represent their point of view. Whereas only 3,7% from the participants who prefer learning through reading handouts, they believe that it considers as the easy way for learning, and they trust the content where they satisfied with what the handouts represent

Section 02 : Critical Thinking

Question 01

➤ When you face a difficulty in your learning , how do you usually act ?

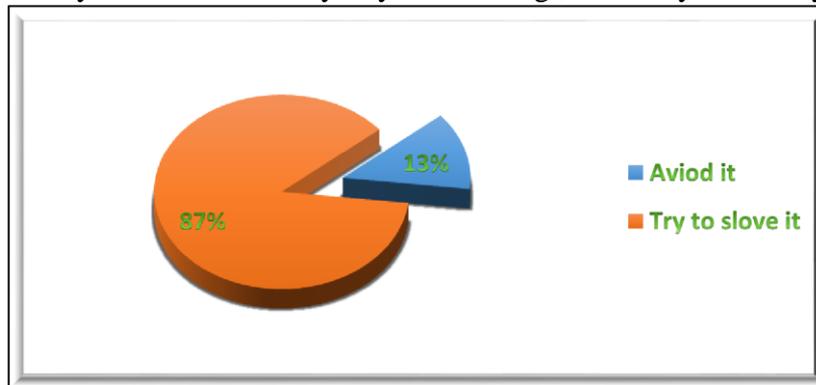


Figure 3.4 :Students' Reaction Towards thier Learning Difficulties

From the answers of the participants we found 87,04% of students try to solve the problems and the difficulties they face in their learning process whether by their own or with the help of the teacher, they do not give up till they reach a solution; however,12 ;96% avoid them, they do not try to check out about the problem they face, they just avoid it.

Question 02

➤ In the learning process, do you depend only on the information which has been given inside the classroom ?

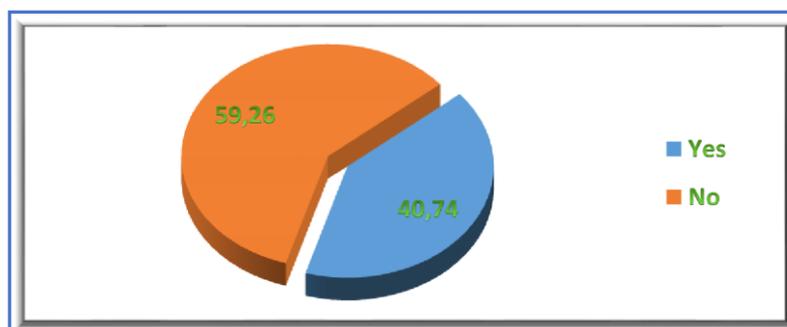


Figure 3.4 : Students' Reliance on the Given Information in Class.

The table above shows that 59,26% of students claimed that they do not depend only on the information they received inside the classroom which means that they depend on themselves and their teachers in learning the language, and they are eager to know more information and go deeply in the subject that they learn, where they use their mind and higher order of their thinking to take a right decision and absorb the right knowledge. And 40,74% of them depend entirely on the information inside the classroom and do not try to do further research outside the formal setting, they don't trust their own search .

Question 03

- Do you state your reasons for accepting or rejecting arguments and propositions?

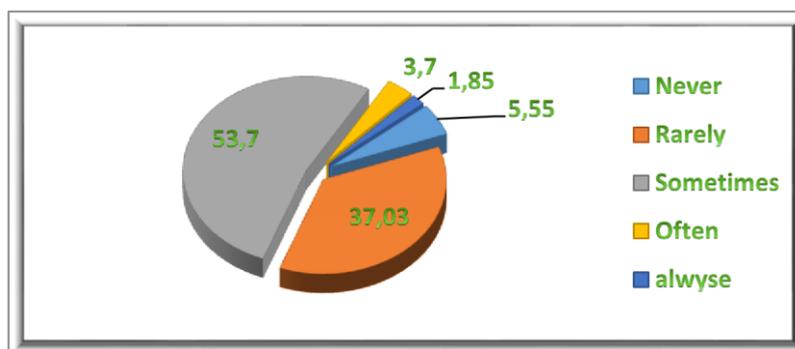


Figure 3.5 :Student’s Rate in Stating Reasons for Accepting or Rejecting Arguments

From students answers we found .53,70 % of the sample state their own reasons to accept or reject the arguments they look out and think reflectively to reach reasons that enable them to refuse or accept propositions and arguments,while 37,03% of them declared that they rarely state their own reasons , 5,55% never do it and 3,70% often look to state reason by themselves ,however ; only 1,85% of the whole population claimed that they are always try to establish their own views and arguments for make a right decision.

Question 04

- You draw conclusion from data you have analysed in order to decide whether to accept or reject an argument ?

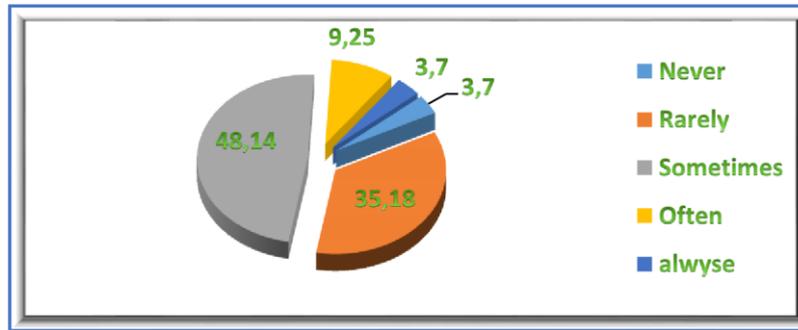


Figure 3.6 :Student’s Rate in Drawing Their Conclusion from the Data they Analysed

This question has relation with the previous one, we asked student to examine their critical thinking level and to see if they are reasoning reflectively and if they are making decision after a reasonable thinking ,we found mainly the half of the sample (48,14%) are sometimes draw a conclusion from the data they have analysed in order to decide whether to accept or reject an argument, 35,18% do it rarely , 9,25% are often try to establish their own conclusions, however only 3,7% never dot and just 3,7% always drawing conclusion by their own.

Question 05

➤ You ask question to reinforce your understanding of the issues ?

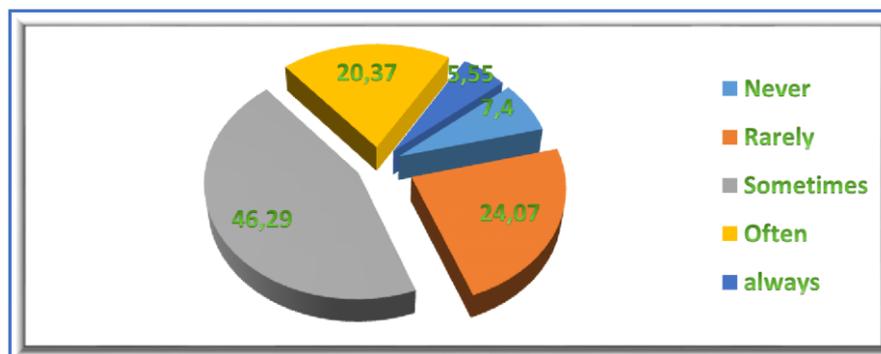


Figure 3.7 : Student’s Rate in Asking Question in Order to Reinforce their Understanding

46,29% of the students are sometimes asking question to understand more the ambiguous issues in learning, 24,07% of them are rarely use asking question process in order to reinforce their understanding, 20,37 % of the participants are often use it ,5,55% always

use it ,however 7,40% never ask question for removing any kind of ambiguity they face in their learning.

Question 06

- When you face a problem do you think about it through ordered levels of thinking (as you start the analysis from your previous knowledge till you reach the solution) ?

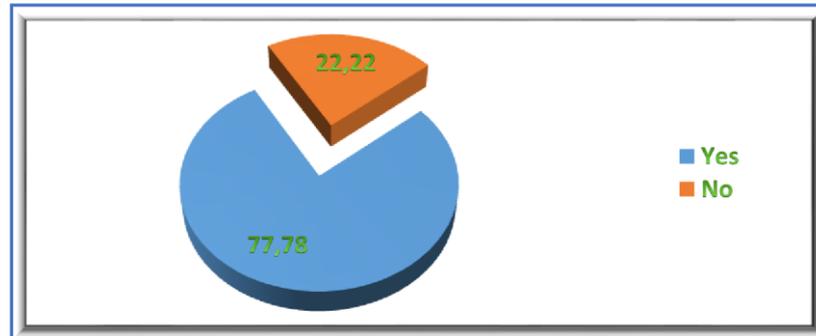


Figure 3.8 :Student Opinion about Ordered Way of Thinking

From the answers, we found that the most of the participants where they represent 77,78% of the whole population are following ordered levels as the bloom’s taxonomy represent ,however 22,22 % of them do not follow that taxonomy when think about a problem they face in learning.

Question 07

- Thinking critically gives you the opportunity to use your mind in analyzing and synthesizing information for making the right decision in learning ,do you think it is important ?

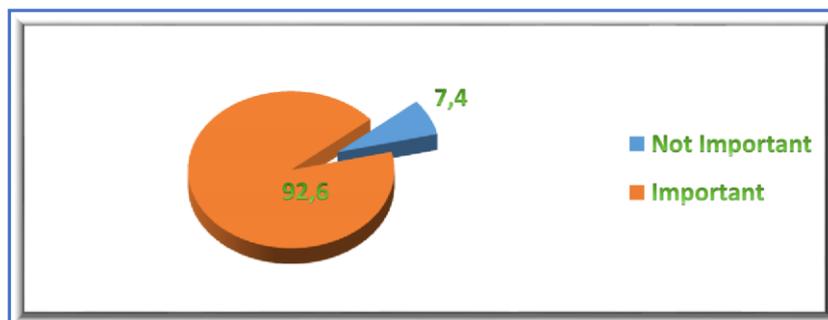


Figure 3.9 :The Importance of Critical Thinking Skills

92,60 % of the sample agree with the important of training students thinking critically because they will have the oppotunity to analyze,interpret ,information by their

own, however only 7,40 % of them do not agree with this view, they do not see critical thinking important in learning.

Question 8

➤ What is the kind of activities that you consider it as an effective way in making you thinking critically ?

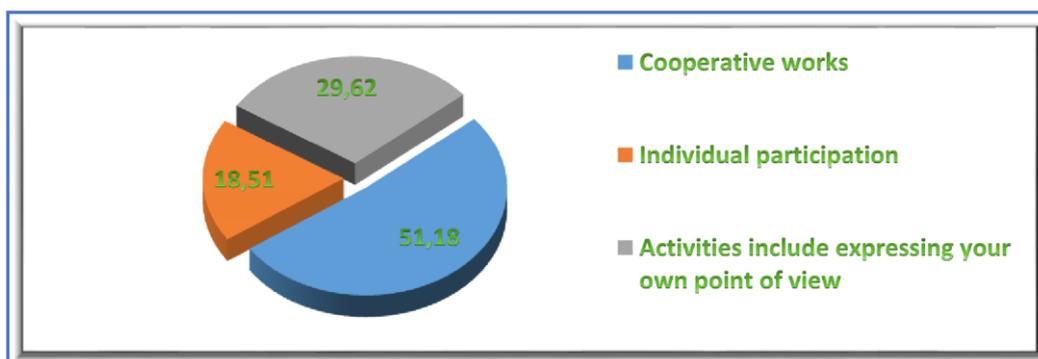


Table 3.10: Student Preferred Activities in Classroom

More than the half of the students (51%) prefer cooperative works of all the other types, where they exchange thoughts and ideas with their mates then they can evaluate their own arguments, and 29,62% of them like the activities that include expressing their own point of view, however 18,51% choose individual participation as the activity that promote their thinking skills.

Question 09

➤ Do you think that asking questions provoke you to think critically ?

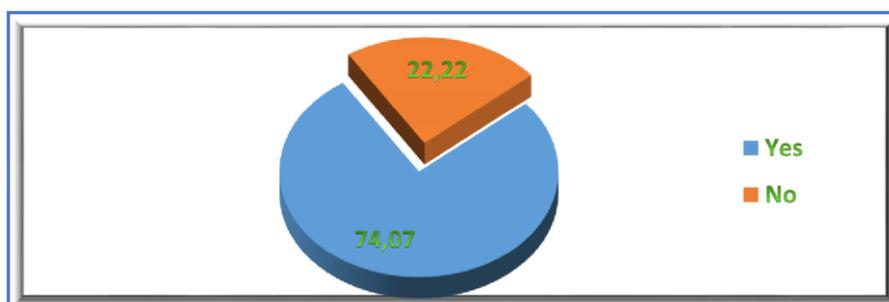


Figure 3.11 : Students'Opinion About The Role of Question in Provoking Thinking Critically

74,07% of the students believe that asking question is effective way in promoting and developing their thinking skills, however 22,22 % did not see that asking question can provoke the student to think critically.

Question 10

- Which kind of assessment tools do you feel they are effective in evaluating your thinking skills ?

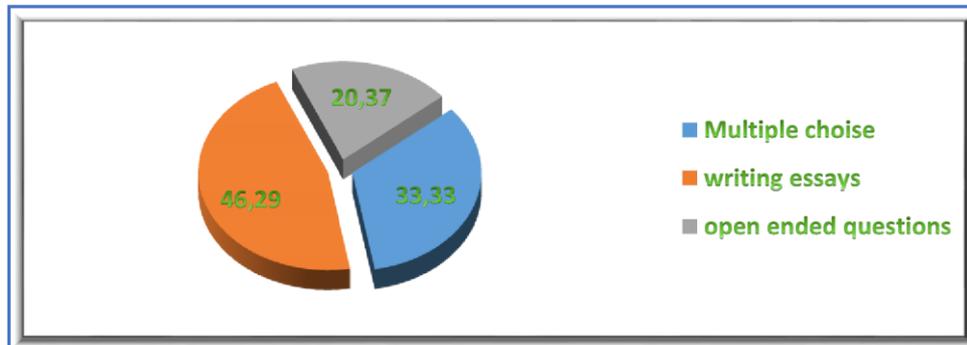


Table 3.12: Student’s Choices of Effective Assessment Tools

From the table above we found 46,29% from the students prefer writing essays as the most effective tool in assessing their thinking level ,it enable them to produce all what they think about ,however 33,33% from them thought that multiple choice is the right way to evaluate their thinking skills ,and 20,37% choose open-ended questions as best tool for assessing their thinking level. **Question 11**

- In your opinion . when you think critically about issues does your autonomous learning level improve ?

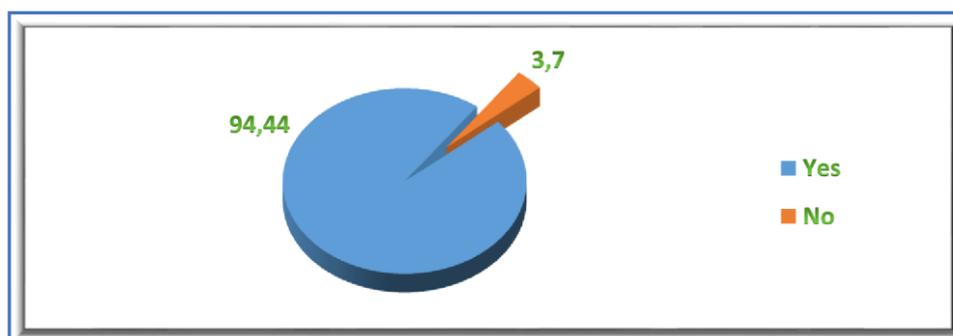


Figure 3.13: The Student’s Opinion About The Importance of Critical Thinking on Developing Learner Autonomy

94,44% of the participants agreed that thinking critically about learning issues will develop and improve their autonomous level,however only 3,70% of them do not agree with this view .

- If yes justify ?

In fact not all the students provide us with justification, however most of those who answer us meet in the same point although they differ in introduce it , they believe that when you think critically towards learning issues, you will be responsible towards your own learning ,so you will take more control over your learning , and then you will develop your level of autonomy, others see that critical thinking make them aware about their weakness, mistakes and enable them to find out the solution of the problems they face, which lead them to develop the sense of autonomy in them, others see that when they think critically means they express their own ideas and analyze them to achieve the solution, so hey develop their ability to understand independently the other learning issues, moreover ; they look to the question from the psychological view, they see that critical thinking give them the feeling that you are different and independent in thinking ,thus automatically effect positively on their autonomous level.

Section three : Autonomous Learning

Question 01

➤ To what extent do you depend on your teacher in your learning ?

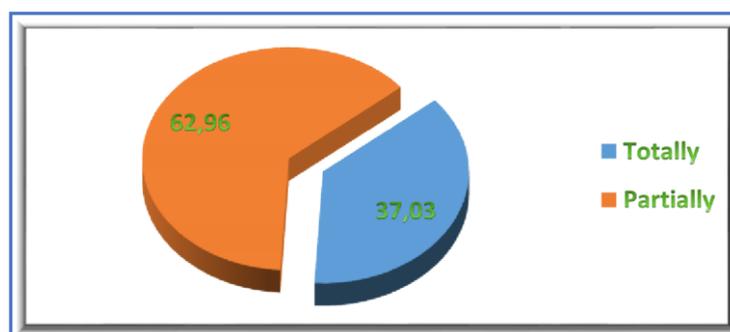


Figure 3.14 : Students' Dependence on Their Teacher.

The results above show that more than the half of students (62,96%) do not depend just on their teacher which mean that they depend more on themselves or on their classmates. This is has relation to their style of learning where they do not satisfy by what is given from the teacher and they rely on themselves in their process of learning or they depend on their mates for misunderstanding, in fact they prefer to absorb,analysis,interpret information by themselves however 37,03% confessed to depend totally on the teacher , where they believe

that he is the one who is responsible in delivering information, explaining, evaluating, and correcting..

Question 2

- Do you depend on yourself in analyzing information and solving problems in learning process ?

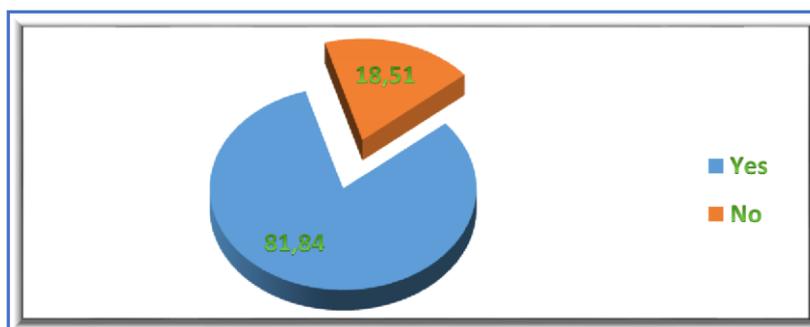


Figure 3.15 : Student' Dependency on Themselves.

81,84% of the participants claimed that they depend on themselves in analyzing information and solving problems in learning process ,they engage more in learning process where they bring their ideas or arguments to their consciousness then they evaluate and make right choices about what they would and would not do,however only 18,51% who declared that they do not depend on themselves in solving problems,they do not trust themselves enough as enable them to look out to the solutions by themselves they often refuge to the teacher who is the guaranteed source according to them.

Question 3 :

- Does your teacher let you take some responsibility inside the class ?

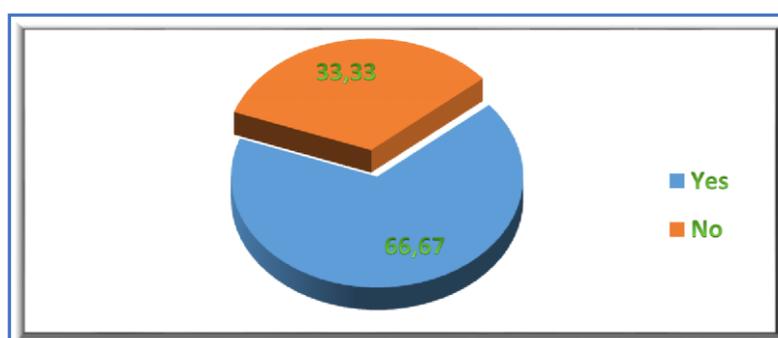


Figure 3.16 : Teachers' Giving Responsibilities

From the answers of the participants, 66,67% of them claimed that their teachers give them the responsibilities inside classroom and make them participate and involve in the process of teaching-learning, where they engage in choosing learning-teaching styles and strategies , however, 25% do not see that are given some responsibilities by the teacher inside classroom , so the teachers should be aware enough about the importance of providing learners with some freedom and autonomy in order to offer a suitable environment for better achievements of the students.

Question 4

- Learner autonomy gives you the opportunity to direct your own learning ,do you think that is important ?

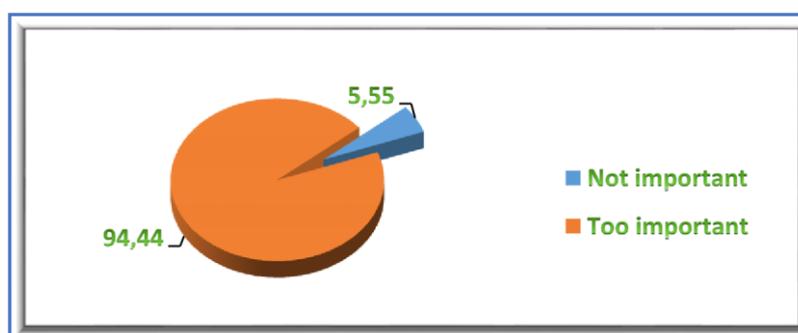


Figure 3.17: Their Opinion Concerning The Importance of Learner Autonomy

The majority of the participants 94,44% of them agree with the view saying that learner autonomy is very important in our classes, thinking that is the time to shift the responsibility to students and give them some freedom as to give them the opportunity to direct their own learning , and to feel motivated and responsible towards their learning. In addition, we found that almost the students are against teachers' dominated classroom where the learner become passive with no interaction ,however; only 5,55% said that is not important, they often listen to their teachers while he/she interprets everything and they believed that he is the one who have the right in directing learning.

Question 5

- Do you prefer to select and design your own materials and your own learning style and strategies in learning process ?

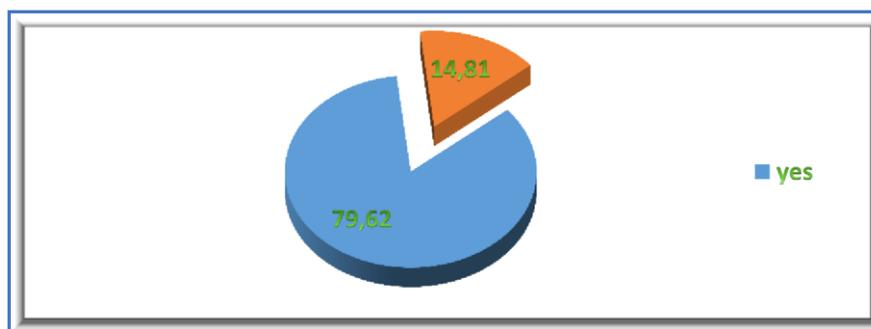


Figure 3.18 : Students'Opinion About The Selection of Materials and Styles by Their Own

Concerning the question about if the students prefer to select and choose their own styles and materials, we found 79,62% of them prefer to involve in learning process ,they prefer to be active rather than passive element in the whole process of teaching and learning ,they fell free,responsible and motivated when they select what meet their needs, however 14,81% they do not prefer to design and select by their own their learning styles,materials and strategies ,they felt that they did not have the right to do it.

Question 7

➤ In your opinion which level(s) of autonomous learning you have reached ?

- A. I'm aware about the content of the materials that I use and about the pedagogical goals as identification of the main goals of each lesson
- B. I'm involved in selecting my own goals 'take choices among options'
- C. I'm involved in modifying learning tasks
- D. I create my own goals and objectives in learning
- E. I go beyond the classroom and search for more information and make relationships between the content of classroom and the world beyond

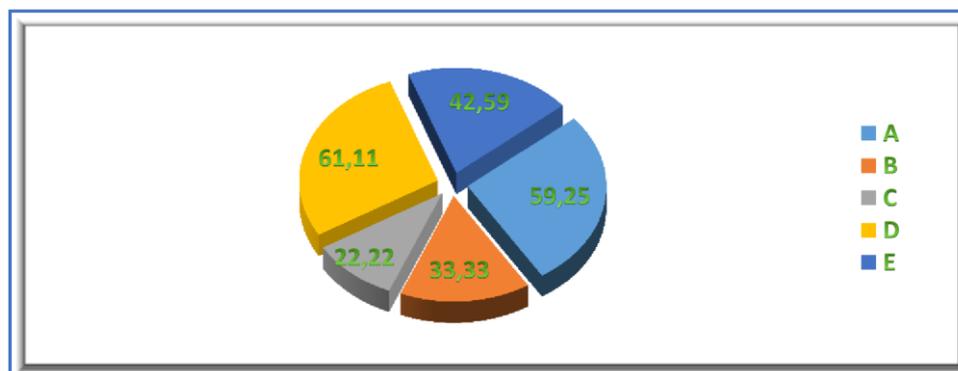


Figure 3.19 : Students' Level of Autonomy

In that question we gave the student the freedom to select more than one answer because the levels according to Nuan are organized gradually so normally they select the levels that they feel that they reach , 59,25% of the whole sample claim that they are aware about the content of materials they use and about the pedagogical goals , and 33,33% of them feel that they are involved in selecting their own goals, 22,22% declared that they are involved in modifying learning tasks ,61,11% said that they are creating their own goals and objectives in learning, however 42,59 %are going beyond the classroom and search for more information and make relationships between the content of classroom and the world beyond.

Question 7

➤ How often do you use computer in your study ?

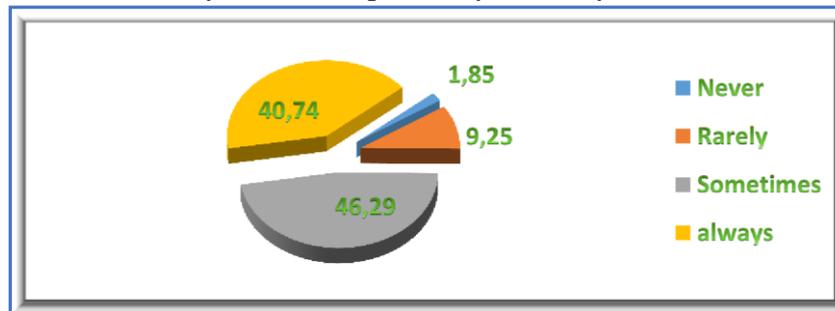


Figure 3.20 : Students Rate in Using Computer in Their Study.

46,74% of the students claimed that they are sometimes using computer in their study and 40,74% use it always ,it was expected to see as this results because the computer considers as an important element for today learning ,they use computer in parallel with their learning ,they feel enjoyed when use it , because it meets their needs and it keep pace with technology development, however 9,25% of them rarely use it, in most cases these results refer to the availability of tools as in instance the students who live in campus . And only 1,85% of the participant never use it because they do not have computer for many social reasons , so they faced a lot of difficulties in learning.

Question 8

➤ Would you consider the internet as an effective tool for studying independently ?



Figure 3.21: Students' Opinion about Internet Effectiveness in Studying Independently.

We have found that a big percentage (90,74%) of students think that Internet is an effective tool for studying independently ,where they use it as source of providing the different kinds of information especially in the absence of the teacher ,most of the participants confirmed that the internet is effective way to promote autonomous learning, however only 9,25% of the students declared that they do not see that the internet as effective tool in studying independently.

Question 9

- Do you use any social website to communicate with other people to enhance your own level of language ?

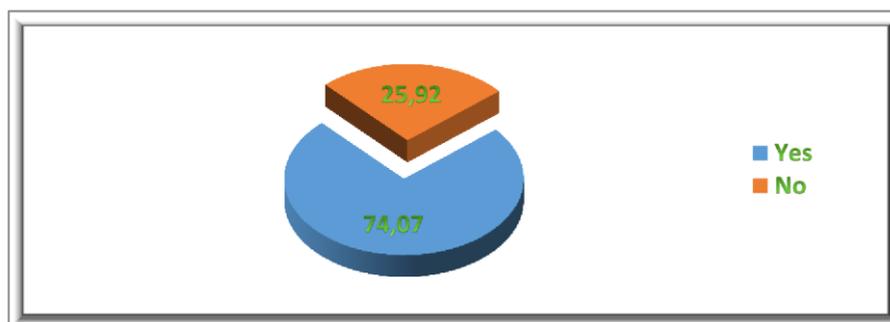


Figure 3.22 : Students' Using of Websites

74,07% of the participants claimed that they use website in order to enhance their level of language by their own ,they refuse to ways far from the official institutions where they feel more relax and they do not fear from doing mistakes ,however 25,92% of them do not use any kind of social website, this result mainly has relation with the question of how

often they use computer because the availability of tools and the social reasons affect the students answers or they do not interested at all.

- If yes , which site do you use usually ?

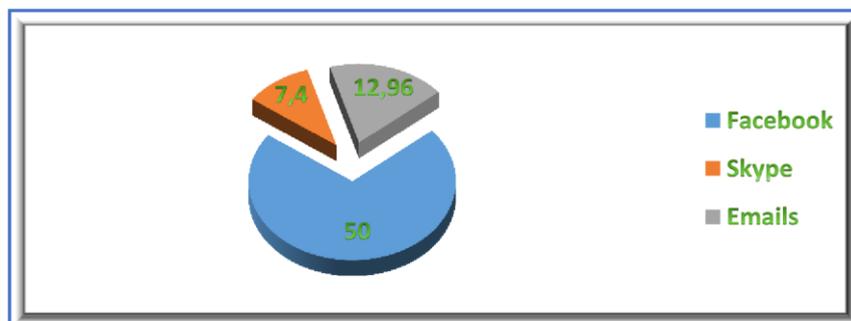


Figure 3.23: Types of Websites Used by Students.

The half of the students who declared that they use websites in order to enhance their language level ,choose facebook as the most website used and 12,96% prefer emails while only 7,40% who used skype, this result are changeable throughout time according to the development of technology ,for example we see this year other websites enter to the Algerian society, in fact many students suggest to us many websites as the snap chat ,Instagram , Viberwhere they feel comfortable and acquire more the language better than the formal institutions.

Question 10

- Do you consider using email as a tool to promote learning independently (when you use it to contact with your teachers and other experts) ?

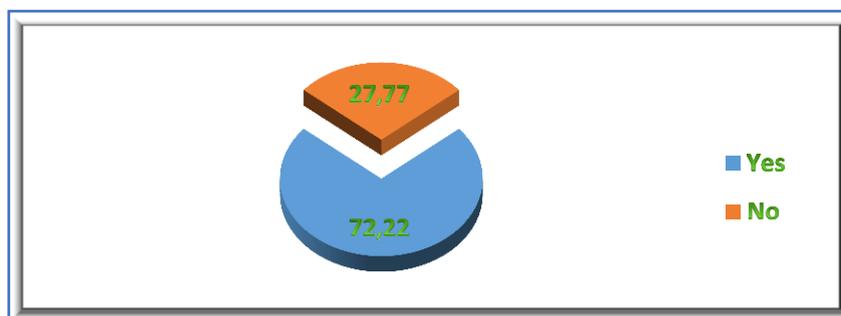


Figure 3.24 :Student's Opinion About Using Emails

From the table above we found 72,22% of the whole population consider using emails as way to promote autonomous learning especially those who do not live in the same city of university, they use emails to contact other people whether their teacher or other expert persons or even normal people from the country of the target language , however 27,77% of them do not see emails as way for promoting learning independently .

Question 11

➤ Do you consider your self-autonomous in learning English ?

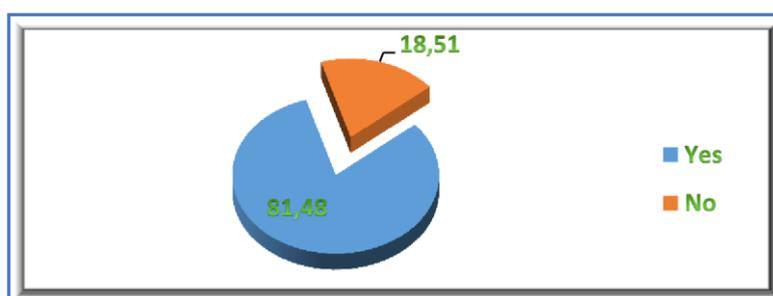


Figure 3.25: Students' Perception of themselves as Autonomous Learners

The results above show that 81,48% of our sample are autonomous in learning which means that they do not rely totally on their teacher ,they often search for information by themselves outside the classroom or outside the formal institutions in general. However 18,51%, do not consider themselves autonomous and dot not try to enrich their learning relying on themselves, they depend on their teachers in their study.

Question 12

➤ Do you think learner autonomy enhances ?

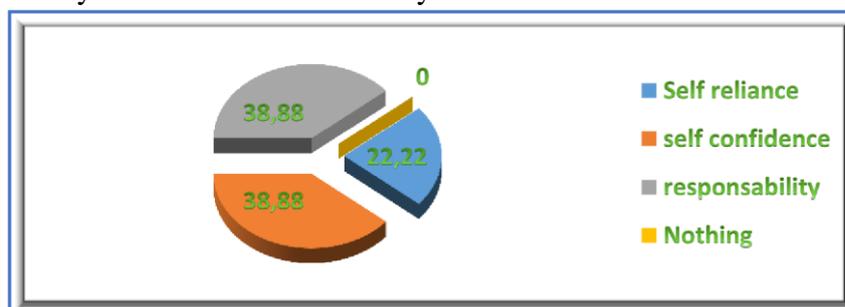


Figure 3.26: Their Perception about Learner Autonomy Advantages

38,88% of the participants believe that learner autonomy enhances students' self confidence where they trust their own competencies and then they bring out their

outcomes, ideas, lives and views to their consciousness to effect, react and interact with real world which result improvement in their learning level, while 33,88% of the students who saw that taking responsibility in directing their learning is the most important quality which the student may develop, where they bear the results of their learning choices and decisions, 22,22% of them replied that learner autonomy enhance self-reliant, as to move from the traditional mode of teaching which focus on the teacher as the only source of information 'teacher centred learning' to students 'learner-centred learning' where they acquire the ability to decide what should be or do. However there is no one claim that learner autonomy has no importance or in other word, they do not see that autonomous learning as ineffective matter.

Question 13

➤ Do you think that when the teacher gives you the opportunity to analyze information infer and bring out the conclusion by your own will develop your autonomous level ?

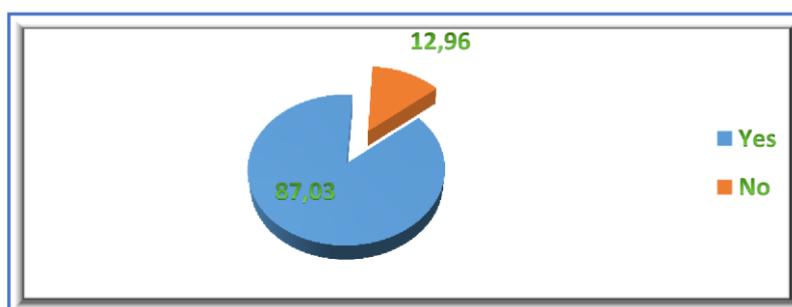


Figure 3.27: Students' Opinion About the Effect of Thinking Critically on their Autonomous Level

The most of the students are agree with the view saying : when the teacher give the students the opportunity to use his higher order of thinking in analysing, inferring, and constructing their own conclusion, then they will promote and develop their autonomous level however, 12,96% they did not agree with it, they do not see that is important to train students to think critically in developing learner autonomy.

➤ If yes justify ?

In fact most of the students do not feel that part of this section, however some of them believe that if they are thinking critically means they identify their own opinion, they examining their mind and draw their own conclusion, so immediately they will improve their independency in learning, others see that critical thinking provide us with opportunities that create inside us a sense of responsibility as well as the independency.

For the last question , most of them like the topic and assist on the importance of teacher awareness of the importance of giving the students the opportunities to exercise their critical thinking skills in order to be autonomous learner.

3.1.5 Interpretation of the Results

We found that the participants of master one students are very aware about integrating critical thinking skills in learning, therefore they prefer to study English through the activities that involve interaction whether between peers or between the teacher and students where they change opinions and views, state their own arguments ,then they sometimes draw their own conclusion from what they receive. According to their answers we can conclude that they often try to solve the problems they face in learning ,they synthesise,analyse information and ask question to reach the right decision in their learning . So to some extent, most of these participants can be considered as critical thinkers. Most of them follow Bloom's taxonomy when they think about different learning issues which reflect their higher order of thinking, they start their analysis from their previous knowledge till they reach to desirable solution. In fact, after analysing the students questionnaire, we remarked that most of the them are unsatisfied with being only as receivers

On the contrary; they have the will to break down this traditional notion in which they view teachers as the only deliver of knowledge. They see that cooperative works and asking questions are effective tools in making them use and provoke their thinking skills . They can do tasks as solving problems,self-evaluation, deciding on issues etc so all of these increase their autonomy and their control on their learning process and achievement ;however, the level of their autonomy differs from one to another. According to the Nunan' model which provides gradual developmental order of learner autonomy. But, this order of development is not true for learners of master one students of Biskara university . For example, they are flexible in creating new content and attempt to design new tasks and in most of the time they search for further information beyond classroom (Level 4 and 5), but they are confused at selecting from a range of alternatives (Level 2) which means a learner does not necessarily to have reach Level 2 before Level 4 of learner autonomy. On other hand, most of the student confirmed the effectiveness of using the Internet in developing and promoting their level of autonomy as using emails to contact their teachers or other expert persons, especially in the case when they study beyond classroom or use different social websites to enhance their level of language.

Most of the sample agreed that when the teacher gives them the opportunity to analyse information, infer and bring out the conclusion by their own, they will used to depend more on themselves , sot they will be autonomous learners.

3.3 Teacher' Questionnaire

3.3.1 Aim of the Teacher' Questionnaire

The teachers' questionnaire is submitted because we seek to answer the questions about the teachers' awareness of the notion of 'learning autonomy' and 'critical thinking' in their students and about the effectiveness of certain tools in enhancing thinking skills and developing learner autonomy, also we want to identify the importance of giving students opportunity to use and foster their thinking skills on promoting and developing learners' autonomy. We aim as well at collecting teachers opinions, suggestions about the topic in general.

3.3.2 Description of the Teacher' Questionnaire

The questionnaire was distributed to seven teachers who teach different modules in the University of Mohammed Khider Biskra. It includes three sections: general information which consists of two questions aiming at gathering background information about teachers concerning their qualification, experience in teaching English.

Second section consisted of seven questions that deal with critical thinking skill, the effectiveness of the activities used by teachers in the classroom to help students to progress in their level of learning and improving their thinking skill and of the assessments tools that used inside classroom to evaluate student thinking skill. Moreover, we ask them to clarify and justify more than one item .

Finally, the last part contained seven questions about autonomous learning, the importance of autonomy in the process of English learning , and their opinion about the effect of technology on their autonomous level, and also their attitude towards shifting responsibility from teacher to learner.

3.3.3 Analysis of the Results

Section one : General Information

Question 01

- the teacher qualification

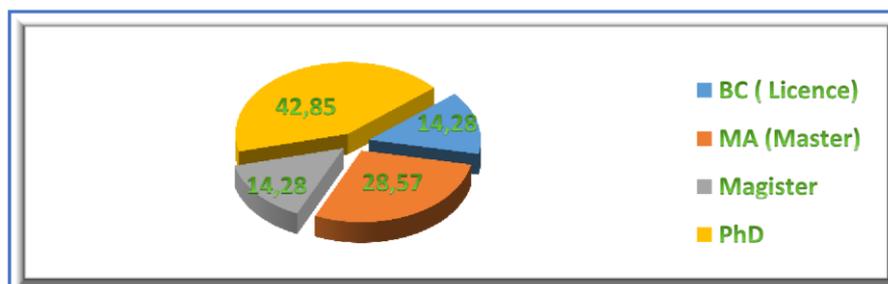


Figure 3.28: Teachers' Qualifications

The table above shows that (42,85%) of the teachers has PhD which indicates that they are experienced and they spent many years in teaching , 28,57 of them have the Master degree, and just 1 out of 7 of our sample (14, 28%) have Licence and the same percentage reveals to those who have Magister in addition, through our investigation we found some of our teachers who have not Master or Magister are preparing their PhD .

Question 2

- Teaching experience

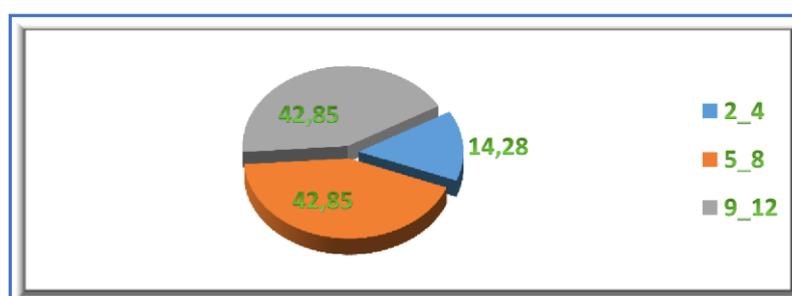


Figure 3.29: Teachers' Answers about their Experience in Teaching English.

The answers indicates that only one teacher (14,28%) out of seven had a teaching experience of English language from 2 to 4 years. Three teachers (42 85%) have been teaching English from 5 to 8 years and the other three teachers (14, 28%) who have been a

teaching experience of English language from 9 to 12 years. All of these results are acceptable, it indicates that they are very experienced.

Section two : Critical Thinking

Question 1

- Do you think your student's are critical thinkers ?

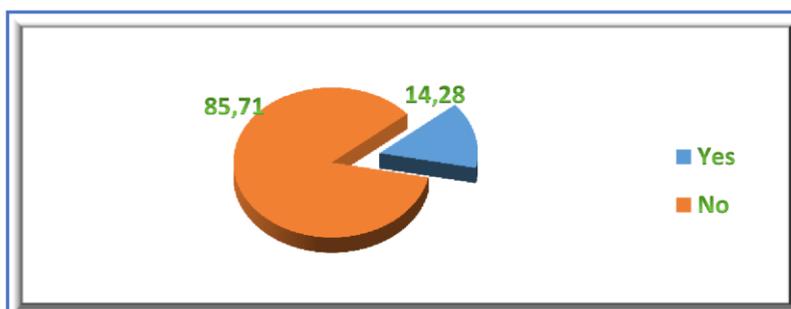


Figure 3.30 : Teachers' Opinion about Whether their Students are Critical Thinkers.

The majority of teachers (85,71%) see that their students are not critical thinkers in class, while 14,28% see their students think critically inside classroom, using their own arguments in taking decisions and solving problem.

Question 2

- Do you think that asking the question is effective in enhancing students thinking skills ?
- If yes, how ?

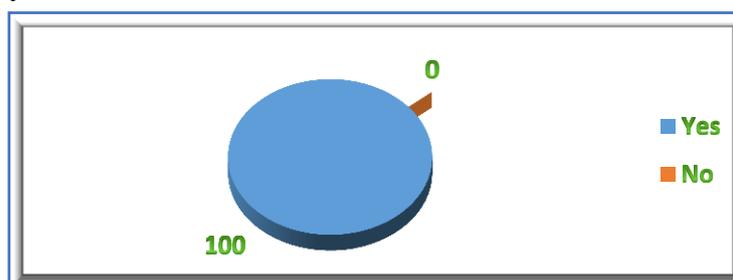


Figure 3.31: Teacher's Opinion about the Effectiveness of Questions in Enhancing Students Thinking Skills

All the teachers who participate in our investigation are agree with the view saying that question is effective in enhancing student thinking skills.

All of them provides us with reasoned arguments ,one of them said that the question makes the student’s brain active .when he tries to find the answer, he analyses and synthesize and then discover the answer .while others claimed that asking questions provoking and stimulate the student’s decision making ,thinking and judgment skills ,in the same stream one of the teachers said that the question makes the students generate every idea they have about the subject that is discussed and make their own interpretation,however the others noted to the importance of the formulation of the questions where they believe that the effectiveness of asking questions depend on the way the teachers formulated it .

Question 3

- Do you think that developing student’s thinking skills (eg : problemsolving , decision making, predicting) contribute in developing learner autonomous level ?

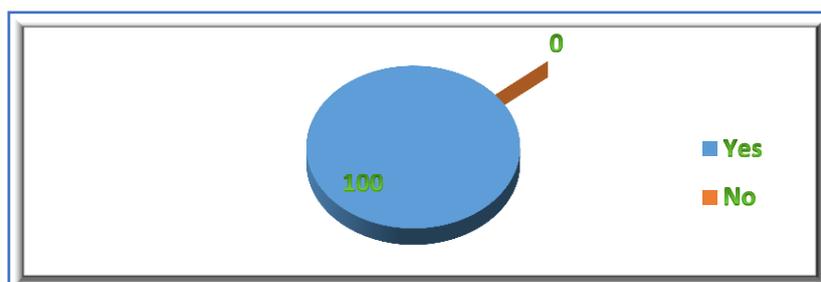


Figure 3.32: Teachers’ Estimates of Developing Pupils Thinking Skills.

All the teachers confirmed with the importance of training our students to think critically in developing student autonomous level ,where they develop in them decision-making skills in order to make them study independently .

If yes,justify ?

All of them provide different reasons but all of them meet in the point of the great effectiveness of developing student’s thinking skills in developing learner autonomy,one of the teachers claim that critical thinking provides the students with competence that make them independent learners,while others especially those who teach oral skill see that these thinking activities such as problem-solving,decision-making and prediction require the student’s both speaking skill and his ability to analyse and discuss individual the subject that is discussed,others justify their answers by confirming that critical thinking will foster student confidence in taking themselves in charge for language learning by deciding upon the input and the strategies also they claimed that when students solve problems,an enhancement is being reached in terms of the

appropriateness of the chosen approach i.e the more we are critical thinkers the more autonomous will be.

Question 4

- Do you think that students put into practice their thinking skills during cooperative work ?

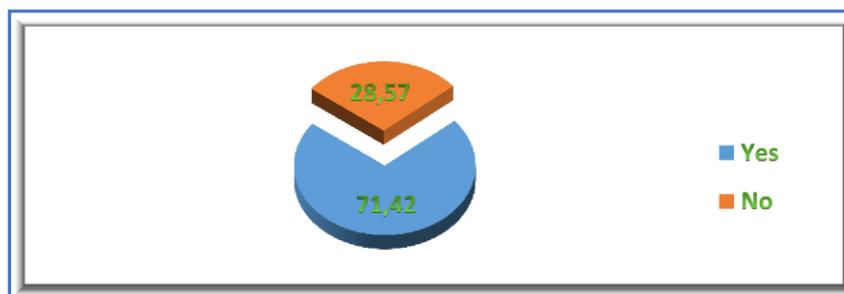


Figure 3.33: teacher' Views on Students' Application of Their Thinking Abilities.

Two teachers (28.57%) answered by "No" and 71.42% selected "yes". This means that the majority of students are really employ their thinking abilities during cooperative work.

- If yes , is the extent of such an application ?

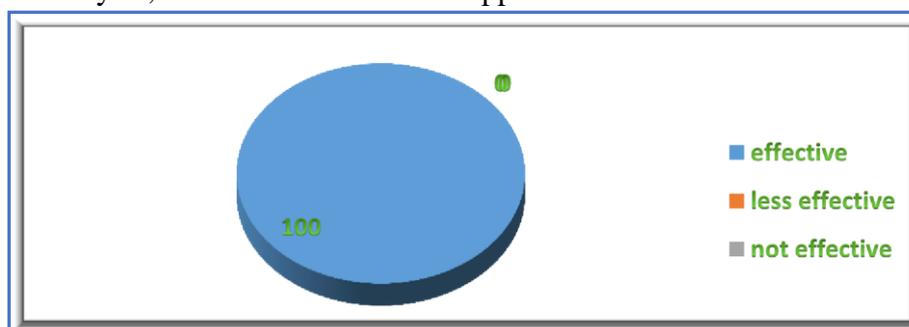


Figure 3.34: Teacher's Estimates of the Extent to which Students Use Their Thinking Abilities.

From the above table, 100% of the participants (N=5) who select yes in the previous question asserted that the student's employment of their thinking abilities during cooperative workers is effective, and no one said that it is less effective or not effective at all. It means that students using their mental abilities since they engaged in cooperative works .

Question 5

- Which tool do you think is effective in assessing student's thinking skills ?

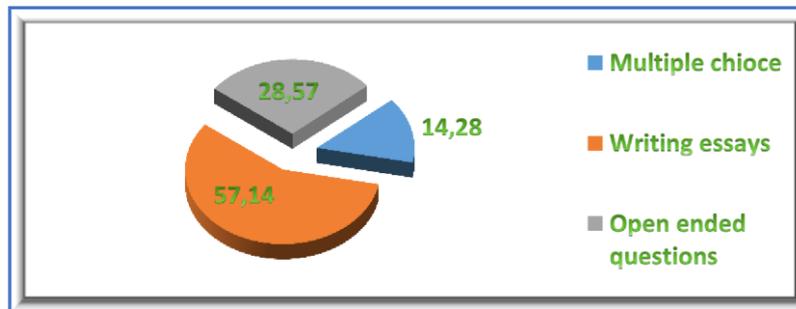


Figure 3.35 : Teacher's Choices of the Effective Assessment Tools

More than the half of the teachers choose writing essays as the most effective tool in evaluating students where they can test the student's ability to produce a well-reasoned arguments ,however only one teacher (14,28%) select multiple choice which test certain critical thinking skills such as analysis inference,recognition of assumptions , Open-ended questions are chosen by two teachers (28,57%) they see it as effective tool in assessing student's thinking skills.No one of them suggest other tools but one of them add that the tool determination depends on the subject that we are teaching.

Question 6

- As you know Bloom's taxonomy set out sex level of thinking , do you use that taxonomy in transmitting information to the student ?

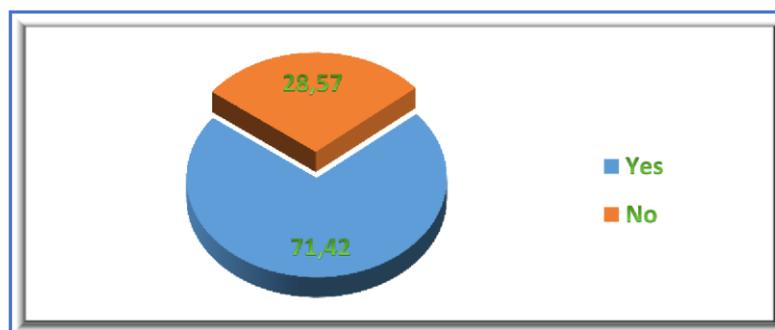


Figure 3.36 :Teachers'Use of Bloom's Taxonomy in Teaching

From the table above we found that 71,42% from the teachers use Bloom's taxonomy in transmitting the content of the curriculum to the students ,where they follow ordered sex level of thinking ,however 28,57% of them do not use that taxonomy ,they might prepare the lessons according to the actual students needs inside classroom.

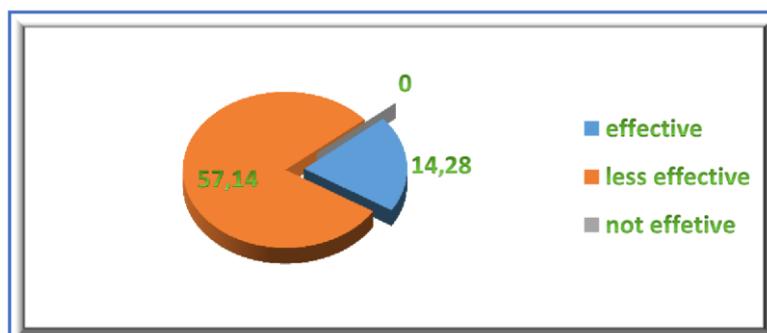


Figure 3.37: Teacher's Estimates of the Extent of the Effectiveness of Using Blooms Taxonomy.

One of the seventeen teacher who use bloom's taxonomy in their way of teaching see that applying this way in transmitting information to the student is effective and it has positive effect on student achievement, however 57,14 % see it as less effective on student level in comprehension.

Question 7

- Relying on your classroom experience, what suggestions would you make to help learners to think critically towards learning issues ?

In fact 6 teachers suggest to us different suggestions as clarified in the table below

Teacher 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Asking questions about topic. ➤ Enhance their autonomy and make them engaged/responsible in stages of the course. ➤ Organize workshops ➤ Providing limited input in class and asking students to do further research ➤ Using tasks/activities that require more participation/interaction/involvement.
Teacher 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Asking them to design activities by their own
Teacher 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Asking them to write paragraph, essays... ➤ Discover the rules by themselves
Teacher 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Problem-solving activities
Teacher 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Discover, observation, comparison, analysis and expecting a given point in advance to adjust and adopt promptly.

Teacher 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ It would be essential to equip students with necessary tools to give them room for thinking devoid behaviorist strategies and more with cognitivist approaches .Let them learn themselves by putting them into question every knowledge item.
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Table 3. : Teachers Suggestion about Helping Students Thinking Critically.

Section three : Autonomous Learning

Question 1

➤ Do you think your student are satisfied with only what you gave them ?

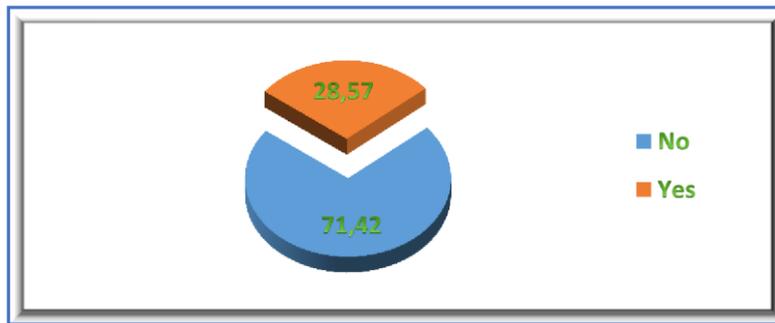


Figure 3.38 : Teacher’s View about Whether Their Students are Satisfied with Only what Gave Them.

The results above indicates that the most of the teachers (71,42%) declared that their students are not satisfied with only what is given to them; they always look out for further information outside the formal institutions,however 28,57% do not see their student search fo more information than what given to them inside classroom.

Question 2

➤ As a teacher do think that learning responsibility is shifted from teachercentred to learner centred ?

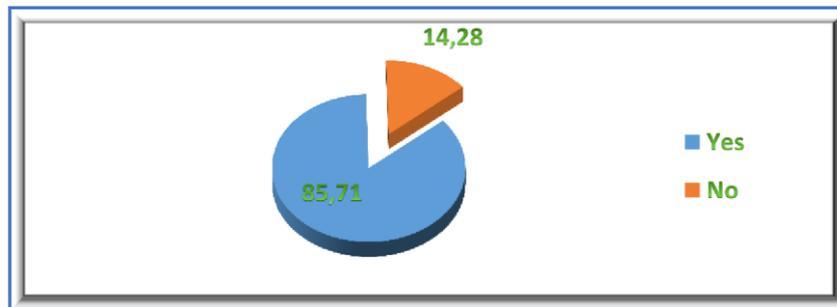


Figure 3.39 :Teacher Opinion Concerning about Shifting Responsibility

Most of the teachers believed that learning responsibility is shifted from teacher responsibility to student responsibility with percentage of 85,71 % , however only one teacher who was against this view .

➤ How ?

One of the teacher claimed that paradigm of teaching is changed where they became depend on new approach of teaching as competence-based approach with the focus on the learner rather than teacher,while other pointed out to that teacher today become as guidance ,so the student in his point of view became capable of doing everything by themselves.moreover,the others confirmed that learner today are taking more active roles in instruction and they are more involved in different lesson states as result of the use of ICT's information (information ad computer technology) as som of them claim.In the other hand the teacher who was against that view ,believe that the majority of the students still relying on their teacher as a source of knowledge ,rather than on themselves as autonomous learner.

Question 3

➤ Do you think your student's are autonomous learners ?

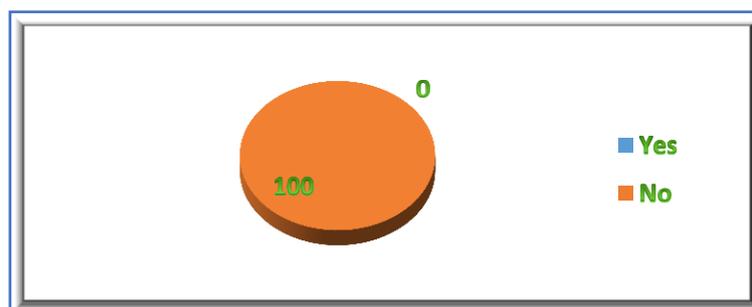


Figure 3.40 : Teacher's Opinion about Whether their Students are Autonomous Learners

All the teacher (100%) believed that their actual students are not autonomous learners although they see that teaching paradigm changed from teacher center learning into student center learner.they

see their actual student still relying on them and they are not trust enough themselves ,however they agree that they are not satisfied with what is given to them (according to what they claim in previous answers).

Question 4

- In the process of English learning, do you consider learning autonomy important ?

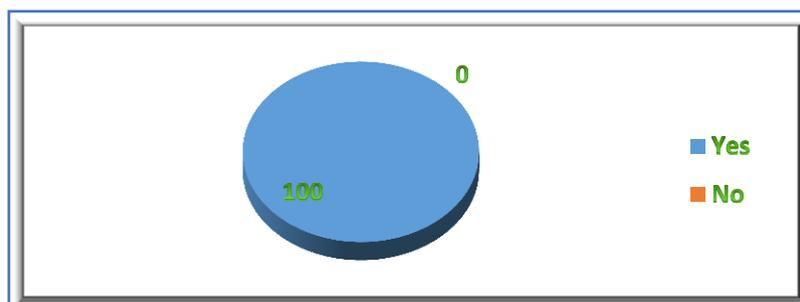


Figure 3.41 : Importance of Learner Autonomy in Learning English.

Teachers in that question are asked whether learner autonomy is important in English learning. 100% of the participants have given positive answer. According to all of them autonomy is too important in learning English. Generally no one of them hesitates in selecting yes.

Question 5

- Researchers have increasingly argued that when you allow students to think critically towards learning issues and let them solve problems by their own , their autonomous level will develop, do you agree with them ?

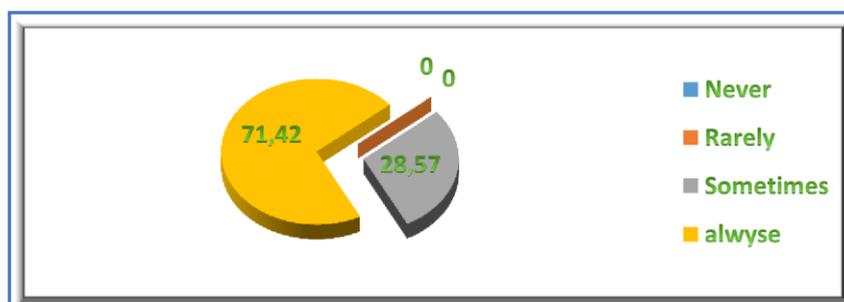


Figure 3.42: Teachers'Rate Concerning Accepting or Rejecting the Hypothesis.

From the result above we find that more than the half of the teacher (71,42%) agree with hypothesis saying that when the teachers train theirs student to think critically where they let them to

solve problems by their own,their autonomous level will develop ,however the rest of them (28,57%) claim that is sometimes happen rather than always .Generally all the teachers have positive attitude toward this hypothesis.

➤ Justify ?

Just three of them who provides us with justification

Teacher 1 :he was agree because he believe that the student practice knowledge through critical thinking and try to use their abilities and experiences in real language situations which enable them to promote and develop their autonomous level .

Teacher 2 : he was agree with this view because he see that training students to think critically is too important in developing learner autonomy because they need to have their personal contribution in their own learning to make to make sense of it.

Teacher 3 : he claimed that Students'own critical thinking of their own learning requires them to do tasks/steps by themselves(like solving problem,deciding on issues,self-evaluation...).All these increase their autonomy and their control over their learning process and achievement.

Question 6

➤ Is the availability of technological materials inside the classroom and outside necessary for promoting learner autonomy ?

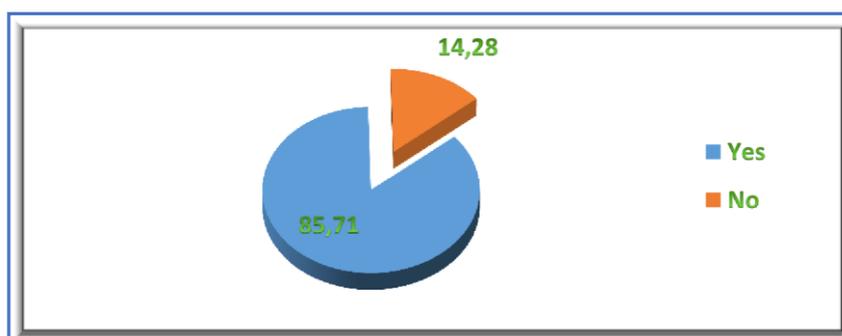


Figure 3.43: Technological Materials Adequacy for Learner Autonomy

Teacher's responses to this question reflect their support to the importance of availability of technological materials in promoting students' autonomy with an average where (85,71%) of them have positive answers,they believe that technological materials are too important in nowadays learning ,however only one teacher who do not see that the availability of technological material is not important in learning.

➤ How ?

Teacher 1 : he believe that technology facilitate tasks for learners, where they use it outside classroom to understand the ambiguity of the lessons

Teacher 2 : he declared that the teacher just organizes things and students have to evaluate,think of the material(video,listening recording...).They are responsible of listening,understanding,asking questions,answering and evaluating the material.

Teacher 3 : he see that this material wider the student's knowledge about the target language culture far from teacher help,where they became in touch with native speakers through different kind of social media as skype,facebook and others.

While the others indicates to the importance of equipping classroom with technological materials in order to develop their independency in learning because it integrates student into reality and field of practice,Then they will be more motivated toward their learning.

Question 7

➤ What challenge do you face in helping your learners to think critically towards learning issues in order to become autonomous learners ?

In fact not all the teacher reply on this question ,only three teachers who provide us with the following answers :

Teacher 1 : the challenge that he faced was the passive students who can't get used to do things themselves,they claim that they prefer to have things ready presented,he confirmed that critical thinking can be hard to do with some students.

Teacher 2 :he see that their age consider a big challenge that teacher face in trying to train their students think critically (the more the person grows the more he will be difficult for him acquire new strategies and styles of learning) .

Teacher 3 :he see that the student still relying on their teachers to give them input without questioning it,where they are still expected that the teacher to take fully in charge not just to guide them.

3.3.4 Interpretation of the Results

First of all , most of the teachers who participate in our investigation are experienced and they have worthy background knowledge about learners' attitudes in learning English as a foreign Language.

After analyzing the teacher'questionnaire we found that all of them believed that learner autonomy is too important and beneficial for students and they confirmed the necessity of allowing students to think critically, but unfortunately they see that their students are not taking advantages of that. On the other hand we see that the participants claimed that they are critical thinkers and are relying on themselves in most of the time, this result indicates that there is misunderstanding between teachers and their students or in the other hand there is no real relation between them, where the teacher do not trust student's abilities and believed that they are not ready to rely on themselves ; in the same time the students have over confident by themselves and they do not show their desire to think critically towards learning issues. Teachers and students showed that asking questions and cooperative works are very effective in enhancing their thinking skills , the questions , in their views make the students think about the answers where they evaluate the question,select the appropriate words/ideas to deliver and decide what to give and answer ,however, they find cooperative works as an open area in which students exchange thoughts and opinions then they will able to adjust and adopt new ones .

They confirmed that the availability of technological materials became one of teaching learning process' necessities because according to them it meets the students'needs and it works with nowadays generation where it motivates them to learn and raise their self-esteem . To obtain a valid assessment of students thinking skills, they choose writing essays as the most effective one because it enable them to evaluate different aspect of students skills as their ability to produce coherent and reasoned arguments , moreover ; all of them confirmed the importance of training student to think critically to develop their autonomy ,therefore ; they believe that the student need to involve in the learning process and they have to engage their personal contribution in their own learning to make sense of it ,in addition , they claimed making students evaluate,decide,predict and contribute to make them have control over their learning process.

Conclusion

In this chapter we dealt with students and teachers' opinion on critical thinking and autonomous learning processes. We have gathered and analyzed data about different issues as which strategies are effective in promoting critical thinking and the most significant and valid tools that are used to assess students' thinking skills and also we investigate about whether master one students of Biskra university are autonomous and critical thinkers. During this study we can not neglect students cooperation and teacher help in providing the study with their views and opinions ,even though we have encountered some difficulties .

General Conclusion

Developing learner' autonomy is not the easy task since it needs higher order thinking that enables the student to make control over his own learning. The present study aimed at showing the importance of critical thinking skills on developing learner autonomy. It consists of two chapters about the literature review, whereas the third chapter is devoted to the field work. For deeper understanding of the subject, a questionnaire have been submitted to a sample of master one students of English at Biskra University, in addition to a questionnaire for teachers used to gather data for this study.

Making students thinking critically is one of the main goals of education; it plays a great role in making student act autonomously in the learning process. For this reason many strategies discussed in the theoretical part can be used to promote students thinking critically. Most of the participants, both students as well as teachers confirmed its effectiveness to develop the former thinking skills, for instance ; cooperative works , which is considered according to the results of the study , as the most effective strategy that the teacher use to help students to think critically, where the learners exchange their thoughts, evaluate the others opinions ,adjust and modifies their own arguments then take the right decision.

Besides, the results also reinforced and confirmed the hypothesis that training students to think critically ,will develop their autonomy because the students need to be involved in the learning process to build a strong background that enables them to act autonomously. thus when the students are given the opportunity to analyse information, predict, infer, and bring out the conclusion by their own. They could take control over their learning and become more active in the different lesson tasks. This will make them more autonomous towards their learning .

On the basis of the results, we found that the students and teachers have contradictory views toward the learners' ability to think critically and act autonomously in learning process. On the one hand, the students thought that they do not rely totally on their teachers in learning as they are not satisfied by what is given to them inside the classroom. Most of the time they search by themselves for further information and for the solution when they face difficulties ,they analyse, synthesize and draw conclusion from the data they receive to reject or accept arguments. All these acts make them more confident in taking decisions toward learning issues, thus they depend more on themselves. On the other hand ,the teachers do not see their students as they see themselves because they believe that the majority of the students are still relying on their teacher as the only source of knowledge rather than on themselves.

The results indicate that there is a misunderstanding of the relation between students and teachers as the teacher does not believe and trust students abilities. At the same time the students have over self-confident and do not do what they say. So, in order to overcome that problem, teachers should believe in the students capacities and try to engage them into thinking tasks to promote their autonomy even if they do not show positive result at first. Moreover; the students should develop the habit of thinking towards learning issues to foster their ability of controlling their learning.

This study can help students to understand better their lacks and reasons for some failure in being autonomous learners as well as teachers to attract their attention to the necessity of engaging students in thinking tasks in order to promote and develop their level of autonomy . As conclusion, some suggestions and solutions were provided to the problems encountered by students in acting autonomously. First the teaching-learning process is built upon the trust between both sides ‘teacher and learner’ and on the interaction between by exchanging thoughts and opinions as well as giving appropriate arguments. Second, teachers should let the students predict, decide, and evaluate their own reasons and arguments because they need to have their personal contribution with their own learning to make sense of it. They also should help them to develop learning strategies that promote their learner’s autonomy and develop their critical thinking.

Third, they should not be satisfied by what is given to them inside the classroom rather than relying on their teachers as the only source of information. they should look out for further information and for deeper understanding and rely on themselves in interpreting data they receive in order to become more autonomous in their learning . Fourth the University as an administrative power has the responsibility to provide students with good programmes that involve curriculums which aim to engage students in thinking tasks that help them in developing their level of autonomy. Furthermore, it should provide the classroom with technological materials such as: videos, computers linked to Internet to develop their independence in learning and to keep online with the world development. Finally, we cannot neglect the role of the seminars with experts in the field of learning from all the world, which will be interesting tools to develop student’ abilities so as to take their own responsibility and become autonomous. Although the research has achieved it aims, there are some difficulties and limitations. First, the time limit which was not enough to search about that problem in just one semester. Besides, this study was conducted only on a small sample of fifty participants of the whole population of

Master one students and seven teachers for the same reason of time limit. Second, lack of the free references on the subject especially chapter one.

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Appendices

Appendix A : Students' Questionnaire

Appendix B : Teachers' Questionnaire

Appendix A

Students' Questionnaire

The Importance of Critical Thinking on Developing Learners 's Autonomy

Dear student,

We are currently conducting a master investigation on the importance of critical thinking on developing learners' s autonomy where we show how is much important to train your mind to work in order to help you to be an autonomous learner . We would be very grateful if you take part in this questionnaire in order to provide us with perceptions about this topic.

Please, answer each statement by ticking (√) in the corresponding box (es).

Note : you can't give more than one answer .

Settouf Manar.

Section One : Background Information

1. Choice of English :

Optional Imposed

2. How would you describe your level in English ?

Good average bad

3. How do you prefer to learn English ?

- Teacher-learner interaction (questions /answers)
- Learner-learner interaction (workshops)
- Reading handout

Section Two : Critical Thinking

1. When you face a difficulty in your learning , how do you usually act ?

Avoid it try to solve it

2. In the learning process, do you depend only on the information which has been given inside the classroom ?

Yes No

3. You state your reasons for accepting or rejecting arguments and propositions ?

Never rarely sometimes often always

4. You draw conclusion from data you have analyzed in order to decide whether to accept or reject an argument ?
Never rarely sometimes often always

5. You ask questions to reinforce your understanding of the issues ?
Never rarely sometimes often always

6. When you face a problem do you think about it through ordered levels of thinking (as you start the analysis from your previous knowledge till you reach the solution) ?
Yes No

7. Thinking critically gives you the opportunity to use your mind in analyzing and synthesizing information for making the right decision in learning ,do you think it is important ?
Not important Too important

8. What is the kind of activities that you consider it as an effective way in making you thinking critically ?
Cooperative works
Individual participation
Activities include expressing your own point of view
You could have added others.....

9. Do you think that asking questions provoke you to think critically ?
Yes No

10. Which kind of assessment tools do you feel they are effective in evaluating your thinking skills : Multiple choice
Writing essays
Open ended questions
Other
.....

11. In your opinion . when you think critically about issues does your autonomous learning level improve ?
Yes No
If yes or no justify your answers
.....
.....
.....

Section Three : Autonomous Learning

1. To what extent do you depend on your teacher in your learning ?

Totally partially

2. Do you depend on yourself in analyzing information and solving problems in learning process ?

Yes No

3. Does your teacher let you take some responsibility inside the class ?

Yes No

4. Learner autonomy gives you the opportunity to direct your own learning ,do you think that is important ?

Not important Too important

5. Do you prefer to select and design your own materials and your own learning style and strategies in learning process ?

Yes No

6. In your opinion which level(s) of autonomous learning you have reached ?. You can pick more than one answer :

- I'm aware about the content of the materials that I use and about the pedagogical goals as identification of the main goals of each lesson
- I'm involved in selecting my own goals 'take choices among options'
- I'm involved in modifying learning tasks
- I create my own goals and objectives in learning
- I go beyond the classroom and search for more information and make relationships between the content of classroom and the world beyond

7. How often do you use computer in your study ?

Always sometimes rarely never

8. Would you consider the internet as an effective tool for studying independently ?

Yes No

9. Do you use any social website to communicate with other people to enhance your own level of language ?

Yes No

If yes , which site do you use usually ?

Facebook skype emails

Others.....

10. Do you consider using email as a tool to promote learning independently (when you use it to contact with your teachers and other experts) ?

Yes

No

11. Do you consider yourself autonomous in learning English

Yes

No

Justify:.....

.....

.....

12. Do you think learner autonomy enhances ?

Self-reliance

Self-confidence

Responsibility

Nothing

13. Do you think that when the teacher gives you the opportunity to analyze information infer and bring out the conclusion by your own will develop your autonomous level ?

Yes

No

Justify

.....

.....

14. If you have any suggestion(s) concerning our topic 'the importance of critical thinking on developing learners's autonomy', please do not hesitate ?

.....

.....

.....

.....

Thank you for your time and collaboration

Appendix B

Teachers' Questionnaire

The Importance of Critical Thinking on Developing Learners 's Autonomy

Dear teacher,

We are currently conducting a master investigation on the importance of critical thinking on developing learners' s autonomy where we will show the important to train your mind to work in order to help you to be an autonomous learner . We would be very grateful if you take part in this questionnaire in order to provide us with perceptions about this topic.

Please, answer each statement by ticking (√) in the corresponding box (es).

Settouf Manar.

Section One : Background Information

1. Your qualification

BA(licence)

MA(Master)

Magister

PhD

2. Teaching experience ? number of years

.....

Section one : Critical Thinking

1. Do you think your student's are critical thinkers ?

Yes

No

2. Do you think that asking the question is effective in enhancing students thinking skills ?

If yes , how ?

.....

.....

.....

3. Do you think that developing student's thinking skills (eg : problem-solving ,decision making, predicting) contribute in developing learner autonomous level ?

Yes

No

• If yes,

justify?.....
.....
.....
.....

4. Do you think that pupils put into practice their thinking skills during cooperative work ?

Yes No

• If yes ,is the extent of such an application ?

Effective less effective not effective at all

5. Which tool do you think is effective in assessing student's thinking skills ? Multiple choices writing essays open-ended question

Others:.....
.....
.....

6. As you know Bloom's taxonomy set out six level of thinking(knowledge, comprehension, application,analysis, synthesis and evaluation) , do you use that taxonomy in transmitting information to the student ?

Yes No

• If yes is that taxonomy ?

Effectiveness effective Not effective at all

7. Relying on your classroom experience,what suggestions would you make to help learners to think critically towards learning issues ?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Section two : Autonomy in Classroom

1. Do you think your student are satisfied with only what you gave them ?

Yes No

2. As a teacher do think that learning responsibility is shifted from teacher-centred to learner centred ?

Yes No

How ?.....
.....
.....

3. Do you think your student's are autonomous learners ?

Yes No

4. In the process of English learning, do you consider learning autonomy important ?

Yes No

5. Researchers have increasingly argued that when are you allow students to think critically towards issues and let them solve problems by their own ,their autonomous level will develop, do you agree with them ?

Never rarely sometimes often always

Justify.....

6. Is the availability of technological materials (inside the school and outside necessary for promoting learner autonomy ?

Yes No

How

7. What challenge do you face in helping your learners to think critically towards learning issues in order to become autonomous learners ?

8. If you have any suggestion(s) concerning our topic ‘the importance of critical thinking on developing learners’s autonomy’, please do not hesitate ?

Thank you for your time and collaboration

ملخص

يواجه الطلبة الجزائريين عدة مشاكل في دراستهم الجامعية، حيث ان اغليبيتهم لا يعتمدون على انفسهم في التحصيل العلمي، ولا يتفاعلون مع النشاطات اثناء الدرس ولا يحاولون حتى التفكير للحصول على المعلومة. وما هذا الا نتيجة لتجاهلهم أهمية مجهوداتهم الذاتية وعدم ادراكهم مدى تأثيرها الإيجابي على حياتهم المستقبلية، وعليه فانا هذه الدراسة تهدف الى توضيح أهمية مهارات التفكير النقدي في تطوير التعلم الذاتي في كليه اللغات قسم انجليزيه. ولذلك قدمنا فرضيه تنص على ان تدريب الطلبة على التفكير النقدي يؤدي الى رفع مستوى التعليم الذاتي، وإثبات هذه الفرضية استعملنا الأسلوب الوصفي استعانة باستبيان كأداة بحث والذي وجه الى (54) طالب وطالبة من أقسام ماستر 1 لكليه اللغات قسم انجليزيه، كما وجهنا استبيان اخر لسبعه (7) أساتذة من نفس المستوى قصد اثراء موضوع البحث واثبات الفرضية. حيث أشارت النتائج المتحصل عليها ان التفكير النقدي يمثل شغف بالنسبة للطلبة على غرار الأساتذة الذين أكدوا حرصهم على تحفيز المهارات الفكرية لدى الطلبة، وذلك لحثهم على الاعتماد على مجهوداتهم الذاتية في التحصيل العلمي. كما بينت الدراسة انهم يشجعون انتقال المحورية في التعليم من الأستاذ الى الطالب. وكخلاصه لذلك فان الطالب عندما يفكر، يقيم، يقرر ويساهم في مختلف النشاطات أثناء الدرس، سيرفع من مستوى تحكمه في طريقه اكتسابه المادة التعليمية.

