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**Project–Based Learning:
A Space for Learner Autonomy during Whole
Class Discussion**

**Case Study: Master I LMD, Applied Linguistics and English Language Teaching at the
Department of English at the University of Bejaia**

**A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for the Requirements of a Master
Degree in Didactics of English**

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Dedications

To

My dear parents

My sweetheart sisters Soraya and Mayouch

My beloved brothers Djamaa, Abdelwaheb and Slimane

All my friends especially Samiha and her dearly loved family, Meliha, lyna, Sofiane and

Nassim

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Abstract

This study examines how project-based learning provides a space for learner autonomy during whole class discussion. Our participants are twenty-two Master I LMD /AL & ELT students studying in the department of English, at the University of Bejaia, Algeria. We have opted for a mixed research design comprised of: quantitative and qualitative trends. The former implies the use of pre-post questionnaires respectively whereas the second involves students' semi-structured interviews, field observation as well as descriptive field notes. The results of both methods revealed that project-based learning is an effective mechanism through which we can develop learner autonomy when using the target language in a real world context. This study is practical for foreign language students and teachers as well, as it raises their awareness of the necessity of developing classroom learner autonomy and it shows the effectiveness of project-based learning as a learning/ teaching method in second/ foreign language learning. The researcher thus encourages the adoption of project-based learning as learning tool to foster autonomy among foreign language learners.

Key words: Learner Classroom autonomy – Project-Based Learning – Target Language- Foreign Language- teaching/ Learning methods

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Key to Abbreviations and Acronyms

AL/ELT: Applied Linguistics and English Language Teaching

CLL: Community Language Learning

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching

CRAPEL : Centre de Recherche et D'Application en Langues

EAP: English for Academic Purposes

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

EL: Experiential Learning

ELT: English Language Teaching

LMD: License, Master, Doctorate

L2: Second Language

MKO: More Knowledgeable Other

N.D: No Date

PBL: Project- Based Learning

(%): Percent

SAC: Self-Access Centre.

SPSS: Statistical Package of Social Sciences

TL: Target Language

WCD: Whole Class Discussion

ZPD: Zone of Proximal Development

Definition of key Terms

For a meaningful understanding of our study, some key concepts require brief definitions

- **Learner Autonomy:** Dickinson (1987:11) defined learner autonomy as “*a situation in which the learner is totally responsible for all the decisions with his learning and the implementation of those decisions*” (as cited Benson, 2006:22).
- **Project Method:** project method originates from pragmatism, the philosophical movement that appeared in the middle of the 19th Century and promotes action and practical application of knowledge (Fragoulis, 2009).
- **Project- Based-Learning :** Blumenfeld & Demirhan (2002) defined project work as “*a comprehensive approach to classroom teaching and learning that is designed to engage students in investigation of complex, authentic problems and carefully designed products and tasks*” (in Bas & Beyhan, 2010).
- **Learners’ Centerdness:** refers to the need to give greater emphasis to the learning processes than to those of teaching, thereby placing the student center stage – in the role where he or she is called on to play a creative role – in an attempt at motivating the student to the full (in Rodrigues Illera, and Escofet, 2009).
- **LMD System:** ‘Licence-Master-Doctorate’ or ‘LMD’ for short, it is considered the literary translation of what is already known as the Bachelor-Master-PhD process. In addition, little theory is said about its given it newness in the field of ELT (Idri, 2005).
- **Self-Access Center (SAC):** Cotterall and Reinders (2000) defined SAC as an educational facility equipped with many resources to assist learners to self-regulate their learning process (in Boyno, 2011).

General Introduction

Introduction

Encouraging classroom learner autonomy is a matter of concern for both novice researchers and language professionals in the field of English language teaching (ELT). It is widely accepted that developing more autonomy among learners belongs to one of the post method era's requirements for highly qualified learners able of different decision making for their learning and latter then, for life-long study skill.

I. Sources of Inspiration

Conducting research is not a recent decision since we have been all the time inspired by this endeavor. However, we have been hesitating about the nature of variables to incorporate in our study. The crux of the matter lays in our intimate motivation to explore a possible way to foster autonomy among learners in our appropriate learning context.

Actually, a strong internal inspiration directed us as novice researchers towards an area, which has little been explored in our home institution. Therefore, we opted for project-based learning in relation with developing classroom learner autonomy during whole class discussions because it represents a challenge for us as a novice researcher in the field of ELT for many considerations. First, projects are not frequently used as a learning method until last year with the introduction of the new option "Educational Psychology, Applied Linguistics and English Language Teaching." Second, autonomy as a universal concept requires research not only on how it should be defined but also on how it should be effectively nurtured to achieve better L2 attainment among English as foreign language (EFL) learners.

In furtherance, the source of interest in language learner autonomy has inspired us to explore the epistemological principles of learning as being neither a submissive nor an obedient process. Rather, learning is an intentional, active constructive course of action. In short, we believe that research in learner autonomy requirements along with PBL principles to promote whole class discussions will be valuably researchable.

II. Statement of the Problem

As autonomy is mostly viewed as a precondition for effective learning (Benson, 2001:24), fostering this capability requires research on a possible approach in which the student will be able to take charge of his own learning.

To clarify, modern foreign language researchers at university level are more conscious of the necessity to rely on learners practicing, reinforcing, and extending to what is thought during contact time lessons (Little, 1991). The goal of these practices is to shift education towards more student-centered, inquiry-based, active learning methods. The intent is to help students become self-directed and autonomous learners who can apply sound higher order thinking skills (Holm, 2011).

Almost all research in the field of autonomy is based on three main principles amongst, the need to demonstrate the effectiveness of some approaches to fostering autonomy in terms of language learning (Benson, 2001). In fact, project based learning (PBL) appears as a renewing model coming into prominence as a response of both researchers' quests and the requirements of the post method era. In this context, project work is advocated by Haines (1989:1) (quoted in Richards & Renandya, 2002:109.) as being "*not as replacement of other teaching methods,*" but rather as "*an approach to learning which compliments mainstream methods and which can be used with almost all levels, ages and abilities of students.*"

Learner autonomy is, on one hand a powerful tool in language pedagogy (Benson, 2001), while communication is at once a public skill, and the vital situation based activity that permits the exchange of knowledge (Lamb & Reinders, 2005). In addition, to project works in which learners engage in worthwhile learning (özdemir, 2006). After being a student of English for five years, presume that students of English are most of the time not autonomous in classroom discussions and this is due to the absence of a learning model that is likely to engage learners actively and autonomously in class debates

To this end, we are attempting to examine whether learning through projects will promote learner autonomy during whole class discussions among Master I AL/ELT students at the department of English, University of Bejaia.

III. Aims of the Study

In the present study, projects are suggested as a learning tool to boost students' autonomy in whole class discussions at the level of higher education for several reasons. First, projects could be the largest part of any language input at this level (Gultaken, 2005). Therefore, our central focus in this study is to reveal the extent to which project-based learning provides Master I AL/ELT students of English Language at the University of Bejaia with the necessarily space to exercise their autonomy. Thus, push their entire progress over in language learning especially when it comes to using authentic language in authentic context particularly during whole class discussions. Finally, and most importantly, we attempt to reveal the importance of implementing projects in the language classrooms; and demonstrate its effectiveness as versatile vehicle through which we can raise students' awareness for autonomous learning and enhanced discussion skills.

IV. Research Questions

Based on the general aim and the central problematic of this study, a set of research questions are addressed:

- 1- Does project based learning model provide a space for learner autonomy?
- 2- To what extent, does project based learning contributes to developing EFL students' discussion skills?
- 3- Are class discussions becoming more favorable for Master I AL/ELT students engagement after PBL implementation?

V. Hypothesis

Having the capacity to engage autonomously during classroom debates is considered as a skill and talent at the same time. Nevertheless, we have noticed that foreign language learners are reluctant and avoid taking advantage from this encouraging atmosphere. Hence, we are particularly seeking for an effective educational setting that allows better learning what paved the way for PBL to be the suggested area to solve this problem in EFL setting. As a result, we are interested in investigating the effect of project-based learning on developing EFL learners' autonomy during whole class discussions, which means that our study comprises an independent variable called project based learning that has an influence over the two

dependent variables, which are learner autonomy, and whole classroom discussions respectively. Based on all the previous facts we are likely to hypothesize that

If projects are implemented effectively among master I AL/ELT students at the department of English, University of Bejaia it will significantly enhance their autonomy during whole classroom discussions.

VI. Methodology, Research Design and Data Collection Methods

For testing our research hypothesis, we opted for a hybrid methodology i.e. triangulated method of data collection consisting of both qualitative and quantitative methods with the purpose of adding more scope and breadth to our research study (Clarke, 2005:61).

First, the qualitative method would consist of classroom observation through which we are going to assess Master students' four autonomous behaviors (initiating, managing, inter group awareness, and reflecting), as well as semi structured interviews administered to a number of students (random choice) to explore the effectiveness of projects enactment over classroom autonomy practice.

Second, the quantitative method consists of quasi-experiment, in which projects are implemented in relation to master content syllabus and test out students' attitudinal effects in terms of engagement and willingness to participate autonomously within whole class discussions, with a pre and post questionnaires to compare the results.

VI.1. Data Analysis Procedures

Our data is analyzed using Excel 2007. In addition, to the statistical package for social sciences software (SPSS) version 21 that provides us with an in-depth statistical description of the results gathered along our study. Concerning the qualitative data, in-depth descriptions are used.

VI.2. Population and Sample

The subjects of the present study consist of one group of Master I LMD students studying in the department of English at the University of Bejaia enrolled in the option of "Applied Linguistics and English Language Teaching." the total number of the group is 22 students but only 19 have the tendency to attend their English classes regularly. In terms of gender, our cluster consists of 17 female students that is 77.27 % and 7 males about 22.73%.

Above all our choice of subjects to treatments obeys to pedagogical conveniences. Nearly all participants took part voluntarily and helpfully in our study.

VII. Significance of the Study

The main purpose behind treating such variables (project based learning – learner autonomy – and finally whole classroom discussions) is to reveal their importance in the scene of language classroom, especially when it comes to learners' responsibility, engagement as well as self-reflection along the learning process.

Through our experience as students of English as a foreign language, we have noticed that learners are hardly encouraged to work autonomously, i.e. we find them most of the time unenthusiastic and unable to think and reason independently. Thus, they show little excitement to engage in concrete contexts using the target language.

We have further noticed that most research studies conducted at the level of our home institution have not explored the area of learning through projects; consequently, we found little contributions about PBL what raised on us a sense of knowledge building .It is on this basis that we have believed that our research theme is actually worth undertaking.

VIII. The Organization of the Work

To test out our hypothesis and reach our objectives two main chapters are intended.

The first chapter is entitled “literature review”, it deals with a review of the major works devoted to the subject matter and it is divided into two sections. Primarily, we have the first section that introduces project based leaning and its related aspects and reveals its importance in language learning. The second section is divided into two main sub sections. The first one for instance discusses classroom autonomy among EFL students, its definition, sources and development. Finally, we make slight reference to how classroom discussions and classroom atmosphere as whole are influenced by PBL endorsement. Chapter two by contrast is merely practical; it is all about the description of data collection procedures and analysis of the findings and the results with an emphasis on possible suggestions, limitations, as well as implications for future research.

Chapter One: An Overview of Project-Based Learning and Learner Autonomy in Whole Class Discussions

Section One: Project- Based Learning: An Outline

Introduction

The study of teaching/learning approaches characteristics has a long tradition in second and foreign language research. During the last decade of the twentieth century, a noteworthy level of sophistication was attained (Brown, 2000). Dozens of approaches appeared accompanied with ample evidence to reach successfully affluent foreign language classes, in this regard Chard (2006:3) claimed,

“[T]he classroom is a place where people can live a fulfilling life together as community of learners if needs and concerns are appropriately expressed. Problems can be discussed; Support, encouragement, and models can be provided by both teachers and peers”

(cited in PBL handbook, p 3)

The extreme need for an efficient model for learners in a way to delegate the responsibility of learning to them overlaid the way starting from the 1920 to project-based learning as means to achieve the 21st Century skills moving away from rote learning and memorization to solve complex issues that hold real world relevance. In short, PBL is said to be the model upon which students will build on their classroom practices.

Section One: Project Based Learning

Along this section, we shall be concerned with the defining aspects of Project- Based Learning, namely its definitions & importance, origins, different configurations of Project Work, fundamental steps toward effective project fulfilment, as well as defining features of PBL and related challenges.

1. Definition(s)

It is of capital importance to note that research on the pedagogy of project based learning gave birth to myriad of definitions. In the related literature, Papandreou (1994) refers to a number of labels that have been given to the approach that makes use of projects (cited in Fragoulis, 2011). Pioneers in the field have not yet reached a common satisfying definition;

therefore Gültekin (2007) described PBL as an approach, method, technique or even teaching and learning. Some of those descriptions are going to be used interchangeably along our research paper. To clarify, we will be concerned with PBL as a learning model not an instructional method.

Solomon (2003) explained that PBL is a process of learning in which students are responsible for their own education. Students thus work collaboratively to solve problems that are “authentic, curriculum-based, and often interdisciplinary”. In PBL, students learn how to design their own learning process and decide what and where information can be collected, used and mostly presented in meaningful artefact that can be sharable.

In the same view, Thomas (2000:34) broadened his perspective by associating project based learning to problem based learning. In this context he asserted, “. . . *equivalent to or slightly better than, other model . . . for introducing gains in general academic achievements and for developing lower –order cognitive skills.*” To simplify, PBL approach is the means by which learners move towards better academic achievements and an improved cognitive growth.

Morsund (1991) subsequently added a number of significant characteristics to project based learning including: authentic content, authentic assessment, teacher facilitation but not direction (as cited in Thomas 2000). This suggests that PBL activities and topics should be of great relevance to students’ real world so as to make sense of them easily and effectively. In addition to authenticity of content, assessment is highly valued within the framework of PBL by reflecting on both the effectiveness of project-based learning as well as its enactment in the language classroom.

Apart from learners, teachers within project based learning are much more facilitators and counsellors rather than transmitters and authoritative. In this stand point, Arpin and Capra (2001) defined this educational method as an opportunity for students to develop their own information by interacting with their group mates and environment, and which recognises the teacher as a pedagogic mediator between student and information objects (as cited in Guven, Yurdatapan & Sahin, 2014).

In their view, Morsund (1999) along with Thomas; Michealson & Margendoller (2002) defined project based learning as an approach that involves students in long pathway and non linear process towards knowledge. They therefore described it as in the following, “*an*

approach that involves students in gaining knowledge and skills through an extended inquiry process structured around complex, authentic questions and carefully designed products and tasks.” (as cited in Thomas 2000:1).

Other definitions of project based learning are those revealed in the PBL handbook. For instance, project based learning is constantly defined as being a model of classroom activity that shifts away from usual classroom practices. In PBL settings learners show a great capacity to explore, make judgment, interpret and synthesise information, foster intellectual tasks to promote understanding (PBL Handbook, 2006).

In this respect, project work is believed to be a change and a revolution in perceptions i.e. classical instruction is to be replaced by more flexible, effective and engaging activities in which learners are supposed to trigger their critical thinking, and develop a capacity to evaluate, and elaborate conclusions and assumptions; hence, promoting their overall thinking.

In the context of developing learners working habits Zachariou & Tretten (1995) claim that:

“students, working both individually and cooperatively, feel empowered when they use effective work habits and apply critical thinking to solve problems by defining or creating solutions in relevant projects. In this productive work, students learn and or/ strengthen their work habits, their critical thinking skills and their productivity. Throughout this process, students are learning new knowledge, skills and positive attitudes”

(in Thomas, 2000:18).

As a consequent, project is regarded as an efficient tool for learning through which learners are allowed to develop their language proficiency both individually and within a group.

To end with, it is fundamental to point that recent research studies have demonstrated that educators are still yearning to encounter all the possible definitions coupled with the term PBL to enrich the literature. The PBL review is then inclusive rather than selective.

2. The Origins of Project-Based Learning

The idea of project-based learning instigates hundred years ago based on John Dewey's background around 1900. The Deweyan perspectives stress the tremendous significance given to learning by doing, peoples' experiences, as well as students directed learning (Buck institute for education, 2005).

Though, the roots of PBL lie in Dewey's tradition, the emergence of a method of learning called project based is the result of two critical developments over the last twenty five years (Buck Institute for Education, 2005). First, the revolution in learning theory overlaid the way to changing views in the sight learners learn and how effective learning should be tied with learners' past experience, needs, and interests.

Second, the industrial revolution witnessed by the late 19th century and along the 20th C paved the way for teachers to truly realize that students need both knowledge and skills to progress, in this flow the US department of Labour assumed, "*we are living in a new economy – powered by technology fuelled by information, and driven by knowledge*" (PBL handbook for teachers, 2006 p. 6). As a results, project based learning helps students develop skills for living in a knowledge based society. The old school model of learning facts and reciting them out of context is no longer satisfactory to prepare students to survive in today's world. Solving highly complex problems require students to own both fundamental skills and digital age skills. Through such valuable combination of skills students become directors and managers of their learning.

3. Theories Underlying Project -Based Learning

Confucius (551 BC-479 BC) declared, "*Tell me, and I may forget. Show me, and I may remember. Involve me and I will understand*" (in Moursund and Albrecht, 2011: 1).

The pedagogy supporting constructivist approaches is concerned with structuring knowledge and value learners' prior experiences to ensure the production of new prepositions. To simplify, learners past experiences are worthy in an active and engaging learning. It is in this way that Nunan (2009:12) has described the effectiveness of Experiential learning in a classroom setting, "*a rubric that conveniently captures the active, experiential nature of the process is 'learning by doing', which contrasts with the transmission approach to education*

in which the learner acquires knowledge passively from the teacher.” (as cited in Tsiplakides, Fragoulis & Keramida, 2011:1).

Since, constructivism is a theory of learning centred around questioning, experience, autonomy and plenty of other criteria that put emphasis on learners’ active and effective participation, the theoretical framework of PBL can then be traced to the constructivist doctrines. In this regard Railsback (2002:6) asserts that “*project based instructional strategies have their roots in the constructivist approach* (in Aimeur 2011:18). Moreover, Doppelt (2003) argued: “*project based learning is one of the methods grounded in constructivism by supporting student engagement in problem solving situations*” (in Gulbahar & Tinmaz, 2006: 309).

In short, PBL lends its principles from the ground of the constructivist learning theory. In the following we will be focusing on the main constructivist strands which have significantly marked PBL. Namely, Dewey’s pragmatic philosophy and Vygotsky’s social interactional theory.

3.1. The Deweyan perspectives

John Dewey’s philosophy places a firm emphasis on the principles of experiential learning which is basically learning by doing (Orey, 2010). Among many educators, Dewey has enormously manifested the benefits of learning through and by experience which assigns great importance to learners’ first hands and involvement (Buck institute for education, 2005).

Dewey generally sees inquiry as the result of some obstacles to action. In this situation, the researcher succeeds to remove such barriers and acts towards his purpose by arriving at a belief which makes an effective plan of action possible. To back up his idea in very metaphoric language Dewey (n.d) claimed,

“The door is locked and I cannot get in. I looked inquiringly for the key under the mat, find it there, and in twinkling, I form and put into effect the plan of picking it up, putting the key hole and opening the door”

(In Peters, 2010: 8)

In the view of that, learners should always be encouraged to undertake the verificatory manoeuvre for reaching out the predetermined outcome through an experiential process of action as it is carried out in project based learning.

On the basis of Dewey's beliefs, Smith (1980) in his work entitled "*Creators not Consumers*" provided three main fundamental assumptions underlying experiential learning (EL) (in Ord, 2012:55)

1. People learn best when they are personally involved in the learning experience.
2. Knowledge has to be discovered by the individual if it is to have any significant meaning to them.
3. Persons commitment to learning is highest when they are free to set their own learning objectives and are able to actively perceive within a given framework.

Above all, PBL is believed to enjoy a strong theoretical foundation in EL, thus; project work is a common practice in the process of learning by doing. The following is a diagram that highlights the previous claims regarding experiential learning.

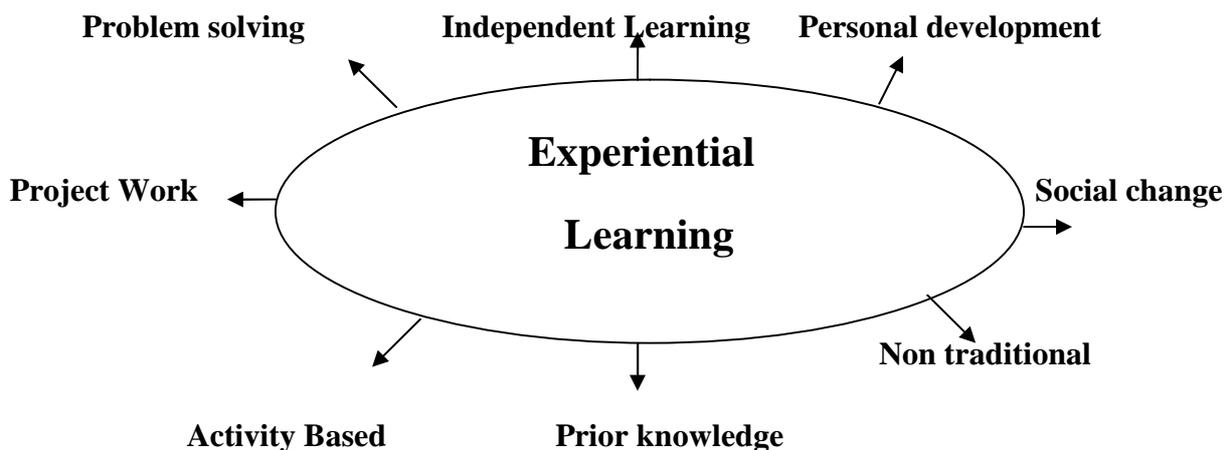


Figure1: Vygotsky's Characteristics of Experiential Learning Methods.

To sum up, according to constructivists, learning and thereby knowing is the affair of doing.

3.2. Vygotsky's perspectives

The Vygotskian theory of social interaction suggests that learning occurs through social construction of knowledge. In other words, Lev Vygotsky (1978) views learning as a product that is build up through and during discussions with a more knowledgeable others

(MKO) (as cited in Pritchard & Wollard, 2010:14). Interaction in the classroom provides a direct encounter with challenging tasks to sort out newly built knowledge.

With regard to PBL pedagogy, the social constructivist beliefs constitute a productive frame for negotiation skills, interactional abilities, and calls for problem solving capacities, Hence incorporate the help of (MKO) to absorb constructed facts in the zone of proximal development (ZPD) (as cited in Pritchard & Wollard, 2010:14). To give explanation, it is axiomatic that the sooner students reach this level of proximity the better they profound in solving those challenging problems and the faster they reap their full potential.

4. PBL Vs Classical classroom

Project based learning and classroom-based classical instruction may results in the same language learning objectives, and or learning outcomes. Both have the same concern in getting students to learn and integrate with the materials in a restricted period. Yet, we can portray many distinctive features between classical instruction and project based learning model in the following is an information chart that demonstrates the differences between the two approaches as tabulated by Zeigenfuss. (n.d)

| Classical Classroom | PBL |
|---|--|
| Teacher - centered and the teacher responsible for the learning | Student centered, students help each other and teacher just facilitates the learning |
| Transmitting knowledge to a group | Constructing of individual knowledge |
| Focuses on memorization of material | Focuses on understanding of content |
| Surface Learning (a little about a lot of concepts) | Deep learning (through understanding of concepts) |
| Learning out of context | Authentic learning in context |
| Individual learning | Group learning |
| Classical assessment | Performance based assessment |

Table 01: Zeigenfuss's comparison chart between the classical based classrooms and PBL model (cited in Mapes, 2009)

In PBL students are outstandingly less controlled compared to classical teacher led classroom activities. In projects, learners are often required to recognize their own work and manage their own time. In addition, students within the project based framework, collaborate, and work together to make sense of what is going on.

Accordingly, project based learning differs from classical inquests by its emphasis on students own created artifacts to concretely demonstrate what is being learnt.

PBL thus encourages learners to expand their knowledge for the sake of developing their entire progress over by solving themes of relevance.

5. Teacher and Learners within Project Based Learning

It is obvious to state that both teachers and learners' roles are diverse in the same learning environment; therefore, responsibilities with respect to the same task may vary. On this basis, project work provides a significant structure where both learners and teachers operate in different ways to reach meaningful artifacts. PBL thus, allows students to find out about the world and themselves: who they are, what they want to learn and become. As a result, teachers play an immeasurable position in assisting students to discover their own journey (in Simpson, 2011).

To exemplify, learners in project work engage actively and most importantly with greater autonomy. In this viewpoint, Lenshow (1998) supports, *"because project-based learning provides students with opportunities to implement their freedom in the learning environment they give up waiting for step by step instructor- based commends"* (in Gülbahar and Tinmaz, 2006: 280).

In the other side, the new-fangled role of instructor in project based implementation is identified by Frank, Lavy & Elata (2003) as *"...when lecturing to passive students is replaced by encouraging motivation, tutoring, providing resources and helping students to construct their own knowledge"* (in Gülbahar and Tinmaz, 2006 p 280).

Generally, a teacher within PBL serves as a facilitator providing scaffolding and guidance as the process unfolds.

To illustrate, the following inspired table, for instance, demonstrates both teachers' and students' responsibilities in project work regarding two main levels: planning and processing.

| Context | Procedures & Strategies | Learners' Roles | Teacher Role |
|--|---|---|--|
| <p>I. Planning</p> <p>a.Designing Overall Climate</p> <p>b. Inquiry</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create Environment that permits and promote Inquiry & challenge • Make real world connections • Choose topics. • Locate resources. • Organize Collaboration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow sufficient time of the project work. • Provide input for the creation of questions, approaches and artifacts. • Ask &refine questions. • Formulate goals. • Plan procedures • Debate ideas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand project content to help learners. • Provide open-ended situations. • Facilitate learning. • Provide structured set of inquiry steps to shed light on learners in their first attempts. |
| <p>II. Processing</p> <p>a. Reflection</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect on their own learning • Share & acquire Multiple perspectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a classroom culture that supports feedback • Finds to ways compare their work with others |

Table 02: Teachers and Students' Roles in a Project -Based Learning Environment (Inspired from the Papandreou, 1994 as cited in Fragoulis 2009 and Hadi 2012)

In conclusion, the essence of project lies in the engaging experiences that involve learners in complex and real world projects through which they develop their autonomy and knowledge of content. In this environment, learners choose, plan, design, implement and construct artifacts. Unlike classical instruction, the teacher in PBL facilitates learning by designing a learner-centered atmosphere, providing resources and advising learners as they reflect on their own learning.

6. Features of Project Based Learning:

Lombardi (2007) identified that learning by doing has being acknowledged as the most effective approach of learning (as cited in Chang, 2014). As a result, a great number of researchers display a heartfelt attitude towards PBL practices.

It is therefore argued that PBL encompasses a set of fundamental features and core tenets which are likely to make of it an appealing model which bridges the gap between theory and practice and mainly promotes learners' autonomy as it is claimed by Skehan (1998:273) "*project work enables the gradual development of autonomy with progressively greater responsibility being taken by learners.*"

In the following guiding principles, we are going to discuss some features that are likely to constitute a real project-based learning model. These features are not definitions but criteria vis-à-vis learning around projects. In short, we are attempting to sort out an answer to the following question: what are the parameters a project should obey in order to be considered an instance of PBL?"

In addition, these features give another view point for students to better understand the real meaning of project based learning; thus, change their perception regarding PBL from a passive learning tool into a positive foresight of an interactive, complex, and entertaining process consisting of a number of interesting features like: centrality, driving question, constructive investigation, autonomy and realism (Thomas, 2000).

- ❖ **Projects are central to the curriculum not peripheral.** PBL projects are the curriculum, the main learning strategy and the basic educational tool through which learners encounter and gain knowledge of the fundamental concepts related to their discipline. In short, learners are solicited to expand their knowledge of content by means of projects.

- ❖ **PBL projects are focused on questions or problems that drive students to encounter the central concepts and principles of a discipline.** PBL highlights provocative issues or questions that lead students to in-depth exploration of authentic and important topics related to the central concept of a discipline. In short, learners become proactive investigators (Thomas, 2000).
- ❖ **Projects involve students in a constructive investigation.** An investigation is a goal directed process that involves inquiry, knowledge building, and resolutions. For the central activity to be an instance of PBL it should involve new understanding and new skills.
- ❖ **Projects are students driven to the great extent possible.** Unlike the classical instruction; PBL projects are mainly students-led and incorporate a great deal of students' autonomy and responsibility.
- ❖ **Projects are realistic not school like.** Projects embody characteristics that give a feeling of authenticity to students. PBL projects include real life challenges where the focus is on a stimulated question, topic or tasks that have real world significance.

7. Project Work & its Various Configurations:

Regardless the apparent similarities that predominantly occur in academic projects; Henry (1994) identified diverse configurations. A variety of factors were acknowledged to be the root behind this diversity of configurations, and examples of these are: curricular objectives, course expectations, students' proficiency level, students' interest, time constraints and finally the availability of materials needed (as cited in Stoller, 2002).

Projects differ mainly in the extent to which both students and teacher decide on the sequencing of project related activities, as it is demonstrated by three types project (as cited in Stoller:2002):

7.2. Structured projects. Largely determined, specified, and organised by the teacher in terms of topic selection, materials needed, available methodology and lastly stage presentation.

7.3. Unstructured projects. These are defined principally by students themselves.

7.3. Semi-structured projects. Are defined and organised in part by students and in the other by the teacher.

Accordingly, as project types vary, as data collection procedures and information sources will obviously be at variance as shown in the following five type project suggested by Stoller (2002) research projects which necessitate the collection of information by means of library research. Similarly, text projects involve contact with texts. To illustrate, literature, reports, and the new media...etc are instances of text project data gathering procedures. Unlike text project, correspondence projects for instance necessitate communication with people in order to solicit information by means of letters, faxes, phone Calls, or electronic mailing. Survey projects on the other hand entail creating survey instruments and thereafter gathering and analysing data from informants. Finally, encounter projects results in direct interaction between students and research informants from outside the classroom walls.

Projects also differ in the ways information is reported. In this context, Stoller, (2002) identified three categories of projects, openly production projects which involve the creation of bulletin-board displays, poster sessions, written reports, handbook and so forth as it requires written production as a final outcome. Performance projects which constitute our primary concern in the present study can be summarized briefly in stage performances. Last but not least, Organizational projects aim mainly at fostering planning and creation skills via the construction of a club, conversation table, or conversation-partner program (Stoller 2002).

Whatever the project configuration is, it is noteworthy to mention that projects can be carried out either intensively over short period of time or extensively over few weeks; as they can be fulfilled by students individually, in small groups, or as whole class. The ultimate purpose is to reach an end product and develop skills as well.

8. Fundamental Steps towards Successful Project Fulfilment

Fried-Booth (1986) and Haines (1989) studies in PBL approach resulted in fundamental steps to how successfully incorporate project work in the language classroom.

In the same perspective, Sheppard & Stoller (1995) proposed eight step sequence of activity which later becomes ten in number. Those steps are clearly presented in the following figure (as cited in Stoller, 2002):

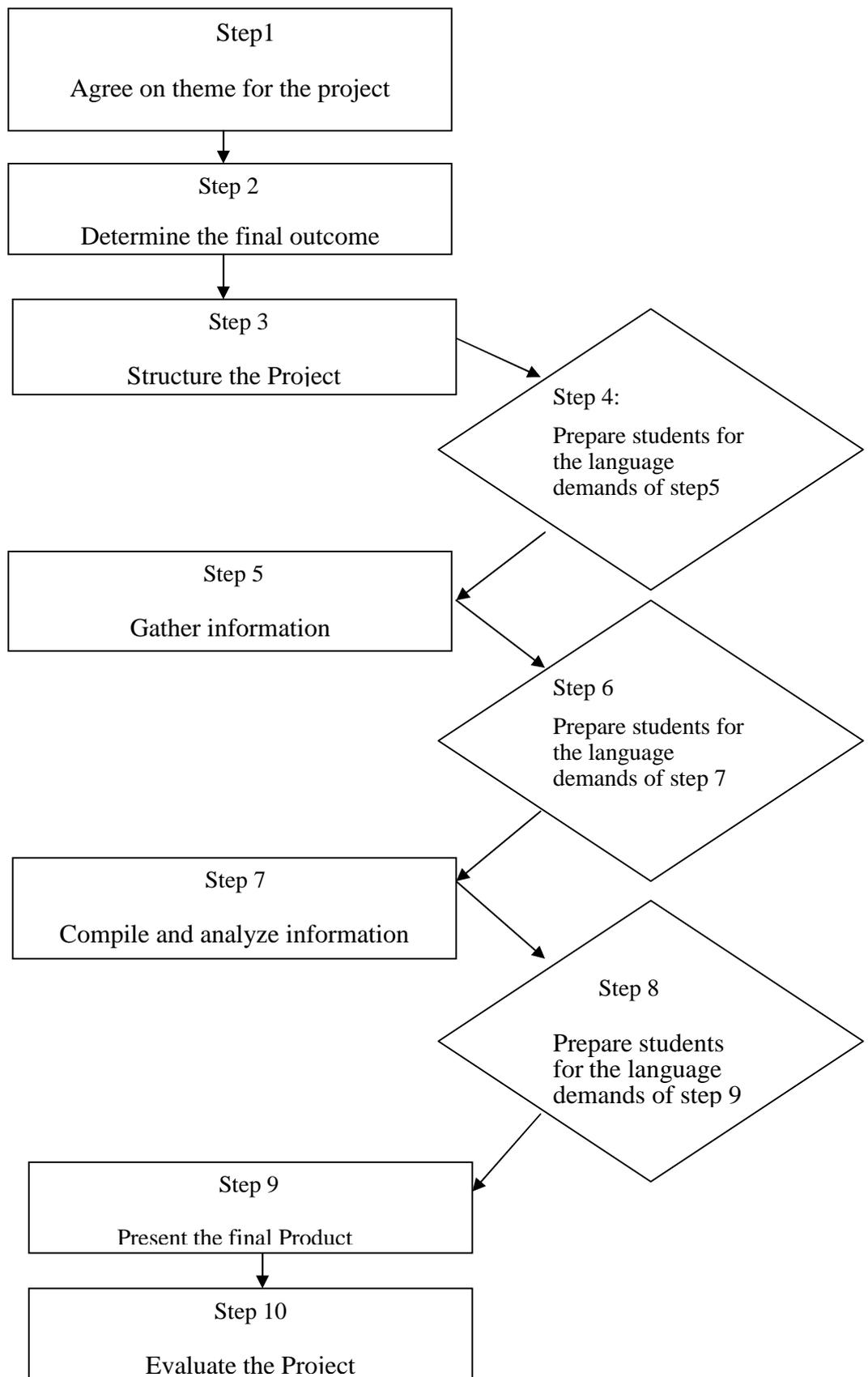


Figure 2: Developing a Project in a Language Classroom.

(Stoller, 1995 in Richards and Ranandya, 2002:112)

9. Benefits of Project Work in EFL Classroom

Project work is seen by its advocates as being fundamentally based on authentic activities designed to develop students' critical thinking and problem solving. It is highly argued that incorporating project based in Second Language (SL) and English as Foreign Language (EFL) settings results in a number of benefits in the following are the most outstanding (as cited in Fragoulis, 2011)

-The process leading to the end product of project work provides opportunities of students to develop their confidence and independence (Fried Booth, 2002)

-Students' autonomy is enhanced especially when they are called to make their own choices (Skehan, 1998);

-Students within the framework of PBL demonstrate increased self –esteem, and positive attitudes towards language learning (Stoller, 2002);

-A significant increased in social cooperative skills and group cohesiveness (Coleman, 1992; Papagiannopoulos et al, 2000);

- Projects help learners use the target language in meaningful activities which require authentic language use (Haines, 1989);

- PBL projects allow the natural integration of language skills (Stoller, 2006:33).

-Within the framework of PBL students experience an enhanced motivational level, engagement, and enjoyments (Lee, 2002);

- PBL promotes an increase in students' critical thinking and problem solving capacity (Allen, 2004).

Last of all, project based leaning encourages motivation, reduces anxiety, increases expectancy for success and promotes effort- based attributions (Dornyei, 2001).

To conclude, project work is an integrative task par excellence calling for multiple competencies transferrable across subjects. The ultimate goal of this learning instrument is thereby promoting learner autonomy, learning through doing with others to construct knowledge and skills.

10. The Importance of Essential Questioning in PBL

It is believed that Project- based learning approach is a rigorous inquiry based activity (Thomas, 2000). Besides, it involves learners in a long endeavour towards solving a real, challenging and authentic problem that has a real world application beyond the classroom walls (Westwood, 2008).

In a similar vein, project work grows out of a challenging question that cannot be answered by rote learning. Learners are rather given the ground to investigations starting from relevant and essential questioning.

In fact, the essential questioning is central in PBL, it even comes before the project work outline as supported by Egenrieder (2011:37) while saying, “[Students] should frame the question, Design the approach, estimate the time and costs involved . . . and finally respond to criticism.” In the subsequent lines are some criteria that PBL questions should obey

- It should be provocative.
- PBL questions are open ended.
- Should touch to the heart of the discipline.
- Should be enough challenging.
- Should be consistent with the learning outcome.

(Cited in PBL handbook, 2006 p 28)

In short, essential questions create the framework and the environment in which students real learning occurs. They also drive students to work relatively autonomously to generate possible conclusions.

11. Difficulties and Challenges with Project work

Although, most project components demonstrate that the advantages of project work outweigh the challenges and difficulties. It is quintessential to make reference to certain difficulties for better insurance of Project work development. These difficulties include time management; crafting essential questions as well as others. In the following we will be concerned with the most prominent ones:

❖ **Time management**

According to the study of project-based learning by Gülbahar and Tinmaz (2006), students revealed the difficulty of managing the deadlines of submissions of their project work.

❖ **The issue of motivation**

Most students cannot maintain their motivation level throughout the project. Gülbahar and Tinmaz (2006).

❖ **Crafting Essential Question**

Students have difficulty in creating important and essential questions because their experience with crafting questions was limited (Max, Blumenfeld, Krajcik & Soloway, (as cited in Thomas, 2000).

❖ **The issue of ornamentation**

Though projects often focus on challenging, real- world subject matters, students are often solely concerned with the visual attractiveness of their projects, paying little attention to content and language learning. (Stoller & Allen, 2002:1)

❖ **The issue of disingenuous involvement.** Students often may give the impression of productive involvement in their work, but may in fact learn and contribute very little.(Westwood, 2008)

Finally, each leaning approach and despite the productive engagements of learners, one should acknowledge some drop-offs of this learning approach to think about successful future performance.

Conclusion

By integrating project based learning into content based classrooms, teachers distance themselves from teacher- dominated instruction. This learning model creates an exciting learning environment that requires active students' participation, stimulates higher level thinking skills, and gives students responsibility for their own learning.

When incorporating project work, students move towards creating a community of inquiry involving authentic discussions, group learning, problem solving and mostly advance autonomy.

Section Two: Classroom Learner Autonomy and Whole Class Discussion

Sub Section One: Classroom Learner Autonomy

Introduction

Over the last two decades, the concept of language learner autonomy has gained momentum; the former is becoming a ‘Buzz word’ within the context of language learning (Little 1991). In recent years, a radical shift in focus took place in language pedagogy; thus delegating the responsibility from teachers to learners as active agents in the learning encounter (Dam, 1995). Accordingly, Kelly (1955) believes that learners are no more passive receptacles expecting to be filled with ready knowledge. In fact, they are without doubt at the core of learning (as cited in Benson, 2001). Yet, this pedagogical shift does not abandon the teacher as an important and a tremendously required element in classroom autonomy. Learners’ centeredness came to adjust views and review positions and functions at the landscape of the language classroom. From this sight, Little (2000) maintained:

“ ...I believe that truly effective leaning entails the growth of autonomy in the learner as regards the process and content of learning; but I also believe that for most learners the growth of autonomy requires the stimulus, insight and guidance of a good teacher” (P.13)

It is certain now that teaching is more about how to make learners learn effectively in this background Thornbury (2005) argued that learners should not be seen as the object of the verb to teach, but the subject of the verb to learn. Besides, classroom learner autonomy can be an empowering educational concept as well as an ultimate of transformation whereby learners will shoulder responsibility and upgrade personal accountability.

I. Autonomy in the Literature: Perceptions and Definitions

Why defining autonomy? It is presumed that a clear perception of terms should be set before embarking into investigation. In addition, for a term to be researchable it should be describable in terms of observable behaviors (Benson, 2001). Autonomy thus, is an area of troublesome for research studies for it represents a

multidimensional term that grows out of individual learner's acceptance of responsibility of his or her own learning.

According to Murase (2014:21), the difficulty to define learner autonomy is situated in aspects and perspectives; thus, she suggested, "*as many of us are aware learner autonomy has been recognized as multi-dimensional construct, which has been defined in terms of its different aspects or perspectives*" (as cited in journal independence issue n° 61).

To explain, despite the fact that autonomy takes commonly the central focus in researchers' agendas, still no stable definition of it exists. In fact, it is not evident to agree on one constant and standard definition of autonomy for it represents a big multiplicity for research studies. Research in several theoretical papers is still yearning for a perfect conception of what autonomy is.

In this context, Benson (2001:47) asserts that autonomy is a multifaceted capacity that takes various dimensions regarding a set of circumstances; he then advocated, "*autonomy is a multidimensional capacity that will take different forms for different individuals and even with the same individual in different context or at different times.*" Benson's claim reinforces the multidisciplinary dimension of autonomy since it is dependent on given variables in the form of time and context. For instance, Little (1995) argued the learner who responds autonomously in one area or task may remote non-autonomous in another (as cited in Benson, 2001).

A more in depth view with regard to language classroom autonomy is the one suggested by Rogers's (1983: 135-6) symbolic saying:

Supposed I had a magic wand that could produce only one change in our educational systems. What would that change be?

"I finally decided that my imaginary wand, with one sweep, would cause every teacher at every level to forget that he or she is a teacher" (cited in Benson, 2001:32).

In his turn, Rogers (1983) regards autonomy as the process of assigning the responsibility of learning to learners and remodels the view regarding the role of the teacher in education. Above all, autonomy for Rogers rejects the imposition of opinions onto learners and replaces that with a more negotiated way of working which values learners' own experiences as well as reflection.

Holec (1981:3) asserted the concatenation of changes in language pedagogy. He has stressed the concept of autonomy as being a critical area, saying that autonomy within language classroom is actually learners taking more charge, and become more reflective about their own learning (in Benson, 2001). He further claimed that “to take charge” should be described as the ability to make all the significant decisions in terms of planning, implementing, and finally evaluating. These steps towards autonomy are shown in the following

- The determination and the setting of objectives;
- Evaluating the progress as well as the content;
- Sorting out the appropriate strategies, methods, and techniques to employ;
- Examine and evaluate the previously acquired knowledge.

Generally, autonomous learning in Holec’s view concerns decision-making abilities at successive stages of the learning process; autonomous learners are therefore able to direct the course of their own learning by making all the significant decisions concerning its management and organization. Project based learning thus, best counterpart with Holec’s stages of autonomy.

Although Holec was aware of the cognitive processes underlying autonomy, but no clear reference was establish in this respect. Evoking cognitive processes related to autonomy, Little (1991:4) perceived autonomous learning as a critical capacity which should be enough nurtured in formal educational context; in addition, learners are only perceived as being autonomous when they reflect critically thus paving the way for decision making and thereby independent action (cited in Benson 2001).

Overall, autonomy is not a matter of how learning is organized. But it should be noted that autonomy related adventures are to be perceived from a psychological perspective as Dickinson (1987:81) pointed out, “*Autonomy is the situation in which the learner is responsible for the decisions concerned with his/her own learning and the implementation of those decisions*” (cited in Benson, 2006:22).

Another dimension in the view of autonomy was underplayed by both Holec (1981) and Little (1991) this is the social aspect of control over the content of learning. Language learning is genuinely self-directed and promoted through interaction, which subsequently lays the ground for learner autonomy to become the

potential to negotiate goals, resources, and content by means of activities that are expected to awaken learners' engagement and responsibility as the case with project work. Within the same perspective, Benson (2001:49) considers that “[g]reater learner control over the learning process resources and language cannot be achieved by each individual acting alone according to his or her own preferences. Control is a question of collective decision making rather than individual choice.”

In summary, the relevant literature is riddled with innumerable definitions the following diagram summarizes the most influential.

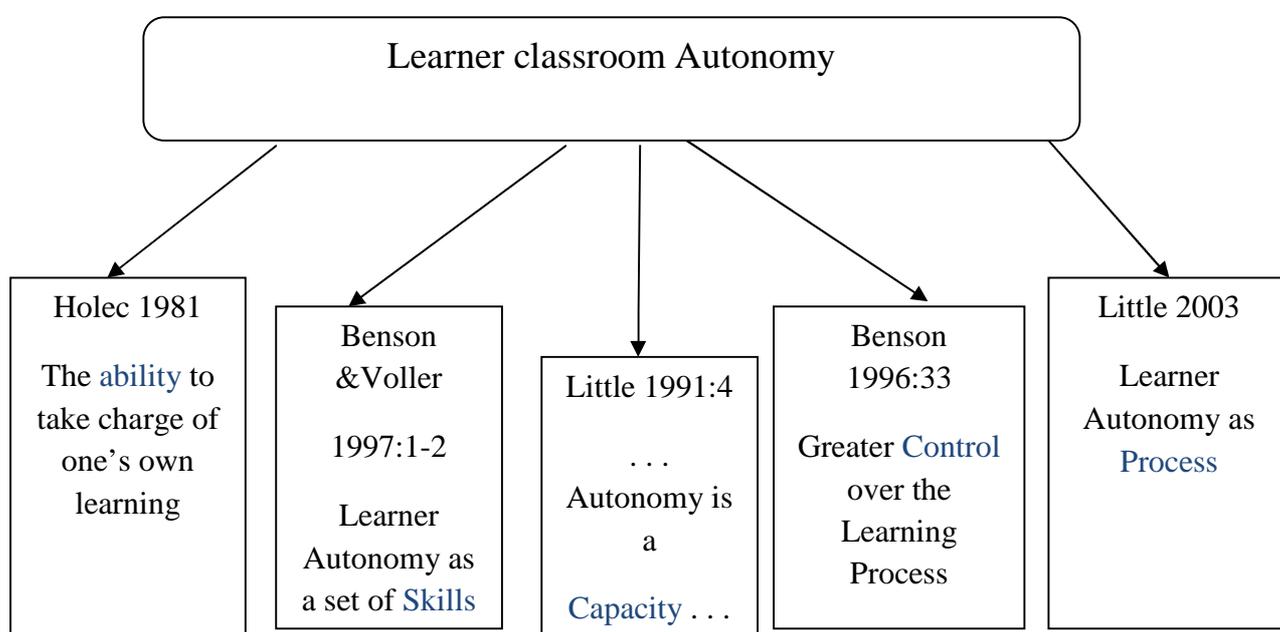


Diagram 1: Proposed Two Level Concept Structure of Learner Autonomy (Source: journal Independence 2014 by Walsh p10).

It is not quite clear whether ability, skills, capacity, control, and process are really attributes of learner autonomy or further attempts at defining learner autonomy. Overall, whatever the definition is the major aim is how to help learners develop to become autonomous ones.

2. The Origins of Learner Autonomy

The term autonomy has a long tradition in various fields like medicine, religion and philosophy. Yet, the idea of autonomy in language education goes back to the 1970s with the proposal of adult self-directed learning brought up by CRAPEL (Centre de Recherche et D'Application en Langues). The latter was one of the major achievements of the Council of Europe's Modern Languages Project. The chief outcome of the project was therefore to supply and support opportunities for lifelong learning as claimed by Benson (2001:8) *"the idea of autonomy first appeared in language learning along with the establishment of Centre de Recherche et d'Application en Language (CRAPEL) which was aimed at adult education."* The emerging field of self-directed learning laid the ground for the practice of the individual's freedom as well as the ability to take charge of one's own learning which was believed to be a natural product in the course of the autonomous learning. Above all, self-access center (SAC) and the idea of learner training broke new ground to support self-directed learning (Benson, 2001). Foremost, the first self-access center at both CRAPEL and Cambridge University Press focused on language materials and opportunities for experimentation as claimed by Little(1995:10), *"in order to create an environment where students could develop into autonomous learners, they not only require appropriate tools, but also the opportunity to practice using those tools."* (cited in journal independence issue 62 :10)

3. Main Approaches to Classroom Learner Autonomy

3.1. The Silent Way

Raven (2007-2009:12) agreed that the silent method is one of the most influential approaches that had an immeasurable influence on enhancing classroom learner autonomy. This approach involves adopting practicable practices towards classroom based learner autonomy through problem solving in teamwork (cited in Hadjab, 2013).

The silent method to language teaching and learning is significantly grounded in the belief that students should learn independently from the teacher. In this way that Gattengo (1977:14) identified the word silent, *". . . a transfer of responsibility of the use of language from the teacher to students"* (in Norland & Pruet-Said 2006). To

simplify, learners within the language classroom are given the opportunity to map out the terrain for more responsibility for their own learning.

Another standpoint with regard to the silent method is that students are involved in purely autonomous learning environment where teaching is mostly viewed as subordinate to learning. Learners then are encouraged to work with one another to solve problems and figure out meaning, in this perspective Richards & Rogers (1986: 99) summarized the rationale supporting the silent way (as cited in Norland & Pruet-Said 2006):

- Learning is flexible process if learners are to discover and create rather than passively remember and repeat.
- Learning is facilitated by learners' interaction with physical objects.
- Learning is easy and possible if learners are involved in problem solving with the content to be learned.

3.2. Communicative Language Teaching

As interest in communicative language teaching (CLT) has risen since the 1970s, it accordingly become a current trend in pedagogical research and most prominent approach in second and foreign language teaching (Brown, 2000). What more, Wenden (1998) believed that one of the most important spin-offs of CLT has been the premium placed on the role of the learner in the language learning process (as cited in Thanasoulas, 2000). Learners especially at advanced level of proficiency need to be actively engaged in constructing intent and use the target language as a tool for communication of meaning (Littlewood, 1981). In communicative language teaching students should be involved in class discussions and have practice of negotiating meaning among their peers and teachers (Simpson, 2011). Similarly, EFL learners should be motivated and encouraged as well to express their thinking, needs, and talents as well to reach the goals of foreign language courses successfully and autonomously. Therefore, the focus in CLT is in communication in authentic situations (Norland & Pruet-Said 2 2006).

In summary, learners within CLT are given the opportunity to practice information, seek and create target language in meaningful contexts.

3.3. Community Language Teaching

Community language teaching or counseling learning, an approach that holds the view that students within second and foreign language are often inhibited to perform and/or use the target language to perform or initiate a conversation. Curren (1972) in this stream claimed that student's inhibitions in learning a second language are extensively frequent. In this method, teachers are viewed more as counselors whose aim is to facilitate language learning as opposed to teaching it.

Curren (1972) believed that in community language teaching every individual learner is unique and should undertake independent decision-making while learning according to their needs, and learning preferences (as cited in Norland & Pruett-Said, 2006). In a similar view, Allwright and Hanks (2009) suggest that learners should be viewed as being capable of independent decision-making developing their own unique ways of learning in mutually supportive environment (as cited in journal independence issue n° 58).

4. Classroom Autonomy and Related Terms

Learner autonomy is one of the implied purposes of adult education (Benson, 2001). After it was entirely limited to adults' education in general, learner autonomy centralized itself starting from 1990 as one of the appealing concepts that emerge most frequently at the prospect of foreign language classrooms. This immense importance resulted in many researches in the field of classroom autonomy that seek whether it is synonymous with other areas as individualized learning, self-directed learning, self-regulation, as well as self-instruction.

According to Benson (2001), there are a number of terms related to autonomy and which can be distinguished from it in several ways. We will mainly concentrate on the following

4.1. Individualized learning: designed to meet the needs of individual learners, but the teacher take responsibility of preparing materials, setting objectives, as well as evaluating the learners' ability to perform the required skills (Benson, 2001)

4.2. Self-directed learning: a sort of readiness and perseverance learner shows before embarking in a given task in term of diagnosing their needs, choosing and

implementing suitable strategies in the pursuit of their learning without external assistance, *it is a way of organizing ones learning* (Pemberton, 1990:3 as cited in Benson, 2001).

4.3. Self-regulated learning: self-regulation is the process whereby learners set goals for their own learning and then act enthusiastically to reach those preset objectives. Dornyei (2005:191) defined self-regulation with reference to the extent to which learners are active participants in their learning.

4.4. Self-access learning: learning from materials and facilities that are organized to facilitate learning (Dickinson, 1987:11).

4.5. Self- instruction Defined briefly as a way of learning without any necessity for teachers' presence (Little, 1991:3).

5. Misconception with Classroom Learner Autonomy

While the literature has revealed a great number of definitions of LA, the lack of clarity created a sort of misconception especially among learners. These misunderstanding need to be dispelled.

Among the recurrent delusion that are widely frequent in foreign language classroom is that most EFL learners (especially when newly introduced to the concept) have the tendency to associate and comprehend learner autonomy with purely individualistic involvement, or the total abdication of a tutor.

Unlike those faulty views, Nunaz (2004:6) asserted:

“I define learner autonomy as the ability of the students, both independently and within small groups, to become more and more self reliant within academic setting, seeking out what ever tools and/ or skills are necessary to accomplish the task(s) set before them, and reach their full potential” (cited in Independence series 2014 issue N° 62 p 6).

To sum up, autonomous learning does not necessarily entails learning individually and or in isolation; in fact, interaction, negotiation and collaboration with more capable peers are all conducive to promoting classroom autonomy over.

6. Classroom Autonomy

Classroom autonomy is a relative concept with its multifaceted meanings. It is relative in a sense that students cannot be completely detached from the control of the

teacher (Hadi, 2012). In furtherance, the conceptualization of classroom autonomy should be much more concerned with shifting the balance from classroom control to empowering learners' control over their own learning. In similar view, Hartle (2011:5) argued while reflecting on her experience with learner classroom autonomy as a university teacher by saying, "*what motivated me originally with the idea of helping students to help themselves was seeing how much confidence learners gained from being given the space to experiment themselves with language.*"

Besides, Nunan (1997) identified the importance given to the language classroom as viable and favorable setting for encouraging learners to move towards greater autonomy.

In the same way, delivering classroom activities and tasks of relevance to students' expectations is one of the mechanisms that characterize the autonomous classroom. With a strong emphasis on pair and group work as the case of Project Work that elicits learners' initiatives, motivation and autonomy, in this respect Legutskie and Thomas (1991:270) acknowledged Kilpatrick's distinctive contribution to classroom autonomy by projects as a means to an end. In this standpoint, they asserted, "*project work provide a principled and practicable root towards autonomy*" (Benson, 2001:31). That is to say, projects have the potential to direct learners towards an enhanced autonomy environment.

Dam (2000) for instance, has defined an autonomous environment as an atmosphere where learners are able to consciously identify and operate in their learning. Some of the prerequisites and requirements for establishing such environment are

- A willingness on the part of the teacher to let go and on the part of the learners to take holds;
- An understanding of what to do and why and how it should be done this concerns both learners and the teacher as well;
- An experience- based insight into the learning process from both teachers and learners;
- An atmosphere of security, trust and respect

7. Fostering Learner Autonomy: Teacher Role

An autonomous classroom is a place where both teachers and learners seek to fulfill constructive interaction with each other.

It is understood of course, that fostering autonomy in classroom is done by providing learners with many opportunities to make significant choices and decisions about their learning (Nunan, 2003). Actually, learners within EFL classroom have a say in what and how they desire to undertake their learning process, and the teacher encourages this by providing opportunities and tools to undertake informed decision regarding their learning. Likewise, Lewis & Target (1999) recognized that teacher's role in an autonomous language classroom is therefore mediating language opportunities with practice inside and outside the classroom (as cited in Turloiu & Stefánsdóttir, 2011). Besides, a big part of implementing autonomy in the classroom is to teach diverse learning strategies, and assist the learners in finding the methods that best suit them. In a similar view, Lancy (2007) claimed that *“the students have responsibility for their learning but through scaffolding, the teacher takes more responsibility than in traditional class”* (cited in Turliou & Stefánsdóttir, 2011:10).

To end with, a teacher with a strong intention to foster autonomy among learners should not only introduce various effective study strategies but also give learners opportunities to try them out in different circumstances.

8. Classroom Autonomy: Moving the Spotlight from Teachers to Learners

Learner autonomy is believed to be a paradigm shift, for that reason perceptions regarding the language classroom should be reshaped and roles subsequently reviewed. Jacobs & Ferrell argued while describing this shift (cited in Turloiu & Stefánsdóttir 2011:9).

“The concept of learner autonomy . . . in fact emphasizes the role of the learner rather than the role of the teacher; it focuses on the process rather than the product and encourages learners to develop their own purposes for learning and to see learning as a lifelong process”.

Moving the spotlight from teachers to learners is not an easy, flexible and manageable matter, as it requires acting upon organisms and awareness from both

teachers and learners. Indeed both novice and expert teachers may find the experience daunting. Hartle (2011:5) in this context expresses her point of view saying that “[I]t is not always so simple for us as teachers to let go of our learners and let them spread their own wings and fly away from us” (in Independence series issue N° 53 p 5).

Yet again, reshaping positions does not automatically result in an entire abdication of the teacher. In this viewpoint Allwright and Hanks (2009: 03) support the following view, “*teachers are officially in charge of the practice of the language learning in the classroom, but they have to leave the actual practice of language learning to learners, only learners can do their own learning*” (cited in Kurugöllü, 2013 in Independence series issue N° 58: 16).

Changing the focus means a change in the mental picture of classroom practices. Knowledge is undoubtedly a matter of learners in regards to both the methods of delivery and materials to be employed.

9. Characteristics of Autonomous Learners

Holec (1981:3) suggested the early and most influential definition of learner autonomy (in Benson, 2001). To explain, according to this pioneer, autonomous learners are those having the ability to take charge of one’s own learning. Soon after, a rich array of definitions emerged coupled with an amount of characteristics and attributes approved by researchers in the purpose of determining what an autonomous learner is.

To all intents and purposes, (Bound, 1988; Kononen, 1992; & Knowles, 1975) believed on the autonomous learner as self proactive makers of decisions in the learning process, generating ideas and availing possible opportunities for learning, rather than reacting for teachers various stimuli (as cited in Thanasoulas 2000a).

According to Thanasoulas (2000b), the major influence of constructivists’ thoughts resulted in some characteristics regarding the exercise of autonomy among learners. For him an autonomous learner is a self-activated maker of meaning, an active agent in his own learning process, in simple words he/she is not the one to whom things accidentally happen; but the one who, by his own volition, causes things to happen.

The emphasis on autonomy and learner autonomy characteristics was and is still a recent concern for most research studies in the field of education. For instance,

Nunaz in her recent article written in 2014 (cited in Independence series issue N° 62 p 16) believed that for students to be academically and socially conscious they need to

- Understand and accept their academic situation;
- Feel motivated with a strong sense of responsibility for themselves;
- Demonstrate a willingness to deviate from social cultural norms to achieve success;
- Take pleasure in completing some tasks voluntarily and independently;
- Keep a sense of wonder for learning.

By taking charge of their own learning and being in control of their own learning processes, students will have the opportunity to the language they are learning.

10. Conditions for Learner Autonomy

After it had been defined and perceived from different perspectives taking control over learning, still remain not an easy exclusive matter. Now, it should be reiterated that autonomy is not an object of faith, a product readymade for use or merely a personal quality (Thanasoulas, 2000b). Relatively, it is certain that classroom autonomy is achieved only and if only certain conditions are put into action in the example of:

10.1. Motivation

Motivation is of crucial foundation in learners' readiness for autonomous learning. The more motivation learners demonstrate, the more efforts they display to their course of learning. A strong relation was thus established between motivation and autonomy as interpreted by Dickinson (1995:15) who fulfilled that *«enhanced motivation is a conditional on learners taking responsibility for their own learning, noticing that successes or failures are related to their efforts rather than to factors out of their control.»*(in Hadi 2012:31)

Chan (2001) when researching motivation in relation to autonomy practice in classroom activities raised the evidence in research studies to support the view that an increasing at the level of learner control will increase the level of self-determination, thereby increasing overall motivation in the development of learner autonomy (cited in Simpson, 2011). Nearly the same view was developed in Chasten work (1991) where he defined motivation as some incentives that cause the individual to

participate in an activity leading towards a goal and to persevere until the goal is reached (in Pavris, M., Pavris, B., & Abdulali2013).

Motivational effects on students' autonomy with project work as a mean are our concern. Therefore, as students choose their own project and set their own goals, they are aware that their work is valuable in the course of the development that attempts to answer a fundamental question, solving a problem of relevance or being beneficial to the community. Students are thus personally involved in projects and stimulated to work hard (Simpson, 2011).

PBL consequently, builds intrinsic motivation and commitments that drives students to be involved in a self- learning process in ways that are not possible in classical methods of teaching and learning (Kartz, 1994; Markham, 2003 as cited in Simpson, 2011). Furthermore, Dopplet (2003) contends that "*students' motivation to their own discipline and their willingness to work on their projects [for] longer hours indicates higher level of awareness among learners who behave like higher achievers.*" (cited in Bell 2010:41).

To come to the point, motivation provides the primary impetus to initiate learning the L2 and latter the driving force to sustain the long and autonomous process of inquiry. Consequently, there is clearly an intimate but rather a complex relationship between the concepts of autonomy and motivation.

10.2. Effective Study Strategies

Learner autonomy entails the conscious deployment of appropriate strategies in relation to particular learning activities and to the learning development overall and these strategies are generated within the minds of individual learners.

It is obvious that knowing how to study effectively is not necessarily innate. Thus, learning strategies are mostly at the heart of successful learning as proclaimed by Cohen (1998:4), "*learning strategies are learning processes selected by the learner*". In addition, Oxford and Wenden (1991) indicated that the concept of language learning strategies reflects "*learners' proactive contribution to enhancing the effectiveness of their own learning*". On the light of these definitions, learning strategies are thought of as learners' behavior, actions, and thoughts aiming at facilitating learning, but learning strategies remain immensely ambiguous phenomena and nothing is clear-cut about them. Interestingly, learning strategy research is central in developing understanding for how to tackle learning a language in a range of

contexts, including independent settings. In this context, White (2008:3) believed in the effectiveness of learning strategies in fostering learners' autonomy, in this way she argued that:

“A fundamental challenge of independent language learning is for learners to develop the ability to engage with, interact . . . I argue that learners develop this ability largely by constructing a personally meaningful interface with the learning context, and that strategies play a key role in this regard”. White (2008:3)

Learning strategies offer a set of options from which students are given the opportunity to exercise an autonomous and conscious choice in real time to optimize their chances of success in achieving their goals in learning the target language (TL). Learners should adopt their own study strategies. In this context, Harmer (2001:335) advocated that *“to compensate for the limits of time and to encounter the passivity that is an enemy of true learning, students need to develop their own learning strategies, so as far as possible they become autonomous learner.”*

To simplify, the term learning strategies characterizes the relationship between intention and action. It is based on the proposal that learners are responsible agents who are aware of their needs, preferences, goals and problems.

Sub section 02: PBL and Whole Class- Discussion

Introduction

The rationale-underpinning learner centered approach to the development of classroom discussion skills is the need to encourage students to become increasingly independent and self-directed. However, Ellis (1990) offered some evidence to support the notion that acquisition is enhanced when teachers allow students relative free choice of topic. Haswell (1993:90), in his turn, described the effectiveness of learner classroom autonomy in determining their own achievements and that of others during classroom presentations in this flow he confirmed, *“this active engagement between students and their learning allows them to integrate mentally the various stages in the learning process in a holistic way”* (in Richards & Ranandya, 2002:225).

Besides, within classroom discussions learners are likely to develop themselves to evolve into effective lifelong learners able of various decisions making as claimed by Harmer (2001: 350) *“one of the best ways of encouraging discussion is to provide activities which force students to reach a decision or consensus.”*

Finally, our sub-section will be consigned with how project work within group works may be used effectively with almost all levels of learners' proficiency to enhance their autonomy in whole class discussion.

1.1. Classroom Discussion

It is worth noticing that the best way to make students gain their self-confidence and autonomy is through and by making them delve in academic inquiries then after present and debate issues in front of their classmates. Harmer (2001:336) in this context argued, "*Having students reflect privately on how they learn can be enhanced by frequent discussion of the learning experience*". Thornbury (2005) supported the view that students act of standing up in front of their colleagues and speaking is an excellent preparation of authentic speaking. He further added that the best discussions are those that arise spontaneously either because one learner reports something personal or the topic of the course raises discussion as the case of project work presentations.

2. Fundamental Stages in Whole Classroom Discussion

Green, Christopher and Lam (2002) identified three stages towards classroom discussion

2.1. Pre- discussion The initial stage in whole class discussion, at this level viable discussions and associated pattern groups are formed. Each group draws on possible discussion elements, deriving principally from their current academic or developmental concerns. Finally, a topic of discussion is ultimately refined and divided into manageable areas of presentation.

2.2. Discussion The group members discuss the topic while partner groups of observer- evaluators monitor the process, using a variety of instruments to record data. The findings of observers are worthy and reported in the post discussion stage.

2.3. Post discussion First, there should be peer feedback from the observer- evaluators. Learners' opinions are worthy Chaudron's (1988) view on feedback especially peer feedback demonstrates that "*[F]rom learners point of view, the use of feedback . . . may constitute the most potent source of improvement in both target language development and other subject matter knowledge*" (in Brown, 2003). The teacher may then give feedback on content, intergroup dynamics and linguistic appropriateness to groups and individuals. Finally, the groups decide on ways to enrich and extend the topic.

In short, autonomy and PBL are at the center of whole class discussion. A successful discussion thus, depends for success primarily on the willingness of all participants to make substantial and coherent contributions to the process.

3. Aims of Whole Class Discussion

Classroom discussion is one of the standard features and productive language skills in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) classrooms (Harmer, 2001). Moreover, exposing students to the genre of oral presentation can be an effective method that motivates students to communicate using English. According to Nation (1997), whole classroom discussion shares the following aims:

1. To make the learners aware of the problem and the need for change
2. To come up with practical suggestions for change,
3. Finally, to get learners to become actively involved in bringing about the change

In the light of these three aims, the classroom is the crucible - the place -where teachers and learners come together and language learning we expect happens (Allwright and Bailey 1991).

Students learn more when most of the available time is allocated to classroom activity where the emphasis is on getting their engagement. Project work consequently, best exemplifies the learners' participation in the learning process. Learners perform functions similar to real life situations. For instance, teachers seeking to bridge the divide between content and students at varying levels of learner autonomy, Project work can be an empowering tool to accomplish this objective.

4. The Relationship between Project Based Learning and Learner Classroom Autonomy in Whole Class Discussion

By integrating project based to content based classroom, learners are looking more and more for better achievements. Projects are likely to create a vibrant learning environment where students' involvement, critical thinking, and autonomy are the crux of the matter. In this view, Preuss (2002:310) noted, "*as students complete their projects, they think reflectively on their experiences about project based learning processes individually. Besides, students realize similarities between what they are learning and what is going on outside the school walls.*" (In Gülbahar and Tinmaz, 2006: 310).

Indeed, learner's control of knowledge and skills does not necessarily pave the way to autonomous learning. Allwright (1988) confirmed that, autonomy nowadays is

much more about the radical restructuring of language pedagogy (Benson, 2006). Learners should be given the context that supports their feeling of autonomy. Accordingly, the preface of project-based learning is viewed as a Copernican revolution within the institution. Project-based learning is an essential integrative instrument of learning and enhanced autonomous learning (as cited in Bensemmane 2011). Assuming that spontaneous oral proficiency is part of what our learners are aiming at (Little, 1996). Research in language pedagogy should develop more to ensure learners opportunities to speak using their target language. The essential first step in this direction is to make the target language the usual medium of classroom communication in this field Broady & Kinning (1996:10) claimed that *“Using language effectively for communication involves negotiation of meaning, rather than mere decoding of linguistic tokens, thus requiring the ability to cope confidently with unpredictable information”*(in Reinders & Lamb 2005:3).

Chapter Two: Methodology, Results and Discussions of the Results, Ethics and Limitations

Introduction

The following study is primarily concerned with exploring the effect of project-based learning on the promotion of learner autonomy during whole class discussions. It mainly illuminates on how project-based learning as an independent variable exercises an effect over the two dependent variables (classroom learner autonomy and whole class discussions respectively). This practical chapter aims at providing an answer to our research questions and research hypothesis. For this end, it encompasses four main sections. The first section deals with the description of the methodology. The second section is about the presentation of findings and discussions. The third one discusses research ethical practices and finally we shall acknowledge the main limitations, constraints in furtherance to possible implications for future research.

Section One: Description of the Study

Introduction

Along this section, we principally aim at presenting our study including both methodology and research design. In addition, our research paper will demonstrate a detailed description of our subjects and the procedures we followed to collect data from participants under investigation. For instance, we will justify rationally and practicably the use of the following instruments: students' questionnaire, students' semi-structured interviews as well as field observation and a sample of descriptive field notes.

1. Participants

The sample of the present study consists of 22 Master I LMD students studying at the department of English at the University of Bejaia. They are enrolled in the option of Applied Linguistics and English Language Teaching". The total number of the group is 22 students but only 19 participated voluntarily in our study since they attend their English classes regularly. The background information collected from the pre- questionnaire revealed that our sample consists of 15 female students (68.18 %) and 6 male (27.27%) in addition to one student who did not mention his/ her gender. Almost all the participants' ages ranged

between 22-26 years old with two students ranging between 19-21 and the other one indicated that she exceeded 26 years old. Concerning learners' motivation towards English courses, most of them exhibited that learning English was their first choice (78.95%) along with 47.37% indicating that they got a good level of proficiency in using the target language. Ultimately, the selection of the participants in our study was done in accordance to convenience sampling regarding some pedagogical considerations (Boyno, 2011).

2. Methodology

For the purpose of our research, we opted for a mixed methodology in favour of exploring the effect of project-based learning (independent variable) on learner classroom autonomy during whole class discussion (two dependent variables respectively). In particular, we aim at testing whether learning through projects will provide the necessary space for learners to develop towards autonomous language communicators during whole class discussion. More specifically, the mixed method approach would help us increase the validity and reliability of our study (Best & Kalm 1993) through pre and post-questionnaires with projects' as a mean along the experimental period. In addition to students' semi structured interviews (conducted with eight students randomly selected from our sample) and field observation accompanied with samples of descriptive field notes. The latter, seeks to provide a description of students projects presentations.

3. Overview of the Research Design

A good design is the one that maximizes reliability and minimises bias (Kothari, 2004). Thus, selecting the appropriate design for our research mainly conform to our objective. Therefore, a small exploratory group conducted with quasi- experimental design will be appropriate to investigate whether learning through projects (our independent variable) will have an effect on developing learner autonomy during whole class discussions. The lack of randomization is mainly due to pedagogical conveniences (mostly Master AL_ELT) who have the tendency to learn content through projects (projects are a means to an end) and it is the only group in the whole option. In addition, to the difficulty to assign randomly subjects to treatments, the scant control of extraneous variables and the choice of only one experimental group are all factors that contributed to our choice of quasi- experimental design. Accordingly, to increase our research validity and guarantee data reliability we opted for a mixed method of data collection with pre-post questionnaire (before and after the

treatment is implemented) along with students' semi-structured interviews and field observation (accompanied with samples of descriptive field notes).

4. Instruments

4.1. Quantitative method : pre- post-questionnaire

For the sake of quantitative data, more specifically gathering individuals' attitudes, facts, and behaviours (Dornyei, Taguchi 2010) students' pre- questionnaires were assigned and subsequently administered on 6th of January to 19 students. The following description for instance; details information of our pre-post questionnaire.

4.1.1. The Pre-Questionnaire

Before embarking in the construction of the questionnaire, we reflected on our review of the literature to sort out the relevant content area to be focused. It is on this basis that we have decided to cover the following items: (learners' engagement, decision-making, reflection-, turn taking allocation, initiation and negotiation skills). In short, our questionnaire has been empowered with literature brainstorming in addition to our supervisor's tutoring; my supervisor has thus assessed the items in term of:

1) Content validity 2) face validity 3) clarity of items.

After receiving the feedback, we opted for the necessary arrangements in either content, the overall external format or in terms of clarity of our items, (we omitted some misleading and recurrent questions).

The first section deals with personal and background information of the participants it is consequently entitled "personal and background information" it includes students' age, gender, proficiency level, the years they been studying English as well as their experience with PBL.

The second section examines students' ability to use effective study strategies (multi item scale). It essentially comprises 8 items that treat learners' ability to design, select, clarify, negotiate, and manage (...) the course of their learning. In addition, another item pool treats students' motivation towards classroom learner autonomy includes 4 items.

4.1.2. Post- questionnaire (PBL Questionnaire)

It is the modified version of the pre-questionnaire. It mainly aims to measure whether project based learning model will bring the necessarily changes among the group of Master I students. It assesses whether students have gained more autonomy especially during project presentation, which lays the ground to whole classroom discussion.

In order to ensure an efficient collection of data I was present when the participants filled in the questionnaire. This proved useful also, when further clarifications needed to be made, since I was able to elaborate on the issue and answer urgent questions concerning the questionnaire.

4.2. The Qualitative Method

4.2.1. The Aim of Students' Semi- Structured Interviews

The overall objective of the present study as well as the nature of our variables necessitates the profound analyses of the participants' views. The interview aims principally to back up the content of our questionnaire and thus increase the internal validity of our study (Dornyei & Taguchi, 2010). Overall, this tool serves as an introspection tool as it liberates opportunities to interact directly with our respondents, which allows us an opening plenary to both, reveal behavioural effects as well as the chance to intervene with the participants and thus gather as much as possible of data.

We believe that students' semi-structured interviews would provide us with access to students' experiences and thereby the route to understanding the meaning of those experiences.

4.3. Field Observation

All along this phase, we were much more concerned with description and explanation than it is with measurements and quantification. Our observation took place starting from (06 January until 25 March). We attended more than 17-project presentations with three different teachers in charge of different workshops.

We were utterly focused on students' autonomous practices during project presentations. In particular, we limited ourselves to four autonomous behaviours, which are as in the following {initiation -Managing – reflection - and intergroup awareness}. Thus, our choice of

the autonomous behaviours to be observed was not done at random as it obeys to the following considerations

- 1) Those behaviours are the most appropriate and suitable to our current contextual objective.
- 2) The study conducted by Thomas in (2000) had an influence over our thinking and research processing. In addition, McCarthy's work in (2010) entitled "the effect of integrating project-based learning into a traditional skills-based curriculum to foster learner autonomy" gave us further motivation to investigate profoundly the qualitative effect of project-based learning on learner autonomy in the Algerian context. Both students' semi-structured interviews and field observation aim immeasurably at indicating learners' perception towards classroom autonomy along the experimental phase, before and after the treatment is being implemented. As whole, the qualitative method gives an extensive explanation of students' autonomy practice as the project process up folds.
3. Reflection is described, ". . . *conscious reflection on the learning process is a distinctive characteristic of autonomous learning* (Benson, 2001)
4. Regarding intergroup awareness it is valuable to confirm that "*... promoting cooperation in the classroom affects learners ...it encourages learners to rely on each other and consequently themselves.*" (Benson, 2001)

In short, we are concerned with those four autonomous behaviors as they are quite open to investigation.

4.3.1. Field Notes

We opted for samples of descriptive field notes as a means of displaying data on how Master I AL/ELT demonstrate improvement in their autonomous practices particularly in terms of the aforementioned autonomous behaviors { initiating- managing – intergroup awareness- and reflection}. We aim principally to capture students' autonomous behaviors and perspectives as a whole group not isolated individuals. To establish the reliability of our data at this level, sample of descriptive field notes were delivered to the targeted lecturers who permitted us to attend their workshops. In particular, such approval would avoid any apparent observer bias.

5. Data Analysis Procedures

The statistical package of social sciences (SPSS) version 21 and Excel 2007 are tools that would help us to analyze our quantitative data (preliminary questionnaires and post questionnaires). We rely on percentages, and descriptive statistics to interpret our data. While, field observation and students semi-structured interviews are analyzed through descriptions as Selinger and Shohamy confirmed, “*Qualitative data analysis techniques deal with non-numerical data usually linguistic units in oral or written form*” (cited in Hadi 2012:90).

6. Validity, Reliability, and Triangulation

According to Sullivan & Feldman, (1979) validity and reliability are interconnected concepts (as cited in Marczyk, De Matteo, & Festinger, 2005). This can be demonstrated by the fact that a measurement cannot be valid unless it is reliable. Reliability, consequently, is a feature of validity. Internal validity in one hand reveals the fact that our independent variable is responsible for the changes in the dependent variables (MarcZyk, et al, 2005). In our paper, we can assume the validity of our work regarding the following concerns.

First, the period of the experiment (around three months) allowed us to attend all the project sessions along one semester (we attended 17-project presentations), which is sufficiently enough taking into account the period of strike (approximately one month) in addition to the facts that we stopped our observation when behaviors under study are replicating themselves. Second, our spotlight was on four social behaviors among many, which gave us the opportunity to observe those behaviors among our participants intensely in different workshops. Concerning the generalizability of our data, and thus the external validity of our study, we believe that it is only possible to generalize the obtained measurements and descriptions among subjects within the same context.

With reference to the reliability of our information, the use of the statistical package of social sciences (SPSS) ensured the reliability of our data.

Regarding the exploratory nature of our study a certain level of consistency is acceptable; Ravid (1994:252) confirmed, “[I]n exploratory research, even when modest reliability of .50 to .60 is acceptable although a higher reliability is always preferable” (as cited in Boyno: 127).

When research in language pedagogy deals with behaviours that are quite difficult to observe such as the exercise of autonomy, triangulation would be favourable first to provide accurate data (convergence) and to backup the drawbacks of the previous instruments in the other hand (complementary).

Conclusion

The mixed method approach to data collection of both quantitative and qualitative data was used in our study. The former for instance includes equally preliminary questionnaire and the post questionnaire. On the other side, the qualitative data comprises field observation, students semi structured interviews and samples of field notes. For the sake of quantitative data, the statistical package of social sciences (SPSS) helped us to gather statistical and numerical facts whereas the qualitative data are examined using content analyses (descriptions).

Section Two: Results and Discussions

Introduction

While the previous section determined what is needed in order to answer the research questions, in the present section, we report on the results of our study.

The statements of both pre-post questionnaires are grouped into two main themes: learners' use of effective study strategies and learners' motivation towards autonomous learning, which aim to answer whether projects provide opportunities for autonomous learning. To ensure the reliability of our item categories, Pearson correlation coefficients for questions by themes are calculated by means of SPSS version 21. The linear connection between the items is interpreted in the following ways (as cited in Ikonen, 2013)

- ❖ < 0.300 = Non – significant
- ❖ > 0.300 = Weak
- ❖ > 0.500 = Moderate
- ❖ > 0.700 = Fairly strong
- ❖ > 0.900 = Very strong

On this basis and obeying to the results gathered in the table below, we believe in the moderate reliability of our items.

| Themes | perceived frequency |
|---|---------------------|
| ➤ Learners' Use of Effective Study Strategies | , 740 |
| ➤ Students' Motivation Towards Classroom Learner Autonomy | , 834 |

Table 03: reveals the Pearson correlation coefficients of the items by themes

In the following section, the results concerning the theme “learners’ using effective study strategies” for preliminary questionnaire are introduced first.

1. Pre- questionnaire results: the findings of our pre- questionnaire are reported using frequencies, percentages, means scores and standard deviations with reference to the fact that both means scores and standard deviations are introduced only to compare between students’ autonomy during whole classroom discussion before and after introducing the treatment.

Item 01: I voluntarily take part in whole class discussion.

| Response alternatives | Frequency | Percent (%) | Mean score | Std. Deviation |
|-----------------------|-----------|-------------|------------|----------------|
| Sometimes | 10 | 50 | 2. 750 | , 850 |
| Most of the time | 5 | 25 | | |
| All the time | 5 | 25 | | |
| Total | 20 | 100 | | |

Table 04: percentages and frequencies of learners’ voluntariness during whole class discussion before the introduction of the treatment

The students are asked whether they initiate debates freely during whole class discussion. According to the results, the majority of learners (50%) reported having reluctant reactions. From the table above, most students who participated in our study revealed that they do not feel enthusiastic to take part in classroom discussion. The purpose behind this question is to explore practically that any possible future progress in students autonomy during whole class discussion would be highly attributed to an effect and control from the independent variable.

Item 2: Are you aware of the role you are required to fulfill in a class discussion?

| Response alternatives | Frequency | Percent (%) | Means Scores | Std. Deviation |
|-----------------------|-----------|-------------|--------------|----------------|
| Not at all | 2 | 9,1 | 2.40 | ,734 |
| Sometimes | 10 | 45,5 | | |
| Most of the time | 9 | 40,9 | | |
| All the time | 1 | 4,5 | | |
| Total | 22 | 100 | | |

Table 05: Learners' awareness about the role they are required to fulfill in classroom discussion

If students' ability to engage voluntarily in whole classroom discussion was identified earlier as being quite inadequate, the present item aims to access students' level of awareness regarding their role in the language classroom. Most of our informants appear as being moderately aware of the necessity to operate in classroom actions. The results show clearly that a number of learners i.e. about 45% of them are raising awareness with relation to the role they are required to fulfill in classroom; whereas, 40, 09% declared advanced level of awareness for generating students centered pedagogy. After incorporating PBL, we aim at testing whether it brings the indispensable changes among all learners regarding their level of responsiveness with the reshaping in perspectives as regards their roles in today's EFL settings.

Item 3: Are you able to manage some language difficulties during a class discussion?

| Response alternative | Frequency | Percent (%) | Means Scores | Std. Deviation |
|----------------------|-----------|-------------|--------------|----------------|
| Not at all | 2 | 9,09 | 2.227 | ,685 |
| Sometimes | 14 | 63,63 | | |
| Most of the time | 5 | 22,72 | | |
| All the time | 1 | 4,55 | | |
| Total | 22 | 100 | | |

Table 06: Learners' ability to use effective management strategies

Learners at this point are inquired on whether they are able to manage effectively some language problems they may face during whole class discussion. Such question involves testing learners having the ability to use management strategies, which are considered as being of great relevance to autonomous learning. 9, 09 % exposed no ability to manage the course of any discussion-taking place in classroom. While 63, 63% of the participants affirmed that from time to time they opt for such strategies. With regard to the importance of management strategies implication, this statement for instance expresses the significant correlation between students progress in classroom discussions with aspects of autonomy practice.

Item 4: Do you decide on effective sequencing of topics undertaken in the classroom?

| Response alternative | Frequency | Percent (%) | Mean score | Std. Deviation |
|----------------------|-----------|-------------|------------|----------------|
| Not at all | 2 | 9,1 | 2.904 | ,734 |
| Sometimes | 10 | 45,5 | | |
| Most of the time | 9 | 40,9 | | |
| All the time | 1 | 4,5 | | |
| Total | 22 | 100 | | |

Table 07 Learners' ability to sequence the learning process

Learners are asked whether they are given the necessary space and or the required opportunities to sequence their own learning process. In fact, such engaging context would immeasurably test their effectiveness and improvement as well. The table above exemplifies that 45.5% of informants pointed out that the total freedom and even their capacity to take hold of this responsibility is quite limited along with 9, 10 % of students who respond to the question saying that they never engage in the sequencing process. 40, 9% reports a given skillfulness to this statement, and lastly, 4.5 % of participants owe a full capacity to sequence autonomously the several stages of their learning.

As regards the importance of the above statement, its development among learners is quite necessary for better performance of the various learning actions.

Item 5: Do you reflect on the content to be discussed in your English Language courses?

| Response alternative | Frequency | Percent (%) | Mean score | Std. Deviation |
|----------------------|-----------|-------------|------------|----------------|
| Not at all | 5 | 22,7 | 2.136 | ,774 |
| Sometimes | 9 | 40,9 | | |
| Most of the time | 8 | 36,4 | | |
| Total | 22 | 100 | | |

Table 08: learners' reflection in the language classroom

This question addresses learners' reflection about the content to be discussed in classroom. As all the participants (22) have answered the question, the following percentages and frequencies were obtained: 22, 7% of the whole population reported having low level of reflection on the content of English language discussions. While the overwhelming majority of the students(40, 9%) expressed that their level of reflection is not permanently stable which means that sometimes they do reflect and sometimes they do not. 8 students representing 36,4% said that most of the time their reflection achieves higher level. From the above frequencies, we can say that students' level of reflection during whole class discussion requires some training for further improvement along the post questionnaire numerical results we will examine evidence of on whether project effectiveness will have an effect over learners' level of reflection intensity.

Item 6: I intend to contribute to whole classroom discussion

| Response alternative | Frequency | Percent (%) | Mean score | Std. Deviation |
|----------------------|-----------|-------------|------------|----------------|
| Not at all | 5 | 22,7 | 2. 136 | ,959 |
| Sometimes | 5 | 22,7 | | |
| Most of the time | 10 | 45,5 | | |
| All the time | 2 | 9,1 | | |
| Total | 22 | 100 | | |

Table 09: Learners' level of contributions during whole class discussion

The autonomous learner is the one who can have a say in his own learning process for instance discuss authentic, relevant, and engaging problems in relation to the learning process. To illustrate, 22.22% of our target population revealed a modest autonomous contributions regarding their learning framework that is insufficient. Similarly, five students indicate the same proportion i.e. 22.22%. In the other side, we found 45.5% of the students supply higher willingness to take part in different aspect of whole class discussion. Through implementing projects, across Master I students subject disciplines we aim immeasurably at testing out its usefulness in terms of their contributions and knowledge building.

Item 7: Are you able to manage turn taking allocation with less teacher interference?

| Response alternative | Frequency | Percent (%) | Mean score | Std. Deviation |
|----------------------|-----------|-------------|------------|----------------|
| Not at all | 3 | 13,6 | 2.181 | ,732 |
| Sometimes | 13 | 59,1 | | |
| Most of the time | 5 | 22,7 | | |
| All the time | 1 | 4,5 | | |
| Total | 22 | 100 | | |

Table 10: turn taking allocation with less teacher interference among Master I students

Throughout this item, we wanted to know about learners' ability to turn take with less apparent interference from the teacher. According to the students' answers, three learners 13.6% out of 22 participants are not at all able to take turn in classroom discussion. On the other side 59.10% revealed taking turn occasionally. 22.70% of students' answers denote taking turn most of the time along with 4.5% having the complete capacity to practice the present item.

Along our experimental phase, we will demonstrate whether the expertise of project presentations would help learners achieve the norms of sound discussion either among project presenters along with observer evaluators. The emphasis on the involvement of students in classroom discussion seems to imply that there is a causal relationship between turn taking and language achievements.

Item 08: Do you freely negotiate ideas during your English classroom

| Response alternative | Frequency | Percent (%) | Mean Score | Std. Deviation |
|----------------------|-----------|-------------|------------|----------------|
| Not at all | 2 | 9,1 | 2,363 | ,798 |
| Sometimes | 12 | 54,5 | | |
| Most of the time | 6 | 27,3 | | |
| All the time | 2 | 9,1 | | |
| Total | 22 | 100 | | |

Table 11: Meaning negotiation among Master I AL/ELT students

Negotiation of meaning involves having a capacity to sustain, assist, cooperate, and support mutual ideas among teamwork. The findings show that 9.10% of learners lack absolutely this capacity along with 54.5% who display irregular skilfulness in meaning negotiation. The remaining participants claimed that negotiation of meaning is a norm of effective learning; those students represent 27.3%. Lastly, we should acknowledge that 9.10% of our subjects believe in the efficiency of negotiating meaning during whole class discussion. In short, with our treatment implication, we are aiming considerably to help students to develop into higher input generators. Consequently, we will test latter whether creating an engaging classroom atmosphere would be conducive to help students discuss, and negotiate meaning.

2. Students' Motivation towards Classroom Autonomy

Item 09: Working in authentic problems is an effective technique to promote classroom autonomy and whole class discussion

| Response alternative | Frequency | Percent (%) | Mean score | Std. Deviation |
|----------------------|-----------|-------------|------------|----------------|
| Not at all | 6 | 27,3 | 2.14 | ,941 |
| Sometimes | 9 | 40,9 | | |
| Most of the time | 5 | 22,7 | | |
| All the time | 2 | 9,1 | | |
| Total | 22 | 100 | | |

Table 12: Learners' readiness for authentic problem solving

As mentioned in the table N°12 above, most of our participants (40.90%) revealed their reluctance for learning throughout real problem solving situations even as open discussions and challenging debates take place. In addition, 27.30% of our targeted subjects stated their rejection for engaging learning where their own ideas, thoughts, plan becomes part of the learning process. Seven students, for instance, established having higher alacrity for authentic situations where they can bridge the situated gap between the known and what remain to be explored. In fact, learners not only require appropriate tools, but also the opportunity to practice using those tools, leaning occurs through and by social interaction with the assistance of more knowledgeable others as Little () believes.

Item 10: I believe my ideas will be beneficial to developing my classroom discussion.

| Response alternative | Frequency | Percent(%) | Mean score | Std. Deviation |
|----------------------|-----------|------------|------------|----------------|
| Not at all | 6 | 27,3 | 2.136 | .833 |
| Sometimes | 9 | 40,9 | | |
| Most of the time | 7 | 31,8 | | |
| Total | 22 | 100 | | |

Table 13: learners' beliefs and motivations towards delivering ideas along whole classroom discussion

Table N°13 displays students' answers concerning the extent to which they believe their ideas are conducive to whole classroom discussion. Thus, from the table above we find that the majority of our participants (40.9%) display unenthusiastic motivations while 27.3% of the students approached frowningly the idea of being beneficial to classroom discussion. However, 07 students corresponding to 31.8% expressed that their ideas are relatively conducive to whole class discussion.

From the numerical results got by means of SPSS, we notice that our participants need further space to practice their autonomy during classroom discussion in our study we aim promisingly to test out whether learning through projects would provide learners with opportunities to authentic language use and autonomy promotion.

Item 13: I have a strong motivation to debate and challenge others ideas in classroom.

| Response alternative | Frequency | Percent (%) | Mean score | Std. deviation |
|----------------------|-----------|-------------|------------|----------------|
| Not at all | 6 | 27,3 | 2.318 | 1.041 |
| Sometimes | 7 | 31,8 | | |
| Most of the time | 6 | 27,3 | | |
| All the time | 3 | 13,6 | | |
| Total | 22 | 100 | | |

Table 14: Learners ability to challenge and debate ideas in the EFL classroom

The aim of this item is to measure the frequency of students' motivation to communicate ideas and private thoughts in front of the whole class. According to the participants' answers, we notice that the level of motivation among learners is approximately close, 27.30% of students who declared being unmotivated to communicate ideas in classroom discussion. Along with the same proportion of learners who have higher level of motivation, the majority of participants hence revealed inconsistent level of motivation with percentage equal to 31.80% while only 03 students (13.6%) exhibited higher degree of motivation. The aim then after is to generate more motivation among our participants.

Item 14: Iam motivated to learn English content via oral presentations and open debates

| Response alternative | Frequency | Percent (%) | Mean score | Std. deviation |
|----------------------|-----------|-------------|------------|----------------|
| Not at all | 2 | 9,1 | 2.454 | .800 |
| Sometimes | 10 | 45,5 | | |
| Most of the time | 8 | 36,4 | | |
| All the time | 2 | 9,1 | | |
| Total | 22 | 100 | | |

Table 15: examine whether open debates and oral presentation stimulate Master I students

As we can see in the preceding table, the majority of participants (45.5%) revealed that oral presentation and classroom debates are sometimes effective techniques for better attainments among EFL learners. Whereas 36.4% of our subjects displayed a strong need for oral presentation and challenging debates. On the other side, we can distinguish two students (9.10%) who totally rejected the idea of oral presentation and open debate along with two

other students who considerably believe in the effectiveness of oral presentation and classroom open debates to achieve the intended outcomes.

Item 15: I have a strong willingness to monitor my learning process at every stage it is a sign of my autonomy growth.

| Response alternative | Frequency | Percent (%) | Mean score | Std. Deviation |
|----------------------|-----------|-------------|------------|----------------|
| Not at all | 6 | 27,3 | 2.136 | .888 |
| Sometimes | 8 | 36,4 | | |
| Most of the time | 7 | 31,8 | | |
| All the time | 1 | 4,5 | | |
| Total | 22 | 100,0 | | |

Table 16: the table checks learners' ability to monitor the learning process.

As it is expressed in the table, the overpowering number of students (36.40%) revealed their occasional ability to monitor the learning process. However, 27.30% of our targeted subjects demonstrated their lack in monitoring ability. We also found that (31.80%) who are approximately capable to carry out their learning along with 4.5% of students who are very able of performing the above item.

3. The analysis of the PBL questionnaire

3.1. The aim of the PBL Questionnaire

This questionnaire is the modified version of the pre-questionnaire. It aims to measure Master I AL/ELT level of autonomy during whole classroom discussion after the inclusion of the treatment. Unlike the preliminary questionnaire this one contains classroom situations, described items usually encountered in project-based learning sessions; that is, situations in which the learner is involved with project presentation and classroom discussions.

It is crucial to note that item responses and the general external format are kept the same along the post questionnaire with clear changes, which aim mainly to heighten learners' awareness on how to learn best.

| Themes | Received frequency |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| ➤ Students' motivation Towards PBL | .632 |
| ➤ PBL in the EFL Classrooms | .641 |

Table 17: Post questionnaire Pearson coefficients for questions by themes

Given the enormous importance of motivation regarding developing learner classroom autonomy we started our analysis with items on the topic of learners motivation towards autonomous learning after incorporating the treatments among our participants

4. Students Motivation for Autonomous Learning after Introducing PBL

Item 01: All over project work, I am convinced that authentic problem solving is helpful to learn English language content.

| Response alternatives | Frequency | Percent (%) | Mean score | Std. deviation |
|-----------------------|-----------|-------------|------------|----------------|
| Most of the time | 7 | 36,8 | 3.631 | .495 |
| All the time | 12 | 63,2 | | |
| Total | 19 | 100 | | |

Table 18: After the treatment is implemented, we represent learners' motivation to learn through authentic problem solving.

After incorporating PBL among our subjects, learners achieved a noticeable progress. For instance, 36.80% of the whole participants exposed that problem solving and classroom discussions are helpful to learn English language content. In the same view, the great majority (63.20%) admitted their genuine attitude towards authentic problem solving with the help of projects practices. When students accept responsibility for their own learning and start to engage in real problem situations of language use, learners commit themselves to develop the skills of self-management, reflection and individual involvement within teamwork, as it believed by Little (1991)

Item 02: Through project presentations, I believe my own ideas will be conducive to developing my classroom discussion skills.

| Response alternatives | Frequency | Percent (%) | Mean score | Std. Deviation |
|-----------------------|-----------|-------------|------------|----------------|
| Most of the time | 8 | 42,1 | 3.842 | .507 |
| All the time | 11 | 57,9 | | |
| Total | 19 | 100 | | |

Table 19: Students' motivation in project presentations as being conducive to developing classroom discussion

Throughout the results gathered in the post questionnaire, a noticeable achievement was attained among Master I AL/ELT students regarding their beliefs about the effectiveness of their ideas, thoughts, and knowledge to whole classroom discussion. From the table, we draw the conclusion that each student in the group progressed greatly regarding the way they recognize and analyze their own contribution to a successful EFL classroom. 42.10% of the participants value a resourceful classroom as the one in which each individual learner has most of the time a great deal in his own learning agendas. On the other side, (57.90%) exhibited their entire commitments to students own shares and opinions. Overall, after PBL approval learners are given the opportunity in which they can explore their own potential. The classroom is becoming the melting pot where every learner expresses his/ her own ideas.

In short, project based learning practices have a noteworthy effect over learners' promptness towards expressing their own thoughts during whole classroom discussion. From the previous results, it is clear that classroom learner autonomy witnessed a noticeable progress comparing to the numerical results of the pre-questionnaire of the present item thus it is possible to recognize the benefits of PBL approach to language learning in general and classroom learner autonomy in particular.

Item 03: I have a strong motivation to comment and debate ideas with classmates during whole class discussion

| Response alternative | Frequency | Percent (%) | Mean score | Std. Deviation |
|----------------------|-----------|-------------|------------|----------------|
| Sometimes | 4 | 21 | 3.263 | .805 |
| Most of the time | 6 | 31,6 | | |
| All the time | 9 | 47,4 | | |
| Total | 19 | 100 | | |

Table 20: learners' readiness for autonomous learning during whole classroom discussion

The results indicate that 21% of students still undergo reluctant responses towards expressing their individual beliefs, views and positions and the extent to which they believe those ideas are conducive to whole classroom discussion; however, (31.60%) developed greatly specially with regards to the results gathered in the preliminary questionnaire. We should also refer to 47.40% i.e. the furthestmost majority of our participants who acknowledged the effectiveness of PBL vis-à-vis their willingness to express their personal thoughts in EFL settings and consequently contribute to meaningful classroom.

Item 04: Thanks to projects, I am willing to monitor my learning process at every stage

| Response alternatives | Frequency | Percent (%) | Mean score | Std. Deviation |
|-----------------------|-----------|-------------|------------|----------------|
| Sometimes | 3 | 15,8 | 3.526 | .772 |
| Most of the time | 3 | 15,8 | | |
| All the time | 13 | 68,4 | | |
| Total | 19 | 100 | | |

Table 21: The effect of project based learning over learners' monitoring ability

From the table above it is clear and apparent that the exposure to the norms of project-based learning develops learners monitoring ability significantly. From the results, 15.80% of the students stated that most of the time they largely examine and monitor their learning process. The great majority (84.20%) determined their complete capacity to monitor the learning process and learning development overall.

5. PBL in the EFL classrooms

Items within this cluster aim considerably at demonstrating the differences that may occur after incorporating PBL in the EFL setting. It consists of items that are slightly adjusted for ingeniously exploring the effect of PBL on learner autonomy during whole classroom discussion.

Item 05: Project work taught me to take part freely in classroom discussions

| Response alternative | Frequency | Percent (%) | Mean score | Std. Deviation |
|----------------------|-----------|-------------|------------|----------------|
| Sometimes | 1 | 5,3 | 3.473 | .611 |
| Most of the time | 8 | 42,1 | | |
| All the time | 10 | 52,6 | | |
| Total | 19 | 100 | | |

Table 22: Learners' voluntarism during classroom discussion after implementing PBL in the EFL classroom

After having the necessary exposure to PBL practices, almost all learners revealed having the complete capacity to take part excessively during whole class discussion. We notice from the table that only one student from 19 participants still remains taking part very little. While 42.10% are involved most of the time active and engaging. 52.10% in the same vein reported taking part all the time. From the previous results, we conclude that PBL as a learning approach owe fundamental parameters of valuable learning experience.

Item 06: Thanks to project work, I gradually became aware of the role I am required to fulfill in classroom discussion

| Response alternative | Frequency | Percent (%) | Mean score | Std. Deviation |
|----------------------|-----------|-------------|------------|----------------|
| Sometimes | 1 | 5,3 | 3.631 | .697 |
| Most of the time | 5 | 26,3 | | |
| All the time | 13 | 68,4 | | |
| Total | 19 | 100,0 | | |

Table 23: Learners' level of awareness after implementing project work among Master I students

Mostly all the respondents viewed that project work is an effective learning strategy and subsequently agreed that PBL has gradually heightens their entire awareness for autonomous learning it is up to them to know what to give importance to and what to spend more time on beforehand. Thus, we can distinguish the prevalence of students saying either they are aware most of the time (26.30%) or all the time (68.40%), whereas only one participant demonstrated momentary reactions.

From the previous results, we can admit the fruitfulness of PBL as a learning instrument to arouse learners' latent skills. In the current study, our focus was on learner level of responsiveness during whole class discussion.

Item 07: Project work helped me to manage some sorts of linguistic problems that can emerge during classroom discussion

| Response alternative | Frequency | Percent (%) | Mean score | Std. Deviation |
|----------------------|-----------|-------------|------------|----------------|
| Most of the time | 8 | 42,1 | 3,578 | ,507 |
| All the time | 11 | 57,9 | | |
| Total | 19 | 100,0 | | |

Table 24: developing communication strategies among EFL learners

It is true that developing management strategies in EFL setting is a step further towards becoming autonomous learner able to solve some practical and immediate linguistic issues in relation to whole class discussion. In the post questionnaire analyses, our respondents accordingly exposed a noticeable and thus a significant progress regarding their management capacities, for instance 57.90% of them established their complete ability to manage those problems with 42.10% of participants who approximately practice the statement most of the time.

These results indicates that the experience of project work allowed Master I students noticeably to more skillfulness in managing effectively the course of their own learning.

Item 08: Thanks to project work, I become more capable to sequence my learning process especially during project presentation.

| Response alternative | Frequency | Percent | Mean score | Std. deviation |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|------------|----------------|
| Most of the time | 9 | 47,4 | 3.526 | .512 |
| All the time | 10 | 52,6 | | |
| Total | 19 | 100 | | |

Table 25: Learners' capability to sequence the learning process

The aim of this statement is to measure if participants' ability to self-sequence the different stages of the project presentation and thus the learning process overall is progressed after using project as part of their own learning. The data gathered in the table above expresses significant achievements. For instance, the whole population displayed a full ability by either saying most of time (47.40%) or all the time (52.60%), those results accordingly are an evident indicator of the level of autonomy learners achieved after using PBL.

Item 09: As I am involved in projects, I always reflect on my learning process later than.

| Response alternative | Frequency | Percent(%) | Mean score | Std. Deviation |
|----------------------|-----------|------------|------------|----------------|
| Sometimes | 3 | 15,8 | 3.368 | .760 |
| Most of the time | 6 | 31,6 | | |
| All the time | 10 | 52,6 | | |
| Total | 19 | 100,0 | | |

Table 26: projects effect over learners' ability to reflect on the learning process

As we can see from the table, the all the participants estimate that their ability to reflect on the learning process is promoted comparing to their previous experiences. The results show that 52.60% of the students spend efforts in their learning process regarding the way they string different elements to homogenous meaningful whole to facilitate the understanding of their content. We can also distinguish 47.40 % of our respondents who are most of the time prearranged to reflect on the learning experiences. Project presentation consequently pushes the learning implicitly to undergo reflective reactions in the course of their learning.

Item 10: I always intend to supply my viewpoints, thoughts, and knowledge during whole class discussion.

| Response alternative | Frequency | Percent | Mean score | Std. Deviation |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|------------|----------------|
| Sometimes | 5 | 26,3 | 3.157 | .834 |
| Most of the time | 6 | 31,6 | | |
| All the time | 8 | 42,1 | | |
| Total | 19 | 100,0 | | |

Table 27: learners' enthusiasm to deliver ideas and personal views during whole class discussion

Concerning this item, it is quintessential to note that some students i.e. (26.30%) still experience hesitant reactions regarding their volition to convey their ideas and views. 31.60% on the other hand illustrate higher level of willingness to debate and communicate thoughts. 42.10% of them expose a complete progress with regards their ability and enthusiasm to deliver testing visions and endowing beliefs.

Item 10: PBL improved my turn taking behavior I become higher input generator.

| Response alternatives | Frequency | Percent (%) | Mean score | Std. Deviation |
|-----------------------|-----------|-------------|------------|----------------|
| Sometimes | 4 | 21,1 | 3.210 | .787 |
| Most of the time | 7 | 36,8 | | |
| All the time | 8 | 42,1 | | |
| Total | 19 | 100 | | |

Table 28: Turn taking behaviour with less teacher interference after incorporating project work

Given its importance in language learning turn taking behavior is recognized as being important in the course of autonomous learning and whole class discussion taking into account the active, conscious involvement of students with less apparent intervention of the teacher. After adopting project work in the EFL setting learners put on view their capacity to manage turn taking behavior as we can notice from the results, 42.10% of the students denote that the majority of the respondents had really benefited from projects, as they are completely capable of managing autonomously their turn taking behavior. In the same context (36.80%)

reflects that the remaining numbers have boost this ability most of the time except 4 of them who do this from time to time.

Item 11: I always negotiate ideas during project presentation and whole classroom discussion

| Response alternative | Frequency | Percent (%) | Mean score | Std. Deviation |
|----------------------|-----------|-------------|------------|----------------|
| Sometimes | 3 | 15,8 | 3.315 | .749 |
| Most of the time | 7 | 36,8 | | |
| All the time | 9 | 47,4 | | |
| Total | 19 | 100 | | |

Table 29: The ability to negotiate meaning among our informants

From the results obtained in table N° 25, students find in project presentation the appropriate surrounding to negotiate ideas and beliefs regarding the content of the discussion. Therefore, from 19 participants only three students remain incredibly not involved in the process of negotiating meaning. However, 36.80% of them are most of the time attentive to this important aspect in language learning. The majority of our respondents (47.40%) prefer to discuss their ideas and views in relation to the issues raised in classroom.

Based on the main results of this item, we confirm that effective learning lies in the engaging nature of social negotiation of meaning between two or more students with differing levels of skills and knowledge.

6. The Pre-Post Questionnaire Comparison

After the full analyses of both pre and post questionnaires, we move to the comparison of mean scores and standard deviations of pre and post-questionnaire results. The foremost objective of this comparison is to show the effect of project based learning on students' autonomy. In other words, we aim to compare statistically the level of students' autonomy before and after the inclusion of the treatment.

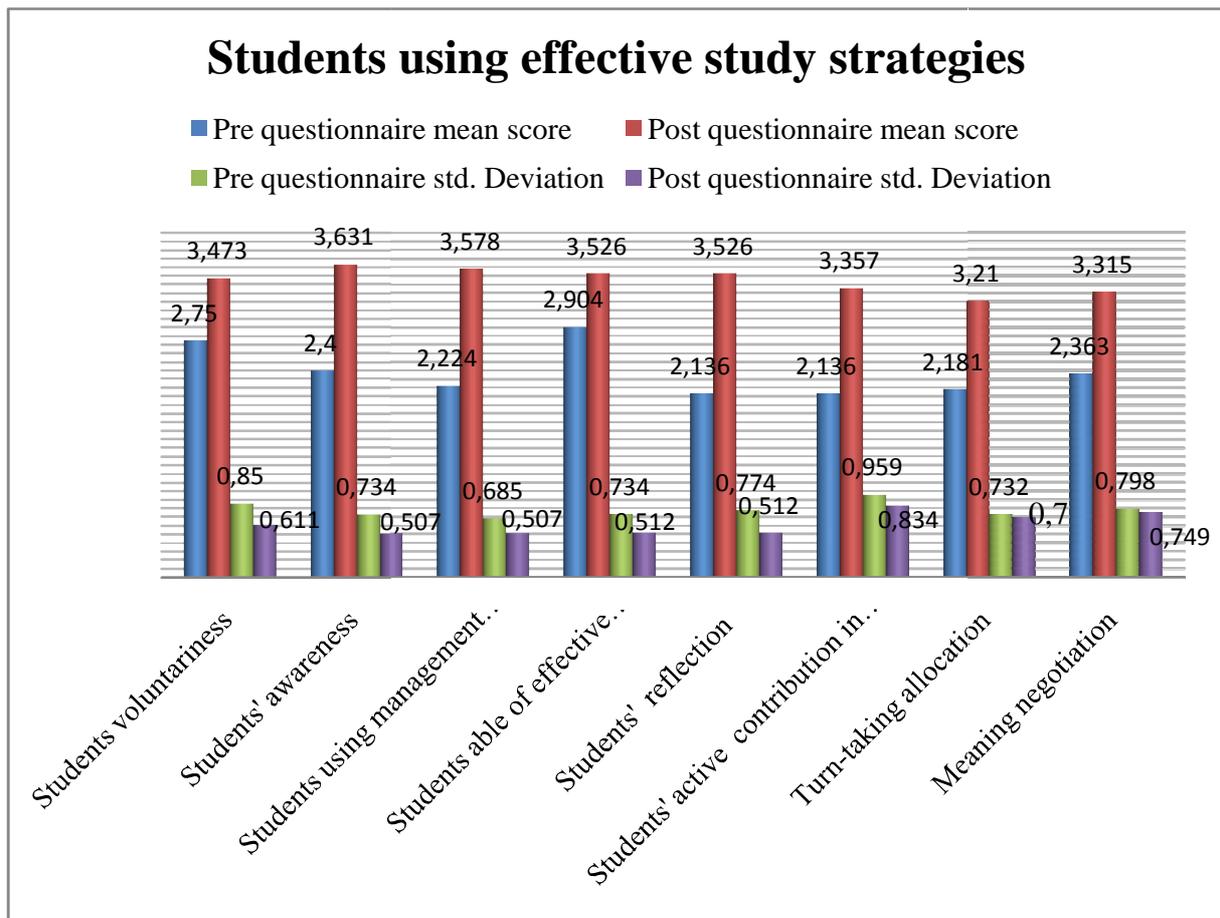


Figure 01: Students' Use Effective Study Strategies

The above graph displays the means and standard deviations of the pre and post-questionnaire results concerning the theme “learners’ use of effective study strategies”. It is worth noticing in the graph above that the mean score of each autonomous behavior has progressed considerably after learning through projects. For instance, students have developed their willingness to take part unconditionally during whole class discussion with a difference of 0.723 between mean score of both pre and post questionnaire, which is significant regarding the pre mean score of the item. In addition, and regarding the extreme importance of students’ awareness in the course of autonomy practice, our subjects exhibited a positive attitude regarding their actual level of awareness after being given the necessary space to hold on responsibility of different aspects of their own learning. As we notice in the diagram, the mean score in the pre questionnaire is 2.400 while in the post questionnaire it achieved 3,631 the difference that can be clearly understood with reference to the standard deviation of the item as pre questionnaire standard deviation is 0.685 whereas in the post questionnaire it hold

up to 0.507). Overall, students become predominantly aware of their learning, which signifies the basic introductory stage of autonomy. Concerning the matter of students' ability to use management strategies they demonstrate having the ability to countenance with some linguistic difficulties during whole classroom discussion with a reasonable progress from the pre to post questionnaire correspondingly as we see in the graph the pre questionnaire mean score is 2.224 and in the post, it reached 3.578. In a similar vein, students' capacities to self-sequence the different stages of the learning process illustrate an adequate improvement in the post-mean score. Students attained 3.526 after being approved the opportunity to sequence the different stages of their projects with a pre mean score estimated with 2.904 all along with standard deviations analysis, which ranged between; 0.734 to 0.512 in the pre-post questionnaire respectively such results indicate another argument on the effectiveness of PBL over learners autonomy. According to the data demonstrated in the graph, we presume that projects helped students also to reflect on their learning and learning processes as we find our participants able to contribute to whole class discussion, which is considered as a step further towards being more autonomous along with turn taking allocation and meaning negotiation where our participants progressed fundamentally.

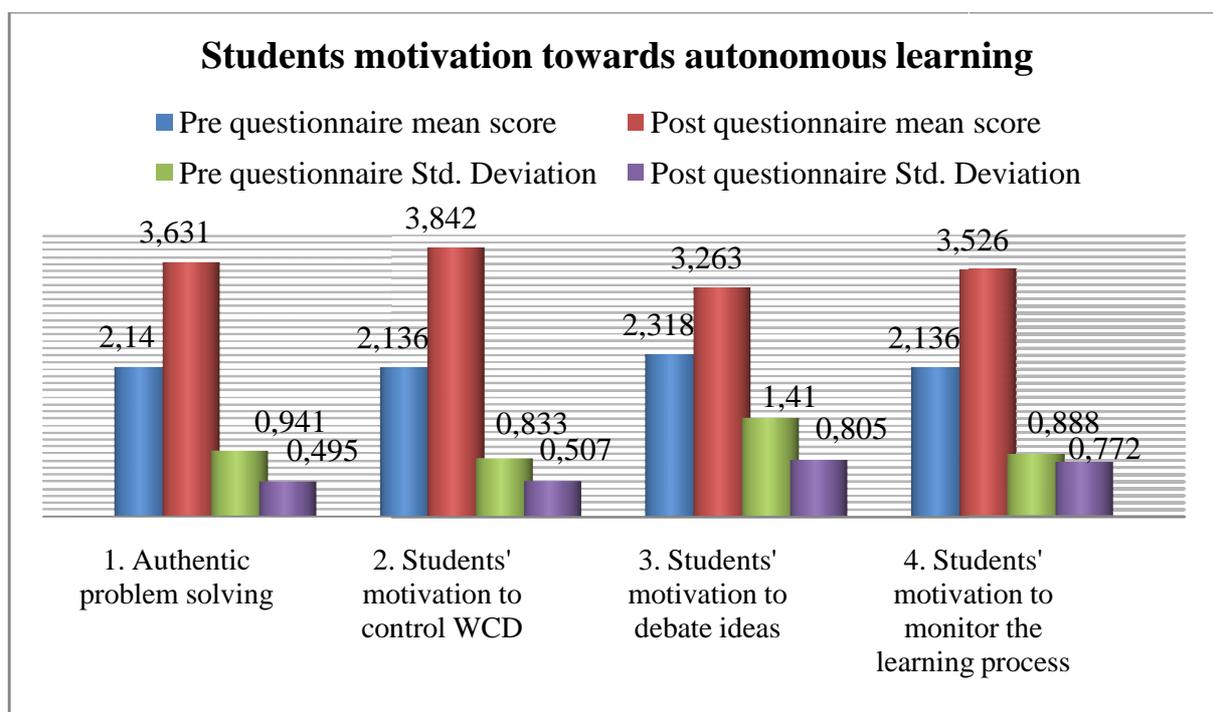


Figure 02: Comparison between the Descriptive Statistics of the Pre and Post Questionnaire for the theme Students using effective Study Strategies.

In the second graph, we compare between the means and standard deviations of the pre and post questionnaire regarding students' level of motivation towards autonomous learning. The data reported in the graph shows that the highest mean score in the pre questionnaire is 2.318 whereas the lowest mean is 2.136. On the other hand, we can expose 3.842 and 3.263 as being the highest and the lowest means of the post questionnaire respectively. The aforementioned numerical results indicate a traceable progress as regards the enhanced motivational level of the students after learning through projects. With reference to the standard deviation of both the pre and the post questionnaire one can recognize deviating findings from pre to post results. To explain, the average standard deviation is approximately close to 1.018 in the pre questionnaire whereas the post questionnaire hold back to 0.644 which indicates the common and share attitudinal effect of the treatment among our participants.

7. Interpretation of the Results

Students responses confirm that project based learning has a positive effect over their autonomy. This proves the hypothesis stated so far in the general introduction of the present study. During project work, students have been familiarized with many effective study strategies what permits further space for autonomy tuition. Moreover, the respondents developed a larger sense of motivation towards holding responsibility for their own leaning as they are given the opportunity to make significant decisions. In the comparison drawn between mean scores and standard deviations of the pre post questionnaire the results show a clear increase in the mean scores during the post questionnaire results and an obvious decrease in standard deviations from pre to post questionnaire which signifies the common views hold from the respondents of the current study.

1.4. The Analysis of Students' Semi-Structured Interviews

Students' semi-structured interviews inquired about students' understanding of autonomous learning. The interviewees asked to elaborate on whether they think about projects as a learning instrument to promote their autonomy and mainly if it helped them to use English language in authentic discussions. Finally, we will show its effect on the classroom environment overall by means of participants experiences.

The interview items are guide included into three item categories obeying our fundamental objective and inductive order reasoning. The item categories are subsequently demonstrated in what follows: classroom learner autonomy: learner views- PBL a space for classroom autonomy - PBL to promote discussion skills in EFL setting.

1.4.1 Classroom Learner Autonomy: Learner Views

The first question in this section solicits students' views on the fact that autonomy is a state that exists among all individuals but requires a certain level of training by means of activities. Students have the following answers:

Vis-à-vis the recurrent responses among our participants, we sufficiently reported some students answers with regard to the overall views of all participants.

The first interviewee reported that each student exhibits a certain level of autonomy and the exercise of that internal state might vary as individual learners are at variance. Furthermore, she demonstrated that learner training by means of activities would be conducive to nurture autonomy among EFL learners especially with a strong willingness to engage in authentic and real world language activities.

Another interviewee understands the concept of autonomy as a state that exists among all individual students worldwide. In our context, students display their readiness to take charge with differing levels even different levels within one activity. Essentially, they are working with partial detachment from their teachers. The student assumed,

"I agree that each student in the world has got this notion of autonomy but the exercise of such construct may differ from one time to another and from one contextual activity to another. Essentially, we are working partially apart from our teachers. "

Overall, the learner believes that everyone is embedded with the force to proceed autonomously. Therefore, if the learning approach corresponds with learners' self-esteem, motivation, self worth learners will largely take part in the planning of their learning.

Through what the third interviewee said, we conclude that autonomy is a natural product in humans, and which is manifested among learners in diverse degrees. In this context another participant reported,

“Autonomy can be generated and developed further by means of activities but its basis is relatively natural and innate.”

Given its importance in the field of language learning, our participant described the concept of autonomy as a predominant characteristic that should be encouraged in and among learners regardless of their foregoing experiences with classroom learner autonomy. Generating such view among our participant directed us to confirm the level of awareness learners achieved after the treatment took place.

“What is important is to develop learners' level of autonomy by thoughtful means regardless of their previous experiences. It is true that the level of autonomy is not equal among us this is why we can distinguish higher achievers, and low effective learners.”

Our contender perceived autonomous learning as a critical capacity that should be enough cultivated in formal educational context rather than elsewhere. Despite the domestic aptitude of any individual for autonomous learning, effective learning tools would be greatly requisite. In this context she proclaimed,

“All students owe this kind or state of autonomy, which is different from one learner to another. The most important for me, is to develop my critical thinking capacity by myself.”

Regarding the question “along project work, how do you like the teacher to act: as a helper, dominator or others please say why in each?”, the following extracts from the students' interviews captured an overall significant response to this question.

A noteworthy aspect when this question was put into action is the total concurrence among students' answers. In fact, all the subjects believe in the teacher as being a helper and a pedagogical mediator who facilitates the development of autonomy among EFL learners. The teacher should always supply learners with techniques and opportunities to have a say in their

learning actions. In short, he should be significantly concerned with how effective EFL classes should be tailored rather than mere dominator and knowledge supplier, the students admitted.

Among student answers in this context, we can state the following:

“During project presentation, I like my teacher to act as a facilitator intervene only when necessary to add something to what we ourselves report. When the teachers act as a guide and facilitator, we feel ourselves fundamentally responsible.”

1.4.2. PBL a Space for Learner Autonomy during Whole Classroom Discussion

The second category of students answers find out about students experiences with PBL. The following students’ responses to the question “are projects the appropriate tool to reach autonomy among learners?”, are crucial to our objective in many aspects.

A noteworthy feature when this question was raised is the state of enthusiasm learners determined. For instance, the first respondent illustrated that project based learning belong to one of the best autonomous practices that help EFL learners become more and more autonomous the student claimed ,

“Yes, projects are very efficient tool to attain autonomy in learners. It allows us to search, discover, and understand knowledge of content. Decipher problems of relevance to our area within our group work through oral performance of authentic hard work.”

The student reported that she really enjoyed the experience of learning English language content through projects. Because they were not only done in-group but she was also given the space, where she can herself examine her efforts, capabilities, and mainly research skills.

Another student agreed that projects are quintessential in the course of autonomy development since it allowed her to develop various capacities.

“PBL gave me an opportunity to show my capacities and abilities.” The student reported.

In short, Project-based learning provides students with many opportunities to put into practice their freedom in the learning environment, where they give up waiting for systematic teacher- based commends. The student here believes in project work as a learning approach that

permits the gradual development of autonomy with progressively greater responsibility being taken by them. To illuminate, the student claimed while reflecting on her experience with PBL.

“Projects are very efficient tool to help learners develop autonomy because the student will be always discovering, searching, manipulating in fact, he will learn by his own decisions with his own pace.”

Within the same significance, another student reported a great favour to this learning approach in accordance with the advantages and the progress they reached this year. In fact, learners thrive to new learning experiences when their own progress, views, ideas and attainments are the priority. In this context our respondents speaks about her actual reaction towards PBL practices saying:

“I learnt many new things comparing to the previous years, now it is possible for me to express my own views, and interact with my peers we really enjoyed the atmosphere, the teacher is a helper only we ourselves decide on how to learn the English language content.”

The last respondent believes that the more the learning experience is engaging the better it would help in the completion of the learning development among learners. She yet affirmed,

“Projects are the best tool to reach autonomy in learners. Thanks to such approach, I developed skills; I attained more efforts delivery, and finally, I could reach higher research and presentation skills.”

Regarding the degree to which students develop their entire potential, it is obvious to state, *“PBL approach to language learning is creatively effective to more autonomy and thus attainments among learners.”*

Concerning the question “would you please list some advantages you have reached while doing project presentations?”, the following comments are representative of the students’ views.

The student under study approached PBL as being not a peripheral activity in language learning but rather a proposal of effective learning.

“It allowed me not only higher level of autonomy but also a deep understanding of content, higher self-esteem, high self-confidence, lower speaking anxiety and finally, a

required conversational and discussion skills. In short, as PBL is incorporated in all our subject matter I started to take charge of my own learning."

The student affirmed that through projects she could develop a certain level of autonomy. Therefore, it is self-evident to confirm that all answers fall in the view that autonomy is always initiated, encouraged and developed when projects are implemented.

1.4.3 PBL to Encourage Discussion Skills among Learners in the EFL Setting

In relation to the question “while projects are presented, are you voluntarily motivated to play a more active role in-group discussion? Please How does this happen?”, students have the opinions below:

Through our direct contact with the respondents, the interviewees rigorously held that projects confirmed their ideal way of learning. She established that PBL approach especially during whole class discussion abridged their capabilities in language use, expertise, communication strategies and especially serendipitous opportunities.

“During project presentation, I always try to involve myself, I frequently comment on my partners' ideas; provide some extra information on the subject matter”. The student argued.

Through the previous believe and viewpoint PBL is portend as the suitable strategy through which we can achieve classroom autonomy among our learners especially during project presentation and subsequently whole class discussion.

Another intervened student agreed that project presentation provides the framework and or the pedagogical setting to take part unconditionally during whole class discussion. It is this way of learning that stimulates her to interact with either project presenters or the rest of observer evaluators. She thus reported,

“Project presentation encourages me to discuss with my classmates either by asking questions, expanding the topic by more elements, agree or disagree about a given idea and most importantly release and contribute to sound EFL classroom.”

To delve in students’ experiences of how they take the initiative to adjust your project presentation to satisfy your mates’ expectations the following responses are described:

Along the project presentation phase, I think that it is a prerequisite to develop implicit and explicit capacities to demonstrate knowledge. To both denote how well observer evaluators have understood the input being delivered, or enlarge the subject of the discussion.

At this level, the student continues her speech saying:

“Autonomous learning along project presentation should take deeper view by learners. It is obvious that the sooner learner reaches this level of autonomy the faster they guarantee a good project presentation and full class discussion.”

As the aim of project is to demonstrate skills and satisfy observer evaluators' needs, it is obvious to owe skills to display successfully artefacts that can be easily understood and thus sharable through expanding the borders and the limits of knowledge and background knowledge. The student claimed saying,

“I always simplify, paraphrase by using diagrams, effective project plans, illustrations, synonyms, and antonyms.”

Another participant in our interview described the experience of PBL within the EFL classroom saying:

“I am always keen to make of my speech and flow of ideas a coherent and well sequenced one I try hard to proceed from general to specific, from easy to difficult, from wide to the narrowed ideas such sequencing would help me and mostly my observer evaluators to follow and comprehend.”

Such interference helps us to corroborate the results of both our questionnaire or field observation and which confirms the active role of projects in getting students more engaged i.e. autonomous in their learning.

Only one student among eight participants highlighted that she still undergo reluctant reaction as regard to her engagement during classroom debate. The student described his experience saying: *“the fact of speaking up in front of the whole class is a big deal that requires sufficient time and training to be fostered at the moment I'm not motivated to share my ideas with my mates.”*

This category of items subsequently illustrates how project work involves EFL learners in whole class discussion. Some of our students' answers are stated taking into account that all the

participants displayed regular and genuine skilfulness in the way they described their own experiences with the treatment.

To reveal PBL influence over student discussion skills the following question is addressed: “project-based learning displays infinite opportunities to practice your speaking did you really developed your speaking skill as whole and classroom discussion skills (turn -taking- conversational skills- initiating- managing) in particular? Explain?”

As learners are given the framework to exercise their autonomy, all of them trust PBL as an effective approach to demonstrate their excitement to recognize themselves as sufficiently competent language speakers able to obey the appropriate roles of different language usage.

“Along my university career I have never felt myself able of developing my discourse competence to this extent. Without projects I think I could not reach such proficiency.”

Unlike the preceding years the project work gave them the necessarily space to develop towards autonomous language communicators. In this context, the student claimed,

“Unlike the previous years, project work gave us the opportunity to have much time to speak in classroom ... in addition to developing conversational and presentation skills I easily debate, criticise when necessary, agree or disagree with others’ opinions. Overall, we become more critical, attentive and even open-minded our classroom is really enjoyable.”

1.4.4. Interpretation of Students Experiences and the Description on Classroom Atmosphere

In the light of the interview data, one can claim that Master I AL/ELT students developed certain skilfulness in autonomous engagement especially when project topics are important and the content relevant. With the implication of projects as learning approach in the EFL settings, students seem to acquire a gradual constructed notion of autonomy along whole classroom discussions including their ability to discuss ideas, responsibility they demonstrate for their own learning, the level of awareness and self-engagement they attained. Furthermore, learners show that they could manage their learning in ways in which contributed to momentous and substantial classroom atmosphere.

Field Observation

Introduction

In our study, classroom observation is one of the purposeful data collection techniques. It facilitates the gathering of various aspects of learner classroom autonomy mainly on the four autonomous behaviours: initiation, management, inter group awareness, and reflection before, while and after incorporating our treatment. In addition, we openly sought to reveal how these autonomous behaviours are manifested among our participants during whole class discussion and essentially describe the classroom atmosphere after incorporating project based learning.

1. The Collected Data

For the sake of comprehensive qualitative data, we started our observation even before implementing PBL model, and then after we started our experiment with three other modules with differing workshops, where project work is the targeted classroom approach. The observation of learner autonomy development has lasted for two months and half. We also decided to have such length because the notion of classroom learner autonomy requires sufficient time to be observed and subsequently decide whether those targeted autonomous behaviours have progressed thanks to the treatment not anything else. The purpose behind is to diminish the control of extraneous variables.

Along classroom observation, we have tried to assemble and sequence information under the headings of the aforementioned autonomous behaviours the following are some of them. It is essential to note that those statements concern project presenters as well as observer evaluators.

1.1. Initiation

- Class members take initiatives to ask questions and generate discussions.
- Each member of the project presenters is ready to engage independently in the presentation of his/her own share of the project in his/her own way.
- Project presenters take initiatives to modify the way the project is presented to convene with their mates' expectations without the interference of the tutor.

1.2. Management strategy

- Students make choice of the material to be used.
- Project presenters seem to take profit from project presentations to improve their oral presentation skills
- The teacher is perceived as a guide and learners enjoy the atmosphere.
- Demonstrate a willingness to deviate their weaknesses to achieve better success. (They make use of strategic competence...ect).

1.3. Inter Group Awareness

- Class members are attentive, comment on the project work and exchange ideas
- The group members feel motivated with a strong sense of responsibility.
- Each student creates his/her own chance to discuss problems, clarify ambiguities, as well as difficulties

1.4 Reflection

- Each member has the ability to assign his/her own touch for the presentation
- Project presenters reflect independently on how to use the available resources (board, the class size. . .) to suit their presentation.
- Students master well discussion norms and seize the appropriate opportunity to take turn in the discussion.

3. Interpretation of the Results

After having observed the group of Master I over a period of two months and half, the observation sessions confirmed that incorporating project work among Master subjects resulted in a noticeable progress as regards students' engagement during whole class discussion and the classroom overall ambience.

3.1. Before Implementing PBL

Before implementing project approach in the EFL classroom and based on our attendance in more than four sessions before the treatment took place, we have noticed that the concept of autonomy was not sufficiently experienced in the learning process among Master I students. Initially, the researcher becomes aware that learners are still relatively distant from different decisions regarding their learning especially in relation to how they engage during whole class discussion.

All along this period, the teacher remains the foremost manager and the most dependable element of all the learning matters. In fact, students' level of motivation during classroom debates and learning commitment remains inadequate especially concerning students' engagement, reflection, awareness, management in class debates. Surprisingly, and despite the moderate educational volition among learners, only some of them reflect, manage, and cooperate around a given content. The overall classroom climate was not sufficiently involving in a way to engage students to participate in whole class discussions.

After the endorsement of the treatment for the first while, students' engagement varied as the main project topic and individual students themselves are at variance.

3.2. The Early Start of PBL Approach

Along this phase, learners reflection, management, and awareness were not a permanent state that can be firmly observed and thus draw conclusion on it. In fact, students at the early beginning of the experiment demonstrated dissimilar involvement and autonomous engagement from one topic to another and from one context to another. Benson (2001) in this regard claimed, "*[A]utonomy is a multidimensional capacity that will take different forms for different individuals and even with the same individual in different context or at different times.*"

Subsequently, our decision of two months and half period of experiment can be reasonably backed up. Autonomy development requires an interlock of some capacities in students all along with sufficient exposure to effective work plans as the case with PBL.

To illustrate, we have noticed that students' ability to initiate a discussion was not generated among all the students at the early start even though they remained all attentive on what project presenters have reported. As a result, we conclude that the ability to initiate, raise awareness, reflect and manage the learning process still needed more training to be fully developed among our students.

3.3. While implementing PBL extensively in the EFL Classroom

After an extensive spotlight with project work (more than five sessions project-based learning) students' progress received another dimension not only regarding initiating roles in whole class discussion but also concerning the way students become aware of their personnel strengths and opportunities. They also learnt how and why negotiation within a group work is

beneficial for larger attainment in the L2; the classroom becomes the melting container for various viewpoints, ideas and criticism.

One of the ways learners become actively involved in controlling their own learning is by taking profit from this space to increase their engagement. Learners are not predominantly teacher oriented even though learners still attach an immense importance to teacher feedback and guidance when necessary as we have noticed in several times students asking by themselves the teacher on how well they have performed. Here we should mention that projects provide learners with the required opportunities for independent thinking what is in live with Egenrieder (2010:40) view “*students use these moments of autonomy to define their identity, establish their uniqueness, and connect with likeminded others.*”

Thanks to projects work students seem to be less obedient to classical classroom culture where intergroup awareness, reflection, management strategies and students voluntariness are partially or completely put sideways. We observed students who are enthusiastic to comment on their partners’ presentations. Most of the time they succeed to create classroom norms where each individual learner invariably brings the version of student working happily in groups, individually aware about the roles they are required to fulfil, and freely deliver their points of views. To back up our observation, Benson (2001) argued, “*in general, we may be able to observe whether learners display a greater degree of autonomy in particular aspects of their learning in relation with ways they reflect on the value of their learning and the value of their learning activity.*”

Conclusion

To conclude with what Solomon (2003) says, “*PBL is a process of learning in which students are responsible for their own education. Students work collaboratively to solve problems that are authentic, curriculum based and often interdisciplinary.* The success of classroom learner autonomy is to a great extent determined by an effective learning approach that in it turn lead to supporting classroom atmosphere where every individual learner is responsible for his own education and mainly able of different decision making.

Section Three: Research Ethical Practices

Introduction

Knowledge about research ethical practices is a prerequisite primarily among novice researchers. After generating relevant questions, formulating clear and testable hypothesis, selecting appropriate and practical research design. We thereafter opted for confidential rules to comply the fundamental parameters of sound research. For instance, full details of our ethic package are established in what pursue.

1. Informed Consent

Before administering our questionnaire (pre-post questionnaire) or setting for formal observation sessions, the targeted lecturers and research participants were formally asked for permission and previously informed about our research interest. Furthermore, as we are concerned in field observation and recording samples of field notes, we decided after the discussion with our supervisor to have both her approval in addition, to the teachers with whom we worked along one semester. We provided the targeted teachers with samples of descriptive field notes and asked whether what we reported in our notes is what really took place along the period of experiment.

2. Anonymity

Anonymity is a means by which the identity of participants is protected. Prior to our study students were explicitly informed that the questionnaires, which are asked to fulfill are entirely anonymous and the information they provide are going to be treated with care and they serve as a valuable contribution to the course of our research objective.

3. Confidentiality (Equity Issues)

Participants' unwillingness to contribute in research is a very common issue worldwide. More particularly keeping the same level of motivation to be involved is always a problematic. I always kept students' freedom to withdraw as a standard. In addition to students with low expectation that need to be deliberately solved, the researcher remains the pointer who motivates students to participate in research through open discussions and deep respects of our respondents. Therefore, we maintained the confidentiality of our participants

through keeping their responses serves merely the objective of our study regardless the level of knowledge of individual learners.

4. Overt Observation

Overt observation is a kind of observation where students are explicitly informed that they are going to be under study. In our research, students were previously informed that we are going to observe them during an interlude and we asked whether our presence would not prevent the ordinary processing of their presentations. All students maintained that we are a source of motivation.

Section Four: Limitations and suggestions for Future Research

Introduction

The main goal of this study was to explore the effect of project-based learning on students' classroom autonomy during whole class discussion. In the following lines the limitations are acknowledged, implications of the study and recommendations for further research are announced.

1. Limitations

Regarding the tentative nature of our study, some limitations need to be acknowledged either the conceptual or the methodological ones:

First, the concept of autonomy in itself was a source of limitation in our study especially at the practical part, as most EFL students tend to associate and figure out the concept of learner autonomy as being a purely an individualistic matter.

Second, autonomy related concepts were used interchangeably among our participants during the semi-structured interview. Learners for instance, used concepts as self-regulation, self- directed learning, and individual learning to indicate their experiences with learner classroom autonomy.

Third, another important limitation that needs to be reported here is the nature of autonomy as a multi faceted concept, which requires large amount of time for exploration, and one semester investigation is not enough.

Moreover, the areas of learner classroom autonomy that are concerned with investigation in our study are students' ability to use effective study strategies, and the students' motivational level towards autonomous learning. Autonomy as a complex concept requires assessing as much as possible of capacities to guarantee the effectiveness of any treatment what is not the case in our research due to limitation in time and resources.

Fourth, our study was limited to a small exploratory group. Thus, the context of our research can be a source of limitation. The current study attempted to explore the effect of PBL on autonomy development during whole class discussions. It can be claimed that the findings from the present research will be consistent with other EFL learners in the same context and quite inconsistent or conflicting with other specialties of learning.

Fifth, the absence of a control group prevented us not only from random treatments of subjects but also influenced the control over extraneous variables and larger reliability of our results.

In similar vein, the total absence of background research about project-based learning at the level of our home institution gave us motivation on one hand and some difficulties on the other (neither articles, nor thesis or books are available on the topic of PBL).

2. Suggestion and Recommendations

The numbers of limitations in this study help us draw a set of possible implications and suggestions for further research. The following lines shed light on some possible suggestion on two levels

1. Suggestions for EFL learners
2. Suggestions for EFL teachers

1. Suggestion for EFL Learners

First, in addition to autonomy development most students shown that PBL helped them to higher self-esteem and lower speaking anxiety level. Research in these areas of study will be highly constructive.

Second, to confirm the result of our study, it is motivating to examine our research hypothesis among other groups using numerous subjects to facilitate the generalizability of our data in either different or similar educational settings.

Third, as project based learning is already defined as an integrative classroom approach par excellence one can explore the effect of PBL on students' achievements and attitudes in English language learning.

2. Suggestions for EFL Teachers

As there is an intimate relationship between autonomy and the use of educational technology, EFL teachers can assist learners to exhibit more autonomy development through projects with the help of various technological aids.

In a similar view, EFL teachers may make use of daily journals and written diaries to support student to evaluate and reflect more on how well they have progressed in project presentations what will stimulate them to develop a sense of responsibility for their own learning and in various language skills.

Project work is a fundamental means to promoting autonomy among learners this is way teachers' tactful feedback, sequential orientations and ongoing guidance would be enormously conducive to its growth. The teacher is always professed as a source of motivation for learners and this would help them enormously to adapt to their autonomous learning rules.

If EFL teachers provide students with the opportunity to experience authentic resources and use English language for meaningful communication these would increase their level of motivation, self- confidence, and a noticeable progress in study and research skills.

Shifting the equilibrium from teacher directed-teaching to learner-centred learning is complex. Teachers need to take on the role as the facilitator while bringing the problems to the students keeping in mind that learning and thus attainments are about more than content, it is about your students thoughts.

As some EFL students still experience the feeling of reticence during oral presentation and whole class discussions, persuasive communication for instance, can be conducive to foster students' attitudes for autonomous learning as wenden (1998:126) believes, "*the communication comprises facts that show what learners can do to attain autonomy...*"

Finally, an important subject that needs to be enlightened by both EFL learners and teachers is the issue of evaluation i.e. how project experience and performance are brought collectively to be evaluated.

Conclusion

In the present research paper, we intended greatly at exploring the effect of project-based learning on learner autonomy during whole class discussions. In other words, we tested the hypothesis, which state that if learners have the necessary exposure to PBL expertise this would result in an increase in learner autonomy during whole class discussion. Actually, the period of our experiment, the statistical results obtained from the pre-post questionnaires as well as students' semi structured interviews and samples of field notes helped us to confirm the usefulness of project work as a learning tool to arouse learner autonomy during class discussions.

In short, learners along their projects raise the necessary motivation and used effective study strategies that helped them to adopt the main principles of autonomous learners in simple words, learners could reach a significant but not entire development in their autonomy.

General Conclusion

The study at hand sought to explore the effect of project based learning on learner autonomy during whole classroom discussion. We considerably aimed at testing whether learning through project would help Master I AL/ELT students at the Department of English, University of Bejaia, to promote their ability to use the target language to engage autonomously, communicate freely and contribute to manage unconventionally their class discussions. To test the aforementioned hypothesis two main chapters were designed.

From the early start of the theoretical perspective of our work, we markedly aimed to select the proper literature that corresponds to our research objective by demonstrating works in which clear scientific evidence between project-based learning and learner classroom autonomy was stated. Then after, comes the practical chapter in which more accurate statistics and insightful descriptions were carried out to reach meaningful conclusions.

To overcome any possible shortcoming of one single methodology the present work relied on a mixed methodology consisting of both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. The former implies the use of experiment with pre and post questionnaires to compare the results in terms of means and standard deviations. Whereas, the second involves field observation, students' semi-structured interviews, and finally samples of descriptive field notes.

The analysis of the data gathered from the different instruments indicated the following results:

First, on the merits of the data gathered from all the instruments used in our study, a noteworthy progress in learner autonomy was accomplished among all the participants under investigation. Students demonstrated a noticeable progress in their autonomy after implementing project based learning.

Second, the study of students' autonomy development through the direct contact with individuals' experiences throughout students' semi structured interviews, field observations or samples of field notes revealed a perceptible and acceptable developments in the extent to which students developed their classroom discussion skills and communication strategies.

Third, with project based learning support, the classroom environment becomes the crucible for different opinions, thoughts, and criticism. Most master I AL/ELT students

reported a genuine impression towards project based learning practices according to the majority of them PBL allowed them the necessary space for their own volitions, ideas, and decisions.

Ultimately, for any possible future research in the area of autonomy it would be beneficial to take into account the set of previously mentioned limitations replicating the work in longer period, investigating other aspects of autonomy practice, and other areas of language skills.

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Appendices

APPENDIX 1 : The Pre- Questionnaire

University A_Mira, Bejaia

Faculty of Letters and Languages

Department of English

Master I AL/ELT Students

The researcher e-mail: *rahimaarib@gmail.com*

Pre- Questionnaire

Dear Students,

This questionnaire is part of a research study exploring the effects of project-based learning in providing a space for learner autonomy during whole class discussion. Your contribution is appreciated and the anonymity of your responses is guaranteed, so please feel free to respond.

Section One: Personal and Background Information

1) Age: 19/21

22/24

25/More

2) Gender: Male

Female

3) Proficiency Level: Average Good Very Good Excellent

4) Was English your: first Choice second Choice Other

5) Have you already experienced learning through projects? Yes

No

Section 2: Learner Autonomy during Whole Class Discussions

I. Learners Using Effective Study Strategies

| Statements | Not at all | Sometimes | Most of the time | All the time |
|--|-------------------|------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| 6) Do you voluntarily participate in class discussions ? | | | | |
| 7) Are you aware of the role you are required to fulfill in a class discussion? | | | | |
| 8) Are you able to manage the problems you may face during a class discussion (e.g. clarify, explain, argue...etc)? | | | | |
| 9) I significantly make efforts to evaluate and monitor my learning in the classroom | | | | |
| 10) I reflect on the content to be discussed in my English classes. | | | | |
| 11) I always intend to contribute to whole classroom discussion. | | | | |
| 12) I am able to manage turn taking allocation with less teacher interference | | | | |
| 13) I freely negotiate ideas while authentic content is taking place. | | | | |

II. Students' Motivation towards Autonomous Learning in EFL Classroom

| Statements | Not at all | Sometimes | Most of the time | All of the time |
|---|------------|-----------|------------------|-----------------|
| 15) Working in authentic problems is an effective technique to promote classroom autonomy and whole class discussion | | | | |
| 16) I believe my ideas will be conducive to developing my classroom discussion. | | | | |
| 17) I have a strong motivation to debate my ideas in classroom. | | | | |
| 18) I am motivated to learn English content via oral presentations and open debates. | | | | |
| 19) I have a strong willingness in monitor my learning process at every stage it is a sign of my autonomy growth. | | | | |

Thank you for your cooperation

APPENDIX 2 : The Post- Questionnaire

Students' Post- Questionnaire

Students' Motivation during Project Presentations

| Statements | Not at all | Sometimes | Most of the time | Almost of the time |
|--|------------|-----------|------------------|--------------------|
| 1) All over project work Iam convinced that project presentations and classroom discussions are helpful to learn English language content | | | | |
| 2) Thanks to projects, Iam willing to monitor my learning process at every stage it is a sign of my autonomy growth. | | | | |
| 3) Through project presentations, I believe my ideas will be conducive to developing my classroom discussion. | | | | |
| 4) During projects every student is willing to speak and discuss ideas the classroom is becoming enjoyable area | | | | |

Section 3: Project-Based Learning in the EFL Classroom

| Statements | Not at all | Sometimes | Most of the time | Almost of the time |
|--|-------------------|------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| 5) Project work trained me to take part freely in Classroom discussions | | | | |
| 6) Thanks to project work I become aware of the role I am required to fulfill in classroom discussion | | | | |
| 7) Project work helps me to manage all sorts of linguistic problems that may emerge during classroom discussion. | | | | |
| 8) As I am involved in projects, I can easily monitor my learning process at every stage. | | | | |
| 9) Thanks to projects I become more reflective | | | | |
| 10) I intend to supply my viewpoints, thoughts, and knowledge during whole class discussion. | | | | |
| 11). I always negotiate meaning during project presentation and whole classroom discussion | | | | |
| 12) PBL improved my turn taking behavior; I become higher input generator | | | | |
| 13)) Project help experience success at oral presentation and classroom discussion | | | | |

Your answers are valuable contribution

APPENDIX 3: Students' Semi Structured Interview

- 1.** Do you agree that autonomy is a state that exists among all students but it needs just certain training by means of activities?
- 2.** Are projects the appropriate tool to reach autonomy among learners? How?
- 3.** While projects are presented, are you voluntarily motivated to play a more active role in-group discussion? Please How does this happen?
- 4.** Along project presentations, how do you like the teacher to act as a helper, a dominator or a facilitator? Please, say why in each case?
- 5.** Would you please list some advantages you have reached while doing project presentations?
- 6.** How do you take the initiative to adjust (modify) your project presentation to well satisfy your mates' expectations and classroom discussion as whole?
- 7.** Project-based learning displays infinite opportunities to practice your speaking did you really developed your speaking skill as whole and classroom discussion skills (turn taking- interactional- conversational skills- initiating- managing) in particular? Explain?
- 8.** Do you find that your classmates' questions, comments and discussions are effective and helpful to create a workable and helpful EFL classroom? Say how?

Thank you for your faithful contributions

And best of luck

APPENDIX 4: Field Observation Checklist

| Learners' social behaviors | Learners' autonomous behaviors during whole class discussions (project presentations) | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| | Items | The rate of the number of the autonomous behaviors | | |
| | | Some of the time | Most of the time | Almost of the time |
| Reflecting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each member has the ability to assign his/her own touch for the presentation | | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project presenters reflect independently on how to use the available resources. | | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners master well discussion norms and seize the appropriate opportunity to take turn in the discussion | | | |
| Initiating | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class members take initiatives to ask questions and generate discussions. | | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each member of the project presenters is ready to engage independently in the presentation of his/her own share of the project in his/her own way. | | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project presenters take initiatives to modify the way the project should be presented to match with their mates expectations | | | |
| Inter- group awareness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class members are attentive and comment on the project work presenter and exchange ideas | | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group members feel motivated with a strong sense of responsibility | | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each student creates his/her own chance to discuss problems, clarify ambiguities, as well as difficulties | | | |
| Managing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students make choice of the material to be used. | | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project presenters seem to take profit from project presentations to improve their oral presentation skills | | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher is perceived as a guide and learners enjoy the atmosphere. | | | |

APPENDIX 05: Descriptive Field Note N°01

Adapted from the observation session n° three

December 14th, 2015

Location: building eight

Room: 16

Time allotted 13h00 – 14h20

Lexicology and vocabulary practice

Project topic: Lexical relations

The total number of the student: 20 students

The number of project presenters: two female students

The project presentation took place in building “8” room “16”. The project presenters took responsibility of demonstrating content on the main lexical relations that are frequently used by foreign language students.

First, the project presenters started their project arrangement by giving a brief outline on the board including a detailed definition of each lexical relation. Then after, they tactfully accompanied their definitions with meaningful examples in which the presenters faced restrained difficulties to carry out their meanings to the observer evaluators what rooted in a moderate interference of the tutor in order to guide students deliberately sequence their definitions and illustrations to achieve the innermost objective of the project.

Concerning the project processing, the two students have reported worthy but detailed definitions with many in-depth illustrations with sensible skillfulness in self-monitoring ability, reflection and in terms of management strategies. Even through, observer evaluators switched off with information the presenters maintained adequately the students’ interest with proper voice, volume, and speed.

The project presentation is worthy in term of students reasonable capability either project presenters or observer evaluators to interfere appropriately in order to express their thoughts, views and contributions regarding the topic of the discussion with thoughtful value of the norms of turn taking allocation and meaning negotiation.

Overall, the presenter members appear keen and energetic well enough to give a successful project presentation what raised a certain level of intergroup awareness among both project presenters and or observer evaluators.

The starting point of project implementation in the EFL classroom among our research participants resulted in the following conclusions:

- ❖ Both project presenters and observer evaluators demonstrate basic norms of autonomous learning with PBL principles mainly product presentation.
- ❖ Autonomy related adventures are to be sufficiently nurtured among students with enough awareness rising for autonomous learning.
- ❖ An insightful view on the second session project based learning denotes rationally that project based learning is a learning tool that may helpfully support students scaffolding towards autonomous learning and improved discussion skills.
- ❖ Moving the spotlight towards more learners centered and students' autonomous leaning the teacher takes hold of larger responsibility then before.
- ❖ The project based classroom atmosphere shift the balance towards encouraging more autonomy among our learners.

Via an insightful observation based on our attendance during the third project based learning sessions, we can dimly that classroom discussions are progressively becoming of great pleasurable for students learning.

In conclusion, PBL allowed the students the opportunity to start thinking on ways to refine and improve their own work. One of them showed a great wiliness to overcome her weaknesses. They also have certain and varied capabilities achieve better. PBL started to foster group presentation and engaged class discussion skills.

APPENDIX 06: Descriptive Field Note N°02

Adapted from the observation session n° 5

Location: Building Three

Room: 02

Time allotted: One hour and half

Didactics of English workshop

Project topic: Lesson Planning

The total number of the student: 17student

The number of project presenters: three students (one male and two females)

The students started first by providing a detailed outline on the board containing the main elements to be covered in the presentation. It is all about planning lessons, its definition, the main objectives behind planning lessons, in addition to some prominent parameters to obey for effective sequencing and planning of lectures.

What is worth noticing in the presentation is the fact that the content is more focused and organized around the chosen topic (knowing that learners are given the freedom to choice autonomously their own topic from a number of alternatives).

Largely, each project presenter had the ability to take full responsibility over his or her own share of the presentation regarding the following aspects turn taking behavior and inter group awareness. The latter are measured as being central in project presentation and which obviously demonstrate learners' awareness about how the presentation should be sequenced rationally to achieve their objectives and satisfy the observer evaluators expectations.

The project presenters always reflect on the content they deliver with indicating certain skillfulness in the way they involve their classmates. Among the criteria that helped them achieve such purpose we mention the following

- Ask important questions
- Use some cues within their content what elicited a full class debates
- Provide illustrations using diagrams...in relation to their subject

Overall, they improved even further. They spoke confidently with a very modulated pace the

students were not hurried and end their presentation on time without any apparent interference from the teacher who took part as observer evaluator as all other students, noticing that her comments and viewpoints gave much confidence to the students either project presenters or the rest of the group.

Last, the project presenters thanked the audience and then the students were given the floor to discuss issues, involve missing points, reveal the ambiguous information and most importantly provide feedback on how well students succeed to transmit the intended meaning or failed to report the necessary data. This opportunity gave a larger space for many individuals to interfere and express their viewpoints freely and spontaneously.

The classroom then becomes the crucible where every individual learner is given a chance to reflect actively on their learning and the way that learning should be shaped for better achievements.

APPENDIX 07: Descriptive Field Note N°03

Adapted from the observation session n° two 06

February 22th, 2015

Location: building eight

Room: 16

Time allotted 11h20 – 12h50

Historical linguistics workshop

Project topic: Corpus linguistics

The total number of the student: 20 students

The number of project presenters: five students [5 females- 2males].

The observation sessions took place in building “08”. The total number of the group is 20 students with seven learners concerned with the project presentation. The presenters started first by developing a clear and concise outline including the main guiding principles of Corpus.

Largely, the project performers maintained very motivated, more relaxed and less apprehensive, regarding the way they **reflected** on the content, the way they **managed** and **sequenced** the project processing with less explicit interference from the teacher in furtherance to other aspects as turn taking allocation and **intergroup awareness**.

Every individual student could manage aspects of sound presentation. For instance, the members smoothly took their turn (deal) in either demonstrating ideas or responding to observer-evaluators’ comments, questions and criticism they improved even further they spoke clearly and at well modulated pace. They used their memorandum cards as a resource of guide and they sound natural and spontaneous.

In similar vein, students communicated their messages successfully regardless some grammatical mistakes, which had no risky impact neither over the authenticity of content nor the overall understanding of the observer-evaluators who generated infinite number of questions. In short, they succeeded to maintain the audience interests in both content and or the presentation skills they improved. A special tension was on learners’ reflection,

managements skills (time allotted- approximately all members finished on time- manage turn taking- students, view the teacher as a guide and a helper when necessary), intergroup awareness through each student creates his/her own chance to discuss problems, clarify ambiguities, as well as difficulties.

In conclusion, these reflections show that the students developed their presentation skills and classroom discussion ability during the project learning sessions the students understood what they had to do to be successful and autonomous along their learning since they are given the opportunity to make frequently the various decisions regarding their learning.

In summary, the classroom environment, students' project presentation skills, and classroom discussions are greatly developed.