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Reassessing the Implementation of Syllabi in Fostering Learner Autonomy & Performance

The Case of 3rd Year LMD English Students at Ahmed Salhi University Centre Naama

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Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Foreign Languages as a Partial Fulfillment for the Degree of Master in Linguistics

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DEDICATIONS

This study is wholeheartedly dedicated to my parents and siblings who have been the source of my inspiration and strength.

To Marcia & Adam, for their spiritual intelligence.

To Shams for nursing my soul.

To the memory of Akram.

To my true self.

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Abstract

Promoting learner autonomy is relevant in the field of Education and Applied Linguistics due to the multiple benefits it brings to the process of learning a new foreign language and performing well academically. However, despite the wide range of research on how to stimulate autonomy in the language classroom in order to endorse exceptional performance, it is still difficult to find a guided process to design syllabi and curricula focused on the development of learner autonomy. Although a syllabus is bound to be effective by some aspects if designed appropriately, the influence it may have on learners' autonomy and performance is still up for investigation. The current study is conducted to view the extent to which a syllabus can be effective in fostering EFL learners' autonomy and enhancing their performance. With the use of an observational research, students' questionnaire, and an interview with teachers, the data have been elaborated. Consequently, evaluating and analysing the results to plan further development of learner autonomy and academic performance. The findings probe that the majority of learners are highly dependent on a variety of aspects whether they originate from the teacher, the syllabus, or the ministry. Therefore, it is expected that they would fall under an immense confusion when facing a complicated, ambiguous syllabus or an inadequate one. For further development, it is definitive that learners' autonomy is based on whether they are encouraged to be self-assured and independent and if that independence relies on whether they are placed in front of a comprehensible syllabus or not. Learners tend to struggle with confusion, dependency, and therefore weak performance in their education. These consequences are almost because of the implementation of an inappropriate syllabus.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

EFL: English as a Foreign Language.

SDT: Self-Determination Theory.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The field of Applied Linguistics has always dealt with several issues such as the effective application of the curriculum and the syllabus inside classrooms questioning how much effectiveness they can generate, on the other hand learners are also proven by studies, to have a strong dependency on what is offered by the teacher or the syllabus, possessing no sense or belief of self-development; leading to an absolute failure in developing autonomy and increasing academic performance and involvement.

Various changes have occurred in different aspects of higher education because of the emergence of new approaches and theories. This work looks at the currents running through syllabus design. Since it is an important part of teaching methodology and it has undergone the changes through the processes of language curriculum development and syllabus design. Based on learners' needs and course objectives essential to require, a variety of syllabus types have been devised. Considered as both effective and non-effective in manner consistent with learner autonomy and performance. Additionally, Nunan (1988) suggests that with the evolution of the educational institutions it is probable that the traditional distinction between syllabus design and methodology has become blurred.

Therefore, the objectives of this research work can be summarised as follows:

- To investigate whether teachers and learners are provided with syllabi be it comprehensive or not.
- To examine how a syllabus is both designed and implemented in EFL education
- To notice if it could prompt effectiveness inside and outside of classrooms.
- To inquire what generates learner autonomy.
- To determine whether its effectiveness has the possibility of reinforcing learner autonomy leading to a confirmation of inquiry about how an effective syllabus and pristine autonomy influence academic performance.

The primary concern of this study is to devise high academic performance developed by learners themselves through their autonomous learning style generated by a syllabus design that is more probable to be effective when implemented in the classroom.

Accordingly, the main question below is set out in this research work as follows: *To what extent can syllabi be effective in fostering EFL learners' autonomy and performance?*

The following sub-questions are derived from the previous main question:

- On what criteria do educators design the syllabi?
- On what measures can learners develop autonomy in learning?
- Can an effective syllabus endorse learners' high academic performance?

The research hypotheses are formulated to help provide an answer to the prior sub questions, as shown:

- It is hypothesized that when designing the syllabus, educators may follow learners' needs, previous knowledge, background, ministry (a failed syllabus may be considered so due to lack of negotiation, communication, and consideration).
- The measures learners can follow in order to develop autonomy in learning are identifying their needs and setting goals to address them, by doing so they would be able to apply learning strategies and evaluate their own work therefore possibly develop their own criteria for correctness regardless of the teacher's role or the syllabus'.
- An effective syllabus has a high likelihood of increasing learners' academic performance. A needs-based syllabus would presumably fit EFL learners' desires and allow them to engage more and very much increase their pedagogical and academic performance.

This research work is divided into two parts where the first chapter is a theoretical framework concerning the key concepts that cover all aspects of this research. Initially, it discusses various definitions in terms of syllabi, autonomy, and performance. Namely, the different syllabi, their design, their effectiveness, types of autonomy, and performance with its practicality.

The second chapter of this dissertation is a practical notion based on field work. Focusing thus, on the various factors that contribute into making a syllabus effective as it is. Eventually, leading students to the enrichment of their awareness of autonomy and enhancing their academic performance skills.

The choice of method depends on the nature of the topic, data and the designed aims next to the sample investigated. Hence, the mixed method is more suitable. Analysing the situation of this research then providing a description of the collected data by an observational research, questionnaires addressed to students, and interviews with teachers in order to test the hypotheses. Finally, the findings of the field work will be discussed and interpreted to ensure the research reliability and validity as much as possible, whereas some suggestions and recommendations will be identified to offer the chance for further future researches and calls for additional pedagogical methods in EFL classrooms.

CHAPTER ONE

Review of literature

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1.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a theoretical framework of the syllabus situation in education, focusing thus, on the different types and implementations that can effectively influence learners' autonomy leading to an improved performance. It discusses also some of the philosophical assumptions and theories regarding syllabus design, types of autonomy, and how learners can achieve it, advantages of autonomy, and types of performance.

As an attempt to demonstrate the importance of designing a proper syllabus aimed at fostering learner autonomy. Bearing in mind, that studying the implementation of effective syllabi as an alternative method to efficiently develop and enhance autonomy and performance for correct use. In addition to defining autonomy and how to develop it along with its importance in academic performance.

At last, this chapter concludes with a thorough description of what an effective syllabus actually is and how it can possibly contribute to an immense state of learner autonomy. Therefore, focusing on the causal relationship between syllabi, autonomy, and performance.

1.2. Basic Elements of Education

Education for Sustainability nowadays functions as a powerful rationale for teaching and learning (Sterling, 2001; Wheeler and Byrne, 2004). It is a whole system of inquiry that combines current best practices of teaching and learning with the content, core competencies, and habits of mind required for students to actively participate in creating their future in fostering their own autonomy and building their academic performance. It can be defined as a transformative learning process that equips students, teachers, schools, and informal educators with the knowledge and ways of thinking that society needs to achieve academic prosperity by the provision of several elements; the teacher and teaching methods (the teacher is perhaps the most important factor in the quality of education), learning environment, funding and organization (which includes infrastructure and technology), school management, and pedagogy (which includes curriculum, syllabus, and assessment)

1.3. Defining Syllabus

In a broad sense, a syllabus is a document or an agreement that provides information dealing with a particular course and establishes expectations and reliabilities. It may be designed by an organization, board of examination, or an educator who teaches the specific course.

The document in particular communicates information about a specific course and defines expectations and responsibilities. It is generally more precise and narrow in scope than a curriculum. A syllabus may be set out by an examination board or prepared by the tutor who teaches or controls the course. It is simply a framework within which activities can be carried out meaning it is a device for teachers to facilitate learning. It only becomes a threat to pedagogy when it is regarded as absolute rules for determining what is to be learned rather than points of reference from which bearings can be taken. And this sets out the main difference between a syllabus and a curriculum.

There are several conflicting views on just what it is that distinguishes syllabus design from curriculum development. There is also some disagreement about the nature of the syllabus, it is possible to distinguish a broad and a narrow approach to syllabus design. The narrow view draws a clear distinction between syllabus design and methodology. Syllabus design is seen as being concerned essentially with the selection and grading of content, while methodology is concerned with the selection of learning tasks and activities. Those who adopt a broader view question this strict separation, arguing that with the advent of communicative language teaching the distinction between content and tasks is difficult to sustain.

Brumfit (1984) provides an excellent overview of the range and diversity of opinion on syllabus design.

> **The syllabus replaces the concept of 'method', and the syllabus is now seen as an instrument by which the teacher, with the help of the syllabus designer, can achieve a degree of 'fit' between the needs and aims of the learner (as social being and as individual) and the activities which will take place in the classroom**.
>
> (*Yalden 1984, p. 14)*

In simple terms, syllabus is a definitive instructive tool that sets a standard of what is expected to happen during the complete course session. It actually serves as the contract between the learners and the teachers which contains functions and ideas that are used for the assessment of the students' performance therefore it is considered as a summary of what will be covered in a course of study. An example of a syllabus is what a college professor hands out to his students on the first day of class.

In language learning/teaching for example, syllabus is a document which gives a detailed account of the various syllabus components which need to be considered in developing a language course. *Threshold Level English'* Van Ek lists the following as necessary components of a language syllabus:

1. The situations in which the foreign language will be used, including the topics which will be dealt with.
2. The language activities in which the learner will engage.
3. The language functions which the learner will fulfil.
4. What the learner will be able to do with respect to each topic.
5. The general notions which the learner will be able to handle.
6. The specific (topic-related) notions which the learner will be able to handle.
7. The language forms which the learner will be able to use.
8. The degree of skill with which the learner will be able to perform.

(van Ek 1975, p. 8-9)

1.4. Types of Syllabus

The choice of a syllabus is a major decision in Education, and it should be made as consciously and with as much information as possible. According to Krahnke (1987), there are six types of educational syllabus, only taking the aspect of language teaching as an example for clarification, that are as follows:

1.4.1. Structural (Formal) Syllabus: A syllabus in which the content of language teaching is a collection of the forms and structures, usually grammatical, of the language being taught. Examples of structure include: nouns, verbs, adjectives, statements, questions, complex sentences, subordinate clauses, past tense, and so on,

although formal syllabi may include other aspects of language form such as pronunciation or morphology.

1.4.2. Notional/Functional Syllabus: It depends on the content of language teaching where it is a collection of the functions that are performed when language is used, or of the notions that language is used to express. Examples of 24 functions include: informing, agreeing, apologising, requesting, promising, and so on. Examples of notions include size, age, color, comparison, time, and so on.

1.4.3. Situational Syllabus: It is a program which the content of language teaching is a collection of real or imaginary situations in which language occurs or is used. A situation usually involves several participants who are engaged in some activity in a specific setting. The language occurring in the situation involves a number of functions, combined into a plausible segment of discourse. The primary purpose of situational language teaching syllabus is to teach the language that occurs in the situations. Sometimes the situations are purposely relevant to the present or future needs of the language learners, preparing them to use the new language in the kinds of situations that make up the syllabus. Examples of situations include: seeing the dentist, complaining to the landlord, buying a book at the bookstore, meeting a new student, asking directions in a new town, and so on.

1.4.4. Skill-Based Syllabus: It is an organised syllabus where the content of language teaching is a collection of specific abilities that may play a part in using language. Skills are things that people must be able to do to be competent in a language, relatively independently of the situation or setting in which the language use can occur. While situational syllabi group functions together into specific settings of language use, skill-based syllabi group linguistic competencies (pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, sociolinguistic, and discourse) together into generalized types of behavior, such as listening to spoken language for the main idea, writing well-formed paragraphs, giving effective oral presentations, taking language tests, reading texts for main ideas or supporting details, and so on.

The primary purpose of skill-based instruction is to learn a specific language skill. A possible secondary purpose is to develop more general competence in the language, learning only incidentally any information that may be available while applying the language skills.

1.4.5. Task-Based Syllabus: It is similar to content-based syllabus in that both the teaching is not organized around linguistic features of the language being learned but according to some other organizing principle. In task-based instruction the content of the teaching is a series of complex and purposeful tasks that the students want or need to perform with the language they are learning. The tasks are defined as activities with a purpose other than language learning, but, as in a content-based syllabus, the performance of the tasks is approached in a way that is intended to develop second/foreign language ability. Language learning is subordinated to task performance, and language teaching occurs only as the need arises during the performance of a given task. Tasks integrate language (and other) skills in specific settings of language use.

They differ from situations in that while situational teaching has the goal of teaching the specific language content that occurs in the situation (a predefined product, task-based teaching has the goal of teaching students to draw on resources to complete some piece of work, a process). The language students draw on a variety of language forms, functions, and skills, often in an individual and unpredictable way, in completing the tasks. Tasks that can be used for language learning are, generally, tasks that the learners actually have to perform in any case. Examples are applying for a job, talking with a social worker, getting housing information over the telephone, completing bureaucratic forms, collecting information about preschools to decide which to send a child to, preparing a paper for another course, reading a textbook for another course, and so on.

1.4.6. Content-Based Syllabus: It is not really a language teaching syllabus at all. In content-based language teaching, the primary purpose of the instruction is to teach some content or information using the language that the students are also learning. The students are simultaneously language students and students of whatever content is being taught. The subject matter is primary, and language learning occurs incidentally to the

content learning. The content teaching is not organized around the language 26 teaching, but vice versa. Content-based language teaching is concerned with information, while task-based language teaching is concerned with communicative and cognitive processes. An example of content-based language teaching is a science class taught in the language that the students need or want to learn, possibly with linguistic adjustments to make the science more comprehensible. In practice, of course, these different types rarely occur independently of each other. Almost all actual language teaching syllabi are combinations of two or more of the types of syllabus described here.

1.4.7. Needs-based Syllabus: This syllabus model is based on the concept that learners receive appropriate services, not just the services for which they qualify, but also for the services they require.

It is essential to provide a clear working definition of needs which is based on the theoretical assumptions underlying course design. It is also essential to decide what to do with the identified needs (i.e., ignore, interpret or adopt them). Furthermore, it is important to decide whose needs take priority when needs of different target groups conflict.

1.5. Purpose of Syllabus

All in all, a syllabus is most simply a document that expresses to the reader the intentions of the instructor regarding course content, learning goals, assessment approach, and expectations. It is an outline for what is expected to transpire during the course and what should be learned. The main point is to share information thus a communication mechanism but also for more specific purposes such as a planning tool or course plan.

As Altman & Cashin (2003) stated, a syllabus lets students know what the course is about, why the course is taught, where it is going, and what will be required for them to be successful in the course. In education, syllabus is a requisite document for teaching in that it serves to outline the basic elements of a course including what topics will be covered, a weekly schedule, and a list of tests, assignments, and their associated weightings.

To begin with, Parkes and Harris (2002) mention three major functions, namely: syllabus as a contract, syllabus as a permanent record, and syllabus as a learning tool. A syllabus which functions as a contract is a syllabus that puts forward responsibilities and tasks of both the teacher and the learners. Moreover, it was pointed out that a syllabus can act as a permanent record of what has been taught in the sense that it meticulously displays the efficiency or inefficiency of a given unit over a period of time indicating learners' interactions, and the instructor's methodology of teaching. It can also document assessment procedures and learners' overall results. Finally, a syllabus can also function as a learning tool by guiding learners throughout the semester to know how to revise, monitor and evaluate themselves as learners.

Before conducting a testing of the product, the researchers validated the content of the syllabus to the expert in order to maintain its quality of the syllabus (Brown, 1995; Dubin and Olshtain, 2010; Mbato, 2016; Parkes and Harris, 2002). In this phase, the researchers obtained a number of brilliant ideas, suggestions, and critics dealing with the weaknesses and strengths of the syllabus. Firstly, the experts pointed out that the researchers should revise the syllabus since the materials included in the syllabus were not well-organized in which they were not in forms of the easiest to the most difficult materials (McKey, 1978; Parkes and Harris, 2002). Such an organization could, of course, make the learners confused to understand the materials; as a result; the learning goals of teaching morphology and syntax could be achieved well. That is why the process of syllabus design has to follow precise steps and take several factors into consideration.

1.6. Syllabus Design

To design a syllabus is to decide what gets taught and in what order. For this reason, the theory of language underlying the language teaching method will play a major role in determining what syllabus should be adopted.

A syllabus may be formally documented, as in the aims and content of a national or institutional syllabus for particular groups of learners or (less explicitly perhaps) in the content material of published textbooks. Every teacher follows a syllabus, but it may vary from being a pre-designed document to a day-to-day choice of content which the

teacher regards as serving a course's particular aims. In the latter case, the syllabus unfolds as lessons progress.

According to Nunan (1988), any syllabus ideally should provide:

- Clear framework of knowledge and capabilities selected to be appropriate to overall aims.
- Continuity and a sense of direction in classroom work for teacher and students;
- Record for other teachers of what has been covered in the course;
- Basis for evaluating students' progress;
- Basis for evaluating the appropriateness of the course in relation to overall aims and student needs identified both before and during the course;
- Content appropriate to the broader language curriculum, the particular class of learners, and the educational situation and wider society in which the course is located.

There were, however, issues a few syllabus designs were not concerned with, in consideration with the presumably ideal one (needs-based syllabus). One was the question of how to develop the identified skills in the learner. This is because it is maintained that it is the role of methodology to deal with this question. While a methodological framework was proposed within the research project it is beyond the purposes of the paper to describe it here.

Similarly, they did provide guidelines in terms of which syllabus items (i.e., skills) to select for the purposes of developing an actual needs-based English language course for a given group of Technical University students. As such, they did not aim to determine what Hutchinson and Waters (1987) call “lacks” (the necessities the learner lacks). Consequently, perhaps it is the role of a group-size needs analysis to determine what a group of learners know already and what they need to focus on in relation to the already identified target needs.

Also, it is maintained that learners should be provided with a reasonable amount of exposure to new language if it were a language learning syllabus so that they can observe it and form hypotheses before production is expected from them (Krashen 1982). In terms of the ordering of the syllabus items, it means that skills with a receptive focus should precede and serve as a basis for skills with a productive focus.

1.6. Designing an Effective Syllabus

The most effective syllabus goes beyond listing the logistics and the topics covered in the course, it articulates the conceptual framework for the course, introduces students to the key questions or problems facing experts in the field, suggests the ways in which an understanding of the course subject matters, and identifies the specific skills and knowledge students will be able to demonstrate upon leaving the course.

Students often depend on a syllabus to manage their time effectively. Many of them report feeling overextended between school, work, and family demands, and they use a syllabus to determine how to allocate their limited time. Furthermore, students' allocation of time to a class often closely matches perceived reinforcements for their time on task, with less time given to a quiz than a test, more for a formal paper than a reaction paper.

Those who cannot predict or influence their professor's expectations and behavior may give up and display typical signs of learned helplessness. Similarly, when faculties shift deadlines frequently, students may become frustrated by their inability to plan writing and studying time. As Mann and his colleagues (1970, cited in McKeachie 1994) conclude, what may initially have been a professor's attempt to be responsive to class needs may ultimately undermine class morale. A good course and syllabus do not need to be rigid in providing this structure, but should be flexibly responsive to student concerns and external events, however, is not the same as an absence of structure (McKeachie 1994). Faculty can provide structure for their students' experiences and be sensitive to individual and group needs to know where they are and where they are going. It is believed that an effective class often teaches process goals rather than only content, generally building on these either within or across courses (Walvoord and Anderson 1998). Also, the strongest syllabi and courses have assignments that are clearly related to process objectives and that clearly help students meet these goals.

Finally, in addition to the purpose of a syllabus from a student's point of view, syllabi are probably equally important for faculty, as they help teachers to develop and organize their vision for the course (Appleby 1999). A well-designed syllabus is both a consequence and a precursor of a strongly articulated teaching philosophy.

For Cotterall (2000), a course which aims at fostering autonomy has to allow students to identify what they deem important to learn, and to set learner goals according to their own needs. This is one of the main characteristics of autonomous beings: they identify what they need, and they plan how to get it. But in order to plan effectively and manage their own learning, the students need to be aware of how education works. The course has to promote the use of tasks that, according to Cotterall, have to replicate real-world situations. These tasks should articulate some learning strategies so that the students can learn explicitly and choose the ones that fit their learning styles and preferences. Finally, all of these principles imply reflection on learning, which has to be constantly promoted throughout the course.

1.8. Syllabus and Autonomy

If learner autonomy is to be implemented, the cornerstone will be both a new design and the institutionalization of such an endeavor. On the basis of the academic literature currently available, there seems to be plenty of research about the characteristics of autonomous learners, measurements of the degree of autonomy reached by certain students at a certain school, and the influence of autonomy on performance as well. Despite the extended theoretical references on autonomy in education, it seems there are not enough models to enlighten teachers about the steps to follow in order to design courses that foster autonomy; or about the essential elements that need to be articulated within the syllabus design in order to attain the so desired learner autonomy. Along similar lines, Bárbara (2007) expresses the same concern.

> **If autonomy is to be understood as a solution to effective learning one can consider the constraints and work out solutions, namely that there are several degrees for autonomy and that it can be gradually introduced in syllabuses in order to achieve change. But we do not have recipes, we only have strategies to try to foster autonomy.**
>
> (Barbara 2007, p. 23)

1.9. Defining Autonomy

Autonomy is the capacity to make an informed, uncoerced decision. In its simplest sense, autonomy is about a person's ability to act on his or her own values and interests. Taken from ancient Greek, the word means 'self-legislation' or 'self-governance. In order to accomplish these decisions, the autonomous person must have a sense of self-worth and self-respect, it is independence in one's thoughts or actions.

1.9.1. Learner Autonomy

Learner autonomy can be briefly defined as the set of skills that allows students to be willingly responsible for their own learning process (Benson 2001). The concept of learner autonomy is relevant in the field of applied linguistics, not only because autonomy allows the learner to take the lead of his/her learning process, but also because it empowers him/her to be an independent knowledge seeker. Learner autonomy is highly desirable for many reasons: It makes students aware that the teacher will not always be present to lead the learning process and therefore helps the former to become more effective, autonomy makes learners become motivated and enthusiastic towards learning, an autonomous student is more secure in his/her learning, and therefore it is plausible that he/she will, eventually, be prepared for functioning effectively in both social and academic settings.

The concept is when learners take control and responsibility for their own learning, both in terms of what they learn and how they learn it. It takes as its starting point the idea that students are capable of self-direction and are able to develop an independent, proactive approach to their studies.

1.9.2. Developing Learner Autonomy

Developing learner autonomy involves learning how to learn, and is a gradual and sometimes difficult process. In order to become autonomous, learners need to be exposed to a range of useful learning activities through the implementation of an effective syllabus, and have the opportunity to evaluate and reflect on these activities.

A person qualifies as an autonomous learner when they independently choose aims and purposes and set goals; choose materials, methods and tasks; exercise choice

and purpose in organising and carrying out the chosen tasks; and develop their own criteria for evaluation.

If autonomy is to be fostered, educators need to assume that their learners have not the slightest bit of intrinsic motivation or will to participate and develop their own autonomy. therefore, the institution should provide students with appropriate resources and spaces for them to develop autonomous behaviours, which brings the idea of self-access centres. Providing self-access centres does not have to be the implementation of a brand new high-budget project. They can be the result of evaluating and adapting previous facilities with new purposes and goals. Most institutions have a small library, a reading room or a modest collection of books and materials that could be revived in favor of learner autonomy. In this regard, Sheerin (1997) and Miller and Rogerson-Revell (1993) present interesting models to evaluate pre-existing facilities and create self-access centres. On the other hand, a self-access centre does not always have to function in a facility: the digital era is the ultimate allegory of self-access, therefore, the self-access centre for independent learning and the practice of education can take the form of an online community in any of its expressions: a blog, a forum, or even a digital cloud.

A separate strand of research into motivational teaching has been based on Self Determination Theory (SDT) Noels (Noels et al. 1999, 2000) showed that adult learners' perceptions of their teacher's style affected their motivation; in line with the belief of SDT, a more informative and less controlling style of education tended to boost their sense of autonomy and competence. Subsequent research has demonstrated that various types of pedagogic intervention can enhance learners' intrinsic motivation to learn, including a 'guided autonomy' syllabus (Fukuda et al., 2011), communicative teaching methodology (Pae & Shin, 2011) and stimulating learning tasks (Jones et al., 2009).

1.9.3. The Importance of Learner Autonomy

Learning to learn is essential in the development of a self-regulated, autonomous learner. Teaching the skills of researching, developing critical and creative thinking, communication skills, and social and self-management abilities is key for learners today.

Learner autonomy affords maximum possible influence to the learners, as it encourages peer support and cooperation, and it means making use of self/peer assessment. Furthermore, it increases the capacity and confidence of an active learner, but for those who think learning means reading books, this method might not give good Results. After completion of education and in real practice of work. Learner autonomy proves an intelligent tool for making knowledge prosper. It is absolutely needed to provide learners with opportunities to take control of their own learning. The problem is that it does not mean that they have to summarise a lot of pages or rewrite text books and study guides. When learners are provided with opportunities to take control of their own learning, they need to be provided with opportunities to put what they learn in practice.

It is therefore important for them to become self-reliant learners who can continue learning efficiently outside the classroom. At the heart of autonomous learning is the student's perception of their own role as a learner.

1.9.4. Autonomy Within a Broader Framework

Being under several deeper influences, autonomy term is much more rooted than it seems to be. It does not just mean the responsibility that the learner has in his or her learning process. As may be guessed, it is not “originally and primarily a language learning concept” (Benson, 2001, p. 22). Even Galileo (1564-1642) suggested that you cannot teach a man anything; you can only help him find it within himself. Apart from Galileo, many other thinkers in the following centuries supported and described the term autonomy without naming it as “autonomy”. Similar quotations prove that autonomy concept is inevitably under the influence of many other fields. According to Benson (2001), if autonomy in language learning is regarded as being in the centre, a number of interactive factors such as political reform in connection with educational reform and adult education in connection are just some of the factors involved.

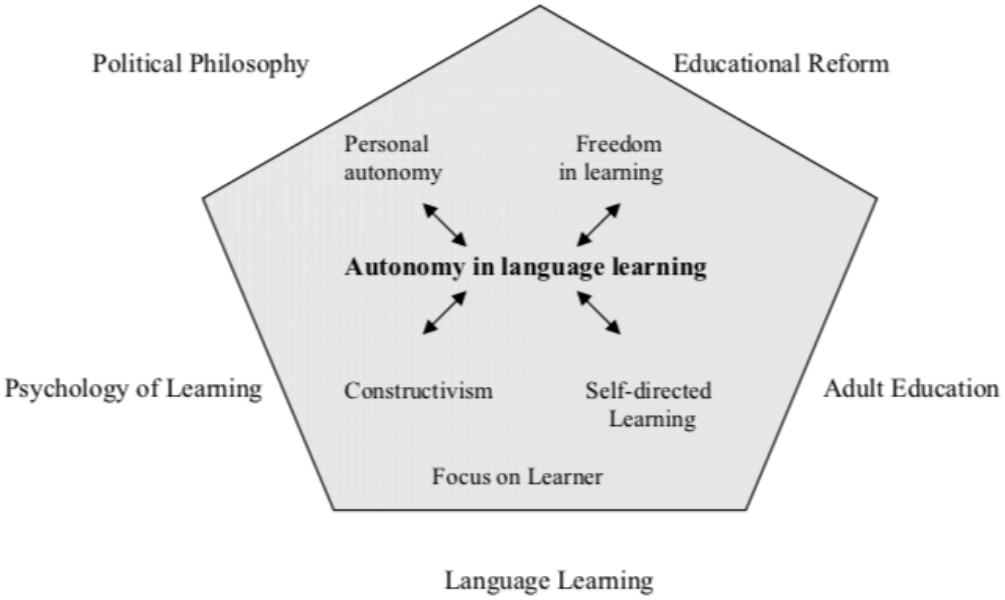


Figure 1.1: Major influences on the theory of autonomy in language learning.
Source: Benson, 2001, p. 22

As demonstrated in the figure, there are many factors interrelated with the concept of autonomy. Among those factors self-directed learning is documented to be involved in learning outside the context of formal education. Since autonomy is highly influenced by constructive factors, it is only natural that the implementation of an effective syllabus as extrinsic factor would immensely foster or at least reinforce it.

1.10. Autonomy and Academic Performance

Recorded history in education has highlighted academic performance as a central issue for discussion (Plato, 399 B.C.). It has been driven mostly by the failure of traditional methods to provide an explanation for the variance found in predictive models. According to Bereiter & Scardamalia (1993), successful learning is not simply taking classes but rather the act of intentionally making learning a goal instead of simply incidental. To help individuals become successful learners means supporting and nurturing intentions necessary for lifelong learning. The learner's intentional behavior or capacity to learn has a lot to do with their diversified characteristics, learning styles, prior experience and other factors, including their perception of their learning environment.

The academic performance involves factors such as the intellectual level, personality, motivation, skills, interests, study habits, self-esteem or the teacher-student relationship. When a gap between the academic performance and the learner's expected performance based on his autonomy occurs, it refers to a diverging performance.

Deci (1975) also elaborates that those learners who have higher motivation would most likely elicit autonomy support from their teachers and ultimately perform better in that state. Myartawan et al. (2013) studied the relationship of autonomy in the language learning proficiency among Indonesian EFL college learners where a strong, positive, significant relationship was revealed between variables, similarly, a positive, significant correlation between autonomy and grade point average. Naturally, a teacher who initiates autonomy support to learners who are inattentive, would most likely develop intrinsic motivation.

1.11. Defining Academic Performance

Academic performance is the measurement of student achievement across various academic subjects. Teachers and education officials typically measure achievement using classroom performance, graduation rates and results from standardised tests. In other words, it is the extent to which a student, teacher or institution has attained their short or long-term educational goals. Completion of educational benchmarks such as secondary school diplomas and bachelor's degrees represent academic achievement.

1.12. The Effect of a Well-designed Syllabus on Learners

Since an effective syllabus is considered as a kind of instructive tool that sets a standard of what is expected to occur during the complete course session. It prescribes the topics and concepts on the basis of which students will be tested in the final examination. A syllabus actually serves as the contract between the students and the teachers which contains functions and ideas that are used for the assessment of the students' performance. Hence, according to Harnish and Bridges (2001) it would expectedly be able to;

- Establish a contact and connection between learners and instructors by stating the objectives and goals to be achieved at the end of the course.
- Set the tone for the course by streamlining the content of course.
- Ultimately include information that will facilitate the academic success of students.
- Inform learners of the course structure, goals and learning outcomes.
- Outline a learner's responsibilities for success.
- Define teachers' duties towards the overall development of learners.
- Describe the materials/activities that support learning outside the classroom.

1.13. Conclusion

What permeates this chapter is the belief that in order to help learners to assume greater control over their own learning and consequently perform better academically, it is important that both syllabus design and implementation methods help them to become aware of and identify the strategies that they already use or could potentially use. In other words, autonomous learning is by no means a teacher-less learning only and learners' academic performance is highly dependent on learners' motivation and their approach on the syllabus provided to them. Syllabus is not bound to be effective in all measures and situations albeit having a variety of types that can suit learners' circumstances. Thus, this highlights the need to integrate learner independence into the educational syllabus and curriculum, with a well-structured focus, delivery, and content.

For further development and research validation, the process of data collection, analysis, and interpretation about the effect of the syllabus and what an effective syllabus can do to foster autonomy and performance will be discussed in the second chapter

CHAPTER TWO

Research Methodology and Data Analysis

2.1 Introduction

2.3. Research Objectives and Motivations

2.4 Research Methodology and Procedures

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2.4.1.1. Student's Profile

2.4.1.2. Teacher's Profile

2.5. Data Collection Instruments

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2.6. Data Analysis

2.6.1. Observation Analysis

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2.6.3. Interview Analysis

2.7. Interpretation of the Findings

2.8. Pedagogical Recommendations and Suggestions

2.9. Research Limitations and Restrictions

2.10. Conclusion

2.1. Introduction

This chapter bridges the gap between the theoretical framework and the practical application of the conducted study, taking into consideration all the different undertaken steps in investigating the phenomena of autonomy in relation to academic performance and the effectiveness of syllabus among third year students of Ahmed Salhi University Centre of Naama.

In fact, in applied linguistics studies, the interpretations of major results are dependent on what the methods of research are, how the sample of subjects is chosen and who is collecting the data. This chapter conveys the different adopted procedures to answer the research questions and spotlights the findings in this investigation as well as seeks to point out the theoretical base that drives the research core hypotheses, objectives and motivations. Moreover, the discussion and interpretation parts are elaborated on the research findings based on relevant literature to gain further insights towards the significance of a well-designed syllabus for the sake of fostering autonomy and enhancing performance.

2.3. Research Objectives and Motivation

The main objectives of this essential research are to examine how a syllabus is both designed and implemented in EFL education to notice if it could prompt effectiveness inside and outside of classrooms, and to determine whether said effectiveness has the probability of reinforce learner autonomy leading to a confirmation of inquiry about how an effective syllabus and pristine autonomy influence academic performance.

Thus, the intention is to devise a high academic performance developed by learners themselves through their autonomous learning style generated by a syllabus design that is more probable to be effective when implemented in the classroom.

2.4. Research Methodology and Procedures

This research work adopts a design in which one or more variables are consciously investigated and modified and the outcome or effect of that modification on other variables is observed. This experimental design will make use of controls that provide a measure of variability within a system and investigate for sources of error.

2.4.1. Population and Sample

The population concerned with this research is third year English Licence students of Ahmed Salhi University Centre of Naama with whom the researcher had the opportunity to work with on a previous study, it contains a hundred-and-seven (107) students divided into three (3) groups.

The particular sample was chosen by a simple random probability consisting of thirty-five (35) participants (35% of 100 students) for questioning. And five (5) teachers for interviewing.

1.4.1.1. Students' Profile

The students' sample of the present study is third year LMD English students at Ahmed Salhi University Centre of Naama at the level of the department of foreign languages where thirty-five (35) students of their full numbers were randomly chosen to answer a questionnaire to investigate their approach and point of view on the syllabus and their independency to study.

1.4.1.2. Teachers' Profile

The teachers' sample at Ahmed Salhi University Centre of Naama working at the department of foreign languages 'section of English' contains five (5) random participants consisting of four (4) females and one (1) male who were willing to be interviewed to investigate contextualized teaching and learning in accordance with their own manners of implementing syllabus and methods to foster learner autonomy and improve their performance.

2.5. Data Collection Instruments

After an evaluation of the classroom's situation (the syllabus, the teacher, the courses…), the study is carried out through a questionnaire administered to the selected sample, a semi-structured interview accomplished with five teachers, and an observation effectuated during a study day in Ahmed Salhi University Centre of Naama on April 6th, 2021 which was directed at taking notes on how teachers and learners would adapt if there was no study plan prepared ahead, and how students would react to such a situation.

2.5.1. Classroom Observation

The researcher implemented a covert observation where participants did not know they were being monitored and became a participant in the culture or context being observed. The observation took place on a study day dedicated to writing workshops in Ahmed Salhi University Centre of Naama on April 6th, 2021.

The observation is aimed at:

- Noticing how teachers approach the syllabus with their own methods.
- Testing teachers and learners' adaptability in case of an absence of syllabus or a program.
- Analysing learners' reaction to teachers' adaptability.
- Investigating whether the offered information would be of relevance

2.5.2. Students' Questionnaire

The researcher further designed a questionnaire and distributed it to Third Year LMD English Students consisting of 12 questions concerned with the adaptability of teachers by means of the syllabus, and learners' reaction and possible intervention in order to enhance it.

The questionnaire is aimed at:

- Knowing how learners are introduced with the syllabus.
- Identifying the level of learners' satisfaction by the syllabus.
- Measuring where learners' autonomy has reached

- Determining learners' reaction to their teachers' adaptability.
- Quantifying the strength of teacher-student communication.
- Extracting solutions and pedagogical suggestions

Section I: Personal Information

This section seeks to identify students' profiles from age and gender.

Section II (01 – 06): Syllabus Provision and Students' Satisfaction

This part is designed to gain more knowledge about whether students are provided with a syllabus or not and how they are satisfied if they are provided with one. And the role of teachers in the classroom.

Section III: (07 – 9): Investigating Autonomy

The third section of the questionnaire includes concerns about the extent to which students investigate issues and ambiguities on their own and their side of the learning process next to their opinions on the syllabus and teaching methods.

Section IV: (10 – 12): Suggestions and Recommendations

The final section of the questionnaire deals with suggestions and recommendations on teacher-student communication, the teaching process in the classroom, and modifications on syllabus design.

2.5.3. Teachers' Interview

The researcher conducted five semi-structured interviews with five teachers for the purpose of gaining information on their own perspective and how they approach the syllabus.

The interviews are aimed at:

- Calculating teachers' experience in teaching.
- Knowing how teachers introduce the syllabus to their learners.
- Seeking enlightenment on how teachers approach the syllabus.
- Understanding teachers' position on agreeing, modifying, and working with the syllabus.
- Seeing whether they are permitted flexibility in the classroom.
- Gaining insight on how they view learners as they progress or regress in their performance.
- Investigating whether they implement their own touch to the teaching process.
- Seeking suggestions and solutions on making the syllabus effective for their learners' autonomy and performance.

2.6. Data Analysis

To analyse the collected data, the researcher depended on a mixture of data analysis methods that are both qualitative and quantitative, in this respect the data is then analysed accordingly:

2.6.1. Observation Analysis

During the observation the researcher had observed teachers' behaviour under specific circumstances which included teachers' adaptability during their presentations, approaching the study day program, and hesitation regarding the exposed information.

The context was a series of workshops about academic writings, where it was noted that the provided information was not relevant in a sense that it was repeated and had

already been proposed in early lessons, which suggested that the study day was planned in the advantage of only one side. One of the most important remarks was one particular teacher struggled to go forth with the presentation because the visual aids (computer and projector) that was being using malfunctioned leading to complete confusion and hesitation on how to proceed lecturing without such support. This was probably because there was no cooperation or collaboration with other teachers.

Another reason why the study day was not of great assistance is because there was limited interaction and communication, the debates were not lengthy, and the questions were not answered properly. This indicated that learners' needs were disregarded to some extent, what aggravated the situation was that they were passive receptors regardless of the information provided.

2.6.2. Questionnaire Analysis

The students' questionnaire is analysed quantitatively as follows:

Section I: Personal Information

Q1: Students' age

Table 2.1: Students' age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18-20	**14**	**40%**
21-23	**12**	**34%**
24-30	**3**	**6%**
Other	**7**	**20%**

The students' age ranged between 18 to 20 years old. Nearly all of them are aged 19 years old making up 40% of the total number of the participants. Then, equal to 37% age between 21 and 23 years old. After that, 3% are aged between 24 and 30 years old. The others were not counted within the same

Q2: Students' gender

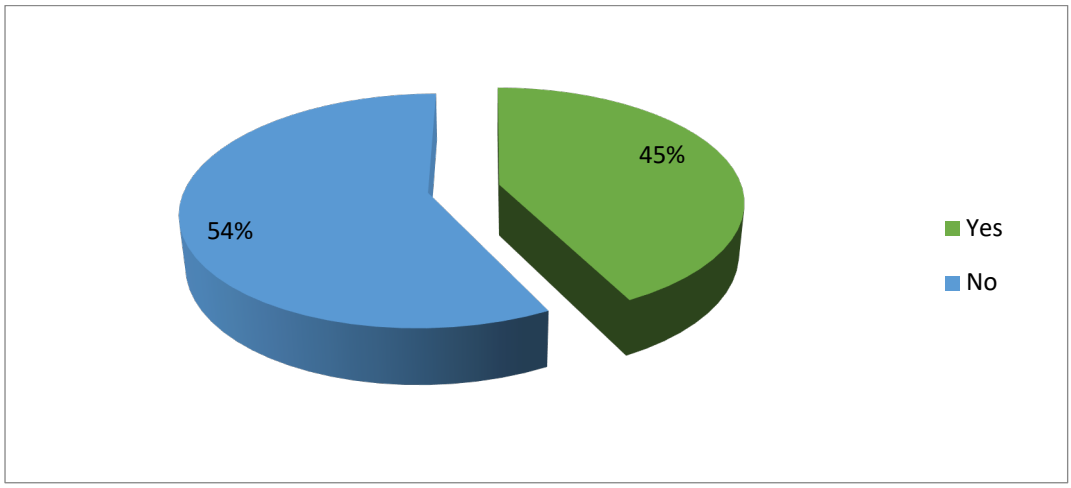
Table 2.2: Students' gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	**20**	**57%**
Male	**15**	**43%**

The findings reveal that the majority of students are female representing 57% of the present sample, while male represents 43% of the sample. It is clearly determined this difference, and thus the sample consists of male and female who protrude different attitudes towards the questions.

Section II (01 – 06): Syllabus Provision and Students' Satisfaction

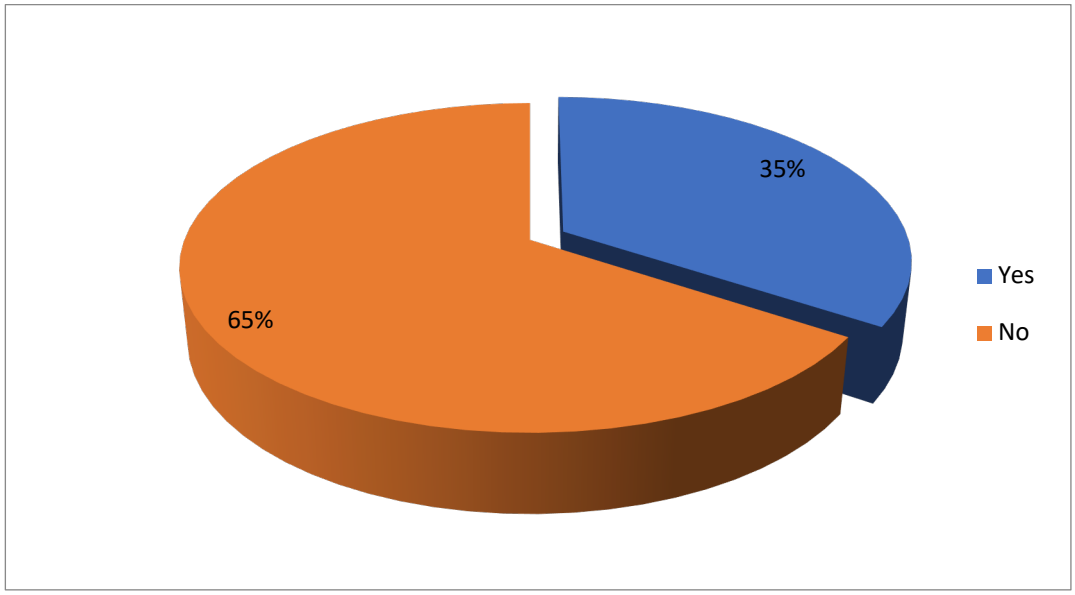
Q1: Were you provided with a syllabus/program in all modules at the beginning of the year?



Pie Chart 2.1: Syllabus provision in all modules

The results demonstrate that 54% of students cited that they were not provided with a syllabus/program in all modules at the beginning of the year and 45% stated that they were indeed provided with a syllabus which begs the need for further investigation on the teachers' side.

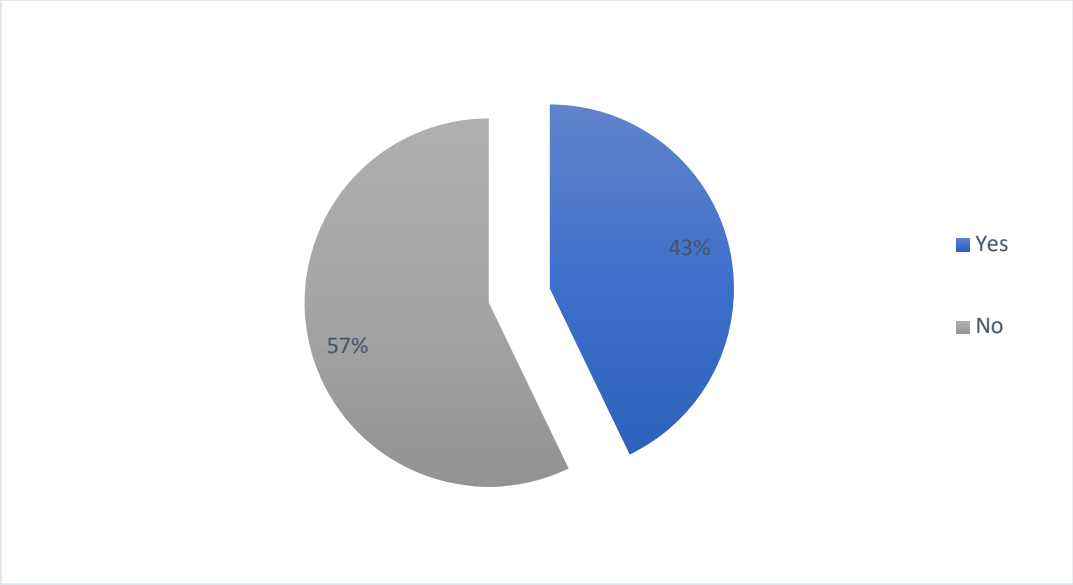
Q2: Were you satisfied with the provided syllabus/program?



Pie Charts 2.2: Students' satisfaction about the provided syllabus

The obtained results show that 65% of students are not satisfied with the provided syllabus/program and 35% were not satisfied due to several factors that will be analysed in the next graphs.

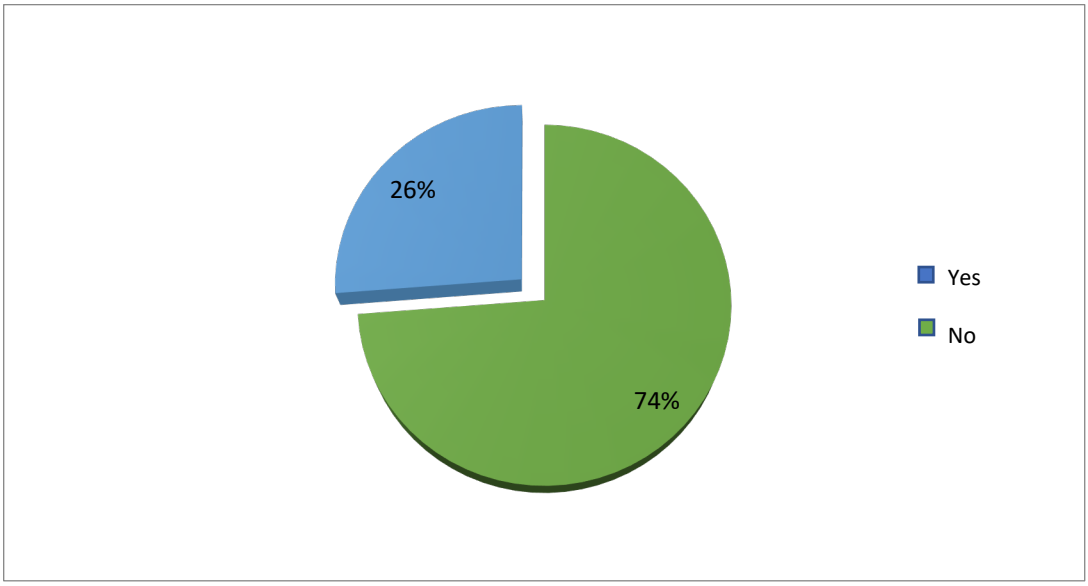
Q3: Was the provided syllabus/program organised according to your own level?



Pie Chart 2.3: Syllabus organisation according to students' level

The above chart shows that 57% of students view that the provided syllabus is organised according to their level and 43% saw that it was not organised and that it neither fit their level nor their needs.

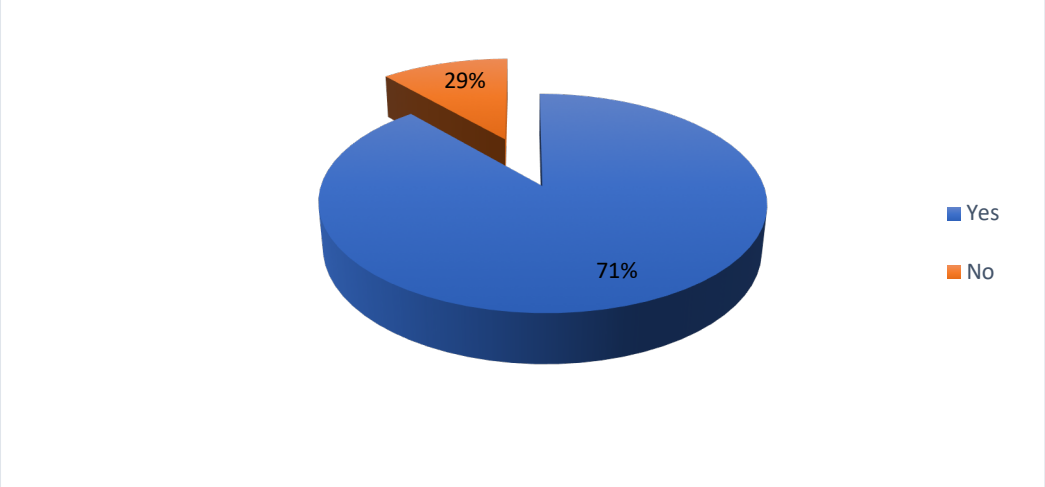
Q4: Do you think the syllabus is important?



Pie Chart 2.4: Students' view on the importance of syllabus

The findings show that a big majority of students of 74% believe that the syllabus is of little importance and 26% view that it is indeed important, this of course is believed to be the result of an experience of struggles and difficulty between students and syllabi.

Q5: Do you use eternal aids to help you understand the syllabus in case you find it mysterious?

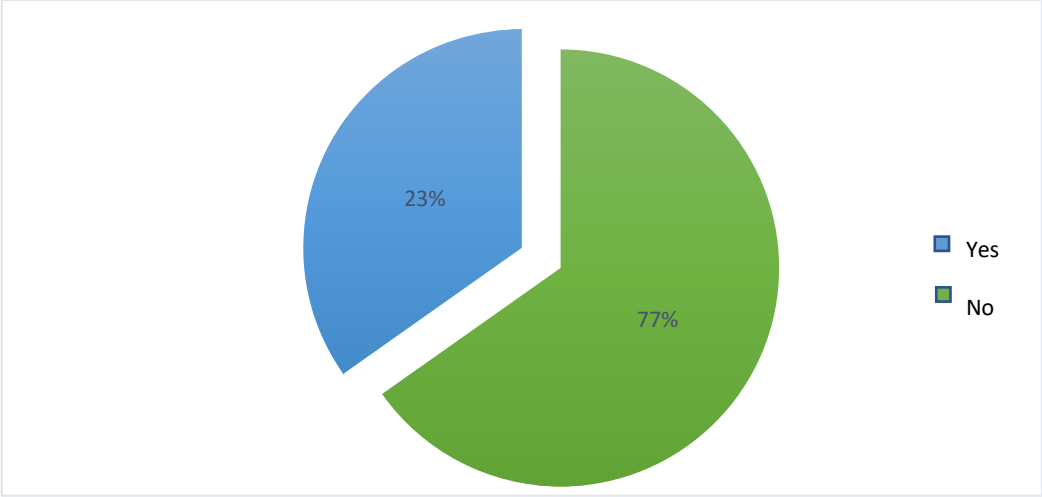


Pie Chart 2.5: Students' use of external aids as autonomous learning

The above results show that an immense percentage of 71% use external aids regardless of their variety when they find the syllabus mysterious or ambiguous to some extent, which is a degree of learner autonomy. And a minority of 29% do not use external aids.

In terms of the minority that answered 'No', it was due to having no or limited access to other resources in order to support one's self, and/or lacked the motivation to do so.

Q6: Were you offered any special assistance by the teacher in the classroom?



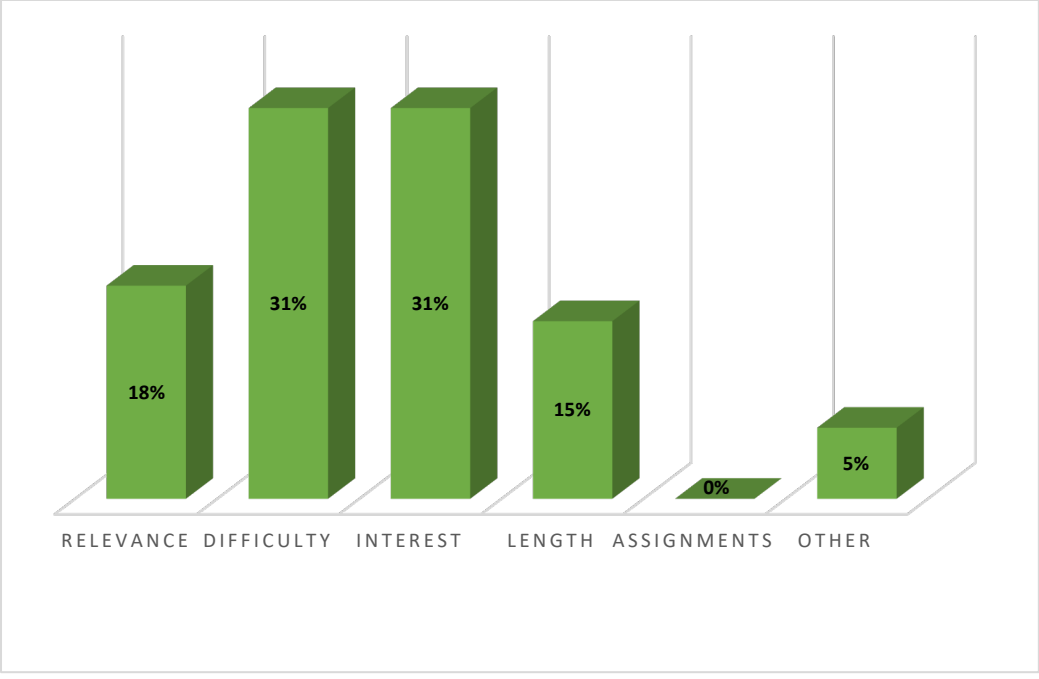
Pie Chart 2.6: Teachers offering special assistance to students in classrooms

The vast majority of students consisting of 77% state that they were not offered any special assistance by the teacher in the classroom, this may be due to several circumstances and different situations. Whereas the remaining 23% showed that they were offered assistance by the teacher in the classroom.

For those who answered 'Yes', teachers had offered special assistance by individually inquiring the difficulties their students faced and suggested methods or other resources for better comprehension, along with additional simplified explanations.

Section III: (07 – 9): Investigating Autonomy

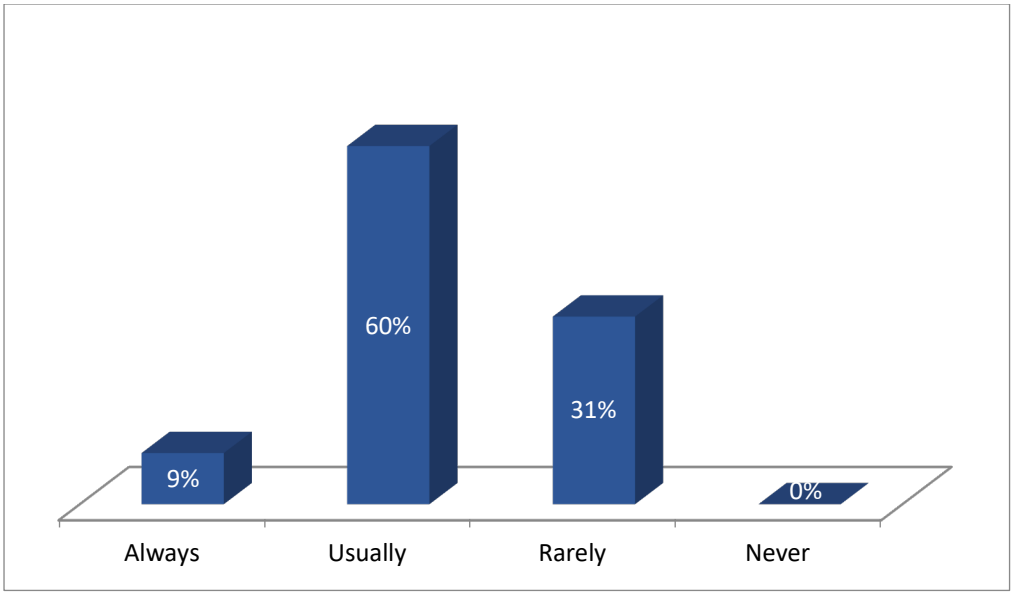
Q1: What troubles you the most when introduced with the syllabus?



Bar Graph 2.7: What troubles students when introduced with the syllabus

The obtain results show that 18% of students find the syllabus irrelevant to their subject matter, 31% find it difficult according to their level or field of study, another 31% find it far from their interest, 15% find it lengthy in terms of the number of courses and lessons, 0% struggle from the given assignments, and 5% struggle from other aspects that are out of relevance.

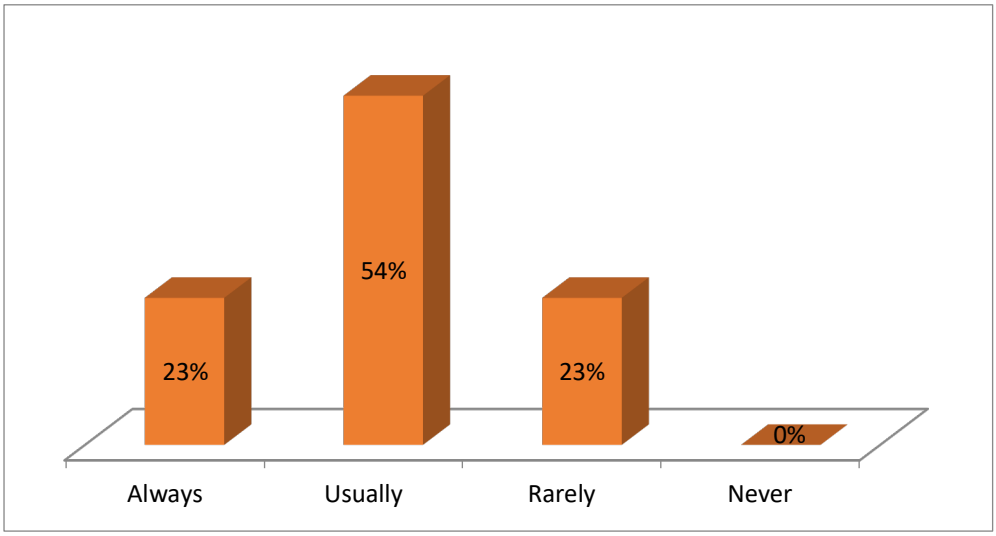
Q2: How often do teachers implement new methods to facilitate learning?



Bar Graph 2.8: Teachers' implementation of new methods to facilitate learning

The bar graph displays students' view of the degree to which teachers implement new methods to facilitate learning where 9% of students stated teachers always implement new methods, 60% of them said it is of a usual manner, 31% declared teachers rarely implement new methods, and 0% in the case of never implementing new methods to facilitate learning in the classroom

Q3: How often do you prepare your lessons according to the syllabus?



Bar Graph 2.9: Students' preparations according to the syllabus

The chart illustrates the frequency of students' preparations according to the syllabus in and outside the classroom in terms of revision and studying, where 23% of students said they always prepare their lessons according to the syllabus, 54% said they usually prepare their lessons, 23% stated they rarely prepare any lessons at all, and 0% in terms of never preparing the lessons.

Section IV: (10 – 12): Suggestions and Recommendations

Q1: What benefits you think teacher-student communication could have for your learning?

A great majority of students believed that teacher-student communication could have a great influence in terms of developing good language skills, pronunciation, and gain more knowledge about the subject matter without having to research it through, whereas others claimed it helps shy students improve their level, makes the teaching process easy and understandable, increases their will and motivation to learn while saving time. In addition, the minority stated that it could assist in growing good academic orientation and better understanding of academic codes along with some believing that teacher-student communication either benefits or kills further interaction in the classroom in the case of lack of tolerance or misunderstanding, decreasing interest of both parties.

Q2: What do you think teachers can do to enhance your classroom performance?

A considerable number of students expressed their views in terms of what teachers can do to enhance their classroom performance by stating they could implement new methods in order to have diverse education, offer special assistance more often, produce extra efforts in making the course enjoyable, whereas others implied that they could have benefited from additional sessions, more individual work, more sources and articles, and activities for the teacher to find where their problems laid.

Q3: How do you think the syllabus should be designed?

Students' propositions were as follows:

- Short, encouraging, and interesting (relevance).
- In accordance with students' level and experience.
- In a modern way that fits what is needed in real life.
- With communication and consideration.
- Befitting both teachers and students' needs and necessities.

3.6.3. Interview Analysis

The teachers' interview is analysed qualitatively as follows:

Q1: Gender consideration.

Table 2.3: Teachers' gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	**01**	**20%**
Female	**04**	**80%**
Total	**05**	**100%**

The above table reveals that the majority of the interviewed teachers are females making up a total of (80%). Whereas, males constitute a small of minority of (20%). As a result, it is apparent females have a higher rate than that of males. This explains the dominance of females at the department of English. Accordingly, it is a regular occurrence that can be observed in all Algerian educational systems.

Q2: How many years of experience do you have in teaching English?

Table 2.4: EFL teachers' experience

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 5 years	**02**	**40%**
5 – 10 Years	**02**	**40%**
More than 10 years	**01**	**20%**

Table 2.4 affirms that the teachers have different experience in teaching English. However, two (2) of the interviewed teachers have between 05 to 10 years of experience in teaching English at Ahmed Salhi University Centre of Naama with the total of 40%. An additional two (2) have less than 05 years of experience in teaching English as a foreign language made up the total of 40% as well. While only one of the teachers declares that they have more than 10 years of experience in teaching English. Which might explain why only a few teachers are able to adapt and be flexible when dealing with learners in the case of an improper syllabus or lack thereof.

Q3: Were you provided with a syllabus in the beginning of the year?

According to their answers, teacher 'A', 'C', and 'E' noted that they were not provided with any syllabus at all but only being offered a big outline by the administration, containing suggested course content and having the opportunity to consult with other teachers to develop a program of courses that would be relevant for both themselves and their students. For teacher 'B' and 'D', it was a special case because they teach a module that is bound to have a syllabus, with or without the administration's provision of one, due to its content relying on rules and degree of difficulty.

Q4: How do you think our syllabus encourages learner autonomy?

Teachers' answers were approximately similar, in a sense that the majority (teacher 'A', 'B', 'C', and 'E') acknowledged the importance of syllabi in general in promoting learner autonomy, the interviewed teachers proclaimed that designing a syllabus or a course program is done in accordance with a number of criteria; the students' level, their previous knowledge, and their future needs. Additionally, one said it depends on students' motivation, attitude, interaction, and communication.

Q5: What was your students' reaction when you first introduced the syllabus to them?

The interviewed teachers offered almost similar answers that suggested an important factor that would confirm an alleged hypothesis, they have never noticed their

learners' reaction since most of them are passive and do not engage in any classroom interaction nor do they seem interested in the least. Which begs further investigation about where learner autonomy generates from and whether it is a matter of extrinsic or intrinsic motivation.

Q6: In your opinion, how do you think the syllabus can be improved to help endorse learners' autonomy and performance?

Teacher 'A' and 'C' both stated that universities should first have active motivated students to be able to work together to improve or at least fix the design of the syllabus in consideration with their students' suggestions and recommendations, whereas teacher 'D' and 'E' recommended the syllabus be designed in terms of simplicity, relevance, and consideration following learners' needs and previous background in order to fit their level, because a syllabus is bound to fail if it does not meet students' guideline necessities. In view of realizing new methods in the classroom, one teacher suggested: "peer to peer" teaching where students take on a teaching role in a school setting in order to share their knowledge with other students, therefore developing a sense of responsibility, autonomy, and confidence in their performance. Moreover, teacher "B" had suggested the idea of effectuating a needs-based syllabus in the hope that it would fit learners' needs and necessities of adaptability, comfort, and motivation.

Q7: Based on your previous experience as a student, how do you think learners can develop autonomy?

All the interviewed participants agreed that autonomy is dependent on two aspects, one being the student's intrinsic motivation, the other being the teacher's assistance and motive, both offering a clearer image dealing with course material, activities, and further academic orientation. Thus, allowing learners to set a learning path, self-assess their progress, take responsibility and expect only a few from teachers, and simply be independent in learning and taking risks.

2.7. Interpretation of the Findings

This section provides clear evidence for the research questions and offers insight certifying the hypotheses. Remarkably, the findings of this study investigation conducted in Ahmed Salhi University Centre of Naama are analysed and compared in an attempt to achieve the objectives of the study and answer the different questions and hypothesis. Withal, it included 35 third year EFL students and 5 teachers. The age variable among students was estimated to be from 18 to 23 years old which is regarded to be suitable for learning and being receptive to new life knowledge. Aside from teachers' age span of 29 to 50 years old that could be really fertile to deliver respected knowledge based on experiences, handle academic issues and differences, and quickly adapt to change to fit learners' necessities.

Moreover, data was collected by means of a covert observation, one students' questionnaire, and an interview addressed to teachers, following the data analysis and discussion. Apparently, the findings demonstrate that both teachers and their learners are oftentimes not provided with a syllabus. Which indicates that students' attitude and performance depended heavily on the provision of a course program whether it be a suitable one or not. Consequently, this gained would dramatically influence learners' motivation to participate and engage more in and outside the classroom, because when one is offered a comprehensible curriculum, syllabus, or at least a lesson plan that fits the proper needs, level, and previous knowledge, one is inevitably expected to develop a hint of autonomy and therefore encouraged to perform more, although intrinsic motivation is lacking.

Furthermore, student's attitude towards different syllabi and lesson plans is shown to be apathetic and indifferent due to lack of energy or concern which may stem from negligence, incompetence or lack of knowledge (failure to understand or read the lesson plan). Teachers' frame of mind however, is neutral due to their complacence. Such a potentially unrealistic assumption arises from the fact that few to none are provided with syllabus or course programs, offering most of them the opportunity to either adapt or

simply design their own schedule albeit done with no collaboration with other teachers in order to have both coherent and cohesive teaching, ultimately leading to confusion in learning, and incertitude among teachers. After a series of experiments, it is sufficient to declare that educators altogether may follow learners' needs, prior knowledge and background.

Given this body of empirical evidence, it is proved that a failed syllabus may be considered so due to lack of negotiation, communication, and consideration. It strongly refers to the first hypothesis, perhaps more plainly, the only thing to ever learn about this reality is that it is not that compatible with what it was expected. On the other hand, when it seems compatible, teachers and learners have just not had the opportunity to view it in enough details to see the ways in which it was other than expected. Whereas, under certain assumptions, students' need of encouragement and motivation can be construed as a hint to both their private and academic lives where they were programmed since early years of education as passive learners and receptors of what is now considered as confusing, irrelevant, and redundant input.

This compilation of research assumptions results in ratifying the need to constantly remind learners that it is crucial to identify one's own needs and set goals to address them, by doing so one would be able to apply learning strategies and evaluate his/her own work therefore possibly develop a unique criterion for correctness regardless of the teacher's role or the syllabus. Suffice it to say that an effective syllabus or any syllabus that is effectively implemented has a high likelihood of cultivating learners' performance. As it is suggested, a needs-based syllabus would presumably fit EFL learners' desires and allow them to engage more and increase their pedagogical performance.

2.8. Pedagogical Recommendations and Suggestions

Making allowances for the previous findings of the primary and the secondary data, this research work concerning the effective implementation of syllabi in fostering learner autonomy and performance suggests the following recommendations:

- Take advantage of learning/teaching without a predetermined course program by designing one that would fit whatever situation faced.
- Students need to be aware that teachers cannot and will not constantly provide them with sources, this awareness can trigger their will to accomplish their own necessities and self-assess regularly.
- Encourage students to participate more and offer formative assessment in a matter consistent with their level, that would indicate where mistakes and errors should be avoided.
- Make use of the feedback loop concept, peer to peer teaching, and other seemingly effective methods that allow teachers and students to simultaneously collect and analyse the learning information to determine where students are and where they require improvement.
- Align instructions to learning standards and insist on high quality performance by having students polish their work, with full awareness that teachers are not forcing passive learning.

2.9. Research Limitations and Restrictions

To acknowledge this study's limitations, it is inevitable to mention the characteristics of design or methodology that impacted or influenced the interpretation of the findings from the research. They are the constraints on generalisability, and applications to practice that are the result of the manner in which it was initially chosen to design the study or the method used to establish internal and external validity or the result of unanticipated challenges that emerged during the study. The researcher was faced with limited time due to classes that began past their initial date, along with lack of material in account of few previous researches under this specific subject matter, because while valid, the mentioned views may be outside the scope of this thesis. In addition to the problem of attrition where the questionnaire's questions

were not entirely answered. Plus, the researcher encountered restricted access to resources in view of the covid-19 pandemic.

2.10. Conclusion

This chapter presents all the undertaken procedures in the process of collecting the data and the results obtained from the observation, students' questionnaires and teachers' interviews, which are assembled in numbers and percentages that are also illustrated in various graphs.

Thus, it conveys the broader theoretical base that elevated the assignment of the appropriate methodology, as well as the construction of the participants' profiles and the research instruments. Finally, it analysed, discussed and interpreted the major findings obtained from all the research instruments throughout this investigation. And elicited a few suggestions and recommendations to pave the way for new teaching/learning techniques whereby effective implementations of syllabi is a combination of efforts by both educators and learners. One of the main reflections pointed out in this chapter are more insights into the perceptions of teachers and students on curricula, syllabi, autonomy, and performance.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

GENERAL CONCLUSION

This dissertation is an Applied Linguistics oriented study of syllabus implementation. Despite the fact that the basic elements of education require the provision of curricula and syllabi, modern education has a high likelihood to fail nevertheless, if syllabus is not included. This core interests of this research are pointed towards the influence of well-designed course programs, and the perspectives that shape the behaviour of both teachers and students on how the effective syllabus contributes to the enrichment of education, shedding light on the need of students to foster autonomy and evolve in performing well academically.

The investigation is conducted in Ahmed Salhi University Centre of Naama at the department of foreign languages. Including thirty-five (35) students of 3rd year EFL students along with five (5) teachers, who were the basis of the investigation.

This study aims at examining the extent to which a considerably effective syllabus or simply a well-designed course program can foster learner autonomy and assist in endorsing academic performance, by means of inquiring how it is approached by educators and dealt with inside the classroom, in addition to the different teachers' views on how to implement it or become adapted in order to fulfill students' needs.

Based on the findings, it is initially found that syllabus is indeed an important element in education in view of the different perspectives discovered in this work (the suggestions of both teachers and students). It offers a great share of contribution to the subliminal gradual buildout of learner autonomy according to both teachers and students, and as it was argued in the interpretation, autonomy may be considered a promising aspect in the growth of academic performance. This study explains the causality of related variables under this investigation (autonomy and performance) that shows the importance of applying a set of diverse methods inside the classroom and across learning grounds. However, there have been several misconceptions according to students, dealing with the fact that learner autonomy would still not be fostered even if a proper well-designed syllabus is applied. This latter may emanate from lack of resources, disinterest, affective

factors (anxiety, lack of motivation and self-regulation), and various other aspects that influence the will to learn, it is still up for improvement nevertheless. Holistically, the assumption that the proper syllabus, unique and effective teaching methods, cooperation and collaboration would effectively bridge the gap between stimulating autonomy and being unconditionally competent in academic performance, was proven by the results.

Seemingly, even many institutions such as middle schools, present the syllabus in a form of textbooks or programs to be used in a certain date, as declared by participants from the interview, teachers are expected to have covered a certain number of units. At the same time teachers are not always provided with a list of supplementary material and resources. Yet, the graduate learners of such programs as are often expected to accomplish course design tasks without having received sufficient skills or training to do so. As a matter of fact, course design requires specialised expertise which can be gained through learning and practice which is why it was suggested that educators must possess an abundance of experiences of adaptability and creativity, to facilitate the teaching/learning process following the participants' answers. Designing courses is unlike preparing one's own teaching as it should be understood by others who will use the design. Similarly, Harmer (2001) states that decisions about course content are very often not taken by teachers, but by some higher authority. Therefore, it is very critical to equip teachers with the basic competence of course design.

In this respect, this work is regarded as an attempted procedural guide to follow in making syllabus decisions for specific instructional programs, it is anticipated that different designs would emerge for each level or higher education institutions, and this is as it was suggested to be. What is important in delivering practical decisions in the matter of syllabus designs and implementations, is that all possible teaching/learning factors ought to be taken into account in order to ensure genuine teachability and mutual understanding. In order to fully inquire the discussed matter in the case of uncertainty of the effectiveness of syllabi in fostering autonomy and performance, it is wise to open new horizons for further research about such as the influence of other variables on the phenomenon of autonomy.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Teachers' Interview

This interview is a data collection instrument to gather data about the implementation of effective syllabi in fostering learner autonomy and performance

1. Gender specification.

2. How many years of experience do you have in teaching English?

3. Were you provided with a syllabus in the beginning of the year?

4. How do you think our syllabus encourages learner autonomy?

5. What was your students' reaction when you first introduced the syllabus to them?

6. In your opinion, how do you think the syllabus can be improved to help endorse learners' autonomy and performance?

7. Based on your previous experience as a student, how do you think learners can develop autonomy?

Thank you for your collaboration.

Appendix II: Students' Questionnaire

Dear student.

For the sake of collecting data about *the effect of syllabus on learners' autonomy and performance,* regarding applicants of Salhi Ahmed University Centre of Naama, you are kindly requested to answer the questions below by putting a tick √ on the appropriate answer and expressing your judgement where needed. Thank you for your collaboration.

Part One: Demographic Data

*Age ….

*Female ☐ Male ☐

Part Two: Please tick √ Yes/No and comment where necessary

1. Were you provided with a syllabus/program in all modules at the beginning of the year?

Yes ☐ No ☐

2. Were you satisfied with the provided syllabus/program?

Yes ☐ No ☐

3. Was the provided syllabus organised and readable according to your own level?

Yes ☐ No ☐

4. Do you think the syllabus is important?

Yes ☐ No ☐

5. Do you use external aids to help you understand the syllabus in case you find it mysterious?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If No, please state why:

……..……

……

6. Were you offered any special assistance by the teacher in the classroom.

Yes ☐ No ☐

If Yes, please state how:

……..……
……..
……

Part Three: For each of the statements below, please indicate frequency by placing a tick √ in the appropriate box and express your opinion

7. What troubles you the most when introduced with the syllabus?

Relevance ☐ Difficulty ☐ Interest ☐ Length ☐ Assignments ☐

Other……..……

8. How often do teachers implement new methods to facilitate learning?

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Rarely ☐ Never ☐

9. How often do you prepare your lessons according to the syllabus?

Always ☐ Usually ☐ Rarely ☐ Never ☐

10. What benefits you think teacher-student communication could have for your learning?

……..……
……..
……

11. What do you think teachers can do to enhance your classroom performance?

……..……
……..
……

12. How do you think the syllabus should be designed?

……..……
……..
……