Fostering Learner Autonomy through Writing: Metacognitive Perspectives

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Abstract

The present study aims at fostering learner autonomy and attitudes among EFL students through a creative-writing project. To attain such an objective, a group of third-year students of English at Mentouri Brothers University has been engaged into a multiphase, story-writing project in an out-of-classroom setting, namely a writing centre. The Learner Autonomy Profile Short-Form (LAP-SF) was the instrument used prior and subsequent to the experiment to measure the subjects' degree of autonomy. The obtained results have shown that the students who have received the experimental treatment could develop a learning autonomy, while those who have not undergone the experiment remained largely non-autonomous. These findings confirm the hypothesis and demonstrate that learner autonomy can be successfully implemented through extracurricular, creative-writing projects.

Keywords : Learner Autonomy, Creative Writing, Attitudes

Introduction

There has been a noticeable shift towards learner-centred approaches in the field of foreign language education over the last few decades, especially in Europe. This major change has led to an increased focus on learner autonomy as a critical factor for learner growth and success. Accordingly, a growing body of literature has explored the notion learner autonomy in language education, and several approaches to fostering it have thereupon emerged. Many researchers (e.g. Dam, 2001; Benson, 2001; Sinclair, 2000; Smith, 2000; Little, 1991) argued that autonomy is an effective component in the development of learners. In the same vein, this article pivots on an experimental study conducted at the University of Constantine to implement learner autonomy through an out-of-classroom, story-writing project.

1.   Review of the Literature

1.1.   Learner Autonomy Defined

A proliferation of definitions for the notion 'learner autonomy' has unfolded through the years as many researchers and educators have attempted to describe it from a multiplicity of perspectives (Gremmo & Riley, 1995). Yet, the debate on its exact meaning is still open and intense (Benson, 2013). Hence, learner autonomy, as a notion, is quite controversial (Little,

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2005), and teachers or researchers who have an interest in it seem to be compelled, in a way or another, to opt for one category of definitions.

Holec (1981, p. 3), who coined the term, described it as "the ability to take charge of one's learning." To put it differently, autonomy in learning refers to learners' capacity and readiness to shoulder responsibility for their learning, thereby demonstrating less reliance on the teacher. Holec's definition, which is the most frequently cited of all definitions existing in the autonomy literature (Benson, 2007), encompasses four major characteristics of autonomy in language education. First, autonomy is related to learners' beliefs and attitudes towards learning and not to the place and mode of learning. Second, it is not a single behaviour, but a set of interrelated behaviours that are manifested, by learners, throughout the learning process. Third, it is not an innate skill but one that is acquirable and can be implemented in learners through various means and in different contexts. Last but not least, the idea of autonomy embraces the learners' right to make choices and reflections at the level of the content being taught to them as well as the method adopted by their teachers or institutions (Dam, 2001).

One of the few definitions which seem to summarize the mainstream of the above-stated definitions is that of Little (2007, p. 6) who defines autonomy as "a learner's willingness and ability to take responsibility, to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate his/her learning with tasks that are constructed in negotiation with and support from the teacher." Little's definition seems to cover almost all the essential components of autonomy, namely capacity, readiness, responsibility, involvement, evaluation and self-direction, with a clear recognition of the teacher's role as a counsellor and facilitator.

Dickinson (1992), on the other hand, adopts a different viewpoint and excludes the teacher's role, educational settings and formal learning materials (e.g. course-books) from the gist of autonomy, when a learner reaches what Dickinson called "full autonomy". In simpler terms, autonomy in learning, for him, has to be developed by the learner himself and in total independence of a teacher and any formal institution of education.

It is noteworthy that up till now, there has been no clear consensus among educators and researchers on the nature and characteristics of autonomy due to its association with other complex philosophical notions (e.g. freedom, independence and control), educational terms (e.g. self-access, out-of-classroom learning) and attitudes (e.g. reflection and evaluation).

1.2. Learner Autonomy and Writing

Although writing, as a language skill, appears to be the most self-directed of all language skills, little has been written in the literature on a potential relationship between writing and learner autonomy. Foster (2006, p. 27) pointed out the importance of autonomy in the writing development of young learners and invited the American universities and educators to regard learner autonomy as an essential component for the growth of student-writers. Foster (2006) states that:

> To develop creativity and voice in their writing, we believe children should not only be
> introduced to a rich range of existing expressive domains, but should also be given the time

and the space to explore these for themselves, making choices, taking risks, and developing their preferences and independence as writers (p. 28).

Foster (2016) argued that the majority of children, who took part in a survey- called We're the Writers- he conducted to investigates young learners' beliefs and needs in the writing class, showed a strong desire for decision making, monitoring, evaluating and taking control over their learning in the writing classroom. To put it differently, Foster brought to light autonomy as a crucial element for the successful writing classroom, and urged writing teachers to allow their students some freedom, agency and responsibility that are pivotal to the development of student as writers. Contemplating Little's (2007, p. 27) definition of learner autonomy as "the ability to take responsibility, to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate his/her learning…" one can easily notice that it covers all the major steps of the writing process; from planning, through monitoring to revising and editing. One may deduce, therefore, that there is a potential relationship between autonomy and the writing process, and that the former seem to help students perform better at the latter.

Contemplating Little's (2007, p. 27) definition of learner autonomy as "the ability to take responsibility, to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate his/her learning." , one could effortlessly notice that it covers all the major steps of the writing process; from planning, through monitoring to revising. One may deduce, therefore, that there is a potential relationship between autonomy and the writing process, and that the former seems to help students perform better at the latter. However, without the support of empirical data our deduction remains invalid.

The above-discussed examples indicate that the connection between leaner autonomy is worth investigating, for it seemingly comprise valuable insights concerning the learning and teaching of foreign languages. In view of that, the present research work aimed to shed light on that very relationship.

1.3. Characteristics of Autonomous Learners

According to (Hedge, 2000), there are certain characteristics that distinguish autonomous learners from those who are not. Below is a list of those features according to the existing literature on learner autonomy. In fact, the majority of scholars (e.g. Candy, 1991; Dam, 1995; Little, 2004; Lamb & Reinders, 2008; Vieira, 2009) describe autonomous learners are ones who:

- Assume and shoulder responsibility for their own learning
- Learner within and beyond the classroom walls homogeneously
- Good at exploiting learning materials and resources
- Flexible and able to adjust their learning strategies and preferences to the task in hand
- Actively engaged in their learning
- Willing to take educational risks and persistent enough to finish difficult tasks
- Reflective and ready to assess themselves and the tasks assigned to them
- Think of teachers as counsellors, guide, negotiators, and intellectual assistants
- Critical thinkers who can manage their time effectively and learn in various settings

The above list indicates clearly that autonomous learners are intelligent and cognizant individuals who are well able to self-direct their learning and adapt to contemporary academic undertakings, and who are collaborative in many ways. With such qualities and skills, autonomous learners are likely to become autonomous citizen in the future.

2. Methodology of Research

2.1. Research Population and Sample

The target population of the present study consists of adult learners attending educational institution in their final undergraduate year at the tertiary level. The sample (N =56) represents roughly 275 undergraduate students divided into six equal groups, and are third-years of Applied Language Studies at the Department of English Language at Mentouri Brothers University in Constantine.

A sample of 56 students has been randomly selected. Afterwards, the selected group has been divided into two equal groups: one control and the other experimental. In addition to their ordinary classes, the participants within the experimental group have received an experimental treatment over a period of seven months in a writing centre, while the control group continued to attend regular classes.

2.2. Tools of Research

The Learner Autonomy Profile Short-Form (LAP-SF) was the instrument used prior and subsequent to the experiment to measure the subjects' degree of autonomy. The statistical analysis of the LAP responses was calculated via the IBM SPSS Statistics, version 24). Additionally, self-assessment and reflection forms have been employed in this study to observe the participants' advancement towards autonomy.

2.2.1. The Learner Autonomy Profile Short Form

The Learner Autonomy Profile Short Form (LAP S-F) is constructed upon the idea that learner autonomy can be interpreted through the learners' behavioural intention. In this instrument of research, respondents are asked about their perception of self and how they would react to various selected situations associated with learning. A Likert scale (ranging from 0 = never to 10 = always) is used to determine the respondents' degree of agreement with the 66 items which the LAP-SF comprises. On a scale of 10, the mean of the scores obtained in each construct represents the degree of autonomy of each participants.

2.2.2. Experimental Design and Treatment

In light of the existing literature on language learner autonomy and the various approaches to implementing it within and beyond the language classroom, an extracurricular writing project, labelled iStory, has been carefully designed and implemented at the University of Constantine. Before that, a writing centre had been created to host the aforementioned project. The experimental group received four hours of tuition every week for a period of seven month (a total of 28 weeks/112 hours).

2.2.2.1. The iStory Project

The iStory is some sort of an extracurricular activity or mission that revolves around engaging a group of EFL learners in a seven-month, story-writing process. It was designed to foster learner autonomy among the participants within the experimental group of this study. The project consists of six major phases.

2.2.2.1.1. Phase One: Creating a Word Bank

After introducing the student participants' to the project and raising their awareness about its significance and potential outcomes, they were divided into small groups. Afterwards, each group was asked to collect words/expressions connected to story-writing in particular and creative writing by large, under such headings as 'action verbs', 'adjectives', 'speech tags', 'character traits', 'idioms', 'literary devices', 'names', 'nicknames', 'professions', 'countries', and 'psychological/mental disorders'. The collected lists were then categorized and stored on a computer or DVD for later access.

2.2.2.1.2. Phase Two: Making Creative Choices

At this stage, the students started planning their stories by making creative choices and decisions concerning the genre, target reader-age/culture, moral of the story and so forth. Using examples from literature, the participants were taught how to use the ordinary (words) to create the extraordinary (art), and they seemed to have greatly enjoyed it. In fact, they were directing, monitoring and reflecting upon their learning both independently and cooperatively with a limited assistance from the teacher/researcher. As expected, the students came up with scores of creative plots and interesting cast of characters.

2.2.2.1.3. Phase Three: Reading for Inspiration

This stage pivots on exposing the participants to a wide range of stories as a way of inspiring them before they actually start writing their own stories. To ensure a degree of freedom and foster autonomy, the students participants were motivate to select the stories they want to examine. Students are also motivated to ask questions such as, why did the author choose certain expressions, adjectives, or verbs? How did he emphasize that idea? What makes a description vivid and appealing? What was written and what was actually communicated? These questions were expected to help students detect the best aspects of each story and try to incorporate those elements into their own writings. Involving students in such major decisions aimed at instilling in them the habit of playing pivotal roles in the classroom as influential partners in the learning enterprise. By making decisions as regards the methods, settings, pace and time of learning, students are meta-cognitively engaged in the process, thereby prepared to direct their learning and boost its potential outcomes (Nunan, 2003). In fact, decision-making is one of the core principles underlying the pedagogy and procedures pertaining to autonomy.

2.2.2.1.4. Phase Four: Writing the Story

During this two-month stage, students began to write their stories by describing characters, creating dialogues, narrating and so forth. The major part of the learning and teaching took place during this phase; the teacher had the opportunity to teach tenses, word choice,

punctuation, sentence structure and similar constructs along with the narrative techniques. The students, on the other hand, went through the unique experience of writing a whole story; they set short-term goals and worked hard to meet them. According to the feedback and reflection forms, this stage was challenging, enjoyable and worthwhile.

2.2.2.1.5. Phase Five: Revising

Revision is a major step in the writing process, and is beneficial to both the writer and his product (Kissel, 2005). Therefore, there student participants were repeatedly engaged in this task through various methods to enhance the quality of their writing. Editing, proofreading, peer reviewing and reading aloud are a few techniques the students have employed at this stage. We kept reminding them that Earnest Hemingway admitted to rewriting the ending of 'A Farewell to Arms' 39 times! After several revision processes, the students could locate the majority of inaccuracies and corrected them. It is noteworthy that the student writers were surprised that each time a revision is made new mistakes are detected. This phase was two-week long.

2.2.2.2. The Evaluation and Reflection Breaks

The iStory Project was characterised by regular intervals of evaluation and reflection after the end of each stage. Questions such as: what have you learned? How it is relevant to your overall learning experience/plan/goals? What was worthwhile? What seemed to be unnecessary? How can you do it better? What was not interesting to you? The answers were often given in a form of reports to make it possible for the researcher to analyse them carefully, and for the learners to go back to them, as learning records, when necessary.

2.2.2.3. Awareness Raising Speeches

Owing to the fact that awareness is crucial to the promotion of autonomous learning (Scharle & Szabo, 2000), ample time has been allocated to what the researcher designed and called 'Awareness-Raising Speeches' (ARS). The ARS are some sort of intermissions or pauses that the researcher has exploited to raise the participants' awareness about the significance of accepting responsibility for their own learning. Such intermissions offered the researcher a good chance to highlight the importance of the project and its potential outcomes to reassure and urge the student participants to persist and devote extra efforts to the mission.

2.2.2.4. The Significance of the Project

The strengths of the iStory project could be perceived through four main aspects: namely, inclusiveness, flexibility, innovativeness, and relevance or foundation. It is inclusive as it touches upon many skills (e.g. writing, reading, reasoning, planning, evaluating, etc.) and various areas (e.g. out-of-classroom learning, creative writing, leaner awareness, project-based learning, etc.) associated with foreign language learning. It is also flexible in the sense that it can be adopted, by any teacher, of any language, anywhere in the world; it could also be shortened or even extended. Further, some phases (e.g. reading for writing and creating a of words) can be changed, adapted or developed. Furthermore, the project can be deemed innovative, as it comprises new procedures and techniques (e.g. reading for writing and awareness-raising speeches). Finally, yet importantly, the project is well established in the

theory of learning autonomy. That is, this experimental treatment has rooted into the main approaches to implementing autonomy. More precisely, it is related to the resource approach in that it makes use of resources (viz., the student-created word bank, dictionaries, novels, and short stories). It is also related to the technology approach in that it comprises computer usage, internet and it exploited a Facebook page. It is, moreover, associated with the learner- based approach as it focuses on the learner and his development through awareness, metacognition and training. The treatment also has deep roots in Nunan's (2003) approach in the sense that it places focus on awareness are a critical step in the autonomy enterprise. In addition, it gives students the chance to direct, monitor and make decisions concerning their learning. Furthermore, the project urges collaboration and peer feedback, which are essential elements in the practices related to learner autonomy.

Participants (N 56)	Desire	Resourcefulness	Initiative	Persistence	Mean
S1	2.1	3.2	1.9	3.2	2.6
S2	2.3	2.9	2.7	2.2	2.52
S3	2.5	3.2	3.4	3.7	3.2
S4	2.3	3.1	3.8	3.3	3.12
S5	2.1	2.5	2.6	1.9	2.27
S6	1.9	1.9	2.4	2.6	2.2
S7	4.1	3.2	2.7	2.7	3.17
S8	3.2	3.0	2.3	3.4	2.79
S9	3.4	1.1	4.3	4.1	3.22
S10	2.6	2.0	5.6	2.8	3.25
S11	2.5	3.6	3.7	4.1	3.47
S12	2.3	3.1	4.3	3.3	3.25
S13	2.1	2.5	2.6	1.9	2.27
S14	1.9	1.9	2.8	2.9	2.37
S15	4.1	3.2	2.7	2.7	3.17
S16	2.3	4.3	4.5	2.9	3.5
S17	2.7	3.2	3.6	3.4	3.22
S18	2.9	1.9	2.4	1.9	2.27
S19	3.0	4.2	2.9	1.7	2.95
S20	4.1	3.2	5.6	3.2	4.02
S21	2.1	1.9	2.3	2.6	2.22
S22	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5
S23	2.7	2.3	2.4	2.6	2.5
S24	1.6	1.8	1.4	1.1	1.47
S25	2.1	3.2	1.9	3.2	2.6
S26	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.2	2.3
S27	3.3	3.6	3.7	4.1	3.67
S28	2.7	2.3	2.4	2.6	2.5
S29	2.0	1.6	1.7	1.9	1.80
S30	2.1	3.2	1.9	3.2	2.6
S31	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.2	2.3
S32	2.5	3.6	3.7	4.1	3.47

S33	2.3	3.1	4.3	3.3	3.25
S34	2.1	2.5	2.6	1.9	2.27
S35	1.9	1.9	2.8	2.9	2.37
S36	4.1	3.2	2.7	2.7	3.17
S37	3.2	3.0	2.3	3.4	2.97
S38	3.4	1.1	3.3	4.1	2.97
S39	2.6	2.0	3.6	2.8	2.75
S40	2.1	2.0	3.2	3.2	2.62
S41	3.0	2.8	2.3	3.1	2.8
S42	3.2	2.7	3.1	2.3	2.82
S43	2.3	3.0	1.4	2.9	2.4
S44	1.8	2.0	2.3	2.3	2.1
S45	2.3	4.3	4.5	2.9	3.5
S46	2.7	3.2	3.6	3.4	3.22
S47	2.9	1.7	2.4	1.9	2.22
S48	3.0	4.2	2.9	1.7	2.95
S49	4.1	3.2	5.6	3.2	4.02
S50	1.6	3.9	5.2	3.2	3.47
S51	2.3	2.8	3.1	2.4	2.65
S52	2.8	2.6	2.9	2.1	2.6
S53	3.5	3.1	3.4	2.8	3.2
S54	2.9	3.6	3.1	3.0	3.15
S55	2.7	3.1	2.9	2.3	2.75
S56	2.4	2.8	3.2	2.5	2.72
Total Mean	2.63	2.77	3.07	2.79	2.81

Table 1: The Participants' level of autonomy in the pre-test as measured by the LAP

2.2.3. Discussion of Findings

2.2.3.1. The Pre-test (Whole Sample)

The pre-test was administered at the beginning of the experiment to both the control and experimental groups to measure their autonomy and see whether they are autonomous or not. The participants' were informed a few days earlier about the test, and were given enough details about it, along with clear instructions on how to accomplish the task.

Table 1, exhibit the results obtained from a pre-test conducted to measure the autonomy of the whole sample, i.e. both the control and experimental groups. The vast majority of participants (97%), as the figures above indicate, obtained very low scores of autonomy as measured by the Learner Autonomy Profile Short Form (total mean = 2.81/10). This may be due to a variety of factors such as the lack of learner-centred approaches in the EFL context in Algeria and/or the pedagogical tenets of the Algerian educational institutions, which seem to focus on traditional methods of teaching in which the teacher is made fully responsible for his learners' learning.

2.2.3.2. The Post-test

a) The Control Group

Table 2: The control group's level of autonomy in the post-test as measured by the LAP

Participants (N 25)	Resourcefulness	Initiative	Persistence	readiness	Mean
S1	2.3	1.7	2.6	2.0	2.02
S2	2.3	2.1	2.7	2.9	2.5
S3	2.7	2.6	2.4	2.3	2.5
S4	1.6	1.8	1.9	1.7	1.75
S5	2.1	2.2	1.9	2.7	2.22
S6	2.7	2.3	2.8	2.2	2.5
S7	2.8	3.1	3.4	3.0	3.07
S8	2.3	3.1	3.3	3.0	2.92
S9	2.7	2.3	2.6	1.9	2.37
S10	2.1	1.9	2.8	2.9	2.42
S11	4.1	3.2	2.7	2.7	3.17
S12	3.2	3.0	2.3	3.4	2.97
S13	3.4	1.9	3.3	3.1	2.92
S14	2.6	2.5	4.6	2.8	3.12
S15	2.1	2.0	3.0	3.2	2.75
S16	3.0	2.8	2.3	3.1	2.8
S17	3.2	2.9	3.8	2.3	3.05
S18	2.3	3.0	1.8	2.8	2.47
S19	1.7	2.0	2.3	2.3	2.07
S20	3.3	4.3	4.5	2.9	3.75
S21	2.7	3.2	3.6	3.4	3.22
S22	2.9	1.9	2.4	1.9	2.27
S23	3.0	3.2	2.9	1.7	2.7
S24	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.2	3.27
S25	2.6	3.9	4.2	3.2	3.47
S26	2.8	2.9	3.1	2.7	2.87
S27	3.1	3.3	2.9	3.4	3.17
S28	2.8	3.0	2.9	2.7	2.85
Total Mean	2.69	2.68	2.95	2.69	2.75

As predicted, the subjects' making up the control group remained mostly non-autonomous (total mean = 2.75), see table 2 below. This implies that many students of English at Constantine University are passive learners, and that the teacher-centred approaches adopted by the teachers are unproductive when it comes to promoting learner autonomy. This does not mean that Algerian students cannot be autonomous; it rather indicates that there is something (e.g. the teaching methods) hindering them from becoming autonomous. Or perhaps, they have never been given a real opportunity to develop their learning autonomy. Indeed, the latter is an acquirable capacity and practice that is often manifested in everyday life (i.e., people keep

making choices and decisions), and probably a basic human aptitude that needs continuous scaffolding to yield satisfactory result

b) Experimental Group

General Discussion of Results

Participants (N 25)	Desire	Resourcefulness	Initiative	Persistence	Mean
S1	4.0	5.1	6.6	6.4	5.52
S2	5.2	4.9	6.9	6.2	5.80
S3	6.0	5.9	5.4	5.8	5.77
S4	4.9	4.2	4.4	3.8	4.32
S5	5.9	6.1	7.0	6.8	6.45
S6	5.4	4.9	5.8	4.7	5.20
S7	4.7	5.6	5.2	6.2	5.42
S8	5.5	5.4	6.5	5.7	5.77
S9	4.2	5.2	5.8	4.4	4.90
S10	3.9	3.3	4.2	4.1	3.87
S11	5.7	5.4	5.7	5.9	5.67
S12	5.1	5.2	5.9	6.3	5.62
S13	5.3	4.2	5.2	6.7	5.35
S14	5.6	4.7	6.0	4.8	5.27
S15	3.9	4.1	5.2	4.9	4.52
S16	4.3	4.5	4.4	5.5	4.67
S17	4.6	4.4	4.9	5.0	4.72
S18	5.0	5.3	4.7	5.4	5.10
S19	4.5	4.3	4.5	4.1	4.35
S20	4.5	5.6	6.1	6.2	5.60
S21	4.7	5.4	5.0	4.4	4.87
S22	5.1	3.8	5.5	4.9	4.82
S23	5.7	6.5	6.3	5.7	5.92
S24	6.2	5.3	5.9	6.2	6.05
S25	5.2	5.6	4.4	4.8	5.0
S26	5.3	5.7			5.9
S27	5.8	6.1	6.4	5.6	5.97
S28	5.9	6.0	5.5	5.3	5.67
Total Mean	5.07	5.09	5.54	5.42	5.28

Table 3: The experimental group's level of autonomy in the post-test as measured by the LAP

As Tables 01, 02, and 03 demonstrate, the findings of the pre-test and post-test yielded significant insights regarding the development of autonomy among EFL learners. More precisely, while the pre-test results showed that all the surveyed students were largely non-autonomous (total mean of autonomy = 2.81), the post-test findings revealed that the subjects who have received the experimental treatment have developed a certain degree of autonomy

(total mean of autonomy = 5.28). The post-test results showed also that the members of the control group, who did not receive the experimental treatment, remained mostly non-autonomous. To put it otherwise, by the end of the project, the participating students appeared to be more mature as learners, motivated, focused and more cognizant of their learning process and mechanisms. The post-test findings, therefore, go in line with this study's premise that engaging English language students in an extensive story-writing project could helped them develop a capacity for taking control over their learning, and more importantly, accept responsibility as learners.

Finally and just as important, the experimental treatment made the students more persistent in comparison to their state prior to the experiment. In detail, 64.28 % of the subjects scored between 5.0 and 6.99, while 32.14 % of them achieved a score between 4.0 and 5.99 in the inventory of Persistence.

Conversely, they scored lower than 3.0 in the pre-test (total mean = 2.69). In fact, during the project within which the experimental treatment was encapsulated, the students were often instructed to stay on task until the learning goals are accomplished (i.e. do not give up or get bored easily). They were repeatedly told to keep themselves motivated by thinking about the potential satisfying outcomes or rewards that the learning task may bring. Likewise, the student participants were constantly urged to watch motivational speeches and read about success stories to develop some sort of a stamina, which would in turn help them persevere as learners. In time and as it could be inferred from the scores pertaining to the inventory of Persistence, those students have seemingly realised that perseverance is a distinctive feature of successful learners. In other terms, they developed a habit of sticking to the various learning tasks long enough to properly complete them.

Overall, the experiment treatment had a positive impact on the subjects by pushing them to adopt favourable attitudes towards learning in general, and so make substantial contributions to the learning process. Indeed, by the end of the project, the participating students appeared to be more motivated, more focused and more cognizant of their learning processes and mechanisms. In a word, they became independent and active learners.

Conclusion

The findings of the present study demonstrated that learner autonomy can be fostered by means of an extensive, creative-writing project. Moreover, the results indicated that a great part of foreign language learning can occur beyond the classroom walls, in different settings including writing centres. In this respect, the study highlighted the significance of learner autonomy in foreign language education. Therefore, EFL teachers are invited to adopt learner-centred approaches in their teaching to help their students become autonomous.

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