

Learners' autonomy in literature: is TBA the key solution?
EFFECT OF TBA on fostering learners' autonomy among Literature
classes

Selma Zemali

Faculty of Foreign Languages 3English department 3University of Mohamed Ben
Ahmed, Oran 2 selmazemali6@gmail.com

Received: 24/10/2024

Accepted: 11/05/2025

Published: 02/06/2025

Abstract:

Learners' autonomy signifies their own ability to direct their learning and their capacity to build goals which adjust their needs and interests. This qualitative exploration deals with the profound effect of task-based approach into a literary class course on fostering learners' extensive autonomy proper attitude and views, to verify the extent to which learners' voluntarily undergo effective autonomy through TBA. The reliable data was carefully collected by a questionnaire addressed to 30 Master literature students, after that it has been qualitatively analysed; participants had positive attitudes toward the necessary integration of (TBA), therefore they felt intuitively more self-confident and autonomous learners which helps them to be efficiently risk takers and clutch them away of their shyness through the use of TBA.

Key words: learner autonomy, Task-Based Approach, teaching literature, learning, self-sufficiency, student's achievement.

1. INTRODUCTION

An extensive debate has been leveled against the aged approaches because of their powerless and inability to meet the learner's needs and interests. Indeed, the teacher-student relationship was chiefly one side direction. The learners were spoon fed with grammatical rules, discourse structures and vocabulary items (the form). It was until the 1960s that change began with the emergence of "Communicative Language Teaching Approach. » On the other hand, the use of TBA reflects fruitfully on teaching literature process and guarantees that the promotion of learners' autonomy holds up education sufficiently; outstandingly with the field of literature, since it is a vast world behind the locked doors. Accordingly, the more teachers support their students to foster their autonomy adopting a purely learner-directed approach, the more pleased they were. As all notion of the world, Algerian teachers were concerned by this revolution regarding the method of teaching literature in an EFL context. Since, a need for an urgent change was crucial; TBA is a purely "learner-centered" and aims at linking the learning with real-life situations. Otherwise, it produces less authoritarian teachers and more sensitive to learner's needs and interests.

It has been agreed that a purely learner-centered method in teaching foreign languages, especially in teaching literature is the key solution to foster learners 'autonomy, indeed an extra weight is currently put on the learners' role in the learning process(i.e. learners should feel that they are merely learning via TBA, as far as teachers should notice that their students are more and more independent through such an approach) , learners are no more viewed as passive recipients of information and teaching literature is no more regarded as a process of getting information, nevertheless learners should play an active role in order to be able to understand and make themselves understood in order to fit their own needs and interests.

It was considering that students should have a say in the course applied in the classroom. Furthermore, as learner autonomy is all about the learners getting their voices heard; not that breezy or chatty voice, it was indispensable to analyse the promotion of learners' autonomy from their viewpoints.

The worth of this study stands from the following factors:

- It examines the outcome of using Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT) for enhancing the learners' autonomy.

- To develop the teacher's methodology in order to offer opportunities for students to share their ideas and cope with their needs.

The adopted approach in this study plans to enlighten the level at which learner autonomy is supported with a space of freedom to express their concerns openly. It aims also at discovering how satisfied the students are with the degree to which learner autonomy is promoted in teaching literature through TBA; whether «learner autonomy» is promoted enough, or even too much. This exploration tries to answer the following statements:

- How does task-based approach adjust the manner of teaching literature? - To what extent does it fosters their autonomy standing to the students' opinions?
- How can TBA help literature teachers in creating a more learner-centered climate?
- How satisfied are the students with the amount to which they think learner autonomy is promoted in literature class using TBA?

Since using TBA in literary classes to promote learner autonomy corresponds to various forms. This particular investigation delivers an additional viewpoint standing on observing the extent to which learner autonomy is promoted through TBA among Master2 literature classes. The gathered data was analysed in order to respond to the above-mentioned research questions. This is why the researcher through her investigation hypothesizes that:

- Task-based approach has a great effect on teaching literature as far as promoting learners autonomy through its application in the field of literature.
- TBA helps the teacher of literature in withdrawing, and freeing the learners to make their voices heard.
- The use of TBA in literary classes liberates the learners and offers opportunities for expanding their independence and self-sufficiency. Consequently, it helps them in forging their spirit of autonomy.

2. Literature review

2.1. Task based Approach.

The rationale of TBA is to call attention to meaningful communication as well as the cooperation between learners and teachers. In language teaching a task is identified as a particular activity with apparent purposes that boost learners' desire to learn, meanwhile in literature, by using or more precisely selecting verbal and non-verbal sources based on the learners' own abilities which fit their needs and interests nurturing learners' autonomy under the guidance of the instructor in order to attain the designed goals by learners and teachers;.

2.2.Task based approach and “autonomy.”

2.2. 1. Teachers ‘and learners’ roles:

Both learners and teachers share a responsibility to play interrelated roles in all pedagogical tasks; the teacher should initially be the facilitator of the learning aids and materials and the planner of tasks. Then again, he/she should be the observer, so as to give the timely guidance to the learners' performance to praise them or give them suggestion of improvement organisers because successful tasks depend on the good organisation by providing their student with the appropriate recommendation to know what to read and how to read. learners, on the other hand, ought to be creative, so the teacher is supposed to take into consideration their opinions and even exchange his/her ideas with them.

2.2.2. Learners and Autonomy

The etymology of autonomy goes farther back to the sixteenth and seventeenth century according to (Benson 2011: 50, Benson and Voller 1997: 4). Accordingly, autonomy is established in learners unless they comprehend their needs or interest and recognise their learning goals. Learners should maximise occasions to use English inside and outside the classroom. Though, learner autonomy is a fairly recent concept, Consequently, learners' autonomy is a matter of conscious intention: generally, learners cannot be responsible for their own learning only if they know what, why, and how they are trying to learn. The learner has to take at least certain initiatives and must share in checking improvement and assessing at what level learners achieve goals. This fact needs the learner's involvement and self control over his or her own knowledge and his or her own role in that process. Autonomy is regarded as one of the most vital goals in English language teaching and learning. Consequently, teachers need to coach their students to be more autonomous and active elements that make more skillful classes.

Standing to Kant and Mill's ideas; one's own self-assurance in terms of skills and abilities is the initiative of the learners' autonomy as well. In opinion of that, teachers, philosophers and precisionists have been attracted in the concern and finally related autonomy to the fields of learning and education. Susan M (1998), has enlarged a huge impact on later thinkers and educators (Benson 2011: 27-36. Adding to that, Susan M (1998), opinions are seen as a root of autonomy in learning through an innate and genuine experience in where learners are responsible of their learning. John Dewey (1859-1952) accentuates the significance of interaction with the authentic atmosphere and problem-solving as a basis of learning (Benson 2011: 29-30). Therefore, autonomy for them is linked to the social matters. But, it has gained increasing the attention of numerous psychologists expert in the field of education, one of them being the humanist psychologist Carl Rogers (2002). Benson (2011, 35).

According to Rogers, learning is distinct; it is individual process which is affected by individual experiences. So, the psychological origins of learner autonomy can be a factor. (Gremmo and Riley 1995, 153).

As a capacity to control one's own learning, learner autonomy can be seen as a form of self-regulation (Vancouver 2005: 305. According to (Henri Holec Benson, 2011: 9) development of technology boosts of learner autonomy (Gremmo and Riley, 1995: 153).

2.2.3. The teachers' role on Promoting Autonomy

Towards a fruitful and effective learning to make learners positive elements, teachers' responsibility in TBA can be successfully accomplished by boosting chances to make them activities and resourceful only if they follow two central measures:

- 1 encouraging learners to have a powerful mental energy in performing the tasks i.e. using their own potentials and mental capacities in tasks achievement.

- 2 motivating the learners' in performing tasks freely, such as the meaning negotiation and content, which make learning effective.

3. Methodology

This study focuses on the students' opinions, so only qualitative tools were used. Indeed, by using teachers and students' questionnaire were integrated in order to conduct the study into an objective way. The researcher was looking for consistency to confirm her hypothesis about how can TBA foster learners' autonomy standing on the view points of both teachers and students.

After the data was collected, it was quantitatively analysed in order to verify the extent to which TBA is applied in our department especially in literary classes. Besides, it examines how it contributes in making learners more independent, involved and decision makers under the guidance of the teacher.

Statments	Alternative responses				
	1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 (%)
I think I have the ability to learn literature well.	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	11 (55%)	9 (45%)
I make good use of my free time in literature study.	2 (10%)	0 (0%)	2 (10%)	16 (80%)	0 (0%)
I I find I can finish my task on time.	4 (20%)	0 (0%)	2 (10%)	0 (0%)	16 (80%)
I find that I can submit my home work on time.	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	16 (80%)	4 (20%)
I I keep record of my study, such as k keeping a journal, writing an evaluation..	4 (20%)	0 (0%)	9 (45%)	7 (35%)	0 (0%)
make self-exam with the exam papers chosen by myself.	2 (10%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	11 (55%)	7 (35%)
I reward myself such as going shopping, playing etc. when I make good in learning.	4 (20%)	0 (0%)	7 (35%)	7 (35%)	2 (10%)
I attend out-class activities to practice and learn the language	0 (0%)	2 (10%)	2 (10%)	2 (10%)	14 (70%)
In class, I take part in activities such as pair/group discussion, role play, Whenever I get the chance.	2 (10%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	16 (80%)	2 (10%)
I know my strengths and weaknesses in my study.	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	16 (80%)	4 (20%)

11) I choose books, exercises which suit me, my needs and my interests.	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (20%)	16 (80%)
---	-----------	-----------	-----------	------------	-------------

Table1: results and percentage concerning the extent through which TBA helps them to be autonomous literature learners

4. Results and discussion

4.1.Participants

The students' questionnaire was distributed among 30 students of master 2 literature, in which they were asked to express their attitude toward the TBA first, its application in literature courses, and according to them how can that purely learner-centered approach helps them in being more self-directed and autonomous learners.

Group	Number of students
Master 2 literature students	30

Table2: details of the participants

4.2. Analysis of the students' responses concerning the extent to which TBA is beneficial to foster their autonomy

For the sake of clarity, the participants were asked to be self-assessors and examine how well TBA helps at fostering the learners' autonomy in teaching literature. As the results have shown, the frequently repeated view of learners' autonomy through TBA is being able to take charge of their own learning, this involves that the learner makes independent choices about their own learning including the ability make good use of their time in their studies, as 55% of the participants said that they strongly agree, and 45% agree to make good use of my free time in literature that they can do it study adding to that 80% strongly agree and 20% agree that they can finish the task on time, in the other hand 80% of them strongly agree and 20% agree that they can submit their home works on time i.e.(as our participants are informants M2 students are sufficiently able to be responsible of their time and manage it successfully). Moreover, 80% strongly believed and 20% agree that they know their strength and weakest points as it are

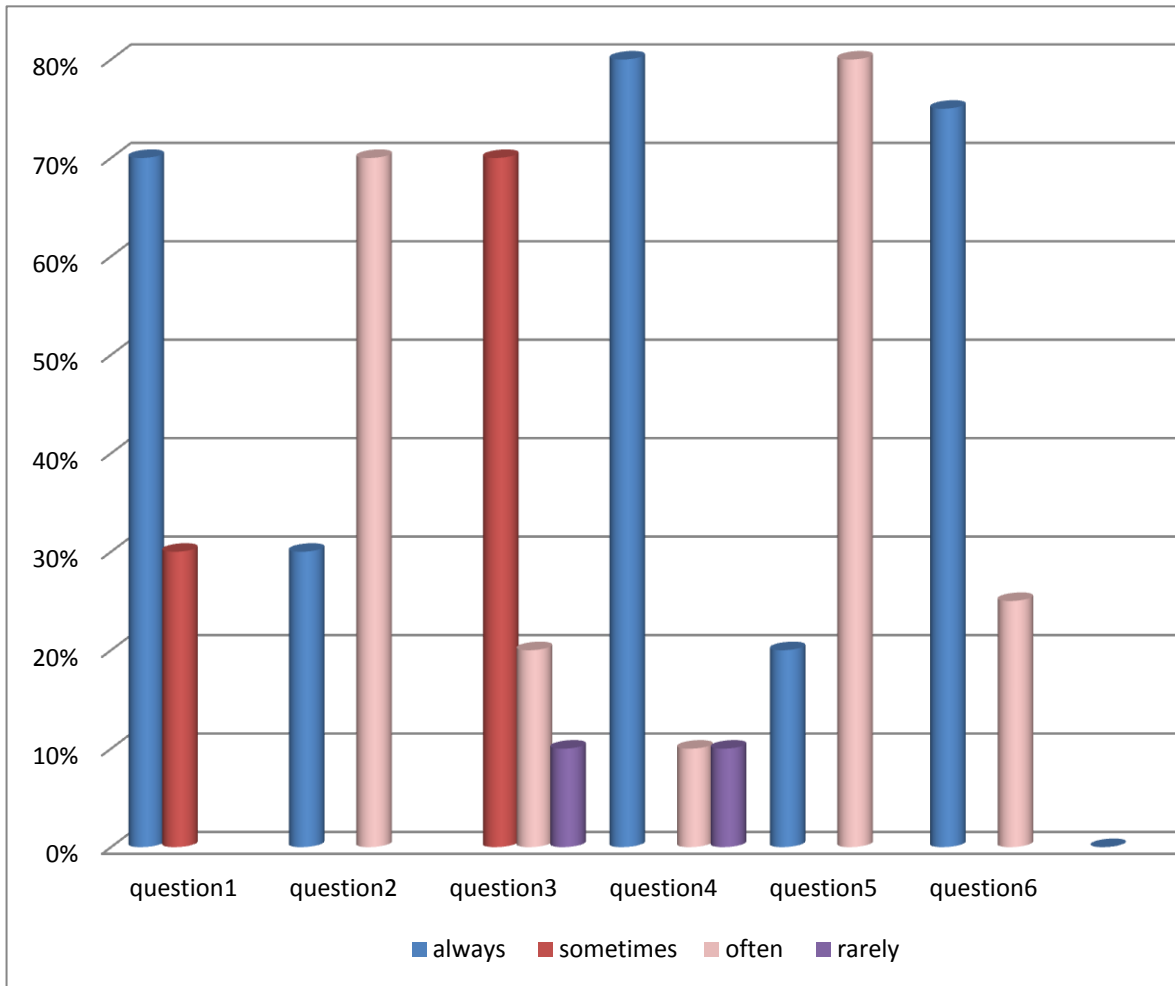
the first and foremost step to overcome the problems occurs in teaching literature and reinforce their capacities into a purposeful way. Furthermore, standing to the fact that without the possibility to make choices about learning, there is no learner autonomy; 80% of the learners agree, and 20% of them strongly agree that they can choose books, exercises which suit their needs and interests, since when it comes to teaching literature, choices can be made on multiple levels. Master learners properly know what is meant by the intrinsic motivation this is why 35% of the participants strongly agree and 70% of them agree that they reward their selves such as going shopping, playing, etc.

To sum up, a strong relationship is between TBA and many factors that affect the learners' autonomy into a purposeful way. Even not explicitly stated, fostering the learners' autonomy through TBA is viewed positively in teaching literature than others. Into the good deal, TBA will ultimately get in the way of fostering learners' autonomy; it should be applied explicitly and viewed critically.

5. Analysis of the students' responses

Standing on their points of view learners confirmed that their teachers help in forging their spirit of autonomy. On the grounds of data collected it might be concluded that the changes in the teachers 'and the students' attitudes are principally positive: the changes in the teachers 'views were related to their roles Thus, the changes in the students' views were related to motivation as the application of TBA essentially encourage learners and incite them forward. In accordance with this the results have shown that under the seed of the TBA which aims at fostering the learners' autonomy, teachers tend to not only increase their students' intellectual abilities, but they also supportively enhance the students' motivation. Furthermore, when students perceive their teachers' support their autonomy, their autonomy will automatically increase. Nevertheless, as the results obtained in this part both students and teachers appreciate all the principles behind autonomous learning. Accordingly, as all teachers applied TBA in M2 literature class 70% of the participants stated that the teacher constantly offers them help when they need it, and only 30% said sometimes. Moreover, 70% of them stated that teachers often and 30 % always encourage them to ask for help from one another when necessary;(This is why one of the teachers said repeatedly this year when teaching try to be as close as possible to your students and this was exactly what she did to assure their learners who act as teachers!) All these factors were connected to the achievement of learner autonomy in teaching literature using TBA lead to greater learner autonomy. As was the case with the study by Black

and Deci (2000), for instance, even with maintaining intrinsic motivation it plays only a part in learner autonomy.



Graph1: Percentage of the learners' points of view towards their teachers (to foster their autonomy)

6.Conclusion:

Learner autonomy is a key element and has received a great deal of attention from L 2 researchers and practitioners over the years (e.g., Dam, 2011).It is more visible that the need for university programs to investigate the inter-complementary relationship between this learner-directed approach and literature,

and how these two areas of study can accomplish each other within a reviewed syllabus. Since TBA showed its success, it was widely adopted in many programs and syllabus in order to develop the individual capacities and find a strong bridge between the practical syllabus, the learners needs, and their capacities. In accordance with this, interactive approaches to teaching literature, can promote the improvement of a variety of related skills, rather than divided; such as close reading skills (direct interaction learner-literary text), writing competence, a reflective critical thinking toward the text, self-government as learners (with the guidance of the instructor), and willingness to exchange and discuss intellectual subjects together (learn from each other through sharing). Stability is both most needed and most creative in courses, which helps students and make theme comfortable and self-directed .In David Nunans' definition the task is «an activity (or technique) where students are urged to accomplish something or solve some problem using their language. Preferably, this activity is open-ended; there is no set way to accomplish their goal” (1989. However, learner autonomy or even autonomous learning is not a language learning method, but “an attribute of the learner’s approach to the learning process” (Benson 2011: 2).

In this investigation autonomy refers to the learners’ responsibility and self-control over learning from an authority to the individual. Lately, the growth of awareness concerning learner autonomy has been expanded, and given rise to a multidimensional view of the concept. However, it seems that the growth of interest in the concept is only growing which have made autonomous learning, and language learning, in specific, a necessity if teachers want to work hand in hand with the continuous changes of today’s world of teaching. According to what have been reviewed within this study, it seems that, the future will bring practical, applicable holistic theories that meet the needs of modern language teaching especially teaching literature in EFL context.

7. Bibliography List:

1Ryan,R.M.,& Deci, E. L, (2000), Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being, American Psychologist, 55 ,68–78.

2. Benson, P. and Voller, P, (1997), Introduction: autonomy and independence in language learning, In P. Benson and P. Voller

- (eds.), *Autonomy and independence in language learning*, London: Longman
3. Susan M. Turner and Gareth B. Matthews, ed., *The Philosopher's Child, Critical Essays in the Western Tradition* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, (1998), pp.105-120.
 4. Dewey, J, (1938), *Experience and Education* London & New York: Macmillan.
 5. J. C. Richards and T. S. Rodgers, “Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching. Cambridge,” University Press, 2002.
 6. Gremmo, M. J., & Riley, P, (1995), *Autonomy, self direction and self access in language teaching and learning: The history of an idea*. System, 23, 151-164.
 7. Vancouver, J. B, (2005), *Self regulation in organizational settings: a tale of two paradigms*. In M. Boekaerts, P. R. Pintrich and M. Zeidner (eds.), *Handbook of selfregulation*. St. Louis, MO: Academic Press, 303-341. [online]
<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/jyvaskyla/docDetail.action?docID=10529531>.
(22 November, 2013).
 8. Holec, H, (1981), *Autonomy and Foreign Language Learning*. Oxford/New York: Pergamon Press. (First Published 1979, Council of Europe).
 9. Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L, (2000), *Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being*. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 68-78. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.68>
 10. Nunan, D, (1989), *Designing Tasks for the Communicative Classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

11. Krashen, S, (1982), Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition. Oxford (Pergamon).
12. Beacco J.-C, (2007), L'approche par compétences dans l'enseignement des langues. Paris (Didier).
13. Duquette, L, (1999), Vers une meilleure connaissance des façons dont les apprenants de L2 résolvent leurs problèmes dans l'environnement multimédia. In Computer Assisted Language Learning, 12/4, 295-310.
14. Dam, L,(2011), Developing learner autonomy with school kids: Principles, practices,results. In D.