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PERCEPTIONS AND APPLICATION OF LEARNER AUTONOMY FOR VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT IN SAUDI EFL CLASSROOMS

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative case study explored how female English language learners in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) realize learner autonomy, especially in the context of the learner's meaning development via purposeful vocabulary acquisition. EFL students' perceptions and applications of autonomous learning strategies for English vocabulary development were investigated, and their adapted methods for learning English. Data collection included face-to-face semi-structured interviews of 8 students from two different classrooms, classroom observations, participants' reflections on specific English coursework, and English learning autobiographies. The findings revealed the students' appreciation of the English language showed how various autonomous learning methods developed their sense of self-possession, self-confidence, and learning outcomes. This study brings to light the necessity for further review of the role of EFL learners in developing the required skills for the English language.

Contribution/Originality: This study contributes to the existing literature examining learner autonomy in English vocabulary learning in the Saudi context where English functions as a foreign language and theorize that vocabulary learning necessitates autonomous learning to self-select and self-apply vocabulary knowledge in various real-life settings.

1. INTRODUCTION

When learners take responsibility for their learning, they are by default using the learner autonomy approach, which has been shown to lead to success in learning and development within and across multiple subject areas in education (Nguyen & Gu, 2013; Tok, 2011). The benefits of learner autonomy have been studied in a variety of domains, such as self-assessment and self-monitoring (Gholami, 2016), blogging (Bhattacharya & Chauhan, 2010) and teacher development (Devi, 2014). Furthermore, areas of learning and development, such as writing (Douillard, 2002) test-taking skills (Gholami, 2016) digital literacy, and multi-literacy skills (Ting, 2015), have been studied within autonomous learning. Previous scholars (e.g., (Abadi & Baradaran, 2013; Haddad, 2016; Tuan, 2011) have examined learner autonomy in English vocabulary learning, especially in a context where English is not the first language. They theorize that vocabulary learning necessitates autonomous learning to self-select and self-apply vocabulary knowledge in various real-life settings. These scholars also believe that giving students the freedom to engage in informal and anxiety-free settings would develop their vocabulary acquisition and foster meaning-making for new vocabulary, thereby leading, for example, to higher levels of literacy.

According to Benson (2007) learner autonomy is defined as a learner's readiness and competence in taking accountability for suggesting, implementing, monitoring, and assessing his/her learning in cooperation with, and with support from, the teacher. One needs to develop learning autonomy as it builds up one's other cognitive and

metacognitive capabilities. As such, educators should take stock of their pedagogical practice to see how well they measure up in supporting their students' learning autonomy development. Students must also take responsibility for developing and applying strategies that would make them successful autonomous learners.

Seminal contributions have been made by, (Abadi & Baradaran, 2013; Haddad, 2016; Nguyen & Gu, 2013; Tok, 2011; Tuan, 2011) to deliver convincing evidence of the benefits of using autonomous learning approaches in learning. Learner autonomy is particularly significant in the KSA context, where there is more importance on teacher-centered learning (Al-Seghayer, 2011). However, only a few works in the literature demonstrate the effectiveness of such an approach in the EFL setting. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine EFL students' perspectives on their development as independent learners and examine the factors that help or hinder this development. In particular, the research reported here examines EFL learners' perceptions and employments of learner autonomy development methods while learning the English language. The study is undertaken at a female-only university in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) since research about Saudi female learners in KSA remains limited (Rajeh, Nicolau, Qutob, Pluye, & Esfandiari, 2019).

This study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What are Saudi female university EFL students' perceptions regarding autonomous learning strategies in English vocabulary learning?
2. How do the Saudi female university EFL students evaluate the autonomy-fostering activities, if there are any, in terms of motivational value and usefulness?
3. To what extent, if any, do Saudi female university EFL students deploy autonomous learning strategies while learning English (mainly vocabulary) in a foreign language context?
4. What types of autonomous learning strategies do female university EFL Saudi students use to increase their English proficiency level?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Learner Autonomy and its Significance

Learner autonomy has been a significant area of interest in language teaching and learning. Holec (1981) within the Council of Europe's modern languages, defined learner autonomy as "the ability to take charge of one's own learning" (p. 3) and suggested that it is a legitimate and desirable goal of language education. Benson (2001) argued that learners who lack autonomy are incapable of developing appropriate learning situations and self-preparation. From the word "autonomy," it is understood that this learning process would require the learner's personal initiative. It should be recognized that autonomy is multidimensional and has different results in different learning situations. However, generally speaking, research has demonstrated that autonomous learning allows learners to make the best use of learning opportunities both inside and outside the classroom (Benson, 2001; Little, 2007). When learners take control of their learning, such as reflecting on their writing, they are likely to learn better and in a manner that can make their learning journey memorable because it is guided by themselves (Douillard, 2002).

Haddad (2016) stressed on the significance of learner autonomy in vocabulary learning. He argued that when learners identify language learning strategies, they gradually develop their independence by selecting and applying different words in diverse contexts. The idea of learner autonomy suggests that students have freedom and independence to study on their own, as guided by the curriculum that the teacher provides. Autonomy in language learning allows room for creativity and stimulation on behalf of the learners. With teachers' help, learner autonomy may be the most effective method of improving students' vocabulary development (Tuan, 2011).

When learners develop creativity and innovativeness, they become self-reliant (Yan, 2012). Yan (2012) In an autonomous learning setting, "teachers must shift their roles from a dominator to a director and let the students learn positively" (Yan, 2012). When students learn vocabulary autonomously, they tend to search for the right

pronunciation and spelling of words without being affected by the teacher's cultural background, making his or her pronunciation or reading the only source of input (Alavinia & Rahimi, 2019). Additionally, considering the workload that teachers have during lesson preparation, they may fail to provide adequate instruction for all students. Therefore, the practical way of studying and answering this problem is by offering methods for teachers to foster learner autonomy. Muchlis (2015) argue that using technology facilitates the progress of learner autonomy in vocabulary development. For instance, EFL students can expand their vocabulary knowledge with the help of technology by utilizing digital storytelling (Kim, 2014) or wiki space (Kessler & Bikowski, 2010). These technological tools aid in developing collaborative and meaningful learning autonomous opportunities among EFL students.

2.2. Why is Learner Autonomy Important in Vocabulary Development?

English language acquisition requires the skills to perceive, understand the language, and communicate using words and sentences (Ellis, 1994). Vocabulary learning is at the core of English language acquisition because learners cannot communicate orally or verbally without using fundamental and academic vocabulary. Because active vocabulary learning requires learning the language inside and outside the classroom, learners must become autonomous and make conscious efforts to learn vocabulary independently. Arabic students also consider English language learning to be a challenging and complicated mission because of the divergence of English grammar, phonetics, spelling, and vocabulary usage (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015). Thus, learner autonomy is vital in enhancing vocabulary knowledge because target-language input is often limited to EFL classrooms. Nevertheless, a greater abundance of exposure is generally required for language skills to develop efficiently. When teachers adopt pedagogical reforms to effectively guide learners to be independent in the language learning process, they may attain comprehensible input and meaningful discourse.

Little (2007) confirmed that language learner autonomy is realized when "the development of learner autonomy and the growth of target language proficiency are not only mutually supporting but fully integrated with each other" (p. 15). When learners initiate the learning process, they are responsible for making sense of different vocabulary in different contexts and comprehending fully each word's meaning with its appropriate contextual usage (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015). The questions that may linger in many learners' minds are whether, through autonomy, they would grasp all that they are required to understand and whether they would attain proper knowledge of the English language.

2.3. How Can Learners Become Autonomous in Vocabulary Development?

When learners of English as a foreign language realize that any foreign language necessitates learning its words, spelling, and usage, they should appreciate the importance of promoting learner autonomy in identifying and using words in different oral or written contexts. Learner autonomy in vocabulary learning is central, as it gives the learner many 'privileges,' such as self-motivation, that lead to more effective vocabulary learning. Additionally, learner autonomy opens up opportunities for English communication in a foreign setting and helps to meet learners' diverse needs at all levels. Learner autonomy also supports students' readiness for active language learning (Haddad, 2016). The vocabulary learning process runs through the learners' reflections and perceptions of the best working language learning strategies.

It is important to note that learner autonomy in this present study is situated within a social practice rather than as an individual act. In individualized autonomous learning, learners are independent, and they receive no guidance from the teacher. On the other hand, in socialized independent learning, learners are monitored and guided by the teacher while they have freedom of choice in learning. Therefore, while learners are encouraged to practice autonomy through interdependence and collaboration, their practice should occur within a social context (Little, 2007). As Toohey and Norton (2003) stated, "autonomous learners have variable motivations, learning

styles, cognitive traits, strategies and personality orientations that are seen as causal of their success or failure in language learning" (p. 58). As such, learners are responsible for choosing their working strategies in vocabulary learning and applying them within a social context to construct individuals and their knowledge.

According to Brockett and Hiemstra (1991) theoretical self-directed learning perspective, learners are expected to have a level of autonomy that allows them to play a significant role in their vocabulary learning and to take responsibility for knowing when, how, and why to apply knowledge. This perspective constitutes a series of learning processes that entail "planning, implementing, and evaluating a learning experience" (Brockett & Hiemstra, 1991), which is a fundamental part of adult education and lifelong learning. As Du (2013) stressed, although school teaching instruction plays an essential role in shaping students' learning development, students choose to be autonomous learners beyond the classroom, but not necessarily inside the classroom. In independent vocabulary learning, students are required to know new words, their parts of speech, examples of usage in situations, and applications of vocabulary within different contexts. Schmitt (1997) proposed a taxonomy of second language vocabulary learning strategies that is divided into two main categories: "strategies for the discovery of a new word's meaning" (p. 7) (e.g., part of speech, affixes, roots, and check for L1 cognate) and "strategies for consolidating a word once it has been encountered" (p. 7). For example, when learners interact with native speakers, they connect a word to personal experience or link the concept to its synonyms and antonyms. This makes them feel authoritative in their learning development.

2.4. Vocabulary Development and Autonomy in Learning in the Context of the KSA

Learner autonomy is particularly important in the KSA context, where there is more emphasis on teacher-centered learning (Al-Seghayer, 2011). Almusharraf (2020) explores teachers' perspectives on promoting learner autonomy for vocabulary development, but there is still limited focused research addressing the need for autonomous vocabulary learning. English is a required subject in public schools from the elementary level through the KSA college level. English language instruction at the university level in the KSA primarily concentrates on students who want to specialize in English-only majors, such as English linguistics, translation, English literature, and scientific and medical majors. Based on the available majors and rules, some students of other majors, such as communication and education, have the option to take one English course each year as an elective.

2.5. Learner Autonomy as a Social Phenomenon

It is essential to clarify that this study is intended to explore EFL learning and learners in a social context in KSA as English is treated as second/ foreign language (Al-Seghayer, 2011). As such, the establishment of their own identification and authority of some parts of their learning process occurs within a social context. Benson (2011) stressed that autonomous learning is situated within social learning strategies inside and outside the classroom environment. He offered some independent learners' traits, such as understanding word usage within social contexts, using best learning approaches to convey meaning, and evaluating their own decision-making processes. It is also worth mentioning that the teacher's role in autonomous learning is not passive; it is an active involvement that necessitates direct and indirect guidance, feedback, and assessment. The teacher is mainly a mentor, trainer, and enabler of students' individually directed practice. As Pichugova, Stepura, and Pravosudov (2016) stated, "It is not realistic to expect students to take responsibility for their learning from one day, or even month, to the next" (p. 4). Promoting learner autonomy inside the classroom requires a long-time planning and teaching approach that primarily depends on the teacher. Independence also develops progressively by developing a set of skills, such as "metacognitive skills which relate to capacity for critical reflection, decision-making, independent action and transferring what they have learned to other contexts of learning" (Pichugova et al., 2016). Therefore, for students to master these essential skills, they have to get the teacher's right guidance. Learners are, consequently, challenged to monitor their language learning by getting the teacher's support when needed, reflecting on their intellectual

processes, assessing their performance, and making meaningful choices regarding their English learning development.

2.6. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate EFL students' perceptions and implications of learner autonomy development in vocabulary development in an EFL context in Saudi Arabia.

3. METHOD

3.1. Participants

This exploratory case study took place at an all-female university in the KSA that offers degrees at the undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate levels. The KSA's public education system is gender-segregated. There are free, equal, and separate public schools from elementary to college level for female students and male students (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015). Participants were randomly recruited from those who were enrolled in Level 7 classrooms within the Department of English Language and Literature. Randomized sampling was utilized to gain an accurate representation of the broader population. Instructors for these classrooms were asked to inform their students about the study and to contact the researcher if they were interested in participation. Students were also told that the decision whether or not to participate in the study would not affect their grades and that participants would be issued certificates upon completion of the study.

Eight students agreed to participate in the study. The profiles of these students are included in Table 1. All names for the participants are pseudonyms.

Table-1. Participants' Profiles.

Course Instructor	Students enrolled/participated	Age	Language(s) Spoken	Length of Intensive Learning English	English Proficiency Level[a]
Khlood	Atheer	25	Arabic, English	7 years	Advanced
Khlood	Azzah	24	Arabic, English, Chinese	4 years	Intermediate
Faten	Dema	25	Arabic, English	5 years	Intermediate
Faten	Fatima	26	Arabic, English	5 years	Intermediate
Faten	Lena	26	Arabic, English, Japanese	4 years	Intermediate
Faten	Maha	23	Arabic, English, French	5 years	Advanced
Khlood	Ragad	31	Arabic, English	6 years	Intermediate
Khlood	Sara	27	Arabic, English, French	5 years	Intermediate

Note:
[a]Intermediate level was assigned to participants who spoke and understood English reasonably well and used basic tenses but had problems with some grammar and vocabulary choices. The advanced level was assigned to participants who spoke and understood English reasonably well and used complex structures but had minor issues with grammar and vocabulary choices. All participants have passed the IELTS exam of grade (5.0 or higher) before entering the English program as a mandatory admission procedure.

During this study, the participants were enrolled in a course that focused on 19th-century English novels. Elements of fiction (character, plot, point of view, setting, style, and theme) were the course's core emphases. The course was suitable for this study as it includes introductory and basic and advanced terminologies to English novel. Participants were enrolled in two different classes, each with a different instructor. Based on interviews with the two instructors, Dr. Khlood, in whose classes Atheer, Azzah, Ragad, and Sara were enrolled, perceived autonomous learning strategies for English vocabulary learning were beneficial to her students' learning promoted their use within her classroom. In contrast, Dr. Faten, in whose class Lena, Dema, Fatima, and Maha were enrolled,

perceived traditional teaching as the only effective method in learning, disapproved of autonomous learning strategies, and avoided using them inside her classroom.

3.2. Procedures

Data on the participants were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, participants' reflective statements, and their learning autobiographies. Table 2 presents details about each data collection method. For further details (See Appendix B, D, E, F & G).

Table-2. Data collection matrix.

Method	Procedure	Data
Observations	• (2) Classroom focused observation (32 times; 100 minutes each) (June – August 2017)	CORPUS data, Audio recorded data, and transcripts
Semi-structured Interviews	• face-to-face, semi-structured, in-depth interview (3 times)	
Reflective Statements	• 8 weekly written statements from each student (at the end of the term)	Written statements
Learning Autobiographies	• 1 written autobiography from each of the 8 students (at the beginning of the term)	Written learning autobiographies

Classroom Observation: While conducting classroom observations, the researcher centered her attention on the amount and nature of student participation, the quality of the instruction provided, and the degree and type of interactions between instructor and students. The researcher also completed reflection notes on each session. Analysis of these data followed the guidelines offered by Wajnryb (1992). Both Drs. Khlood's and Faten's lectures were observed twice a week for 8 weeks. All lectures were audio-recorded and transcribed.

Student Interviews: Each of the 8 participants was interviewed three times for between 30 and 45 minutes each time, during which time the interviews were audio-recorded. The participants were first interviewed before the summer term (June 2017) to gather general information about their preferred learning method and their perceptions about learner autonomy. After 4 weeks of the summer term (July 2017), participants were again interviewed to learn more about their attitudes toward the current instruction method they were receiving and their beliefs about its effectiveness. Finally, at the end of the term (August 2017), the participants were interviewed to obtain their final thoughts about their learning experiences. All audio-recordings were transcribed and were analyzed thematically. Reflective Statements: The participants were asked to write a reflective statement (1–3 pages in length) at the end of the semester as an evaluation of the instruction they received and as an opportunity for them to reflect on their thinking development inside and outside the classroom. Analysis of the data from these reflections focused on the relationship between the nature of the instruction the participants received and their vocabulary growth, as well as identification of any features related to autonomous learning. Learning Autobiographies: Finally, the participants were asked to write a learning autobiography (1–3 pages in length), which described their journey as EFL students not only to uncover some aspects of autonomous vocabulary learning but, also, as Brutt-Griffler and Samimy (1999) stated, to "promote personal history as a site of struggle over identity" (p. 420). These learning autobiographies were gathered and analyzed at the end of the summer term (August 2017). For the analysis process, Corbin and Strauss (1990) recommend open-coding system as the first level of data analysis. Using this system, the researcher read and inductively coded every sentence of the classroom observations, interview transcripts, reflective statements, and learning autobiographies. "Thick description" (Geertz, 1973) style was employed to give details of the participants' thoughts and actions and to situate and explain specific examples of cultural and social connections within the educational setting. Next, the analysis was

guided by characteristics of constructivism and transformative learning theories (Duffy & Jonassen, 1992; Mezirow, 2000) which described learner's control over his or her learning. Finally, the corpus of data was reduced, codes were condensed into manageable sections of analysis, the participants' thoughts were summarized, and redundant data were discarded. From this, initial themes were generated from the coded data. Two colleagues, both doctoral candidates, were asked to undertake a peer review of the analysis to identify any perceived discrepancies between the coded data and the initial themes. After reviewing the peers' notes and feedback, the researcher made revisions to the themes. For this study, the University at Buffalo's Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved the topic and the procedures for this research (see Appendix A). The departments in KSA universities have Deans, while American universities have vice presidents of academic affairs. The English department's Dean reviewed the aim, design, and instruments approved for the proposed study.

4. RESULTS

This section contains results about students' perceptions and evaluation of the autonomous learning approach. It narrates the degree to which they deploy independent learning strategies, and the types of strategies they use to develop their vocabulary. The results are based on interviews and autobiographies of the participants and are presented in the order of the four research questions of this study.

4.1. Students' Perceptions of Autonomous Learning Strategies

This sub-section provides results to answer the first research question, "What are female university EFL students' perceptions regarding autonomous learning strategies in English vocabulary learning?" The findings related to this question are organized according to the following themes: autonomous learning as a window to the outside world, as a pathway to academic success, and as a guided practice.

4.1.1. Autonomous Learning as a Window to the Outside World

Atheer, Lena and Fatima are examples of how learners perceived autonomous learning as a window to the outside world. Atheer mentioned that because of her English knowledge, she became more aware of different cultures and personalities. She asserted, "The most incredible thing in learning language is that it made me a learning seeker. Language opened my eyes to the world so now I see everything around me in bigger image." Likewise, Lena discovered that "self-learning method is the best method for me to continue learning. I encourage myself to read books… magazines, newspapers, kids tv…and political and sport news." Fatima mentioned that talking to English-speaking people taught her about new cultures and to have new friends. She stated, "I believe the limit of my languages is the limit of my world." All participants believed that self-directed learning helped develop their English vocabulary knowledge and connect them to the outside world and their cultures.

4.1.2. Autonomous Learning as a Pathway to Academic Success

Most participants perceived English autonomous learning as a way for academic success. Dema mentioned: "I am planning to make a very successful job out of it one day." Likewise, Fatima talked how to increase vocabulary by talking to sales people. Atheer mentioned that she preferred practicing English with her friends and expressing her opinion comfortably without feeling shy or afraid of making mistakes. She asserted: "the more you practice, the greater results you will have." She was assured that the development of self-learning is a gradual process. Additionally, Lena and Sara stated that they prefer to work in a group to communicate and test their vocabulary knowledge. Maha stated, "Reading academic books will give us a huge number of new vocabularies, also making many sentences for the words will help us to memorize them." This shows that students emphasized self-exploring academic texts to develop English lexical knowledge within the novel course.

4.1.3. Autonomous Learning as Guided Practice

Azzah explained that while she believed that teachers helped acquire new skills, knowledge, and instructional adaptations, she had employed some self-learning techniques to nurture her learning. Sara further pointed out that there was a deficiency of school preparedness and much-needed support for English learning. Ragad stated that she preferred using autonomous learning to develop her English vocabulary. However, she needed English teachers to guide her as to what, where, and how to learn and use them correctly in different contexts. She stated: "Since most of the schools' teachers teach only the theoretical parts of the curriculum and mostly ignore the practical parts, the students will not be well educated and learned." The majority of participants agreed that they still needed teachers' guidance and support while they attempted to discover learning techniques.

4.2. Students' Evaluation of the Novel Classrooms

This section presents data to answer the research question, "How do the Saudi female university EFL students evaluate the autonomy-fostering activities, if there are any, in terms of motivational value and usefulness? information about students' attitudes on the two different teaching approaches and their opinions and evaluations of each instructor's style and the methods used in her instruction is provided.

4.2.1. EFL Students' Views of Dr. Khlood's Novel Classroom

The four students who were enrolled in Dr. Khlood's classroom stated that Dr. Khlood established a learner-centered classroom, within which she continued in her role as a teacher but also facilitated a collaborative learning community.

4.2.1.1. A Class of Interactive Communication

Atheer explained how pleased she was with Dr. Khlood's use of different interactive teaching strategies in the field of literature, such as increased student discussions in order to connect personal experiences with academics. Atheer stated, "In Dr. Khlood's class, she asks us to do more active things like asking questions, guessing the answers, and thinking. What I mostly liked in her class are classroom activities, fun assignments, games, questions during the lecture, peer student lecturing, and student point of view about the lecture." Atheer further explained that learning mostly through lectures was not helpful to her English language development. She stated that the most beneficial skill was freely expressing her opinion [by using everyday language terminology] inside and outside the classroom, despite her shyness, using a variety of expressions due to Dr. Khlood's encouragement.

4.2.1.2. A Class of Instructional Adaptations

Azzah expressed the following insights about her experience as a student in Dr. Khlood's class: "Very few of teachers were allowing us to participate and swim in our imagination." Azzah portrayed Dr. Khlood's class as "The most fun and interesting class ever," because Dr. Khlood trained the students one-on-one, and as a group, on how to use analysis and interpretation techniques. She also gave the students time to think over specific tasks and her positive feedbacks on their answers did not emphasize their mistakes. This helped Azzah focus on new correct information and vocabulary. Sara similarly mentioned how Dr. Khlood made the course fun by giving interesting examples (e.g., comparing wedding in the present and the past) and challenges, causing her students to think deeply and encouraged them to learn extra vocabulary in addition to the novel's story.

4.2.2. EFL Students' Views of Dr. Faten's Novel Classroom

The four students, who were enrolled in Dr. Faten's classroom stated that Dr. Faten established a teacher-focused classroom, in which she controlled the entire classroom climate.

4.2.2.1. A Class of Dynamical Constraint

Fatima stated that Dr. Faten disregarded her and other students' learning needs and degrees of engagement, as her primary goal was to deliver the lesson. Fatima wrote: "The novel course with Dr. Faten was so difficult for me because it was taking a long time and effort. I can't catch all of her reading." Similarly, Dema stated, "All I have learned is teacher talking all the time, and making fun of our answers." yearning to be appreciated and respected while learning. She also mentioned that Dr. Faten's primary strategy was standing up front and reading the novel, which was "so boring I couldn't focus." She stated that the novel included many words that were not explained [by Dr. Faten]. In a similar thought, Lena mentioned, "The redundant teaching of Dr. Faten destroy my learning progression. I shocked and thought about class dropping, but I can't since it is required class." Evidence from students showed that there was a lack of connection in Dr. Faten's classroom as there was an absence of autonomous learning approaches.

4.3. Students' Deployment of Autonomous Learning Strategies

This section presents results that answer the research question, "To what extent, if any, do female EFL university students deploy autonomous learning strategies while learning English (especially vocabulary) in a foreign language context?" These results are organized to differentiate between the student's use of autonomous learning strategies within Dr. Faten's teacher-centered approach to learning and Dr. Khlood's student-centered approach.

4.3.1. EFL Students as Passive Followers in Dr. Faten's Classroom

Observational data collected from Dr. Faten's lectures shed light on students' exclusion from the learning process.

Dr. Faten: How many of you did the homework? It seems like just the same hands are raised who are writing, reading. The rest are not concerned, should I say. Can you tell me you wrote something? Hello? Did you write? Yes. Can you just read what you wrote?

Student: I wrote about satire.

Dr. Faten: What? Read it now.

Student: The satire here under the British government and inside was is an important event [not complete participation -was interrupted by the instructor].

Dr. Faten: Is that it? Why is it important? Why do you think it's important? What are you talking about?

Student: I don't know…

Dr. Faten: Can you understand what's written there if you don't read? I've given you a task to do at home. You don't do it, yes? Four days is not enough to do it? You read only that passage, even that one page I give you. I'm doing the reading for you. It's very sad to see only a couple of students doing the work. And that's always the case, whether it's summer or not summer.

Dr. Faten's teaching was undoubtedly challenging. She did not keep in mind the students' learning method and continued speaking despite nobody neither comprehending the novel nor focusing in class. The researcher observing her classroom noticed that the students seemed confused, reluctant to learn, and overall, less motivated.

4.3.2. EFL Students as Agents in Learning in Dr. Khlood's Classroom

By contrast to the environment within Dr. Faten's classroom, Dr. Khlood's students were allowed to take full responsibility for language learning development without any restrictions as mentioned by this excerpt:

Dr. Khlood: By the way, I don't really have any rules in class. You're free to eat and drink as long as you're paying attention and you feel comfortable. You can always bring chocolates and give to the whole class, you like that, right?

Student: Yes!

Dr. Khlood: Distribute some love. That's it. Have a great day, you can go. I don't have anything else to give. Please make sure you get the book as soon as you can. Watch the clips I've sent you and start to do some reading.

Student: Tomorrow?

Dr. Khlood: Do I have it tomorrow? Yes, if you did some search even on your phone and you saved it, like, you screenshot it, then you can use it. This will probably take you—I promise you, less than minutes. If you really focus, you can do it in minutes. Do some research on one of these points and pack the information within you. Because it will help you better, that's it. Here we go.

Student: Can I research with my friend here?

Dr. Khlood: Absolutely, and we can do think, pair, and share. Thanks for you!

It appears from this extract that students were positioned in a friendly learning environment, and they were comfortable, engaged in leading their learning process in a welcoming setting, and constantly encouraged to experiment with new methods of gathering and learning information to discuss later.

4.4. Students' Autonomous Learning Strategies for Vocabulary Development

The following section answers the research question, "What types of autonomous learning strategies do female university EFL students use to increase their level of English proficiency?" These strategies included using digital tools, using a notebook strategy, reading books, engaging in the university's English conversation sessions, using translation techniques, and practicing in a real-life context.

4.4.1. Using Digital Tools

Atheer explained that she utilized technological tools such, "Movies, TV shows, YouTube and blogs, songs, shopping websites, iPhone games, PlayStation4" as tools to develop her English vocabulary. She stated, "I'm a TV-shows lover, so I think it is useful as much as reading." Atheer indicated that English learning apps and internet resources helped her, as well. Fatima related how she learned English through reading recipes or watching cooking, blogging, and makeup tutorial videos on YouTube. She stated, "Some time I wrote it on my little board or sticky note, then put it on my disk." She confirmed that her learning was combined with fun, as she mostly learned from signs, advertisements, social media networks, and other useful apps, such as TED. Maha also conveyed that the secret behind her advanced English level was "Seeing movies to learn the language and the culture of the world at the same time."

4.4.2. Using a Notebook Strategy

Azzah stated that she mainly focused on writing notebooks to build her own vocabulary lists. She said, "I have them on my desk. When I read a book, I keep one close, so I can write down any new word I come across, and then later, I look up the words." This helped her track newly acquired words and reviewed them every day to ensure memorization.

4.4.3. Reading Books

Azzah reflected on her learning process and mentioned that she needs more reading practice by saying, "I need to work on my reading books part. I have a love-hate relationship with books." Sara revealed that she enjoyed reading the news and other English texts related to study materials (novels) to benefit her English vocabulary.

4.4.4. Engaging in the University's English Conversation Sessions

Atheer stressed that English conversation sessions were other factors in her vocabulary development. She appreciated the student-centered approach and emphasized that the change in routine practices was driven by

former teachers who used effective teaching methods and taught her how to be actively involved in the learning process.

4.4.5. Using Translation Techniques

Dema expressed herself as an autonomous learner by saying, "Thinking in different ways than your mother tongue language and seeing movies or TV show without looking to the translation subtitle." She mentioned that translating each new word helped in scaffolding from Arabic to English. She indicated that she used English-Arabic translation to help her understand and apply words of different contexts in reality. Maha also claimed that using Arabic benefitted her because it necessitated a self-exploration and investigation to understanding the knowledge gap in Arabic and English.

4.4.6. Practicing in a Real-Life Context

Sara stressed that she practiced learning new English words in context and associating them with experience. She mentioned that learning the pronunciation and spelling of English words was a core goal to develop her lexical knowledge, which she fulfilled with the help of smartphone applications. She wrote: "The biggest challenge was communicating with my British teachers, who could speak no word in Arabic. I was disappointed since I was embarrassed about making some mistakes. I decided to challenge myself and start my learning."

Additionally, Lena explained that she started learning English from her father. Despite finding it challenging, she continued her efforts by attending a formal institution where she discovered her weaknesses and strengths. She utilized autonomous learning to enhance her motivation and language awareness by increasing her vocabulary. She mentioned, "[I am] studying new vocabularies, knowing how to write and pronounce them also using them in different styles of sentences." Lena noted that engaging herself in conversations with native English speakers helped her identify areas to improve further. Consequently, she achieved most of her learning goals and was content with her proficiency in English. Lastly, Ragad explained that she used English occasionally outside the classroom, in cafes and restaurants, with her housemaid (who only spoke in English), and while traveling. She also put much time and effort into learning English by spending half an hour daily studying after school hours.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1. Students' Perceptions and Learning Practices

The findings showed that the students believed that promoting learner autonomy could increase their language development. The results also showed that EFL learners are willing and capable of taking responsibility for their learning, but they are not necessarily encouraged by the teachers to do so. Besides, the autobiographies confirmed the students' appreciation of the English language, attempts at autonomous learning, and self-exploration and comparison using their native language to help their vocabulary development.

The findings from students' reflective statements suggested that students in the student-centered gave positive feedback regarding the teacher's style of teaching and their English learning development because of the high engagement levels. On the contrary, students who were merely listening and taking notes in the teacher-centered method gave negative feedback regarding the teacher's pedagogical methods.

5.2. The Current Context of Learner Autonomy in the EFL Classroom

The findings from Dr. Khlood's classroom opens up great opportunities for students' engagement in learning because it is a developmental process that requires both students' and the teacher's effort. It aligns with various approaches shown to be most effective in language development. Researchers (e.g., (Norah Almusharraf, 2018; Hargreaves, 2014; Kristmanson, Lafargue, & Culligan, 2013; Li, 2015; Yeung, 2016)) claimed that student autonomy in learning shows a positive result on students' learning outcomes, primarily through self-assessment.

Dr. Khlood's encouragement of autonomous learning aligned her more closely with some tenets of constructivism theory.

In addition to the classroom observation which only recorded Dr. Khlood's encouragement toward autonomous learning strategies, she fostered approaches that prepared her students to do a reflection of given texts, which assisted them in "transferring what they have learned to other contexts of learning" (Pichugova et al., 2016). This study's findings also showed that autonomous learning allows learners to associate new information with real-life events, which aid in the learning process.

Al-Seghayer. (2014) argues that if most EFL teachers play knowledge givers' role, they lessen students' enthusiasm and motivation in their English learning, which goes against the transformative learning theory. Thus, Dr. Faten needed to be more interactive, creative, and reflective in her planning and teaching. As an emic observer, the researcher believed that the primary factor behind the absence of a high engagement level was related to the teacher's instruction method, which was primarily based on lecturing and far from authentic and experiential. In this research, the classroom that catered to students' interests led to better comprehension and a higher engagement level compared to the traditional classroom where conversations were limited; thus, engagement was low. Al-Seghayer (2011) argued that Saudi EFL teachers should use their given autonomy to modify textbooks to meet students' cultures and needs. It is also worth mentioning that teachers who are not familiar with the local context create a learning challenge. Dr. Khlood connected some aspects of the novel with the students' real-life examples. For instance, the wedding characteristics and procedures as an example in the present and connected it to the 19th century. She allowed the use of the students' first language for second language linguistic support. This practice is consistent with the beliefs of Dirkx (1998) who described it as "consciousness-raising" (p. 3), which refers to "a process in which learners develop the ability to analyze, pose questions, and take action on the social, political, cultural, and economic contexts that influence and shape their lives" (p. 3). However, in Dr. Faten's class, the limited interaction hindered several developments.

5.3. Students' Perceptions and Applications of Autonomous Learning

The data reveal that all participating 8 EFL students were highly positive about autonomous learning effectiveness. Although some are naturally autonomous in life, students' autonomy in learning can only be developed if they have extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. This corresponds with Sanacore (2008), who claimed that learners' freedom of learning choice develops intrinsic motivational factors that aid in English vocabulary knowledge and communication skills.

This study reveals autonomous learning attempts from EFL learners This finding contradicts (Al-Seghayer., 2014) claim that EFL students "perceive English as a dry and boring subject learned for instrumental purposes, chiefly to pass an examination" (p. 19), but confirms his findings that students in knowledge-giver situations passively understand the teachers. As such, this kind of learning environment limits students from being engaged in their own English learning. Participants mentioned that different autonomous approaches, such as utilizing various technology and books, helped them improve their English vocabulary knowledge. The significance of these accords with Little (2007) views of constructivism in language learning. As he stated: "Each of us constructs his or her knowledge through the (unconscious, implicit) interaction between what we already know and the new ideas, information and experiences we encounter" (p. 20).

Furthermore, the study's findings reveal that the participants appreciated English because it increased their future career opportunities by communicating with English speakers and understanding Western cultures. Benson (2011) claimed that the development of students' autonomy is necessary for a well-respected and self-determined position in society. In other words, learner autonomy is the foundation of fundamental human rights. The participants' perception of the global spread of English led them to understand its significance as a future professional path because they realized learning more would benefit them more in the future. This conversational

belief in English's universal power indicates the learners' agency to learn English for their own benefit (Brutt-Griffler, 2002).

Also, students who have the opportunity to study abroad have the advantage of developing their English language and understanding other cultures and norms. Mezirow (1991) described how learners improve and employ critical self-reflection to change or confirm their perceptions and knowledge. The participants showed their development and change in opinion of English as a foreign language from a difficult language to learn to an essential language.

The study's findings confirm (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015) the claim that technology allows EFL Saudi learners to connect and speak with individuals online to learn English. These indicators of autonomous learning are consistent with the constructivist approaches that support self-directed learning. Duffy and Jonassen (1992) stressed that individual contribution to learning plays a vital role in developing critical skills. They further explained some autonomous learner characteristics, including learners' construction of knowledge, application of learning in real-life situations, analyzing, exploring, and examining their development.

The data from the participants and classroom observations confirmed the significance of the presence of Dickinson (1993) five autonomous learner characteristics. Firstly, the participants understood the purpose of choices because they had an adequate understanding of language. However, only four who were enrolled in Dr. Khlood's classroom were given chances to contribute to classroom decisions. Secondly, the same four students were allowed to plan their own learning development. Thirdly, markers of learner autonomy can be seen in all student participants. Learners were encouraged to ask questions for explanation or evaluation and communicate in the classroom for self-reflection. Concerning the practical strategies, instructors should pay attention to the learners' emotional state and help lower anxiety levels and increase their motivation and self-confidence through encouragement. Lastly, the participants who were enrolled in Dr. Khlood's classroom were given the time and encouraged to try learning strategies to help them become more independent and take more control over their learning status.

The study's findings indicate that learner autonomy develops personal autonomy too. Benson and Voller (1997) argued that when learners are given the opportunities to explore their learning and monitor their learning development, they raise their sense of responsibility and accountability over their knowledge. As the participants were seeking materials for themselves, creating a curriculum for vocabulary development. In these cases, they were developing academic language skills and social and personal skills that prepare them for life's obligations.

It is also worth mentioning that the majority of the participants admitted that school played a relatively limited role in providing strong support for second language acquisition and autonomous learning. The novel studies class, in this case, should have included active learning strategies, because, as Pichugova et al. (2016) claimed, raising students' cognitive abilities can transfer to what they have learned to broader contexts.

Norton (2010) suggested a vital need to encourage teachers to foster autonomy in literacy classes to enable students to have a better understanding of English concepts and knowledge in the learning environment. Benson (2001) also affirmed that students usually feel confident to explore and negotiate their learning processes. Thus, this study stresses the significance of fostering autonomous learning to explore different methods that can aid teachers in enhancing student autonomy in vocabulary development for university-level English language learners.

The findings also illuminate the areas that can be used to develop new teaching methodologies that cater specifically to student needs. Within this study, the use of the students' native language in the traditional classroom was neither encouraged nor allowed. Due to the lack of understanding of students' requirements, the knowledge was deemed unproductive and failed to invoke interest. The encouragement to use the native language, plays a vital role in establishing links with the composition of the two languages, which helps the student to construct a mind map of the English language (Pichugova et al., 2016). Students can then use the grammar and the vocabulary base's permutations formulated through class learning to create their literary work. The structure can be further

enhanced, thereby raising the level and ensuring that the transfer of instructions occurs when the student's mind is open to learning. Alrashidi and Phan (2015) emphasized the importance of using the mother language, Arabic, to assist the understanding of the foreign language, English, and help students discover the best way of learning. In this study, the findings reveal that the participants used Arabic to translate, describe and clarify meanings in their EFL classrooms

Consequently, it is recommended that the teacher boost the use of the native language in the classroom to create lingual comparisons to enhance the learning outcomes. In the study, Dr. Khlood promoted the use of Arabic Language as support in understanding the meaning behind specific literary works. Ryan (1991) argued that one of the characteristics of autonomous learning is that the learner can make decisions in the learning process. The data retrieved within the study align with the tenets of constructivist learning theory. More specifically, they frequently mentioned using Arabic as a scaffold for learning English terms in a self-direction fashion.

In general, this study revealed that there are certain aspects, such as student-centered approach and the learner's previous English learning experience, which play an essential role in their language development by increasing their interest. The study demonstrated that students who were enrolled in private schools had an advanced English level compared to those learners who studied in public, which is the original cause for various English levels. Public schools in Saudi Arabia are not as sufficiently equipped for English language learning, as are private schools, where English is taught as a core subject (Al-Seghayer., 2014). Previous studies (e.g., (Abadi & Baradaran, 2013; Agustín-Llach & Alonso, 2017; Du, 2013; Haddad, 2016; Kassem, 2019)) have shown that considering students' prior knowledge and real-life experiences have a significant impact on language development. These findings parallel those of previous studies. Students who were given independence and were allowed to ask questions and negotiate the development formalized their unique learning style, thus breaking existing knowledge boundaries.

Learner autonomy and vocabulary development are inextricably connected, as is evident in the rise of students' engagement when they are allowed to use English vocabulary inside and outside the classroom for everyday activities (Alavinia & Rahimi, 2019; Scott-Monkhouse, 2012; Vela & Rushidi, 2016; Walters & Bozkurt, 2009). The study confirms how significantly instructor's performances influences the learning environment; thus, all instructors should encourage student-initiated knowledge to support lifelong learning. This study claims that a natural learning setting and a learner's willingness contributes as the two significant pillars to English development by supporting learning autonomy.

6. CONCLUSION

All 8 participating EFL learners believed that promoting learner autonomy could productively increase their vocabulary learning development and language learning. This research also found that all of the participants were willing and capable of taking responsibility for their learning when encouraged by their teachers to do so. Not surprisingly, all of the participants evinced the qualities of being bilingual. They show their appreciation of the English language and that the use of their native language, Arabic, in self-exploring, comparing, and contrasting, assisted in their vocabulary development. The participants' attempts at autonomous learning approaches led to their sense of personal autonomy, and the student-centered classroom resulted in a higher level of engagement than the teacher-centered class. This last finding of the students pointed to their prior knowledge and that their real-life experiences in language learning had a remarkable influence on their language development.

While the present study presented essential data related to students' perceptions and applications of autonomous learning strategies, some limitations must be acknowledged. One of the study's limitations is that the number of participants is limited in this study. I would like to do some tests on a larger scale of participants, measure learners' vocabulary development in a given period carefully, and increase the generalizability of the findings of this study. The other limitation is that study is limited to one school in Riyadh, and specific coursework,

a more diverse context is needed to examine teachers' and learners' views from public and private universities in the KSA. For the research design and methodologies, the absence of male subjects is not limited to getting the overall perceptions, attitudes, and implications of autonomous learning in Saudi Arabia. Research on gender segregation at the KSA schools reveals that female educational growth has a significant influence on women's social and professional opportunities but has no significant effect on gender and power relations (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015). However, in a future study, it would be fruitful to use a questionnaire to explore males' and females' individual differences regarding understanding autonomy as a multidimensional concept (Benson, 2011).

This study brings to light the necessity for further review of the role of EFL learners in developing the required skills for the English language. (Alavinia & Rahimi, 2019) state that instructors could arrange activities to improve students' vocabulary learning through their involvement in authentic tasks. Since this study primarily explored the participants' insights into autonomous learning strategies in vocabulary development, future studies are recommended to examine how to adapt and implement independent learning strategies inside EFL classrooms. Further emphasis should also be placed on reviews that offer specific guidance and learning strategies on learner autonomy in English education in the KSA classroom and outside of where language learning occurs. Teachers can support students' learning needs to promote the students' decision making in learning appropriately and guide them in developing learner autonomy regardless of their English proficiency levels.

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APPENDIX A

University at Buffalo
The State University of New York

University at Buffalo Institutional Review Board (UBIRB)

Office of Research Compliance | Clinical and Translational Research Center Room 5018
875 Ellicott St. | Buffalo, NY 14203

UB Federalwide Assurance ID#: FWA00008824

APPROVAL OF SUBMISSION

May 19, 2016

Dear Norah Almusharraf:

On 5/19/2016, the IRB reviewed the following submission:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
Title of Study:	LEARNER AUTONOMY AND VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT FOR COLLEGE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS
Investigator:	Norah Almusharraf
IRB ID:	STUDY00000379
Funding:	None
Grant ID:	None
IND, IDE, or HDE:	None
Documents Reviewed:	• TEACHERS' CONSENT , Category: Consent Form; • Consent from Imam, Category: Consent Form; • 502 Targeted Students' consent, Category: Consent Form; • Interview Questions & Observation guidelines, Category: Recruitment Materials; • recruitment documentation (3), Category: Recruitment Materials; • Ima Uni approved Letter, Category: Site Permission Letter; • recruitment documentation (4), Category: Recruitment Materials; • recruitment documentation (1), Category: Recruitment Materials; • 502 Targeted teachers' consent, Category: Consent Form;

APPENDIX B

Student Interview Questions

Initial Interview Questions 1

Demographical Information: name, age, place of birth, marital status, language spoken.

Educational Information: academic major and concentration, reason(s) for choosing English academic major, and plans after graduation.

English Learning Background: the place you started learning English and ways of English learning (teacher-based or self-learning), frequency of English language learning, the expectation to the English program, and EFL learning goals.

Career Information: job planning, current usage of the English language.

Research-related questions:

Why are you learning the English language? Who motivates you to learn the language?

What is the most challenging part of your learning experience? And what do you think is the reason(s) behind this challenge/s?

How do you usually learn English vocabulary? To what extent is this method effective?

What do you do daily (inside and outside the classroom) to improve your English vocabulary and knowledge?

What kinds of assessments do you have to take? What kinds do you prefer to be assessed with? Why?

What is more productive to you, working with other people to complete a task or working on a task by yourself then sharing with others? Why?

Follow up Interview Questions 2

What is your opinion/understanding of self-directed learning or learner autonomy?

Have you experienced being a self-directed learner in your English language learning. If so, explain its outcomes?

What are the differences between a self-directed learner or learner-directed by the teacher? Which of these two learning environments do you prefer to be involved in?

What are the effects of self-exploring English vocabulary learning and applying it to real-life context on long-term memory?

To what extent, if any, do you prefer to be more included in the learning process (creating learning goals, designing syllabi, self-assessing, choose your preferred method of learning)?

How often do you use English outside the classroom environment? What are the cases?

In your opinion, what are the main methods that help in developing academic vocabulary?

What do you believe teachers should do to help improve your English learning?

What methods are your current teachers employing/employed that works for you? How do you measure its effectiveness?

How do you want to learn about your mistakes in English? (implicitly, explicitly) and explain why?

Which is more important for the language learning development? Your teachers' role? Your own efforts of practice in using the English language or the curriculum provided? Could you arrange them in the order of importance? And explain why?

Interview Questions 3

Does your teacher allow room for students' input and imagination while teaching? Would that work for you? Why?

What kinds of activities do you do in the English classes? Which ones do you prefer?

What skills do you have that allow you to be an autonomous learner? What skills do you need to improve to be an autonomous learner?

What are your strong and weak skills in English? Justify each strength and weakness.

How much of your time and effort do you dedicate to studying the English language?

What makes learning the English language memorable and pleasurable? (e.g., outside activities, seeing movies, playing games, etc..)?

Have you made progress in English vocabulary? If yes, what helped you improve? If no, why?

When you make a mistake in your English, how significant is it, in your opinion, to be corrected? In what ways do you prefer to be corrected?

Do you have personal learning goals that you designed for your initial stage of English learning? Have you achieved them?

Do you agree that self-assessing and self-reflecting will help with the learning development? If yes, how so? If no, why not?

What advice can you give to new students admitted into the English department regarding vocabulary learning development?

APPENDIX C

Classroom Observation Form (Adapted and edited from Wajnryb (1992)

Instructor: _____Course _____

Peer/Observer: _____   Date and Time_____

Review Section	Description/Comments
SUBJECT MATTER CONTENT (shows good command and knowledge of subject matter; demonstrates breadth and depth of mastery)	
ORGANIZATION(organizes subject matter; evidences preparation; is thorough; states clear objectives; emphasizes and summarizes main points, meets class at scheduled time, regularly monitors online course)	
RAPPORT(holds interest of students; is respectful, fair, and impartial; provides feedback, encourages participation; interacts with students, shows enthusiasm)	
TEACHING METHODS(uses relevant teaching methods, aids, materials, techniques, and technology; includes variety, balance, imagination, group involvement; uses examples that are simple, clear, precise, and appropriate; stays focused on and meets stated objectives)	
PRESENTATION(establishes online course or classroom environment conducive to learning; maintains eye contact; uses a clear voice, strong projection, proper enunciation, and standard English)	
MANAGEMENT(uses time wisely; attends to course interaction; demonstrates leadership ability; maintains discipline and control; maintains effective e-platform management)	
SENSITIVITY(exhibits sensitivity to students' personal culture, gender differences and disabilities, responds appropriately in a nonthreatening , proactive learning environment)	

ASSISTANCE TO STUDENTS (assists students with academic problems)	
PERSONAL (evidences self-confidence; maintains professional comportment and appearance)	
PHYSICAL ASPECTS OF CLASSROOM (optional) (state location and physical attributes of classroom, number of students in attendance, layout of room, distractions if any; list any observations of how physical aspects affected content delivery)	

APPENDIX D

Classroom Observation Protocol for Undergraduate STEM (COPUS) Developed by Smith et al. (2013). Descriptions of the COPUS student and instructor observational codes.

1. Students are Doing

L	Listening to instructor/taking notes, etc.
Ind	Individual thinking/problem solving. Only mark when an instructor explicitly asks students to think about a clicker question or another question/problem on their own.
CG	Discuss clicker question in groups of 2 or more students
WG	Working in groups on worksheet activity
OG	Other assigned group activity, such as responding to instructor question
AnQ	Student answering a question posed by the instructor with rest of class listening
SQ	Student asks question
WC	Engaged in whole class discussion by offering explanations, opinion, judgment, etc. to whole class, often facilitated by instructor
Prd	Making a prediction about the outcome of demo or experiment
SP	Presentation by student(s)
TQ	Test or quiz
W	Waiting (instructor late, working on fixing AV problems, instructor otherwise occupied, etc.)
O	Other – explain in comments

2. Instructor is Doing

Lec	Lecturing (presenting content, deriving mathematical results, presenting a problem solution, etc.)
RtW	Real-time writing on board, doc. projector, etc. (often checked off along with Lec)
FUp	Follow-up/feedback on clicker question or activity to entire class
PQ	Posing non-clicker question to students (non-rhetorical)
CQ	Asking a clicker question (mark the entire time the instructor is using a clicker question, not just when first asked)
AnQ	Listening to and answering student questions with entire class listening
MG	Moving through class guiding ongoing student work during active learning task
1o1	One-on-one extended discussion with one or a few individuals, not paying attention to the rest of the class (can be along with MG or AnQ)
D/V	Showing or conducting a demo, experiment, simulation, video, or animation
Adm	Administration (assign homework, return tests, etc.)
W	Waiting when there is an opportunity for an instructor to be interacting with or observing/listening to student or group activities and the instructor is not doing so
O	Other – explain in comments

APPENDIX E

2. Demographical information:

Classroom Observation Protocol for Undergraduate STEM – COPUS

Smith MK, Jones FHM, Gilbert SL, and Wieman CE. 2013. The Classroom Observation Protocol for Undergraduate STEM (COPUS): a New Instrument to Characterize University STEM Classroom Practices. CBE-Life Sciences Education

<u>Date and time of Observation:</u> _____

1) <u>Background Information</u>
    a) **Observer Name:** _____

    b) **Class No./name/section:** _____

    c) **Observer's location in the class**: _____

2) <u>Classroom and background</u>
    a) Room location and layout (e.g., type of student seating, instructor on podium, etc.).

    b) Note if there is anything unusual about this particular class/lecture (e.g., quiz day, first day of semester, etc) (try to avoid observing classes that are particularly anomalous)

    c) **(Optional, if known)** What goes on <u>out of</u> class? ☐Homework? ☐Pre-readings? ☐Labs? ☐Projects? ☐Other? Explain briefly.

    d) **(Optional, if know)** How varied are classes for this course? Circle one each, to show balance of *Active Students / Instructor Delivery* ...
        i) for the **Whole Course,** balance approximates: 0%/100%   20/80   40/60   50/50   60/40   80/20   100%/0%
        ii) in **Today's Class Only,** balance approximates: 0%/100%   20/80   40/60   50/50   60/40   80/20   100%/0%

3) <u>Narrative Description of Class (also known as field notes)</u>   (optional)
Information could include ...
    • The structure of the lesson (e.g., how the instructor sequenced material, the narrative arc of the class)
    • The range and nature of activities that occurred.
    • Dialog/behaviors that illustrate codes you gave, especially for teaching techniques and student engagement.
    • Instructor's actions that appear to have affected students' engagement.
    • Evidence of variability among students (e.g., if small groups, to what extent did groups behave and engage similarly?)

APPENDIX F

3. Observation protocol

Smith MK, Jones FHM, Gilbert SL, and Wieman CE. 2013. The Classroom Observation Protocol for Undergraduate STEM (COPUS): a New Instrument to Characterize University STEM Classroom Practices. CBE-Life Sciences Education, Vol 12(4), pp. 618-627; www.cwsei.ubc.ca

Date: _____ Class: _____ Instructor: _____ No. students _____ Observer Name: _____

Classroom arranged how? _____

1. **L**-Listening; **Ind**-Individual work; **CG**-Clicker Q discussn; **WG**-Worksheet group work; **OG**-Other group work; **AnQ**-Answer Q; **SQ**-Student Q; **WC**-Whole class discuss.; **Prd**-Predicting; **SP**-Student present.; **TQ**-Test/quiz; **W**-Waiting; **O**-Other

2. **Lec**-Lecturing; **RtW**-Writing; **FUp**-Follow-up; **PQ**-Pose Q; **CQ**-Clicker Q; **AnQ**-Answer Q; **MG**-Moving/Guiding; **1o1**-One-on-one; **D/V**-Demo+; **Adm**-Admin; **W**-Waiting; **O**-Other

For each 2 minute interval, check columns to show what's happening in each category (or draw vertical line to indicate continuation of activity). Check multiple columns where appropriate.

COPUS

min	L	Ind	CG	WG	OG	AnQ	SQ	WC	Prd	SP	T/Q	W	O	Lec	RtW	Fup	PQ	CQ	AnQ	MG	1o1	D/V	Adm	W	O	L	M	H	Comments: EG: explain difficult coding choices, flag key points for <u>feedback for the instructor</u>, identify good analogies, etc.
0 - 2																													
2																													
4																													
6																													
8 - 10																													
10 - 12																													
12																													
14																													
16																													
18 - 20																													
20 - 22																													
22																													
24																													
26																													
28 - 30																													

page 2

min	L	Ind	CG	WG	OG	AnQ	SQ	WC	Prd	SP	T/Q	W	O	Lec	RtW	Fup	PQ	CQ	AnQ	MG	1o1	D/V	Adm	W	O	L	M	H	Comments: EG: explain difficult coding choices, flag key points for <u>feedback for the instructor</u>, identify good analogies, etc.
30 - 32																													
32																													
34																													

APPENDIX E (REFLECTIVE STATEMENT)

Instructions for Reflective Statement

Write a 1–3 page essay in which you describe your opinion of the material worked on in the course as well as your evaluation of your own learning process. Use the following questions as a guideline for your essay:

1. What aspect of teaching did you like/dislike. Explain why?

2. What is your view of the topics and tools used in class? (textbook, activities, worksheets, articles, media, etc.)?

3. What strategies are used in class? What is your personal view of its effectiveness?

4. In what aspect of English learning have you developed during the semester? In which areas (vocabulary, writing, speaking, reading, listening, ability to express opinions, etc.).

5. To what extent you used your own decisions about materials and strategies to help you to learn the English material? Did you find the format of the course helpful/not helpful? Explain why?

6. What recommendations would you make for future classes?

APPENDIX G

Description of Language Learning Autobiography

For this first writing task, please write a reflective narrative paper based on your personal experiences with "English language" learning. Your own English learning story should be at least 2 pages, double spaced.

Guidance Questions

(Do not try and answer all questions; these are solely suggestions to help you get started on your personal English learning autobiography; you may address some or none of them, or your own questions)

- Why did you decide to learn the English language?
- How has your prior experience and knowledge affected your English language development?
- What efforts do you put into learning English inside and outside the classroom?

- What is (are) your preferred style(s) of learning?

- What strategies do you use to encourage yourself, understand and retain information and concepts?
- How do you monitor your own English learning?
- What are your strengths and weakness is in c to English language skills? Explain the rationale behind your self-evaluation?
- What are the most unforgettable memories and/or impressions of yourself as a "language" learner?
- What have you gained from your "language" learning experience?
- Have you found unexpected benefits beyond your initial English learning motivation?