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From Knowledge to Practice: A Qualitative Study of the Impact of Continuing Professional Development on Language Teachers' Promotion of Learner Autonomy at a Saudi University

by

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Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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<u>Abstract</u>

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The development of learner autonomy (LA) is widely recognised as an essential objective in language education; however, its promotion in many educational settings can be challenging. One primary reason for this difficulty is the lack of continuing professional development (CPD) that addresses teachers' knowledge and practices concerning LA as a significant educational issues. However, research in teacher education has not extensively explored language teachers' understanding and methods of teaching for fostering LA. This study examines the impact of CPD on in-service language teachers' knowledge about LA through specialised workshops to impact their practice.

Initially, online group interviewing discussions were organised to investigate six EFL teachers' beliefs and knowledge regarding LA and their responsibilities and teaching practices at a university in Saudi Arabia. This was followed by four online workshops, incorporating insights from the initial group interviewing and relevant literature to further develop the teachers' knowledge and practices about implementing LA. At the teachers' request, a post-workshop phase was added, resulting in five workshops, each involving focus group (FG) discussions and reflective audio diaries submitted by teachers two weeks apart. The fourth phase involved face-to-face field visits to observe classroom practices. The final phase consisted of online semi-structured interviews to assess changes and developments in teachers' knowledge about LA and to explore uncovered issues raised in all the previous four phases.

The findings of this qualitative study were analysed using qualitative content analysis, which revealed the impact of the CPD on teachers' knowledge and practices. While some teachers' knowledge and practices showed resistance to change, the provided CPD also contributed to increasing teachers' awareness of the concept of LA, and a minor change was noted in one participant's practice. The results also showed the difficulties of promoting LA in this context as some challenges hindered the promotion of LA, such as teachers' lack of understanding of LA-related issues in terms of knowledge and implementation. This study contributes to the academic understanding of professional development for autonomy-oriented teaching by introducing a context-sensitive Role-Shifting framework. Developed in response to teachers' limited understanding of the facilitator role, the framework outlines a progression from organisational to interactional and reflective practices. It offers a theoretical tool for supporting teacher development and advancing research on CPD, teacher roles, and learner autonomy in higher education.

Table of Contents

Table of Tables

Table of Figures

Research Thesis: Declaration of Authorship

Print name: Suha Ali Almazyad

Title of thesis: The Impact of Continuing Professional Development on In-service Language Teachers' Promotion of Learner Autonomy at a Saudi University

I declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

I confirm that:

1. This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;
2. Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;
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6. Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;
7. None of this work has been published before submission

Signature: *Suha*   Date: 13 June 2025

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Definitions and Abbreviations

CK .... Content Knowledge

CLT .... Communicative Language Teaching

CPD .... Continuing Professional Development

EFL .... English as a Foreign Language

FG .... Focus Group

KSA .... Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

LA .... Learner Autonomy

MOE .... Ministry of Education

PCK .... Pedagogy Content Knowledge

TA .... Teacher Autonomy

Chapter 1   Introduction

1.1   Introduction

The present study investigates the impact of dedicated continuous professional development (CPD) focused on learner autonomy (LA) on the knowledge and practices of a small group of language teachers in a Saudi higher education institution. In recent years, LA has attracted national attention in Saudi Arabia, reflecting increased recognition of its crucial role in fostering academic success and lifelong learning habits (Ministry of Education, 2021). The educational paradigms at different levels of the educational system in Saudia Arabia increasingly prioritize learner-centred approaches that enhance the promotion of LA as a primary academic focus (Ahmad, 2016; Ahmed and Dakhiel, 2019; Kassem, 2019). This educational goal emphasises the development of learners' critical thinking, self-regulation, and problem-solving capacities (Maksum et al., 2021; Ghanizadeh and Mirzaee, 2012). It emphasises the role of the teachers, who are now encouraged to be a facilitator and a mentor rather than just a knowledge provider, empowering students to take more control over their learning (Harden and Laidlaw, 2021).

However, it is worth mentioning that teacher promotion of LA is influenced by teachers' own beliefs toward teaching (Borg, 2001, 2003; Richardson, 1996; Skott, 2014), which impacts their students' learning outcomes (McCutchen et al., 2002; Opper, 2019). Teachers' beliefs play a significant role in shaping their classroom teaching practices since these beliefs influence how they interpret their roles, interact with students, and implement strategies that encourage autonomous learning (Borg, 2001, 2003; Opper, 2019; Charalambous, 2015; McCutchen et al., 2002; Richardson, 1996; Skott, 2014).

It can be argued that CPD for language instructors should consider the development of teachers' beliefs *(*Al-Lamki, 2009; Charalambous, 2015). This is not only to equip teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to foster LA but also to address and shape their beliefs for effective LA pedagogy (De Vries et al., 2013a; De Vries et al., 2013b; De Vries et al., 2014). It is particularly important to consider these beliefs as they affect teachers' participation during CPD, which affects their learning process (De Vries et al., 2013a; De Vries et al., 2013b; De Vries et al., 2014) and reactions to newly introduced approaches during CPD (Al-Lamki, 2009). Teachers' beliefs also affect the process of updating teachers' knowledge and teaching performance (De Vries et al., 2013a; De Vries et al., 2013b; De Vries et al., 2014). As teachers' knowledge and expertise grow through CPD, teachers are likely to become more confident (Coburn and Borg, 2024), recognising their own space and developing their autonomy, and then become more

effective in making pedagogical decisions (Coburn and Borg, 2024; De Vries et al., 2013a; De Vries et al., 2013b; De Vries et al., 2014; Trebbi, 2008).

With this sense of autonomy, teachers should be better equipped to create dynamic and autonomous learning environments for their students and to effectively and adequately deal with obstacles of any kind (Trebbi, 2008). Thus, this study explores these interconnected dimensions, investigating how CPD can provide teachers with the knowledge and skills that, in turn, inform their beliefs and practices to foster LA regardless of any constraints, as teachers are never free from them (Trebbi, 2008).

1.2   Research Gap

It is essential to mention that Saudi classrooms are generally characterised as teacher-centred, although the goal of fostering LA is becoming increasingly prominent in education (Benson, 2013). Many classrooms remain traditional (Borg and Alshumaimeri, 2019; Manzano Vázquez, 2018a, 2020), where learners are passive and wait to be 'spoon-fed' by their teachers (Alrabai, 2017a; Borg and Al-Busaidi, 2012; Manzano Vázquez, 2020; Saad, 2024).

Substantial research examines what LA means from teachers' perspectives and how desirable and feasible the promotion of LA in English as a foreign language (EFL) higher education institutions and self-access centers is (Al-Asmari, 2013; Al-Busaidi and Al-Maamari, 2014; Borg and Al-Busaidi, 2012; Borg and Alshumaimeri, 2019; Haji-Othman and Wood, 2016; Keuk and Heng, 2016; Lengkanawati, 2016; Rañosa-Madrunio et al., 2016; Stroupe et al., 2016; Tapinta, 2016; Van Loi, 2016; Wang and Wang, 2016), all adding further confirmation to the literature regarding the lack of LA promotion. According to these studies, teachers have a basic understanding of LA, and its promotion is desirable, yet not feasible. These studies clarify many reasons for the lack of LA promotion. The significant reasons behind the absence of an LA-supportive environment are some factors related to teachers, students, and institutions. For example, teachers lack adequate understanding of LA, learners lack motivation to be autonomous, and institutions have fixed curriculums.

However, while a number of these studies attempted to enhance LA through CPD (Borg and Al-Busidi, 2012; Haji-Othman and Wood, 2016; Keuk and Heng, 2016; Rañosa-Madrunio et al., 2016; Stroupe et al., 2016; Tapinta, 2016; Wang and Wang, 2016), no previous studies have examined the impact of CPD on teachers' knowledge and practices. Moreover, these studies use quantitative methods, such as surveys, as their primary investigation tool to understand the extent to which the promotion of LA is feasible from teachers' point of view. This includes the studies with CPD as they used the results of questionnaires during CPD to widen participants'

awareness about how feasible the promotion of LA is in their institutions, e.g., the work done by Borg and Al-Busidi (2012), as described in detail in Section 2.7.

Teachers' beliefs and understanding were explored by Li (2023) through a purely qualitative study to investigate teachers' beliefs and understanding about LA. The study also included professional development workshops and investigated their impact on teachers' beliefs, understanding, and practices about the development of LA. Li's (2023) findings showed that CPD has made teachers more aware of LA and its importance in language learning.

However, Li's study and all the studies mentioned above rely on teachers' reported practices to explore teachers' practices, beliefs and understanding of LA implementation. The authors acknowledge this reliance on reported practices and lack of classroom observations as a limitation of their studies. A recent study conducted by Coburn and Borg in 2024 in language teaching and learning explored the impact of an in-service course on teachers through CPD, including visits to the field. Their findings revealed an effect on teachers' knowledge and practices; however, their focus was on teacher knowledge, confidence, and change, not on promoting LA.

While this study is situated within a specific institutional and cultural context, it contributes to the still limited body of empirical research examining how CPD can support in-service teachers' knowledge and practices concerning the implementation of LA in language learning, as recommended by a significant body of work in the literature for the need for CPD provision focusing on LA-related issues (Al-Asmari, 2013; Alonazi, 2017; Alqahtani, 2018; Manzano Vázquez, 2016, 2018b; Smith, 2003a). It also highlights the limited number of purely qualitative studies that seek in-depth insights into the phenomena.

According to Al-Asmari (2013), Alonazi (2017), Alqahtani (2018), Manzano Vázquez (2016, 2018b), and Smith (2003a), there is a need for a specific methodology that encourages teacher reflexivity in their teaching and learning practices and the use of various strategies to improve local practices, in other words, encouraging learner-centeredness and the creation of autonomous learning opportunities. Furthermore, the reliance on teachers' reported practices highlights the need for classroom observation. Even though LA is not easily captured during classroom visits, teachers' instructions could be observed to understand how these instructional practices create opportunities for autonomous learning, as this is the focus of this study on teachers' autonomy-supportive teaching practices, not to observe specifically autonomy among learners.

1.3   Research Context and Background: The Saudi EFL Context

1.3.1   LA in Language Teaching

In the context of Saudi EFL classrooms, the Saudi authorities recognise the significance of education quality through the Vision 2030 plan led by the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, Prince Muhammed bin Salman. Vision 2030 was launched in April 2016 and describes Saudi Arabia's new direction, which seeks to transform itself from an oil-based to a knowledge-based economy (Vision 2030). Vision 2030 has several educational objectives, such as enhancing the learning context to encourage creativity and innovation, improving curricula and teaching practices, shifting to digital education to support the teaching and learning process, and preparing students for the labour market demands (Albiladi, 2022). This indicates that the old educational models and methods may not serve to achieve the new objectives.

According to this vision, notably the National Transformation Programme (NTP), the Kingdom needs an educational system to serve its national purposes (Vision 2030). This includes equipping professionals with the expertise and knowledge to practice effectively. Attention is also given to learners, and the NTP objectives highlight the need to improve education and increase learners' skills so that they can meet the needs of national growth and the demands of the labour market (Ministry of Education, 2021; Vision 2030).

It is worth mentioning that research in LA has recently received attention in Saudi EFL education (e.g., Al-Asmari, 2013; Alhaysony, 2016; Alhejaily, 2020; Almusharraf, 2018, 2020; Alqahtani, 2024; Alonazi, 2017; Alrabai, 2017a, 2017b, 2017c; Alrashidi, 2022; Alzahrani, 2016; Bin Seddiq, 2019; Borg and Alshumaimeri, 2019; Halabi, 2018). However, the promotion of LA is particularly challenging due to several factors. The traditional and hierarchical nature of Saudi classroom dynamics, in which teachers are highly respected, is a significant factor that impedes the promotion of LA. This is said to be due to the high level of power distance between teachers and students (Alshahrani, 2016). Teachers are seen to have an authoritative role and dominant position and are highly valued in Saudi culture. Alshahrani (2016) confirms that the hierarchical structure leads to a formal and unidirectional flow of information from the teacher to the students. Teachers in these classrooms control the learning process and transmit knowledge, while students are passive recipients of knowledge (Alharbi, 2015; Alkubaidi, 2014). Promoting LA in the Saudi context, as teachers describe, is a desirable goal but not feasible (Alrashidi, 2022; Borg and Alshumaimeri, 2019).

This type of formal education influences students' passive learning attitudes (Almusharraf, 2018, 2020; Alrabai, 2017a; Alhejaily, 2020), which is evident in their reluctance to participate in

communicative activities (Aljumah, 2011). Aljumah (2011) noted that Saudi students often resist participating in classroom discussions, demonstrating low self-regulation and high levels of teacher dependence (Alhaysony, 2016; Alrabai, 2017b; Alrashidi, 2022; Halabi, 2018; Haque et al., 2023).

This passivity is likely to be further reinforced by using more traditional methods (Almusharraf, 2018, 2020; Alrabai, 2017a, 2021; Alhejaily, 2020), such as the grammar-translation method, which remains a dominant teaching approach in Saudi language classrooms (Elyas and Picard, 2010). This is because the grammar translation method focuses on memorising grammatical rules and vocabulary without encouraging students to use the language in real-life communicative situations (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2013). Alrashidi and Phan (2015) argue that teachers often fail to encourage their learners' participation and fail to provide real-life examples when teaching. Instead, they tend to overcorrect students' mistakes and are overly critical of their efforts in learning (Alrabai, 2021; Alrashidi and Phan, 2015).

Teachers often fail to motivate learners (Al-Johani, 2009), despite the wide-ranging literature suggesting that teachers are perhaps the most influencing factor in learners' motivation (Al-Johani, 2009; Alrashidi and Phan 2015; Khan, 2011a). Teachers also fail to provide constructive feedback on learners' progress (Alrabia, 2018), and learners are usually left without teacher guidelines (Khan, 2011a). As a result, this method fosters a surface level of understanding rather than maintaining a deeper level of learning that encourages the cognitive engagement required for autonomous learning (Race, 2019).

The rigidity of the Saudi educational curriculum is another component that challenges promoting LA. The curriculum seems to have been developed without evaluating or analysing students' needs (Al-Seghayer, 2014). It is delivered rigidly and prescriptively, leaving little room for creativity and innovation (Al-Seghayer, 2014). Also, Saudi English teachers rely heavily on textbooks (Al-Seghayer, 2014). Classroom activities are limited to those encoded in the curriculum, and teachers have minimal involvement in planning them (Almalki, 2014), limiting their ability to include content beyond what is outlined in the curriculum (Alrabai, 2018). Their few initiations are usually designed and prepared unprofessionally (Al-Seghayer, 2014), and they are inadequately trained on how to effectively implement the new EFL curriculum (Almalki, 2014; Al-Seghayer, 2014). Al-Seghayer (2014) confirms the absence of authentic materials and argues that it is partly due to learners' low motivation and lack of interest in learning English.

This marginalisation of teachers from the curriculum development process is also highlighted in Alnefaie's (2016) study. Alnefaie clarifies that Saudi EFL teachers' lack of autonomy over what they do in language classrooms led to the utilisation of inappropriate teaching methods. Alnofaie (2013) points out that teachers in Saudi classrooms often cannot implement innovative

pedagogies, such as critical thinking strategies, due to strict adherence to the prescribed curriculum. This lack of freedom disempowers teachers and further prevents students from taking active roles in their learning. Since teachers are not empowered to facilitate an environment that fosters independence, learners are discouraged from exploring language use beyond the textbook. As a consequence, learners' development of their autonomy and critical thinking is restricted, and classroom activities remain limited, with few opportunities to move beyond the standard materials.

This passive teaching and learning approach continues due to the influence of the examination system. Alhammad (2010) and Al Alhareth and Aldighrir (2014) argue that the academic methods at Saudi schools encourage the development of an ineffective memorisation system, primarily focusing on passing exams rather than maintaining deep and meaningful learning. According to Alrabai (2017b, 2017c), learners in this educational environment seek to meet basic requirements for passing the course rather than prioritising actual learning. They rely on rote memorisation and are spoon-fed by teachers (Alrabai, 2017a), which results in Saudi EFL learners having low levels of autonomy (Almusharraf, 2018, 2020; Alrabai, 2017a; Alhejaily, 2020). This is because teachers and students recognise that memorisation alone can lead to passing exams and achieving high grades without mastering language skills (Alrabai, 2018).

These students are generally unfamiliar with learning independently (Al-Misnad, 1985). Instead, they wait for their teachers to explicitly provide them with the necessary information, including what to memorise for the exams (Al-Misnad, 1985). They lack the self-management and critical thinking abilities essential for independent learning and are unprepared to take total responsibility for their learning (Alrabai, 2017a). Therefore, such teacher-centred environments reduce opportunities for students' active engagement in the learning process and the development of necessary skills for self-regulated learning. It also reinforces a culture of dependence, where students depend heavily on their teachers to guide them rather than take the initiative (Alharbi, 2015).

While many constraints hinder the promotion of LA in the Saudi context, recent studies have noticed a movement toward learner-centred classrooms (e.g., Alqahtani, 2024; Halabi, 2018; Haque et al., 2023). Based on the data from their studies, Halabi (2018), Haque et al. (2023), and Alqahtani (2024) argue that Saudi learners are autonomous. Halabi (2018) reports that Saudi EFL students have positive views about autonomy, show signs of autonomous practices, and welcome opportunities to participate in learning.

Alqahtani (2024) explains the divergence of her study's findings from those of the majority of other studies in the Saudi context and other similar contexts (e.g., Alrabai, 2017a; Borg and Al-busaidi, 2012) as reflecting a movement towards LA in Saudi education, which aligns with the Saudi

national educational reform. Alqahtani (2024) argues that the COVID-19 pandemic influenced Saudi universities' teaching approaches, as many shifted to online teaching. Albiladi's (2022) study findings support Alqahtani's (2024) claims about the influence of COVID-19 on teaching approaches in the Saudi context. Albiladi's (2022) findings reveal that COVID-19 helps language teachers meet the expectations of the Saudi Vision in terms of the use of technology and shift to digital education. His findings also reveal teachers' beliefs about the importance of learners' collaborative work, which could help them prepare for the labour market. This adds further confirmations for teachers meeting Vision 2030 expectations (Albiladi, 2022).

Furthermore, Alqahtani (2024) explains that the recent shift in the type of Saudi learners from the passive characterisation seen in many previous studies (e.g., Almusharraf, 2018, 2020; Alhejaily, 2020; Alrabai, 2017a; Alrashidi, 2022) to autonomous learners (e.g., Haque et al., 2023; Alqahtani, 2024) is due to the skills of the teachers. Halabi (2018) also claims that it is not the learner who is not interested in being autonomous but, it is the teacher who can play a significant role in reducing students' reliance on them and developing LA by overcoming challenges that hinder the promotion of LA, as Haque et al. (2023) also argue. Alqahtani (2024) explains that young Saudi faculty members who obtained their degrees from distinguished Western institutions might be more aware of autonomous-supportive teaching practices than older faculty members, as young learners' education might impact their teaching practices.

While this section shows how the country's new direction seeks educational quality improvements, encourages LA promotion among learners, and describes how challenging it is to foster LA in the Sudi EFL context, very recent publications show different descriptions of the Saudi EFL context. This could be a message of hope for the movement from teacher-centred to learner-centred that supports LA. The following section describes in-service teacher professional development programs in Saudi Arabia.

1.3.2 In-service Teacher Professional Development Programmes

While the preceding section clarifies the teacher's central role in developing LA, this section identifies teacher education as one of the Saudi Ministry of Education's (MOE) main concerns. The MOE frequently offers training programs to improve teacher performance (Jouiee, 2021). Teachers and administrators are sent to national or international universities to pursue advanced degrees (Jouiee, 2021). At the same time, a range of year-round development courses and initiatives, often in collaboration with private sector experts, are provided according to the needs of curricular projects (Jouiee, 2021).

Teachers receive professional development throughout their careers in different ways, such as innovative tools like computerised supervision, which enable quick information exchange and

idea-sharing, enhancing teaching environments and outcomes (Jouiee, 2021). The Ministry is also preparing an ambitious teacher assessment project to improve educational outputs further, focusing on continual professional development, raising teaching standards, and aligning with global best practices (Jouiee, 2021). Currently, the Professional Development of Teachers project is in progress, aiming to boost teacher performance through specialised programs and higher qualifications to meet the demands of modern education (Jouiee, 2021).

However, Alqahtani (2018) and Elyas and Al Grigri (2014) argue that these programs are limited and not widely accessible nationwide. For example, many teachers, including those with years of experience, struggle to access these retraining opportunities. This is unfortunate because ongoing professional development is crucial for teachers to stay up to date with new teaching methods and enhance their ability to engage students (Khan, 2011b). These programs have also been criticised for their over-focus on integrating information and communication technology promoted by the Tatweer project, often neglecting other vital areas like language pedagogy (Althobaiti, 2017). This highlights the inadequate context-specific type of training. Alqahtani (2018) points out the lack of professional development that provides support for EFL teachers to help them transition to other forms of learner-centred approaches, moving away from outdated teaching approaches like Grammar-Translation and the Audio-Lingual Method, which are now considered less effective. Moskovsky (2018) further supports Alqahtani's (2018) standpoint, highlighting the lack of incorporated CPD workshops designed to help teachers recognise the significance of and need for cultural change and guide these teachers toward that cultural shift. Alonazi (2017) and Halabi (2018) highlight teachers' need for knowledge about implementing LA through proper training, as teachers in the Saudi context have limited experience in this regard.

1.4   Research Rationale, Contribution, and Significance

The identified gap in the research literature, as highlighted in section 1.2, including the Saudi context as highlighted in the preceding section, was not the sole reason that encouraged this study to provide CPD workshops to make a difference and impact the teachers' knowledge and skills as an attempt to contribute to the field of LA. My personal rationale is another reason, as my interest in LA is driven by an intrinsic motivation to support my students in becoming autonomous learners. As an English teacher, I have always encouraged my students not to be passive learners and less dependent on me. Unfortunately, most of my early attempts have failed, as I lacked two essential things: a basic understanding of LA and possible strategies for implementing it. My need for knowledge in this area and my desire to promote LA heightened my awareness of providing opportunities for fostering LA. This has encouraged me to use my personal experience of working with English teachers who are seeking professional development and are willing to develop their

teaching practices to improve their students' foreign language acquisition. Another motivation for choosing this particular area of educational improvement is our country's new vision, as highlighted in Section 1.3.1.

This led this study to explore the impact of CPD on teachers' knowledge and its effect on LA implementation. Before delivering CPD, an initial investigation took place to explore teachers' knowledge and practices. During CPD workshops, a focus was to enable teachers to reflect on the content interactively regarding its possible application in the university setting. Teachers had an opportunity to freely express their thoughts about the possibility of the learner-centred approach being applicable in their classrooms during the CPD programme, particularly during the workshops and after through reflective audio diaries. This was followed by classroom visits to investigate teachers' instructional practices about LA implementations and individual interviews to enrich the data. The collected data was analysed using Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA), which enabled the exploration of the impact of the CPD on teachers' knowledge and practices, as it has a descriptive nature, enabling the presentation of the data beyond its literal meaning and allowing conclusions to be drawn.

This study contributes to a deeper understanding of LA and teacher education by exploring how in-service university language teachers in Saudi Arabia engage with a locally developed CPD programme. Focused on the facilitator role who promotes autonomy among learners, the programme combines workshops, reflective tasks, and classroom observations to provide a holistic picture of how autonomy-oriented practices are interpreted and applied in real classrooms. By integrating both direct observation and post-intervention reflections, the study moves beyond the limitations of self-reported data that dominate much of the existing literature. However, the findings, which reveal only limited changes in actual teaching practice, challenge the prevailing assumption that professional development reliably facilitates a smooth transition from knowledge acquisition to classroom implementation, particularly within the complex context of higher education. A key issue emerging from the data is the evident gap in practical knowledge; while participants may develop a stronger theoretical understanding, many continue to lack concrete, actionable training in how to effectively adopt the facilitator role in everyday teaching. This underscores the need for CPD programmes to move beyond abstract theoretical models and provide more practical, experience-based training that enables educators to apply autonomy-supportive approaches in meaningful and context-sensitive ways.

A key significance of the study is the development of a Role-Shifting Framework, which conceptualises the facilitator role as a progression through organisational, interactional, and reflective stages. This framework addresses a notable gap in autonomy literature, where the teacher's role in enabling autonomy is often under-theorised or overlooked. In doing so, the study

not only enhances empirical knowledge of the challenging factors for fostering learner autonomy in a reform-oriented educational context but also offers a theoretically grounded tool to support future research and CPD design.

1.5   Research Aims and Questions

This study aims to explore teachers' knowledge and practices concerning LA and the role of purpose-designed CPD workshops in shaping both. Specifically, it seeks to understand what LA means to language teachers, what roles and responsibilities they adopt, and what roles and responsibilities they assign to their students before and after the CPD workshops. Additionally, the study focuses on how CPD can reveal what hinders the development of autonomous teaching practices. The study aims to provide a nuanced understanding of how CPD impacts teachers' knowledge and practices and how certain factors could impede the promotion of LA in educational settings. The study planned to answer the following research questions, which were formulated following a review of the literature and considering the highlighted research gap in Section 1.2:

1. How does CPD on language learner autonomy impact:
    a. Teachers' knowledge of the concept of LA?
    b. Teachers' knowledge and practices regarding their roles and responsibilities concerning implementing LA?
    c. Teachers' knowledge and practices regarding their assigned roles and responsibilities to their students concerning implementing LA?
2. How does CPD help reveal the factors that impede the promotion of LA?

1.6   The Structure of the Thesis

This thesis has six chapters. Chapter 1 is the introduction. It introduces the contextual background of the study. It clarifies the research problem, rationale, and significance. It also clarifies the research aims and questions. Chapter 2 presents the theoretical framework and the literature review. It shows the role of CPD in enhancing teachers' knowledge concerning the promotion of LA to minimise the identified gap in the literature that confirms the lack of LA promotion. It also suggests the importance of considering teachers' beliefs that influence teachers' practices during CPD workshops. Finally, it clarifies that although some constraints could hinder the promotion of LA, CPD could help widen teachers' knowledge and enhance their teaching practices. Chapter 3 discusses the methodology of this study. It presents the data collection procedures and how the data was analysed. This is followed by Chapter 4, which presents the analysed data, while Chapter 5 discusses the findings. It also presents a framework

developed during this study based on the revealed data that the teacher needs to understand the role of a facilitator, which could be argued as a significant reason behind the lack of LA promotion. This thesis is concluded by Chapter 6, which summarises the thesis and the study's theoretical, CPD design, and practical contributions to the field. It presents the study's limitations and suggests recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2   Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1   Introduction

This chapter has eight sections. After setting out the structure of the chapter in this introduction section, the second section clarifies the concept of Learner Autonomy (LA), starting by discussing its definition and importance from different perspectives. That section also discusses the constraints that hinder the promotion of LA, both internal and external. This is followed by the third section, titled, 'the classroom dynamics' which shows how the focus of the teaching and learning approach influences the role of the teacher, and how the role of the teacher in turn influences the students' assigned duties, thus influencing the type of students, whether passive or active. In other words, it influences the type of classroom, whether teacher-centred or learner-centred. The fourth section is about teacher autonomy. It suggests that teachers with a sense of autonomy can update their knowledge, which could be gained through training. It also clarifies the role of this knowledge in their skills to promote LA.

Section 2.5 then discusses the impact of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and is suggesting three components to consider during CPD for effective pedagogy for autonomy: teachers' beliefs, teachers' knowledge, and teachers' reflections. Section 2.7 shows the relevant studies in the field of LA, and Section 2.8 clarifies this study's theoretical framework. Finally, this chapter concludes with a summary of the whole chapter.

2.2   Learner Autonomy in Language Learning

This section clarifies the importance of promoting learner autonomy (LA) among students in language classrooms. It also provides the definition of LA from known scholars in the field, such as Holec, Benson, Raya, Lamb, Vieira, and Little. It shows how Holec's (1981) widely cited definition in the field has been criticised as it only focuses on one dimension, the political dimension. It suggests that LA in the classroom should involve other dimensions, such as the social and psychological. This section also highlights factors that hinder the promotion of LA in language classrooms. It concludes by clarifying how this discussion is highly relevant to this thesis, as teachers' understanding of LA and related issues for its implementation needs to be investigated in order to be able to address them through CPD for effective LA pedagogy.

2.2.1   The Importance and Definition

LA is widely recognised as an essential feature of democratic and transformative education polces (Raya et al., 2017). It refers to the learner's ability to take control of their learning, to make decisions independently, and to undertake self-directed learning activities (Holec, 1981; Knowles, 1980). It is also recognised as an essential objective for meaningful and effective language teaching and learning experiences (Benson, 2007; Holec, 1981; Little, 1991; Little et al., 2017; Raya et al., 2017). Research on LA (e.g., Benson, 2013; Borg and Al-Busaidi, 2012; Cotterall, 2000; Raya et al., 2017) suggests that promoting LA enhances the quality of language education and supports individuals' sustained learning that attains lifelong learning process and long-term success in the learning society.

Despite the attention LA has received, particularly in language education and lifelong learning, there remains considerable disagreement on its definition and implementation within various educational theorizations and sociocultural frameworks. It has been defined by different scholars and researchers from different perspectives; for example, Holec's (1981, p.3) early and widely cited definition of LA is 'the ability to take charge of one's own learning ... to have, and to hold, the responsibility for all the decisions concerning all aspects of this learning.' While Holec's (1981) definition has been universally accepted, it has been criticised from different aspects. Little (1991) argues that Holec's (1981) definition proposes two separate objectives for language teaching: helping learners achieve linguistic and communicative goals and fostering autonomy, referring to Holec's (1981, p.3) argument when suggesting that LA involves moving from 'directed teaching' to 'self-instructed learning.' However, Little (2007) argues that these should not be separate but integrated, as autonomy should naturally involve language learning. This is because the capacity to take charge of one's learning is 'not inborn' but must be acquired either by 'natural' means or, as is most often the case, through formal learning (Little, 2007, p.16).

Benson (2013) further emphasises the connection between autonomy and language learning. Benson (2016) asserts that teachers who intend to foster LA need to focus on the personal relevance of the language being taught and learned. Nunan (1988) also emphasises that obtaining foreign language proficiency goes beyond basic grammar knowledge and vocabulary and highly depends on learners' language learning purposes and their particular areas of interest. This aligns with advocates of language learners' autonomy (e.g., Mynard, 2024; Little, 2022), associating it with constructivism, in which learners construct knowledge based on their learning experience and reflection.

It could be argued that Holec's (1981) definition is closely related to Dickinson's (1987, p.11), who defines LA as 'the situation in which the learner is responsible for all of the decisions concerned with his learning and the implementation of those decisions,' in the sense of independence. The

definition provided by Dickinson suggests that a learner carries total responsibility, emphasising self-reliance as in Holec's (1981) definition, with the assumption that learning may occur without a teacher's support. Such a notion highlights the political dimension with the absolute sense of power, control, and freedom. This falls within the liberal-humanist approaches, which celebrate the individual's freedom, critical thinking, and responsibility (Raya et al., 2017).

However, this notion of total responsibility and independence has been identified as one of the most apparent problems in school settings (Raya et al., 2017). This notion has been criticised by Little (1991) as he considered independent learning in a classroom context to be not absolute freedom but interdependence with an emphasis on the social dimension. Little (1991) emphasises that self-learning is not a synonym for LA (a detailed illustration is provided in Section 2.2.2.1), and learners are not confronted with an independent reality beyond their control; instead, they are faced with a reality they actively construct and dominate (Little, 2007). Borg and Alshumaimeri (2019) add that expecting students to have complete autonomy over their learning, especially when teachers need control and higher authorities make decisions concerning the curriculum and assessments, is not always realistic.

From this perspective, Little (1991) argues that autonomy is a capacity rather than ability. Little (1991, p.4) defines autonomy as 'a capacity - for detachment, critical reflection, decision-making, and independent action.' Little (1991) argues that his definition of substituting ability with capacity requires that learners develop a particular psychological connection to their learning process and the content they study. Little (1991) argues that the capacity to be autonomous will be displayed in how the learner learns and applies what has been learned to different contexts. In alignment with Little's (1991) definition of autonomy as a capacity, Benson (2013, p.2) defines LA as 'the capacity to take control over one's own learning.' However, Bensons' definition emphasises the political dimension over the psychological.

In 2022, Little provides his developed definition of LA in language learning as:

> A teaching/learning dynamic in which learners plan, implement, monitor and evaluate their own learning. From the beginning they do this as far as possible in the target language, which thus becomes a channel of their individual and collaborative agency. By exercising agency in the target language, they gradually develop a proficiency that is reflective as well as communicative, and the target language becomes a fully integrated part of their plurilingual repertoire and identity. (p.64)

Little's (2022) definition demonstrates a dynamic and holistic approach to language learning in which students are empowered to direct their learning process. This highlights the teacher's role in involving learners in taking responsibility for their learning (see Section 2.3), unlike Holec's

(1981) and Dickinson's (1987) definitions. These two definitions rely on the political dimensions and exclude the role of the teacher in developing LA, marginalizing the school setting. Furthermore, Little's (2022) definition highlights the role of the teacher in developing autonomy among learners and the significance of individual and collaborative students' learning processes. It also points out the integration of two objectives: language learning and the development of LA. Thus, it emphasises all three dimensions highlighted above: political, psychological, and social, addressing the criticised points highlighted in Holec's (1981) definitions.

Despite the absence of consensus on the definition of LA, Sinclair's (2000) review indicates that there seems to be common ground regarding certain features. Some of these features are in alignment with Little's (1991, 2007) argument above. Both Sinclair (2000) and Little (1991, 2007) argue that autonomy has political, psychological, and social dimensions. Sinclair (2000) and Little (1991, 2007) also highlight that autonomy includes both independence and interdependence. However, Sinclair's (2000) review adds that autonomy requires both willingness and ability to take responsibility for learning, develops and varies across time and circumstances, could be acquired naturally and in formal educational settings, and may take different forms in different cultures.

While defining LA is inherently complex due to its multifaceted nature, articulating a definition remains essential for clarifying the scope and direction of the concept. Raya et al. (2017) clarify that LA is better understood as a dynamic, exploratory framework that invites continued dialogue and reflection, particularly within the context of foreign language education, rather than offering a rigid or final interpretation. In this light, Raya et al. (2017, p. 17) define LA as 'the competence to develop as a self-determined, socially responsible and critically aware participant in (and beyond) educational environments, within a vision of education as (inter)personal empowerment and social transformation.'

Their broad definition highlights general aspects of autonomy in which LA can be seen as the ability to grow into self-directed, socially aware, and critically reflective participants, not only within formal learning environments but also beyond them. This view links autonomy to far-reaching aims of autonomous education rooted within motivational frameworks, like personal freedom and social change, reinforcing its position as an outcome and process in education.

Raya et al. (2017) clarify various foundational assumptions that shape this conceptualization. First, autonomy is understood as a competence that comprises knowledge, skills, attitudes, and ethical responsibility, enabling learners to manage their own learning effectively. Second, it is not a fixed trait, but instead, a developmental continuum, which means that individuals exercise autonomy in varying degrees and across different learning contexts. Third, it involves self-determination, where learners make choices based on reflection and personal agency, as well as

social responsibility, emphasizing collaboration and sensitivity to group dynamics. Fourth, critical awareness is highlighted as extremely important to genuine autonomy, as learners need to recognize and, when needed, challenge ideological or institutional constraints. Fifth, autonomy also means taking initiative and control, emphasizing the autonomy of the learner as an active agent, not a passive consumer. Finally, autonomy is both achievable and valuable within educational settings, particularly when those environments encourage flexible control and participation.

In summary, this section discusses the importance of LA development in language learning and how it is defined. It sheds light on the problem of considering LA with a political dimension only, negating the other dimensions, as this is not a reality in language learning classrooms. This discussion is highly relevant to this thesis, as it affirms that autonomy is desirable and necessary for preparing learners to navigate the demands of a changing world (Raya et al., 2017). The next section discusses factors that lead to misunderstanding the concept (e.g., how defining LA with a political dimension and teachers' beliefs and ideas) hinders its promotion in language classrooms.

2.2.2 The Constraints

Literature confirms a variety of constraints that hinder the promotion of LA (Dam, 2011; Little, 1991; Trebbi, 2008). Trebbi (2008) classified these constraints into internal and external. The internal constraints relate to teachers' ideas and beliefs. In contrast, the external constraints relate to other factors normally unrelated to the teachers, such as the curriculum, institution, culture, etc. The following sections provide further details about them.

2.2.2.1 Internal

Internal constraints relate to teachers' beliefs and attitudes toward promoting LA (Trebbi, 2008). Little (1991) and Dam (2011) clarify that teachers hold many ideas and beliefs that could be considered misconceptions about LA. These misconceptions could impede the promotion of LA. Little (1991, p.3) clarifies that the most common 'misconception' is that self-instruction is equivalent to autonomy or learning without the guidance of a teacher. Little (1991) argues that autonomy is not mainly about how learning is structured. At the same time, Little (1991) does not reject this idea, as he confirms that some individuals can pursue self-instruction and develop a strong sense of autonomy, but this is not the case for everyone.

A second misconception is what Little (1991, p.3) terms an 'organizational fallacy.' This organizational fallacy suggests that teachers must have no control and initiative if planning to promote autonomy to their students in the classroom (Little, 1991). Little (1991) explains two

primary sources for this raised belief. The first source is that autonomous learners will no longer need a teacher—a misconception closely related to the first presented above. The second source is about the conception that any teacher involvement could potentially disrupt the autonomy students have achieved. Dam (2011) clarifies that LA is often mistakenly associated with chaos, where learners are perceived as doing whatever they want whenever they want. However, this view, as Dam (2011) argues, is entirely incorrect and can constrain the implementation of practices that promote autonomous learning, as teachers might avoid providing necessary guidance and support.

Little (1991) continues clarifying misconceptions related to LA promotion. He adds that a false belief about autonomy and classroom learning could be handed to learners as a new teaching technique while not neglecting that learners are not expected to develop LA without teacher active support. Little (1991) confirms that thinking that LA can be systematically developed through lesson plans is inaccurate. Little's (1991) fourth misconception about autonomy is the belief that it is a single specific behaviour. Little (1991) confirms that even though autonomous learners could be recognised by their actions, autonomy can appear in different forms based on different factors, e.g., age, learning process, and current needs.

Little's (1991) fifth and last misconception is related to his previous misconception. He suggests a mistaken belief that autonomy is a steady state that some learners can achieve. A teacher may proudly state that all his or her students are autonomous, implying they are different from ordinary learners. However, the truth is that autonomy is not permanent and often challenging to achieve (Little, 1991). As Little argues, a very autonomous learner in one area might still lack autonomy in another.

Benson (2013) clarifies that learner engagement takes different degrees based on the unique characteristics of every learner and of every learning context, emphasising that being an autonomous learner is a matter of degree rather than a status, as a student might be autonomous in one dimension of LA and less autonomous, or maybe not at all, in another (Benson, 2016). Oxford (1999) likewise holds the same position, stating that autonomy is not a permanent state but a variable trait. Both perspectives align with Little (1991), as highlighted above, in identifying that LA is not a fixed state. All three perspectives emphasise how teachers could develop or discourage the development of LA.

To this end, Little's (1991) early work suggests that autonomy is (a) not synonymous with self-instruction, (b) not simply allowing learners to manage on their own, (c) not a teaching method, (d) not a single, easily defined behaviour, and (e) not a fixed state. Palfreyman and Benson (2019) argue that points (a) and (b) help distinguish 'autonomy' from 'independence.' Point (c) is critical, especially in the context of educational methods often being labelled as 'learning,' e.g., task-

based learning and blended learning (Palfreyman and Benson, 2019). Points (d) and (e) emphasise that LA can appear in various forms and levels across different learners and situations (Palfreyman and Benson, 2019).

It is worth mentioning that Little (1991) does not claim that autonomy does not refer to independence; he assumes that autonomy demonstrates a significant level of independence from others' control. However, he clarifies that the freedom associated with autonomy is never absolute; it is always conditional and limited. Little illustrates that as social beings, independence is always balanced by individuals' reliance on each other. The idea of LA suggests that the learner has incredible freedom. However, this freedom is not absolute, and autonomy to this end has a social dimension as interdependence. In other words, the development of LA is driven by a social-interactive process, which is crucial for effective interaction between teachers and students. (Little, 1991).

This discussion sheds light on the role of CPD in understanding teachers' LA misconceptions, as Little (1991) argues that recognising this helps to clear up many misunderstandings about autonomy. Thus, it is important for the educator to understand these misconceptions in order to address them if they appear during CPD (see Section 2.5). However, while this section presents the first form of constraint, the following section clarifies the other form of constraint. It provides the external factors that hinder the promotion of LA.

2.2.2.2   External

While the literature in the previous section acknowledges many internal constraints, it also confirms the existence of many external constraints (e.g., Harden and Laidlaw, 2021; Smith, 2003b; Trebbi, 2008). One significant external constraint is the institutional environment (Trebbi, 2008). Smith (2003 b) notes that many educational contexts do not inherently support LA. Lamb (2013) argues that the main reason for schools having static teaching practices is their reliance on textbooks, examinations, and the professionalism of their instructors. He argues that such stability mainly exists in developing countries and influences learners' sense of autonomy, as well as their independent learning and their use of English, and he calls for more research into this phenomenon.

Harden and Laidlaw (2021) discuss various elements that contribute to the learning contexts and the implications of these elements. The elements identified by Harden and Laidlaw (2021) collectively foster a complex learning context that supports or constrains student development. Harden and Laidlaw (2021) argue that the learning environment is multifaceted. It involves 1) the physical surroundings and facilities, 2) organisational culture and structure, 3) the education

program, 4) social dynamics, and 5) digital presence (Harden and Laidlaw, 2021). Harden and Laidlaw (2021) clarify these elements in detail:

Harden and Laidlaw (2021) explain that the physical environment can either facilitate or hinder learning. Factors such as seating, audiovisual facilities, classroom temperature, and noise levels all play a crucial role. Harden and Laidlaw (2021) add further illustrations about the layouts of the traditional lecture theatre and how they may constrain small group work, while creative use of space can support individualised and peer-to-peer learning.

Harden and Laidlaw (2021) argue that the culture of an educational institution impacts the learning context. In alignment with this, Borg and Alshumaimeri (2019) confirm that various socio-cultural, professional, and institutional factors influence teachers' pedagogical behaviour. Harden and Laidlaw (2021) continuously argue that culture can create either collaboration or competition among learners. To clarify, students in collaborative settings work together and have a sense of belonging, which is helpful in team-based learning situations. Teamwork and collaboration are essential learning outcomes; however, most educational organisations create competitive environments where competition is emphasised rather than collaboration. However, individual performance is emphasised and rewarded over group work (Harden and Laidlaw, 2021).

The culture can also be supportive or punitive, influencing how students deal with academic and personal issues, as Harden and Laidlaw (2021) argue. Harden and Laidlaw (2021) claim that students in the past suffered from a tough and intimidating educational environment, as they were left to cope with challenges on their own and sometimes felt humiliated. Harden and Laidlaw (2021) note that such harshness discourages learners from openly addressing their difficulties. According to Harden and Laidlaw (2021), the past approach is replaced with a new one that emphasises developing a supportive atmosphere where students feel secure and safe to express their concerns. Modern educational contexts prioritise psychological safety and provide reassurance and counselling to encourage a more open and constructive learning experience (Harden and Laidlaw, 2021).

The educational program is the third element that contributes to the learning environment and its implications, as highlighted by Harden and Laidlaw (2021). According to Harden and Laidlaw (2021), the curriculum's design and implementation significantly impact the learning environment, including the assessment methods. This is because assessment plays a critical role in the learning environment (Harden and Laidlaw, 2017, 2021) and contributes to the promotion of LA, as Palfreyman and Benson (2019) argue that assessment can either support or hinder autonomy depending on how it is integrated into the curriculum.

Formative assessment, which includes constructive feedback (Harden and Laidlaw, 2021) and reflective activities, can help students understand their learning goals and progress, fostering a sense of responsibility and self-direction (Öz, 2014). Formative assessment helps students identify the strengths and weaknesses of their work and push them toward their goals to achieve success in the learning process (Topping, 2003). Topping et al. (2000, p.150) assert that formative assessment can be beneficial 'if it yields rich and detailed qualitative feedback information about strengths and weaknesses, not merely a mark or a grade.' However, formative assessment is a kind of assessment that teachers could use to check their student's progress and understand how far they have mastered what they should learn.

The use of peer and self-assessment and learner portfolios, as suggested by Cotterall (2000), Little (2002), and Logan (2009), provides structures for students to reflect on their learning processes, encouraging autonomy. Peer and self-assessment, as Ndoye (2017) and Panadero and Alonso-Tapia (2013) argue, can also enhance self-regulation and learning because they enable learners to evaluate their work against pre-determined criteria. Peer and self-assessment both facilitate understanding of the course content and curriculum and explicitly and implicitly communicate the course requirements, which can help students meet the module's expectations (Keppell et al., 2006). It also helps students identify the characteristics of quality work and identify strengths and weaknesses of their work, pushing them to be active learners (Boud et al., 2015) who can direct and control their learning process (Boud and Falchikov, 1989). However, the summative assessment of autonomy remains contentious as it pressures learners and teachers to perform in a particular way (Palfreyman and Benson, 2019). Tassinari (2015) argues that while frameworks exist to evaluate autonomy, the focus should ideally be on qualitative, reflective data rather than objective assessment. This approach ensures that the assessment process itself supports the development of autonomy rather than merely measuring it, as would happen using standardised measures. However, aligning assessments with learning outcomes is still significant for meaningful evaluation.

While many educational contexts do not inherently support LA (Smith, 2003b), it could be argued that there will always be a certain flexibility that allows teachers' initiations. For instance, Kuchah's experience in Cameroon (Africa), as discussed by Kuchah and Smith (2011), illustrates that even within restricted educational systems, teachers can initiate changes towards more autonomous learning environments. This was obtained when Kuchah focused on the dynamic and interaction between him and his students playing a vital role in shaping his educational experience. He established trust and fostered effective communication, facilitating peer-to-peer teaching and learning and engaging passion. He recognised the significance of their commitment and expertise are essential elements of a conducive learning environment. Thus, Kuchah's shift

from traditional teaching to a more collaborative, student-centred approach demonstrates that teacher skills and determination can foster LA (see Section 2.3.2).

This section discusses the possible external constraints to promoting LA in language classrooms. This discussion is relevant to this study since the second research question focuses on exploring the constraints that hinder the promotion of LA in language classrooms. It also highlights the significance of considering the internal constraints first in CPD training, as this study argues that teachers could promote LA with any existing external challenges when they are aware of how to do so (see Section 2.5).

2.3 The Role of the Teacher and Their Assigned Role to Students

This section discusses the role teachers play in the promotion of LA. It clarifies that the focus of the teaching and learning process influences the role of the teacher and their assigned responsibilities to their students. This is highly relevant to this thesis as teachers were introduced to such teaching and learning focus and different teacher roles and responsibilities in relation to LA promotion during CPD. They were also introduced to how these roles impact their classroom types in general. For example, it emphasises how adopting specific roles, e.g., a facilitator, results in splitting the responsibility of the learning process between teachers and students, encouraging students to have a vital role in their learning process.

2.3.1 The Role of the Teacher

Teacher development within a teacher-led context towards any new teaching approach, particularly a pedagogy enabling active learning and autonomy, requires a shift of focus from the teacher to the learner (Dam, 2011; Harden and Laidlaw, 2021). This is because the traditional classroom's teaching and learning process has a different focus than in the learner-centred classroom. For example, the traditional classroom focuses on teaching rather than learning (Dam, 2011). In traditional classrooms, as illustrated by Dam (2011, pp.43-44), teachers ask themselves, 'How do I do my best teach this or that?' however, teachers in learner-center directed classes ask themselves another question, which is 'how do I best support my learners in learning this or that?' This is a shift of focus from a focus on teaching to a focus on learning (Dam, 2011), or as Harden and Laidlaw (2021) termed it, from the teacher to the learner.

Shifting focus from the teacher to the learner involves transitioning the teacher's role from an authoritative figure, typical of teacher-led classrooms, to that of a facilitator of learning (Harden and Laidlaw, 2021), from being a 'sage on the stage' to a 'guide on the side' (King, 1993, p.30). Harden and Laidlaw (2021, p.73) note that this is a 'shift in power.' This transition enables teachers

to delegate some of their responsibilities, empowering learners to take them on. Little (1995, p.179) emphasises the role of teachers' knowledge in which he assures the need for teachers to determine 'whether and to what extent it is possible for the learners to determine their own learning objectives, select their own learning materials and contribute to the assessment of their learning progress.'

Dam (2011) argues that teachers can cultivate LA by transitioning from a teacher-directed teaching environment to a more learner-directed learning setting. She outlines a model with specific steps for making this shift. These steps include teachers reflecting on past experiences, planning future actions, implementing these plans, and evaluating the outcomes, eventually leading to a collaborative relationship between teachers and students.

The literature proposes various terms for the role of the teacher in autonomous learning: facilitator, counsellor, consultant, resource, advisor, helper, coordinator, and knower (Benson, 2013). This is very different from having full authority, as in a traditional classroom, where the teacher is the sole source of knowledge (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2013). Voller (1997), in a detailed review of the literature, suggests that in autonomous learning, the role of the teacher is reduced to psycho-social and technical support. He describes three possible roles for the teacher: facilitator, counsellor, and resource manager. Alonazi (2017) describes four possible roles: facilitator, counsellor, resource, and manager. A more recent study proposes that teachers incorporate eight roles: (a) information and coach, (b) facilitator of learning and mentor, (c) curriculum developer and implementer, (d) assessor and diagnostician, (e) role model, (f) manager and leader, (g) scholar and researcher, and, finally, (h) professional (Harden and Lilley, 2018). Harden and Lilley's (2018) list of roles emphasises the role of the teacher as a knowledge provider in learner-centred classrooms; however, they demonstrate that while this is not the main and sole role, it is still essential and cannot be neglected.

These three references, Voller (1997), Alonazi (2017), and Harden and Lilley (2018), provide different definitions for each role, particularly the role of the facilitator, counsellor, and resource manager, which the research reported in this thesis focused on during the provided CPD workshops, as explained in detail in the methodology (see Section 3.5). A facilitator is defined by Voller (1997) as a teacher who encourages students and provides support. While Voller does not elaborate on what kind of encouragement and support students could be provided, Alonazi (2017) provides more detailed responsibilities for such a role. Alonazi (2017, p.189) explains the facilitator role of the teacher as being one who helps students to 'set up their own learning objectives, select their learning materials, evaluate their own learning and progress, and reflect on their learning.' Harden and Lilley (2018) combined the facilitator role with a mentor and provided a close relationship to Vollers' definition, which they define as teacher support to

learners when difficulties occur. However, they clarify four areas for teachers to facilitate learning to learners: 1) clarifying learning outcomes and demonstrating what has to be learned, 2) identifying the appropriate learning opportunities, 3) assuring that learning takes place effectively and efficiently, and 4) engaging the students in the learning process. With close attention and analysis to this role, it could be argued that learners are involved with what they learn, as the learning process is an interactive intellectual process in which learning could be analysed and criticised rather than memorised as receptive knowledge to be produced exactly as received, in which the more accurate reproduction the student can produce, the more perfection has been attained.

A counsellor is defined by Voller (1997) and Alonazi (2017). While Voller sheds light on how it functions, with the focus on one-on-one interaction, Alonazi (2017, p.190) defines the role of the teacher as a counsellor as the one who makes the students 'aware of the skills and strategies [they] need to learn by their own,' is able to identify 'psychological problems that inhibit students progress,' has 'dialogues with students to find solutions for their learning difficulties,' encourages 'students to make study plans,' and is 'positive and supportive when giving feedback,' giving a definition that focuses on teachers' duties rather than on how counselling occurs in practice. Harden and Lilley (2018) provided different terms to the counsellor but with similar duties toward their learners' progression. They term this role 'assessor and diagnostician' (p.29). This role, as Harden and Lilley (2018, p.29), includes the 'provision of appropriate feedback to students, identifying any gaps and deficiencies in their learning.'

The third role is termed and interpreted differently by these authors. Voller (1997) combines 'resource' with 'manager' and defines the resource manager as the teacher who is a source of knowledge and expertise. Alonazi (2017) divides this role into two distinct roles of the teacher: the resource and the manager. A resource is defined as one who is 'suggesting tools and techniques for self-assessment, using computer-based learning materials, selecting a website, videos or online dictionaries that motivate students to use the target language outside the classroom, encouraging students to read English books, magazine and newspapers outside the classroom, and encouraging students to study with their peers' (Alonazi, 2017, p.191). Alonazi (2017, p.192) defines the role of the teacher as a manager as the one who is 'organizing different kinds of games and activities in the classroom, providing clear instructions of the task assigned to the students, giving learners opportunities to tell their opinions in the classroom management, and giving learners opportunities to tell their opinions in the classroom activities.' Harden and Lilley (2018, p.28) also divide this role into 'information provider and coach' and 'manager and leader.' The former is defined as the one who provides information. At the same time, the latter is related to management and leadership, in which teachers are responsible for dealing with changes that

occur professionally. According to Voller's (1997) and Harden and Lilley's (2018) definitions, a teacher as a knowledge provider is a main role that cannot be marginalised.

However, if the teacher's role changes from carrying full authority in the classroom to, for example, being a facilitator or a resource manager, the learner's role will also be influenced by such a change, as the nature of the teacher-student interaction will be different, depending on the particular method of teaching followed (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2013). Any transformation in the teacher's role in the classroom will coincide with a transformation in the students' roles. Engaging learners in several aspects of classroom management is an essential step as the teachers' involvement in contextual change will not inevitably involve the transfer of ownership for classroom work to students (Canagarajah, [2002] as cited in Smith, 2003b). The following section provides further discussion on the influence of the teacher's role on students' roles.

This section discussed how the focus of a teaching approach influences a teacher's role. The following section clarifies how the teacher's role influences students' learning process. It identifies that even though students appear passive, waiting to be spoon-fed, as stated extensively in the research literature (e.g., Alrabai, 2017a; Borg and Al-Busaidi, 2012; Manzano Vázquez, 2020; Saad, 2024), this passivity should not be attributed to the learners themselves, but rather to the lack of an effective autonomous learning approach (Smith, 2003b).

2.3.2 The Assigned Roles to Students

In many educational settings, learners may appear reluctant, at least initially, to take on more authority within classroom learning (Smith, 2003b). Studies promote different views, as evident in Borg and Al-Busaidi's (2012) work on learners' learning demotivation. Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012) indicate that learners resist changing their passive roles, and teachers indicate that learners' passive attitude is one of the constraints that hinders them from fostering LA. While the results of Borg and Al-busaidi's (2012) work show teachers' perspective excluding their responsibility from the development of LA, Sinclair (2000) suggests that students' capacity and willingness to take responsibility for their own learning is not necessarily innate. Benson (2013), from a slightly different perspective, argues that a degree of autonomy is a natural attribute of all humans, as learners are autonomous learners by default (Little et al., 2017). This suggests that while students' ability to take responsibility in learning might need to be cultivated, the potential for autonomy exists within individuals and can be developed over time.

However, Smith (2003b) and Little et al. (2017) emphasise that if learners do not respond well to a particular technique for building autonomy, it is not sufficient to conclude that they lack the desire for autonomy or that the aims of autonomy are unsuitable. The teaching approach may be

criticised rather than the students or the validity of autonomy itself (Smith, 2003b). Smith (2003b) asserts that if one technique for developing LA does not work well in a non-Western classroom, other techniques may be more appropriate. However, as with any educational intervention, suitable methods must also be effective in moving students forward rather than simply allowing them to remain with their existing talents, thoughts, and behaviours (Smith, 2003b).

Fives and Buehl (2016) assert that facilitating students' learning process is part of the teacher's responsibility. They confirm the argument of this study that teachers are the ones best able to influence learners' behaviours and motivate them to give up their passive positions. Jiménez and Vieira (2015, p.vii) mention that learners seldom have much choice 'other than becoming subservient to the system [rather] than active creators of the world.'

Thus, learners respond to the teaching approach and teachers are encouraged to find different ways to motivate learners to become engaged. Such influence of teachers' changing actions on learners' attitudes was evident in two examples, Dam and Kuchah, who bring further evidence on the literature that teachers' change in their teaching strategies could develop learners' sense of autonomy, as detailed below. Lamb (2013) also asserts that he found that young learners are eager and increasingly desire to learn English during his teaching experience in Indonesia; he related this enthusiasm to technology, which provides a novel means for accessing language learning. Lamb's (2013) study provides further evidence of the role that teaching methods play in supporting LA, as Smith (2003b) argues.

To clarify, in a teacher-centred approach, in which the teacher is the authoritative figure, the teacher is primarily responsible for learning (Harden and Laidlaw, 2021; Dam, 2011). The teacher selects the teaching methods to achieve particular learning outcomes, while the curriculum is designed to be adaptable for students (Harden and Laidlaw, 2021). In this model, the teacher delivers the content, while students are anticipated to reflect and formulate their understanding (Harden and Laidlaw, 2021).

This is not what teachers adopting a learner-centred approach normally do (Harden and Laidlaw, 2021). In this approach, teachers are encouraged to motivate students to take ownership of their learning, thereby transforming them into facilitators of learning (Harden and Laidlaw, 2021). This approach prioritises the distribution of authority between teachers and students (Harden and Laidlaw, 2021). Teachers in student-centred learning prioritise placing students at the centre of the educational process, emphasising their accountability for their learning. Learners are involved in setting their own goals, monitoring their progress, and adjusting their learning strategies when necessary. In this context, students are seen as partners in their learning process, actively participating in the curriculum and learning activities (Harden and Laidlaw, 2021).

In this approach, learning is customised to meet students' specific needs, focusing on what is learned, how and when, the learning environment, and the individuals engaged in the process (Harden and Laidlaw, 2021). By customising the learning experience, education becomes more relevant and engaging for each student (Harden and Laidlaw, 2021). In such a context, student engagement is a core component (Harden and Laidlaw, 2021). Learners are encouraged to be actively engaged in decision-making about their learning (Harden and Laidlaw, 2021). Smith (2003b) highlights that the involvement of learners in decision-making could help in understanding their preferences, as such involvement enables teachers to understand their students' appropriation or rejection of the approach or parts of it. Smith et al. (2018) emphasise that such a practice allows individuals to express their voices and engage with their agency within an autonomy paradigm.

This approach also connects the subject matter to the student's learning experiences for students' active involvement in their learning process (Harden and Laidlaw, 2021). This participation fosters a sense of belonging and enhances the overall educational experience, both academically and socially. Smith (2003b) also asserts this point by clarifying that autonomy, in this approach, can be developed culturally and contextually as it is elicited from the students and is based on what they brought to the classroom. They must be involved in accepting or rejecting the opportunities offered.

Student engagement also includes their involvement in feedback techniques (Harden and Laidlaw, 2021, p.77) to access students' voices in a suitable and context-sensitive manner (Smith et al., 2018). Smith et al. (2018) emphasise how students' feedback regarding what constitutes good teaching practice often contradicts what formal education provides and what learners want or need. Hamid and Baldauf (2011) and Smith et al. (2018) clarify that this can help teachers improve their understanding of learners, enabling the formulation of principles for practice.

Teachers with such an educational goal encourage continuous negotiations with students whenever possible. Constantly negotiating classroom arrangements with students can provide valuable evidence of what matches their interests and needs and can then be applied (Smith, 2003b). Continual negotiation and reflection on classroom arrangements and settings can lead to the students determining, by themselves, the nature of classroom-appropriate activities, as was the case in Dam's experience with a group of mixed-ability students (Smith, 2006) and Kuchah's difficult experience with limited supportive educational resources in Africa (Kuchah and Smith, 2011).

Kuchah and Dam, in these two different contexts, took their first steps towards autonomy by considering their learners' voices and desires and engaging them in decision-making (Smith, 2006; Kuchah and Smith, 2011). Both teachers (Dam and Kuchah) involved their learners in

teaching and learning by valuing their ideas, interests, and needs. After many failed attempts, they shifted their students' roles from passive to active during class. Their success was established through negotiation with their students based on agreements between the teachers and students. The collective efforts between the teachers and students demonstrate the practical value of Dam and Kuchah's experiences. Both teachers and their students were able to develop autonomous learning in the classroom, overcoming challenges they encountered through the use of LA as a rescue solution. Smith et al. (2018) claim that in some circumstances, a pedagogy of autonomy has emerged as a 'rescue solution.' They clarify that although LA has European origins, it may have particular relevance in developing countries and less well-resourced contexts. This is exactly what happened with Kuchah's class, in which he encountered many challenges, including learners' passive attitude towards learning, a huge number of learners in a class that did not suit them, while some students were not able to be in the class but outside the classroom, listening to the lesson through windows, and limited resources including the availability of textbooks (see Kuchah and Smith, 2011). However, Kuchah was able to create an autonomous learning environment within the existence of challenging circumstances.

Thus, this highlights a teacher's role in shaping the classroom dynamic, particularly their students' learning attitude. Dam (2011) further elaborates in this regard, clarifying that the teacher's role in a context with students' passive attitude toward learning is two-sided. First, teachers must motivate learners to take responsibility for planning, executing, and evaluating their learning. Second, they must support learners in developing the necessary skills.

However, it has been observed that teachers often struggle with relinquishing control and handing over responsibility to the learners, despite learners generally finding it easier to take on this responsibility. This challenge indicates a broader issue: many teachers may lack the crucial skills to successfully transition to a learner-centred environment. Harden and Laidlaw (2012) assert that a successful teacher must have the necessary technical skills and a deep understanding of fundamental educational principles.

In line with this, Dam (2011) outlines several critical principles for fostering LA. The first principle emphasises allowing learners to make choices, facilitating reflection, increasing awareness of the learning process, and enhancing learners' sense of responsibility and self-confidence. The second principle is to provide clear guidelines for learners, as they are not entirely free to choose their activities within an institutional setting and must follow curricular guidelines. The third principle shifts the focus from teaching to learning. The fourth principle involves creating an authentic environment in the language classroom, where ongoing communication between the teacher and learners is authentic and reflective of real-life situations. Finally, Dam emphasises

the importance of engaging learners in evaluation, reflection, and assessment and providing the appropriate tools to participate in these processes effectively.

This comprehensive understanding enables teachers to adjust their teaching methods to fit their unique situations, address issues as they arise, and adapt to necessary changes. Without this foundational knowledge, teachers may struggle to foster LA effectively. As a result, a lack of such skills and knowledge may cause a potential misalignment between teachers' and institutions' educational purposes, as highlighted by Pontefract (2016). In other words, conflicts may arise if a teacher views their role mainly as an information provider while the institution expects them to facilitate a more student-centred learning context (Harden and Lilley, 2018). Harden and Lilley (2018) further emphasise that such misalignments can create significant challenges in promoting autonomy.

Harden and Laidlaw (2012) also emphasise that teachers are responsible for staying informed about the latest teaching techniques and sharing their experiences and knowledge with colleagues. Maintaining professionalism and engaging in teaching scholarship are crucial aspects of a teacher's role (Harden and Laidlaw, 2012). This commitment to continuous professional growth allows teachers to incorporate new strategies that enhance LA and meet the changing needs of their students. This point aligns with what has been discussed throughout this section regarding teachers' roles, highlighting the importance of teachers updating their knowledge. Doing so can enhance their skills, which is crucial for effectively promoting LA.

This section highlights the central role teachers play in shaping the development of learner autonomy. The teacher's behaviour, whether with the whole authority or facilitative, sets the tone for student engagement and influences how responsibility for learning is shared. The roles assigned to students, either as passive recipients or active participants, further determine their sense of agency and independence within the classroom. Teachers who are aware of this knowledge could adopt strategies that actively engage learners, fostering autonomy and reducing passivity.

The following section shows teacher autonomy could be developed through CPD as teachers' knowledge and skills could be developed to foster LA in language classrooms, emphasising teachers' dual roles: outside their classrooms (in terms of their willingness to educate themselves and learn) and inside them (in terms of their capacity to promote LA), for effective LA pedagogy in language classrooms.

2.4   Teacher Autonomy: Teacher as Learner

The literature offers various definitions of teacher autonomy, each of which focuses on different aspects. The most common interpretation of the term is that it means being free from the control of others (Benson, 2000). Benson's definition focuses on choice as an essential element. However, such an interpretation is unlikely to be the reality for teachers who are surrounded by restrictions such as curricula, school regulations, and administrative responsibilities. Trebbi (2008) discusses the concept of freedom and its link to autonomy and argues, from a philosophical perspective, that we are never entirely free from constraints because we live in social environments.

Little (1995) offers another definition of teacher autonomy. He defines autonomous teachers as those with 'a strong sense of personal responsibility for their teaching, exercising via continuous reflection and analysis ... affective and cognitive control of the teaching processes' (1995, p.179). Tort-Moloney (1997, p.51) defines an autonomous teacher as 'one who is aware of why, when, where and how pedagogical skills can be acquired in the self-conscious awareness of teaching practice itself.' A further focus is introduced by Palfreyman and Benson (2019) in their definition of teacher autonomy, which focuses on teaching strategies; they linked teachers' autonomy to their ability to address learners' needs and encouraged teachers to serve as role models for the desired active engagement in students.

These three definitions emphasise that teachers are responsible for their development and need to be prepared to develop professionally and monitor their actions. In contrast, Thavenius (1999, p.160) emphasises that learners need to become less dependent on their teachers and more responsible for their learning processes. He argues that autonomous teachers are those who are willing 'to help their students take responsibility for their learning.' This definition supports the link in the literature between teacher autonomy and learner autonomy (Dam, 2003; Lamb, 2008; Little, 1995, 2000; McGrath, 2000) while not neglecting that the previous definitions implicitly do.

However, Smith's (2003a, p.5) definition of teacher autonomy refers to 'teacher-learner autonomy,' defining it as 'the ability to develop [the] appropriate skills, knowledge and attitudes for oneself as a teacher, in cooperation with others' (Smith, 2003a, p.1; 2003c, p.1). Smith (2003a) focuses on teachers as learners, and while not neglecting the other dimensions (e.g., being free from the control of others), the primary focus is on their professional development. Smith's concept of 'teachers as learners' makes a significant contribution to the field, according to which teachers are encouraged to continuously reflect on and improve their skills as they seek improved learning outcomes for their learners.

Smith's (2003a) definition aligns with those of Little (1995), Tort-Moloney (1997), and Palfreyman and Benson (2019), as all four place greater emphasis on teachers' knowledge and skills. However, Smith also sheds light on the role of collaborative working and introduces a slightly different interpretation of teacher autonomy by implying a relationship between teacher autonomy and collaboration (Vangrieken et al., 2017). This is unlike most definitions of teacher autonomy, for example, the definitions of Benson (2000), Little (1995), Tort-Moloney (1997), Palfreyman and Benson (2019), and Thavenius (1999), which exclude collaborative working, as, by definition, autonomy is linked to individual work and independence (Vangrieken et al., 2017).

In this context, all definitions of teacher autonomy that have been previously articulated are relevant. For example, Smith (2003a; 2003c) states that teachers are encouraged to improve their abilities and knowledge. Smith emphasises the importance of this development through collaboration with others, which may include engaging in training programs that specifically aim to encourage LA and teach learners how to learn. Training programs can include different notions of autonomy. For example, teachers who voluntarily participate in these programs, particularly in encouraging discussions and reflections, demonstrate significant personal accountability for their learning and teaching. They actively analyse and reflect upon their teaching practice to determine the specific circumstances, reasons, and methods for acquiring pedagogical abilities. As a result, individuals assume responsibility for their professional growth and oversee their actions with teacher autonomy, as defined by Little (1995) and Tort-Moloney (1997). In addition, teachers with advanced knowledge and abilities can assist their students in assuming responsibility for their learning, as Thavenius (1999) emphasised, based on their needs and interests (Palfreyman and Benson, 2019). Similarly, Benson (2000) proposed that these teachers can function autonomously without relying on external supervision. Nevertheless, this autonomy is not unrestricted, but choices can be made based on specific instructional methods, including their selective tools, classroom organisation, communication, types of activities, methods of evaluations, and so on.

The involvement of teachers as learners in the process of 'autonomisation,' as termed by Smith (2003b) and defined as feeling more powerful in directing their actions, develops teachers' autonomy and provides a beneficial source of teaching-related learning (Smith, 2003 b). As Vieira (1999) observes, in this kind of practice, teaching is transformed into a type of research, while research is transformed into a teaching method. Adopting this approach can thus serve as an essential foundation for constructing an appropriate application of autonomy for a particular class, as every classroom is unique (Smith, 2003b).

This brief explanation of teacher autonomy emphasises two critical processes in promoting LA. The first process involves teachers' responsibility for continuous learning and professional

development. The second process considers transmitting their newly acquired knowledge and skills to facilitate student learning. To this end, this study operationalises teacher autonomy in terms of two roles: first, teachers as learners updating their own knowledge and skills, and second, teachers as transmitters of their updated knowledge and skills to their learners. The first process could be defined as the role of an autonomous teacher outside the classroom, and the second is the role of an autonomous teacher inside the classroom. These dual roles held by the teacher, inside and outside the classroom, contribute to the field, providing a new perspective on the definition of teacher autonomy and demonstrating the link between teacher autonomy and teachers' efforts to foster LA. It also suggests that these dual roles are interconnected, as the former influences the latter.

While this section emphasises the role of gaining knowledge for effective teaching pedagogy, the following section highlights teachers' need to be equipped with particular knowledge and skills through CPD. It clarifies the need for a specific CPD that does not confront their beliefs and attitudes but values their ideas and feelings, as teacher beliefs influence their behaviour. The following section also highlights considering teachers' knowledge before any training to provide suitable input in the CPD. It also clarifies the significant role of enabling teachers' reflections and how this helps to shape teachers' beliefs that could accept or reject a certain presented knowledge to enhance the development of LA.

2.5 The Impact of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) on Teachers' Knowledge and Beliefs, Enabling Reflections for Effective LA Pedagogy

Teaching is a professional action that must be built upon knowledge, beliefs, and values (Solomon and Tresman, 1999). Therefore, it is important to highlight that training programmes are encouraged to consider these areas, as the impact of these programmes on teachers' knowledge, beliefs and values attached to beliefs is significant (Solomon and Tresman, 1999). This is not to neglect the importance of enabling teachers' reflections through CPD, as the reflective process helps them adapt new knowledge (Solomon and Tresman, 1999). Therefore, CPD can be a powerful catalyst for changes in teachers' beliefs and practices about the presented content and beyond the immediate content provided. This combination also helps teachers make informed professional judgments, further developing their identity and shaping their beliefs about their role and effectiveness (Solomon and Tresman, 1999).

This section is divided into four subsections. The first is about teachers' knowledge, how it is defined, the type of knowledge teachers need for effective LA pedagogy, and the impact of CPD on teachers' knowledge through CPD. It also suggests considering teachers' current knowledge

to provide appropriate content to them during CPD for an effective impact on their knowledge and pedagogy of LA. The second section concerns teachers' beliefs, how challenging and possible they are subject to change, and what shapes them. The third section is about the role of enabling teachers' reflections on their core beliefs and values and how they are helpful in shaping their beliefs and values. Finally, section four highlights how teachers' knowledge about the promotion of LA through CPD supports the promotion of LA in teacher practice.

2.5.1   Teacher Knowledge

Richardson (1996) defines knowledge as involving understanding subject matter and pedagogy. This includes content knowledge (CK), also called received knowledge (Wallace, 1991) and defined as the knowledge of the subject being taught, and pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), also termed experiential knowledge (Wallace, 1991), classified as understanding how to teach the subject effectively. As Richardson (1996) noted, these two types of knowledge are usually acquired through formal education and training and influence teaching practices and instructional decisions. By introducing new content through CPD, teachers' knowledge could be enhanced (Solomon and Tresman, 1999). Solomon and Tresman (1999) argue that successful CPD should focus on acquiring new knowledge and evaluating its application in the classroom. However, Richardson (1996) argues that practical knowledge gained through experience is more context-specific, involving the whole person rather than solely mental knowledge.

Solomon and Tresman (1999) argue that CPD improves teachers' practices by fostering better teaching methods and boosting confidence. Teachers who engage in CPD report increased confidence in their teaching, even in areas not directly covered by the course (Solomon and Tresman, 1999). This highlights how CPD shapes both practical skills and broader professional beliefs (see 2.5.2). Solomon and Tresman (1999) also note that even minimal input of new content can lead to significant changes in teaching practices, with teachers experiencing shifts in their perceptions and approaches to teaching.

Hiebert et al. (2002, p.3) argue, '[To] improve classroom teaching in a steady, lasting way, the teaching profession needs a knowledge base that grows and improves.' As Hiebert et al. (2002) emphasise, building a helpful knowledge base for teaching begins with practitioners' knowledge, as Manzano Vázquez (2018b, p.243) highlights that teacher education cannot be merely based on 'knowledge transmission,' as widely acknowledged. Hiebert et al. (2002) argue that starting with the teachers' knowledge as a base could have better results in improving classroom practice than relying on the theoretical insights preserved in academic research, even though researchers continually strive to make these findings applicable. Hiebert et al. (2002, p.3) clarify that several

factors are required before a proper knowledge base can be gathered and 'transformed into a professional knowledge base for teaching.'

First, Hiebert et al. (2002) claim that the knowledge used by teachers, which some call 'craft' knowledge, is totally different from that provided by educational researchers. They claim that it is differentiated by its directness and contextual depth rather than by its generalisability and independence. Bridging the gap between established research knowledge and teachers' practices, as Hiebert et al. (2002) emphasise, is an intrinsically complex, if not intractable, challenge. However, they highlight the value of craft knowledge. Second, Hiebert et al. (2002) assert that professional information must be made public and represented in a way that allows it to be acquired and shared with other colleagues while constantly validating and developing it. From this perspective, shared knowledge is emphasised, which could be regarded as the knowledge base that grows and develops, as Hiebert et al. (2002) mentioned. The shared knowledge could be achieved during CPD that included teachers from different contexts through online meetings, as this study did (see Chapter 3, Section 3.4 and 3.6 for further details in this regard).

This section suggested the importance of considering teachers' current knowledge before training that is not below or too far from their understanding. In the following section, I discuss how teachers' beliefs influence and guide their practices. I also clarify how beliefs lead to accept or reject certain types of knowledge that might presented by the CPD. The section also clarifies that beliefs are complex to change but change is possible.

2.5.2   Teacher Beliefs

It has been argued that teachers' beliefs strongly influence their instructional behaviours (Borg, 2001, 2003; Richardson, 1996; Skott, 2014), development (Buehl and Beck, 2015), and, as a result, the opportunities for learners to learn since beliefs are deeply rooted (Phipps and Borg, 2007; St John and Sercu, 2007) due to the value dimension attached to them (Borg, 2001). The literature provides multiple distinctions between beliefs and other concepts complicating what constitutes a belief, attitude, perception, or value. However, Pajares (1992) suggests that concepts such as attitudes, values, preconceptions, theories, and images are fundamentally different forms of beliefs. From this perspective, this study refers to any of these concepts as beliefs or attitudes, interchangeably.

Beliefs have been defined by Richardson (1996) as psychological constructs that present an individual's perceptions, assumptions, or propositions about the universe. The individual holds these beliefs as true, remaining stable and resistant to change. Such generalisation is avoided by Kagan (1992), who highlights that some beliefs are incredibly resilient and resistant to change. In

alignment with Kagan, Rokeach (1968) specified that more central beliefs are more difficult to change.

Based on The Cognitive Dissonance Theory, initially proposed by Leon Festinger in 1957, when individuals hold two or more conflicting cognitions, such as beliefs or attitudes, they experience psychological discomfort, known as dissonance. This discomfort motivates them to reduce the dissonance, resulting in the avoidance of information that is likely to increase cognitive dissonance. The degree of dissonance is closely associated with the level of pressure that reduces dissonance.

Harmon-Jones and Mills (2019) review several paradigms used in dissonance research. One is the belief-disconfirmation paradigm, in which dissonance appears when individuals encounter certain information that contradicts their beliefs. Harmon-Jones and Mills (2019) explain that to reduce dissonance, individuals might refuse or reject the disconfirming information, seek support for their original belief, or try to convince others of their faith.

It is, therefore, essential to understand the roots of teachers' beliefs, which have been shaped over the years by different sources. For example, childhood memories affect teachers' practices, and Kennedy (1991, p.16) mentions that new teachers will 'teach as they were taught.' However, coming with a different perspective, St John and Sercu (2007) argue that the feedback teachers receive when attempting a new activity or adopting a new strategy will feed into their assumptions about what constitutes good teaching.

The two perspectives highlight two sources that shape teachers' beliefs and influence their teaching practices, both of which relate to the teacher's experience, first as a learner (Borg, 2003) and then as a teacher (St John and Sercu, 2007). These two sources carry the same value in shaping teaching practice. However, St John and Sercu's (2007) explanation indicates that if teachers try new strategies that work successfully, they will be added to their belief systems as effective practice. However, it could be argued that what makes beliefs subject to change is clear evidence that the teachers themselves witness when received from learners as positive feedback on their new pedagogy. This draws attention to the collective efforts of teachers and students, as a teacher could notice several practices that work well for them and their students.

The synthesis of these perspectives provides a compelling argument for the fact that change in teachers' beliefs is possible. On the one hand, acknowledging the resilience of certain beliefs (Kagan, 1992) provides a realistic perspective for understanding the difficulties raised. On the other hand, recognising the dynamic and flexible nature of other beliefs (Jiménez and Vieira, 2015; Solomon and Tresman, 1999; Thompson, 1992) introduces an optimistic vision to this understanding. This means that, despite the difficulty of changing beliefs (Kagan, 1992; Phipps

and Borg, 2007; Richardson,1996; Rokeach, 1968; St John and Sercu, 2007) that 'guide behaviours' (Pajares, 1992, p.315), change is possible.

Solomon and Tresman (1999) further noted the role of CPD in influencing teachers' beliefs and practices. Solomon and Tresman (1999) argue that CPD impacts teachers' beliefs by encouraging reflection and value alignment. Through reflection, teachers can connect their actions to their core beliefs and values, strengthening their professional identity (further details about the role of teachers' reflection on their practice are mentioned in Section 2.5.3).

Transformative learning theory confirms such possible change. The concept of transformative learning was introduced by Jack Mezirow in 1978 through his article titled, 'Perspective Transformation,' published in *Adult Education Quarterly*. Mezirow emphasises a critical perspective of adult learning, enabling individuals to recognise and reevaluate the assumptions and expectations that shape their attitudes, emotions, and actions. Mezirow was influenced by Paulo Freire, Thomas Kuhn, and Roger Gould's works and inspired by his wife's transformative educational experience. Drawing on these, Mezirow's concept assures that learning can foster significant identity changes. Transformative learning is shifting problematic frames of reference, such as mindsets, habits of mind, and meaning perspectives, into inclusive, cautious, open, reflective, and adaptable ones. These improved frames of reference are shaped by culture and language, influencing perception, cognition, and emotions. This theory aims to help individuals reassess their underlying assumptions and expectations about thinking, feeling, and acting.

Mezirow (2018, p.94) suggests two types of transformation: 'epochal' (sudden significant changes) and 'cumulative' (gradual insight leading to a shift in views and habits). The process involves phases such as experiencing a disorienting dilemma, self-examination, critical assessment of assumptions, exploring new roles, planning, acquiring knowledge, trying out new roles, and reintegrating them (Mezirow, 2018). A key component of transformative learning is the practice of critical reflection. This reflection is crucial for taking action based on transformed perspectives and continuously reevaluating these perspectives based on new evidence.

Despite the significance of this theory, it has faced criticism for underplaying the roles of emotion, intuition, and imagination e.g., their influence in the transformation process. These elements are vital for initiating and navigating transformations, often occurring unconsciously. Additionally, critics highlight the need for the theory to consider significant contextual factors such as ideology, culture, power, dynamics, and social differences like race, class, and gender. Transformative learning should focus on social action, advocating for modifications to oppressive practices and fostering reflective discourse crucial for active participation in a democracy.

In practice, transformative learning has been integrated into graduate adult education programs, such as the Adult Education Guided Independent Study at Teachers College and Columbia University in New York (Mezirow, 2018). Mezirow (2018) reports that critical self-reflection, discourse, and the creation of learning communities are embedded in this programme. Universal aspects of adult learning, such as seeking meaning in experiences, self-awareness, rational reasoning, and critical reflection, are central to transformative learning (Mezirow, 2008). These elements can be enhanced by cultural and contextual factors, emphasising teaching adults to think critically and transform their frames of reference (Mezirow, 2018).

Finally, Mezirow's transformative learning theory provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how adults can critically reevaluate and transform their assumptions and perspectives. Despite critiques and areas for further development, particularly regarding emotion and context, the theory offers valuable insights into adult learning and personal growth.

While this section clarifies the role of teachers' beliefs in their practices, it highlights two different theories. One shows how participants may reject certain presented content, which confirms that beliefs are hard to change, while the second clarifies that change is possible. Therefore, this encourages this thesis to consider teachers' beliefs during CPD (see Section 2.8 for further details). The following clarifies the significance of enabling teachers' reflections while CPD is in progress. It discusses that teachers' reflections help in shaping their beliefs and, therefore, their teaching practices.

2.5.3   Teacher Reflections

Reflection is an essential component of professional development (Nagai et al., 2020). Nagai et al. (2020) clarify that reflective practice around teacher autonomy results in new insights into teachers' beliefs about their teaching and teaching methods. It helps teachers become more critical of their teaching and learning and adopt new positions that challenge their personal beliefs (Richards et al., 1994). Richards (1995) argues that a reflective approach to teaching necessitates a shift in how teachers think about teaching and their position in the process.

Smith (2003b) points out how teachers' reflections also bring provisional local insights, which may be considered necessary prerequisites for creating contextually appropriate interventions. As Smith (2003b) clarifies, such 'insider' insights are typically based on what learners have already demonstrated of themselves within the limits of present classroom setups. From this perspective, the teachers can generate suitable local principles, providing acceptable development of methods based on local settings (Smith, 2003b).

Even though reflective teaching is valuable for enhancing teachers' teaching practices, it has some limitations, since writing or recording a reflection can be time-consuming. However, reflective analysis is like any other form of self-inquiry, as it is regarded as a valuable tool for teachers' self-evaluation and professional growth (Richards, 1995). Reflective analysis enables teachers to 'examine teaching in a way that is unavailable through other means' (Richards et al., 1994, p.8).

According to Nagai et al. (2020), reflective practice has three stages: self-reflection, critical evaluation, and action, all of which are necessary for improving teachers' self-directed learning and teaching capacity. They further clarify these stages. In the first stage, as they explain, teachers reflect on their existing didactic skills and knowledge, as well as on their teaching practice and the implicit assumptions that underpin it. Practitioners become more aware of their didactic knowledge, skills, and teaching skills towards the end of this first stage. The outcome is the foundation for the second stage of reflective practice. As Nagai et al. (2020) illustrate, the second stage involves critical inquiry. In this stage, the authors proposed that teachers must critically assess and examine the results of the first stage of their self-reflection from several viewpoints, such as students' individual needs, course objectives, and curricular goals. Nagai et al. (2020) demonstrate that teachers use critical inquiry to evaluate the strengths and shortcomings in their knowledge and teaching practice, recognising particular needs, areas they need to learn more about, and teaching modifications that should be implemented. Teachers, based on Nagai et al.'s (2020) clarification, should inquire critically about their teaching theories, learners' needs, and instructional objectives. They further highlight that dialogical discussions with fellow student teachers, colleagues, mentors, and professors can help students practice critical reflection more successfully. Nagai et al. (2020) argue that teachers become clear targets of critique when they allow their expertise, teaching practice, and personal theory to lapse. By the end of this stage, teachers become far more aware of their education and their instruction's strengths and limitations, recognising particular areas that still need to be learned and improvements that need to be addressed in their teaching, both of which prompt action in the following step (Nagai et al., 2020).

In the final step, as Nagai et al. (2020) explain, the teachers create a clear plan for carrying out their self-directed teacher learning and teaching. In self-directed learning, as the authors demonstrate, practitioners determine what needs to be learned, referencing the second stage of the reflective process and considering appropriate learning materials. They then determine when and how they will study. In self-directed teaching, as Nagai et al. (2020) argue, practitioners determine what should be altered and why. They set specific goals and consider how to modify their teaching approaches to attain those aims. They then develop and conduct a concrete plan. At this point, Nagai et al. (2020) clarify that teachers should be free from external control to take

charge of their learning and teaching. However, considering teachers' busy schedules when teaching, assessing, preparing lessons, and mentoring, they also need to use the knowledge identified through their reflections to help their students learn more efficiently and effectively (Nagai et al., 2020). Reflective practice, in the last stage of self-directed teaching, will almost certainly lead to a new cycle of critical reflection, resulting in a cyclical structure for the professional development of autonomous instructors (Nagai et al., 2020).

Although critical reflection by a determined and strong individual may result in actual changes in their practice, it is far easier if this is done with others (St John and Sercu, 2007) since learning is a social activity (Vygotsky, 2012). Studies of cooperative learning indicate that learners who work with others, sharing responsibility and learning resources, achieve more than they do independently (St John and Sercu, 2007). Ramos (2006) indicates that autonomy is not associated with isolation, individuality, or self-sufficiency and that interaction and collaboration are significant aspects of the development of autonomy. Teachers' collaboration is also emphasised in Smith's (2003a) definition of teacher autonomy, which includes 'cooperation with others' (mentioned in Section 2.4).

In programs showing successful results, teachers assess students' work, construct development evaluation criteria, and collaborate in designing, teaching, and improving lessons (Hiebert et al., 2002). According to the reports of teachers who used to work traditionally and in isolation, joining a program to improve practice and be in close contact while working collaboratively with colleagues is a valuable practice (Hiebert et al., 2002).

These two essential elements, reflection and collaboration with others on the workshop content, help teachers increase their knowledge and learn new professional skills that may become part of their career identity. Teachers may become critical professionals who continuously observe and evaluate their behaviour and that of their learners. In doing this, the teachers will always be learning and seeking to understand their contexts more closely, and in so doing, they will become teachers as learners. This thesis argues that this helps effectively promote LA.

This section and the previous sections clarify the importance of CPD, shedding light on the significance of considering teachers' knowledge and beliefs and the importance of enabling reflections for effective LA pedagogy. The following section clarifies how training helps teachers foster LA, as they will have the knowledge to promote LA; thus, the promotion will be intentional.

2.5.4 Teachers Practices: Pedagogy for Autonomy

Pedagogy for autonomy emphasises the value of teacher training for understanding autonomy and how to foster it among students. This is because it is unexpected for teachers to develop LA

if they do not know how to be autonomous learners themselves (Little, 2000). While Little argues that not understanding what it is to be an autonomous learner makes it unexpectable for teachers to promote LA, the literature shows that such a thing is possible.

Dam and Kuchah maintain classroom improvements and apply the principles of autonomy without being exposed to the term 'learner autonomy' and without having previous knowledge or being taught its methodology (Smith, 2006; Kuchah and Smith, 2011). While not intentionally fostering learners' autonomy, those teachers' practices are termed a 'pedagogy of autonomy.' However, it is worth mentioning that even though these teachers promoted LA without being exposed to the term itself, there were different factors that influenced their autonomous behaviour, e.g., in the case of Kuchah, he was exposed to a Western country and communicative language teaching (see Smith, 2006 and Kuchah and Smith, 2011); thus, confirming Little's (2000) argumentation.

A 'Pedagogy of autonomy' differs from a 'pedagogy for autonomy.' The teacher, with the goal of pedagogy for autonomy, has a clear goal of increasing LA (Kuchah and Smith, 2011, p.130). This brings the value of CPD to increase their awareness about the concept of LA and how it can be implemented in language classrooms. Teachers could discuss their roles and responsibilities as well as their learners for potential pedagogy for autonomy, as this thesis argues.

While understanding the concept of LA through training is significant for effective LA pedagogy, it could be helpful for teachers to understand the versions of LA pedagogy introduced by Smith (2003b) and which version is applicable in their contexts. Smith (2003b, p.131) clarifies the 'strong' and 'weak' versions of the pedagogy for LA as two methodological orientations. Smith (2003b) argues that strong pedagogies for autonomy are based on the assumption that students are already autonomous and capable of exercising this capacity. On the other hand, the weak version of autonomy is based on the assumption that students currently lack autonomy and need training toward this goal. Smith (2003b, p.131) states that the methodological focus of the strong version is on 'co-creating with students' optimal conditions for the exercise of their autonomy, engaging them in reflection on the experience,' whereas autonomy is seen 'as a deferred goal and a product of instruction rather than something students are currently ready to exercise directly' in the weak version.

Whenever possible, the strong version of pedagogy for autonomy provides opportunities to connect classroom learning with students' lives beyond the classroom, allowing them to become increasingly active in developing their learning styles in ways they find acceptable (Smith, 2003 b). Smith (2003b) emphasises that he does not imply that a strong version of pedagogy can or should be practiced to the same extent in more challenging settings than the one he outlines in his paper (see Smith, 2003b, for more details). He also emphasises that a strong version of

pedagogy for autonomy, developed jointly by the teacher and the students, will not fit with the established norms as it evolves, creating what he terms a 'cultural challenge' (p.143). It will be co-created within the constraints of what is feasible and appropriate within a given setting (Smith, 2003b).

It is worth noting that transitioning the classroom norms and types, mainly speaking, from a teacher-led to a learner-led environment that encourages autonomous learning is time-consuming. It may require several years before teachers determine what suits their learners best. For example, the practices of Smith (2003b) and Kuchah (in Kuchah and Smith, 2011), which could be seen as role models in this field of practice, took five and three years, respectively, while they tried to achieve their pedagogical aims and find appropriate contextual practices. Fives and Buehl (2016) assert that when evaluating the efficacy of new practices, teachers need time to realign their beliefs and practices before they can become effective in their student's learning process.

It could be argued that encouraging teachers to seek appropriate procedures that work well with their students continuously ignores previous generalisations or fears about whether their initiatives will be successful. These extended plans indicate that contextual change will not happen suddenly during one semester. However, they will occur gradually, and even a few steps towards change will be an achievement.

To conclude, this section, Section 2.5, highlights the importance of CPD, which considers teachers' beliefs and knowledge and enables teachers to reflect on the presented content for effective pedagogy for autonomy. Further details will be presented in Section 2.8 and the methodology chapter. Before reaching that point, the following section presents the relevant studies in the field of LA.

2.6 Teacher Education for Autonomy: Design and Pedagogical Principles for CPD Sessions

This section details foundational principles for designing impactful CPD programmes, as effective CPD is central to educators' ongoing growth and success. It presents ten core principles that inform the planning and implementation of CPD initiatives to enhance teacher practice and student learning. It focuses on how CPD can be planned and designed to maximise its impact in refining teachers' knowledge, skills, and professional attitudes and practices that support effective classroom teaching and learning.

2.6.1 Principle 1: Define Learning-Oriented and Feasible Objectives

Clearance of purpose is at the heart of effective CPD. Borg (2023) clarifies that planning should begin by defining what the CPD is intended to achieve, with a clear focus on improving student learning outcomes. This means identifying the teacher competencies that require development, whether content knowledge, pedagogical strategies, or language proficiency, and considering how these enhancements will benefit teachers, students, and the wider school community (Borg, 2023).

Borg (2023) highlights the importance of setting clear, effective objectives that are directly linked to student learning. Similarly, Wallace and May (2016) argue that CPD should prioritise practical impact by ensuring that goals are both actionable and relevant to the participants' professional context. Borg (2023) also points out that these objectives need to be realistic, achievable within the programme's scope, and communicated transparently to all stakeholders. Clear objectives, according to Borg (2023) and Wallace and May (2016), not only shape the planning process but also provide essential benchmarks for evaluating the success of CPD initiatives.

2.6.2 Principle 2: Understand the Audience and Context

Relevant literature highlights the importance of participants and context in shaping effective CPD programmes (Borg, 2023; Smith, 2000). A central theme across Borg (2023), Smith (2000), and Wallace and May (2016) is that designing impactful CPD requires a thorough understanding of the participants. Wallace and May (2016) argue that objectives, discussed in the previous section, are most feasible when they are personalised and aligned with the actual needs of professional practice. While understanding the individual participants is essential, it is equally important to consider the broader context in which they operate. This broader context can be examined across three interconnected levels: the individual, the school, and the wider educational and socio-cultural environment.

At the individual level, Borg (2023) stresses the value of recognising teachers' specific backgrounds, beliefs, needs, and working conditions. The second level focuses on the immediate school environment, which includes institutional culture, leadership, and available resources. The third level expands to the wider educational landscape, encompassing policy frameworks and cultural norms that shape teaching practices (Borg, 2023). Borg (2023) further explains that effective CPD design should begin with an initial phase of discovery to understand teacher needs and continue to be responsive and adaptable throughout the programme.

2.6.3 Principle 3: Build on Existing Cognitions and Practices

Teachers bring a wealth of experience and deeply held beliefs to professional learning (Borg, 2023). Borg (2001, 2003, 2023) clarifies that teachers' pre-existing cognitions shape how they interpret and apply new knowledge (see Section 2.5.2). Thus, CPD is most effective when it acknowledges and builds upon these foundations, helping teachers reflect on current practices before encouraging change (Borg, 2023; Hiebert et al., 2002).

This principle entails that CPD should seek to raise (for educators and teacher trainers) awareness of teachers' beliefs and practices before any attempts to change them. Attempting to force a radical change on teachers' cognitions and practices goes against what is reasonable (Borg, 2023). It is fundamental in the constructivist learning perspective that one starts from what people know, or what baseline awareness they possess, and builds from there (Borg, 2023; Hiebert et al., 2002). As Borg (2023) argues, this constructivist approach fosters genuine engagement and sustainable growth.

2.6.4 Principle 4: Make CPD a Situated Process

Borg (2023), Slimani-Rolls and Kiely (2019), and Smith (2003b) emphasise that a key principle of effective teacher development is its close connection to the everyday realities of teachers' classrooms. This includes aligning content with local curricula, using locally sourced examples, and encouraging experimentation within participants' own classrooms (Borg, 2023). This principle does not mean that CPD should exclude any content or examples beyond the scope of the teachers' context, nor does it mean that any theoretical issues should not be discussed during CPD (Borg, 2023). However, it highlights that while theoretical insights and international examples have value, the most meaningful professional development enables teachers to apply learning directly to their context (Borg, 2023; Smith, 2003b).

Borg (2023) emphasises that CPD becomes more effective when it firstly develops strong links between CPD activities and the actual practice in the teachers' classrooms, and secondly, when it introduces practical innovations that build upon teachers' current practices in a way that can be embraced in the curriculum (Borg, 2023).

The emphasis here is on gradual change. It is typically more realistic and impactful to support teachers in improving familiar practices than to expect them to adopt entirely new approaches all at once (Borg, 2023).

2.6.5   Principle 5: Focus on Both Content and Process

Content and process are equally crucial in CPD, as programmes that combine content (the what) with processes (the how) are more likely to result in lasting professional change (Borg, 2023; Slimani-Rolls and Kiely, 2019). The selection of content should reflect clearly defined goals (Principle 1) and be sensitive to local contexts (Principle 2). Regarding process, CPD should engage teachers in constructivist (Principle 3), situated (Principle 4), collaborative (Principle 6), and reflective learning (Principle 7). This might involve inquiry-based learning, dialogue, classroom experimentation, and structured reflection (Borg, 2023; Slimani-Rolls and Kiely, 2019).

There is widespread agreement on the sort of approaches that promote meaningful professional development, and these generally suggest that CPD should be designed to encourage active engagement in learning (Borg, 2023). It is also essential to note that effective teacher development revolves around core instructional activities such as lesson planning, teaching, questioning, and reflective practice (Borg, 2023).

2.6.6   Principle 6: Make Teacher Learning a Social Process

Although teachers' individual learning is valuable, the social dimension of teacher learning is a core principle in CPD, where collaborative discussion and peer learning are central to professional growth (Borg, 2023; Hiebert et al., 2002; Slimani-Rolls and Kiely, 2019). Borg (2023) and Slimani-Rolls and Kiely (2019) argue that CPD is enriched when teachers learn together, as collaboration with colleagues during CPD helps teachers consolidate their learning process.

Collaboration with colleagues takes different social formats such as peer observation, mentoring, study groups, and professional learning communities that foster collaborative engagement (Borg, 2023). These formats validate teachers' experiences, promote dialogue, and facilitate the exchange of practical strategies (Borg, 2023). Importantly, Borg (2023) highlights that participants should be supported in understanding and navigating these collaborative models, particularly if they are unfamiliar, and be helped to understand what is expected of them and how to do it effectively.

This approach promotes deeper learning and values teachers' expertise as a resource for professional development (Borg, 2023). It also supports teachers' theoretical and practical learning process, as it facilitates conveying the perceived knowledge to be translated into practice inside classrooms (Slimani-Rolls and Kiely, 2019).

2.6.7 Principle 7: View CPD as an Extended Process

Professional growth takes time, as Borg (2023) highlights. CPD is more impactful when it occurs over an extended period, allowing teachers to assimilate new ideas, apply them in practice, receive feedback, and refine their approaches (Borg, 2023). Short, one-off workshops may raise awareness, but sustainable change is more likely when learning unfolds across a semester or an academic year (Borg, 2023; Slimani-Rolls and Kiely, 2019).

2.6.8 Principle 8: Provide Ongoing Teacher Support

Effective CPD offers support to help teachers succeed (Slimani-Rolls and Kiely, 2019). There are two critical stages where this support is particularly crucial (Borg, 2023). The first is when teachers are introduced to new forms of professional learning, such as collaborative action research, they often need significant guidance (Borg, 2023). This includes understanding what the process involves, why it's beneficial, how to implement it, and how to work with others collaboratively (Borg, 2023). As many teachers may be unfamiliar with these methods, ongoing support is essential during this learning phase (Borg, 2023).

The second crucial stage is when teachers begin to implement changes in their teaching (Borg, 2023). This can be a difficult and uncertain time, and unfortunately, it's often when support disappears (Borg, 2023). Slimani-Rolls and Kiely (2019) highlight that teachers must be supported structurally and culturally, as they argue that teachers need development frameworks that support gradual shifts in practice, enabling them to negotiate their professional identity within the realities of their teaching context. Without encouragement from school leaders, supervisors, peers, or even parents, teachers may feel isolated or discouraged, weakening their motivation and reducing the lasting impact of any changes they try to make (Borg, 2023).

To counter this, effective CPD recognises that support is key to enabling change (Borg, 2023). Programme designers should actively seek the support of influential figures in the educational institution environment and aim to build supportive structures, such as peer networks, that help teachers feel less alone and more empowered to innovate (Borg, 2023). Making pedagogical change a collective process can strengthen commitment and improve long-term outcomes (Borg, 2023).

2.6.9 Principle 9: Prioritise Teacher Educator Competence

The effectiveness of CPD often lies in the quality of those leading or facilitating it, known as teacher educators (Borg, 2023). Whether external facilitators or school-based mentors, teacher educators require specific competencies beyond classroom teaching experience (Borg, 2023).

These include expertise in adult learning, group facilitation, and reflective practice (Borg, 2023; Slimani-Rolls and Kiely, 2019). CPD programmes should identify necessary competencies early on and provide teacher educators with training and ongoing professional development (Borg, 2023).

2.6.10   Principle 10: Optimise Practical Arrangements

Logistical considerations significantly influence the success of CPD. For example, when and where CPD occurs, the time commitment involved, the mode of delivery, whether face-to-face or online, and the availability of required resources all affect teacher participation and engagement (Borg, 2023). Thoughtful planning of these practical elements ensures that CPD is accessible, inclusive, and conducive to deep learning.

To conclude this section, Section 2.6, the ten principles outlined here offer a comprehensive and adaptable framework for designing CPD that is both contextually relevant and pedagogically sound. They highlight the importance of aligning CPD with teacher and student needs, embedding learning in authentic settings, and supporting change through collaboration and sustained engagement (Borg, 2023).

2.7   Relevant Studies

Studies exploring EFL teachers' beliefs and practices about LA and its feasibility have received increased attention in recent years. For example, a study was conducted by Borg and Al-Busaidi in 2011 at the language centre at Sultan Qaboos University in Oman to explore English language teachers' beliefs and practices regarding LA. The study employed a questionnaire distributed to 200 teachers from 25 nationalities, followed by individual interviews. Their questionnaire included Likert-scale items to understand teachers' beliefs about LA, the desirability and feasibility of LA, and the extent to which teachers promote it in their teaching. 61 EFL teachers completed the questionnaire, representing a 30.5% response rate, and 20 teachers participated in follow-up semi-structured interviews. These interviews were conducted to gather qualitative, in-depth insights into teacher beliefs and practices based on their responses to the questionnaire.

Borg and Al-Busaidi's (2011) findings show how these teachers define LA, showing variable beliefs; the common view among these teachers is that LA is students' freedom and ability to make choices and decisions about their learning, demonstrating a basic understanding of the concept. Their findings also show teachers' attitudes to the importance of LA. Most teachers believe that LA positively impacts language learning success, as it helps learners to learn more

efficiently. Their data also reveals the extent of the division among teachers. The findings also clarify discrepancies between the desirability and feasibility of promoting LA. Teachers were more optimistic about the desirability of involving learners in decision-making than the feasibility of doing so. However, feasibility is seen as more achievable in materials, topics, and activities and less so in objectives and assessments. The findings also show the promotion of LA from teachers' perspectives, as 79.6% of them felt that they promote LA, while only 10.2% reported that they do not, and another 10.2% took a neutral position as they were unsure. Finally, the data reveals challenges that impede the promotion of LA, such as learners' lack of motivation, overloaded curriculum, low expectations of learners' capabilities, and teachers' lack of autonomy. These examples highlight the main factors that Borg and Al-Busaidi (2011) identified: learner factor, curriculum factor, and teacher factor, respectively, in their terms. Their results show that the teachers' diverging views about LA were mainly due to their different perceptions of what constituted evidence of autonomous learning.

Borg and Al-Busaidi used the empirical data from the questionnaire and interview to use local insights as a foundation for CPD workshops in their study. The empirical data was used to create a shared understanding of LA and identify possible strategies for promoting LA at the institution to address the identified challenges to promoting LA and offer practical support. They designed five workshops with different topics, 90 minutes each, to share the empirical data with the same participants. The topics for the five workshops are the definition of LA, LA in the language centre, implementing LA, developing a strategy for promoting LA, and teacher research on LA. These sessions are designed to achieve different goals. For example, Workshop-1 aims to involve teachers in discussions to define LA in contextually feasible ways. While Workshop-2 encourages teachers to share and discuss their practices about LA, Workshop-3 introduces a framework that describes LA and encourages participating teachers to use it to analyse activities for promoting LA. Workshop-4 motivates teachers to discuss the challenges of promoting LA in their language centre and find ways to respond productively. The last workshop introduces teacher research as a strategy for classroom teachers to explore LA.

The first four workshops were conducted over five days, and the final was conducted a few months later for logistical reasons. However, the sessions were conducted to share the empirical data of their previous phase and extended far beyond enabling teachers to reflect on their beliefs and practices regarding LA. For example, in Workshop 2, teachers shared the results of their responses to the questionnaire items, mainly, 'In general, in teaching English at SQU, I give my students opportunities to develop LA (Borg and Al-Busaidi, 2011, p.288). The figure from the results shows the percentage of their response to this particular question with a significant agreement with the question. They were then asked about their reaction to the result.

In 2012, Borg and Al-Busaidi published their study again, providing more details. For example, more details were provided for the workshop design. In their 2012 publication version, they clarified that the second workshop, as an example, investigated how teachers promote LA. To clarify, prior to their second CPD workshop, teachers, particularly those who mentioned that they promote LA, were asked to give examples of how they do so, and they highlighted several practices. Twenty of their practices were shared during the session, and teachers were asked to go through them and then link them with one of five approaches that were also shared. In the following task, teachers were asked several related questions, such as, 'Do you use any of the practices listed above to promote autonomy in your classes? If yes, what exactly did you do? How effective do you find these practices in encouraging learners to be autonomous?' (Borg and Al-Busaidi, 2012, p.37). This is followed by a fourth and last task during this session about the feasibility of LA practice in the language centre. Teachers were asked to provide reflective feedback. They were asked to return to the shared list of LA practices to decide on the five most feasible practices and then consider how they contribute to LA.

As Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012) acknowledged, no measurements were utilised to provide concrete evidence of changes in teachers' beliefs and practices. This demonstrates the impossibility of claiming the impact of these workshops on the teachers or their learners. However, the work of Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012), combining research and professional development, offers a solid basis for such impact.

In their second publication, more details were revealed about the findings. For example, while they clarified that the political dimension in relation to the definition of LA demonstrates a high agreement among teachers, their second publication detailed that the psychological dimension is higher. The social dimension demonstrates the lowest mean. In terms of feasibility, the detailed results show that involving learners in topic discussion is the most feasible, and the lowest is how learning is assessed. Teachers were also asked about the feasibility of involving learners in learning skills, and they were happy to involve learners in learning co-operatively and less happy with the other skills, such as evaluating their learning, monitoring their progress, and identifying their needs. More details were also revealed regarding the challenges, e.g., learner reliance on the teacher, learners' focus on passing tests, and limited learner proficiency in English.

The limitations of this study, as Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012) acknowledge, are context-specific findings that might not be fully generalisable to other educational settings. The second is the limited sample size, e.g., the response rate for the questionnaire was 30.5%, which may not represent the beliefs and practices of the entire population of 200 teachers at the Language Centre. Third, the teacher data, including both the questionnaire and semi-structured interview data, are self-reported. This introduces potential bias because teachers' perceptions or reports

of their practice may not fully align with their practices. Finally, while the study offered valuable insights into teachers' beliefs and practices about LA, it may not have captured the complexity of these beliefs and classroom practices. Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012) suggest that further studies on LA could offer a more in-depth exploration of particular aspects.

Borg and Al-Busaidi's (2012) influential work in the field has been replicated by several other researchers (Al-Asmari, 2013; Al-Busaidi and Al-Maamari, 2014; Borg and Alshumaimeri, 2019; Haji-Othman and Wood, 2016; Keuk and Heng, 2016; Lengkanawati, 2016; Rañosa-Madrunio et al., 2016; Stroupe et al., 2016; Tapinta, 2016; Van Loi, 2016; Wang and Wang, 2016), all of whom found similar results. Collectively, they showed that teachers have a basic understanding of LA, although students lack the motivation to become autonomous learners. These studies also reveal a fundamental contradiction between the desirability of fostering LA and its feasibility.

In 2019, Borg and Alshumaimeri conducted a similar work to Borg and Albusaidi's (2012) study with 359 English teachers at the English Preparatory Year Programme (PYP) in Saudi Arabia. They attempted to avoid some of the limitations of Borg and Al-Busaidi's (2012) study, particularly the response rate. Borg and Alshumaimeri (2019) had a response rate of 78%, compared to the 30.5% achieved by Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012), which means that they have successfully described how LA is understood and implemented at an institutional level in a representative way. While the aim of their study is similar to Borg and Al-Busaidi's (2012) aim, in which they investigated teachers' views on the nature of LA, feasibility and desirability of LA, and perceptions of LA among students and promotion practices, their methodology was slightly different. They provided quantitative and qualitative data using a questionnaire including Likert-scale items and open-ended questions. This is a limitation as they acknowledge that their methodology lacks possibilities for conducting a deeper qualitative analysis, as would be afforded by interviews or observations.

Nonetheless, Borg and Alshumaimeri's (2019) findings show that teachers mostly associate LA with psychological aspects, such as motivation and self-regulation, and political aspects, such as control over learning decisions. Their findings revealed teachers' concern for learner independence and control regarding completing tasks individually and collaboratively, with minimal teacher involvement. Furthermore, there was a clear difference between the desirability and feasibility of promoting LA, as most EFL teachers believed that LA was essential for students but were less confident about the feasibility. In other words, many teachers supported involving students in decision-making. However, they were uncertain how to implement this in practice. This suggests a notable gap between teachers' desirability and the feasibility of involving students in decision-making processes.

Most teachers disagreed that their students showed a significant degree of autonomy, attributing this primarily to issues like learners' lack of motivation, low English proficiency, and a previous

education system focused on a teacher-centred approach. They identified several obstacles to promoting autonomy, such as a non-flexible curriculum, cultural influences, and an exam-driven education system, which limited students' opportunities to develop independent learning skills.

While Borg and Alshumaimeri's (2019) study contributes to the literature by offering empirical data on teachers' beliefs and practices regarding LA, it has some limitations and suggestions for further development. First, its reliance on questionnaire data, notably, limited the depth of the findings. Incorporating qualitative instruments like interviews or observations could offer richer insights. Additionally, the focus on a single institution may have limited the generalisability of the results. Finally, although the study did not include CPD, it suggested including CPD for teachers to address the gap between teachers' beliefs and their capacity to foster LA in practice.

Conversely, Li's (2023) study includes specialised professional development workshops in LA to improve five Chinese in-service teachers' beliefs, understandings, and practices. The study investigates teachers' perceptions of LA and evaluates the impact of these sessions in enhancing their LA-related beliefs and practices. The research has three phases. The first phase includes semi-structured interviews to understand teachers' beliefs and practices about LA. The second phase includes two workshops. These aligned existing beliefs with sufficient LA practices, assuring the significance of classroom interaction and action research. The final phase includes focus group conversations, written feedback, and the researcher's reflective journals to evaluate the impact of these workshops.

Li's (2023) findings indicate a discrepancy between teachers' willingness and ability to promote LA. While teachers are happy to involve students in various learning decisions, they are sceptical about its feasibility. Some participants related LA with learners' intrinsic motivation and self-directed learning, indicating a basic understanding of the concept. The study highlights that teachers agree that fostering LA requires them to act as facilitators and reduce their talking time. However, there is uncertainty regarding students' ideas and challenges to ensure all students' voices in decision-making.

The study's findings also reveal the challenges hindering LA's promotion. These challenges to promoting LA involve an examination-oriented curriculum that causes negative consequences, lack of prioritisation from school administrators, learners' low language proficiency, and inadequate practical training related to LA. Some teachers highlighted the significance of scaffolding for goal setting, self-evaluation, and reflection before engaging students in decision-making activities. Participants appreciated the interactive nature of the workshops provided and acknowledged the importance of classroom interaction skills and the incorporation of action research in their teaching practices. The workshops improved teachers' awareness regarding the importance of LA in language learning and offered practical strategies to be fostered. Despite

challenges such as limited time and a need for further practical examples and support, the study assures the significance of ongoing professional development that sufficiently associates theoretical and practical aspects to foster LA in classrooms.

While all the studies explore LA-related issues in terms of implementations, as mentioned earlier, Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012), Borg and Alshumaimeri (2019), and Li (2023) all indicate similar existing challenges in their different contexts. The literature continuously reveals challenges that hinder the promotion of LA and suggests possible solutions. For instance, Saad's (2024) study also reveals some challenges. The study aims to understand the challenges six ESL teachers face in implementing LA and potential solutions for practical implications in the classroom at the Academy of Language Studies at University Teknologi Mara, Kedah Campus, in Malaysia. The study utilised a qualitative methodology, conducting semi-structured interviews. The analysis revealed valuable insights into the challenges and possible solutions for promoting LA.

Saad (2024) categorises teacher challenges implementing LA into four main areas: policy, institutional, teacher's knowledge, and learner's background. The policy-related challenges identified included a standardised curriculum design, a focus on completing the syllabus, and a top-down approach. Institutional challenges include limited teaching hours and the need to teach a broad range of skills. Regarding teachers' knowledge, challenges involved the belief that LA is unsuitable for all ESL subjects and only appropriate for proficient and mature learners. It also includes the continued utilisation of traditional teaching methods, a spoon-feeding culture in classrooms, teacher reluctance to relinquish control, misconceptions about LA, and students' perception of learning. Finally, challenges related to learners' backgrounds included different student characteristics and proficiency levels, lack of self-confidence, dependence on teachers, passive learning attitudes, and a spoon-feeding culture.

The solutions were highlighted by the participants, suggesting that several vital skills could be essential for fostering learners' autonomy. The study skills are critical thinking, information searching, and teamwork. The interviewees emphasised the essential role these skills play in creating autonomous learning contexts, as they assist students to take greater responsibility for their learning and minimise their reliance on teachers for tasks and projects. In other words, recognising these mentioned challenges and adopting these suggested solutions can help English teachers foster a more supportive environment to encourage LA in their classrooms, as this study highlights. While this study contributes to practical suggestions for LA implementation and offers valuable insights for teachers and policymakers, it has a set of limitations. The researcher acknowledged that the small sample size and lack of classroom observations are the primary two limitations.

However, while Saad's (2024) study suggests the significance of certain types of skills learners should be developing, such as their critical thinking skills, their ability to search for information, and their willingness and flexibility to work with a team, other recent research explores the role of the teacher about the teaching strategies they use in order to promote LA. For example, Batuwatta and Premarathna's (2024) study explores 60 English language teachers' perspectives on promoting LA and strategies and supportive characteristics teachers use to enhance LA. Batuwatta and Premarathna hypothesise that teachers play an essential role in fostering autonomy among learners. Additionally, the study highlights that teachers' understanding and experience in this area are crucial for maintaining successful learning outcomes. Batuwatta and Premarathna's study used a questionnaire to investigate teachers' beliefs, perspectives, and characteristics in developing LA, followed by a group distribution method for this survey. Group distribution is a survey data collection method where the researcher hands out the survey to participants in person.

Most respondents favour encouraging learner-centred activities, self-study practices, group work, and using authentic materials outside the classroom. However, many teachers do not support rules such as setting lesson objectives, selecting learning activities, conducting self-evaluations, arranging seating, and deciding on homework. Around 98% of respondents (73.3% agreeing and 25% strongly agreeing) showed that curriculum reform is essential to develop LA. Finally, 100% of teachers (71.7% agreeing and 28.3% strongly agreeing) showed their need for additional training to help their students achieve greater autonomy. Batuwatta and Premarathna (2024) confirm that LA could be promoted through teachers' teaching practices only if they fully understand and practice the concept of autonomy themselves.

As Batuwatta and Premarathna (2024) ensure the significant role teachers play in the promotion of LA, some studies explore the roles teachers adopt in the classrooms. For example, Alonazi (2017) aims to investigate the roles of 60 female English teachers in promoting LA. The study identifies teachers' roles, the obstacles they face, and the solutions they consider effective in fostering LA. The study employed a quantitative approach as data was collected via a questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into three sections: teachers' roles in promoting autonomy, constraints on developing autonomy, and strategies for developing autonomy.

The findings show that teachers have multiple roles in fostering LA, including those of a resource, classroom manager, counsellor, and facilitator. As resources, teachers select and assess materials, integrate technology, and suggest additional tools for learning. As classroom managers, teachers organise activities, offer clear instructions, and engage students in decision-making. As counsellors, teachers provide support, offer feedback, and address learning

difficulties through discussions. As facilitators, they motivate students to reflect on their learning process and engage them to select learning objectives and materials.

Although Alonazi's (2017) questionnaire study results demonstrated that teachers play various roles in promoting LA, the roles reveal ranking order based on how frequently the teachers implemented them. The ranking is from the highest to lowest: resource, classroom manager, counsellor, and facilitator. Alonazi's (2017) study also highlights some significant challenges to promoting LA, such as learners' lack of independent learning skills, institutional constraints, and teachers' lack of employing strategies that foster autonomy. Some teachers also do not regard their students as autonomous learners. In order to address these obstacles, Alonazi (2017) suggests different teaching strategies, including ongoing reflection and analysis of teaching practices, minimising institutional restrictions on teacher autonomy, providing professional development programs focused on LA, and incorporating autonomy principles into teacher education programs. While this study contributes to providing empirical data on the roles of English teachers in Saudi public schools, it has some limitations. For example, it focused on female teachers and relied on self-reported data.

While Alonazi's (2017) research highlighted that the facilitator teacher role ranked the lowest among various teaching roles observed in the same context, Eshgi's (2024) study pointed out the motherhood identity of the teacher affecting their role as a teacher being less autonomous. Her study, which involved six Saudi English teachers, examined the role and impact of CPD within the environment where these teachers work. It focused on aspects such as professional identity, agency, and emotions. The findings revealed that two teachers often identified themselves in the role of a mother, a perception shaped by Saudi cultural norms that highly value motherhood. The study underscores how teacher identity, agency, and emotions are shaped by the interplay of context, culture, and personal positioning. Moreover, it emphasizes that the relationship between these elements is not linear but rather an ongoing dynamic that continuously shapes and reshapes teacher identity over time.

Batuwatta and Premarathna (2024) and Alonazi (2017) suggest that teachers cannot create an autonomous learning environment, as both studies reveal that teachers lack the promotion of the teaching strategies that support the promotion of LA. The study conducted by Lestari et al. (2024) takes a further step, as it aims to enhance students' learning autonomy in writing through differentiated teaching instruction. At first, students found writing tasks uninteresting, resulting in poor writing proficiency and low motivation. The researchers implemented differentiated instruction using a classroom action research design over two cycles to address this issue. The findings revealed a notable rise in student enthusiasm and writing proficiency. During the first cycle, 70% of students achieved predetermined criteria of success, which increased to 85% in

the second cycle, indicating that differentiated instruction provided a more engaging and motivating environment for students. This approach contributes to creating a safe, educational environment where students feel appreciated and confident, motivating them to take responsibility for their learning and make mistakes without fear. The research demonstrated that individualised instruction promotes learning autonomy by enabling students to select topics and follow instructions that align with their interests and proficiency levels.

Aziz et al.'s (2024) study also shed light on teachers' teaching strategies and their relation to developing autonomy and critical skills among learners at Indonesian Islamic boarding schools. Their study explores the impact of metacognitive strategies on learners' autonomy and critical thinking skills in argumentative writing among students. The research employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative data from pre-tests and post-tests with qualitative insights from interviews, questionnaires, and observations to assess the effectiveness of these strategies. The results showed that metacognitive strategies considerably developed students' abilities to construct coherent arguments and manage their writing process independently. However, the overall impact on learners' autonomy and their critical thinking skills was not statistically significant. The study contributes to the theoretical understanding of how metacognitive strategies can enhance learners' analytical and evaluative skills. It emphasises the significance of contextual adjustments, provides evidence for the role of peer feedback in improving metacognitive awareness, and highlights the importance of incorporating local values to develop students' motivation and independence. The study has some limitations, including the short duration of the study, its limited sample size, and the necessity for further research to explore long-term impact.

Coburn and Borg (2024) explored the impact of professional development on four in-service teachers at a Norwegian primary school over 26 months. Their study examined how the course they completed influenced their language use, teaching practices, and confidence. They used a qualitative multiple case study approach, including multiple instruments such as interviews, written reflections, and classroom observations that took place three times during the study.

Their study tracked these teachers who completed their course and found that the course they completed positively impacted their confidence to speak in English and their oral fluency. Variable changes in teachers' classroom practices were also noted. For example, the proportion of classroom language spoken in English increased in three cases, ranging from 14% to 32%, while no change was noted in the fourth case. Such variation was also found in textbook reliance and the range of learner-centred activities and ideas to be integrated into their teaching. The study has some limitations, as Coburn and Borg (2024) acknowledge these limitations such as the small sample size and the challenges of achieving sustained involvement from participants over

an extended period. Coburn and Borg highlight a need for research that addresses cultural influences and context-specific challenges in various educational settings. This review of the literature clearly shows a research gap that needs to be addressed. The following shows this gap and clarifies the theoretical framework of this study.

2.8   The Theoretical Framework of this Study

The literature review sheds light on a gap between theory and practice, as what researchers have emphasised in theory is not seen in classroom practice (e.g., Jiménez and Vieira, 2015). It is argued that a learner-centred classroom which engages learners in the learning process so that they take responsibility, or some responsibility, for their own learning, is an effective practice. However, most classrooms retain traditional practices, and learners are often passive and 'spoon-fed' (Alrabai, 2017a; Borg and Al-Busaidi, 2012; Manzano Vázquez, 2020; Saad, 2024). This does not relate to a particular context, such as the context of Saudi Arabia, but it also exists in different parts of the world, including in Europe (Manzano Vázquez, 2020), in Asia (Lengkanawati, 2016; Ramadhiyah and Lengkanawati, 2019; Van Loi, 2016) and elsewhere in the Middle East (Borg and Al-Busaidi, 2012; Borg and Alshumaimeri, 2019). Intensive work in the literature emphasises the importance of providing adequate training to address the issue raised in many studies about teachers' lack of understanding of LA (Alonazi, 2017; Borg and Al-Busaidi, 2012; Borg and Alshumaimeri, 2019; Coburn and Borg, 2024; Li, 2023).

Drawing on the literature that emphasises that beliefs are hard to change (Kagan, 1992), this study examines the difficulty of introducing teachers, especially experienced in-service teachers, to a completely new teaching methodology that is fundamentally different in nature compared to the one they are familiar with. Asking teachers to follow a particular teaching approach because its importance is acknowledged in the literature, but not yet from their perspective, may not be helpful. To clarify, if teachers have been exposed to traditional teaching approaches since they were young learners and have applied the same approaches for many years, convincing them to promote LA only on the basis of theory will most likely not succeed. This is because the new strategy might challenge the teachers' beliefs, as Smith and Kuchah (2016) argue (see Figure 2-1).
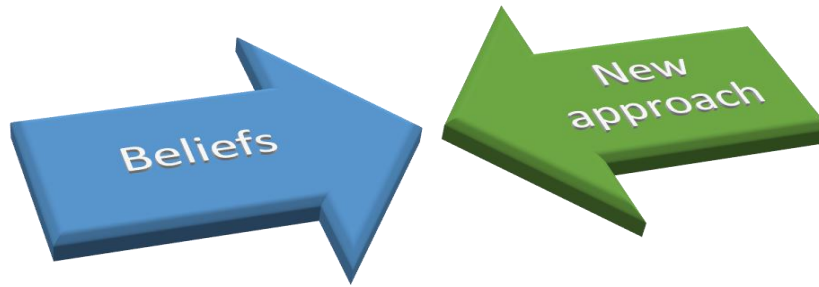
Figure 2-1   Conflict may occur between teachers' beliefs and the new teaching being introduced, but which the teachers have not yet been convinced to follow

This figure clarifies that new teaching methods, such as promoting LA, might challenge teachers' beliefs. It demonstrates the importance of considering teachers' beliefs when applying a new teaching strategy (Fives and Buehl, 2016), as some beliefs are resilient and resistant to change (Kagan, 1992). This study suggests presenting new knowledge in a suitable manner that is not too far beyond their present level of knowledge, which could cause their refusal to adopt it, nor is it too easy, something that already exists in their input systems.

This study could term the newly presented knowledge as the new content to be added to teachers' belief system, as '1', while their current knowledge base could be termed 'K.' Showing positive views about the newly presented content would mean that '1' is accepted by the teachers intellectually and that it is successfully added as (K + 1); however, it is the received knowledge, as mentioned by Wallace (1991) in section (2.5.1), that is received effectively and teachers need and are ready for. This study argues that if teachers' practices show their attempt to apply the newly learned skills, their knowledge is enhanced and modified, showing the influence of the provided CPD workshops on their practices (see Figure 2-2) below.

Key:

K= Knowledge
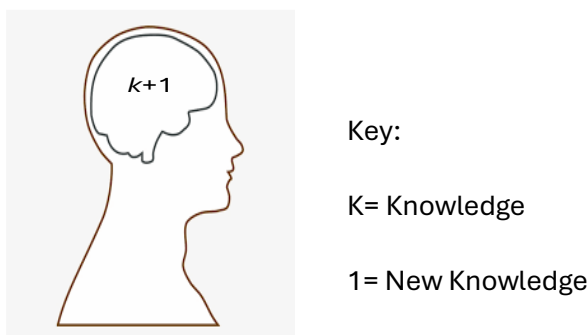
1= New Knowledge

Figure 2-2   CPD First Stage Impact: Need for New Knowledge

If '1' is added to teachers' current knowledge and accepted, this could be regarded as the first stage toward contextual shifting. This is followed by the attention drawn to teachers' current

'pedagogy of autonomy' as 'pedagogy for autonomy,' emphasising teachers' intention to promote LA. Attention is also drawn to the large number of teachers who shared local experiences, ideas, strategies planning, and so on, which leads to the second stage, namely, the pedagogy for autonomy, yet not confirmed as pedagogy for autonomy unless seen in their teaching practices.

2.9   Summary of the Chapter

This chapter clarifies the significant role of teachers in the LA promotion process. However, it also demonstrates that to help teachers who are used to teacher-led approaches to create autonomous learning contexts, teacher knowledge and autonomy to promote LA should be enhanced through CPD workshops that do not neglect their beliefs and current knowledge. The chapter suggests that the provided sessions consider teachers' beliefs and current knowledge to impact their classroom behaviour for possible LA pedagogy. It also argues that teachers who are knowledgeable about LA could foster it with the existence of any constraint as they will find their way to address these challenges. The chapter also argues that CPD is a significant factor that contributes to minimising the gap between theory and practice in the field of language learning, as teachers will frequently be updated with the latest research suggestions related to teaching and learning.

Chapter 3   Methodology

3.1   Introduction

In view of the theoretical framework provided in the previous chapter, this chapter focuses on the research methodology used to accomplish the objectives stated in Chapter 1—namely, to investigate the role of CPD workshops in teachers' knowledge and practices concerning LA. This chapter discusses the methodological procedures used in the research. It is structured as follows. After this introduction, I present the research design (Section 3.2), then discuss the piloting of the research instruments (Section 3.3), the research setting and participants' criteria and selection (Section 3.4), continuing professional development (Section 3.5), the limitation of workshop design (3.6), data collection (Section 3.6), data analysis (Section 3.8), the role of the researcher 'reflexivity' (3.9), ethical consideration (Section 3.10), triangulation and trustworthiness (Section 3.11), and the summary of the chapter (Section 3.12).

3.2   Research Design

The research design consists of four essential components: the philosophical stance, also known as the research paradigm, the theoretical standpoint, the methodology, and the specific employed research methods. It is crucial to comprehend the interdependent nature of these components and their influence in the context of conducting research (Creswell, 2023). This research study employed an interpretivist theoretical framework to guide the data-gathering method and subsequent data interpretation. Figure 3-1 illustrates the framework of the research design.

It is essential to shed light on the decision to use this particular design in this study. It was based on precise research aims and developed as a set of research questions that required investigation to meet the research objectives (Oliver, 2010). The research aims had consequences not only for the choice of research design but for the selection of data-gathering tools and methodologies (Oliver, 2010). Denzin and Lincoln (2011, p.246) called this a 'strategy of inquiry,' which is a methodological approach researchers apply when transitioning from a particular study paradigm or design to the process of gathering empirical data. They are often called 'methodological bricoleurs' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011, p.246). However, this strategy combines researchers' different skills, assumptions, practices, and material methodologies. The strategy is usually deployed for the researcher to align themselves with particular methods and procedures, thereby facilitating the efficient collection and analysis of empirical data (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011, p.246). In essence, it serves as a bridge between the theoretical elements of

research (paradigm and design) and the practical aspects of research (data collection and analysis), providing a road map for structuring the research design, collecting data methods, and data analysis techniques (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). This strategy enables the researcher of this study to address the research questions, collect relevant data, and interpret the findings consistently and methodically.
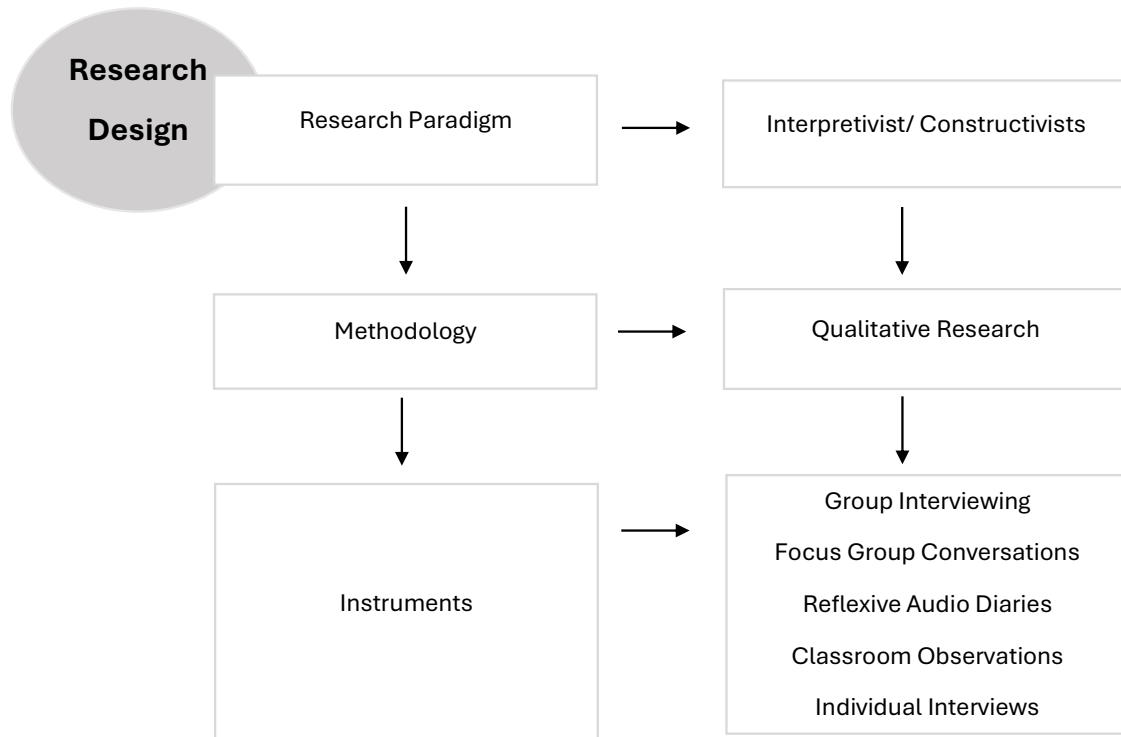
Figure 3-1   The Research Design Framework. Adapted from Al Kindi, 2020, p.92.

An interpretivist qualitative study was considered the most appropriate approach in this study, evaluating its compatibility with the chosen paradigm and its alignment with the research issues and inquiries. In other words, it considers exploring the role of CPD in developing teachers' knowledge and practices about LA. Finally, the concept of data-gathering methods relates to the strategies utilised in obtaining the necessary data to address research inquiries and attain research objectives. Implementing this can encompass a singular methodology, e.g., intensive interviewing (Bryman, 2016) or combining many techniques (Dörnyei, 2007). In the context of this study, data was collected from multiple sources, employing the qualitative approach, as outlined by Heigham and Croke in 2009. As shown in Figure 3-1 above, the chosen methods, group interviewing, focus group conversations, reflexive audio diaries, classroom observations, and individual interviews, were appropriate for this research framework, in line with many scholars (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Heigham and Croker, 2009; Oliver, 2010). The following section provides further details and justifications about the research paradigm.

3.2.1   Research Paradigm: 'Interpretivist'

This research consisted of a thorough theoretical analysis of the involvement and development of English language teachers within the realm of Saudi Higher education. It attempted to understand their insights and perspectives as they were actively engaged in discussions. Adopting an 'interpretivist' viewpoint was motivated in this study by two primary rationales. Firstly, it recognised that teachers' standpoints, as illustrated in Chapter 2, had a substantial impact on their instructional approaches (see 2.5.2). These attitudes were shaped by years of learning and teaching experiences. However, these attitudes occasionally demonstrated resistance to accepting change. Secondly, the study investigated the role of the CPD workshops on participants' knowledge and instructional practices. Therefore, an interpretivist lens was considered appropriate for understanding these diverse realities within the Saudi environment. Furthermore, this interpretivist approach prioritised perceiving the world via participants' standpoints to comprehend participants' knowledge and practices concerning the implementation of LA and how the provided CPD workshops influenced their knowledge and practices regarding three main areas. These three areas were related to how they defined LA and identified their roles and responsibilities as well as their students before and after joining these CPD workshops.

The primary aim of interpretivism, as Davies and Fisher (2018) illustrate, is to describe, explore, and understand the context of naturally occurring events while considering its socially constructed nature (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006). Therefore, this research study investigated the viewpoints of participants who were involved in specific educational contexts. The objective was to comprehend their spoken utterances and actions in their professional contexts. The research instruments were intentionally designed to address different areas of investigation about this research investigation and have detailed information, allowing participants to construct their interpretations in a dialectical nature, as interpretive research offers (Davies and Fisher, 2018). The dialectical nature occurs through the generation of discoveries through dialogue and communication between the subject being studied and the researcher (Davies and Fisher, 2018), who was also the teacher educator in this research study.

However, interpretivism emerges in opposition to positivism which is based on relativism (Davies and Fisher, 2018), or what Oliver (2010) called nominalism. It demonstrates a reluctance to adopt any fundamental criteria by which truth is universally apprehended (Heigham and Croker, 2009).

Interpretivism, as a research paradigm, differs fundamentally from positivism in that it rejects the idea of a single, objective truth (Heigham and Croker, 2009). Instead, it assumes that reality is socially constructed and that individuals interpret the world based on their own experiences and contexts. Participants were encouraged to be engaged in describing or providing many narratives

actively. This is because the study intends to comprehend individuals' interpretations of the social phenomena they were engaged in, as advocates of the interpretive paradigm recognise that no single interpretation is selected or favoured as the definitive one (Heigham and Croker, 2009). Instead, the presence of multiple interpretations is acknowledged as reality varies according to personal, contextual, and time circumstances (Heigham and Croker, 2009).

Adopting an interpretivist paradigm in this research study entails 'a deeply self-reflective process for the researcher', as confirmed by Davies and Fisher (2018, p.23). Therefore, several areas related to participants' perspectives and personal learning and teaching experiences about promoting LA have been investigated. By embracing an interpretivist paradigm, this study sought to examine how teachers understand and interpret their experiences, allowing for an exploration of the particular and unique individual meanings that participants assign to these experiences and practices (Richards, 2003). Notably, the interpretive paradigm was anticipated to be highly beneficial in addressing the research questions of this study (Creswell, 2023), which focus on comprehending how and why participants accept or resist some teaching practices seen as enhancing the development of LA in the existing research literature. The reason beyond this was that interpretivism offered the potential to gather rich qualitative data through the use of various methods of data collection such as focus groups (Oliver, 2010), diaries, classroom observations, and individual interviews (Heigham and Croker, 2009), shedding light to the phenomena of teachers' readiness and decision to foster LA.

This brief explanation clarifies the interpretative paradigm stances to justify the decision made to select this particular paradigm, as this study used interpretivist qualitative research. This is not to assure that it is preferable over other paradigms but to conclude that the decision to select methods and procedures was made to align with the research objectives. In brief, this approach helped comprehend the realm of participants' experiences, focusing on their perspectives and considering their backgrounds and experiences about the implementation of LA, as confirmed by Heigham and Croker (2009). The following section further sheds light on the research methodology and its suitability to this study.

3.2.2   Research Methodology: Qualitative Research

Qualitative research could be regarded as best suited to this research study for examining the phenomena under investigation. Harden and Laidlaw (2012, p.114) clarify that 'the education environment can be assessed using qualitative research.' However, the time-consuming nature of the qualitative research could be seen as a weakness. This is because this kind of research, as Croker (2009) and Dörnyei (2007) mention, is usually longitudinal and requires researchers to

spend a lot of time in the research settings to get a comprehensive and deeper understanding of what is happening there, and what the participants actualise about their own personal world.

However, even though qualitative research is time-consuming, it is used in this study to explore teachers' support and enhancement of LA and the role of the CPD in influencing teachers' knowledge and practices in this regard, as this type of research enables in-depth investigation into the phenomena (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). This particular type of investigation enabled the researcher to maintain the significant and comprehensive criteria inherent in actual occurrences, such as the type of teachers' roles and the utilised teaching strategies in Saudi Higher education classrooms.

The current study utilised various methods (see Section 3.2.3) with lecturers at the English Language and Literature department at a Saudi university to identify and examine the teachers' understanding of the concept of LA and its promotion in that context (see Section 3.4). This aligns with the existing body of the literature, which posits that a qualitative study exceeds mere clarification of results and attempts to articulate the underlying factors contributing to those outcomes. Hence, this methodology has transformed investigation into concrete stances, making it a desirable attribute for this particular study.

However, there has been little work using qualitative research in this research area. At the same time, many researchers have embraced an alternative approach known as 'mixed methods' such as the work done by Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012) and all replicated work following them, as mentioned in Chapter 2 (see Section 2.6). It is essential to note that their research scope is different as they tried to understand teachers' opinions regarding LA and its implementation in language classrooms. Their results clarify that teachers have positive views about the significance of LA but are not necessarily ready to implement their beliefs in the classrooms. They clarified that promoting LA is not feasible in their teaching and learning contexts. These studies, in particular the one done by Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012), did not measure the impact of the CPD on teachers' beliefs and practices.

This current study attempts to fill a gap in the literature as it provides CPD workshops and examines the role of these sessions on teachers' knowledge and practices concerning the concept itself, their roles and responsibilities, as well as the roles and responsibilities they assigned to their students. It also explored the challenges of promoting LA based not only on teachers' reported data, as in previous studies, but also on the observed contextual practices of teachers. In this way, this research contributes to knowledge in both theoretical and CPD design-related aspects and helps in generating hypotheses for future research (see Sections 6.3.1and 6.3.2). The following section presents the methods of investigation used in this research to achieve its aim and gather data for each research question.

3.2.3 Research Questions and Instruments

This section represents the research questions presented in Chapter 1 to clarify the instruments employed for each research question, as shown in Table 3-1 below. These particular tools were selected to provide deeper insights into the participants' experiences and enrich the derived data. However, it is worth mentioning that these particular research methods were also chosen to correspond well with the objective and purpose of the current study, which is to influence teachers' knowledge and practices about implementing LA through CPD workshops. The table also presents the sections of the findings and where the discussions of these findings are presented through the lens of theory and related empirical studies.

Table 3-1   Research Aims, Questions, Instruments, Research Findings and Discussions

No	Research question	Instruments	Findings in Section	Discussion of the Findings in Section
RQ1a	How does CPD on language learner autonomy impact teachers' knowledge of LA in terms of their definition?	• Group Interviewing • FG conversations • Audio-diaries • Interviews	4.2	5.2 + 5.5
RQ1b	How does CPD on language learner autonomy impact teachers' knowledge and practices regarding their roles and responsibilities concerning implementing LA?	• FG conversations • Audio-diaries • Classroom observations • Interviews	4.3	5.3 + 5.5
RQ1c	How does CPD on language learner autonomy impact teachers' knowledge and practices regarding their assigned roles and responsibilities to their students concerning implementing LA?	• FG conversations • Audio-diaries • Classroom observations • Interviews	4.4	5.4+ 5.5
RQ2	How does CPD help in understanding the factors that impede the promotion of learner autonomy in language learning?	• FG conversations • Audio-diaries • Classroom observations • Interviews	4.5	5.6

As clearly shown in the table above, the study has two research questions. The first question has three sub-questions related to the role of the provided CPD workshops on teachers' knowledge and practices in three main areas: how teachers define LA, how they identify their roles and responsibilities, and what roles and responsibilities they usually assign to their students, although the first area focuses only on the knowledge, not the practices. This research question aims to investigate the role of CPD in teachers' knowledge and practices concerning LA. The second question explores the factors that hinder the promotion of LA to understand the factors that inhibit the promotion of LA in this particular educational setting. This question was not initially intended as part of the investigation; however, the emerging data prompted its consideration (see Section 3.8.2).

However, to obtain answers to the research questions, different research instruments were used in an attempt to triangulate data collection: group interviewing, focus group conversations (FG), reflexive audio diaries, classroom observations, and semi-structured individual interviews. The following sub-sections elaborate on the five instruments utilised in this study and discuss their suitability for investigating the research questions based on their respective features.

3.2.3.1   Group Interviewing

Group interviewing is considered one technique for collecting effective data for educational research in collective settings (Cohen et al., 2018). Cohen et al. (2018) clarify that group interviewing can clarify peoples' different opinions, bringing them together in one meeting. The focus of analysis in this particular type of research instrument is on the collective perspective of the whole group rather than the individual perspective (Cohen et al., 2018). This type of research instrument is used to capture a unified group response regarding the variations of standpoints among the group members (Cohen et al., 2018). It generates a broader range of responses and is time-efficient compared with individual interviews (Leshem, 2012). Further details about why this type of research instrument was employed and when and how it was employed with the attempt made to address its drawbacks are provided in Sections 3.7.2 and 3.7.3.1, respectively.

3.2.3.2   Focus Group Conversations

Focus group discussions encourage 'dialogic reflection' (Mann and Walsh, 2013, p.297), in which participants consider their colleagues' perspectives, maintaining a continuous critical questioning of their practice. This social interaction within the same group of participants enables them to articulate their perspectives and construct meaning (Schensul, 1999) with the possibility that this process could refine their views (Hennink, 2014). This adds significant value to focus group discussions on the present study in that all participants mutually contributed views, as the teachers shared their thoughts while listening to the other's points of view.

Another value of a focus group is the interactive nature of the conversation, which challenges rationalisations and requires justifications and focused explanations. This thereby uncovers various aspects and complexities of issues that are usually not present when interviews are conducted with individual participants (Hennink, 2014). Focus group conversations are more likely to elicit replies from participants and enhance the quality of the output (Greenbaum, 1999).

Another critical point in group discussions is that they can quickly generate a wide variety of data (Hennink, 2014). Fern (1982) found that a single focus group discussion can raise about 70% of the issues that a series of in-depth interviews with the same number of people might generate. This indicates that a large amount of data can quickly be generated through focus group conversations. For this reason, focus groups were selected as the primary tool for data collection, while interviews were to be a supplementary tool for data collection (see Section 3.2.3.5), considering the time for the data to be collected within six months.

Focus group discussions usually take place either online or in person. However, virtual focus groups have evolved under the influence of technological improvements. These online meetings offer outstanding characteristics, such as gathering people from different locations. Since participants in this study were from two campuses that were distant from each other, face-to-face gathering was not an option for them at all, even though online meetings have several drawbacks.

The disadvantages of online sessions would make it harder for a moderator to observe nonverbal communications, for example, body language or facial expressions, as these can provide helpful information and visual cues that aid in directing a discussion and stimulating contributions (Hennink, 2014). Second, there is a possibility that the members of a virtual focus group will become distracted or withdraw from the discussion because they are doing other things at the same time (Hennink, 2014). Third, virtual focus groups also depend on members' proficiency with technology and are at risk of being disrupted by technological difficulties (Hennink, 2014). Even though remote meetings have such disadvantages, they have become popular and save time and money (Hennink, 2014) and are considered more convenient to the participants of this study. Further details about why this type of research instrument was employed and when and how it was employed, including the attempt made to address its drawbacks, are provided in Sections 3.7.2 and 3.7.3.2, respectively.

3.2.3.3   Audio Diaries

Diaries are normally used as a self-report method that minimises inaccuracies caused by memory lapse (Van Eerde et al., 2005). Participants record their entries based on recent events rather than trying to recall distant ones (Van Eerde et al., 2005). Bolger et al. (2003) clarified three

categories of diaries: interval contingent, signal contingent, and event contingent. Interval contingent diaries encourage participants to report on their experiences at a particular time regularly. Signal contingent diaries depend on signalling devices, e.g., a pager, to remind participants to provide their diary reports. Event contingent diaries encourage participants to provide a reflective audio self-report whenever a specific event occurs.

However, Fry (1988) identifies several weaknesses of diaries. First, consistency in terms of time and depth cannot be ensured. Second, subjects might guess the researcher's intentions and simply present what they assume that the researchers are after or attempt to present themselves in a positive light. Third, the participants' consciousness of behaviour might change their perception of reactions. Furthermore, McKay (2009) argues that analysing diary data is quite challenging due to the large amount of data generated. The data should not be summarised and reported but analysed for content, context, and form. Finally, Dörnyei (2007) clarifies a significant limitation of diaries, which requires participants to be literate and comfortable with writing diaries. This could be challenging, particularly for participants who may feel uneasy about expressing themselves in written forms (Dörnyei, 2007). However, Gibson (1995) suggests that maintaining a video or audio diary instead could address this particular challenge. Further details about why this type of research instrument and when and how it was employed, including the attempt made to address its drawbacks, are provided in Sections 3.7.2 and 3.7.3.2, respectively.

3.2.3.4   Classroom Observations

Classroom observation is widely acknowledged as the most effective way of exploring teachers' instructional behaviours (Opper, 2019). It is a powerful tool for gaining insights into situations, as great care should be given to the actions of teachers and students as they occur in real time (Spada, 2017).

Classroom observation allows researchers to analyse what actually happens during lessons, rather than relying solely on teachers' or students' reports (Dörnyei, 2007). It also involves systematic recording of teacher and learner behaviours, instructional procedures, and patterns of interaction (Dörnyei, 2007). It focuses not only on what is taught, but how it is delivered, looking at things like classroom organisation, teacher movement, the structuring of activities, and affective responses such as praise and other forms of help or even feedback (Spada, 2017). These observable actions play a key role in shaping classroom climate, influencing the amount of control that learners are given to actively articulate their thoughts and exercise autonomy.

Classroom observation offers valuable ways to examine how teachers and students interact within the learning environment (Spada, 2017). It brings valuable insight into the lived reality of

classroom life (Dörnyei, 2007). It enables researchers to capture the subtle and often unspoken cues that shape teacher-student relationships and influence learning processes (Spada, 2017).

Data for classroom observation could be collected through distinct methods, structured and unstructured observation (Dörnyei, 2007). Dörnyei (2007) explains that the difference between these two types is similar to the distinction between quantitative and qualitative research methods. Structured observation focuses on specific objectives and uses predefined categories, while unstructured observation involves watching events as they occur to decide their importance for the study (Dörnyei, 2007). Structured methods usually use observation forms, while unstructured methods rely on detailed written notes, sometimes supported by diagrams or maps. These methods are not entirely separate but exist on a spectrum, and in practice, they are often combined. Further details about why this type of research instrument was employed and when and how it was employed, including the attempt made to address its drawbacks, are provided in Sections 3.7.2 and 3.7.3.3, respectively.

In this study, the framework for examining classroom practices combined structured and unstructured observational approaches. It used both free documentation and predefined categories to capture key elements of classroom behaviour, as it focused on particular categories in relation to LA (See Section 3.7.3.3).

3.2.3.5 Individual Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews have a dynamic nature (Dörnyei, 2007) that helps in covering planned areas of investigation and, at the same time, allows interviewees to address unanticipated issues. This is because, as Richards (2009) explains, the participant is guided to cover essential topics of interest in a semi-structured interview. In contrast to an open-ended interview, the interviewer is guided by the participant. Thus, using the interview guide as 'a spoken survey,' broadly speaking, enables researchers to ask the same questions to effectively generate data (Roulston, 2011).

Furthermore, semi-structured interviews indicate the important role of subjectivity in the research process. Croker (2009) asserts that the researcher in a qualitative study is the primary 'research instrument.' An advantage of this, as Croker (2009) mentions, is that researchers can be responsive and adaptive to their participants and the research setting, which helps to explore anticipated avenues of the research. Thus, the data analysis in qualitative research is called interpretative analysis (Croker, 2009). However, a disadvantage of researchers' interpretations is the danger of introducing bias (Davis, 1995). Further details on attempts to minimise potential bias are given in Section 3.9. Further details about why this type of research instrument and when

and how it was employed, including the attempt made to address its drawbacks, are provided in Sections 3.7.2and 3.7.3.4, respectively.

Section 3.2.3 briefly describes the research methodology, particularly the focus of an investigation, its aims, and methods to obtain data. These instruments offer a wide range of data that may be analysed and interpreted to obtain valuable insights and effectively achieve the research objectives (Heigham and Croke, 2009). These methods served as illustrative examples facilitating a comprehensive examination of a particular situation.

The selection of research instruments in this study was carefully considered regarding their key characteristics and relevance within the methodological framework. Finally, this triangulated approach of the utilised tools together ensures that the collected data contributed to the trustworthiness of the research study and confirms the extent to which the results obtained from these inquiries can be depended upon (Weir and Roberts, 1994). The following section presents further details about the procedures followed to pilot the research instruments.

3.3   Piloting the Research Instruments

Piloting the research tools is highly recommended before launching and for the research tools to be tested (Dörnyei, 2007; Weir and Roberts, 1994). This not only ensures that the tools work well but also that the overall data collection process is effective, as this could help detect ambiguity and different interpretations (Cohen et al., 2018). This research study tool, focus group conversations, workshop materials, diary questions, and semi-structured interview items had been piloted by several professionals in this area.

The piloting took two forms. The first form was a 'Tool Review Pilot' in which all instruments, excluding the workshop materials, had been sent to seven colleagues in the field. All volunteers who reviewed these research methods had master's or PhD degrees in applied linguistics. On the other hand, the workshop materials were sent to two different reviewers who were specialists in the field of LA with a PhD degree. An online meeting was conducted with each of these two reviewers. All comments received from both groups were considered, and modifications were made accordingly, ensuring the quality of all instruments and items.

The second type of piloting was the 'Pre-study Pilot,' which took place after the first type of piloting had been completed. All instruments, except the fourth, the classroom observation, were tested on one volunteer to collect preliminary data and identify any potential problems or improvements for suitability purposes. In other words, this particular type of piloting was conducted to examine the suitability of instrument items, whether too easy or too complicated,

and whether respondents could comprehend items. However, the fourth phase, 'individual interviews,' was conducted with this volunteer and two others, for a total of three.

Piloting was conducted in this way as research tools 'must be valid' (Weir and Roberts, 1994, p.138), which means they measure what it is intended (Hughes, 2020) to answer the research questions; 'otherwise there is no point in collecting the data' (Weir and Roberts, 1994, p.138). Moreover, the duration of the two piloting processes covered a period of four months, from August to November 2022. This is to ensure adequate piloting, which was a primary concern for this study, as the literature indicates that the absence of such sufficient piloting may result in gathering data of incredibly limited value (Weir and Roberts, 1994).

It is worth noting that after launching the main study, the original design of the workshops slightly changed. Four workshops were to be conducted; however, a fifth workshop was later designed and added (see Section 3.7.3.2). The fifth workshop was sent to a colleague for tool review pilot only, the first form of piloting. This is because of time issues, as this study received approval for a limited time. The following section describes the context of this study and the participants.

3.4   Research Setting and Criteria for Participation and Selection

3.4.1   Research Setting and Criteria for Participation

This study was conducted with six EFL teachers at a Saudi university in the middle region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), particularly at two different campuses in two different towns. This Saudi university has multiple campuses located in rural areas across the kingdom. At the time of data collection, this university had 21 campuses; some of these campuses are for males, and others are for females, as these campuses segregate genders. These campuses have different faculties e.g., the Faculty of Humanities and Sciences. The Faculty of Humanities and Sciences has different departments; among these is the Department of English Language and Literature, and this is the targeted context for this study to be conducted.

The Department of English Language and Literature has several characteristics that satisfy this study's primary criteria to refine the convenience sample, as participants were accepted using a combination of purposeful and convenience sampling (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). As Merriam and Tisdell (2016) highlight, qualitative research typically focuses on an in-depth exploration of a bounded system. This study has three main criteria. First, participants had to be in-service English language teachers. Second, their length of teaching experience is not less than five years. Lastly, the classrooms should be held face-to-face.

The reason for the choice of experienced in-service teachers with five years of teaching minimum as target participants was their experience. That means that what they did in classrooms was

based on what they genuinely believed based on their experience, as mentioned in the literature review (see Section 2.5.2), that teachers' beliefs could be shaped through years of experience as both teachers and learners. The third condition of conducting the study in a face-to-face environment was the possibility of understanding the general atmosphere, the types of interactions, and specific details that could be noticed during classroom observations in such a context and might not be clearly evident in an online setting. For this reason, one participant's classroom was not observed because her classes were to be carried out online (see Section 3.7.3.3). This situation was not the case when she expressed interest in participating.

3.4.2   Participant Selection and Information

The six EFL teachers who participated in this study were from two different campuses. This decision was made due to difficulties in finding enough volunteers from just one campus. To address this challenge, the research methodology was adjusted to include participants from different campuses within the same university, ensuring that the study could proceed effectively. This approach highlights the importance of adaptability in research when dealing with unexpected obstacles, ensuring the study remains valid and produces reliable results.

However, different procedures were followed to reach the sample size. The heads of three English departments at three separate campuses among the 21 campuses at the same university were contacted by phone or email, depending on their preference. One of the three campus teachers was willing to participate based on feedback from the three heads of these departments, either oral or written. Consequently, another head of the English Language and Literature department was contacted on a fourth campus. Three of the 13 English teachers at the fourth campus agreed to participate in the study. This totalled four, where five or six were at least needed in case someone withdrew. Thus, a fifth campus at a different location was contacted, and four more teachers expressed interest in joining the CPD and the study's various phases. This resulted in eight volunteered participants from three distinct campuses in three different towns.

After receiving initial acceptance from these eight EFL teachers, as initially reported by the heads of these three campuses, the heads of these three English departments were emailed a link to share with the participants. This link led to a brief Qualtrics survey that included an information sheet, a consent form for participants to sign, and a request for their contact details if they agreed to join a WhatsApp group. The WhatsApp group was used to facilitate communication with participants during the study. For example, the workshop links had been sent to this WhatsApp group in addition to prompts to maintain reflective audio diaries (see Section 3.7.3.2). However, two withdrew before joining any CPD workshops; one was because of her lack of ability to use technology. She was unable to join the first session and decided not to participate. This resulted

in six English language teachers from two different female campuses in two different towns, as shown in Table 3-2 below.

Table 3-2   A Summary of the Participants' Details

Participants	Campus	Major	Status	Years of Experience in KSA
Bayan	1st campus	Linguistics and Translation	Attended All Phases	14 Years
Deem	1st campus	Applied Linguistics and Literature	Attended All Phases	13 Years
Afaf	1st campus	Applied Linguistics and Literature	Attended All Phases	12 Years
Mabrukah	2nd campus	Applied Linguistics and Literature	Attended All Phases	12 Years
Rabab	2nd campus	English Literature	Attended All Phases	5 Years
Ehsan	2nd campus	English Literature	Attended Phase-1	7 Years

Table 3-2 above shows the volunteered participants' names; however, these were not their real names. All participants' names were replaced with pseudonyms to ensure confidentiality. They were named as Bayan, Deem, Afaf, Rabab, Mabrukah and Ehsan. The first three participants listed in the table above were from the first campus, and the following three participants were from the second campus. They brought diverse academic interests, one specializing in applied linguistics and translation, two in English literature, and three in linguistics and literature. One participant withdrew after the first phase of the study, but all others participated in all five phases.

The data of the participant who withdrew after the first phase was used, as she consented. However, while five participants participated and completed the following phases, this number was considered good. This sample size aligns with Creswell's (2014) recommendation for such phenomenological research, which generally involves three to ten participants. It is considered a reasonable number in such a study involving 'interactive discussion,' as Hennink (2014) described that the ideal number of participants could be between five to ten.

It is worth mentioning that none of the participants was a Saudi EFL teacher. They were of three different nationalities: Sudanese, Egyptian, and Indian. Each was above 35 years old with a minimum of five years of teaching experience in the Saudi higher education system, particularly

in the public sector. Although none of the participants were Saudi nationals, they shared familiarity with the Saudi curriculum, classroom management in a Saudi context, and navigating cross-cultural communication with Saudi students and administrations.

Participants also received their education in their homelands, none from a Western country. In this study, 'non-Western' refers to educational systems rooted in cultures with hierarchical social structures as opposed to Western individualistic assumptions and pedagogical models (Pokhrel, 2016). This distinction is crucial to consider when analysing how teachers navigate concepts such as learner autonomy in Saudi classrooms.

Finally, teachers in these classrooms use English as a medium of instruction, with allowance for translanguaging, particularly in Arab teachers' classrooms. This means that this is not the case with the teacher from India, as English was the only language used in her classes with her students as a medium of instruction.

3.5   Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Workshops

There were five workshops. The sessions, which the researcher led, lasted 60 to 90 minutes each, as the suitable suggested time, as confirmed in the literature, 'to gain a broad range of views on the research topic' is 'over a 60–90-minute period ...to create an environment where participants feel comfortable to express their views' (Hennink et al., 2011, p.136). These workshops took place online via Microsoft Teams instead of face-to-face, based on the change being made to reach participants from two different campuses (see Section 3.4.2). These workshops took place within three months, commencing in December 2022 and ending by March 2023 (see Table 3-3). They were carried out during the weekdays, after work, and in the evening time, considering participants' preferences, in line with the principle that practical arrangements significantly influence teachers' engagement with CPD (see Section 2.6.10)

In the first session, the main focus was on the definition of LA. The teachers were exposed to different definitions of LA, including Holec's (1981) often-cited definition and others such as Dickinson's (1987), Little's (1991), Dam's (1995), and Benson's (2010). Each definition was selected for a specific purpose to build a comprehensive understanding of the concept and its classroom implications. However, it is important to note that each definition served to highlight different dimensions of LA that are crucial for shaping teachers' knowledge and practice. For example, Holec's (1981) definition of LA was shared to emphasize the importance of involving learners actively in both the cognitive and metacognitive processes of their learning. It introduces the idea that autonomy is not just about completing tasks independently, but about learners having a greater ownership over their learning journey and being able to make decisions in this regard.

Dickinson's (1987, p.11) definition was also shared to highlight that fostering LA within classroom settings is different from independent, isolated learning. In classrooms, while learners are encouraged to make decisions, the teacher plays a crucial role in gradually supporting and scaffolding the development of autonomy. On the other hand, Little's (1991) definition which emphasised that LA is a capacity for taking control of learning was shared to shift the focus from autonomy as a state learners either have or do not have, towards understanding it as a skill or competence that can be developed progressively over time through intentional teaching practices.

The purpose of sharing Dam's (1995) definition was to highlight Dam's argument that willingness to take responsibility is a significant factor for learners to become autonomous. The inclusion of this perspective was to underline the affective dimension of LA, namely, that students must not only be capable of taking responsibility but must also be willing and motivated to do so. This introduces the importance of creating classroom environments that nurture learners' confidence and readiness to take on more responsibility.

Finally, the reason for sharing Benson's (2010) definition was to highlight that the term control best describes the relationship between students and the learning process. Benson's (2010) definition positions autonomous learners as those who are in control of important aspects of their learning. The use of Benson's work was to broaden the discussion, encouraging teachers to think critically about the power dynamics in the classroom and to consider how they can support students in gaining control over significant elements of their education, rather than simply offering surface-level choices.

Together, these definitions were presented to offer multiple, complementary perspectives on LA. The goal was to enable teachers to critically engage with the concept, reflect on their own classroom practices, and consider how they might support the gradual development of autonomy in their specific teaching contexts (see Appendix B Workshop 1).

The second workshop focused on the teachers' roles in the traditional classroom and a learner-centred environment. They were introduced to the teachers' roles in each teaching and learning context and were provided with definitions and explanations. For example, the role of the teacher in teacher-led and learner-led classrooms was presented. However, only three roles of the teacher in the learner-led classrooms were presented: the facilitator, counsellor, and manager. However, the focus on these three was for particular reasons. First, the facilitator role has been emphasised as the most important role among the rest if the aim is to provide a learner-centred and autonomous learning context (Harden and Lilley, 2018). The other two roles are asserted as they concern the provided knowledge, the type of interaction between the teacher and students, and issues related to learners' learning progression. Second, based on the literature review that

resulted in a lack of LA promotion, focusing only on these three roles at the early stages of CPD seems reasonable. If CPD is continuous at later stages, the provision of the rest would be beneficial. However, during this session, the teachers had an in-depth discussion about their current roles and what other teacher roles could be applied within their context, providing reasons for their answers.

The focus of Workshop 2 was to discuss the influence of teachers' roles in the type of classroom, whether teacher-led or learner-led. It highlights how a teacher's role as a facilitator creates conditions for meaningful communication in the classroom, an approach that reflects a broader shift in language education from method-driven instruction to interaction-led teaching. As Slimani-Rolls and Kiely (2019) note, teachers are increasingly encouraged to draw on principles of communicative language teaching that promote student engagement, authentic dialogue, and emergent learning opportunities within real-time classroom discourse (see Appendix B Workshop 2).

The third workshop focused on shared leadership and learners' readiness to take control, or some control, over their learning. Based on their perspectives, the teachers were involved in discussions about their learners, such as their students' current readiness to take control. They were asked about the kind of support they could provide and the possibility of developing teaching strategies that could enhance the promotion of LA.

The purpose of Workshop 3 was to highlight the classroom as a social space shaped not only by pedagogical aims but also by the relationships, identities, and interactions that unfold within it. As Slimani-Rolls and Kiely (2019) emphasise, classrooms are complex environments where agency can and should be shared between teachers and students. Building on this understanding, the workshop aimed to encourage teachers to engage more openly with their learners, not simply as recipients of instruction, but as participants in shaping their own learning experiences. Teachers were invited to reflect on their willingness and capacity to listen to students' perspectives, respond to their evolving needs, and provide meaningful opportunities for them to make decisions about classroom activities and learning goals. By promoting this sense of shared agency, Workshop 3 supported a shift from teacher-directed instruction toward a more collaborative, autonomy-supportive classroom culture (see Appendix B Workshop 3).

The fourth session focused on the relationship between teacher autonomy and learner autonomy, and participants were asked to share their thoughts on a possible link between them. They also shared several definitions of teacher autonomy regarding individual and collaborative work. The session also opened discussions regarding constraints and what strategies for fostering LA within the existence of constraints could be possible.

Slimani-Rolls and Kiely (2019) identify one of the key roles of teachers as that of independent participants within the learning community. The notion of teachers as independent participants continues to shape contemporary thinking around teacher development and autonomy-supportive pedagogy. Workshop 4 was designed with this role in mind, encouraging teachers to view themselves not merely as implementers of external expectations, but as professionals with the capacity to shape their classroom environment, even within institutional, curricular, or cultural constraints. The workshop invited teachers to reflect on their own values and teaching styles, and to identify spaces within their daily practice where they could promote learner autonomy in ways that were both contextually appropriate and personally meaningful. Rather than advocating for large-scale reform, the session focused on small, deliberate pedagogical choices that reflect teacher agency. In doing so, it reinforced the idea that fostering autonomy does not require a radical overhaul of practice, but a thoughtful reorientation towards shared responsibility, student voice, and negotiated learning within the teacher's own area of influence (see Appendix B Workshop 4).

The fifth workshop was developed based on the data information from phase one up to this point of phase two to provide a suitable session for them that matches their needs. All recorded meetings and audio diaries were reviewed as it was seen as essential to understand what beliefs teachers had in resisting the feasibility of LA. It had been seen after reviewing that teachers held several misconceptions about LA and were not sure about its implementations in their different fields of specialisation, e.g., translation, English literature, etc. Thus, this was the basis of the content of the fifth workshop, which focused on the misconceptions of LA and its implementation in different classes. The principles related to LA promotion in language teaching and learning and some practical applications were shared. A framework named role-shifting was shared (see Appendix B Workshop 5).

The purpose of Workshop 5 was to respond to the diverse understandings teachers held about LA, and to explore how it could be practically implemented across disciplines such as translation and English literature. The design of this session was informed by three key principles highlighted in the literature review (Section 2.6). First, aligning with Principle 3, the workshop built on teachers' existing practices and cognitions by drawing on insights gathered during Phase 1 and the early part of Phase 2 (including Workshops 1–4 and reflective audio diaries). This ensured that the session addressed teachers' expressed concerns and professional realities. Second, reflecting Principle 8, the workshop was designed to offer structured, ongoing support to help teachers engage with practical strategies for promoting LA, recognising that pedagogical change requires sustained guidance. Third, the design was guided by the principle that effective CPD must be grounded in an understanding of the individual, institutional, and broader socio-cultural contexts in which teachers operate (Principle 2). By responding to participants' needs and

professional environments, the workshop aimed to present strategies that were both relevant and realistically applicable. Consistent with Slimani-Rolls and Kiely's (2019) and Smith's (2003b) emphasis on negotiating what is feasible within local contexts, participants were encouraged to critically reflect on their current practices and collaboratively explore context-sensitive approaches to LA. Relevant theoretical principles were introduced, along with a practical framework for role-shifting, which was further developed later in the programme (See Section 5.7). Table 3-3 provides details on the workshop's titles and exact dates.

Table 3-3   Details of the Workshops

No	The content of workshops	Dates
Workshop 1	Introduction to the concept of 'learner autonomy'	Tuesday 27 December 2022
Workshop 2	The role of the teacher	Tuesday 10 January 2023
Workshop 3	Shared leadership between the teacher and students	Tuesday 24 January 2023
Workshop 4	The relation between teacher autonomy and learner autonomy	Tuesday 7 February 2023
Workshop 5	Misconceptions of learner autonomy and practical implementations	Monday 13 March 2023

As is evident in Table 3-3, the first four workshops took place every other Tuesday, in weeks 4,6,8, and 10, during the second semester of the academic year 2022- 2023, resulting in two weeks between every workshop. The fifth workshop occurred during the third semester of the academic year 2022- 2023, resulting in four weeks between Workshop 4 and Workshop 5. This is because the fifth workshop was not originally part of the research design. However, based on the participants' request and initial analysis of the data (see Section 3.7.3.2), it was designed to be conducted with the participants. Another reason for conducting the fifth workshop a month later was based on the participant's suggestion, as they were busy with final preparations and exams. They mentioned their preference for the fifth workshop to be conducted during the third semester, again in alignment with Principle 10 (see Section 2.6.10).

During these four weeks, the researcher had enough time not only to develop the fifth workshop but also to send it to a reviewer who is a PhD candidate in applied linguistics. While the previous workshops were all reviewed by specialists in LA, this time, the fifth workshop was not sent to colleagues who are experts in the field of LA. This is because their response may take time, and time was critical at this stage of data collection, as detailed in Section 3.3. Further details about the data collection are presented in the following section.

The whole series of workshops were with particular objectives (see Appendix B) in alignment to CPD principles, particularly Principle 1 (see Section 2.6.1). Furthermore, aligned with the principle that CPD is more effective when it is a social and collaborative process (see Section 2.6.6), the workshops encouraged teachers to actively engage in discussions about LA. They participated in reflective group activities that fostered dialogue, shared experiences, and collective meaning-making around the concept

They were delivered in a teacher-centred manner to produce knowledge that is directly connected to classroom practices and can guide future actions (Slimani-Rolls and Kiely, 2019). Slimani-Rolls and Kiely (2019) critique traditional research-led approaches to teacher education, highlighting that such approaches often promote practices grounded in learning theories. Slimani-Rolls and Kiely (2019) question whether the role of research should be to dictate teachers' actions or simply to provide illustrative examples of what might be effective in certain contexts.

While Slimani-Rolls and Kiely's (2019) perspective challenges the prescriptive nature of theory-driven training and calls for a more nuanced understanding of research as a supportive, rather than directive, tool in informing classroom practice, the conducted workshops still retained a strong element of theory-driven instruction. One justification for using a theory-driven instruction in this study is that it offers a clear and structured framework capable of supporting enhancement in teaching knowledge and practices, even within a limited timeframe. Research has shown that short-term professional development initiatives grounded in theoretical foundations can lead to meaningful changes in teacher behaviour and classroom dynamics (Rach et al., 2013). Moreover, the limited teacher agency observed in the classroom further justifies the need for a more guided and theory-based CPD design, as it provides the necessary structure and support for teachers working within constrained environments. Additionally, LA is not yet widely practiced in classrooms, making it unrealistic to begin with classroom-based practices at this stage; however, future research may benefit from such an approach, particularly longitudinal studies (see Section 6.5). Longitudinal studies that will be conducted in similar educational contexts and last for more than two years could start with training teachers about action research before engaging them in such a process, as Borg (2023) recommended (see Section 2.6.6). Finally, it is worth clarifying that while workshops retained an element of theory-driven instruction, they did incorporate a sense of autonomy by responding to teachers' demands and needs, as illustrated in the discussion of Workshop 5 (See Section 3.7.3.2).

3.6   The Limitations of the Workshop Design

In spite of thorough and committed planning toward supporting teachers' professional growth, the CPD workshop series still has some shortcomings that are worthy of thoughtful consideration.

One of the most prominent limitations of these workshops stems from the fact that I took complete responsibility for their design and subsequent delivery, regardless of the fact that two specialized reviewers in LA gave feedback on the workshop design (see Section 3.3). The planning and design were done in relative isolation and with no prior training on how to act as a teacher educator, while training is seen as crucial regardless of the years of teaching experience (Borg, 2023). The reviewers certainly offered valuable suggestions for some of the session designs. However, there might be a lack of many helpful insights that could have been incorporated. If there were collaboration with other teacher educators in the field of LA, the design process would add more value by ensuring that challenges and biases would be tackled more effectively.

Another limitation that has been noticed is the lack of certain practical constraints. For example, Workshop 4 attempted to highlight the need to create a space where teachers practice their skills and learners start exercising learner independence. Though the workshop effectively demonstrates the theoretical link between teacher autonomy and learner autonomy and clarifies some ways to foster autonomy among students, its design remained abstract. For example, a shift, moving from theory to practice, would have strengthened the workshops' impact.

Another limitation is the reliance on the assumption that awareness and knowledge of LA would lead to LA implementation. The workshop would have had a greater impact if it had had a more practical component. For example, the session could have been more focused on classroom outcomes rather than theory by asking participants to design detailed, context-specific plans to help foster LA. It also would have been valuable to incorporate a follow-up process into the workshop series, with later sessions revisiting these plans, giving teachers a chance to share what they tried, what challenges came up, and work together to find practical solutions. This would not only help connect the workshops more directly to everyday classroom practice but also encourage a habit of professional discussion and hands-on problem solving. However, setting up this kind of system would have required additional training for teachers to understand how to do some sort of action research (Borg, 2023), and given the six-month timeframe for data collection in this study, it was not possible to implement it within the available period. One reason for this, involving teachers in research needs specific training and ongoing support, as highlighted by Borg (2023), who considers these as principles of CPD (see Section 2.6.6 and 2.6.8).

Another example is of Workshop 2, which was approached by promoting the idea of teachers as facilitators and learners as active participants. While this focus aligns well with the teaching practices that emphasize active and autonomous learning, the workshops did not give enough attention to how participants could realistically apply these ideas in their own classrooms, especially in settings where traditional, teacher-centred instruction is still the norm. Without enough scaffolding, practical guidance, or clear examples of best practices, some teachers may have found these shifts either too vague or simply unapplicable in their specific teaching contexts. A more supportive approach, starting from classroom practice, could have included hands-on modelling of facilitation strategies, active simulations of teacher-student dynamics, and an in-depth exploration of the cultural and systemic factors that either support or obstruct such changes.

3.7   Data Collection: Research Phases and Procedures

The data was collected in five phases, and several procedures were performed using the earlier mentioned methods, in Section 3.2.3: group interviewing, focus group conversations, reflexive audio diaries, classroom observations, and individual semi-structured interviews, see Table 3-4.

Table 3-4   The Five Phases of the Study and the Research Instruments Used

Phase	Instruments Used	Purpose of Phase	No. of actions	Date
Phase 1	Group interviewing	To understand the contextual practices before the CPD workshops	-One Group interview	During the 2nd semester/ 20 December 2022
Phase 2	-FG conversations during workshops -Reflective audio diaries	To enable discussions, reflections, and sharing of experiences during CPD workshops and after	-Four FG conversations -Four responses from each participant after every workshop (two-week time)	During the 2nd semester/ 27 December 2022- 21 February 2023
Phase 3	FG conversations	To address participants' specific needs	-One FG -One response from each participant after the fifth workshop (two-week time)	During the 3rd semester/ 13-27 March 2023
Phase 4	Classroom observations	-To observe teachers' actual practices -To capture anything that may be captured -To have an in-depth contextual understanding	-Three visits to four teacher's classrooms *One participant was not observed	During the 3rd semester/ April- May 2023
Phase 5	Interviews	-To be able to monitor changes in comparison with early phases -To ask for clarifications related to issues raised during the study	-One for every participant	During the 3rd semester/ May 2023

As clarified in this table, group interviewing occurred once during the first phase. FG conversations took place four times during the second phase and one time during the third. Audio diaries were used as a supplementary tool during the second and third phases. The fourth phase used classroom observations, and the fifth phase involved an individual interview with every participant.

The procedures during these phases all involved planning, action, reflection, and evaluation. The underlying rationale for these five phases relies on the characteristics of the methods and the nature of the study. The following sub-sections provide the general common procedures that relate to all phases (Section 3.7.1), the purpose of every phase, including justification of the selected method at every particular phase (Section 3.7.2), and how the study was carried out through the study's phases (Section 3.7.3).

3.7.1   General Common Procedures in All Phases

All data collected during the study's phases through the above-mentioned instruments was conducted online except for classroom observation, which was carried out face-to-face. Additionally, all phases were audio-recorded, except the data gathered through classroom observations. These phases were recorded to help the researcher revisit any particular issue that appeared during data collection (Hennink, 2014). Furthermore, these phases were recorded to better understand each individual's thoughts and perspectives (Creswell, 2007).

Permission for recording was obtained before data collection as all participants agreed to the recording by signing a consent form with this particular procedure written in the consent form. All recordings were also transcribed, as detailed in Section 3.8.2, to capture and document the teachers' interactions, including their quick-fire comments, in greater detail than would be possible with notetaking as they could be revisited and also be quoted using participants' own words (Hennink, 2014). Regarding classroom observation, it is worth mentioning that video-recorded observations are sometimes needed because they help decode the contextual details of the observations (Cohen et al., 2018). However, there was no way to video record these classrooms for cultural reasons.

Audio recordings were not obtained either during classroom visits for two main reasons. First, the fourth phase, 'classroom observations,' included students who were not participants in this study. Second, it was difficult to obtain permission from all students in all these classrooms; as Hennink (2014) confirms, not all participants might give permission for audio-recording discussions, and notetaking could be a good alternative. For these two reasons, the decision was made to rely on only note-taking during this stage of data collection. Thus, the observed classrooms were documented in a written format as notetaking was applied. Detailed instances for the visited classes were written in text format during the visit, and any missing parts, due to the time-consuming nature of writing, were added immediately after the class. This is because certain details might be neglected or forgotten if they are not written during or immediately after the event in cases where researchers observe the classroom while presenting (Cohen et al., 2018).

Furthermore, the language used during the phases of the study was English, as English was the primary language used by participants. This choice was driven by the fact that one of the participants did not speak Arabic as her native language. Thus, English was used during the phases which involved all participants. Participants also used English during other instruments where data was collected individually. For example, when audio diaries were sent and during the individual interviews without prior planning, it came naturally.

Finally, the data in this study is collected entirely by the researcher herself by directly interviewing and observing the participants and by carrying out the workshops in phases 2 and 3, including enabling them to discuss and share their thoughts and encouraging them to reflect on every session through the audio diaries. However, the following section clarifies the purpose of every single phase, including the purpose of the selected instrument or instruments for each particular phase.

3.7.2   The Purpose of Every Single Phase

Every action taken during this study had a purpose. While the main goal of this thesis was to investigate the impact of CPD in teachers' knowledge and practices concerning the implementation of LA, every single phase had a different purpose that contributed to the main goal.

During Phase 1, group interviewing was employed as a form of needs analysis aimed to elicit detailed accounts that could assist in capturing complex and nuanced understandings of instructors' classroom experiences. At this phase, group interviewing was undertaken to collect a comprehensive understanding of the educational context in which this research was conducted regarding the promotion of LA among learners. This research method enabled the rapid gathering of different perspectives, providing a holistic picture of the setting, as highlighted in Section 3.2.3.1. Group interviewing also ensures the suitability of the prepared CPD workshops for participants (see Section 3.7.3.1).

During Phase 2 and Phase 3, two instruments were utilised: the FG conversations and the reflexive audio diaries. FG discussions took place during the CPD workshops because of their dialogic reflection nature, mentioned earlier in Section 3.2.3.2, which is encouraged in this study to prompt teachers' discussions and reflections. While workshops were in progress, discussions and reflections were enabled via focus group conversations.

The researcher led the group conversations and directed the discussion to encourage depth and breadth in the participants' responses. As Hennink (2014) indicates, this kind of discussion is necessary for capturing the type of data unique to this data collection method. These focus

discussions focused on some issues regarding the promotion of LA, as group discussions usually focus on a particular set of problems (Greenbaum, 1999; Hennink, 2014) to enhance teachers' awareness in this regard.

Audio Diaries, such as teachers' reports and reflections about their teaching knowledge and practices, were encouraged in this study as they might contribute to teachers' better understanding and insight into their classroom interaction and practices. These diaries were intended to motivate teachers to reflect continuously and consciously on their pedagogy and to gain a deeper understanding and insight into their classroom interactions and practices. Audio diaries also allowed the teachers to reflect on their teaching and about work that had been done previously. Receiving these audio diaries from teachers several times helped the researcher track teachers' reported speech. The teachers' responses to the questions mentioned above also helped the researcher gain a deeper understanding of what teachers believe in and how they behave in classrooms.

Phase 2 and Phase 3 could be regarded as the heart of this study, as these phases included the intervention, 'the CPD workshops', and the reflection cycles for teachers. It is the core of this study as it aims to influence teachers' knowledge and practices regarding the implementation of LA. The purpose of the preceding phase, namely Phase 1, was to investigate the suitability of the intervention and its designed materials, while the following phases, Phase 4 and Phase 5, were designed to validate the data gathered from the primary tool, 'FG conversations', with the supporting tools, as detailed below.

During Phase 4, classroom observations were conducted to provide greater validation. The data from all previous instruments during Phases 1, 2, and 3 were compared with the data from the classroom observations. This comparison helped to check their interpretations. These observations accompany in-depth investigations to document the complexity of the relationships between teachers' reported knowledge and beliefs and actual practices when interacting with their students. It also provided insight into the extent to which teachers' actual practices align with their reported practices.

During Phase 5, individual semi-structured interviews were conducted. These interviews helped in understanding teachers' ideas. They were used as a means of self-expression in a more private environment than FG conversations, where responses were shared with the whole group. Privacy was essential in this stage, and this type of exploration, as the researcher's goal was to hear about the teachers' authentic practices rather than what the other teachers might think is more acceptable and suitable for sharing. At the same time, interviews helped to uncover issues during group discussions or a particular action during the classroom visit, particularly issues or actions

related to every individual participant. The following section provides a detailed description of the procedures for collecting data through the mentioned instrument during the study's five phases.

3.7.3 The Procedures of Every Single Phase

3.7.3.1 Phase 1: Online Group Interviewing

The first phase of this study included only one research method: group interviewing. It took place online via Microsoft Teams on Tuesday, December 20th, 2022. Participants were sent a link through the WhatsApp group. They joined the online meeting via the link and were welcomed to the session. The teacher educator, who is also the researcher, introduced herself, and everyone did the same as they were from two different campuses and had never met before, despite working at the same university.

The teacher educator prepared a set of questions, which were presented to the participants via PowerPoint. These questions were introduced to stimulate the participants' discussion in a non-threatening way and encourage their participation without fear of being judged. The questions were carefully designed based on the literature and their design was under four sections. The first section was for general classroom features to gain general insights into classroom norms and issues. It relates to the nature of classroom interaction and is intended to give a deeper understanding of the classroom setting. The second section concerns LA and its feasibility, and the third section relates to managing classes and promoting student participation. The last section focuses on teachers' collective work and their autonomy (see Appendix A).

The purpose of using group interviewing at this initial phase, as highlighted in the preceding section, was to collect general accounts of practice, which may provide better insights into the general question, 'What are the teachers' pedagogic practices overall?' This group interview was designed with the goal of gathering information regarding local issues, such as the existence of traditional practices, as the results of several scholars have shown (Borg and Alshumaimeri, 2019; Manzano Vázquez, 2018a, 2020). A further purpose of this phase was to understand the role of the teacher in the classrooms and the type of interaction between teachers-to-students and students-to students.

The initial analysis of the data collected during this phase offered valuable clarification of the context, which confirms the alignment between the empirical findings (e.g., Borg and Alshumaimeri, 2019; Manzano Vázquez, 2018a, 2020) and the practical realities of the study context, regarding the lack of LA promotion in EFL classrooms (see 4.24.3 and 4.4). The initial analysis of the group interviewing used in this phase also ensured that the content of the CPD workshops was relevant to meeting participants' needs and achieving effective outcomes, as

these CPD workshops were developed based on insights drawn from the literature, and the initial analysis of this phase.

3.7.3.2 Phases 2 and 3: Online Focus Group Conversations and Audio Diaries

During the second phase, particularly before each workshop, a link to Microsoft Teams was sent through the WhatsApp group to join the online sessions. The first workshop took place on December 27th, 2022, and every other week another session took place until February 7th, 2023, which was the last session during the second phase, totalling four workshops (see Table 3-3).

Every workshop included FG discussions. The design of these FG discussions is a set of questions that encourage teachers to reflect on the content and share their feelings regarding it. For example, when the teacher educator presented certain content, she allowed discussions and reflections before moving to the following point. To clarify, when she shared the definitions of LA, she asked them about their reflections, e.g., which definition they agreed or disagreed with the most. These questions might be found in the Workshop Materials—Practice sections (see Appendix B).

After every workshop, teachers were asked to respond to several questions as a form of reflexive audio diaries (see 3.2.3.3). The first three questions of all audio diaries were precisely the same after each workshop, while the rest varied based on the content of each single session. The three repeated questions were as follows: 1) What did you learn that you are expected to learn? 2) What did you not learn that you expected to learn? 3) What did you learn that was unexpected? For further details about the other questions related to every workshop, see Appendix B. Appendix B shows Workshop 1, followed by the audio diaries of Workshop 1, then Workshop 2, followed by the audio diaries of Workshop 2, and so on.

However, teachers received the questions immediately after each session to reflect on within two weeks. They were asked to respond before the next session, without a specified duration. This meant they had up to two weeks to reply at their convenience, with no fixed time limit for each individual response. Some participants responded within seconds to each question, while others took longer; however, no single response took more than twenty minutes after each session.

Additionally, participants of this study were informed to send audio diaries or written ones if they preferred in order to avoid the time-consuming disadvantage of diaries as highlighted in Section 3.2.3.3. However, nearly all participants' responses were received in audio-recorded format except for one participant whose first diary was sent in written format.

The audio diaries in this study combined the three categories mentioned in Section 3.2.3.3. They motivate teachers to focus on their experiences and remind them to do so every two weeks

between one workshop and the following one. This timing meant they had enough time to respond to these questions. Before the following session, a reminder to respond to these questions was sent if not all participants had responded individually through WhatsApp.

By the end of phase two, participants indicated their desire to have a fifth workshop. Thus, the fifth workshop was not in the study's original design but was added to meet the study's goal of making the concept and its implications clear to all teachers. It was also based on teachers' demands as they expressed their desire to learn about fostering LA, particularly about practical LA implementation-related issues.

Considering the preliminary reviewed data that revealed that participants lacked an understanding of practical ideas for effective implementations and that they held several misconceptions that are seen as hindering the promotion of LA, as claimed in the literature (see Section 2.2.2.1), the decision to include this phase was made to address the issues raised related to LA implementation. However, this step was essential, as Barnard and Burns (2012) note that researchers need to be flexible if circumstances differ from the original plan. This phase addition confirms the flexibility of this methodology.

However, the second and third phases included three repetitive reflection cycles for teachers. These phases, as described in this section, included CPD workshops designed in a particular way, allowing discussions and reflections during every session and after, forming three repetitive cycles. The first cycle started when the teacher educator (the researcher) shared new concepts, ideas, or strategies with participants. This kind of knowledge is called content knowledge by Richardson (1996), also called received knowledge (Wallace, 1991) (see Section 2.5.1).

The second cycle began when the teacher educator stimulated deep discussion and encouraged justifications considering the current context. This step emphasised the roles of reflection and collaboration with others, and teachers, at this stage, were observed learning from each other. Teachers were indirectly encouraged to practice what they believed could be applicable in their classrooms, respecting their own personal theories. They were also welcome to share any similar experiences they had tried before or will be doing with other participants. This kind of knowledge is the pedagogical content knowledge (Richardson, 1996), also termed experiential knowledge (Wallace, 1991), and is that part of the teacher's knowledge base that Hiebert et al. (2002) highlight that it should be shared (see Section 2.5.1).

The third cycle involved the two weeks between each workshop and the next when teachers were given time to think about the new ideas (see Figure 3-2 for all cycles). To clarify, Cycles 1 and 2 took place repetitively during the first workshop, as an example, which means the teacher educator presented part of the contents followed by discussions and reflections and again

continued to provide some sort of the content followed by discussions and reflections, and so on until the end of the session. Cycle 3 took place immediately after the first workshop and ended before the second workshop, for example. The second workshop will also enable Cycles 1 and 2 to occur repeatedly during the workshop, with different content, while Cycle 3 retook place the period immediately after the second workshop and before the third workshop, and so on.
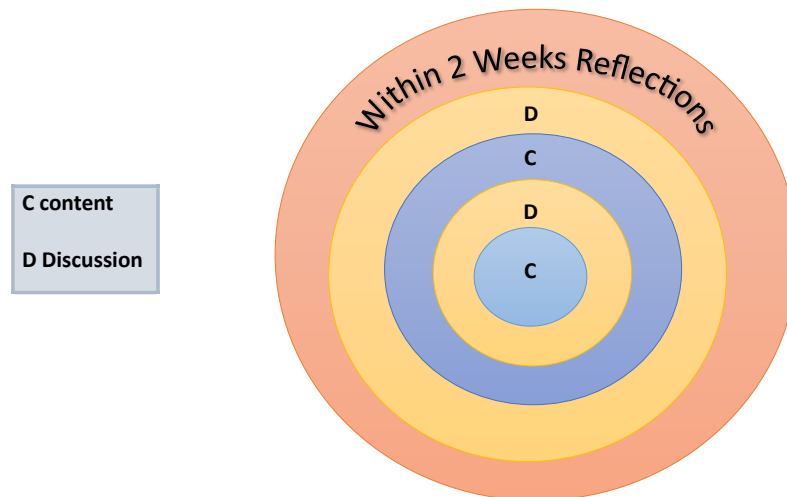
Figure 3-2   The Reflection Cycles for Teachers

Blue 'C' and yellow 'D' show the first and second cycles, which occur repetitively during each workshop. Every newly presented content 'C' in cycle 1 is followed by discussions 'D' in cycle 2, and again, new content is presented, followed by teachers' negotiations and discussions. These two cycles continue until the end of the session. The last cycle is the one in orange, as it occurs within two weeks, between every workshop and the next, except Workshop 4. This is because the period between Workshop-4 and Workshop-5 was four weeks, as detailed in Section 3.5. However, this particular procedure was done allowing time for reflections about the content and their own possible future practices because of the significance of reflections as confirmed in the literature review (see Section 2.5.3).

3.7.3.3   Phase 4: Face-to-Face Classroom Observations

Classroom conversations were conducted a month after the second phase. Three classroom observations were conducted with each teacher. The arrangement for the visit was planned with participants in advance, as it requires commuting back and forth between these campuses, which are one hour apart, and between the researcher's residence, which is five hours away. There was no fixed time for the visit duration, as it was based on the period of the lecture, and the researcher attended the whole period of lectures (see Table 3-5).

Kumar (2018, p.191) asserts the primary concern in qualitative research is to achieve saturation. While there is no particular perfect number for classroom visits, they need to continue until saturation is obtained. Kumar (2018) clarifies that reaching the saturation point means that the researcher is no longer getting new data about the explored situation or phenomenon from participants. In other words, to obtain sufficient data on what the researcher needed to understand.

This might not be achieved through one classroom visit, as Shaughnessy et al. (2002) illustrate that participants being observed might feel anxious, which might affect their behaviour. They may have better or worse performance than normal. Observing multiple classrooms for each teacher helped ensure that the influence of one-off events or unusual occurrences in a single class was minimised and that the data collected was consistent and reliable. This is precisely what happened, as data for the third classroom visit was quite similar to the previous two observed classrooms of every participant. See Table 3-5 for classroom' visit details.

Table 3-5   Observed Classrooms and Total Hours

Date	Lecture 1	Lecture 2	Lecture 3	Lecture 4	Campus
Wednesday 26 April 2023	Deem/ 8-10:30 Teaching Methods (ENG 460)	Bayan/ 10:30-12:10 Translation-2 (ENG 411)			1st Campus
Thursday 27 April 2023	Deem/ 8-10 Appreciated Poetry (ENG 231)				1st Campus
Sunday 30 April 2023		Bayan/ 9:00-10:50 Translation-1 (ENG 150)			1st Campus
Monday 1 May 2023	Rabab/ 8-10 Modern Poetry (ENG 432)	Mabrukah/ 10:30- 11:30 Phonetics (ENG 328)	Mabrukah/ 11:30-12:15 English 2 (NGM 141)	Mabrukah/ 12:30-1:00 Victorian Poetry (ENG 431)	2nd Campus
Tuesday 2 May 2023	Rabab/ 8-10 American Literature (ENG 371)	Rabab/ 10-11:20 British Novel (ENG 351)			2nd Campus
Wednesday 3 May 2023	Deem/ 9-10:30 Teaching Methods (ENG 460)	Bayan/ 11-12 Translation-2 (ENG 411)			1st Campus

It is worth mentioning that four teachers' classrooms were visited, while there was no class visit for the fifth participant, as shown in Table 3-5 above. That was because the classes of the fifth teacher during the third semester of the 2022-2023 academic year were all shifted online. This was not the situation when she agreed to participate. This research did not intend to observe online classes but face-to-face for the reasons mentioned earlier in the setting and participation (see Section 3.4.1). However, one of her classes was carried face-to-face.

This sole face-to-face class had not been visited as another issue occurred, preventing the researcher's visit. This face-to-face class was held with a different faculty, which the researcher had no approval to access. The researcher had no idea about her online classrooms and her classes conducted with the other department, not the English Language and Literature department, before being physically in the field. This situation with this lecturer was only for the third semester, as when she participated during the first, second, and third phases, the situation was the same as the rest of the participants, meeting the criteria mentioned in the research participants and setting discussed above (see 3.4.1).

The method employed for collecting data through classroom observation was a combination of structured and unstructured methods of observation. For example, there was no checklist or form for the classroom observation, but there was written documentation for almost every action taken during the classroom. While this could be regarded as an unstructured method of observation based on Dörnyei's (2007) clarification (see 3.2.3.4), it could also be regarded as structured in the sense that it does not only rely on free writing but also with a focus on teachers' actions, in particular, whether their actions supported LA implementations or not. For example, the concern here was to have a more grounded understanding of how teachers' actions create or impede autonomous learning environments. In other words, the focus was to explore whether the observed teacher behaviour tends to resort to authoritarian control or facilitate the emergence of learner active and independent behaviours. This follows systematic observation of teacher actions and focuses on teacher behaviour such as instruction, feedback, control, and the type of interaction, whether solely from the teacher to students or enabling students' interactions. This distinction is crucial when evaluating the extent to which classroom environments support or inhibit the development of LA.

At the same time, the observation documented every single action, and during data analysis, there was room for any issues related to the promotion of LA. Such openness allowed data to illustrate unfocused areas related to the main investigation yet related to the promotion of LA. In other words, the emerging data led to a focus on the factors that hindered the promotion of LA, leading to another research question, which was not originally designed as a research inquiry, as detailed in Sections 3.2.3 and 3.8.2.

3.7.3.4   Phase 5: Individual Semi-Structured Online Interviews

The individual interviews took place during the third semester of the 2022- 2023 academic year. They were the fifth research instrument used during the last phase of the study. One individual semi-structured online interview was conducted with every participant who completed all five phases of the study. They lasted 60 minutes with each teacher and were used to better understand each individual's thoughts and perspectives. The exact date and time for the interview had been arranged ahead of time with every participant, and a link to join the online interview on Microsoft Teams was sent individually to every participant via WhatsApp (see Table 3-6).

Table 3-6   Phase Five Timeframe

Date	Participant
Sunday: 21 May 2023	Afaf
Monday: 22 May 2023	Mabrukah
Monday :22 May 2023	Rabab
Tuesday: 23 May 2023	Deem
Tuesday: 23 May 2023	Bayan

The interview items were presented during the online meeting using PowerPoint, moving from section to section. These interviews were carried out informed by 1) pre-determined themes and 2) themes arising from discussions during CPD or by the observed lessons. For example, questions related to how teachers define LA and how they identify their roles and responsibilities as well as those of their students were associated with the pre-determined themes. This was not a random action but was planned to help assess the effectiveness and impact of the CPD workshops on teachers' knowledge and practices in relation to the implementation of LA.

Questions asking for further clarifications for the unclear reported data or understandable action, for instance, the avoidance of technology and the reason for intensive revisions as observed during visited lessons, were all related to themes arising from reported data or observed classrooms. These questions were designed to help the research maintain accuracy while analysing the data. This is also done for member checking to avoid possible bias as much as possible (see Section 3.9). This means that data collected from all instruments, group interviewing, focus group conversations, the audio diary, and classroom observations, were all

carefully reviewed to offer specific questions for each teacher. For this reason, interview items (see Appendix B) contained a unique section for each participant. Thus, a set of questions was prepared for every teacher based on the previous phases.

3.8   Data Analysis

3.8.1   Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA)

The preceding section provided an overview of the data collection instruments utilised in the primary study. In contrast, the present section delineates the methods employed to analyse the data to enhance the qualitative inquiry after it had been acquired. The study used QCA to analyse the data, and the analysis implemented both manual and software analysis, such as MaxQDA.

Mayring (2014) describes QCA as a set of techniques to develop a systematic analysis of qualitatively oriented text. However, Drisko and Maschi (2015) clarify that QCA not only analyses written texts as early definitions confirm but could be applied to audio recordings, images, television shows and movies, telephone calls, and any forms of electronic data, including social media. Drisko and Maschi (2015) also clarify that this analytical approach, from its name, does not employ a statistical analytical method as the basic content analysis approach does. However, this makes this approach similar to, yet distinct from, other qualitative research methods. For this reason, this study used QCA because of its several distinctive features from other forms of qualitative analysis that suit this particular research methodology.

One particular advantage of content-analytical procedures, compared to other qualitative approaches, is the embedding of the material within the communicative context. In other words, how analysis is done about a specific communication context (Mayring, 2014). For example, the design of the workshops enabled discussions, reflections, and communications to be between the teacher educator and participants and between one participant to another (Mayring, 2014) through focus discussions, as highlighted in Section 3.7.3.2.

Drisko and Maschi (2015, pp.2–4) argue that this type of analysis goes beyond 'the manifest content of a message,' as it goes beyond what is literally presented in a communication, enabling 'latent content' to be considered and analysed. Moreover, this analytical approach allows researchers to analyse data in different ways. However, it focuses on summarising and describing critical issues in a narrative manner (Drisko and Maschi, 2015).

Furthermore, QCA can also document participants' views, attitudes, and interests of individuals, small or large groups, and diverse cultural groups (Drisko and Maschi, 2015). This approach was used to present the data in a narrative description showing the impact of the CPD workshops on

teachers' knowledge and practice about the definition of LA, their roles and responsibilities as well as their assigned duties to their students. This way of describing the data in a narrative manner was also used when presenting the analysed data related to the second research question about the factors that hinder the promotion of LA in EFL classrooms.

Furthermore, QCA was selected as the analytical approach for this study because of the systematic rule-bound procedure this approach suggests. In contrast to free analysis, QCA emphasises that every single step and every decision to be made in the evaluation process should follow a systematic and well-established rule (Mayring, 2014) to be transparently reported (Drisko and Maschi, 2015). This systematic quality of content analysis is also reflected in its methods of 'dissection' (Mayring, 2014, p.39), e.g., how to approach the materials, which parts to analyse and in what sequence, and what conditions must be obtained for encoding to be carried out. This is an unrecognised strength of content analysis, enabling thorough and consistent analysis of the data, as Drisko and Maschi (2015) reported. The following section clarifies the procedures of this study's analysis in detail.

3.8.2 Analysis Procedures

The analysis procedures started with the 'transcription' of the audio recordings of all recorded phases as the first step, excluding the data from the field visit as they were documented in a written format (see Section 3.7.1). These transcripts followed a particular transcribing system in which transcripts were done word for word. Transcripts are presented in a simple and coherent text that is easy to understand yet represents the original utterances as they were produced, leaving out grammatical issues with no refining, as Braun and Clarke (2012) recommend keeping them as they are. This type of transcription is called a 'clean read or smooth verbatim transcript' (Mayring, 2014, p.45). Although this type of transcription does not include utterances like uhms, aha, hhhh, and decorating words such as right, you know, etc., this study's transcripts did include them. This study also showed deleted unnecessary utterances in exerts as [...]. Finally, the transcripts also deleted the repetitive words as they were seen as excessive.

The second stage began by using the transcripts as a base material, which was used to decide what to analyse in particular (Mayring, 2014). In other words, this stage required an exact description of what to analyse. It attempted to show the direction and goal of the analysis, which is the third step. This stage involves defining a specific line of inquiry or analytical direction, as the transcribed data cannot be interpreted without a clear focus (Mayring, 2014). This requires identifying and determining the purpose and goal of the analysis, such as understanding the subject matter, gaining insight into the author's perspective, or examining its impact on the audience. Positioning the text within a communication framework, such as 'Who says what, in

what way, to whom, and with what effect?' provides a structured approach to guide the analysis. This ensures the process is both systematic and goal-oriented (Mayring, 2014, p.48).

The theoretical orientation stage follows this step, as content analysis is characterised by the theoretical orientation of the interpretation (Mayring, 2014). The analysis of this study followed a theoretical-based issue of substance and a systematic procedure. For example, to answer RQ1a, the data required to be presented in a way that discovers if and how the CPD workshops influenced teachers' knowledge about the concept of LA. This was done by tracking teachers' knowledge and practices, reported or actual, right from the first phase, through the process of triangulating the data from the different employed instruments in this study.

For example, during the first phase, participants' initial definitions before receiving any content were investigated through group interviewing. This was done when participants were asked about their definitions of LA. During the first phase, five out of six participants defined LA: what does it mean to them? In the second phase, they shared their definitions twice: once during the first workshop via FG conversations and again after the workshop via WhatsApp voice notes. To clarify, during Workshop 1, participants were encouraged to consider definitions of LA from the literature, including those by Holec (1981), Dickinson (1987), Little (1991), Dam (1995), and Benson (2010). They were encouraged to express their ideas and indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with these definitions, and four responded to this question during the Workshop 1 discussion. Within two weeks of the first session, participants were requested to contribute their own definitions via WhatsApp voice notes as a type of reflective audio diary and four out of five provided their definitions.

The last time they provided an LA definition was in the final phase, as they all gave their definitions for the fourth time during the individual interviews. This multi-phase methodology enabled a thorough and comprehensive understanding of how their perspectives changed during the CPD workshops. This consistency enabled a thorough tracking of their perspectives and the growth of their views over time. This could be regarded as a significant factor that encourages the decision to select QCA as an appropriate approach for analysing this study's collected data (Drisko and Maschi, 2015).

It is worth highlighting that only three participants consistently supplied definitions of LA throughout the investigation of the study's phases; thus, their definitions were chosen to be presented in the findings chapter as three scenarios. The findings chapter presents these three teachers' provision of the four instances in which they provided LA definitions to show how utilising multiple instruments allowed such tracking, showing the impact of the CPD workshops on teachers' knowledge in a narrative manner, even though, development in knowledge was not always the case (see Section 4.2). The findings chapter clarifies how some beliefs resist change,

challenging the acceptance of certain content, while other beliefs are possible to change based on the stance of the theory (see Section 5.2), as has been seen in the previous literature (see Section 2.5.2). This is done to contribute to knowledge tapping this experience resulting from this study to the cumulative experience of others in the field of CPD and LA.

Such a systematic approach was also considered with RQ1b and RQ1c. As RQ1b investigated the role and responsibilities of teachers in relation to the implementation of LA, triangulating data from different instruments, as in RQ1a, was employed. For example, how teachers identified their roles and responsibilities before and after being exposed to specific subject knowledge was investigated in a way that allows tracking their development in this regard. The same manner was followed with RQ1c, which investigated how teachers assign roles and responsibilities to their students before and after CPD (see Table 3-7).

RQ2 was also analysed using systematic procedures. It explored the factors that impede the promotion of LA. However, as this was not an inquiry or investigation in the original plan of the study but was developed during the data collection, the systematic procedure was different from that used for RQ1. For example, during the first phase, there was no planning to understand what hinders the promotion of LA. Still, the data showed that some practices were impeding the promotion of LA, such as the avoidance of technology usage (see Table 3-8). The research methodology that enabled discussions and reflections in Phase 1, Phase 2, and Phase 3 allowed emergent data to show other factors that do not support the development of LA. Classroom observations in Phase 4 also hugely contributed to showing factors that hinder the promotion of LA that were only revealed during this phase (see Section 4.5). Such a methodological approach adds strength to the research methodology.

The data of this question contributes to knowledge, providing evidence for both the absence of LA promotion (e.g., Borg and Alshumaimeri, 2019; Manzano Vázquez, 2018a, 2020) and the discrepancy between teachers' beliefs and practices about the implementation of LA reported in the literature (e.g., Al-Asmari, 2013; Al-Busaidi and Al-Maamari, 2014; Borg and Alshumaimeri, 2019; Haji-Othman and Wood, 2016; Keuk and Heng, 2016; Lengkanawati, 2016; Li, 2023; Rañosa-Madrunio et al., 2016; Stroupe et al., 2016; Tapinta, 2016; Van Loi, 2016; Wang and Wang, 2016).

The procedures described above indicate that the study started analysing deductively while not neglecting inductive analysis. To clarify, the first question was analysed deductively to explore the impact of CPD on teachers' knowledge and practices in three different areas: teachers' definition of LA, their identified roles, and the roles they assigned to the students. Thus, the impact of CPD is a predetermined category, and the three areas are the predetermined sub-categories that were investigated deductively (see Table 3-7), while the second category, 'the factors that hinder the

promotion of LA,' is an emergent category resulting from the inductive investigation (see Table 3-8).

However, while this question, RQ2, had different analysis procedures, 'inductive,' than the first question, 'deductive,' the presentation of the analysed data was similar in both research questions. The data related to the second research question was written and presented in a narrative approach, triangulating the data from multiple instruments showing the relations between reported teachers and actual practices, as in the first research question. This is a distinctive feature of QCA as it enables the triangulation of multiple methods to analyse both verbal and visual data, as Drisko and Maschi (2015) confirm.

Table 3-7   Coding Book: The First Main Category 'The Impact of CPD on Teachers' Knowledge and Practices'

Sub-Categories	Sub-categories
Definition of LA before CPD	• LA is the learner's responsibility
Definition of LA after CPD	• LA is both the teacher and the student's responsibility
Role of the teacher before CPD	• Rejected roles: Authoritative figure and facilitator • Preferred roles: Paternal, Maternal, and Fraternal, a mother and a friend, and a skills developer
Role of the teacher after CPD	• A mother, knowledge provider, facilitator, problem-solver, flexible with restrictions, considering learners' voices and choices, and a maestro
Assigned duties to learners before CPD	• Disagree with involving learners in decision-making
Assigned duties to learners after CPD	• Minimal acceptance to involve learners in decision-making • Future plans: use need analysis surveys, encourage peer-assessment

Table 3-8   Coding Book: The Second Main Category, 'The Factors that Impede LA Promotion'

Sub-categories	Sub-categories
Lack of understanding of LA-related issues	• Lack of understanding of how a facilitator role functions
Teacher reliance	• Very structured class
Avoid the use of technology	• No electronic aids, no use of the internet
Other factors	• Learners' lack of motivation, • Students with limited English proficiency, • Curriculum and course specifications, • Lack of provision of LA training, and teachers' busy schedules to update themselves, • Standard learning objectives- heading for Accreditation

The focus of the first category, shown in Table 3-7, is to assess the impact of CPD on teachers' knowledge and practices, while the focus of the second category, shown in Table 3-8, is to reveal the factors that hinder the promotion of LA.

It is essential to highlight that the initial analysis followed a thematic approach, which is closely similar to QCA (Boyatzis, 1988). However, based on the distinctive features of QCA presented above, which could show the data in a systematic narrative way, the decision to use the thematic approach for analysing the data had been changed to be analysed using QCA. In other words, while thematic analysis could be employed as an analytical approach to this study data, QCA was seen to suit it best. This is because QCA is a more systematic approach, enabling consistency and comparability across the dataset. Second the comparison across the dataset allowed drawing conclusions beyond the literal meaning. While thematic analysis could identify themes, it lacks the systematic coding that was employed to track how teachers define LA and identify their roles as well as the roles and responsibilities they assigned to their students before, during, and after the intervention.

The final step, which could be seen as a central procedure of this analytical approach, is the division of the text into segments (Mayring, 2014), providing detailed coding (Drisko and Maschi, 2015). This step was done deductively and inductively, as code lists were developed before and during data analysis. The deductive coding was used to define particular techniques and create a

structured model for QCA. The strength of this analytical approach lies in breaking the analysis down into clear, predetermined steps, making it understandable, repeatable, and scientifically valid, and creating a general framework and units of analysis to enhance the precision of the content analysis (Mayring, 2014).

For example, the findings of this study related to RQ1, were written under a particular framework to explore the predefined categories based on prior research agendas (Mayring, 2014). There were three prior categories developed ahead of time. These categories were the definition of LA, the role of the teacher, and the duties teachers assigned to their students, as highlighted earlier. A second step follows this step, which includes developing a list of categories. The second step is coding materials under each category, allowing the creation of sub-categories based on the data inductively (Mayring, 2014). For example, when analysing the first category, particularly the second sub-category, 'the role of the teacher,' many sub-categories showed up, such as the fraternal, maternal, and paternal role of the teacher.

The inductive analysis of the data, through direct data examination, revealed many sub-categories. For example, avoidance of technology usage, enhancement of teacher reliance, lack of understanding of how a facilitator role functions, and other factors were all identified as sub-categories and grouped together in one category: factors that hinder LA promotion. The inductive approach of data analysis results in formulating the second research question, as highlighted earlier and in Section 3.2.3.

It is essential to mention that a basic understanding of content analysis relates the approach to a frequency approach, in which a piece of information might be presented more than once during data collection; Drisko and Maschi (2015) argue that content analysis is also viewed as a non-frequency approach, where pivotal information that occurs once or rarely might be key evidence and valuable data to be mentioned. This is applicable to QCA where a frequency approach is related to basic content analysis, the second approach of content analysis highlighted by Drisko and Maschi (2015).

As Drisko and Maschi (2015) argue, this analytical approach could generate new theories and concepts or test theories. This study attempted to generate new concepts and contribute to existing theories in the field. It also provided another perspective on the definition of TA, relating it to knowledge, as shown in Section 2.4.

3.9   The Role of the Researcher: 'Reflexivity'

In qualitative research, the researcher assumes the role of the principal instrument for data collection and analysis (Heigham and Croker, 2009), which encompasses two fundamental

components. Initially, Heigham and Croker (2009) highlight that data collection that researchers themselves conduct through methods such as direct observation and participant interviews allows for flexibility and the ability to investigate unforeseen study avenues. The practical nature of this approach also enables the collection of varied data and accelerates the subsequent process of interpretation to assure accuracy (Merriam, 2002).

The second aspect emphasises the notion that data collected, including field notes, interview extracts, or even questionnaire replies, do not intrinsically disclose underlying patterns of reality without interpretation and analysis (Heigham and Croker, 2009). However, the task of interpreting these data falls upon the researcher, so establishing a close association between qualitative research and interpretive analysis (Heigham and Croker, 2009).

Researchers' personal backgrounds and experiences play an essential role in influencing their viewpoints in qualitative research (Heigham and Croker, 2009). Gender, age, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, politics, religious beliefs, and life experiences all impact how researchers see and interpret their findings (Heigham and Croker, 2009). This intrinsic subjectivity is a fundamental concern in qualitative research, requiring researchers to be conscious of the impact of their own identity on the research setting and participants (Heigham and Croker, 2009). As Heigham and Croker (2009) mention, researchers should clearly note this influence in their final reports. Yet, the sole dependence on the researcher's interpretations and the absence of a second coder could affect the objectivity and reliability of the findings. However, Heigham and Croker (2009) clarify that this issue is not a big concern and could be addressed through triangulation, as employed in this study (see Section 3.11). While triangulation is helpful its worth acknowledging that it cannot avoid the influence of the researcher's own framing of LA on the analysis.

It is worth mentioning that subjectivity is seen by other researchers as a virtue since it allows them to offer distinctive contributions by integrating their personal attributes with the gathered data. From this perspective, the perception of each researcher might be described as a unique viewpoint (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Oliver, 2010). This is because of the different influences on every researcher's background and experiences (Oliver, 2010) and because there is no 'correct telling' of this occurrence (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011, p.5). Each narration, like 'hitting a crystal,' provides a unique perspective on the racial occurrence (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011, p.5). Oliver (2010) explained how subjectivity is part of the interpretive paradigm as the world around us is constructed. This is by the comparison researchers made between their perceptions and formulations and with those of others who were engaged in the study (Oliver, 2010). This perspective asserts that the reality we perceive is, to some extent, a result of our subjective interpretation and cognitive construction.

In the literature, two conceptual stances that have been identified are referred to as 'insider' and 'outsider' (Leavy, 2014). Davis (1995) argues that the cooperation of insiders and outsiders strengthens and ensures the study's credibility and dependability. The researcher's position in this study is that of both an insider and an outsider. As an insider, the researcher is familiar with the context and shares the same cultural and educational background, having previously taught in the same university but on a different campus to those of the research participants (see Section 3.4). This puts the researcher in a position of an outsider as well. This position as insider and outsider is seen as an advantage.

The advantage of being an insider lies in my understanding of the context and relevant issues to the difficulties and challenges teachers may face in order to think about and learn a different teaching approach. Teachers are loaded with intensive teaching hours and administrative work. This led to workshops being conducted with no pre-preparation requirements. At the same time, this informed the decision to never frequently rush the teachers, e.g., to send their responses to the audio diaries.

However, in order to follow up with participants and remind those who did not send their audio diaries, two reminder messages were sent within the two-week period between one workshop and the next. One message was scheduled to be sent one week after a carried workshop thanking those who had already sent their audio diaries, as a reminder to those who have not yet done so. The second message was planned to be sent two days before the following session. This strategy worked well, but one time, one participant did not send any. This participant was contacted privately to remind her, but she apologised for being unable to respond because of her health condition. As a researcher and human considering the importance of the well-being of the participants, only wishes were sent to her to get well soon.

In qualitative research, researchers usually have no control over the research setting as they frequently seek authentic behaviour in natural settings, allowing researchers to be more adaptable and responsive to the research setting (Heigham and Croker, 2009). In quantitative research, the situation is entirely opposite. Quantitative research is usually controlled, as data are often collected in contexts designed for data collection, such as a language laboratory, as opposed to a natural setting (Heigham and Croker, 2009). However, some cases show less control, e.g., if an open-ended questionnaire is used (Heigham and Croker, 2009). However, it is worth mentioning that, in qualitative research, this control is not entirely absent in some situations, e.g., when researchers use verbal reports, structured interviews, or observation checklists as they structure the data collection process (Heigham and Croker, 2009).

This research study adopts both approaches, as is the case with most methods (Heigham and Croker, 2009). The focus group conversations used in this study and classroom observations

have very little control to avoid restricting participant insights. However, there is a lot of control with diaries, and semi-structured interviews are in a medial position. This is because, in diaries, participants, as Heigham and Croker (2009) mention, respond to particular questions, which could facilitate comparison of the gathered data, while interviews allow some room for participants to share unplanned inquiries under investigation.

Regardless of researcher bias, bias might occur due to participants' desires to meet social expectations. Dörnyei (2007) argues that by providing participants with cues to the expected results, they may act according to what they think is expected of them. However, although researchers' bias cannot be prevented, Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest using member checks, peer defriending, and reflexive journals to minimise bias. During this study, member checks were used, and this was permitted due to the dialectical nature of FG conversations and the nature of semi-structured interviews that allow elaborating and asking further questions for a better understanding of the phenomena.

3.10   Ethical Considerations

Before commencing the research, ethical approval was sought and obtained from the Faculty Ethics Committee at the University of Southampton, where the researcher was pursuing her education (ERGO number 73954). At the same time, additional ethical approval was obtained from the Saudi university where this study was taking place to access different colleges (with ethical approval number ERC_SU_20220092).

Besides obtaining ethical approval before conducting the research in the field, the Participant Information Sheet (see Appendix C) was shared with participants, and consent forms were signed via Qualtrics (see Appendix E) to avoid ethical issues (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). The Participation Information Sheet clarified essential aspects related to the study, such as a summary of the research, an explanation of who is eligible to participate, the procedures that the participants will go through, benefits and drawbacks of the study, the type of intended data collection and how the results will be addressed. Regarding the risk of harm, it had been confirmed that no dangers were involved in this study. It was also clearly stated that the participants had the right to withdraw at any time.

These measures have been taken as scholars assert that researchers must consider factors such as participant safety, transparency, confidentiality, dignity, anonymity, and informed permission (Bryman, 2016; Creswell, 2023; Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Miles et al., 2014). These research ethics are the principles of behaviour that guide the study process to protect participants' rights (Saunders et al., 2009).

3.11   Triangulation and Trustworthiness

A combination of data sources, triangulation, is required in most evaluations because no single source can adequately describe the diversity of features found in educational settings and because findings must be corroborated by using data from different sources, collected by various methods and by different people (Weir and Roberts, 1994). This study used various data-gathering techniques, such as group interviewing, focus group conversations, audio diaries, classroom observations, and individual interviews to achieve trustworthiness.

The use of group interviewing reveals a holistic picture of the context, which helped in evaluating the suitability of the materials that will be carried on with participants. The use of focus groups in the second phase as the primary tool offered gaps and required areas for improvement, as stressed by Harden and Laidlaw (2012). Focus groups also helped generate a large amount of data about LA and its promotion very quickly (Hennink, 2014; Fern,1982), considering the limited time available for this study which was completed within six months. The use of audio diaries, on the other hand, helped as a supplementary tool, providing more evidence for the data being analysed. Together with the audio diaries and the focus groups, classroom observations brought evidence of teachers' classroom practices. They helped to understand what was not clearly comprehensible when analysing teachers' reported speech. Finally, individual interviews helped individual inquiries to be conducted. Every participant was asked several particular questions related to this specific participant as they were developed based on the primary data. The data from both focus groups and classroom observations informed them. Triangulated data helped in generating beneficial data for this research study, providing a more profound vision of the impact of CPD workshops on teachers' Knowledge and practices, and informing CPD designers of areas of focus in the field of LA.

Furthermore, triangulation is one potential strategy for resolving the subjectivity issue. It is a procedure that entails collecting data from multiple participants and employing various data collection techniques to obtain diverse perspectives (Heigham and Croker, 2009), as detailed in Section 3.9. Triangulation, as Dörnyei (2007), Cowie (2009), and Cohen et al. (2018) confirm, increases a study's trustworthiness and confirmability. It provides a fuller picture of participants' perspectives (Croker, 2009).

Trustworthiness was also obtained by assessing the quality of the data collection procedures during the pilot phase. When needed, adjustments and refinement of the study instruments and CPD workshop materials were made based on new insights from both the reviewers and volunteered participants during this piloting phase. Thereby, the quality of materials and suitability of the procedures were validated before conducting the main study. This was

particularly effective because the reviewers and participants of the pilot study closely resembled those of the actual research.

3.12   Summary of the Chapter

This chapter clarified the research design and described the study phases and procedures in detail. To reiterate, the research used an interpretivist qualitative research approach in an attempt to fill a gap in the literature that called for providing CPD workshops to in-service teachers to influence their beliefs and practices about LA. The design of this study also focused on triangulating data collection to promote an adequate analysis of the research inquiries, as well as building trustworthiness. A group interview was conducted during the pre-intervention phase to gain a comprehensive understanding of the study's context and to ensure that the workshop materials were appropriate and well-suited for the intended purpose. This step was taken as seen an essential principle of CPD, as recommended by Borg (2023), See Section 2.6.2. Focus groups were used as the principal tool for gathering data. Classroom observations supplemented these focus group discussions, semi-structured interviews, and reflective audio diaries. Classroom observations were intended to capture actual practice about LA. At the same time, reflective audio diaries and semi-structured interviews were sought to monitor the provided workshops' impact and explore any unclear reported or observed data that needed further clarification. The trustworthiness of the data was obtained through the adoption of a triangulated approach. Finally, efforts were made to incorporate ethical considerations into the research process.

Chapter 4   Findings

4.1   Introduction

The findings in this chapter are organised into four major sections: the first, Section 4.2, shows the impact of continuing professional development (CPD) on teachers' knowledge regarding their comprehension of the concept of language learner autonomy (LA), namely how they define LA. Section 4.3 is about the impact of the CPD programme on both teachers' knowledge and practices regarding the role and responsibility of the teacher in relation to the implementation of LA. This is followed by the third section, Section 4.4, which is about the impact of the provided CPD on teachers' knowledge and practices in relation to the roles and responsibilities they assign to their students in relation to the implementation of LA in language learning. While these three major sections concern the first research question with three different areas of focus—how they define LA, how they identify their roles and students' responsibilities in relation to the implementation of LA—Section 4.5 considers the second research question, which focuses on the factors that hinder the promotion of LA. Finally, Section 4.6 provides a summary of the chapter.

4.2   The Impact of the CPD on Teachers' Knowledge: The Definition of LA

This section addresses the impact of the CPD programme in influencing teachers' knowledge and understanding of LA. In other words, I examined changes in how teachers define LA before, during, and after the CPD. Tracking these changes was enabled as the teachers provided their definitions of LA four times during the different stages of the study. First, they provided a definition prior to joining any session during the first phase of the study. The second and the third time they defined LA were during the second phase, one during Workshop 1 and the other after the first workshop through the sent audio diaries. The fourth definition was provided during the last phase of the study via individual interviews, as detailed in Section 3.8.2.

The following two sub-sections detail three particular instances of teachers' changing definitions of LA. These three scenarios were chosen among the five participants who completed the study's five phases because these three teachers consistently supplied definitions of LA throughout the investigation. This consistency enabled a thorough tracking of their perspectives and the growth of their views over time (see Section 3.8.2).

Two of the three teachers showed development in their understanding of LA and its related issues, while the third participant's perspective remained almost the same throughout the

phases of the study. Section 4.2.1 shows the views about LA of the teachers whose views developed through the CPD programme, while Section 4.2.2 reveals resistance to change or developing any further ideas related to LA.

4.2.1   Enhanced understanding of LA

This section provides two examples of participants whose tracked data reveals a development of their understanding of the definition of LA. While both cases show similar results, different details are presented in each case.

4.2.1.1   Bayan

Bayan's definitions of LA demonstrate a gradual development in her understanding of the concept, progressing from the initial phase to the final phase of the study. For example, prior to the CPD workshops, Bayan provided her definition of LA as students taking complete freedom over their learning. During phase one via group interviewing, she stated:

Excerpt 1

> *Actually, they [her teachers] let us know about the textbook, the major outlines, and then we did the research. All the research, actually all of it, **not a single textbook** to study from book, from title to title or something. No. They get just give us you will study this book go and learn about it. And of course, when I am talking about **my undergraduate years** there was no net, **no Internet,** no nothing else. But the **paper books** in **the library,** so **we spent a lot of time researching** and a **lot of time looking for information** gathering information that actually I think that was **the best definition for learner autonomy**.* (Phase 1, Group Interviewing Data, pos. 32)

Bayan, in the above excerpt, reflected on her experience as an undergraduate student and the approach her teachers promoted. She described how they drove students to establish full control of their educational path, as the focus was on self-directed learning. There was not a prescribed textbook or singular resource; instead, learners were charged with exploring multiple resources to deepen their comprehension. At the same time, she shed light on the difficulties of lacking internet access and where the sole source of knowledge was paper books at libraries. She also emphasised the difficulties that persons without constant internet access confront. She referred to her experience as 'the best definition of LA.'

During the first workshop, when participants were asked to reflect on definitions of LA from the research literature, Bayan disagreed with Dickinson's (1987) definition of LA, which argues that students are fully responsible for all learning decisions. Her disagreement with Dickinson's (1987)

definition of LA demonstrates her rejection of the fully autonomous approach she experienced as a student, as evident from her initial definition of LA. This was clear from the excerpt, excerpt 2, supplied below.

Excerpt 2

> *I **disagree** with the first one to be in **total totally responsible** for all decisions. This one of course, **my opinion now is obvious** and the students are should be in **capacity,** yes, **willingness,** but **not in full control**. **They** should **be guided** somehow.* (Phase 2, W1, FG Data, Pos. 176)

The above extract shows interesting data. It shows Bayan's development in thinking based on her feelings as she expresses an articulated, clear opinion. The content presented during the session, including varied definitions, helped Bayan formulate a distinct perspective, leading her to state that she had gained a better understanding of the concept. Little progress also appeared as she clarified that now with her clear understanding, she could say that LA does not entail students exerting full control over their learning, but rather, it revolves around their capacity and willingness to take on responsibility.

This demonstrates a gradual shift in thinking, comparing her initial definition of LA in excerpt 1 with her definition in excerpt 2. In excerpt 1, she defined LA as students' taking full control. In contrast, in excerpt 2, she assured that it is not about students taking full control but about their capacity and willingness to have responsibility over their learning with one condition: teachers' guidance.

Bayan's response to the questions sent after the first workshop for reflections, expressed through a WhatsApp voice note as shown below, revealed a notable development in her understanding of LA. At this point in the CPD, she articulated a distinct perspective from those she had expressed earlier. Bayan suggested that learners should be afforded the opportunity to voice their own opinions. However, she emphasised that the freedom granted to learners should not be absolute but rather limited within specific guidelines. This demonstrates a sophisticated perspective on LA, comprehending the significance of learners' contribution while recognising the necessity of structure and guidance in the learning process.

Excerpt 3

> *In my point of view, the learner's autonomy can be defined as **giving the student space of thinking**, of giving an opinion, of **expressing his own or her own opinion** or her own ideas. Of course, **within some limits within some outlines**, but giving the student these kind of freedom.* (Phase 2, Audio Diaries Data, Pos. 5)

In close alignment with the notion conveyed through the audio diaries shared above in excerpt 3, the findings obtained from individual interviews during the last phase, as excerpt 4 below shows, reinforce Bayan's definition of LA. The statement reaffirms the idea that students should be granted a certain degree of freedom to express their ideas during classroom sessions while simultaneously highlighting the importance of setting boundaries. These boundaries are primarily determined by the classroom regulations established by the course leader. This refined definition offers additional clarification on the limitations under which LA functions, emphasising the importance of well-defined instructions in promoting autonomous learning within educational environments. Bayan said:

Excerpt 4

> And in my opinion, a learner's autonomy is the learners, no, let's say **sort of freedom** of thinking of **expression**, OK, **within certain boundaries** and certain limits. According to the classroom rules, of course, set **by the instructor**. (Phase 5, Individual Interviews-Data, Pos. 9)

The extract above clarifies Bayan's definition during the last phase of the study. It offers a similar definition to the one provided in the audio diary. The two definitions collectively reflect a developing progression of thought, with each stage demonstrating greater clarity. Furthermore, the period between these final two definitions provided in the excerpts, about three months, implies increasing stability in her viewpoint, signifying a noteworthy influence from the given CPD training.

In summary, Bayan's initial definition of LA is maintaining full control over the learning process within the classroom. She reported her experience as a learner with full autonomy over her study; at the same time, the data reveals the opposite standpoint as she doesn't agree with Dickinson's (1987) definition, which argues that students are fully responsible for all learning decisions. While it is evident that at the earlier stage of the CPD, Bayan had an opposing viewpoint to the promotion of LA, her ideas showed a process of articulation. Her attitude and ideas showed stability in the last phase when compared with her changing perspective before the last provided definitions.

Bayan's attitude at the later stage of the CPD and also following the CPD highlighted the value of sharing the responsibility for learning with her students. She took a more balanced approach, thinking it was useful for teachers to provide guidance while still giving learners some freedom. However, this shift obtained in her thinking would provide possible behaviour enabling students to take ownership of their learning while ensuring they receive the support they need to succeed. This is because the teacher demonstrated her willingness to encourage learners to express their

ideas and thoughts, fostering a sense of learners' needs and demands being considered. Further details about her practice can be obtained in Sections 4.4.2, 4.5.3, and 4.5.4.

The following section reveals the second case, Rabab, for whom the data shows enhancement regarding the concept of LA. As presented above, the data demonstrates her definition of LA before, during, and after joining the CPD workshops.

4.2.1.2   Rabab

The data concerning Rabab reveals fascinating findings, and also demonstrates the development of her perspective over time. Rabab's definition of LA prior to joining the CPD workshops was similar to Bayan's, wherein students assumed a significant or complete level of control and responsibility over their learning. However, Rabab's definition differed by emphasising that LA also includes learning by doing, whereby the student actively participates in their own learning process. She clarified that the students are responsible for determining how, when, and why they learn. Rabab reported:

Excerpt 5

> *Yes, when you talk about learner autonomy, we say **when** students **take full control** or **take most of the control and responsibility** for their own learning, **what** we can say both in terms of **what they learn** and **how to learn**. [..] That's **autonomy means learning by doing,** by the student itself, **how and when and why,** it is **his or her responsibility**.* (Phase 1, Group Interviewing Data, Pos. 194-196)

Rabab's initial definition, as shown above in excerpt 5, emphasises that students take total or most of the control and responsibility for their learning, deciding how learning occurs, when it happens, and why. This implies that the students have autonomy over their learning process, including the time slot and goals. Although Rabab mentioned 'learning by doing,' this concept was not clearly explained. It could be interpreted as students taking complete responsibility for their learning and conducting the process independently in the absence of instructors' support.

However, during the first workshop, Rabab reflected on and expressed agreement with Dam's (1995) definition from the literature, which suggests that a key factor for learners to become autonomous is their willingness to take responsibility. This agreement is evident in the following excerpt:

Excerpt 6

> *For me, **I will go with Dam** because the **willingness,** what we call motivation, **self-motivation,** that is more important to take responsibility because when we talk about autonomy, the student has **the willingness,** he **has motivation**. He should have the*

*willingness to know that, yes, this is my subject, and **I am the main point that I have to be willing,** that I should be motivated to know, **to learn**. Only then this teaching learning will go forward because **the main important in this is the learner**. So, his willingness, his positive attitude is most important in learning or **to be autonomous**.* (Phase 2, W1, FG Data, Pos. 164)

Rabab's definition above highlights that LA is primarily the student's obligation, driven by their intrinsic motivation without any contribution from the teacher. This interpretation aligns with her original definition, which emphasises the learner's responsibility to take charge of their own learning, thereby reinforcing the concept that LA is the student's responsibility.

However, Rabab's voice note sent through WhatsApp introduced an unexpected shift in her viewpoint. She placed the responsibility of fostering autonomous learners on the teacher, encouraging the use of '*appropriate teaching and learning strategies*' (Excerpt 7, Phase 2, Audio Diaries Data, Pos. 5). This significant shift in viewpoint reflects her deep thinking and awareness of her role in creating a supportive environment for LA.

During the final phase of data collection, specifically the individual interview, Rabab's developing thoughts became apparent. She emphasised the importance of LA in attaining successful learning outcomes. She acknowledged the teacher's role in providing students with the opportunities to demonstrate responsibility for their learning, express their thoughts and feelings, and consequently develop LA.

Excerpt 8

> *When we say learner autonomy means **giving the responsibility to the learners**. Giving honour or credit to the learners. [..] **it is the teacher who has to make them autonomous**. As we know autonomy means self-dependent, self-reliance. **We have to give them, we have to encourage them** and for this I think the teacher is the role model or **main component** in **this process** because if we encourage our students to do, maybe they commit a mistake in the first goal, in the second goal, but if we allow them to speak, to do what they want, like, ah, not full authority, but **if we allow them to speak up,** speak up about **their thoughts** about **feelings** so **we can develop learner autonomy,** and in order **to get effective teaching,** learning this learner autonomy is a prominent component. So, this learner autonomy is very much important in a successful teaching learning process.* (Phase 5, Individual Interviews Data, Pos. 6)

The excerpt above shows that a change in Rabab's perspective led to the implementation of more organised support systems where teachers actively facilitate the development of students'

autonomy. She clarified that it is the duty of the teacher to establish a supportive setting that fosters and enhances this autonomy. As an illustration, she mentioned the importance of utilising scaffolded learning strategies, facilitating the acquisition of abilities necessary for self-directed learning in learners.

In summary, tracking Rabab's viewpoints from prior to the CPD workshops to the final stage reveals a significant transformation in her thinking. Initially, she supported the idea of LA being when learners have full charge over their learning. She viewed LA as solely driven by the student's intrinsic motivation, with no responsibility on the teacher. After participation in the CPD, her perspective underwent a shift to recognise the essential role teachers play in fostering autonomous behaviour by allowing students space to assume responsibility and by valuing their thoughts and feelings.

In contrast to these two cases, which show the influence of the CPD the teachers received, the third example involves Afaf, whose data revealed interesting discoveries. Afaf displayed a fixed viewpoint and demonstrated some resistance to change. The following section illustrates how she consistently maintained her earlier viewpoint of LA.

4.2.2 Consistent perception of self-learning: Afaf

Throughout the study, the third case, Afaf, did not show a notable change in her perception of LA. She consistently regarded self-directed learning as a fundamental aspect of the educational process. Before joining the CPD workshops, Afaf defined LA as self-directed, where learners depend entirely on themselves. She stated:

Excerpt 9

> It is the **self-learning,** of, student can, yes, sorry, **learn by themself** and **depend on themselves**. (Phase 1, Group Interviewing Data, Pos. 201)

Afaf's definition of LA in excerpt 9 above suggests that learning occurs in the absence of a teacher, for example, in a self-access learning centre. Interestingly, Afaf's reflections on the definitions shared from the literature during the second phase of the study, particularly during the first workshop, revealed her agreement with Benson's (2010) definition, which characterises LA as the self-determination of groups, polities, and individuals. Benson (2010) emphasises 'control' as the most accurate descriptor of the relationship between students and the learning process. This consists of the definition she supplied in phase one.

The following excerpt demonstrates Afaf's agreement with Benson's (2010) definition, as she explicitly declared her agreement with it when asked which term she found most agreeable.

Excerpt 10

> *For me, I think* **Benson definition** *in terms of* **self-determination**. *Why? Because the individual should, uh, take, take and whether to uh apply self-autonomy or not also? Since there is a relation between the student, I think, and the learning process for this,* **they have to take the responsibility in motivating this relationship** *and taking also part to participate* **with themself** *in achieving the learning goal or objective of learning for example, and if we compare the terms of autonomy or learner autonomy pre- and post-pandemic, we find that this great variation. Sometimes there is application of the online. Uh online learning, for example. This* **gives chance for student to participate** *more and to* **depend on themselves more** *than all.* (Phase 2, W1, FG Data, Pos. 168)

Her agreement, shaped by the pandemic's impact on educational norms, connects her thoughts to independent learning environments supported by the easy availability of online resources. More interestingly, her response through voice notes revealed the following, confirming her initial perspective:

Excerpt 11

> *I can define it as a* **self-reliance** *and* **decision making** *to learn and to continue to learn by following some self-rules. That is to say ahh taking responsibility and* **self-dependence** *also in order to learn by yourself and the most important point is continuation of learning in this part.* (Phase 2, Audio Diaries Data, Pos. 5)

The data from the final phase, exemplified in excerpt 12, also shows alignment with Afaf's previous perspective, defining LA as students' self-determination to take responsibility for their learning. At this stage, her definition was '*learners' ability to take charge of his or her own learning.*' She further stated:

Excerpt 12

> *They have to follow their goals, which* **they set it up from the beginning**. *Why they want to apply this type of learners' autonomy or to* **take their responsibility by themselves**. *And also, they can work hard* **to achieve their goals**. *And this can give them chance to be also motivated and engage in their learning.* (Phase-5, Individual Interviews Data, Pos. 26-28)

Afaf's definition of LA above closely aligns with Holec's (1981) definition, which involves learners setting their own goals and taking responsibility for achieving them, thereby taking ownership of their learning process. According to this view, learners are in charge of their progress and

outcomes rather than relying on external guidelines or instructions. Her response emphasises the role of learners in fostering self-directed learning.

In summary, Afaf consistently defined LA as students' self-determination over their learning from the first meeting, especially during the introductory session before participating in any CPD workshops. Afaf consistently regarded self-directed learning as a fundamental aspect of the educational process, asserting that learners should be navigating their learning journey independently. Her approach remained unchanged, prioritising self-directed learning across all stages of the study. She continued emphasising the responsibility for students to establish their own goals, manage their time effectively, and engage in self-evaluation to reflect on their progress. Although Afaf's example shows that she largely maintained her perspective before joining the CPD, it also demonstrates a development in which she integrated her perspective with the literature. The previous excerpt clearly illustrates the development of her ideas, as she explained the concept of self-learning by emphasising learners' planning and goal achievement.

To summarise this section, I examined the impact of the CPD workshops on teachers' understanding of the concept of LA. I tracked three cases to assess the influence of the CPD workshops on their understating of the definition of LA. Through an analysis of these three cases, varied impacts of the provided CPD workshops on the teachers' perceptions of LA could be observed, which range from significant shifts to reinforcing pre-existing thoughts demonstrating both flexible and hard beliefs to change and answering RQ1a (see Section 5.2). The following section also explores the development of teachers' knowledge and practices regarding their roles and duties.

4.3   The Impact of the CPD on Teachers' Knowledge and Practices: Teachers' Roles and Responsibilities

This section addresses the role of the CPD programme in developing teachers' knowledge and practices regarding their roles and responsibilities in relation to implementing LA in language learning. Section 4.3.1 presents the impact of the CPD in teachers' knowledge, while Section 4.3.2 clarifies the impact of the CPD in teachers' practices.

4.3.1   On Knowledge

Teachers' knowledge and understanding regarding their roles and responsibilities are a major concern to be investigated in this study. This study explores how teachers identified their roles and responsibilities before and after being exposed to specific content in this regard. The following two sub-sections explain how teachers initially defined their roles and responsibilities,

which contrasted with those typically found in learner-centered classrooms. Over time, however, they began to adopt different roles that align more closely with the principles of learner-centered teaching, after active participation in the CPD.

4.3.1.1   Teachers' Identified Roles Prior Active Participation

During Workshop 2, titled 'The Role of the Teacher and Learners in Teacher-centred and Learner-centred Classes,' participants were introduced to the roles of teachers in both teacher-led and learner-led educational environments. They were encouraged to reflect on these roles in relation to their own practices, considering which role they currently adopt, prefer, or agree with and which they are willing to adopt to better comprehend their perspectives and role preferences. The following subsections provide further details, starting with an opposing stance to the authority figure, facilitator, counsellor, and manager, followed by different preferences for teacher roles.

4.3.1.1.1   Rejected Roles

The data reveals teachers' rejection of the authority figure and the roles of facilitator, counsellor, and manager. Regardless of the fact that support for these roles occurs at early stages, rejections were clearly made at later stages. Overall, the data reveals that there was no consensus on the teacher having complete authority, with some respondents expressing disagreement. For example, Deem specifically highlighted this disagreement. She stated:

Excerpt 13

> I agree with Mabrukah and Rabab, the **teacher [...]** should **not be the whole authority inside the classroom**. (Phase 2, W2, FG Data, Pos. 45)

Excerpt 13 demonstrates the disagreement of three participants with the concept of a teacher having complete authority or control. The findings not only show opposition to this role but also highlight, as Mabrukah in excerpt 14 pointed out, the limitations of a teacher-led context. She acknowledged the effectiveness of this approach during her own years as a student but argued that this approach no longer aligns with today's rapidly evolving digital world. Mabrukah explained that teacher-led classrooms hinder learners from participating, sharing their ideas without fear, and developing creative thinking. She emphasised her commitment to making students the focal point of the teaching and learning process, asserting that students should have a more prominent position in the classroom than the teacher.

Excerpt 14

> According to **the development of the artificial intelligence** and as we know that the **world is now,** is **developing very rapidly** in different aspects of life. [...] I'll do my best in

*order to give the centre for the student, you know that to be a real situation. OK. And **we really need to go away from the traditional way of teaching**. Just if we return back or **go back to our school days,** we remember very much that the **teacher is the authority**. So really, **although we learn a lot of good things**, but **still, we lack a lot of things that we really need,** for example, **expressing your own opinion.** For example, creating your **thinking creatively** or create your own OK thinking, **participating without any, for example, fear**. So, **all these aspects should be considered**. When we say it is a student-centre [..], the **role of the teacher should,** umm..be **less than the students.** So, **it's not a good way to do the role of or to have the share of the lion**. So, **give it to the student**.*
(Phase 2, W2 FG Data, Pos. 65-66)

However, the data further revealed teachers' reactions, particularly when three distinct roles for teachers in learner-centred classrooms aimed at enhancing LA were introduced during the second workshop. As detailed in Chapter 2 (see Section 2.3.1), three distinct roles for teachers emphasised by Voller (1997) were introduced: facilitator, counsellor, and resource. These roles were designed to empower students, encouraging active participation, critical thinking, and self-directed learning. Four participants expressed positive attitudes toward these roles. For example, Deem, in the following extract, stated:

Excerpt 15

*I agree with Mabrukah and Rabab the **teacher could be a facilitator, counsellor and resource*** (Phase 2, W2, FG Data, Pos. 45)

However, when teachers were asked about their willingness to adopt any of the presented roles, three participants responded; however, two had completely different responses. One participant expressed willingness to adopt the roles of facilitator and counsellor, while the other disagreed and emphasised alternative roles. Bayan was the one who showed a willingness to embrace all three presented roles, stating:

Excerpt 16

*I am personally **willing to adopt a new a new roles of facilitator and counselling and counsellor**. We used to have **the traditional way or the traditional role of the teacher directing** and **lecturing** and **giving instructions**. But actually yes, of course we I am personally **willing to adopt a new** roles of **facilitator and counselling and counsellor**.*
(Phase 2, W2, FG Data, Pos. 83)

Bayan, in the previous excerpt, emphasised her willingness to adopt new roles despite her traditional approach to teaching, which involves directing, lecturing, and giving instructions. Interestingly, Rabab, in the following excerpt, number 17, highlighted that teachers have multi-

dimensional roles and stressed that the teacher's role depends on specific circumstances, such as social and mental factors. She emphasised that these factors influence the teacher's adoption of her role, whether a traditional role or one of the new roles presented in the session, such as facilitator, counsellor, and resource, taking a mid-point position.

Excerpt 17

> *Uh, like a teacher, can adopt a role maybe it is **a new, or maybe traditional**, or someone depends upon the situation. So, a teacher is not bound to be stagnant, or to be unidimensional. So, **the role of a teacher is dimensional**. **He can change whenever he needs, whatever he finds suitable for his teaching learning**. Sometimes a teacher should be **very hard** because the situation, **it is the situation that asks the teacher how to behave**. So, it will.... It depends upon the situation, circumstances. What is the different? What are the different things like what are **the social circumstances**? What are **the mental circumstances**, etc. that. Ask a teacher what is the need of the act so a teacher can change **he's not fixed**, so these rules also. So, **it depends upon the situation in which the teacher is, sometimes, he has to be very hard, sometimes he has to be soft**. So, **it is up to the teacher and the situation**.* (Phase 2, W2, FG Data, Pos. 86)

The excerpt above highlights the adaptability of teachers' roles, demonstrating that these roles should be tailored to the specific needs of the context while considering the unique characteristics of each classroom. It emphasised that effective teaching requires flexibility, allowing instructors to shift between traditional and innovative roles, such as facilitator, counsellor, or resource, based on the social, mental, and situational factors influencing their students. This approach ensures that teaching methods are responsive and appropriate for diverse learning environments. However, excerpt 17 above does not illustrate what social and mental factors influence teachers' roles and how. It also highlighted the presented roles, during this session, as new roles which could provide insight that the teacher is not familiar with these roles.

The discussion of teachers' roles in the classroom reveals a spectrum of perspectives and adaptability. While Bayan and Rabab demonstrate a willingness to embrace new roles such as facilitator, manager, and resource, adapting to the unique needs of their classrooms, Deem's stance, clarified in the following section, highlights a more teacher-led approach.

4.3.1.1.2   Preferred Roles

This section provides several roles that teachers prefer to adopt. The following subsections provide further details of these preferred roles, which are clarified in three subsections.

4.3.1.1.2.1   Paternal, Maternal and Fraternal Roles in Teaching

Deem expressed resistance to adopting the three presented roles of facilitator, manager, and resource. Although she showed some agreement with teachers who supported these roles, as reported in her excerpt number 15 in section 4.3.1.1.1, Excerpt 15 also reveals her use of the modal auxiliary verb 'could,' indicating a low degree of certainty. This suggests that while she acknowledges the possibility of these roles, she is not fully committed to them and prefers different roles, as she confirmed her role preferences.

Deem confirmed her adoption of paternal, maternal, and fraternal roles, explaining that her exposure to these roles comes from her extensive reading. She stated:

Excerpt 18

> *I have **another role** which is **totally different from the previous ones**, but it is complementary role to them. The role is **I have read in one of books** related to learn authority also, I mean learner autonomy. This role, I attract, attracted me very much by the way, he said, the writer said, the teacher should be **paternal, maternal, and fraternal**. **Maternal means the motherhood**. Yeah, the teacher should be mother although he is a female or male. He or she should have the emotions of the mother. This role I think is very much related to the counsellor role, and also, he/she should be paternal. **Paternal means the strict role of the father**. The teacher whether [..] male or female, regardless of their gender, they should have read the paternal not paternal.... Yes. Paternal side. They should be strict sometimes. If the necessity, needs. ..it needs to be strict. They should be strict to some of the students and at the same time they should have the emotions of mother at most of the students, and also at the same time they should be fraternal. **Fraternal means friends.** They should be friends of the students. They should create a good rapport with within their students. I think this is a very good role of the teacher. **If I have a choice, I would choose this role to be paternal, maternal and fraternal**. That's all dear. (Phase2, W2, FG Data, Pos. 56-58)*

The excerpt above explains the roles Deem is adopting, e.g., nurturing and merciful like a mother, strict like a father, and trustworthy like a friend. Interestingly, these roles captured Rabab's attention and agreement, as the following extract demonstrates.

Excerpt 19

> *Yeah, **I really happy with Deem**. She **give** like **an excellent example,** like a teacher should be a mother, like a mother like whenever a student need like when they are weak emotions she should treat her like, in respective of gender whether she is male or female teacher irrespective of gender, they should treat **like a mother**. How we console how our*

*mothers' consoles us. That's good. And **as father** as a strong person and **when we need the support of the strong**, the teacher should be like a father. And **as a friend**, like whenever we need to discuss our weaknesses, whenever we need to discuss our drawbacks and those or do not, we can easily talk with them. I really appreciate this definition. A teacher should be paternal, fraternal and maternal.* (Phase 2, W2, FG Data, Pos. 60)

It can be argued that a colleague's agreement in the same workshop highlights the importance of reflection and sharing experiences as crucial elements of any training; however, the following section further supports the significance of the roles of a mother and a friend.

4.3.1.1.2.2   Roles of motherhood and friendship in teaching

The roles presented by Deem and supported by Rabab in the previous section are further emphasised here, highlighting teachers' concerns for learners' well-being and emotions. The data, as shown in the excerpt below, demonstrated the importance of teachers being a source of emotional support and building a good rapport with students. The roles of a mother and a friend were frequently emphasised. For instance, Bayan discussed the importance of being merciful with learners, stressing that she deals with human beings and values the emotional aspect of teaching. She explained that, in addition to providing academic instructions to enhance students' knowledge and learning skills, she is responsible for their holistic development, including building their character, as illustrated in the extract below.

Excerpt 20

> *Actually, my point of view, **when dealing with student, you are dealing with the whole human being, not the student who is learning from you**. No, this is the human being. **You are more or less like the mother raising children** like Deem said before. But I'm actually not like a mother. No, I'm. I'm **using my mind** and my using my skills **more than my emotions*** (Phase 2, W2, FG Data, Pos. 83-84)

Bayan's excerpt above confirmed that such a merciful role is not her primary responsibility but rather a supportive one, with her main focus being more practical tasks. This aligns with the maternal role described by Deem in excerpt 18 in Section 4.3.1.1.2.1 above.

4.3.1.1.2.3   Skills developer

Bayan further explained that teachers should be equipped to handle students' problems, acting as problem-solvers. She emphasised that teachers are responsible for helping students develop these skills. Additionally, the data suggested that teachers should go beyond addressing

curriculum and class issues and also serve as academic advisors or supervisors, particularly for students who are not well-versed in university regulations. For example, Bayan stated:

Excerpt 21

> *I need to **promote this character**, these characters of the students, **the whole character, not only the student who is getting information** but the student **who is getting skills**, communication skills and how to speak how to how to handle problems, how to problem solver, how to be a problem solver and everything like that, and how that **academic issues** also, we have to cover this issue with them **and it's very important actually** because some of **them or most of them** actually in our university **don't know the rules of the university**. The **courses which would open** what and every procedure that we go, we are going through. So, we need to **enlighten them about these things, not only about the courses** and the lectures and the **and the curriculum**, no, we are we are also required to establish this character, and this is my point of view. (Phase 2, W2, FG Data, Pos. 84)*

Excerpt 21 highlights some support for developing LA by focusing on enhancing learners' communication skills and problem-solving abilities. However, it reveals a basic understanding of the teacher's role as a guide, suggesting that academic advisors should handle university procedures. This participant's understanding could be part of her motherhood sense, as she mentioned earlier in the previous section, excerpt 20.

The following section explores teachers' developing understanding of their roles. Participants across different sessions, following the second session, shared various roles, many of which can be seen as contributing to the development of LA, which could be an indicator of participants' development perspectives.

4.3.1.2   Teachers' Identified Roles After Active Participation

After the second workshop, teachers suggested various roles to promote LA. One role was reiterated from the second workshop, while the rest were newly proposed. The role emphasised in the second workshop is the nurturing figure like a mother. The newly introduced roles are facilitator, flexible within restrictions, attentive to learners' voices and styles, respectful, and a maestro.

4.3.1.2.1   Nurturing Figure Similar to a Mother and Knowledge Provider

The data, after the second workshop, continued to emphasise the maternal role, focusing on her supportive emotional responsibilities. This role highlights a mother who nurtures her children, equipping them with both knowledge and ethical values. Mabrukah stated:

Excerpt 22

> *We need to be **mothers** inside the classroom. We need to **be shoulders to cry on** when we find a sad situation inside our classroom. **Really the task is not just giving a lecture or a lesson randomly,** or just in a hurry. We **need to touch our student needs** as our, my colleagues said. So, they are not only need to be taught academically. **They need to be guided**. As. One of our Poem said, [Translation: Teach the youth knowledge that they may benefit from, the ways of life, and the before knowledge comes ethics], and [Translation: A mother is a school; if you prepare her, you prepare a nation of noble character], so the teacher should be a mother **a good mother**. Because be behind good mothers, good boys and girls, or let us say children. So, **our learners are like our children**. Whenever we did our best in order to help them to grow up, they will find it very easy for them to overcome their own problems. So, really the roles of the teacher, what? the role of the teacher is really so great.* (Phase 3, W5, FG Data, Pos. 151-162)

This excerpt, number 22, emphasises the cultural dimension by highlighting the teacher's position as identical to a mother, a figure firmly established in many cultures as a fundamental source of emotional assistance, nurturing, and ethical direction. The excerpt emphasises the cultural expectation that teachers play a multifaceted role in their student's development, reflecting broader societal standards, values, and norms. It does this by comparing the teacher to a mother who not only teaches information but also teaches values and ethics. This could be a confirmation that part of the teacher's role is to act as a knowledge provider.

4.3.1.2.2   Facilitator

Mabrukah continued providing different roles for the teachers. She described the teacher's role as a facilitator, highlighting that teachers should provide support while assigning activities to students rather than merely sitting at the front of the class. She said:

Excerpt 23

> *The role of the teacher, as my colleague said is to be **a facilitator. [...]** The role of the teacher is to move every now and then, in order to check, for example if we give the learners some activities to do in group, let us say or pair work, it is very important for the teacher to follow, not just giving the exercises **and sitting in front of the class**, observing the students from distance, no, it is our role to **go around or to move around** in order **to help the weaker students** or weaker learners, or even to share their, to share them the responsibility in doing their activities. When they feel this, they **feel that they are involved** and they at the same time they will feel that their teacher is **taking care of them**, so they*

will, this will, this point will motivate them in order to achieve what is required. (Phase 3, W5, FG Data, Pos. 154-156)

Mabrukah's definition demonstrates a profound understanding of the facilitator role. She emphasises the importance of providing support and engaging with students during activities rather than passively sitting at the front of the class. This insight is a positive indicator of the CPD's impact on her understanding of the teacher's role. Her ability to articulate this shift suggests that the CPD effectively conveyed the significance of active facilitation in fostering a more dynamic and supportive learning environment.

4.3.1.2.3 Problem-solver, Class-manager and Decision-maker

The data also shows that the teacher could be a problem-solver who continues assessing the classroom's general norms and demands, a class manager who is taking the role of the leader controlling the class, and a decision-maker who takes immediate actions when circumstances require, as Mabrukah stated:

Excerpt 24

> *In one class, we can find multiple classroom, with poor learners, with good learners, with shy learners, with noisy learners. So, in this case, **the role of the teacher is to be a problem solver**. In order **to deal with this different levels**, and **different situations** and in order to find a way in order **to satisfy this different group**. Another thing for the teacher, a teacher should **be able to control the class**. What we call **class management** because all teaching/ learning process mainly depend on the class management. This is the first point before starting the lesson or the lecture. **We should think of the classroom atmosphere**. We should **think of that class situations**. OK. How the learner **set**. How? They **work**. [..] whether they prefer group work, individual work, pair walk or whatever. So, a good teacher or the most important role for the teacher to do is to be a **class manager** to be **a problem solver**, to be **a decision maker** because sometimes, the teacher finds her or himself in a condition or in a situation that she has to choose, or to select which is **which there is a decision that is need to be taken?** So, a good teacher should have the role to be an decision maker. Inside the classroom, for example, we have subjects that we need to taught them in a funny way.* (Phase 3, W5, FG Data, Pos. 148-162)

The data confirmed the role of a problem solver, as highlighted by Deem. She elaborated on this role, stating:

Excerpt 25

> *A teacher autonomy, a very let us say, a distinguished character. **A problem solver**. This is from my own point of view, **whatever a problem he come across**, he can **solve it and he can deal with it.** (Phase 2, W4, FG Data, Pos. 7-11)*

Highlighting the teacher's role as a problem-solver who can handle diverse situations and challenges shows that Deem recognises the importance of flexibility and adaptability in teaching. This understanding reflects the effectiveness of the CPD in relation to these key aspects of LA, where teachers not only impart knowledge but also support and guide students through various learning obstacles. This viewpoint effectively highlights the impact of the training sessions, with particular emphasis on the fourth workshop. This session was instrumental in shedding light on the challenges teachers face and provided strategies to overcome them.

4.3.1.2.4   Flexible with Restrictions

The data continues revealing various roles, and Deem emphasised one particular problem, which is restrictions on what the teacher can do. She highlighted that it is the teachers' responsibility to be flexible within these restrictions. For instance, Deem, in the following extract, pointed out that even within limitations, solutions can be found. She stated:

Excerpt 26

> *We **are abide by the curriculum** […] as written in the plan. But sometimes **we have to be flexible**, […] we **need to teach [it]**, and this is one of the restrictions which we meet for example. [..] sometimes **those books are very rough** to be taught to the students for example, the history of English language. For example, the book which is written in the course plan **is very difficult for the students** who are undergraduates. It is suitable to the students who are doing their master or be PhD. […]. So, it is, ah, **the flexibility of the teacher here**. That's right, it is **one of the restrictions**. We should choose this book, we should teach this book, but **we should change our teaching strategy** in order to work in order to let this book to be more easier for students, to grasp the ideas which is written in this very, let us say interesting book. It is so difficult to do this for the undergraduates to grasp. It is **the responsibility of the teacher** here to **choose a teaching strategy,** such as for example, **paraphrasing**, a teaching strategy such as, for example, **summarising** and **gives them the gest from this interesting book** to let the students be motivated in learning this subject, which is history of English language. As a teachers, we should **taught it just like a story** in order to attract the students attention to the importance of this subject and to let them enjoy. [..] **The autonomous teacher** here should not. ..**We should abide by the rules**, but we, **our role here developing teaching strategies**, paraphrasing,*

summarising for the students in order to let it more, more easier to be grasped. (Phase 2, W4, FG Data, Pos. 110-117)

The above excerpt highlighted the participant's issue with regulations, specifically the university's assigned textbook. She explained that she could not use an alternative reference, but as a solution, she could vary her teaching strategies, such as paraphrasing and summarising. She illustrated that the course leader could utilise these techniques to simplify complex content and make it more understandable for learners. This also highlights a developed understanding that reflects the effectiveness of the CPD on teachers' knowledge regarding teachers' role in promoting LA.

4.3.1.2.5 Considering Learners' Voices and Styles of Learning and Mutual Respect

The data continued revealing different roles, for example, the role of the teacher who is respectful and considers learners' voices as Mabrukah stated:

Excerpt 27

*Also, the role of the teacher inside the classroom is to give the **students a chance to bring their own ideas**. So, this is **role of a teacher who is a good listener,** so the role of the teacher entered the classroom is to **listen attentively** to what? to the students. Also, **appreciate what they do**.* (Phase-3, W5-data, Pos. 148-162)

The data also highlight Deem's consistent emphasis on the importance of considering learners' individual learning styles. She stated:

Excerpt 28

*So, the teacher role **in order to let the learner autonomous** and motivated. [..] She should use different types of strategies in order to **consider different types of styles** and she should also start from the easier to the most difficult in order **to consider the individual differences** between the students.* (Phase-3, W5-data, Pos. 127-135)

Excerpt 27 and excerpt 28 add further confirmation to the development in teachers' understanding, as the teachers in both excerpts describe the characteristics of what teachers do in a learner-led environment that encourages the development of LA (see Section 2.3).

4.3.1.2.6 A Maestro Leading a Whole Orchestra

Another role highlighted by the data is that of the teacher as a maestro, leading an entire orchestra rather than performing solo. Bayan explained that this role involves coordinating the collective efforts of the learning process rather than relying solely on the teacher's individual efforts. She

also emphasised issues related to the overall class, including the curriculum and classroom setup.

Excerpt 29

> *The teacher or instructor is a is like a **maestro, is leading a whole orchestra**, is **not a solo player,** he is actually a leader to all what's going on in the class, to the curriculum, to the students too, to **the settings of the class** to make them comfortable, to make **herself comfortable**. So, actually, a teacher is a leader of all this is a maestro, as I said, to sum up.* (Phase 3, W5, FG Data, Pos. 166)

Even though the role Bayan mentioned mirrors the teacher's role in the direct method (Larsen-Freeman, 2013), it encourages collaboration and collective efforts among students. This approach helps students take responsibility for their learning, work together, and develop their sense of autonomy. It shifts the focus from the teacher to the students, making learners active contributors. Furthermore, it is important to mention how this teacher cares about the comfort of learners in the classroom, ensuring a positive, friendly atmosphere. However, while this role provides collaborative learning and a safe environment that could support the development of LA, it could also suggest a link to a mother role as it could be seen as providing nurturing and support as well as guidance.

While the presented data in this section, 4.3.1, reveals a development in the teachers' understanding regarding their roles and duties, further analysis of the data reveals the role of the CPD in their practices. The following section clarifies the impact of the CPD on teachers' practices in relation to the implementation of LA in language learning. It is based on one example, as it was the sole evidence of improvement regarding practice based on the analysed and observed data, although pedagogical development is also evident based on reported data.

4.3.2   On Practices

This section explores one case in detail, along with some reported behaviours from other teachers, as the data reveals interesting findings. The findings show that the provided sessions helped Deem change her teaching methods. She reported below that she took notes during the sessions and directly applied what she had learned.

Excerpt 30

> *I learned very much from their discussions, and I wrote there. Every important notification and I just directly implement them, and I **think I learned because it changes my behaviour for the better and I know the importance of autonomy.** I know... you attract*

*me, you attract me **about the importance of autonomy** before while we are students there before, while we are students, **we learn something about autonomy,** but we **learn it's theoretically**. And you come across and you give us **importers of autonomy practically**. And this is the most important here. That's why you **affect me**. You affect me very much by your **valuable workshop**.* (Phase 5, Individual Interviews Data, Pos. 142)

In the previous excerpt, the data highlights not only the value and effectiveness of the workshops but also their practicality. Deem clarified that while she had enrolled in courses about LA during her studies, those classes were theory-driven, and the importance of LA was not recognised until the participant joined these CPD workshops.

The data continues revealing the influence of the series of CPD sessions on the participant's teaching techniques based on her reported action. For example, Deem was frequently demonstrating that she learned new strategies to promote autonomous learning. For example, the following excerpt shows evidence for involving learners in problem-solving tasks as a new teaching strategy. She stated:

Excerpt 31

*I remember that. I took one, one of your ideas dear Suha, which is **problem solving**. Yeah, I took one of your ideas which is problem solving and this is I implemented to my strategies. I took this idea while I am listening to your workshop. This is one of the most important. Yeah. I benefit it very much really, benefit me very much. I ask is my,.. I give this I give this advantage of... I remember that I give **disadvantage of communicative language teaching,** some of the disadvantages of communicative language teaching to my students. I explained to them some of the disadvantages. And then **I asked them to find solution to these problems,** to consider these disadvantages as problems and to find as problems to come across solution to each one of these problems. They give me, they give me very good very good solutions to these problems.* (Phase 5, Individual Interviews Data, Pos. 125)

The excerpt above explains the participant's implementation of the problem-solving activity in the teaching technique class, particularly the one about Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), as a newly learned technique. Deem reported her teaching practice as sharing the limitations of a particular teaching method with learners and then directing them to find possible ways to overcome them.

Throughout the classroom observation, this particular strategy described during the last phase was implemented in her classroom after she presented her lesson about CLT, as noted during the field visit. Below is Deem's shared handout with her students during the field visit.

> **Find solutions to the following problems about CLT**
> - The approach gives priority to meanings and rules of use rather than to grammar and rules of structure.
> - The CLT approach focuses on fluency but not accuracy in grammar and pronunciation.
> - CLT is sometimes difficult to implement in an EFL classroom due to the lack of sources and equipment like authentic materials and native-speaker teachers.

As the observed data reveals, when the teacher provided knowledge about CLT, she started to instruct learners to work collaboratively. The students started working following her instructions. They were seated in circles in which group discussions were allowed. During this newly learned teaching technique, it was observed that learners were using their mobile phones for searching. The teacher was moving around while the groups were carrying out the task of discussing and searching, listening to students, and answering the questions raised by students. Finally, when all groups were ready, each group shared their own discussions with the whole class. While this newly implemented strategy shows a good utilisation, enhancing learners' ability to solve problems and be critical, another newly implemented strategy was found to be problematic in relation to LA promotion (see Section 4.5.2).

However, the above data shows that the teacher acted as a facilitator, unlike what she described as a paternal, maternal, and fraternal role, rejecting the role of the facilitator as mentioned in Section 4.3.1.1.2.1. It could be suggested that the newly learned teaching technique influenced the way she acted. She shifted her focus on the teaching and learning process in which she involved her students in the learning process, and as a consequence, her role as a teacher had shifted to a facilitator.

While the above details show a shift in a teacher's role, from opposing the facilitator role to acting as a facilitator, the reported data continues revealing pedagogical developments in relation to the implementations of LA. For example, Mabrukah demonstrated her readiness for implementation as a consequence of the CPD sessions. She said:

Excerpt 32

> *After having this workshop or after attending this workshop, **we are really ready to implement**, OK, how to develop learners and teachers' autonomy, specifically, learners, how can we motivate learners in order to be active and to be good participants.* (Phase 2, Audio Diaries Data, Pos. 5)

Data continues revealing the effectiveness of these sessions in terms of their practicality and value. Deem clarified, in excerpt 33 below, that the CPD workshops are inspiring because of the new teaching and inspiring ideas they convey. These workshops also enhance the development

of teachers' practices to enhance learners' various skills at no charge. For instance, Deem clarified:

Excerpt 33

> *This workshop is very helpful in terms of implementation of learners' autonomy because it **covers many fruitful ideas** and **teaching strategies that the teachers can apply** easily in any classroom's situation. They **cost nothing and they worth more**. [..]* Those strategies are **very valuable** and contribute directly to learners' autonomy and enhance **their critical thinking**, **problem solving**, **imagination**, **creativity** and **effective communication skills**. (Phase 2, Audio Diaries Data, Pos. 5-6)

The effectiveness of the CPD workshops went beyond expectations. Mabrukah, for example, demonstrated her participation in a community of practice by presenting a session about LA within her educational context. She reported:

Excerpt 34

> *Frankly after your sessions, I **immediately participated in our scientific department**, OK, Research Department, they ask us **to make workshops, so I immediately presented this issue. How to develop learner autonomy?** How to develop learners' autonomy, OK. I make it a presentation just made of a PowerPoint concerning this. OK. Yeah. And even I, OK, I'm so giving it to the students first. The important in this issue because they have to know about the importance of learners' autonomy, you see, because they always OK complain about why are divide in group. Why do we ask this to do? a lot of questions? So, it is going to be very important for them as teachers also to know what learner autonomy is.* (Phase 5, Individual Interviews Data, Pos. 175-181)

Findings highlight Mabrukah's future plans as she shared her plans for the next semester, as excerpt 35 shows below. She illustrates that she is planning to have an English club to enhance learners' language proficiency, developing LA among learners. She stated:

Excerpt 35

> *For the **future plans** I have already started thinking of this issue and I told the student that for **the next semester**, we are going to make an **English club**. [...] They are going to provide different topics for discussion and in the English club will do our best in order **to involve the students**.* (Phase-2 Audio-diaries data, Pos. 6)

Data, as shown below in excerpt 36, continues revealing future work as Mabrukah demonstrated her excitement to convey her experience of joining the CPD workshops to another educational

context. Mabrukah emphasised that she shared her amazing learning experience about LA with her colleagues in Sudan. She encouraged them to explore this area of LA and broaden their knowledge.

Excerpt 36

> I **told my colleagues in Sudan** that you have a very nice workshop about learners' autonomy, and **they asked me about the most important issues that we discussed**. OK. And **I asked them to search and see more about learners' autonomy.** (Phase 5, individual Interviews Data, Pos. 209)

She also emphasised that she would 'carry' her experience with her when she is back in Sudan.

Excerpt 37

> I will carry, OK, this experience. OK, I'll make it a big issue when I return back to my country. And I hope that my country is going to be well, and everything is goanna be OK. I reflect this workshop not to number of teachers or just the number of students or learners. No, I'm going to collect, OK, the teachers in Kartom town or in another, OK, region in order to collect different teachers and make this as we did in for example, TKT. We had the course and then they are after the they send us out our certificates they require us in order to free to reflect this task. So, I reflected this to more than 70 teachers. (Phase 5, Individual Interviews Data, Pos. 189)

Mabrukah's reported views in excerpts 34, 35, 36, and 37 regarding the effectiveness of the CPD demonstrated her satisfaction and excitement about conveying the provided content of the CPD within and outside a particular educational context, particularly her campus 'Campus 2', and outside the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, particularly in Sudan.

It is important to mention that teachers related their development, particularly pedagogical development, to the design of the CPD. For example, Rabab, as shown in the excerpt below, excerpt 38, continued demonstrating how these sessions are effective, as they tolerate discussions in order to share their thoughts and obstacles. They try to find ways to overcome them. Rabab also confirmed that she learned how to involve learners in taking responsibility for their learning and gaining practical knowledge. She expressed her wish to continue having similar sessions.

Excerpt 38

> Regarding the last question, of course, not only me. All of my colleagues agree that these series of lectures were very, very useful. We learn a lot of practical knowledge. We

*discussed. We have **live discussions**. We put **our thoughts,** our **obstacles,** and **we learn how to tackle these situations** in order to make learners autonomy or in order to make teaching/ learning and actual process. And we **also learn how we can involve much and much involvement of students in teaching/ learning process**. There have been various ways and means that we discussed since from the day one of the work workshop, and [..] **it will help us in the future in our classroom** regarding teaching learning process, **so I wish we have more these sessions in future** because it involves actual involvement. So, for me I really appreciate the efforts done by the coordinator Dr. Suha who has been a living coordinator, a living host who make all of these workshops memorable or live for all of us, who have participated in these sessions, so I wish her good luck in her life.* (Phase 2, Audio Diaries Data, Pos. 7)

The data also reveals how these tolerated discussions mentioned by Rabab above allow participants' reflections, as Mabrukah stated:

Excerpt 39

*We learned how a nice and good perfect workshop talking about the learners' autonomy can be organised. How, we can organise a perfect workshop concerning information about the title or the aspect of the workshop and the following questions are really, really beneficial. **We really got a lot of chances in order to reflect our own knowledge** about learners' autonomy, [..] the most important thing that I like best is **the questions after each workshop** and **the whole organisation of the workshop*** (Mabrukah, Phase 2, Audio-diaries Data, Pos. 4)

Mabrukah continued emphasising her preference for attending workshops not only for the content being presented and shared but also for discussions, reflections, and knowledge exchange. She clarified that such CPD methodology enables her to be exposed to different teaching experiences from colleagues on both the same campus and the second campus.

Excerpt 40

*The thing that it was unexpected to learn, and we have already learned, as I told you, the organisation of the questions after each workshop. **Giving feedback**. Really. I mean first I thought it is just a matter of giving the workshop as a presentation just. But for the **presentation to be followed by questions,** you know that **to have different opinions and ideas,** it's **a good chance for all the colleagues to give their own opinions**. So, it will be good in order **to exchange knowledge**. So, **these questions will help us** to **exchange knowledge**, OK, **and experiences,** for example, we are from different colleges.*

So, we can exchange knowledge. So, this is a good idea giving questions after each session. (Phase 2, Audio Diaries Data, Pos. 4)

To conclude this section, 4.3, teachers illustrate a significant development regarding their roles and responsibilities in relation to the implementation of LA. The provided CPD workshops reveal teachers' development in terms of both their knowledge and practices, answering RQ1b (see Section 5.3). The following section is also concerned about the role of the CPD workshops on teachers' knowledge and practices in relation to the implementations of LA, however, in relation to the roles and responsibilities assigned to the students by their teachers.

4.4 The Impact of CPD Workshops on Teachers' Knowledge and Practices: The Roles and Responsibilities Teachers Assigned to Students

The data explores teachers' knowledge and practices regarding learners' involvement in taking responsibility for their learning. It demonstrates acceptance and disagreement, as detailed in the following sections.

4.4.1 On Knowledge

This section explains teachers' understanding regarding the involvement of learners to take responsibility for learning and their knowledge regarding learners' capacity for such engagement. It demonstrates that while teachers show agreement with this engagement for the purpose of encouraging cognitive processes, they assertively refuse learners' engagement in decision-making. It also reveals the teachers' sceptical stances regarding learners' capacity to be involved in decision-making.

To clarify, during Workshop 3, participants were engaged in discussions in which they expressed their points of view regarding the involvement of students in many skills that encourage cognitive processes, particularly enhancing self-regulation and self-assessment, such as encouraging learners to identify their needs and strengths, and weaknesses, evaluate their own learning and learn independently. Most participants agreed to involve learners in such kinds of tasks. For example, Mabrukah stated, '*Every now and then, I try to do my best in order to help them to do these things*' (Excerpt 41, Phase 2, W3, FG Data, Pos. 556). Rabab also expressed her agreement and explained that learners are the best evaluators for their needs, and her role as a teacher is to provide support for improvement if needed. She mentioned:

Excerpt 42

> *If we talk about like giving opportunity to learners, to **identify their own needs** because **it is the learner who knows himself very well,** he knows his needs. As a teacher, we know we support, as I told you, that we can be **a pillar at their back,** but it is the learner himself who has to know, and **he knows his strengths**. He knows **his weaknesses** and he is **the best evaluator**. He's **the best judge** to judge his own self, so it is the learner, and I **will give this opportunity to my students to think, to ponder about their own self** and to know about in which domain they are weak, where they are strong. So, **for me it is like a totally I agree with it**. I will give my students an opportunity to know. And even **I will be always there a support if they have some weaknesses**. I will also be there to help them to sort out that problem is, but **it is the learner he who himself has to come up with these things**. [..] a learner, **a person is a best critique by himself.** (Phase 2, W3, FG Data, Pos. 206-216)*

Deem also expressed her agreement by recounting a 2015 experience in which she utilised a needs analysis survey to help learners identify their needs, strengths, and weaknesses. She stated:

Excerpt 43

> *I still remember that **in 2015** I was teaching listening and speaking course, listening and speaking-2, and then I give the students a form, **a survey,** just like a needs analysis. **I ask them** some questions about **what do you expect to learn**? What do you expect to, for example, to, yeah. Yes. Some questions like this, the content, I give them some of the content which is already going to be taught by me through this term. And some other contents outside the book itself, and **I asked the students about their needs**. What, what, **what do you expect to learn during this term**? (Phase 2, W3, FG Data, Pos. 221-228)*

Through the audio diaries, Deem illustrates her views, demonstrating the importance of the needs analysis survey. When asked about her future plans to develop LA, she highlighted her plan to use such a survey. She stated that:

Excerpt 44

> *I have some plans. I will adapt in the coming term. I will make **needs analysis** for my students at the beginning of each term **asking them about their opinions** in the materials, the **preferable teaching strategy,** their **strengths, their weakness,** their **style of learning**. All those things **will give me a great insight** about my students before start*

*teaching them. **I can benefit from these responses** in choosing the best teaching techniques which aligned with their styles, needs and the one that develops and get rid of their weakness*. (Phase-2 Audio-diaries data, Pos. 6)

The extract above demonstrates the participant's perspective that the need analysis survey helps in teaching preparation. This is because they enable the teacher to consider all learners' needs, learning preferences, and styles.

Deem further reported that peer assessment is an essential aspect of learning to consider. As illustrated in the following excerpt, she stated that this type of student involvement is highly acceptable by the students themselves.

Excerpt 45

> ***Assessment,** for example, I think it is the most important area which we can engage our student in it. We can **give them tasks to evaluate each other's**. For example, they will engage in such activity, and they will love it*. (Phase 2, W3, FG Data, Pos. 122)

However, when examining teachers' views on involving students in decisions about certain aspects of learning, such as course objectives, materials, assessment types, content, and teaching methods, the findings show that all but one participant opposed this involvement. For instance, Rabab, in the following excerpt, highlighted her disagreement with student participation in decision-making related to teaching methods, course materials, resources, and classroom management.

Excerpt 46

> *Like **classroom management, teaching methods**, we **cannot**. [..] **material**, for example, if they suggested a book, Yeah, no like **we cannot, we cannot rely on students**. They can suggest, you, this book, but we cannot rely. **They can suggest to their friends** or like that. Maybe they **their experience or their perspective may go in one angle**. But there are perspective of the teacher may be some the student find this book comfortable for her. But that book will not be comfortable for the other students. So, it can be, she can share this with her friends, but for a teacher she **cannot suggest a ahh some resources.*** (Phase 2, W3, FG Data, Pos. 151-156)

In the previous excerpts, Rabab's response reveals scepticism about students' capacity to be involved in decision-making, reflecting a lack of confidence in their capabilities. It also demonstrates her basic understanding of the potential outcomes of such involvement, viewing it as potentially disruptive and a threat to classroom management.

Bayan, as another example, expressed strong disagreement with students' involvement in decision-making. She firmly rejected the idea of students making decisions regarding course materials, objectives, assessments, and types of activities, stating that she would not consider learners' preferences in activities. She attributed her firm stance to the institution's restrictions. Bayan stated:

Excerpt 47

> OK. I think that most of us will agree on Rabab's point of view that there are certain points or certain areas that **we cannot share with our students**. They are **set beforehand** but about the **activities, the material, the objectives, NOOOO, the assessment,** of **course, NOOO.** (Phase 2, W3, FG Data, Pos. 145)

Participants who disagreed with involving learners in decision-making provided various reasons. For example:

1) Learners are just learners, and insufficient decisions could be made.

Excerpt 48

> If we talk about this, that, uh, the learner has the to determine **their own learning objectives, select their own language learning material** and **contribute to the assessment, I do not agree** with this because learners, **they are just learners,** they cannot determine. **They cannot determine**. When prominent member, they, decide the objectives or the learning material, they put so many things in mind, DOs and Don't, so **I do not agree with this** at that it is the wholly responsibility of the learner to determine the objectives, learning materials and assessment. I do not agree with this because **they are still learners**. They can **commit errors**. (Rabab, Phase 2, W3, FG Data, Pos. 29-32)

Another example was provided by Bayan, who demonstrated that involving learners in making decisions regarding the course objectives will end with other objectives that do not align with the program objectives. She stated:

Excerpt 49

> We cannot take the, the opinions. If you take the opinions, if you allow me to of students about the objectives, **they will choose totally other objectives other than the targeted ones** that you are you are **heading for the program.** (Phase 2, W1, FG Data, Pos. 95)

2) Learners are not qualified because of their young age and lack of experience.

Excerpt 50

> *Yeah, I agree with Rabab **because their age and experience will not allow them to return or to choose the appropriate content, for their age.*** (Deem, Phase 2, W3, FG Data, Pos. 31-39)

3) Such an act needs a special committee or expertise, e.g., the syllabus designers. Even teachers, especially novice teachers, should not have a role in this matter.

Excerpt 51

> ***Even the teacher**. We **need a very good expert in the field in order to determine the materials** as well as **the content,** [..] even the teachers, even the **teachers with no experience,** or **little experience** [..] This is **the responsibility for the syllabus design**, they are syllabus designers who are **responsible for designing the syllabus and the content** in a special way **in a very appropriate way**. (Deem, Phase 2, W3, FG Data, Pos. 31-39)

Excerpt 52

> *Even **the teacher cannot single handily do it**. It is a **duty of a committee.*** (Rabab, Phase-2, W3-data, Pos. 29-32)

4) Some external factors disable teachers from making decisions regarding the aspects of learning mentioned above. They are restricted by course and program specifications and are heading to accreditation, which requires a standardised criterion.

Excerpt 53

> *Because we **are restricted by course specifications**, also, and programs specifications, that's why.* (Bayan, Phase 2, W3, FG Data, Pos. 145)

Excerpt 54

> *We are actually, my dear ladies, are heading for academic **accreditation**. So, accreditation requires certain standards and certain objectives, and **those objectives should be the same all over the university**.* (Bayan, Phase-2, W1, FG Data, Pos. 130)

5) The involvement of students in decision-making is not related to developing LA.

Excerpt 55

> *So, for me, we have to, yeah, develop the autonomy of the learner, but **this is not the autonomy of the learner,** that he can determine his objectives, his learning material, his assessment. I do. I do not agree. I think it's vague.* (Rabab, Phase-2, W3-data, Pos. 37)

6) Allowing learners to choose the type of assessment will not ensure fair evaluation or real feedback, as they will select the easiest options.

Excerpt 56

> *Letting them [the students] to choose their evaluation technique will not ensure fair evaluation and will not give the teacher the real feedback about the level of her students. Simply because the students will choose the items which they understood and will avoid the ones that needs much explanation.* (Deem, Phase-2 Audio-diaries, Pos. 4)

However, in contrast to the others who disagreed, Mabrukah was the sole participant who agreed with involving learners in decision-making. From a different perspective, Mabrukah was open to trying to involve learners in making decisions regarding their learning, as shown in the following extract.

Excerpt 57

> *When we, see, **think of the objectives**, ohh not only the objectives, but **the whole plan** is something that **is not**, let, we cannot say that **100% fixed**. Let's think deeply in the issue. So, **no problem**, if I **show the objectives** for the learners and **ask them to give their own point of views**. What about **sharing the objectives** with the students? If I have a curriculum with objectives, let's says that come from the university or that has been said by the supervisors, or who are concerned, **why don't we put our students on the consideration** of even think of the objectives, because knowing the objectives previously by the learners will enhance them, you know, in order to be ready. To fulfil or to do the best in order to fulfil these objectives, because we have had, you know, we have general and specific objectives. So, **from the beginning they have to be involved** in **order to be ready to** know, **to distinguish between the general objectives** and at the same time **the specific objectives** and even to be involved in the objectives. **Why not?** (Phase 2, W1, FG Data, Pos. 103)

In the following excerpt, Mabrukah continued emphasising the importance of involving learners in all the aspects mentioned by Holec (1981) in the content presented in the CPD programme. Specifically, she advocated for including learners in determining objectives, defining contents and progressions, selecting methods and techniques, monitoring the acquisition process, and evaluating what has been acquired. Mabrukah encouraged teachers to consider learners' gradual involvement in these aspects and highlighted potential adaptations for each one.

Excerpt 59

> *All these issues are really **very important to be sure with the students**. If we take, if we take them **one by one**, we will find most of them are so essential in order to build **from the beginning**, from the students' consideration.* (Phase-2, W1-data, Pos. 132)

Mabrukah also supported involving learners in selecting topics to discuss, for example, in a speaking class.

Excerpt 60

> *It is the most important thing is to **give them a chance,** option, in order to **select the topic** that they **are so interested** at. This will help them **to speak fluently** this will without any hesitation. They will be so interested at that.* (Phase-2, W3-data, Pos. 447)

Mabrukah, in the following excerpt, clarified that passive learners are developed culturally, and the teacher has a role in such learner-adapted attitude. She emphasised the role of teacher knowledge to move students from being passive to active learners.

Excerpt 61

> *When we enhance learning strategies, really, really, really good. Teachers need to see what are the new learning strategies? How do teachers of English teach? In different countries, you see, students have to participate. We have to change knowledge. Teaching English like an ocean you see. We have to go deeper in order to make it easy for the student to move from being passive learners into active learners and also how to develop that.... really, really Suha really, really I found this topic 'learner autonomy' very useful because if the teacher peer in mind the importance of learners autonomy, we will change the way we teach. Really. Really.* (Phase 2, W3, FG Data, Pos. 397-405)

However, Mabrukah expressed disagreement with learners' involvement in decision-making, namely the course materials and course objectives, as she stated, '***For the materials**, for **the course objectively, [..] No'*** (Excerpt 62, Phase 2, W3, FG Data, Pos. 466). While she was at the same workshop, she agreed when discussions were carried out in regard to the involvement of learners in creating their own materials. She reported, '*why not? Why not? **If they are able** to do things, why don't we let them do'* (Excerpt 63, Phase 2, W3, FG Data, Pos. 453-455). This shows scepticism about learners' ability to do so, and at a later stage, as excerpt 64 below shows, she illustrated that the involvement of learners to carry their responsibility is a new perspective she had never known, as she illustrated below.

Excerpt 64

> *We **got many good new information** such as strategies. There are some strategies that is **new for us** [...] such as **giving responsibility for the students** or giving them a chance in order **to carry their own responsibilities**. (Phase 2, Audio Diaries Data, Pos. 6)*

On the other hand, the data below shows changes in some teachers' attitudes, as among the four teachers who resist learners' involvement in decision-making, three showed slight acceptance at later stages. In the first example, Rabab showed minimal acceptance of students' involvement in decision-making. As clearly shown in the following excerpt, she viewed involving learners as a matter of gaining feedback rather than making decisions. Rabab emphasised her stance against allowing learners to participate in decision-making but showed some acceptance of asking learners for frequent feedback. This feedback could include their preferences for teaching methods, for example. She clarified that by hearing their preferences and voices, learners would feel empowered as their input is acknowledged and applied by their instructors.

Excerpt 65

> Generally, we can ask them for **feedback**, **not decision**. We can say feedback. **After every lecture** we can ask them to give you feedback, so they can say whether they why? Suppose I used an audio, visual aid or I use, ohh, a video? Or I used just a presentation? I will ask them to give me your feedback. So, they will say yes, because then we make use of audio-visual aids, it is more fruitful. [..] We can ask them **for feedback** or when we use a, suppose they will say **which method they like the most** or **which method they grasp the things the content more easily**. So, we can ask them for feedback, or we can ask them like after **every week** you can give you a suggestion. What do you want? How do you want? Then it depends. On the teacher, **it depends on the teacher whether he or she is going to implement those or not**. But when we asked the students for feedback, **they get encouraged**. Yes, our teacher listens to ask if we feel anything. **The teacher listens to us**, so we are also important in teaching learning process because when we ask students for feedback it **makes them to realise their importance**. So, the feedback is important in order for the teacher to improve her teaching learning process and for the student to realise the importance and to motivate towards **future learning**. (Phase 4, Individual Interviews Data, Pos. 94-98)

The second example is Bayan, who initially disagreed with involving learners in decision-making but later showed some acceptance. She mentioned that learners could be involved in taking responsibility for their learning within certain conditions, such as being guided, as she stated:

Excerpt 66

> *My point of view, the outlines of the of the course, of the curriculum is set by the course specifications, and course, and program specifications and so on. OK. But shall we call it, for example,* ***a guided instructions*** *or* ***guided instructions for students*** *to fill in these layouts, for example, let me give you an example, from literature. For example, drama, novel, if you need to tell them, you need to know the characters, the plot and the theme, OK. They can fill in those contents, those require contents, they can search for that they can express themselves; they can express their viewpoints in these outlines within these outlines. And this is my point of view and in in theoretical curriculum. But in in the translation, for example, no,* ***you have to give them full responsibility*** *to translate,* ***to choose some content*** *of the translation and some methods of translations and so on. So, I think in my point of view you can get both points of view in order* ***to give them this sort of autonomy,*** *to* ***give them,*** *the students. I mean this sort of autonomy to* ***gather their own material,*** *yes. But* ***within the outlines*** *of the course. (Phase 2, W3, FG Data, Pos. 47-49)*

The excerpt above illustrates four issues: 1) the involvement of learners could be in different educational contexts, theoretical or content-based, and translation courses. 2) The degree of responsibility is full in a translation course but less in a content-based course, for example, English literature. 3) The teacher has a role in promoting LA, as several times she said, '*give them full responsibility'* and *'this sort of autonomy.'* Finally, 4) it shows a slight change in Bayan's perspective in regard to the students' involvement in material gathering. This excerpt demonstrates a slight change in Bayans' attitude regarding the involvement of learners in taking responsibility for aspects of their learning.

Bayan also showed her acceptance to involve learners in the process of selecting a text to translate and assigning a leader for their group. She stated:

Excerpt 67

> *The decision to choose, for example, their own material to translate as I I was saying now give them a project to translate it.* ***They can choos****e, they can choose their own* ***material to translate*** *their project. I mean and they can divide and among the group and they* ***can choose their own leader****. All these are decisions for the learners to make. Yes. (Phase 5, Individual Interviews Data, Pos. 36)*

However, Deem was the third case showing acceptance to include some type of tasks that empower learners to be decision-makers and communicators in order to develop LA. She emphasised that students will not take responsibility unless they are given a chance.

Excerpt 68

> *The teacher has a very good role, or they should play a very good role in supporting or helping or guiding the students to be autonomous learners. **They should design tasks** or let's say, **teaching techniques** which will **enable their students to take part in decision making in,** in let's say cooperating among each other in communicating the language, in learning the language.* (Phase 5, Individual Interviews Data, Pos. 41)

While this section demonstrates a slight impact of CPD on teachers' knowledge in relation to LA implementation, the following section shows the impact of CPD on teachers' practices.

4.4.2   On Practices

This section demonstrates almost no impact on teachers' practice in terms of the roles and duties they assigned to their students in relation to LA, yet a highly structured classroom was evident, limiting students' autonomy. For instance, Bayan reported that she did not develop any new strategies or modify her own practices. However, she expressed her willingness, as she stated, '*Hopefully, I will, not yet, not yet, but I keep it in mind actually*' (Excerpt 69, Phase 5, Individual Interviews Data, Pos. 52).

The data collected through group interviewing in the first phase reveals Bayan's reported teaching approach of not allowing translation attempts to be carried out outside the classroom. Instead, the data shows her preference to work with students during class, making sure that they understand the meaning of every single word in the text before they start the translation, as evident below.

Excerpt 70

> *I let them discuss with each other and discuss with me while we are translating on site during the class, I **don't give them homework,** so **I don't give them** the **part they will translate next lecture,** no, **because of course I know they will go to Google Translate** and so on. I know that, so, I get them the paper during the lecture I get let them translate discuss with each other, collaborate, and I help them. **I look at each one who's translating**. **I give them notes,** pay attention to this to that, and **then we translate on the board**. The **students themselves start to translate what we had on board,** and other students start to comment on what we have said and draw their attention. We have said so you pay attention to so and they start to discuss with each other. I asked them all the time. What about this? What about this? If you have more meanings for this word, OK. And I think this way makes all the students full of attention to what you're saying...and actually...In my opinion, of course, it depends on the teacher to make them interact, to*

*make them to draw their attention to you, what you're saying. If you're **adding to their***

***information**, I think they will pay attention more attention of course.* (Phase 1, Group

Interviewing Data, Pos. 96-100)

What has been reported above is exactly what was done in the classroom. For example, during

the observed class, the teacher distributed a handout with a written English text for learners to

translate into Arabic. See the text below:

What do you know about Australian bushfires?
Australia faced a devastating start to its fire season in late 2019, and things quickly got **worse**
before rains helped contain many of the worst fires in February 2020. **Dozens** of fires erupted in
New South Wales, Australia, leading the government to declare a state of emergency in
November 2019. Fires rapidly spread across all states to become some of the most devastating
in history. At least 33 people are dead, including at least three volunteer firefighters, and more
are missing. Around 3,000 homes have been destroyed or damaged.

The data reveals the participant's actual practice as noted during the classroom visit. For

instance, the teacher started reading the English text after distributing the handout. While reading

the first sentence, she pointed out the adjective 'worse' and clarified the difference between

'worse and worst' in usage. She continued reading and again pointed out the word 'dozens,' asking

students to provide an equivalent translation of this particular word. The teacher rapidly asked,

'could we say (درزن)? providing a literal meaning of the word 'dozen.' Students laughed, and the

teacher continued confirming that a literal translation could not be provided for this particular

word. Students provided an equivalent for this particular word, saying, 'عشرات.'

However, the data reveals Bayan's teaching practices, as providing the translation of every

unknown word of meaning without referring to any aids but the teacher. For example, during the

class one student asked the teacher about the meaning of 'fire season', and the teacher said, 'it

means (موسم الحرائق)', providing the translation herself.

The data also confirms that the teacher provided not only lexical translations, if unknown by any

student but also phrases. For example, when one student came in front of the board to translate

the third sentence, she asked the teacher how to translate 'in history' and suggested a translation,

saying, 'Could it be (عبر التاريخ)?' The teacher said, 'Yes, and also (عبر العصور).'

It is worth highlighting that translation occurs with the supervision of the teacher in which

students take it in turn to translate sentences on the board as a whole class work with teacher-

structured directions and some learners' efforts, and the rest were observed copying what was

written on the board. Bayan, prior to the classroom visit, described this situation as it had been noted, stating that:

Excerpt 71

> *I can help them*. *I look at each one who's translating. I give them notes, pay attention to this to that, and then **we translate on the board**. The students themselves start to translate, what we had**, on board** and other students start to comment on what we have said and draw their attention. We have said so, you pay attention to so, and **they start to discuss with each other**. I **asked them all the time**. What about this? What about this? If you have more meanings for this word, OK. And I think in this way, it makes all the students full of attention to what you're saying, and actually, in my opinion, of course it depends on the teacher to make them interact to make them to draw their attention to you, what you're saying. If **you're adding to their information**, I think they will pay attention more attention of course. But of course, we have differences that's granted for all classes, but I think we're in translation in particular, I enjoy it because I do this particular method in teaching. It's not teaching actually it's training*. (Phase 1, Group Interviewing Data, Pos. 95)

This reported action aligns with the observed data, except for one particular point. The classroom observations revealed that Bayan did not give her students the opportunity to interact or work collaboratively in some parts of the task. However, the data in this extract could justify the participant's structured teaching approach as paying attention to everything, as Bayan stated above. She illustrated her action as supportive.

The data collected through individual interviews explored the participant's views on supporting learners' autonomy. Bayan emphasised that it could be through providing intensive explanations. For example, she reported:

Excerpt 72

> *You can you can simply give them tasks to do. Yeah, yeah, yeah, I said if you, if you could learn ....or if you could remember the way I told them, I give them all the data. Do this and that and that. These are your tasks, so go on. You'll give them the task and make it as clear as possible. **Explain as much as you can**. Make it easy for them as you can. And then ask them to contribute. Don't give them vague. **Don't give them difficult tasks to do**. They will be reluctant to contribute actually, but if you give them an **easy task**, a **clear task to do**, I think they will be willing, and they will be encouraged to do it. Yes*. (Phase 5, Individual Interviews Data, Pos. 32)

From this excerpt, the teacher prioritises simplifying tasks and making them as clear as possible. However, comparing what she mentioned above with her actual practice, a very structured teaching methodology had been provided in a manner that enables teacher control over students' learning process, limiting their autonomy. To clarify, first, students were not using any translation aids, whether electronic or paper dictionaries. It has been noticed that if students found any word difficult, they asked the teacher about its meaning. The data also suggests that the teacher is encouraging this practice as she frequently asks if there are any difficult words for her to translate. Second, discussions were not encouraged, and neither some room for learners to make decisions or self-regulations were provided, instead providing step-by-step instructions.

While the observed data reveals a very structured classroom environment, it shows complexity in Bayan's case. Her experience as a learner and her clarification of the need for guidelines and some certain level of teacher supervision, as shown in Section 4.2.1.1, resulted in complexity. What she did as a student does not necessarily translate into her teaching beliefs, as the initial data suggests in Section 4.2.1.1, or her practices as providing a very structured learning environment.

Furthermore, the data show no evidence of involving learners in the process of learning except the newly learned techniques highlighted in excerpt 31 above and expert 78 will be shown below, and one reported practice highlighted by Ehsan prior to any training. She reported that.

Excerpt 73

> *I organise my courses in every course. I take the names, the way they show up in the list and **I created** a **portfolio** for every student. It means what, for example, today in my course on history of English language, I had questions about what are the main features of Old English. Every student must submit an answer writing form and send it via WhatsApp or e-mail instantly. OK? And that answer will be saved in her portfolio **when the time of the exam comes**; they have something **for revision**, and they have a portfolio full of their own answers. It's their production. And I did this for every course.* (Phase 1, Group interviewing Data, Pos. 64-66)

While Ehsan encourages the use of portfolios, which could enhance the development of LA, her approach clearly does not promote LA but encourages teacher reliance and memorisation as a revision and preparation for exam-based learning (see Section 4.5.3).

Section 4.4.2 suggests that the teaching approach falls short of promoting an effective context that enhances students' skills required to develop LA, such as self-control and decision-making, for example, regarding the choice of lexis to use in their translated texts. Such very restricted instructions could be a negative result of her experience as a learner in which she was given full

control over her study, which could be rationalised by her refusal of the teaching approach she received and her confirmation of the importance of providing very clear and intensive guidelines (see Section 4.2.1.1).

To this end, Section 4.4 has investigated the influence of the CPD workshops on teachers' beliefs and practices to their students' assigned roles and responsibilities. This section shows only a minor impact on teachers' knowledge, yet nearly no impact on practical aspects, although Deems' teacher role as a facilitator could contribute to learners' involvement. However, there is no direct and concrete evidence other than Deems' reported practice in which she started to implement new teaching strategies.

However, this demonstrates the most challenging aspect of change, which is the involvement of learners in the learning process (see Section 5.4). While this section presents an answer to RQ1c, it also contributes to answering RQ1 alongside Sections 4.2 and 4.3. These sections clarify the impact of CPD in teachers' knowledge and practices, demonstrating variable levels of influence (see discussion in Section 5.5).

4.5   Factors that Impede the Promotion of LA in Language Learning

This section aims to investigate the second research question: 'How does CPD help in understanding the factors that impede the promotion of LA in language learning?' The primary tool of this section is the field notes, while the other tools contribute further confirmation or explanations. The data shows many challenges hindering the promotion of LA, as the subsections below reveal.

4.5.1   Lack of Understanding of the Concept of LA

This section reveals that teachers lack an understanding of what LA means. For example, their initial definitions provided during phase 1, excluding teachers' responsibility from the process of developing LA confirms such basic understating (see Section 4.2). Such exclusion of teachers' responsibility separates LA from language learning.

Furthermore, one participant's data reveals a lack of understanding of the concept of LA. For example, the association of LA with learners' language proficiency level. Deem stated:

Excerpt 74

> *This is one of the obstacles of the teacher. Maybe to find the, let's say,* **autonomous techniques implementation** *inside the classroom is* **very difficult**. *It* **depends on the level of the students**. *But if you have a students who have* **high proficiency in**

*communication **in English language**, it would be very easy for the teacher to implement a different types of techniques with his or her own students.* (Deem, Phase 5, Individual Interview Data, Pos. 60-62)

Deem also associated learners being active in a question-and-answer session as being autonomous. She reported that

Excerpt 75

I will never explain the lesson just like I mean the explaining, explaining, explaining and giving, giving, giving, giving no. I will take from the students themselves. I will explain the lesson through question and answer, question and answer, all the time I ask, and they answer I ask, and they answer, and I lead them to answer the questions from one by one, one by one in order to distribute the opportunity for all the students to give them. And yeah, I mean share their share. (Phase 1, Group Interviewing Data, Pos. 77)

Deem highlighted, describing active learners as those who ask many questions and frequently ask for clarifications and further explanations. She stated that:

Excerpt 76

*You are going to find two or three students who are **active all the time**, discussing, answering, and want to ask you, in order **to listen from you**. They ask you, for example, to elaborate. I **have very active students**, very, very active students. **They didn't even skip an information without letting me giving them example**. They want more elaboration the discussion.* (Deem, Phase 1, Group Interviewing Data, Pos. 77-85)

The excerpt above highlights a misunderstanding of active learners. Deem describes students frequently asking a lot of questions. Those learners' actions could be seen as teacher-dependent to provide them with an answer to every particular issue that needs further elaboration to gain knowledge from the teachers instead of seeking answers to their questions by themselves, searching online, or finding a further reading reference. However, the teacher's reaction to such an act is responding to their demands instead of encouraging them to work autonomously in groups, with peers, or individually to be involved in their learning process.

Finally, the findings show that teachers' talk time should be more than their students. Rabab mentioned that

Excerpt 77

***It's not the students' talk that's more important**. If we make the teaching learning so **autonomous**, but still, it is **the teacher who has the more important role**, or more*

teacher talks than of the students. The teacher gives the chance to students to talk. But **the teacher has to talk more**. (Rabab, Phase 5, Interview Data, Pos. 163)

While teacher talk time is not necessarily to be less than students' time, particularly in lecture-based classrooms, the data above show misunderstandings that even in autonomous-learning classrooms, the teacher talks should always be more than her students.

4.5.2 Lack of Understanding of the Responsibilities of the Facilitator Role

This section clarifies one of the challenges observed during the field visit hindering the promotion of LA. It demonstrates a lack of understanding of how a facilitator's role properly functions. To clarify, while the data reveals Deems' practice as demonstrating a facilitator role in Section 4.3.2, it also reveals that several implemented activities were noted for their role in enhancing memorisation. For instance, the teacher, at the start of her class, began by welcoming students back after a break and reviewed all the teaching methods covered before the break, such as the Grammar Translation Method, Direct Method, Desuggestopedia, and Silent Way. She asked about each method's goals, the skills each method emphasised, and key principles, including the roles of the teacher and students in which a singular correct answer was ensured to be provided.

Frequent reviews were also observed in a different class taught by the same teacher. For example, in the 'Appreciated Poetry' class, the teacher assigned a task called the 'Card Activity,' where learners were given cards, half with terminologies and half with definitions. Each student with a terminology card had to find the classmate with the corresponding definition card and vice versa. Once matched, the pairs sat together to explain how they determined the match. For example, one student had the card labelled 'diction' and paired it with a card explaining the 'vision of the eagle.' These students explained that the poet used the word 'watches' instead of 'staring' or 'looking' to more accurately describe the eagle's vision. This activity lasted about 15 minutes and was identified by the teacher as a review activity to check students' understanding of previous lessons.

The data at the Appreciated Poetry class continues revealing the participant's practice of revising and checking that the students are providing accurate answers. For example, at the end of the class, the teacher involved learners in a question-and-answer session. She asked them several questions, starting with the main idea of the poem, which students identified as making choices in life and taking risks. The teacher confirmed their answers and discussed the difficulty of making choices, especially when aware of the risks. She then asked about the definition of collocative meaning, which the students defined as 'unclear or hidden meaning.' The teacher continued by asking for examples of diction from any poem, and the students provided numerous examples.

Finally, the teacher concluded the class by emphasising the importance of frequent revision, lesson by lesson, and asked if there were any questions. When none were asked, she advised the students to revise the poems at home.

A third example of enhancing memorisation was noted by the same teacher whose data indicated an acceptance to act as a facilitator, as detailed in Section 4.3.2. Deem's practices demonstrated that her implementation of a newly learned activity was not properly implemented, regardless of the learners' positive feedback being happy with it. For example, she reported that:

Excerpt 78

> *Yeah, I give them some ..some group of strategies, for example, 'hot chair', this is **a very new strategy**. I have just told, I told my students in the in the previous week about this strategy and **they love it**. I will asked their opinions; I said in the coming week, I will use this 'hot chair' with you because we are going to finish today. So, in the coming week, we are going to use this 'hot chair' **to revise the whole content** which we have studied during this subject, one of the students will come, and she will sit in this hot chair, and her colleagues **will ask her the things which is difficult for them which is which needs more clarification,** and she should **answer their questions**. If she succeeded in answering their questions, that's good. If she can't, she will choose one of the colleagues in order to come and to sit in this hot chair and to be in this critical situation. **They love, they love this activity**, they love it. I before applying it, I asked their opinions. Do you want me to apply it for you? They said yes, yes, yes, they were very enthusiastic. When it's all in the coming in the coming week, we are going **to use it to revise**. Yeah. (Phase-2, W3 Data, Pos. 132-136)*

The excerpt above highlights a misunderstanding of how a facilitator's role functions. The purpose of the new activity, termed 'the hot chair,' was not to engage students in the process of learning and taking some responsibility; rather, it was implemented to encourage memorisation and revision for the examination.

However, during the individual interview in the last phase, the participant was asked about her purpose of the intensive reviewing during the class as an act of a member check (see Section 3.9). Her response was, as she reported, '***It will enhance students' memorisation***. *[..] Of course, this one of the **brain activity**'* (Excerpt 79, Phase 5, Individual Interviews Data, Pos. 194-200). The participant's standpoint regarding the importance of continuous reviewing was mainly to enhance memorisation.

Such a goal was not noted by Deem only but by two other teachers, namely Mabrukah and Bayan. For example, Mabrukah, who explained the role of the facilitator very well in Section 4.3.1.2.2,

had been observed to have the same issue in which the purpose of engaging learners in activities aligns with Deems' purpose of facilitating an activity. To clarify, during the classroom visit, the teacher was seen utilising the traditional method in which memorising the correct answer is appropriate. For example, as a warming-up activity of Mabrukahs' class, she started asking the students about the name of the book and what had been covered during the semester. It could be argued that there is no point in asking the students about the name of the book and what had been covered during the semester. It could be argued that this is not a warming up activity that checks the previous knowledge of the students to be linked with the new knowledge.

Another example of the same teacher who demonstrates a lack of understanding of the role of the facilitator was revealed during one of the visited classes. For example, the teacher utilised a particular task in which she divided learners into groups and asked each group to prepare some questions, such as preparing summative exams. The students took several minutes preparing their questions. Then, the teacher asked Group A to ask Group B the questions they had prepared. Group A asked Group B, 'What makes the syllable more prominent?' Group B was not able to answer Group A's question, so they moved it to Group C as a part of the activity rules. Group C had several seconds of discussing, then answered: '*The way of pronouncing; some of the characteristics of a prominent syllable is the length, the quality, and loudness.*' The teacher added that '*stress and intonation could be added*.' One student who said 'loudness' was looking for the answer on her mobile, and the teacher noticed that and notified her that this was cheating in a very friendly and respectful manner, asking the student to put down her phone while laughing. This is avoiding the aids of technology and the opportunities it offers to enhance learning opportunities. However, further discussions will be detailed in Section 4.5.3 as it provides the third example, namely Bayan.

In summary, generally speaking, Mabrukah's class was not a lecture style, but at the same time, the activities were not critical nor enhancing learners to take responsibility for their learning. Many types of questions were seen seeking one particular answer to memorise for examination-based courses, which indicates the influence of assessment type on teaching practices. Furthermore, it could be argued that these two teachers, Deem and Mabrukah, lack an understanding of the facilitator's responsibility and how such a role functions. This could be contributing to the field of LA, adding further obstacles to its promotion in language classrooms.

The following case, as explained in the following section, is similar to these examples in some respects and different in others. It is similar to the two examples presented in this section, as it enhances memorisation, but it is different because it is very structured, enhancing learners' reliance on the teacher.

4.5.3 Enhancing Teachers' Reliance and Memorisation for Examination-based Preparations

The data from Bayan's classroom not only reveals teachers' reliance enhancement but also encourages memorisation, as in the case of Deem and Mabrukah's classrooms in the previous section. For example, when the teacher and learners completed the translation task, the teacher shared a PowerPoint with theoretical content about 'Equivalence at the word level' written on the first slide. The teacher asked the students 'what equivalence at the word level means?' One student answered, '(مقابل).' The teacher started explaining what the word means and its lexical meanings. She exposed four types of meaning. The four types were propositional meaning, expressive meaning, presupposed (collocational) meaning, and evoked meaning.

The teacher clarified that students are required to memorise only two types, saying that a question in their written exam might be like '*talk about two types of the meanings.*' She also clarified that in order for students to answer this question, they need to provide a meaning of the type and give two examples of each type. When the teacher was reading the PowerPoint, in particular the expressive meaning, she clarified that the first two points are about the definition of the type. She asserted that two examples among these should be given while the rest of the slide is not that important. She did the same with all the types, clarifying which points are related to the definitions and should be written in the exam. When she was reading the slide about collocation restrictions, she also asserted that two examples should be memorised: one from the English collocations and the second from the Arabic collocations.

This is clear evidence from the data that the teaching strategy enhances memorisation for exam preparation. During the lecture, the teacher focused on the parts of the lesson that learners would be tested on and highlighted what could be the ideal answer, what to memorise, and how many examples to provide. To this end, the observed data reveal the influence of examination-based assessment on teachers' practices. The following section provides a fourth factor that impedes the promotion of LA, as the described situations do not encourage the use of technology in their classrooms.

4.5.4 Avoiding Technology Usage

The emerging data shed light on technology usage in classrooms and show two cases of resistance to the use of technology. Deem, for example, believes that learners' usage of technology does not reflect their accurate level of learning. The findings demonstrate her resistance based on her concern about plagiarism, in which students will be relying on technological aids to complete their tasks. Deem reported:

Excerpt 80

> *We should not let the students go at home and then answer this question for example, if I give them such type of assignment, it's better to do it **in front of me** if I want **a real feedback** because some of the students goes and **search on the internet** and just take the **answer from Google** and give it to the teacher and then the teacher will be amazing for the answer and she will not know that this is from Google. This is not the answer of the student in herself. This is answer of Google but in order to have a feedback, a real feedback about the knowledge of the history of English language, which is a students, whether the student knows or not, understand or not, give them this assignment **in front of your eyes** and give them for example, half an hour and let them do and write whatever they information they have.* (Phase 1, Group Interviewing Data, Pos. 252)

This extract number 80 shows the participant's concern about the use of technological aids. However, her concern regarding plagiarism hinders the learning process. It limits learners' knowledge to what is provided in their class only, as they are not encouraged to search for further information. As a consequence, it limits their critical thinking and autonomy.

The other case, Bayan, also reported her rejection of the use of technology, emphasising her teaching approach of limiting translation practices to be carried out during the class period only. The data provided Bayan's rationale for following her teaching methodology to avoid Google translations.

Excerpt 81

> *While we are translating on site during the class, **I don't give them homework**, so I **don't give them the part they will translate next lecture no**, because of course I know they will go **to Google Translate** and so on. I know that so I get them the paper during the lecture I get let them translate discuss with each other, collaborate as I say it **and I help them.*** (Phase 1, Group Interviewing Data, Pos. 95)

When further explanation was asked during the interview with Bayan, she confirmed the same response, expressing her concern about the use of Google Translate. She stated:

Excerpt 82

> *Mainly my concern that they will go to, refer to **automatic translation**. And that is, of course, will hinder their ability, their skills of translation. That's why I give them, [..], the passage, for example, they will translate **in front of my eyes** not in order to observe them, but in order to make sure that they were not referred to automatic translation. I wanted to them to translate, and **I give them the important words** as you saw, as you attended my*

*lecture. **I give them all the data required**. (Phase 5, Individual Interviews Data, Pos. 102-103)*

Bayan demonstrates in the above extract that she does not prefer off-site work because she emphasises developing the students' ability as translators. However, her actual practice of providing all the required data, as she described, in which the teacher provides translation of every unknown word (as detailed in Section 4.4.2), is obviously limiting their ability as well. The following section provides further challenges that hinder the promotion of LA from teachers' perspectives.

4.5.5   Other Challenges that Hinder the Promotion of LA

The data also presents other challenges that hinder the promotion of LA besides the ones mentioned above. However, this section is based on teachers' perspectives, not observed data as shown above. Participants mentioned many obstacles that contribute to the lack of fostering LA, e.g., learners' lack of motivation, students' passive role, curriculum and course specifications, lack of specific training, teachers' busy schedules, and standard learning objectives for unified learning outcomes. Table 4-1 below shows these challenges along with extracts from the participants as evidence.

Table 4-1   Other challenges that hinder the promotion of LA

Challenges	Participants' Excerpts
Learners' lack of motivation	• *Most of the students, they're not all of them, they're not motivated*. (Excerpt 83, Mabrukah, Phase 2, W4, FG Data, Pos. 216) • *I totally agree with Rabab because we, the students all over the world are the same regardless of Saudi Arabia or in India or in any other country. Most of the students didn't want to participate*. (Excerpt 84, Deem, Phase 2, W2, FG Data, Pos. 104)
Students are passive and prefer to be passive	• *The majority of them **prefer to listen**. Either it's fear or anxiety or they won't.. They don't know how to say it or they don't know how to put it. So, in my case it's one-way direction. But I invest too much energy in changing this, but the process is very slow. I've been here for five years with excellent student, it's two-way direction, but with the majority, it's one way direction **relying on me to direct them** to guide them to be the facilitator, to be the producer. OK. I don't want to say this, but that's the real side of teaching and I'm for the, uh, autonomy of the student, and I'm for the independence of student. But still I think it will take long. A lot of time to be like put into process.* (Excerpt 85, Ehsan, Phase 1, Group Interviewing Data, Pos. 62)

	• *Students are always they want to be passive, oh that the teacher did not see me, so I'm happy she did not ask me any questions* (Excerpt 86, Rabab, Phase 2, W2, FG Data, Pos. 101)
Curriculum and course specifications	• *We are abide by the curriculum, which is that, I mean the course, the course specifications which is written in the plan.* (Excerpt 87, Deem, Phase 2, W4, FG Data, Pos. 110) • *In my point of view, of course, yes, we are restricted by curricula, by the rules, by regulations, and we also free to choose our strategies to teach and so on.* (Excerpt 88, Bayan, Phase 2, W4, FG Data, Pos. 123)
Lack of the provision of LA training and teachers' schedules being too busy to update their knowledge themselves	• *As we know that we are so busy in our work, so frankly we don't usually search and go deeper in learning teaching process, you see? Yes, we are practicing teaching learning processes inside the classroom. But really, as you know that there is no chance for training in the university unfortunately.* (Excerpt 89, Mabrukah, Phase 2, W4, FG Data, Pos. 87)
Standard learning objectives- heading for Accreditation	• *Let's differentiate between two things. OK, my dear leaders, because I lived… this reality, this is reality. Reality that you are. You are supposed to teach. And students are supposed to be taught what the objectives the, according to the program itself. OK. The whole program of the English language has main objectives, and they are divided into the courses respectively. OK, so we are actually, my dear ladies are heading for Accreditation academic accreditation. So, accreditation requires certain standards and certain objectives, and those objectives should be the same all over the university, OK? And all over the courses of English language, they are (standardised). That's what I mean. So, we are. We are supposed to teach for a certain or certain objectives, OK. And the students should receive the same input in order to give the same output. Now here I'm talking about quality, quality assurance. OK, so actually these objectives, I don't these objectives are set for us according to the program according to the to the course. But they are we in my opinion, yes we should. We should discuss we should amend we should many do many things but actually the reality it doesn't happen. Let's face it, let's be realistic. The realistic about that. we are we, we were on our objective is to get academic accreditation. So, we need to to comply to the standards required to the objectives required and then we can discuss the strategies, the content, the evaluation, OK, that all that I agree with. But the objectives No. That's my point of view.* (Excerpt 90, Bayan, Phase 2, W1, FG Data, Pos. 130)

The table above demonstrates many challenges that hinder the promotion of LA. Together with the above sections, a list of challenges shows up. For example, participants' lack of understanding of the concept, participants' lack of understanding of the duties of the facilitator,

teachers' practices that enhance learners' reliance on teachers and memorisations for examination-based preparations, discouragement of making use of technology, learners' lack of motivation, students' preference to remain passive, curriculum and course specifications, and lack of specific training and teachers' busy schedules, and standard learning objectives for unified learning outcomes are all examples were noted in this research study and seen as discouraging LA enhancement. To this end, this section provides an answer to the RQ2. It demonstrates challenges that hinder the promotion of LA (see Section 5.6).

4.6   Summary of the Chapter

This chapter provides insight in an attempt to answer this study's research questions. It demonstrates the importance of CPD in both teachers' knowledge and practices. It shows how these workshops developed: 1) teachers' knowledge regarding LA definition, 2) teachers' knowledge and practices on teachers' roles and responsibilities, and 3) teachers' knowledge of the roles and duties they assigned to their students, but no evidence was seen in terms of their practice, except one, although the teachers welcomed the idea of involving learners in self-regulation activities and assessment, yet refused leaners' involvement in decision making. This chapter also shows how CPD helps in understanding contextual challenges that could be hindering the promotion of LA.

Chapter 5 Discussion

5.1 Introduction

The present chapter discusses the results presented in Chapter 4 in light of the literature presented in Chapter 2. Specifically, the discussion relates the findings to theories and concepts of teachers' knowledge and practices to promote learner autonomy (LA) and the impact of continuing professional development (CPD) that considers teachers' current knowledge and beliefs. The findings of this study are also discussed in relation to the research questions, aims, and objectives presented in Chapter 1. It explains how teachers understand LA and how they perceive their own roles and responsibilities alongside those of their students, explaining how CPD influences their growth in knowledge and practices.

Following this introduction to the chapter, Section 5.2 answers research question 1a, and discusses the impact of CPD in developing teachers' knowledge in relation to the definition of LA. It focuses particularly on the impact of CPD in how teachers develop their understanding of what LA means. This is followed by Section 5.3 which addresses research question 1b. It looks at the impact of CPD in the development of teachers' knowledge and practices towards their roles and responsibilities in relation to the implementation of LA. Research question 1c is discussed in Section 5.4, which discusses the impact of CPD on teachers' knowledge and practices towards their students' assigned roles and responsibilities in relation to the implementation of language learner autonomy. Section 5.5 adds a further contribution to the discussion of research question 1 (RQ 1a, 1b, and 1c), by clarifying the variable impact of CPD on teachers' knowledge and practices. Section 5.6 discusses the findings in relation to the second research question and examines the factors that impede the promotion of LA, followed by Section 5.7, which discusses several considerations for teachers to be LA-supportive. The last section, Section 5.8, summarizes the chapter.

5.2 The Impact of CPD on Teachers' Knowledge in Relation to the Definition of LA

This section answers the first research question, particularly question 1a, 'How do CPD workshops on learner autonomy impact teachers' knowledge of the concept of language learner autonomy?' The tracked three cases revealed the influence of the CPD on the teachers' knowledge of the concept of LA, particularly how teachers define it. Two cases demonstrated knowledge growth in relation to their understanding of what LA means. However, one case showed a very slight impact, as her initial definition almost remained unchanged (see Table 5-1).

Table 5-1   The Impact of CPD on In-service Teachers' Knowledge in Relation to the Definition of
LA

Participants	1st Phase (Group Interviewing)	2nd Phase (FG Discussions)	2nd Phase (Audio Diaries)	5th Phase (Individual Interviews)
Bayan	Excluded the teacher's responsibility	Included the Teacher's responsibility	Included the Teacher's responsibility	Included the Teacher's responsibility
Rabab	Excluded the teacher's responsibility	Excluded the teacher's responsibility	Included the Teacher's responsibility	Included the Teacher's responsibility
Afaf	Excluded the teacher's responsibility	Excluded the teacher's responsibility	Excluded the teacher's responsibility	Excluded the teacher's responsibility

As the table above shows, two cases, namely Bayan and Raba, demonstrated a developing perspective in the way they understand LA, from excluding their responsibility for providing LA supportive environments to realizing their own role in this regard. The third case's data, Afaf, demonstrated a notable example of resistance concerning her understanding of LA, as her definition of LA remained unchanged throughout all the study phases, referring to LA as students' self-learning. While her definition kept emphasizing the exclusion of teachers' responsibility, a slight growth occurred in providing a definition similar to Holec's (1981) definition, yet it demonstrates that a student is in charge of his or her own progress and outcomes (see Section 4.2). This result also shows the varied level of acceptance between participants during the study phases as bayan accepted her involvement in this process before Rabab (see Section 5.5).

Overall, then, analysis of teachers' provided definitions shows a shift in perspectives in two cases. They provided different definitions than their original one provided before CPD. Initially, they excluded the teacher role, and later, they emphasized the role of the teacher in this regard and learners' capacity and motivation. Thus, their initial definitions of LA were associated with the political dimension, whereas their later provided definitions included the psychological and social dimensions, along with the political.

This result is in alignment with Li's (2023) study's results showing an impact of CPD in developing in-service teachers' understanding regarding the enhancement of LA, even though the procedure to examine the impact is slightly different. Li's (2023) study asked the participants about the effectiveness of the CPD on their understanding during the last phase of their study. Their participants reflected that they had a clearer understanding of LA. However, in this study, the

impact of CPD on teachers' understanding of LA is examined by tracking teachers' understating before and after CPD in three different areas. The first area is to investigate how teachers defined LA throughout the study's phases. The impact of the second and third areas are discussed in Sections 5.3 and 5.4, respectively.

The process of shifting problematic frames of reference, like these teachers' mindsets, their habitual ways of thinking, and interpretive perspectives, into more inclusive, thoughtful, open, reflective, and flexible ones ensures that transformative learning occurs. While Mezirow (2018, p.94) classifies two forms of transformation: 'epochal,' which involves sudden and significant changes, and 'cumulative,' which consists of gradual insights that result in shifts in perspectives and habitual thinking, it could be argued that the shift in the two teachers' perspectives here is cumulative. This is because these two participants went through the transformative learning process phases, particularly speaking critical assessment of assumptions, and they demonstrated a gradual insight leading to a shift in views, not yet in their actions.

While analysis of teachers' provided definitions shows a shift in perspectives in two cases, the third case shows consistency in providing a definition of LA relating it with self-learning. This consistency demonstrates a resistance to understanding the significance of the teacher's responsibility for the development of LA. The resistance suggests that certain preconceived notions are resistant to change, a phenomenon supported by Kagan (1992), who notes that deeply rooted perspectives are difficult to alter. Cognitive dissonance theory explains this resistance as psychological discomfort or 'dissonance' that arises when individuals hold conflicting views, leading them to avoid information that contradicts their existing beliefs. This participant's reluctance to adopt a new understanding of LA may stem from the diminished value attached to her prior notion (Borg, 2001). Such a finding is unsurprising, considering that significant change typically does not occur overnight. However, it contributes to the understanding that some beliefs are indeed hard to change, remaining stable and resistant to change (Kagan,1992; Richardson, 1996).

While this section discusses the results related to RQ1 regarding the impact of CPD on teachers' knowledge and understanding of what LA means, the following section discusses the impact of CPD on their knowledge and understanding of the teacher's role in relation to the development of LA.

5.3   The Impact of CPD on Teachers' Knowledge of Their Roles and Responsibilities in Relation to the Implementation of LA

This section addresses the first research question of this study, specifically question 1b: 'How do CPD workshops on learner autonomy influence teachers' knowledge and practices regarding their roles and responsibilities in implementing language learner autonomy?' While the previous section explored the impact of CPD on teachers' understanding of the concept of LA, particularly its definition, including teachers' perceived responsibilities in promoting LA, this section shows the impact of CPD on teachers' identified roles in the classroom in relation to LA support.

5.3.1   On Knowledge

The findings showed how teachers had opposing standpoints about particular roles in learner-centered classrooms that help enhance the promotion of LA. The initial findings, as shown in Section 4.3.1.1.1, show how participants rejected certain roles that are possibly encouraging LA and how their rejection altered at later stages (see Sections 4.3.1.2 and 4.3.2), revealing acceptance of these roles, e.g., the role of the facilitator. In other words, as the data shows, some examples of initial resistance in relation to specific teacher roles and sequence duties, however, this resistance reflected a shift in perspectives observed at a later stage of the CPD process. However, this change was very slight as the dominant role was the mother's role while the facilitator received little attention.

The limited presence of the facilitator role was observed across all participants, aligning with findings from Alonizy (2017) and the broader literature, which confirms that not all teachers adjust to this role (Harden and Crosby, 2000). Alonazi's (2017) study investigates the role of the teacher in promoting autonomy among learners. The data collected from 60 English teachers via a questionnaire show that the participants had different roles in fostering LA, such as those of a resource, classroom manager, counselor, and facilitator. However, a ranking order of the roles based on how frequently the teachers implemented them, showed that the facilitator role was the least implemented.

It is worth mentioning that the notable change in perspective was only seen by two participants, Deem and Mabrukah (see Section 4.3.1.2). This slight impact on teachers' acceptance of the roles of a teacher in learner-centered classrooms could be because of the dominant role of a teacher as a mother, as frequently evident throughout the study phases, which means before, during, and after CPD (see Section 4.3). However, this role could be culturally driven, as was confirmed in studies in a Saudi context (e.g., Eshgi, 2024). Eshgi's (2024) study explored the role

and impact of the CPD in the environment in which her participants operate in relation to teachers' professional identity, agency, and emotions.

The findings of Eshgi's (2024) study showed that two teachers among six positioned themselves as mothers. She clarifies that the role of a teacher as a mother is influenced by Saudi culture, which values the role of the mother. In order to have greater outcomes, it could be suggested that future teacher training consider cultural aspects to be addressed during CPD, along with teachers' beliefs and knowledge before training (see Section 6.4).

5.3.2   On Practice

This section highlights a particularly interesting example that demonstrates a shift not only in knowledge but also in practice. Deem initially opposed the roles of teachers in a learner-centered classroom and then demonstrated a sudden major change in her perspective and actions. She initially resisted the facilitator role as an example, expressing her preference for different roles: fraternal, maternal, and paternal, as shown in detail in excerpt 18 in Section 4.3.1.1.2.1. Deems' standpoint and resistance to the facilitator role appear to have changed. She began to recognize her responsibility in creating a learner-centered educational environment. She reported her initiative in developing certain new activities that help her learners to be engaged, such as the example of activity she termed 'the hot chair' (see Section 4.5.2, excerpt 78), besides other mentioned examples, particularly problem-solving tasks (see Section 4.3.2, excerpt 31). The data from the classroom visit, detailed in Section 4.3.2, confirms that Deems accepts the facilitator role in practice, demonstrating that such change in practice was visible in both the self-reported data and the observation data, bringing further validity to this finding.

Such professional development in knowledge and practice aligns with Coburn and Borg's (2024) study results, which tracked the impact of CPD on four in-service teachers. Their study showed a shift in teaching practices. They changed from teacher-led instruction to more interactive and communicative approaches. In other words, they shifted their practices from textbook reliance to integrating a range of learner-centered activities and ideas into their teaching. However, while Coburn and Borg's (2024) results showed a shift in all participants' practices, Deem was the only one in this study to demonstrate a shift in practice, which could be because of the difference in the length of time between these two studies. In Coburn and Borg's (2024) study, CPD lasted for 26 months, while in this study, it lasted for six months, which could be acknowledged as a limitation of this study (see Section 6.5).

Therefore, the professional growth Deem demonstrated, showing acceptance to and acting as a facilitator, illustrates how she had critically evaluated and improved her teaching practices. This is possibly due to the increased knowledge of subject matter and pedagogy, in other words,

content knowledge (CK), e.g., knowledge about LA and teachers' roles and responsibilities, and pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), as Richardson (1996) termed it, e.g., understanding how to promote learner autonomy.

It could also be argued that Deem's example, which demonstrates a positive impact of the CPD on her knowledge and autonomy that influenced her practice, confirms the theory this study is developing and arguing for. This study highlights the significant role of CPD in teacher education. The study argues that teachers always need to be presented with the latest teaching strategies recommended by research. As clarified in Section 2.8, it suggests that the shared CK of the recent teaching approaches and practices could add new knowledge to teachers' belief system, which is termed as '1', to teachers' current knowledge, which is termed as 'k,' as depicted in Figure 5-1.

$$k+1 = k^m$$

Key:

K= Knowledge

1= New Knowledge

K^m= Modified Knowledge
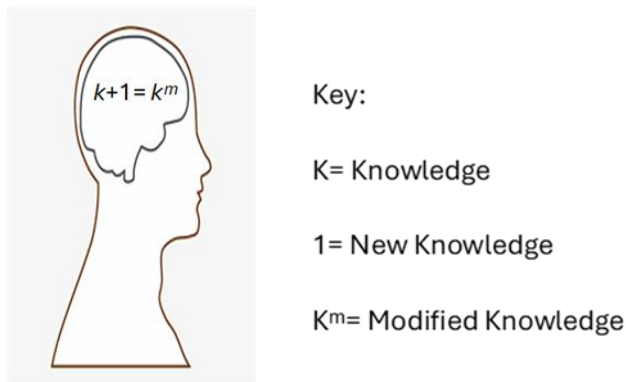
Figure 5-1   CPD Second Stage: The Impact of a New Knowledge

Deems' new practice confirms that 1 is added to her belief system that influences her teaching practices. In the case of Deem, this growth in her practice highlights that her prior Knowledge (knowledge before joining the CPD) accepted the new knowledge from the CPD, 'K+1,' as she reported and observed acting as a facilitator. Her action as a facilitator during her class clarifies that her new CK demonstrates a modification. Thus, 'K+1= K^m', as Figure 5-1 above shows.

Understanding what LA means and related issues, such as the role of the teacher in developing LA and how to create an autonomous learning environment, suggests a relation between the CK and PCK. It could be argued that such transformation happened with Deem as a result of being exposed to CK. In this sense, CPD with efficient CK is an essential principle if a change in knowledge and perspectives is to occur. This is because the CPD provided the participants with opportunities to widen and deepen their subject-specific knowledge. Such exposure to new content enriches teachers' comprehension, which they can, in turn, translate into more effective teaching practices.

It could be argued that gaining knowledge about LA could be the basic and essential step toward its promotion among learners. Based on Little's (2000) argument, teachers' promotion of the

growth of autonomy is unexpected if teachers themselves do not know what it is to be an autonomous learner.' Thus, knowledge, as Hiebert et al. (2002) point out, is an important element in improving classroom teaching practices, as the teaching profession needs a knowledge base that grows and improves.

It is worth noting that considering teachers' knowledge is an essential factor this study is highlighting. For example, investigating teachers' knowledge in the first phase was not randomly based. It purposefully explored teachers' understanding and allowed the teacher educator to begin with their own knowledge as such an important step has been emphasized by (Hiebert et al., 2002). Hiebert et al. (2002) suggest that focusing on the knowledge that teachers already have may lead to more effective improvements in classroom practice, as evident in Deem's action, instead of relying on knowledge from past research, even though researchers have consistently worked to make their findings influential.

Another important factor that contributes to Deems' case, demonstrating professional growth, is the design of the CPD. The CPD that allows discussions and reflections is no less important than the provided CK. This is because a reflective approach to teaching requires a shift in how teachers think about their teaching and their own positions in the process, as (Richards, 1995) argues. Smith (2003a) and Nagai et al. (2020) argue that a reflective approach to teaching encourages intensive teachers' reflections, which in turn allows self-assessment and evaluation. It also allows teachers to express their feelings, beliefs, and impressions freely as much as possible. This contributes to the development of LA, as the importance of reflections is acknowledged in the literature as restructuring teachers' beliefs to scaffold autonomous learning.

Reflections enhanced Deem's criticality of her own learning and teaching to adopt new positions that challenge her personal beliefs, as suggested by Richards et al. (1994). It could be argued that Deem's reflective practice went through stages: self-reflection, critical evaluation, and action, all of which, as Nagai et al. (2020) argue, are necessary for improving teachers' self-directed learning and teaching capacity. In the first stage, Deem reflected on her existing didactic skills and knowledge, and also on her teaching practice and the implicit assumptions that underpin it. She became more aware of her didactic knowledge and teaching preferences and practices, as she clearly expressed her preference for the three roles she mentioned at early stages: fraternal, maternal, and paternal.

During the second stage, she demonstrated a critical inquiry as she critically assessed and examined her previous self-reflection during the previous phase based on her students' needs and interests, as the data shows (see e.g., Section 4.4.1, excerpt 45). While critical inquiries regarding her personal teaching theories are not obviously clear in the data, the occurrence of such inquiry is possibly happening, yet not necessarily revealed by the data. However, dialogical

discussions with colleagues, including the teacher educator, took place during the CPD workshops, which could help in practicing critical reflection more successfully. In the last stage, Deem shows professional development in her autonomous instruction, exactly as what had been explained by Nagai et al. (2020).

The three stages Deem possibly went through suggested a sudden major change in her perspectives and practices. Such a sudden major change, from rejecting the role of a facilitator to acting as a facilitator in a relatively short period of training, could be understood through Mezirow's (2018) transformative learning theory. It could be demonstrating the second type of transformative learning theory, which is the 'epochal' (Mezirow, 2018, p.94), which suggests that individuals go through critical reflection and reassessing of their teaching practices, leading to adopt new perspectives and pedagogies.

A third factor that is highlighted by the literature encouraging teachers to adopt new practices is the feedback they gain from their students. For example, when Deem reported her new experience implementing a new activity, she highlighted that her learners' engagement with the lesson was not the only outcome, but how the new teaching strategies aroused their interest, as shown in Section 4.5.2, excerpt 78.

Deem's reporting of her students' positive reactions toward the newly implemented teaching strategies possibly confirms how learners' feedback is valuable to teachers, in alignment with the literature. For example, St John and Sercu (2007) clarify that new teachers' attempts to develop new activities will be added to their new teaching system and shape their teaching practices, as new teaching strategies, if worked successfully, will be added to teachers' belief systems as effective practice. This is because this could bring clear evidence witnessed by the teachers themselves when receiving positive feedback from learners on their new pedagogy (St John and Sercu, 2007). This highlights the importance of the collective efforts between the teacher and students when a teacher notices one or several certain practices that worked well for them and their learners as well, as Dam and Kuchah experienced in their contexts (see Smith, 2006; Kuchah and Smith, 2011).

More importantly, Deem's shift in action could be regarded as evidence of teachers' level of control over their classroom implementations, regardless of their low level of control over the type of assessment, curriculum-based approach, and other institutional factors that contribute to limiting the promotion of LA. This suggests that the continuity of teacher-led practices is a result of the influence of traditional method-based frameworks, which limit teacher agency by prescribing actions and marginalising teacher-led innovation (Slimani-Rolls and Kiely, 2019). In many cases, this control was not solely the result of external institutional constraints but

stemmed from internal factors, specifically, teachers' limited understanding of the professional discretion they hold in promoting LA (see Section 5.6.2).

However, Deem's example is a great representative of the positive role of the CPD, as clearly shown by the data. It shows how she developed her knowledge and autonomy, starting from her willingness to join the CPD and expressing enthusiasm to learn the actions that had been taken in relation to the promotion of LA. Such professional outcomes, in both her knowledge and practices, ensure that ongoing learning could help teachers stay updated with the latest developments in the field of teaching and learning, which is critical in a fast-changing educational environment.

5.4 The Impact of CPD on Teachers' Knowledge of Students' Roles and Responsibilities in Relation to the Implementation of LA

This section is concerned with answering the first research question of this study, particularly 1c: 'How does CPD on learner autonomy impact teachers' knowledge and practices towards their students' roles and responsibilities in relation to the implementation of language learner autonomy?' It clarifies teachers' standpoints and discusses one resistant example, in detail, regarding both her knowledge and practices in allowing room for learners to practice their autonomy.

The literature indicates the effectiveness of involving learners in taking responsibility for their learning. For example, the study conducted by Aziz et al. (2024) measured the impact of involving metacognitive strategies on students' autonomy in argumentative writing. Aziz et al.'s (2024) findings reveal that metacognitive strategies significantly developed learners' abilities to construct coherent arguments and manage the writing process independently.

The data from the present study reveals teachers' willingness to engage learners in certain metacognitive skills, e.g., peer and self-assessment, although there is no concrete evidence of engaging them at the time of the data collection, either reported or observed. For example, all participants stated that they welcome such learners' involvement in their classes but did not mention that they really usually do so. While teachers show their positive attitude in engaging learners in certain practices of evaluation and providing feedback to teachers for further development and improvement, all but one were not willing at all to empower learners to make certain decisions in relation to the content, material, teaching approach, type of assessment, etc.

They showed assertive refusal, and the one with the positive view showed nothing more than accepting the idea of promoting LA on one occasion, while both her reported and observed data showed nothing more in relation to the involvement of students in decision-making (see Section

4.4.1). The literature supports this result, as it shows that involving learners in decision-making is desirable by teachers but not feasible (Al-Asmari, 2013; Al-Busaidi and Al-Maamari, 2014; Borg and Al-Busaidi, 2012; Borg and Alshumaimeri, 2019; Haji-Othman and Wood, 2016; Keuk and Heng, 2016; Lengkanawati, 2016; Li, 2023; Rañosa-Madrunio et al., 2016; Stroupe et al., 2016; Tapinta, 2016; Van Loi, 2016; Wang and Wang, 2016). These studies clarified discrepancies between the desirability and feasibility of promoting LA. Participants in these studies were more optimistic about the desirability of involving learners in decision-making than about feasibility. This finding is also consistent with Batuwatta and Premarathna (2024), who found resistance to involving learners in setting lesson objectives but support for group work. This further confirms the limited presence of the facilitator role, which is critical for enhancing autonomous learning (Harden and Lilley, 2018).

In an attempt to understand teachers' minimal engagement of their students to take responsibility for their learning process, it is important to understand the roots of teachers' beliefs, which have been shaped over many years. In this study, particularly in the case of Bayan, for example, she implicitly rejected the promotion of LA when she defined LA in a particular manner; then, at a later stage, she showed and explained her disagreement with the specific approach she had already rejected, as evident in Section 4.2.1.1 (excerpts 1 and 2). Her refusal could be attributed to her understanding of the concept, shaped by her experience as a learner, as confirmed by Borg (2003). Bayan's experience as an autonomous learner, being left alone without support or guidance, being responsible for her learning, and facing difficulties in seeking knowledge in the library shaped her understanding of LA. However, the challenges she faced justified her refusal to promote it, even though at later stages of the CPD, she showed acceptance to promote LA but with the teacher's guidance and supervision.

Interestingly, her classroom behavior did not mirror her tutor's methods but rather demonstrated an opposing approach. She created a highly structured learning environment that limited her students' creativity and autonomy (see section 4.4.2). This finding was unexpected. This is because the literature has revealed that teachers' beliefs are shaped by their experiences as learners and strongly influence their instructional behaviors (see Section 2.5.2). Based on Kennedy's (1991) argument, the influence of learners' experiences that shape teachers' beliefs and guide their practices resembles those early experiences. Kennedy (1991) argues that teachers often teach the way they were taught.

However, in contrast to Kennedy's (1991) argument, Bayan's data shows a different approach than the one she received as a learner. To clarify, in Bayan's case, her experience as a learner shaped her understanding of LA, but her practice took a vastly different direction, likely as a reaction to the extreme lack of support she experienced. This case contributes to the

understanding that while beliefs influence teachers' practices, they do not necessarily mirror the way they were taught, highlighting that opposite teaching direction and approach to practice is also possible, contributing to the literature (see Section 6.3.1).

This is not to reject Kennedy's (1991) argument, as what Kennedy mentioned was also evident in another example from Bayan as well. Bayan's data demonstrated the challenges of her learning experience, particularly the lack of technology and intensive reliance on physical resources at the library. Despite these challenges of learning, her reported and observed data confirm her rejection of technology usage in her translation class, e.g., the avoidance of using electronic dictionaries, as shown in Section 4.5.4. This reluctance could be influenced by her experience as a learner with challenges as a result of a lack of technology and reliance on paper resources. However, this reluctance of technology usage restricts students' knowledge sources to the teacher, discouraging autonomous learning. However, it is worth highlighting that the lack of technology, by itself, does not necessarily indicate a lack of autonomy support. Rather, it can enhance student engagement and autonomy (Prensky, 2001) as technological innovations increase students' interest in learning (Lamb, 2013).

It is important to mention that Bayan's very structured behaviour influences learners' practice, namely teacher reliance. While a previous study has reported learner reliance on teachers based on quantitative data (Borg and Al-Busaidi, 2012) and reported data from semi-structured interviews (Saad, 2024), this study corroborates this finding through direct observational evidence. The classroom observations reveal a similar teacher dependence, highlighting the consistency of this behavior across different methodologies. Furthermore, the classroom observations clarify that this reliance is largely attributable to the teacher's highly structured practices, which appear to shape learners' dependency, reinforcing the importance of instructional design in shaping learner behavior.

Furthermore, Bayan's standpoint and practices remained mostly unchanged throughout the study, although little progress was evident in the data in Section 4.2.1.1, in terms of the definition of LA. This stability is because of her deeply rooted beliefs, prior experiences, and knowledge, which shape her educational philosophy and teaching methodology. This example reinforces the idea that significant changes in teaching beliefs and practices are challenging and often require extensive time and effort, as explained in Section 2.5.2.

It could also be argued that the long-term teaching experience (14 years in Saudi higher education) suggests that Bayan had already established well-defined teaching routines and pedagogical preferences, as Slimani-Rolls and Kiely (2019) argue. This professional stability may contribute to the degree of resistance to change, as her responses show. As reflected in her responses, implementing practices aimed at enhancing LA, particularly those that challenge

teacher-centred methods, is a deferred goal to consider (see Section 4.4.2, excerpt 69). This delayed education goal might be rationalised to her belief that promoting LA is idealistic or misaligned with the realities of the local context (See Section 4.5.5, excerpt 90).

Slimani-Rolls and Kiely (2019) suggested another reason for teachers' practices that are not LA-supportive is that it is not easy for teachers to realize how to move beyond prescribed methods and instead develop context-sensitive practices that reflect their learners' needs, classroom realities, and their own professional judgement. Slimani-Rolls and Kiely (2019) highlight that while this approach is well supported in academic and policy discussions, it can be conceptually demanding and time-consuming for teachers to implement, particularly in educational systems where top-down expectations, standardised curricula, and large class sizes limit flexibility. These constraints often prevent classrooms from becoming truly autonomy-supportive environments, even when teachers are motivated to change. Slimani-Rolls and Kiely (2019) argue that one way to bridge this gap is through supportive evaluation strategies, such as classroom observation followed by reflective interviews. These can help teachers identify both their existing strengths and areas for development, while also encouraging more informed, context-appropriate decisions that gradually open space for LA (Slimani-Rolls and Kiely, 2019).

Finally, this result contributes to the field, showing that CPD has the lowest level of impact on teachers' knowledge and practices in terms of splitting the responsibility among learners. This demonstrates a challenge in teachers' relinquishing control to be mutual between them and their students, although Deems' example shows acceptance of sharing the learning responsibility with her students. It also clarifies that involving learners in decision-making is the most challenging aspect of the CPD. It could be argued that the reason behind teachers' unwillingness to involve learners in taking responsibility for their learning is because of teachers' lack understanding of how to act as a facilitator (see Section 5.6.2) and their attitude towards their learners (see Section 5.6.3). Thus, this requires further procedures to help teachers master the facilitator role in order to influence the roles and duties they assign to their students (see Section 5.7).

It could be argued that the type of the provided sessions are enlightening teachers through input on LA, but not revising or enhancing teachers' beliefs and practices for LA implementations to occur. If change in practice is an educational goal, teacher education should begin with teachers' own classroom realities, allowing them to investigate and reflect on their practices (Burns, 2009). Burns (2009) argues that action research empowers teachers to generate knowledge through their experiences, making professional development more relevant, practical, and sustainable (see Section 6.5)

To summarize this section, teachers' beliefs about the level of their learners' engagement to participate in different activities and tasks varied. The data shows their acceptance to engage

learners in certain activities such as evaluation (e.g., self and peer-assessment) and in providing feedback to teachers to understand their needs for better teaching practices. However, teachers show refusal to involve learners in decision making regarding their learning process. This result shows a kind of contrasting data. This is because of the contrasting notion between gaining students' feedback to consider their preferences and their rejection to consider their voices and choices. However, while no teaching class was seen highly valuing this, one notable classroom instruction was providing a highly restricting teaching and learning environment, particularly Bayan's above-mentioned example.

To this end, question number one has been answered and discussed in relation to findings and literature in sections 5.2, 5.3, and 5.4. The following section also contributes to RQ1. It shows how CPD impacts teachers' knowledge of the concept, their roles and responsibilities, and their students' roles and responsibilities. Specifically, it shows that teachers' reactions and acceptance are not the same in terms of the level of acceptance of new knowledge provided in order to acquire new teaching skills to take further action.

5.5   Variations in the Impact of the CPD on Teachers' Knowledge and Practices

This section adds more clarification to the first research questions: 1a, 1b, and 1c. It clarifies how CPD has variable impacts on participants who are teaching at the same university and have received the same content from the same teacher educator. The impact was evident in both CK and PCK.

This study suggests variations in teachers' acceptance of the CK and PCK. For example, while Deem demonstrated a high level of acceptance, managing actions shift, as illustrated above in Section 5.3, another example in the present study, showed a much lower level of acceptance of the CK and PCK from the CPD. To clarify, Rabab initially refused to involve learners in decision-making but later clarified that she was open to gaining feedback from students. However, she emphasized that this process is about 'gaining feedback,' not making decisions, as shown in Section 4.4.1, excerpt 65.

On the other hand, Bayan's data, as shown in Section 4.4.1, excerpt 66, demonstrated a higher level of agreement in involving learners in decision-making, highlighting the possibility of allowing learners to choose the texts to be translated and to select their group leaders. Although this perspective shows a slightly higher level of acceptance than Raba's, it is still lower than Deem's level. Bayan's acceptance remains tentative, as no concrete or planned actions were mentioned,

and her use of the modal auxiliary verb, 'can,' in the same section, 4.4.1, excerpt 67, indicates a lack of firm commitment.

However, the highest level of acceptance is shown by Mabrukah, who took further initiative by sharing her experience and knowledge gained from the CPD within and outside her educational context, participating in a community of practice, as shown in Section 4.3.2, excerpt 34. While Mabrukah's data show the highest level, the lowest acceptance among all is Afaf, as shown in Section 4.2.2 and discussed in Section 5.2. Afaf's example demonstrates almost no acceptance of the provided CK in terms of teachers' responsibility of creating an autonomous learning environment.

The variation between teachers that occurs in this study is similar to the variation found in the case study conducted by Coburn and Borg (2024), although they have a different focus than this study. Their study showed the variable impact of the in-service teachers' course on their language accuracy, teaching practices, and confidence. For example, one participant's English word speed increased by 50% while another participant's word speed increased only a little,14%.

The variation in the impact of CPD highlights the importance of a sensitive and adaptive approach to professional development. It could be argued that customized interventions that consider the specific needs, contexts, and initial attitudes of teachers are essential for fostering meaningful and lasting changes in educational practices. Furthermore, participants' varied reactions could partly answer any raised questions about the scalability and sustainability of such transformations among teachers with varying levels of acceptance across different educational campuses if the institution considers the promotion of LA as an educational goal, emphasizing the continuous provision of CPD (see Section 6.4).

Ongoing support and follow-up are necessary to ensure that the initial benefits of this particular CPD are reinforced and built upon. The minor shifts in teachers' attitudes and practices reflect a broader narrative of gradual professional growth, emphasizing the importance of patience, persistence, and adaptability in educational reform efforts. Borg (2024), writing in his blog, argues that CPD programs should incorporate support for innovative teaching practices. He argues that such support should be consistent in adopting and maintaining new teaching strategies. He also argues that professional development is not valuable if it does not lead to practical change in what teachers do inside classrooms. If professional development does not translate into improved teacher practices, its effectiveness is questionable (Borg, 2024).

In this regard, the teachers in the present study reacted differently to the provided CK in terms of acceptance, demonstrating different possible outcomes, from sudden to gradual shifts to complete resistance. This highlights the importance of educational support to provide frequent

effective CPD to keep teachers updated with recent research recommendations and teaching trends. While there could be resistance, ongoing training addressing challenges that arise will contribute to minimizing the confirmed gap in the literature between theory and practice (e.g., Jiménez and Vieira, 2015).

While up to this point, the discussion has focused on the role of the CPD on teachers' knowledge and practices in terms of how teachers define LA, what roles and responsibilities they take, what roles and responsibilities they motivate learners to take, demonstrating variation in acceptance and rejection, the following section is about the role of the CPD in revealing the factors that could contribute to hindering the promotion of LA.

5.6   Factors that Impede the Promotion of Language Learner Autonomy

This section addresses the second research question, 'How does CPD help to understand the factors that impede the promotion of language learner autonomy?' The emerging data suggests several factors hindered the promotion of LA. The most resilient factors are teachers' lack of knowledge, teachers' lack of understanding how the facilitator role functions, and teachers' attitudes regarding their students' capacity, all in relation to LA and its implementation. These three main factors are discussed in detail in the following sub-sections.

5.6.1   Teachers Lack Knowledge in Relation to LA

This section highlights how teachers define and understand learner autonomy and how their provided definitions and discussions before and during the series of CPD workshops reveal their lack of understanding in the area of LA. For example, many provided definitions, mainly before CPD workshops, demonstrated a lack of adequate understanding of the concept of LA. Such a result of the teacher's basic understanding is also closely related to the revealed findings of numerous works in the literature that demonstrate teachers' lack of understanding of learner autonomy (Al-Asmari, 2013; Al-Busaidi and Al-Maamari, 2014; Alonazi, 2017; Batuwatta and Premarathna, 2024; Borg and Al-Busaidi, 2012; Borg and Alshumaimeri, 2019; Coburn and Borg, 2024; Haji-Othman and Wood, 2016; Keuk and Heng, 2016; Kuan-wei Patrick Lin, 2024; Lengkanawati, 2016; Li, 2023; Ramadhiyah and Lengkanawati, 2019; Rañosa-Madrunio et al., 2016; Stroupe et al., 2016; Tapinta, 2016; Van Loi, 2016; Wang and Wang, 2016). For example, participants in Borg and Al-Busaidi's (2012) and Borg and Alshumaimeri's (2019) studies defined LA as learners' ability and freedom to make choices and decisions about their learning.

The first definition given by teachers in the present study that illustrates their basic understanding of LA is the one defining LA as learners' self-learning (see Section 4.2). The problem with such a definition will be highlighted from different aspects. First, self-learning is associated only with the political dimension in which a learner is assumed to be able to take charge of their learning on their own. This holds that autonomy is about learners' ability of total control, which means their total independence over their learning process. This demonstrates the political dimension of independence and freedom to make decisions. This also means that autonomy, in this sense, is a synonym for self-learning, innate behavior, and status. This definition of LA demonstrates a lack of understanding of the concept of LA.

Second, the problem with this understanding is the exclusion of the social dimension from this particular definition. This is because self-learning, in this sense, is associated with the act of isolating LA to be an educational goal for teachers and educational institutions to achieve rather than enhancing the idea that such skills and attitudes toward language learning are to be integrated. In addition to this social dimension being missing from the teacher's definition of LA as self-learning, the psychological dimension is also missing (Little, 1991), indicating a third problem.

Such understanding has been criticized, as Little (1991) criticizes Holec's (1981) definition, for the same reasons. Holec's (1981) definition emphasizes the political dimension while neglecting both the social and psychological dimensions. Little (1991) argues that such emphasis on the political dimension that self-learning carries is not the reality in the classroom. He emphasizes that in an educational context, learning is a social activity to be developed with others. Further, he argues that LA is not synonymous with self-instruction, not simply allowing learners to manage on their own, not a fixed state, and not about independence but interdependence, with an emphasis on the social dimension. Little (1991) clarifies that Holec's (1981) definition of the ability to take charge of one's own learning emphasises ability over capacity, while the psychological dimension emphasises learners' capacity to be autonomous in learning how to learn and how to apply what has been learned (Little, 1991).

It is important to clarify that a learning process of isolation and independence can possibly occur in different settings than the classroom, particularly speaking of adult learning. For example, independent adult self-learning with self-control could take place at home or in self-learning centers with clear plans and objectives and high self-esteem and motivation. However, learning in classrooms is expected to be interactive between the teacher and the students and among students themselves, as learning in such a context is a social attribute (Vygotsky, 2012) that occurs interdependently with the efforts and support being made by others (Little, 1991).

The second definition that demonstrates the teachers' basic understanding of LA in the present study is their association of LA with language proficiency, as shown in Section 4.5.1, excerpt 74. The data shows how some teachers mentioned that their students' low level of language proficiency limits their autonomous learning opportunities, aligning with the findings of several studies (Borg and Al-Busaidi, 2012; Borg and Alshumaimeri, 2019; Li, 2023). This, as the previous definition, also seems to distance language learning objectives from fostering autonomy as separate goals. Little (2007) argues that these should not be separate but integrated and clarifies that autonomy should naturally involve language learning. This is because the capacity to take charge of one's learning is 'not' necessarily 'inborn' but must be acquired either by 'natural' means or, as is most often the case, through formal learning (Little, 2007, p.16).

The third definition of LA produced by some teachers in this study is as learners' active attitude toward learning in which they ask frequent questions, and the whole session could be turned into a questions and answers session (see Section 4.5.1, excerpt 74). Such a notion is criticized in the literature. For example, Dam (2011) confirms that this is not autonomy. Additionally, she clarifies that a question-and-answer session alone does not ensure learner autonomy, as it provides 'school knowledge'—information presented by someone else, often forgotten if not applied—rather than 'action knowledge,' which integrates personal understanding and application (Barnes, 1976, p.30).

However, throughout the study, a number of examples demonstrate teachers' lack of understanding not only in the way teachers define LA but in different LA-related issues, as mentioned in Sections 4.4.1 and 4.5.1, for example, teachers stated that:

1. Learners are just learners and cannot make sufficient decisions.
2. Learners are not qualified for decision-making due to their young age and lack of experience.
3. Decision-making is reserved for special committees or experts, such as syllabus designers.
4. Teachers, especially novice ones, should not have a role in decision-making.
5. Teachers are restricted by course and program specifications, aiming for accreditation that requires standardized criteria.
6. Involving students in decision-making is unrelated to developing LA.
7. Allowing learners to choose the type of assessment will not ensure fair evaluation or real feedback, as they will select the easiest options.
8. Teachers' talk time is more than learners' talk time. Teachers are more important.

Dam (2011) argues that allowing learners to make choices does not mean they can do whatever they want. Drawing on her practical experience, Dam (2011) clarifies that certain challenges can arise when teachers aim to promote autonomy. These include a lack of confidence in learners' ability to take on responsibility, a drift away from authentic classroom engagement, such as asking questions the teacher already knows the answer to, shifting into a teaching mode rather than a learning support role, and citing practical constraints like time limitations or the requirement to follow a coursebook as reasons for not pursuing more autonomy-oriented practices. Instead, Dam (2011) emphasized that acknowledging and navigating these challenges is key to creating meaningful, autonomy-supportive learning environments.

Another example is related to talk time. One teacher in the present study, namely Rabab, was not convinced that teachers could have less speaking time than their students. While this is not an issue by itself, as it depends on the class style, whether lecturing or language classroom, the issue is with the teacher not making a differentiation between these types and the possibility of teachers having less talk time in language classrooms. This limited knowledge is not in alignment with Li's (2023) study. Participants in Li's (2023) study clarified that fostering LA requires teachers to act as facilitators, reducing their speaking time.

The findings of this study reveal many misleading ideas about LA and its implementations that are held by the teachers, which align with Saad's (2024) study. However, paying close attention to these ideas is closely related to teachers' attitudes towards their own responsibilities and their students as well. These attitudes indicate that teachers themselves limit both their and their students' roles and responsibilities. While this section clarifies teachers' adequate understanding of LA, in terms of CK, the following section clarifies their basic understanding in terms of PCK.

5.6.2   Teachers Lack Understanding of How the Facilitator Teacher Role Functions

The data confirms that teachers prefer some roles such as providing emotional support, establishing trustful relationships, and creating positive environments, along with being knowledge providers. While these roles are crucial in promoting learner autonomy, it could be argued that they alone indicate a low level of contextual autonomy. A higher level of autonomous learning context necessitates the role of a facilitator alongside the role of a knowledge provider, as emphasized by Harden and Lilley (2018).

Harden and Crosby (2000) propose a five-point scale to measure teachers' commitment to and development in their roles. This scale ranges from recognizing and practicing the role to aligning

it with learning outcomes, reflecting on activities, and adopting a scholarly approach by applying research-based educational knowledge.

Interestingly, Deem's initial rejection of the facilitator role during the early stages of the CPD and her later recognition of the role, which is demonstrated in her practice, as observed during the field visit, shows her basic understanding of mastering the essential skills of this role. Her facilitator role was focused on helping students memorize content for a summative assessment, not aligning with autonomous learning outcomes. For example, as discussed in Section 5.3.2, she was observed acting as a facilitator, as she was sharing a new lesson with her students and, from time to time, facilitating certain activities. She actively engaged her students, guiding them rather than merely instructing, helping learners to work collaboratively, either with peers or in small groups, and moving around listening and providing support when necessary. While Deem demonstrated great professional growth, some specific issues were observed in relation to mastering the facilitator role.

These activities were not to help learners negotiate or maintain high critical thinking and deep learning but surface learning (Race, 2019). For example, the data in Section 4.5.2 clarifies how Deem utilized certain activities enhancing frequent reviews and memorizations, particularly the 'Card Activity,' in which the purpose of this activity, as observed, was to help learners memorize the definitions of certain terminologies that learners will be asked to provide during their summative exams as confirmed by Deem in Section 4.5.2, excerpt 79.

This finding, consistent with Batuwatta and Premarathna (2024), highlights the limited role of the facilitator due to pressures from the examination system. Many other studies clarify that exam-oriented education systems limit students' opportunities to develop independent learning skills (Borg and Al-Busaidi, 2011; Borg and Alshumaimeri, 2019; Li, 2023). For example, the findings of Li's (2023) study showed that an examination-oriented curriculum challenges the promotion of LA and causes negative consequences for learners, such as low language proficiency. Borg and Alshumaimeri (2019) added that an examination-driven education system limits students' opportunities to develop independent learning skills.

It is essential for CPD programs in any educational setting to be tailored to the specific context in which they are implemented (see Section 6.4). In this particular context in which Deem showed how her knowledge had been modified, as discussed in Section 5.3.2, her modified knowledge now demonstrates a need for specific knowledge in relation to how a teacher as a facilitator acts, what type of activities to utilize, to what extent these tasks are critical, and so on (see Section 5.7). In this sense, the teacher-modified knowledge during training demands further provided

content; in other words, a new particular '1' about how a facilitator teacher role functions is needed (see Figure 5-2).
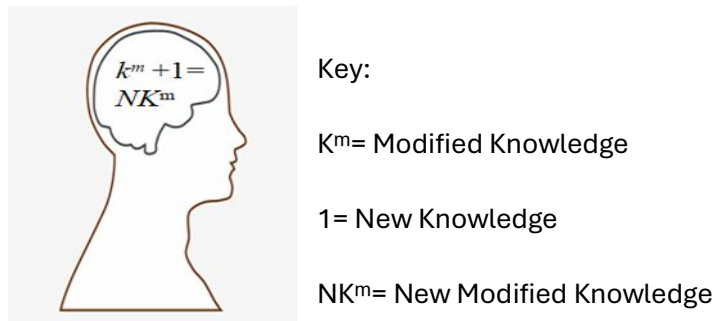

Key:

K^m= Modified Knowledge

1= New Knowledge

NK^m= New Modified Knowledge

Figure 5-2   CPD Third Stage: Modified Knowledge Demands Further Knowledge

There is always a critical need for the modified knowledge to be updated and modified, particularly in this context, where there is a critical need for teachers to transition from teacher-led instructor roles to facilitators of learning effectively. Without a facilitator, students are often left without the guidance and support necessary to navigate their learning pathways efficiently. The absence of a facilitator also guarantees the continuity of a teacher-led classroom and assures that transition to another method is not a possible option.

Finally, the transition to a student-centered approach requires teachers not to be merely information providers but also facilitators and managers of student learning. This shift of focus is tightly linked to teachers' attitudes toward learners' capacities and their understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Harden and Crosby (2000) argue that as students gain more responsibility and freedom, the teacher's role as a facilitator must adapt accordingly. Without this adaptation, autonomous practices remain limited. The following section demonstrates teachers' attitudes toward learners' capacities as the third factor hindering the promotion of LA.

5.6.3   Teachers' Attitudes Regarding Learners' Learning Attitude and Capacity

This section discusses teachers' attitudes towards their learner's capacity which is seen as a major concern in relation to the implementation of LA. This is because teachers' scepticism of their learners' ability to take responsibility or some responsibility over their learning demonstrates teachers' lack of confidence in them. As is evident from the data in Section 4.4.1, excerpt 63, the teachers in this study had a sceptical attitude regarding their students' capacities. This aligns with the findings of Li (2023) and Borg and Al-Busaidi's (2011) studies. For example, in Li's (2023) study, participants showed uncertainty regarding students' ideas and challenges to ensure all students had voices in decision-making. It could be argued that such a sceptical

attitude influences teachers' actions not being supportive or taking the initiative to create an autonomous learning context. In other words, it influences their selective implementation of activities or perhaps rationalising the lack of activity implementations in teacher-led classrooms, contributing to the lack of a facilitator teacher role, along with the other reasons identified in this study.

However, literature shows how teachers rationalise the absence of LA promotion in classrooms, pointing out several factors. One of these highlighted factors in the literature, as is evident in many studies, is learners' preference to be passive learners (Saad, 2024) and their lack of motivation (Borg and Al-Busaidi, 2011; Borg and Alshumaimeri, 2019). This study also confirms such teachers' attitudes toward their learners' preference to remain passive and their lack of motivation, as shown in Section 4.5.5.

It is insufficient to conclude that learners lack the desire to be autonomous, as Smith (2003b) argues. He further confirms that the learner may appear reluctant to take authority within classroom learning. However, there are different ways in which teachers can figure out how to motivate learners to become engaged. Smith (2003b) further elaborates, shedding light on the validity of the implemented teaching techniques and arguing that if one technique does not work well, another technique may suit them.

Students who appear passive may not be capable of practicing LA on their own at the moment. They may need to develop particular essential skills, knowledge, and confidence through instruction and teacher support before they can effectively manage their own learning. Thus, autonomy could be developed as a result of effective teaching. This is exactly what Smith (2003b, p.131) termed a weak version of autonomy, which is seen 'as a deferred goal and as a product of instruction rather than as something which students are currently ready to exercise directly.'

Based on Smith's (2003b) weak version of autonomy, it could be implied that autonomy, in this particular version, is a goal to be developed and achieved in the future, not immediately. This is because students are not yet fully prepared to be autonomous learners and need carefully designed instruction, guidance, and support from the teacher. This emphasis on the role of the teacher in developing learners' sense of autonomy is also supported by Dam (2003, 2011), who argues that developing learner autonomy is largely the teacher's responsibility. She clarifies that teachers aiming to foster a learner-centred environment should motivate students to reflect on their learning experiences and develop habits that empower them to take charge of their progress confidently.

However, the data in Sections 4.5.2 and 4.5.3 indicate that such actions are minimal, with classroom activities showing low levels of critical thinking and engagement. As noted by the

participants in Li's (2023) study, this could be addressed by continuously encouraging teachers to gradually implement certain teaching strategies, e.g., scaffolding goal setting, self-evaluation, and reflection, followed by engaging students in decision-making activities.

While both Smith (2003b) and Dam (2003) claim that teachers are responsible for developing LA, Barnes (1976) argues that learners' passive attitude is a result of the communication between the teacher and learners. Barnes (1976) continues clarifying that one type of communication may promote memorization of details, while other approaches could encourage students to reason through evidence or guide them toward imaginatively reconstructing a way of life. Barnes (1976, p.15) argues that '[As] the form of the communication changes, so will the form of what is learnt.' See Section 5.7 that shed light on the importance of considering the nature of communication between the teacher and learners in order to change the type of the classroom to be LA supportive.

Furthermore, learners' passive role in the present study are a result of expected communications built between the teacher and the learner, as the data shows in Section 4.4.1, excerpt 61. This relation between the teacher and learners seems to be developed culturally, valuing the power of distance between the teacher and students, as confirmed by Alshahrani (2016). While Borg and Alshumaimeri's (2019) study clarified that the absence of promotion is due to the previous education system that emphasized teacher-centred learning, other studies explain that it is built from the raised value of learners being respective listeners while teachers are controlling the learning process being transmitters of knowledge (Alharbi, 2015; Alkubaidi, 2014).

If teachers in such a teaching and learning environment are assuming LA as learner responsibility, then, based on the identified context and high value of learners to be respective listeners, LA is not promoted either, aligning with many studies in the literature (e.g., Borg and Alshumaimeri, 2019; Li, 2023). These studies' results are unlike what the findings of Borg and Al-Busaidi's (2011) questionnaire show.

Borg and Al-Busaidi's (2011) findings reveal that 79.6% of the teachers who completed the questionnaire felt that they were promoting LA. While they provided examples of the strategies they used to promote LA, potential bias is possible. This is because teachers' perceptions may not fully align with their actual practices, as Borg and Al-Busaidi (2011) argue. However, the present study attempts to avoid this limitation highlighted by Borg and Al-Busaidi (2011) by not solely relying on teachers' reported data but including observed data, as shown with Bayan's very structured classroom in Section 4.4.2 and also discussed in Section 5.4, confirming the unalignment between teachers' views and actual practices. For example, Bayan reported that she would provide support and guidance to her students, but her action, as detailed in Section 4.4.2, demonstrated a highly structured classroom, enhancing learners' reliance on her.

To this end, numerous studies and the teachers in the present study argue that the absence of LA promotion is because of learners' attitudes toward learning. These teachers and numerous studies argue that learners are passive and prefer to be so. However, data show that teachers are not really confident about their students' capacity to take responsibility for their learning. It could be argued that the lack of LA promotion is not mainly because of learners' attitudes and preference towards learning to be passive but because of the teachers' sceptical attitude regarding their students' capacities. This contributes to the lack of promotion of LA. For example, if teachers are sceptical about their students' capacities to take the initiative in their learning, it is not logical that they will engage them to carry their learning responsibility. In these classes, the learner should be supported and helped to develop their own responsibilities over their learning. Such activity needs modifications in teachers' belief systems so that they can be convinced that learners' appearance to be passive is due to the way of communion between the teacher and students and established expectations and the types or lack of implementations of learning activities. If these remained unchanged, LA will never be promoted. The following section provides a framework that was developed in this study to help teachers understand how to promote LA.

5.7 Teacher as an LA Supportive

Teacher knowledge of how to foster LA in the classroom can assist in demonstrating this aim effectively. The teacher could be helped 'to carefully and responsively scaffold attempts by the learner to take control of [their] learning decisions and performance in the second language' (Palfreyman and Benson, 2019, p.672). Genç (2015) emphasises that a teacher's role of providing scaffolding and guidance and offering an autonomous friendly learning environment is crucial to developing autonomous learners. This indicates the influence of teachers' behaviour on the type of classroom, whether teacher-centred or learner-centred, as they play a vital role in shaping the classroom environment.

When a teacher acts as an authoritative figure, it is expected that learners remain silent and politely listen to the provided content (Alharbi, 2015; Alkubaidi, 2014). In contrast, the teacher who acts as a facilitator is more likely to encourage learners' engagement in task completion or developing a particular activity or learning skill (Harden and Lilley, 2018). These two distinct dynamics can have various impacts on both the teaching environment and the attitudes of the learners.

However, to foster learner autonomy, it is essential to cultivate students' sense of responsibility and encourage their active involvement in making decisions about their learning (Scharle and Szabó, 2012). Teachers should be informed about their role in creating autonomous learning

environments. They should be informed to consider four main areas to enhance their students' autonomy. These areas concern classroom organisation, classroom communications, classroom instructions, and classroom continuous development.

The aim of this is to simplify the initial steps of teachers' practices in order to offer educational contexts that encourage learner-centred, not teacher-led approaches. It demonstrates that such a basic step starts with teachers' awareness and understanding of their roles and responsibilities and how their roles impact their practical decisions and, thus, in general, impact their classrooms. It suggests the teachers should shift their responsibilities to be shared with their learners. Learners, in this sense, could be motivated to perform particular responsibilities which are usually carried by the teacher in a teacher-led class, e.g., researching and presenting on a certain topic, being engaged in assessment and feedback, etc.

A framework considering these ideas was developed during this study. It went through several development procedures as it had been originally designed to be shared with the participants of this study during Phase 3 to address their needs, as detailed in the methodology. Secondly, it was presented at the 57th ITAFEL conference, which was held in Brighton in April 2024. Finally, it was presented with MA students in LING6008- Autonomy and Individualisation in Language Learning class at the University of Southampton. During all these occasions, all attendees' suggestions were considered for further improvements (see Figure 5-3). While this framework is validated, it could be recommended for future studies to test it (see Section 6.4). Note: the early version is shared in Appendix B, particularly during Workshop 5).
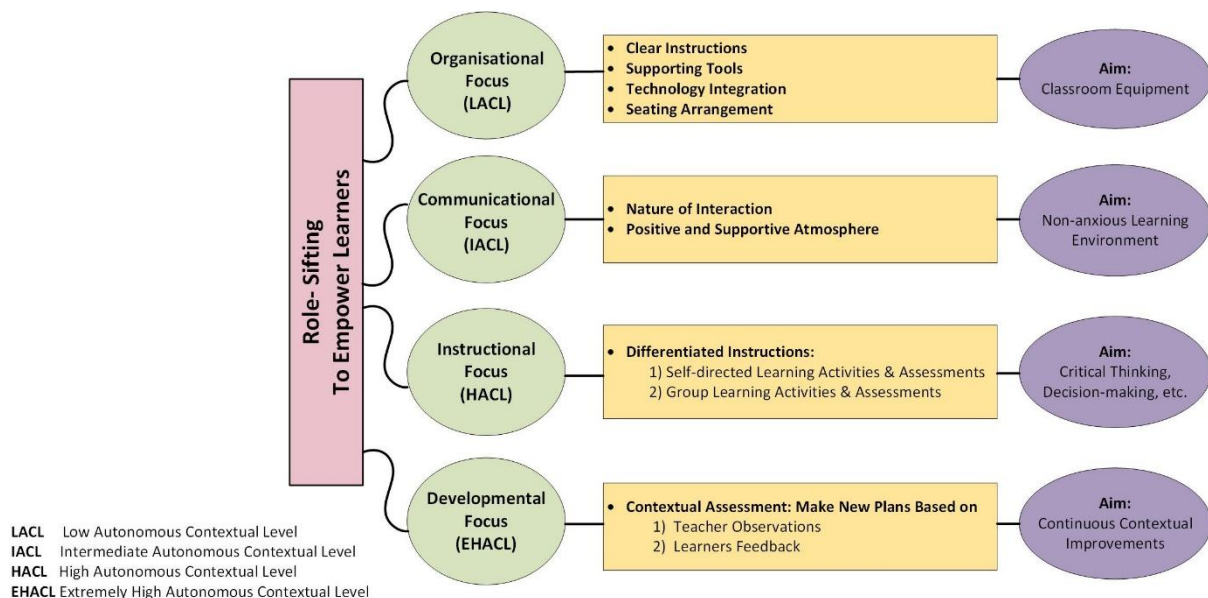

Figure 5-3   Role-shifting between Teachers and Students

Role-shifting framework aims to encourage teachers to empower their students to take ownership of their learning. It is part of the teacher's duties to create a transparent structure for

a lesson or a teaching and learning cycle that the students can eventually take over, either entirely or in part (Dam, 2011). This framework, as schematised in Figure 5-3, has four main areas of focus for teachers to encourage learners to take responsibility for their learning: 1) Organisational Focus, 2) Communicational Focus, 3) Instructional Focus, and 4) Developmental Focus.

Organisational Focus suggests the importance of providing clear agreed guidelines, such as sharing the course syllabus, which could serve as a course road map for learners. It is also suggested that the syllabus should be clearly written involving all significant and specific details, e.g., the course description, the learning outcomes, the course requirements, the assessment details and marking distribution, the deadlines and word limits, etc. Agreed guidelines could add a sense of flexibility to the syllabus as the teacher is encouraged to negotiate the syllabus with learners and make adjustments accordingly (Voller, 1997). For example, teachers could discuss the deadline for a final work submission, etc. Organizational Focus enhances the utilisation of supportive educational tools such as rubrics, diaries, cards, digital platforms, interactive feedback tools, and logbooks if teaching elementary students. It is believed that these tools have the potential to increase learning (Dam 1995, 2011).

Organizational Focus also emphasises self-access centres and the integration of technology. What has been found in this study is the particular situation in which participants avoid the use of technology. Technology, as the literature confirms (e.g., Lamb, 2013), is usually used to support and improve learning procedures. Many examples could be seen as offering individualised learning opportunities, such as interactive technologies, instructional apps, and online resources. However, if self-access centres are not offered by the educational institution, the teacher could still make references to different technological educational resources.

Organizational Focus also pays attention to how seats are organised, considering seating and grouping, which could facilitate the following focus: communication (Harden and Laidlaw,2021). Seating and grouping pave the way for enhancing communication, as such consideration allows pairs or small groups to work and collaborate, influencing the nature of the interaction or communication between teachers and students. However, what has been observed in this study about seating is their position confronting the teacher.

The nature of communication affects the role of the students in the classroom, specifically whether they will take an active or passive role. This is because students will not take an active role in the production of knowledge if the teacher does not allow that (Barnes, 1976). Barnes (1976) continues arguing that students' participation in the classroom will not be raised only from their individual characteristics, e.g., intelligence, capacity for speaking, or high self-esteem, but incorporate the results of both his and the teacher's attempts to comprehend one another. Thus, students' participation in learning is built on the expectations established in a classroom of what

could be accepted by their teachers, such as 'who asks what questions, what proof is regarded as relevant, what counts as an acceptable answer, and so on' (Barnes, 1976, p.30).

The nature of communication is not only affected by grouping and teacher allowance and encouragement to engage in tasks of learning, but also by the general classroom atmosphere. To clarify, a positive classroom atmosphere plays a major role in learners' initiatives (Mahdavinia and Ahmadi, 2011). The teacher is encouraged to be careful with wordings in which encouragement is offered, and negative judgments or words are avoided. Barnes (1976) confirms that every single teacher behaviour, such as his or her questions, gestures, and stance, tone of voice, or the way he or she responds to students, will confirm the language usage that the teacher expects from the students. In addition to the importance of positive wording, teachers are also encouraged to build a good rapport with students and tolerate mistakes, to be visited later if they frequently occur, in order to provide a non-anxious learning environment. This is because these minor issues are strong enough to limit learners' participation to take an active role in their learning, behaving as passive learners.

Creating a positive atmosphere does not ensure that learners are not passive, yet it is a basic step to move forward considering the teaching approaches and types of implemented teaching and learning strategies. Therefore, teachers' initial steps to promote a learner-centered environment are fundamental. The encouragement of learner autonomy is core to modern instructional methods, as it empowers students to take control of their learning processes, enhancing their engagement and motivation.

Instructional Focus is the third area of focus in this framework, which is seen as a crucial and central element for contextual transformation from a teacher-led to a student-led environment. This is because the teaching and learning process in the traditional classroom has a different focus than the learner-centred classroom. For example, in the traditional classroom, the focus is on the teaching rather than on the learning (Dam, 2011). In traditional classrooms, as illustrated by Dam (2011, pp.43-44), teachers ask themselves, 'How do I do my best teach this or that?' however, teachers in learner-centered classes ask themselves another question, which is 'how do I best support my learners in learning this or that?' This is a shift of focus from a focus on teaching to a focus on learning.

Instructional Focus aims to utilise particular teaching strategies to engage learners in specific learning strategies. In other words, teachers, in general, are encouraged to involve learners in activities in the classroom, whether individually or collaboratively with others. Particularly speaking, those teachers who are used to the role of the authoritative figure are encouraged to change their teaching strategies and gradually use other techniques that permit learners to be involved in certain tasks and assessments, stimulating and enhancing their metacognitive and

cognitive skills. For example, learners could be given an activity with a problem to negotiate with a peer or in a small group and provide possible suggestions to be solved. They could also be encouraged to have self-or-peer assessments, and so on. Differentiating teaching strategies exemplifies this shift, where the teacher acts more as a guide, providing diverse and adaptable learning experiences designed to meet individual student needs.

The main aim of this focus is not only to improve academic performance but also to foster a more meaningful and effective learning experience. It helps learners be creative, critical thinkers, problem-solvers, and decision-makers, considering learners' voices, preferences, interests, and learning styles. This is in an attempt to empower learners to be ready for the labour market, equipped with the necessary knowledge and lifelong skills with high self-esteem. It is worth mentioning that such kinds of learners' outcomes, e.g., being critical thinkers, contribute to language or other disciplinary success. This is because an individual with these skills will be able to achieve course requirements and maintain their desired criteria for success.

The last focus is the Developmental Focus, which seeks frequent contextual improvements. It suggests monitoring any existing teaching and learning gaps or contextual problems and frequently making new plans following certain procedures. Monitoring could be carried out by teachers themselves, through teachers' observations, or by learners through feedback via various methods, e.g., via a survey link or a feedback session at the end of the class as suggested by Dam (2011).

It could be suggested that a radical shift is not expected to occur at first attempts as many obstacles may exist. However, the way this framework is designed suggests moving from simple to complex. For example, the teacher who aims to be a facilitator could start with the first focus, the Organisational Focus, as it is all about technical issues that could be obtained. Successful achieving of this focus could demonstrate a certain level of autonomous context, yet it is low. However, if the teacher succeeds in promoting a positive atmosphere, allowing communication between the teacher and the students and between the students themselves, the level would be a bit higher, demonstrating an intermediate contextual level of autonomy. While the heart of the process is the third focus, the instructional focus, as it supports the learning process to be learner-centered, encouraging learners' autonomy, and demonstrates a high autonomous contextual level, the developmental focus indicates an extremely high autonomous contextual level. This is because it goes beyond the teaching and learning focus and considers continuous contextual evaluation in which teachers are encouraged to act as researchers doing a certain kind of action research or exploratory research in which they identify contextual weaknesses or challenges to be addressed.

It is not expected at all that a teacher could be able to consider the third focus easily. For example, teachers may not be familiar with the mentioned tools in the first focus or may act as an authoritative figure with one way of communication, from the teacher to the students, with little interaction from the students. The novelty of this framework lies in its practicality and gradual process of sharing the control of the teacher, from the whole responsibility of teachers to mutual control between the teacher and the learner.

It is worth mentioning that the framework expands upon the eight roles of the medical teacher model developed by Harden and Laidlaw (2018), as they demonstrate the different roles of the teacher and illustrate how each role has different functions and responsibilities. While this framework considers all roles of the teachers highlighted except the professional, it demonstrates the practical tips for moving from an authoritative figure to a facilitator, mentor, and so on. The professional role is not ignored in this study but received huge support, as described in Section 2.4. It is one of the dual roles that encourage professional development, while the second role involves the seven roles emphasised in Harden and Laidlaw's (2018) model, the 'eight roles of the medical teacher.'

The framework is suitable for teachers in settings where frontal teaching dominates and for students primarily accustomed to this method. It is also suitable for a higher autonomous contextual level. Finally, it can be applied to learners across various educational stages, from kindergarten to university and beyond.

5.8   Summary of the Chapter

This chapter discusses the findings of the present study, presented in Chapter 4, in light of theories, concepts, and relevant studies discussed in the literature review chapter. It discusses the role of the CPD on teachers' knowledge and practices in relation to the promotion of LA. It also sheds light that the CPD impact is varied from one teacher to another. While some teachers demonstrate a great impact of the CPD in terms of both knowledge and practice, others reveal resistance to knowledge and practice.

This chapter has also discussed the factors that impede the promotion of LA and shows how the CPD helps in revealing these factors. It demonstrates the main factors that hinder teachers' promotion of LA are all related to CK and PCK. To clarify, participants have adequate understanding in terms of subject knowledge, but they know little about LA. They also demonstrate a lack of understanding in terms of theory and practice, as the data does not only show the absence of the facilitator role but also a lack of understanding of how this role functions. This is mainly related to a lack of knowledge and the beliefs teachers hold, demonstrating lack of

understanding about the concept of LA. However, this chapter concludes by drawing a conclusion from this study by suggesting a framework that could facilitate teachers' promotion of LA.

Chapter 6   Conclusion

6.1   Introduction

This chapter concludes the study by summarising the key findings of the research in relation to the research questions and aims (Section 6.2). It also highlights the study's contribution to theory, CPD design, and practice in the context of implementing LA (Section 6.3). This is followed by Section 6.4, which is about the implications and recommendations of this study for future research. Section 6.5 acknowledges the limitations of this study; Section 6.6 reflects on the researcher's own learning journey.

6.2   Key Findings of the Research Study

The preliminary findings from this research project reveal the impact of CPD on teachers' knowledge and practices. Although different from previous studies, which revealed the impact of the CPD, this study showed three areas of impact: what LA means (see Section 4.2), the roles and responsibilities of teachers (see Section 4.3), and the roles and responsibilities assigned to learners (see Section 4.4). The study also showed that the impact of the CPD had various levels of impact on teachers, as discussed in Section 5.5.

The study also showed the factors that impede the promotion of LA (see Section 4.5), shedding new insight into the discrepancy between teachers' beliefs and practices raised as an issue in many research studies (e.g., Al-Asmari, 2013; Al-Busaidi and Al-Maamari, 2014; Borg and Alshumaimeri, 2019; Haji-Othman and Wood, 2016; Keuk and Heng, 2016; Lengkanawati, 2016; Li, 2023; Rañosa-Madrunio et al., 2016; Stroupe et al., 2016; Tapinta, 2016; Van Loi, 2016; Wang and Wang, 2016). These factors provide the potential reasons for the lack of LA promotion and the continuity of teacher-led classrooms, which is their basic understanding of the concept, how to adopt a facilitator role, and teachers' sceptical attitude regarding their students' capacity. These factors confirm the described context and background of this study (see Section 1.3.1), in which the teacher encourages the continuity of teacher-led involvement by implementing several practices, such as teachers' explicit provision of what to memorize for exams and the reduction of opportunities that encourage students' involvement in the learning process.

6.3   Contributions of the Study

6.3.1   Theoretical Contributions of the Study

This study highlights the role and impact of CPD in enhancing teachers' knowledge and practices regarding their current knowledge and beliefs. It offers valuable insight into how teachers interacted with the provided CK, showing both flexibility and resistance to change. The study contributes to the field of LA, particularly in the Middle East, as there are few studies looking at teachers and involving them in CPD, providing them with the knowledge to influence their teaching practices. The study also provides very detailed data on the impact of collaborative CPD.

Furthermore, the study supports and extends existing theories by confirming that teachers' beliefs, which influence their practices (Borg, 2001, 2003; Richardson, 1996; Skott, 2014), are both resistant (Kagan, 1992) and subject to change (St John and Sercu, 2007). While the findings confirmed that some beliefs are flexible enough to adopt new understanding and vision, they show variations in the level of acceptance. The level of accepting new teaching perspectives varies from one teacher to another. Some of the participants demonstrated change only in their ideas, while one participant's practices have been influenced, demonstrating change in both knowledge and practices, which are both influenced by teachers' beliefs. This supports Mezirow's (2018) theory, in particular, the two indicated forms of transformation, epochal and cumulative, which suggests that some beliefs could demonstrate sudden major changes. In contrast, other perspectives could be gradually developed (Mezirow, 2018). This varied acceptance from one teacher to another could be related to different reasons such as their experiences and backgrounds as learners, their level of engagement and active participation during the sessions, and personal theories around teaching and learning.

The study also supports the idea that teachers' beliefs, which guide their practices, are shaped by several factors. First, they are influenced by their memories and experiences as learners; and second, they are influenced by their experience as teachers. This supports Kennedy's (1991, p.16) argument that teachers will 'teach as they were taught,' and St John and Sercu (2007) who argue that teachers, when interacting with students, are testing their teaching strategies. For example, what works best and what has been liked by learners will be confirmed as a successful teaching practice. However, while this study supports Kennedy's (1991) argument, it also contributes to the field by highlighting that teachers do not always teach the way they were taught. Sometimes, they teach differently, as they may reject the way they received their education (see Section 5.4).

Finally, this study demonstrates how CPD workshops widened teachers' knowledge and pedagogy, suggesting a link between CPD and teacher knowledge and autonomy. To clarify, the

CPD helped teachers gain certain knowledge in relation to the implementations of LA, and as a consequence, one teacher's teaching practices confirm that the knowledge gained during the sessions impacted her teaching skills and actions in the classroom, although some issues were raised. This influential impact shows the dual teacher roles in relation to teacher autonomy definition this study operationalises (see Section 2.4), suggesting a link between CK and PCK. Furthermore, a teacher's broader knowledge of the possible impact of CPD on her practice can also suggest the role of the teacher in influencing the classroom dynamic, and influencing learners' behaviour, whether to be respective listeners or active learners.

To this end, this study suggests a theoretical framework in which it is suggested that teachers with their current knowledge need to be presented with new content, in this study termed '1.' This study suggests that 1 will add knowledge to their current knowledge 'k.' This new knowledge, if showing acceptance, will demonstrate a modified knowledge, 'K^m.' However, if this modified knowledge is problematic, this means that another new knowledge should be presented to address these issues, which could result in new modified knowledge, 'NK^m' (see Figure 6-1).

Stage 1   *Stage 2*   *Stage 3*

In the figure: Stage 1: $k+1$; Stage 2: $k+1= k^m$; Stage 3: $k^m +1= NK^m$
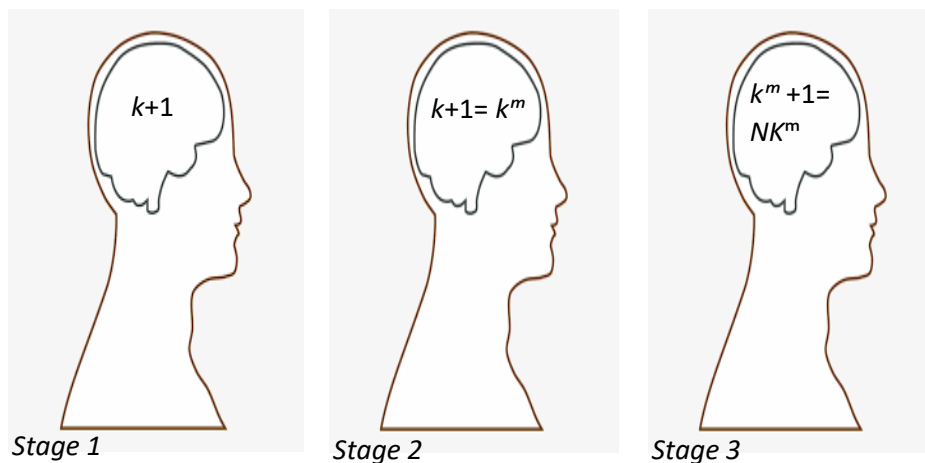
Figure 6-1   The Impact of Ongoing CPD

To further clarify the model presented in the above figure, Figure 6-1, this model encourages teachers' educators not only to focus on what to present to trainees, 'stage 1', as this stage is expected to be, but also to investigate the outcomes of Stage 2, particularly by exploring the impact of the CPD on teachers' knowledge and practices. It suggests addressing any issue that appears insufficient with the modified knowledge as a possible impact of CPD. The model argues for providing further training on these issues, as needed. Without addressing these issues and providing further support, the desired learning outcome, which is teachers' promotion of LA in this study, may not be achieved. Thus, this model contributes to the field of LA, suggesting that

the modified knowledge, 'K^m,' not necessarily in the field of education or LA, should be explored to investigate if the acquired new knowledge and practices are adopted properly or need further training for better understanding and implementation.

6.3.2   The CPD Design Contributions of the Study

It is important to highlight the innovation of this study's CPD design because of its uniqueness. The design does not resemble previous CPD research designs, but considering their limitations and recommendations along with considering the theoretical stance gives originality to this study from several points.

First, reviewing and piloting the study of both the research instruments and the content of the CPD workshops facilitates the process of the sessions to run smoothly and effectively. Second, Phase 1 is extremely crucial to understand participants' current knowledge in order to begin with their knowledge as a base, as suggested by Hiebert et al. (2002). This helps to have a workshop that is not confronting their beliefs but negotiating something slightly new to them. For example, if teachers have a good understanding of the LA, how it is promoted, and how to deal with the challenges, the content of CPD sessions will focus on these areas for further development rather than what roles and responsibilities of the teacher they demonstrate, as an example.

This consideration of teachers' level of understanding of LA and encouragement for room for discussions and reflections is the most important issue. Without such steps, the teacher educator will not understand teachers in-depth, and the challenges will not be revealed. For example, teachers' views regarding learners' involvement were initially positive. However, in-depth discussions reveal that it is not feasible. This is because of many challenges that hinder learners' engagement in the process of learning, and the biggest challenge this study confirms is the internal constraints, namely, teachers' beliefs, attitudes, and basic understanding of LA, including the misconceptions they hold.

Furthermore, classroom visits are also seen as essential and add further confirmation to the CPD design uniqueness for several reasons. Firstly, many studies in the field acknowledged that not visiting classrooms and observing teachers in the field is a limitation of their studies (Borg and Al-Busidi, 2012; Haji-Othman and Wood, 2016; Keuk and Heng, 2016; Li, 2023; Rañosa-Madrunio et al., 2016; Stroupe et al., 2016; Tapinta, 2016; Wang and Wang, 2016). Secondly, while autonomy may not be directly observable, teachers' classroom practices can provide valuable insight into the teaching approaches they prioritize. Observations from classroom visits revealed key existing patterns, including highly structured environments, a strong emphasis on memorization, largely driven by assessment types, and limited adoption of the teacher's role as a facilitator.

These observed practices offer a window into prevailing local norms, which should not be overlooked. As Holliday (1994) argues, it is important to start from where teachers currently are. This principle is echoed in discussions around language curriculum reform (Slimani-Rolls and Kiely, 2019). Thirdly, these insights were not self-reported but emerged from direct observation, underscoring the value of field-based teacher observation.

Finally, the impact of the CPD on teachers, whether in terms of knowledge or both knowledge and practices, reveals that CPD helped equip teachers with the necessary reflective skills and strategies necessary to promote LA in their classrooms. For example, the resistance to the role of the facilitator, followed by participants showing adoption of such a role, highlights a well-designed CPD that addresses teachers' needs, beliefs, and practices. This suggests that effective CPD is the foundation for promoting autonomy among students. Teachers must first experience meaningful professional development and some autonomy themselves before they can guide their students toward becoming autonomous learners. This answers the call by others (e.g., Dam, 2003; Little, 1995, 2000) for teachers to receive CPD and experience some autonomy, and only then will we be able to expect LA to be better.

6.3.3 Practical Contributions of the Study

This study offers several practical contributions to the field of English language teacher education, particularly in relation to LA promotion. One of the key findings was the absence of the facilitator role in teachers' practice (see Section 5.6.2). This absence appeared to stem from a lack of understanding about what this role entails, specifically, the kinds of responsibilities it involves, how decision-making can be shared with students, and what classroom activities genuinely support autonomous learning. This highlights a clear need for professional development that addresses not only the concept of autonomy but also the practical realities of how it can be implemented through everyday teaching.

In response, the study developed a Role-Shifting Framework to support teachers in moving towards more autonomy-supportive practices. The framework outlines a series of progressive steps, starting with organisational aspects, e.g., seating and grouping, moving through communication and interaction with students, and ending with regular evaluation and adaptation to the classroom context (see Section 5.7). It is intended as a practical guide that teachers can use to reflect on their current approaches, experiment with new strategies, and gradually adopt a more facilitative role.

Although designed with the Saudi higher education context in mind, the framework has wider potential for adaptation in other settings where LA is underdeveloped. It may also serve as a useful resource for CPD providers and teacher educators aiming to design training that bridges

theory and practice. By offering a concrete, context-sensitive model, this study contributes not only to theoretical understanding but also to the professional growth of teachers working to create more learner-centred classrooms.

6.4 Implications and Recommendations

This study highlights several key implications and recommendations to enhance the impact of CPD on in-service English language teachers' knowledge and practices, particularly concerning the implementation of LA. While the findings revealed the impact of CPD on teachers' knowledge and practices regarding LA promotion, they highlight the limited contextual opportunities for promoting LA.

Thus, this research suggests that CPD programs need to move beyond top-down approaches and instead focus on empowering teachers to take ownership of their professional development. By integrating reflective practices and collaborative learning opportunities into CPD. The study suggests involving all stakeholders, in alignment with Harden and Laidlaw's (2012) suggestion. As this study argues, the teacher is the focal point in the process of changing from a teacher-led to a learner-led environment, and through him or her, the change could occur. However, teachers' initiation to change their practices is not expected, as they, with intensive work hours, are too busy to update themselves in the Saudi context, although this could be possible. However, individual efforts for contextual change to meet the country's new vision, 'Vision 2030,' are not enough, instead collective efforts must take place. All teachers, students, and educational contexts should have the same direction as the country for such an aim to occur.

Building on these implications, several recommendations can be proposed based on the research undertaken in this thesis. The first recommendation is for policymakers. Policymakers should consider the importance of training that involves teachers and learners in relation to curriculum and context-specific issues. It suggests that sessions concerning teaching and learning are available throughout the year, providing what research and new teaching trends suggest, then investigating and evaluating the outcomes and providing what the specific context needs, as highlighted in Section 6.3.1, particularly stage 3.

This is because CPD is seen as crucial to enhance both the teacher's and learners' behaviour. Based on the data analysis of this study, teachers should be trained to first change their attitude towards their learners as passive and prefer to be passive. Learners could be guided to change their behaviour in the classroom and learn how to be active learners in a way that prioritises student agency as the core of successful language policies and practices (Block, 2015; Hall, 2004; Tajeddin and Griffiths, 2023). See Figure 6-2 below.
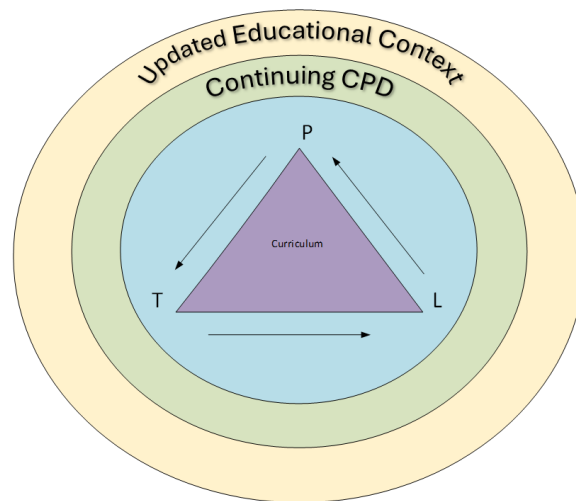
Figure 6-2   Triangle of Change: Updated Educational Context

The figure above suggests the importance of frequent updates to the educational context that aims to minimise the gap between theory and practice through CPD, considering teachers and learners in relation to the curriculum. Policymakers (P) should frequently offer CPD sessions to teachers (T). Teachers are encouraged to apply what has been learned to the learners (L). Students' outcomes should always be evaluated to inform policymakers about their contextual needs. Frequent cycles of such suggested approaches help in improving the educational context to minimise any existing gap between theory and practice.

This study also recommends future research that aims for contextual improvement toward LA promotion, a deeper exploration of the teacher's role as a facilitator, and effective strategies for enabling learner-led classrooms. It could also suggest future research to test the developed framework for teachers as facilitators (see Section 5.7). Moreover, while the findings highlighted that exam-oriented educational practices, which prioritise memorisation over critical thinking, limit the effectiveness of approaches designed to promote LA, further research investigating the role of the type of assessment in the promotion of LA is necessary. CPD programmes could also address this by focusing on methods that encourage the development of learners' critical thinking skills and motivate them to take responsibility for their learning.

Cultural factors were also identified as significant barriers to the effective implementation of LA. Specifically, the culturally driven role of teachers as mothers can discourage learner-led approaches in the classroom. To overcome this, future CPD programs should incorporate cultural considerations alongside other factors this study already considered, such as teachers' existing beliefs and knowledge, ensuring training is both contextually appropriate and impactful. By addressing these cultural dynamics, CPD initiatives can better equip teachers to foster LA in ways that align with local contexts while also aligning with global educational priorities.

Finally, although the study aligns with Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 objectives, it reveals insufficient opportunities to cultivate autonomous learning environments. This points to a potential disconnect between institutional and educational goals and the broader ambitions of Vision 2030. Further research is needed to investigate this misalignment and ensure that institutional practices align more effectively with national educational priorities, if fostering learner autonomy is to be taken seriously as a national educational goal, particularly in systems undergoing reform. In these systems, teachers should be supported structurally and culturally as Slimani-Rolls and Kiely (2019) pointed out. Institutions should not only endorse learner-centred practices in policy but also provide explicit encouragement, mentoring, and leadership alignment to ensure that teachers feel empowered to enact these practices (Slimani-Rolls and Kiely, 2019). Bridging this gap could contribute to the development of cohesive frameworks that support LA in harmony with the aims of Vision 2030.

6.5   Limitations of the Study

This study has some limitations. One significant limitation of this study is the limited number of participants, consisting only of six participants. Due to the small size of participants, the study's findings could not be generalised to a broader population. This is because the study's conclusions are context-specific, which means that the insights gained from it are unique to these particular individuals. As a result, the study's outcomes may not be applicable in other educational settings or with other groups of participants. This limitation sheds light on the need for careful interpretations of the results and suggests that further research with a larger sample is essential to validate these findings.

Another limitation of this study is the gender segregation among the participants. The study sample has no option but to be conducted in the female sections, as the system at many Saudi universities has gender-based divisions. This could have influenced the results as such segregation may not fully capture the range of perspectives, experiences, or practices that might appear in a more integrated setting. Consequently, the findings might have limitations in their capacities to address gender-related issues, potentially missing significant insights into how gender dynamics impact the outcomes under investigation. This limitation highlights the significant need for future research to examine the effects of gender segregation more explicitly to achieve a more thorough understanding of the studied phenomena.

This study has a further limitation due to the relatively short duration of the research. The short timeframe, which lasted for six months, meant that teachers were participating in this study for a limited period, compared with other studies in this area, e.g., the one conducted by Coburn and Borg (2024) that lasted for two years. This limitation may mean that the study was not effective in

capturing long-term changes. A longer duration could contribute to providing deeper insights, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of the participants' understanding, beliefs and practices. A longer period could also contribute to the scalability and sustainability of the changes that occur among teachers as a possible result of participating in CPD.

Another limitation of this study is its design of the workshops. The workshops of this study focused on theoretical discussions, which helped to build a holistic picture of the teachers' beliefs and practices regarding the promotion of learner autonomy during teachers' discussion (Borg, 2023). While this theoretical foundation was necessary, a shift towards more practical, hands-on engagement would have been important to fully support teachers in applying these ideas in their classrooms. CPD should reach beyond theory and address the real-life situations and difficulties encountered by teachers and learners in the classrooms. The workshop might have been more effective, as Slimani-Rolls and Kiely (2019) highlight, if grounded in classroom practice through supportive evaluation strategies, such as classroom observation. Slimani-Rolls and Kiely (2019) clarify that such type of research recognises the complexity of classrooms as a social and cultural aspects.

Thus, moving from theory to practice calls for a shift to a sustained professional development approach that starts with an actual classroom and suggests that, in university settings, professional development initiatives aimed at promoting LA may require more sustained engagement such as ongoing mentoring, collaborative communities of practice, and alignment with departmental or institutional strategies to foster meaningful and lasting change.

Finally, the absence of Saudi participants in the sample could be considered a limitation of this study despite the inclusion of participants from different nationalities. While this diversity adds value to this study by providing broader perspectives, the lack of Saudi representatives limits the generalisability of the findings to the Saudi context.

6.6   Reflections on My Learning Journey

As this thesis concludes, this section highlights my reflections on my journey as a researcher and teacher educator. Reflecting on my personal learning journey throughout this process provides an opportunity to consider its impact. The experience significantly enhanced my knowledge and skills while contributing to the development of a dual identity as a researcher and teacher educator.

Exploring the impact of CPD on teachers' knowledge and practices in fostering autonomy among learners has deepened my understanding of educational research and practice. It also offered valuable insights into the challenges and rewards associated with supporting professional

development among language teachers. Developing the CPD intervention and evaluating its impact on teachers highlighted the complexity of aligning theoretical frameworks with practical implementation. Aligning theoretical frameworks with practical implementation was extremely complicated, more than expected. This is because of the positive views teachers show regarding learners' engagement in the process of their learning whilst simultaneously exhibiting difficulties not only in how to foster LA but also in their attitudes regarding their actual practice, not willing to foster LA, and their attitude regarding learners' capacity to have some control over their learning. While this was frustrating, I became aware that this is a core problem that should be addressed if a contextual change toward LA implementation is to occur.

Furthermore, ensuring the study was both comprehensive and relevant required careful consideration and adaptability. One of the most important lessons was the need for flexibility, as unexpected challenges, such as the challenge with the selection of sample size, led to the decision to conduct the study with two campuses and carry out the CPD sessions online (see Section 3.4.2). Moreover, teachers' varying reactions to the content and their different levels of engagement and needs, necessitated adjustments along the way (see Section 3.5). This process enhanced my methodological skills and reinforced the importance of being reflective and adaptable throughout the research journey.

This journey has had a significant impact on my approach to teacher training and professional development. Implementing the CPD intervention provided me with valuable opportunities to engage with teachers' perspectives on LA and observe their gradual progress in understanding and practice. It highlighted the significance of the CPD in understanding teachers' preexisting beliefs and fostering a supportive environment that encourages both discussions and reflections. The experience also reinforced the critical role of reflective learning, as the CPD sessions demonstrated how teachers' discussions and reflective diaries can inspire meaningful professional growth. These insights have not only influenced my current practices as a teacher educator but also helped shape my vision for designing effective professional development initiatives in the future.

This research extends its impact beyond my immediate roles as a researcher and practitioner. It has encouraged me to take a broader perspective on how CPD programs can consider context-specific issues to address particular needs for contextual growth and development. It also enhanced my perspective on how CPD programs can be structured to bring about lasting changes in educational practices. I have developed a deeper awareness of the interconnected relationships between teacher knowledge, beliefs, institutional dynamics, external constraints, and teaching and learning outcomes, triggering a desire to explore these complex interactions in future research. Finally, this experience has emphasised the critical need to empower teachers

to take ownership of their professional growth, an approach that I intend to advocate in collaboration with educational institutions and policymakers.

Reflecting on this journey, it has been as much a process of personal and professional development as it has been a contribution to the education field. It has pushed me to think critically, demonstrate understanding, and navigate challenges with resilience. Above all, it has strengthened my commitment to support meaningful learning experiences for both teachers and me. As this chapter comes to a close, I carry forward the insights gained, guided by a renewed sense of purpose and a dedication to fostering positive growth in education.

Appendix A   Group Interviewing

Section 1: General classroom features
1. Let's start by talking about your classroom's general features. First, how could you describe the nature of interaction in your classroom? Is it more one-way (initiations from the teacher to the students) or two-way (initiations from the teacher to the students and from the students to the teachers or from student to students)? Explain.
2. If your answer to Q1 is one-way interaction, could you clarify why students are not initiating interactions? However, if your answer to Q1 is a two-way interaction, who would be more likely to initiate interaction in the classroom (the teacher or the students)?
Section 2: Learner autonomy and its feasibility
1. Have you ever heard about learner autonomy?
2. What is learner autonomy?
3. To what extent is it applied in this university?
4. To what extent do you promote learner autonomy? Explain.
Section 3: Teacher autonomy and the promotion of learner autonomy
1. In your opinion, who is responsible for the learning process in the classroom? Is it the teacher's responsibility or the learner's responsibility?
2. If your answer to question 1 is teacher responsibility, why is it teacher responsibility? And how could teachers be responsible for students' learning process?
3. If your answer to question 1 is learner responsibility, what could teachers do for learners to take more responsibility for their learning?
4. To what extent do you think that teachers could encourage learners to have more responsibility and take more control over their learning?
5. To what extent do you agree that learners could be given some opportunities to lead certain activities?
Section 4: Teacher Autonomy and Collaborative Work
1. To what extent is it possible for teachers to develop new strategies to promote learner autonomy?
2. If it is possible for teachers to develop new strategies to foster learner autonomy, is it more beneficial for these strategies to be developed with the cooperation of a number of teachers or an individual teacher?
3. What kind of suggestions do you think could be developed to improve learners' performance and independence over their learning?

Appendix B   Workshops Materials Including FG and Followed by Audio Diaries

Learner Autonomy: English Language Teachers' Knowledge and Practices

Workshop 1: What is Learner Autonomy?

Objectives:

During this workshop, participants will be:
- shared different definitions of 'learner autonomy' cited in the literature
- asked about their perspectives regarding these definitions
- asked to provide their own definition
- asked to discuss related concepts of learner autonomy, in particular, the dynamicity of learner autonomy.

1: Definitions of Learner Autonomy

Widely cited definition (Holec 1981:3)[1] 'the ability to take charge of one's learning … to have, and to hold, the responsibility for all the decisions concerning all aspects of this learning'
i.e.
- determining the objectives
- defining the contents and progressions
- selecting methods and techniques to be used
- monitoring the procedure of acquisition properly speaking
- evaluating what has been acquired.

Practice

Share your thoughts about Holec's definition of 'learner autonomy':
1. To what extent do you agree with Holec permitting your students to practice the following? Give percentage.

determining the course objectives	
defining the contents and progressions	
selecting methods and techniques to be used	
monitoring the procedure of acquisition	

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[1] Holec, H. (1981). *Autonomy in foreign language learning*. Oxford: Pergamon.

evaluating what has been acquired	

Practice

> Share your thoughts about Holec's definition of 'learner autonomy' and all aspects of this learning:
>   1. How do you feel about these results?
>
>   2. Why do you think that this aspect (*) has the highest percentage?
>
>   3. Why do you think that this aspect (*) has the lowest percentage?

Dickinson (1987, p.11)[2] refers to learner autonomy as 'the situation in which the learner is totally responsible for all of the decisions concerned with his learning and the implementation of those decisions.'

Little (1991)[3] emphasises that learner autonomy can be seen as a capacity for taking control of learning.

Dam (1995)[4] states that willingness to take responsibility is a major factor for learners to become autonomous.

Benson (2010)[5] argues that the idea of learner autonomy in education has been borrowed from political philosophy and basically refers to the self-determination of the affairs of groups, polities, and individuals. **Benson (2010, p.79)** emphasizes that the term 'control' best describes the relationship between students and the learning process. He defines autonomous language learners as those who are, in some sense, in control of important aspects of their learning.

Practice

> Share your thoughts about the previous definitions of 'learner autonomy':
>
>   1. Which definition do you agree with the most? Why?
>   2. Which definition do you disagree with the most? Why?
>   3. If you have been asked to create your own definition, how could you define 'learner autonomy'?

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[2] Dickinson, L. (1987) *Self-instruction in language learning*. Cambridge University Press.

[3] Little, D.G. (1991) *Learner autonomy: definitions, issues and problems*. Authentik Language Learning Resources.

[4] Dam, L. (1995) *Autonomy from theory to classroom practice*. Authentik.

[5] Benson, P. (2010) 'Measuring autonomy: should we put our ability to the test' in A. Paran and L. Sercu (eds) *Testing the untestable in language education*. Datapage International Ltd., pp.77-97.

Benson and Voller (2014)[6] assert that there is no canon for concepts such as independence and autonomy in applied linguistics. This is because different applications of learner autonomy relate to different perspectives, making it difficult to obtain one single agreed-upon definition.

Little (2007)[7] argues that Holec's definition is a fundamental and universally accepted one.

2: Learner Autonomy: Static or Dynamic

- Benson (2016)[8] clarifies that being an autonomous learner is a matter of degree rather than status. Benson (2016) illustrates three dimensions of learner autonomy and clarifies that a student might be autonomous in one dimension and less autonomous, or maybe not at all, in another.
- Oxford (1999)[9] clarifies that autonomy is not a permanent state but a variable trait.

Practice

> Share your thoughts about the previous discussion:
>
> 1. Do you think that learner autonomy is a status or degree? Explain your choice of answer.
>
> 2. How could your students be helped to have a sense of autonomy (e.g., how could we help them to increase their level of autonomy and independence over aspects of their learning?

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[6] Benson, P. and Voller, P. (2014) *Autonomy and independence in language learning*. Routledge, pp.98-113.

[7] Little, D. (2007) 'Language learner autonomy: Some fundamental considerations revisited', *International Journal of Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 1(1), pp.14-29.

[8] Benson, P. (2016) 'Language learner autonomy: exploring teachers' perspectives on theory and practice', in R. Barnard and J. Li (eds) Language learner autonomy: teachers' beliefs and practices in Asian contexts. Phnom Penh: IDP Education (Cambodia) Ltd., pp.xxxiii-xliii.

[9] Oxford, R.L. (1999) 'Relationships between second language learning strategies and language proficiency in the context of learner autonomy and self-regulation', *Revista Canaria de Estudios Ingleses*, 38(1), pp.108-26.

Audio Diaries after Workshop 1

Dear colleagues,

Considering the workshop content, please respond to these questions via WhatsApp voice notes or in writing <u>before</u> our next session.

1. What did you learn that you are expected to learn?
2. What did you not learn that you expected to learn?
3. What did you learn that was unexpected?
4. How could you define learner autonomy?
5. What kind of practices teacher could implement to encourage learners' autonomy?

Thank you for your cooperation

Learner Autonomy: English Language Teachers' Knowledge and Practices

Workshop 2: The Role of the Teacher and Learners in Teacher-centred and Learner-centred Classes

Objectives:

During this workshop, participants will be:
- discussing teachers and learners' roles in traditional classroom vs. learner-centred classrooms
- discussing the teacher role in promoting learner autonomy

1: Teacher and Learner Role

Role	Description
Teacher Role in a Teacher-centred Class: Traditional role	The teacher is the authority in the classroom. The students do as what teacher says so they can learn what she/he knows. (Larsen-Freeman, and Anderson, 2013)[10]
Teacher Role in Learner-centred Class as a: Facilitator	**facilitate.** To facilitate an action or process means to make it easier for it to happen or be done, a fairly formal word. *(Collins COBUIW English Language Dictionary)* 'The ideal of the teacher as a *facilitator* of learning, as a *helper* whose role is to facilitate learning, is perhaps the most commonly used term in discussions of self-directed, self-instructional, individualized and autonomous learning' (Voller, 2014, p.101)[11]. The facilitator organizes the session and conducts the meetings. Group members can expect the facilitator to use open-ended questions, wait time, and paraphrasing to encourage participation. The facilitator also emphasizes the importance of keeping the discussion on track, focusing on one topic or task at a time. The person in this role is not an expert and should remain neutral, allowing group members to share different perspectives. All group members are valued and encouraged to participate in their own way (Marzano, Marzano, and Pickering, 2003)[12].
Teacher Role in Learner-centred Class as a: Counsellor	**Counsellor:** a person whose job is to give advice to people who need it. **Counsel** is advice to someone which is based on a lot of experience or serious thought. If you **counsel** someone, you give them advice, especially about a problem, as part of your job. **consultant:** a person

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[10] Larsen-Freeman, D. and Anderson, M. (2013) *Techniques and principles in language teaching.* Oxford University.

[11] Voller, P. (2014) 'Does the teacher have a role in autonomous language learning?', in P. Benson and P. Voller (eds)

Autonomy and independence in language learning. Routledge, pp. 98-113.

[12] Marzano, R.J., Marzano, J.S. and Pickering, D. (2003) *Classroom management that works: Research-based strategies for every teacher*. ASCD.

Role	Description
	who gives expert advice to people who need professional help. *(Collins CO BUILD English Language Dictionary)*
	Counsellor means that the teacher recognizes how threatening a new learning situation can be for adult learners, so he skilfully understands and supports his students in their struggle to master the target language (Larsen-Freeman, and Anderson, 2013, p.127).
	'One could say that although the teacher in autonomous learning situations can be characterized as *a facilitator*, this is especially so in **classroom situations**. In **more individualized situations**, the teacher's role has also been widely defined as a *counselling* one.
	This characterization of the teacher as *counsellor,* to **whom learners turn for consultation and guidance**, has been suggested for situations where learning contracts are used, for individualized study programmes and, more commonly, to describe the role of staff in self-access centres' (Voller, 2014, p.103).
	'Equate counselling with dependency: as learners become more self-directed, the counsellor's role will become a more supervisory one' (Voller, 2014, p.103).
	O'Dell (1992)[13] see the role of self-access centre staff as one of *guidance and counselling* while Sturtridge (1992)[14] prefers the term *adviser*.
	Voller (2014) questioned whether this is part of the facilitator's role. If so, it is difficult to see how the term 'counsellor' in this context can be differentiated from the term 'facilitator'.
Teacher Role in Learner-centred Class as a: Resource	Resource: something or someone that you can use or refer to, especially when you need information on a particular subject. Someone's resource is their ability to solve problems and difficulties quickly, efficiently, and with initiative. *(Collins CO BUILD English Language Dictionary)* Resource: the teacher, which, is seen as a source of knowledge and expertise (Benson, 2013, p.186)[15]. This role is given less prominence than the facilitator and counsellor often because it is not clearly differentiated from them (Voller, 2014). Voller (2014) clarifies that this aspect of the teacher's role has been categorized in terms of.. - *expertise* - the teacher as *a resource* - the teacher as *a guide*

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[13] O'Dell, F. (1992) 'Helping teachers to use a selfaccess centre to its full potential' *ELT Journal*, *46*(2), pp.153-159.

[14] Sturtridge, G. (1992). *Self-access: Preparation and training*. British Council.

[15] Benson, P. (2013) *Teaching and researching: autonomy in language learning*. 2nd edn. Routledge.

Role	Description
	- *knower* in Community Language Learning and the learner-centred classroom Is there a difference between being *a resource* and being *an expert* or *knower*? It could be argued that the difference in terminology depends on the *context* in which self-directed learning is to take place: the teacher as an expert is more appropriate to **classroom** or **group learning situations**, and the teacher as *resource* is more applicable to **self-access situations**. *** Self-access facilities** are, after all, resource centres containing materials such as books, worksheets, videotapes, and audiotapes that help learners to learn a language (Voller, 2014, p.105).
Learner Role in a Teacher-centred Class: Passive learner	Most of the interaction in the classroom is from the teacher to the students. There is little student initiation and little student–student interaction (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2013, p.39).
Learner Role in Learner-centred Class: Communicators	They are actively engaged in negotiating meaning—in trying to make themselves understood—even when their knowledge of the target language is incomplete (Larsen-Freeman, and Anderson, 2013, p.161).

Practice

Share your thoughts about teachers and learners' roles:

1. What teacher role do you think best matches your current context? Why?

   - The whole authority
   - Facilitator
   - Counsellor
   - Resource

2. Is it possible for you to adopt a new teacher role? If yes, which role and how? If no, why not?

3. What learner role do you think best matches your current context? Why?

   - Passive learner
   - Communicator

> 4. If your learners are passive, to what extent do you think it is possible to motivate your learners to be less dependent on you? If they are communicators, what makes them hold such a position?

2. Features of a facilitator

Salient features of a facilitator (Holec, 1985: pp.184-6) characterizes them as the provision of *psycho-social* support and *technical* support (as citied in Voller, 2014, p.102).

Salient features of a facilitator	Description
Psycho-social support	• the personal qualities of the facilitator (being caring, supportive, patient, tolerant, empathic, open, non-judgemental) ; • a capacity for motivating learners (encouraging commitment, dispersing uncertainty, helping learners to overcome obstacles, being prepared to enter into a dialogue with learners, avoiding manipulating, objectifying, or interfering with, in other words, controlling them); • an ability to raise learners' awareness (to 'decondition' them from preconceptions about learner and teacher roles, to help them perceive the utility of, or necessity for, independent learning).
Technical support	• helping learners to plan and carry out their independent language learning by means of needs analysis (both learning and language needs), objective setting (both short- and longer-term, achievable), work planning, selecting materials, and organizing interactions; • helping learners evaluate themselves (assessing initial proficiency, monitoring progress, and self- and peer-assessment); • helping learners acquire the skills and knowledge needed to implement the above (by raising their awareness of language and learning, by providing learner training to help them identify learning styles and appropriate learning strategies).

3. Facilitator vs. Counsellor

What is the difference between the facilitator role and counsellor role?
The only perceptible difference between the two is in terms of self-access learning, where the counsellor, in addition to fulfilling all the functions of a facilitator, should be able to provide information and answer questions about self-access resources and how best to use them to both learners and classroom teachers (see O'Dell, 1992).
'The informational role (or at least the guidance part of it) is really also implicit in the list of features associated with technical support given by the facilitator' (Voller, 2014).
'Thus, it would appear that the only real difference between counselling and facilitating is in the nature of the interaction: counselling implies a one-to-one interaction. The manner in which the counsellor interacts with the language learner' (Voller, 2014)

4. Teacher role in promoting learner autonomy

Dam (2003, p.135)[16] says that 'it is largely the teachers' responsibility to develop learner autonomy.'

Van Loi (2016)[17] emphasizes the major role that teachers play in fostering learner autonomy—providing guidance and support to students in their learning strategies, selecting materials, and instructing them on self-regulation to manage their own learning.

Blidi (2017)[18] confirms that students are capable of achieving learner autonomy, but they might need further support, which can be provided not only by teachers but also by anyone else close to the learner (e.g., friends, classmates, mentors, and parents or guardians).

Practice

Share your thoughts with your colleagues:

1. To what extent do you agree with the previous discussions?
    a. Do you agree that teachers play a major role in promoting learner autonomy?
    b. What kind of guidance and support can teachers do to better promote learner autonomy?
    c. How could teachers provide instruction on self-regulation to help learners manage their own learning?
    d. How could classmates provide support to each other to increase their degree of autonomy?

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[16] Dam, L. (2003) 'Developing learner autonomy: The teacher's responsibility', in D. Little J. Ridley and E. Ushioda (eds) *Learner autonomy in the foreign language classroom: Teacher, learner, curriculum and assessment* (pp. 135-146). Authentik.

[17] Van Loi, N. (2016) 'Learner autonomy in Vietnam: insights from English language teachers' beliefs and practice', in R. Barnard and J Li (eds) *Language learner autonomy: teachers' beliefs and practices in Asian contexts.* Phnom Penh: IDP Education (Cambodia) Ltd., pp.1-22.

[18] Blidi, S. (2017) Collaborative learner autonomy. Springer.

Audio Diaries after Workshop 2

Dear colleagues,

Considering the workshop content, please respond to these questions via WhatsApp voice notes or in writing <u>before</u> our next session.

1. What did you learn that you are expected to learn?
2. What did you not learn that you expected to learn?
3. What did you learn that was unexpected?
4. How could teacher shift their roles and adopt a new one?
5. What could teachers do to promote learner autonomy?

Thank you for your cooperation

Learner Autonomy: English Language Teachers' Knowledge and Practices

Workshop 3: Shared Leadership (Shifting Roles) and Leaners' Readiness to Take Control/ Some Control

Objectives

During this workshop, participants will be:
- discussing the possibility for the student to share the leadership and take control/some control over their learning
- discussing learners' readiness to take control/ some control over their learning aspects
- discussing the possibility of shifting teachers and learners' roles in the traditional classroom
- discussing the involvement of learners in decision-making
- discussing the possibility of developing strategies to promote learner autonomy

1. Shared Leadership and Learners' Readiness

Little (2007)[19] clarifies that involving students in this process cannot happen from one single act, as pedagogical practices need to be constant from the beginning of a course.

Little (2007) explains that only a few students arrive to class ready to take complete charge of their learning, whereas the majority of them need to learn self-management in learning as a basic step to begin with.

Little (2007, p.20) notes that the practical transition from a teacher-centred approach to a learner-centred approach is a major problem in itself because it is quite difficult for learners, as their role requires a change to adopt the new teaching approach. They will be using different pedagogical procedures that are 'exploratory, interpretative and participatory ... that traditional pedagogies deny them'.

Little (1995)[20] underlines that in the formal context, learners do not automatically accept taking responsibility for their own learning and critically reflect on the learning process.

Scharle and Szabo (2007)[21] argue that developing learners responsibility to take charge of their own learning cannot occur unless teachers allow some room for learner involvement.

Little (1995) clarifies that students need teachers' help in providing them with the appropriate tools and opportunities for autonomous learning.

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[19] Little, D. (2007) 'Language learner autonomy: Some fundamental considerations revisited', *International Journal of Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 1(1), pp.14-29.

[20] Little, D. (1995) 'Learning as dialogue: the dependence of learner autonomy on teacher autonomy', *System*, 23(2), pp. 175-181.

[21] Scharle, A. and Szabo, A. (2007) *Learner autonomy: a guide to developing learner responsibility*. Cambridge University Press.

Little (1995) also emphasises the importance of students' gradual acceptance of control and responsibility over their own learning, arguing that this acceptance of responsibility is the basis of learner autonomy.

Practice

Share your thoughts with your colleagues:
1. Do you think that your students are ready to take control/ some control over their learning?
2. What kind of guidance and support do students need from their teachers?
3. What could be the basis of increasing learners' sense of autonomy?

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2. Shifting roles from traditional to more learner-centred for mutual control

    a. Giving Learners Choice

Little (1995, p.179) emphasizes the need for teachers to determine 'whether and to what extent it is possible for the learners to determine their own learning objectives, select their own learning materials and contribute to the assessment of their learning progress.'

Here are some results from Borg and Albusaidi (2012)[22] study of language centre teachers' views about learner autonomy:

- **96%** of teachers agreed that learner autonomy is promoted when learners have some choice in the kinds of activities they do.

- **93%** agreed that involving learners in decisions about what to learn promotes learner autonomy.

- **95%** agreed that autonomy means that learners can make choices about how they learn.

Here are some teachers expressing similar views:

> 'to me, learner autonomy means the ability of an individual to self-direct their learning, and to make decisions about how they will learn, what kinds of things they will learn, for what reason they are learning'.

> 'learner autonomy means that the learner has full responsibility and right to choose what to learn, how to learn, when to learn, and to be able to assess.

Practice

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[22] Borg, S. and Al-Busaidi, S. (2012) 'Learner autonomy: English language teachers' beliefs and practices', *ELT Journal*, 12(7), pp.1-45.

> Share your thoughts with your colleagues:
>
> 1. How do you feel about these results?
> 2. To what extent is allowing learners some choice of content and activities feasible in this University?

Smith (2003a)[23] asserts that the educational shift from a traditional classroom to a more active and autonomous one requires specific changes in the teacher's role. In this role, the teacher allows the students to take responsibility for their learning and relinquishes some of their control.

Voller (1997)[24] asserts that for learners to achieve their educational goals, teachers need to let go of being 'in control' and instead provide structure and scaffolding.

Ramos (2006)[25] explains that one of the constraints on transforming education from a traditional classroom to a learner-centred classroom is the fear of change.

Practice

> Share your thoughts with your colleagues:
>
> 1. How could teachers allow their students to take responsibility for their learning and relinquish some of their control?

b. Involving Learners in Decision-Making

Borg and Albusaidi (2012) asked teachers how desirable it was for students to be involved in certain course decisions. The chart shows the percentages of teachers who felt that student involvement was desirable for each course area.

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[23] Smith, R.C. (2003a) 'Teacher education for teacher-learner autonomy', in J. Gollin, G. Ferguson, G. and H. Trappes-Lomax, (eds) Symposium for Language Teacher Educators: Papers from Three IALS Symposia. Edinburgh: IALS, University of Edinburgh, University of Warwick, UK: Centre for English Language Teacher Education (CELTE), pp. 1-13.

[24] Voller, P., 1997 'Does the teacher have a role in autonomous language learning?', in P. Benson and P. Voller (eds) Autonomy and independence in language learning. Routledge, pp. 98-113.

[25] Ramos, R.C.(2006) 'Considerations on the role of teacher autonomy', Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal, 8(3), pp.183-202.
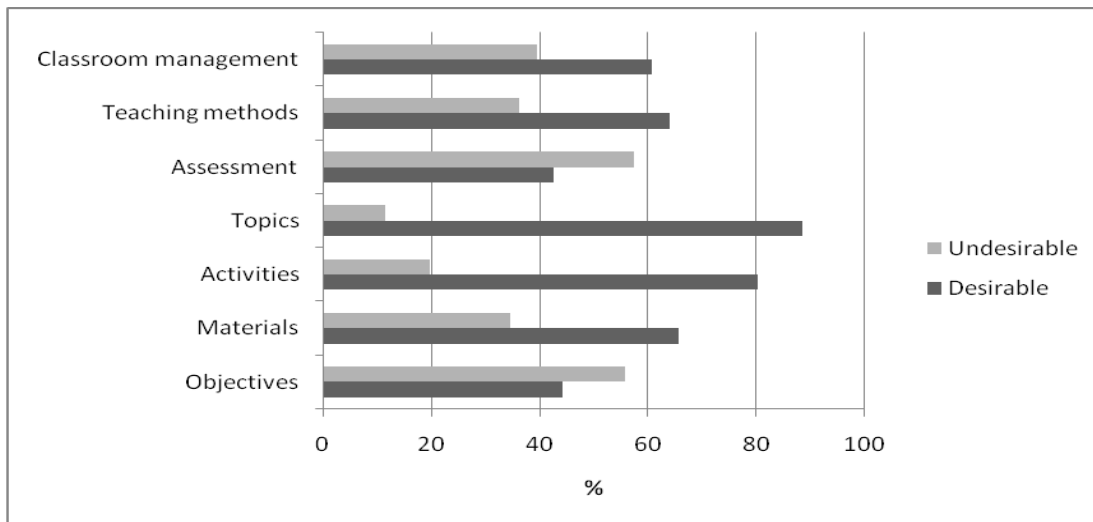
Figure 1: How desirable is it for learners to be involved in decisions about these issues?

Practice

> Express your thoughts:
>
> 1. Which course areas do you feel student involvement is applicable?
> 2. How do you feel about these results?

3. Developing possible strategies to promote learner autonomy
A. Shared leadership and mutual control

Practice

> Share your thoughts with your colleague:
>
> 1. Is it possible for the students to bring their own suggested resources? Clarify.
> 2. Is it possible to involve learners in creating their own tasks? Clarify.

B. Decision making

Practice

> Share your thoughts with your colleagues:
> 1. Are your learners involved in decision-making about:
>   a. the course learning objectives
>   b. the used materials
>   c. the types of tasks and activities they perform
>   d. the topics discussed
>   e. how learning is assessed

f. the teaching methods used
g. classroom management

Extracted from Borg and Al-Busaidi's (2012) questionnaire

C. Self-regulation and self-assessment

Practice

Share your thoughts with your colleagues:

1. Are your learners given the opportunity to:

   a. identify their own needs
   b. identify their own strengths
   c. identify their own weaknesses
   d. evaluate their own learning
   e. learn independently

   Extracted from Borg and Al-Busaidi's (2012) questionnaire

Audio Diaries after Workshop 3

Dear colleagues,

Considering the workshop content, please respond to these questions via WhatsApp voice notes or in writing <u>before</u> our next session.

1. What did you learn that you are expected to learn?
2. What did you not learn that you expected to learn?
3. What did you learn that was unexpected?
4. To what extent do you see yourself involving your students in decision-making?
5. Do you have any future plans regarding improving your students' sense of autonomy? If yes, please share your plans.

Thank you for your cooperation

Learner Autonomy: English Language Teachers' Knowledge and Practices

Workshop 4: The Relation Between Teacher Autonomy and Learner Autonomy and the Possibility of Developing Strategies to Promote Learner Autonomy

Objectives:

During this workshop, participants will be:

- discussing the link between teacher and learner autonomy
- discussing the definition of teacher autonomy
- discussing the link between teacher autonomy and freedom
- discussing current constraints of the promotion of learner autonomy
- asked about their own spaces to promote learner autonomy with the existence of constraints
- asked about possible strategies for fostering learner autonomy within the existence of constraints

1. Teacher autonomy and learner autonomy

Dam (2003), Lamb (2008)[26], Little (1995, 2000[27]) and McGrath (2000)[28] indicate a link between teacher autonomy and learner autonomy.

Practice

> Share your thoughts with your colleagues:
>
> 1. What is teacher autonomy?

2. What is teacher autonomy?

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[26] Lamb, T. (2008) 'Learner autonomy and teacher autonomy' in T. Lamb and H. Reinders (eds) Learner and teacher autonomy: Concepts, realities and responses. John Benjamins Publishing Co., pp.269-281.

[27] Little, D. (2000) 'We're all in it together: Exploring the interdependence of teacher and learner autonomy, in L. Karlsson, F. Kjisik and J Nordlund (eds) All together now: papers from the 7th Nordic conference and workshop on autonomous language learning, Helsinki, September 2000. University of Helsinki, Language Center, pp. 45-56.

[28] McGrath, I. (2000) 'Teacher autonomy', in Sinclair, B. and McGrath, I. eds., 2000. Learner autonomy, teacher autonomy: future directions. Longman, pp.100-110.

Benson (2000)[29] teacher autonomy means being free from the control of others.

Little (1995, p.179) defines autonomous teachers as those who have 'a strong sense of personal responsibility for their teaching, exercising via continuous reflection and analysis … affective and cognitive control of the teaching processes.'

Thavenius (1999, p.160)[30] places greater emphasis on learners needing to become less dependent on their teachers and more responsible for their own learning processes. He argues that autonomous teachers are those who are willing 'to help their students take responsibility for their own learning'

Smith's (2003a)[31] definition of teacher autonomy, which he refers to as 'teacher-learner autonomy' (p.5), defining it as 'the ability to develop [the] appropriate skills, knowledge and attitudes for oneself as a teacher, in cooperation with others' (Smith, 2003a, p.1).

Practice

Share your thoughts with your colleagues:

1. Do you think that there is a link between teacher autonomy and learner autonomy? If yes, could you explain why? If not, why not?
2. Which definition of teacher autonomy do you agree with the most? Why?

3. Autonomy: is it linked to individual work or group work
Vangrieken et al. (2017)[32] clarify that autonomy, by definition, is linked to individual work and independence.

Smith (2003a) sheds light on the role of collaborative working.

Practice

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[29] Benson, P. (2000) 'Autonomy as a learners' and teachers' right', in B. Sinclair and I. McGrath (eds) Learner autonomy, teacher autonomy: Future directions. Longman, pp. 111-117.

[30] Thavenius, C. (1999) 'Teacher autonomy for learner autonomy', in S. Cotterall (ed) Learner autonomy in language learning: defining the field and effecting change. Peter Lang, pp.159-163.

[31] Smith, R.C. (2003a) 'Teacher education for teacher-learner autonomy', in J. Gollin, G. Ferguson, G. and H. Trappes-Lomax, (eds) Symposium for Language Teacher Educators: Papers from Three IALS Symposia. Edinburgh: IALS, University of Edinburgh, University of Warwick, UK: Centre for English Language Teacher Education (CELTE), pp. 1-13.

[32] Vangrieken, K., Grosemans, I., Dochy, F. and Kyndt, E. (2017) 'Teacher autonomy and collaboration: A paradox? Conceptualising and measuring teachers' autonomy and collaborative attitude', Teaching and Teacher Education, 67, pp.302-315.

Share your thoughts with your colleagues:

1. Do you think that autonomy is only linked to individual work, or it could be developed within a collaborative work? Explain your choice?

4. **Teacher autonomy and the freedom of being controlled by others (Creating Teachers' Own Space to Develop Possible Strategies that Promote Learner autonomy)**
Teacher autonomy means being free from the control of others (Benson, 2000).

Practice

Share your thoughts with your colleagues:

1. Looking closely at Bensons' definition, is it the reality with teachers in educational institutions? Are teachers completely free from control and not surrounded by restrictions such as curricula, school regulations, and administrative responsibilities? Explain your answer.

Trebbi (2008)[33] discusses the concept of freedom and its link to autonomy and argues that we are never completely free from constraints, i.e.

- external (e.g., institutional and curricula constraints)
- internal (e.g., teachers' beliefs and attitudes)
- supportive (e.g., those that provide fresh experiences and stimulate critical reflection)

Trebbi's (2008) argument counters the notion that the existence of constraints hinders the development of teacher autonomy, and it emphasizes the importance of acknowledging obstacles and dealing with difficulties.

Practice

Share your thoughts with your colleagues:

1. What kind of challenges do you face with your students?
2. How do you react to these challenges, if any exist?
3. What kind of teaching strategies could be developed by the teacher to promote learner autonomy?

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[33] Trebbi, T. (2008) 'Freedom–a prerequisite for learner autonomy? Classroom innovation and language teacher education', in T. Lamb and H. Reinders (eds) Learner and teacher autonomy: Concepts, realities, and responses, pp.33-46.

Audio Diaries after Workshop 4

Dear colleagues,

Considering the workshop content, please respond to these questions via WhatsApp voice notes or in writing <u>before</u> our next session.

1. What did you learn that you are expected to learn?
2. What did you not learn that you expected to learn?
3. What did you learn that was unexpected?
4. If you think there is a link between teacher autonomy and learner autonomy, how could teacher develop their own skills and knowledge in order to support their students to take responsibility for their learning?
5. From your perspective, what are the teacher's first steps toward changing her/ his practice to improve her/his teaching/ learning environment?
6. Is it important for teachers to motivate learners to take responsibility for their learning or to help learners motivate themselves to take responsibility for their learning? Explain your answer.

Thank you for your cooperation

Learner Autonomy: English Language Teachers' Knowledge and Practices

Workshop 5: Practical Principles for Developing Learner Autonomy

Objectives:

During this workshop, participants will be:

- shared their inquiries and demands regarding the development of LA-based on their data gathered from the WhatsApp reflections
- shared the ambiguity participants have regarding the promotion of learner autonomy and supported in the literature in order to widen teachers' knowledge and enhance acceptance
- given important principles related to the promotion of learner autonomy in language teaching and learning for boosting the enhancement regarding the development of LA
- shared some ideas of implications regarding learner autonomy
- shared some applications that could help in the promotion of learner autonomy

1.   Review participants' inquiries and demands:

How to make learners active?

Are there any new strategies to include learners in the teaching/ learning process?

What are some examples of technological applications that enhance the development of LA?

Why do we have passive learners?

What are the obstacles/ difficulties that hinder LA in real situations?

Could you include something regarding classroom management?

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* The focus will be only on the first three questions, and references will be recommended for all the questions, particularly the last three. This is because the session is for one hour, and the aim of the workshops aligns with the first three questions.

Before discussing teachers' demands, it is important to share the misconceptions regarding learner autonomy held by many teachers (Dam[34], 2011), including my participants:

2. Misconceptions regarding learner autonomy

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[34] Dam, (2011) 'Developing learner autonomy with school kids: Principles, practices, results', in D. Gardner (ed),

Fostering autonomy in language learning. Gaziantep: Zirve University, pp. 40-51.

- Allowing learners to make choices means they will do what they want to do whenever they want to (Dam, 2011)
- Regarding the content, students could FREELY choose their own course objectives (Dam, 2011)
- Regarding the evaluation, including learners in choosing the type of assessment will not ensure fair evaluation and will not reflect real feedback as learners will choose what is easy for them (from my data)
- Autonomous learners are those who are curious to ask many questions regarding the topic (Dam, 2011)
- Autonomous learners are those students who answer all their teacher's questions (Dam, 2011)

This is not the case:

- Allowing learners to make choices does not mean that they will do what they want to do whenever they want to (Dam, 2011).
- The content of teaching and learning is restricted by the curriculum rules established for a certain group of learners (Dam, 2011).
- A question and answer session is not enough to ensure that a learner is autonomous as their provided knowledge is someone else knowledge, 'school knowledge' which is different than 'action knowledge' (Barnes[35], 1976).

  o School knowledge is the information that has been presented to us by another person. We have a partial understanding of it, just enough to complete exercises, respond to exam questions, and answer questions posed by teachers. If it is not used, it probably will be forgotten as it remains someone else knowledge.

  o Action knowledge is the knowledge that is used for a certain purpose and incorporate it with our own perspective to the world and part of it is used to scope with life's demands.

3. **Principles of learner autonomy**

- Developing learner autonomy means moving from a totally teacher-directed teaching context to a possible learner-directed learning context within the constraints (Dam, 2011).
- For both teachers and students, fostering learner autonomy is a protracted and ongoing process. During this process, the teacher fosters a learning atmosphere where students are gradually made (co-)responsible for their learning during this process (Dam, 2011).
  o the teacher could make a certain plan or plans, then try her new plans or strategies, and finally evaluate the outcomes. This could be a non-stop teacher action for the sake of teaching and learning process that matches a certain context (Dam, 2011)

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[35] Barnes, D. (1976) *From communication to curriculum*. Penguin.

4. **Implementation: how to move from a teacher-directed environment to a learner directed context?**

First, what are the current contextual limitations?

Constraints provided by the participants:

- Curriculum

- Policymakers

- Programme objectives

Second, plan to implement learner autonomy within constraints.

First, look back (to the current context with its limitations), then plan ahead based on these particular issues. Third, try your plans and finally evaluate the process (Dam, 2011). Then, consider the gradual shift when carrying out your plans and try to move step by step. This emphasis is not to try multiple new implications at once.

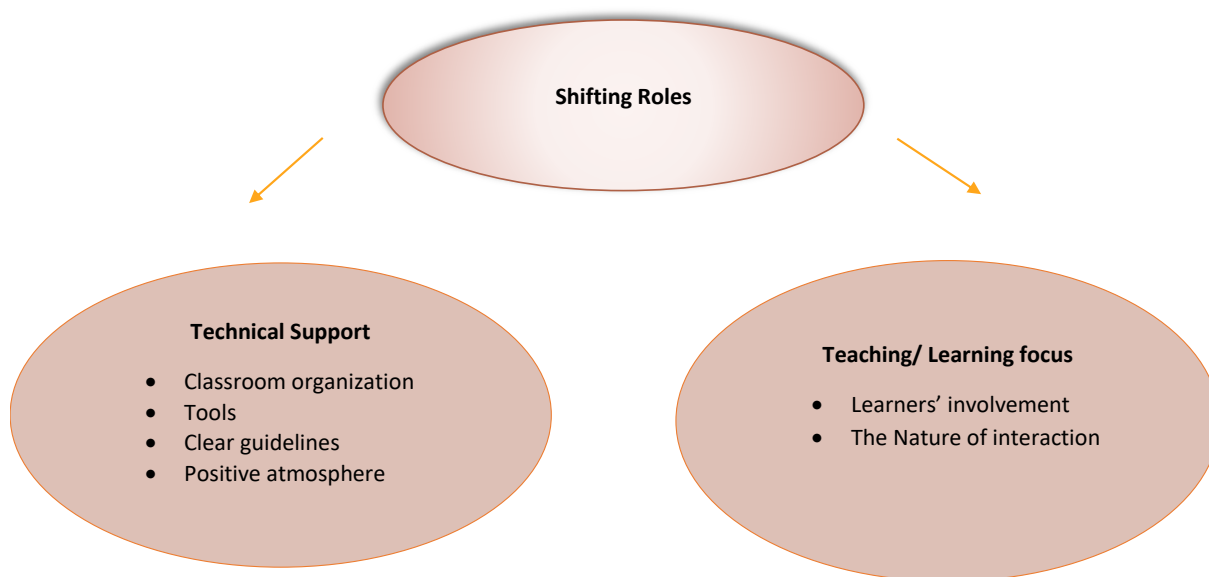*Third, consider shifting roles between the teacher and the learners*

Figure 1: Shifting Roles Model

Shifting roles. It is the teacher's duty to create a transparent structure for a lesson or a teaching/learning cycle that the students can eventually take over, either entirely or in part (Dam, 2011). This model suggests that in order for teachers to promote learner autonomy, they should acknowledge their responsibility to support learners in taking some responsibility for learning.

Technical support includes the **organization of the classroom**, which considers seating and grouping that allow pair or small group work. It also includes **the tools to be used** to facilitate the teaching and learning process, i.e., evaluation tools such as the use of a *rubric* in which students could understand the criteria they need to meet or a *reflection form* that learners could use to assess their own skills for continuous reflection frequently. Reflection forms could help both teachers and learners to monitor students' progress. The use of tools also includes the *use of technology*, e.g., the use of applications or websites (e.g., Slido, Google Forms, Qualtrics).

Technical support also considers the importance of **clear guidelines,** such as sharing the course *syllabus*. The syllabus could be the road map for learners during the semester. **A positive atmosphere includes providing positive feedback, feeling secure (not threatening), and having** trust and good rapport with learners.

The teaching/ learning focus in the traditional classroom is different than in the learner-centred classroom. In the traditional classroom the focus is on the teaching rather than on the learning (Dam, 2011). In traditional classrooms, as illustrated by Dam (2011, pp.43-44), teachers ask themselves, 'How do I do my best teach this or that?' however, teachers in learner-centred directed classes ask themselves another question, which is 'how do I best support my learners in learning this or that?'. This is a shift of focus from focus from teaching to a *focus on learning* on the part of the teacher in the first question, teachers concentrate on how best to transfer school knowledge to learners, while in the second, teachers consider how best to involve learners in building their action knowledge by activating their prior knowledge (Dam, 2011). From this perspective, two major issues will be taken into consideration: the involvement of learners in *decision-making and planning* and *the nature of the interaction* between the teacher and learners.

Involving learners in decision-making and planning will include the type of activities (try out several activities and focus on their preferences), type of assessment (self-evaluation, peer-evaluation, and teacher evaluation), and course objectives (their choices will be within the main course objectives written by policymakers). **The nature of the interaction** focuses on different types. First, the direction of the interaction is one way (from the teacher to the student) or both ways (from the teacher to the students and from student to student). The nature of the classroom also considers the authenticity of classroom activities and materials.

Authenticity in language classroom activities and materials

Examples:

Reading class	- learners could be asked to create their own questions or discussions regarding the text they have read. - text production in pairs or small groups
Speaking class	- small talk with a partner (2 minutes talk) - give a talk (5 minutes) - make a radio program/ make a TV program/ Make a PowerPoint
Literature class	- make a play (free production or based on a cartoon, picture story, poem, or a story).

Producing their own materials

Reading class	- learner could bring their own stories to read during the term and summarize
Speaking and Listening class	- learners could be asked to listen to any podcast or combination of podcasts and give a talk. This could be done in pairs or small groups.
Translation	- learners could be asked to translate their own texts and link theory into practice, e.g., if they are covering the problems in translation, they could be asked as part of their work to illustrate the problems they faced while translating.

	- learners could be asked to search for proverbs in the SL and find their equivalent in the TL. If they did not find an equivalent, they should discuss how they could translate them.
Literature class	- summaries of a certain theme - giving a different conclusion for a story read in a classroom - search for a particular point asked by the teacher
For all classes	- use of cards - games - presentations

5. References[36] might help you
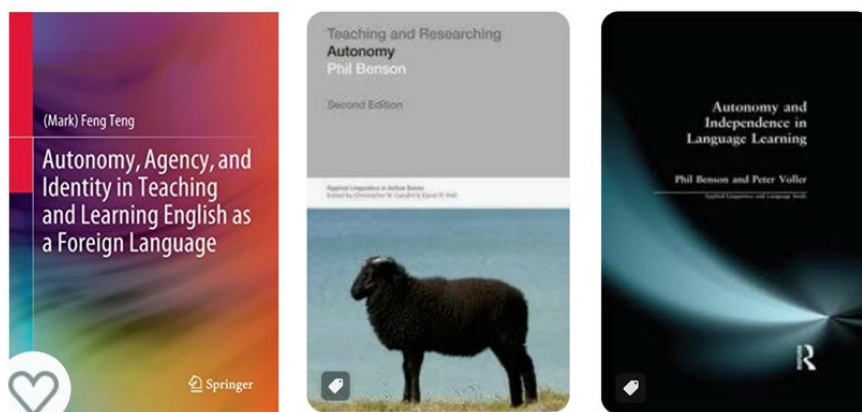
Practice

Share your thoughts with your colleague:

1. How helpful do you see this workshop regarding the development of learner autonomy?
2. How could teachers support their learners to take some responsibility for their learning?
3. What is the teacher's role in any classroom?

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[36] Benson, P. (2013) Teaching and researching: autonomy in language learning. 2nd edn. Routledge.

Benson, P. and Voller, P. (2014) *Autonomy and independence in language learning*. Routledge.

Mark Feng Teng (2019) *Autonomy, agency, and identity in teaching and learning English as a foreign language*. Springer.

Audio Diaries after Workshop 5

Dear colleagues,

Considering the workshop content, please respond to these questions via WhatsApp voice notes or writing <u>within two weeks if possible.</u>

1. What did you learn that you are expected to learn?
2. What did you not learn that you expected to learn?
3. What did you learn that was unexpected?
4. How helpful do you see this workshop in terms of the implementation of learner autonomy?
5. Was there any new information during all the workshops? If yes, please explain what was new.
6. What will you do with the new knowledge provided during the workshops in your future practice?

Thank you for your cooperation

Appendix C   Individual Semi-structured Interviews

Section 1: Learner Autonomy
1.   What is learner autonomy?
2.   How could teachers support learners to take responsibility for their learning?
3.   How could learners take their own responsibility for their learning?
4.   How easy/difficult is the process of fostering learner autonomy?
5.   Is learner autonomy a status or degree?
6.   In general, is the teaching process in the university teacher-centered or learner-centered? Explain your answer.
Section 2: Feasibility of Fostering Learning Autonomy
1.   To what extent do you think that you, as an English teacher, could encourage the learners to take control/ some control over their learning? Explain.
2.   Could learners lead activities? If yes, please explain how. And what type of activities?
3.   If you could allow your learners to make any decision, what kind of decision could they make?
Section 3: Teachers Collaborative Work
1.   To what extent do you think that teachers' discussions are effective?
2.   Do you remember any information, techniques, or ideas from your colleagues during the workshops? If yes, please list them.
3.   Have you come to develop new strategies suggested by a colleague to promote learner autonomy? Or have you modified certain previous practices? If yes, how?
Section 4: Teacher Autonomy
1.   To what extent do you think you could make your own decisions to develop a new teaching strategy and suggest different types of assessments or references to use with your learners?
2.   To what extent do you think there is a relationship between teacher autonomy and their promotion of learner autonomy?
Section 5: The Training Session
1.   Let's start by talking about the training program. To what extent do you think that the content of the workshops is effective? Which parts of the workshops caught your interest the most?
2.   In what way do you think that this program has an impact on the views you hold about learner autonomy?
3.   In what way do you think that this program has an impact on your practices?
4.   How far would you recommend a colleague to join these workshops? Why?

5. What kind of strategies, if there are any, did you use before attending the workshops that promote learner autonomy, and would you like to continue using them in the same way or modify them a bit? Explain your answer.
6. Is there any suggestion to improve these workshops in the future?

Section 6: Question Developed based on the Reported Speech and Classroom Observation
Participant 1 Individual Questions
1. How could you train learners? What kind of training you will provide?
Participant 2 Individual Questions
1. You mentioned that we need to change our teaching strategies if we want to foster learner autonomy. Could you explain what strategies could be modified and how?
2. You mentioned that the university is very strict regarding class time, but you are really convinced that it is not a matter of time; it is not quantity but quality. Could you explain why you did not fulfill the assigned hours by assigning different activities and having more practice?
Participant 3 Individual Questions
1. How do teachers talk less than students talk?
2. Let's imagine one classroom setting, for example, a literature classroom. What kind of activities could learners be involved in that require them to work and talk?
3. In our previous discussions, you mentioned' recapitulation' and emphasized its importance for the learning process. You said that you are doing it to get feedback to check learners' understanding of the lesson. I noticed that in your classrooms during my visit. I would like to hear from you: Why do you see this as an important matter? In what way could this help learners?
Participant 4 Individual Questions
1. You mentioned that you will do a need analysis with your learners at the beginning of each academic term. Could you talk more about your plans and the importance of that?
2. You also mentioned that every recommended work you will assign to your students will be assigned to be completed in front of your eyes as you are concerned about plagiarism. Is there any other means to solve this problem?
3. During the teaching techniques class, you were making sure that students understood the principles of the previous method and the presented method. Why this kind of reviewing could be considered an important practice?
Participant 5 Individual Questions
1. You mentioned that every recommended work you will assign to your students will be assigned to be completed in front of your eyes as you are concerned about plagiarism. Is there any other means to solve this problem?
2. During the translation class, I noticed that all the work was done in the classroom. My question is: Is it possible to translate the keywords of the English and Arabic texts before the class and collect all these keywords in a glossary?

Appendix D   Participant Information Sheet

Study Title: The Role of the CPD Workshops and Teachers' Reflection and Sharing Experiences in Teacher Autonomy and their Promotion of Learner Autonomy

Researcher: Suha Almazyad
ERGO number: *73954*

You are being invited to take part in the above research study. To help you decide whether you would like to take part or not, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the information below carefully and ask questions if anything is not clear or if you would like more information before you decide to take part in this research. You may like to discuss it with others, but it is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you are happy to participate, you will be asked to sign a consent form.

What is the research about?
I am a PhD candidate in the Modern Languages and Linguistics department at the University of Southampton. I am working towards the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. My research project looks at the impact of CPD workshops on teachers' perspectives and practices and the role of reflection and shared experiences in teacher autonomy to promote learner autonomy in traditional classrooms. I am doing this research to investigate how CPD workshops, teachers' reflections, and shared experiences could extract the good practices teachers do unintentionally or perhaps intentionally by some or all, promoting learner autonomy. Negotiations triggered during the CPD workshops are hoped to motivate teachers to share their own practices with colleagues to allow thoughts and practices to be shared and articulated and hopefully intentionally be done by teachers in their classrooms. This project is fully sponsored by the Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission and Shaqra University.

Why have I been asked to participate?
You are asked to participate because you are an EFL teacher who could affectively answer my research questions. My research could help all teacher educators and English teachers in different parts of the world to work collaboratively in improving their classroom environments, especially if they are interested in particular issues. This study will look to learner autonomy to be less dependent on their teachers and take control or some control over their learning. It is aligned with our country's new vision (vision 2030), which aims to have a learner as an autonomous learner instead of a textbook memorizer.

Your participation is valuable and appreciated. The role of the teacher in learner autonomy is essential, and a collective effort between teacher educators and the faculty members of the English department might have a good impact on teachers and students. Ten English teachers are very welcome to join the training program of this research study.

What will happen to me if I take part?
If you take part in the study, you will be joining CPD workshops about learner autonomy. There will be four workshops which will take place every other week. Before the start of the program, there will be an introductory session to introduce you to the workshop and to answer all your concerns. During the introductory session, you will be invited to share your experience, thoughts, and feelings regarding teaching and learning to help the researcher understand certain issues related to learners' responsibility over their learning and practices inside/ outside the classroom. Before these sessions, the researcher may ask for classroom observation.

After each workshop and before the next workshop, you will be kindly asked to send a voice note via WhatsApp responding to a number of questions that will be sent by the researcher, and that is based on your reflections and your observation of your classroom context. By the end of the program, the teacher educator (the researcher) would ask to attend your classes and have an individual interview for a deeper understanding of the impact of the CPD workshops in the teaching/ learning process. All meetings might be recorded and transcribed. The recording will be later destroyed when this project is published which is approximately 2-3 years later. Transcribed data will be saved for up to 10 years but strictly stored and only be accessed by the researcher and the supervisor if accessed by any researcher for future publications, your identity will be anonymized, and participants will be given numbers not mentioned by names.

Are there any benefits to my taking part?
Yes, this study has a direct benefit to you. By joining the CPD workshops, it is hoped that the knowledge they provide and the opportunity they facilitate for reflection and sharing experiences will be a great professional experience.

Are there any risks involved?
There will be no risks involved in this study.

What data will be collected?
Group interviewing will take place in the introductory session and while the CPD workshops are in progress. The purpose of the first focus group conversation in the introductory session is to gain a deeper understanding of the teaching and learning process and the general norms of classroom environments, including different aspects, e.g., teachers' and learners' roles, the nature of the interaction between the teacher and the students and between student to student. Close attention will be given to learner autonomy. These data will help the researcher to make modifications to the CPD workshops based on their responses.
The data derived from the voice notes will help teachers reflect on their own teaching contexts and will help the researcher track any changes in teachers' actions or learners' behaviour. Finally, repeated classroom observations and individual interviews will provide a deeper understanding of any educational modifications.

Some personal data might be helpful, like teachers' years of teaching, learning background, and professional experiences, and those will be kept secured. If these data are in a hard copy, it will be stored in a lockable cabinet. If it is in a soft copy, it will be stored in the University of Southampton OneDrive and the University of Southampton laptop with a secured system and password. If this kind of information will be shared with other researchers for future publications, identities will be kept anonymous.

Will my participation be confidential?
Your participation and the information collected about you during the research will be kept strictly confidential. All your information gathered from various tools, including audio recordings, will be saved in either the University of Southampton OneDrive or a lockable cabinet.

Only members of the research team and responsible members of the University of Southampton may be given access to data about you for monitoring purposes and/or to carry out an audit of the study to ensure that the research is complying with applicable regulations. Individuals from regulatory authorities (people who check that we are carrying out the study correctly) may require access to your data. All of these people have a duty to keep your information, as a research participant, strictly confidential.

Do I have to take part?
No, it is entirely up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide you want to take part, you will need to sign a consent form to show you have agreed to take part. Once you receive the invitation, you can send an email or message through WhatsApp or Twitter. If you decide to take part in the study, you will need to sign a consent form to show that you have agreed to take part.

What happens if I change my mind?
You have the right to change your mind and withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without your participant rights being affected. You may need to email the researcher indicating your desire to withdraw. The researcher's email is saa1m19@soton.ac.uk.
If you want to withdraw, you must inform the researcher before the first workshop. If you decide to withdraw after the first workshop, your data will not be removed from the study and will be used only to achieve the objectives of the study.

What will happen to the results of the research?
The research will be written up and may be published, including the results. However, your personal details will remain strictly confidential. Research findings made available in any reports or publications will not include information that can directly identify you without your specific consent. If you wish to receive a copy of the results, please email the researcher at saa1m19@soton.ac.uk.

Data may be used for future studies if helpful in terms of contribution to the field and educational improvement. Data will be saved in a secured server of one of Saudi universities. No audio recordings will be saved, as all will be destroyed after this research is completed and the writing-up is completed. Only anonymized transcribed data, observation checklist sheets, and consent forms will be saved in a lockable cabinet. No direct personal identification without your specific consent.

Where can I get more information?
If you have any concerns or you need further information, please do not hesitate to contact the researcher at saa1m19@soton.ac.uk to answer all your questions.

What happens if there is a problem?
If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you should speak to the researcher at saa1m19@soton.ac.uk, who will do their best to answer your questions.
If you remain unhappy or have a complaint about any aspect of this study, please contact the University of Southampton Research Integrity and Governance Manager (023 8059 5058, rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk).

Data Protection Privacy Notice
The University of Southampton conducts research to the highest standards of research integrity. As a publicly funded organization, the University has to ensure that it is in the public interest when we use personally identifiable information about people who have agreed to take part in the research. This means that when you agree to take part in a research study, we will use information about you in the ways needed and for the purposes specified to conduct and complete the research project. Under data protection law, 'Personal data' means any information that relates to and is capable of identifying a living individual. The University's data protection policy governing the use of personal data by the University can be found on its website (https://www.southampton.ac.uk/legalservices/what-we-do/data-protection-and-foi.page).

This Participant Information Sheet tells you what data will be collected for this project and whether this includes any personal data. Please ask the research team if you have any questions or are unclear about what data is being collected about you.

Our privacy notice for research participants provides more information on how the University of Southampton collects and uses your personal data when you take part in one of our research projects and can be found at http://www.southampton.ac.uk/assets/sharepoint/intranet/ls/Public/Research%20and%20Integrity%20Privacy%20Notice/Privacy%20Notice%20for%20Research%20Participants.pdf

Any personal data we collect in this study will be used only for the purposes of carrying out our research and will be handled according to the University's policies in line with data protection law. If any personal data is used from which you can be identified directly, it will not be disclosed to anyone else without your consent unless the University of Southampton is required by law to disclose it.

Data protection law requires us to have a valid legal reason (lawful basis) to process and use your Personal data. The lawful basis for processing personal information in this research study is for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest. Personal data collected for research will not be used for any other purpose.

For the purposes of data protection law, the University of Southampton is the 'Data Controller' for this study, which means that we are responsible for looking after your information and using it properly. The University of Southampton will keep identifiable information about you for 10 years after the study has finished after which time any link between you and your information will be removed.

To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personal data necessary to achieve our research study objectives. Your data protection rights—such as the right to access, change, or transfer such information—may be limited, however, to ensure the research output is reliable and accurate. The University will not do anything with your personal data that you would not reasonably expect.

If you have any questions about how your personal data is used or wish to exercise any of your rights, please consult the University's data protection webpage (https://www.southampton.ac.uk/legalservices/what-we-do/data-protection-and-foi.page) where you can make a request using our online form. If you need further assistance, please contact the University's Data Protection Officer (data.protection@soton.ac.uk).

Thank you for taking the time to read the information sheet and considering taking part in the research.

Appendix E   Consent Form

Study title: The Role of the CPD Workshops and Teachers' Reflection and Sharing Experiences in Teacher Autonomy and their Promotion of Learner Autonomy

Researcher name: Suha Almazyad
ERGO number: *73954*

Please initial the box(es) if you agree with the statement(s):

I have read and understood the information sheet and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.	
I agree to take part in this research project and agree for my data to be used for the purpose of this study and future publications.	
I understand my participation is voluntary and I may withdraw at any time for any reason without my participation rights being affected.	
I understand that should I withdraw from the study then the information collected about me up to this point may still be used for the purposes of achieving the objectives of the study and future publications.	
I understand that I will be taking part in CPD workshops which includes focus group conversations, post-observations, audio-diaries and individual interviews.	
I understand that taking part in this study is for the purposes set out in the participation information sheet and understand that these may be recorded using audio recordings and written notes.	
I understand that audio recordings may be transcribed for the purposes set out in the participation information sheet.	
I understand that I may be quoted directly in reports of the research but that I will not be directly identified as my identity in any part of the report or future publications will be anonymous (e.g. that my name will not be used).	
I understand that all information provided for this study, or any publications will be treated confidentially.	
I understand that my personal information collected about me such as my name will not be shared beyond the study team and for publication purposes, identities will be anonymous.	

I understand that my anonymity cannot be guaranteed in the group discussions that any information collected by the researcher will be kept confidential and participants will be asked to keep the discussions confidential.	
I understand that signed consent forms will be retained in a lockable cabinet.	
I agree to be contacted for follow up questions at any time during the study.	
I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information.	

Name of participant (print name)..

Signature of participant..

Date..   ....

Name of researcher (print name) **Suha Almazyad**

Signature of researcher *Suha Ali*

Date 18/7/20

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