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**EFL Students Engagement in the Learning Process and the Contribution of Homework Assignments:
Case of First Year EFL Students at Tlemcen University**

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Statement of Originality

We hereby declare that this work is ours and contains no plagiarism. This research work represents our own investigation and results, and it was not taken from other dissertations of others universities.

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Dedications (1)

I dedicate this dissertation to:

My lovely parents, my source of inspiration for their love and support through our research adventure, May Allah bless them.

My grandmother who wish me the best and success.

Heartfelt thanks to my husband, pillar of my life and his family for their unconditional support and never-ending encouragement.

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To all those who believed in me and pray for my success.

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Abstract

All mindful teachers strive to improve their students' engagement, and maintain the degree of motivation as part of the English learning process since the light are shed on the learner not the curriculum. Besides, a general agreement among researchers is that teachers can foster students' commitment to extend learning process even outdoor school settings through asking learners from time to time to finish homework assignment. In this regard, the following study aims to demonstrate where students prefer to finish their homework assignment, as well as, the best out-of-class activity that can extend student learning process. The scope of this study was reached with the help of two research instruments: students and teachers questionnaire, and teachers' interview. Furthermore, the qualitative and quantitative analysis of the collected data revealed that students prefer to work in collaboration with their mates, also they rely much more on online learning or courses to keep learning even outside classroom. Thus, this can highly affect the motivational level and students' commitment in language learning process.

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List of Acronyms

CCL: Canadian Council on Learning.

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching.

EFL: English as a Foreign Language.

E-Learning: Electronic Learning.

ICT: Information and Communications Technologies.

LMD: Licence, Master and Doctorate.

NSSE: National Survey of Student Engagement.

General Introduction

General Introduction

It has been debated before by so many psychologists, psycholinguists and speech therapists on how we learn our own or second language, and it is still not completely certain. Yet we do know in general terms what is involved in the process of language learning. It is true that no two learners have the same knowledge, skills or abilities in learning a second language in comparison to their native one.

Indeed, We all try to use certain strategies and techniques so that we can overcome the worldwide communication barriers as well as facilitating the process of understanding and interpreting the meanings of messages, learning other's cultures and traditions, exchanging ideas, thoughts and emotions with people all over the world who do not share the same languages. Thus, researchers have shown that learning a second language can get people engaged effectively in social interactions

Research findings and investigations have shown that foreign language teaching and learning process has shifted from teacher-centered to learner-centered pedagogy. Nowadays language teaching and learning is based on self-directed learning where both teachers and learners attempt to select suitable methods and techniques to fit their needs, interests and necessities. Thus, learning a language is much more than knowing some words in the dictionary, or knowing how to ask for a direction in a target situation, it is about being motivated and active in learning an additional language, for so many students struggle the act of learning a new language or they fear of not being able to break the barriers to a successful language learning process. Therefore, they all strive to be successful in their classes and communicatively proficient, not professionals or experts in specific area or field like grammar, phonetics, linguistics, etc. but rather, using the target language effectively in real life situations including the enthusiasm of carrying on language learning even outside the classroom walls.

Today's learners want to make their learning more enjoyable, funny, meaningful, especially not very difficult and prefer to be engaged in learning process. That's why most EFL teachers are striving to find suitable ways and methods to make their students active participants, as well as, offer students opportunities to show their

curiosity, and attention when they are learning or being taught. Student engagement reflects the degree of interest students may have so that language learning can be improved to the extent that goals and objectives are reached, while this process may face difficulties such as, disengaged, detached and dissatisfied learners.

This research work aims to demonstrate the most beneficial types of out-of-class activities to improve student engagement and commitment as part of the English learning process, and the contribution of homework assignment to improve students' English language proficiency. In the light of such assertion, two research questions can be formulated:

1- What is the most appropriate place for students to finish their homework assignments?
2- What is the most beneficial out-of-class activity that maintains motivation degree and extends students learning process?

Therefore, the following hypotheses can be put forward:

1- Students prefer to finish their homework assignment in collaboration with their friends
2- Language learners may rely on the use of the internet and technology, specifically the use of online learning or courses to keep learning even outside the classroom walls

In order to reach these objectives in mind, the achieved outcomes from the two research instruments students' and teachers' questionnaires, and teachers' interview were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively.

This research work is divided into two chapters. The first chapter attempts to give a theoretical background about the issue studied. It provides different definitions in relation to the key concepts of 'student engagement', 'Homework assignment', 'students' motivation and commitment'

The second chapter illustrates the methodology used to carry out this investigation, namely the research instruments, the sample studied. It provides also the readers with a

full analysis of students' and teachers' questionnaires and interviews. Then, it offers some suggestions and recommendations for making students more engaged and motivated in the English learning process

Chapter One

CHAPTER ONE: Literature Review

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1.1 Introduction:

It is noticeable that all students may share the same things: they all have a family, friends, studies, daily routines, all the joys and sorrows they may face. However, what seems different is that in the foreign language learning process, no two individual learners are alike; they all differ from each other. Each individual starts from various angles to meet the objectives and aims of the prescribed syllabus and content. All the students have different knowledge, skills or abilities in acquiring or learning a foreign language, as well as, having disparate learning styles and strategies to accomplish what is involved in the teaching methods and approaches.

Some teachers may witness a hurtful moment when they try to review what has been taught in the last day while their students cannot be retained or engaged with the course content. Thus, a teacher will be disabled to add new things. Hence, professional teachers always wonder what aspects can be used to improve EFL learners' engagement and language learning outcomes that can help them to get the opportunity to understand their roles in their homes, communities and to behave as world citizens. Besides, there is a need to know what they will require as supporting tools, tips, and activities to reinforce what has been taught during the lecture, as well as, involving them in thinking about what and how they are doing things; to mirror actions or behaviours, and to be mirrored to seek for improving one's English language proficiency.

1.2 Student Engagement in the Learning Process:

In educational settings, student engagement means the active, goal-directed, flexible, constructive, persistent, focused interactions with the learning environment (Skinner et al, 2008, qtd. In Rahmanpanah and Mohseni, 2017, p. 2), i.e., it is the extent to which EFL learners are involved and interested in language learning endeavor.

1.2.1 Spot on "Engagement":

"Engagement" is an umbrella term that is not seen straightforward, for it has different views. People think of engagement when love or marriage is the idee fixe subject, whereas, it can also represent a strong association between a teacher and a learner, a school and a teacher, a student and a classroom; simply, engagement leads to an alliance among all the stakeholders and the scholarly endeavour through providing motivation and an active learning. All teachers wish to make their students engaged in the learning process, be it inside or outside the classroom, where they sow seeds with great ambition, and greed their students to eat the fruit.

It represents an *'appointment'*, as if students save a reminder on their calendar since they always meet their school engagements. For some universities foreign students who may face foreign languages and cultures be in fights through experiencing unattractive times while they try to understand how engagement should be. Besides, a behavioural view has also contributed in defining the concept of 'engagement' which drops the lights on the student's internal emotional condition like being active in learning, motivated, states of curiosity, ambition, enthusiasm, asking for clarifications and interests.

It has been argued that the National Survey of Students Engagement (NSSE) that has been administered since 1999 measures how much students are actively engaged in the learning process. It defines the term engagement as a 'rendez-vous' between learning and the digital tools and techniques that excite students; George D.kuh (2003, qtd. In kuh, 2009, p. 1) states that the concept of engagement means that the extent to which students may understand the subject and getting a feedback would probably help them to understand what they are learning and can work with people from different backgrounds, as well as, the extent to which they are involved in a set of practices and activities be it inside or outside the classroom. Barkley (2009, p.14) states: ***"engaging students doesn't mean they're being entertained, it means they are thinking"; so in this respect, engagement echoes the strength of being active in learning and the internal desire that boosts their participation and involvement."***

When teachers think of how they can make their students more engaged, they directly knock into motivation where they walk side by side to fulfill the learning requirements. Having only engaged students or motivated ones is not full enough to suit all the needs, and what amazes a customer is always a fresh cocktail; so a course always needs both of them to accomplish its content.

It is a great thing if any student can be his teacher's eyes and can see all the best things that were in his heart. Tasting that coaching, passion, and enthusiasm that foster their shining eyes; then, any professional teacher may feel pleased and happy of making his students motivated where all the hands are up, smiley faces and full minds that may lead them to be engaged in the motions of finishing their homework assignments. All this ensures that the connection between motivation and engagement is the core of successful school achievements.

1.2.2 Student Engagement:

Krashen (1982) states that if the input contains forms and structures that they are beyond the learner's current level of competence in the language, so both comprehension and acquisition will occur. In this respect, when comprehension is provided students will show their curiosity, interests, and passion toward what is taught as well as they share their entire motivation with teachers and classmates. All this explains the term 'student engagement' which culminates the strength of participation and instructional activities facing all the obstructions that students may encounter during the learning process. Besides, Kuh (2007, quoted. In Vicki Trowler 2010: 9) defines student engagement as: ***"the participation in educationally effective practices, both inside and outside the classroom, which leads to measurable outcomes."***

The glossary of education reforms introduces student engagement dimensions, as well as, they were defined by Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris (2004, p. 62-63, quoted. In Trowler 2010, p. 7) that they are presented as follows:

Intellectual Engagement	Emotional Engagement	Behavioural Engagement
It is the act of engaging students in the course design through providing a feedback about what parts need to be repeated, changed or modified, as well as, creating activities or projects to make them participating in the courses	The teacher's job is to create a positive learning atmosphere, so that students will feel attractive, interested, and willingly to learn. Also, teachers should care about their students mood and feelings; and playing the role of an advisor so that they reduce all the obstacles	It is good when a teacher can perfectly manage his classroom through creating certain manners, gestures and cues that trigger student attention; for instant, changing students' seats, clapping when there are right answers, etc.

Table 1.1 Student Engagement Dimensions.

1.2.3 Student in-Class Learning Engagement:

As stated previously, no two learners are alike: they do not have the same learning styles and strategies, as well as, the degree of motivation and interests vary from one to each other. Thus, the term 'student engagement' has been founded on the basis of the three dimensions (intellectual, emotional, and behavioural), i.e., how much each learner is interested in the course and to what extent they are curious, ambitious and passionate while learning or interacting to others in the classroom. Furthermore, student engagement is the fruit of a delighted course design and shining strategies of keeping them attracted despite all the differences and difficulties that can be encountered during lecture delivery.

Schlechty (2002, quoted. in Hurst 2013) introduces three main divisions that measure the level of student classroom engagement:

The engaged classroom	The compliant classroom	The off-task classroom
In the engaged classroom most of the students are active in learning, and they	The compliant classrooms represent traditional classrooms where all the	In this kind of classroom, most of the teachers feel painful and hurtful since

do not face alienating times while interacting with their teachers or other students	students need to show that they are working and participating just to ensure that the learning process is occurring despite having the obstacle of being noisy and disturbances	they stop delivering lectures and start dealing with noisy students; and all the kinds of confront behavioral problems

Table 1.2 Student Classroom Engagement Levels.

1.2.4 Strategies to Boost Student in-Class Engagement:

It has been concluded that researches after researches, the more students are highly motivated and engaged the more it leads to successful learning outcomes. However, students cannot always play the role of employers, but rather they need a catalyst that boosts their whole attention and willingness to learn more and more. So, it is so thoughtful if teachers ever wonder if their classrooms are so bored; or their students are facing unattractive times within a disappointing learning environment. Thus, this would probably lead them to mirror the way they teach as well as what splendid tips that need to be brought into being to create and fascinate their classrooms.

The following clues are addressed specifically to increase student in-class engagement:

1. *Connect the Course Content to Real Life:*
   What makes any course or lesson fully comprehensible is when it links its content to the world students are living in; besides it is preferable to choose teaching materials appropriate to their needs, interests, level and age. For instance, designing a lesson plan that represents learners' culture where using everyday examples and that may connect them to outside classroom learning process. Indeed, Skinner and Belmont (1991, qtd. In Brewster and Fager 2000, p. 14-15) note in this respect that teachers should relate course materials to students' daily life so that they perform well in real life situations.

2. *Learner-Centered Active Learning:*

   How should a lesson plan be if you give your students the chance to design a course based on their own experience? Simply, it is so great if any teacher offers his students chances to share their splendid ideas and thoughts; besides, Brooks et al (1998, qtd. In Browster and Fager 2000, p. 14-15) claim that it is vital to allow the learners to have a degree of control over the teaching and learning process. Most studies have shown that creating a learning-centered environment promotes student motivation and engagement as well as strengthening their retention and performance in exams. Besides, engaging them in discussions or debates where they are allowed to suggest and provide solutions to certain problems.

3. *Be Just, and Care about those who Care:*

   One of the teachers job is to try discovering what your students' interests and needs are through which you find out what everyone is passionate about. The results of this strategy are engaged, motivated and happy hard workers. Having an eye that sees everybody alike and cares about those who are fascinated is the representation of a reflective professional teacher and the good instructions.

1.2.5 Student outside Classroom Learning Engagement:

Every teacher who is mindful and professional expects to get a fertile feedback after delivering a great lecture in order to enhance what has been taught.

The goal of any teacher is to keep his students always connected to their classroom so that they will be always engaged in learning outside their classrooms and still involved in the taught content. Student engagement is not seen as a science but rather as signs interpreted by learners who contribute in producing outcomes beyond classroom walls through a set of activities such as homework assignments, multiple out-of-class activities and reviewing their lessons with great intrinsic desire.

Student outside classroom engagement is seen in that strength of creating specific involvement and knowledge through an ongoing reflection and participation to make a strong link between the learning process and academic achievement.

1.3 Learning beyond Classrooms:

Since the advent of the industrial revolution and the whole world is obsessed by technology. The latter has facilitated worldwide human conditions; for instance, it has cured all the differences and challenges facing the teaching and learning process as well as both inside and outside classrooms.

1.3.1 What is meant by learning beyond classroom?

At the time where teachers used *'chalk to talk'* method in traditional classrooms based on teacher-centered approach, as learners adopted a passive role and the teacher was the main source of information has led to barren outcomes. If classroom walls could talk, it would probably be said that it is not enough to rely on prescribed data and consume the goods on the ready; but rather, creating a classroom outside the educational settings with out-of-activities that make students still engaged and connected to their in-class learning process. The House of Common defines the term '*learning beyond the classroom'* as a set of provisions: student's participation in drama productions or activities within a school or college, besides, involvements in clubs, and educational visits during weekends or holidays.

1.3.2 Lifelong Learning:

It is really delighted to stay in the learner mood once you leave classroom because you always need to be clever about how things should be done. For instance, people need to learn how to use Smartphones, or finding a starting angle to function in their community, even knowing the tips to fix their cars. Nowadays challenge is to keep being in the learner's mindset even after graduation where there is a need to teach how to keep learning, asking questions and being curious to find a set of answers.

When people continue their learning beyond the formal structure of the classroom walls throughout lifetime, they are in the process of lifelong learning. It develops learners curiosity, abilities and enhance their wisdom as it was argued by Encarta (2008, qtd. In London, 2011): "it is the development after formal education:

the continuing development of knowledge and skills that people experience after formal education and throughout their lives."

When tackling foreign language learning, lifelong learning is a crucial process to carry on even after the tertiary level since language is dynamic and changes through lifetime. Learners always face new vocabulary, expressions and new purposes of using the language.

1.3.3 Reasons for Extending Learning outside Classroom:

It has been proved that learning outside classroom offers many benefits to learners who dream to reach the top of successful outcomes, as Dickinson (2015) points out a set of reasons for taking learning outside of the classroom:

a) *Expose Learners to Greater Sources and New Opportunities:*
   Language learners are expected to earn a tremendous number of free resources with getting greater chances to interact with native speakers through authentic materials.

b) *Improving Student Attendance:*
   Every teacher should create a learning atmosphere outside classroom walls so that students still motivated, engaged, and turn up to school settings.

c) *Making Learning Relevant:*
   It is helpful to provide learners with lessons that make part of their daily life through putting them in a clear realistic context.

d) *Nurture Learning-Centered and E-Learning:*
   Taking learning outside the classroom provide learners with chances of creativity and solving problems; besides, they contribute in the discussion to give solutions via the use of ICTs and online courses.

e) *Reduce Behaviour Problems:*
   Taking learning outdoor classroom fits those who are eager to learn and motivated to explore new things; also, going beyond of being around the school grounds. Learners will be excited to get new knowledge and be happy to share the outcomes.

1.3.4 Golden Activities for Engaging Students in Learning outside Classroom:

Any mindful teacher strives to make his students the most brilliant ones although no one is perfect. All learners prefer to do mad things when they go outside the classroom and sitting around, this is why they[teachers] need to work more and more to make them engaged, active in learning, motivated and having fun while doing out-of-activities even outdoor schools. In this respect, Nunan (1991, qtd. In Coskun 2016, p. 2) claims that successful language learning in a variety of context all over the world is often associated with learners' ability to continue learning English outside the classroom. Here are some simple out-of-class activities that can help EFL learners to improve their language learning competence and performance:

➤ *Online Learning Environment:*

The online learning environment or what is also called E-learning approach that was adopted to conduct EFL learners to a self-instruction to improve their language skills through online or live courses, online training, blogs and wikis (Kern, 2006, qtd. In, Coskun 2016, p.3)

➤ *Extensive Readings:*

All EFL learners look for improving their English language proficiency and having a good hand at writing. One of the important keys to improve the writing skill is a greater free reading time (novels, newspapers, and articles) at any place may students prefer based on 'read to write'; Krashen (1984, qtd. In Bell) indicates that those learners who are prolific readers in their pre-college years become better writers when they enter college. The extensive reading nurtures learners vocabulary as Nagy and Herman (1987, qtd. In Bell) claim that learners acquire words from reading, as well as, children learn up to 3000 words due to direct vocabulary instruction.

➤ *Watching Television:*

It may be seen for some people that learning a language from television after a long day of studying in school is such a thing of no sense since learners may acquire expressions or slangs that their meaning does not suit students' learning environment. However, watching television may provide learners with movies

that handle stories inspired from true event; films or TV shows that determine a successful factor in second language acquisition and make parts of students lives (Donaghy, 2014) may interpret certain culture or historical events where they are a motivational and enjoyable tool for learners to acquire a language Besides, there are certain online courses that teach learners grammar, pronunciation, and private classes to improve learners' listening and speaking skills.

➢ *Use of Social Media:*

When parents see their children surfing on the net, they probably think that it is a waste of time; however, they [children] keep telling them that social media represent a resourceful window. Social media such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, and Google are used to create and share online data which facilitates collaboration and participation (Evans 2014, qtd. In Anankulladetch, 2017, p. 6) Thus, so many people can communicate easily and interact with native speakers all over the world like Skype and other means through which EFL learners will overcome foreign language barriers by creating online channels, and promote students motivation, passion, and enthusiasm.

➢ *Creating English Clubs:*

All EFL learners wonder where to practice the use of English outside classrooms, and being confident to talk in English without any obstacles and challenges faced by students. One of the great and beneficial activities that can help students be motivated, ready to speak English, and improve their language proficiency is the creation of English clubs where learners have the chance to work in collaboration, share ideas and thoughts, build confident and relaxed, as well as, encourage participants to bring in their own content(Ewens, 2015). In addition to this, English clubs produce innovative and creative learners with great potential for exploring others hobbies and diversions.

1.4 Supporting Environment and Student Motivation:

Most studies show that some students acquire or learn a second language easily and fluently while others do not because this has to do with certain factors that may

challenge the process of learning a language. One of the main factors is the supporting environment.

1.4.1 Relationship between the Supporting Environment and Student Motivation:

A lot of teachers may face awkward times when they interact with apathetic students; and start wondering about what to do in order to produce emotional, motivated, engaged, focused learners. Student engagement has been interpreted as students' vitality, involvement, and how much they are enthusiastic in doing both inside and outside language learning activities as far as these EFL learners are under a positive influence from the surroundings.

From pre-schooling to tertiary level, the learning environment has a major factor for supporting or interrupting language learning process, as Fraser (1998a, p. 3, qtd. in Opdenkker and Minnaert, 2011, p. 2) points out that the learning environment refers to *"the social, psychological and pedagogical contexts in which learning occurs and which affect student achievement and attitudes".* Indeed, one must reflect both in-class and out of the classroom walls on why students are or not affected by language learning. Thus, the learning environment has a direct link with EFL learners' motivation since the latter has great role second language learning. Furthermore, it is necessary to know how learning environment may influence the learners' motivation and engagement. For instance, crowded classrooms, problems of lightning, and the lack of ICT devices can de-motivate learners and does not suit all their conditions.

This is why effective teachers should delve into learners behaviour and perception of language learning activities; trying to conceptualize each positive or negative act, in addition to this, they should truly care about what kind of atmosphere should be created in order to make them feel released and energized.

1.4.2 Environmental Factors that Prevent EFL Learner's Motivation:

It is so pensive to wonder what kind of surroundings that my interrupt English learners' motivation and engagement, as well as, what prevents their English language

proficiency and performance. Here are some environmental factors that may affect learners' attitudes and attention:

✓ *Classroom Management:*

Some students can be influenced by the physical conditions and classroom environment, as their friends behave (Tuan, qtd. in. Ekiz and Kulmetov, 2016, p. 5). Indeed, classroom atmosphere represents a hindrance that obstructs language learning results such as crowded classrooms with the lack of ICT devices that support motivation and facilitate learning.

✓ *Teachers Attitudes:*

Teachers' behaviour, styles, and strategies are quite important to trigger learners' willingness to learn. For instance, a teacher should be just and care about those who care or it will lead to a failure if he follows certain teaching methods that do not suit learners needs and interests.

✓ *Parental factors:*

Where does learning start? Butler (2015, qtd. In and Kulmetov, 2016, p. 6) argues that learning begins in the family. So parents are a social-relevant element that may influence their kids' inspiration and motivation. They should listen, care and support their offspring's language learning orientations without any kind of obsessed control that prevent their learning process.

1.5 Contribution of Homework Assignment:

Homework and its contribution are considered as the key to successful learning. In this case, it can provide a sort of background knowledge and feedback to all stakeholders.

1.5.1 What Is Meant by Homework Assignment?

The homework-assignment activity is a task or piece of work which is assigned or given by school teacher to accomplish during non-school hours, i.e.; as a link between home and school. Cooper (1994) argues that homework assignment is beneficial and essential. For more details, it can provide better retention of factual knowledge, feedback for both the teacher and student, encourage learning and improve

positive attitudes towards school. Besides, homework assignment helps to develop better study habits and skills and aids the learners to be self- directed, self-disciplined, self-organized and independent.

1.5.2 Differences between Homework and Assignment:

Homework and assignment are essential for the improvement of students' learning. Thus, to have a clear view of these terms, we differentiate between them by giving a concise explanation.

1.5.2.1 Homework:

Homework is a task or activity which is given by the teacher from different resources to complete outside the classroom. The Canadian Council on Learning "CCL" (2009, p. 9, qtd. In Dr. Dobozy, 2010, p. 2) claims that most researchers adopt the definition offered by Cooper (1989) because it is clear and concise. Cooper (1989, qtd in Dr Dobozy, 2010, p.2) defines homework as ***"any task assigned by school teacher intended for students to carry out during non-school hours."*** Spencer (2016) states that by doing homework, students can improve their skills and develop good habits that help to understand the topic and increase self- direction. Furthermore, homework helps students to find out all the difficulties that encounter them and to be independent in solving problems. Therefore, homework is the best way to prepare and assess students' learning.

1.5.2.2 Assignment:

An assignment is a piece of work assigned by the school teacher to do at home. It is assigned as a part of job or course of study. Otherwise, assignment enables students to learn and train appropriately on a particular subject. As Admin (2015) posts that assignments guide students how to complete the task and motivate them at the time of doing it. Assignments help the teacher to find out the needs and problems that students face and propose some suggestions and solutions to come out from this issue. Therefore, the assignment is an effective way of learning any subject either easy or difficult,

simply; it helps students to connect with their study materials, to reflect and improve their skills and helps the teacher to know students' understanding and their level.

1.5.3 Views on Homework:

Homework is a big educational issue that has been questioned and debated over the last 100 years. The issue of homework has historically reflected societal trends and prevailing educational philosophy of the time. In the early twentieth century, the rise of anti-homework movement questioned many aspects of schooling with many educators: ***"once the value of drill, memorization, and recitation was open to debate, the attendant need for homework came under harsh scrutiny as well"*** (Kralovec and Buell 2000, p.42). In 1900, the editor of the Ladies' Home Journal that he began a series of anti-homework articles in which he recommended that homework should be eliminated for all students under the age of 15 and limited of one hour nightly for older students (Bok, qtd. In Vatterott, 2009, p. 4) in 1930, the anti-homework sentiment had emerged and formed a society of the abolition of homework and many schools across the United States voted to abolish homework.

The launch of Sputnik trend in 1957 to increase the practice and the less amount of homework was quickly reversed to the U.S and it would be increasingly dominated by math and science education, Gill and Schlossman, (2004, p.176, qtd. In Vatterott, 2009, p.5) argue that ***"the homework problem was reconceived as a part of national crisis...a commitment to heavy homework loads was alleged to reveal seriousness of purpose in education; homework became an instrument of national defense policy."***

By the late of the 1960s and early 1970s, a new debate emerged over homework and others educational activities. The progressivists argued that homework was seen as a symptom of too much pressure on students' achievement. The American Educational Research Association and National Education Association stated that the amount of homework should be limited and eliminated.

In 1983, the study A Nation at Risk had a clear idea which was homework has got an extensive support as a means of boosting academic achievement. Vatterott (2009, p.7) notes that the U.S Department of Education published "what works" in 1986 which

stated homework as the best way of learning. From 1900 to 1970, historians argued that some saw homework as *school imperialism* and others who viewed it as an important form of communication and link between home and school. In the beginning of the 1990s, the proponent of homework trend argued that more homework was a remedy.

By the late 1990s, the tide would begin to shift back to anti-homework. As homework increased in 2000, the struggles appeared, therefore; a national attention was received to limit and discourage the amount of homework.

1.6 What Makes Homework Effective?

A Homework assignment is a suitable tool that reinforces student's learning when it is well-designed and implemented. Cooper, Greathouse, Lindsay, and Nye defined homework as *"A task assigned to students by the school teacher that is meant to be performed during non-school hours."*(1998, p.70), the issue of homework and its effectiveness have a large debate among scholars, teachers, parents, administrators and even students. In order to increase homework effectiveness, the teacher has to understand what makes homework effective. Vatterott is regarded as an international expert on the topic of homework; Vatterott (2010) identified five central hallmarks of good homework including purpose, efficiency, ownership, competence and aesthetic appeal.

1.6.1 Purpose:

The homework should be comprehensive and the teacher should give students assignments that are appropriate according to their level and their learning styles. According to Xu (2011), students have to understand the objective of the assignment and why it is crucial in their context. Moreover, homework provides the teacher with feedback and the students ought to be given topics which are studied and taught before. Thus, Prothereo (2009), *"student should have a clear idea of what they are going to do and how to do."*

1.6.2 Efficiency:

The amount of homework should be limited and should require thinking. Cooper and Shumow state that students, who take too much time to complete homework,

perform in a bad way in comparison to those who spend less time. Activities that have less difficulty may enhance motivation and increase the growth and development of a student. Assignments those are easy to complete lead to tedium and the ones that are complex lead to frustration. Therefore, the assignments that are well-planned and organized are the key.

1.6.3 Ownership:

There are several ways to create ownership in students. More precisely, linking students directly to the assignment can provide a sort of motivation. Besides, to create an effective homework assignment, it needs a connection between students and teachers including personal choice, interest, learning styles and teachers' care. For Protheroe (2009) ***"homework should be planned and designed so that students can complete it with high success in which students can take pride".*** Therefore, this will make them more ownership towards their work.

1.6.4 Competence:

Students should have the ability to accomplish their homework, and to realize this; they need to know how to deal with mixed abilities. Vatterott (2010, p.13), argued that ***"homework that cannot be done without help is not good homework; this will discourage students and will not enable them to complete their assignment".*** Otherwise, the teachers are responsible for the achievement of homework. In addition, they should take into consideration the needs of students and how to structure the homework in order to ensure that completing the assignment is successful.

1.6.5 Aesthetic Appeal:

It is the teacher's job to make homework looks important and necessary. Vatterott (2009, qtd. In, Scbrat Carr, 2013, P 175) noted that the smart teachers have studied that all students with different levels are motivated to complete uncluttered assignments which have less information and different graphics and plenty of rooms to answer that make the activities more inviting and interesting for students. Therefore, good or effective homework must be, comprehensive, efficient, personalized, doable, inviting and interesting.

1.7 Categories of Homework:

Homework is an engaging and relevant learning activity which is assigned by the teacher to enhance students learning. It is purposeful because it improves skills and provides feedback and background knowledge for both the teacher and student. There are various categories of commonly assigned homework stated by Board Policy P. 036 (1999) are as follow:

1.7.1 Completion homework:

Completion homework is any task given to by the teacher during the school hours and completed at home. It helps students to keep students to carry out the classroom program outside of school. Completing classroom assignments include reading responses, notes, exercises, piece of writing and reading selection.

1.7.2 Practice Homework:

Practice homework is an activity that provides students with opportunities to apply new knowledge review and reinforce skills and concepts taught in class. It helps students revise the information, acquire and develop their skills and makes them independent. It includes consolidation exercises, essay writing, reading for pleasure, practicing for the mastery of language.

1.7.3 Preparation Homework:

Preparation homework is any work that provides and gives chances for students to gain and acquire background information for the upcoming unit of study so that they are better prepared for their future lessons. It helps students to bring their prior knowledge and experiences to the next classes. This category includes a variety of activities among them background reading, reading English text for class discussion and researching topics for a class unit of work.

1.7.4 Extension Homework:

Extension homework is any task that explores and improves learning in new context. It helps to encourage students and pursue knowledge individually. Further, it aids students to think creatively and critically. Thus, it requires students' understanding

and relates the learning process to the real world. Extension homework has many activities including writing a book report review, researching, for example; history of Britain, retrieval skills by using computer and internet to find materials that help them in their studies.

1.8 Responsibilities for Homework:

Homework becomes increasingly crucial during the learning career. It is considered as an integral part of the curriculum. In this case, homework provides opportunities to students in order to work independently and take responsibility for organizing their work that why it is important in raising student achievement through solidifying skills and developing new ones. Therefore, homework bridges the gap between school and home so that students and teachers can monitor the progress. NSW Department of Education and Communities (2012, p. 6) states the major responsibilities:

1.8.1 Teacher's Responsibilities:

The class teacher has an essential role in designing and guiding students to complete their homework. Thus, the teacher has to:

- ➢ Use practice homework for the materials that have been taught before.
- ➢ Give full, clear and comprehensive instruction.
- ➢ Set the deadline for completing homework and ensure to return it back.
- ➢ Distinguish between homework and class work.
- ➢ Reduce the number of problems, for example; in copying the homework and making photocopies to win more time.

1.8.2 Students' Responsibilities:

Homework helps students to develop skills and good habits towards their learning. Besides, it encourages them to take responsibility and manage their time. Therefore, the student has to:

- ➢ Copy down instructions for the task and deadline date into the homework dairy.
- ➢ Make sure that they understand the objective and direction of the homework.
- ➢ Inform the class teacher of any difficulties or needs before leaving the classroom.

➢ Ensure that the homework is completed and handed in to meet the deadline.

➢ Avoid copying and cheating.

1.9 Benefits and Drawbacks of Homework:

The issue of homework has historically debated and questioned among researchers, schools, parents and students. Most argue that the homework is beneficial because it facilitates the learning process. However, it can be associated with drawbacks.

1.9.1 Benefits of Homework:

Homework is an effective tool to integrate learning when it is used appropriately. Proponents of homework Cooper and other researchers (qtd, in Blazer, 2009) believe that homework can:

➢ Help students to organize themselves and manage their time.

➢ Encourage them to be responsible toward their learning.

➢ Provide feedback about students' understanding.

➢ Aid parents to know the progress of their children.

➢ Give the students the chance to revise the materials covered before.

➢ Help to improve skills and develop good habits.

1.9.1 Drawbacks of Homework:

Homework is seen as a symptomatic tool that decreased students' achievement. Those who are against homework, Leon and other researchers (qtd, in, Blazer, 2009) claim that:

➢ It provides a kind of cheating and copying between students.

➢ It reduces students' motivation and concentration.

➢ It increases problems between the family and their children.

➢ It can create a sort of pressure on students.

➢ It can be difficult and inappropriate to students' level.

➢ It can increase negative attitudes and frustration.

1.10 Conclusion:

One of the main language teacher's jobs is to enhance language learning process and trigger EFL learner attention and energy to do language learning activities. This can happen in highly degree of motivation and engagement. However, motivation and engagement can be affected by certain environmental factors that may prevent learning English. That is why there is a need to think of what English learners may require as key activities, tips and clues to be done as a homework assignment so that students still engaged and motivated to continue language learning process even outside the school setting.

Chapter Two

CHAPTER TWO: Data Analysis, Interpretation and Recommendations.

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2.9 Conclusion

2.1 Introduction:

The time one spends to become a professional teacher is something more than choosing that job. We are on the path to be part of and useful to society, even to think of interesting ways to motivate and engage the students in the learning process from in-class activities to further chances beyond the classroom walls where this research paper aims to find out what type of out-of-class activities that can be done as a homework assignment to boost student commitment in language learning process. This chapter demonstrates the objective of this research work. It also provides an overview about the English Language Department. Then, this investigation has adopted two research instruments, and the collected data are analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The main results are directly linked to the research questions to check what needs to be accepted or rejected. Ultimately, this research will provide some suggestions and recommendations for opportunities that extend students' engagement outside classroom.

2.2 Research Objective:

Any research work aims to achieve certain outcomes based on determining the validity of the research questions and hypotheses. Thus, it represents an exploratory case study that seeks to answer a set of the 'WH' questions to shed some lights on the studied phenomenon. Therefore, the purpose of using this type of case study attempts to fulfill what any research may lack as details and test the formulated hypotheses (Milles, 2010). This research paper investigates students' attitudes towards lifelong learning, and if they keep being in the learner mood outdoor classrooms that encompass a set of out-of-class activities which extend their commitment outside class time and the contribution of the homework assignment.

2.3 English Language Department:

The English Language Department is seen as the largest department in the Faculty of Letters and Languages that contributes to the growth of both personal and intellectual inspirations of postgraduates. Indeed, nowadays most baccalaureate

holders find it as a magnetic choice for their future career. It provides an education within the LMD system (Licence, Master, and Doctorate).

The teaching of English in this Department relies on various modules: oral production, written production, grammar, phonetics, literature, civilization, research methodology, etc. Besides, when students finish their three years, they get their license diploma; then, they pass to master's degree where they are allowed to choose a specialty, namely language studies, literature and civilization, and didactics and assessment in English Language Education.

2.4 Sample Population:

Sample population is part of the research work that helps to achieve the outcomes. This research paper has selected twenty (20) first year students with teachers from different specialties at English Department, University of Tlemcen.

2.4.1 Students' Profile:

In educational setting, 'student profile 'provides information about the individuals who have helped and participated in completing the questionnaires. Thus, in this work twenty (20) students were selected randomly from different EFL first year groups, so they all had the chance to take part in this investigation. All the students were motivated to complete the questionnaires although they had no idea about the studied case.

2.4.2 Teachers' Profile:

In this study, ten teachers have contributed in the process of data collection through their cooperation in answering the questions. They were four females and six males from different specialties.

2.5 Research Instrument:

There are many types of research instruments that can help to gather data, such as questionnaire, interview and observation. In this work, the researchers designed two

questionnaires administered for both teachers and students; and one interview with teachers.

2.5.1 Questionnaires:

Questionnaire is a structured research tool composed of a series of written and prepared questions. So to speak, questionnaires are *"printed forms for data collection, which include questions or statements to which the subject is expected to, respond, often anonymously"* (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989: 172). The questions should address the topic studied and elicit information from the respondents about the issue investigated. Besides, the use of such tool can provide the researchers with quantitative and qualitative data.

In this research work, the researchers have used two questionnaires. One was given to English teachers and the other one to first year EFL students to investigate the research questions and hypotheses. These questionnaires were originally written in English. The content and the format were kept simple and consistent to avoid any kind of misunderstanding and confusion. The administration of the questionnaires took place in March 2018. Questionnaire to students was devoted randomly to first year students, and questionnaire to teachers was delivered to Ten (10) English teachers.

2.5.1.1 Questionnaire to students:

Twenty students were asked to answer to the questionnaire. It consists of two sections. The questions were designed from three types: close-ended, open-ended and multiple choice questions (see Appendix A). Therefore, the questionnaire consisted of Ten (10) questions.

- ➢ **Question One:** asks to know if students like to complete homework.
- ➢ **Question Two:** aims to know whether homework is a helpful tool to improve students' language learning skills or not.
- ➢ **Question Three:** asks to know the time spending to complete homework.
- ➢ **Question Four:** is designed to discover who helps students to do their homework assignment.

- ➢ **Question Five:** tries to know where and why students prefer to do their homework.
- ➢ **Question Six:** asks to know if students keep in their mood when go outside classroom.
- ➢ **Question Seven:** seeks to know students' opinion about what keeps them committed with the course content outside classroom.
- ➢ **Question Eight:** asks to know the activities used by students in order to improve their English language proficiency.
- ➢ **Question Nine:** this question is designed to discover how students rate their English language proficiency after doing activities outdoor classroom.
- ➢ **Question Ten:** asks students to suggest some beneficial tools to improve their commitment in the learning process.

2.5.1.2 Questionnaire to Teachers:

The questionnaire was devoted to Ten English teachers at University of Tlemcen. It consisted of six questions. Different questions were used whereas four questions were multiple choice questions, and two were open-ended questions (See Appendix B).

- ➢ **Question One:** tries to ask teachers how long they have been English teachers.
- ➢ **Question Two:** this question is designed to know how teachers rate their students in- class- engagement.
- ➢ **Question Three:** asks to know the teachers' belief about the teachers who always give homework to students.
- ➢ **Question Four:** tries to know how often teachers ask their students to accomplish homework.
- ➢ **Question Five:** seeks to know the teacher's opinion about the best homework time to spend outside classroom.
- ➢ **Question Six:** asks the teachers to suggest some out-of-class activities that make the students motivated and active in their learning.

2.5.2 Interview:

The interview is a way to gather data as well as to gain knowledge from individuals by listening, taking note, recording and filming their responses. It is a tool used by the researcher to collect points of views about the subject matter. Richards (2001:61), for example, observes that *"interviews allow for a more in-depth exploration of issues than is possible with a questionnaire, though they take longer to administer and are only feasible for smaller groups".* The researcher or the interviewer often uses open-ended questions. There are four types of interview: structured, semi-structured, in-depth interview and focused group discussion.

In the current study, the researchers have used structured interview with teachers which was given to four (04) English teachers. The administration of the interview took place in April 2018.

2.5.2.1 Interview with Teachers:

The interview was addressed to four English teachers. It included three sections. The interview consisted of twelve (12) questions. The questions were a mixture between open-ended questions and close-ended questions (see Appendix C).

- ✓ **Section One:** (questions 1 to 3) is about the teachers' profile including, the qualification, field of study and their experience as an English teacher.
- ✓ **Section Two:** (questions 4 to 7) in this part, the researchers attempted to know about the contribution of homework assignment in language learning process, including whether teachers like to complete homework or not, how can homework assignment help students' language proficiency, how it positively affect language learning process and the importance of completing homework.
- ✓ **Section Three:** (questions 8 to 12) in this section, the researchers tried to know out-of-class activities triggering students' commitment to language learning process, including the students' level in the course, how they prevent students from becoming detached, teachers' thought about their students' learning outside classroom, kind of activities that students may do to maintain the

motivational level and some suggestions about the activities that can be done outside classroom.

2.6 Data Analysis and Interpretation:

At this phase of study, the researchers report and analyze the data collected from the questionnaires and interviews mentioned above. It aims to reach fruitful answers of the research questions sited in this study, as well as, it determines the validity and credibility of the proposed hypotheses at the beginning of this research paper. The latter encompasses a qualitative and quantitative analysis of a set of yes/no questions and open-ended questions.

2.6.1 Analysis of Students' Questionnaire:

As it was mentioned before, the questionnaire was submitted to twenty (20) first year EFL students from different groups. It consists of two yes/no questions, two open-ended questions and six multiple choice questions. The participants were required to answer some questions concerning the importance of students' engagement in the learning process and to determine the types of activities that can be done outside classroom in order to trigger their commitment.

Section One: The best homework time for students to spend outside classroom.

➢ **Question One: Do you like to complete homework?**
   -Yes   - Not really
   - Little bit   - No

This question is asked to know if students like to complete homework or not. Four (04) students   choose 'yes', seven (07) choose 'little bit', five (05) choose 'not really', and four (04) also choose 'no'. The following figure clarifies the findings:
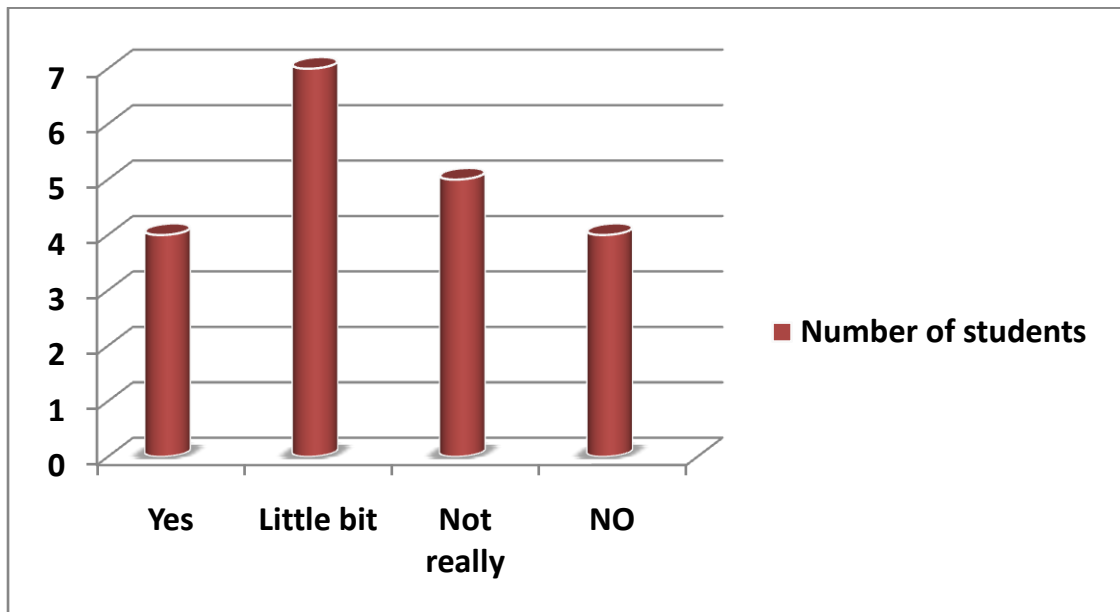
Figure 2.1: Students' Attitudes towards Completing Homework.

This might be interpreted that the majority of students were a little bit satisfied for completing homework.

➢ **Question Two: Is homework a helpful tool to improve your language learning skills?**

- **Yes**
- **No**

Through this question, we noticed that the majority of students considered homework as a helpful tool to improve their language learning skills. The result was (70%) of the respondents answered by 'Yes', while (30%) answered by 'No'. The results are summarized in the following figure:
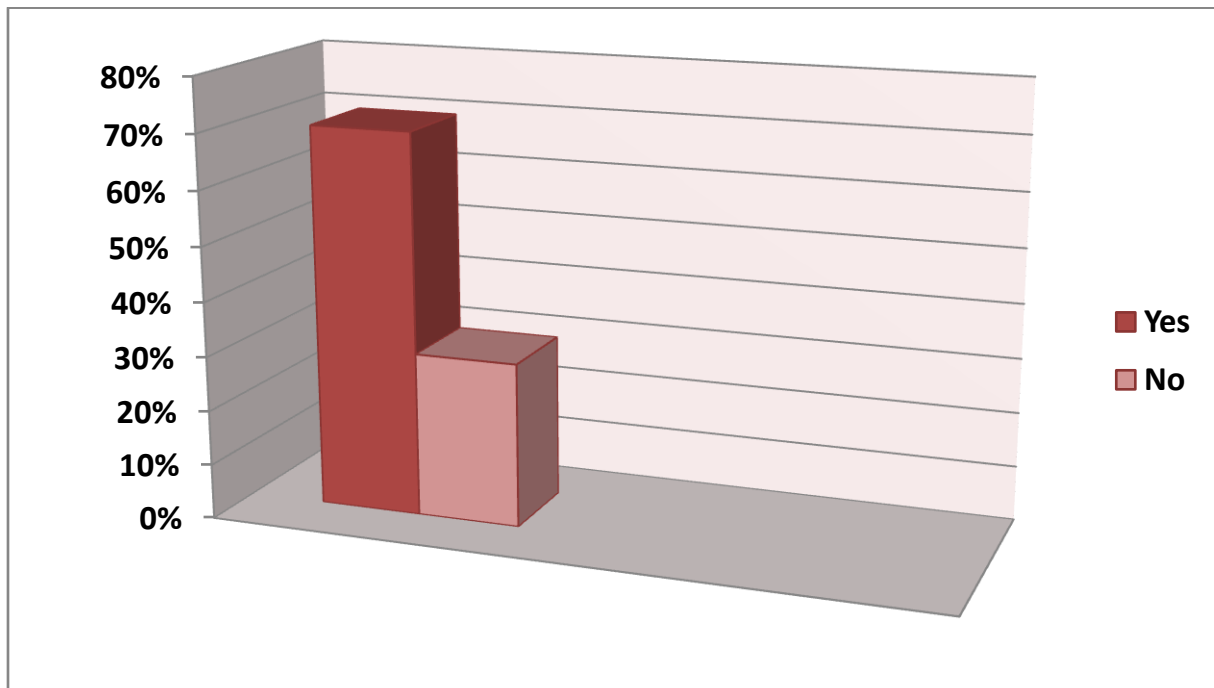
Figure 2.2: Homework as a Helpful Tool to the Improvement of Learning

Language Skills.

When interpreting the findings of this question, the findings indicated that the majority of students considered homework as tool which improve and enhance the language learning process. However, the rest neglected it; maybe they were not aware of its importance.

- ➢ **Question Three: How much time does it take to accomplish your homework?**
- • **15 minutes**
- • **30 minutes**
- • **1 hour**

From asking this question, we want to know the time spendt by students on completing their homework. When analyzing the students' answers the researchers found that (25%) of students completed their homework in "15 minutes", the same percentage of students (25%) replied that they accomplished their homework in "half

an hour". However, the rest (50%) replied that they completed their homework in "one hour". The findings for this question are graphically represented in figure 2.3:
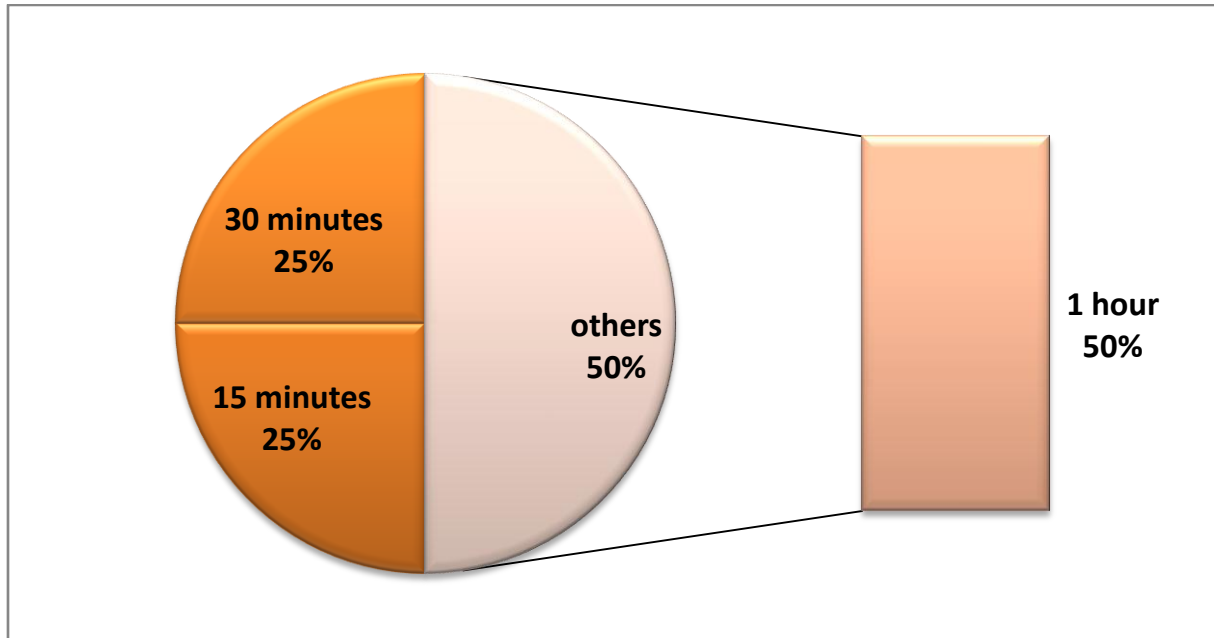
Figure 2.3: Time Spent on Completing Homework.

This implies that the majority of students spent a long time on completing their homework; maybe they took their time in searching and investigating the right answers.

➢ **Question Four: Who helps you in doing your homework assignments?**

  • **No one**

  • **Parents**

  • **Classmates/ friends**

This question is designed to discover who helps students to do their homework assignments. From the whole sample (50%) answered with "classmates and friends", (40%) of them answered with "no one", and (10%) of them answered with "parents". The outcomes are exposed on figure 2.4, sketched below:
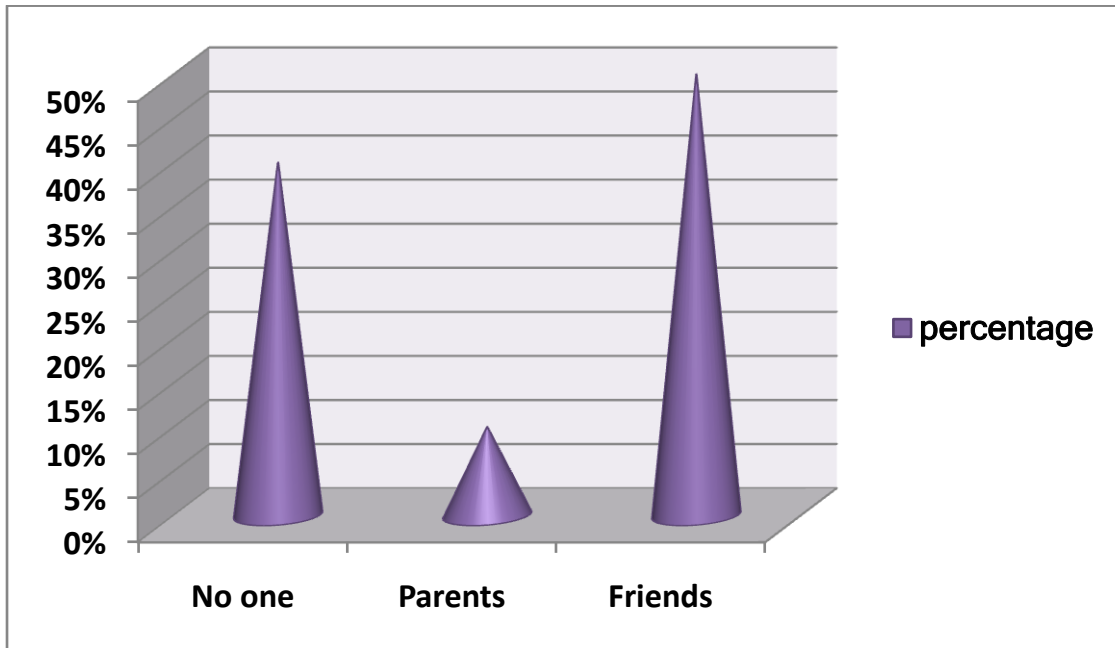
Figure 2.4: Helping Students in Completing their Homework.

Evidently, 50% of students claimed that they did their homework assignments with the help of their classmates and friends because it created a kind of encouragement.

➢ **Question Five: Where do you prefer to do your homework?**

- **At home**
- **Libraries**
- **In collaboration**
- **Clubs**

Justify your answer? ....

By asking this question, the researchers tried to know where and why students prefer to do their homework. The participants provided us with a large number of answers but the most common ones were 'in collaboration' which represented (50%). (30%) of students replied by 'at home', and (20%) replied by 'libraries'. No answers (0%) for the choice 'clubs'. The figure below provides us with the main results:
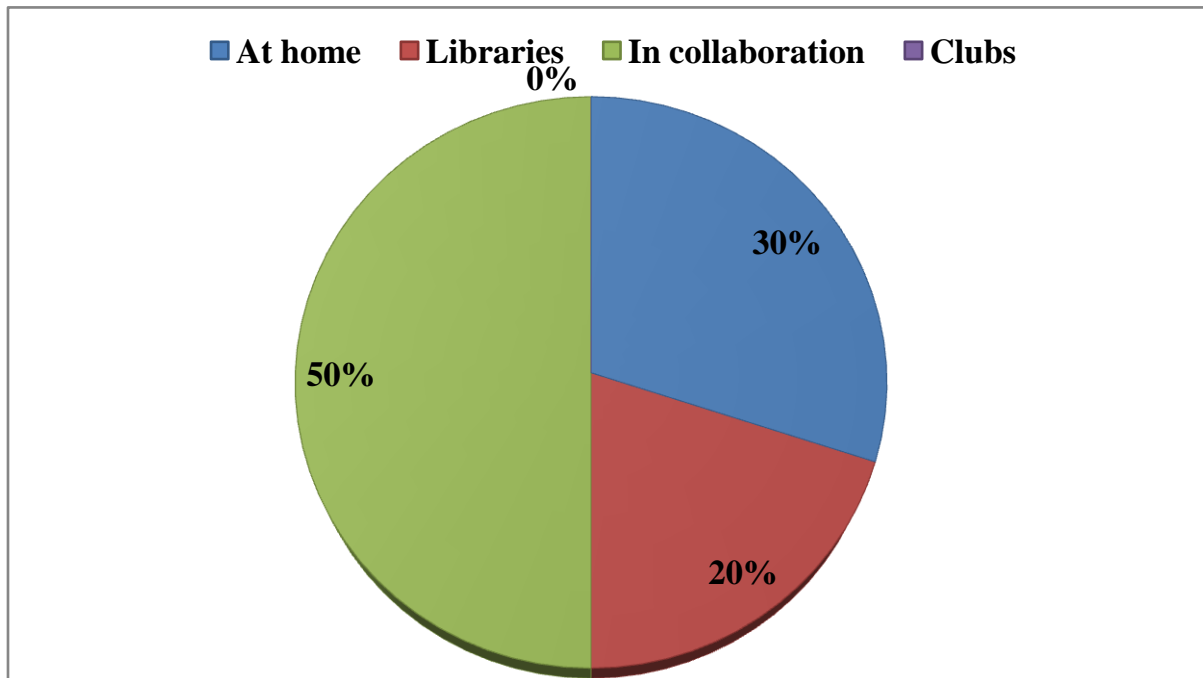
Figure 2.5: Respondents' Answers about the Preferable Places to Do Homework.

In this question, the results showed that 50% of the respondents preferred to do their homework in collaboration, therefore; they liked collaborative learning because it is the best strategy to achieve their common goal. However, some of the respondents focused on some and neglected the others.

Section Two: Out-of-class activities that trigger students' in-class commitment.

➢ **Question Six: Do you keep in the learner mood when you go outside classroom?**

- **Yes**
- **No**

This question aims to demonstrate whether or not students keep in the learner's mood when they go outside the classroom. Most participants (55%) stay in the learner's mindset even after class time,. However, (45%) of the students do not keep learning outside classroom.
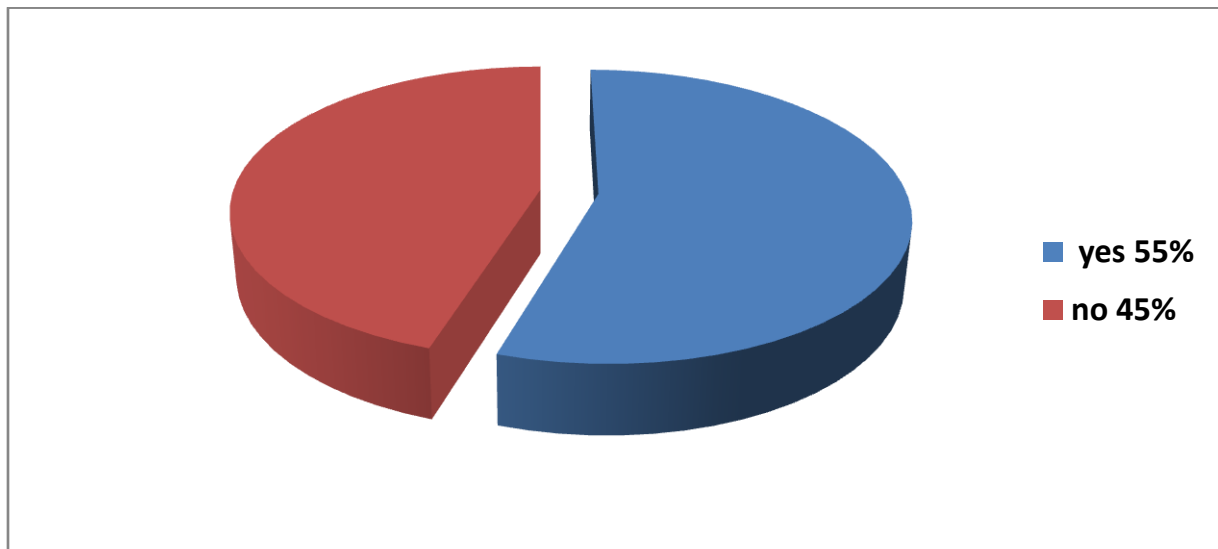
Figure 2.6 Students' Rate of Keeping in the Learner's Mood outside Classroom

These findings illustrate that there is a sample of students who challenge to keep learning to improve their language proficiency outside school instead of doing mad things. However, there are certain learners who close their minds when they move out of school.

➢ **Question Seven: In your opinion, what keeps you committed with the course content when outside classroom?**

The majority of the respondents declared that if integrated project or the course subject is interesting and something important that boosts their curiosity, they keep learning and committed with the course content even after class time. They said also they use internet, books or any other beneficial source just to improve their language skills. However, other students mentioned that teachers' motivation and support help them to extend their learning beyond the classroom wall, as well as, the teachers' care after a big failure on a crucial project class.

➢ **Question Eight: What kind of activities do you do to improve your English Language Proficiency?**

- **Extensive reading**
    What type of books?

- **Watching TV**

    What kind of TV programmes do you prefer?

- **Online courses**

- **Essay writing**

The findings obtained of this question allow us to understand that most students (50%) rely on online courses. whereas (25%) of the students prefer to taste extensive reading. Also, (15%) of students prefer watching TV. Ultimately, only (10%) of the students use essay writing. The following figure 2.7 displays the results:
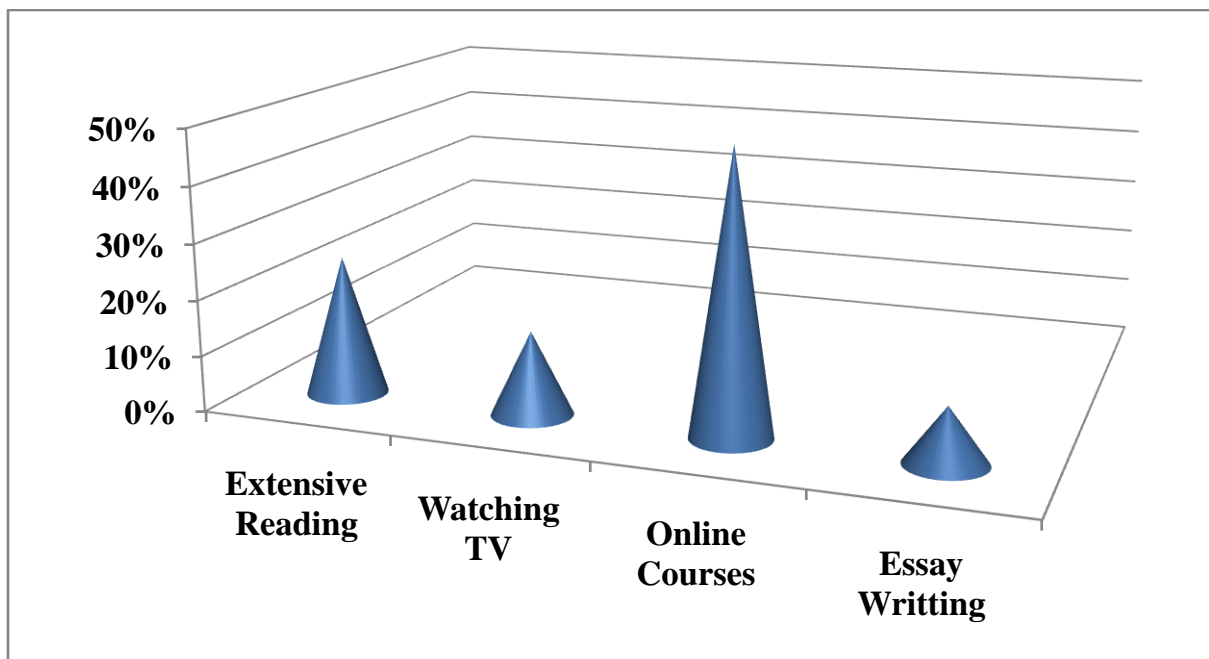
Figure 2.7 Types of activities to improve student's English Language Proficiency

This implies that majority of students choose online courses in order to improve their English language proficiency. Besides, they prefer extensive reading as satisfying preference and choice to nurture their knowledge and information. Thus, they mentioned certain types of books they like namely: journals and diaries, history books, drama and horror stories, anthology books. Others stated watching TV to improve their language skills and serve both their entertainment and educational needs like English TV shows that handle interesting topics, movies and series of history and civilization and the rest prefer essay writing to improve their English Language Proficiency which

demonstrates that there are some learners attempt to improve their English proficiency through the writing skill.

> ➤ **Question Nine: How do you rate your English Language Proficiency after doing activities outside classroom?**
>
>   - **Excellent**
>   - **Good**
>   - **Average**
>   - **Weak**

This question aims to know how students rate their English Language Proficiency after doing activities outside classroom, and the results illustrated that (20%) of the students maintain that they are excellent when doing out-of-class activities. Besides, the results have shown that (45%) of the participant are good. There is also (25%) of the students whose English language proficeincy is average, while (10%) of the respondents rate their english proficiency as weak.
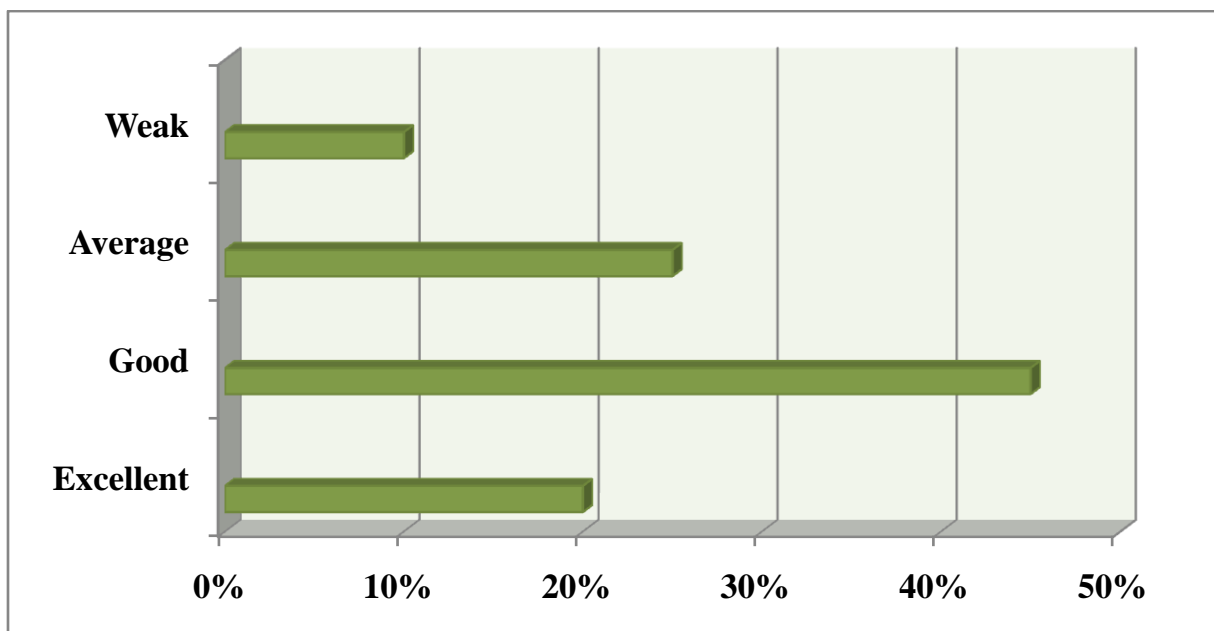
Figure 2.8 Rating students' English Language Proficiency

The results obtained confirm that students benefit from such activities since they improve their English proficiency and doing different activities outside classroom is

useful and fruitful. Whereas, others claimed that their level is weak because they do not benefit from out-of-class activities.

> ➢ **Question Ten: As a student, what do you suggest as the most beneficial tool to improve one's commitment to the language learning process?**

The most repeated tool that was suggested by the students as the most beneficial and important way through which they improve their commitment to language learning process is doing written homework with the use of online sources; among them online courses and videos that represent for them useful and helpful method to still engaged with the course subject even outside classroom. Furthermore, they maintained that such technique nurtures their language skills at once, as they write, listen and interact with native speakers' language, culture and learning environment with one shoot.

2.6.2 Analysis of Questionnaire to Teachers:

As it was mentioned previously, this questionnaire was addressed to ten English teachers at the University of Tlemcen. It included two open-ended questions and four multiple choice questions. It aimed to collect information about the importance of students' engagement, and what kind of 'golden' activities that can be done outside classroom to motivate their commitment as part of the English learning process.

> ➢ **Question One: How long have you been an English teacher?**

This question tried to ask teachers about their experience as an English teacher. Two (2) teachers answered with '15 years', (1) answered with '18 years'. Five (5) of them answered with '20 years' and the rest (2) answered with '30 years'. The table 2.2 represented the main results.

Number of Teachers	Teachers' Experience
2	15 years
1	18 years
5	20 years
2	30 years

Table 2.2 Teachers' Experience

From the result obtained, all the teachers had a large experience during their carrier of teaching English language.

➢ **Question Two: How do you rate your students' in-class engagement?**

- **Highly motivated**
- **Motivated**
- **De-motivated**

This question was designed to know how teachers rate their students' in-class engagement. The majority of teachers (5) replied by 'motivated', (3) replied by 'de-motivated' and (2) by 'highly motivated'. The figure below summarized the findings.
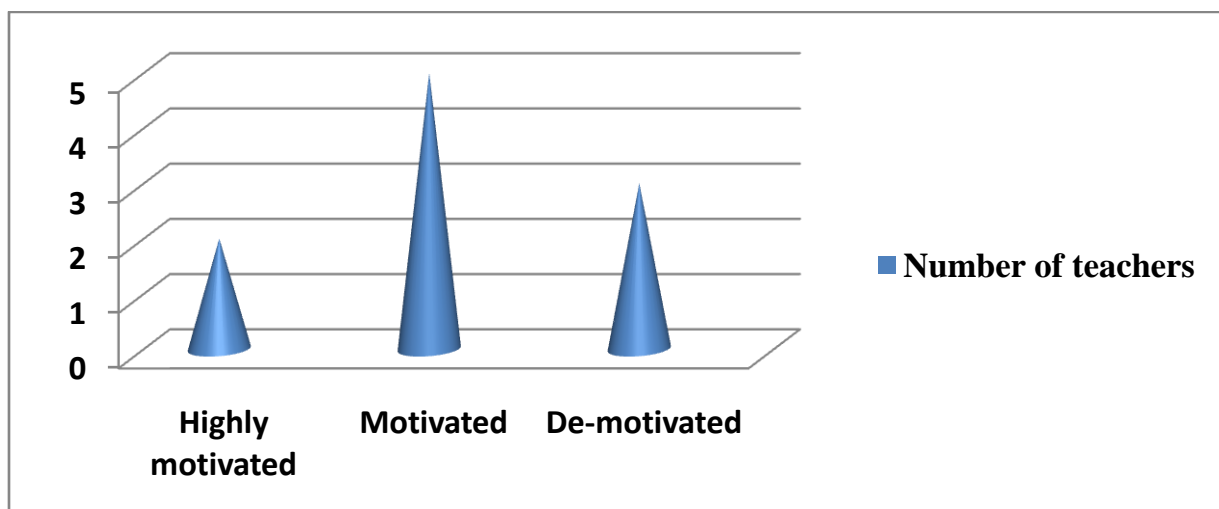
Figure 2.9 Teachers' rating their students' in-class engagement.

The finding indicated that most of teachers claimed that their students were motivated and boosted in-class engagement because it increased their learning process.

> ➤ **Question Three: What do you think about those teachers who always ask their students to finish their homework at home?**
>   - **Good idea**
>   - **Bad idea**
>   - **No idea**

This question was asked to know the teachers' thought about the teachers who asked their students to finish their homework at home. Seven (7) teachers choose 'good idea', (3) choose 'bad idea', and no answers (0) for the choice 'no idea'. The figure 2.10 justified the results.
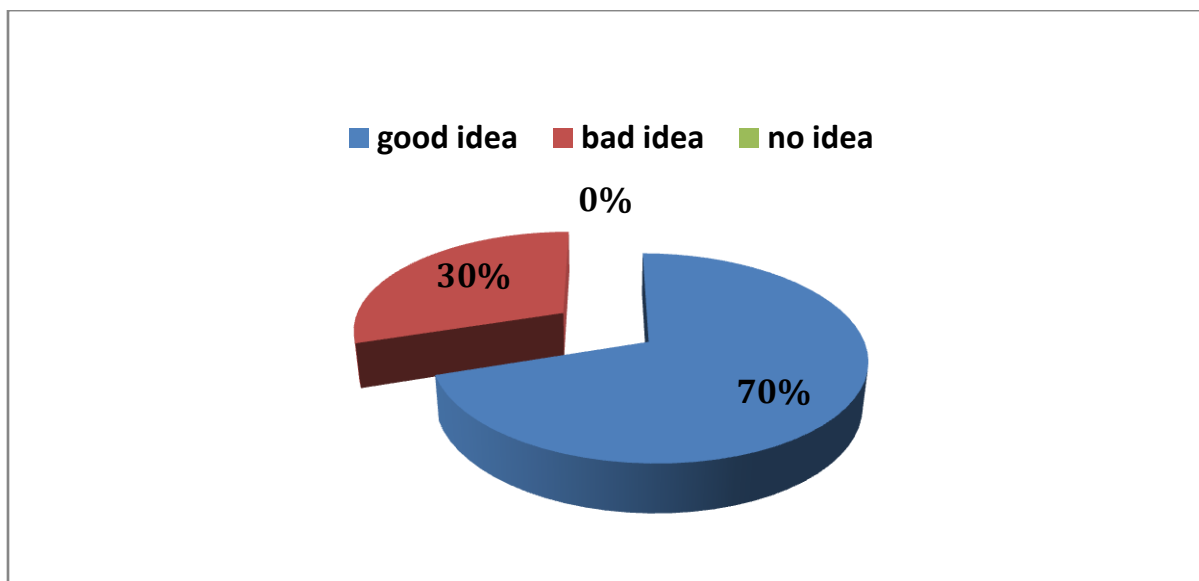
Figure 2.10 Teachers' Thought towards Finishing Homework at Home.

This implies that 70% of teachers stated that asking students to finish their homework at home was helpful and beneficial; this gave them the opportunity to review all what has been taught in class.

➢ **Question Four: How often do you ask them to finish homework?**

- **Always**
- **Very often**
- **Often**
- **Rarely**
- **Never**

In this question, the researchers tried to know how often teachers asked students to finish their homework. Four teachers answered with 'often', three answered with 'always' , two answered with ' very often' and one answered with 'rarely'. The following figure 2.11 clarified the results.
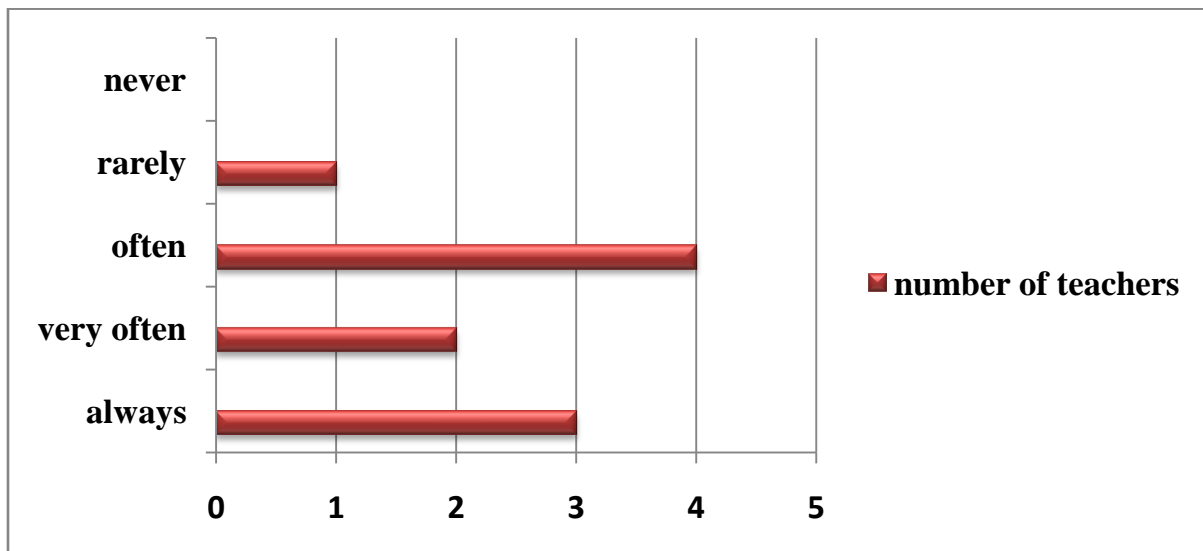
Figure 2.11 Teachers Asking Students to Finish their Homework.

When interpreted the finding, most of teachers often asked their students to finish their homework because it provided them with background knowledge about their students' level.

➢ **Question Five: In your opinion, what is the best homework place for learners to spend outdoor classroom?**

- **At home**
- **At the library**
- **Alone**
- **In collaboration**

This question is asked to know the teachers' opinion about the best homework place for learners to spend outdoor classroom. The results showed that the majority of teachers preferred their learners to work individually in order to assess their level. Whereas, other teachers stated that they preferred collaborative work because it is good technique to exchange ideas.

➢ **Question Six: What kind of out-of –class activities do you suggest to make them active in their learning and motivated?**

As for the last question, which revolved about the suggestions of some kinds of out-of-class activities that made students active and motivated in their learning, the answers were different. Some teachers suggested reading as a beneficial activity that helped them to improve their language proficiency. However, other teachers suggested essay writing and book report because these activities improved their learning language skills.

2.6.3 Analysis of Interview with Teachers:

This part includes the interview with teachers' result. In order to remind the reader, this structured interview was devoted to four (4) English teachers from different specialties in the department of English at Tlemcen University. This interview was divided into three sections, and the findings were as follow:

Section One: Teachers' Profile

The teachers were asked to provide the researchers with information about their qualification, their field of study and their teaching experience. The following table 2.3 summarized the main results.

Number of Teachers	The Qualification	The Field of Study	The Experience
2	**Doctorate**	**Linguistic Sciences**	**15 to 18 years**
2	**Doctorate**	**TEFL & Applied Linguistics**	**20 to 30 years**

Table 2.3 Teachers' Profile

Section Two: The Contribution of Homework Assignment in Language Learning Process

- ➢ As for the first question, two teachers liked to finish homework assignment at home; they argued that it gave them the opportunity to review their courses. However, the two other teachers, they did not like to finish it at home because they were not aware of its importance.

- ➢ As for the second question, the first two teachers answered that whenever their students did a homework assignment; they improved their English language proficiency and had a sort of competence. Whereas the other teachers stated that through a homework assignment; students improved their writing skills by doing different activities that made their leaning in progress.

- ➢ For the third question, all the teachers claimed that homework assignment is beneficial and had positive effects on language learning process; they argued

that it kept the learning outside classroom and represented a review and an opportunity to learn a second or foreign language.

➢ In this question, the interviewees reported that asking students to finish homework is very important. In brief, they stated that homework assignment is the key to be active and successful in language learning, moreover; it made students connected to the course content.

Section Three: Out- of – Class Activities Triggering Students' Commitment to Language Learning Process.

➢ For the first question, the teachers declared that students were motivated because they were already prepared and they brought their prior knowledge to the next course. This led them to be engaged and motivated in the course.

➢ In this question, all the teachers replied that they prevented students from becoming detached by opening new discussion and debate, creating a comfortable atmosphere, asking them questions related to the subject. Thus, this can provide a sort of collaboration and motivation.

➢ As for the following question, all the interviewees argued that students kept learning outside classroom because it bridged the gap between school and home.

➢ Related to the kind of out-of-class activities that students may maintain the motivational level, each teacher differ from the other in that some teachers (2) preferred reading books, watching TV, online videos in order to improve their language skills. Whereas, others (2) favored essay writing and using the social media to improve their writing and speaking skills.

➢ As a concluding question, the interviewees provided a number of suggestions concerning the activities that can be done outside classroom to extend student learning process; all of them suggested reading as a helpful activity to improve their language skills, online courses and writing activities.

2.7 Discussion of main Results:

This section of research is a gateway to discuss the findings obtained from the research tools that sought to indentify where students prefer to do their homework assignment, as well as the best type of out-of-class activities that can enhance EFL students' commitment to the learning process. Thus, this part of research work will determine whether the research hypotheses are valid or not.

The collected data from the two research instruments (questionnaires and interviews) helped in achieving the expected outcomes. The results obtained from students' questionnaire revealed that most language learners like and prefer to finish their homework assignment in a collaborative atmosphere with their friends based on that fact that 'two minds are better than one'. Indeed, the aim of CLT is to produce learners using the language effectively in real life situations. Therefore, collaborative language learning method attempts to enable language learners to use the language even outside the school settings through students' interactions and meaningful discussions. Whereas, the data gathered from questionnaire to teachers showed that the most great place for students to spend doing their homework assignment is 'being alone' so that they will be able to assess their English language proficiency individually, as well as, the outcomes achieved from teacher's interviews illustrated that working in collaboration prevent students from becoming detached. In the light of this, the obtained data from students' questionnaires and teachers' interviews confirm the first research hypotheses.

The second hypothesis was that language learners rely extensively on online courses to extend their learning even outside classroom walls. Indeed. The results gathered from questionnaire to students confirm that, for technology has completely changed the way learners are learning. Hence, nowadays students rely much more on online learning where they can find the links of published courses and they can download everything easily. So, thanks to high-speed Internet that facilitated nowadays language learning process. However, questionnaire to teachers revealed that the most helpful and interesting activity that may trigger students' commitment to

English learning process. From interview with teachers, the data collected showed that teachers see extensive reading as the most great out-of-class activity to maintain motivation level.

2.8 Suggestions and Recommendations:

One of the most crucial problematic in language teaching and learning is to maintain or increase 'student engagement' in language learning process. Thus, keeping learners motivated and active in learning may flourish educational achievements as well as improving students' English Language proficiency. Thus, the current section attempts to recommend some interesting and innovative activities that can extend language learning even outside the classroom settings.

2.8.1 Online Social Networks:

Language learners require an affective learning environment through communication and authentic interactions to exchange information and improve language skills. Hence, online social networks can provide this opportunity with intercultural communication that enhances knowledge and language learning process. Blattner ANF Fiori (2009, qtd. In Akbari et al, 2016) claim that the use of Facebook among students can increase their motivation for learning the English language. For instance students are allowed to record their speech or voice calls, launch live chats to participate in direct authentic discussions with native speakers or other language learners through a spontaneous manner and use of English. Besides, with such environment, students still connected to their classroom since they can work in collaboration with other students of the same course or other courses.

2.8.2 Interactive Technology:

In order to support the 21st century language learning, there is a need to encourage and motivate language learners so that they maintain their commitment to learning process, as well as to provide an attractive and active learning environment based on technological mind and creations. Therefore, language learning nowadays is

no more based on teacher-centered, but rather it is self-directed through interactive technologies and multimedia to offer students the opportunity to construct knowledge based on their experiences, and share their life stories in relation to the subject they are learning. For instance, creating class blogs or websites, online courses and games, podcasts, presentation software where students can find the links to be referenced after their courses, download podcasts; and later on they can share their comments or contribute in publishing interesting presentations.

2.8.3 Teachers Creating Readers:

It is really interesting when teachers find the inspiration and passion for reading through which they can be as a reading model. Thus, this act can encourage and support students to be engaged readers, or transform reluctant readers to readers who want and like reading. Furthermore, teachers may evolve classrooms where they teach students reading skill, as well as, why they need to choose reading although there are some other challenging activities to be done in free time, and how to read effectively, be it for pleasure or for language learning process.

2.8.4 Book Clubs:

It has been argued that 'book clubs' is a great method to enhance students engagement where they share their opinions, likes, dislikes, and passion in a group of motivated learners who practice book discussion.

In these clubs, students are allowed to guide the discussion with a full preparation of questions and main points. Besides, learners are faced by challenges and competitive phases with other readers from different groups, specialties and year levels. For example, one can read only the abstract of a book and let the others guess the titles or the genre, or maybe trying to summarize the book in ten (10) words in a funny and enjoyable atmosphere.

2.9 Conclusion:

Through the previous pages, this chapter provided an overview of the research design. It gave a clear and concise view about the objective of this research work. This study work took place at Tlemcen University with two sample populations being involved "First year-EFL students and English teachers from different specialties". In addition, the researchers used two questionnaires and interview with teachers to collect the needed data. The results were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. The obtained results confirmed the hypothesis put forward in this investigation, which were: the best homework place to spend and the activities that can be done outside classroom to trigger students' in-class commitment. Finally, the researchers provided some suggestions and recommendations concerning students' engagement and the activities that can be done outdoor classroom to trigger students' commitment.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

EFL learners' need is to facilitate their language learning process. Thus, they have to improve their language proficiency and language learning skills. From this perspective, the present study has investigated the importance of students' engagement and to determine the kind of 'golden' activities that can be done outside classroom to motivate students' commitment as part of the English learning process.

This research work was divided into two chapters. The first chapter was a theoretical part which is done to define the topic studied. The second chapter was a methodological part in which the researchers provided a case study and methodology, the research participants and instruments. In addition, it gave the reader a detailed analysis of the results from different research instruments; two questionnaires and interview which were addressed to First EFL students and English teachers at Tlemcen University. The collected data were analyzed and interpreted both qualitatively and quantitatively and then discussed.

The obtained results confirmed the two hypotheses. That is to say, students' engagement and homework assignments' activities are very important in the language learning process. In addition, the findings showed that both the teachers and the students confirmed that the use of homework assignment as a helpful tool to improve students' language proficiency.

The second chapter presented some suggestions and recommendations for both teachers and students, including online social network through chat discussion and group interaction via live videos. Furthermore, interactive technology that attempts to create WebPages, and presentation software. Besides, teachers need to create readers while they transform reluctant readers to readers who want and like to read. Finally, book clubs organize groups of students or engaged readers to share their book discussions and main points.

Ultimately, the present study faced a number of limitations and difficulties. Firstly, the sample population was very small in term of participant, especially teachers. Secondly, the majority of teachers did not have time to answer all the

questions concerning the interview. They were more generalized in their responses. Finally, the researchers encountered difficulties in distributing and getting back the questionnaires from both teachers and students.

In this dissertation, the focus was on students' engagement and the different kind of activities that can be done outside classroom and their importance in the language learning process. Thus, one should also think about some successful tips that make students engaged, motivated in their learning carrier.

Appendices

Appendix "A"

Questionnaire to Students

Dear student,

The following questionnaire is part of a research work for the fulfillment of Master's Degree on Didactics and Assessment in English Language Education. It is a tool for collecting data about the importance of students' engagement in the learning process and to determine the type of activities that can be done outside classroom in order to trigger their commitment. We will be very grateful; will appreciate your cooperation in writing this research work.

Section 1: The best homework place for student to spend outside classroom.

    1. Do you like to complete   homework?

       ☐ Yes

       ☐ Little bit

       ☐ Not really

       ☐ No

    2. Is homework a helpful tool to improve your language learning skills?

       ☐ Yes

       ☐ No

    3. How much time does it take to accomplish your homework?

       ☐ 15 minutes

       ☐ 30 minutes

       ☐ 1 hour

    4. Who helps you in doing your homework assignments?

       ☐ No one

       ☐ Parents

       ☐ Classmates / Friends

    5. Where do you prefer to do your homework?

       ☐ At home

       ☐ Libraries

☐ In collaboration

☐ Clubs

Justify your answer...

…………………………………………………………………………………………….

Section 2: The activities that can be done outside classroom to trigger student's in-class commitment.

6. Do you keep in the learner's mood when you go outside classroom?

☐ Yes

☐ No

7. In your opinion, what keeps you committed with the course content when outside classroom?

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…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

8. What kind of activities do you do to improve your English language proficiency?

☐ Extensive reading

What type of books? ....

☐ Watching TV

What kind of TV programmes do you prefer? ....

☐ Online courses

☐ Essay writing

9. How do you rate your English language proficiency after doing activities outside classroom?

☐ Excellent

☐ Good

☐ Average

☐ Weak

10. As a student, what do you suggest as the most beneficial tool to improve one's commitment to our learning process?

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Thank you very much for your participation.

Appendix "B"

Questionnaire to Teachers

Dear teachers,

The aim of this questionnaire is to collect information about the importance of students' engagement, and what kind of 'golden' activities that can be done outside classroom to motivate their commitment as part of the English learning process. It will be so helpful if you complete this questionnaire.

Q 1: How long have you been an English teacher?

……………………………………………………………………………………………

Q 2: How do you rate your students' in-class engagement?

☐ Highly motivated

☐ Motivated

☐ De-motivated

Q 3: What do you think about those teachers who always ask their students to finish their homework at home?

☐ Good idea

☐ Bad idea

☐ No idea

Q 4: How often do you ask them to finish homework?

☐ Always

☐ Very often

☐ Often

☐ Rarely

☐ Never

Q 5: In your opinion, what is the best homework place for learners to spend outdoor classroom?

☐ At home

☐ At the library

☐ Alone

☐ In collaboration

Q 6: What kind of out-of-class activities do you suggest to make them active in learning and motivated?

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Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Appendix "C"

Interview with Teachers

Section One: Teachers Profile

Q1: What is your qualification and when did you qualified?

Q2: What is your field of study?

Q3: How do you see your experience as an English teacher?

Section Two: The contribution of homework assignment in language learning process.

Q1: When you were a student, did you like to finish homework assignment at home?

Q2: How can homework assignment help students' language proficiency?

Q3: How does it positively affect language learning process?

Q4: Is it important to ask student to finish homework from time to time? Why?

Section three: Out-of-class activities triggering students' commitment to language learning process

Q1: Do you notice that your students are motivated in your course?

Q2: How do you prevent students from becoming detached?

Q3: Do you think that they keep learning outside classroom?

Q4: What kind of out-of-class activities that students may do in order to maintain the motivational level?

Q5: As a teacher, what do you suggest as the most helpful activity to be done outside classroom to extend student learning process?

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Summary

This research work aims to demonstrate where EFL students prefer to finish their homework assignments to improve their English language proficiency. Besides, it attempts to determine the best type of out-of-class activity that students rely on to maintain motivation level, trigger students' engagement and commitment to language learning process, and also to extend student learning process.

Key words: homework assignment, English language proficiency, out-of-class activity, students' engagement, motivation.

Résumé

Cette recherche vise à démontrer où les étudiants EFL préfèrent terminer leurs devoirs pour améliorer leur maitrise de l'Anglais. En outre, pour déterminer la meilleure activité hors classe sur laquelle les apprenants comptent pour déclencher l'engagement des élèves, maintenir le niveau de motivation et ainsi étendre le processus d'apprentissage de la langue Anglaise.

Mots clé : les étudiants EFL, les devoirs, meilleurs activité hors classe, l'engagement des élèves, motivation.

ملخص

يهدف هدا البحث إلى توضيح أين يفضل طلاب اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية إنهاء واجباتهم المدرسية لتحسين إجادتهم للغة الانجليزية. بالإضافة إلى دلك, لتحديد أفضل الأنشطة خارج الفصل الدراسي الذي يعتمد عليها الطلاب لتحفيز تفاعلهم و التزامهم و كذلك توسيع نطاق عملية تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: طلاب اللغة الانجليزية, واجبات المدرسية, أفضل الأنشطة خارج الفصل الدراسي, تحفيز, تفاعل و التزام.