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# **Bridging the Gap between Self-Concept and Academic Achievement**

**Case Study: Ayeb Derraji Middle School Pupils**

*Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of Master in Language and Culture*

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## **Dedication**

I dedicate this dissertation to my parents who encouraged me and helped me walk this long path, no expression can describe how grateful I am for their endless support and love that have been always present through my academic journey.

To my dear sister Nada, who was like my partner, for her support and encouragement.

To my dear Yahia for being always present to help and encourage me.

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### **Abstract**

The current study aims to investigate the influence of self-concept in improving learners' level of achievement, it is concerned with hypothesizing whether self-concept affects learners' level of achievement positively and successfully in their learning of English as a foreign language or not. With the intention of attaining this goal, a descriptive research is opted to describe the relationship between two variables: self-concept as the independent variable, and learners' level of achievement as the dependent variable. A questionnaire was administered to a representative sample of learners to evaluate the major role of self-concept in increasing self-confidence and self-motivation among learners at Ayeb Derraji Middle School in Khenchela in addition to the effective learning strategies that play a critical part in developing self-worth of learners and boosting them to succeed and achieve better grades. The findings of this study reveal that learners' self-beliefs, self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-efficacy are considered as the most important constructs of self-concept that maximizes the participation of the pupil, encourages and motivates him/her to learn and to do his/her best to develop and improve a high level of achievement and performance; the higher is self-concept, the better will be the level of achievement.

**Key words,** The Self, Self-concept, Self-confidence, Self-esteem, Self-efficacy, Learners' Achievement, Motivation.

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## List of Abbreviations

**EFL:** English as Foreign Language.

**SL:** Second Language.

**ESL:** English as a Second Language

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## **General introduction**

Today, the majority of learning theories agree that self-concept of learners is given the primary concern as an essential part of the constructive approach since it has a powerful impact on learners' attainments in different field of language learning. In order to increase positive attitudes in learners towards vivid interaction in EFL classroom, teachers should work on increasing their students' self-confidence, self-worth, self-esteem by creating a loose learning atmosphere full of excitement and engagement; the idea that if learners accept their own self-concept they will have a high level of self-confidence and self esteem that will affect their school development and success. This study intends to explore learners' self-concept influence on the development of their academic achievement considering the relative significance of their beliefs about themselves and their capabilities to achieve desirable outcomes.

### **1. Statement of the problem**

Many researchers argue that beginner learners who have low self-esteem, low self-worth, negative self-talk and low self-confidence, exert low performance and insufficient efforts to learn which result a low level of achievement. Therefore, a research into the field of psycho pedagogy has covered the relationship between self-concept and learners level of achievement; students should master their capacities and be able to improve their self-concept constructs in an effective and appropriate manner in order to improve their scores and their high level of achievement. In this regard, the present research's problems and questions at issue are whether pupils of Ayeb Derraji Middle School can learn EFL effectively if they believe in their abilities or not.

### **2. Significance of the study**

The choice of the topic is inspired from keen interest in learners' achievement during class according to their self-esteem and self-confidence. Since the present study is based on a

questionnaire as a research tool to probe learners opinions about the influence of self-concept in learning EFL, the descriptive method will be the suitable method for this investigation.

### **3. Aims of the study**

This study aims at:

- a) Considering the importance of learners' effective factors and attitudes in learning process.
- b) Increasing the consciousness of teachers about the role of self-concept in relation with learners' level of achievement.

### **4. Literature Review**

Over the years the thinking process of the individual has been assumed to be directly linked to the degree of intelligence of the one. Recent study, however, has shown that many factors such as motivation and attitude may have a considerable effect on the level level of achievement of an individual; the theory that has been found to describe the variations in the level of achievement of an individual is that of Alder 's achievement.

The motivation theory of achievement is a cognitive theory used to explain why some individuals achieve more than others. Sometimes, it is easy to comprehend the difference level of achievement between people based on their intellectual level or their physical abilities. Nonetheless, those with similar attributes frequently have significantly different degrees and levels of achievement. Many psychologists explain these differences between individuals with common potential because "some people simply have a stronger desire to succeed more than others" (Good and Trophy, 1986); success and achievement become a major part of the lives of individuals, structuring their time around pursuing goals of achievement versus fulfilling other needs and objectives.

Alfred Alder theorized that a person's purpose in life is to reach perfection or completion; he believed that all current behavior is directed by future goals.

This purpose is what motivates individuals towards fulfillment of their unique potential. Alder believed that the attitude of persons toward life guided their all actions.

He also theorized that all human beings experience some sort of inferiority, either psychological or social, he felt that people who felt inferior in some way would try to compensate for their weakness by intense training

According to Alder, it is not the defect itself that motivates the individual to overcome their weakness; it is their attitude towards it. He felt that how a person perceived his/her weakness could be destructive or constructive tone's life.

Another theory used to explain a child's lack of motivation is called "Learned Helplessness". A theorist, Martin Seligman, discovered a type of personality response that was typical to handicapped students. These students typically learn to appear helpless; they exhibit external cues that give an impression that they are not competent (learned behaviors).

According to Sprinthall, "parent's attitudes and feelings of guilt have often times impeded the child's ability to grow" (1987). The ability of children to become competent is lost. However, the child becomes competent in getting others to accomplish his/her needs and wants. This theory may be used to explain the differences between children who are willing to try and believe that they are capable of succeeding and those who believe that they will fail from the start.

## **5. Research questions**

The current study addresses the following questions:

- Does the self-concept of students can predict the level of academic achievement?
- How do the students' attitudes toward teachers relate to their self-concept and academic achievement?

- Are self-concept and academic achievement related to self-perceptions and peer perceptions of students?

## **6. Hypothesis**

From the aforementioned, the hypothesis of this study tackles the idea that learners' self-concept influences their level of achievement:

- The more learners have a high level of self-concept, the better is their achievement.

## **7. Research Methodology and Tools**

### **7. 1. Selecting Method:**

The goal of this study is to investigate the relationship between academic achievement of pupils in school and their self-concept. This latter will have a direct impact on their scores and increases their success academically and socially in the classroom. Therefore, a descriptive research is adopted with a group of random pupils selected from second year classes. The study entails both quantitative and qualitative methods to obtain valid and reliable results.

### **7. 2. Data collection tools**

The results obtained during this research are based on one questionnaire addressed to pupils to consider their points of view about the belief in the self-concept and its effect on their achievements.

The answer of the pupils to the questionnaire will be analyzed and categorized in order to be compared with their teachers' evaluation which is identified by the scores given to the pupils.

## **8. Selecting the Sample**

The populations of this study are second year pupils at Ayeb Derraji middle school in Khenchela. The sample is a group of 40 pupils (18 boys and 20 girls), aged between 12-14 years old. The study has already a limited population.

## 9. Structure of the Research

The present dissertation is made up of two parts: One theoretical, concerned with the related literature, and the second is practical, covering the research design and the analysis of the results obtained.

➤ The theoretical part consists of two sections.

- Section one provides an overview about self-concept in educational psychology and foreign language learning, in addition to the formation of this concept by individuals in general and students in particular. Also, it discusses and synthesizes the major role of self-concept's constructs in maximizing learners' level of achievement.
- Section two covers issues related to learners' achievement in learning EFL classes, the main factors that affect learners' achievement, types of achievements' assessments, its strategies and purposes, and end with the relationship between self-concept and their level of achievement.

➤ The practical part, it consists of one chapter (chapter two) which is concerned first with describing the research design and data collection procedures, population and sample, as well as a description the research tool (a questionnaire), and second it focuses on the interpretation and the analysis of the results in form of tables and figures. So, this chapter will answer the research questions, compare the results to the theoretical concept discussed in the earlier chapter, indicate the problems and limitations faced throughout this study, and suggest recommendations for both parents and teachers to build a positive self-concept among learners.

A general conclusion is provided to inform the important elements related to the study.

*Theoretical*  
*Part*

*Chapter one:*  
*Self-Concept and Learners*  
*Achievement in English as*  
*A Foreign Language Classes*

## **Chapter One: Self-Concept and Learners Achievement in EFL Classes**

### **Introduction**

Learning a language is an important process in which ESL and EFL learners acquire and learn a language through instruction and experience. It is a process whereby learners show a great value for their expected goals, an importance of the subject matter, and the interest they have towards the target language. But, there still another factor that must be considered in explaining the process of learning a foreign language which is known as “Self-Concept” of learners. This chapter consists of two sections; the first section discusses the subject of learners' self concept as an interactional phenomenon of special importance of a sound learning, it focuses on the importance of implementing self-concept learning in teaching foreign language and its impact on learners. Moreover, it highlights some teaching techniques that are used to overcome the barriers faced by learners. The second section covers the way learners achieve during EFL classes and the various factors that impact their level of achievement. It also discusses some types and strategies of assessment used by teacher in order to develop their learners' levels of achievement. Furthermore, this part accounts the main barriers confronted by learners that block their levels which is due, to some extent, to real self-concept learners have in regard to the target language. After that, the light was shed on some teaching techniques that are used to overcome these barriers.

A general conclusion of the whole chapter is provided to introduce the relationship between learners' self-concept and their level of achievement.

### **I. Section One: Self-Concept in English as a Foreign Language Classes**

Self-concept is an important factor that predicts the success of EFL learners to a large extent; it plays a crucial role in learning/teaching process and determines students'

motivational orientation. Therefore, in many studies, this term was conceptualized as the basic and the major feature for learners' success.

## **I. 1. Defining Self-Concept**

### **I. 1. 1. Dictionary Definition**

✓ **Self-concept** <sup>[self-kon-sept, self-]</sup> *noun*

The idea or mental image one has of oneself and one's strengths, weaknesses, status, etc.; self-image.

### **I. 1. 1. 2. Theoretical Definition**

Carl Rogers suggested a theory about the importance of the self in human adjustment, in which the self is considered as “the central aspect of personality and thus, to individual's. It means that the maintenance and the enhancement of the self guided the person's behaviors.

The number and variety of approaches to the study of self-concept and its role in determining human behavior has been widely given particular prominence by several researchers, particularly, the symbolic interaction in order to give rise to a diversity and richness of theoretical insights that are concerned with self-concept's issue.

In general, self-concept is what an individual understands about himself. I.e. the mental image one has of oneself or the total picture a person has of himself. Many theorists defined this term as:

- Lecky identified self-concept as “the nucleus of the personality” (1973, p. 406).
- “A person's values and identities, both personal and social” (Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993, p.160).
- “The composite of ideas, feelings, and attitudes people have about themselves” ( Hilgard, et al, 1979, p 605, cited in Woolfolk, 2004, p. 71)

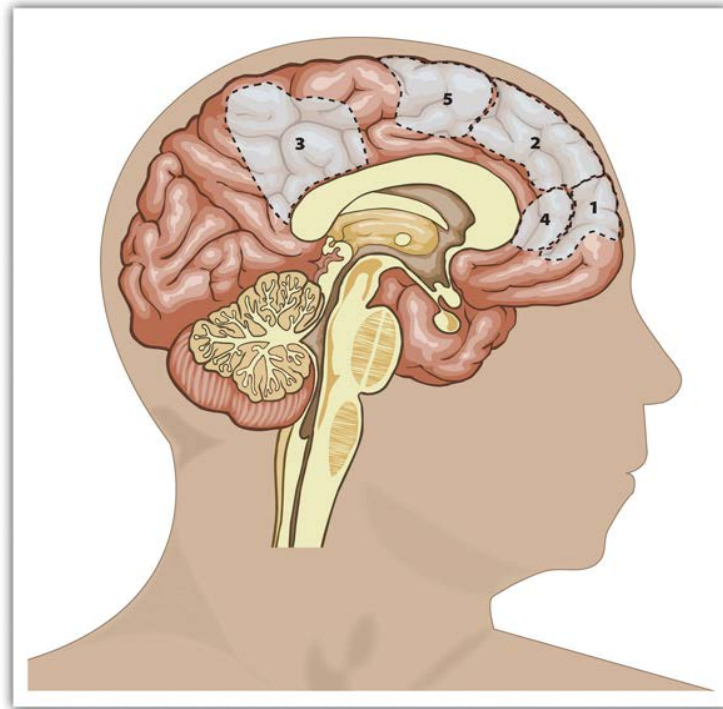
- “The description of self in terms of role and attributes” (Beane, 1986, p. 65).

This multifaceted nature of self-concept led researchers to focus on such a term in relation to social relationship to confirm that people compare themselves with others, and consequently from the comparisons they make, they develop their self-concept and from the information that they receive about themselves from others. In short, self-concept is the composite of all traits, attributes, and limitations the individual assigns to oneself; the individual's evaluation of oneself and how he/she perceives what others think of oneself.

This will be of a great importance for learners because “the amount and kind of positive or negative feedback that learners receive in class from both the teacher and their peers will affect their sense of achievement, their motivation to achieve more and the establishment of their self-efficacy in the area” (Williams et al., 1997, p. 98).

In this regards, children and adolescents' self-concept becomes more abstract and complex, it is organized into “self-schemas” which is a variety of different cognitive aspects of the self; children have self-schemas about their appearance, their skills and their progress in school, that direct and inform their processing of self-relevant information, much as schemas that affect the social cognition.

The approach used to study self-schemas is "neuroimaging" that directly studies the self in the brain. The studies of the next neuroimaging's figure have shown that “information about the self is stored in the prefrontal cortex, the same place that other information about people is stored” (Barrios et al., 2008).



**Figure 1: The areas of the human brain that are known to be important in processing information about the self; primarily areas of the prefrontal cortex (areas 1, 2, 4, and 5).**

*Data are from Lieberman(2010).*

Concerning learners, however, the most influential figures to them are likely to be their parents, their teachers, and their peers in that order. A strong implication of such a theory is that there would be a major effect on the form of language used by those who make up the social world of the child. upon the type of self-concept that the child acquires, and therefore also an influence upon his development of self-confidence, and, self-esteem.

Just as in all other areas of psycho-pedagogy, learner’s view of himself has proved to have a greater impact upon the process of learning a target language, i.e. an understanding of how the learner sees himself is connected with the development of his self-concept which in turn will affect his contribution to language learning.

This self-enhancement and affiliation will create what is known as the learner’s self-concept. That is “the prestige” that we gain by doing good in school or college. Yet, Learning has variously been explained and categorized into two schools of thought: the behaviorist and the cognitive essentially. So, it is necessary to identity the thoughts and ideas proposed in both

the behavior and cognitive approaches in order to prove that learners who try to learn a language are going to learn it faster if they are reinforced for every correct response, which in turn will increase their self-confidence to bring other attempts to solve language problems.

Thus, the more important than learner's awareness of his identity, is to realize the quality of his self-concept (good or bad); a positive or negative self-concept.

### **I. 1. 1. 3. Educational Psychology Definition**

Due to a stronger emphasis on a multidimensional self-concept instead of global measures of self, the last decade has seen considerable progress in theory, measurement and research. This progress is. In addition, self-concept theory is considered as one of the oldest in psychology, it was used in many disciplines and when it always had a strong influence on the emerging profession of counseling. Lecky (1945) contributed the notion that "self-consistency is a primary motivating force in human behavior" (quoted from Academic Kids).

Carl Rogers a psychologist, theorist, and clinician who has an eloquent voice in self-concept theory introduced an entire system of helping built around the importance of the self in 1947; the self is the main element in human personality and personal adjustment. He posited a theory of how self-concept influences and, indeed, acts as the framework for one's personality by describing the self as a social product, developing out of interpersonal relationships and striving for consistency. Rogers claimed that there is a basic human need for positive regard both from others and from oneself, which means that in each individual there is a tendency towards self-actualization and development so long as this is permitted and encouraged by an inviting environment; the image individuals have of who they are contributes to their personalities, and their actions -combined with their personalities- create a feedback loop into their image of themselves.

On the broadest level, self-concept is the overall idea a person has about who he is and includes cognitive and effective judgments about himself, it is influenced by biological and environmental factors, but social interaction plays a big role as well since it develops

through childhood and early adulthood when it is more easily changed or updated; years later, it can be changed, but it is more of an uphill battle because people have established ideas about who they are. So, “psychology focuses on how self-concept impacts people” (Gecas 1982), and rarely its general focus on the individual versus.

Just as in all other areas of psycho-pedagogy, learner’s view of himself has proved to have a greater impact upon the process of learning a language; how the learner sees himself is connected with the development of his self-concept which in turn will affect his contribution to language learning.

This is why, learners’ beliefs about the capability of doing a specific task will not only be interconnected, but will also, be related to other more central aspects of their personal belief systems , I.e. the image learners have about themselves will surely affect their ability of doing a task, whether an easier or a difficult one.

Brookover, et al. made a distinction of academic self-concept from other concepts (Child 1977, p. 71). As a result, they found with alternative studies a very positive relationship over time; i.e. the better self-concept of educational ability, the higher achievement. Any change in self-concept would surely correspond with changes in achievement. Similarly, Gurney Suggest that “what does seem highly likely, however, is that the self-concept may well perform an important inner mediating function in the learning process” (Williams et al., 1997, p. 100)

A child gradually comes to see himself as being relatively good in school, and as having varying degrees of ability to do a task. This is often why academic self-concept is the strongest affect measure in predicting school achievement. So, learners’ beliefs that they are capable of doing a task and their valuing of academic success are more important than their actual ability in predicting their achievement. This is why the more the self-concept is at high position; the more likely the learner’s achievements would be at high position too.

In general, the self-concept is of primary concern because it provides teachers with powerful psychological messages about the learner's inner state in the process of learning.

### **I. 1. 2. Self-concept in Foreign Language Learning**

As the world is becoming more and more globalized, the demand for learning languages, especially English, is increasing as well. Having social status privileges led up English to become the primary language of New Media (Satellite TV, and Internet). English is spoken by almost one billion people and it is the language of both national and international communication in business, diplomacy, technology, sport, travel and entertainment (Tiersky, 2001). Thus the emphasis in learning English is now of great deal in education all around the world. In the case of Algeria and specifically in 2001, the ministry of Education made some changes concerning the situation of English teaching and gave it a considerable attention. English is introduced at the level of first year middle school, studied for seven years; four of which at middle school and three at secondary school.

Levels researches indicate that the attitudes and social acceptance of students play an important role in developing a positive self-concept. Newhouse (1975) declared that "a child's attitude towards others is partly determined by their attitudes towards themselves". The concerned research supports Shantz and Hobart (1989) findings that "the relationship between self-definition and interpersonal experiences is likely to be bi-directional". According to Burns and Farina, "self-concept is related to friendship patterns and peer- acceptance ratings" (1984, p. 8). Bradley and Newhouse (1975) conducted a study using pupil's scores on the Piers-Harris Children's Self Concept Scale.

The results indicated that self-concept of the learners is highly related to how their peers perceived the learner and accepted him. In addition, it is highly important for the pupil that parents express confidence in their children's abilities. Based on a previous study by Brook over (1962), a research project was conducted by Dr. Jean LePere with parents of low-achieving ninth-graders.

As a result of treatment for one semester, some parents changed their evaluations of their children's abilities to do better in school, and some students were so affected by the change that a gain in grade-point average was shown by 42 percent of them. This percent was raised positively by the end of the year.

School systems and teachers need to be constantly searching for old or new ways that will help students realize their full potential. Thus, it can be said that factors such as attention, perception and memory are the focus of the work of information processing theories as stated by the majority of cognitivists:

- **Attention:** as defined by Best “is a cognitive resource which can be upon as a means of concentrating our mental efforts” (Williams et al., 1997, p. 15). So, what we pay attention to is guided to a certain extent by what we already know and what we need to know.
- **Perception:** is defined by Woolfolk as “a process of detecting a stimulus and assigning meaning to it” (2004, p. 240). His definition is based on both physical representations from the world and our existing knowledge.
- **Memory:** “it is the workbench of the memory system, the interface where new information is held temporarily and combined with knowledge from long-term memory” (Woolfolk, 2004).

### **I. 1. 3. Formation of Learners' Self-Concept**

Studies have shown that a positive self-concept can be enhanced through the use of structuring the environment and providing positive experiences in school and at home settings. The following factors are concerned with “learners' self-concept formation”.

Learning and teaching process suggests that educators have to understand the important factors that influence learners' self-concept development and how each one may come to hold his/her own positive-realistic self-concept. Many authors suggest that self-concept's formation of the learners is developed through:

- **Self-concept of preschool learners**

According to Mark Rubenstein (1980), “healthy level of confidence is formed by the child's parents within the first year of life”. In early childhood education, there has been limited research focusing on creating a positive environment that assists the child in developing a positive self-concept.

Rubenstein (1980) agreed that “the most important thing a parent can do is cultivate a stronger sense of self-esteem, especially at the three to five year old levels”. In addition, the intervention within the first five years of life is considered as the "critical period" when the child's intelligence increases; a positive environment can result in developing a strong sense of “the self” in children, then, it is only logical that educators and parents try to understand what a positive environment should include.

- **Self-concept of elementary learners**

Various studies indicate that the attitudes and the social acceptance of learners play a major role in developing their self-concept positively during elementary grade levels; “a child's attitude towards others is partly determined by their attitudes towards themselves” (Newhouse, 1975).

According to Neuman (1992), "Many proponents of the self-esteem movement seem to believe that it is something that can be doled out on the first day of school along with pencils and name tags."

- **Self-concept of high school learners**

On the effects of ability grouping, research conducted by Watkins and Kemp (1996), found that higher-ability students have a tendency to have a lower self-esteem, but lower-ability students have a tendency to have a higher self-esteem in high school (Marsh, 1987). These findings were interpreted as the "big fish little pond" effect, which means that the group used by the pupil as a reference has a strong influence on his self-esteem.

As result, researchers created what is called "Students Serving Students". They used this program to heighten academic self-concept of high school students: students were paired in groups in order to see how they can positively affect each other and at the same time affect the quality of learning and find reasons to stay in school and better their academic performance.

- **Self-concept of college learners**

According to the three previous grades that provide a clear understanding of the importance of the self-concept in learning process, the mentioned factors allow college student to have a clear picture of the self in the context of society and education. Therefore, achievement expectancy, academic self-concept and student attitudes are predictors of performance better than subsequent academic accomplishment because learners develop their own instructions and many self' complexities to be central in order to gain a positive self-concept development for the future. So, without the strong foundation of a well-developed sense of "the self", learners will never feel comfortable with their socio-cultural role. The majority of researchers found that a positive environment can result +in the formation of a strong self-concept.

#### **I. 1. 4. Self-Concept Constructs**

The most fundamental sense of self-concept expressed in the notion of human agency as: effectance motivation, personal causation, self-efficacy, intrinsic motivation, internal locus of control, and self control. So, The learner's view of his/her self-worth is very significant to the process of teaching as well, in the sense that it is essential for the teacher to know how to develop the effective emotional system in order to establish a positive but realistic self-concept in his/her learners.

The majority of reviewers conclude by presenting their own composite views of the nature of the self-concept; they share some central features; that the expression "self-concept", while frequently used as a general umbrella term, is best acknowledged as just one

feature of the self along with other features like self-efficacy, self-confidence, self-worth, and self-esteem, etc as will be discussed in more detail below.

#### **I. 1. 4. 1. Self-Efficacy**

According to Bernhard (1997), “self-efficacy is learners' beliefs about their abilities to accomplish a task”. For Pajares, “self-concept is the students' judgments of their academic competence” (2000, p. 54). Ehrman also defined the concept as “the degree to which the student thinks he or she has the capacity to cope with the learning challenge” (1996, p. 54). Learners’ self-efficacy in EFL determine how learners feel, think, motivate themselves and behave, it produces these diverse effects through four major processes:

**Cognitive process:** The effects of self-efficacy beliefs on cognitive processes take a variety of forms where much human behavior, being purposive, is regulated by forethought embodying valued goals. Therefore, self-appraisal of capacities has a big impact on the personal goal setting; the stronger the perceived self-efficacy, the higher the goal challenges people set for themselves and the firmer is their commitment to them. Furthermore, it is difficult to achieve much while fighting self-doubt.

Moreover, the major function of thought is to enable people, in general, and learners, in particular, to predict events and to develop ways to control those that affect their lives. Such skills entail an effective cognitive process that contains many ambiguities and uncertainties. Thus, in learning predictive and regulative rules, learners have to draw out on their knowledge to construct options, integrate predictive factors, test their judgments against the results of their actions, and remember which factors they had tested and how well they had worked.

**Motivational process:** Self-beliefs of efficacy has a major role in regulating self-motivation; people motivate themselves and guide their actions actively by the exercise of

forethought where they design beliefs about what they can do, expect outcomes of prospective actions, and set goals to achieve.

Obviously, motivation, performance and affective reactions may be affected by causal attributions affect through beliefs of self-efficacy.

**Affective process:** In threatening or difficult situations, the way individuals think of their own capabilities affects how much stress and depression they experience as well as their level of motivation. Therefore, affective processes include all feelings and responses (positive or negative) that is related to individual's emotion-laden behavior, knowledge, or beliefs, these processes affect alter perceptions of situations as well as outcomes of cognitive effort by blocking, or terminating cognition and behavior. So, it is hard to dismiss the importance for educators, parents, and counselors of understanding how changes in affect can influence teaching/learning process.

In the last decade, emotion's role in education seems to have been rediscovered; learners' emotions, such as, enjoyment, boredom, pride, and anxiety are seen to affect their achievement by influencing their involvement and attitude towards learning environments, which also affects how (intensively) students process and/or interpret information.

This renewed attention for this process is the result of several developments such as the change from teacher-directed to learner-centered approaches in education, which often involve giving more responsibility for and control over the learning process to the learner.

**Selection process:** Beliefs of personal efficacy can shape the course lives take by influencing the types of activities and environments people choose.

There are many social factors that affect learners' judgments of their intellectual efficacy such as peer modeling of cognitive skills, social comparison with the performances of other students, motivational enhancement, and teachers' interpretations of learners' successes. Due to this, the belief of learners in their capacities to master academic activities affects their level of interest in academic activities, and their academic achievements.

In this context and during the crucial formative period of learners' lives, the school functions as the primary setting for the cultivation and social validation of cognitive competencies, it is the place where learners develop the cognitive competencies and acquire the knowledge and problem-solving skills essential for participating effectively in the larger society. Learners develop a growing sense of their intellectual efficacy while mastering cognitive skills.

#### **I. 1. 4. 2. Self-Confidence**

Bandura (1986) considered self-confidence as “one of the most influential motivators and regulators of behavior in people's everyday lives” (p. 173). So, Self-confidence is an attitude formed by optimism, affection, pride, independence, trust, the ability to handle criticism, emotional maturity, and other personal attitudes in order to build a positive and realistic perception. Moreover, it is a belief in learners' abilities, a mental attitude of trusting or relying on ourselves. In this respect individuals' best preparation for an evolving society is helping children face the future with confidence in their own abilities and with a faith that they are essential representatives of whatever they can find themselves in. Concerning the process of learning, learners do not only set expectations and assumptions, but, they also bring many other personal characteristics to the class that might influence their way of learning. Perhaps, the most influential characteristic is confidence.

Self-confidence, then, has been termed as one of the primary effective elements that influence the learner's worth or value. In other words, learning a language depends on the extent to which learners do believe about their abilities. Indeed, it is not just a matter of having this ability, but what matters more is whether learners are capable of approaching with some assurance this ability in real classroom settings.

Surely, these learners can leap ahead of their classmates, and take the risks involved in using the new language to communicate wherever they encounter language situations. It is therefore, very important for the teacher to make his learners feel confident that they can and

will learn the foreign language. Hence, the more learners rely on themselves, the more likely; they will achieve target goals which will be represented in terms of higher academic achievements.

#### **I. 1. 4. 3. Self-Esteem**

Individuals' self-esteem involves the sense of self-worth or self-regard manifested in such feelings as "I am happy with myself" or "I don't like myself". It is based on "values or value indicators such as attitudes, beliefs, or interests" and it refers to the positive (high self-esteem) or negative (low self-esteem) feelings about "the self".

When learners have succeeded at an important task, their self-concept will create many positive thoughts and they will also have high self-esteem. When learners have failed, done something harmful, or feel that they have been ignored or criticized, the negative aspects of the self-concept are more accessible and they experience low self-esteem. So, self-esteem enables the child to construct a positive self-concept and reinforce his own behavior to be independent of the evaluations of others.

In this respect, Fontana (1995) states that in a number of studies children with high self-esteem consistently perform better than children of similar ability with low self-esteem (p. 148). Moreover, the higher self-esteem is, the better opinion of the self would be, which in turn would have also a positive effect on learning achievement. So, children learn well with a combination of appropriately high expectations and appropriately high self-esteem.

#### **I. 5. Promoting Positive Self-Concept Among Learners**

Parents and teachers have the most impact in developing positive self-concepts within learners. By providing a democratic classroom atmosphere, each student can think of himself as responsible and contributing member of the group where there is respect for each person in the class, and where each one feels free to express his opinion frankly and openly. This atmosphere enables learners to gain a positive realistic image of themselves.

**a) Parents role in promoting a positive self-concept among learner**

As parents are the primary influencers of their children, especially in their first years of learning, they have the opportunity to feel responsible for ensuring that their child measures up to societal, cultural, familial and parental expectations. This means that parents are the role models from whom children imitate and learn about themselves, their family and the community they live in since they have a significant effect on children's cognitive, psychological, emotional and physical development.

In this regard, and in order to nurture a positive self-concept for children's' learning turns, parents have to:

- Be mindful of the language they use to describe their children.
- Provide them with opportunities for success.
- Show their children that they have faith in their goodness and in their abilities.
- Spend time together.
- Support their children's interests.
- Set reasonable rules and enforce them with loving kindness.
- Help the child to manage his emotions and work out problems.
- Give the child the opportunity to explore the environment.
- Maintain a connected relationship.
- Acknowledge effort and offer encouragement.

At this point, a healthy self-concept is the foundation for the positive development and the overall well-being of a child.

**b) Teachers' role in promoting a positive self-concept among learners**

In developing the appropriate climate for learning, teachers have to avoid the negative self-concept whenever possible and provide a wide variety of opportunities for success and self appreciation through productive learning situations where the learner can and will achieve. Therefore, the positive attitudes of the teacher can promote a positive classroom

atmosphere, while the negative attitudes of him promote a feeling of negativism to the children.

Through some recent research completed by Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968), this phenomenon has been especially well illustrated as follows:

- Personalize learning instruction.
- Teachers have to demonstrate a sincere liking for each student by developing empathy; give each student the feeling that he is liked, understood and appreciated.
- Teachers have to let each child know that they are aware of him as a person, that they are willing to listen to him and help him when necessary.
- Teachers should take some time during their busy schedule to establish opportunities to communicate with each student privately or semi privately about his interests and concerns.
- Teachers should serve as a model of respect and self-respect: treat each student as if he were the most important person you know.
- Establish a positive instructional setting.
- Evaluate learner's progress in reference to previous accomplishments; compare each student's progress only with his own past performance. What improvements has he made?

Generally put positive comments on written work. Negative remarks and a great many check marks pointing out mistakes only reinforce the student's feeling of inadequacy, and discourage positive attitudes and any further attempts to improve.

- Take special opportunities to praise students for their successes; tell learners when they have done well and encourage this kind of work to be continued. Send notes to parents letting them know their children do well.
- Provide for flexibility in planning and in learning.

- Involve each learner in planning his educational program, in charting his progress, and in evaluating his performance. Learners need this responsibility and the feeling of belonging.
- Give each student some freedom to explore, discover, and make some mistakes in order to include creative and recreational reading activity.
- Guide each child through learning process.
- Set the purpose of instruction: Let each student know what is expected in performing a given task or in his effort to learn a particular skill. Let each learner know what teachers' expectations are and promote the feeling that teachers are confident that he can accomplish the given task, that he can learn and can succeed.
- Find the instructional reading level of each student and locate learning material at interest level. Make certain that each student experiences success; organize and plan instructional activity to meet each student's range of challenge; neither above nor below his instructional level.
- Guide each learner toward having as many successful experiences as possible. Make units of improvement small enough to record the learner's progress at frequent intervals; enable learners to have some immediate feedback to realize they have mastered the smallest step. Learners learn from success, not failure!

In short, how the teacher feels about his students has been found to be especially important; if a teacher believes that his students can and will achieve, then the students will be more successful. Conversely, if the teacher believes that students cannot achieve, then this will influence their performance negatively.

This section dealt with the different definitions of self-concept and the various beliefs learners have about themselves while concentrated on the importance of self-concept and its definite relationship with foreign language learning, as well as the influence of self-concept that can be enhanced through the use of structuring the environment and providing positive

experiences at school settings. It also made references to the formation of learners' self-concept while mentioning the major constructs associated with learners' self-beliefs. On the basis of the previous discussion of key terms in this section, parents and teachers need to enhance learners' self-belief about themselves to build a positive self-concept and to make them confident enough and ready to take risks and solve different language problems for effective and better achievement.

### **I. Section Two: Learners' Achievement in English as a Foreign Language Classes**

Since learning is a highly complex activity where learners are expected to cover a wide range of academic subjects, it is worthy, then for teachers to provide an appropriate knowledge and skills to be consistent with the learning contexts. For this purpose, teachers should know and understand the various theories and approaches to cognitive and behavioral developments, and try to apply their principles in selecting the most appropriate approaches and methods, which create a desired atmosphere for effective learning and better achievement in teaching/learning process.

#### **I. 2. 1. Teaching/ Learning Process**

According to Hasa (2017), the word "teaching" is defined as "the imparting of knowledge, values, skills, behaviors [...] that involves the planning and the implementation of instructional activities and experiences to meet an intended outcome according to the teaching plan". As for the term "learning" (p. 1), it indicates the acquisition of such knowledge, skills, behaviors and preferences. Teaching/learning process is the process used by teachers in order to pass their knowledge to learners. This knowledge must be first structured and organized based on a method. Then, it is necessary to have a perception in didactics and pedagogy. These concepts represent the supportive methods used in the design of a given course. It is worth mentioning that teachers work on improving the level of learners by adapting new

strategies and methods since the learner of today is not the same of yesterday, and his concerns are no longer the same.

### **I. 2. 2. The Teaching/Learning Process of EFL in Algeria**

The social role of the English language in Algeria lays in providing a communicative atmosphere in which students exchange knowledge through interaction. Thereby, the teaching/learning of English aims to give learners a linguistic proficiency (grammar, vocabulary, syntax, pronunciation) which gives them the opportunity to take part in acts of language, communication or interaction with the native speakers and understand their background, values and behaviors. At this point, learners need to interact and communicate with their entourage by bringing all what they have learned before: skills, knowledge, competence, etc. Thereby, the teacher must give constructive feedback to learners by creating a conducive atmosphere to facilitate interaction and maintain communication in classroom basing on learners' motivation and their desire to learn the language through the adaptation of a pedagogy that suits their psychological needs.

### **I. 2. 3. Definition of Learners Achievement**

Muhibbin Shah defines learners achievement as the level of student success in learning the subject matter in schools that are expressed in the form of scores obtained from the results of tests on a particular subject matter (2008, p. 91). Meanwhile, many authors agreed that learning achievement is the acquisition of knowledge or skills that are developed by subject matter, usually indicated by test scores or numerical value assigned by teachers. So, learning achievement is the level of ability that has been achieved by students after attending a teaching-learning process within a certain time in the form of changes in behavior, skills and knowledge that can be measured, assessed, and then realized in numbers or statement. In other words, it is the success rate of students in schools that are expressed in the form of a numerical value.

Learners achievement is known also as "the academic performance" which is the extent to which a student, teacher or institution has attained their short or long-term educational goals. This performance is commonly measured through examinations, continuous assessments, or completion of educational benchmarks such as secondary school diplomas and baccalaureate's degrees represent academic achievement, but there is no global agreement on the effective way to assess the achievement of learners.

Furthermore, the successful factors that predict the academic performance of learners require consideration when designing models of school achievement.

#### **I. 2. 4. Factors that Impact Learners Achievement**

There are many factors that can impact successful learner's achievement on numerous levels including learners' personal factors, their interactions with others such as parents, teachers, administrators, and the larger systems that surround the student; school districts, communities, local economy, governance, and multicultural relations. These factors are grouped into internal factors and external factors.

##### **I. 2. 4. 1. Internal Factors**

Internal factors were divided by Slameto (2003) into:

##### **a) Physical factors**

- **Health:** Slameto asserts that this condition influences students learning process, which means that students who have good health condition will increase their learning capacities. Students who have bad health condition will be weak physically, so their sensory and motorist nerve become weak (2003, p. 18).
- **Disability:** Slameto concluded the relation between disability and learning as someone who has physical imperfections then the learning will also be disrupted (2003, p. 19).

##### **b) Psychological factors**

- **Intelligence:** which is not considered just as a matter of brain quality, but it is the quality of other organs. It can be interpreted as the psychophysical ability of stimulation.

- **Attention:** According to Slameto, attention is an activity of enhancing livens of mind which focuses only to the particular or group of objects (2003, p. 19).
- **Interest:** students' interest can be observed from students' way in follow learning process, their note, and activity in the class (Slameto, 2003).
- **Talent:** Slameto claimed that talent is the capacity to learn (2003, p. 20). In different words, talent is a potency or basic skill which is brought since we were born, then every people have different talent and someone will learn something that appropriate with his/her talent.
- **Motivation:** Slameto believed that motivation can determine the way to reach the goal in learning process (2003, p. 20). In contrary, students who have low motivation do not care with the lesson, give up immediately and always disturb learning process. So, they get many difficulties.
- **Maturity:** Slameto stated that the behavior or maturity is something a person in the growth phase in which the means of his body was ready to implement new skills (2003, p. 21).
- **Readiness:** according to Slameto, readiness is preparedness to respond or react, means a willingness to provide a response or reaction (2003, p. 211).
- **Fatigue factors:** there are several factors that fatigue can affect students' achievement, they can be divided into two kinds: physical exhaustion and spiritual (mental) exhaustion.

#### I. 2. 4. 2. External Factors

External factors were divided by Slameto (2003) into:

- a) **Family circumstances:** such as parents' education, relations between family members, understanding parents, family economic circumstances, cultural background and atmosphere of home (Slameto, 2003, p. 22).

- b) Factor of school:** “ school includes teacher, learning model, learning tools, school time, the interaction of teachers and students, infrastructure, and learning media” (Slameto, 2003, p. 22-24)
- c) Society of environmental factors:** they are factors that encourage student to meet new friends in order to hanging out together, practicing other activities outside school and living in family environment.
- **Students in community activities:** Students' participation in community activities can be beneficial to their personalities' development
  - **Friend mingles:** get along a good friend would be good for student education, and vice versa.
  - **Living environment:** It can be concluded that “we have to live in a good environment in order to give a positive impact for children to learn” (Slameto, 2003, p.25)

#### **I. 2. 4. 3. Non-cognitive Factors:**

Non-cognitive factors are considered as a combination of attitudes, behaviors, and techniques that facilitate academic and professional success such as academic self-efficacy, self-control, motivation, optimism and goal setting theories, emotional maturity, and determination.

- a) Motivation:** that is the reasoning behind an individual's actions. Research has found that learners with higher academic performance, motivation and persistence use intrinsic goals rather than extrinsic ones. Furthermore, learners who are motivated to learn and improve upon their previous or upcoming performance tend to perform better academically than peers with lower motivation. In other words, learners with higher need for achievement have greater academic performance.
- b) Self-control:** in the academic setting, self control is related to self-discipline and self-regulation, it is the ability to prioritize long-term goals over the temptation of short-term impulses and it is usually measured through self-completed questionnaires.

- c) **Self-efficacy:** one of the best predictors of academic success. Stajković et al. (2017) looked at the Big Five traits on academic success as well and saw that conscientiousness and emotional stability were predictors of self-efficacy in over half of their analyses. Otherwise, self-efficacy was more indicative of academic performance than personality in all of the analyses. Thereupon, parents who want their children to have academic achievement can look to increase their child's sense of self-efficacy at school.

Given the importance that is granted to the non-cognitive factors and other self-beliefs (self-efficacy, self-confidence, and self-esteem) that define the self-concept process; many researchers while looking for the determinants and consequences of academic success found a quite remarkable relationship between self-concept of learners and their achievement in language learning.

### **I. 2. 5. Learners Achievement's assessment**

Since all learners do not learn the same way or at the same rate, teachers must use a variety of teaching methods and understand the background and individual needs of each one because learners are like leaves on a tree; just as a leaf comes in unique colors, shapes and sizes, each student has their own unique learning style. Obviously, learners do really appreciate the positive feedback they receive from other persons which will lead them, of course to use great effort to do a task and to show themselves as capable learners within their classrooms. This feeling will be developed every time teachers motivate and praise their learners.

Assessment as part of classroom activities is a fundamental process required to promote learning and ultimately achievement, its primary purpose is to improve student learning. In different words, it is the process of gathering information from a variety of sources (including assignments, projects, and a midterm) that accurately reflect how well learners are achieving the curriculum expectations.

The amount and kind of positive or negative feedback that learners receive in class from both the teacher and their peers will affect their sense of achievement, their motivation to achieve more and the establishment of their self-efficacy in the area (Williams et al., 1997, p. 98).

### **I. 2. 5. 1. Types of Learners Achievement's Assessment**

Designing tests to accurately probe students' comprehension of science principles is a challenge that requires having an overall evaluation approach and well-designed assessment instruments. In order to make the evaluation more successful, they need to be continuously woven during teaching and learning, and the results need to be used to guide instruction.

Using an assessment process is one great way to achieve this goal. The diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment process can be embedded into any research unit.

<b>Formative</b>	<b>Diagnostic</b>	<b>Summative</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Used during the learning process</b></li> <li>• <b>Provides feedback on learning-in-process</b></li> <li>• <b>Dialogue-based, ungraded</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Used to ascertain, prior to instruction, each student's strengths, weaknesses, knowledge, and skills.</li> <li>• To remediate students</li> <li>• To adjust the curriculum</li> <li>• To meet each learner's unique needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Used at the end of the learning process</li> <li>• Evaluates student learning towards some standard or benchmark</li> <li>• Grade</li> </ul>

**Table 1: Types of assessment in teaching/learning process.**

### **I. 2. 5. 2. Strategies of Learners achievement's Assessment**

Learners' evaluation is based on assessment of learning that provides evidence of student achievement at strategic times throughout the grade/course, often at the end of a period of learning. Assessment techniques include:

- Evaluations of:
  - Attitudes, reactions and feelings
  - Learning (perceptions or knowledge)
  - Skills (applying learning to practice)
  - Effectiveness (improved performance)
- Examinations, quizzes.
- Term papers, essay questions, take home exams (writing skills).
- Group projects (team work).
- Ethical reasoning (case study analysis).
- Class participation.
- Oral presentations.
- Course assignments.
- Attendance of public lectures.

### **I. 2. 5. 3. Purposes of Learners Achievement Assessment**

There is no doubt that the evaluation of students has a great impact on their level of achievement, the main purposes of this assessment are:

- To assist student learning.
- To identify students' strengths and weaknesses.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of a given instructional strategy.
- To improve the effectiveness of curriculum programs.
- To assess and improve teaching/learning process effectiveness.

- To provide appropriate data that assist in decision making.

In brief, the evaluation of the learner refers to the process of assessing the level of his learning on the basis of established success standards and assigning value to that level. Also and as part of assessment, parents, peers, society, and teachers have to provide students with descriptive feedback that guides their effort towards improvement.

### **I. 2. 6. The Relationship Between Self-concept and Learners' Level of Achievement**

Assessing students' background with respect to their learning interest, and ability should be identified in all school levels; this will demand the use of tests of different sorts, such as achievement tests, aptitude tests, interest tests, attitude tests, personality tests, standardized tests and the like.

In relation to the above issue, self-regulation enables students to develop and learn constructive behaviors that affect one's learning; these behaviors are planned and adapted to promote the achievement of personal ambitions in evolving learning conditions where high-level of self-regulation of learners have good control over how to achieve their objectives. Thus, conscious self regulation requires a student to focus on the process of how to acquire these skills. At this point, many researchers agree with the importance of self learning for students at all academic levels, and the principle that self regulation can be taught, learned, and controlled.

In sum, creating self-regulated learning environments for the complex and diverse range of backgrounds, skill sets, and personalities that many students encompass poses challenges to even for the most experienced teachers. Fortunately a great deal of literature showcases a variety of successful teaching methods such as direct instruction and modeling, guided and independent practice, and social support and feedback for promoting and enhancing self regulation in classroom.

In this section, the main focus is given to the implementation of self-abilities in learning process and how it is used to arm student's confidence, motivation, creativity, and

most importantly, their self-concept and its main role in improving the level of learners' achievement positively. Also, it emphasizes on how parents and teachers can be the main factors to motivate learners to perform and improve themselves among their peers and classmates during EFL classes. Additionally, this part covers the most common types and strategies of assessments that have a numerous advantages in developing self-concept of learners as well as their level of achievement.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter illustrated the theoretical correlation between self-concept and the academic achievement of learners in learning /teaching process; the first section has mapped out the various definitions of self-concept that describes how learners feel about their own academic abilities and perceptions. Moreover, it demonstrated the main constructs of self-concept and how to form them positively among learners during EFL classes. The second section gives a practical exhibition and explanation of the academic achievement of learners; definition, factors that affect learners achievement, types and strategies of learners achievement's assessment in EFL classes and finally the relationship between self-concept and learners' achievement.

*Practical*  
*Part*

*Chapter Two:*  
*Research Methodology*  
*And Data Analysis*

## **Chapter Two: Research Methodology and Data Analysis**

### **Introduction**

This research is meant to investigate the positive effect of learners' self-concept on their level of achievement. Hence, this chapter is the practical one that devoted to the methodology used to achieve the objectives as well as the steps of the analysis and interpretation of the data collected. After the discussion of the findings a general conclusion came up to sum up the present investigation.

### **II. 1. Research Method**

The present study endeavors to draw the impact of self-concept of learners on their academic level of achievement in educational setting. Therefore, the research opted for a descriptive method which is based on one questionnaire addressed for pupils randomly from four classes of second year. In addition to the description, analysis, and interpretation (tables and figures) of the findings concerning the positive effect of self-concept on learners' level of achievement, the results will show whether the hypothesis of this study will be confirmed or rejected.

### **II. 2. Data Collection Procedures**

Because of what people are going through recently with the quarantine that affects many domains around the entire world, especially education, the electronic questionnaire was displayed online through E-mails and in a specific-group of AyebDerraji teachers and pupils on Facebook.

Learners' questionnaire aims at gaining the possible learners' attitudes and points of view about the effect of self-concept on their level of achievement.

In order to answer the questionnaire, learners have to read the statements attentively, and then choose the appropriate answer for him/her.

The results conducted from the questionnaire would serve to investigate what learners expect and want from their teachers while the answers will help teachers in using

the effective materials and the appropriate teaching methodology while focusing on the psychological sides that pupils approach in learning process.

### **II. 3. Population, Sampling and Setting**

This study was carried out with second year pupils of AyebDerradji Middle School in Khenchela. The school has 26 classrooms, a director's office, two laboratories, a surveillance room, rest room, and a small yard. It has about 421 pupils (206 boys, and 215 girls), and 27 teachers.

The sample is composed of 40 random pupils (18 boys, and 22 girls) selected from 4 classes, aged between 12-14 years old. The researcher chooses second year learners because their minds are still fresh committed to learning. In addition, they will have so many different courses in their future education while learning English as a new foreign language after passing through a process of learning a second language which is French, and also to notice that learners' positive self-concept will affect their English language's learning which in turn will affect positively their level of achievement.

### **II. 4. Description and Administration of the Questionnaires**

The questionnaire was sent to the concerned pupils that make up the whole research sample (40 pupils from four classes), they were also provided with appropriate instructions, before the ongoing work of answering the statements.

The instructions were about how to answer the questionnaire and for which purpose it was designed. They were informed that:

- a-** Answering the questionnaire is an essential part of a scientific investigation.
- b-** There is no right or wrong answers to the statement.
- c-** Their answers will be based upon their opinions.

### **II. 5. Analysis of Learners' Questionnaire**

Learners' questionnaire consists of two sections; the first section is about learners' self-concept in learning EFL, and the second section is about learners' level of

achievement. It is concerned primarily with the learners' beliefs about their abilities to learn English language and what can affect their achievement level concerning their self-worth.

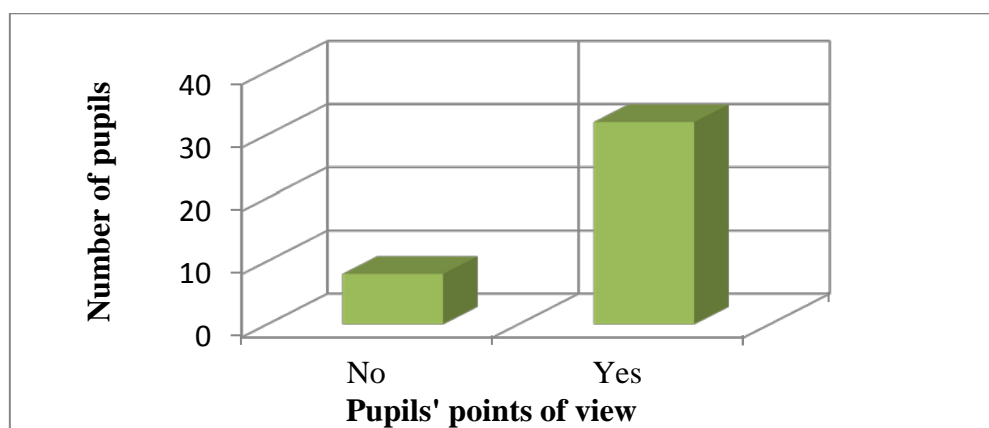
➤ **Section one: learners' self-concept**

• **Learners' opinions towards English language as a subject.**

The 1st question deals with whether pupils like English language as a subject or not. 80% of them answered positively (yes), whereas 20% of the remaining answered negatively (no). Those who agreed were so excited to learn and acquire good language skills that help them to understand and to perform better.

No	Yes	Total
08	32	40
20%	80%	100%

**Table 2: Learners' opinions towards English language as a subject.**



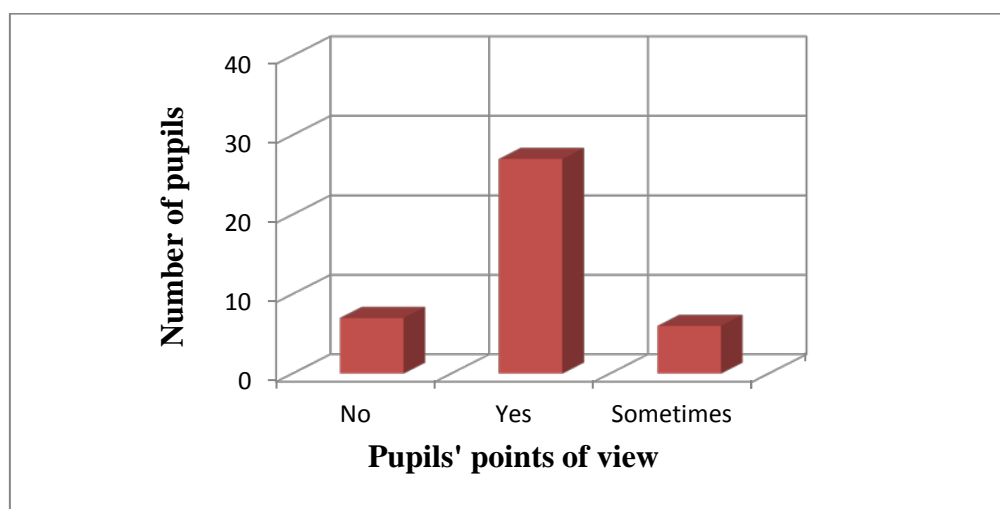
**Figure 2: Learners' opinions towards English language as a subject.**

- **Learning and succeeding in the English module in spite of the difficulties are achievable in all cases.**

The 2nd question purpose is to know whether learning and succeeding in the English module in spite the difficulties are achievable in all cases, or just the opposite. 67.5% of the respondents answered by yes, 17.5 were negative (no), and 15% chose sometimes as an answer. So, the majority of learners showed that they are really mastering the new foreign language and that they had already a strong self-confidence about their capacities during class learning which is at the basis of their success

No	Yes	Sometimes	Total
07	<b>27</b>	06	<b>40</b>
17.5%	<b>67.5%</b>	15%	<b>100%</b>

**Table 3: Learners' opinions towards if learning and succeeding in the English module are achievable in all cases or not.**



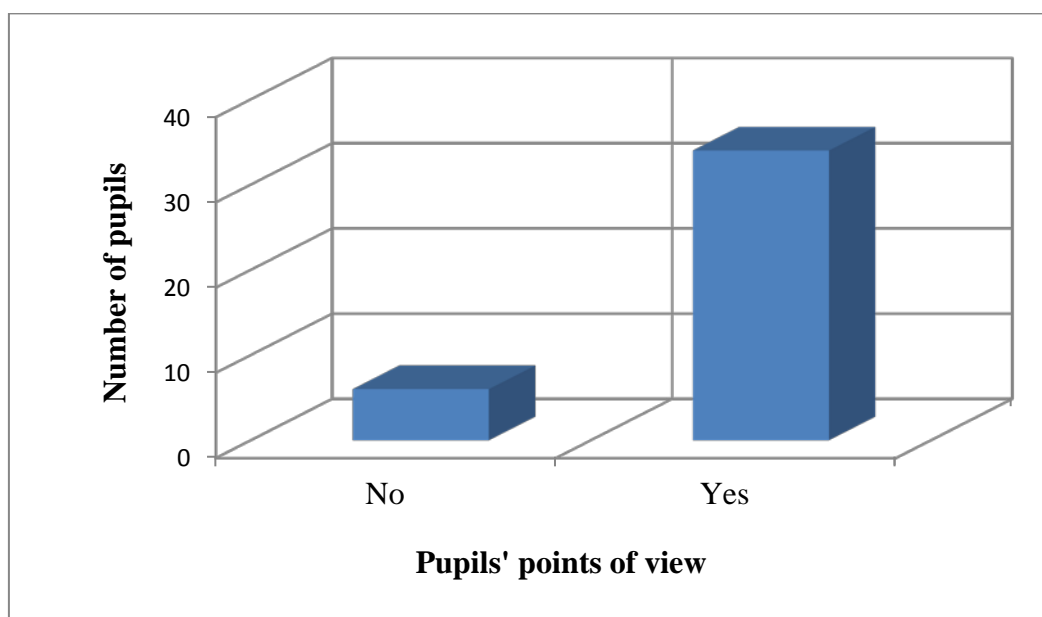
**Figure 3: Learners' opinions towards if learning and succeeding in the English module are achievable in all cases or not.**

• **Learners' pride of their abilities in the English class**

The 3rd question was about whether learners are proud of their abilities in the English class or no; that means that they have a certain degree of self-confidence. While 15% of pupils answered 'no', 85% of them answered 'yes'. The percentage (85%) indicates that learners who believe in their capacities are those who had a strong self-confidence. This latter allows them to beat their shyness and perform better in the English class.

No	Yes	Total
06	34	40
15%	85%	100%

**Table 4: Learners' opinions towards English language as a subject.**



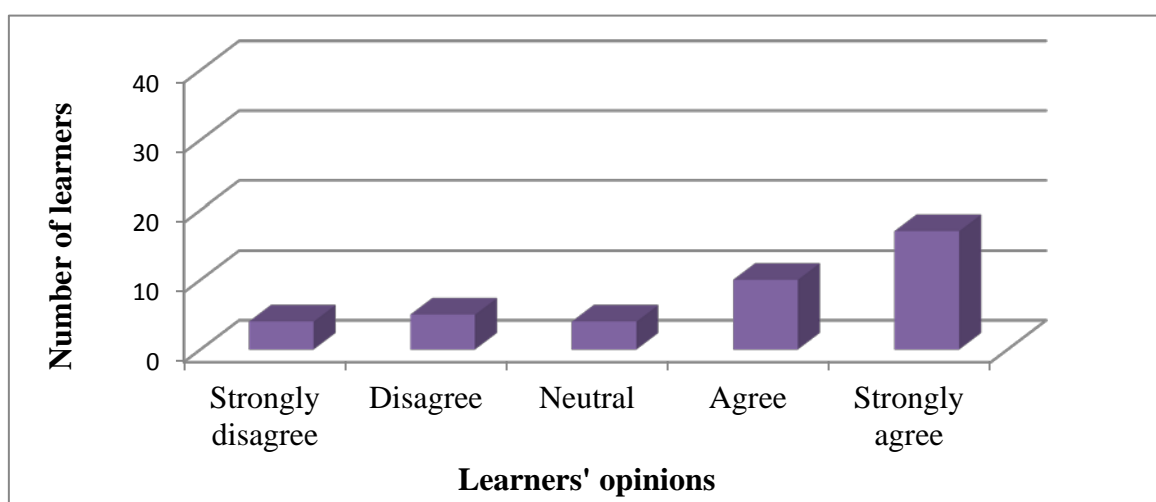
**Figure 4: Learners' pride of their abilities in the English class**

• **The teacher who cares about his learners and encourages them is a good teacher.**

This question aims is to know the opinion of pupils about their teachers of English; whether the teacher who cares about them and encourages them is a good teacher or not. 10% of respondents report that they strongly disagree, 12.5% disagree, 10% do not determine their answers, 25% agree and 42.5% strongly agree. The positive answers show that the more teachers encourage pupils for doing well during the course, the more their self-concept increases and make them ready to cope with difficulties and, hence learn English and achieve in an efficient way.

<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Total</b>
04	05	04	<b>10</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>40</b>
10%	12.5%	10%	<b>25%</b>	<b>42.5%</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 5: The teacher who cares about his learners and encourages them is a good teacher.**



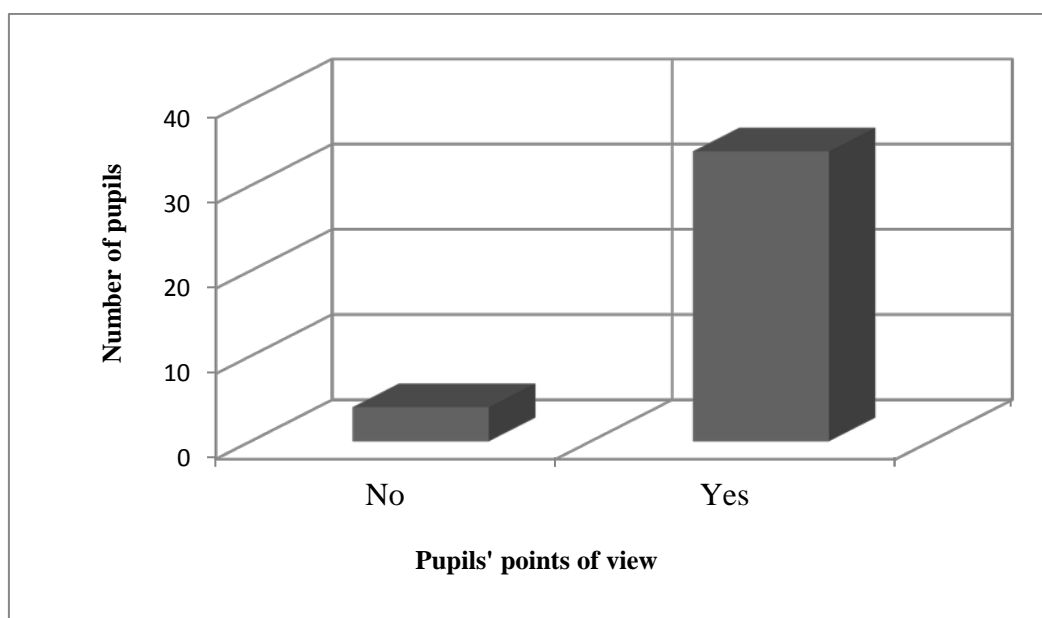
**Figure 5: The teacher who cares about his learners and encourages them is a good teacher.**

### • I believe I am a good pupil

Later on, each learner has been asked about whether he/she believes that he/she is a good pupil or not. Of the total respondents, 90% of answers were positive 'yes', and the rest 10% were negative 'no'. The majority of pupils was proud and consider themselves as good learners compared to their classmates, which means that they have a high level of self-confidence, self esteem and self-efficacy. In other words, they have a strong self-concept about themselves and their capacities which will in turn affect their level of achievement positively as good pupils.

No	Yes	Total
04	36	40
10%	90%	100%

**Table 6: I believe I am a good pupil**



**Figure 6: I believe I am a good pupil**

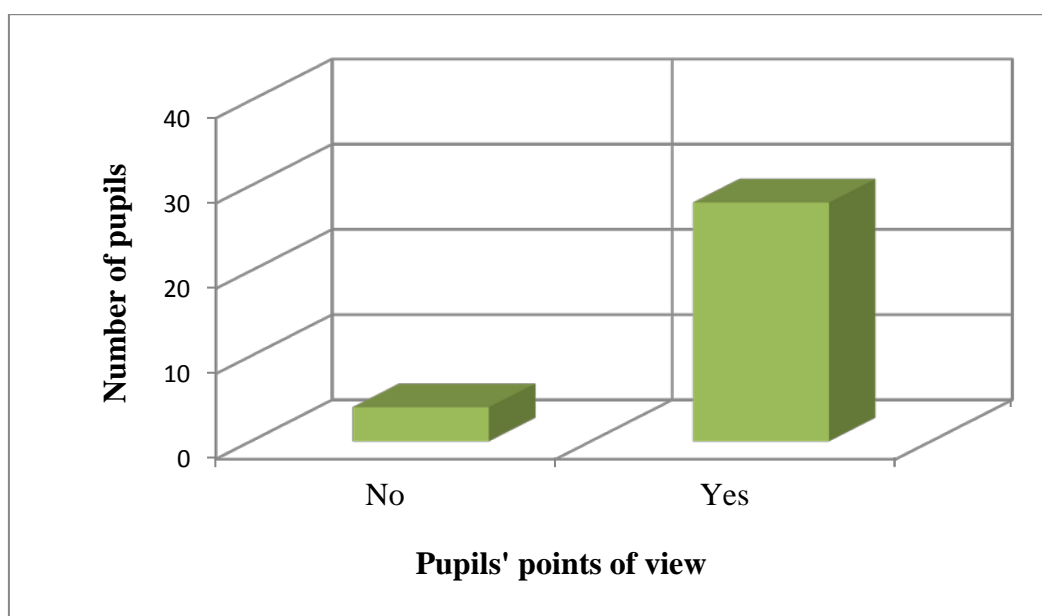
➤ **Section two: learners' level of achievement.**

• **If my answer is wrong, I participate again until I get the right answer.**

Concerning the first question of the second section, 30% of the respondents answered negatively 'no', while 70% of them agreed on the fact that once they answer a wrong answer, they participate again until they get the right one. So, learners persevere according to the strong beliefs they have about themselves such as a strong self-worth which is a part of their self-concept.

No	Yes	Total
12	28	40
30%	70%	100%

**Table 7: If my answer is wrong, I participate again until I get the right answer.**



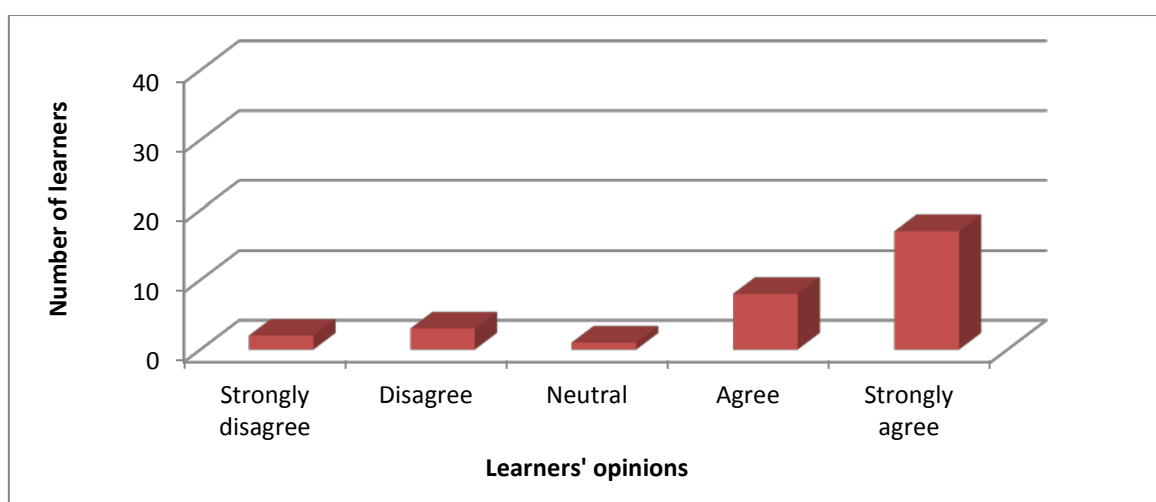
**Figure 7: If my answer is wrong, I participate again until I get the right answer.**

• **Getting a bad mark does not affect my self-confidence.**

The answers of this question vary between agreements and disagreements; 65% of pupils strongly agreed, 20% agreed, 2.5% expressed no opinion, 7.5% disagreed, and 5% of them strongly disagreed. The answers of this question vary between agreements and disagreements; 65% of pupils strongly agreed, 20% agreed, 2.5% expressed no opinion, 7.5% disagreed, and 5% of them strongly disagreed. These results indicate that even though the learner faces obstacles and getting bad marks when attempting to learn English language, he/she will pass them, simply because he/she has already developed a self-worth that allows him/her to achieve successfully in learning of EFL.

<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Total</b>
02	03	01	<b>08</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>40</b>
05%	07.5%	02.5%	<b>20%</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 8: Getting a bad mark does not affect my self-confidence.**



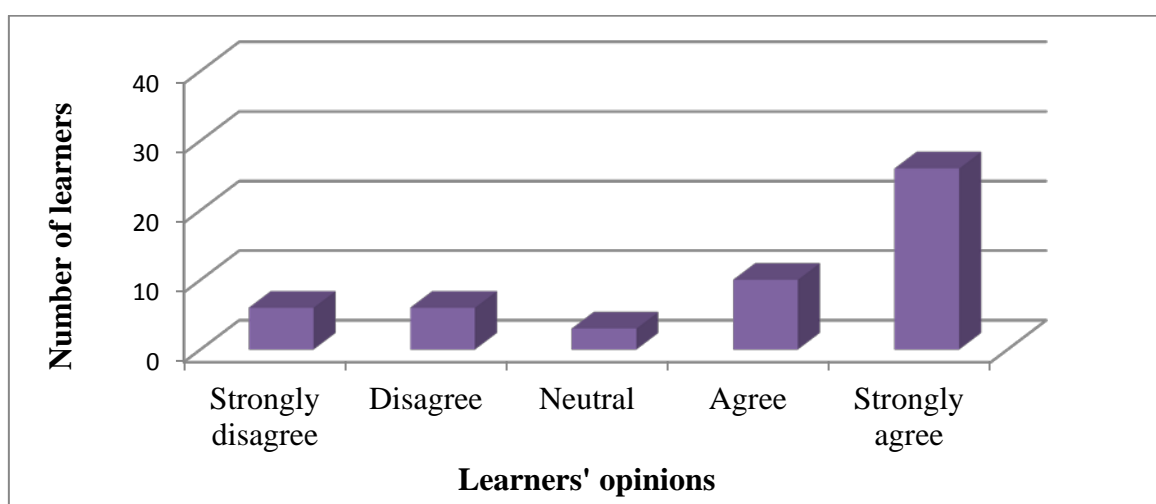
**Figure 8: Getting a bad mark does not affect my self-confidence.**

• **Failing for me is a motivator to achieve better results**

This question is concerned with whether failure pushes learner to work harder to succeed or just implies a total lack of the necessary ability in him/her. 15% of respondents strongly disagreed, also 15% disagreed, 7.5% had no opinion, 25% agreed and 37.5% strongly agreed. The positive percentage reveals that the more anxious about failure the learner is, the more his defensive attributions and strategies will be used to acquire strong abilities that can allow them to deal with any difficulty that might prevent them from learning English. By contrast, the lower the learner's self-concept the more he will fail and achieve lower level.

<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Total</b>
06	06	03	10	15	40
15%	15%	07.5%	25%	37.5%	100%

**Table 9: Failing for me is a motivator to achieve better results.**



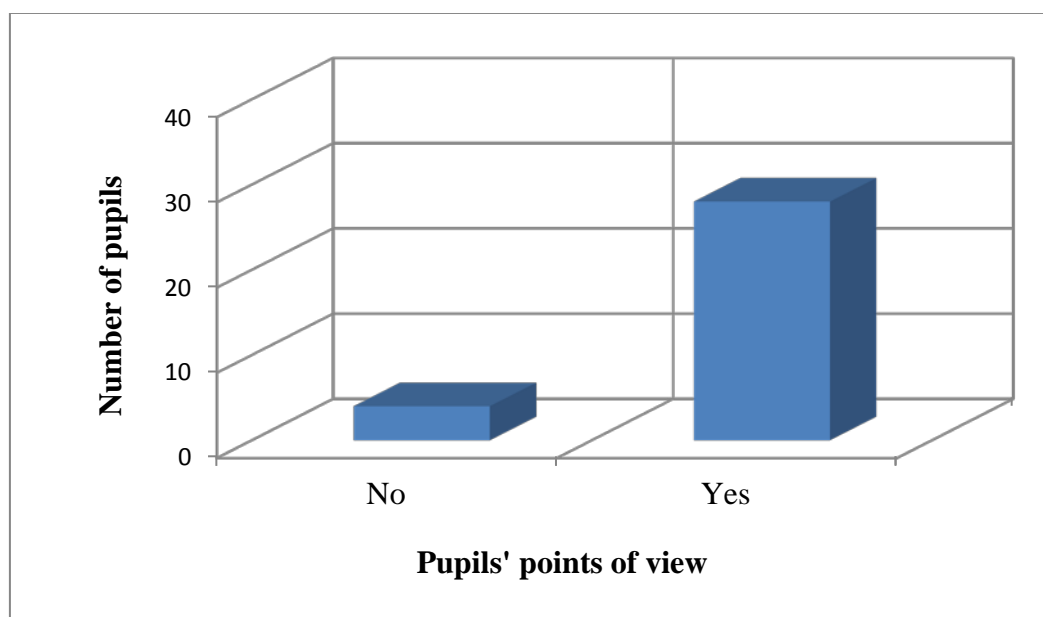
**Figure 9: Failing for me is a motivator to achieve better results.**

• **Teachers rewards reinforce my self-concept**

The fourth question of this section is about whether the rewards of teachers reinforce the self-concept of learners or not. 87.5% of the answers were positive 'yes', while the remaining of them (12.5%) was negative 'no'. This means that praising expressions increase the efforts of learners, boost their self-confidence, make them ready to cope with difficulties and, hence learn English in an efficient way.

No	Yes	Total
05	35	40
12.5%	87.5%	100%

**Table 10: Teachers rewards reinforce my self-concept**



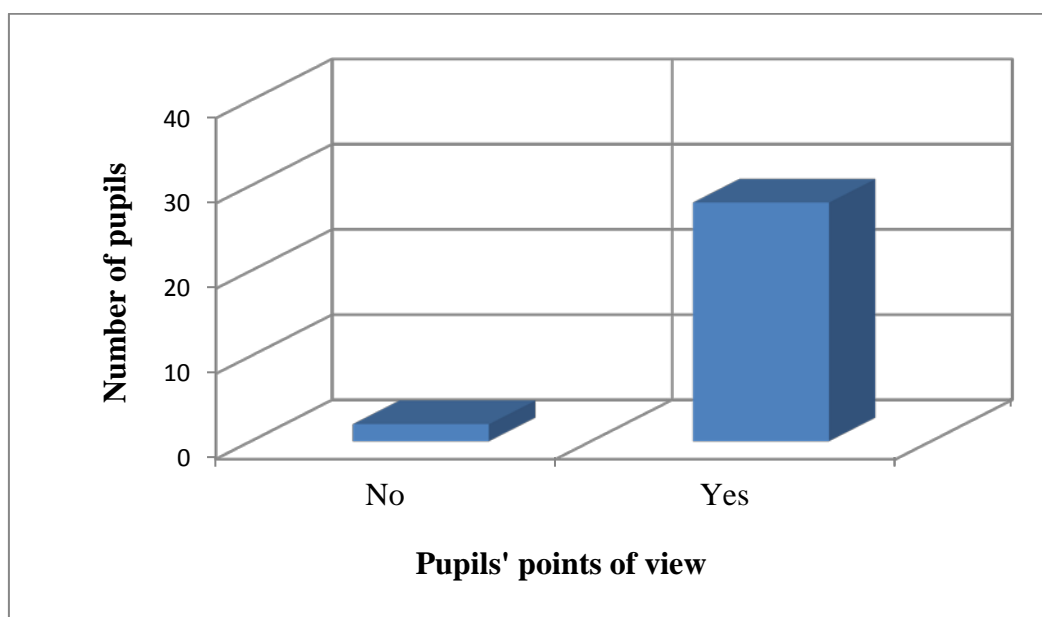
**Figure 10: Teachers rewards reinforce my self-concept**

**• I believe that self-concept affects my achievement level**

The last question was about the effect of self-concept on learners' achievement level. 5% was the percentage of the negative answers 'no'. On the other hand, 95% of answers were positive 'yes'. These results confirmed that the positive self-concept helps learners get more confidence and more positive self-image and positive self-talk, and apply more abilities in order to encounter this learning process successfully as well as having a high achievement level. By contrast, the negative self-concept leads to think just about failure and be anxious while learning EFL and results a low achievement level.

No	Yes	Total
02	<b>38</b>	<b>40</b>
05%	<b>95%</b>	<b>100%</b>

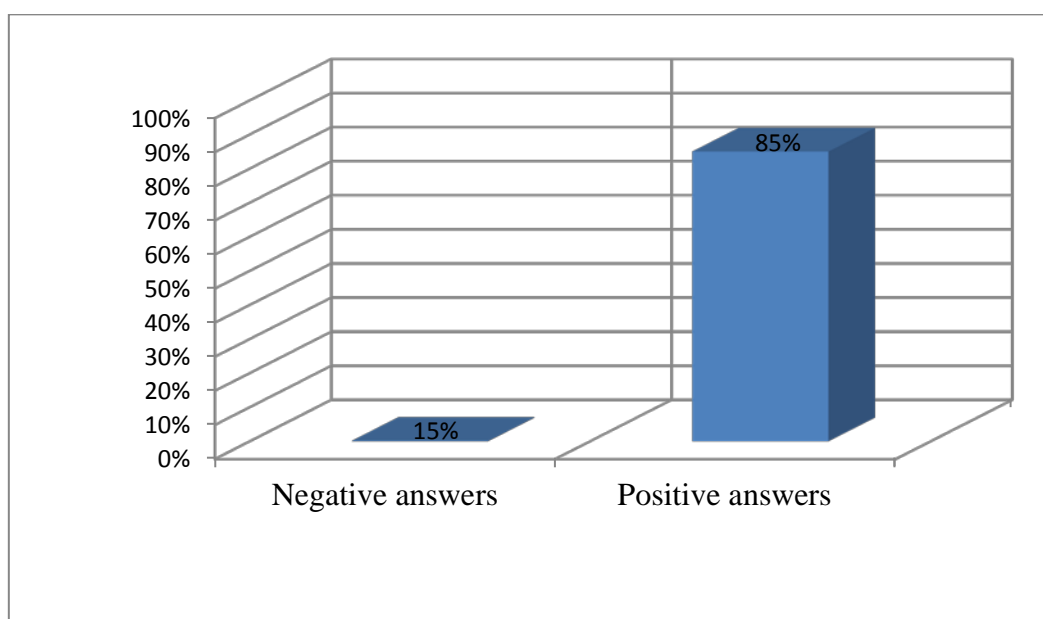
**Table 11: I believe that self-concept affects my achievement level**



**Figure 11: I believe that self-concept affects my achievement level**

## II. 5.1. Global analysis of learners' questionnaire

In considering the learners' questionnaire, globally, almost all statements have been agreed by learners; all of the statements, approximately, show implicitly different notions of self-concept and self-confidence and their roles in learning process. In addition, the results will show that the amount of agreements is higher than that of disagreements; 85% of positive answers, against 15% of negative ones. The questionnaire's statements also support the presuppositions and the point of view concerning the significance of self-concept in sustaining and building learners' self-confidence, which in turn will raise their level of academic achievements.



**Figure 12: Global analysis of learners' questionnaire**

## II. 6. Discussion of the results

The different answers given by learners in the questionnaire make things clear and reveal some aspects of learners approach to their learning process.

Self-concept, self-esteem and self-confidence are three factors that affect learning process. In other words, learners who have a positive view about their self-concept will

raise their self-esteem to a high level, which in turn will give them confidence in themselves and their abilities to make learning successful. In addition to what have been said, first, these answers have strengthened more the idea developed in the back ground of this piece of research, mainly the significance of self-concept, self-esteem, self-efficacy, and self confidence in the process of learning.

Second, when considering, again, the answers of learners and their agreements with the significance of positive relationship between self-concept and academic achievement for better learning, tables 4, 6 and 11 indicate association between these two variables.

At last, it could be understood that the hypothesis of this research, concerning the positive relationships between self-concept and effective level of academic achievement, is in the right direction.

As a consequence, these learners have indeed a high level of self-confidence that touches one aspect of their psychological makeup and which affects positively their level of academic achievement in English language.

As long as the sample of middle school learners is represent the population of middle school learners of English as a foreign language, at least concerning AyebDerraji Middle School in Khenchela. To conclude ,with some caution, the previous results show, on the whole, a positive correlation between self-concept and level of achievement. Henceforth, it should be made quite explicit that language, learners' beliefs, and perceptions about the self-appear influence their level of achievement. So, it is advisable for both teachers and learners not to neglect this factor in their processes of teaching and learning.

## **Conclusion**

This present study investigates the issue of the self-concept as a psychological factor that has an effect on learners' level of achievement. The analysis of the questionnaire shows the impact of self-concept on level of achievement. In addition, the obtained results

show considerable agreements with the review of literature and hypothesis. It is worth repeating that this piece of research expected to shed a little more light on the effect of learners' beliefs and perceptions of their learning process of English language that would result positively and successfully on their level of academic achievement. Also, the present investigation put more stress on learners' own confidence and capabilities mainly in their persistent efforts to learn English language and attain a better achievement. In this context, the research pointed out the fact that positive emotions foster learners control over their learning, while negative emotions lead to more passive behavior. In other words, positive emotions predict high achievement and negative emotions predict low achievement. So, it is necessary for teachers to select appropriate methods that are consistent with the learners' effective and the emotional sides in the learning process, to help them get more confidence and more positive self-image and positive self-talk, and apply more abilities in order to encounter this learning process successfully.

## **Problems and Limitations of the Study**

This study revealed that self-concept can be one of the main factors that have an influence on learners' level of achievement. Nevertheless, during this research, possible limitations that could affect the effectiveness of the outcomes have been faced and that should be taken into account

The first limitation is "COVID-19 Pandemic"; Corona Virus pandemic affected educational systems worldwide which led to the widespread closure of schools, public libraries and universities on March 16, 2020. In other words, most governments in the world have temporarily closed educational institutions, in an effort to stem the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Also, in light of the quarantine and the interruption of transportation, most governments have sought to facilitate the continuity of education for all through distance learning, but only a limited number of students have access to digital devices.

Another limitation is the lack of references and resources required in libraries and reading centers, which led to resorting to the exchange of electronic books through social networking sites, online research and the virtual space.

In addition, the confusion of the supervising professor who finds himself obliged to communicate with his students, by phone, e-mail and social networks.

Similarly, the questionnaire served through the post or electronic mail have the often low response rate, and the incorrectly filled out questionnaire, or even missing answers, will inevitably influence the quality of the data obtained, and have the potential to further lower the number of usable questionnaires.

The final limitation is the small number of participants and their limited vocabulary.

## Recommendations

The results of this study revealed that in English classrooms, self-concept is effective to increase students' level of achievement as well as to build their confidence, and promote their values of respect and acceptance to others.

In the light of the research methodology used and the study's subsequent findings, recommendations will be made for teachers and further research on the subject of self-concept and academic achievement.

➤ In reference to the result of this research, self-concept is effective to improve students' abilities through a cooperative and systematic learning structure. Therefore, the English teachers are recommended to take this concept into account in teaching in order to improve the quality of teaching/ learning process.

➤ Future studies are needed to provide attention to self-concept and self-esteem among school age students also their teachers, and parents should be offered methodological guidance in order to work on this throughout the educational process.

➤ Implement psycho-educational program in curriculum for parents and teachers to provide a chance for students in order to express themselves and develop their self-esteem and self-confidence.

➤ Teachers should organize and plan for instructional activity according to students' English level in order to meet each learner's range of challenge neither above nor below his instructional level, and find the instructional learning level of each student, this will allow teacher to locate learning material at his interest level. It is imperative to provide time or some extra sessions in order to implement self-concept.

➤ Teachers should familiarize students with working in pair/group activities to avoid any discomfort while performing with two or more students.

➤ Rotate group members every time to make them work with different classmates.

➤ Teachers should provide the necessary atmosphere, equipments, and materials during class to motivate learners and encourage them to share and exchange information.

➤ Finally, the current investigation used school based test scores as measures of academic achievement and the self-concept scales used general measures of the physical, emotional, social and cognitive self-concepts. Future studies can use standardized measures instead of school based test scores. In addition, using grades instead of the actual marks can be tried, using self-concept scales that ask more specific questions on each self-concept domain.

## **General Conclusion**

This research is conducted to display how self-concept can be effective for Middle School second year pupils' achievement during the teaching/learning process. It was conducted to enhance learner's achievement. The study demonstrates significant results which meet with main objectives that self-concept help students overcome obstacles and barriers in improving their self capacities. Self-concept in foreign language classrooms boosts students' motivation and interest in learning. Besides decreasing their boredom, it creates the perfect relaxing atmosphere for them to improve their self abilities. The contributors liked the ambiance created by this new concept; hence, they managed to overcome their fear of participating in public, inhibitions, as well as their anxiety and shyness. Moreover, students' motivation by teachers resulted in increasing their self-confidence to express themselves and their background through communication and exchanging information. The findings of this research demonstrated an enrichment of students' abilities in practicing English language during classes where self-concept turned out to be so powerful to use language in a real context. Besides, learning through experience is what makes students achieve in a better way. All in all, the implementation of self-concept improves learners' level of achievement and helps them to be more creative and motivated.

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# Appendix

## Learners' Questionnaire

Dear learners, we would be so thankful if you answer the following questions.

Please, read the statements attentively and simply choose the appropriate answer.

تلاميذي الأعضاء ، سنكون شاكرين للغاية إن أجبتكم على الأسئلة التالية. من فضلكم ، اقرؤوا العبارات بعناية واختاروا ببساطة الإجابة المناسبة.

### Section One: Self-concept

1- Do you like English language as a subject?

Yes

No

1- هل تحب اللغة الانجليزية كمادة؟

2- Learning and succeeding in the English module in spite of the difficulties are achievable

in all cases.

Yes

No

2- التعلم والنجاح في مادة اللغة الإنجليزية بالرغم من الصعوبات يمكن تحقيقهما في جميع الحالات.

3- Are you proud of yourself and your abilities in the English class?

Yes

No

3- هل أنت فخور بنفسك وبقدراتك في حصة اللغة الإنجليزية؟

4- The teacher who cares about his learners and encourages them is a good teacher.

4- المعلم الذي يهتم بتلاميذه ويشجعهم هو أستاذ جيد.

5- I believe I am a good pupil.

Yes

No

5- أؤمن أنني تلميذ جيد.

### Section Two: Learners Achievement.

1- If my answer is wrong, I participate again until I get the right answer.

1- إذا كانت إجابتي خاطئة، أشارك مرة أخرى حتى أحصل على الإجابة الصحيحة.

Yes

No

2- Getting a bad mark does not affect my self-confidence.

2- الحصول على علامة سيئة لا يؤثر على ثقتي بنفسي.

Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Neutral  Agree  Strongly Agree

3- Failure for me is a motivator to achieve better results.

3- الفشل بالنسبة لي حافز لتحقيق نتائج أفضل.

Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Neutral  Agree  Strongly Agree

4- Teacher's rewards reinforce my self-concept.

Yes  No

4- مكافآت المعلم تزيد من تقديري لذاتي.

5- I believe that self-concept affects my achievement level.

Yes  No

5- أعتقد أن مفهوم الذات يؤثر على مستوى تحصيلي.

**Thank you for your collaboration**

شكرا على مشاركتكم

### ملخص

تبحث الدراسة الحالية في العلاقة بين مفهوم الذات لدى المتعلمين ومستوى إنجازهم ؛ إنه يهتم بإيجاد ما إذا كان مفهوم الذات له علاقة بمستوى إنجاز المتعلم أم لا. لذا ، فإن الفرضية التي أشرت إليها في بداية هذه الدراسة هي أن مفهوم الذات يؤثر على مستوى إنجاز المتعلم. بمعنى آخر ما إذا كانت قيمة الذات والصورة العالية التي يحملها المتعلمون عن أنفسهم ستزيد من ثقتهم بأنفسهم بشكل إيجابي وناجح في تعلمهم للغة الإنجليزية أم لا. منهج البحث المعتمد في هذه الدراسة هو منهج وصفي ، ويهدف إلى وصف متغيرين: مفهوم الذات كمتغير مستقل، ودوره في تعزيز مستوى تحصيل المتعلمين كمتغير تابع ، وتحديد العلاقة بينهما. تم جمع البيانات من خلال استبيان تم عرضه على عينات تمثيلية من متعلمين في المدرسة الإعدادية عايب الدراجي في خنشلة. سمحت لنا النتائج التي تم الحصول عليها بتقييم أهمية مفهوم الذات باعتباره له تأثير كبير على مستوى إنجاز المتعلمين.