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Investigating How Polyglots Use Autonomous Learning to Learn Foreign Languages

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Dedication

To my family, who have supported me in every step of the way and have been all eyes on me throughout this academic journey,

To my friends, who have provided me with endless laughter, distractions, and support when I needed it the most,

To my mentors and professors, whose guidance and wisdom have shaped me into the researcher I am today,

And lastly, to all those who have paved the way before me, whose work has laid the foundation for my own research, and whose dedication to their craft has inspired me to pursue this path with passion and purpose,

This dissertation is dedicated to you, as a symbol of my gratitude and appreciation for all that you have done for me.

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Finally, I would like to acknowledge the participants of my study, whose contributions and insights have made this dissertation possible. Their willingness to share their experiences and perspectives has enriched my understanding and knowledge of the research topic.

Warm thanks go to everyone who has supported and contributed to my dissertation.

Abstract

Polyglots' autonomous learning methods have brought new ways to learn foreign languages, which in return, have demolished the traditional ways and shown tremendous results. The present research work aims to explore through the polyglots' mentoring program how they acquire several different languages autonomously and how beneficial this can be to anyone aiming to learn a language. In this regard, the theoretical framework for the study drew on the literature on polyglots' autonomous language learning, with a particular focus on their own beliefs and new methods of learning, autonomous learning and the role of motivation. The sample that the researcher chose consists of thirty (30) polyglots-program attendants. For collecting data, a questionnaire that contains sixteen (16) questions was designed. It comprises of Likert scale, Yes/No questions, multiple-choice answers and one open question. The questionnaire is directed to the attendants of polyglots' mentoring programs to know about their attitudes towards these courses. The study results showed that polyglots use a variety of strategies and techniques in autonomous learning. These strategies were found to be highly effective in supporting language learning and most of the attendants' attitudes toward these programs were positive.

Key-words: polyglots, autonomous learning, mentoring programs, foreign language learning, new methods.

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General Introduction

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1. Background of the Study
2. Statement of the Problem
3. Significance of the Study
4. Aim of the Study
5. Research Questions
6. Hypothesis
7. Methodology
8. Structure of the Dissertation

1. Background of the Study

Learning foreign languages is vital in our daily lives due to the circumstances and the growth that is taking place in the world. FL learning can be a dream for many people who aim to enhance their living situation socially and financially, for it has recently become essential for businesses that want to sustain a strong footing in the global economy. For that reason, introducing new effective methods and skills that have been proven by many polyglots around the globe is crucial for the development of FL learning.

There are some people among us today who have got superhuman language skills. These people are known as polyglots. Cox (2021) defines polyglots as human beings who have a deep love for languages and are able to speak, use and understand several of them. The term 'Polyglot' is often used to describe people who can speak more than three languages. These brilliant multilinguists have their own self-made origin stories. The latter are driven by intrinsic curiosity and a passion for languages that drove them to want to learn more. Polyglots do not prefer the term "language teaching"; rather, they believe it is the individual duty to take the learning process into one's own hands. This is for them the only way to learn a foreign language because it takes one's own materials and unique ways that will suit him and that might be totally different from the traditional-known ways some of them would do, what we regard as normal persons, some silly or awkward acts, but for them, this is very beneficial and proved great results.

2. Statement of the Problem

Learning a foreign language is a challenging task that requires time, effort and dedication. While traditional language learning strategies such as classroom instruction and textbooks are still widely used, there is an increasing interest in alternative strategies such as autonomous learning. The latter is the individual's control of their own learning and managing the learning process themselves, including setting goals, monitoring progress, and

selecting learning materials and activities. Polyglots are often cited as examples of successful autonomous language learners. However, little is known about the strategies and techniques that polyglots use in autonomous learning and how these strategies contribute to successful language learning, as Kaufmann (2005) argued that autonomous learning means taking responsibility for your own learning and developing your own methods and strategies. Therefore, the problem addressed in this study is the lack of empirical research on how polyglots use autonomous learning to learn foreign languages and the need for a better understanding of the factors that contribute to their success. The study aims to address this problem by investigating the strategies and techniques used by polyglots in autonomous learning and their impact on language learning outcomes.

3. Significance of the Study

The significance of the present study is mainly to correct some wrong beliefs of learners where they think it is the teacher's job to do the work they were supposed to do in order to learn. Furthermore, to encourage people to learn autonomously, take the learning process into their hands, and clarify that there is no exact method in FL learning, they should only discover the most enjoyable way to learn and adapt materials in various ways that suit them and serve their goal. The study has important implications for language education. It highlights the potential benefits of autonomous learning for language learners of all levels and provides practical guidance for educators and learners on incorporating autonomous learning strategies into their language learning practices.

4. Aim of the Study

The present study aims to maintain the fact that we can learn any language independently. They just need to know a few essential procedures and apply them properly. Furthermore, the study seeks to show that the source of learning does not always have to be the school, ready-made courses, and teachers; instead, it is crucial to take the learning process

into people's own hands using their own materials and make it more fun and enjoyable rather than an exhausting task. Additionally, the study aims to show that the teacher's job is only to facilitate the learning process.

This study does not aim to look for universal methods for language learning that suit everyone. Instead, we would like to focus on diverse methods that have proven their efficiency used by polyglots who believe that each person has his own style of learning that can always be different from the others. In addition to this, learning a foreign language, however, is by no means an easy task, and there are many different opinions regarding this issue.

5. Research Questions

The present study attempts to answer the following questions:

- 1- How do polyglots consider the autonomous learning concept crucial to foreign language learning?
- 2- Are Polyglots' methods helpful in learning foreign languages?

6. Hypothesis

According to the research questions cited above, evidence related to the following hypothesis will be tested:

- Learning a language autonomously in the polyglots' way can be more effective than traditional school learning.

7. Methodology

The study design of the research is to collect quantitative data (the quantitative method). A questionnaire is posted via Google-Forms in four Facebook groups of polyglots and it is directed to the attendants of these programs, asking them about the methods and the process they learned, and whether they have found it beneficial for them. All of the participants have participated voluntarily.

We have chosen thirty (30) learners who attend those polyglots' programs and they are asked to answer the questionnaire using Google Forms regarding their learning process and whether they found it beneficial.

8. Structure of the Dissertation

The present dissertation is divided into a general introduction, a general conclusion, and two main parts. The first part is theoretical, whereas the second is practical. The theoretical part consists of two chapters covering the relevant literature review. In the first chapter, we review the main notions of 'polyglots', their beliefs, and the skills they have got. The second chapter deals in detail with autonomous learning, motivation, and the way polyglots learn autonomously. The second part consists of one chapter which is devoted to the methodology. In this chapter, the data collection instruments opted for and the analysis procedure followed are explained. Results are also reported and discussed in the third chapter.

Chapter One: Polyglots: A General Overview

Chapter One: Polyglots: A General Overview

Introduction

1.1 Definition

1.2 Polyglots' Beliefs

1.2.1 Language Learning as a Skill

1.2.2 No Exact Method for Language Learning

1.2.3 No Fear of Mistakes

1.2.4 The Role of a Teacher as a Mentor

1.3 Polyglots' Strategies for Sustaining Proficiency

1.4 Polyglots' Motivation

Conclusion

Chapter One: Polyglots: A General Overview

Introduction

Polyglotism is a skill that has become increasingly important in today's globalized world, as the ability to speak multiple languages opens up many career opportunities and allows you to connect with people from all over the world. Kaufmann (2005) argues that polyglots often have a love for different cultures and a curiosity about the world. Polyglots see language learning as a way to connect with people from different backgrounds and gain a deeper understanding of the world around them. It is said that "You can only become a polyglot if you are passionate about each language, and not because you want to 'collect' a large number of languages." (Lewis, 2014, p. 110). In this chapter, we will present an overview about polyglots in general who they are, their common beliefs, their language mastery level and how they keep their languages.

1.1 Definition

A polyglot is someone who can speak multiple languages, typically more than three. The term "polyglot" is derived from the Greek words "poly" and "glot", which means "many tongues" (Herlevi, 2020). According to Wyner (2014), a polyglot is a person who knows several languages well and he is able to communicate effectively in multiple languages through speaking, writing, or reading. Kaufmann (2005) defines polyglots as people who speak many languages, often as a result of extensive study and practice. Lewis (2014) states that "not to be confused with a linguist, someone who studies or specializes in linguistics, a polyglot is a person who can speak multiple languages well." (p.110). Even though knowing Chinese, Arabic, French, and German may seem impressive, if you are not eager to live your life through each language or explore various cultures, fascinating literature, or wonderful and interesting people, then it is obvious that your interests are in the wrong things. The same laws apply: your chances of success decrease if you're unwilling to put in the effort (ibid.).

Polyglots are often admired for their ability to communicate and connect with people from diverse backgrounds, as well as for their cognitive and linguistic skills. Overall, they possess an exceptional ability to understand and communicate in multiple languages, which is a valuable skill in our globalized world.

1.2 Polyglots' Beliefs

Polyglots' beliefs are different. Some of them are as follows:

1.2.1 Language Learning as a Skill

It is important to note that being a polyglot is never dependent on having a natural talent for language learning. No polyglot is gifted or has some kind of privilege over the average person, rather they tend to have certain habits, skills and attitudes that help them learn more efficiently. It is all about the hard work, consistent practice and patience they put in. Lewis (2014) claims that there is no such thing called talent in language learning, rather he believes in the hard work and willingness of the learner to put time and effort to learn and practice consistently.

Machova (2018) states that she never sees herself as particularly talented to learn languages; for example, she does not have an ability to hear sounds any better than most people to differentiate them and her accent is not really great in any language that she speaks. The only thing that polyglots have as a privilege to the average learners is the experience they get from their previous learning and the identification of the methods that worked best for them, but they still have to put effort to learn the new language. Kaufmann (2020) maintains that polyglots are not necessarily people who are born with a special language talent. Rather, they are people who have a passion for languages and have made a conscious effort to learn and use them. Machova (2020) claims that learning her ninth language has not helped in any way because she still has to learn it the same way as if it is her first one, but what definitely helped her is the confidence she got in learning languages.

1.2.2 No Exact Method for Language Learning

Polyglots unanimously agree that there is no one-size-fits-all method for learning a language that can work for everyone. Instead, they believe that language learning should be personalized and tailored to the individual learner's needs, interests, and goals. Lewis (2014) states that there is no perfect method of language learning that works for everyone, indeed what works best for you will depend on your own unique needs and preferences.

According to Lampariello (2022), “There is no shortage of language learning methods that claim to be ‘the best’, ‘the fastest’, or the ‘most effective’.” (p.15) Similarly, Wyner (2014) states that there is no one best way to learn a language. The optimal approach is the one that you find effective, enjoyable, and produces the desired outcomes. Polyglots believe in the importance of experimentation and finding a personalized approach to language learning rather than looking for the best method. Lampariello (2022) states that it is much simpler to find a "good" method for you than to look for the "best" method. All in all, learning languages is not limited to one method, in fact, we can learn languages in various ways and what works for one person does not necessarily work for another.

1.2.3 No Fear for Making Mistakes

Polyglots do not fear making mistakes in language learning, as they recognize that making mistakes is a natural part of the learning process. In fact, many polyglots believe that making mistakes is essential to language learning, as it allows learners to receive feedback, identify areas for improvement, and ultimately improve their language skills.

Wyner (2014) states that “if you make mistakes then so much the better; you’ll learn even more from your stories.” (p.120). Lewis (2014) argues that there is no need to worry about making mistakes and sounding foolish. Simply go for it! The more you practice, the more you master the language. The more you master the language, the more confident you become.

Overall, polyglots understand that mistakes are an important part of the learning process and should be embraced rather than feared.

1.2.4 The Role of the Teacher as a Mentor

Polyglots think that the only role of a teacher is to exclusively guide and mentor the learner to go study by himself and never to teach him the language. On the other hand, learners should take the learning process into their hands and not wait to be spoon-fed by the teacher.

According to Machova (2018), language schools are somehow dangerous because they give learners the wrong mindset that their role is only to attend the lectures and expect the teacher to do the job they were supposed to do. Lampariello (2022) states that we are still locked in the traditional paradigm of language learning, where we depend on our teachers to explain to us why and how to learn certain things. The brand-new paradigm is unique, all of those choices are made by the learner.

1.3 Polyglots' Strategies for Sustaining Proficiency

Polyglots do not master all their languages at the same C2 level (Lampariello, 2022). Rather, they speak their languages at varying levels. Lewis (2014) states that while he can communicate in multiple languages, he does not necessarily have the same level of proficiency in each language. Machova (2019) adds that polyglots generally master five languages at a C2 level and the rest at varying levels. Kaufmann (2005) argues that polyglots are not necessarily fluent in every language they learn. Rather, they are able to communicate effectively in several languages and have a deep understanding of language learning and language acquisition.

In order for polyglots to keep their language and not to forget it, they must achieve comfortable fluency in that particular language and not cut the learning process before reaching a decent level at that language (at least B2); otherwise, they would lose it and have

to start over from scratch. Machova (2020) portrays the process of learning the language as if someone is stuck on an island in the middle of the sea and wants to get to the wild ocean, but waves keep pushing toward the island, so he picks his boat and starts rowing through the island's waves and towards the ocean, but if he stops rowing (learning the language and giving it time and energy) before crossing the last wave (a good B2 level), the waves would drag him back towards the island (the starting point of learning); therefore, he would forget all about the language and he would have to start from scratch.

1.4 Polyglots' Motivation

Polyglots may also have a strong motivation for learning languages, whether for personal or professional reasons. This motivation can drive them to invest time and effort into language learning, which can lead to faster and more effective acquisition of new languages. Oxford and Shearin (1994) claim that "Motivation is a key factor in successful language learning, and it can come from both internal and external sources" (p. 175).

Machova (2020) presents one of the best ways to self-motivation which is to put a table on the wall and each day after you complete your task you put a tick on that table, but if you miss a day you would put a cross, this would be as rewarding feedback to motivate you to do your everyday work (See Figure 1).

On the other hand, Lampariello (2022) has another opinion about motivation. He thinks that you cannot always stay motivated, but you have to push towards your goal anyway. He states that

I'm sorry to say that such an infinite source of motivation does not exist. There are ways to increase motivation, but no ways to keep it going forever. Heck, even I have days where I don't feel like learning at all. So don't let motivation be a prerequisite for action. Instead, flip the formula on its head and let action be a prerequisite for motivation. (pp.9-10) (See Figure 2).

Figure 1. Chart of Self-assessment and Rewarding Feedback

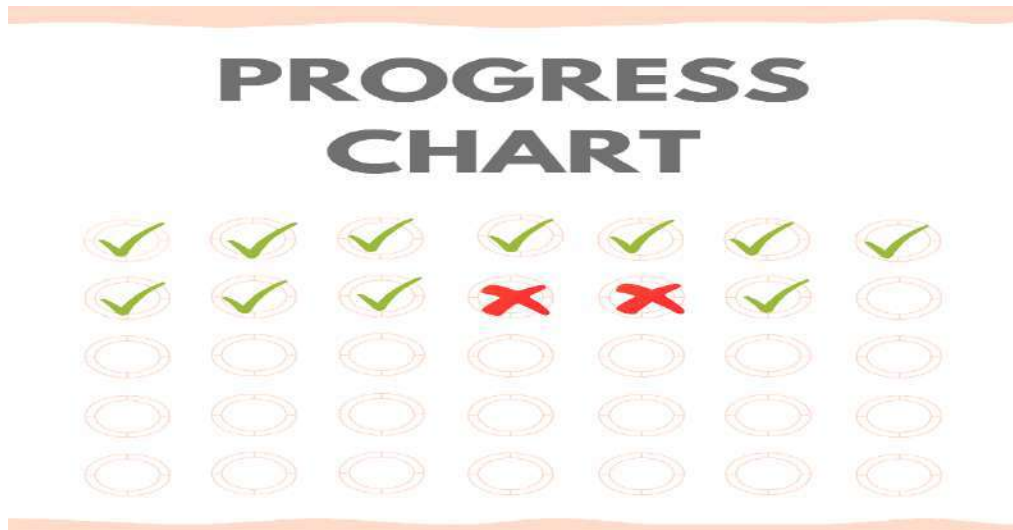
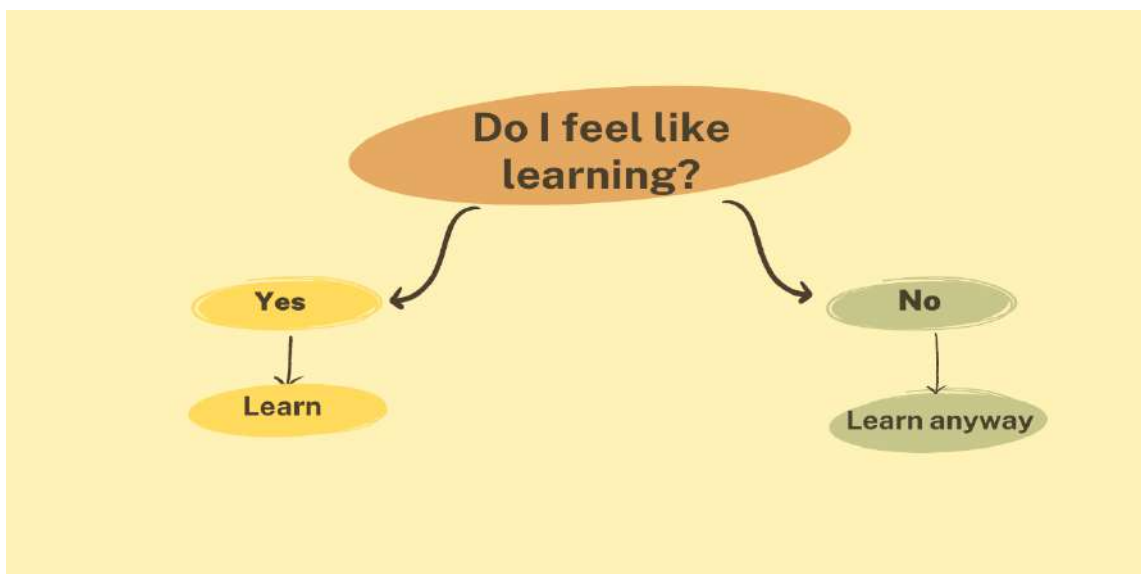


Figure 2. Dependency on Motivation in Language Learning



Conclusion

Polyglots offer a wealth of knowledge and insights into the process of language learning. They suggest that language learning is not limited to those who are naturally talented or have a specific learning style. From their experiences, we can see that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to learning a new language and that individual needs and preferences should be taken into account. Additionally, they suggest that teachers should act as facilitators and provide feedback rather than lecturing or dictating.

Polyglots also emphasize the importance of motivation, consistency, and practice in language learning. Finally, they remind us that making mistakes is an inevitable part of the language-learning process and that learners should embrace them as opportunities for growth and improvement. These beliefs offer a refreshing perspective on language learning and provide hope for those who may have previously believed they were not capable of learning a new language. By adopting the beliefs and practices of polyglots, language learners can develop the skills and confidence they need to become successful learners.

Chapter Two: Polyglots' Autonomous Learning

Chapter Two: Polyglots' Autonomous Learning

Introduction

2.1 Autonomous Learning

2.2 Challenges of learning autonomously

2.3 Advantages of autonomous learning over traditional learning

2.4 Polyglots pillars of successful language learning:

2.4.1 Fun

2.4.2 Method

2.4.3 Contact

2.4.4 System

Conclusion

Introduction

In the past decades, if individuals wanted to learn a language, they were required to find a teacher to teach them that language and guide them through specific recordings or textbooks but none of them can find materials by themselves, but today we have access to various materials in different languages (Machova, 2019). Lampariello (2022) indicates that accessibility in language learning did not lead to an increase in success rates among language learners because people are not trained to learn effectively on their own. People can become polyglots in different ways. Some people are born into multilingual families and pick up multiple languages from an early age. Others learn languages through formal education or language classes. But increasingly, people are becoming polyglots by learning autonomously, which means that they are learning on their own without any formal instruction or guidance (Machova, 2018). Richard (2018) argues that learning does not happen when you are in a class with a bunch of students, rather it happens when you are alone and focused. This chapter attempts to give an overview of autonomous learning, motivation and polyglots' pillars of successful language learning.

2.1 Autonomous Learning

Autonomous learning is one of the effective learning strategies. The latter refer to “specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective and more transferable to new situations” (Oxford & Nyikos, 1989, p. 8). Kaufmann (2018) claims that autonomous learning means taking responsibility for your own learning and developing your own methods and strategies. Benson (2013) defines autonomous learning as the capacity to take control or take charge of one's own learning.

Holec (1981) also defines learner autonomy as “the ability to take charge of one's learning” (p. 3). Little (1991) viewed the concept as “a capacity – for detachment, critical

reflection, decision-making, and independent action” (p. 4). Dickinson (1987) describes learner autonomy as the situation where the learner is solely responsible for making all learning-related decisions and the execution of those decisions. According to him, autonomy means learners’ total responsibility for their learning performed without the investment of a teacher, institution, or specifically prepared materials.

2.2 Challenges of Learning Autonomously

Autonomous learning is a great way to develop language skills, but it comes with its own set of challenges. Machova (2017) states that learning languages autonomously is simple, but it is not easy, because it takes a lot of time, energy and self-discipline. One of the biggest challenges is the lack of structure and guidance as well as the lack of receiving accurate feedback on their progress, which can make it difficult to stay motivated and on track. As noted by Benson (2013), the lack of institutional and interpersonal forms of support necessitates a high level of self-motivation on the part of learners in order for them to succeed.

Another challenge is the need for self-discipline and self-motivation (Machova, 2019). Autonomous learners need to be able to set their own goals, manage their own time, and hold themselves accountable for their progress. Machova (2018) mentions that autonomous learners need to be self-starters who are motivated by their own interest in the language, rather than external factors like grades or job requirements. Autonomous language learning requires a high degree of self-discipline and organization. Learners must be able to set goals, create schedules, and manage their time effectively in order to make consistent progress.

2.3 Advantages of Autonomous Learning over Traditional Learning

Richard & Machova (2019) claim that autonomous learning is more helpful than traditional learning because the latter the teacher is the one in charge of the learning, he is the one who decides what to study according to the curriculum, the materials used in the lecture,

the timing...etc, and you as a learner will be totally reliable waiting to be spoon-fed by the teacher.

On the other hand, as an independent learner, you can choose carefully your learning materials, the amount and the right time to learn and the fun way to do it. Being an independent learner does not necessarily mean that you are not in a formal class, rather it means that you are the one in charge of your learning (ibid). Wyner (2014) adds that with autonomous language learning, learners are free to choose their own materials, set their own goals, and work at their own pace.

2.4 Polyglots' Pillars of Successful Language Learning

Polyglots' pillars of successful language learning are as follows:

2.4.1 Fun

Lampariello (2022) argues that learning a language doesn't have to be boring at all. From the starting point to the end, the process can be enjoyable and fun. And the best way to achieve this is by never making yourself learn something you do not find enjoyable. He further explains, you must take enjoyment in what you are learning since, in many ways, enjoyment is what motivates you to keep coming back. not only for a few hours or days, but also for a few years, decades, and even longer. And that kind of perseverance is what you'll need to achieve your language learning objectives.

Also, Wyner (2014) claims that if you can find joy in learning a new language, the rest will come naturally. He adds, even if he promises fluency in 30 seconds a day, you're going to have a hard time sticking to it if it's unpleasant because language learning is an exercise routine and to succeed in an exercise routine we need to enjoy it or we would drop it.

Machova (2017) argues that having fun is the first requirement of learning a language effectively. Therefore, you have to find a way that is amusing and enjoyable to you, not only some drilling exercises or boring tasks.

2.4.2 Method

Wyner (2014) suggests that we learn better when we are having fun, and in looking for the fastest way to learn, he ended up with the most enjoyable method. Richard (2019) states that the one piece of advice that he likes to give to people is to spend a longer time selecting the perfect language materials for them, because the secret to language learning is understanding how you learn best and then highlighting on that.

Lampariello, (2022) states that finding a good method for you is much easier to do than finding the best method. Machova (2020) claims that there is no unique method to learn a language; it only depends on what you prefer, what type of learning you are and whether you want to work with books or apps or anything else. In fact, there are so many possibilities to learn.

2.4.3 Contact

Polyglots stress the importance of regularly practicing and using the language to improve their proficiency. Regular contact with the language is crucial to develop fluency, accuracy and comprehension. Lewis (2014) states that:

Being able to devote several months full-time to your project would be nice, but if that isn't possible, just devote as much time as you can and you will still reach the level you want to reach, even if the time it takes is longer. (p.18)

Machova (2017) mentions that after you decide upon the methods you enjoy the most, the next thing is you have to do a lot of it as much as possible every day; you must have everyday contact with the language. Kaufmann (2020) claims that the key to successful language learning is to find what works best for you and to be consistent in your practice. Wyner (2014) mentions that in order to learn a language effectively, you need to make it a regular habit and incorporate it into your daily routine.

As a learner, you set up your system to spend as much time as possible learning the language, within the confines of your daily routine. You should try thinking of places to put one more activity in, even in small doses like fifteen minutes of listening during the morning traffic jam, ten minutes of reading during the afternoon coffee break and twenty minutes of the gold-list method before bed. Also, you need to surround yourself with the language. In that way, it will become a natural part of your life (Richard, 2019).

2.4.4 System

Machova (2018) states that the only way to progress in your autonomous language learning and to stay motivated is to follow a system in your learning. Being systematic means planning your learning seriously, putting simple small steps to be followed every day and including your reason behind learning that language, whether it is speaking or just understanding and whether is writing not of your priority.

Being systematic means that you describe your learning process thoroughly according to your language goal (Machova, 2019). First, you mention your priorities, whether it is vocabulary, listening, or speaking. Second, you decide on the method to tackle your learning. Next, you decide how much time you are going to spend every day and the exact time during the day so you will not be caught up each day on what to learn or how you are going to learn. All of this is displayed clearly in the following tables along with the total hours in the week:

Table 1. An Example of a Systematic Weekly Plan

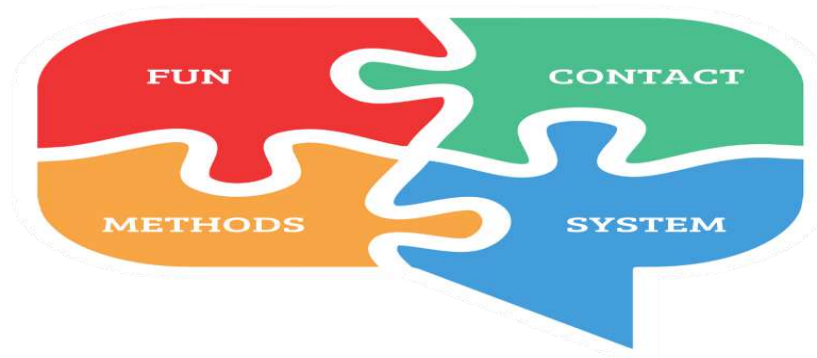
Priorities	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Total
Methods	Podcast, Audiobook, Ted talks	Tutor, Self-talk	E-books	
How much times a week	5	2	5	
How many minutes	30	60	30	
Total in hours	2.5	2	2.5	7

Table 2. An example of a Thorough Systematic Weekly Plan

Priorities	Fun	Grammar	Vocabulary	Speaking	Others	Total
Methods	Spanish language TV shows, Big bang theory, The news	Online grammar exercises	Gold list, LingQ (Internet site)	Language exchange, Self-talk, Paid tutor	Listening to Podcast and YouTube, Reading in LingQ	
How much times a week	2	5	6	4		
How much minutes	30	20	30	25		
Total in hours	1.00	1.67	3.00	1.67		11.83

Being systematic as a polyglot helps you create time in your daily schedule and make you more organized and focused on your goal. The following figure sums up all the previously mentioned pillars:

Figure 3. Polyglots' Pillars of Successful Language Learning



Conclusion

Polyglots' autonomous learning style is a model for effective and fulfilling language learning that has proven great results compared to the traditional way of learning languages. By taking charge of their learning process, polyglots are able to achieve fluency and develop valuable skills. While autonomous learning comes with its own set of challenges, polyglots can overcome them by developing good habits such as the four pillars for learning languages which simply stand for finding the best methods that you enjoy the most, spending as much time as possible with that and finally draw yourself a learning map by working systematically this means you will break down your learning into small steps that would guide you throughout your everyday learning.

Whether you are a seasoned polyglot or a beginner language learner, incorporating some of these autonomous learning techniques and strategies can enormously help you reach your language learning goals and become a more independent and confident learner.

Chapter Three: Attendants' Questionnaire

Chapter Three: Attendants' Questionnaire

Introduction

- 3.1. Research Method
- 3.2. Population and Sample of the Study
- 3.3. Research Instrument
- 3.4. Description of Polyglots' Questionnaire
- 3.5. Validity and Reliability
- 3.6. Data Analysis
- 3.7. Findings and Discussions

Conclusion

Introduction

This chapter is the practical phase of the dissertation. It aims at presenting the methodology adopted for building up this piece of research, which seeks to investigate how polyglots use autonomous learning to learn foreign languages. Firstly, it describes the population and the sample that have been chosen in this research. Furthermore, it identifies the adopted tool in the study. Then, it clarifies the validity and the reliability of the research. At the end, it shows the data analysis and the discussion of the findings. All in all, it provides a clear description of the data collected through the questionnaire in a detailed formula to be discussed further in the chapter.

3.1 Research Methods

The present study is explorative in nature with a quantitative underlying approach. In order to achieve the aim of the study and to test the current hypothesis, we conducted a quantitative method in collecting data. A questionnaire on Google Form was carried out and published in 4 private Facebook groups. In addition, the questionnaire was sent via Gmail to polyglots to pose it to their trainees.

The questionnaire is directed to the attendants of the polyglots' mentoring programs, asking them about the process and methods they learned and whether they have found it beneficial for them or not.

3.2 Population and Sample of the Study

The target population of our research contains 35 individuals who took the polyglots' mentoring programs. They were asked to answer a questionnaire on Google Form regarding their learning process and whether they found it beneficial or not. The participants were kindly asked to participate and they voluntarily chose to participate in the questionnaire.

The reason for choosing these individuals as the sample for our study stems from their unique suitability as exemplars, as they have diligently incorporated all of the instructions,

methods, and techniques advocated by polyglots in their language learning attempts. Moreover, their autonomous learning approach further adds to their eligibility as participants in our research.

Ethical procedures were considered through gaining electronic informed consents from the users and the founders of the groups. Moreover, all of the repliers were used anonymously, and any information that might reveal their identity was disguised.

3.3 Research Instrument

Questionnaires are widely used to gather opinions or perceptions of individuals. Therefore, in this study, a questionnaire is found to be the appropriate tool to collect data and opinions of the participants.

Putting aside the fact that data collected using questionnaires are deemed to be superficial and biased, questionnaires are the best choice to convince participants to take part in your research since it is less time-consuming and not an exhausting task to do. This questionnaire aims to explore the attitudes of individuals who took polyglot's mentoring programs and language learning techniques.

3.4 Description of Polyglots' Questionnaire

Our essential aim from this study as a whole is to prove our research hypothesis which is "Learning a language autonomously in the polyglots' way can be more effective than traditional school learning". The current study relies on a questionnaire as a research instrument to collect data. This instrument is addressed to the individuals who attended polyglots' mentoring programs.

The aim of our questionnaire is to examine the attendants' point of views about polyglots' mentoring program and whether they find the polyglots' ways of learning languages helpful and applicable. The questionnaire consists of three sections and a series of questions which include 16 questions. It is a mixture of Yes/NO questions and Likert scale

questions. It is at the form of (03) Yes/No questions, in addition to (09) questions with different options and (03) Likert scale questions. It starts with a small introduction. Through this introduction, we have asked participants to answer kindly the questionnaire. Also, we have tried to present to them the main aim of our study. Moreover, the questionnaire was done in one section. No demographical questions or profile information are needed.

3.5 Validity and Reliability

Cohen and Manion (2007) define validity by stating that “In quantitative data validity might be improved through careful sampling, appropriate instrumentation and appropriate statistical treatments of the data.” (p.133). Regarding our research, we first identified clearly the objectives and specific constructs that this questionnaire is going to measure. On top of that, we presented the questionnaire to our supervisor to evaluate the content validity of the questionnaire. Cohen and Manion believe that: It is impossible for research to be 100 per cent valid; that is the optimism of perfection. Quantitative research possesses a measure of standard error which is inbuilt and which has to be acknowledged. In qualitative data the subjectivity of respondents, their opinions, attitudes and perspectives together contribute to a degree of bias (ibid).

An important criterion to be established in order to assure the data collection procedures is that of reliability and credibility. Cohen and Manion (ibid) went to define reliability saying that for research to be reliable it must demonstrate that if it were to be carried out on a similar group of respondents in a similar context (however defined), then similar results would be found.

In our research work, we tried to ensure the reliability of our study by using clear and unambiguous language, and we considered the question structure and formatting and we make sure that it is understandable. In addition to that, we removed any potential response biases.

3.6 Data Analysis

The aim of our questionnaire is to examine the attendants' point of views about polyglots' mentoring program and whether they found the polyglots' ways of learning languages helpful and applicable. Although the questionnaire is directed to many attendants, only (23) individuals have answered. The distributed questionnaire comprises of one section. No demographical questions or profile information are necessary. The data were collected through Google Forms where the questionnaire was designed. The site automatically gathers responses and forms diagrams and percentages which will be transformed to the research.

Section One: Polyglots' Mentoring Programs

Question 1: Which polyglots' mentoring program have you followed?

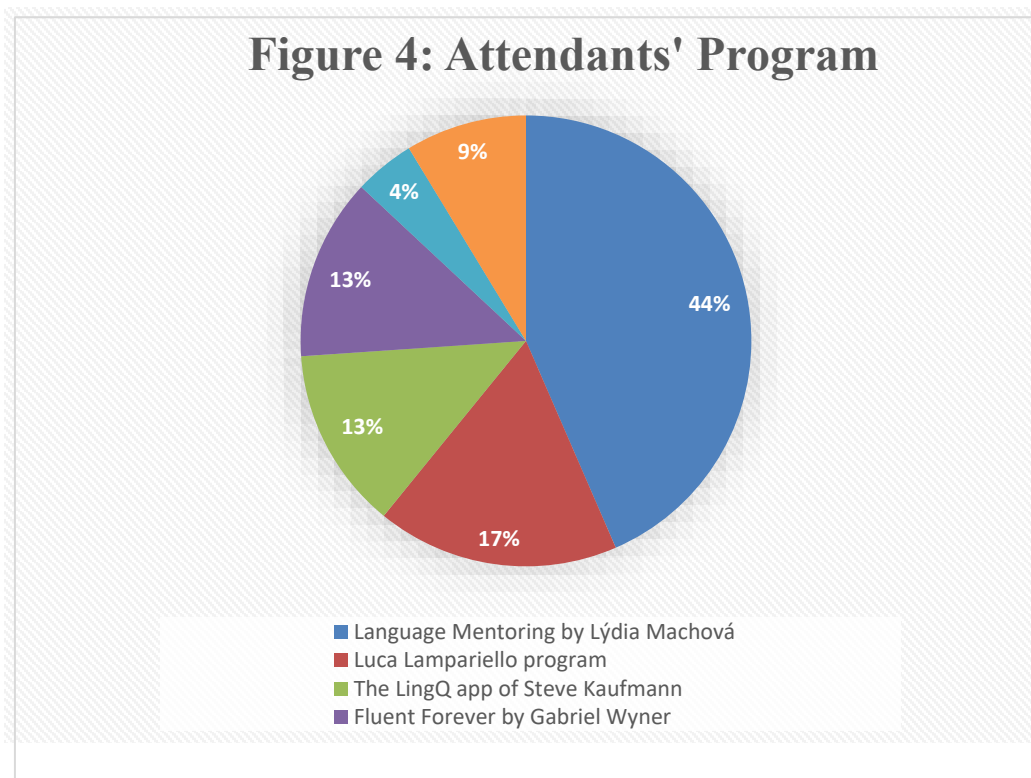
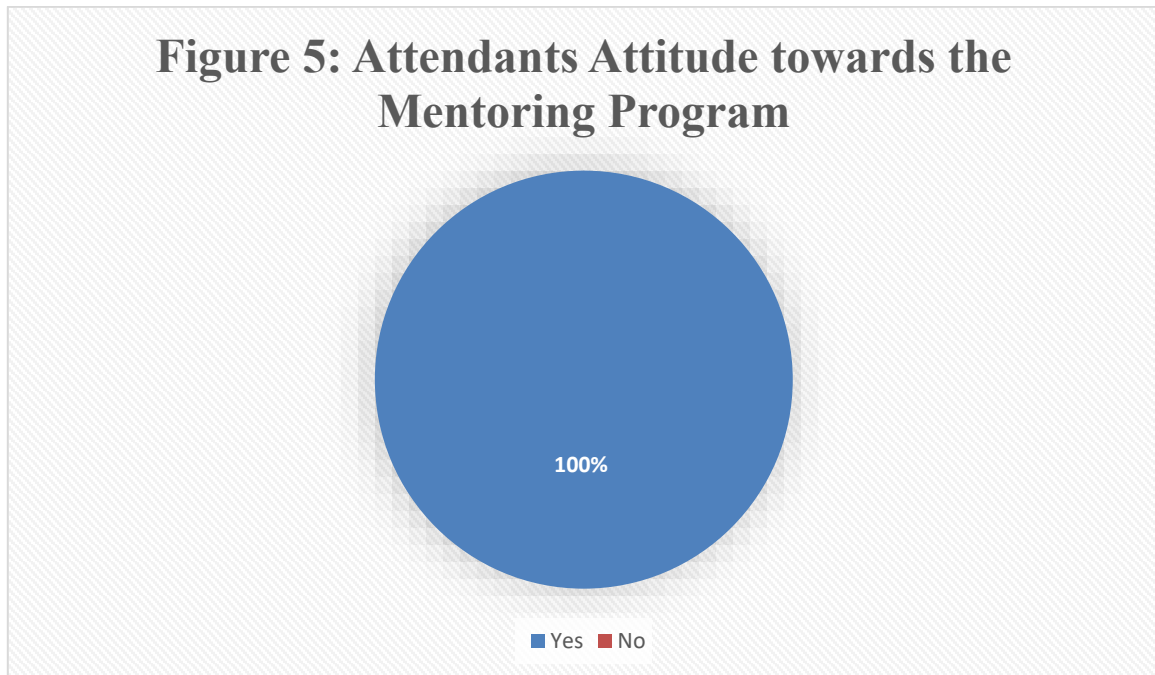


Figure (4) reveals that the majority of participants (44%) followed the Language Mentoring of Lydia Machova and (17%) followed the Luca Lampariello program. Additionally, (13%) used the LingQ app of Steve Kaufmann, and also (13%) followed the Fluent Forever program of Gabriel Wyner. Besides, only (4%) chose the Fluent in 3 Months

program of Benny Lewis. On top of that, (9%) chose ‘Others’. Hence, we conclude that there are many different polyglots’ mentoring programs; we just need to pick the program that aligns best with us.

Question 2: Did you find polyglots' mentoring programs helpful?



Concerning Figure (5), all of the attendants (100%) found the mentoring program helpful, and that is after they have experienced it and seen the results. That is to say, polyglots’ mentoring programs are supportive.

Question 3: What does the mentoring program do the most?

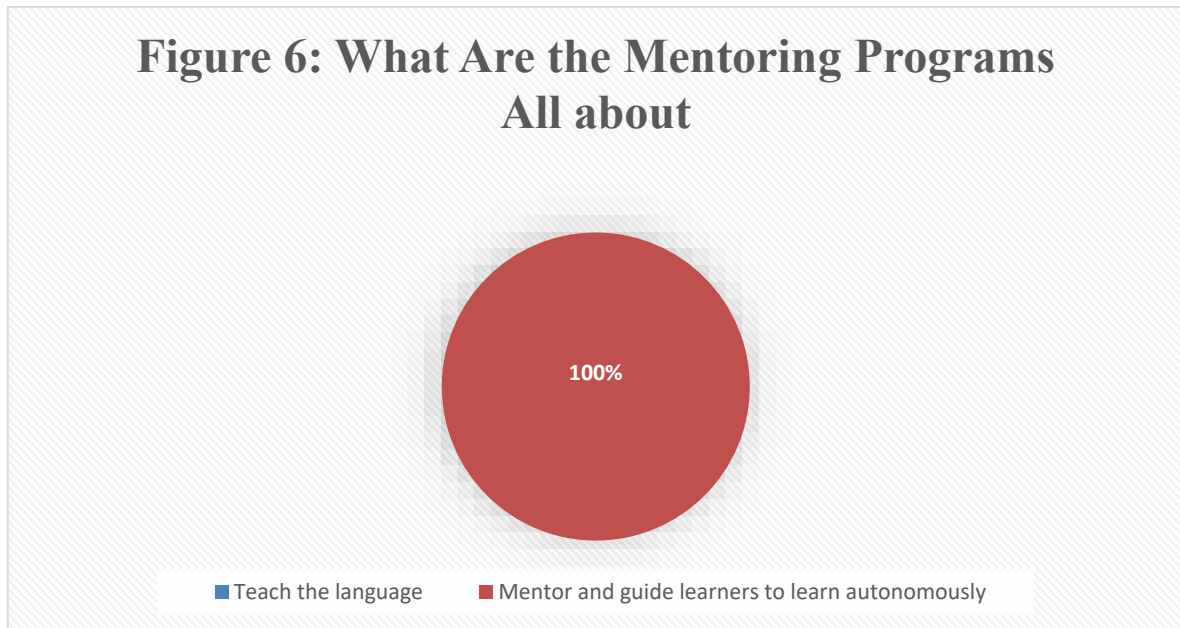
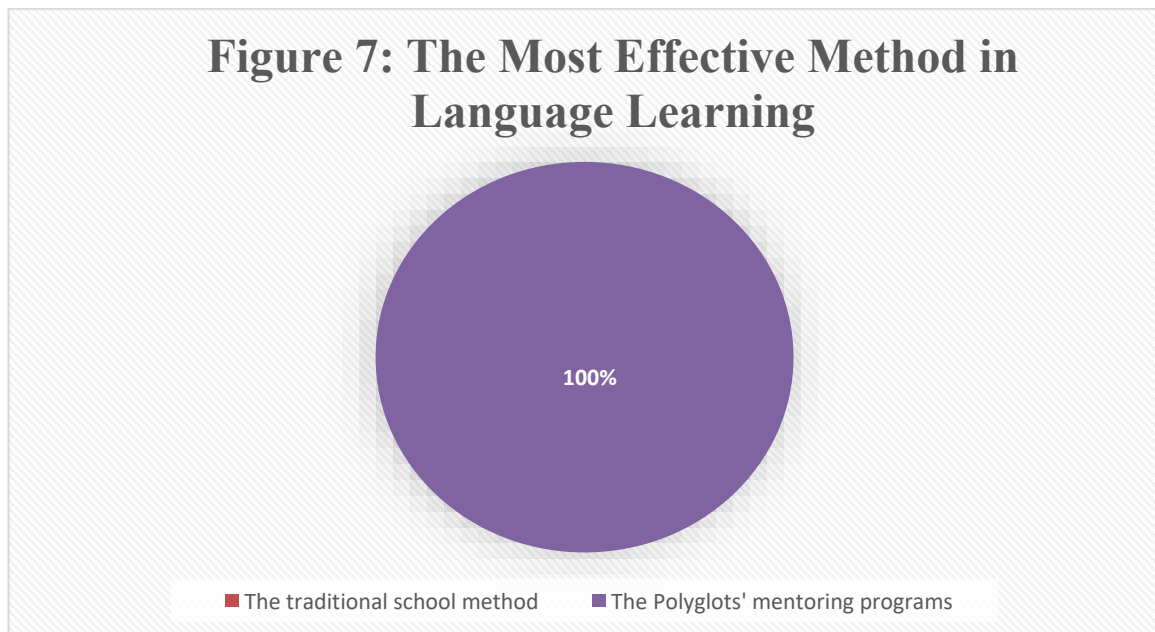


Figure (6) displays that all of the attendants (100%) agree that the mentoring programs' main task is to mentor and guide learners to learn autonomously and never to teach anyone a language. This means that mentoring programs are not designed to teach languages, but to mentor and guide people to learn autonomously.

Question 4: In your opinion, which method is more effective in learning foreign languages?



It is obvious from Figure (7) that all the participants (100%) prefer the polyglots' mentoring programs over the traditional language learning and that is after they have experienced the mentoring programs. Thus, in the participants' opinion, polyglots' mentoring programs are more effective than the traditional school system.

Question 5: In your opinion, what do mentoring programs have as an advantage over traditional learning?

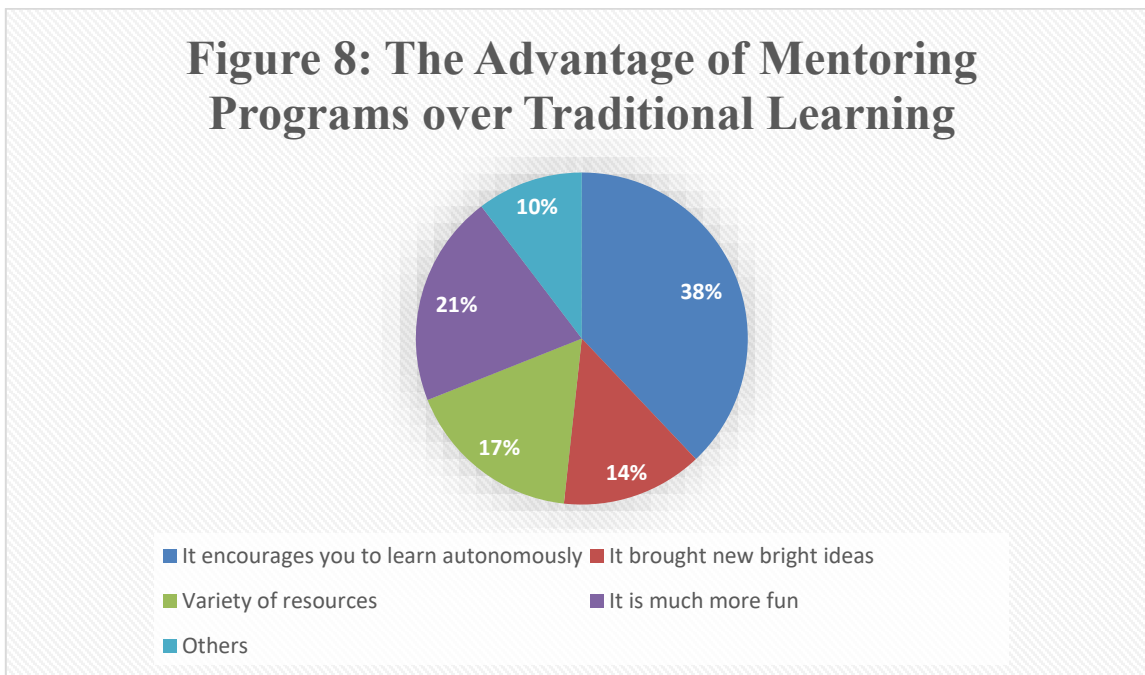
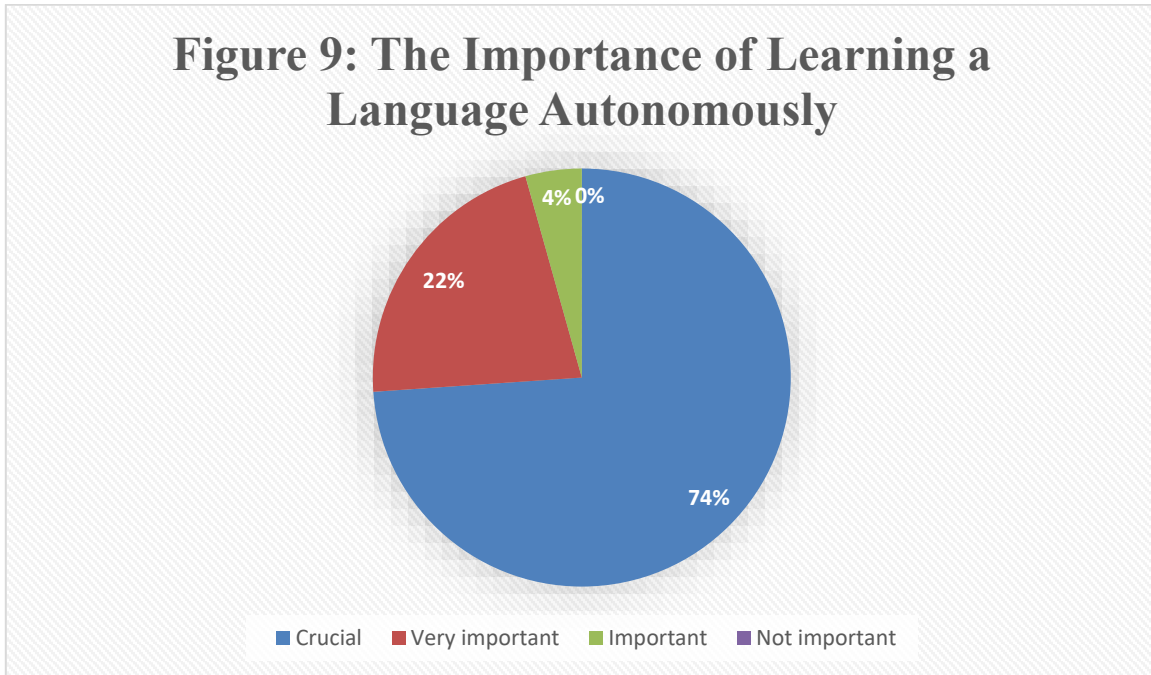


Figure (8) demonstrates that the majority of participants (38%) found the advantage of mentoring programs over traditional learning in encouraging them to learn autonomously. Meanwhile, (21%) stated that because it is much more fun, while (17%) prefer the mentoring program for its variety of resources. In addition, (14%) stated that it brought new bright ideas and different methods to language learning. Lastly, (10%) chose other advantages, as they got the chance to learn from polyglots' experiences and hopefully this would get them the same results as polyglots. Furthermore, one participant stated that it is because the program showed great results in a short period of time; besides, one participant claimed that it is because of the comprehensible input he experienced in the program.

All in all, the participants' results revealed that polyglots' mentoring programs can be advantageous over traditional learning in various ways. As a learner, you can guarantee faster progress as you are following valid and applicable methods that have been tested over many trainees and which lead to great results.

Section Two: Autonomous Language Learning

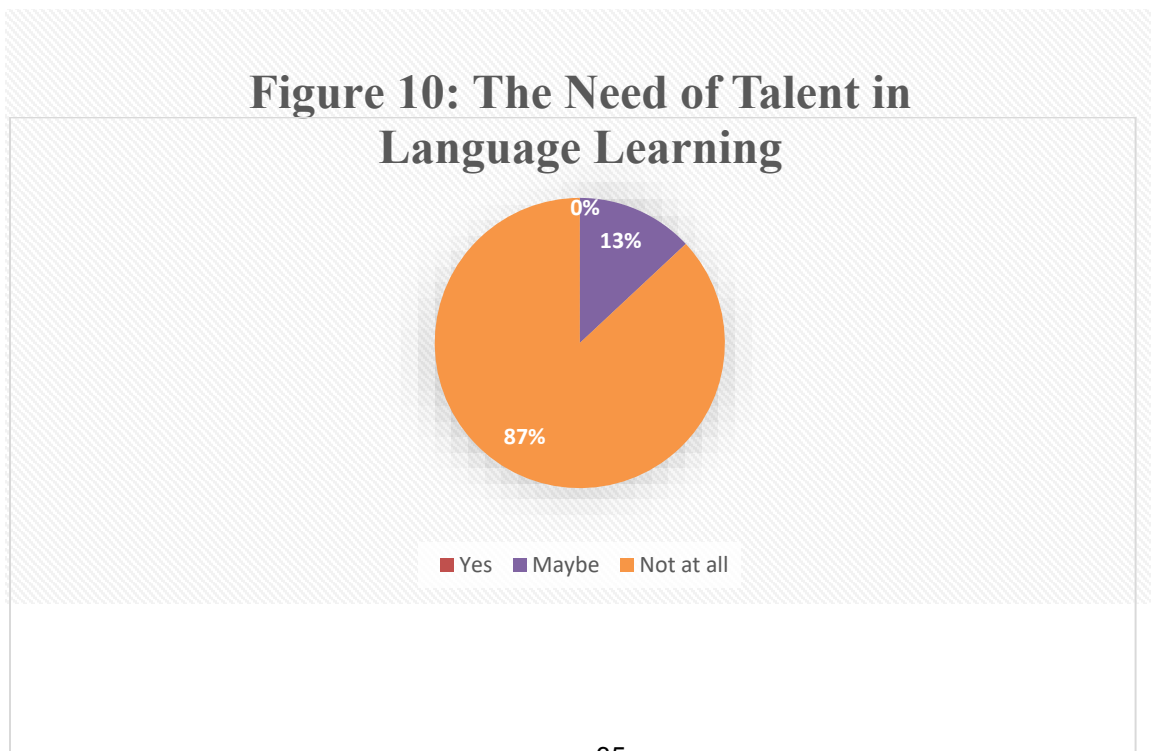
Question 6: How important do you think learning a language autonomously is?



The results in Figure (9) indicate that more than half participants (74%) answered that it is crucial to learn the language autonomously. However, (22%) answered that it is very important. While the remaining (4%) answered that it is just important. This explains that it is crucial to learn foreign languages autonomously.

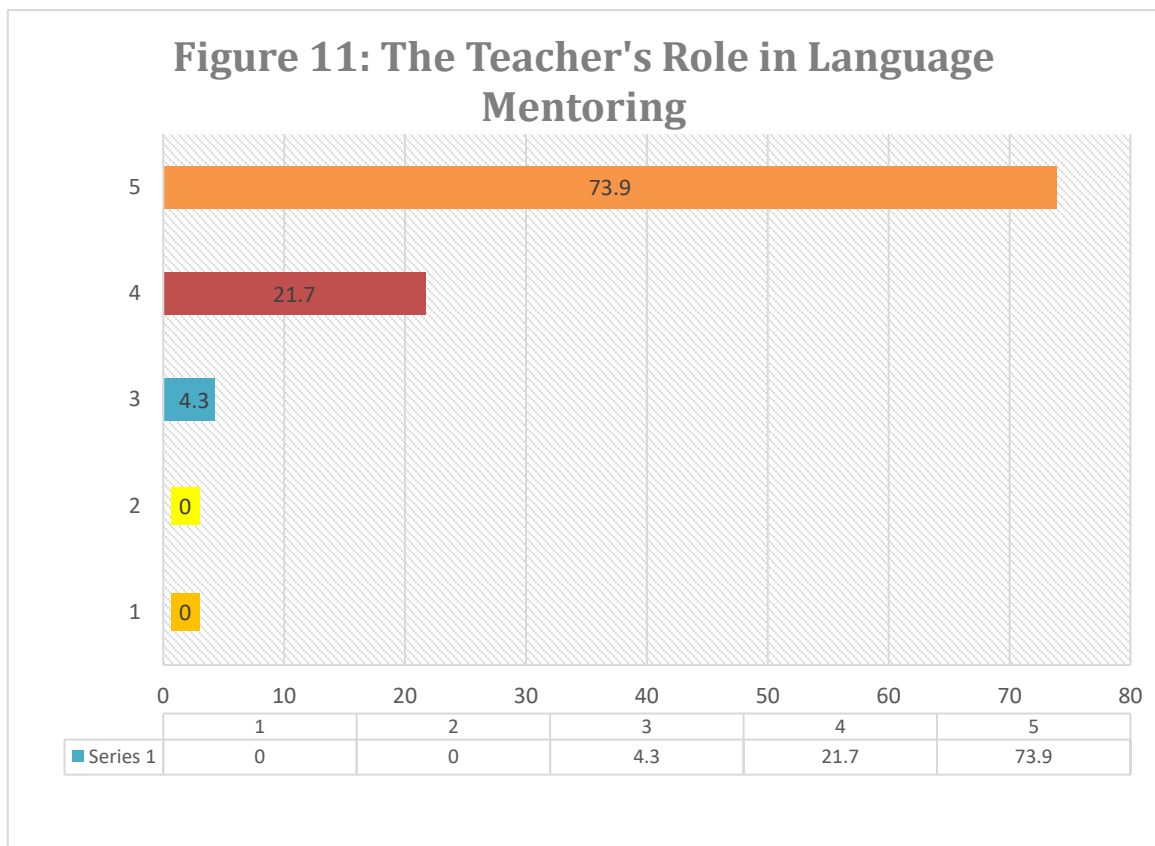
Section Three: Learning the Polyglots' Way

Question 7: Do you think that learning various languages requires a special kind of talent?



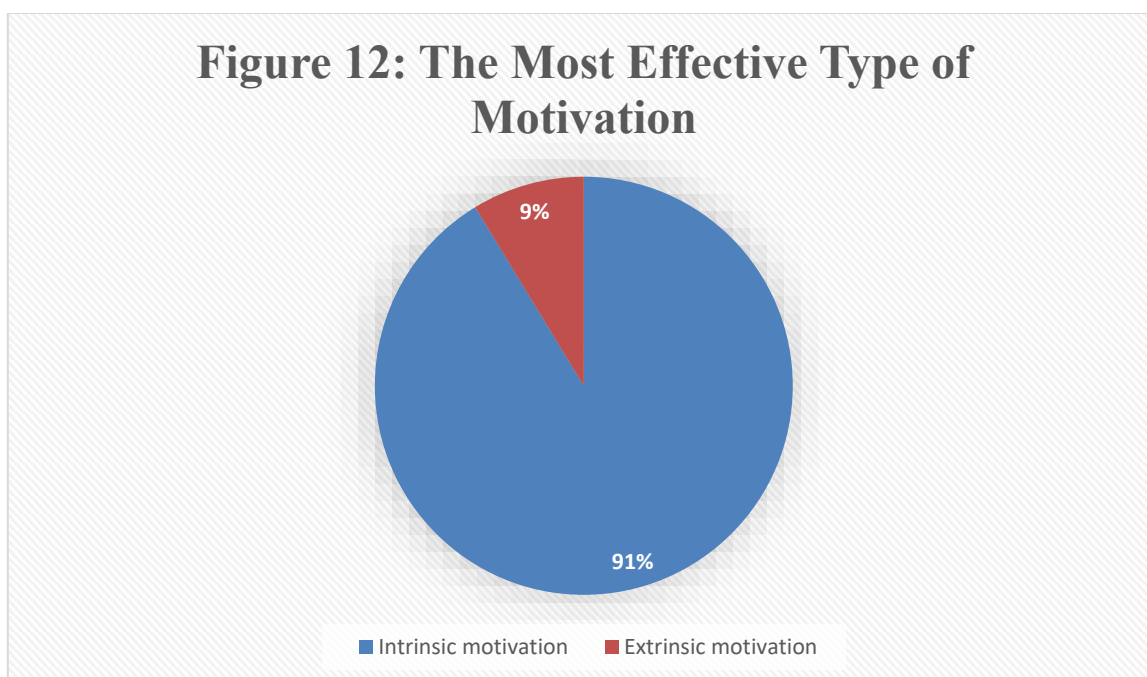
The data appeared in Figure (10) show that the majority of the participants (87%) believed that there is no talent required in learning foreign languages. On the other hand, only a few see that some of the professional polyglots might have some kind of talent. None of the participants thought that we need to be talented in order to learn various languages. We can conclude that there is no need for talent in learning various languages.

Question 8: On a scale of 1 to 5, to what extent do you agree with the following statement:
The only role of a teacher is to mentor and empower students to go and learn autonomously?



According to the given results in Figure (11), all of the participants agreed with the statement. (73.9%) gave it 5 for 5, (21.7%) gave it 4 for 5 and only (4.3%) gave it 3 for 5. This means that the only role of a teacher is to mentor and empower students to go and learn autonomously.

Question 9: Which type of motivation do you think is the most helpful in learning foreign languages?



As it is shown in Figure (12), almost all the participants (91%) stated that the most effective type of motivation is intrinsic motivation. While just (9%) saw that extrinsic motivation is the most effective one. This means that we need to be intrinsically motivated to learn foreign languages.

Question 10: What strategies do you use to keep yourself motivated?

Participants replied to this question differently. The main responses can be summarized as follows: some stated that they focus on the ultimate goal, think of the results and remember why they are learning the language. But some think that when you see progress, you stay motivated and keep learning. Some use progress charts and rewarding feedback, whereas some follow a system.

The ones that rely on extrinsic motivation stated that they use a language partner, learn in groups or follow a tutor. On the other hand, some replied that they do not rely always on

motivation. Hence, we can say that each participant uses a different strategy that suits them the most.

Question 11: What of these four polyglots' pillars of learning languages do you apply in your learning?

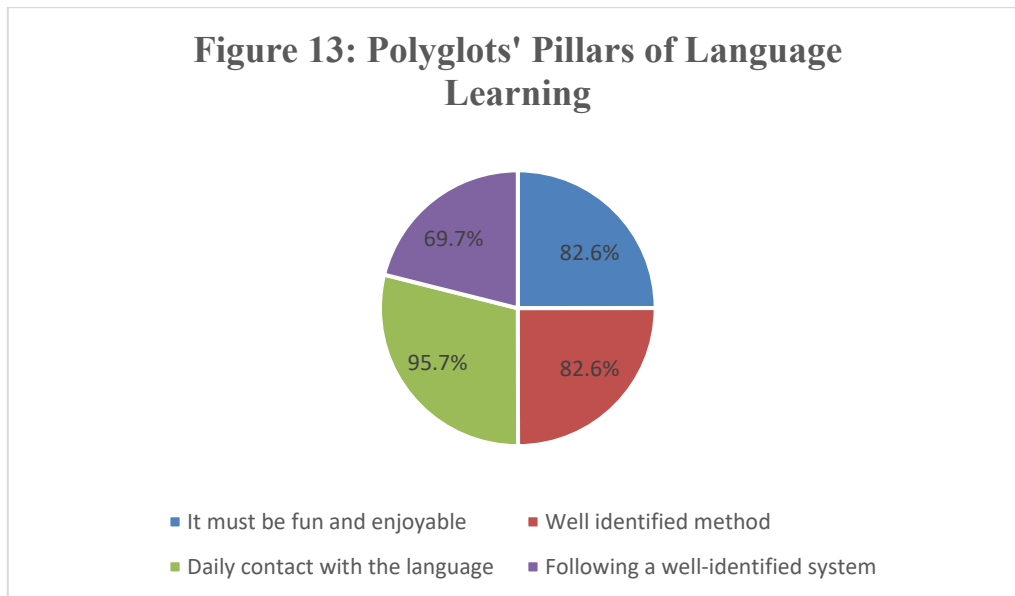
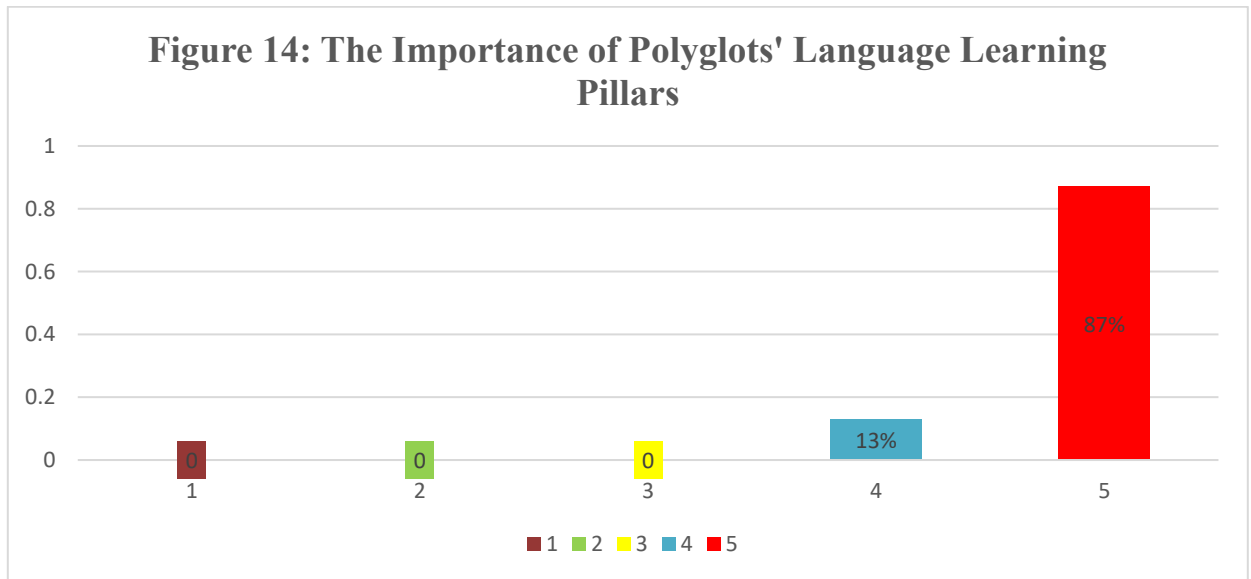


Figure (13) exhibits that all of the participants apply polyglots' pillars of language learning at varying levels. Daily contact at the top level as (95%) apply it and (82.6%) stated that they must enjoy their learning and use a well-identified method. In addition, (69.7%) follow a well-identified method. Therefore, it is noticed that participants apply polyglots' methods in their language learning.

Question 12: To what extent have you found these Polyglots' pillars helpful?



As seen in Figure (14), all of the participants maintained that the polyglots' language learning pillars are crucial in language learning. (87%) gave it 5 for 5 and (13%) gave it 4 for 5. As a result, we can say that polyglots' language learning pillars are extremely important in language learning.

Question 13: On a scale of 1 to 5, to what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Success in language learning depends on you finding ways to enjoy the process"?

Figure 15: Implying Fun in Language learning

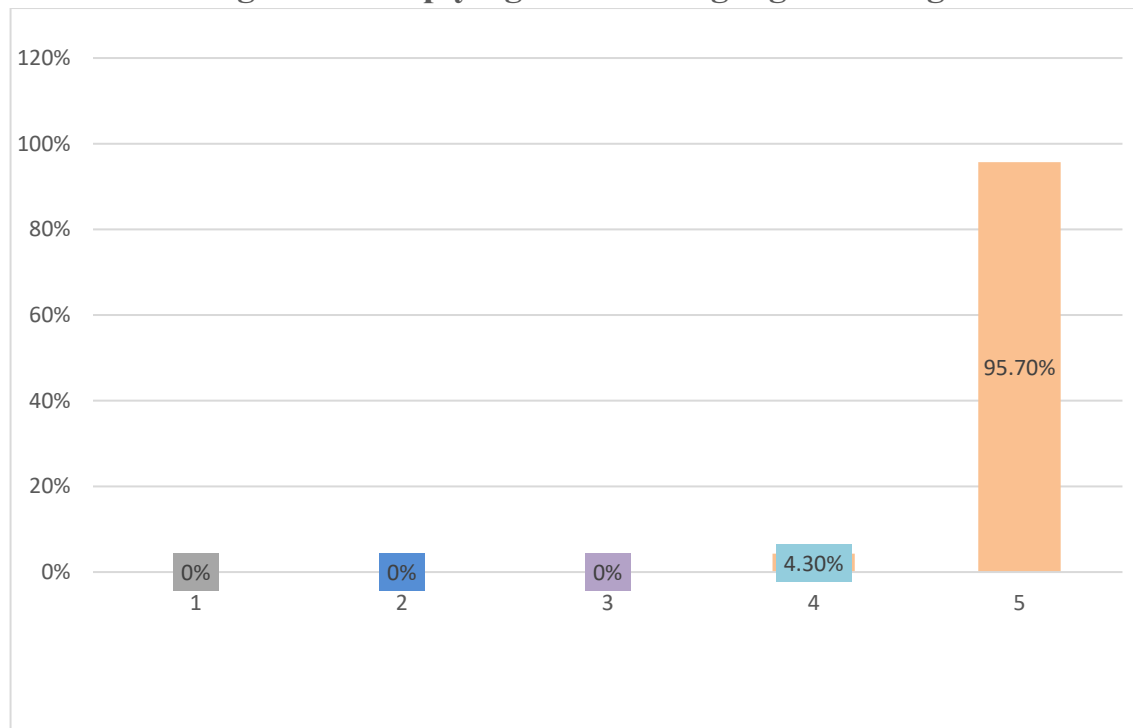
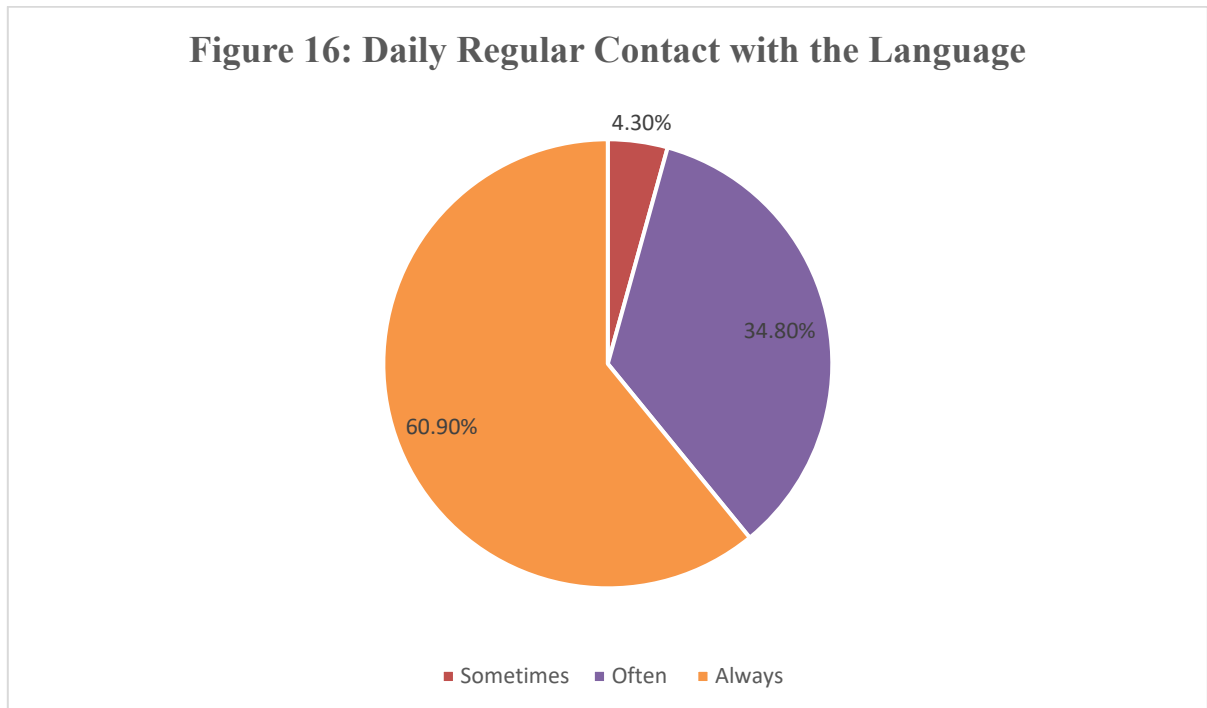


Figure (15) points out that all participants agreed that making their language learning process enjoyable is crucial. (95.70%) gave it 5 for 5 and (4.30%) gave it 4 for 5. Hence, finding ways to enjoy the language learning process can guarantee success in language learning.

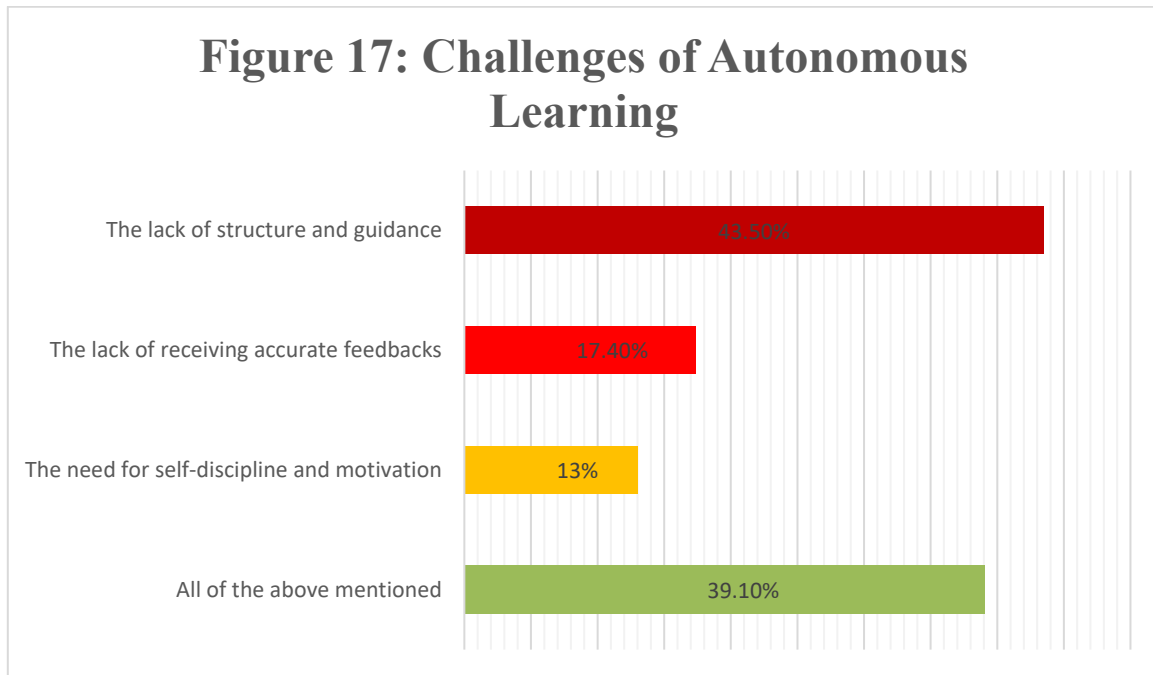
Question 14: Do you have a daily-regular exposure to the language?



It is obvious from Figure (16) that a huge number of participants (60.90%) have had daily regular contact with the language. That is to say, they considered it crucial to spend as much time as possible learning the language, within the confines of their daily routine they practice the language every day and under any circumstances.

On another dimension, more than a quarter of the participants (34.80%) expressed their regular exposure to the language as often, for they sometimes skip some days, such as weekends. That will not affect language learning in the long run. Furthermore, only a small minority of participants (4.30%) stated that they only practice the language sometimes, and that would affect their learning progress negatively. Consequently, it is noticed that the majority of participants have daily-regular contact with the language.

Question 15: What do you find the most challenging aspect of learning a language autonomously?



As seen in Figure (17), almost half of the participants (43.50%) thought that the lack of structure and guidance is their biggest challenge in learning the language autonomously, whereas (17.40%) of the participants stated that it is the lack of receiving accurate feedback and (13%) of the participants replied by the need for self-discipline and motivation. On the other hand, (39.10%) chose ‘all the before mentioned’. Therefore, it is noticed that learning a language autonomously is challenging.

Question 16: Does following a system in your learning help you overcome these challenges?

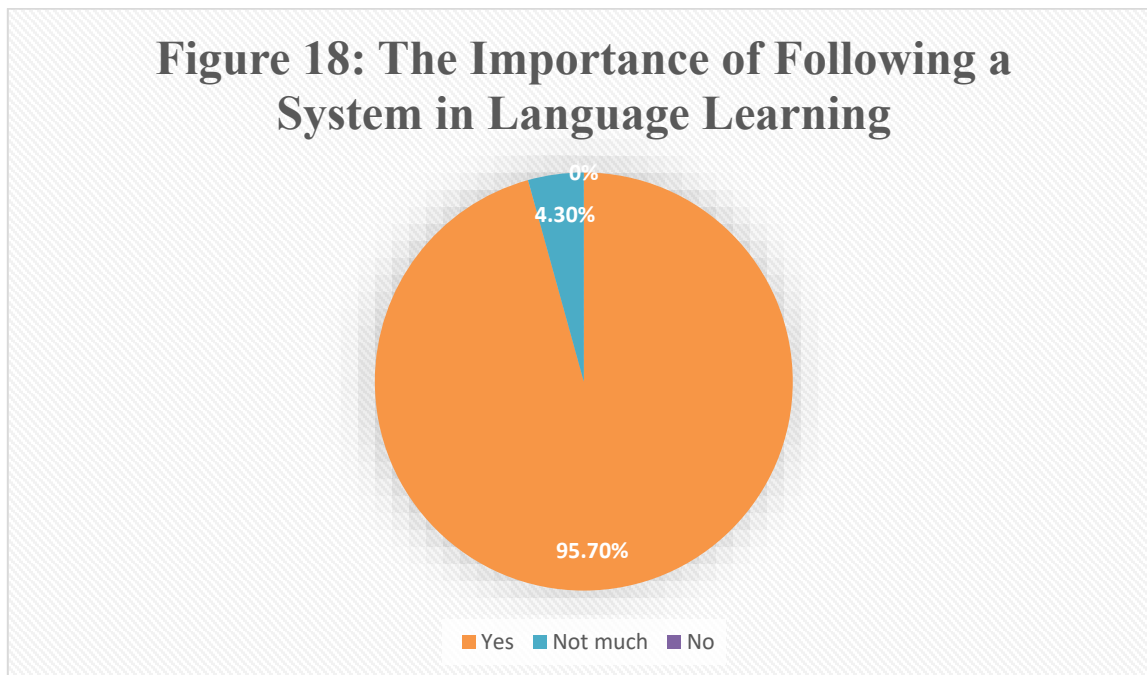


Figure (18) exhibits that most of the participants (95.70%) stated that having a system in their language learning has helped them overcome the challenges of learning autonomously. Only some a minority of (4.30%) claimed that having a system did not help them that much, and this is probably because they misused it or did not know about it in the first place. Consequently, by following a well-identified system one can overcome the challenges of learning a language autonomously.

3.7 Findings and Discussions

The interpretation and the analysis of participants' questionnaires indicate several significant points which are summarized in the following lines. Attendees of the Polyglots' mentoring program revealed that the mentoring program was helpful for them and they believed that it was designed to mentor and guide learners to learn autonomously and not to teach the language.

Moreover, from their point of view, they saw that these programs are better and more effective than the traditional school method. Additionally, they believed that it is crucial to

learn languages autonomously driven by intrinsic motivation and depend on teachers to only guide and mentor them. Furthermore, they apply the four polyglots' learning pillars, fun, method, contact and system, in their learning. Lastly, even though learning a language autonomously can be challenging, they found having a system is very helpful.

Conclusion

The third chapter dealt with the research methodology and design. It presented the results of the collected data and the interpretation of the findings. It clarified the research method, the population and the chosen sample. Moreover, it covered the validity and the reliability of the research, explained the used instrument and then it described its results. Lastly, it exhibited the discussion of the findings that were based on the results of the attendants' questionnaire. The results revealed that the attendants of these programs preferred the polyglots' mentoring programs, their new ideas and techniques over the traditional school method. In addition, the vast majority believed that it is crucial to take the learning into their own hands and make it an enjoyable process. On the whole, it was possible through this analysis to spot light on the modern way of learning foreign languages through polyglots' mentoring programs and to the techniques and ways polyglots tackle their learning.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

The present research attempted to investigate how polyglots use autonomous learning to learn foreign languages. In order to reach the main objectives, the researcher introduced two research questions. The first question was about how polyglots consider the concept of learning autonomously crucial to second language learning. The second question was about applying polyglots' methods to learning foreign languages.

The study started with two chapters concerning the theoretical background and one chapter for the field work. The first chapter tackled the main notions of 'polyglots'. It began by giving a definition to the term 'polyglot'. Moreover, it explained the major polyglots' beliefs about foreign language learning, and also it elaborates how polyglots regard motivation. The second chapter dealt with autonomous learning and how polyglots recommend learning autonomously. After that, it explained the advantages of autonomous learning over traditional learning. Finally, it tackled the polyglots' pillars of successful language learning and how they can be helpful in the process of learning foreign languages.

The third chapter was devoted to the methodology. In this chapter, the data collection instruments opted for and the analysis procedure followed were explained. Results were also reported and discussed in the third chapter. We tried to prove the research hypothesis in order to answer the research questions. We relied on a questionnaire as the most suitable instrument for collecting data about the participants' attitudes toward polyglots' mentoring programs. The results of the collected data showed positive attitudes of the participants concerning the usefulness of these mentoring programs. Moreover, the attendants saw the programs as an effective and enjoyable method of learning foreign languages.

Each research has its limitations, including the current study. First, the study covered only the common and not all the areas and beliefs of polyglots, which is a vast topic filled with details, such as their language setbacks. Second, this study tried to shed more light on the points that polyglots agree upon. However, there are many points that polyglots disagree upon

and each has his own point of view. Third, this study did not encompass the crucial role of the internet in facilitating autonomous learning and the inherent flexibility it offers in accessing a wide range of learning resources online. Fourth, the sample size of the study was relatively small, which may limit the power of the statistical analyses and the generalizability of the findings. Fifth, it was meant for the research to use a mixed-methods approach and conduct interviews with open questions to gather qualitative data from professional polyglots, but unfortunately, after the polyglots were contacted, they could not attend the interview due to their full schedule. Finally, the study relied solely on self-report data obtained via a questionnaire, which may be subject to social desirability bias.

Based on the results of this study, there are several recommendations and implications for both learners and educators of foreign languages. To begin, we should not expect language schools, teachers, or anyone else to be the saviour or best place when it comes to learning a foreign language, because no one has the ability to do so, and this is not how languages work; the only way to learn a foreign language is to learn it autonomously by applying the fundamental pillars of learning foreign languages which polyglots use in their learning and proven ultimate results. These pillars go as follows: First, we must use the things that we enjoy doing as a resource to learn foreign languages because it is an exercise routine that does not only take days, weeks, or months, but years; and to succeed in an exercise routine we need to enjoy it, or we would drop it. Second, there is no such thing as the best method to learning foreign languages; each has his own methods that suit him the best, so we need to find the method that helps us learn the most and highlight on that. Third, after you decide upon the methods you enjoy the most, the next thing is you have to do a lot of it as much as possible every day; you must have everyday contact with the language in order to witness improvements. Forth, following a system is crucial in language learning, especially in autonomous learning. Being systematic means planning your learning seriously as a polyglot, putting simple small steps to be followed every day, and including your reason behind

learning that language. Finally, language mentoring programs can be extremely beneficial when it comes to language learning because you will learn from experienced polyglots sharing their experiences and hacks and they will mentor and guide you to the suitable ways.

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Appendix

Appendix: Polyglots' Questionnaire

This questionnaire is inclusively for the individuals that have taken polyglots' language mentoring program. You are kindly invited to respond to the following questionnaire, which is aimed at collecting information on autonomous language learning, as well as your experience. I would greatly appreciate your cooperation and thoughtful response to the following questions.

Section One: Polyglots' Mentoring Programs

1. Which Polyglots' mentoring program have you followed?

Language mentoring by Lydia Machova.

The LingQ app of Steve Kaufmann.

Fluent in three months by Benny Lewis.

Fluent Forever by Gabriel Wyner.

Luca Lampariello program.

2. Did you find the language mentoring program helpful?

Yes

No

3. What does the mentoring programs do the most?

Teach the language Mentor and guide learners to learn autonomously

4. In your opinion, which method is more effective in learning foreign languages?

The traditional school methods The Polyglots' mentoring programs

5. In your opinion, what do the mentoring programs have as an advantage over traditional learning?

It encourages you to learn autonomously It brought new bright ideas to language learning

Variety of resources

It is much more fun

Others

Section Two: Autonomous Language Learning

6. How important do you think learning a language autonomously is?

Crucial

Very important

Important

Not important

Section Three: Learning the Polyglots' Way

7. Do you think that learning various languages require some kind of talent?

Yes

Maybe

Not at all

8. On a scale of 1 to 5, what extent do you agree with the following statement: The only role of a teacher is to mentor and empower student to go and learn autonomously?

Mostly disagree

1

2

3

4

5

Completely agree

9. Which type of motivation do you think is the most helpful in learning foreign languages?

Intrinsic motivation

Extrinsic motivation

10. What strategies you use to keep yourself motivated?

.....

.....

11. What of these four Polyglots' pillars of learning languages do you apply in your learning? You can choose more than one answer.

It must be fun and enjoyable

Well identified method

Daily contact with the language

Following a well-identified system

12. To what extent have you found this helpful?

Not much helpful 1 2 3 4 5 Crucial to language learning

13. On a scale of 1 to 5, to what extent do you agree with the following statement:

“Success in language learning depends on you finding ways to enjoy the process.”

Mostly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Completely agree

14. Do you have a daily-regular exposure to the language?

Sometimes Often Always

15. What do you find the most challenging aspect of learning a language autonomously?

The lack of structure and guidance The lack of receiving accurate feedback
The need for self-discipline and motivation Others

16. Does following a system in your learning help you overcome these challenges?

Yes Not much No

Résumé

Les méthodes d'apprentissage autonome utilisées par les polyglottes ont apporté de nouvelles façons d'apprendre les langues étrangères, ce qui a par conséquent bouleversé les méthodes traditionnelles et montré des résultats remarquables. La présente recherche vise à explorer, à travers le programme de mentorat des polyglottes, comment les polyglottes ont acquis différentes langues de manière indépendante et en quoi cela peut être bénéfique pour toute personne souhaitant apprendre une langue. À cet égard, le cadre théorique de l'étude s'est inspiré de la littérature sur l'apprentissage autonome des langues chez les polyglottes, en mettant l'accent particulier sur leurs propres croyances et nouvelles méthodes d'apprentissage, l'apprentissage autonome et le rôle de la motivation. L'échantillon sur lequel nous nous appuyons est composé de (30) participants au programme de mentorat des polyglottes. Cependant, seuls (23) participants ont participé. Pour la collecte des données, un questionnaire contenant seize (16) questions a été conçu dans une seule section. Cette section comprend une échelle de Likert, des questions à choix multiple, des réponses oui/non et une question ouverte. Le questionnaire est destiné aux participants des programmes de mentorat des polyglottes afin de connaître leurs attitudes à l'égard de ces programmes. Les résultats de l'étude ont montré que les polyglottes utilisent diverses stratégies et techniques d'apprentissage indépendant. Ces stratégies se sont révélées très efficaces pour soutenir l'apprentissage des langues et la plupart des participants avaient une attitude positive envers ces programmes.

Mots-clés: polyglottes, apprentissage autonome, programmes de mentorat, apprentissage d'une langue seconde, nouvelles méthodes.

الملخص

أظهر التعلم العصامي المنتهج من قبل متعددي اللغات طرقاً جديدة لتعلم اللغات الأجنبية، والتي قضت في المقابل على الأساليب التقليدية وأظهرت نتائج هائلة. يهدف البحث الحالي إلى استكشاف كيفية اكتساب متعددي اللغات للغات عديدة بشكل عصامي من خلال برنامج التأطير لمترجمي اللغات، وكيف يمكن لهذا أن يكون مفيداً لأي شخص يرغب في تعلم لغة أجنبية. في هذا الصدد تمت الاستعانة بالإطار النظري للدراسة من خلال الأدبيات المتعلقة بالتعلم اللغوي المستقل بين متعددي اللغات، مع التركيز الخاص على معتقداتهم الخاصة وطرق التعلم الجديدة والتعلم المستقل ودور المحفزات والدافعية. تتكون العينة التي استندنا إليها من (30) مشاركاً في برنامج متعددي اللغات، ومع ذلك لم يشارك سوى (23) مشاركاً. لجمع البيانات، تم تصميم استبيان يحتوي على ستة عشر (16) سؤالاً في قسم واحد. يتضمن هذا القسم أسئلة مدى الإعجاب وأسئلة نعم/لا وإجابات متعددة الاختيارات، وسؤال مفتوح. يستهدف الاستبيان المشاركين في برامج التأطير لمترجمي اللغات لمعرفة مواقفهم تجاه هذه البرامج. أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن متعددي اللغات يستخدمون مجموعة متنوعة من استراتيجيات وتقنيات التعلم المستقل. تبين أن هذه الاستراتيجيات فعالة جداً في دعم تعلم اللغة وكانت معظم مواقف المشاركين تجاه هذه البرامج إيجابية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: متعددي اللغات، التعلم الذاتي، برامج التأطير، تعلم اللغة الأجنبية، مناهج جديدة.