



Promoting Learner Autonomy: The case of Moroccan secondary EFL teachers

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DOI: <http://doi.org/10.36892/ijlls.v2i2.278>

Received:

29/04/2020

Accepted:

12/05/2020

Keywords:

Autonomy Models;
EFL Teachers; Learner
Autonomy; Moroccan
Schools

Abstract

Learner autonomy has been the concern of a number of researchers in English language teaching. The concept has begun life since the 1980s. It has been considered in the Moroccan EFL context among the priorities of education, which English language teachers try to implement in their classes. Research revealed that there are correlations between learner autonomy and other variables related to learners, which therefore calls for the promotion of learner autonomy in EFL classes. As such, the present study aims at investigating the extent to which secondary EFL teachers promote autonomy in their learners. To achieve this purpose, a quantitative research design was employed in the study. Through this design, quantitative data was generated and analyzed. Therefore, a sample of 96 (57 males and 39 females) EFL teachers completed the questionnaire. Findings revealed that EFL teachers promote learner autonomy to a great extent and that the results were conclusive among the teachers' rates of levels of agreement and disagreement regarding the strategies for promoting learner autonomy. Thus, it is concluded that the study reported on the extent to which teachers employ a number of strategies to promote learner autonomy, and that it does not necessarily mean that the study explained the degree to which teachers know how to implement those strategies, as this would be beyond the purpose of the present study.

1. INTRODUCTION

In a world characterized by changing winds and shifting sands, education resides. To successfully cope with the demands of the transnational societies, people need to be lifelong agents of their own decisions. Learners' autonomy should be fostered. In fact, a number of researchers consider autonomy as a goal of education (Benson 2011; Ouakrime, 1998; Nunan, 2003; Pawlak, 2017). In other words, the goal of teaching should be that of considering the learner as an active contributor to the teaching and learning process. According to Idri (2012), learners have the capacity to think, criticize, analyze, question, and they are able to be responsible for their own learning. Therefore, EFL teachers who are in charge of their classrooms need to transfer responsibilities to their learners (Cotteral, 2000), collaborate with learners (Nunan, 1988, 1997), give opportunities to learners to participate in class (Nunan, 2003), encourage self-monitoring (Cresswell, 2000), and support their learners to become autonomous (Intraboonsom, Darasawang, & Reinders, 2020). It is therefore a responsibility of teachers to guide learners towards achieving this critical goal (Ahmadianzadeh, Seifoori, & Tamjid, 2018).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of the current study is to investigate the extent to which Moroccan secondary EFL teachers promote learner autonomy.

Research Question

The present study aims at answering the following main question:

- To what extent are Moroccan EFL teachers ready to promote learner autonomy in their classes?

Research hypothesis

The study will either prove or disprove the following hypothesis:

- EFL teachers are ready to promote learner autonomy in their classes.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Learner autonomy has been the concern of many scholars worldwide, and, thus, it is theoretically well-grounded in the literature of English language teaching (ELT, henceforth). Indeed, it is not a concept that suddenly began life in ELT. Instead, it is born as a result of changes taken place in education in general and in EFL in particular. Such changes are reflected in the learning theories and teaching methods, which are reconsidered through the roles of the teacher, from an owner to a facilitator of knowledge (Nakata, 2011). Audiolingualism, as a method of teaching shaped by behaviourism as a learning theory, puts much focus on the content to be taught, considering the learner no more than an organism, a passive contributor, and hence lending the authority to the teacher (Brown, 2007; Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011; Nunan, 1991; Richards & Rodgers, 1986). By the late 1960s, humanistic approaches defending the status of the learner came into existence (Idri, 2012). They took the learner's affect into consideration (Idri, 2012). Communicative language teaching is a case in point here, where the learner is highly involved as an active learner who is able to construct his/her own knowledge and thus an approach that paves the way towards learner autonomy (Nunan, 2003).

2.1. Learner Autonomy Defined

Defining learner autonomy, the universally accepted definition is provided by Holec (1981), who defined the concept as "the ability to take charge of one's own learning" (as cited in Little, 2007, p. 14). This definition exhibits the characteristics of what it means to be an autonomous learner. Essentially, according to Pichugova¹, Stepura and Pravosudo (2016), Holec's definition encompasses assuming responsibility for determining objectives, choice over the content to be learned, selection of learning strategies as well as evaluation of one's own learning. Equally important, learner autonomy is not considered an inborn ability, but it is a capacity that should be fostered (Little, 1991). In the same vein, subsequent researchers have defined the term in different ways. Macaro (2008) defines autonomy as the ability to employ, effectively, cognitive and metacognitive strategies. According to Ellis (2008), learner beliefs come into play when developing autonomy is concerned. She argues that for teachers to promote learner autonomy, they should study their learners' beliefs about language learning. In addition, for autonomy to take place, learners need a convenient and relaxing environment where motivation ensues (Elashhab, 2020).

2.2. Weak and Strong Pedagogies for Autonomy

Different pedagogies and approaches have been suggested to characterize the implementation of autonomy, each of which tries to argue for the stances it holds. The strong version of pedagogy assumes that the learner, being the subject of the debate, already exerts some control to a greater or lesser degree. Put it differently, this 'type' of pedagogy considers the learner to be self-regulated in his/her learning to an extent. The weak version, on the other hand, states that learners at the early stages of their learning lack the capacity to be autonomous, which calls for training on this concern. This implicates that both the syllabus designer and the teacher should consider autonomy as a goal that is worth pursuing to train learners to be autonomous (Smith, 2003, as cited in Benson, 2011). Central to these versions

is to not favoring one perspective over the other but rather an employment of both views need to be the case (Oxford, 2003, as cited in Benson, 2011).

In the same line of thought, Nunan (1997) argues that only few learners are autonomous in their learning. Most importantly, according to Nunan (1997), autonomy is a matter of degrees and not an “absolute concept” (p. 193), considering that autonomy is critical to learners’ effective learning and that the mission of developing autonomy in language learners must be done through appropriate pedagogical procedures. Thus, the degree of autonomy that language learners attain is controlled by the learners’ characteristics that are cognitive and psychological in nature. Social, cultural and educational setting also come into play when it comes to autonomy (Nunan, 1997).

2.3. Autonomy in Moroccan EFL Secondary Schools

Many reforms on the approaches and methods adopted in the teaching of English language in the Moroccan schools have taken place the latest of which is manifested in English Guidelines for Moroccan Secondary Schools (ELGMSS, henceforth) suggested by the Ministry of National Education (2007) to adopt the standards-based approach. This approach calls for what is called 5 Cs, which can be summed up as follows:

1. **Communication:** Learners will communicate in both oral and written forms, interpret both oral and written messages, show cultural understanding, and present oral and written information to various audiences for a variety of purposes. Three modes of communication are involved here: the *interpersonal*, *interpretive*, and *presentational* communication.
2. **Cultures:** Learners will gain deeper understanding of their culture(s) and other cultures in terms of their perspectives (e.g. values, ideas, attitudes, etc.), practices (pattern of social interactions), and products (e.g. books, laws, music, etc.).
3. **Connections:** Learners will make connections with other subject areas; and acquire information and use through English for their own purposes.
4. **Comparisons:** Learners will gain awareness of cross-cultural similarities and differences (in terms of both language(s) and culture).
5. **Communities:** Learners will extend their learning experiences from the EFL classroom to the outside world through activities such as the use of the internet. They will therefore be made aware that we live in a global world (p.5).

Within these 5 Cs, learner training for autonomy is encouraged. The importance of learner training lies in its potential to foster learner autonomy (Little, 1995; Thornbury & Watkins, 2007). Thus, according to the guidelines put forward by the ministry of national education (2007), the curriculum and the syllabi should be ready to target and integrate the above mentioned components of the standards-based approach. Aligned with these standards, learners will be able to learn how to learn and become autonomous language learners. This learner training is encouraged by the ministry of education, as there is an agreement in the literature that autonomy is a complex concept, “entailing various dimensions and components” (Tassinari, 2012, p. 28). Therefore, learners need training concurrently with the language being taught to overcome the ensuing challenge of autonomy. Strategy training, for instance, helps learners to develop their learning skills (Nhem, 2019), and paves the way towards a greater development of autonomy in learners (Cohen, 2010).

Moreover, according to the ELGMSS proposed by the National Ministry of Education (2007), the teaching of English language in the Moroccan EFL secondary schools aims at fostering learner learning, lifelong learning and learner autonomy. In these guidelines, learner autonomy is defined as “the freedom and ability to manage one’s own affairs, which implies the right to make decisions about what, why and how to learn” (ELGMSS, 2007, p. 49). The definition indicates the sort of learners that the curriculum and syllabus designers want EFL secondary students to be; those who will take charge of their learning. In addition, the literature on learner and teacher autonomy state that “the promotion of learner autonomy

depends on the promotion of teacher autonomy” (Aoki, 2002; Benson, 2001; Little, 1995; Nakata, 2009; Smith, 2000, as cited in Nakata, 2011, p. 901). This reciprocal relationship, according to Nakata (2011), leads to the inclusion of both learner and professional autonomy as being the inseparable type of readiness to promote learner autonomy. In other words, according to Nakata (2011), a teacher who is autonomous; that is, one who is aware of the importance of autonomy, has positive attitudes towards fostering it, and one who constantly assesses students’ progress and help students to be self-reliant is the one that is in a position to promote autonomy in his/her students.

A number of models of autonomy (Benson, 2011; Macaro 1997: 2008; Nunan, 1997; Oxford, 2003), to cite but a few, have been introduced in the literature of autonomy. Implementing learner autonomy in EFL classrooms, it is recommended in the English language guidelines for the Moroccan secondary schools (2007) that teachers use Nunan’s (1997) model of autonomy. In line with the discussion above on the weak and strong versions of pedagogies for autonomy, Nunan’s (1997) notion of autonomy is that young learners are not expected to be already autonomous. Instead, they are to be helped gradually. He, therefore, proposes a model composed of five levels for fostering learner autonomy ranging from awareness raising on goals of the materials through other stages to the transcendence level in which learners exceed beyond the walls of the classroom, extending their learning experiences to the real world. What follows, thus, constitutes the five principles of Nunan’s (1997) model of autonomy:

Level	Learner action	Content	Process
1	Awareness	Learners are made aware of the pedagogical goals and content of the materials they are using.	Learners identify strategy implications of pedagogical tasks and identify their own preferred learning styles/strategies.
2	Involvement	Learners are involved in selecting their own goals from a range of alternatives on offer	Learners make choices among a range of options.
3	Intervention	Learners are involved in modifying and adapting the goals and content of the learning programme.	Learners modify/adapt tasks.
4	Creation	Learners create their own goals and objectives.	Learners create their own tasks.
5	Transcendence	Learners go beyond the classroom and make links between the content of classroom learning and the world beyond	Learners become teachers and researchers.

Figure 1. Autonomy: levels of implementation (Nunan, 1997)

The table above sums up the five levels of autonomy. Accordingly, Nunan (1997) states that some of the principles “are readily incorporated than others” (p. 194). As is schematized in the table, the purpose of the first level is to sensitize learners about the content and goals of the materials being used. The second step is to slightly involve learners in the selection of close-ended options concerning the content. The next level is where learners are stimulated to ‘intervene’ and modify the tasks of learning. At the fourth step, learners will

decide on what content to learn as well as ‘create’ their learning tasks. Finally, after being made aware of the goals of the content, being involved, being encouraged to intervene, and being able to create their own tasks, learners will extend their learning experiences to the outside world and continue “to create their own learning materials from the resources that exist in the community” (Nunan, 1997, p. 195).

In line with Nunan’s principles of learner autonomy, ELGFSS (2007) specify the roles that teachers should play in the classroom to help learners take responsibility for their own learning. These roles include agents of change, facilitators of learning, language consultants, and language learners. In essence, teachers should sincerely change their traditionally assigned roles. In other words, it is stated in the guidelines (2007) that no teacher should see him/herself as “a purveyor of knowledge or wielder of power” (p. 50). This should be the case as it is argued that the development of autonomy is in everyone’s nature (Little, 2007). In their self-determination theory, Deci and Ryan (2000) consider autonomy, in addition to the need for competence and for relatedness, as an innate basic need “that we must satisfy to achieve a sense of self-fulfillment” (as cited in Little, 2007, p. 17).

3. METHOD

In any inquiry, the methodological design is of crucial significance. As such, this section introduces the methodological approach and research design employed in the present study to carry out the main research question set out in the introduction. More specifically, it will shed light on the research design and procedures, participants and sampling strategy, and finally the instrument made use of in this study.

3.1. Research Design and Procedures

The present study employed a cross-sectional survey research, using quantitative approach that is mainly characterized by a process of generating and interpreting a quantitative data. The design is a non-experimental one, using a self-completion questionnaire, which is the instrument by which the data was collected, providing numeric and quantitative description of the data. When collected, the data were coded and entered into the computer using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Software (SPSS) ‘version 23’. It was analyzed using quantitative procedures through the use of descriptive statistics, namely frequencies and percentages. Starting with the background information of the participants, the frequency of the teachers’ gender (females-males) was calculated alongside their teaching experience, of which the range is (1-2; 3-4; 5-6; and more than 7 years). The study then ran descriptive statistics for the strategies teachers use to promote learner and professional autonomy.

3.2. Participants

The population of the study targeted Moroccan secondary EFL teachers. Thus, a sample of 96 participants completed fully all the items, leaving no room for missing data being undesirable. With respect to missing data, Bryman (2008) contends that “questions that seem not to be understood ... or questions that are not often answered should be apparent” (p. 263). The type of the sampling used in the current study was non-probability convenience sampling, accessing the participants available. According to Bryman (2008), this type of sampling increases the response rate of the participants. In other words, there is the likelihood that the questionnaires will be returned back with a good rate of response.

3.3. Instruments

This study employed a questionnaire to collect data from EFL Moroccan teachers’ readiness to promote learner autonomy. There are many reasons behind the employment of such an instrument over other methods. These include the opportunity to administer the questionnaires to a large sample of respondents from different locations. According to

Dornyei and Taguchi (2010), questionnaires are ‘versatile’ in that they “can be used successfully with a variety of people in a variety of situations targeting a variety of topics” (p. 6). Convenience, for the participants too, is ensured as they complete the questionnaire at their own pace (Bryman, 2008). Another important benefit is generalizability of the results being the goal of the quantitative research (Newman & Benz, 1998, as cited in Ait Hammou and Elfatih, 2019).

The questionnaire of the present study adopted Nakata’s (2011) scale measurement of teachers’ readiness to promote learner autonomy. For the purpose of the present study and context, one item from the original scale was deleted along with some slight changes. For the present study, the questionnaire consisted of three main parts. The first part was devoted to collect data on what Dornyei and Taguchi (2010) call ‘factual questions’ aiming at gathering information about some demographic characteristics, namely, for the present study, gender and teaching experience of the informants in question. The second part, entitled ‘strategies to promote learner autonomy’, contained 10 items in the form of statements. Finally, the third part is about strategies to promote professional autonomy, which included 12 statement items as well. To measure the teachers’ degree of promoting autonomy, the participants were voluntarily asked to indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement with those statements, using a five-point Likert scale ranging from ‘Strongly disagree’, ‘disagree’, ‘Neutral’, ‘agree’, and ‘strongly agree’, each of which was coded from 1 to 5, respectively.

Worth stating also is the reliability of the scale used in the present study. Reliability has to do with the consistency of measures (Bryman, 2008; Creswell, 2014). In this study, Cronbach’s alpha, a statistical test being commonly used to measure the internal reliability (Rasinger, 2010), was used. According to Dornyei and Taguchi (2010), Cronbach’s alpha ranges between 0 and +1. As such, Bryman (2008) asserts that a perfect reliability occurs when the alpha reaches 1, and 0 indicates no reliability at all. Dornyei and Taguchi (2010) suggest that the value of Cronbach’s alpha that does not approach at least .60 is a sign indicating the warning of the scale in question, which therefore needs to be reconsidered. For the present study, the level of Chronbach’s alpha is .88, which shows a highly acceptable level of reliability.

4. RESULTS

This section will present the results of the data collected in the present study. It contains tables displaying the frequencies along with the corresponding percentages alike. For consistency purposes, it starts with the analysis of the questions concerning demographic characteristics pertaining to the participants, namely their gender and years of teaching experience. They are presented and described statistically in terms of frequency of occurrence. The section then goes on to present and analyze the data pertaining to the research question, which concerns the extent to which EFL teachers are ready to promote learner autonomy, set out in the introduction of the study.

4.1. Demographic Characteristics

This section is a space where some factual questions aiming at finding out about some personal background information as well as professional information about the participants sampled in the study are presented.

Table 1. Gender of the Participants

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	57	59,4%
Female	39	40,6%
Total	96	100%

As is clearly shown in the above table, the distribution of gender was not that balanced with male respondents representing 59.4% and females representing 40.6%.

Table 2. Teaching Experience of the Participants

Teaching Experience	Frequency	Percentage
1-2 years	35	36,5%
3-4 years	19	19,8%
5-6 years	10	10,4%
More than 7 years	32	33,3%
Total	96	100%

The above table clearly shows that the dominant group in terms of teaching experience is the one whose range varies between 1-2 years of teaching experience with a percentage of 36.5%. Then follows the group with more than 7 years of teaching occupying 33.3% of the participants. The last two groups that vary between 3-4 years and 5-6 years of teaching consist of 19.8% and 10.4% participants, respectively.

The following tables are presented to illicit EFL teachers' degree of promoting learner and professional autonomy.

4.2. Teachers' Readiness for Promoting Learner and Professional Autonomy

The following tables report on the findings concerning the degree to which EFL teachers promote autonomy in their learners.

Note: (SD) = strongly disagree, (D) = disagree, (N) = neutral, (A) = agree, and (SA) = strongly agree.

Table 3. Strategies for promoting learner autonomy

Items	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %
1. I help learners to identify their own strengths and weaknesses	4.2	3.1	9.4	46.9	36.5
2. I help learners to set up their own learning goals	4.2	11.5	10.4	43.8	30.2
3. I help learners to decide what to learn outside of the classroom	3.1	9.4	21.9	39.6	26.0
4. I help learners to evaluate their own learning and progress	1.0	5.2	9.4	65.6	18.8
5. I help learners to stimulate their own interest in learning English	0.0	2.1	10.4	54.2	33.3
6. I help learners to learn from peers, not just from teachers	1.0	1.0	7.3	37.5	53.1
7. I help learners to become more self-directed in their learning	1.0	5.2	13.5	49.0	31.3
8. I give learners chances to offer opinions in their learning	1.0	3.1	6.3	38.5	51.0
9. I help learners to discover knowledge in English on their own rather than waiting for knowledge from the teacher	0.0	2.1	6.3	52.1	39.6
10. I give learners chances to offer opinions on what to learn in the classroom	4.2	13.5	25.0	39.6	17.7

The results presented in table 3 indicate that the majority of EFL teachers' readiness to promote autonomy deemed satisfying. The majority of teachers agree (46.9%) or strongly agree (36.5%) that they help their learners to identify their strengths and weaknesses, with only insignificant number of teachers disagreeing (3.1%) or strongly disagreeing (4.2%) with

the item. A significant number of the participants agree (43,8%) or strongly agree (30,2%) that they help learners to set up their own learning goals. Regarding the item number 3, the participants agree (39,6%) or strongly agree (26%) that they help their learners to make decisions concerning their learning outside the walls of the classroom. Over half of the participants agree (65,6%) or strongly agree (18,8%) that they help their learners to evaluate their learning progress. Item number 5 demonstrates that more than half of the participants (54,2%) agree or strongly agree (33,3%) that they help learners to stimulate their own interest in learning English.

Further, the results indicate that the majority of respondents agree (37,5%) or strongly agree (53,1%) on helping learners to learn from their peers. Very few teachers (2%) seemed to disagree with the statement. A large number of teachers agree (49%) or strongly agree (31,3%) that they help their learners to be self-directed. In response to item number 8, teachers agree (38,5%) or strongly agree (51%) that they give their learners chances to offer their own opinions regarding learning. Results of item 9 present that teachers agree (52,1%) or strongly agree (39,6%) that they help their learners to discover knowledge of English on their own. With regard to item 10, teachers agree (39,6%) or strongly agree (17,7%) that they help their students to offer opinions concerning what to learn in the classroom, while a percentage of (25%) remain neutral.

Table 4. Strategies for promoting professional autonomy

Items	SD	D	N	A	SA
%	%	%	%	%	%
11. I identify their own strengths and weaknesses	2.1	4.2	15.6	54.2	24.0
12. I set up their own learning goals	3.1	17.7	26.0	35.4	17.7
13. I decide what to learn outside of the classroom	9.4	30.2	17.7	29.2	13.5
14. I evaluate their own learning and progress	2.1	6.3	14.6	53.1	24.0
15. I stimulate their own interest in learning English	1.0	4.2	14.6	53.1	27.1
16. I motivate myself in improving teaching skills required for English teachers	2.1	0.0	11.5	35.4	51.0
17. I motivate myself in improving English proficiency required for English teachers	2.1	2.1	5.2	38.5	52.1
18. I learn from colleagues at the school and those outside the school	2.1	0.0	5.2	52.1	40.6
19. I become self-directed in improving my teaching methods, techniques, etc.	2.1	6.3	10.4	44.8	36.5
20. I exchange my opinions about the unit texts with other teachers	2.1	4.2	15.6	50.0	28.1
21. I listen to learners' voices and learn from them	1.0	3.1	15.6	49.0	31.3
22. I exchange opinions about the ideal lesson With other teachers	2.1	3.1	12.5	53.1	29.2

Table 4 displays results concerning strategies for promoting professional autonomy. A large number of teachers agree (54,2%) or strongly agree (24%) that they identify their own strengths and weaknesses. Over half of the participants agree (35,4%) or strongly agree (17,7%) on setting up their students' learning goals. In response to item number 13, a quite significant number of teachers disagree (30,2%) or strongly disagree (9,4%) on deciding what to learn outside the classroom; whereas, 29,2% and 13,5% agree and strongly agree with the statement item, respectively. With regard to statement item number 14, over half of the teachers agree (53,1%) or strongly agree (24%) on evaluating their students' learning and progress. Almost a similar number of teachers agree (53,1%) or strongly agree (27,1%) on stimulating their learners' interest in their learning of English. Another significant number of

teachers agree (35.4%) or strongly agree (51%) on motivating themselves in improving their teaching skills.

Additionally, results of item statement 17 presents that a large number of teachers agree (38.5%) or strongly agree (52.1%) on motivating themselves in improving their overall English proficiency. Another very large number of teachers opted for agreement (52.1%) or a strong agreement (40.6%) on learning from their colleagues both at and outside the school. Very significant is also the number of teachers who agree (44.8) or strongly agree (36.5%) on their readiness to become self-directed in improving their teaching methods and techniques. Concerning exchanging opinions about the unit texts to be taught with their colleagues, a large number of teachers (50%) agree or strongly agree (28.1%) with the statement. Also, the majority of the teachers agree (49%) or strongly agree (31.3) on listening to their learners' voices. Finally, a large number of teachers agree (53.1%) or strongly agree (29.2%) on exchanging opinions about the ideal lesson with their colleagues.

5. DISCUSSION

Generally, EFL teachers' readiness to promote learner autonomy is significantly high. Apparently, the vast majority of teachers are ready to promote learner autonomy with percentages, summarizing the two degrees of agreement, swing between 42.7% as the least degree of general agreement and 92.7% as the highest rate of agreement. The statement item that receives the lowest rate of agreement is the one related to teachers' self-directedness to make decisions as to what to learn outside the school; whereas, the one with the highest rate of general agreement concerns the teachers' self-agency to learn from their colleagues. This implies that EFL teachers are perceived to be professionally more autonomous in what concerns collaborative autonomy; learning from and with peers, which is a good sign as to the promotion of learner autonomy. In other words, the proposition made in the literature, as discussed earlier, that learner autonomy depends on teacher autonomy (Aoki, 2002; Benson, 2001; Little, 1995; Nakata, 2009; Smith, 2000, as cited in Nakata, 2011), which the present study supports. It follows that the second highest rate of agreement with a percentage of 91.7% is lent to the statement concerning teachers helping their learners to discover knowledge in English on their own rather than wait for knowledge only from teachers. Unlike the present study's findings, in a study on Japanese EFL teachers' readiness to promote learner autonomy by Nakata (2011), it was revealed that these teachers were not ready to foster autonomy in their classes.

Moreover, it was found that the rates are conclusive. As illustrated in both tables 3 and 4, almost the same percentages go along the agreement column as well as very insignificant differences among the disagreement column. For example, agreement and strong agreement hold an almost consistent rate of responses across the statement items. The same applies to the disagreement responses across all the items. This points to the importance of promoting learner autonomy in the Moroccan EFL classes. Evidently, thus, EFL teachers promote learner autonomy to a great extent as depicted by the tables above. These findings are expected where a more learner-centered approach is integrated. In fact, there is a space devoted to learning how to learn in the Moroccan EFL textbooks in every unit's theme. What this means is that the aforementioned strategies for promoting learner autonomy are feasible since the guidelines stresses, as already discussed in the related literature, the importance of learner learning and autonomy. These findings support a study by Akar, Dermir, and Urun (2014) who found that EFL high school teachers were highly motivated to enhance autonomy in their students.

Worth noting also is that, according to Little (1995), autonomy does not mean a total independence from one's peers. Indeed, item number 18 "learning from colleagues", item 6 "helping learners learn from their peers not just from their teachers", and item 22 "exchanging opinions about the ideal lesson with colleagues", which represent Little's statement, receive the highest rates with percentages of 92.7%, 90.6%, and 82.3%, respectively. This indicates that EFL teachers are determined and are responsible enough to

employ strategies to promote learner autonomy in their classes, as they truly understand the value of what it means to promote autonomy. This can be a result of the fact that they are made aware of the importance of learner autonomy in the guidelines related to ELT in the Moroccan schools put forward by the ministry of education (2007).

6. CONCLUSION

Taken as a whole, the present study indicated that EFL teachers are ready to provide learners with chances to be autonomous language learners. Both strategies concerning both learner autonomy and professional autonomy, making up the psychological dimension of teachers' readiness to promote autonomy, are determined to be employed to a great extent as depicted by the tables. Significant also is the fact that the rates regarding the statement items across the agreement, disagreement, and neutrality responses were conclusive.

That being concluded, the teachers' use of these strategies to promote autonomy does not, however, mean that the present study explains the behavioural dimension. That is, the study does not inform us about how these teachers actually employ these strategies and put them into practice. That is thus one of the limitations to be drawn as that would be beyond the purpose of the study which was to investigate whether EFL teachers promote autonomy or not. This of course was manifested in the questionnaire items targeting the use of strategies for promoting learner and professional autonomy. Therefore, sticking to the purpose of the study, it reported the findings concerning the extent to which EFL teachers use the aforementioned strategies. Overall, teachers, as displayed in the findings, provide a supportive environment where learners are helped to assume responsibility and hence enjoy autonomy, which confirms the hypothesis stated in the introduction.

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