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آموزش نرم افزار Word برای پژوهشگران

آموزش نرم افزار Word برای پژوهشگران

Learner Autonomy or Teacher Authority

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Abstract

Language learning studies have become increasingly interested in psychological studies on language learners stressing learners' role in their own learning process. Agency, as an emergent concept in language pedagogy, highlights the issues of learner autonomy, inhibition or anxiety and the power relations between teacher and learners to foster the former and reduce the latter. This paper attempts to contribute to a fuller understanding of learners' agency and the role of classroom environment in fostering agency in EFL majoring students. Among factors which contribute to learner agency such as self regulation, motivation, learners' self concept, and the power relation between teacher and students, the focus of this study is on learner autonomy, and anxiety and teacher authority in agentic participation of learners at university. Relying on the socio-cultural framework or complex dynamic system and mixed method research, we report on the results of interview and questionnaire grounded investigation of Kashan university EFL students attitudes toward agency and the effect of educational environment on reducing anxiety and the instructors role in fostering agency and finally the relationship between students' will and capacity to act (i.e. agency) and their scores.

Key terms: *Learner, Teacher, Autonomy, Anxiety, Authority*

1. Introduction

The term "agency" has become increasingly prevalent in second language acquisition and applied linguistics literature during the past few decades. It has also shed light on the issue of educational environment and its influence on learner agency. According to Benson (2001) two major developments within Second Language Acquisition (SLA) have led to an increased interest in the concept of learner agency. The first emphasises the role of the learner as an active key agent in learning processes and concerns the importance of the concepts of learner-centredness and autonomy. The second advancement in SLA reflects the increasing recognition of more socio-constructivist understandings of learners. This acknowledges the agentic interaction between learners and their environments and the learning contexts. In this view learners are agents who engage in building their own terms and conditions of learning contexts.

One cannot discuss learner autonomy without considering the power relations between teacher and learners. In addition, the concept of power relations is a key concept of critical pedagogy which is a transformative approach and fosters changes in systems where necessary. Education should not prevent students from participating in the daily discourses that construct their educational practices. To put it in Van Lier's words (2004) teachers can encourage students to develop their own 'voice' in the new language by embedding language in meaningful activity.

Therefore learners should not be viewed as passive masses of bodies without capacity for autonomy or critical thinking, as often perceived by their teachers (Murphy et al, 2009).

In a paper written in 2006, Giroux urges teachers to provide conditions that foster the knowledge, skills, and culture of questioning in order to engage students in critical dialogue with the past, question authority and its corresponding impacts, as well as power relations and prepare themselves for what it means to be critical, active citizens not only in interrelated local and national spheres, but also in global spheres. He further argues that public education has always attempted to liberate humanity from the blind obedience to authority; moreover autonomy of individuals takes place under the conditions that guarantee the workings of an autonomous society. Giroux believes that teachers in both public schools and higher education should relate their work to larger social issues, offering students knowledge, debate, and dialogue about pressing social problems and help students come to terms with their own power as individual and social agents (Giroux 2006).

Our objective in this paper is to explore the concept of agency and probe into factors which influence learner agency such as, learner's identity, anxiety including general anxiety, classroom anxiety, foreign language learning anxiety and its effects. We will further explain learner autonomy, teacher autonomy and finally focus on the issue of teacher authority. We also want to discuss anxiety in relation to the factors causing anxiety in EFL classroom and its effect on learners. In order to step out of theory, see it in real-life contexts and delve into students' accounts of autonomy or self-regulation, anxiety, and teacher authority, a study was conducted on the afore mentioned topics at Kashan University in Iran through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews.

Review of related literature

2. What is agency?

Gao (2010) has defined agency as “an individual's will and capacity to act.” In SLA, renewed interest about agency has emerged from recent theoretical debates about the role of structure/society and the individual. There are two main perspectives which have been polarised with one view, cognitive theorists, giving primacy to the individual's cognition and the other view assigning primacy to social contexts. However, recently another perspective has gained ground which takes a more balanced view and assigns equal importance to both the individual and the context. This view sees humans as agents able to act upon their contexts, rather than just reacting to them.

Bandura (1989: 1175) as cited in Mercer (2011) explains that “the capacity to exercise control over one's thought processes, motivation, and action is a distinctly human characteristic”. In his ‘social cognitive’ theory, he proposes a triadic model of human behaviour:

“...persons are neither autonomous agents nor simply mechanical conveyors of animating environmental influences. Rather, they make causal contribution to their own motivation and action within a system of triadic reciprocal causation. In this model of reciprocal causation, action, cognitive, affective, and other personal factors, and

environmental events all operate as interacting determinants”.

Students should be aware of their own agency and must believe that they can exercise that agency in order to manage learning effectively and regulate emotional responses. “Effective learners are aware of themselves as active agents capable of exercising agency through various strategies to actively shape their learning experiences as well as their motivational responses.” (Bown 2009 as cited in Mercer)

According to Gao (2010) as mentioned in his book ‘Strategic Language Learning: the Roles of Agency and Context’ the concept of learner agency needs to be extended to include a number of elements other than learners’ metacognitive knowledge or self-regulatory competence. In this study Gao views learners’ motive/beliefs system as one of the most critical parts of learner agency.

On the other hand, other researchers such as Toohey and Norton (2003) suggest that learner agency is a complex phenomenon that is closely related with other learner and contextual factors, their embodied experiences and their individual histories in sociocultural contexts. They further believe that learner agency plays a central role in facilitating autonomous, self-regulatory and goal-orientated strategic learning behaviours.

Toohey and Norton’s sociocultural perspective on L2 learning mostly focuses on how practices in specific social, historical, and cultural contexts provide or restrict the access of learners to community activities and thus to learning rather than focus so much on individual learners per se. In other words such an approach delves into the fundamentally social nature of learning and cognition (Kirshner and Whitson (1997) as cited in Toohey and Norton). In one of their articles on autonomous learners, Toohey and Norton wrote:

“Inspired by the early twentieth-century work of Vygotsky (1978) and that of more contemporary cultural psychologists, anthropologists and educators, second language researchers with interests in sociocultural theory have urged that our traditional focus on individuals and their functioning needs to shift to a focus on activities and settings and their learning that inevitably accompanies social practice.”

3. Identity

As Canagarajah (2003) points out, there has been a ‘social turn’ in applied linguistics literature that puts emphasis on sociocultural factors involved in the construction of individuals and their learning. There is another ‘turn’ in the realm of language which sheds light on our understanding of the relation between people and language. This “turn” which has been introduced by post-structuralism is the ‘linguistic turn’ which recognizes that language practices are socially constituted and that social beings are discursively produced. This view has applied the notion of ‘social identity’ (Pierce, 1996) to learners and teachers in second language contexts. In Pierce’s view, identity is complex and multiple and changes over time.

According to Morgan (2010) learning too is a complex process involving ‘*identification*’ – that is, of acquiring an identity, of becoming someone or something. Morgan relates this process of becoming to how we understand ourselves and our professional roles and responsibilities. He takes the example of the way we understand ourselves in relation to the idea of ‘change’ which suggests that we might see ourselves as bystanders or passive recipients of the changes English brings to our lives. Alternatively, we might come to see ourselves as

active participants in how these changes take place. Or, it may be a bit of both, depending on the personal and professional constraints in our lives. He believes that learners should become agents of 'change' i.e. active participants and transformative practitioners.

In a recent qualitative study on two successful language learners' social interactions, Toohey and Norton (2003) discovered that both learners sought to set up counter-discourses in which their identities could be respected and their resources valued rather than monitoring their linguistic performances more diligently and exploiting the target language systematically (i.e. focusing on language acquisition per se.)

4. Anxiety

Tension or worry is believed to hinder effective learning. However, there are opposing views about the psychological variables that affect one's willingness to communicate. Some scholars are of the opinion that factors such as anxiety, poor motivation, or low level of confidence are said to block learning while others believe that this block can be overcome by an affect such as the desire to assimilate.

In the previous section we explored different types of identities. We discussed identity as social identity or individual. Social science is highly interested in viewing human as part of the society rather than considering the very self or the individual. Whereas in a modernist model importance is given to the cognitive processes of the individual and control of those processes is presumed. Therefore, in a social model much importance is given to the individual learner in determining his or her own learning outcomes and the way these outcomes influence an individual's social life (Ellwood, 2004).

Hence affective elements or psychological variables (particularly anxiety in our discussion) have been sources of debate. We wish to delve into the issue of anxiety in relation to teacher's authority or the overall authoritative ambiance in learning environments and want to see its effects. In order to provide a broader view we will explain different types of anxiety.

4.1. *Types of anxiety*

Participating in an EFL classroom requires interaction and communication. Communication anxiety commonly affects many foreign language learners. Classroom anxiety is a topic deserving continuing investigation because anxiety can hinder performance and achievement. In a study conducted by Mohseni and Ameri (2010) a brand new taxonomy was offered which drew attention to some problems long neglected in language teaching and learning namely, inside school (Intramural) and outside school (extramural) inhibition. The former relates to inhibitions induced by malefactors in university or school, such as difficult course books, teachers, students and the academic setting in general, whereas the latter arise from within a student which in turn fall into several categories, such as: psychological, biological, physiological, medical, familial, ideological, cultural, vocational, and sociological.

Others such as Andrade and Williams (2009) are of the opinion that anxieties can be described and categorized in different ways which overlap to a certain degree. The first in their grouping in general terms is 'trait anxiety' which is defined as the tendency of a person to be nervous or feel tension no matter what circumstances they are in. On the other hand, they identified 'state (situational) anxiety' which is being nervous or tense at a particular moment in response to some outside stimulus (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1989 as cited in Andrade and

Williams 2009). Communication anxiety and fear of negative evaluation are types of state (situational) anxiety. The former occurs when people interact verbally and the latter may be present when people worry about what others think of them (Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope, 1986; as cited in Andrade and Williams 2009).

Since classroom is the context or situation where part of learning occurs and due to our study objectives, we wish to elaborate on the other types of situational anxiety which are observed in the context of classrooms such as cognitive tension, affective tension, test anxiety, and subject or task anxiety.

According to Andrade and Williams (2009) when learners' expectations of the content and organization of a course are not met they may feel cognitive tension. Learners may suffer from affective tension when there is unsatisfactory interaction with other learners or the instructor. Test anxiety is self explanatory and task anxiety refers to nervousness and tension associated with grammar, listening, public speaking, reading and writing.

4.2. Footprints of foreign language learning anxiety

Effects of foreign language anxiety can be classified as physical, psychological and social. Rapid heartbeat, muscle tension, dry mouth, and excessive perspiration are examples of physical outcomes of anxiety in foreign language classrooms. Psychological symptoms can include embarrassment, feelings of helplessness, going blank, and poor memory recall and retention. Manifestations of negative social behavior may be in such ways as inappropriate silence, unwillingness to participate, absenteeism, and withdrawal from the course.

In contrast to this *debilitative anxiety*, (Scovel, 1978 as cited in Andrade et. al.) learner anxiety has got its own proponents, too. Some researchers are of the opinion that a bit of anxiety is not really bad for learners since this can be a driving force for more and more accomplishments in the future. They also argue that learners should learn to manage and control their anxiety and turn it to their advantage.

As cited in Andrade et.al. (2009) Kondo and Yang (2003) found in their study of 148 university students in Japan that classroom anxiety was associated with three main factors: low proficiency, fear of negative evaluation by classmates, and speaking activities. A more recent study done by Andrade and Williams in 2009 revealed that many students enter their university EFL classes expecting to experience an anxiety-provoking situation and that anxiety is likely to significantly hinder the performance of some students. Foreign language learning anxiety is not something to be ignored or considered a problem for the students to deal with on their own. To optimize learning for all learners, teachers should be aware of anxiety-provoking situations and take steps to minimize their negative impact. In addition, learners would benefit from being taught how to cope with these situations in a positive way.

To draw the discussion of the footprints of foreign language learning anxiety we would like to refer to two ideas presented by influential figures in language learning teaching and learning and applied linguistics as cited in Ellwood's PhD thesis. Firstly, Elwood (2004) presents Krashen's affective filter hypothesis and explains that it refers to a failure to learn effectively because of an affective or psychological block to learning. He, on the other hand, presents other more contemporary applied linguists' findings regarding assimilation to oppose Krashen's affective filter hypothesis. Assimilation, as Elwood cited in his thesis argues that while factors such as anxiety, poor motivation or low levels of confidence are said to block learning, an affect such as the desire to assimilate is believed to overcome such block.

5. Learner autonomy

Autonomy or the capacity to take charge of one's own learning, according to Benson (2001) was viewed as a natural commodity of the practice of self-directed learning, or learning in which learners themselves determine the aims, progress and assessment of learning.

It has been rather a long time since teacher's role as the sources of knowledge is replaced by other roles such as facilitator, monitor, etc. When adopting these roles, teachers are likely to hand over more responsibility to their students. Student presentations are a common classroom activity that can make students into facilitators responsible for the learning of their peers. As Silver, 2010 has put "...teachers understand that by fostering the goodwill and cooperation of their students, they can create an effective learning environment". Silver (2010) cited in his paper that Dornye and Murphey (2003) suggest that teachers "give students positions of genuine authority [because] designating course responsibilities makes students fully functioning members of the class group" (p. 105).

Benson (2004) is aware of less learner-centered learners and believes that learners who were accustomed to more teacher centred education would also need to be psychologically prepared for more learner-centred mode of learning. According to Holec as cited in Benson (2001), teaching learners how to carry out self directed learning would be counterproductive, since learning by definition would be no longer self-directed. Instead learners need to train themselves.

Here we wish to dispel a popular misconception about autonomy which was noticed in Benson (2001). According to Benson learners' managing their own learning, setting their own priorities and agendas and attempt to control affective factors that influence their learning does not imply that these learners are necessarily autonomous.

"Autonomy implies not only that learners attempt to take control of their learning from time to time, but that they possess the capacity to do so systematically. Similarly, fostering autonomy does not imply that we simply leave learners to their own devices, but that we simply leave learners to their own devices, but that we actively encourage and assist them to take control of their learning in ways that will be effective in terms of goals that they have determined for themselves."

The germs of the modern idea of autonomy in learning are to be found within thinkers such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-78), John Dewey (1859-1952), William Kilpatrick (1871-1965), Paolo Freire (1921-77), Ivan Illich (1971), and Carl Rogers (1902-87). (Benson 2001)

5.1. Nurturing autonomy

On issues of motivational discourse, beliefs and strategy use in autonomous learning, Gao takes the view that Language learning research has consistently demonstrate that autonomous language learners sustain their learning with a strong motivation, beliefs in what works in learning and strategies that help achieve their language learning objectives, all considered essential components of autonomous language learning.

According to Palfreyman and Smith (2003), while these components have been traditionally considered 'static' learner attributes, researchers have recently contended for a shift from a theoretical abstraction of learners towards a focus on the agency of the individual person with an identity, a personality, a person with goals, motives and intentions; a focus on the

interaction between this self-reflective agent, and the fluid and complex web of social relations, activities, experiences and multiple micro-and macro context.

6. Teacher Authority

In our personal interviews or teachers' room talks we've heard colleagues saying that Iranian students are not willing to take control over their learning and what they need is someone to push or make them study or do a certain task and argue that the issue of agency is not practical in all cultures and this is more practical in the West rather than the East.

In a study, Littlewood (2000) examined preconceptions about Asian students and their leaning attitudes, particularly the belief that they see the teacher as an authority figure and as a fount of all knowledge which they will need to acquire. Littlewood (2000) quoted Liu (1998) as saying that TESOL programmes often encourage student-teachers from overseas to adopt ideas and practices that are valued in North America, Britain, and Australia, but may not be really helpful in their home environment. Littlewood considers Liu's paper as a valuable contribution to the wider discussion about the need to develop 'appropriate pedagogies' for the specific educational traditions within which teachers work rather than assuming that western ideas must work for every context. Littlewood cites some comments from members of a range of countries in East Asia in his paper which indicates that Asian students do not usually tend to voice their opinion and challenge what the lecturers say. One of the objectives of our study, thus, is to consider authority in EFL classrooms. Perhaps we also need to think about learners' linguistic difficulties and the extents to which it affects their performance.

According to Palfreyman (2003), learner's background has often been viewed by teachers as a setback in promoting autonomy. He quotes Ho and Crookall (1995: 235) as saying that cultural traits may be an obstacle to the promotion of autonomy.

Harmer (2011) argues that language practitioners must discuss the limits to their attempts to make agency happen. He suggests that learning is conditioned both by student's educational culture and by their individual learning styles and performance as well. He criticises the idea that all the students should be forced to become autonomous and describes it as rather prescriptive.

"The fact is that in the words of an old English proverb, you can lead a horse to water but you can't make it drink. And if it does not want or need to drink, you should not make it do so anyway. Some students, like horses at water's edge, just don't get it; for them the teacher is the one who is responsible for their learning, and they expect the teacher to do their job. Faced with the reluctance of at least some of the students in a group to assume agency, we have to consider what we can do both for those students and for others in the group who are keener on the idea of taking learner responsibility."

Interestingly enough, Ellis (2009) identifies authority or power for teachers as their autonomy in teaching. In his view of autonomy and the social word, both learners and teachers are in some sense autonomous. He said that:

"Underlying both the view of L2 learning and of language pedagogy ... Learners and teachers are in some sense autonomous. Learners have been treated as autonomous processors of input; teachers have been characterized as autonomous decision-makers, free to decide what and how to teach. This, however, is a view that has been challenged

strongly both in SLA and in discussions of teacher education. In both cases, the challenge is based on the argument that learning and teaching need to be located firmly within the social worlds of learner and teachers.”

Teachers must be very careful not to confuse learner autonomy with undermining themselves (Scrivener, 2011). Teachers must be very clear and say what they need to say without hiding it. To put it in Scrivener’s words: ‘...if you want to stop an activity, say stop now, please. Feel your own natural authority and let it speak clearly.’ (p. 76)

However, the teacher’s intentions or self-awareness of their actions can damage and marginalize a student from the learning process. In order to encourage student voices to emerge and provide a place for those voices in the higher education classroom, educators should engage in critical reflection and critical teaching. Being critically reflective involves honestly thinking about the ways power influences educational transactions and how one’s assumptions may work the interest of both students and the teachers themselves (Brookfield, 1995 as cited in Delgado, 2008).

7. Significance of the study

Reviewing the literature on autonomy, inhibition and authority revealed that applied linguists, educators, psychologists, sociologists and language practitioners as well as language learners have got divergent or in some occasions opposing ideas towards agency. While a large body of international research exists regarding agency and related issues to agency in different countries and cultures in Asian contexts, empirical studies conducted on agency in Iran are scarce. In fact this study is an attempt to discover Iranian EFL students’ attitude towards self-regulation, self-initiation and the power relation between students and their teachers. We assume that the findings of this study will give a clearer picture about Iranian learners and will help educators to take more practical steps in course designing, material developing and adopting appropriate methodologies. This study attempts to raise awareness about the constituents of agentic learning and can furthermore inform teachers about students’ attitudes about their learning, motivation, and affect.

8. Research Questions

The following queries are what will be both quantitatively and qualitatively responded to by the ascribed methodology.

1. To what extent do EFL learners practice agency?
2. Does the educational environment have any impact on fostering agency in EFL classrooms?
3. Is there any relationship between learner agency and learners’ scores?

9. The study

9.1. Method

The methodology used in this research was mixed-method including both qualitative and quantitative methods and among the current typological approaches in mixed methods, qualitative – quantitative was used. Dörnyei (2007) considers it as a frequently recommended procedure for designing a new questionnaire which involves conducting a small-scale explanatory qualitative study first to provide background information on the context, to

identify and narrow down the focus of the possible variables and to act as a valuable source of ideas for preparing the item pool for the purpose of questionnaire scale construction. According to Dörnyei (2007), over the past 15 years, mixed-method research has been increasingly seen as a third approach in research methodology.

9.2. Participants

The research was undertaken with 64 university students majoring in literature and translation ranging from freshmen to senior students at Kashan University in Iran. Their courses include literature and translation courses along with common-core language courses for both majors namely, reading comprehension, oral reproduction of stories, idioms and phrasal verbs and grammar. This study was conducted in two phases of quantitative and qualitative types. For the qualitative phase five students volunteered to attend the interview, and 64 participants completed the questionnaire for the quantitative one.

9.3. Instrumentation

Data were retrieved from questionnaires and interviews. A self-designed Likert-scale questionnaire along with a structured interview grounded on studies in areas such as learner autonomy and affect, and the teachers' authority (power-relations in the classroom) were used to explore and retrieve the EFL students' opinion about agency and the extent to which they practice agency and find out which affective factors influence their performance. The overall internal consistency of the questionnaire was determined by the researchers using Cronbach alpha(CA) and it was 0.63. The main themes of the items revolves around three important concepts probed so far in learner agency studies, namely learner's self-regulation or self-initiation related to autonomy, learners' inhibition or anxiety, and student teacher power relation or authority.

9.4. Result

We have been constantly hearing students complaining about lack of rapport and access and teachers criticising uninterested, silent and not self-sufficient community of students. Therefore we decided to probe into the issue and asked Kashan University EFL students to complete our questionnaires. Our obtained information, as shown in tables 1 and 2, revealed that majority of the participants plan for their studies independently, tend to find the answer to their questions themselves rather than depending on the teacher as the fount of knowledge and wisdom, believe in students' contribution to material selection, and enjoy participating in class discussions. However 23% of the participants seldom read resources other than the ones assigned by the teacher. Our investigation about the affective factor in learning showed that more than half of the participants (56.3 %) feel anxious whenever they want to talk in English in the classroom. 59% of students avoid speaking for fear of making mistakes. Regarding the issue of anxiety about course and lessons more than half of the participants said they feel anxious about the course, while, interestingly enough, majority of participants said they don't feel worried for the exams. Most of our participants stated that they feel anxious when they want to talk to their teachers even in their mother tongue. 61% of the students, however, feel comfortable in the classroom. This statement, in fact, contradicts rest of the data collected from them. Regarding the issue of power-relations, almost all students consider teachers as sources

of knowledge who must transfer their knowledge to students and should possess more power than students. The results underline the need to question our preconceptions, and to explore in greater depth the nature and extent of cultural influence on learning. These paradoxical ideas and practices indicate that Iranian learners tend to be autonomous, wish to take charge of their learning and what they require is an appropriate context which fosters agentic behaviour.

In order to find out more about the reality of learner autonomy, anxiety and the extent of power relations, we interviewed 5 students – two freshmen, one sophomore and two senior EFL students at Kashan University. The obtained responses shed light on the issue under study and enabled us to find out whether Iranian students tend to agency and how they view power relations at university. The interviews were transcribed and the answers were carefully analyzed and compared. The collected data revealed that Iranian students strongly believe in power relations between teachers and students and are confidently of the opinion that teachers are the fount of all knowledge and should transfer it to students. Based on the collected data this issue does not create anxiety and teachers try to create good rapport with students. On the other hand they believe that learners must take charge of their own learning; however, the setting for such changes are not yet provided for them. According to the participants, only in one or two courses can they participate in material selection and are invited to discuss and share ideas (drama and conversation classes). In the rest of the courses, they believe, only the teacher can bring material to the class and should explain everything because this is the teacher who knows everything about the subject. They also said that the teachers talk and teach and lecture on the subject most of the class time and students talk when the teacher asks them questions and they said most of their teachers ask them to contribute and express ideas which boosts students' confidence. In conversation and grammar lessons, as the interviewees put, they bring material and talk about them and teacher's and students' talking time equals. Regarding the sources of anxiety our interviewees named several factors such as the teacher and their attitudes, class ambiance and exams. According to one of the freshmen, most of the time they feel anxious to contribute for fear of making grammatical mistakes and getting negative feedback and being criticised. We also found out that students have no idea of the course objectives and are not motivated enough in their studies and that's the reason why they do not cooperate even if when the teacher forces them to speak by asking them questions. This study revealed no remarkable relationship between students' scores and their level of agency. More than 50% of the students' GPA ranges between 16 to 18 as shown in table 3.

Table 1.

Result of descriptive analysis for autonym related items

autonomy related items	No. of responses	
	(autonomy) sometimes seldom -never	(power relations) always-usually
I can plan for my studies myself independent of my teacher's help.	31	33
I like to find the answer to my questions myself rather than asking my teacher or supervisor.	20	44
I think students should contribute to the selection of the course materials.	41	23
I would like to participate in class discussions.	39	25
I read other books about my subjects outside the class.	24	40
I can plan for my studies myself.	41	23

I ask my teachers questions and insist until I get my answer.	32	32
I see knowledge as something that I should discover myself.	40	24

Table 2.

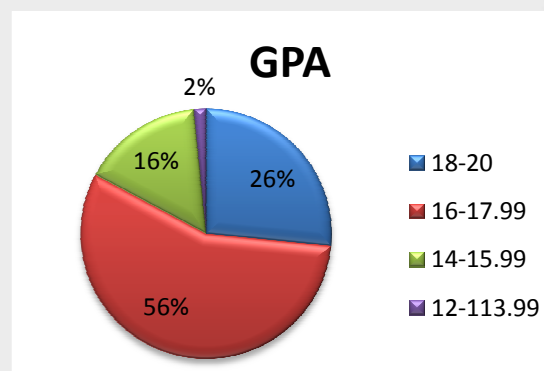
Result of descriptive analysis for autonym related items

Authority related items	No. of responses	
	(power relations) always-usually	(autonomy) sometimes seldom -never
If the teacher does not practice their authority, students will not study.	33	31
I think the teacher should be more powerful than students.	51	13
I believe teachers are the source of knowledge.	34	29
When I disagree with my teacher, I don't tend to express it.	16	48
When my teacher disagrees with me I don't defy my claim more.	15	49
I feel worried when I want to speak in English with my classmates.	8	56
I feel worried when I want to speak in English with my teachers.	15	49
I don't speak because I am afraid of making mistakes.	8	56
I feel anxious about my lessons and courses.	20	44
I cannot study well for my exams because I feel anxious.	12	52
I normally feel anxious when I want to talk to my teacher (in my mother tongue).	10	54
I only read the material my teachers assign.	25	39
I see knowledge as something that the teacher should pass on to me.	20	44

Table 3

Frequency of GPA

range	number of scores
18-20	17
16-17.99	36
14-15.99	10
12-13.99	1



10. Concluding Remarks

The important perspective emerging from this study is that all learning is ultimately autonomous because actual learning depends on the efforts of the students themselves. What we need to cultivate and develop is autonomous way of thinking. Autonomy brings forth benefits to EFL education about which learners and teachers should become aware and prepare themselves to take on new roles. It is teachers' calling to organize various activities to prepare students for more independence and accountability. The findings presented in this article do not provide easy formulas or advice for pedagogy. In fact they indicate that in order to optimize learning for all learners, teachers should be aware of anxiety-provoking situations and take steps to minimize their negative impact. Learner agency exists as latent potential (Mercer, 2011) and aims at engaging people in self-regulated behaviour to engage in self-directed behaviour. This cannot be achieved without counting students' belief system, culture, and level of motivation, affective factors and skills.

Here we wish to explain one inherent limitation of this study which was about the qualitative part of the study. Interview participants joined the study voluntarily which we believe indicates that these students are supposed to be self-initiative which is an important agentic trait, thus the results of the study might have been influenced by their views. To recapitulate the findings in a few words, Iranian learners tend to be autonomous, wish to take charge of their learning and what they require is an appropriate context which fosters agentic behaviour.

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بلاگ مرکز اطلاعات علمی



سامانه ویراستاری STES



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روش تحقیق کمی

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آموزش مهارت‌های کاربردی در تدوین و چاپ مقالات ISI

آموزش مهارت‌های کاربردی در تدوین و چاپ مقالات ISI



آموزش نرم افزار Word برای پژوهشگران

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