An Investigation into Iranian EFL Teachers' Perception of Learner Autonomy

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Abstract—There has been heated debate over the issue of learner autonomy in the arena of language education for the last three decades. To this effect, the present study intends to examine Iranian teacher's perception of learner autonomy and its desirability and feasibility in Iranian context. The beliefs and reported practices regarding learner autonomy of 123 teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL) were studied via questionnaires (Borg & Al-Busaidi, 2012). The results showed that the majority of teachers had an acceptable level of understanding of learner autonomy, but in their view, no notable amount of interest in desirability and feasibility of learner autonomy was seen. In addition, the findings implied neglected aspects of practicality of learner autonomy among EFL teachers and consequently lack of impetus to make its practice desirable. Finally, this study concludes with highlighting the role of autonomy in teacher education programs and some implications are proposed.

Index Terms—learner autonomy, desirability, feasibility, EFL, teachers' beliefs

I. INTRODUCTION

Learner autonomy is established as a significant concept in the field of EFL learning for about thirty years. Much has been written about learner autonomy, its rationale, and its implications. It is believed that it is a human right, and that it permits learners to do their best in learning opportunities in and out of the classroom (Cotterall, 1995; Palfreyman, 2003; Camilleri, 2007). In addition, enhancement of learner autonomy through collaborative online environment has been researched (Eneau & Develotte, 2012) to target final goal of fruitful learning. Regarding language learning success, Littlejohn (1985) believes that if students have the chance to act autonomously such as getting involved in making decisions about their language aptitude, they will probably be more passionate about their learning.

Basically, autonomy is defined as the extent to which learners demonstrate their ability to take control of their learning. However, it is not as easy as it may seem at first glance. Benson (2011) believes that the description of autonomy is important for two reasons: Firstly, it should be describable in terms of observable behaviors in order to construct validity of research. Secondly, in order to foster autonomy, programs or innovations must be more effective if they are based on vivid understandings of the behavioral changes which they intend to develop. Therefore, it is important that we recognize its role in the contexts of our research and practice.

While different definitions exist in the body of literature regarding learner autonomy in the works of many scholars (Barfield & Brown, 2007; Benson, 2001,2007; Burkert & Schwienhorst, 2008; Cotterall, 1995; Dickinson, 1987, 1995; Gremmo & Riley,1995; Holec,1981,1988; Lamb & Reinders, 2006,2007, 2008; Little, 1995,2007,2009; Littlewood, 1996, 1999; Murphy, 2008; Ryan,1991; Smith, 2000; Vieira, 2009), there exists a consensus on the fundamental principles of learner autonomy: i.e. learners take charge of and the responsibility for their learning; they recognize their needs; they learn how to make their own decisions on what and how to learn; they become critical learners; they increase the opportunities to practice English inside or outside the classroom.

Although Ryan's (1991, p. 210) definition of autonomy as a process of 'self-determination' or 'self-regulation' which leads to 'autonomous interdependence' is referenced typically, Holec's definition is the most often quoted definition of autonomy. Holec (1981) characterizes autonomy as an individual feature which is equal to student's independence from the teacher. Independent learner could use provided material willingly, make decisions about learning process, and actively contributes to the target educational curriculum.

Concurrently, extending the notion of autonomy and providing categorizations for it, Littlewood (1996) has made a distinction between 'proactive' and 'reactive' autonomy made by learners. Learners have proactive autonomy when they have responsibility for their learning, specify their goals, follow suitable strategies, and assess the acquired results (Holec, 1981). Littlewood (1999) believes when the direction of reactive autonomy is initiated, it allows students to manage the material autonomously in order to meet their goal. The reflection of the concepts of reactive and proactive autonomy leaded Flannery (1994) to differentiate cooperation learning strategies form cooperative strategies. This classification implies the fact that the sole understanding of the notion of autonomy is not sufficient as it is directly associated with desirability and practicality.

The theoretical background of this study is linked to the field of language teacher cognition, which deals with the investigation of teachers' beliefs and thoughts (Borg, 2006). According to Johnson (2006), in the last 40 years, teacher cognition in language teacher education has made the most significant contribution to our understandings of teachers and teaching. It has yielded very productive results in the field of language teaching since the mid-1990s. Intuiting visions about the landscape of teachers' cognition and its consequent effects in the arena of language teaching are extensively acknowledged (Phipps & Borg, 2009).

For the accomplishment of this study, two specific points about teachers' cognition are to be taken into account. On the one hand, teachers' ideas and beliefs can strongly shape both their action and, eventually, the learning opportunities of the learners. Henceforth, teachers' viewpoint regarding autonomy, its desirability as well as feasibility will clarify how autonomous learning takes place. On the other hand, when teacher education is designed on the basis of an understanding of the beliefs teachers have, it is expected to have positive effects on teachers' practices (Borg, 2011).

There is a reasonable literature on learner autonomy which, however, allots limited space for Iranian EFL teachers' beliefs about this concept. In other words, there is a relatively small body of literature that is concerned with the notion of learner autonomy and its two facets, desirability and feasibility respectively, among English teachers in the context of Iran. Then, our study addressed this gap by examining what 'learner autonomy' means to language teachers in Iran. Finding out such beliefs is essential to the process of persuading teachers to promote learner autonomy in their work. Respectively, the current study addresses the following questions:

1. What is Iranian EFL teachers' perception of leaner autonomy?
2. What is Iranian EFL teachers' evaluation of desirability and feasibility of learner autonomy?

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Learner autonomy is the focus of interest in many conducted research projects regarding language learning. As one of key elements predicting success in language learning, it calls EFL teachers' recognition. When the notion is understood, the teachers do their best in transferring the concept of autonomy practically to language learners.

Among one of the first qualitative studies on learner autonomy, Camilleri (1999) collected questionnaire data of teachers' ideas in six European contexts to explore how learners should decide about setting course objectives and materials. The results revealed that teachers found it convincing to involve learners in some activities. In contrast, teachers working in state schools, were not positive about learner involvement in the selection of textbooks and the decision on the time and place of lessons. Replicating this study, Camilleri (2007) found much analogy in terms of the positive general views of autonomy. In contrast, this time teacher participants were found to be more positive about learners' materials selection, goal setting, and self-assessment.

Using the same instrument in Turkey, Balçıkanlı (2010) showed that the student teachers were inclined toward students' engagement in many classroom activities, but, again, they were less positive about students' decisions about the time and place of holding the classrooms. Notably, these positive attitudes of teachers towards learner autonomy could be through teachers own experiences as language learners (Martinez, 2008). However, this observation suggests that using questionnaires and interviews in not necessarily adequate to study teachers' beliefs. Thus, we must always pay attention to the possible incongruity between teachers' beliefs at the level of theory and their real classroom practices (Borg & Al-Busaidi, 2012).

Considering mismatch between teachers' theoretical beliefs and their practice, Bullock (2011) noted a substantial gap between language teachers' theoretical views about the value of learner autonomy with their reported classroom practices. Thus, Yoshiyuki stressed that theoretical standards and pedagogical attempts may not always concur in terms of the notion of learner autonomy. Calling for a more systematic model of L2 learner autonomy, Oxford (2003) argued that although learner autonomy has been promoted by involvement of many experts, there is still some roots of conflict even in the terminology leading to inconsistency and incomplete understanding.

Previous research has established the major role of teachers in the process of endorsing learner autonomy either practically in classes or verbally through ideas (Nunan, 1997; Littlewood, 1997; Hurd, Beaven, & Ortega, 2001) and it is unlikely to expect teachers to develop a sense of learner autonomy unless they have experienced teacher education courses including an investigative and evaluative methodology to autonomy (Burkert & Schwienhorst, 2008; Castle, 2006; Marcosa & Tilemab 2006).

In a study, which set out to determine the practice of autonomy, Yang (1998) reported an attempt to teach students how to learn and become autonomous in language learning by combining learning strategy instruction with the content course of second language acquisition. In addition, determining strategy support and amount of needed time to have explicit strategy instruction teachers should take learners' interests and maturity levels into consideration (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Thus, the teacher ought to tailor strategy guidance to the level of the class and interweave strategy assistance uniformly into lesson plans (Oxford, 1996) to make learners responsible for language learning.

There can be discrepancies between core beliefs and peripheral beliefs. The former has been recognized through practical classroom experience and the latter could be established as recently learned knowledge through training curricula which express ideally constructed performance not yet relocated to real classroom practices (Borg, 2006; Phipps & Borg, 2009). Phipps and Borg (2009), in their investigation of the fundamental motives for differences in teachers stated principles and their application regarding grammar teaching, noted 'how contextual factors such as

classroom management concerns and student expectations can cause tensions between teachers' beliefs and their practices' (p. 385). They highlighted the significance of seeing these tensions positively valuable as a way of raising teachers' awareness. The recognition of tensions between their views and their classroom exercise constitutes a powerful intention for developmental change (Golombek & Johnson, 2004; Pajares, 1992).

Reviewing the relationship between beliefs and practices resulted in interesting findings. In their study, Kennedy and Kennedy (1996) discussed the importance of teacher attitude and the interconnections with beliefs and teaching behavior and introduced a model which may help to explain why there is often a gap between statements of intent and the reality of what happens in classrooms. They concluded that beliefs about the innovation, its consequences, and contextual factors are quite important in determining behavior, even as important as attitude itself (Kennedy & Kennedy, 1996). Awareness-raising of beliefs and their origins will therefore be significant if we wish to change or get teachers to question beliefs. In other words, making teachers aware of their beliefs is the first step in helping them to change (Alexander, 2011). Awareness could be raised through specific workshops to gain teachers reflections on learner autonomy advancement (Borg & Al-Busaidi, 2012). Consequently, there is a call to attend to teachers' viewpoint on the perception of autonomy.

As one of the most recent studies on teachers' understanding of learner autonomy, Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012) explored theoretical perception of autonomy teachers as well as practical dimensions (i.e. desirability and feasibility) in the context of Oman. They found out although the majority of the teachers were positively disposed to the theoretical conception of learner autonomy and engaging language learners in decision making process, they were at the same time less positive in terms of practicality of this notion. In other words, a significant discrepancy between the extent of desirability teacher felt and the extent of teachers' beliefs about the feasibility of involving learners in a range of decisions.

Considering the lack of research in the literature on teachers' perception of learner autonomy as well as its desirability and feasibility, this study aims to find out whether Iranian EFL teachers have proper level of understanding about learner autonomy, its appeal, and its practicability as these notions are not yet widely discussed.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

The participants of the present study were recruited from 34 high schools in Sabzevar, Iran. They include 123 EFL in-service high school teachers, either instructing at public or at private schools. Their age ranged from 30 to 55 and their educational experience ranged from 5 years to 30 years. In addition, they had different levels of teaching experience, whether in primary high school or in secondary high school. Among the teachers, 60 had B.A in TEFL and 63 had M.A. in the same field.

B. Instrument

In the present paper, the instrument was taken form Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012). For the purpose of their study, they consulted the instruments available (Benson, 2007) and developed a new questionnaire, as they believed the previous ones were found to be mainly lacking in empirical information about what learner autonomy means to teachers. We used this instrument as it had been critically reviewed, largely piloted, precisely prepared, and reliably developed.

In this study, the questionnaire was administered to 123 teacher respondents. The rationale behind administering the questionnaire in such a large sample was to have enough participants to reach statistical significance for the expected results as Dornyei and Taguchi (2009, p.129) suggests that we should have a sufficiently large sample size "to allow for statistically significant results".

The first section of questionnaire was about learner autonomy which compromised 37 items of Likert-scale on a five-point scale of agreement. When the responses of the participants were obtained, the reliability of the scale of the first section was estimated via Cronbach's Alpha which turned out to be 0.84. The second part of the questionnaire addressed desirability and feasibility of learner autonomy. It included 14 items on four-point Likert scale. For the former section, the Cronbach's alpha was 0.81 and for the latter it was calculated to be 0.74.

C. Procedure

In order to identify whether teachers know what learner autonomy is, they were asked to fill first part of the questionnaire. Before completing the survey forms and after inviting the participants, the purpose of the research was clearly explained to reassure first teacher participants' confidentiality and second to elicit fair responses from them. Although the questionnaire forms were even in design, all the instructions to complete the forms were also provided for the ease of the respondents and for the prevention of ambiguity. All the participants cooperated in doing so.

In the follow-up phase of the study, to establish whether the participants find learner autonomy desirable and feasible or vice versa, they were wanted to complete the second part. By the end of the survey period, data had been collected from all teacher participants. When all the survey forms were sent back, data management and analysis were performed using SPSS 23. Then, descriptive statistics of the form statements as the output were calculated to be reported. Following this procedure, the exported data was ready to be interpreted as follows.

IV. RESULTS

This study set out with the aim of identifying Iranian English teachers' perception of learner autonomy and two aspects of desirability and feasibility. To achieve this aim, the teachers' views about three trajectories of learner autonomy, its feasibility, and desirability were elicited through their responses to well-developed questionnaire of Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012). Considering each research question, we will provide the related results to shed more light on the issue.

A. What Is Iranian EFL Teachers' Perception of Leaner Autonomy?

The results of the first section of the questionnaire, as Table 1 depicts, showed that there was support for all items of the questionnaire; i.e. four orientations including political, psychological, social, and technical, but for 6 items including items 8, 9, 20, 23, 24, and 34. These are stated in questionnaire as follows:
   • Learner autonomy means learning without a teacher.
   • It is harder to promote learner autonomy with proficient language learners than it is with beginners.
   • Learner autonomy is only possible with adult learners.
   • Learner autonomy is a concept which is not suited to non-Western learners.
   • Learner autonomy requires the learner to be totally independent of the teacher.
   • The proficiency of a language learner does not affect their ability to develop autonomy.

TABLE 1.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF AUTONOMY

Item	Mean	SD	Item	Mean	SD	Item	Mean	SD
1	3.34	1.06	14	3.95	0.78	27	3.36	1.08
2	3.44	1.03	15	3.37	1.21	28	3.90	0.86
3	3.56	0.95	16	3.89	1.00	29	4.00	0.88
4	3.41	1.14	17	3.26	1.09	30	3.06	1.12
5	3.24	1.15	18	3.30	1.07	31	3.80	0.94
6	3.59	1.10	19	3.85	0.92	32	3.55	0.89
7	3.72	1.06	20	2.28	0.82	33	4.22	0.91
8	2.54	0.99	21	3.24	0.88	34	2.57	1.03
9	2.85	1.23	22	3.30	0.83	35	3.99	0.87
10	3.59	0.96	23	2.17	0.98	36	4.10	0.90
11	4.18	1.09	24	2.55	1.02	37	3.96	0.95
12	3.76	1.03	25	3.97	0.93			
13	3.67	1.08	26	3.14	1.16			

Studying less accepted items mentioned above, it could be argued that from teachers' perspective in this study, learner autonomy is not merely equivalent to independence from teacher. This is accurately what Flannery (1994) talked about, as he highlighted the role of teacher in setting the schedule for learning concurrently with the independent acting of learners.

It is apparent from the calculated total mean (M =3.450) that there is consensus among EFL teachers about the purpose of learner autonomy. With a close look at descriptive statistics of first section (see Appendix A), it is convincing that there is a governing shared knowledge between instructors in all aspects of autonomy, particularly in considering its psychological dimension. In other words, the overall responses to the majority of items were positive. In addition, it can be seen from the data in Table 1 that items 33, 36, and 11 had higher means than the others. These results suggest that EFL teachers, highlighting the differentiation of confident and motivated learners from others, agreed on the effectiveness of learner autonomy.

B. What Is Iranian EFL Teachers' Evaluation of Desirability and Feasibility of Learner Autonomy?

The overall measurement results of second section of questionnaire are summarized in Table 2 and Table 3. To see percentage of each item on the scale see Appendix B.

As shown in Table 2, Iranian EFL teachers did not show a strong tendency toward desirability of leaner autonomy (M= 2.82). Teachers' elicited responses on the items of this part of questionnaire, except for items 4 and 13 (examining desirability of topics being discussed and co-operative learning), reflected that the practice of autonomy was not convincingly worthy to them. In summary, for the informants in this study, learner autonomy is not desirable. This finding calls for attention to contemplate and find out why autonomy is not believed to be properly desirable to be treated in classrooms.

TABLE 2.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF DESIRABILITY

Item	Mean	SD	Item	Mean	SD	Item	Mean	SD
1	2.50	0.91	6	2.40	0.92	11	2.93	0.79
2	2.63	0.95	7	2.72	0.92	12	2.98	0.78
3	2.86	0.92	8	2.82	0.80	13	3.24	0.81
4	3.11	0.82	9	2.88	0.83	14	2.92	0.83
5	2.57	0.87	10	2.93	0.87			

TABLE 3.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF FEASIBILITY

Item	Mean	SD	Item	Mean	SD	Item	Mean	SD
1	2.06	0.92	6	2.19	0.85	11	2.55	0.79
2	2.41	0.80	7	2.40	1.02	12	2.50	0.77
3	2.66	0.86	8	2.27	0.80	13	2.81	0.83
4	2.81	0.95	9	2.65	0.74	14	2.75	0.91
5	2.40	0.87	10	2.79	0.79			

Similarly, the results, as seen in Table 3, indicates there is no significant orientation in feasibility of learner autonomy among instructors (M= 2.51). The most striking result to emerge from the data is that opposed to teachers' inclination toward learner autonomy, respondents did not found it to be feasible, whether it is due to lack of fundamental facilities, predetermined course objectives, shortage of time, lack of experienced instructors, poor teacher education system, or ease-oriented language teaching.

Then, with this attitude toward its impracticality, no strong argument could be made to show the likelihood of practicing learner autonomy in language classrooms. Conspicuously, in this section, there is no statement to support teachers' belief about feasibility of autonomous practices in pedagogical context. Comparing the total mean of these two latter sections as well as individual mean of each item reveals that desirability is steadily more supported than feasibility but, after all, both are felt less promoting than key concept of learner autonomy.

V. DISCUSSION

Three objectives of this study were to figure out Iranian EFL teachers' understanding of learner autonomy concept and two facets of desirability and feasibility. To achieve this aim, 123 teachers were asked to fill the questionnaires. The findings of the first section revealed affirmative stance of teachers to leaner autonomy. This is in line with many previous studies in existing literature (e.g. Camilleri 1999; Martinez, 2008; Yoshiyuki, 2011). Therefore, the consistency of teachers' support for learner autonomy in this study with those existed in the literature was seen.

However, this positive viewpoint should not be confused for readiness to enhance learner autonomy as Yoshiyuki (2011), investigating teachers' readiness for promoting learner autonomy by exploring the perceived importance and use of strategies among Japanese high school teachers of English as a foreign language through a questionnaire and focus group interview, concluded that many Japanese EFL teachers are not fully ready to promote autonomy in their learners. It seems that teachers' perception of autonomy would be of first steps towards readiness to enhance learners' autonomy. However, there is still call for more supportive actions to extend this purport in all its aspects because teachers' beliefs will shape the foundation for teacher education courses in each community of practice (Borg, 2011).

It could be claimed that providing learners with autonomy will rely on the quality of practicality and delightedness of the transfer procedures to which teacher make attempt. So, it is worthwhile to have autonomous teachers, those who have understood what learner autonomy is and how they could improve its attractiveness and practicality as Thavenius (1999, cited in Cotterall & Crabbe) elaborating on a contradiction asserted that "To help learners become autonomous, the teacher has to be autonomous, but the teacher cannot become autonomous until she has experienced the process with her learners for a substantial period of time. Still, I believe teacher autonomy is possible" (p.163). In addition, it is believed that imbalance of top-down organization and teacher autonomy (i.e. teacher's adaptation to various classroom contexts and various individual students' needs) would delay student learning (Prichard & Moore, 2016).

Responding second research question, we found that EFL teachers feel reluctant in terms of both desirability and feasibility of the notion of learner autonomy. Furthermore, regarding the latter, they feel more disinclined. This finding highlighted Bullock's (2011) idea of a departure between teachers' positive notions about learner autonomy and its practicality. In the same vein, Camilleri (1999) found out that despite general positive attitudes of student teachers towards the adoption of learner autonomy principles, the majority depicted unwillingness for their future students' participation in the decision-making process due to contextual issues which is in contrast with Littlejohn's study in 1985. Littlejohn stated that students' contribution to decision making will result in more enthusiasm about their learning.

The evidence presented in this section suggests that there is not necessarily a match between teachers' and leaners' viewpoint in considering what is proper (Harmer, 2007) and certainly what is fitting for one student may not be suitable for another. As a result, when teachers train the learners to be autonomous, they need to offer them choices in learning strategies. Scharle and Szabo (2000) suggest that it is of importance to find out students' individual differences such as their knowledge level, personal attitudes, motivation degree, and learning strategies to get students aware of their own learning styles. They believe that becoming an autonomous learner is a process encompassing awareness raising, preferences changing, and responsibility transferring.

Due to the fact that learners do not automatically assume responsibility for their learning, an intervention in ongoing classroom practice is needed to promote learner autonomy to have learners who, as Chan (2003) stressed, establish a personal schedule for learning. Pennycook (1997) warns that the universal encouragement of learner autonomy without the knowledge of the social, political, and cultural context, may lead to inappropriate pedagogies and cultural impositions. It is believed that cultural issues and the educational norms are to be constrains to encouraging autonomous learning.

After all, in contrast with growing support of this notion among EFL teachers, it seems that they are still reluctant to practice it. It could be attributed to teachers' unfamiliarity with practical aspects of enhancing learner autonomy. As Alexander (2011) evidenced that the first phase of assisting instructors to developmentally change is their getting aware of the notions they believe. To summarize, teachers' different presentations of autonomy and its promotion among the majority of EFL teachers as well as incomplete preparation for fostering learner autonomy would be considered as obstacles (Yoshiyuki, 2011).

VI. CONCLUSION AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

The aim of the present research was to examine Iranian EFL teachers' understanding of learner autonomy as well as its desirability and feasibility. The results of this investigation show the positive viewpoint of teachers toward the notion of learner autonomy; however, as Bullock (2011) noted the discrepancy between theoretical and practical understanding of autonomy, teachers showed less inclination toward desirability and feasibility of practically applying autonomy in their classes. In addition, referring to Little's (1995) claim about the dependability of learner autonomy on teacher autonomy, it could be argued that disinclination of teachers toward two facets of desirability and feasibility may root from their own educational background.

An implication of this is the possibility that in spite of the recognized notable status of learner autonomy shared by EFL teachers, it seems beneficiary to implement its aspects of desirability and feasibility comprehensively, whether in teacher education programs for teacher students or in language classrooms for learners, in order to achieve the most possible developmental results. Taken all together, the present study makes several noteworthy contributions to the realm of teacher education. Pedagogical implication of the results suggests the requirement of a more inclusive viewpoint toward enhancing learner autonomy by stakeholders, educational communities, teacher trainers, pedagogical practitioners, and EFL instructors.

The study is limited by the lack of information on learners' voices to find out whether teachers act upon their theoretical understanding. Another issue that was not addressed in this study was the absence of teachers' voices to determine what are the underlying reasons of this resistance toward desirable practice of autonomy in their classes.

In future, researchers of this field may employ other methods to explore learner autonomy qualitatively through interview, observation, and ethnography. Moreover, desirability and feasibility, as two key elements of an autonomous process could be investigated, with reference to their immediate pedagogical applications. They also may try to investigate the effectiveness of recognition of the concept of learner autonomy and learners' success in each particular area of language learning by employing more instruments and employing a mixed methodological process with intuitively anecdotal as well as objectively empirical accounts of autonomy. In terms of directions for future research, further work could diagnose and address potential problematic issues teacher feel in the way of applying autonomy to their classrooms. As well, further studies regarding the role of teacher autonomy would be worthwhile.

APPENDIX A. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR AUTONOMY

	Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree
1	Language learners of all ages can develop learner autonomy.	7.3%	13.0%	27.6%	42.3%	9.8%
2	Independent study in the library is an activity which develops learner autonomy.	2.4%	21.1%	18.7%	45.5%	12.2%
3	Learner autonomy is promoted through regular opportunities for learners to complete tasks alone.	0.8%	15.4%	25.2%	43.9%	14.6%
4	Autonomy means that learners can make choices about how they learn.	6.5%	17.1%	21.1%	39.0%	16.3%
5	Individuals who lack autonomy are not likely to be effective language learners.	6.5%	23.6%	23.6%	32.5%	13.8%
6	Autonomy can develop most effectively through learning outside the classroom.	3.3%	16.3%	21.1%	37.4%	22.0%
7	Involving learners in decisions about what to learn promotes learner autonomy.	2.4%	15.4%	13.8%	44.7%	23.6%
8	Learner autonomy means learning without a teacher.	15.4%	35.0%	31.7%	16.3%	1.6%
9	It is harder to promote learner autonomy with proficient language learners than it is with beginners.	17.1%	25.2%	22.0%	27.6%	8.1%
10	It is possible to promote learner autonomy with both young language learners and with adults.	2.4%	13.0%	21.1%	49.6%	13.8%
11	Confident language learners are more likely to develop autonomy than those who lack confidence.	2.4%	9.8%	8.1%	26.8%	52.8%
12	Learner autonomy allows language learners to learn more effectively than they otherwise would.	2.4%	9.8%	24.4%	36.6%	26.8%
13	Learner autonomy can be achieved by learners of all cultural backgrounds.	3.3%	12.2%	23.6%	35.8%	25.2%
14	Learner autonomy is promoted when learners have some choice in the kinds of activities they do.	1.6%	3.3%	13.8%	61.0%	20.3%
15	Learner autonomy cannot be promoted in teacher-centered classrooms.	6.5%	22.8%	17.1%	34.1%	19.5%
16	Learner autonomy is promoted through activities which give learners opportunities to learn from each other.	4.9%	4.1%	14.6%	49.6%	26.8%
17	Learner autonomy implies a rejection of traditional teacher-led ways of teaching.	6.5%	17.9%	30.9%	32.5%	12.2%
18	Learner autonomy cannot develop without the help of the teacher.	3.3%	23.6%	26.8%	32.5%	13.8%
19	Learner autonomy is promoted by activities that encourage learners to work together.	1.6%	8.9%	14.6%	52.8%	22.0%
20	Learner autonomy is only possible with adult learners.	13.8%	52.8%	25.2%	7.3%	0.8%
21	Learner autonomy is promoted by independent work in a self-access center.	3.3%	14.6%	43.1%	33.3%	5.7%
22	Learner autonomy is promoted when learners are free to decide how their learning will be assessed.	1.6%	14.6%	40.7%	38.2%	4.9%
23	Learner autonomy is a concept which is not suited to non-Western learners.	26.0%	43.1%	21.1%	7.3%	2.4%
24	Learner autonomy requires the learner to be totally independent of the teacher.	12.2%	44.7%	22.0%	17.9%	3.3%
25	Co-operative group work activities support the development of learner autonomy.	1.6%	7.3%	13.0%	48.8%	29.3%
26	Promoting autonomy is easier with beginning language learners than with more proficient learners.	9.8%	20.3%	27.6%	30.9%	11.4%
27	Learner autonomy is promoted when learners can choose their own learning materials.	2.4%	25.2%	20.3%	38.2%	13.8%
28	Learner-centered classrooms provide ideal conditions for developing learner autonomy.	0.8%	7.3%	15.4%	53.7%	22.8%
29	Learning how to learn is key to developing learner autonomy.	0.8%	6.5%	14.6%	48.0%	30.1%
30	Learning to work alone is central to the development of learner autonomy.	13.0%	13.8%	35.0%	30.9%	7.3%
31	Out-of-class tasks which require learners to use the internet promote learner autonomy.	1.6%	8.9%	19.5%	48.0%	22.0%
32	The ability to monitor one's learning is central to learner autonomy.	0.8%	11.4%	33.3%	40.7%	13.8%
33	Motivated language learners are more likely to develop learner autonomy than learners who are not motivated.	0.8%	4.9%	13.0%	34.1%	47.2%
34	The proficiency of a language learner does not affect their ability to develop autonomy.	11.4%	45.5%	22.0%	17.1%	4.1%
35	The teacher has an important role to play in supporting learner autonomy.	3.3%	2.4%	11.4%	57.7%	25.2%
36	Learner autonomy has a positive effect on success as a language learner.	0.00%	8.1%	11.4%	43.1%	37.4%
37	To become autonomous, learners need to develop the ability to evaluate their own learning.	4.1 %	4.1%	10.6%	54.5%	26.8%

APPENDIX B. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR DESIRABILITY AND FEASIBILITY

	Desirability					Feasibility			
	Undesirable	Slightly desirable	Quite desirable	Very desirable		Unfeasible	Slightly feasible	Quite feasible	Very feasible
Learners are involved in decisions about:									
The objectives of a course	15.4%	32.1%	38.3%	13.1%		31.7%	39.0%	21.1%	8.1%
The materials used	14.6%	26.8%	39.8%	18.7%		12.2%	42.3%	37.4%	8.1%
The kinds of tasks and activities they do	11.4%	16.3%	47.2%	25.2%		9.8%	30.9%	43.1%	16.3%
The topics discussed	1.6%	23.6%	36.6%	38.2%		9.8%	26.8%	35.8%	27.6%
How learning is assessed	11.4%	35.0%	39.0%	14.6%		17.9%	32.5%	41.5%	8.1%
The teaching methods used	17.9%	36.6%	33.3%	12.2%		22.0%	43.9%	27.6%	6.5%
Classroom management	8.9%	34.1%	33.3%	23.6%		23.6%	29.3%	30.9%	16.3%
Learners have the ability to:									
Identify their own needs	5.7%	25.2%	50.4%	18.7%		17.1%	43.9%	34.1%	4.9%
Identify their own strengths	4.9%	26.8%	43.9%	24.4%		5.7%	34.1%	49.6%	10.6%
Identify their own weaknesses	6.5%	22.8%	42.3%	28.5%		5.7%	26.8%	50.4%	17.1%
Monitor their progress	1.6%	30.1%	41.5%	26.8%		7.3%	41.5%	39.8%	11.4%
Evaluate their own learning	4.9%	17.1%	52.8%	25.2%		8.9%	40.7%	42.3%	8.1%
Learn co-operatively	2.4%	16.3%	36.6%	44.7%		4.9%	30.9%	42.3%	22.0%
Learn independently	5.7%	22.0%	47.2%	25.2%		10.6%	25.2%	43.1%	21.1%

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