

PAPER DETAILS

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BOOK REVIEW

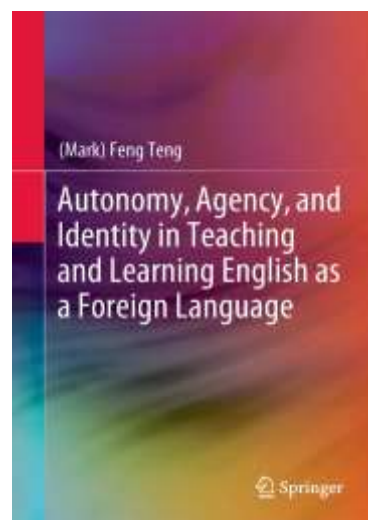
Autonomy, Agency, and Identity in Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language (2019)

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Autonomy has been considered as one of the key notions in foreign language learning and teaching over the past decades. In recent years, the understanding of autonomy has been expanded because of the increasing importance of identity and agency in EFL learning and teaching and the interrelation of these three concepts has been discussed. *Autonomy, Agency, and Identity in Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language* is a book that aims to provide theoretical and practical understanding of autonomy, agency and identity from different perspectives and roles in relation to teaching and learning. This book presents up-to-date information and research findings about these notions and their interrelationship. Of 132 pages, the book consists of eight chapters. The first six chapters focus on theoretical information and the interrelationship of autonomy, agency and identity. The last two chapters present two research studies related to these notions.

Chapter 1, entitled *Learner Autonomy: An Educational Goal of Teaching English as a Foreign Language* focuses on the different aspects of learner autonomy in EFL settings. First, it presents various definitions of learner autonomy to clarify it in readers' mind and then reviews learner autonomy from different perspectives such as political development, social development, sociolinguistics, cognitive psychology, meta-cognitive domain, and motivation. The chapter not only presents supports for learner autonomy but also criticisms against it that emerged among educational philosophers. The author concludes the chapter by putting emphasis on teachers' roles to promote learner autonomy.

Chapter 2, entitled *Teacher Autonomy: A Buzzword in Teaching English as a Foreign Language* aims to show the place of teacher autonomy in ELT. The author clarifies teacher autonomy by giving various definitions and explains the reasons why teacher autonomy is required to support learner autonomy. In that vein, it highlights teachers' roles in development of students' autonomous learning behaviors under six categories that have a vital role in enhancing learn autonomy. The author

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mentions both the autonomy-enhancing supports that affect the development of teacher autonomy positively and the autonomy-suppressing constraints that have negative effect on the enhancement of teacher autonomy.

Chapter 3, entitled *Learner Identity in Foreign Language Education: Issues and Implications* concentrates on the meaning of the learner identity in the field of foreign language education and discusses the reciprocal nature of learner identity and language learning. In this direction, this chapter reviews not only the effects of positive and negative learner identities on their language learning success but also the factors that influence learner identity because of the complexity of identity development.

Chapter 4, entitled *Teacher Identity in Foreign Language Education: From the perspective of Teacher Autonomy, Communities of Practice, and Affordance* aims to conceptualize teacher identity and its development with regard to three notions that are teacher autonomy, communities of practice, and affordances. The chapter presents the definitions of teacher autonomy, teacher identity, communities of practice and affordances and then explains the interrelation between all four notions in detail. The author also discusses contextual factors connected to teacher identity progress that support or prevent the construction of teacher autonomy and teachers' ability to notice affordances in teaching settings.

Chapter 5, entitled *The Complexities of Learner Agency and Teacher Agency in Foreign Language Education* explores the notion of agency in terms of the roles of learners and teachers. The author firstly highlights learner agency by giving various definitions and then discusses the development of learner agency through the interaction between the individual and the contextual settings. Likewise, the author sheds light on teacher agency by means of exploring this notion and the factors that influence the formation of teachers' professional agency. This chapter develops an understanding of the concept of agency and the involved complex components that create challenges for teacher and learners to become more effective in their teaching and learning.

Chapter 6, entitled *Interrelationship of (Teacher) Autonomy, (Teacher) Agency, and (Teacher) Identity in Foreign Language Education* explains the interrelationship between autonomy, agency, and identity and discusses the reciprocal nature of teacher autonomy, teacher agency, and teacher identity and their important roles in the field of teacher education. The author argues that a complete conceptualization of their interrelationship helps teachers realize the affordances more easily to develop their autonomy by taking their identity and agency into consideration.

Chapter 7 and 8 comprises two different research studies focusing on identity from the perspective of different roles such as teachers and students. Chapter 7 presents the study, *To Be or Not to Be An 'Old English Lecturer': A Social Identity Theory Perspective* that explores the identity formation experiences of university English lectures in China. On the other hand, Chapter 8, covers the study *How EFL Students Learn English: From the Perspective of Identity Continuity and Identity Change* that examines the identity continuity and change of three Chinese college English major students in their English learning process.

The book is a great resource to explore autonomy, identity, and agency from different perspectives and roles. Theoretical information on these notions is supported with research findings and that makes the content more understandable. The relationship between these important notions and their importance in EFL settings are presented in detail to bring a new insight into learner and teacher education. All in all, it can be evaluated as a useful reference for researchers that aim to explore the nature of autonomy, identity, and agency in ELT.