

Autonomy in Foreign Language Learning and Teaching: A Culture Bound Concept

Fawzia Bouhass Benaissi

Faculty of Letters Languages & Arts
Djilali Liabès University, Algeria

Abstract

This paper argues that fostering autonomy in the FL classroom is a highly desirable aspiration as research is continuously reporting encouraging echo on the subject. Yet what is lacking in various theoretical as well as empirical discussions is the cultural dimension that is bound to the notion of autonomy. Autonomy is neither an innate characteristic nor is it valued and expected in all cultures, hence educational contexts. What is more, autonomy is a long term evolving feature that requires new-found outlooks from both learners and teachers. The major concern of this work is an attempt to discuss learner autonomy in respect to learners' specificities which are in turn highly shaped by specific socio-cultural educational contexts. The arguments behind learner autonomy as a culture related concept, in the present paper, are associated to Algerian students of English at university level as they constitute the category of learners the author is most familiar with.

Key words: attitude, culture, foreign language learning/teaching, learner autonomy

Cite as: Benaissi, F. B. (2015). Autonomy in Foreign Language Learning and Teaching: A Culture Bound Concept. *Arab World English Journal*, 8 (1).

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol6no1.31>