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**Book Review: Raya, Manuel Jiménez, Vázquez, Borja Manzano, & Vieira, Flávia (Eds.). *Pedagogies for Autonomy in Language Teacher Education: Perspectives on Professional Learning, Identity, and Agency*, Routledge, 2024, vi-223 pages, ISBN 9781003412021**

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Teachers are invaluable assets to the education system, particularly in a post-method era that not only redefines their role but also expands their responsibilities. Within this evolving educational landscape, the concept of “teacher autonomy” has gained significant recognition as a vital factor influencing the development of learner autonomy in second language acquisition. This relationship underscores the idea that when teachers are empowered to exercise their autonomy, they can foster more independent and motivated learners. This understanding of teacher autonomy is crucial because it has significant implications for the language teaching profession and the dynamics within the language classroom. As individuals enter the English language teaching profession or seek to advance in their careers, it becomes increasingly beneficial to engage with the various interpretations and dimensions of teacher autonomy encountered in our field. Recognizing these different aspects is essential for professional growth, as it helps educators to understand how autonomy can enhance their instructional effectiveness, ultimately enriching the learning experiences of both teachers and students. To better understand and develop these concepts, *Pedagogies for Autonomy in Language Teacher Education: Perspectives on Professional Learning, Identity, and Agency* systematically examines how autonomy can be cultivated within language teacher education programs. This work explores diverse lenses including theoretical, reflective, collaborative, and technological perspectives, demonstrating how teacher autonomy can be integrated into various pedagogical frameworks. The chapters, organized thematically, illustrate the dynamic and relational nature of autonomy across different educational contexts, featuring specific contributions from different authors.

### **Overview of the Contents**

The opening chapter by Manuel Jiménez Raya, Borja Manzano Vázquez, and Flávia Vieira lays the theoretical foundation for integrating autonomy into teacher

education, highlighting the persistent gap between theory and practice and advocating for innovative pedagogical strategies. This theme continues in Chapter 2, authored by Borja Manzano Vázquez, who provides a meta-analysis of language teacher education initiatives aimed at promoting learner and teacher autonomy. Vázquez synthesizes key findings from prior programs, examining their strengths and challenges, particularly emphasizing the necessity for institutional support. Chapter 3, by Juan de Dios Martínez Agudo, also explores the emotional and cognitive dissonance encountered during teacher training, illustrating how these experiences can serve as catalysts for developing both identity and autonomy in educators. Following this discussion, Chapter 4 returns to practical applications, where Jiménez Raya presents case writing as a reflective tool to align theory with practice, providing concrete methods for teacher education programs.

In Chapter 5, Flávia Vieira examines inquiry-based practices in practicum settings, demonstrating how reflection on real-life teaching experiences fosters autonomy among primary English teachers. This practical focus is complemented in Chapters 6 by Marcella Menegale, who discusses the interplay of teacher identity and autonomy, conceptualizing autonomy as a two-way process where both teacher educators and student teachers engage in reciprocal learning.

The theme of collaboration is pivotal in Chapters 7 and 8. In Chapter 7, Yunus Emre Akbana and Kenan Dikilitaş advocate for collaborative teacher autonomy in contexts involving young learners, emphasizing shared responsibility and professional growth. Building on this notion, Chapter 8, authored by Masaki Kobayashi and Emi Kobayashi, explores the role of post-practicum feedback discussions in fostering autonomous participation, framing these dialogues as opportunities for critical reflection and collective learning.

Chapters 9 and 10 address transformative practices and systemic challenges. In Chapter 9, Mira Kim and Bosheng Jing discuss how teacher educators revisiting their roles can gain fresh insights into autonomy development. In Chapter 10, Aysegül Okay and Cem Balçıkanlı examine how novice teachers navigate institutional pressures during their transition from university to school, revealing how autonomy is negotiated within rigid professional environments.

Chapter 11, by Larissa Dantas Rodrigues Borges and Walkyria Magno e Silva, emphasizes strategies for empowering pre-service EFL teachers to “learn how to learn,” positioning lifelong learning as central to autonomy. The examination of technological dimensions is explored in Chapter 12, where Bruna Quartarolo Vargas, Christine Nicolaides, and Junia Braga discuss how digital self-reflective tools can enhance agency and autonomy in pre-service teacher education, although the chapter’s focus on specific tools may limit its generalizability. The book

concludes with Chapter 13, which synthesizes the main insights from the earlier contributions while providing a forward-looking discussion of critical issues and future pathways for autonomy-focused teacher education.

One of the book's primary strengths is its systematic organization, which offers a multifaceted exploration of autonomy in language teacher education. By integrating themes such as reflective practices (Chapters 4 and 5), collaborative learning (Chapters 7 and 8), and identity development (Chapters 3 and 6), the volume provides a comprehensive view of how autonomy is cultivated across different contexts. This thematic diversity, further enriched by the inclusion of global perspectives, offers insights applicable to varied sociocultural and institutional settings. Particularly notable is the relational approach to autonomy, highlighted in Chapters 6 and 7. By framing autonomy as a process involving mutual growth among teacher educators, peers, and student teachers, the book challenges traditional individualistic conceptions of autonomy and underscores the importance of professional relationships in fostering agency. Furthermore, the practical tools presented in Chapters 4 and 12 demonstrate how autonomy can be operationalized in teacher education programs, effectively bridging theory and practice.

Despite these strengths, the volume has notable limitations. The thematic repetition regarding reflective practices across Chapters 4, 5, and 8 reduces the novelty of individual chapters. While reflection is central to autonomy, greater diversification in examples or case studies would have strengthened the overall impact. Additionally, while the theoretical discussions are robust, the lack of empirical rigor in some chapters, particularly Chapters 3 and 13, suggests that they would have benefited from more detailed empirical evidence or longitudinal studies to validate their claims. The discussion of technology in Chapter 12, while innovative, remains underdeveloped relative to the growing importance of digital tools in education. A broader exploration of technological advancements, such as AI-supported learning or virtual collaboration, would enhance the book's relevance to contemporary educational challenges. Furthermore, the geographic focus of the book is skewed towards Western contexts, with limited engagement with non-Western educational environments. This restricts its applicability for educators and researchers in regions where autonomy is shaped by different sociocultural dynamics.

In summary, while *Pedagogies for Autonomy in Language Teacher Education* offers a significant contribution to the field by presenting autonomy as a dynamic and multifaceted construct, its limitations in empirical grounding and contextual diversity reduce its overall applicability. The relational framing of autonomy in Chapters 6 and 7 is particularly commendable, yet the absence of

critical engagement with sociopolitical constraints, such as standardized testing or rigid institutional policies, weakens its practical implications. Overall, the book provides a comprehensive exploration of autonomy in teacher education, offering both theoretical insights and practical strategies. However, its limitations suggest areas for improvement, inviting further critical engagement with unresolved challenges in the discourse on autonomy in professional learning contexts.

### **Author's Biography**

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**Dr. Muhammed Parviz** is an Assistant Professor in the Department of English Language at Imam Ali University in Tehran, Iran. His research interests focus on second language writing, text analysis, discourse analysis, corpus linguistics, artificial intelligence (AI) technology and its applications in language learning and teaching, and Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). He has published extensively in (inter)national peer-reviewed journals, sharing his expertise in areas such as AI-assisted L2 writing, the use of corpora in language studies, and the application of SFL frameworks to analyze language use and development. His work aims to bridge the gap between technological advancements and second language acquisition, exploring how AI can be leveraged to enhance language learning and teaching practices.

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