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In Language Sciences

Final Thesis

Do EFL Textbooks Develop Learner Autonomy and Responsibility?

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Abstract

Learner Autonomy theories have demonstrated the significance of learner-centredness approaches in language education and much research has been published supporting the implementation of this police in classrooms. However, although this topic has been investigated from different angles, only a few scholars have examined the role of textbooks in the promotion of autonomy.

In this scenario, the purpose of this work is to fill this gap in the literature analysing a sample of EFL Textbooks and Grammar Books to observe if pre-packaged materials are powerful instruments in developing autonomy and responsibility in learners.

By using pre-existing tables (Reinders, Nunan and Chamot), both an external (books' sections) and an internal (exercises) evaluation of the books have been made, demonstrating that these types of material could be strongly improved. In fact, it seems that the design of the book does not encourage learner choices and metacognitive strategies are timidly and only implicitly fostered. For this reason, it can be concluded that EFL textbooks, and so EFL teaching, have not entirely embraced active learning yet.

Keywords: Learner Autonomy, EFL Coursebooks, Metacognitive Strategies, pre-packaged materials, active learning

Introduction

In the language education field, the concept of 'learner autonomy' is becoming increasingly important and always more investigations and studies have been published on this topic.

Learner autonomy, active learning and self-directed learning are just some of the many ways used to identify 'the ability to take charge of one's learning' (Holec, 1981) and, in this regard, the related literature framework is rich and abundant. For this reason, we have focused our attention on the relations that enable the 'opportunities to learn' considering the learner, the teacher and the material as the three subjects involved in the learning process (Allwright, 1981). Although the equal role of these three elements in the model, much more prominence has always been given to the figure of the teacher in a great number of studies and publications and on the other hand, only a few scholars detected the impact of materials on the promotion of learner autonomy.

In this work, we have investigated the role of pre-packaged materials in fostering a self-directed learning with the goal of testing if all the theorized learner autonomy polices are mirrored even in the classroom reality via the textbooks. Starting from the examination of two previous studies that have investigated the presence of learner autonomy policies in a sample of some EFL (English as a Foreign Language) textbooks, we tried to enrich this analysis using a new sample and some new methods. We have tried to answer two research questions analysing the twelve books of our sample through the 'Nine Steps' By Nunan (2001), the 'Framework for Self-directing Learning' of Reinders (2010) and 'the Metacognitive Model of Strategic Learning' of Chamot (1999). The aim of this study is one of measuring the role of EFL textbooks and Grammar Books in fostering learning autonomy.

The following work is divided in two main parts: the literature review (Part 1) and the textbook analysis (Part 2). In the first part, we will synthetize the main considerations and definitions regarding the notion of learner autonomy starting from the main idea of

learner-cetredness (1.1). Then, we will discuss the role of different learners' identities, styles and strategies to conclude mentioning the function of motivation and aptitude (1.2). Finally, we will analyse some data and programmes formulated by the European Union with the goal of promoting learner autonomy in order to educate active and committed citizens (1.3). The second chapter of the first part of the work reports and comments upon some previous studies, offering the up-to-date state-of-the-art. In section 2.1, the relevance of autonomy will be stressed, reporting even some criticisms at the same time. Then, we will investigate the attention given to the teacher-learner relationship (2.2) and the role of textbooks in the classroom organization (2.3). Finally, some previous studies will be described in order to understand the design of our research (2.4). Part 2 will also be divided in two chapters. In chapter 3 the design of the research will be presented describing the research questions (3.1), the materials and the sample (3.2), the methods followed to answer the first (3.3) and the second research question (3.4). Finally, Chapter 4 will be dedicated to illustrate and discuss the outcomes achieved for each of the two research questions (4.1 and 4.2).

Part 1 – Literature Review: Theoretical Context of Reference

Chapter 1 – Theoretical Framework

This chapter is divided into three sections and it offers an overview of the major theories and considerations on learner autonomy. Firstly, after a brief analysis of the historical development in the language education field, the learner-centredness idea will be discussed in section 1.1. In fact, all the related aspects will be mentioned: the difference between the traditional and the learner centred curriculum, the definition of autonomy and the interrelation with learner's motivation and awareness. Then, the focus will be on the uniqueness of each learner and the necessity to adopt different methodologies and learning strategies to develop the potentiality of each student (1.3). Finally, the present state of art will be discussed with reference to some European Educational Programmes and statistical data.

1.1 From Learner Centeredness to Learner Autonomy: some Definitions

In the language teaching field, different approaches and methodologies have been tested and implemented over time. Unlike the teaching of other subjects, as Maths or Physics for example, in the English language teaching tradition a multitude of methods have been used to properly suit the changing historical backgrounds and needs (Kuhn, 1970).

However, the aim of this section is not the one of reporting the fully detailed historical development in the field of language education, but instead the one of underlining the change in the conception of what learning a foreign language means. Nowadays, language teaching is considered an interdisciplinary field involving linguistic, sociological, psychological, neurological, intercultural, educational and technological

competences at the same time. As time has passed, always more emphasis has been given to learners' needs and interests, understanding students' feelings and motivation, and to determine pupils' attitudes and aptitudes. In fact, unlike the first approaches, as in the Grammar Translation Method for example, in the last decades the learner centredness is a key notion and in the following pages we are going to discover more about this concept.

The theoretical developments in the field of language education demonstrate that different approaches have contributed to the multi-faceted learner-responsive trend. The humanistic movement and the communicative approach offered different perspectives on this topic and in the last few decades, the term learner-centredness has acquired more and more prominence in studies, research and articles on language teaching.

In a dichotomic and simplified view, the learner-centred approach is in opposition to the teacher-centred approach. The latest is also labelled as passive learning because the teacher occupies a directional and authoritarian role, making all the decisions concerning the teaching methods, the curriculum and the different forms of testing. In this model the teacher is at the centre and the focus is on how the teacher should teach, giving attention to the teacher's styles, choices and behaviours.

On the other hand, learner centered teaching style focuses on how students learn instead of how teachers teach (Weimer, 2002). In a learner-centered classroom, teachers abandon traditional teacher-fronted lessons for a more active, engaging, collaborative style of teaching (Wohlfarth et.al, 2008). For some scholars, this approach is a means to prevent the restrictions caused by large classes, low-tech materials and inadequate coursebooks (Deller, 1990). Deller offered a practical observation to better understand why active learning is nowadays important, if not fundamental. Teaching ESP (English for Special Purposes) and Business English for a long period, he realised that student's knowledge was deeper that teacher's one in specific areas. The increasing number of this type of English courses taught teachers to respect students and to call upon their specialist knowledge, seeing them as equal individuals, who can contribute to the lesson bringing their knowledge on specific contents.

However, the concept of learner-centred is much more deeper and to further analyse it we are going to follow three perspectives of this phenomenon: activity organisation, curriculum definition and learner autonomy (Tudor, 1996).

Firstly, activity organisation and material selection are fundamental elements in promoting active learning. The teacher's sensibility to the topic and the coursebook organization are important premises to promote a learner-centred approach enhancing the potential of the learner, the element of surprise, the constant needs analysis and the group solidarity.

Campbell and Kryszewska (1992) discovered that placing the learner at the centre is a useful way to overcome the dissatisfaction caused by textbooks, that often do not match student's needs and interests and so, they produced a 'resource book' collecting activities and exercises, but also advice and guidelines for teachers in order to stimulate the learners:

- personal interests and concerns

- professional and/or specialist knowledge

- willingness to work with fellow students to achieve shared goals

- prior learning experiences on the process of learning study

(Campbell and Kryszewska cited in Tudor, 1996 p.16)

We will focus more on the role of textbooks in Chapter 2, for the moment it is sufficient to stress the importance of materials and activities in fostering active students.

Secondly, the concept of 'Curriculum' can be variously defined, but broadly speaking, it can be considered as the document in which the contents of the course and the action to deliver and evaluate learners achievements are specified. Contrasting learner-centred curriculum with the traditional one, we can say that it …

> ... will contain similar elements to those contained in traditional curriculum development, that is, planning (including needs analysis, goal and objective setting), implementation (including methodology and materials development) and evaluation (see, for example, Hunkins, 1980). However, the key difference between learner-centred and traditional curriculum development is that, in the former, the curriculum is

a collaborative effort between teachers and learners, since learners are closely involved in the decision-making process regarding the content of the curriculum and how it is taught.

<div align="right">(Nunan, 1988:2)</div>

The concept of learner-centred curriculum was one of the goals of the Adult Migration Education Program (AMEP) postulated in Australia during the 80s to help migrants to learn English. Important researchers as Brindley, Nunan and Willing contributed to the project defining the procedures to identify learners' need, methodologies and the nature of decision-making. Some years later, Nunan published the 'Nine Steps to Learner Autonomy' (2001), an article in which he defines nine key points to be incorporated into the educational process in order to move learners from total dependence on the teacher to autonomy.

Nine steps to Learner Autonomy (Nunan, 2001)

Step 1: Make instruction goals clear to learners

Step 2: Allow learners to create their own goals

Step 3: Encourage learners to use their second language outside the classroom

Step 4: Raise awareness of learning processes

Step 5: Help learners identify their own preferred styles and strategies

Step 6: Encourage learner choice

Step 7: Allow learners to generate their own tasks

Step 8: Encourage learners to become teachers

Step 9: Encourage learners to become researchers

Table 1. Nine Steps of Nunan, (2001)

The 'Nine Steps', which will be further analysed in the following chapter, lead us to the third concept we want to define here: learner autonomy.

Learner autonomy has been largely studied from different angles and it has been a dominant topic in the field for the last 15 – 20 years (Just to quote some of the major works on this area: Brookes and Grundy 1988; Holec, 1997; Wenden, 1991; Wenden and Dickinson, 1995; Wenden and Rubin, 1987). The first attempt to define learner autonomy in language learning was made by Holec (1981): 'the ability to take charge of one's learning'. But the literature has offered in these years innumerable definitions and interpretations of the concept. Some terms strictly related to learner autonomy are self-direction (Candy,1991), independence (Sheerin, 1991) and language awareness (James and Garrett, 1991). Little (1991: 4) defines learner autonomy as 'a matter of the learner's psychological relation to the process and content of learning; a capacity for detachment, critical reflection, decision-making, and independent action'. According to Deci (1996), being autonomous is a basic element in order to achieve a sense of self fulfilment and he associates autonomy with the willingness to do what we are doing with interest and commitment. In addition, Benson (1997) describes this concept as the capacity of the learner to take responsibility for his own learning. According to Benson and Voller (1997: 1 – 2), in language education, the term is used in five different ways:

1. for situations in which learners study entirely on their own
2. for a set of skills which can be learned and applied in self-directed learning
3. for an inborn capacity which is suppressed by institutional education
4. for the exercise of learners' responsibility for their own learning
5. for the right of learners to determine the direction of their own learning.

However, although the presence of different interpretation of this phenomenon, it is important to understand that learner autonomy does not mean self-learning without the presence of a teacher and it is not a stable state immutable and valid for everyone (Esch, 1996).

Now, that we have clarified what learner autonomy means, it is fundamental to analyse another peculiarity of this phenomenon. The ability to be an active and committed agent in the learning process taking charge and responsibility for our learning is 'not inborn,

but must be acquired either by natural means or (as most often happens) by formal learning, i.e. in a systematic, deliberate way' (Holec, 1981: 3). This observation forces us to distinguish between being proficient in a foreign language and being autonomous. These two goals are two sides of the same coin, but their achievement must follow two separate paths. For this reason, it is important to promote both these two aspect in the learner, giving importance both to his language specific results and to his learning approach. With reference to this latter aspect, other factors must be taken into consideration such as motivation, learning strategies and learner awareness, which are fundamental in developing the learner's self-image and his will and capacity to learn.

The affective variables must be considered as a fundamental feature of teaching especially in a learner-centred perspective. Learning a foreign language is not just learning grammar rules, but it requires the complete involvement of the learner's him/herself. In fact, in a language class, students must be able to manage different feelings because learning a foreign language implies personal exposure to the judgment of teachers and classmates. Having a strong self-esteem and perception is in some cases mandatory to actively participate in classroom. In fact, careless errors in spelling or a low level of participation during a lesson might not be only a lack of concern, but also sign of learning anxiety.

Anxiety is a widespread feeling among foreign language students and many of them are apprehensive while learning a foreign language. During foreign language classes, they feel frozen, scared and unable to control their emotions, and in other cases, they are worried, sweat a lot and have palpitation (Horwitz,1986). These psycho-physical symptoms are the prevalent features of foreign language classroom nervousness. Language theorists and researchers know that learning a foreign language can be stressful especially in classroom situations and this emotional state does not allow students to perform at their best. Stress and nervousness contribute to the creation of the affective filter (Krashen, 1982); a sort of barrier that, according to Krashen, "makes the individual unreceptive to language input" (Horwitz, 1986). Learners cannot memorize and fix what they are studying because the stress blocks the connections between neurons blocking the creation of synapses and therefore, the language

acquisition process. As a consequence, anxious learners have more difficulty in developing new language skills and anxiety become a huge impediment to the learning mechanism.

This is just an example of the impact of feelings and self-perception on language proficiency to demonstrate the interrelation between individual features and school results. But analysing the learner's identity, helping the student to identify his actual self and to plan his/her future and ideal self is just a first step in reaching learner autonomy. Guiding the learner to understand means to favour a process of learner awareness. Recently, Dörnyei (2005) has associated the idea of selves to motivation in the L2 Motivation Self System Theory. He believes that having a clear idea of who we want to be by clarifying our wishes, aspirations and hopes helps us to identify our ideal self and if being proficient in the target language is part of that plan, this will be a powerful motivator to learn the language.

Literature concerning motivation in the foreign language is abundant and rich, but for the purposes of this work we will just quote some basic notions useful to better understand our reasoning. Learner autonomy and motivation are deeply interrelated and as Kaplam and Flum (2009 cited in Murray, 2011: 19) point out, researchers have recently begun 'to reframe existing motivational theories such as self-determination theory (La Guardia, 2009) and expectancy-value theory (Eccles, 2009) in relation to constructs of identity'. Generally speaking, 'motivation provides the primary impetus to initiate learning the L2 and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process' (Dornyei, 1998: 117). According to Gardner and MacIntyre (1993: 3), motivation is based on three components: 'desire to achieve a goal, effort extended in this direction, and satisfaction with the task'. To conclude our brief description of what motivation is, an important distinction should be made between instrumental and integrative motivation (Gardner and Lambert, 1959). Learners with an instrumental orientation learn a foreign language to find a better job or pursue a successful career. On the other hand, learners with an integrative orientation are interested in the culture of the target language; they want to acquaint themselves with the target community and become an integral part of it.

Up to now, we have seen what learner autonomy means and why the concept of learner-centredness is strictly linked with it. Being an autonomous learner is not something inborn, and as much effort is needed to become proficient in a foreign language, as to become autonomous. We have seen that being responsible for the learning process, developing a deep learner awareness, finding our motivation and believing in our potentiality are the four mainstays of the autonomous learner. But what are the guidelines to transform passive students into active learners if each individual is unique? How can we promote learner autonomy considering that each student has his own needs, motivation, identity, awareness and level of responsibility?

1.2 The GLL: Learning Styles and Learning Strategies

The learner-centred approach previously discussed states that language learners 'should be the main reference point in decision-making with respect to both the content and the form of teaching. This component clearly implies a constructive acceptance of learner diversity…' (Tudor, 1996: 29). In fact, many scholars sustain that the learner centredness approach has its roots in constructivism. Constructivist learning theories claim that we construct our knowledge thanks to the interaction between what we already know and the new information and experiences we face. For that reason, because each of us possesses a personal and exclusive stock of knowledge, what we absorb from a language class, for example, is at least in part unique. These reflexions allow us to consider the presence of individual differences among foreign language learners. In the literature, this idea has been summarised under the definition of aptitude considering that 'there is a specific talent for learning foreign languages which exhibits considerable variation between learners' (Dornyei, 2003: 590). Carroll (1962) researched foreign language aptitude during the 1950s and finally proposed the four components of aptitude as illustrated in Table 1.

Component name	Nature and function
Phonemic coding ability	Capacity to code unfamiliar sound so that it can be retained over more than a few seconds and subsequently retrieved or recognized
Grammatical sensitivity	Capacity to identify the grammatical functions that words fulfill in sentences
Inductive language learning ability	Capacity to extract syntactic and morphological patterns from a given corpus of language material and to extrapolate from such patterns to create new sentences
Associative memory	Capacity to form associative bonds in memory between L1 and L2 vocabulary items

Table 2. Carroll's four-component model of aptitude (Dornyei, 2003: 592)

The results produced by Carroll's investigation and the following efforts to plan specific tests to assess aptitude can be considered the first studies concerning aptitude in applied linguistics (Just to quote some of the most popular tests elaborated in these years: MLAT, Carroll and Sapon, 1959; PLAB, Pimsleur, 1966; DLAB, Petersen and Al-Haik, 1976; VORD, Parry and Child, 1990; CANAL-F battery, Grigorenko, 2002). However, even if aptitude was perceived as a useful tool to predict learner's proficiency results in the target language, it was often considered undemocratic, out of date conceptually and of little explanatory value (Dörnyei, 2003). This is why, for many years little investigation was conducted on this topic, but the relevance of individual differences is something interconnected with learner autonomy and a subsequent deeper analysis in this field brought to life new interesting elements.

In 1975, Joan Rubin published an interesting analysis with reference to learner's individual differences titled *What the "Good Language Learner" can teach us.* The author realised that some students are more successful than others at learning a second language and decided to investigate the reason of this discrepancy. He observed that if on the one hand people can learn their native language spontaneously and easily, on the other hand , it is not the same in second language acquisition. After Rubin, other scholars (Naiman, Fröhlich, Stern, Todesco, 1978; Wong Fillmore, 1979) detected the reasons why some students performed better in studying languages than others and heterogeneous theories emerged in an attempt to establish what makes a Good

Language Learner (GLL). The GLL is a person with an outstanding capacity in learning a foreign language. Good Language Learners vary greatly in age, aptitude, gender and personality but also in level and type of motivations, learning styles and learning strategies (Cottarell, 2008). The variables influencing the GLL are aptitude, motivation and opportunity. As previously described, aptitude is considered as 'a relatively invariant characteristic of the individual, not subject to easy modification by learning' (Carroll, 1960: 38). But, on the other hand, other scholars (Politzer and Weiss, 1969; Yeni-Komshian, 1967; Hatfield, 1965) demonstrated the strong interrelationship between aptitude and motivation and the possibility to improve aptitude trough training. In this regard, Rubin identified some strategies that GLLs unconsciously adopt and many believe that their implementation can improve the results of common learners, too. The guidelines postulated by Rubin (1975) are here reported and a parallelism with the four components of aptitude theorised by Carroll can be easily found:

- The Good Language Learner is a willing and accurate guesser.
- The Good Language Learner has a strong drive to communicate, or to learn from a communication.
- The Good Language Learner is often not inhibited
- The Good Language Learner is prepared to attend to form and is constantly looking for patterns in the language.
- The Good Language Learner practices.
- The Good Language Learner monitors his own and the speech of others.
- The Good Language Learner attends to meaning.

Starting from these observations, three major works were published in the 1990s (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1990; Wenden, 1991) testifying that the concept of language learning strategy was a recognised notion in the L2 field and, even nowadays, the work published by O'Malley and Chamot *Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach* (CALLA) is considered one of the most effective model to promote learning strategies in classroom. Learning strategies (LS) refer to a set of actions, steps and techniques that people use in order to gain control over their own learning process. These behaviours are 'implemented by L2 learners as tactics to make the new cognitive

demanding linguistic system simpler' (Montaño, 2017: 480) and the conscious use of learning strategies demonstrate the learner's active role in the learning process. Extensive lists of strategies are available in the literature and among them Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) and O'Malley and Chamot's inventory (1990) are the most well-known. These two inventories are quite similar and both group learning strategies into six major categories: cognitive, metacognitive, affective, social, memory-related and compensatory.

- *Cognitive strategies* are "limited to specific learning tasks and involve more direct manipulation of the learning material itself", e.g., through reasoning, analysis, note-taking, summarizing... (Brown, 2000, p.124). Making inferences, attending to form, trying to talk like native speakers, writing summarises, notes or messages and looking for patterns are all cognitive strategies to perform better and learn easily a foreign language.

- *Metacognitive strategies* are those that 'involve planning for learning, thinking about the learning process as it is taking place, monitoring one's production or comprehension, and evaluating learning after an activity is completed' (Brown, 2000: 124). While cognitive strategies are known as resources *in the hands*, as they help handle and solve exercises, metacognitive strategies are resources *in the head*, because they are helpful to organize and manage the learning path. (Montaño, 2017).

- *Social/affective strategies* refer to the learning of a second language through interaction with peers. In these strategies, people are resources with their own attitudes and beliefs towards L2 learning. Cooperation and self-talk are examples of these strategies (Chamot & O' Malley, in Herrera & Murry, 2011).

- *Memory related strategies* foster the development of techniques in order to easily memorize vocabulary and structures using sounds, images, body movements or location, for example.

- *Compensatory strategies* help the learner compensate for missing knowledge. These techniques are helpful for low proficient learners to communicate at the beginning using circumlocutions, synonyms or gestures. In fact, as for the

memory-related strategies, these techniques are less mandatory as the learner improves because substituted by a stronger communicative competence.

It can be stated that the relevant literature on learner strategies is considerably wide, but with reference to autonomy 'researchers generally agree that the most important abilities are those that allow learners to plan their own learning activities, monitor their progress and evaluate their outcomes' (Benson, 2003: 290). To better explain the four subcategories of the metacognitive strategies class, the Metacognitive Model of Strategic Learning (Chamot et al. 1999) is briefly reported, even though it will be extensively analysed in the following chapters.

Metacognitive Model of Strategic Learning (Chamot et al. 1999)

Planning process	*Set goals*
	Direct attention
	Activate background knowledge
	Predict
	Organizational planning
	Self-management
Monitoring process	*Ask if make sense*
	Selectively attend
	Deduce/induce
	Personalize/contextualise
	Takes notes
	Use Imagery
	Self talk
	Cooperate
Problem Solving process	*Inference (guess meaning)*
	Substitute (say it in another way)
	Clarify/ask questions
	Use resources
Evaluating process	*Verify predictions*
	Summarise
	Check goals

	Evaluate oneself
	Evaluate one's strategies

Table 3. Metacognitive Model of Strategic Learning (Chamot et al.)

However, learning strategies are not the only factor affecting the student's outcomes in the foreign language and a brief description of what learning styles are seems necessary. 'Learning style is the biologically and developmentally imposed set of characteristics that make the same teaching method wonderful for some and terrible for others' (Dunn and Griggs, 1988: 3). It is the general approach used by the learner in acquiring a target language. Generally speaking, it is possible to distinguish between cognitive styles and learning styles. Cognitive styles can be defined as 'a predisposition to process information in a characteristic manner [and so] it is more restricted to information-processing preferences' (Dörnyei, 2003: 602). Learning styles embrace all the aspects of learning in a broader perspective and not just the processing of information. In this case sensory preferences, personality type and biological differences are taken into consideration. Obviously, each learner has his/her own inclinations and his/her style emerges from a mix of different dimensions. According to Oxford and Anderson (1995, cited in Dörnyei, 2003: 605), a single learner possesses at least 20 different style dimensions, but eight are identified as particularly important for L2 learning:

- global vs. analytic
- field dependent vs field independent
- feeling vs thinking
- impulsive vs reflective
- intuitive random vs introverted
- visual vs. auditory vs. hands-on (or tactile/kinesthetic)

To conclude, the presence of heterogeneous classes and the awareness that each learner is unique, once again reinforces the idea that the learner dimension deserves much attention. Motivation, feelings, aptitude, learning strategies and styles must be

taken into consideration and all these elements underline the importance of employing a broad instructional approach realising that a single methodology will not be efficient for everyone.

1.3 Learning to Learn and Lifelong Learning: two Key Competences of the European Educational System

All the notions, concepts and theories presented so far have been condensed into two main Key Concepts by the European Educational System. In fact, learning to learn and lifelong learning are the two goals that Europe constantly measured and monitored in order to test the development of the European Educational System. Learning to learn is "the ability and willingness to adapt to novel tasks, activating one's commitment to thinking and the perspective of hope by means of maintaining one's cognitive and affective self-regulation in and of learning action" (Hautamäki et al., 2002, p. 39). On the other hand, the lifelong learning (LLL) concept considers learning not just limited to a specific period in life, that of the years of schooling, but as an ability to develop and practice over the course of a lifetime. Obviously, these two goals can be reached only if schools and institutions promote a learner-centred approach that offers students the opportunity to increase awareness of themselves, of their learning and their identity. The learner-centredeness perspective always recurs in the European documents, as for example, in the Bologna Process and in the ET2020 (Education and Training) Programme.

However, what emerges from the Trend of 2015 (Sursock, 2015) is that, although the European policies, it is difficult for institutions to translate into practice the European guidelines especially with reference to offering more personalised and flexible learning to students (Loukkola and Dakovic, 2017). The challenge seems to be the one of convincing teachers of the necessity to keep their teaching up to date and to focus on the learner perspective (Trend 2018). The latest European dossier 'Trend 2018'

demonstrates that LLL practices are now an integral part of the European Higher education institutions' strategies and programmes. However, the situation differ from country to country making the EU educational panorama extremely heterogeneous. What can be finally said is that even if the notion of learner-centredness has recently reached highly consideration and has been in some cases integrated into the curricula, its widespread acceptance and implementation has not yet been completed, though trends show a positive tendency.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review and Previous Studies

In this chapter, recent research and case studies will be reported in order to consider the efficacy of the presented theories in the everyday classroom reality. In section 2.1, the relevance of autonomy will be demonstrated describing advantages and disadvantages of its implementation. Then, all the stakeholders that take part in the learning process will be presented, analysing in detail the teacher-learner relationship (2.2) and the role of materials and textbooks (2.3). Finally, the guidelines to evaluate a textbook will be provided and two studies that analyse the presence of autonomy polices in textbooks will be described in depth.

2.1 Autonomy in practice: relevance, criticisms and advantages

Learner autonomy theories were the focus of Chapter 1, but the importance and need for promoting learner autonomy in real foreign language classes is reinforced by the results of recent case studies and research. In fact, publications related to this topic have flourished over the last few decades and a multitude of aspects and peculiarities have emerged from the investigation of FL classrooms from all around the world. Many believes that the concept of autonomy is a Western cultural construct difficult to be implemented in other cultural backgrounds (Aoki&Smith, 1999), while, on the other hand, others believe that learner autonomy is a psychological phenomenon not influenced by cultural differences (Littlewood, 2001). The debate around the interference or not of different cultures on the implementation of the leaner autonomy polices is much deeper and an important focus in recent studies.

Many studies have analysed the impact of national cultures on autonomy and interesting aspects have emerged. Ho and Crookall (1995) underline the Chinese cultural norm of avoiding asking questions to clarify doubts both of the teacher and of the

learner and this can be considered an obstacle to autonomy. Another important aspect of autonomy is motivation, especially intrinsic motivation. This type of motivation is framed and reinforced by the cultural consideration and social importance given to learning studies. Finally, some studies on individualism and collectivism bring to light cultural differences among countries and some forms of individualism has been considered particularly useful in developing autonomy (e.g. Dam and Gabrielsen, 1988; Karlsson, Kjisik and Nordlund, 1997).

The cultural differences here briefly mentioned are considered in some cases as a starting point to criticises learner autonomy as a universal need for all learners (Riley, 1988; Jones, 1995; Pennycook, 1997), but this is not the only form of criticism to learner autonomy.

In fact, Cuypers (1992) and later Hand (2006) believe that it is nonsense to direct ourselves when there are others with more expertise that can do it better. According to Hand (2006: 538):

> '…since most of us spend much of our lives operating in spheres in which others have greater expertise than we do, and working in organisations in which others have authority over us, it would be nonsense to say that we ought always or generally to determine our own actions '.

For this reason, his conclusion is that autonomy is not a fundamental goal of education, but if the importance of lifelong learning is considered, it can be immediately understood why autonomy should be an aim of our educational system. The need for enhancing lifelong learning in our society is just one of the major arguments in favour of learner autonomy as an educational goal (Vázquez, 2016).

The importance of Lifelong Learning in the educational sistem has already been discussed in the previous chapter (1.3) and so here other advantages of learner autonomy are analysed. In fact, a second pro for autonomy is the connection with the learner's psychological development and awareness. Learner autonomy 'is a way of encouraging students to experience that sense of personal agency and self-determination that is vital to developing their motivation from within' (Ushioda, 2011:

224) and when no autonomy is fostered a lower degree of self-motivation, resistance to work and engagement can be measured (Vázquez, 2016).

In addition, learner autonomy contribute balancing the teacher-learner relationship in the classroom limiting the emergence of the authoritarian teacher and promoting a democratic atmosphere. In this regard, learners are part of the decision-making process and they are stimulated to express their opinions. Researches in this area demonstrate that after adopting autonomy policies, learners are not only more responsible for their learning, but also proud of having a say in the classroom (Dam, 1995; Serrano Sampedro, 2008). Therefore, learner autonomy can be considered a tool to prepare the active and democratic citizens of the future.

Finally, with reference to the development of foreign language proficiency, different studies demonstrate that autonomous learning in the secondary school context produces the same results in terms of proficiency as the traditional approach (Dam, 1996; Legenhausen, 2010). However, the studies conducted by Legenhausen (1999, 2001, 2003, 2010) in the LAALE project (Language Acquisition in an Autonomous Learning Environment) show that self-directing learners achieve better linguistic results than students educated via a textbook-based communicative syllabus.

This testify the importance of promoting autonomy not just from a theoretical point of view, but also in practice, by demonstrating the positive effects of these actions on learners.

2.2 The Attention given to the Teacher-Learner Relationship

In the previous section, the relevance of autonomy in learning a foreign language has been discussed and now, starting from these observations, we want to analyse the instruments used to transform a passive learner into an self-direct one. According to the model presented by Allwright (1981, cited in Hutchinson and Torres, 1994 here as Figure 2) the opportunities to learn from a specific lesson emerge from the interaction between three main elements: the teacher, the learner and the materials. These three aspects

should play an equal role in the promotion of autonomy, but as the number of published studies and research demonstrate, attention is mostly given to the relationship between teachers and learners, considering materials only marginally.

Voller (1997) identifies three roles for the teachers: the teacher as a facilitator, the teacher as a counsellor and the teacher as a resource and he strongly believes that the degree of autonomy that a learner can reach depends on his/her relationship with the teacher. The facilitator helps learners to plan their learning and manage the classroom activities (Lowes & Target, 1999), the counsellor informs the learners and makes them aware of the learning strategies available, but does not influence their choices and then, the resource is a teacher who helps students to discover new styles and strategies in order to direct them to adopt the best method to learn. The role of the teacher is fundamental in promoting autonomy, but in order to do so even the teacher should acquire autonomy. For this reason, it is possible to distinguish between learner and teacher autonomy.
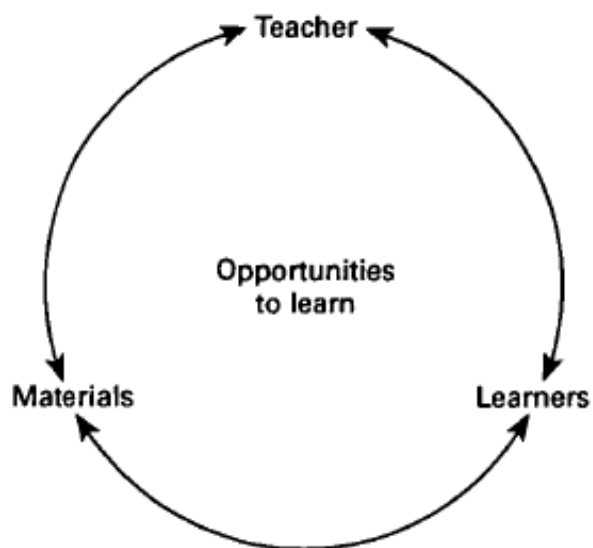

Figure 1. The Interaction Model of Allwright (1981)

The concept of teacher autonomy has a long history, but only recently is it receiving interest and attention, becoming the real focus of studies on autonomy (Cárdenas-Ramos, 2016). In fact, the recent international conferences on the topic of autonomy

(Nottingham, 1998, AILA 1999 in Tokyo, Helsinki 2000, Hong Kong 2000, Shizuoka 2001, Edinburgh 2001, Singapore 2002) have been dedicated almost entirely discussing teacher autonomy. One of the reasons why this topic is now scrutinized is probably the awareness that teachers must keep up to date and so learning is a fundamental aspect in their lives too. As Smith (2000: 90) declares:

> 'one leitmotiv of recent work in the field of teacher education is that learning constitutes an important part not only of becoming, but also of continuing to be a teacher. If this is the case, then learner autonomy is likely to be as necessary for ourselves as we consider it to be for language students.'

Different definitions of teacher autonomy have been theorized, but just to better explain this concept one of them is reported. Teacher autonomy is 'the teacher's ability and willingness to help learners take responsibility for their own learning' (Thavenius, in Cárdenas-Ramos, 2016: 188). Generally speaking, teacher autonomy is the result of the teaching job and as Little (1995: 178) states, this view includes '…having a strong sense of personal responsibility for their teaching, exercised via continuous reflection and analysis.. affective and cognitive control of the teaching process'.

However, Kirovska-Simjanoska (2015) emphasise two major problems in implementing autonomy in the classroom. She believes that teachers may be influenced by the cultural and social stereotypes proper of a specific community and this belief could prevent them from behaving differently. For example, in the Macedonian and Albanian culture there is a widespread image of the authoritarian teacher and so implementing in the class autonomy policies could transform the figure of the teacher into a lazy and unprepared one. Secondly, teachers may be afraid of giving responsibility to their learners for fear of losing control. In this regard, the case study of Üstünlüoğlu (2009) investigates the perception of responsibility of 320 university students and 24 teachers. The results gathered by a questionnaire show that teachers tend to see themselves as the principal cause of success or failure in learners and they take all the responsibility of the learning path because they believe that learners lack this ability. These results are consistent with many other studies (Holden and Usiki, 1995; Littlewood, 2000; Chan et al., 2002) and

probably an explanation for this could be retraced in the socio-cultural background, once again.

To conclude, the concept of teacher autonomy is now a widespread notion and many scholars have contributed to the definition of some good practices for teachers, in order to transform them into facilitators of learner autonomy. However, the development of autonomy is based not only on this teacher-learner relationship, but also on the use of appropriate materials and this will be the heart of the next section.

2.3 The Role of Textbooks

In this work, English as Foreign Language (EFL) Textbook is a term used in a broader sense to include all the different types of pre-packed materials developed to teach and learn English as a foreign language. It embraces the coursebook, the workbook, the teacher's guide and extra available contents, in a single and unified book or in a fully-integrated learning package. Textbooks are the universal materials adopted and proposed in almost every different English course even if other typologies of materials can be used, such as authentic materials, for example.

However, even if using textbooks in class is a widespread practice, the impact of this phenomenon has been little analysed and the majority of papers published on this topic have been generally critical, especially during the 90s (Hutchinson and Torres, 1994). The following lines taken from Swan (1992: 33) synthetize a common belief concerning textbooks.

> The danger with ready-made textbooks is that they can seem to absolve teachers of responsibility. Instead of participating in the day-to-day decisions that have to be made about what to teach and how to teach it, it is easy to just sit back and operate the system, secure in the belief that the wise and virtuous people who produced the textbook knew what was good for us. Unfortunately this is rarely the case.

Many other studies have reinforced this idea (e.g. Littlejohn, 1992) while others have highlighted that pre-service teachers tend to consider the good teacher the one who builds his/her own materials and curriculum and does not follow a coursebook (Loewenberg, Ball and Feiman-Nemser, 1988). The underling conviction is that books are fixed and unchanging products, which do not provide the flexibility needed for teaching according to the centred-student teaching style.

Despite all these considerations, textbooks continue to be adopted in schools and the publishers go on producing teaching materials, with up to date tools. In the following lines, just four of the major arguments in favour of textbooks are presented.

Firstly, in order to demonstrate that books have been changing through time, the author of two successful textbooks (study conducted by Viney reported in Hutchinson and Torres, 1994) made a comparison between *Streamline* (Hartley and Viney, 1978) and *Grapevine* (Viney and Viney, 1989) noticing a shift from a simple collection of texts and pattern drill exercises in the older book to a more structured and detailed product in the second case. If textbooks continue to be a strong reference for teachers, it is probably because to some extent they are perceived as useful tools, through which it is possible to bring update pedagogical theories to the classroom.

Secondly, the lesson, and in particular the foreign language lesson, can be considered a social event (Prabhu, 1992) in which active participants have to express themselves and take risks. If, on the one hand, public speaking is something stressful for everyone, in the English class, students must communicate even in a language that is not their mother tongue increasing stress, anxiety and negative feelings. Prabhu believes that these emotions are even stronger if participants feel unpredictability and so, they do not know in advance the organization of the lesson and the different activities in which they will be involved. For this reason, it is fundamental to structure and prepare lessons following always the same pattern and design in order to create a 'social routinisation'. In this way, students are able to predict the different moments of the lessons and this foster them to interact and participate with more enthusiasm and less stress. In spite of this, the textbook plays a central role showing in advance all the different steps and

exercises to undergo. This is probably a second reason to explain why textbooks continue to be adopted worldwide.

Thirdly, in the theories connected to learner autonomy presented before, the importance of student's involvement in the organisation and negotiation of the curriculum was central. In spite of this, the uniqueness of needs, identities and motivation seems not to be taken into account in textbooks and it seems impossible to meet this learner peculiarities using this type of material. For example, how can learners participate in the creation of the curriculum if they are not given the chance to select the topics to study? In fact, the guidelines to build a personalised curriculum can lie in three places: the teacher's head, in a predefined syllabus produced by an external institution or authority or in pre-planned materials. It is immediately clear that the third option is the one accessible to students and so textbooks are useful instruments to present contents to learners and give them the possibility to negotiate with the teacher a personalised curriculum. Moreover, a printed book is a means of comparison to standard goals both for the teacher and for the learner. For example, it may offer the opportunity to compare the ability developed in a single class with the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) indicators followed by books orienting teachers and learners efforts.

Finally, the textbook can be considered a very efficient agent of change. At this proposal, research demonstrates the active role of books in stimulating teachers in implementing new curricula and new practices in class. Van den Akker (1988) conducted an experiment with two groups of teachers with the purpose of introducing a more enquiry-based approach. To the control group, less structured materials was given leaving the teacher more freedom in his decisions, while to the experimental group a fully planned list of exercises was given with advice concerning estimated times and explanations of the purposes of each activity. The results demonstrated that the control group had more difficulty in implementing the guidelines of the new approach losing control and returning to traditional practices and habits. On the other hand, the other group of teachers appeared more self-confident and successful in managing the new rules in the class. In spite of this, Van den Akker concluded that materials have an influence on the

teacher's development. Structured materials such as textbooks enable teachers to feel comfortable with a new approach promoting security and defeating anxiety. This is an instrument to control the impulse to adopt old practices and resist to change. If properly used, textbooks can help teachers learn new methods.

To sum up, four major statements in favour of books have been presented in order to contribute to the discussion about the role of printed materials in the foreign language classroom. Going back to the Interaction Model of Allwright (Figure 1, p. 25) it is now possible to understand why materials are considered a stakeholder in the learning process. This is why teachers, but also learners, should be ready and trained in reasoning about how and why something is done on that way. This interaction among the three actors (teacher, learner, materials) should be properly managed in order to achieve the best result in terms of language learner proficiency.

Along with studies which support the positive role of textbooks in EFL classes, is worth mentioning research about textbook design and course book assessment (e.g. Arikan, 2009), teacher's and learner's attitude tough wards textbooks (e.g. Torki and Chalak, 2017) and learners' perception about the concept of EFL textbooks (e.g. Kesen, 2010).

With reference to autonomy, however, not many studies analyse the correlation between self-directed learning and textbooks and this is probably because much more importance is given to the role and behaviour of the teacher, as mentioned before.

To conclude, it is possible to retrace some general features of the role of textbooks in the development of autonomy. We saw that textbooks can be an important tool to present topics, grammar and vocabulary to students enabling the learner to take active part in the construction and selection of the curriculum. Then, the use of a book allow a predictable and so more relaxed lesson, thus favouring a more convenient environment where to interact with peers. Finally, textbooks are fundamental tools in the promotion of updated theories and practices in the classroom. This could also be a possible support to the teacher's difficulties of implementing different approaches in an unfavourable socio-cultural context, as mentioned in paragraph 2.2. The presence of a printed book can be considered as a legitimation to adopt unconventional or uncommon behaviours. These are some basic considerations concerning textbooks, but in the following chapter

we will analyse all the studies that explicitly investigate the implementation of learner autonomy polices in textbooks.

2.4 EFL Coursebooks and Learner Autonomy: Previous Studies

In the previous chapters, two major perspectives concerning the role of textbooks have been presented. Despite criticism to the use of coursebooks, the central role of textbooks in the organization of foreign language classes offering advantages both for teachers and for learners has been shown. In fact, books are adopted worldwide and each school and teacher can choose the textbook that better matches the goals and needs of the course itself, evaluating the structure and purposes of different books.

In this regard, developing the ability to evaluate textbooks is fundamental for teachers because this enables them to choose the appropriate book for a class and to consider its weaknesses and strengths in advance so as to make appropriate adaptation in its day to day use.

However, no predefined fixed criteria for evaluation are available, because judging a book is something more than following a check- list. Despite this, several scholars have tried to define some basic guidelines to facilitate the evaluation process. Among them, it is worth mentioning Cunningsworth (1995), Hutchinson and Waters (1987), (Breen, 1989), Ellis (1997) and Robinson (1991), but the latest and more complete model of textbook evaluation was proposed by McDonough and Shaw (2003). This model suggests three stages in the process: external evaluation, internal evaluation and overall evaluation. First, external evaluation consider the analysis of the basic information such as the table of contents, the proficiency level, the audience, the context of use, texts and exercises available, use or not of audio-video materials and methodology. Second, internal evaluation considers the following aspects (Karimi et al., 2015: 31023): 'the presentation of the skills, the grading and sequence of the materials, the authenticity or artificiality of the listening materials, the authenticity or artificiality of the speaking materials, the appropriateness of tests and materials, and the appropriateness of the

materials for different learning styles and claims made by the authors for self-study'. Third, overall evaluation is a stage that considers usability, generalisability and flexibility factors in general.

Other methods to evaluate books are identified in McGrath (2001): the "impressionistic method" which is based on a general impression considering the layout and the topics; the "check-list method", which establishes a list of criteria in advance to be retraced in the book, and finally, the "in-depth method" which considers the observation of any single features and elements.

Although the literature concerning textbooks is rich and abundant, only a few studies have tried to evaluate books in relation to the promotion of learner autonomy. This may be due to the fact that studies tend to focus more on the role of teacher in the development of learner autonomy rather than on the role of the materials or books used by the teachers him/herself. Yet, some studies do exist, for example, the one reported in Spirovska (2015).

The aim of this research was to 'analyse the textbooks in terms of the impact that they have on development of autonomous learners' (p. 67). She analysed four EFL textbooks of upper intermediate level which are commonly used in the English courses of a South Eastern European University.

To detect the presence of the autonomous principles, she followed Nunan's Nine Steps List considered useful to facilitate learner autonomy as presented in chapter 1 (see Table 1, p. 10). The results demonstrate that 'textbooks fail to enable and encourage the learners to assume more responsibilities for their own learning' (p. 71).

	CUTTING EDGE	WHISHES 2.2	ENGLISH FILE	ENGLISH RESULT
step 1	Yes, the learning goals and outcomes are listed at the beginning of each module	Yes, although not explicitly. There is a section at the beginning of each module listing some of the outcomes (Listen, read and talk about).	Not sufficiently, although there is a brief list of grammar and vocabulary at the beginning of each module.	Yes, very clearly via sections ABC Put it all together and I can which summarize the learning outcomes.
step 2	Yes/ via sections USEFUL VOCABULARY	No	No	No
step 3	Yes/via sections TASKS, projects which the students can work on together (poster presentations)	No	Yes, especially via writing tasks (writing biographies)	Yes, via writing tasks
step 4	Yes (there are some instructions in the textbook which help students improve / be aware of their learning strategies	No	Yes (there are sets of instructions in the textbook which help students improve their learning strategies	No
step 5	No	No	No	No
step 6	Yes, via communication activities which are part of several modules	No	No	No
step 7	No	No	No	No
step 8	No	No	No	No
step 9	No	No	No	No

Table 4. The results of Spirovska's study according to the 'Nine Steps' by Nunan (2015).

Another study is that described in Reinders and Balçikanli (2011) which was meant to find out 'to what extent [textbooks] prepare learners for their future learning' (p. 265). Five popular EFL textbooks for the intermediate language level were analysed detecting the presence of information or opportunities to practice self-directed learning according to the framework for self-directing learning elaborated by one of the authors (Reinders, 2010). This model is presented in Table 5 and is based on the circular interaction of eight stages that repeat and build on themselves. (this framework is an adaptation of the five-step module by Knowles (1975) and these are considered to be the good practices to adopt in order to self-direct learning and promote autonomy). Referring to the stage of the model, the authors could identify some important features in the textbooks (see Table 6 p. 35 for a report of the results obtained), which made them conclude that:

> Clearly, the enormous amount of attention given to autonomy in recent years (cf.
> Benson 2001) has not translated into a deliberate focus on developing students' skills
> for self-directed learning (and by extension, their autonomy) in the most popular
> English language textbooks (Reinders and Balçikanli, 2011: 270)

LEARNING STAGES	TEACHER-DIRECTED	LEARNER-DIRECTED
Identifying needs	Placement tests, teacher feedback.	Learner experiences/ difficulties in using the language.
Setting goals	Determined by the course, relatively fixed.	Contextually determined, relatively flexible.
Planning learning	Determined by the teacher. Somewhat flexible.	Contextually determined. Very flexible.
Selecting resources	Provided by teacher.	Self-selection by learners.
Selecting learning strategies	Teacher models and instructions.	Self-selection by learners.
Practice	Exercises and activities provided by teacher	Implementation (language use) and experimentation.
Monitoring progress	Regular classroom feedback and comments on assignments and tasks	Self-monitoring, peer-feedback
Assessment and revision	Tests, curriculum changes	Self-assessment, reflection

Table 5. Framework for self-directing learning (Reinders, 2010).

LEARNING STAGE	INCLUDED?	INFORMATION OR ACTIVITY?
Identifying needs	X	
Setting goals	X	
Planning learning	X	
Selecting resources	X	
Selecting learning strategies	2	New Opportunities: includes information on speaking strategies. New Headway: includes information on vocabulary records.
Practice	X	
Monitoring progress	2*	Cutting Edge: At the end of each unit, there is a section called 'do you remember'. Face to Face: Each unit includes a Progress Portfolio where students record what they have learned.
Assessment and revision	X	

Table 6. The results of study 2 as reported by the authors (Reinders and Balçikanli, 2011).

In the first two chapters of this work, we reported a general literature framework. The historical development in the language education field, the central role of the learner in the language acquisition process and the importance of developing long-lasting learner autonomy were some key concepts of the first chapter. In the second chapter, more recent studies and observations on autonomy were presented, underlining the shared positive results in favour of the promotion of learner autonomy. Even in recent years, scholars agree on the importance of autonomy in learning and the role of teachers has been considered the main element in fostering it. However, even the significant role of materials, and textbooks in particular, were demonstrated, but although deep analysis and researches have been conducted on this matter, only in a few studies the role of EFL books was detected in relation to the development of autonomy.

Considering this background, this work wants to contribute to fill this gap in literature presenting in the second part of the paper a quantitative and qualitative research, analysing some textbooks and their implementation of the learner autonomy policies.

Part 2 – Textbook Analysis: A Quantitative and Qualitative Research

Chapter 3 – The Research Design

In the previous part of this work, we briefly discussed the importance of learner autonomy in language education and the paramount role of textbooks in the teaching and learning of English as a Foreign language.

Now that the theoretical framework has been delineated, we can better explain the purposes of the actual research. This chapter is devoted to the clarification of the research design and it is divided into four sections. Firstly, the research questions will be presented (3.1), then materials and type of sampling will be described (3.2) and finally, instruments and methods will be explained (3.3 and 3.4), with reference to each research question.

3.1 Problem and Research Questions

In the first part of this work, we have analysed the literature framework concerning learner autonomy and we have stressed the absence of a fully developed debate on the role of textbooks in the promotion of learner autonomy. Although many studies have investigated both the relevance of learner autonomy and the importance of using pre-packaged teaching materials in class, little research have scrutinised the presence of autonomy polices in textbooks to see if this widespread type of materials fosters active and self-directed learning, concluding that active learning polices are not fully present in textbooks. Our aim is to enrich these considerations by analysing some textbooks

To pursue this goal, we have formulated two research questions:

1. Do EFL textbooks take into consideration learner autonomy?
2. Are metacognitive strategies promoted in order to foster learner autonomy?

Through the first research question, we analyse the general structure of the book conducting an external evaluation and using pre-existing instruments of testing. To answer the second research question, we analyse the exercises offered in each book following the principles of the internal evaluation. In this case, we follow a well-known model for the classification of the metacognitive strategies, even if its application to textbooks has never done before and, so far as we are concerned, this wants to be a new experimentation.

3.2 Materials

A sample of twelve EFL (English as a foreign language) books have been selected. We focused on books for the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language not taking into account textbooks in other languages such as German, French or Spanish for example. In fact, the collection of such a differentiated type of materials is not simple especially regarding the necessity of creating equal and representative samples for each language. For this reason, we decided to focus on EFL books, considering that English is a Lingua Franca and that large amounts of textbooks are produced and available all around the world. In this regard, we hope that EFL books can be considered up-to-date products receiving high level of attention by producers and innovative and brand-new pedagogical and educational theories.

All the selected books are well-known and widespread in the secondary school in Italy. The Italian education system can be divided into two levels: the primary school, for children from 3 to 10 years old and the secondary school, for students from 11 to 19 years old. Moreover, the secondary school is further divided into two levels: lower secondary school (scuola secondaria di primo grado) for students between 11 and 14

years old, and upper secondary level (scuola secondaria di secondo grado) for students between 14 and 19 years old. The materials analysed in the study are directed at students of both lower and upper secondary school levels.

The chosen sample can be classified as a convenient sample because available and close to hand books have been selected. As mentioned before, teachers and schools select textbooks autonomously and so different books, publishers and authors can be chosen. For this reason, it is difficult to find lists of recommended or adopted books on a regional or national level and the availability sampling is one of the possible methods to select books adopted in schools. But, if on the one hand the convenient sample is a helpful option for us, on the other hand it is important to mention some disadvantages of this form of sampling. In fact, the convenient sample may not fully represent the population of interest and using a non-probability sampling method can be a source of bias. For this reason, in order to increase the accuracy of our sample, we selected books published between 2000 and 2018 by different publishers, including both Italian and English editors.

Now, having made some general considerations on the sample, we will present the selected materials in detail, dividing them into three major groups.

First, four out of the twelve books are elementary level (A1/A2) textbooks used in the lower secondary school. Table 7 reports details.

Title	Authors	Publisher	Year	Level
Twenty-one 1	V. Heward, E. Scorti, A. Greenwood, S. Cochrane	De Agostini Scuola	2018	Elementary (A1)
Go Live!	C. Maxwell and E. Sharman	Oxford	2016	Elementary (A2)
Classmates	J. Dooley and V. Evans	Zanichelli	2017	Elementary (A2)
English Zone	Rob Nolasco	Oxford / La Nuova Italia	2001	Elementary (A2)

Table 7. Elementary level EFL textbooks.

The second group of our sample is made up of four Intermediate level textbooks adopted in the upper secondary school in Italy. In Table 8, the first reported year

indicates the year of publication, while the second year reports the reissue of the book analysed in our study.

Title	Authors	Publisher	Year	Level
Success	S. McKinlay, B. Hastings, L. White and R. Fricker	Pearson	2007/ 2010	Intermediate (B1)
New English File	C. Oxenden, C. Latham-Koenig and T. Byrne	Oxford	2006/ 2011	Intermediate (B1)
Cutting Edge	S. Cunningham, P. Moor and J. C. Carr	Pearson	2005/ 2008	Pre-Intermediate (A2-B1)
Energy Plus	S. Elsworth, J. Rose, D. Delaney, L. Kilbey and L. Sharman	Pearson	2006/ 2008	Intermediate (B1)

Table 8. Intermediate and Pre-Intermediate EFL textbooks

Finally, the third group consists of four multilevel grammar books adopted in the upper secondary school. They are generally used in class with the support of the teacher or individually at home by students to reinforce specific grammar items.

Title	Authors	Publisher	Year	Level
Essential Grammar in Use	R. Murphy and L. Pallini	Cambridge	2005	Multilevel (A1-B1)
Language practice for Advanced	M. Vince	Macmillan	2014	Advanced (C1-C2)
Grammar in Progress	L. Bonci and S. M. Howell	Zanichelli	2008	Multilevel (A1- C1)
Activating Grammar	A.Gallagher and F. Galuzzi	Pearson	2007	Multilevel (A1-B2+)

Table 9. Multilevel EFL Grammar Books

In conclusion, the sample consists of twelve EFL books of Elementary and Intermediate level adopted in Italian lower and upper secondary schools. Both textbooks and grammar books are selected because these are the two types of pre-packaged materials adopted by schools for EFL teaching and learning. In fact, the textbook is generally used in class to present different vocabularies and grammar rules, but also to improve the listening, writing, reading and speaking skills. Each textbook is composed of the

student's book (SB) and the workbook (WB), which have been both considered in our analysis. With reference to the grammar books, they are generally used in the upper secondary school and they can be used as support for students to study specific topics individually in depth or as integral part of the lessons in class.

3.3 Methods and Scoring: First Research Question

To answer the first research question "Do EFL textbooks take into consideration learner autonomy?", we analysed the structure and the different sections available in each book. As in the studies of Spirovska (2015) and Reinders and Balçikanli (2011), the particular structure of a book is considered to be a first step to develop autonomy. The presence of review sections, self-assessment tests or goal planning areas are all examples of good elements to foster learner autonomy via a textbook. For that reason, we decided to combine the two validated methods used in the two presented studies in order to reply to this first question: in particular, first we used the framework for self-directing learning (Reinders, 2010) as already presented in Tale 5 (p.34) and then, we examined the presence of the nine steps by Nunan as done by Spirovska (2015) in her research.

Before filling the models with all data taken from the textbooks, we decided to analyse the book design paying attention to the presence of different sections. Just to give an idea of the considerations elaborated for each book, we report a brief description of one of the selected books: 'Twenty-One 1'.

> The Elementary Level 'Twenty-One 1' textbook includes the SB and the WB in a single volume and both these two parts are built upon 8 Units. Each unit follows the same structure and each of them is made up of five sections as shown by the labels on the upper corner of each page (e.g. Dialogue, Vocabulary, Grammar, Oral Competences, Competences and Culture). The opening page does not give learners a summary of the topics and specific skills on which they are going to

work in the unit, but this information is available at the beginning of the book, where an overall presentation of the volume is offered. The first three lessons focus on grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation and different activities are presented in order to stimulate and develop the speaking, writing, listening and reading skills. The fourth lesson is devoted to functional language. At lower levels this section is about basic situations and as the learner moves to higher levels he is asked to express himself in more sophisticated and challenging circumstances. The last lesson in each unit is built around a specific cultural topic through which students can learn something more about the habits and costumes of the UK.

At the end of the book, there are some extra sections useful to review or extend some topics presented in the units. The revision and grammar sections offer a series of communicative exercises to practice the key grammar and vocabulary items of the unit. Students can use it as additional practise or as review and consolidation at the end of the learning process. Then, students can read about cultural topics in depth in the extra sections *Festivals*, *Classic Culture* and *Extension*, but also improve their pronunciation through the *Pronunciation bank*, collaborate in class projects thanks to the *Compiti di realtà* section and learn something new about other school subjects via the CLIL section.

This is just an example of a book description to show how we have proceeded in a first and general evaluation of each book, but then, using the Reinders' model, we followed strict guidelines.

After this overview, we started to analyse the books following the framework for self-directed learning (Reinders, 2010) and the nine steps by Nunan (Spirovska, 2015). We will present the results obtained with these two methods separately, but then to finally answer the first research question we will consider the aggregated results considering the two outcomes at the same time.

With reference to the model taken from Reinders (p. 34), we used it exactly as in the reported study. We filled a separate diagram for each book of our sample reporting the presence or not of each phase in the books and taking notes and making considerations for each point.

Now, we are going to mention for each stage of the model the observed rules and methods in order to clarify the details of our analysis.

- Identifying needs

With reference to this first point, the presence of an entry level test is taken into consideration. However, the placement test is a traditional element in the teacher directed learning and, for that reason, this aspect was not considered as a feature in favour of autonomy. Indeed, we retraced the presence of advice and sections that enable students to reflect on themselves, their wishes and necessities. The learner should be stimulated to observe his difficulties in using the language reflecting on his experiences and identifying the occasions in which he use the foreign language mostly, even outside the class.

- Setting goals

At this stage, we considered the presence of a summary of topics and aims, at the beginning of the book or of the unit, a first element in favour of helping set goals. In fact, this feature shows students that what they are studying is planned in order for them to reach a specific goal. Teaching them this method of setting goals will show them that in the learning process there is no randomness and efforts must be all directed in the same direction. However, to consider this point fully satisfied, goals must be flexible and contextually determined. This means that students can select their own goals in relation to their needs, interests and classroom reality.

- Planning learning

This point considers the opportunity for the learner to plan his own learning without interference and in a flexible way. This means that the book enables students to choose the order of doing the exercises, not pre-planning the timing of each section and not forcing them to follow a specific direction. For example, the presentation of fixed lessons to follow and solve in a predetermined order is not an indication for learner autonomy. A positive alternative could be the presentation of exercises showing the level of

difficulty for each one. In this way the learner can choose the topic that he prefers, being aware of his own level and of the commitment required by each single exercise. In addition to this, a general description of how the book is built and the presence of some pieces of advice to use it at the best of its potentiality is considered another positive element.

In order to consider this stage fully satisfied, both these two elements must be present seeing both the information and the activities as fundamental features to plan the learning path consciously.

- Selecting resources

Referring to this level, the opportunity for the learner to select relevant resources is scrutinized. To develop autonomy, it is fundamental to teach learners how to select materials such as texts for reading activities, videos and podcasts for listening or extra exercises to practice. It is important to educate the learner even to create appropriate activities for the chosen resources, motivating them to solve their exercises and teaching them a long-lasting method to learn a foreign language. In the books, we inspected the presence activities to foster the self-selection of resources by the learner in addition to the traditional presentation of pre-selected materials.

- Selecting learning strategies

Using learning strategies consciously and efficiently is a first step to succeed. To consider this point implemented, the presence of activities that help to consciously adopt a specific learning strategy was detected. But to fully satisfy this stage, both the presence of activities and of information or advice must be present. The core value in this case is making the learner aware and willing to use strategies.

- Practice

In this case, we investigated the opportunity for the learner to use the language and to experiment with the language. For this reason, it is important not only to present pre-selected exercises in the books, but also to enable learners to play with the language.

We traced the presence of 'free exercises', exercises in which students can use the language without strict rules and guidelines, and express themselves in a more natural way.

- Monitoring progress

This step is fundamental in directing the learning and to check whether the objects of our learning path have been reached. In this way, learners can modify their learning habits during the path. Self-monitoring and peer feedback are the two ways to monitor the process following the learner autonomy policies. These two approaches should be fostered in the books in order to reduce dependency on teacher's feedback. For this reason, we focus on sections and exercises that are useful for monitoring progress through peer feedback or self-analysis.

- Assessment and revision

Finally, this point gives importance to the final evaluation step. It is important to measure obtained results and check if planned goals have been reached. According to learner autonomy policies, a self-assessment test instead of a teacher evaluated test is advised. But, in addition to the presence of this form of evaluation, it is mandatory to present a section for reflection. For this reason, to consider this level fully implemented, we trace the presence both of self-assessment tests and of self-reflection activities or sections.

As regards the 'Nine Steps' by Nunan, they were considered as follows.

- Step 1: Make instruction goals clear to learners

With reference to this first step, we traced the description of goals at the beginning of each unit or at the beginning of the book, but also the presence of an introduction section with adequate information and advice to use the book at its best. This enables learners to understand the planning and goals promoted by the book and integrate

them in a personalised learning path. This observation can be easily associated to the 'Setting goal' section of the first model.

- Step 2: Allow learners to create their own goals

This step fosters learners to identify their needs and to select their goals. As we saw in the first point of Reinders, the presence of entry level tests, but also sections for self-reflection is a fundamental element to start a new learning path, and these will be the elements evaluated in our sample.

- Step 3: Encourage learners to use their foreign language outside the classroom

This step can be considered similar to the point 'Practice' in the previous model. In fact, even in this case the focus is on giving students the opportunity to practice the language in a less structured way. This point is important to transmit learners the necessity to practice a language as much as possible, even outside the classroom. With reference to this point, we consider the presence of sections or resources useful to stimulate the learner to experiment and have fun with the language.

- Step 4: Raise awareness of learning processes

Concerning this point, we take into consideration the presence of information and advice to plan and manage the learning process consciously.

- Step 5: Help learners identify their own preferred styles and strategies

With reference to this step, the presence both of information and activities to spread the importance of managing different learning strategies will be evaluated. For this reason, this level can be associated with the fifth point in Reinders' model, but in Nunan's even the promotion of learning styles is mentioned. In order to trace this second element, we analyse the presence of sections that are useful for stimulating the different senses in learners such as the tactile or kinesthetic through projects and

dynamic activities, but also the presence of information as how to manage biological differences properly.

- Step 6: Encourage learner choice

At this level learners are encouraged to create their own targets and the book should enable this passage offering the opportunity to modify the order of exercises, units and topics. Goals must be flexible and contextually determined as in Reinders' model and, as in the 'Planning learning' point, learners should be given all the tools necessary to plan their learning encouraging individual choices and risk-taking.

- Step 7: Allow learners to generate their own tasks

In this case, we evaluate the possibility that learners have to create their own activities in relation to selected materials. Like the 'Selecting resources' point in the first model, students are fostered to select resources according to their interests and build the related activities in accordance with their needs.

- Step 8: Encourage learners to become teachers

The teacher is generally considered a figure with the power to evaluate and judge the outcomes on learners. For this reason, Step 8 is associated with the development of self-evaluation ability in the learner. We trace the presence of self-assessment tasks and revision sessions with this purpose in mind. To make a comparison, a similar intent between this step and the last two points can be found in Reinders' model.

- Step 9: Encourage learners to become researchers

This final step identifies the presence of sections and activities useful for encouraging learners to study specific topics in depth. We trace the presence of stimuli to discover something new about the items presented in the book even outside the classroom.

To conclude, we have described how we have implemented the two models for the evaluation of textbooks in accordance with the learner autonomy policies. In chapter 4.1, we will present the results obtained for each single book following these two methods.

3.4 Methods and Scoring: Second Research Question

In this section, we are going to analyse the tool used to answer the second research question: 'are metacognitive strategies promoted in order to foster learner autonomy?' With this second investigation an internal evaluation of the books is provided. This means that, while through the first question we evaluated the structure of the books, in this second case we analysed the typology of exercises and the efficacy of their instructions.

In order to do this, we took into consideration the first unit of each book of the sample. With reference to the eight textbooks (first and second group), we analysed unit one both in the SB and in the WB, while in the four grammar books (third group) we considered from three to six units because in this type of book units are shorter and so we tried to consider a sufficient amount of exercises in order to build a representative sample.

The Metacognitive Model of Strategic Learning (Chamot et al. 1999, see p. 18 above) offered us the guidelines for the analysis. We filled a table for each book making a distinction between SB and WB and classifying exercises according to the four major categorises of Chamot et al.'s metacognitive model. Finally, we counted the number of exercises for each category and we made proportions in relation to the total amount of exercises in the selected pages of the books. In this way, it was possible to compare the results and to easily identify trends and tendencies with reference to our goals.

The importance of describing the parameters observed to classify exercises emerges and in the following pages, we are going to describe the features of each of Chamot's subcategory. Just to recall the model, it is important to remember that it was based on four major classes: planning process, monitoring process, problem solving process and

evaluating process. Each of them are further divided into other points which are explained below.

Category 1: 'Planning process'.

The first category is 'Planning Process': first stage to develop learner autonomy and a moment in which learners set their goals and organize their learning path. In this first level, we considered both exercises useful to plan and direct the learning path as for example the frequency or intensity of learning sections, but also exercises useful to plan and organize the steps to solve a specific exercise, as for example the planification of a writing activity. This distinction will be clarified with examples in the following points and for the moment it is sufficient to consider the presence of both these two elements.

- Set goals

With reference to this first point, the presence of useful exercises are scrutinized in the books. In this case, revision sections are not taken into consideration, but rather exercises that enable learners to measure their proficiency and to set their own goals in relation to their needs and wishes.

- Direct attention

In this case, we investigated the presence of activities beneficial to learn how to focus attention on details or learning processes. Figure 2 reports an example of this considering a more cognitive aspect of learning, but this exercise could be useful also to transmit to learners the habit to control their learning, focusing on what is more relevant for them.

Before you read. Osserva le foto. Abbina le parole (1-3) alle foto (a-c).
1 a phone …..   2 a guitar ……   3 a surfboard …..

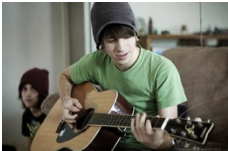a.   b.   c.

Figure 2. Exercise 1 page 126 Elementary level textbook Go live! (WB).

- <u>Activate background knowledge</u>

Through this stage students are stimulated to think about what they already know with reference to a specific topic. This is generally a pre-reading activity, but the presence of this activity transmits students the importance not only to solve exercises, but also to follow a specific method to solve them easily end more efficiently. This allows them to plan their learning in a structured way, not just making exercises mechanically.

Before you read. Look at the headings of the five texts. In pairs, discuss what you know about them.
A what do you know about Irish dancing?
B not very much./there's a famous Irish dance. I can't remember the name.

Figure 3 . Exercise 2 page 23 Intermediate level textbook Energy Plus (SB).

- <u>Predict</u>

Another important ability for EFL students is the one of being able to predict. It is important to transfer to them an efficient method to practice the foreign language so that even autonomously they can overcome difficulties and find solutions if the cognitive demand is greater. Figure 4 reports an information box, while figure 5 a practical activity both with the aim of fostering learners to predict.

Learning to Learn	Predicting content
Titoli, sottotitoli, immagini e suoni aiutano a fare previsioni sul contenuto di un testo	

Figure 4. Learning to Learn box of information offered in the Elementary level textbook Classmate 3 at page 18 (SB).

Read question 1 and 2. What do we expect the dialogue to be about?

1. What was Steven's favourite hobby as a child?
    a. golf   b. scuba diving   c. football

2.Steven likes his job because he works
    a. outdoors   b. in the mornings   c. alone

Figure 5. Exercise 6 page 16 in the elementary level textbook Classmates 3 (SB).

- Organizational planning

Being able to organize the work and/or the steps to reach a goal autonomously is something fundamental for an active learner. Figure 6 reports an exercise helpful to practice the language in a structured way, but this ability could be applied even to the organization of the learning process itself, promoting exercises or giving advice helpful to plan the learning path or the steps to follow to develop a new ability (Figure 7).

Choose a fashion or a style that is popular with a group of people in your country. Write a description of about 200-250 words.

Paragraph 1 _ Mention the clothes, accessorises and make-up they usually wear.

Paragraph 2 _ mention the kind of music they listen to.

Paragraph 3 _ mention how they typically spend their free time.

Figure 6. Exercise 5 page 13 in the Intermediate level Success (SB).

Study skills – Writing		
Doing research		
Before you start to write…		
… decide what information you need.		
… decide where to find the information.		
*a library	*the internet	*a newspaper
*a magazine	*an enciclopaedia	*a real person

Figure 7. Study Skills box of information offered in the Intermediate level textbook Energy Plus at page 23 (SB).

- Self-management

In order to consider whether this step was implemented, we looked for 'free exercises', exercises through which students can follow only their own decisions and not fixed directions given by the authors. In this way, learners can learn to manage themselves. This ability can be applied both to solve a cognitive exercise, as a reading or writing task for example, and to manage the learning path such as choosing exercises or deciding to practice something specific.

Category 2: 'Monitoring Process'.

At this step learners should be able to apply different metacognitive strategies in order to check in real time whether what they are doing is good or not in reaching their goals. These behaviours can be applied both to the single exercise and to the full learning path.

- Ask if make sense

The habit to control what we produce in a foreign language or to analyse the resources that an EFL textbook presents us is a first step to becoming committed learners. In fact, learners should always scrutinize if what they produce is correct or not. Books can transmit this ability through exercises that stimulate the exploration of the language as for example looking for mistakes or correcting them in sentences as Figure 8 shows.

Correct the mistakes in the questions.

I can help you?   _____

How much is this cost?   _____

What time is?   _____

……

Figure 8. Exercise 11 page 10 in the Intermediate level textbook Cutting Edge (WB).

- Selectively attend

This step can also be considered part of the cognitive learning strategies, because it fosters learners to work directly with the language, as for example using the skim and scan techniques to read a text. For this reason, we generally do not consider these exercises in the analysis unless the metacognitive purposes are explicitly presented to students. To better explain this distinction, we report an info box (Figure 9) through which learners can understand the method to solve the true and false exercises and then a true/false activity (Figure 10) to practice the given advice. In this case, we classified this type of exercises as helpful activities to learn how to selectively attend, but we do not considered all the true/false exercises in that way. To recap, to fully satisfy

this point of the model, exercises with this goal must be in conjunction with specific advice to solve them correctly and consciously.

Learning to Learn	Identifying true statements
Quando devi stabilire se delle affermazioni relative a un testo sono vere: • Concentrate su un'affermazione alla volta. • Individua la parte di testo in cui se ne parla • Soffermati sulle parole chiave che possono aiutarti a rispondere.	

Figure 9. Learning to Learn box of information offered in the Elementary level textbook Classmate 3 at page 18 (SB).

Read the text. Choose the five statements from A-G below that are true according to the information in the text. Write the letter of the true statements on lines 1-4 in any order.

A Zookeepers work with dangerous animals.

B Volunteer zookeepers never work on their own.   **1** ……

C Visitors to the zoo mustn't touch the animals.   **2** ……

D All animals in the zoo mustn't touch the animals.   **3** ……

E it costs a lot of money to feed the zoo animals.   **4** ……

F Animals in the zoo don't like looking for their food

G the zoo provides volunteers with footwear.

Figure 10. Exercise 3 page 18 in the Elementary level textbook Classmate 3 (SB).

- Deduce/induce

With reference to this stage, we take into consideration all the exercises that force the learner to make hypotheses about something, deducing it from the context. An example of this is reported in figure 11 .

Listen to these people describing their countries. Where are they from?		
The Maldives	Morocco	India

Figure 11. Exercise 5 page 23 Intermediate level textbook Energy Plus (SB).

- Personalize/contextualise

In this case, we looked for activities that force students to personalize exercises according to their needs. We did not evaluate tasks that asked the learners to talk about themselves, but rather exercises that stimulate a pro-active participation of the learner.

- Takes notes

Considering this step, we evaluated activities that foster and show learners how to take notes as the example of figure 12 shows. This is a fundamental and traditional metacognitive ability.

Read the text again and take notes under these headings:	
*type of job	*DOs/DON'Ts
*duties	*clothes

Figure 12. Exercise 7 page 19 in the Elementary level textbook Classmate 3 (SB).

- Use Imagery

In relation to this point, we counted all the exercises that promoted the use of figurative language. However, even in this case, the purposes of the exercises must be explicit, because a traditional exercise on phrasal verbs for example was not considered a helpful activity to develop awareness on the necessity of using imagery. Figure 13 and 14 report a good example of what developing this strategies means for us.

Find and underline the words which suggest that these sentences are speculation.
1_ these young people are probably harmless
2_ maybe it's hard for some Goths to get up in the mornings!
3_ everyone appears to be having fun.
4_ Steve Mayes Believes the event was a success.

Figure 13. Exercise 4 page 11 in the Intermediate level Success (SB).

Train your Brain and check your answers to Exercise 4.

TRAIN YOUR BRAIN	Reading skills
Identifying speculation Writers often use speculation when they don't know all the facts. To identify speculation: 1 Read the statements carefully and try to decide if it is a definite fact or an impression/guess. 2 Look out for typical words or phrases which suggest a statement is an impression/guess.	

Figure 14. Exercise 5 page 11 in the Intermediate level Success (SB).

- Self-talk

As we have already mentioned, self-talk is a fundamental habit to develop in autonomous students to help them to identify who they are and who they want to become. In this way, introspection enables learners to understand their needs and plan their goals. Figure 15 reports an exercise of self-talk present in one of the books.

Which is the right job for you? And for your classmates (minimum 4)? The right job for me is… The right job for Filippo is…

Figure 15. Exercise 5 page 9 in the Elementary level textbook Classmate 3 (SB).

- Cooperate

With reference to this point, we must stress a distinction between metacognitive and socio-affective strategies. In fact, cooperation can be associated to both these two categories. In our analysis, we considered exercises in which pair work is useful for controlling and monitoring the learners' outcomes including in the instructions the words 'check or compare with your partner' (Figure 16).

Abbina le nazioni alle immagini (1-16) e confronta le tue scelte con quelle del tuo compagno. Poi ascolta, controlla e ripeti. the United Kingdom (UK) – Albania – Egypt – China – Germany – France – Ireland – Marocco – Italy – Sri Lanka – Peru – Spain – the USA- Ukraine

Figure 16. Exercise 1 page 126 Elementary level textbook Twenty-one 1 (SB).

Figure 17 reports an example of cooperation, but with the goal of developing relationships and socio-affective skills. For this reason, these types of exercises were not positively evaluated in our analysis.

What are your plans for the summer? Discuss in pairs. Use the expressions below as well as your own ideas.

   go to a language school – travel abroad – get a part-time job – swim at the beach

A This summer, I'm going to go to a language school. What about you?

B I'm going to…

Figure 17 . Exercise 10 page 14 in the Elementary level textbook Classmate 3 (SB).

Category 3: 'Problem Solving process'.

For autonomous learners this is a fundamental ability to acquire because they must be confident in solving problems quickly and easily with no anxiety or demotivation if something is not immediately clear.

- Inference

In this regard, a first skill to develop is the ability to guess the meaning of unknown words looking for hints in the context or in the background knowledge. Figure 18 reports a well-structured exercise in order to transmit students this necessity. On the other hand, exercises similar to Figure 19 have not been positive evaluated in our research because they stimulate learners to immediately use a word or to ask someone else for the meaning of the words, not making any inference about it.

Look at the sentence and decide what the context is.

   We make fun of each other a lot.

a. I laugh at myself and my friend laughs at herself.

b. I laugh at my friend and she laughs at me.

Figure 18 . Exercise 4 page 12 in the Intermediate level Success (SB).

Check the meaning of these words.				
peaceful	noisy	busker	performer	tough

Figure 19. Exercise 1 page 17 Intermediate level textbook Energy Plus (SB).

- <u>Substitute</u>

In this case, we evaluated activities that foster learners to avoid unknown words and stimulate them to explain their ideas saying it in another way and using familiar concepts.

- <u>Clarify/ask questions</u>

Being brave and asking for clarification is something beneficial to autonomy. We have previously seen that this behaviour can be culturally related and, even for this reason, books should transmit students (and teachers) the importance of this habit. In order to satisfy this point, we looked for the promotion of asking questions to classmates or teachers if something is not clear.

- <u>Use resources</u>

Concerning this last point, we evaluated exercises that suggest that learners use different resources. For example, the use of a dictionary, of online websites, of specific tv programmes to study in deep or to better understand specific topic.

Category 4: 'Evaluating Process'.

The learner's ability to evaluate his outcomes and to check if his goals have been reached is the final step of a circular model through which students can autonomously evaluate themselves, but also start planning a new learning process path.

- <u>Verify predictions</u>

This step is strictly linked with the point "activate previous knowledge' and 'predict' of the planning process area, but also to the point "deduce/induce' and 'inference'. In fact, it is important not only to make hypothesis, but also to check if our hypothesis are correct. Figure 20 reports the exercise that in the 'Energy Plus' book follows the useful exercise to activate background knowledge (Figure 3; p. 49) Through this second activity, students are fostered to verify their predictions.

> **Quick read. Check your answers to exercise 2.**

Figure 20. Exercise 3 page 23 Intermediate level textbook Energy Plus (SB).

- <u>Summarise</u>

With reference to this stage, the importance of summing up of what we have read or of what we have done to improve our skills during a specific period of time is evaluated.

- <u>Check goals</u>

In this case, we decided to consider positively all the exercises that include in the directions the words 'Listen and check' (Figure 21) or 'check at the end of the book'. In this way, in fact, learners are stimulated to check their outcomes and, even if the reason of this is not explicitly clarified, the repetition of this practice could become a beneficial habit in learners.

> **Riscrivi le frasi sostituendo I nomi sottolineati con il pronome corretto. Poi ascolta e controlla.**
>
> Alan is German
> *He is German*
> 1. <u>My birthday</u> is in April
> 2. <u>You and Rosie</u> are Friends
> ….

Figure 21. Exercise 2 page 28 Elementary level textbook Twenty-one 1 (SB).

- Evaluate oneself

While in the 'check goals' step learners have to check if the solutions of an exercise or the goals of a learning path have been fulfilled, in the 'evaluate oneself' point, learners give a mark to their work in relation to a fixed method of evaluation (Figure 22).

Complete la descrizione che Sarah fa di sé e le sue preferenze. Usa le informazioni nel factfile dell'es. 6.

Hi! My name's Sarah Morris. I'm _____ Glasgow _____ favourite sport _____ _____, and _____ favourite sportsperson _____ _____ _____. He's a _____. _____ favourite type of music _____ _____, and _____ favourite singers _____ _____-. _____ favourite colours _____ _____ _____ _____ .

Writing competence check
Segna (✓) la casella una volta verificato ciascun punto.
   Ti sei ricordato di espimere il pronome soggetto?

   Hai utilizzato la forma corretta del verbo be (is o are)?

   Hai controllato lo spelling di ciascuna parola?

Figure 22. Exercise 7 page 127 Elementary level textbook Go live! (SB).

- Evaluate one's strategies

This final point stimulate learners to observe if strategies have been correctly employed in exercises by themselves or by others.

In this section (3.4), we have presented guidelines and explanations concerning Chamot's model using as examples exercises taken from the analysed books. This passage is fundamental to fully understand the results achieved in relation to the second research question (4.2). In the following chapter, we are going to present and discuss the results obtained implementing these methods.

Chapter 4 – Results and Discussion

In this chapter, we are going to present and discuss the results of the study. For this reason, this last section is divided into two main parts as many as the research questions we formulated in the previous chapter.

In the first section (4.1), we will deal with the first research question: firstly, the outcomes of the analysis will be reported (4.1.1) and then, a discussion will be offered (4.1.2). With reference to the second research question (4.2), we will follow the same pattern: in section 4.2.1, we will present the results while in section 4.2.2 we will examine them.

At the end, final conclusions will be drawn.

4.1 First Research Question: Do EFL Textbooks take into consideration Learner Autonomy?

In this paragraph, the results achieved for the first research question will be presented and discussed, with the purpose of testing the presence of learner autonomy policies in the sample.

4.1.1 Results

Concerning the first research question, we have already said that we followed two different methods in order to answer it. For that reason, in the following pages, we will firstly present the outcomes obtained using the model of Reinders and then the results achieved through the application of the 'Nine Steps' by Nunan. Finally, we will aggregate the presented results in order to measure the presence or not of the learner autonomy policies in our sample.

Table 10 reports the analysis of the four elementary level EFL textbooks using the Reinders' Model. For each book a brief description and some notes are reported with reference to each point. However, in order to declare the satisfaction or not of a precise

stage, we have followed the methods of evaluation as described in section 3.3. The 'x' indicates the total absence or the incomplete implementation of a specific point in the textbook, while the 'yes' shows full observation of the theoretical directions as described in the Methods section.

	TWENTY-ONE 1		CLASSMATES 3	
IDENTIFYING NEEDS	book descripton 'starter' (placement section)	x	book description 'welcome back' (placement section)	x
SETTNG GOALS	sum up beginning	x	sum up beginning	x
PLANNING LEARNING		x	use of symbols to classify exercises	x
SELECTING RESOURCES		x		x
SELECTING LEARNING STRATEGI	some advices, but not sufficent to develop awareness	x	skills and strategies section/ learning to learn	yes
PRACTICE	clil and culture sections are a plus, but exercises are fixed	x	clil and culture sections are a plus, but exercises are fixed	x
MONITORING PROGRESS	self monitoring at the end of the book	yes		x
ASSESMENT AND REVISION		x	self-assessment (no reflection)	x
	GO LIVEl 1		ENGLISH ZONE 3	
IDENTIFYING NEEDS	book description 'starter' (placement test)	x		x
SETTNG GOALS	sum up beginning	x	sum up beginning	x
PLANNING LEARNING	use of symbols to classify exercises	x		x
SELECTING RESOURCES		x		x
SELECTING LEARNING STRATEGI	no explicit, only strategies fo the writing	x		x
PRACTICE	clil and culture sections are a plus, but exercises are fixed	x		x
MONITORING PROGRESS	revision every two units	yes	self-check	yes
ASSESMENT AND REVISION		x		x

Table 10. Results of the four Elementary level EFL textbooks using Reinders' Model.

With reference to this first group of textbooks (Table 10), it can be noticed that the majority of the levels in the model are not fulfilled. In fact, in three of these elementary level textbooks the monitoring process stage is satisfied and in one book the description and selection of learning strategies point is fully developed. These are the only two stages traced in this first group. However, in the monitoring process we have recorded the presence of self-revision sections and activities useful to inspect autonomously results and achievements by the learner, but no stimuli for peer feedbacks are present in the books. Both self-revision and peer feedbacks are useful approaches to develop a self-monitor ability in the learner and even if this Reinders' step can be considered satisfied, it is important to stress the possibility to improve this point. On the other hand, Classmate3 is the only book in which for each unit a section is devoted to the presentation and implementation of different learning strategies. In addition, throughout the book we can find the 'learning to learn' box (Figure 23) through which instructions to solve exercises are given. This is the only book in which this stage is perfectly implemented.

Learning to learn	Matching headings
Quando devi abbinare dei titoli ai paragrafi di un testo: • Leggi i titoli, sottolinea le parole chiave e pensa a dei sinonimi • Leggi i paragrafi e individua l'idea principale espressa in ciascuno di essi.	

Figure 23. Leaning to Learn box taken from Classmate 3 p.32

Concerning all the other points of the analysis, it can be noticed that some of them can be measured only partially, as for example 'Identifying needs' in which a placement test can be found in almost all the books, but learners are not stimulated to observe their use of the language or to reflect on their necessities. Even the second point (Setting goals) is not fully developed because learners cannot select their own goals that are presented in a predetermined list at the beginning of the book. The presence of a table of content is a plus, but it is not sufficient to consider this level achieved. Referring to

the 'Planning learning' point in two books exercises are marked by a symbol to specify the purposes of the activity as Figure 24 shows. Although this is a positive element in this perspective, it is not enough to consider this level satisfied.

Le icone

ES Attività per la preparazione dell'Esame di Stato

K Attività per la preparazione dell'esame di certificazione Cambridge English

T Attività per la preparazione dell'esame di certificazione Trinity GESE (Grades 2,3,4) e ISE Foundation

Attività per sviluppare le competenze di comprensione di un testo scritto

I file audio collegati alle attività di ascolto si trovano nel CD audio dell'insegnante, nell' eBook e sul sito online.zanichellli.it/classmates

I file audio delle regole grammaticali si trovano nell' eBook e sul sito online.zanichellli.it/classmates: I file audio della sezione Training for INVALSI si trovano sul sito online.zanichellli.it/classmates

Inquadra l'immagine vicino all'icona con l fotocamera del tuo smartphone, scatta e guarda il video. Tutti I video sono disponibili anche nell'eBook.

Figure 25. Symbols used in the 'Classmate 3' to classify exercises. (p. VII)

The 'Selecting Resources' and the 'Assessment and Revision' points are totally absent in this first group. Moreover, the 'Practice' level offers some material useful to practice the foreign language dealing with cultural topics or different school subjects, but all the activities are fixed and pre-planned by the authors.

The outcomes for the second group of books are reported on Table 11 and a similarity with Table 10 can be immediately perceived. Even in Intermediate and Pre-Intermediate level textbooks two points seems to be satisfied: the 'Selecting Learning Strategies' and the 'Monitoring Processes'. In addition to this, one book (Energy Plus) fully implements point one adding to an initial revision unit also a self-reflection page as shown on Figure 26 (p. 69). Concerning the other levels of the model, the observations reported for the first group can be equally applied to the second group of books.

	SUCCESS		NEW ENGLISH FILE	
IDENTIFYING NEEDS		x		x
SETTNG GOALS	sum up beginning	x	goals at the beginning of the unit	x
PLANNING LEARNING		x		x
SELECTING RESOURCES		x		x
SELECTING LEARNING STRATEGIES	information page at the beginning of the WB and exams strategies advices and activities	yes		x
PRACTICE	very short culture section	x		x
MONITORING PROGRESS	revison every two units	yes	'what can you' section at the end of each unit	yes
ASSESMENT AND REVISION	self-assessment in the WB (no reflection)	x	'what do you remember' each unit (no reflection)	x
	CUTTING EDGE		ENERGY PLUS	
IDENTIFYING NEEDS		x	initial revision unit and self-reflection activities	yes
SETTNG GOALS	sum up beginning book and units	x	sum up beginning book and units	x
PLANNING LEARNING		x		x
SELECTING RESOURCES		x		x
SELECTING LEARNING STRATEGIES		x	advices and exercises to solve in order to develop strategies for each skills	yes
PRACTICE		x		x
MONITORING PROGRESS	practice section at the and of each unit	yes	'energy check' section every two units	yes
ASSESMENT AND REVISION	'mini-checks' at the end (no reflection)	x	'grammar, vocabulary gym' at the end of the book (no reflection)	x

Table 11. Results of the four Intermediate and Pre-Intermediate level EFL textbooks using Reinders' Model

	ESSENTIAL GRAMMAR IN USE		ACTIVATING GRAMMAR	
IDENTIFYING NEEDS		x		x
SETTNG GOALS		x		x
PLANNING LEARNING	(only info) information about the book at the beginning	x	advices to use the book and organization of exercises by level (basicA1-B1/learn more	yes
SELECTING RESOURCES		x		x
SELECTING LEARNING STRATEGIE		x		x
PRACTICE	extra exercises for practice, but not flexible	x		x
MONITORING PROGRESS		x		x
ASSESMENT AND REVISION		x		x

	GRAMMAR IN PROGRESS		LANGUAGE PRACTICE FOR ADVA	
IDENTIFYING NEEDS		x		x
SETTNG GOALS		x		x
PLANNING LEARNING	goals at the beginning of the unit	x	(only info) information about the book at the beginning	x
SELECTING RESOURCES		x		x
SELECTING LEARNING STRATEGIE		x		x
PRACTICE		x		x
MONITORING PROGRESS	revision at the end of each unit	yes	consolidations every four units	yes
ASSESMENT AND REVISION	progress check every three units (no reflection)	x	solutions of all the exercises (no reflection)	x

Table 12. Results of the four Multilevel EFL Grammar Books using Reinders' Model

The third group of our sample considers four multilevel grammar books and even in this case Reinders' principles are not fully observed. Once again the 'Monitoring Process' is implemented and in one case the 'Planning Learning' stage is fully satisfied, instead of the 'Selecting Learning Strategies' point that none of these books observe. All the Grammar books analysed tend to clearly divide topics in different units and this is useful for learners because in that way they can jump from one unit to another selecting only specific items in relation to their necessities. But only the Activating Grammar book organizes exercises by level so that students can choose the activities related to a specific topic according to their level of proficiency. This is a good example of giving learners the opportunity to plan their own learning with no interferences and in a flexible way. However, it is worth mentioning that limited observations can be reported for this cluster because the majority of the studied points is totally absent in this type of book.

In conclusion, it is possible to see that on average only one fully developed stage of the model can be traced in each volume. These results will be presented at the end of the chapter in comparison with the results obtained using the second instrument of our analysis. But before this, we will describe the detailed scores reached following the 'Nine Steps'.

Data deriving from the analysis through Nunan's 'Nine Steps' model will now be displayed.

Table 13 describes the results of the four Elementary level EFL textbooks, Table 14 depicts the results of the four Intermediate and Pre-Intermediate level EFL textbooks and finally, Table 14 represents the results of the four Multilevel EFL Grammar books.

Comparing the outcomes achieved through the analysis, an homogeneous scenario emerges. In fact, all the books satisfy from a minimum of two to a maximum of four steps and the implemented steps are almost always the same. In fact, Step 1 (make instruction goals clear to learners) is present in all the books. That means that all the books present a list of contents at the beginning and, in some cases, we can find the goals even at the beginning of each single unit. In the four grammar books, an

introduction page is available, through which the authors describe the goals of the volume and offer some directions to use the book at its best.

	TWENTY-ONE 1			CLASSMATES 3	
step 1	sum up beginning	yes	sum up beginning	yes
step 2	placement test 'starter' (no reflection)	no	placement test 'welcom back' (no reflection)	no
step 3	online extra resources	yes	project + online extra resources	yes
step 4		no		no
step 5	presence of some advice	no	skills and strategies section/ learning to learn advices	yes
step 6		no		no
step 7		no		no
step 8	revision and self-assessment section	yes	revision and self-assessment section	yes
step 9		no		no
	GO LIVE! 1			ENGLISH ZONE 3	
step 1	sum up beginning	yes	goals at the beginning of the book	yes
step 2	placement test 'starter' (no reflection)	no		no
step 3	onlineextra resources	yes		no
step 4		no		no
step 5	no explicit, only writing skill checks	no		no
step 6		no		no
step 7		no		no
step 8	revision and self-assessment section	yes	revision and self-assessment section	yes
step 9		no		no

Table 13. Results of the four Elementary level EFL textbooks following the Nine Steps of Nunan.

	SUCCESS		NEW ENGLISH FILE	
step 1	goals at the beginning of the book	yes	goals at the beginning of the unit	yes
step 2		no		no
step 3		no		no
step 4		no		no
step 5	information at the beginning of the WB 'exam strategies'	yes		no
step 6		no		no
step 7		no		no
step 8	revision and self-assessment section	yes	revision and self-assessment section	yes
step 9		no		no
	CUTTING EDGE		ENERGY PLUS	
step 1	goals at the beginning of the book	yes	goals at the beginning of the book and of each unit	yes
step 2		no	revison unit and self-reflection at he beginnig of	yes
step 3		no		no
step 4		no		no
step 5		no	'study skill' section for advices and 'skills' section to	yes
step 6		no		no
step 7		no		no
step 8	revision and self-assessment section	yes	revision and self-assessment section	yes
step 9		no		no

Table 14. Results of the four Intermediate and Pre-Intermediate level EFL textbooks following the Nine Steps of Nunan.

	ESSENTIAL GRAMMAR IN USE		ACTIVATING GRAMMAR	
step 1	sum up beginning + info	yes	sum up beginning + info	yes
step 2		yes		yes
step 3		no		no
step 4		no		no
step 5		no		no
step 6	exercises and topic presented to be choosen	yes	exercises and topic presented to be choosen	yes
step 7		no		no
step 8		no		no
step 9		no		no
	GRAMMAR IN PROGRESS		LANGUAGE PRACTICE FOR ADV.	
step 1	sum up beginning + info	yes	sum up beginning + info	yes
step 2		yes		yes
step 3		no		no
step 4		no		no
step 5		no		no
step 6	exercises and topic presented to be choosen	yes	exercises and topic presented to be choosen	yes
step 7		no		no
step 8	progress check and unit revision	yes		no
step 9		no		no

Table 15. Results of the four Multilevel EFL Grammar Books following the Nine Steps of Nunan.

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Step 2 (Allow learners to create their own goals) is fully implemented only in the Intermediate level book 'Energy Plus'. This is the only case in which both an initial placement test and a section for self-reflection are offered. In some books, we noticed the presence of entry level tests, but, as we already said, this is considered as just part of a traditional teacher-based approach unless it is matched with a section for autonomous and individual analysis of the results. We report some of the exercises available at the end of the revision unit in the 'Energy Plus' because this is an excellent example to better understand the concept of self-reflection (Figure 26).

✓ = I can do this   ✓✓ = I can do this easily   ✗ = I have problems with this

	Skills	Description of competencies	CEFR Level	✓ ✓✓ ✗
Understanding	Listening	I can understand: • Dialogues (all units) • People talking about arrangements, intentions and predictions (p.9) • People talking on a TV holiday programme (p.12)	B1 B1 B1	
	Reading	I can understand: • Dialogues (all units) • Brochures and job adverts (p.8) • A personal letter (p.8) • A holiday diary page (p.10) • Postcards about holidays (p.13)	B1 B1 B1 B1 B1	

Speaking	Spoken interraction	I can: • Start, maintain and close face-toface conversations on topics that are familiar or of personal interest • Make suggestions (p.7) • Talk about past holidays (p.13) • Show interest (p.13)	B1 A2 B1 B1	
Writing	Writing	I can write: • about future arrangements (p.9)	A2	

Too many ✗ *in your self-assessment? Do you think you need remedial work? Ask your teacher to help you fill in the table below and do the suggested work. This will help you to get better results in the Module Test.*

Problem Area	Assigned remedial work	Deadline	My comments (After remedial work)	My teacher's comments (After remedial work)

Figure 26. Good example of self-reflection activity proposed to students in the Energy Plus textbook (p.14)

Step 3 (Encourage learners to use their second language outside the classroom) can be traced in the online resources offered by some Elementary level books. Considering the year of publication of these books, we can hypothesize that the use of technologies and multimedia devices in conjunction with the book is a recent practice that in previous book is developed only partially. We might think that the production of a fully integrated package is an increasing practice in this field, but with reference to our sample we only considered the implementation or not of the step.

Step 5 (Help learners identify their own preferred styles and strategies) is completely developed only in three books. In this case both advice and activities are proposed to foster the knowledge and use of learning strategies It is also important to stress that while in almost all the textbooks some references to the learning strategies are present, in the four grammar books there is absolutely no sensibility about this topic. Moreover, with reference to learning styles, no activities, sections or information are mentioned in any of the books.

Step 6 (Encourage learner choice) is positively evaluated only considering the grammar books, in which learners can choose exercises and topics in relation to their necessities and proficiency, but in textbooks this opportunity is not available. On the other hand, Step 8 (Encourage learners to become teachers) is traced only in textbooks, where self-evaluation test and revision section are always present.

Finally, Step 4: (Raise awareness of learning processes), Step 7 (Allow learners to generate their own tasks) and Step 9 (Encourage learners to become researchers) are not present in the books analysed.

In conclusion, we have reported the outcomes for each book of the sample using the two different tools as previously described (3.3). In the following Table (Table 16) the aggregate results are reported in relation to the model of Reinders and to the 'Nine Steps' by Nunan. In this way, this synoptic representation of the results enables us to synthesize and discuss them more easily and efficiently.

For each point, both in the Reinders' model and in the list of Nunan, we have reported in the first column the number of books that fulfilled the steps in relation to the total number of books of the sample. For example, 1\12 means that in one book out of twelve the point is implemented Then, the second column reports the same outcomes but using a proportion. This value enables us to easily compare the results and to decide whether a level is present or not in the whole sample. In fact, in order to consider a point fully satisfied, we need a value equal to or greater than 0.50, and so, this means that half or more of our sample presents a precise feature.

Following these guidelines, it can be observed that using the first tool only one point can be considered implemented and concerning the second instrument two steps scored more than 0.50

REINDERS' MODEL			
IDENTIFYING NEEDS	1\12	0,08	x
SETTNG GOALS	0\12	0,00	x
PLANNING LEARNING	1\12	0,08	x
SELECTING RESOURCES	0\12	0,00	x
SELECTING L. STRATEGIES	3\12	0,25	x
PRACTICE	3\12	0,25	x
MONITORING PROGRESS	9\12	0,75	yes
ASSESMENT AND REVISION	0\12	0,00	x

NINE STEPS BY NUNAN			
step 1	11\12	0,92	yes
step 2	1\12	0,08	no
step 3	3\12	0,25	no
step 4	0\12	0,00	no
step 5	3\12	0,25	no
step 6	4\12	0,33	no
step 7	0\12	0,00	no
step 8	9\12	0,75	yes
step 9	0\12	0,00	no

Table 16. Aggregated outcomes considering all the book of the sample using the first tool (Reinders' model) and the second tool ('Nine Steps' by Nunan).

4.1.2 Discussion

Do EFL textbooks take into consideration learner autonomy?

What emerges from the analysis is that all the selected books show a similar tendency towards learner autonomy policies. In fact, the application of the two models to the sample demonstrate that only a few points are implemented in pre-packaged materials. The positive practice of stimulating learners to self-monitor their results instead of depending on the teacher's feedback ('monitoring process' point and Step 8) and the clarification of the volume's aims and goals at the beginning of the book (Step 1) are the only two points fully implemented in the sample. With reference to the other points of the models, we have an heterogeneous situation in which the increasing attention given to the promotion of learning strategies ('selecting learning strategies' and Step 5), to the

importance of learners' choices (Step 6) and the stimulation of using the language outside the classroom (Step 3) emerge.

No huge differences can be scrutinized between different level textbooks or between textbooks and grammar books demonstrating that, despite their different design, structures and purposes, learner autonomy policies are not the main focus of the authors. Moreover, there are no differences between English publishers and Italian publishers testifying that editorial guidelines are pretty similar independently from the national differences and necessities or the European indications.

Comparing the outcomes of our analysis to the results obtained by Spirovska (2015) and Reinders and Balçikanli (2011), it can be noticed that a similar scenario is described. In fact, even in these two studies the implementation of very a few points was observed and a similar final conclusion was drawn.

Although our sample cannot be considered as representative of learner autonomy policies implemented by all existing EFL Textbooks and Grammar books.

Data show that Textbooks are far from fully encouraging learner autonomy. However, from this first analysis some kind of attention to learning strategies has emerged, even if in some cases this was not sufficient to consider the related points satisfied. For this reason, with the second research question, we want to concentrate our efforts on measuring the promotion of metacognitive strategies in the sample. This second investigation will offer us an internal evaluation of the books useful to reinforce or reject what stated so far.

4.2 Second Research Question: Are metacognitive strategies promoted in order to foster learner autonomy?

In this paragraph, the results achieved for the first research question will be presented and discussed, with the purpose of testing the presence of metacognitive-related exercises in the sample.

4.2.1 Results

With the second research question, the level of promotion of the metacognitive strategies in the EFL Textbooks is investigated. For the analysis, we followed the Metacognitive Model of Strategic Learning theorized by Chamot (1999) as described in section 3.4. The results of the analysis are reported in Table 17, 18 and 19 showing for each book of the sample the proportion and the distribution of the metacognitive-related exercises available.

Table 17 shows the outcomes achieved through the analysis of the four EFL Elementary Level Textbooks making a distinction between Student's Book (SB) and Workbook (WB).

	TWENTY-ONE1		CLASSMATES3		GO LIVE!1		ENGLISH ZONE3		SUBTOTAL	
	SB	WB	SB	WB	SB	WB	SB	WB		
PLANNING STRATEGIES	2	0	6	1	3	3	0	1	16	6,06%
MONITORING STRATEGIES	3	2	8	6	0	0	4	0	23	8,71%
PROBLEM SOLVING STRATEGIES	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0,76%
EVALUATING STRATEGIES	9	4	1	0	5	2	1	0	22	8,33%
	15	6	16	7	8	5	5	1	63	
total number of considered exercises	37	31	52	33	38	24	26	23	264	
	41%	19%	31%	21%	21%	21%	19%	4%	23,86%	

Table 17. Percentage and number of metacognitive-related exercises present in the sample.

The number of metacognitive-related exercises offered in the books are reported in relation to the Chamot's categories listed in the first column (planning, monitoring, problem solving and evaluation strategies). The final rows of the table reports the proportion of exercises useful in developing autonomy in relation to the total amount of considered exercises. For example, in 'Twenty-One1' SB, we counted: 2 planning

strategies exercises, 3 monitoring strategies exercises, 1 monitoring strategies exercise and 9 evaluating strategies exercises. Therefore, 15 exercises out of the 37 analysed exercises are useful in the promotion of autonomy. This means that 41% of the exercises presented in the first unit of this textbook can be considered relevant for the promotion of metacognitive strategies. On the right side of the table, the subtotal is reported offering for each group of the sample some mean values.

Table 18 and 19 follow the same structure and they report respectively the outcomes of the Intermediate Level Textbooks and the Multilevel Grammar Books.

|	SUCCESS		NEW ENGLISH FILE		CUTTING EDGE		ENERGY PLUS		SUBTOTAL	
	SB	WB	SB	WB	SB	WB	SB	WB		
PLANNING STRATEGIES	3	0	4	0	2	0	5	0	14	5,30%
MONITORING STRATEGIES	3	1	2	0	1	1	4	0	12	4,55%
PROBLEM SOLVING STRATEGIES	1	0	3	3	0	0	2	0	9	3,41%
EVALUATING STRATEGIES	2	0	4	1	0	2	2	3	14	5,30%
	9	1	13	4	3	3	13	3	49	
total number of considered exercises	37	23	51	34	27	23	32	26	253	
	24%	4%	25%	12%	11%	13%	41%	12%	19,37%	

Table 18. Percentage and number of metacognitive-related exercises present in the sample.

	ESSENTIAL GRAMMAR	ACTIVATING GRAMMAR	GRAMMAR IN PROGRESS	LANGUAGE PRACTICE FOR ADV.	SUBTOTAL	
PLANNING STRATEGIES	0	0	0	0	0	0,00%
MONITORING STRATEGIES	4	2	1	0	7	2,65%
PROBLEM SOLVING STRATEGIES	0	0	0	6	6	2,27%
EVALUATING STRATEGIES	0	0	1	4	5	1,89%
	4	2	2	10	18	
total number of considered exercises	27	25	24	23	99	
	14%	8%	8%	43%	18,18%	

**Table 19.** Percentage and number of metacognitive-related exercises present in the sample.

Observing the presented outcomes, no relevant differences can be seen among the three groups. In fact, comparing the three subtotal proportions, a similar scenario emerges demonstrating an homogeneous sensibility in the promotion of metacognitive strategies by the different publishers. In the Elementary Level Textbooks, the highest proportion of metacognitive-related exercises can be traced (23,86%), but only a few points separate this category from the others two (Intermediate 19,37%: Multilevel 18,18%). In Graph 1 (p. 76), this homogeneity is emphasized. In fact, no important differences in the promotion of the metacognitive strategies can be underlined in relation to the different levels of proficiency adopted by the books. On average, the

three groups demonstrate a similar percentage of metacognitive-related exercises and the different levels of proficiency do not influence the quantity of this type of exercises in the pre-packaged materials analysed.
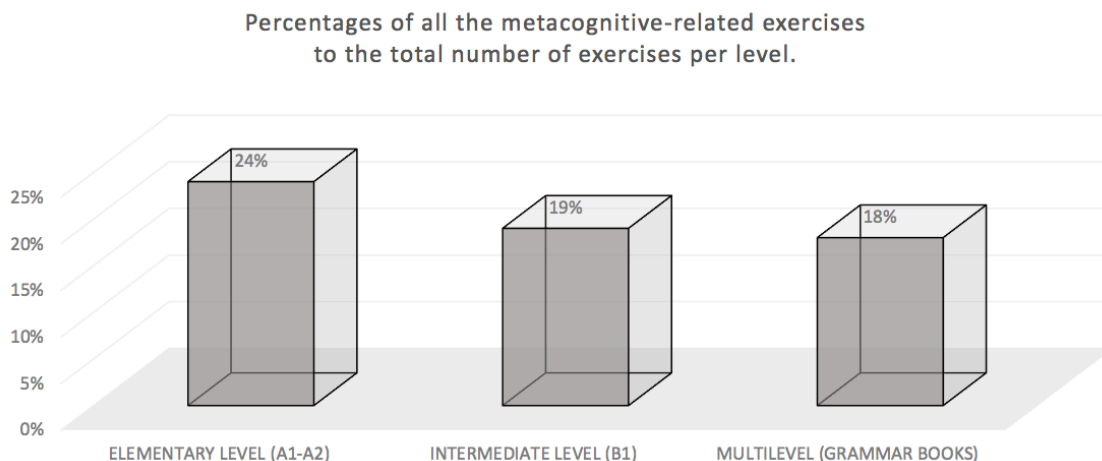
Graph 1. Proportions of metacognitive-related exercises per level.

However, not only the quantity of exercises, but also the quality of them is not influenced by the level of proficiency of the books. In fact, Graph 2 shows the proportion of the four categories of metacognitive strategies per level and, even in this case, no meaningful differences emerge.
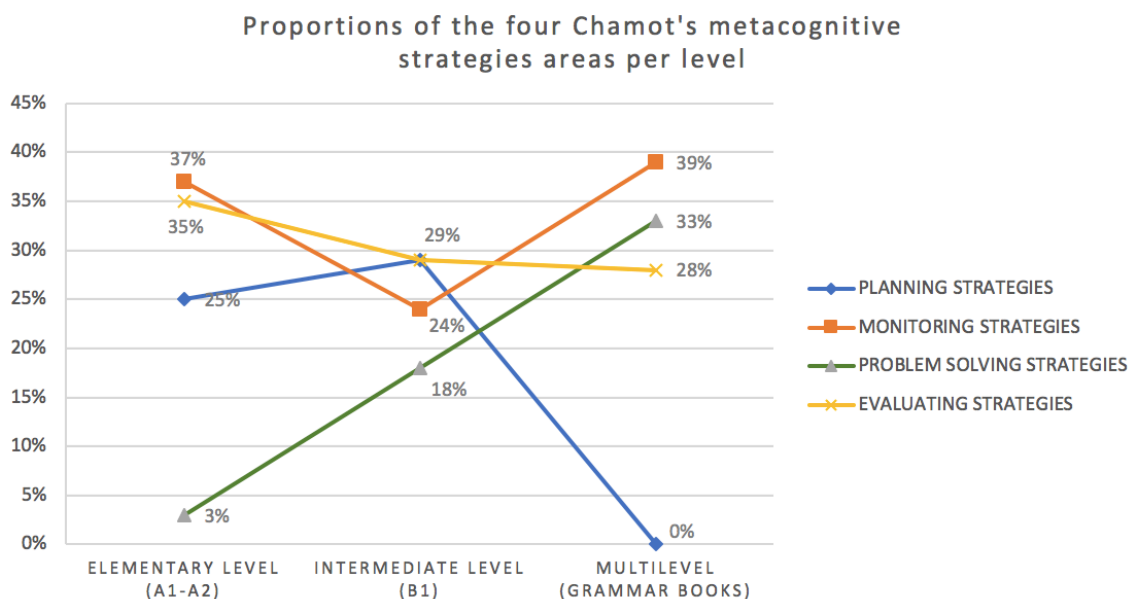
Graph 2. Proportions of the four Chamot's areas per level.

Observing the graph, it can be noticed that in the elementary level group monitoring (37%) and evaluating strategies (35%) are the two prominent categories, even if the planning strategies constitute a fourth (25%) of the entire amount of metacognitive-related exercises in this group. However, the problem solving strategies are not promoted at all. Concerning the intermediate level group, the four macro-areas are all equally distributed, even if the problem solving category scores less than the others, again. Finally, with reference to the multilevel group, the planning strategies are totally absent, while the other three categories score pretty similar. Making some general considerations, it is possible to observe that the majority of the outcomes score between 40% and 25% and there is no predominance of one area on the others. Even analysing the internal distribution of each area per level no relevant patterns can be demonstrated.

Summing up, both the proportions of metacognitive-related exercises on the total of the presented exercises in the books and the distribution of Chamot's four categories have been analysed in relation to the different levels of proficiency. It is possible to state that no meaningful differences can be seen and that the different level of proficiency does not influence the level of promotion of the metacognitive strategies.

A correlation between level of proficiency and number of metacognitive related exercises has been disproved and, now we are going to analyse a possible relationship between the typology of the books and the promotion of metacognitive strategies.

A first comparison can be made between Student's Books and Workbooks. Graph 3 (p. 78) reports the proportion of metacognitive-related exercises available in the eight SBs and WBs of the sample. The blue line shows the percentage of counted exercises on the total number of considered exercises in the SBs, while the orange line refers to the WBs' values. For example, in the Twenty-One 1 textbook a higher rate of metacognitive strategies are fostered in the SB (41%) while only the 19% have been measured in the WB. This tendency can be observed in all the books of the sample demonstrating a stronger promotion of metacognitive strategies in SBs than WBs.

However, only two books score 40% or more, while all the other outcomes fluctuate between 30% and 5%. This result shows us that the promotion of metacognitive strategies in pre-packaged materials can be improved and that at the moment, this cannot be considered one of the major goals of EFL books' authors and publishers.
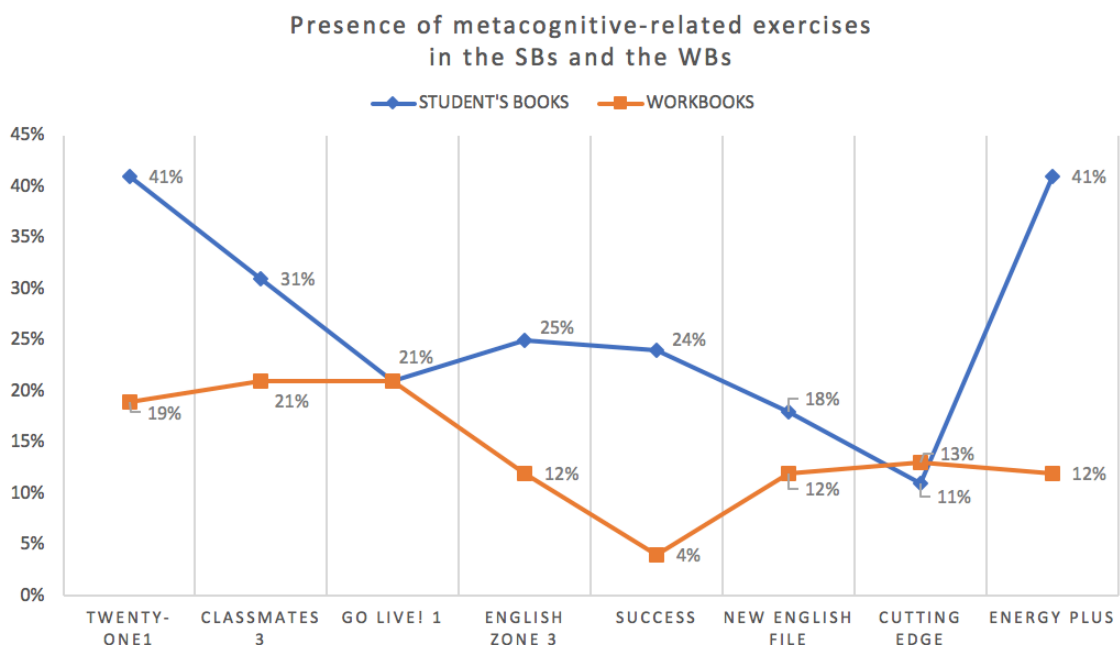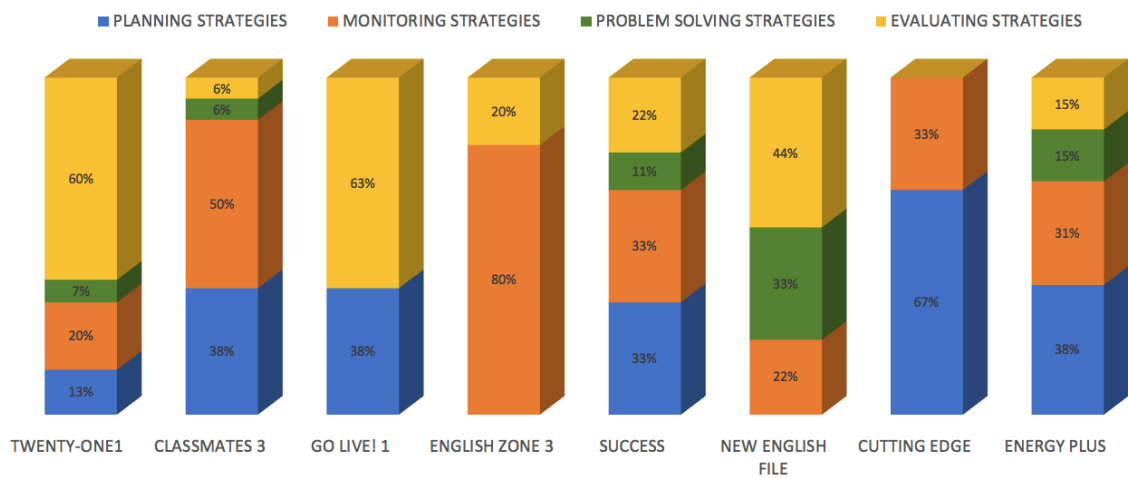

Graph 3. Proportions of metacognitive-related exercises in the SBs and WBs.

However, if we consider the distribution of the four strategies categories a further distinction can be made. Graph 4 and 5 (p. 79) show the proportion of the four categories available in SBs and WBs respectively.

In four SBs out of the eight analysed, all four of Chamot's categories are presented, while in the other four books (Go Live!, English Zone3, New English File, Cutting Edge) only two or three types of strategies are promoted. The problem solving strategies are the less fostered sort of strategies in these types of book, but this scenario can be considered a heterogeneous one especially if it is compared with the WBs' situation (Graph 5).
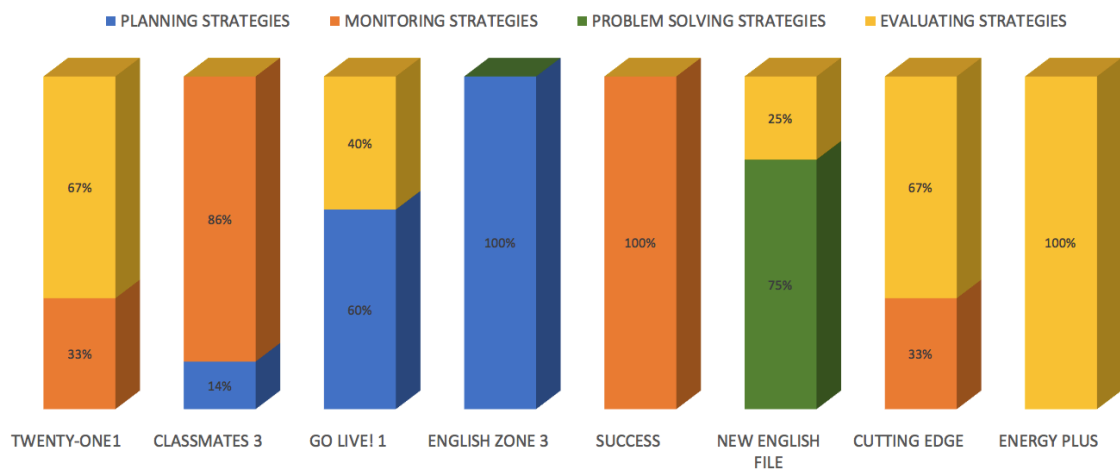
In the WBs, a standardised situation is reported. No more than two categories are available per book, even if the associated SB includes a wider range of strategies-related exercises. In three out of the eight WBs, only one sort of metacognitive strategy is presented to students and the problem solving strategies are promoted in only one book.

Graph 4. Proportions of the fours Chamot's areas to the total number of metacognitive-related exercises in the SBs.

Graph 5. Proportions of the fours Chamot's areas to the total number of metacognitive-related exercises in the WBs.

To conclude, SBs offer a greater number of metacognitive-related exercises and in this type of book different sorts of metacognitive strategies are promoted. On the other hand, on average WBs offer a lower proportion of strategies-related exercises and not all the four metacognitive macro-areas are fostered.

Up to now, we have seen that while the level of proficiency of the books does not influence the level of promotion of the metacognitive strategies, the typology of book

can impact on the authors' sensibility about the metacognitive matter. However, in the sample we analysed not only textbooks, but also grammar books. Therefore, can some differences be retraced even between textbooks and grammar books (GB)?

Table 20 shows the aggregated outcomes with reference to the different levels (Elementary, Intermediate and Multilevel) and the different book typologies (SBs, WBs and GBs). Through this table, it is possible to notice the already mentioned difference between the proportions referred to SBs (27,33%) and WBs (13,82%) underling the presence of more than 14 points between this two categories. GBs are placed in the middle with the 18,18% of metacognitive-related exercises.

	ELEMENTARY TEXTBOOKS			INTERMEDIATE TEXTBOOKS			SUBTOTAL elementary-intemediate		GRAMMAR BOOKS
	SB	WB	mean	SB	WB	mean	SB	WB	
PLANNING STRATEGIES	11	5	8	14	0	7	25	5	0
MONITORING STRATEGIES	15	8	11,5	10	2	6	25	10	7
PROBLEM SOLVING STRATEGIES	2	0	1	6	3	4,5	8	3	6
EVALUATING STRATEGIES	16	6	11	8	6	7	24	12	5
total number of metacognitive-related exercises	44	19	31,5	38	11	24,5	82	30	18
total number of considered exercises	153	111	132	147	106	126,5	300	217	99
	29%	17%	24%	26%	10%	19%	27,33%	13,82%	18,18%

Table 20. Percentages and numbers of metacognitive-related exercises present in the sample divided per level of proficiency, type of book and area of metacognitive strategies.

The following Graph (Graph 6, p. 81) clearly shows the proportions of metacognitive-related exercises in the three different book typologies analysed. The proportion of exercises is reported in relation to the total amount of considered exercises (100%) and the differences among the books are vividly underlined.

However, even if a ranking can be formulated placing SBs on the first place as the typology with more metacognitive-related exercises followed by GBs and WBs, it is important to remember that the three categories show pretty similar results. In fact, in all the books, less than a quarter of all the exercises can be considered relevant for the promotion of the metacognitive strategies, and, even in this case, only 13 points separate SBs from GBs.

Percentages of metacognitive-related exercises per book's category

Graph 6. Proportions of metacognitive-related exercises per book's category.

So far, the relation between the percentage of metacognitive-related exercises and both the level of proficiency and the book typologies has been investigated, but in this analysis we have only considered the four Chamot's macro-areas.

Table 21 reassumes the percentages relative to each strategies' area showing that only 21,27% of all the analysed exercises are useful exercises for developing the different metacognitive strategies in the learner. The monitoring strategies are the more stimulated group of strategies (7,47%) followed by the evaluating (6,17%) and the planning strategies (5,19%). With reference to the problem solving strategies, it can be stated that they are barely mentioned in the sample (2,44%) and that learners do not have the opportunity to practice them.

	PLANNING	MONITORING	PROBLEM SOLVING	EVALUATING	subtotal
number of useful exercises	32	46	15	38	131
total number of exercises	616	616	616	616	616
	5,19%	7,47%	2,44%	6,17%	21,27%

Table 21. Proportions and numbers of metacognitive-related exercises for each strategies'area.

In the following pages, we are going to analyse the distribution of the exercises for each subcategories following the model of Chamot, as described in section 3.4. For this analysis, the aggregated outcomes are reported, considering all the books of the sample at the same time.
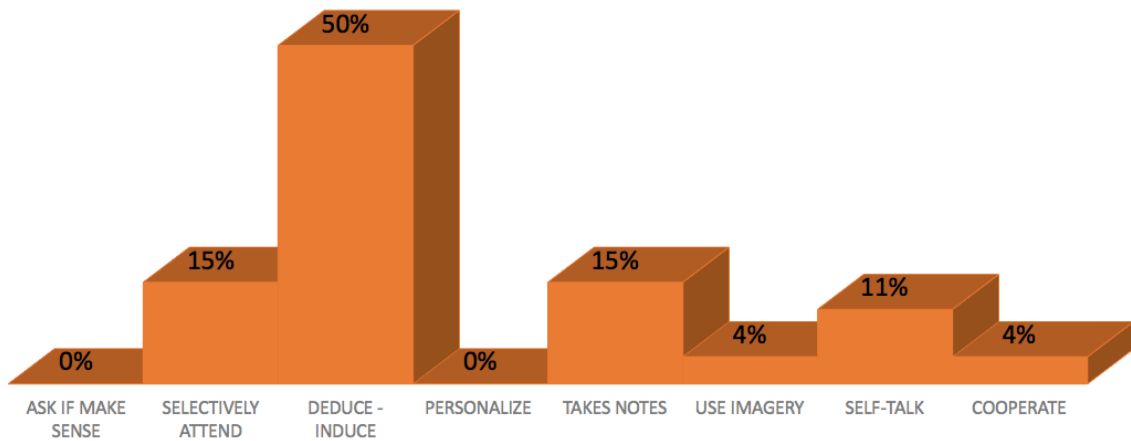
With reference to the planning strategies area, Graph 7 illustrates its internal distribution. Only three subcategories out of the six available in the model are promoted in the sample. In none of the analysed books, the set goals strategies, the direct attention strategies and the self-management strategies are stimulated or mentioned.

Planning strategies: subcategories' internal distribution
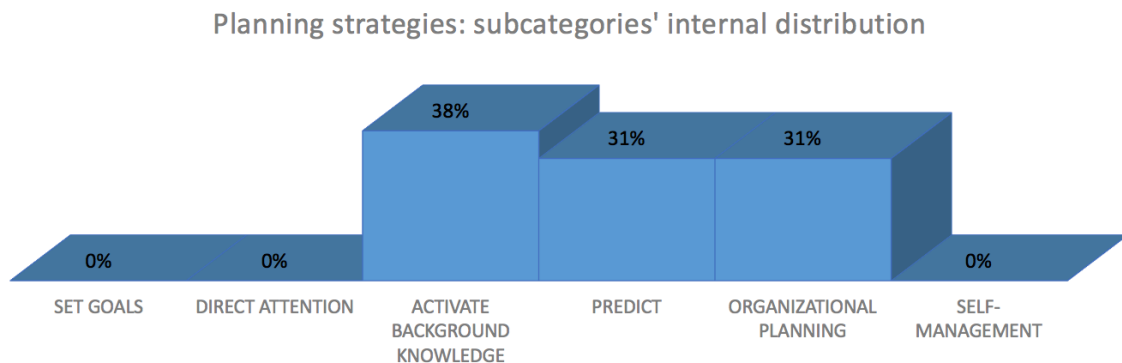
Graph 7. Proportions for each subcategory of the planning strategies area.
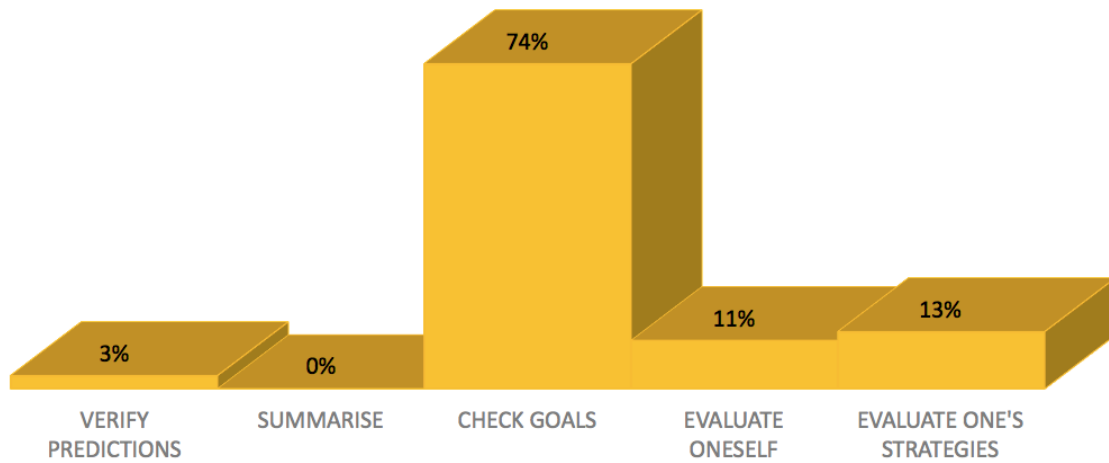
Graph 8, 9 and 10 shows the outcomes for each subcategory of strategies of the other three macro-areas (monitoring, problem solving and evaluating strategies). It is important to notice that not one of the four macro-areas are completely presented to students in the books of the sample. In fact, about half of the subcategories theorized by Chamot are totally absent in the books and no exercises are offered to develop these specific and fundamental strategies. In each of these three areas, the prevalence of one subcategory over the others emerge: in the monitoring strategies the focus is on 'deduce/induce' strategies, in the problem solving all the attention is given to the 'inference' strategies, while in the evaluating strategies students are stimulated mainly to 'check goals'.

**Monitoring Strategies: subcategories' internal distribution**

ASK IF MAKE SENSE	SELECTIVELY ATTEND	DEDUCE - INDUCE	PERSONALIZE	TAKES NOTES	USE IMAGERY	SELF-TALK	COOPERATE
0%	15%	50%	0%	15%	4%	11%	4%

Graph 8. Proportions for each subcategory of the monitoing strategies area.

Evaluating Strategies: subcategories' internal distribution

VERIFY PREDICTIONS	SUMMARISE	CHECK GOALS	EVALUATE ONESELF	EVALUATE ONE'S STRATEGIES
3%	0%	74%	11%	13%

Graph 9. Proportions for each subcategory of the evaluating strategies area.

Problem Solving Strategies: subcategories' internal distribution

80%   20%   0%   0%

INFERENCE   SUBSTITUTE   CLARIFY/ASK QUESTIONS   USE RESOURCES
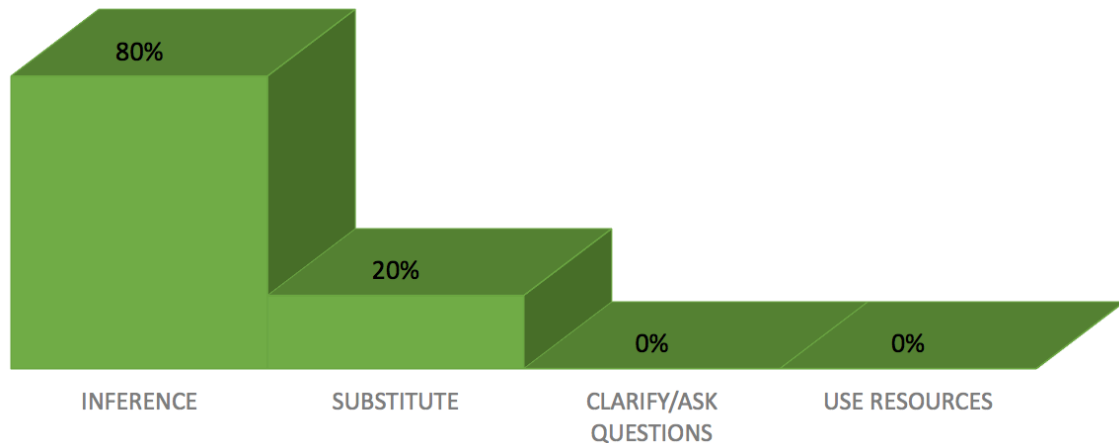
Graph 10. Proportions for each subcategory of the problem solving strategies area.

In the next section we are going to focus on the implications of such results with the aim of answering the second research question.

4.2.2 Discussion

In the previous paragraph (4.2.1), we presented the results of the analysis determining the level of promotion of the metacognitive strategies in the sample according to different variables. We have investigated also the type of strategies that are privileged and the one that are not fostered or mentioned in our pre-packaged materials. Starting from this data analysis, we wants to understand though metacognitive strategies are appropriately stimulated by textbooks or not.

The presented outcomes show that some differences in the promotion of the metacognitive strategies can be traced in relation both to the different features of the books, and to the peculiarity of each strategy category and subcategory.

With reference to the book's features, some distinctions can be seen between the different levels of proficiency. In fact, Elementary Level Textbooks show a higher proportion of metacognitive-related exercises (24%) followed by the Intermediate Level Textbooks (19%) and the Multilevel Grammar Books (18%). A similar observation can

be made even grouping our sample according to the three book typologies: SB, WB and GB. Considering this variable, SBs present a larger number of metacognitive-related exercises (27%) followed by GBs (18%) and then WBs (14%).

A reflection should be conducted on the reason why SBs and WBs present so different percentages of metacognitive-related exercises. It seems that SB and WB that are part of the same volume pursue different goals and follow different guidelines with reference to the promotion of the learning strategies. It is really difficult to find an explanation for this phenomenon considering that WBs are generally used at home by students to practice and reinforce autonomously their skills and that, on the other hand, SBs are adopted by teachers to present the different topics to the class. It could be stated that the teacher should be the guide in promoting autonomy as a new learning approach, but it is also known that each learner has his own styles and necessities and for that reason becoming an autonomous learner is a personal path. In this case, WBs and GBs acquire a central role in stimulating the learner to self-direct his learning.

Probably, as mentioned in section 2.3, textbooks can be considered an agent of change by publishers and a stimulus for teachers to adopt a different approach, forcing them to leave more responsibility and autonomy to learners through these sorts of exercises. Yet, it could also be that the necessity to foster learner autonomy has not been fully included in the aims of EFL books, yet. In this regard, it is important to stress that the results of the three different book typologies are not so different. In fact, as we have already said, only 13 points separate the SB value form the WB value and, on average, less than a quarter of the analysed exercises can be considered useful for the promotion of metacognitive strategies.

Therefore, considering the quantity of metacognitive-related exercises available in the sample, it is difficult to completely demonstrate the active role of EFL pre-packaged materials in the promotion of metacognitive strategies and thus, in the promotion of learner autonomy. Moreover, the absence of similar investigations does not allow us to compare our results to analogous studies. However, as far as we are concerned, the reported outcomes cannot be considered positively, and the promotion of learner autonomy through the promotion of the metacognitive strategies should be improved.

In addition, we have also investigated which one of Chamot's four categoies is the most fostered in the sample. The outcomes reveal that the monitoring strategies category is the area with the highest number of related exercises followed by the evaluating strategies, the planning strategies and finally, the problem solving strategies. However, analysing the internal distribution of Chamot's subcategories for each macro-area some relevant observations can be made.

Only a few types of strategies are stimulated per each macro-area in the sample and on average only one subcategory is promoted in each group. For this reason, it is difficult to see a common and complete intent of promoting metacognitive strategies in the sample. It seems that, metacognitive-related exercises are offered by the authors because considered useful exercises to improve the foreign language skills more than to promote a self-directed learning.

In conclusion, although some differences can be measured both among different book's levels and categories, and among different strategies areas and subcategories, a unique and clear intention to promote the metacognitive strategies does not emerge from the analysis. It seems that the goal of all the analysed books is the one of improving more the language abilities than the self-management in learners, not considering the necessity to create active students. In fact, as described in section 1.2, using metacognitive strategies correctly and confidentially is one of the main features of the autonomous learner and for this reason, it can be stated that publishers do not fully implement the fundamental steps to make learners aware of the importance of self-direct the learning path.

Conclusions

The purpose of this work is to ascertain whether learner autonomy policies are implemented and used in the classroom reality. The focus of our investigation is on the role of coursebooks in the promotion of a self-directed learning, with the main goal of understanding the function of pre-packaged materials in the learner autonomy scenario. The presented research analysed twelve EFL textbooks offering us two different examinations of the sample, as many as the research questions.

To answer the first research question, an external evaluation of the books is provided using two pre-existing methods and showing that the sample does not fully develop learner autonomy. In fact, no huge differences can be identified between different levels of textbooks or between textbooks and grammar books demonstrating that, despite their different design, structures and purposes, learner autonomy policies are not the main focus of the authors.

Through the second research question, the level of promotion of metacognitive strategies is measured in order to see whether learners are stimulated to improve not only their language skills and proficiency, but also their ability to self-manage the learning path. In this case, not the structure of the books, but rather the exercises in the books are investigated contributing to create an internal evaluation of the sample. This second analysis shows that metacognitive-related exercises are offered in the books, but their quantity cannot be considered suitable to develop learner autonomy. Moreover, although some differences can be noticed between different book categories or levels of proficiency, it is really difficult to identify some general guidelines to develop autonomy through the use of metacognitive strategies. It seems that developing learner autonomy is not considered as a goal of the EFL publishers.

Considering the outcomes of the first and the second research question together, the absence of a shared plan to develop learner autonomy emerges. The presence of beneficial elements for the promotion of autonomy can be considered part of

consolidated practices in textbooks, rather than an explicit choice to foster active learning.

However, considering only our results it is difficult to affirm that learner autonomy policies have not been incorporated in pre-packaged materials or in the educational system yet. The two previous studies that tested the textbooks-autonomy relation report similar considerations and results, but unfortunately not many scholars have investigated this topic. For this reason, making inferences and overgeneralising our results to the whole EFL textbook situation could be dangerous and more similar studies should be conducted to deeply analyse the actual situation. Nevertheless, with reference to the available data, we can state that learner autonomy is not fully presented to learners via EFL textbooks and that teachers continue to be considered the major variable in the promotion of active learning.

In this regard, there is the impression that only teachers should be considered the promoters of new pedagogical and educational theories. For sure, teachers are a model for students and they have a strong influence on the promotion of good practices in class, but, as we have seen, stimulating teachers to adopt new teaching methods and to implement brand new theories of language education requires enormous effort. For this reason, coursebooks should be considered fundamental agents of change, useful to facilitate the assimilation of new educational practices by learners and teachers at the same time.

Probably, textbooks are losing importance and appeal in the contemporary language education field, considering the increasing use of technological devices and activities available online, but they are fundamental instruments to turn new methodologies into practice because their production is the result of expert and committed authors.

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