ACTION RESEARCH FOR TEACHER DEVELOPMENT - REFLECTIONS ON A GROUP OF MOROCCAN ELT RESEARCH PROFESSORS AT SIDI MOHAMMED BEN ABDELLAH UNIVERSITY, FEZ

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Abstract:

In this paper, it is assumed that practitioners at universities conduct research for different purposes. This study aimed to assess the extent to which a group of research professors conducted action research for professional development. Analysis of the results from questionnaires and interviews revealed that the participants conducted more research projects compared to action research ones, but the participants showed more optimism for conducting more action research projects that would contribute to raising educational standards in their country.

Keywords: action research, reflective teaching, teacher development, Moroccan university

1. Introduction

The success of any educational system may be dependent on some infrastructure means related to the number and the quality of schools and universities open for students or the kind of technological equipment available, etc. Still, it is highly dependent on the kind of teachers operating within these schools or universities. More importantly, this success is dependent on whether these teachers are able to change and/or adapt their teaching practices in this rapidly changing world or not. Today, the educational domain, like any other domain in this world, is changing at a very fast pace, and so some changes or adaptations are needed to keep up with these changes and innovations. In order to meet the ever-changing needs of students and of the educational system, it is important that such teachers question their practices and exert some control over what they teach, how they teach, the means they use, conditions where they teach, etc. Such processes of

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reflection and action for improvement may not be achieved based on intuition, but for more credibility, they have to be based on scientific evidence from action research.

Action research has been an important concern for a great number of teachers, syllabus designers, and researchers worldwide because of the role it plays in teacher development and reforms of some educational systems. Interest in studying the use of action research for development among a group of Moroccan ELT research professors at Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah University rose from my reflection on educational practices at Regional Centres for the Professions of Education and Training 'Centres Régionaux des Métiers de l'Education et de la Formation (CRMEFs)' and universities as institutions of higher education.

In this study, it is assumed that practitioners at the Moroccan university conduct research for different purposes. In universities, as in other higher educational institutions, research laboratories are created with the purpose of researching various issues related to the educational domain, but how much research is done to promote educational practices inside the university? Following these assumptions and reflections, the present study aims to assess the extent to which a group of 22 Moroccan ELT research professors at Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah University use action research for professional development. Moreover, it seeks to investigate the problems or challenges that may hinder the promotion of such research projects.

This study is composed of four chapters. The first one is a theoretical background to the study and attempts to provide some definitions of such a research approach. It also tries to examine the relationship between action research and professional development. The second chapter on methodology introduces the purpose of the study, the research questions, the participants and the research instruments used for eliciting data. The third chapter analyzes and discusses the findings. It attempts to analyse and discuss the findings based on evidence from questionnaires and interviews, with some reference to previous studies in other educational contexts. The fourth and last chapter on pedagogical implications attempts to promote the practice of action research for developmental purposes among more research professors inside universities as well as other higher education institutions. At the same time, it suggests some procedures and ways to overcome obstacles that may discourage some research professors from undertaking action research projects.

1.1 Theoretical background

Before assessing the use of action research for professional development among a group of Moroccan ELT research professors at Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah University, it would be more appropriate to start with some historical background to action research. Precisely, the first section will attempt to provide some definitions of such a research approach. The second section will examine the relationship between action research and professional development.

1.2 Action research: some definitions

Action research started when practitioners wanted to see the link between science, i.e. what people study, what they know and the effect of this science or this knowledge on their practices. In other words, it came to bridge the gap between theory and practice. People may know something, but its application needs to be tailored or adapted to suit the context where it will be applied. Historically, while reviewing the literature, action research was found to be linked to the German-American social psychologist Kurt Lewin, who referred to action research as an approach to improving practices in general (cf. Lewin (1946) Burns (1999), among others. Lewin was first interested in improving the social situation and lives of groups and communities at his time and action research was employed as a means to reach those ends. Although a number of authors claim that action research goes back to Lewin (1946), other researchers say that action research had been practised earlier. McTaggart (1992), for instance, is one of these researchers. He refers to some earlier work on action research before 1946; he also cites a study on a community development initiative in Vienna by Gstettner and Altricher in 1913.

It is true that action research was first implemented with the purpose of improving the social lives of practitioners, but later, this type of research was transmitted to the world of education. Nowadays, action research is becoming part of teacher education programmes and training, and this type of research allows teachers to question the relevance of what they have learnt from books, from universities, and/or from pedagogical training centres. Such type of research appeared then as an alternative to academic research that was conducted to tackle issues of relevance to practitioners in general and to serve the 'general' teacher in any classroom. However, the findings and suggestions from academic research sometimes prove to be too general and de-contextualized, in the sense that they do not always help in solving particular educational problems in specific classrooms and schools. Therefore, in order to improve educational practices, teachers can examine their own practices and suggest appropriate solutions or updates based on the evidence they can gain from action research.

1.3 Action research for professional development

The development of educational systems is becoming an urgent concern of educators and policymakers because the development of all sectors depends on the development of the educational sector. Moreover, in this highly competitive world, if people do not attempt to progress, they are likely to regress. Development of the educational system is a lifelong process that normally starts earlier with pre-service training at pedagogical training centres and universities, and it continues with some forms of in-service training till the day of retirement. During their professional career, teachers may benefit from various opportunities of this in-service training: through attending seminars, conferences, and also through conducting research.

In this study, the promotion of action research may be motivated by this need for teacher development and educational reform. Today, educators, researchers, decision-makers and many other people are talking about the need for educational reform and the

need to achieve excellence. However, such educational reform cannot be achieved through the accumulation of teaching experience or implementation of other researchers' solutions, but through conducting action research. Sometimes, teachers may benefit from academic research that is produced by other researchers. However, this application of ready-made solutions from academic research may not always be appropriate to all students at all times. Following this approach of action research for development, educational reform can be initiated from inside, i.e., by the teachers themselves. It is through studying educational practices from the inside that these teachers can act and experiment 'new' alternatives that would solve particular problems and, therefore, would help them achieve higher standards in their institutions. On the use of action research as an approach to teacher empowerment and professional development, Ginns, Heirdsfield, Atweh, & Watters (2001) assert that action research can:

> "*Empower teachers to examine their own beliefs, explore their own understandings of practice, foster critical reflection, and develop decision-making capabilities that would enhance their teaching and help them assume control over their respective situation.*" (p. 129)

As can be inferred from the quote above, the research professor can conduct action research to solve particular problems. Following reflection on practices, the teacher asks questions and proceeds to answer them. Based on the findings, s/he moves to adapt practices that would meet students' needs, interests, styles and environment. It is this reflection-adaptation process that characterises action research and makes it a more suitable approach to teacher development. Glatthorn (1995), among others, refers to this connection between systematic reflection on teaching practices and teacher development and asserts that:

> "*Teacher development is the professional growth a teacher achieves as a result of gaining increased experience and examining his or her teaching systematically.*" (Glatthorn (1995:41))

Through this systematic examination of practices, teachers may be able to understand what works better for students and what needs to be redressed in future sessions. However, if teachers exercise their profession without critical reflection, they may become slaves to some pre-set models they have read about in some books or have inherited from some teachers. Since such pre-set models may not be appropriate to 'all' students in 'all' places and 'all' times, they need to be verified based on some evidence from research. Critical reflection on prevailing practices becomes then a trigger that pushes teachers to conduct action research. Schön (1983), among others, refers to 'reflection-in-action' and 'reflection-on-action' and states that such kinds of reflective processes may be important for teacher development in the sense that such reflection allows teachers to 'mirror' acquired/theoretical knowledge and prevailing practices.

Following reflection on their own practices, and a systematic assessment of what works and what does not, practitioners can decide on appropriate alternatives for developing these practices. On the importance of self-reflection for development, Carr and Kemmis (1986) assert that action research is:

> *"…a form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own practices, their understanding of those practices and the situations in which the practices are carried out."* (p. 162)

Following the quote above, reflection is an important strategy that is employed by action researchers. In addition to being a reflective practice, action research is collaborative in most cases, but may be conducted individually. Kemmis and McTaggart (1988), among others, state such type of research is 'collaborative' or participatory and add that it is used for change or improvement. They write that action research is:

> *"…carried out by practitioners (for our purposes, classroom teachers) rather than outside researchers; secondly, that it is collaborative; and thirdly, that it is aimed at changing things."* (quoted in Nunan 1992:17)

Collaboration is something beneficial for some co-researchers in a research project, but sometimes for constraints related to the commitment of one or other members in the research group, action research projects can be undertaken by individual researchers.

In order to conduct action research individually or collaboratively, teacher-researchers are supposed to follow a certain systematic, rigorous procedure or model. The models that are described in the literature do not seem very different since they all translate this reflection-adaptation process. Among the models suggested in the literature is Kemmis's (1991), which describes the spiral model of action research and states that each cycle goes through four steps: plan, act, observe and reflect.

In the first stage, the 'planning' stage, the teacher researcher identifies the problem based on his/her reflection on educational practices; then, s/he designs a strategic plan of action describing what needs to be done to make such changes or improvements.

During the second stage, the practitioner 'acts' or intervenes to implement changes or improvements to his/her practices.

In the third stage, s/he proceeds to 'observe' the effects of the action implemented. During the observation stage, s/he collects data on the effects of this intervention.

At the fourth stage, 'reflection', the researcher moves to assess the outcome(s) of his/her action. On the basis of such assessment, s/he either implements the changes or updates practices. Then s/he shares these updates with other practitioners. If outcomes prove to be not very effective, s/he repeats the cycle with the purpose of making more improvements.

2. Research methodology

2.1 Purpose of the study

In this study, it is assumed that practitioners at Moroccan universities conduct research for different purposes. The main aim of this study is to assess the extent to which a group of Moroccan ELT research professors at Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah University conduct action research for improving educational practices. It also attempts to elicit the problems or obstacles that hinder the promotion of action research projects.

2.2 Research questions

To achieve the above purposes, there was a need to answer the following research questions:

1) To what extent does a group of 22 EFL research professors at Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah University conduct action research to improve educational practices?
2) What are the obstacles that face the participants when conducting action research projects?

2.3 The participants

For assessing the use of action research among research professors, the choice was made for university research professors. The focus on the university may be justified by the fact that the university is a space for learning and researching. In addition to teaching duties, practitioners at university are supposed to conduct research either individually or in collaboration with other co-researchers in research groups and/or research laboratories. The selection of Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah University was motivated by the fact that the collection of data would be easier thanks to the help and cooperation of some research professors at both faculties of Arts and Humanities in this university, namely the Faculty of Dhar Mehraz and the Faculty of Sais.

For practical reasons, the study did not employ randomisation procedures, but it focused on one group of 22 research professors (14 males and 8 females) at Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah University. The present study may be considered as a case study as it was conducted with an intact group that was selected for convenience.

2.4 Research instruments

To answer the above research questions, there was a need to elicit some quantitative and qualitative data using two retrospective research techniques: a questionnaire and an interview, as an example of triangulation. Triangulation was employed here with a purpose to enhance the validity of the study; expecting that the data gathered from the interview would support the findings from the questionnaire.

Like any study, the quality of the present study can also be assessed in terms of internal and external validity. As it is a case study that was conducted with an intact group that was selected for convenience, it was important to control some threats related to internal validity. As a measure to avoid threats related to contamination and the

influence of respondents, it was important to administer the questionnaires to individual professors while they were outside the university campus. External validity may be controlled by asserting that the outcomes of this study are applicable only to this specific group at Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah University in Fez and cannot be generalised to the larger population of ELT research professors in Moroccan universities.

2.4.1 The questionnaire

The questionnaire was the first research instrument used for collecting data in this case study. To fill in the questionnaire, the participants had to retrospect on past teaching/research experiences and report whether they used action research for development. The questionnaire was composed of 13 items and aimed at eliciting some quantitative and qualitative data. The questionnaire items were closed and open. The closed format was chosen to assess the extent to which the participants used action research for professional development. The open items were meant to generate information relating to the problems that faced the participants when experimenting with action research. A sample of this questionnaire is pasted in Appendix A in this report.

2.4.2 The interview

For more support to questionnaire findings, an interview sought to elicit some qualitative data on the use of action research for professional development. The 18 items ranged from yes-no questions to wh-questions. It was a structured interview, and this format was chosen to ensure some degree of consistency across the participants and, therefore, increase the reliability of this research instrument. After some piloting, it was conducted with two volunteer research professors from the target group. It was conducted on a one-to-one basis inside the university campus. A sample of this interview schedule is pasted in Appendix (B).

3. Analysis and discussion of results

The purpose of the study was to assess the extent to which a group of 22 Moroccan ELT research professors at Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah University used action research for professional development. It also aimed to investigate the problems or challenges that hindered the promotion of action research practices. To achieve those aims, two research questions were asked, and two research instruments were used. The questionnaire was administered to collect some quantitative as well as qualitative data according to the types of items provided. Some items were of a binary type in the form of Yes/No questions. Some other items were of an MCQ format and were meant to elicit the extent to which the respondents used action research for professional development. As it is a small-scale study, the measure of average or the mean ($\overline{X}$) and measure of dispersion or Standard Deviation (SD) were not provided. For quantification and comparative purposes, it was more appropriate to compute some percentages through the use of the software SPSS 10.0 for Windows.

3.1 Questionnaire findings

The questionnaire was the first instrument used to assess the extent to which a group of Moroccan ELT research professors at Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah University used action research for professional development. Twenty-two questionnaires were administered, but only twelve were completed. Section one of this questionnaire sought to elicit some data relating to the participants' background, such as age, gender and teaching experience. From the analysis of this section on demographics, it was found that from the 12 research professors who participated in the study, there were 8 males and 4 females. All of them were from different ages, as can be seen in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Age of participants

Age	Number
a. Between 30-40	0
b. Between 41-50	4
c. Between 51-60	6
d. More than 60	2

Concerning the item regarding their teaching experience, it was found that the majority (10 participants) had some teaching experience of more than 20 years.

Section two in this questionnaire aimed at eliciting the purposes for conducting research. An MCQ item consisting of four choices was provided. Following quantification and analysis of results, it was found that the participants used research for the following purposes, but with different degrees, as illustrated in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Purposes for conducting research

Research purposes	Cases
a. testing hypotheses	2
b. experimenting issues	2
c. understanding issues	11
d. other	3

As can be observed from the findings displayed in the table above, the majority of respondents (11 out of 12) reported having conducted research for understanding teaching practices, 2 respondents out of 12 said having conducted research for testing hypotheses and 2 participants out of 12 mentioned having undertaken research for experimenting approaches and methods in their classrooms. In addition to the above purposes, the respondents were given the freedom to add some other purpose(s) for which they had used research. Analysis of results revealed that 2 participants out of 12 reported having conducted research for the following purposes: "*participating in academic conferences*", "*keeping updated and contributing to knowledge*"; and one research professor mentioned 'other purpose', without giving any explanation.

With the purpose to assess the extent to which the participants conducted research and action research and the purposes for undertaking such practices, item (5) and item (6) were given. Table 3 below illustrates comparison of findings.

Table 3: Research (Res) vs Action Research (A-Res)

Number of projects in 5 years	RES	A-RES
a. Four projects	0	0
b. Three projects	5	1
c. Two projects	7	6
d. One project	0	3
e. No project	0	0

From analysis and comparison of findings in a five-year period, it was noticed that the participants produced more research projects than action research ones. Among the responses collected for research purposes, it was found that action research was conducted mainly to improve teaching practices and solve educational problems. Some qualitative evidence was also provided by some research professors in the target group. One respondent reported having a problem with the teaching of writing and mentioned solving the problem by "*suggesting topics that were close to students' reality*".

Section three aimed at eliciting the difficulties or obstacles that faced the participants when conducting research. Following analysis and comparison of these constraints or obstacles, the results were quantified in percentages. For more illustration of these constraints, the following histogram is provided.
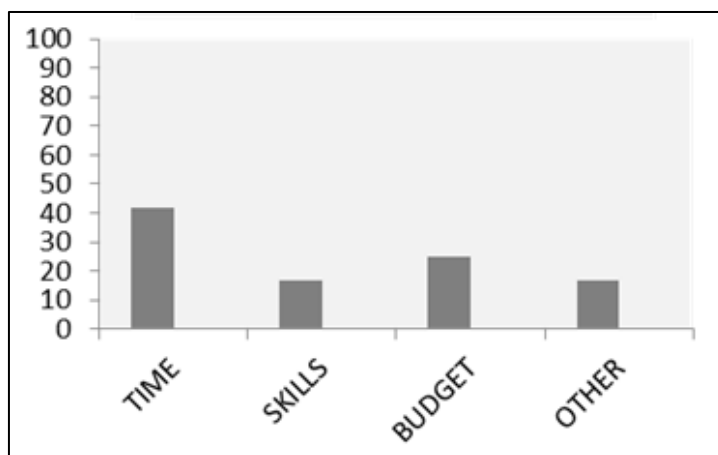
Analysis of results revealed that the respondents encountered some difficulties or obstacles that hindered the practice of action research. 5 out of 12 respondents reported difficulties linked to insufficient time; 2 out of 12 mentioned obstacles related to lack of research skills for conducting research projects; 3 out of 12 mentioned difficulties linked to insufficient budget; and two other respondents reported some problems related to lack of enthusiasm and motivation of some colleagues in research teams.

3.2 Interview findings

The interview was the second research instrument used to collect qualitative evidence on the use of action research for professional development. It was mainly intended to elicit some data on the kinds of action research projects conducted by the participants and the kind of obstacles that rendered involvement in such research projects difficult. Data were collected from two volunteer participants and then were transcribed.

From analysis of results, it was found that the participants conducted research as well as action research projects for improving particular teaching practices. In the following, one interviewee reports that she had to reflect on teaching practices and improve/adapt them. She says that she conducted research "*on several occasions, particularly when I saw that the students were not really motivated to follow the teaching of grammar,*". Following reflection on the teaching of grammar, the professor says: "*we went back to the teaching of pedagogical grammar, grammar in context; and ... we had to switch to another technique, and it gave good results because it was more concrete to students.*" The researcher also mentions the case when she had to motivate students to write. She reports that "*students did not like to write, multi-paragraph essays*". She adds: "*I tried action research with writing ... I thought that making students write about things that are close to their reality may motivate them... , so I diversified the activities... and it worked.*"

For more qualitative evidence on the use of action research for professional development, another participant supports this need for action research and mentions instances when he had to use research to promote educational practices. For evidence on such instances, the professor began his report with an overview of research at the university. He says: "*From the very beginning, the situation when I worked was characterised by emphasis was on teaching ...research was needed only when it became a requirement for promotion that people started thinking about doing research.*" As a response to a question on the need of action research for developmental purposes, the professor adds: "*the most important moment when the urge was felt, when the need was felt for reflection when the ministry-initiated reforms... introduced changes that were consistent with modular degree programmes*".

As an example of action research projects for developmental purposes, the participant reports on a study on attrition among university students. He says: "*If I may focus on one example and that is characteristic of what I think of as action research. When I started thinking about the impact of attrition in higher education in Morocco. We set up a group of colleagues ... , seven or eight; and we carried out research on the reasons and effects of attrition ... It was within a project that was sponsored by the 'PARS' (Projet d'Assistance à la Recherche Scientifique) ... It was meant to last three years*". He adds that it "*it was meant to ease the transition for students moving or coming to university from high school because we found that one of the main reasons why the rate of attrition was so high was the fact that students who moved from high school to university found it very difficult and a very daunting experience to adapt to the higher educational system*". As a measure following reflection on this problem of attrition among university students, the participant reports saying that "*the initiative was implemented*". In the end the research professor concluded with some optimism for the future of action research and says: "*Now that research has become a requirement for*

promotion … it seems to me that there is talk about the importance of what we would call action research now in Morocco, in the system of higher education."

The above extracts collected from the research participants are some kinds of qualitative evidence on the need of using action research for professional development. The interviewees could give concrete instances when they had to conduct action research projects for adapting practices that fitted their students and university context.

To sum up, this study could shed light on the use of action research for developmental purposes. However, as a case study, it does not fail some limitations, especially limitations related to the small sample size of ELT research professors from Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah University. Since the sample was not chosen at random, the conclusions drawn are only applicable to this sample and cannot be generalised to the whole population of university professors.

4. Implications for the Moroccan HE context

The aim of the study was to assess the extent to which a group of ELT research professors use action research for professional development. From analysis of results, it was found that in a five-year period, the participants produced more research projects than action research ones. The study could also elicit some difficulties related to time constraints, lack of research skills and insufficient budget. In the light of the findings summarised above in the previous chapter, the following pedagogical implications can be drawn.

First, if action research is important for promoting educational systems, then more collaboration is needed not only from research professors but from all stakeholders in the educational system. Based on the findings, it may be suggested that educational institutions can sponsor more action research projects inside universities or perhaps encourage research professors with some incentives in the form of prizes for the 'best' action research project. Research professors in higher educational institutions are rewarded with some incentives in the form of advances in salaries, which may be considered as a motive for promoting more research in this country. However, if more funding is provided from public and private educational institutions, research professors will cooperate and also compete to produce good quality action research projects that will empower research professors themselves and at the same time these 'self-empowered' professors will contribute to the development of the Moroccan educational system as a whole. Some universities do finance research projects in research laboratories and take charge of publications of university proceedings and journals.

It is true extrinsic motives play an important role in promoting action research, but not all shortages of action research projects is to be related to equipment or insufficient funding. There are some other constraints linked to the research professors themselves, such as lack of time and/or non-commitment of members in a research group, as some respondents reported in questionnaires and interviews. I think when research professors have to work in groups, there is some need for engagement and commitment from all members, but the problem is that sometimes, for some reason, members cannot

meet on time or do not succeed in completing particular tasks or parts of a research project.

In addition to this problem of commitment, I personally believe that working on a research project is sometimes demanding and time-consuming, bearing in mind the many tasks a research professor is assigned: planning, managing, evaluating the teaching/learning process, correcting papers, supervising so many research projects for a 'big' number of students. In addition to all these tasks, the research professors are in need of meetings to supervise students inside faculty offices/classrooms. However, in order to contribute to raising the educational standards of students, research professors can take individual initiatives to examine and improve educational practices. To achieve such purposes, they need to be equipped with research skills that will enable them to conduct action research projects. They can get involved in research teams and work on collaborative research projects that would benefit them and other ELT practitioners.

5. Conclusion

In short, action research is considered one of the approaches to professional development. This study attempted to assess the extent to which a group of 22 Moroccan ELT research professors at Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah University used action research for professional development. Analysis of findings revealed that the participants conducted more research projects than action research ones. The study also tried to elicit some obstacles that hindered the promotion of action research projects. The respondents mentioned some difficulties related to time constraints, lack of research skills, insufficient budget, etc.

On the whole, this study could achieve the objective stated at the beginning of this report. It could shed some light on the role of action research in promoting educational practices among a group of 12 respondents. However, as a case study, it does not escape some limitations, particularly limitations related to the small sample size. Since the sample was so small and the sampling procedure was not done at random, the conclusions drawn are only applicable to this sample and may not be generalised to all the population of research professors at Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah University. Still, the findings can be of some benefit to other research professors in this country and elsewhere through communications in conferences and publications in journals. I hope this study can open avenues for other researchers to study action research from other perspectives and at a larger scale.

Conflict of Interest Statement
The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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Appendix A: Teacher Questionnaire

Dear Professor,

The purpose of this questionnaire is to see the extent to which Moroccan EFL practitioners at Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah University in Fez conduct action research for professional development and the difficulties or obstacles that discourage them from undertaking such projects.

The questionnaire is organised in three sections. Please read the items carefully and complete them as requested. You may tick more than one answer. All your answers will be kept anonymous. Your cooperation in this study is highly appreciated.

_____

Section I
- Age: ………..…..
- Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐
- Degree: ………..…
- Teaching experience:
  - 1-10 years ☐
  - 11-20 years ☐
  - More than 20 years ☐
- Courses/modules taught so far: ....

Section II

1. What do you do when you face an educational problem?
 a) I ignore it ☐
 b) I seek help from (a) colleague(s) ☐
 c) I attempt to adopt and adapt practices based on intuition ☐
 d) I reflect on it and try to find a solution based on research evidence ☐

2. How many research projects have you conducted in a five-year period?
 a) four projects ☐
 b) three projects ☐
 c) two projects ☐
 d) one project ☐
 e) no project ☐

3. Why do you conduct research?
a) to test hypotheses ☐
b) to experiment something ☐
c) to understand educational practices ☐
d) for other reasons (please specify the reason(s)! ☐
....

....

4. Are you familiar with action research?
a) Yes ☐
b) No ☐

5. If 'yes', have you conducted action research?
a) individually ☐
b) in collaboration with another researcher ☐
d) with a research team at university ☐
e) individually and in collaboration with other researchers ☐

6. If 'yes', what were the purposes for conducting action research?
a) to solve educational problems ☐
b) to improve educational practices ☐
c) to innovate educational practices ☐
d) for other reasons (please specify the reason(s)! ☐
....
....

7. If 'yes', how many action research projects have you conducted in a five-year
 period?
a) four projects ☐
b) three projects ☐
c) two projects ☐
d) one project ☐
e) no project ☐

8. If you have conducted action research with the purpose to solve educational
problems, do you implement the change(s) or the solution(s)?
a) Yes ☐
b) No ☐

9. If 'yes', please give examples of these changes/solutions in the space below?
....
....

10. Have you made the research findings public?
 a) Yes ☐
 b) No ☐

11. If 'yes', have you shared the outcomes of your action research projects with the ELT community through:

a) presentations in seminars ☐

b) presentations in conferences☐

c) publications in journals, proceedings ☐

d) other (Please use the space below to write your answer!)

....

....

Section III

12. While conducting action research projects, have you encountered any difficulties or obstacles?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

13. If 'yes', are the obstacles related to?

a) lack of time ☐

b) lack of research skills ☐

c) lack of insufficient budget ☐

d) other (please use the space below to write your answer!) ☐

....

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Thank you for your cooperation!

Appendix B: Teacher Interview

The purpose of this interview is to assess the extent to which Moroccan EFL practitioners at Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah University in Fez conduct action research for professional development.

First, it is used to collect some qualitative evidence on the use of action research among research professors at this university. It also seeks to elicit difficulties or obstacles that may hinder the promotion of action research practices.

I am sure that your cooperation in this interview will be of some benefit to this study; and to other colleagues and researchers who see action research as a means to professional development.

_____

1) Please professor! If you may go back and reflect on your professional career, did you need to change your teaching practices or not?

2) Why?

3) Can you tell me about some cases when you needed to improve or adapt teaching practices?

4) Can you tell me please what measures you took to solve such classroom/educational problems perhaps relating to adaptability or improvement?

5) Did you seek help from colleagues?

6) Did you seek for help/responses to your problems from academic research?

7) Was this academic research always useful to you as a research professor?

8) Can you tell me please what you did when some of these ready-made solutions/suggestions from research happened to be incompatible with the kind of students you were teaching, the context where you were teaching and the way your students were learning?

9) Did you try action research?

10) Can you give me some examples of some situations that motivated you to conduct action research?

11) If 'yes', what were the purposes for conducting action research?

12) Did you conduct the study(ies) individually or in collaboration with other research professors?

13) Were there any difficulties that you encountered while conducting such studies? If yes, can you give some examples please?

14) As a research professor, what did you benefit from the study(ies)?

15) What were the impacts on your students?

16) Please, can you tell me if you were able to share the outcomes of action research with the large community of ELT research professors in this country and outside?

17) If yes, how did you share the findings?

18) As a last question, in case, there are some handicaps to the practice of action research for developmental purposes? What do you suggest to overcome such handicaps or challenges?

Thank you so much Professor for you this evidence on the use of action research for education development.

Thanks again for your cooperation!