

The Place of Learner Autonomy in Language Preparatory Programs: A Case Study

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Abstract. The concept of autonomy is not new in the field of foreign language teaching but recently there has been an increasing interest in learner autonomy in particular, as new trends in foreign language teaching support a learning environment which enables learners to take control of their own learning. The purpose of this study is to find out how language teachers perceive learner autonomy based on their classroom practice. The study was conducted at an English Preparatory Program of a foundation university located in Istanbul. Data were collected through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The findings of the study revealed significant implications in terms of integrating learner autonomy in EFL classrooms.

Keywords: learner autonomy; instructors' perceptions; EFL.

1. Introduction

Learner autonomy is one of the current research topics being investigated in the field of language teaching. According to the Oxford Dictionary, the term autonomy is defined as '*the freedom from external control or influence; independence*'. Although the definition provided by the Oxford Dictionary belongs to autonomy, which can be seen as an umbrella term, the way it is described is actually pretty much similar to the existing definitions of learner autonomy in the relevant literature as those definitions of learner autonomy also refer to the ability to be free and to be able to control one's own learning. Secondly, as defined by the Oxford Dictionary, the equivalent of the word autonomy is given as independence, which is also a widely accepted and expected feature of autonomous learners.

Turning back to the relevant literature, the most well-known definition of learner autonomy is the one suggested by Holec (1981, p.3) who describes learner autonomy as learners' ability to take charge of their own learning. By being responsible for their own learning, learners actually take control over all the decisions regarding their learning process. This ability of learners is not inborn, but it can be obtained by formal learning.

Besides, Little (1991, p.4) defines learner autonomy as a matter of the learners' psychological relation to the process and content of learning. According to this definition, autonomous learners are ones who take responsibility for their own learning explicitly. It is also pointed out that in order to develop autonomy in language learning, there are three main pedagogical principles which are learner involvement, learner reflection, and appropriate target language use.

Dickinson (1993) points out that learner autonomy is a situation in which all decisions related to the learning process belong to the learners as well as the implementation of those decisions.

Finally, Benson and Voller (1997) state that learner autonomy is taking personal responsibility for learning. Learners can be regarded as autonomous if they are able to study

entirely on their own, use skills which can be applied in self-directed learning, activate their inborn capacity suppressed by educational institutions, practice learners' responsibility for their own learning, and determine their own learning.

2. Learner Autonomy in ESL/EFL Context

Apart for reaching a common definition of the term autonomy, the way by which learner autonomy can be developed has been another important point discussed in the relevant literature. Since being an autonomous learner requires creating a sense of responsibility to participate actively in the learning process, it takes quite some time to develop it. To be able to achieve the goal, which is to create autonomy for learners, motivation and self-confidence, monitoring and evaluation, learning strategies, cooperation, sharing information with the learner, consistent control, delegating tasks and decisions must be in the priority list while teaching a language (Scharle and Szabo, 2000, p. 8).

Illés (2012) makes some comments on developing learner autonomy and how it can be promoted in language classrooms. According to her, autonomy is integral to language learning and use which requires engaging students in processes of communication by which learners will have the chance to use their skills for problem solving. She also points out that the course tasks for learners have to include problems which are challenging enough in order to activate their linguistic capacity as well as other resources. For this reason, it is important to choose the communicative tasks which do not replicate or rehearse real-life communicative tasks as in those types of tasks learners are asked to look at the conditions through the eyes of native speakers. However, this doesn't make them autonomous as it doesn't allow them to develop their capacity. While expecting learners to practice meaning making and the concomitant problem solving through the activation of their capacity, teachers are required to create an atmosphere in which they ask learners to go beyond conformity and actively involve themselves in interpretive procedures. When learners are provided with such an atmosphere, they are expected to solve the code and propose solutions which they don't necessarily face in everyday interactions.

Cotterall (1999) agrees with the idea that suggests fostering learner autonomy and she believes that it is an important element of language course design. However, she points out that the principles which can guide language courses willing to encourage their learner to be autonomous aren't available. For this reason, Cotterall (1999) suggests five principles which can be used as a starting point to design courses in which learner autonomy is promoted. These five principles are based on learner goals, the language learning process, tasks, learner strategies, and reflection on learning. First of all, learners' goals must be reflected by the course in its language, tasks and strategies. Secondly, there needs to be an explicit link between the course tasks and a simplified model of the language process. The third principle states that course tasks must either replicate real word communicative tasks or provide rehearsal for such tasks, but this principle is actually opposed to the point made by Illés (2012) as she proposes to avoid the tasks which are replicas or rehearsals of the ones in the real world. According to the fourth principle, the course must integrate discussion and practice with strategies known to facilitate task performance. Finally, reflection on learning must be promoted in the course. Although the design of the course might be easier with these principles in mind, there is still a challenge to be dealt with, which is related to discovering methods to encourage the transfer of responsibility for decision-making on learning from

teachers to learners. On the other hand, it is worth pointing out that once the learning awareness of individuals grows, there is an increase in the potential of learner autonomy.

According to Reinders (2010), expecting students to turn into autonomous learners in a very short time without giving them a clear rationale, allocating them some reflection time as well as giving them the support they need while acquiring skills for autonomy is rather unachievable as the whole process needs a big change in the whole classroom atmosphere. Asking students to take over the responsibility for their own learning is something different for most students no matter where they are. Although some teachers also complain about their students' unwillingness to be more actively involved in the learning process, they should try to understand the fact that student might not have such an experience before so it is normal for them not to be cooperative at first.

In order to make it a bit easier for both teachers and students Reinders (2010) gives an example of a framework to develop learner autonomy not only in language classrooms but also all educational contexts. In this framework there are 8 main stages: Identifying needs, setting goals, planning learning, selecting resources, selecting learning strategies, practice, monitoring progress and assessment and revision. This framework may not be a guarantee to develop learner autonomy but at least the activities will be helpful for an easier shift of focus from teachers to learners.

There are also some studies in the literature which comment on the role of teachers in learner autonomy. Thanasoulas (2000), for example, agrees that autonomous learners take a greater responsibility for their own learning; however, that does not mean that teachers are redundant or that they don't transfer their control over the language learning process. He also states that teachers are still needed as they need to adapt resources, materials and methods to the needs of learners. Likewise, Camilleri (1997) argues that a learner and teacher must be in cooperation in the learning process. In this partnership, the teacher takes place as the expert of learning and the learner is the expert of himself/herself.

3. Learner Autonomy in Turkish EFL Context

Learner autonomy has become a focus of attention of the research in the field of English Language Teaching in Turkey as well. However, as the existing literature is mostly on the definition of the term or how to foster it in language classrooms, the research which has been conducted in Turkey has dealt with other aspects of learner autonomy, some of which will be summarized in this part of the paper.

Sert (2006), for example, carried out a case study among EFL student teachers in Turkey to investigate English language learning autonomy. 57 student teachers who were studying at their freshman year at a Turkish university participated in the study. The aim of the study was to find out if EFL student teachers were able to direct and monitor their own learning process for autonomous learning. Another point which the study investigated was to question if the student teachers managed to set language learning goals. Finally, the study also searched to answer how the student learners' ratings of their language skills through the CEF self-assessment checklist Level B2 compared with the scores they got from FCE. According to the data gathered from the study, the students were not capable of identifying what to master and

how to master it in respect to efficient learning as they lacked the capacity for reflection about how to monitor their learning process.

In another study, Guven and Sunbul (2007) tried to investigate the relation between the learners' autonomy level and their learning style. 110 female and 148 male students were randomly selected for the study and they were both given a questionnaire and a learner style inventory to collect the data. To identify the learning styles of the participants, Kolb's model was used in which learners are divided into 4 groups as activists, reflectors, pragmatists and theorists. According to this model, learners show a variety in getting, processing and using the information which was the base of the study. The study indicated 5 crucial results. First of all, one third of the participants were in favor of taking part in discussions and simulations with a facilitator and a guide, which were the main features of activists. On the other hand, observations and reflecting were preferred by the other one third who were called reflectors. Secondly, the results show that all participants whose learning styles vary were prone to autonomous learning. Thirdly, it is stated that gender has no effect on participants' autonomy level and their learning styles. Fourthly, reflectors are said to have less autonomy than activists. Finally, activists' achievement scores and autonomy levels were higher than other groups.

Yildirim (2008) worked on university level Turkish EFL learners' readiness for learner autonomy. 103 learners were involved in the study which investigated their perception of teacher and learner responsibilities as well as their ideas about their own abilities to become autonomous and how frequently they employ actual autonomous language learning. According to the results of the study, due to the notion of responsibility in university level Turkish EFL learners' minds, they are found to be ready to take more responsibility in their learning process. Regarding to their capacity of performing autonomously, they stated that they generally found themselves capable of practicing it during their own learning process.

Balcikanli (2010) studied the beliefs of student teachers towards learner autonomy in the Turkish educational context. 112 students from the Department of English Language Teaching of a state university participated in his study in which a questionnaire developed by Camilleri was given to the participants. In the data collection process, 20 volunteers were interviewed in order to identify their general attitude. The results of the study showed that student teachers were positive towards the adoption of learner autonomy principles. In spite of this positive attitude, they also pointed out that students shouldn't be involved in the decision making process regarding to time and place of the course as well as the course books to be used. According to the results of the study, Balçıkıanlı makes four important suggestions to teacher educators. First of all, student teachers must be encouraged to be involved in more outside-the-classroom tasks to increase their level of autonomous learning. Secondly, student teachers should be involved in the decision making process. The third point is to include some strategy training sessions in syllabuses to make student teachers experience the use of strategies. Finally, teacher educators must use portfolios in their courses.

Finally, Mede, Incecay and Incecay (2012) investigated the perceptions of language learners and teachers in terms of oral book reporting as a medium to foster learner autonomy in extensive reading courses across the English curriculum. They conducted their study at a preparatory program of a private university in Istanbul, in which students were asked to read graded readers chosen by the instructors of the program and write an oral report on them. For the purpose of the study, the students also had to choose another graded reader according to their own interests. Unlike the common procedure followed in the program, they were also

required to present their book reports orally. The reflection papers of the learners and semi-structured interviews with 5 learners and 2 reading teachers were used to collect the data for the study. The analysis of the data gathered through the reflection papers and interviews with both the students and the teachers indicated that oral book reporting was an effective tool to foster learner autonomy in language classrooms where extensive reading activities are highly encouraged by the curriculum. The study showed that oral book reporting contributed a lot to develop learners' autonomy in a language classroom by raising awareness, making them responsible for their own learning, improving both reading and speaking skills as well as increasing learners' motivation.

According to what has been discussed above, it is obvious that the idea of learners' being responsible for their own learning is crucial. Most of research on learner autonomy has mainly focused on three common areas: the definition of learner autonomy, why it should be promoted and how it should be implemented in language teaching and learning (Borg and Al-Busaidi, 2007). However, as it is stated by Borg and Al-Busaidi (2007), these studies mainly focus on the same three aspects of learner autonomy: the definition of learner autonomy, why it should be promoted and how it should be implemented in language teaching and learning. On the other hand, the existing relevant literature has overlooked an important aspect of learner autonomy, which must be to find out what it actually means to language teachers as they are the ones who need to practice it in their classes. From this point of view, it is really important to find the answers to this question in order to understatement what language teachers understand by the term itself and how they promote it in their teaching.

4. Method

The purpose of this study is to find out how language teachers perceive learner autonomy based on their classroom practice. The following research questions were addressed:

1. What does the term 'learner autonomy' mean to the English preparatory program instructors?
2. What are the perceptions of the English preparatory program instructors about the contribution of learner autonomy to foreign and second language learning?

4.1. Setting

The study was carried out at English Preparatory Program at one of the foundation universities in Istanbul. The primary aim of the program is to meet the students language needs in general which will help them follow their undergraduate courses at their departments.

4.2. Participants

For the purposes of this study, the data were gathered from eighty seven (N=87) language preparatory program teachers. Specifically, fifty-six (N=56) were female and thirty-one (N=31) were male teachers participated in the study. As for their qualifications, half of the participants hold a Master's Degree in various fields while the other half had a Bachelor's Degree in the fields related to English Language including English Language Teaching, English Language and Literature, American Language and Literature and Translation. Regarding the participants' experience in the field of English Language Teaching, the data indicated that fifty-one (N=51) of them were experienced teachers whilst the others were novice teachers with a minimum of two years experience.

4.3. Data Collection Instruments

Data for this study were obtained from a questionnaire and semi-structured interview which aimed to gather data about the EFL instructors' perceptions on the importance of learner autonomy in language preparatory programs.

4.3.1. Learner Autonomy Questionnaire

The questionnaire was adapted from Borg and Al-Busaidi's (2007) study on learner autonomy. Specifically, only Section 1 (Learner Autonomy) from the original questionnaire was adapted since it mainly focused on the English language teachers' beliefs about learner autonomy. Specifically, items 10 (*It is possible to promote learner autonomy with both young language learners and with adults*), 13 (*Learner autonomy can be achieved by learners of all cultural backgrounds*), 20 (*Learner autonomy is only possible with adult learners.*) and 23 (*Learner autonomy is a concept which is not suited to non-Western learners*), were excluded because they were not applicable for the context of this study (Appendix A). Each item in the scale was accompanied by a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 'strongly disagree' (1) through 'strongly agree' (5). The questionnaire was randomly administered to hundred and thirty six EFL instructors working at the Language Preparatory Program.

Before the questionnaire was administered, it was piloted with ninety-seven EFL instructors. The result of the reliability test for the instructors' questionnaire was found as $\alpha = .723$ which indicates a high internal consistency of the items in the scale (Gliem and Gliem, 2003).

4.3.2. Interviews

The semi-structured interviews included 7 questions that were prepared parallel to the questionnaire items. The questions mainly focused on the perceptions of the instructors on the topic of learner autonomy by asking their opinions about the main characteristics of autonomous learners, involvement of learners' in the decision making process about what to learn, the teacher's role in an autonomous learning environment, personal experience of autonomy in their own teaching practice, and finally the advantages and disadvantages of autonomy. The interview was carried out with twenty-three (N=23) EFL instructors who volunteered to share their opinions on learner autonomy.

4.3. Procedure

The main study was conducted three weeks after the final version of the data collection instruments were prepared. The questionnaire was given randomly to the EFL instructors. Semi-structured interviews were carried out during the same period. Each interview protocol was carried out face-to-face with the instructors according to their weekly schedules.

4.4. Analysis

The data obtained through the questionnaires were analyzed using SPSS 16.00. As for the semi-structured interviews, the data were transcribed and analyzed using pattern coding (Bogdan and Biklen, 1994) and then, compared by two researchers for the inter-rater reliability. In order to find out whether the outcomes of the interviews and questionnaires were consistent with each other, the questions were grouped under the same categories.

5. Results

5.1. The Perceptions of the Preparatory Instructors about the Definition of Learner Autonomy

The findings of the questionnaires and semi-structured interviews provided evidence for the importance of learner autonomy in preparatory language programs. The descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) and frequencies of the questionnaire are reported in Table 1 below. The statistics are used to discuss the results related to the perceptions of the EFL instructors concerning the definition of learner autonomy and its contribution to foreign and second language learning.

Table 1. The perceptions of the EFL instructors' about the definition of learner autonomy

<i>Teachers' Perception of Learner Autonomy</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>
1. Language learners of all ages can develop learner autonomy.	3.61	.956	71.4
2. Independent study in the library is an activity which develops learner autonomy.	4.07	.604	85.7
3. Learner autonomy is promoted through regular opportunities for learners to complete tasks alone.	3.86	.591	82.1
4. Autonomy means that learners can make choices about how they learn.	3.79	.738	78.5
5. Individuals who lack autonomy are not likely to be effective language learners.	3.46	.793	50
6. Autonomy can develop most effectively through learning outside the classroom.	3.14	.803	32.2
7. Involving learners in decisions about what to learn promotes learner autonomy.	4.18	.612	89.3
8. Learner autonomy means learning without a teacher.	2.32	.945	17.9
9. It is harder to promote learner autonomy with proficient language learners than it is with beginners.	3.00	.943	28.5

10. Confident language learners are more likely to develop autonomy than those who lack confidence.	3.89	.737	75
11. Learner autonomy allows language learners to learn more effectively than they otherwise would.	3.96	.576	82.2
12. Learner autonomy is promoted when learners have some choice in the kinds of activities they do.	4.04	.576	93.2
13. Learner autonomy cannot be promoted in teacher-centered classrooms.	3.50	1.106	53.5
14. Learner autonomy is promoted through activities which give learners opportunities to learn from each other.	3.96	.744	85.8
15. Learner autonomy implies a rejection of traditional teacher-led ways of teaching.	3.00	.943	42.9
16. Learner autonomy cannot develop without the help of the teacher.	2.82	1.020	28.6
17. Learner autonomy is promoted by activities that encourage learners work together.	3.86	.591	75
18. Learner autonomy is promoted by independent work in a self-access center.	3.82	.476	78.6
19. Learner autonomy is promoted when learners are free to decide how their learning will be assessed.	3.00	.816	28.6
20. Learner autonomy requires the learner to be totally independent of the teacher.	2.07	.604	3.6
21. Co-operative group work activities support the development of learner autonomy.	4.04	.508	89.3

22. Promoting learner autonomy is easier with beginning language learners than with more proficient learners.	3.39	1.066	53.6
23. Learner autonomy is promoted when learners can choose their own learning materials.	3.14	.663	32.2
24. Learner-centered classrooms provide ideal conditions for developing learner autonomy.	4.07	.663	89.3
25. Learning how to learn is the key to developing learner autonomy.	4.43	.573	96.4
26. Learning to work alone is central to the development of learner autonomy.	3.11	.875	35.7
27. Out-of-class tasks which require learners to use the internet promote learner autonomy.	3.89	.497	82.1
28. The ability to monitor one's learning is central to learner autonomy.	3.64	.678	60.7
29. Motivated language learners are more likely to develop learner autonomy than learners who are not motivated.	4.32	.548	96.4
30. The proficiency of a language learner does not affect their ability to develop autonomy.	3.18	.945	50
32. Learner autonomy has a positive effect on success as a language learner.	4.14	.803	92.9
33. To become autonomous, learners need to develop the ability to evaluate their own learning.	4.14	.891	92.8

Based on the questionnaire results reported in Table 1, *EFL* instructors perceived the key terms such as independent study (85.7%), learner-centered classrooms (89.3%), motivated language learners (96.4%), supportive teacher role (92.9%), providing learners with choices in learning (89.3%), cooperative group work (89.3%) and self-evaluation (92.8%) to be fundamental while defining the concept of 'learner autonomy'.

On the scale out of 1 to 5, where 1 reflects strong disagreement and 5 reflects strong agreement, the table shows that the most supported definition for learner autonomy represented the technical orientation (Borg and Al-Busaidi, 2012). Specifically, the items with the mean scores of 3.50-5.00 and frequencies (70-100%) (Table 1) showed what 'learner autonomy' meant for the participants.

Further insights into the perceptions of the instructors about learner autonomy emerged from the interviews where the teachers were asked to elaborate on what the term meant to them (Appendix B). Four major concepts that reoccurred in the answers of the participants were responsibility for your own learning, motivated learner, supportive teacher and self evaluation. The following comments made by the instructors illustrate the prevalence of these ideas:

"I think that the learners should be given the responsibility for their own learning. In other words, they should be aware of what they are doing and why."

"The teachers should support the students during their learning process to make sure they become independent learners."

5.2. The Perceptions of the Preparatory Instructors' about the Contribution of Learner Autonomy to Foreign and Second Language Learning

When each item in the questionnaire was analyzed, the most commonly-shared definition of learner autonomy was learning how to learn as 96.4% of the instructors involved in the questionnaire agreed on this. In addition to this, with the same percentage, the instructors also believed that motivated learners are more likely to develop learner autonomy than unmotivated ones. Another important point made by the instructors was the role of teachers in a teaching context where students are expected to be autonomous. 92.9% of the instructors participated in the study stated that the teacher has an important role to play to encourage students to be autonomous (item 31). On the other hand, being able to study in the library independently (item 2) was also regarded as an activity which supports the development of autonomy by 85.7% of the instructors. The present results reflected the belief of the instructors regarding to the positive effect of autonomy on the success of learners. 92.9% of the instructors perceived autonomous learners to be more successful than the ones who are not (item 32). The analysis of the items in the questionnaire revealed the qualities of autonomous learners as well. 92.8% of the instructors indicate that being able to evaluate their own learning (item 33) was one of the qualities autonomous learners need to develop. Another quality that these learners need was to be capable of making decisions about what to learn (item 7), which 89.3% agreed on. Finally, the two items in the questionnaire showed that 89.3% of the instructors suggested that in order to develop learner autonomy, language classrooms must be learner-centered (item 24) and the materials used must require cooperative group work (item 21).

Overall, the instructors expressed positive views about the contribution of learner autonomy to foreign and second language learning. These comments are listed below followed by a supporting quote after each.

Autonomous learners are good decision makers:

"I think when learners decide on something they feel themselves important and they follow their decisions as a part of their own learning."

Autonomous learners are good problem solvers:

“Language learners are problem solvers who try to discover the rules of language.”

Autonomous learners are more motivated and enthusiastic to learn.

“I believe that the more motivated and enthusiastic the learners are the more autonomous they become which affects their ability to learn the language well.”

6. Conclusion

In this study, the instructors' perceptions about learner autonomy in the context of English preparatory programs were investigated. The results indicated that special attention should be given to 'learner autonomy' while designing the curriculum for language preparatory programs. Specifically, the preparatory program should foreground the encouragement of student abilities such as learning how to learn, being able to evaluate their own learning, and cooperating with their peers. In addition, learner-centred classrooms promote learner autonomy which has a positive effect on success and the motivation of language learners.

The present study has both practical and empirical implications in terms of promoting learner autonomy. The results of the study indicated that the nature of the Language Preparatory Programs should be based upon learner autonomy. In this sense, the administrators can share the results of this with the university management to revise the existing curriculum into a new one in which learners are given more chances to become autonomous. As a result of this, the quality of education provided by the program is expected to improve since taking more responsibility for their own learning with the help of opportunities created by the school administration will contribute a lot to learners' motivation to learn a language.

Although the present study revealed some interesting and important findings, they should be taken as suggestive rather than definitive due to the following limitations. First, data collector bias might be considered as a limitation of this study. Since the researcher herself worked at the same department, the instructors might have been hesitant to reveal their genuine opinions about the preparatory program. Another point which needs to be taken into consideration is conducting the study among the language programs of other universities as it can help us to make broader generalizations on what language teachers at a tertiary level think about learner autonomy.

Despite these limitations, this study is important for the field of foreign and second language teaching/learning since it provides foundation for further research. Since the importance of administrative support is a must to implement learner autonomy, further studies must be conducted to learn about what administrators think about learner autonomy. As teaching is an activity which includes students as well, a study to find out students' perception of learner autonomy can be an option for further research. In addition, learner autonomy can be analyzed comparatively in order to see if native and non-native teachers perceive learner autonomy in the same way or not. Another comparative study can be conducted on the perceptions of teachers working at state universities with the ones working at private universities which may lead to some interesting findings. Thus, there need to be more experimental and longitudinal studies that emphasize the importance of learner autonomy in different contexts.

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APPENDIX A. Learner Autonomy Questionnaire

1. Gender: _____ Male _____ Female
2. Status of education: _____ BA _____ MA _____ PhD
3. Department you graduated from: _____
4. Years of experience in teaching: _____

Please tick the appropriate choice.

	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Unsure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
1. Language learners of all ages can develop learner autonomy.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Independent study in the library is an activity which develops learner autonomy.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Learner autonomy is promoted through regular opportunities for learners to complete tasks alone.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Autonomy means that learners can make choices about how they learn.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Individuals who lack autonomy are not likely to be effective language learners.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Autonomy can develop most effectively through learning outside the classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Involving learners in decisions about what to learn promotes learner autonomy.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Learner autonomy means learning without a teacher.	1	2	3	4	5
9. It is harder to promote learner autonomy with proficient language learners than it is with beginners.	1	2	3	4	5

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10. Confident language learners are more likely to develop autonomy than those who lack confidence.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Learner autonomy allows language learners to learn more effectively than they otherwise would.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Learner autonomy is promoted when learners have some choice in the kinds of activities they do.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Learner autonomy cannot be promoted in teacher-centered classrooms.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Learner autonomy is promoted through activities which give learners opportunities to learn from each other.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Learner autonomy implies a rejection of a traditional teacher-led ways of teaching.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Learner autonomy cannot develop without the help of the teacher.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Learner autonomy is promoted by activities that encourage learners work together.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Learner autonomy is promoted by independent work in a self-access center.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Learner autonomy is promoted when learners are free to decide how their learning will be assessed.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Learner autonomy requires the learner to be totally independent of the teacher.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Co-operative group work activities support the development of learner autonomy.	1	2	3	4	5
22. Promoting learner autonomy is easier with beginning language learners than with more proficient learners.	1	2	3	4	5
23. Learner autonomy is promoted when learners can choose their own learning materials.	1	2	3	4	5
24. Learner-centered classrooms provide ideal conditions for developing learner autonomy.	1	2	3	4	5
25. Learning how to learn is the key to developing learner autonomy.	1	2	3	4	5
26. Learning to work alone is central to the development of learner autonomy.	1	2	3	4	5

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27. Out-of-class tasks which require learners to use the internet promote learner autonomy.	1	2	3	4	5
28. The ability to monitor one's learning is central to learner autonomy.	1	2	3	4	5
29. Motivated language learners are more likely to develop learner autonomy than learners who are not motivated.	1	2	3	4	5
30. The proficiency of a language learner does not affect their ability to develop autonomy.	1	2	3	4	5
31. The teacher has an important role to play in supporting learner autonomy.	1	2	3	4	5
32. Learner autonomy has a positive effect on success as a language learner.	1	2	3	4	5
33. To become autonomous, learners need to develop the ability to evaluate their own learning.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix B. Learner Autonomy Interview Questions

1. In your opinion, what are the main characteristics of autonomous learners?
2. Do you agree with the idea that learners should be involved in the decision making process about what to learn? Please give your reasons.
3. What do you think teachers' role is in a learning environment in which students are or expected to be autonomous?
4. Personally, do you think your students are or likely to be autonomous learners? What do you do as a teacher to encourage them to be autonomous learners?
5. Do you think the institution you work support the idea of learner autonomy? If yes, how? If no, why?
6. Knowing how to learn is said to be a key element in learner autonomy. Do you agree with this? Why/Why not?
7. Can you share some advantages and/or disadvantages of learner autonomy?