

EFL INSTRUCTORS' PERCEPTIONS ON LEARNER AUTONOMY AT
ANADOLU UNIVERSITY

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MA THESIS

English Language Teaching Program

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Bu çalışma, Anadolu Üniversitesi Yabancı Diller Yüksek Okulu Temel Yabancı Diller Bölümü'nde 2003 yılında gerçekleştirilen müfredat yenileme projesi kapsamında programa dahil edilen öğrenen bağımsızlığı ile ilgili olarak, bölümde görev yapan İngilizce okutmanlarının öğrenen bağımsızlığı algılamalarını araştırmak amacıyla yapılmıştır.

Bu amaca ulaşmak için Anadolu Üniversitesi Yabancı Diller Yüksek Okulu Temel Yabancı Diller Bölümü'nde görev yapan 108 İngilizce okutmanının katılımıyla bir anket çalışması yapılmıştır. Katılımcılardan kendilerine verilen anketteki soruları cevaplandırmaları ve her soru için vermiş oldukları cevabın gerekçesini belirtmeleri istenmiştir.

Veriler sıklık ve yüzdellik değerleri hesaplanarak analiz edilmiştir. Çalışmanın sonuçlarına göre, katılımcıların çoğunluğu, uzun dönem ders hedef ve amaçları; ders içerik görevleri; işitsel-görsel araçlar ve realia seçimi; ders işleme hızı; öğrenme görevleri; materyal kullanımı; ödev etkinlik türleri; disiplin sorunları; nitelik, tür ve sıklık bakımından ödev görevleri; ve okuma parçası, işitsel-görsel materyaller ve realiadan ne öğrenileceğine karar vermeyi kapsayan 15 sınıf içi deneyim alanında otonom öğrenme konusunda öğrencilerle işbirliği ve uzlaşma gerekliliğini ifade etmişlerdir. Kısa dönem ders hedef ve amaçları; ders içerik konuları; bireysel, eşli, grup çalışması; sınıf etkinlik türleri; sınıftaki sıraların konumu; öğrencilerin sıralara yerleştirilmesi; yapılan işin, alınan notların ve devamsızlık kaydının tutulması; öğrencilerin sınıf içi görevlere yönelik görüş belirtebilmeleri; öğrenme süreçleri; haftalık, aylık ve yıllık olarak öğrencilerin kendilerini değerlendirebilmeleri gibi 14

alanda öğrenen bağımsızlığını desteklediklerine dair görüş belirtmişlerdir. Ders kitabı seçimi; ders zaman ve yerini kapsayan 3 alanda da öğrenen bağımsızlığına karşı olduklarını ifade etmişlerdir. Çalışmada bu sonuçlar ışığında okutmanların otonom öğrenmeye ilişkin algılamaları konusunda bazı önerilerde de bulunulmuştur.

M.A. THESIS ABSTRACTEFL INSTRUCTORS' PERCEPTIONS ON LEARNER AUTONOMY AT
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Advisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Handan KOPKALLI YAVUZ

The present study was conducted at Anadolu University School of Foreign Languages Basic Languages Department to investigate the EFL instructors' perceptions on learner autonomy. Learner autonomy was included in the curriculum after the curriculum renewal project which was started in 2003.

To determine the EFL instructors' perceptions on learner autonomy, 108 EFL instructors were given a questionnaire. The participants were asked to answer the questions in the questionnaire and state their reasons for their answers for each question.

The data were analysed by calculating frequencies and percentages. Results of the study revealed that among 32 areas of classroom experience, majority of instructors were in favour of collaboration and negotiation with students in terms of learner autonomy by answering *partly* in the questionnaire in the following 15 areas of classroom experience: determining long-term course objectives, tasks of course content, selection of audio-visual aids (AVA) and realia, pace of the lesson, learning tasks, use of materials and type of homework activities, discipline matters, quantity, type and frequency of homework tasks, and what is to be learned from texts, AVA, and realia. For the 14 areas including short-term course objectives, topics of course content, individual/pair/group work and type of class activities, position of desks and seating of students, record keeping of work done and marks gained and attendance, learner explanations on classroom tasks, learning procedures, and weekly, monthly and annual assessment of learners, they expressed their support for learner autonomy. For 3 areas

including textbook selection and time and place of the lesson, they expressed their resistance to learner autonomy. Moreover, the study includes some suggestions in terms of the perceptions of EFL teachers on learner autonomy based on the outcomes.

JÜRİ VE ENSTİTÜ ONAYI

Abdulkadir DURMUŞ'un "EFL INSTRUCTORS' PERCEPTIONS ON LEARNER AUTONOMY AT ANADOLU UNIVERSITY" başlıklı tezi tarihinde, aşağıda belirtilen jüri üyeleri tarafından Anadolu Üniversitesi Lisansüstü Eğitim-Öğretim ve Sınav Yönetmeliğinin ilgili maddeleri uyarınca Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı İngilizce Öğretmenliği Programı yüksek lisans tezi olarak değerlendirilerek kabul edilmiştir.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the Study

Language teaching methodology and theory have benefited greatly from major innovations such as emphasis on individualised instruction, more humanistic approaches to language learning, a greater focus on the learner, and greater emphasis on development of communicative competence. The two important concepts, communicative language teaching (CLT) and learner centeredness, which emerged from these innovations, focus on the idea of learner being at the centre of teaching and learning process. Thus, traditional roles of teachers and learners have changed in terms of power and authority (Little, 1991, cited in Benson & Voller, 1997; Thanasoulas, 2000; Chan, 2003; and Benson, 2001), and new concepts such as learner autonomy and independence, which are sometimes used as a synonym for autonomy, received great importance.

Nunan (1999) states that the most pervasive changes in teaching practice over the last twenty years can be described within the framework of communicative language teaching (CLT) which stems from the theory of language as communication. As it is stated by Brown (2001) there are various number of detailed studies related to CLT. Brown (2001: 43) suggests the following six interconnected characteristics to describe CLT:

1. Classroom goals are focused on all of the components (grammatical, discourse, functional, sociolinguistic and strategic) of communicative competence. Goals therefore must intertwine the organizational aspects of language with the pragmatic.
2. Language techniques are designed to engage learners in pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes. Organizational language forms are not the central focus, but rather aspects of language that enable the learner to accomplish those purposes.
3. Fluency and accuracy are seen as complementary principles underlying communicative techniques. At times fluency may have to take on more importance than accuracy in order to keep learners meaningfully engaged in language use.
4. Students in a communicative class ultimately have to use the language, productively and receptively, in unrehearsed contexts outside the classroom. Classroom tasks must therefore equip students with the skills necessary for communication in those contexts.
5. Students are given opportunities to focus on their own learning process through an understanding of their own styles of learning and through the development of appropriate strategies for autonomous learning.

6. The role of the teacher is that of facilitator and guide, not all-knowing bestower of knowledge. Students are therefore encouraged to construct meaning through genuine linguistic interaction with others.

As it is suggested in Brown's (2001) descriptions above, communicative competence is an essential factor in language teaching. Savignon (2001: 13) defines communicative competence as 'students' ability to understand and express themselves in a foreign language'. Nunan (1999) states that the aim of language teaching methodology in the framework of CLT should be to assist learners to develop communicative competence.

Nunan (1999) expresses that CLT resulted in new innovations in language teaching methodology. One of these innovations is the ideological shift in focus away from the teacher and textbook towards the learner. Thus, learner-centered education emerged. A learning-centered environment enables learners to develop skills to make critical pedagogical decisions through systematic judgements. Nunan (1999) adds that this kind of an environment is composed of two sets of complementary aims. One set of aims is focused on language content whereas the other set is focused on the learning process. For this reason, learners are systematically educated in the skills and knowledge to make choices about what to learn and how they want to learn. However, learner-centered instruction is not an approach in which the rights and powers of teachers are left to learners in a unilateral way. Nor does it devalue the teacher. In contrast, it is a matter of educating learners to achieve greater responsibility for their own learning (Nunan, 1999).

Learner autonomy is one of the new concepts which entered language teaching methodology as a result of CLT and learner-centered approach. What makes this new concept important and desirable is that it involves learners to take responsibility for their own learning (Thanasoulas, 2000). A. Camilleri (1999) is one of the researchers who suggest that learner autonomy should be the central theme in language learning and teaching because she considers learner autonomy as a part of a wider development in education that aims at preparing learners for a lifelong learning through the ability to organise and direct their own learning both inside and outside the school context. In language learning, autonomy is considered vital since it fosters learners to prepare themselves for communication. In order to learn to communicate, learners need to

acquire skills of independence in intercultural and interlinguistic interaction. A. Camilleri (1999) argues that no school or programme can provide its students with all the knowledge they will need later on in life. Learner autonomy can enable learners to develop a more wholesome understanding of themselves as learners who are aware of the learning process and the necessities of a strong communication. For this reason A. Camilleri (1999) accepts learner autonomy as an essential concept in the communicative language approach. In this framework, learners are expected to take responsibility for their own learning, and negotiate and cooperate with each other and the teacher. They are given the opportunity to take responsibility in various issues such as the decision of course objectives and ways of achieving them. In addition, they are allowed to share their individual knowledge, experiences and feelings with others. Learners are encouraged to learn to monitor and evaluate their own progress as well.

Vanijdee (2003) suggests that since autonomy contributes significantly to the development of capacity, attitudes and psychology of learners, it should be given importance in the curriculum. In addition, autonomy is suggested to have positive effects on technical and political issues. Vanijdee (2003) furthermore states that learners who are able to take control of their own learning would be successful in developing communication skills supported with these issues.

As a crucial concept in communication, internal qualities of learners and learning strategies, learner autonomy has become an important concern for education programmers, curriculum developers, researchers and teachers over the last two decades (Benson, 2001; Camilleri, 2000; Vanijdee, 2003).

1.2. Definition of Learner Autonomy

Learner autonomy has been defined in various aspects in the context of language learning. To receive a better understanding, it is necessary to mention some of these definitions.

Most frequently quoted definition of autonomy is that of Holec (1981). He defines autonomy as 'the ability to take charge of one's learning' (cited in Thanasoulas, 2000; Benson & Voller, 1997). Little and Dam (1998) explain Holec's definition as follows. Learners are expected to have some idea of what, why and how they are trying to learn

in order to accept responsibility for their own learning. The learner should take at least some of these initiatives that shape and direct the learning process.

Vanijdee (2003: 76) has defined learner autonomy as ‘a capacity – a construct of attitudes and abilities – which allows learners to take more responsibility for their own learning’. The term ‘responsibility’ is considered as the key word of this definition which suggests that learners participate in their own learning activities voluntarily.

Ryan (1991; cited in Littlewood, 1999) suggests that achievement of autonomy should be considered as one of the basic needs and purposes of human beings. For this reason, he defines autonomy as a process of ‘self-determination’ or ‘self-regulation’ in different aspects of lifelong learning. Ryan (1991:75) states that autonomy develops more effectively in an interpersonal environment. He lists the factors which constitute the ideal facilitating environment for autonomy as:

- Concrete support through the provision of help and resources;
- Personal concern and involvement from significant others;
- Opportunities for making choices;
- Freedom from a sense of being controlled by external agents.

As for language education, Benson and Voller (1997: 1–2) suggest Holec’s (1981) definition as an appropriate definition of learner autonomy for language education. They suggest at least five different ways to use the term autonomy in language education in accordance with this definition:

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 exercise of learners’ responsibility for their own learning;
5. for the right of learners to determine the direction of their own learning

As a result of these different usages, autonomous learner is expected to expand his/her role at every stage of his/her own learning including:

- setting learning goals;
- identifying and developing learning strategies to achieve such goals;
- developing study plans;
- reflecting on learning (which includes identifying problem areas and means of addressing these problems);
- identifying and selecting relevant resources and support;
- assessing one’s own progress (which includes defining criteria for evaluating performance and learning) (Chan, 2001: 506).

1.3. The Importance of Learner Autonomy

Learner autonomy is accepted as an important and desirable goal in language learning. Benson (2001), Dam (1995), Camilleri (1999, 2000) and Little (2000) state that learner autonomy enables learners to take active role in decision-making process of their own learning. This characteristic of the concept makes it essential for learning and teaching activities for these researchers.

Cotterall (1995) suggests that autonomy is regarded desirable for philosophical, pedagogical, and practical reasons. The philosophical rationale behind autonomy is the belief that learners have the right to make their own choices in terms of their learning. Moreover, in order to maximize their life choices for rapidly changing future, learners should be encouraged to become more independent in learning. Cotterall (1995) adds that learner autonomy can also be promoted on pedagogical basis since adults learn more and effectively, if they are consulted about aspects such as pace, sequence, mode and content of instruction. Furthermore, teachers are not always available to assist learners and learners do not always have access to the individual instruction they need. Thus, learners should be able to learn on their own in order to become proficient in the language.

Camilleri (2000) states the reasons for the importance of learner autonomy as learners' being able to access highly developed and readily available information with the help of modern information technologies. Moreover, he states that the amount of knowledge and information increases the capacity and desire of any individual to have such an entire knowledge.

Crabbe (1993) states the combination of three arguments in order to state the importance of autonomy. These are the ideological, the psychological and the economic discussions. Ideological argument refers to the right of each individual to be free to exercise his or her own preferences. The application of this right to learning as well as to the other areas of life is also suggested in the framework of ideological argument. The psychological argument refers to the view that people learn better, provided that they take control of their own learning due to its being more meaningful and permanent when the individual is in charge. As for the economic argument, individuals must be able to identify their learning needs since the society does not have enough resources to provide instruction for the needs of each individual. Crabbe (1993) suggests that

psychological argument has closer relationship with pedagogical issues rather than the other two argumentations. For this reason, psychological argumentation is regarded as the most appealing one for language learning.

Little (2000) states the reasons of the importance of autonomy as;

1. If learners are themselves reflectively engaged in planning, monitoring and evaluating their learning, it should follow that their learning will be more successful than otherwise because it is more sharply focussed;
2. The same reflective engagement should help make what they learn a fully integrated part of what they are, so that they can use the knowledge and skills acquired in the classroom in the world beyond.

To conclude, as a result of modern approaches in language teaching methodology, learner autonomy has become an important term. This importance, as suggested by various researchers mentioned above, lies in enabling learners to take an active role in decision making process of their own learning activities by giving learners an opportunity to make choices and take responsibility of their own learning. Moreover, learner autonomy enables learners to access information beyond the classroom through modern information technologies and receive a vision of world knowledge.

1.4. The Role of the Teacher in Promoting Learner Autonomy

Teacher has an indispensable role in the promotion of learner autonomy. Breen and Mann (1997) describe the characteristics of a teacher who engages in pedagogy of autonomy. These characteristics are listed under the titles of ‘attributes’ and ‘classroom action’. ‘Attributes’ refer to the qualities of the teacher who promotes autonomous learning, and ‘classroom action’ refers to the role of teacher in the class for learners to practice their autonomy. Breen and Mann (1997) list three characteristics under the title of attributes that the teacher can apply in his/her relationship with learners. These are ‘self-awareness’, ‘belief and trust’ and ‘desire’.

Self-awareness of the teacher is an essential precondition for the teacher to be able to promote autonomous learning. This awareness includes the critical sense of deciding when to let learners act autonomously and when not to. Breen and Mann (1997) suggest that it is essential for teacher to be aware of his current assumptions, perceptions and practices to foster autonomous learning.

Belief and trust refer to the teacher’s believing in each learner’s capacity to learn and to trust each learner’s capacity to assert his/her own autonomy. The teacher should

have positive and supportive beliefs that each learner is able to learn and is fully able to take an autonomous stance to his/her learning.

Desire refers to the desire of the teacher to foster the development of learner autonomy in the classroom. The teacher should seek opportunities to promote autonomy.

Breen and Mann (1997) describe 'classroom action' under the title of six different characteristics:

Being a resource: The teacher of autonomous learners is expected to accept an essentially responsive role in relation to learners' ongoing and emerging needs. The teacher is also expected to sustain the appropriate balance between being a resource and a guide.

Decision sharing: The teacher should be willing to share his decisions about providing the learners with the opportunity to take responsibility. S/he should find ways to gradually share all classroom decisions with them. This will result in the teacher being perceived as an equal partner whose knowledge and experience are seen as rich resources to enable learners' own exercise of autonomy.

Facilitating collaborative evaluation: The teacher should benefit from the positive potential of assessment and evaluation in providing feedback that promotes learner autonomy. The teacher ought to initiate collaborative procedures which enable learners to exercise responsibility. He or she should set clear evaluation criteria for successful learning, and collaborate with learners to make their own judgements against the criteria.

Managing the risks: The teacher should be willing to mediate between the individual learners' preferred learning agenda and the other learning activities which are held by the class as a whole. The teacher should maintain a balance between the constraints of the group process and the potential benefits that derive from collaborative endeavour.

Being a patient opportunist: The teacher should accommodate the dynamic nature of autonomy knowing that different learners will be at different levels between dependency and independency. The teacher should be willing to stand back during the teaching and learning process and remain alert to the opportunities to enable individual or group of learners to practice autonomy.

Getting support: If learners are personally in a demanding environment and struggling towards practicing autonomy, the teacher may be required to redefine his roles and responsibilities. From this framework, the teacher may need support and continual reminders to analyse whether his/her actions are likely to be beneficial to the learners' language learning process. Moreover, the teacher may need to confront and assert his own autonomy. In that case, the teacher is advised to create situations in which he can get support from colleagues.

The above mentioned six ways of acting to create opportunities for learners to practice and increase autonomy suggest that the teacher has a crucial role in the promotion of autonomy; however, in order to be successful in this role, the teacher must recognise and assert his/her own autonomy.

Chan (2003) states that the teachers' beliefs are important components of their teaching practices. Therefore, first, the teachers have to believe in the importance of learner autonomy. Only then, are they expected to foster learner autonomy. The teachers who want to help their learners must learn to 'let go', and provide students opportunities to exercise their right, to choose a level of engagement appropriate for their situations and circumstances. To sustain learning and long-term success, a partnership between the teacher and student is needed to develop a flexible teaching culture to encourage the practice of learner autonomy. The role of the teacher and teacher-based approaches to foster learner autonomy are discussed in Chapter II.

1.5. Statement of the Problem

Anadolu University School of Foreign Languages Basic Languages Department offers intensive English language program to students of various faculties of the university. For a more effective curriculum, a bottom up approach curriculum renewal project was started in 2003. As an initial part of this curriculum renewal project, a mission statement of the department was written. Based on the mission statement, the goals and objectives for each skill in the program were written. The mission statement of the department is as follows:

'Providing students from various departments at different language proficiency levels with basic English knowledge in a nurturing and supportive teaching and learning environment to comprehend and react to what they read and hear, and to express themselves through written and oral language so that students can communicate effectively in various (their) academic, professional and social contexts. A further aim of the Basic Languages

Department is to broaden students' vision by encouraging them to become autonomous learners who are competent in pursuing the advances in the international academic and scientific era' (www.ydyo.anadolu.edu.tr).

Learner autonomy was a new concept entering the mission statement, as well as the goals and objectives of each skill. During the curriculum renewal, a group of teachers worked on learner autonomy and identified the ways of implementing it in each skill. However, due to time constraint, it was not possible to identify the teachers' perspectives on learner autonomy then. Teachers have been teaching for almost three years now since the beginning of the curriculum renewal project. Within the past three years, teachers have been promoting learner autonomy in their classes. However, how the teachers perceive learner autonomy has not been investigated. Thus, investigation of how the teachers perceive and interpret learner autonomy will provide information whether the teachers would need in-service training on promoting learner autonomy.

1.6. Aim of the Study

As it is suggested by various researchers (Crabbe, 1993; Cotteral, 1995; Camilleri, 2000; Little, 2000) learner autonomy is an important and desirable philosophy in language teaching. Learners must be provided with a share in the control of some certain aspects in their learning process to exercise the responsibility for their own learning (Benson, 2001). To achieve this, the teacher should be willing and ready to involve learners in decision-making process. It means that the teacher's role in the promotion of learner autonomy is indispensable. However, Littlewood (1999) and Benson (2001) state that different cultural contexts affect the perception of learner autonomy.

Yumuk (2002) claims that "teachers are the main authority in the classroom and it might be difficult for them to change their teaching" (p: 152) in Turkish educational system. This claim, however, is not based on scientific research as the number of research done on learner autonomy in Turkey is limited to make such evaluations. The present study attempted to contribute to the field by investigating the perceptions of teachers working at Anadolu University School of Foreign Languages Basic Languages Department on learner autonomy. The study thus aimed to determine the perceptions of teachers and underlying reasons of these perceptions on learner autonomy. The study is

expected to help the curriculum planners, program evaluators, teachers and researchers in making decisions, determining priorities, strategies, in-service training and other activities involving learner autonomy.

1.7. Statement of Research Question

The following research question was asked to reach the aim of the study mentioned above.

How do EFL teachers perceive learner autonomy?

To answer the above question, perceptions of teachers working at Anadolu University School of Foreign Languages Basic Languages Department, on learner autonomy were investigated.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this chapter, various definitions and misconceptions of learner autonomy and related terms, historical and theoretical background to the term, ways to foster learner autonomy and characteristics of autonomous learners are presented. Some studies related to learner autonomy are also covered.

2.1. Concept of Learner Autonomy

As it is mentioned by Benson and Voller (1997), autonomy, which has been a buzz-word in literature has been considered and defined from various perspectives. Thus there are a number of different definitions of learner autonomy. Although the concept of learner autonomy was defined in the introduction chapter of this study, presenting different definitions of learner autonomy and definitions of different concepts related or similar to learner autonomy from various perspectives were thought to be beneficial. In addition, some misconceptions related to learner autonomy are discussed in this section.

2.1.1. Definitions and Comparisons of Learner Autonomy, Independent Learning, Self-instruction and Self-Directed Learning

Despite the fact that most referred to Holec's (1981) famous definition, "the ability to take charge of one's own learning", various researchers defined learner autonomy and other related terms differently. As it is stated by Benson and Voller (1997), there has been confusion about definitions of learner autonomy and other terms such as independent learning and self-directed learning. Therefore, 'monolithic definitions of autonomy and independence have proved elusive, and it is perhaps more productive to speak of different versions of the concepts which correspond to different perspectives and circumstances' (Benson & Voller, 1997: 13). Contrasting learner autonomy and other terms such as independent learning and self-directed learning can be problematic because they are not opposite terms. Definitions of these terms are compared in the framework of Benson and Voller's suggestions in this section.

Dickinson (1987) sets a distinction among self-instruction, self-direction and autonomy. Self-instruction is a neutral term for situations in which learners work without the direct control of a teacher. However, such a learning may also be controlled by a teacher who is not physically present, but making all the key decisions, including what will be learned, how it will be learned, and how it will be assessed, in the learning process. Self-direction on the other hand, requires complete responsibility for all the decisions concerned with the learning process. Thus, self-directed learning can offer learners choices in time, location, pace of learning, material and topic selection. As for autonomy, it describes a situation in which the learner is not only responsible for all the decisions concerned with learning, but also for the implementation of these decisions. Autonomy for Dickinson (1987) is the degree of independence the learner is given in setting language learning goals, the path of the goal, the pace of learning, and measurement of success. Fully autonomous learner operates independently of a classroom, teacher or textbook. Therefore, Dickinson (1987) considers a fully autonomous learner ideal rather than real. This perspective of Dickinson is not accepted by many researchers (Holec, 1981; cited in Benson, 2001; Benson, 2001; Little, 1991; Littlewood, 1999).

Agreeing with Dickinson in some aspects, Nunan (1997) argues that autonomy is not an absolute concept. He states that there are degrees of autonomy which are feasible for learners. Embracing autonomy by the learners depends on a range of factors which are related to the personality of learner, the reasons for studying another language, the philosophy of institution providing the instruction and cultural context of learning. Considering the different levels of autonomy, it can be the key concept from superficial awareness-raising to ideal level where learners transcend the classroom and take complete charge of their own learning.

Healey (2002) accepts independent learning and autonomous learning as almost same concepts. She states that whether reachable or not autonomous learning should be a goal because it is a part of Rubin's (1979; cited in Healey, 2002) definition of the good learner. A good learner is someone who sets his or her own direction and takes responsibility for his own learning. Thus, independent or autonomous learning is an individual process which has almost no end.

Jeffries (1990) shares the same perspective with Healey in his definition of independent learning as:

Learning in which an individual or group of learners study on their own, possibly for a part or parts of a course, without direct intervention from a tutor. This can involve learners in taking more responsibility for what they learn, how they learn and when they learn. It can also lead learners being more involved in their own assessment. Independent learning is likely to be most effective when at least some support is available (P: 12).

To sum up, as it is also stated by Littlewood (1999), various definitions of autonomy in language learning have been proposed since 1980s. Littlewood (1999) touched on the importance of taking responsibility for one's own learning, and listed the central features of these definitions as in the following:

1. Students should take responsibility for their own learning. This is both because all learning can in any case only be carried out by the students themselves and also because they need to develop the ability to continue learning after the end of their formal education.
2. "Taking responsibility" involves learners in taking ownership (partial or total) of many processes which have traditionally belonged to the teacher, such as deciding on learning objectives, selecting learning methods and evaluating progress.

2.1.2. Misconceptions Related to Learner Autonomy

To clarify the meaning of learner autonomy, stating what it is not is important. Benson (2001) argues that misconceptions about learner autonomy are often derived from the nature of the concept and its implementations. Strong provoked reactions against the idea of students' becoming more autonomous can also be the main reason for misconceptions. Benson expresses that autonomy is often assumed to imply an isolated learning without a teacher or learning outside the classroom. This standpoint makes the relevance of the concept to language teaching unclear. Moreover, autonomy is usually accepted as essentially implying particular skills and behaviours and particular methods of organising teaching and learning process. Autonomy is considered as a multidimensional concept which takes different forms in different contexts of learning. Benson criticises these approaches because they make the term more confusing and complex than it is, and suggests that autonomy is not 'a method of learning, but an attribute of the learner's approach to the learning process' (P:2).

Little (1991) makes a list of misconceptions about learner autonomy. First one is the synonymous usage of learner autonomy with self-access learning, self-instruction,

distance learning, individualized instruction, flexible learning or self-directed learning. Each of these approaches may promote the development of learner autonomy, but none of them have the same broad meaning with learner autonomy. The second misconception, learner autonomy's being accepted as the absolute freedom of learners. However, freedom, in learner autonomy, is limited by social relations and requirements of learners. Third misconception is that all the initiative is taken by the learners. In fact, only educators can determine the limits of freedom and responsibility of learners. The fourth misconception is that learner autonomy entails the isolation of learners. However, learner autonomy promotes interaction and interdependence among learners. Fifth misconception is that learner autonomy is absolute. However, as it is stated by Nunan (1997) also, learner autonomy has some degrees, and achieving complete autonomy is always ideal, but not real. The sixth misconception is accepting learner autonomy as a new method. However, as it is mentioned by Benson (2001) as well, it is neither a method, nor an approach. It is an attribute to increase learner involvement in learning. The last misconception is that learner autonomy is a fixed state and once acquired, it can be applied to all learning areas. On the contrary, it is a hard-won state that must be fostered and maintained persistently (Little, 1991; Benson, 2001).

Discussing the misconceptions about learner autonomy, Esch (1997) summarizes the problem focusing on three points. Esch (1997) states that there are no 'autonomous language learning skills' to be trained. The words 'training' and 'autonomous learning' seem not appropriate to appear in the same context. To raise the question of training students for autonomous language learning, an agreement on definition of 'autonomous language learning' should be made. Three misconceptions to be avoided in defining autonomous learning are, the concept's reduction to a set of skills, avoidance of language-learning specific issues, and the belief that autonomous learning means 'learning in isolation'. The first misconception is to reduce the concept of autonomy to a set of techniques to train language skills which causes a negation on the radical content of the term. Since language learning is different from any other learning, specific features peculiar to language learning should be taken into consideration in the framework of autonomous learning. Second misconception appears from accepting language learning same with other learning activities such as learning physics or geography. Esch (1997) argues that third misconception, learning in isolation, is caused

by misinterpretation of individualistic approaches to language learning that stress individual differences among learners rather than common points. There is a confusion of autonomy with individualization and isolation.

In summary, it can be said that most of the misconceptions of learner autonomy stem from different understandings and interpretations of the concept. However, it has been noticed in the literature that experts of the field insistently state these misconceptions and try to direct people who are interested in learner autonomy to the accurate insights of the term.

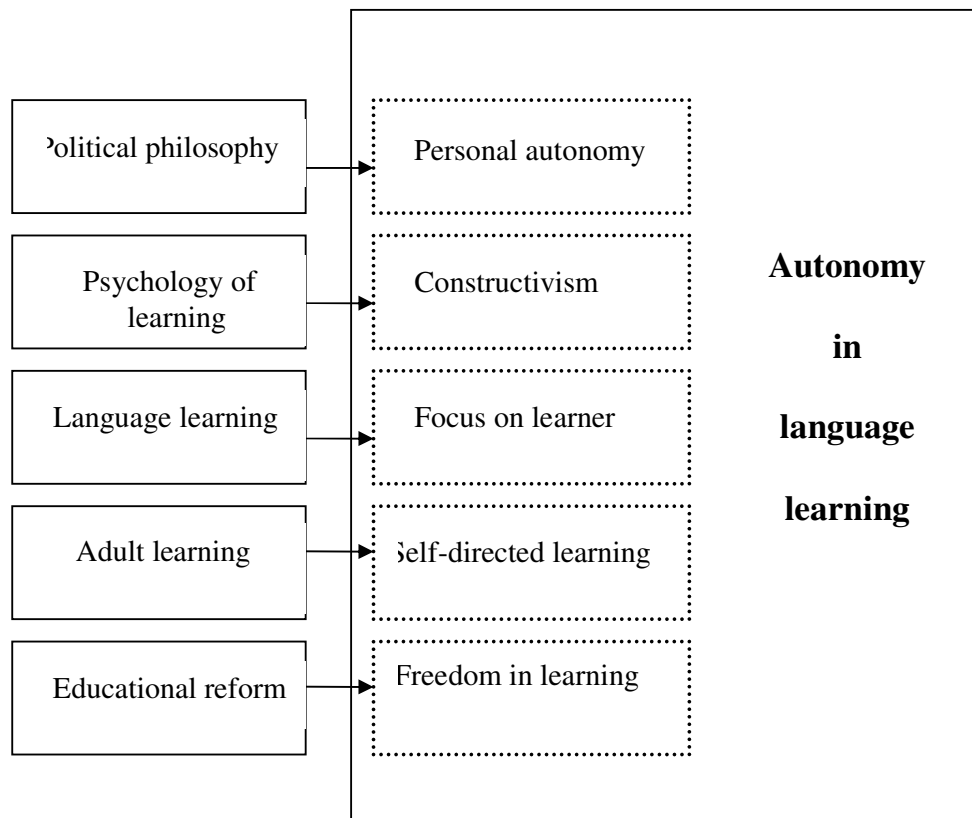
2.2. Historical and Theoretical Background to Learner Autonomy

Historical and theoretical background of learner autonomy is described under subtitles of philosophical, psychological and pedagogical background to learner autonomy in this section of the study.

2.2.1. Philosophical Background to Learner Autonomy

Although the term learner autonomy has become popular in last three decades (Benson & Voller, 1997), throughout its development in history, the concept of autonomy has influenced and been influenced by a variety of approaches and has become a crucial concept for language learning. These approaches root back to sixteenth century; to Galileo. Galileo's (1564 – 1642) expression, “you cannot teach a man anything; you can only help him find it within himself,” can be accepted as the first serious stance for learner autonomy (Benson, 2001). This statement has had an important function for educational reforms, adult education, and psychology of learning and political philosophy in twentieth century in many countries. By this way, various approaches of education have become important influential sources for autonomy in language learning. Figure 2.1 indicates these major influences on theory of autonomy in language learning (Benson, 2001).

Figure 2.1. Major influences on theory of autonomy in language learning (Benson, 2001)



Some important successive thinkers of Galileo such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712 – 1778), John Dewey (1859 – 1952), William Kilpatrick (1871 – 1965), and so many others initiated different aspects of theory of autonomy indicated in figure 2.1 above. Rousseau in his ‘natural education theory’ states the importance of intrinsic factors on learning in a philosophical view. His emphasis on the responsibility of learner for learning has become a key idea for autonomy:

Make your pupil attend to the phenomena of nature, and you will soon arouse his curiosity. But to nourish this curiosity, be in no hurry to satisfy it. Suggest problems but leave the solving of them to him. Whatever he knows, he should know not because you have told him, but because he has grasped it himself. Do not teach him science; let him discover it. If ever you substitute authority for reason in his mind, he will stop reasoning, and become the victim of other people’s opinions. If he goes wrong, do not correct his errors. Say nothing till he sees them and corrects them himself; or at most, arrange some practical situation which will make him realise things personally. If he ever made mistakes he would never learn properly. In any case, the important thing is not that he should know the topography of the country, but that he should be able to get this information for himself (Boyd, 1956; cited in Benson, 2001; p: 24).

As it is stated above, each individual is supposed to have his or her own authority intrinsically in learning. Learners are responsible for their own actions, and learn by enjoying. Children develop naturally into individuals subject to their own authority rather than the authority of others. In Rousseau's model, the teacher is a permissive individual who supports learners and learns with them. Modern learner-centred approaches and learner autonomy have the same characteristics with natural education theory of Rousseau (Benson, 2001).

Indirectly but principally influenced by Rousseau, John Dewey (1859 – 1952) rejected romantic view of Rousseau and set autonomy on these areas; the relationship between education and social participation, education as problem solving and classroom organization (Benson, 2001; Garrison, 1999). The primary purpose of education, in a democratic society, should be to prepare students to both social and political life actively by having them gain the skills and attitudes they need for democratic social participation (Dewey, 1916; cited in Benson, 2001). Dewey stated that individuals have a moral responsibility to engage in betterment and reform of their society in his problem-solving method. School and classrooms were seen as microcosms of community in which learners worked together to solve shared problems in a collaborative way. By this way students were planned to have responsibility of their own problems in real life. Teacher's role in this process was directing the learning as a resource and guide for learners in their own self-directed efforts and set internal discipline.

In addition to above mentioned philosophers, as it is stated by Beyer (1997), Kilpatrick had a distinctive contribution to the idea of autonomy with project method. In this method, students plan and execute their own learning projects which may be of four kinds such as *construction projects* that involve a theoretical plan and its application; *enjoyment projects* including reading a novel or seeing a film; *problem projects* which require students resolve an intellectual or social problem; and *specific learning projects* that involve a learning skill such as swimming or writing. Although these projects seem to have no relationship with language learning, Benson (2001) states that they can be practical projects with some modifications. Teacher's role in project method is being a resource and guide as in Dewey's approach.

Contributors to the development of the theory of autonomy are not limited with above mentioned philosophers. Paolo Freire (1921 – 1977), Ivan Illich (1926 -) and Carl Rogers (1902 – 1987) are also accepted as early developers of autonomy in learning. Freire focused on transformative learning which is accepted as ‘the process of making meaning of one’s experience’ (Taylor, 1998). Illich studied issues related to schooling and self-motivated learning system outside the school system, and Rogers worked in the field of humanistic psychology which adapted Rousseau’s view to a modern approach. Effective learning comes up from the uniquely individual experiences of the learner and this leads to a change in behaviour for Rogers. This approach forms an important perspective for self-directed learning. Teacher in this process is regarded as a non-judgemental facilitator (Benson, 2001). This role of teacher is accepted by many researchers (Voller, 1997; Nunan, 1999; Benson, 2001) in the framework of learner autonomy in modern classroom-based approaches.

2.2.2. Psychological Background to Learner Autonomy

As a result of the developments in philosophical aspects, some psychological theories of learning have been accepted as the base for the theory of autonomy in language learning. Some researchers such as Fenner and Newby (2000), Benson (1997), Kelly (1953; cited in Fenner and Newby, 2000) argue that constructivist theories of learning constitute the major theoretical background for the psychological aspect of learner autonomy. According to this, an ongoing process to make sense of the world based on previous experience and pre-knowledge is attempted. Kelly (1953; cited in Fenner and Newby, 2000) supports this view by stating that a person’s processes are psychologically canalised by the ways in which he anticipates the events by construing their replications. In other words, events in themselves carry no meaning; meaning is applied by the individual who interprets it. From this point of view, the differences between each individual arise in terms of constructing the events, and different perspectives to same or similar events.

Connecting all these to learning, since learning processes are individual and based on learner’s pre-knowledge, they can only be monitored by the learner him/herself. Learning is a search for meaning. Therefore, learning must start with the issues around which students are actively trying to construct meaning. The key to success in learning

depends on allowing each individual to construct his or her own meaning, not to make them memorize and repeat another person's meaning (Benson, 2001).

Benson (2001) states that although philosophical and pedagogical background of autonomous learning root back to centuries before, theory of autonomy in language learning has a history of approximately three decades. As a result of political conflicts in 1960s, interest in the concept of autonomy in language education was aroused. Official entrance of autonomy to the field of language teaching was through the Council of Europe's Modern Languages Project in 1971. As an outcome of this project, CRAPEL (*Centre de Recherches et d' Applications en Langues*) was established at the University of Nancy in France. CRAPEL, under the directory of Yves Châlon who is considered to be the father of autonomy in language learning, became the focal point for research and practice in the field of autonomy. After Châlon, Henri Holec became the leader of CRAPEL. He remains as a prominent milestone within the field of autonomy today. Holec's project report submitted to Council of Europe has become a key document which still keeps its validity on autonomy in language teaching (Gremo and Rily, 1995).

2.2.3. Pedagogical Background to Learner Autonomy

As it was stated above, the basic ideas of learner autonomy in language teaching have appeared in the last three decades. These ideas have been developed in harmony with major innovations and popular approaches in language teaching and methodology simultaneously. Intellectual shift away from behaviourist approaches and the development of humanistic and functional approaches have supported a movement towards more communicative approaches to language teaching. These approaches required communication in context rather than the acquisition of decontextualised knowledge about target language (Benson, 2001). The idea that language learning should be a process of learning how to communicate (Nunan, 1999) supports the learner-centred philosophy, which requires learner stance at the centre of teaching and learning process rather than the teacher (Nunan, 1999; Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

Communicative teaching, learner-centeredness and autonomy all focus on the learner as the key agent in the learning process (Benson, 2001). Roles of learners in communicative approach are different from those in traditional language classrooms.

Breen and Cadlin (1980; cited in Richards and Rodgers, 2001) describe the learner roles in communicative approach as negotiator between the self, the learning process, and the object of learning. To achieve these roles, individual or group participation in classroom procedures and activities is required. The learner should contribute as much as he gains, and learn in an interdependent way, which implies 'working together with teachers and other learners towards shared goals' (Benson, 2001; p: 14). This situation implies that learners bring preconceptions of what teaching and learning procedures should be like (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). Learner-centeredness and learner involvement in the learning process that 'enable the learner to make critical pedagogical decisions' (Nunan,1999) become key concepts in this framework.

Pulist (2001) states that concept of learner-centeredness has evolved as a contemporary counter to traditional approaches to education which require authoritative teacher-centeredness in nature. There has been a shift in focus to the learner as a result of dissatisfaction with traditional approaches that are based on transmitting a predetermined knowledge to the learner. Learner-centeredness reflects a desire to explore ways of making teaching responsive to learner needs and interests, and allowing learners to be more active in teaching and learning processes. Learning is accepted as an individual discovery in learner-centred approach so it has a common point with autonomous learning. Gibbs (1992; cited in Pulist, 2001) mentions this common point and states that learner-centred learning gives learners greater autonomy and control over choice of subject matter, learning methods and pace of study. Learner-centred education is the perspective that focuses on individual learner's heredity, experiences, perspectives, background, talents, interests, capabilities and needs.

Burge (1989) considers learner-centeredness as a difficult but worthwhile concept and supports this philosophy with four points. Firstly, she states that learner-centeredness is an encompassing concept and is not an overreaction to the concept of teacher-centeredness. The interaction between teacher and learner in their own roles becomes the main motivator at this point. The second point is that the focus should be learner's self responsibility, not learner's self-directedness. It means that the teachers as educators cannot take responsibility for someone else's learning because this is the thing only learners can do. The teacher only takes the responsibility for effective facilitation. Third point of Burge (1989) is concerned with the sophistication of the concept of

learner-centeredness that can be developed with six components; learner's personal ability, resources and opportunities for access to learning; choice; relationships between theory and practice, learner's own experience and that of peers, and between tutor and guests in a course; diversity in learning styles; support mechanisms and estimated levels of development reached by each learner. Fourth and last point is learners' needs. The learner is seen as a complicated interactor with past, present and future. Needs of a learner should be interpreted broadly to include ongoing learning skills in a wide sense to stimulate self-directed, lifelong learning.

As it is stated by Benson (2001), current value of learner autonomy to language educators may well lie in its usefulness as an organising principle for broader possibilities contained within a framework of communicative and learner-centred pedagogies. To conclude, it can be said that pedagogical justification for the concept of autonomy to language learning comes from communicative approach to language teaching and learner-centred education.

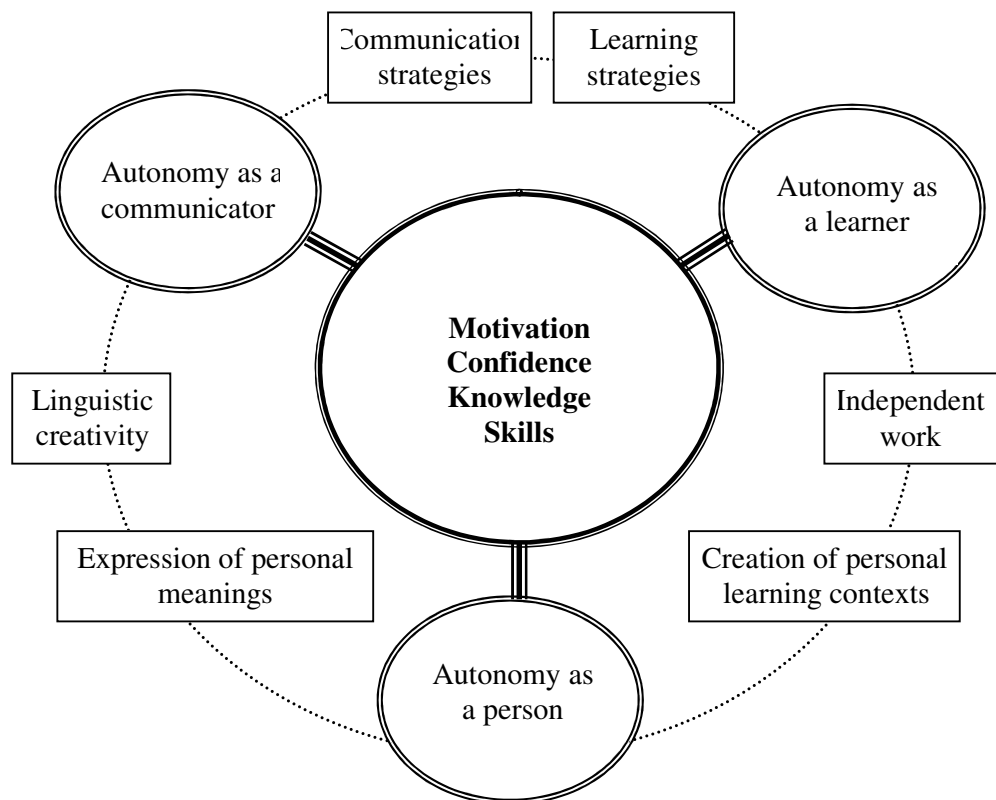
2.3. Fostering Learner Autonomy

There are various implications and suggestions to encourage and develop learner autonomy in language teaching. Nunan (1997) argues that fully autonomous learners are a rarity, but encouraging learners to move towards autonomy can be best done inside the language classroom. To achieve this, incorporating two sets of complementary goals into a language program is suggested. First set of goals consists of language content goals and the second set consists of learning process goals. Both sets should be incorporated into the curriculum in harmonious ways. Separate lessons developed for learner strategy training are not thought to be effective by Nunan.

Littlewood (1997) states that development of autonomous individuals is the long-term goal of most educational endeavours. To achieve this goal, specific subjects in the curriculum should have a goal of developing students who accept more and more responsibility for their own learning, for setting goals and objectives, for finding resources, and for evaluating the outcomes of their learning activities. Littlewood argues that autonomy is possible only when students possess both willingness and ability to act independently. Willingness of students depends on their motivation and confidence, and their ability depends on the level of their knowledge and skills. To encourage and

develop autonomous learning, teachers need to help learners develop motivation, confidence, knowledge and skills that are essential in order to communicate and learn more independently, and be more independent as individuals. Figure 2.2. represents the development of autonomy in language teaching. Centre circle contains the four components explained above. The three outside circles show the three kinds of autonomy which students can develop. The three outside circles show the three kinds of autonomy which students can develop. Autonomy as a communicator refers to the ‘ability to operate independently with the language and use it to communicate personal meanings in real, unpredictable situations’ (p: 81). Autonomy as a learner refers to the ‘ability to take responsibility for their own learning’ (p:81), and autonomy as a person refers to the ability to communicate and learn independently, and to develop as greater generalised autonomous individuals. The six additional labels placed around the circle show some of the applicable ways in which these three kinds of autonomy in language learning are expressed.

Figure 2.2. Developing autonomy in language teaching (Littlewood, 1997: 83).



Brojcich (2000) suggests that learners should have opportunities to learn according to their own individual styles and preferences. In accordance with this suggestion he gives a list of practical tips to develop learner autonomy in language classrooms:

1. *Encourage students to be interdependent and to work collectively.* This will enable students to depend less on their teachers, and gain more autonomy.

2. *Ask students to keep a diary of their learning experiences.* Through practice, students are expected to become more aware of their learning preferences and start to search for new ways of becoming more independent learners.

3. *Explain teacher/learner roles from the outset.* Asking the opinions of students on issues related to the roles of both the teacher and learner could be beneficial. A negotiation between the teacher and learners in terms of roles could promote them to become autonomous learners.

4. *Promote gradually from interdependence to independence.* Students should be given time to adjust to new learning strategies, and should not be expected too much too soon.

5. *Give students projects to do outside the classroom.* Such projects may increase motivation and sense of responsibility.

6. *Give students non-classroom duties to perform.* Such projects may also increase student motivation.

7. *Have students design lessons or materials to be used in class.* An 'interests and ability inventory' is suggested for a good practice of this point. By this way, students would have a say in study tasks and activities.

8. *Instruct students on how to use school's resource centres.* Teachers should encourage students to go and use school libraries, language labs and language lounges. In addition, if there is, school's English club should also be encouraged.

9. *Emphasize the importance of peer editing, correcting and follow-up questioning in the classroom.* By this way, interdependence will increase among learners.

10. *Encourage students to use only English in classroom.* Thus, students will be able to achieve their goals easier.

11. *Stress fluency rather than accuracy.* Communication and negotiable and interpretive aspects of English conversation should be emphasized.

12. *Do allow students to use reference books.* Students will be able to identify their weaknesses and overcome them through these reference books.

Cotterall (2000) states that fostering learner autonomy is an important and appropriate goal in language course design, and proposes five course design principles for language courses to foster learner autonomy:

- *Learner goals:* Courses designed to promote learner autonomy should have goals which the learners judge important. If they have an idea of what they are trying to achieve, the learners will take the advantage of learning. Therefore, some time should be spent on increasing learner awareness in terms of identifying goals, specifying objectives, identifying resources and necessary strategies to reach goals and measuring progress to foster autonomy of students.

- *The language learning process:* Anyone who wishes to achieve his own learning is required to have a basic understanding of language learning process. Having a model of their own learning, learners are expected to question the function of input tests and tasks, to be open to alternative strategies, and to ask for feedback on their performance.

- *Tasks:* Course tasks should be designed in accordance with the goals and needs of learners and lead them to develop their ability to manage their own learning.

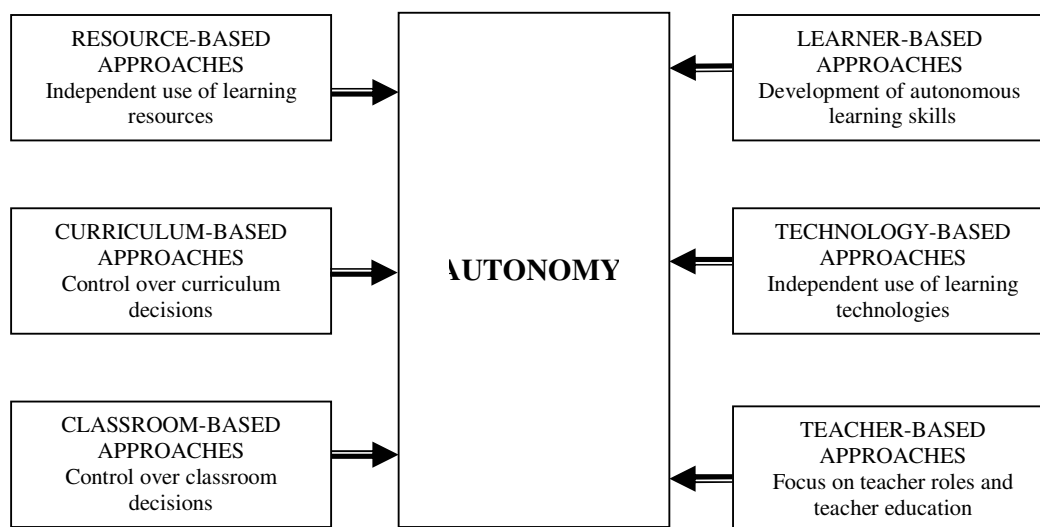
- *Learner strategies:* Concept of choice lies at the heart of learner autonomy. Therefore, existing strategic behaviours of learners should be extended, and they should be taught the weak aspects of the strategies to promote learner autonomy.

- *Reflection on learning:* Learner's ability to reflect critically on their learning is a measure of the effectiveness of the learning environment. The potential for learner autonomy increases as awareness of learner grows. Therefore, activities which prompt learners to reflect on their learning aim to enhance their insight into their learning processes. Cotterall (2000) argues that a language course that integrates these principles will contribute both to learners' control over their own language learning process, and to their developing language ability.

Benson (2001) states that besides some learners who are capable of developing autonomy independently of the efforts of teachers, there are some learners who are unable to achieve this alone. Therefore, the teachers and educational institutions should

attempt to foster learner autonomy through the practices that will allow learners to engage in modes of learning in which the capacity of gaining autonomy can be developed. Benson (2001) gives a list of six different approaches to foster learner autonomy in language learning. Figure 2.3. represents these approaches. Each approach is described in detail below.

Figure 2.3. Autonomy in language learning and related areas of practice to promote learner autonomy (Benson, 2001).



2.3.1. Resource-based Approaches

Learner's independent interaction with learning resources is the focus point for resource-based approach. Resource-based approaches provide learners opportunity to exercise control over learning plans, the selection of learning materials and the evaluation of learning. In research-based approaches, learners are expected to develop skills in freedom of choice through experimentation and discovery. Self-access, self-instruction and distance learning can be listed as the ways of fostering autonomy in the framework of research-based approaches (Benson, 2001).

Sheerin (1997: 54) defines self-access as 'learning materials and organizational systems designed for direct access by users'. Sheerin (1997) states two main reasons to set up self-access facilities for both teachers and learners dues to pragmatic and ideological reasons. Pragmatic reason is represented by individualization that becomes crucial as a result of changing roles of teachers and students. Learners differ in their

learning styles and preferences. Individual learners may have particular weaknesses which can be overcome alone. There may also be time constraints or other factors that affect learning. Good self-access facilities provide opportunities for affective individualization of learning, and without any scheduled organization, students can take the advantage of benefiting from these facilities whenever they want.

The other reason for providing self-access facilities is ideological in that it represents the promotion of independent learning. Learners are expected to take responsibility for their own learning and developing effective learning strategies. Sheerin (1997) refers to a general belief among educators to explain her justification for promoting independent learning via self-access centres, 'learning is more effective when learners are active in the learning process, assuming responsibility for their learning and participating in the decisions which affect it' (p: 56).

In addition to self-access facilities, another way of research-based learning, self-instruction refers to the 'situation in which learners study languages on their own, primarily with the aid of 'teach-yourself materials' (Benson, 2001). Self-instructed learners require a high degree of autonomy in order to succeed. Benson (2001) states that as self-instructed learners, distance learners also depend on packaged resources and are commonly isolated from their peers. The main difference between self-instruction and distance learning is that distance learning is an institutional form of learning, which requires teachers, materials, and a syllabus to follow whereas self-instruction does not require any teacher or syllabus to follow (Benson, 2001).

2.3.2. Technology-based Approaches

Benson (2001) points out the similarity between resource-based approaches and technology-based approaches. The main difference between these two is that the latter focuses on technologies to access resources. The relationship between educational technology and learner autonomy is emphasized in this framework. Motteram, (1997; cited in Benson, 2001) expresses this relationship as;

There has always been a perceived relationship between educational technology and learner autonomy. This is taking educational technology in its broadest sense and taking learner autonomy as the super-ordinate term. This has become increasingly true for computers and self-access.

Computer-assisted language learning (CALL) and the Internet are thought to promote learner autonomy as technology-based approaches. As it is mentioned by Cook (2001), interactive communication has become an important issue in language teaching theory in recent years. Kenning (1996) focuses on this aspect of CALL to support and promote learner autonomy, and states that supported with the usage of multimedia, hypermedia and interactive technologies, CALL aims to achieve this goal. The use of computer as a multidimensional linguistic or non-linguistic educational tool facilitates creative manipulation of text. High control and interpretation over different aspects of a text promotes the development of metacognitive skills and metalinguistic awareness.

The Internet is also accepted to foster learner autonomy as a means of technology-based approaches. E-mail messages, online discussions, and web authoring are some of the Internet-based activities that promote self-directed learning and learner autonomy. These kinds of activities increase interaction among learners, between learners and target language users, and between learners and their teachers. The importance of internet appears for the situations in which it is difficult or impossible to achieve a direct communication in class or self-access centre (Benson, 2001).

Motteram (1998) states the importance of web for language learning and learner autonomy. Motteram accepts web as the broad range of internet-based materials that are available mainly for free and the local intranet medium, which may be set up on a local area network inside a school or college to provide learners with materials. Web also consists of all the elements that can be applied in a typical classroom. The teachers can make the use of the web as a resource and supplement their lessons. Web resources may increase learner motivation, as well. Given choice, learners can find their own texts in this wealth of information. These characteristics of web can closely fit into an autonomous learning paradigm.

2.3.3. Learner-based Approaches

Learner-based approaches to promote learner autonomy focus on 'the production of behavioural and psychological changes that will enable learners to take greater control over their learning' (Benson, 2001; p: 142). Primary goal in this approach is to develop learners and help them become better language learners. Developing autonomy

is an integral part of this goal. Benson (2001) makes a list of six main categories of approaches to learner development:

1. Direct advice on language-learning strategies and techniques, often published in the form of self-study manuals for independent learners.
2. Training based on 'good language learner' research and insights from cognitive psychology.
3. Training in which learners are encouraged to experiment with strategies and discover which work well for them.
4. Synthetic approaches drawing on a range of theoretical sources.
5. Integrated approaches treating learner training as a by-product of language learning.
6. Self-directed approaches in which learners are encouraged to train themselves through reflection on self-directed learning activities (p: 143).

As it is stated in the list above, language learning strategies and techniques have an important role in the development of autonomous learners. Benson (2001) mentions the strategies used by adult foreign language learners to direct their own learning. These are knowledge about what language and language learning process involves; planning the content and methods; and self-evaluation of the progress and learning experience.

O'Malley and Chamot (1990; cited in Benson, 2001) suggest that metacognitive strategies involve behaviours that have been closely associated with autonomy. These are planning, directed attention, selective attention, self-management, self-monitoring, problem identification and self-evaluation. Planning refers to previewing the organizing concept or principle of an anticipated learning task. Directed attention is deciding in advance to attend in general to a learning task and ignore irrelevant distractors. Selective attention refers to attending to specific aspects of language input or situational details that assist performance of a task. Self-management refers to understanding the conditions that help learners successfully accomplish language tasks. Self-monitoring is checking, verifying, or correcting one's comprehension or performance. Problem solution is identifying the central point which needs resolution in a task explicitly. Self evaluation is checking the outcomes of one's own learning performance.

Explicit instruction of strategy use can enhance learning performance. Reflective training models can be more effective in fostering autonomy because they integrate learning management techniques, which control the cognitive and content aspects of learning, and allow learners to develop an awareness of the appropriateness of strategies to the overall self-direction of their own learning (Esch, 1997).

2.3.4. Classroom-based Approaches

Classroom-based approaches focus on learner involvement in the planning and evaluation of classroom learning. Learner control over the classroom activities is suggested to increase autonomy. Learners should be involved in decision-making process and day-to-day management of their learning. Especially, learner involvement in planning and assessment is suggested to have positive effects (Benson, 2001; Nunan, 1999).

Finch (2000) expresses that having role in the management of classroom activities may lead to the development of control over both cognitive and content aspects of learning. As a result, the capacity to define the content of their learning may be developed by learners through an ongoing cycle of negotiation and evaluation to the extent that curriculum guidelines permit.

2.3.5. Teacher-based Approaches

Teacher-based approaches stress the role of the teacher and teacher education in the practice of fostering autonomy among learners. Teacher autonomy is another concept which is mentioned in teacher-based approaches (Benson, 2001).

Teacher role in an autonomous learning environment clearly falls within the framework of interpretation of teaching which is different from the understanding of traditional teaching. Terms proposed to describe the role of the teacher within this perspective include facilitator, helper, coordinator, counsellor, consultant, advisor, knower, and resource (Benson, 2001). Voller (1997), reduces these terms to three in a detailed review of literature on teacher roles in autonomous learning. The 3 roles of a teacher are being a facilitator, a counsellor and acting as a resource. Facilitator has been the most commonly used term regarding the teacher as a helper in classroom situations. Counsellor which refers to guidance focuses on one-to-one interaction between the teacher and learners in terms of providing them better learning opportunities. Although not used as commonly, acting as a resource considers the teacher as a knower. In addition to these, he suggests another term, negotiation, to explain teacher's role in autonomous language learning. Voller (1997) suggests these terms as the ways of "empowering" ourselves as teachers. On the other hand, becoming aware of learner autonomy will be a prerequisite for fostering learner and teacher autonomy. To achieve

this, he suggests three fundamental assumptions. First, language learning is an interpretative process, and autonomous learning involves a responsibility transfer to the learner. Second, our teaching practices reflect these assumptions by certifying that they are based on a process of negotiation with learners. Third, we should self-monitor our teaching, to observe and reflect upon the teaching strategies we use and the nature of the interactions we set up and participate in.

Voller (1997) lists the functions and qualities associated with the roles mentioned above under the titles of psycho-social features and technical support. Psycho-social features include:

- The personal qualities of the facilitator (being caring, supportive, patient, tolerant, emphatic, open, non-judgemental);
- A capacity for motivating learners (encouraging commitment, dispersing uncertainty, helping learners to overcome obstacles, being prepared to enter into a dialogue with learners, avoiding manipulating, objectifying or interfering with, in other words, controlling them);
- An ability to raise learners' awareness (to 'decondition' them from preconceptions about learner and teacher roles, to help them perceive the utility of, or necessity for, independent learning) (p: 102).

Key features of technical support include;

- Helping learners to plan and carry out their independent language learning by means of needs analysis (both learning and language needs), objective setting (both short- and long-term, achievable), work planning, selecting materials, and organizing interactions;
- Helping learners evaluate themselves (assessing initial proficiency, monitoring progress, and self- and peer-assessment);
- Helping learners to acquire the skills and knowledge needed to implement the above (by raising their awareness of language and learning, by providing learner training to help them identify learning styles and appropriate learning strategies (p. 102).

Another important concept for teacher-based approaches is teacher autonomy. Barfield (et al, 2001:1) define teacher autonomy as 'ideas of professional freedom and self-directed professional development'. Critical reflection and transformation through dialogue are highlighted points in teacher autonomy. A list of features that teacher autonomy should involve is proposed by Barfield (et. al, 2001). They are;

- Negotiation skills;
- Institutional knowledge in order to start to address effectively constraints on teaching and learning;
- Willingness to confront institutional barriers in socially appropriate ways to turn constraints into opportunities for change;
- Readiness to engage in lifelong learning to the best of an individual's capacity;
- Reflection on the teaching process and environment;

- Commitment to promoting learner autonomy.

Shaw (2002) defines teacher autonomy as ‘the capacity to take control of one’s own teaching’ inspiring from the famous definition of learner autonomy, the capacity to take control of one’s own learning. Self-directed professional development and freedom of choice are two important terms for teacher autonomy for Shaw (2002). Shaw also argues that promoting learner autonomy should be one of the responsibilities of autonomous teacher.

Little (2000) argues that teachers are indispensable. But their roles change. Changing the terms used to describe what teachers do, never weakens their responsibility. Teacher’s key role is to create and maintain a learning community. Little argues that if teachers stop teaching, most learners will stop learning. These realities make learner autonomy dependent on teacher autonomy in two senses for little (2000):

1. It is unreasonable to expect teachers to foster the growth of autonomy in their learners if they themselves know what is to be an autonomous learner.
2. In determining the initiatives they take in their classrooms, teachers must be able to apply to their teaching those same reflective and self-managing processes that they apply to their learning (p: 1).

2.3.6. Curriculum-based Approaches

Curriculum-based approaches focus on learner involvement in decisions related to the curriculum issues. The principle of learner involvement has been formalised in the idea of process syllabus and negotiated curriculum (Benson, 2001).

Nunan (1999) argues that curriculum designed to promote learner autonomy is based on mutual understanding between learners and teachers. Learners are involved in decision-making process focusing on the content what they are going to learn. Learner’s active involvement in the decision-making process concerning their own learning may support effective learning, since learning can be more focused and purposeful for learners.

In process syllabus, learners are expected to make the major decisions related to the content and procedures of learning in collaboration with their teachers (Benson, 2001). Littlejohn (1997) states that process syllabuses focus on negotiation between learners and teachers in terms of what will be done and how it will be done in the

classroom. The ideal curriculum developed to foster learner autonomy should be flexible so that learners and teachers exercise their individuality through negotiation.

Negotiated curriculum has been accepted as another type of curriculum to promote learner autonomy. Nunan (1999) argues that the philosophy of learner-centeredness affected the appearance of negotiated curriculum in which 'the views of learners as well as the pedagogical agenda of the teacher are satisfied through a progress of give-and-take' (p: 16). Neither learners, nor teachers can make decisions on their own about the content and process that are negotiated.

Dam (1995) suggests that course content, selection and use of materials, position of desks and seating of students, discipline matters, homework tasks, time, place and pace of the lesson, methodology and types of activities, and assessment could be issues to be discussed in the framework of curriculum-based approaches.

2.3.6.1. Course Content

Little (2000) mentions that course content should include three principles to foster learner autonomy: learner empowerment, target language use and reflection. In other words, learners should be in the business of learning, should be necessitated to use target language to develop an understanding of the nature of the target language, and they should be conscious of how they learn. The course content should be related to the needs and interests of learners, as learners need to make their own learning more meaningful and purposeful is the basic aspect of learner autonomy.

Littlejohn (1997) states that tasks and activity types such as multiple choice, true/false, yes/no, gap filling suggest that learners will be called upon to work with limited content. This will help learners to engage in essentially reproductive rather than creative language use. However, learners should be supplied with tasks such as communicative activities and open-ended questions that help them work creatively. Learner involvement in planning of the course content, in terms of tasks, activities and topics will help them develop their potential for self-expression, self-development and for the development of autonomy.

2.3.6.2. Material Selection and Use

Fenner and Newby (2000) argue that in an autonomous learning environment, the learner may use all kinds of materials to further his/her own learning. The tasks in these materials can only be regarded as suggestions which the learner might reject or replace with his own tasks. From this aspect, there must be a room for freedom of choice of material for an individual and a group of learners. Through a rich variety of texts, genres, tasks, approaches and methods, they can learn to make qualified choices that suit their own personal learning. Materials should provide choice of subject-matter, choice of different types of texts, choice of different levels, choice of different amounts, choice of approach to a text, choice of tasks, choice of approach to tasks, and choice of progression to foster autonomy.

Nunan (1999) expresses that learners can be given a greater sense of ownership and control over their own learning by being encouraged to bring their own authentic data into the classroom. Bringing authentic materials into the classroom can help learners see how grammatical forms operate in context and enable speakers and writers to relay communicative meanings. Moreover, authentic materials will help learners encounter target language items in the kinds of context that they naturally occur.

Materials that can enhance learners' individual learning processes should be encouraged, and learners should be given chance in choosing and using the course materials to gain autonomy. Since learners may need more input than the teachers expect and provide, they should be supported with access to reach a wide range of written materials, audio-visual-aids, reference books and learner-designed materials. They should be encouraged to use these materials on their own, in accordance with their needs and interests. (Dam, 1995; Ryan, 1997).

2.3.6.3. Position of Desks and Seating of Students

The traditional mode of classroom organization was a teacher-fronted one, with learners sitting in rows facing the teacher. Such an arrangement gives the idea that the teacher is the authority. However, position of desks and seating of learners are important issues for decisions concerning the physical layout of foreign language

classroom. To support the development of autonomy, desks should be arranged in a way so that students can express their ideas, share these ideas by communicating with each other, and focus on the tasks rather than the teacher and the blackboard. Students should be encouraged to change their places and determine their partners in pair work and group work (Nunan, 1999; Dam, 1995).

2.3.6.4. Discipline Matters

Negotiation has an important role in determining what students can and cannot do in the classroom. Learners should be encouraged to participate in decisions related to discipline matters. This will enable them to cope with disciplinary problems on their own. Teachers should be organizers of negotiation and establishment of rules (Dam, 1995; Brown, 2001).

2.3.6.5. Record Keeping

As learners are encouraged to be responsible for their own learning in learner autonomy, they should be encouraged to keep records of their learning progress, such as completed works, marks and attendance. This will also keep learners develop metacognitive control of the learning process as well as raising their consciousness of the target language. Record-keeping may also help learners develop their self-reflection capacity. For the reasons stated above, to promote learner autonomy, some performance-recording activities should be included in the curriculum (Benson, 2001; Dam, 1995).

2.3.6.6. Homework Tasks

Nunan (1999) focuses on the importance of activities aiming learners to use their language skills in the real world. Good language learners have the ability to find opportunities to activate their language outside the classroom. In contemporary approaches, learners can achieve this by various activities such as role plays, practice simulation, and ability to carry out creative and imaginative learning projects outside the classroom. Such practices will enable students become independent learners. Nunan (1999) gives a list of out-of-class tasks which include;

- Engaging in peer review sessions, in which they collaborate with a fellow student to review projects and assignments;
- Conducting dialogue journals with teacher via the Internet;
- Taking part in conversation exchanges with foreigners
- Projects and surveys
- Doing language improvement projects in the independent learning centre (p: 87).

Homework tasks, which can also be accepted as out-of-class tasks, provide additional practice for learners. Homework tasks provide students with opportunities to practice and reflect on their learning, based upon corrective feedback from their peers and teachers. In addition, with the help of homework tasks, seeing the usage of the target language in real world situations outside the classroom, learners will be able to see that English is not limited to classroom only. Types and contents of homework tasks in autonomous context should be designed to encourage learners study in a creative, proactive and independent way (Benson, 2001; Brown, 2001; Dam, 1995).

Harmer (1998) states that getting students to do various kinds of homework like written exercises, compositions or study is the best way to foster student autonomy. Teachers should choose the right task for their students. Teachers should also follow up homework when they say they are going to, imposing the same deadlines upon themselves as they do on their students.

2.3.6.7. The Time, Place and Pace of the Lesson

Learners should be considered equal partners and given opportunity to determine the time, place and pace of the lesson. Such an opportunity will enable learners to take some initiatives which will help them increase their own responsibility in the learning process. Depending on the proficiency level, the nature of classroom activity and materials, learners should be given a chance to have a say in determining the time, pace and environment of learning (Benson, 2001; Dam, 1995).

2.3.6.8. Methodology and Types of Classroom Activities

Learners need to be involved in decision-making process as equal partners regarding the methodology of the lesson in formal educational settings. Since the purpose of language learning in formal learning environments is to enable learners to communicate through the target language, an ideal foreign language class that promotes

learner autonomy should be designed as a rich and natural learning medium where learners, in company of teachers, test and investigate new things with the help of the same interactive mechanisms they used in first language acquisition. Learners are encouraged to participate in making decisions related to their own learning. Teachers give up some of the control mechanisms and become facilitators, evaluation is an integral part of the course, and learning process becomes visible in this type of class. However, learners are given limited control over the classroom activities they participate in. Many different activities with different contents and varied types are suggested in classrooms in which learner autonomy is a desired goal. Learner autonomy highly favours pair and group work rather than individual work in the classroom because pair and group work develop learners' capacity to use the target language as a medium of communication. In addition, learners learn how to talk to negotiate meaning, convey the message, and listen for a reason so that they can establish firm links between classroom and the world outside the school, and improve their social abilities as well as their proficiency levels (Benson, 2001; Nunan, 1999; Dam, 1995).

2.3.6.9. Assessment

Assessment plays an important role in any learning environment. Traditional or alternative, every educational program needs assessment and evaluation to receive feedback for both learners and teachers to make decisions (Dam, 1995; Benson, 2001).

Nunan (1999) argues that learners do not develop their own ability to assess how much they have learned, and how much they need to learn in traditional environments. As a result, learners are unable to know exactly what they have learned and how much they still have to learn. However, in contemporary teaching, learners are trained systematically in ways of assessing their own learning process, and they are able to identify their strengths and needs. Autonomous learners are expected to make judgements of their own performance. Nunan (1999) suggest that alternative assessment approaches which enable learners to make these judgements are needed.

Dam (1995) focuses on the importance of time requirement, reflection and honesty for both learners and teachers in an atmosphere of trust and respect. Reflection can make learners more effective because they may become more aware of their strengths and attitudes towards language learning. Benson (2001) describes reflection as a part of

self-assessment, which motivates and enables learners to set more realistic learning goals. Self-assessment and self-evaluation are key concepts in autonomy because they facilitate autonomy in language learning. Benefits of self-assessment are listed below:

1. Self-assessment trains learners to evaluate the effectiveness of their communication, which is beneficial to learning in itself.
2. It raises learners' awareness of the learning process and stimulates them to consider course content and assessment critically.
3. It enhances their knowledge of the variety of possible goals in language learning, which leaves them in a better position to exercise control over their own learning and to influence the direction of classroom activities.
4. It expands the range of assessment criteria to include areas in which learners have special competence, such as the evaluation of their own needs and effective dimensions of the learning process. (Benson, 2001; p: 155).

2.4. Characteristics of Autonomous Learner

Various issues related to the concept of learner autonomy have been discussed in the framework of literature in this chapter. However, a vital subject, characteristics of autonomous learners should also be emphasized. Several researchers have suggested different characteristics to describe autonomous learners. Little (2000) suggests that learners take their first step towards autonomy when they accept responsibility for their own learning. This provides some learning behaviours shaped and guided by reflection. From this perspective, autonomous learners are the ones who have a capacity for detachment, critical reflection, decision-making and independent action. In addition to these, autonomous learners need to have a capacity for social interaction to make successful classroom experiments clear.

Breen and Mann (1997) state that autonomous learners;

- See their relationship to what is to be learned, to how they will learn and to the resources available as one in which they are in charge or in control;
- Are in an authentic relationship to the language they are learning and have a genuine desire to learn that particular language;
- Have a robust sense of self that is unlikely to be undermined by any actual or assumed negative assessments on themselves or their work;
- Are able to step back from what they are doing and reflect upon it in order to make decisions about what they next need to do and experience;
- Are alert to change and able to change in adaptable, resourceful and opportunistic way;
- Have a capacity to learn that is independent of the educational processes in which they are engaged;
- Are able to make use of environment they find themselves in strategically;
- Are able to negotiate between the strategic meeting of their own needs and responding to the needs and desires of other group members (p: 134 – 136).

Among more than a hundred competencies, Candy (1991; cited in Benson, 2001: 85) has suggested 13 characteristics of autonomous learners. According to Candy, the learner capable of autonomous learning will characteristically;

- Be methodical and disciplined
- Be logical and analytical
- Be reflective and self-aware
- Demonstrate curiosity, openness and motivation
- Be flexible
- Be interdependent and interpersonally competent
- Be persistent and responsible
- Be venturesome and creative
- Show confidence and have a positive self-concept
- Be independent and self-sufficient
- Have developed information seeking and retrieval skills
- Have knowledge about and skill at, learning processes
- Develop and use criteria for evaluating.

2.5. Studies Related to Learner Autonomy in Literature

Overall considerations related to the promotion of learner autonomy in language learning were discussed in previous sections of this chapter. Studies related to learner autonomy will be presented in this section.

Present study is based on the research conducted by Camilleri (1999). Camilleri investigated the attitudes of English teachers towards learner autonomy as a European Union project. The project set off with the hypothesis that teachers considered some areas of teaching and learning, which may be considered as classroom experience, as more suitable than the others for the implementation of learner autonomy. The whole process of planning and execution of this research project was considered as an educational and reflective experience for its members. A questionnaire, which is also used in present study as well, was administered to English language teachers in Belorussia, Estonia, Malta (two groups), The Netherlands, Poland and Slovenia. The questionnaire was in English, and members of the project were free to translate it into their native languages in case of necessity. The questionnaire was a five-scale Likert type one having entries starting from 'not at all' to 'little', 'partly', 'much' and 'very much' for each question. Camilleri (1999) considered entries 'not at all' and 'little' as expressions of resistance to learner autonomy; 'much' and 'very much' were regarded as expressions of strong support for autonomy. 'Partly' was considered as a desire for the given activity to be a result of collaboration and negotiation between the teacher and

the learners for data analysis. The results revealed teachers' willingness to change and develop practice in significant areas of their teaching in the direction of learner autonomy. The results also revealed that teachers' attitudes had a crucial role in the successful implementation of learner autonomy. However, the teachers stated that the difficulty of implementing learner autonomy in some areas depend on decisions by higher authorities.

Chan (2003) focused on the teachers' views of their roles and responsibilities, their assessments of their students' decision-making abilities and the autonomous language learning activities that they have encouraged their students to take up in her study conducted at Hong Kong Polytechnic University in Hong Kong. Chan (2003) found that teachers generally perceived themselves more responsible for language related decisions, and they considered autonomy important for motivating their students to be responsible for assessing and evaluating their learning. However, they regarded themselves less responsible for learners' engagement in outside class activities and their progress out of class. The study suggests that the teacher's beliefs are important components of their teaching practices. Relevant and knowledgeable support from the teacher is a vital concern to encourage learner autonomy.

In another study, Chan (2001) focused on the readiness of both learners and teachers for learner autonomy. Chan (2001) investigated the applicability of learner autonomy in the tertiary classroom. The study investigated learners' readiness for learner autonomy by exploring their attitudes and expectations of language learning. Teacher and learner roles, their learning preferences and perceptions of learner autonomy were the other points investigated in this study. The results revealed that students gained an initial awareness of different roles of the teacher and themselves, the existence of various learning preferences and approaches, and the choice over different learning practices and procedures. The study suggested two guiding principles for the design of any autonomy-oriented classroom activities; rooms for student involvement and a wide range of learning conditions and group activities to stimulate motivation and interest. It was concluded that learner autonomy was applicable at tertiary level classrooms, and the students were more amenable to autonomy as an important goal.

Cotterall (1995) conducted a study to investigate learner beliefs and effects of these beliefs on readiness for autonomy. A questionnaire on learner beliefs about language

learning was applied to the students to gather data. Factor analysis of the responses of subjects revealed the existence of six factors. These were (1) role of the teacher, (2) role of feedback, (3) learner independence, (4) learner confidence in study ability, (5) experience of language learning, and (6) approach to studying. Results of the study indicated that beliefs of learners in terms of the factors stated above have an important role in promoting learner autonomy. The results of the study also suggested that learners and teachers can hope to construct a sharing understanding of the language learning process, and of their roles in it. This is an essential awareness for developing learner autonomy.

Kiho and Hirotsugu (2000) examined the effects of motivational styles differing in the degree of autonomy on perceived control beliefs and self-regulated learning of English by Japanese undergraduate students. Cluster analysis showed four groups of students which differed in the degree of autonomy. The results of structural equation modeling, which was conducted to examine the effects of autonomy on English learning processes, confirmed that intrinsic motivation and identified regulation positively affected students' academic performances through adaptive self-regulated learning. It is suggested in this study that the higher the degree of autonomy, the more adaptive the learning process will be.

Chuk (2003) conducted a study aiming to explore how exploratory practice can be integrated into regular classroom applications to help learners develop a sense of autonomy in language learning. The study was carried out in an EFL classroom where the use of regular classroom activities was designed to encourage conscious reflection on learning in Hong Kong. Exploratory practice is defined as 'natural integration of research and pedagogy which relies on existing pedagogical practice as a research tool, and uses teacher and learner *puzzles* about classroom events as its starting point for pursuing an understanding about what happens in classrooms' (p:1). Ordinary and familiar classroom activities were adapted to raise metacognitive awareness in the students in data collection procedure. Data was gathered through group discussions, oral presentations in class, learner diary records, and teacher-researcher's diary records. Data was collected on an ongoing basis, and it was explicitly discussed in class. The results of the study conveyed that the students developed metacognitive awareness. Learner awareness, subject matter awareness, learning process awareness and social awareness

of students were also developed in different levels. Both the students and the teacher became more autonomous and the quality of life in the classroom improved. Findings of the study suggested that both learner autonomy and teacher autonomy can be promoted through exploratory practice.

Dias (2000) reported an on-going action research project in which ICT (information and communication technology) was being employed to equip students with useful tools for autonomous learning in oral English classes. Participants of the study were the students, who were attending a Japanese university specializing in health and animal sciences, at the beginning and end of the academic year, students in classes that were exposed to ICT, and those in classes where teachers made no use of computers, were surveyed to determine their previous experience with ICT and language learning. Results showed that it was not possible to say that the ICT-supported course led students to be autonomous learners in any absolute way.

Vanijdee (2003) studied learner autonomy in a distance education setting in Thailand to determine the degree of autonomy for distance learners of an ESL course. Data of the study were collected through a questionnaire sent to students country-wide, think aloud protocols and interviews. Results of the study showed that there were two kinds of distance learners; self-sufficient learners who were able to follow the course but displayed a limited degree of learner autonomy, and dynamic distance learners who were more proactive in their approach to learning. The study suggests a model based on the relationship between learner autonomy, learning strategies, and the interaction with self-instructional materials in distance learning context to have dynamic learners.

Thomson, Mosumi-so and Osho (2001) conducted a study investigating three major challenges of language teaching professionals. These were multidimensional learner diversity, industry demand for accountability of language programs, and the gap between research and teaching. These challenges were aimed to be overcome by designing and delivering a new course developed using underpinning theoretical frameworks in both learner autonomy and sociolinguistics. The results of the study showed that promoting learner autonomy in class may help classrooms become a learning community without walls, and the amount and variety of social interaction both in target and native language between the students can be increased.

In addition to the studies mentioned above, a number of studies on learner autonomy are conducted in Turkey. Yumuk (2002) conducted a study investigating how an Internet information search-based program in an academic course can promote learners of a traditional view of learning to become more autonomous learners. The study was conducted with third-year English-speaking translation students, whose native language was Turkish, at a university in Turkey. Primary aim of the study was designing and evaluating a program to promote a change in students' attitudes from traditional learning to more autonomous learning. The results of the study revealed that the promotion of learner autonomy was achievable through this program. The program had students develop an understanding of their own learning process and became more self-confident in questioning their teacher-dependent learning habits.

In a more recent study, Yıldırım (2005) investigated the perceptions and behaviors of Turkish English Language Teaching (ELT) students related to learner autonomy. The study focused on participants in two aspects as learners of English and prospective EFL (English as foreign language) teachers. The study also investigated if education received on how to teach English makes a difference in their perceptions of learner autonomy. Two different questionnaires were used to collect the data in the study; one for learners of English, and one for future teachers of English. In order to support the data gathered through the questionnaires, follow up interview sessions were conducted with some of the participants. Findings of the study revealed that as learners of English, the participants were ready to take responsibility and control of their own learning. As for future EFL teachers, the results indicated positive beliefs of participants related to learner autonomy.

In another recent study, Özdere (2005) investigated state-supported provincial university instructors' attitudes towards learner autonomy and towards sharing instructional responsibilities with learners regarding aspects of students' own learning. The study was conducted with 72 English language instructors working at 6 different universities (Afyonkarahisar Kocatepe University, Akdeniz University, Balıkesir University, Muğla University, Niğde University, and Zonguldak Karaelmas University) in Turkey. The data were collected through a Likert-type questionnaire. In addition, a total of 10 instructors from participating universities were interviewed. The results of the data analysis revealed that participating instructors had attitudes varying from

neutral to slightly positive towards learner autonomy in their formal teaching environments. They considered some areas of teaching and learning as more suitable than others for the implementation of learner autonomy. The outcomes also showed that the participating instructors' attitudes towards learner autonomy changed depending upon the facilities they were provided by their universities and the opportunities for authentic language use in their environments. Moreover, the findings highlighted that an in-service training for the instructors, and systematic and planned adjustments in the curricula might contribute to the promotion of learner autonomy in these universities.

This chapter focused on the various definitions and misconceptions of learner autonomy, historical and theoretical background of the term, ways to foster learner autonomy characteristics of autonomous learners and some empirical studies to support theoretical implications related to learner autonomy. Approaches and studies presented in this chapter suggest that the promotion of learner autonomy is a contemporary and desirable approach, and should be a goal in language learning and teaching. Learners should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning. Teachers, on the other hand, are suggested to be open to learner autonomy, encourage their students to become autonomous learners, and develop themselves as autonomous teachers.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to investigate EFL teachers' perceptions on promoting learner autonomy. Methodological procedures to achieve this purpose are presented in this chapter. First, setting and participants of the study are described. Then, data collection instrument and the way the data were collected are presented. Finally, the analysis of the data is explained.

3.1. Setting

The study was conducted at Anadolu University School of Foreign Languages Basic Languages Department in the spring semester of 2005 – 2006 academic year. Anadolu University is among the leading educational institutions of Turkey with its openness to innovations in education and universal education philosophy. The university is among the firsts in Turkey to offer English preparatory classes to its students (www.anadolu.edu.tr/eindex.html; www.kenthaber.com/universite.asp?ID=12).

In some of the faculties, the medium of instruction is English. Thus, School of Foreign Languages, Basic Languages Department was founded to meet the needs of students in terms of English. The mission of the school is stated as 'providing students from various departments at different language proficiency levels with basic English knowledge in a nurturing and supportive teaching and learning environment to comprehend and react to what they read and hear, and to express themselves through written and oral language so that students can communicate effectively in various (their) academic, professional and social contexts. A further aim of the Basic Languages Department is to broaden students' vision by encouraging them to become autonomous learners who are competent in pursuing the advances in the international academic and scientific era' (www.ydyo.anadolu.edu.tr).

School of Foreign Languages offers a one-year intensive English program to the students of different faculties. To achieve its goals as stated in the mission statement successfully, Basic Languages Department started a curriculum renewal project in 2003 and included some contemporary approaches to language teaching and learning such as

learner autonomy and critical thinking into its mission statement as it is stated above, and into its goals and objectives.

3.2. Participants

Participants of the study were 116 EFL teachers who were teaching English to the students of the School of Foreign Languages Basic Languages Department. 116 teachers were given a questionnaire to answer but 108 of them returned it. 30 (27.8%) of these teachers were male, and 78 (72.2%) were female. 108 participants varied with reference to their age. 66 of them (61.1%) were between 20 and 30; 34 (31.4%) were between 31 and 40; and 8 (7.4%) were above 40 years of age.

As for the academic background, 84 (77.8%) of the participants were ELT department graduates; 9 (8.3%) were graduates of American Culture and Literature department; 9 (8.3%) were English Literature department graduates; and 6 (5.6%) were graduates of Translation and Interpretation department.

Participants of the study had teaching experiences varying from 0 year to more than 10 years. 28 (25.9%) of the participants had a teaching experience between 0 – 3 years (started teaching between 2003 – 2006); 27 (25%) had 4 – 6 years of experience (started teaching between 2000 – 2002); 26 (24.1%) had 7 – 9 years (started teaching between 1997 – 1999); and 27 (25%) had experience more than 10 years (started teaching in and before 1996).

A curriculum renewal project was started in 2003 at the School of Foreign Languages Basic Languages Department. During the renewal, 7 working groups were formed. These groups were grammar, reading, writing, speaking, listening, vocabulary, and learner autonomy. All the instructors employed by the department at that time worked in one of the groups of their choice. In the questionnaire, participants were asked to state the group in which they worked. Instructors who were not employees of the university at the time were instructed to write 'none' as they did not work in any of the groups. For the purpose of this study, participants' responses to this question were categorised into three classes; 'learner autonomy', 'other' and 'none'. Learner autonomy refers to teachers who were members of the learner autonomy group; 'other' refers to teachers who were members of other groups listed above; and 'none' refers to teachers who did not participate in the curriculum renewal project in 2003. According to

this classification, 8 of the participants (7.4%) were in the learner autonomy group; 64 (59.3%) were in the other groups; and 36 (33.3%) were not members of any group as they were not employed as teachers at the School of Foreign Languages at that time.

In the questionnaire, participants were asked to identify their knowledge of learner autonomy to determine their background knowledge about the subject. The results indicated that all of the participants, except for one, had at least heard about learner autonomy. 31 (28.7%) stated that they had heard about learner autonomy, but did not know much about it; 71 (65.7%) stated that they had read about learner autonomy; and 5 (4.6%) of the participants had done research that included issues on learner autonomy. Deriving from this information it can be said that the participants of the study were familiar with learner autonomy.

3.3. Instruments

As it is stated by Benson (2001), since it is not easy to directly observe autonomy level of learners and teachers, exercise of autonomy in various aspects of learning can be observed. Therefore, measuring gains in autonomy involves identifying behaviours associated with autonomy. Learners' and teachers' beliefs and perceptions are also difficult issues to observe. Commonly used measurement instruments of beliefs and perceptions in literature are different forms of questionnaires. Chan (2001 and 2003), Camilleri (1999), Cotteral (1995), Yıldırım (2005) and Özdere (2005) preferred questionnaires as instruments of data collection. According to Cohen and Manion (1994), questionnaires are among the easiest and most practical means of gathering information from larger groups.

In this study, a learner autonomy questionnaire that was developed by Camilleri (1999) for a research project in six European countries for European Union was used. The questionnaire has two major parts (see Appendix A). Part A asks for some demographic and background information about the participants. The participants were asked to write their age, gender, department they graduated from, and their teaching experience and the courses and levels they taught in the 2005 – 2006 academic year. The participants were also asked to state which group they worked in during the curriculum renewal process in 2003. The aim of this question was to identify the number of the participants who were in the learner autonomy group and other groups.

This question also allowed the identification of the number of teachers who did not participate in the curriculum renewal as well.

In part A, teachers' knowledge on learner autonomy was also questioned. The participants were asked to check the appropriate box based on their knowledge level on learner autonomy ranging from 'no knowledge' to 'heard about learner autonomy', 'read about learner autonomy' and 'done research on learner autonomy'. Those who checked 'read about learner autonomy' were further asked about reading they have done, and to write a brief definition of learner autonomy based on their understanding of learner autonomy.

Part B of the questionnaire consisted of questions related to the views of ELT teachers on learner autonomy. There were 13 main questions employing a five-point Likert –type scale ranging from 0 (not at all) to 1 (little), 2 (partly), 3 (much) and 4 (very much). Each question in this part had 1, 2, 3, or 4 sub questions. Construction of the questionnaire is presented in Table 3.3 below. In addition, the participants were asked to state their reasons for each question they answered. Participants were asked to write their comments for each question in the original questionnaire. In order to clarify what participants were expected to write in this part, the term, 'comment' was changed into, 'please state your reasons'. The participants were free to write the reasons either in Turkish or English.

Table 3.1. Construction of the Questionnaire

ITEM NO	ITEM NAME	SUB QUESTION
1	Objectives	a) short-term b) long-term
2	Course Content	a) topics b) tasks
3	Selecting Materials	a) textbooks b) AVA c) realia
4	Time Place Pace	a) time b) place c) pace
5	Learning tasks	
6	Methodology	a) individual/pair/group work b) use of materials c) type of class activities d) type of homework act.
7	Classroom Management	a) position of desks b) seating of students c) discipline matters
8	Record-keeping	a) of work done b) of marks gained c) attendance
9	Homework Tasks	a) quantity b) type c) frequency
10	What is to be learned from materials	a) texts b) AVA c) realia
11	Explanations	
12	Learning procedures	
13	Assessment	a) weekly b) monthly c) annually

3.3.1. Reliability of the Questionnaire

In this study, the original form of the questionnaire developed by Camilleri (1999) was used with some changes in Part A and page format. Five teachers who were excluded from the study were given the questionnaire to evaluate and pilot it in terms of content validity, face validity and clarity of items. Considering the suggestions and

feedbacks of these teachers, the items in Part A were revised and necessary changes were made.

Since the reliability of the questionnaire was not included in his study by Camilleri (1999), Cronbach – alpha values of the Likert – type questions in Part B were calculated for reliability, and was found to be $\alpha = 0,90$. Table 3.3. demonstrates the reliability evaluation criteria for α value below (Özdamar, 1999; p: 522).

Table 3.2. Reliability evaluation criteria for α value

α value	Reliability of the instrument
$0.00 \leq \alpha < 0.40$	No reliability
$0.40 \leq \alpha < 0.60$	Low reliability
$0.60 \leq \alpha < 0.80$	Quite reliability
$0.80 \leq \alpha < 1.00$	High reliability

As suggested in the table, the questionnaire had a high reliability level.

3.4. Data Collection Procedure

In the present study, quantitative and qualitative data were collected through aforementioned questionnaire. Quantitative data were collected through Likert-type scale, and qualitative data were collected by having participants write their reasons for each question in the questionnaire. The questionnaire was conducted in English to avoid the possibility of meaning confusion due to translation, but in order to have participants state their reasons comfortably; they were left free to state their reasons in English or in Turkish.

Before administering the questionnaire, the participants were informed about the aim of the study, and were guaranteed that the results would be confidential, and would not be used for other aims.

3.5. Data Analysis

The data for the present study consisted of both quantitative data gathered from the questionnaire and qualitative data gathered from the reasons stated by the participants. Quantitative data which were composed of responses to the questionnaire were analysed by calculating frequencies and percentages for each question to determine teachers' views related to learner autonomy. Each entry in the questionnaire was given a numerical value to calculate the frequencies and percentages while analysing the data.

To support quantitative data with qualitative data, reasons that were stated by participants for each question were categorised in terms of the entries for each question. Then, the number of the teachers who wrote reasons was identified, and a list of reasons for each entry was formed. Qualitative data were used in the interpretation of quantitative data in the discussion of results.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The present chapter consists of the presentation of results and their discussion in the light of relevant literature and previous studies. The results for each item in the questionnaire and its reasons stated by the teachers will be presented, interpreted and discussed independently. Then, an overall comparison and discussion will be provided to reach a reasonable answer to the research question of the study, “How do EFL teachers perceive learner autonomy?”

4.1. Teachers Understanding of Learner Autonomy

Assuming that they have enough knowledge, the teachers who stated that they read about learner autonomy were asked to define learner autonomy without any help from any resource to see their understanding of learner autonomy. As it is stated in the literature (Benson and Voller, 1997; Benson, 2001; Little 2000; Nunan, 1997), learner autonomy is defined in different forms, and the term is accepted as a buzz-word because of this variety. Definitions of the teachers were not different from the ones in literature in terms of variety. Most common and remarkable definitions of teachers are provided below:

1. Learner autonomy, to me is learner’s individual awareness of all of the responsibilities in and out of the class.
2. Learner autonomy is for learner to create opportunities to develop language learning skills independent from his/her teachers.
3. Learner autonomy is having a curiosity to decide on what and how to learn without any reinforcement or pressure.
4. Learner Autonomy, to me, is to set students free to choose their way of learning with professional guidance. In other words, learners are led to study on their own making their own choices to achieve their aims.
5. Learner’s achieving his own goals through his own methods, techniques and materials.
6. Learner’s being aware of his/her learning process.

7. I can say that learner autonomy is learners independence of their teachers, who know how to learn better and who take responsibilities for their own learning.
8. It is a way of learning independently
9. It is the ability to make decisions on every issue related to one's learning process.
10. Learner Autonomy is making the student responsible for his or her learning. The teacher allows the student to have a say in material and activities, can create an environment in which student search, study out of class and feel as an individual. Not the teaching but learning is important.
11. Learner autonomy is giving a chance to learners to have a say in teaching and learning process.
12. Learner autonomy is finding the most suitable and right information to learn something.

Deriving from the definitions provided above, 71 participants, who stated that they read about learner autonomy, can be said to be familiar with the concept of learner autonomy. This familiarity was assumed to be observed in their views and reasons they stated in the questionnaire.

4.2. Teachers' Perceptions of Learner Autonomy

The questionnaire has thirteen different items referring to different classroom experiences. Each item has various number of sub-categories in the questionnaire. The thirteen different items are about objectives of a course, course content, material selection, time, place and pace of a course, learning tasks, methodology, classroom management, record-keeping, homework tasks, what is to be learned from materials, learner explanations, learning procedures and assessment in general. Teachers were asked to answer each sub-category with an item and state their reasons. Some of the teachers did not state any reason for their choices. Number of teachers who stated reasons are provided while presenting the results for each item. Number of the teachers who stated similar reasons are given in parentheses.

Each response type (i.e. 'not at all', 'little', 'partly', 'much', 'very much') was calculated and interpreted individually. However, Camilleri's (1999) division was also used in the interpretation of the responses to get the big picture in terms of the

perceptions of teachers on learner autonomy. According to this division, entries, “not at all” and “little” were accepted as a resistance to learner autonomy. “Partly” was interpreted as collaboration and negotiation between teacher and learner. “Much” and “very much” were interpreted as strong support for learner autonomy. Table 4.1. presents the categorization for each reply (Camilleri, 1999: 8).

Table 4.1. Camilleri’s (1999) Interpretation of replies

Reply	Interpretation
Not at all; Little	Resistance to learner autonomy
Partly	Collaboration and negotiation between teacher and learner
Much; Very much	Strong support for learner autonomy

Results for each item in the questionnaire and their reasons are presented in the following sections.

4.2.1. Decisions on Objectives

The first item in the questionnaire was about learner involvement in establishing the objectives of a course of study. The teachers were asked to state their opinions and reasons for these opinions about short-term and long-term objectives. Table 4.2 presents the results of the first question in the questionnaire.

Table 4.2. EFL teachers’ perceptions on learner involvement in establishing the objectives of a course of study.

ITEM NAME	SUBTITLE	NOT AT ALL		LITTLE		PARTLY		MUCH		VERY MUCH		TOTAL	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Objectives	a) short-term	4	3,7	8	7,4	39	36,1	51	47,2	6	5,6	108	100
	b) long-term	7	6,5	14	13	43	39,8	37	34,3	7	6,5	108	100

4.2.1.1. Decisions on Short-term Objectives

The results for short-term objectives show that 4 (3.7%) teachers stated that learners should not at all be involved in establishing short-term objectives. 3 of the 4 teachers who expressed their reasons stated that since they, as teachers, occasionally have difficulty in determining the objectives of a course, learners would not be able to contribute to this issue. 8 (7.4%) teachers answered *little*, and only 5 of them stated their reasons. Those teachers stated that it was the duty of the teacher to decide the objectives of a course, and that students are not experienced enough to make decision on the objectives of a course. Reasons of the teachers who answered *not at all* and *little* were then similar. Deriving from these reasons, it can be said that 11.1% of teachers have a strong resistance to learner autonomy.

39 (36.1%) participants stated that students should be *partly* involved in decisions related to short-term objectives of a course. 23 of these participants who wrote their reasons addressed the issues of collaboration and negotiation with the learners. They stated that learners and teachers should meet on the same ground while deciding the objectives of a course. They also stated that learner participation in short-term objectives would help learners involve in activities more consciously. This way, learners will be able to express their needs, and provide insights to teachers in syllabus design. In addition, it will enable learners to feel ownership for their courses, thus, they would not get bored. Teachers stated that although learners may not have enough knowledge, they might provide different perspectives for teachers and be motivated more in the class.

More than half of the participants expressed positive opinions towards learner involvement in short-term objectives. 51 (47.2%) teachers answered *much*, and 6 (5.6%) answered *very much*. When the number of teachers who responded *much* and *very much* are combined, 56.8% of teachers had a strong support for learner autonomy. 46 of the participants who answered *much* and *very much* expressed their reasons. Teachers stated their positive stance and strong support to learner autonomy in their reasons as well.

1. Students should set goals at least for a week or month and do activities or follow strategies to fulfil them inside or outside the class. Only they can know their own strengths and weaknesses (n=14).

2. Students are actively involved in almost every step of learning process. For this reason, they may have a word to say about short-term objectives. (n=10).
3. Needs of students can be more effectively taken into consideration this way (n=8).
4. Short term objectives are related to the activities we carry out in class, so they are already in the process of making decisions. (n=6).
5. Establishing objectives with students would enable a more effective teaching. Students would become aware of why certain tasks are performed in class and why they are learning the target language (n=4).
6. Motivation of students will get higher (n=2).
7. In order to accept and internalize short-term objectives, students should be involved in the process (n=2).

4.2.1.2. Decisions on Long-term Objectives

The teachers did not support learner involvement in long-term objectives as much as they did short-term ones. 37 (34.3%) teachers responded *much* and 7 (6.5%) responded *very much*, which resulted in a cumulative percentage of 40.8%. 29 of those teachers stated the following reasons.

1. Students should feel that they are an important part of this process (n=10).
2. As each course should be designed for specific purposes to achieve success, students should state their aims to learn (n=5).
3. Establishing objectives with students would result in more effective teaching. Students would become aware of why certain tasks are performed in class and why they are learning the target language (n=4).
4. If students complain about something we do in class, we can justify why we are doing it by reminding them the objectives they had decided (n=3).
5. Objectives should depend on the needs of students, so disregarding the ideas of students in establishing objectives has no point to support (n=3).
6. Because the students need to use the language in the future, we should take their needs into consideration (n=2).
7. Students should know something about the level they will reach at the end of the term (n=2).

As for teachers who expressed a resistance to learner involvement in long-term decisions of course objectives, 7 (6.5%) of them answered *not at all*, and 14 (13%) answered *little* which had a cumulative percentage of 19.5%. 9 of those participants indicated the reasons for their choices. The teachers stated that it was the job of teachers to decide on long-term objectives and that students are unable and unprofessional to make decisions on this subject. They, as teachers, on the other hand, are professionals, and they know what is best for the students. They expressed that they think about what makes or could make students more successful and happier while teaching.

43 (39.8%) teachers responded *partly*, and 29 of participants expressed their reasons. The reasons stated by the teachers are as follows.

1. Students may not be capable of setting long-term goals (n=8).
2. It requires awareness of responsibilities and duties (n=6).
3. Students should take a part in deciding long term objectives which will help them feel important. They should take the responsibility of their own learning (n=4).
4. For long term objectives, students cannot decide on the sequence of tasks they will learn (n=3).
5. Students are not aware of the requirements for their own level (n=2).
6. We should consider their needs in the syllabus (n=2).
7. They are too general, so students cannot be involved (n=2).
8. Long-term objectives are related with the policies of the school. Students' need should be taken into consideration but there must be expert decision-makers (n=1).
9. Students are not competent to set long term goals. Setting long term goals needs professionals, they cannot do it (n=1).

As it is stated by Benson (2001) and Cotterall (2000), learners should be given a chance to participate in decision-making process of setting goals in collaboration with their teachers. This way, learners would judge these goals important. In addition, Nunan (1997) expresses that learners should be fostered to participate in language content goals and learning process goals. These implications clarify the value of learner involvement in establishing the goals of a course. Outcomes of the present study suggest that the

participants also support the idea of involving students in deciding goals and objectives of courses.

4.2.2. Decisions on Course Content

Second question in the questionnaire investigated teachers' opinions about learner involvement in decisions related to course content in terms of topics and tasks. Little (1991) expresses that if they were given an active role in determining and defining the objectives and content of a course, learners would develop a particular kind of psychological reflection to the process and content of the course they were learning. Therefore, content of the course is another essential subject of learner involvement. Table 4.3. presents the findings for learner involvement in decisions of course content.

Table 4.3. Teachers' opinions on learner involvement in deciding the course content.

ITEM NAME	SUBTITLE	NOT AT ALL		LITTLE		PARTLY		MUCH		VERY MUCH		TOTAL	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Course Content	a) topics	6	5,6	10	9,3	31	28,7	45	41,7	16	14,8	108	100
	b) tasks	8	7,4	11	10,2	46	42,6	30	27,8	13	12	108	100

4.2.2.1. Decisions on Topics

45 (41.7%) teachers responded *much* to learner involvement in decisions related to topics of a course while 16 (14.8%) responded *very much*. These results show that 56.5% of teachers were in favour of learner autonomy in terms of learner involvement in course topics. 42 of participants stated their reasons for this support as follows.

1. Topics may be chosen by how students like (n=10).
2. It is necessary for increasing student motivation, participation and involvement (n=10).
3. Interests of students can be understood more easily (n=6).

4. At the beginning of each term we should analyze the needs of students asking them the topics they are interested in (n=5).
5. Students are the only ones who know their own learning process. They know what they need as a topic (n=4).
6. Topics which students are interested in are important in terms of enjoyable and efficient lessons (n=4).
7. If you want to have an interesting class, you should choose topics according to students' interests and needs (n=3).

As for the results who answered *not at all* and *little*, the frequency for the former was 6 (5.6%), and for the latter 10 (9.3%) which suggests that 14.9% of the teachers expressed a resistance to learner autonomy in terms of course topics. 10 of these participants stated their reasons. Some of the reasons stated suggest that teachers do not actually resist learner autonomy; rather external factors affected their responses to this item. For example, some teachers expressed that even they were unable to decide the course content since it was already generated in the course books. In addition, some stated that it would not be practical. Other reasons, on the other hand, expressed a strong objection to learner involvement in deciding topics. For some, course content had nothing to do with the decisions of students, and students would be unable and not qualified enough to decide on such issues.

31 (28.7%) of the teachers answered *partly* for this question. 14 of those teachers wrote their reasons for their response. Some reasons given stated that students only care about their own interests rather than the curriculum, thus, it would not be realistic to ask all the students to decide on topics because of individual differences. Some had rather positive reasons that it would make their jobs easier during the semester, and learners would help teachers develop different insights.

4.2.2.2. Decisions on Tasks

Participants were not as much willing to have students participate in decisions related to the tasks as they were for topic. The number of teachers who answered *partly* was more than that of other participants; 46 teachers (42.6%). 33 of those teachers expressed their reasons for their response. They addressed negotiation and autonomy as follows:

1. To increase student autonomy (n=10).
2. While analyzing the needs of students we should ask them what kind of tasks mostly help them learn (n=7).
3. Teacher of a lesson should consider objectives, general tendency and expectations of students while choosing a task (n=4).
4. Sometimes we can consider preferences of students (n=4).
5. As the students tend to be irresponsible from time to time, it is better to get suggestions from them (n=2).

Although they answered *partly*, some of the teachers expressed their resistance to learner involvement in the decisions of tasks whereas some others expressed their support:

1. Students may not like certain tasks, but they have to achieve some goals, so they may not know which tasks are really good for them (n=4).
2. The tasks which students want to do in class may not be useful. Students do not have the pedagogical knowledge a teacher has, and they are not aware enough (n=1).
3. Students may not be clear on why some tasks are performed although they may be very effective. Tasks students think are fun and effective would increase motivation and participation (n=1).

The frequency of *much* is 30 (27.8%) and *very much* is 13 (12%) had a total of 39.8%. 22 of the participants stated their reasons as follows:

1. Needs of students must be taken into consideration (n=6).
2. Task should be the choice of students; tasks should be enjoyable, and suitable for students that they could add something from their lives (n=5).
3. This is the production part, so students may choose as they are the ones to produce (n=4).
4. In order to motivate students, course content should of course be prepared based on their suggestions (n=2).
5. Students are the ones who know what is the most enjoyable and useful for them (n=1).
6. We can help students decide on tasks and learn what kind of tasks is liked by them. It's important since they are related to learning skills (n=1).

7. Makes students more conscious (n=1).
8. Students' learning styles differ, so they should choose the ultimate tasks they need to learn better (n=1).
9. Since students are assumed to have learnt the topics, they should be allowed to say something about what they will do as a task (n=1).

Of the remaining 19 teachers, 8 (7.4%) of them answered *not at all*, and 11 (10.2%) answered *little*. Reasons which were stated by 12 of those teachers were as follows:

1. Students are not aware of or qualified enough to decide on the tasks. May be options and what they will need in their department can be made clear and then they may be asked to choose the content accordingly (n=5).
2. Tasks are nothing to do with the students' decision (n=3).
3. Some activities may be boring for students, but they are usually useful. We should not give up such activities (n=2).
4. The teacher should decide on what tasks are needed keeping the objectives of the course in the mind (n=2).

As it is suggested by Littlejohn (1997), learner involvement in planning of topics and tasks of a course content helps learners develop their potential of self-expression, self-development and development of autonomy. As it was stated by some of the participants in the present study, since they are the ones who are going to do these tasks, they should be given a chance to express their ideas. Findings of the study suggested that most of the teachers either supported negotiation and collaboration or expressed a strong support for the promotion of learner autonomy for learner involvement in decisions related to topics and tasks of a course content.

4.2.3. Selecting Materials

Third question in the questionnaire was about the selection of materials. The question had three subtitles – textbooks, Audio-visual aids (AVA) and realia. Results of the study in terms of material selection are presented in table 4.4. below.

Table 4.4. Teachers' opinions on learner involvement in selecting materials.

ITEM NAME	SUBTITLE	NOT AT ALL		LITTLE		PARTLY		MUCH		VERY MUCH		TOTAL	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Selecting Materials	a) textbooks	34	31,5	30	27,8	29	26,9	8	7,4	7	6,5	108	100
	b) AVA	11	10,2	12	11,1	39	36,1	31	28,7	15	13,9	108	100
	c) realia	14	13	10	9,3	36	33,3	27	25	21	19,4	108	100

4.2.3.1. Selecting Textbooks

34 (31.5%) of teachers answered *not at all*, and 30 (27.8%) answered *little* when asked if students should be involved in selecting textbooks. Cumulative percentage for these two entries was 59.3%. 37 of participants wrote their reasons for their answers. The reasons stated suggest that teachers considered textbook selection as the job of professionals.

1. Students need special education for this. Selecting textbooks is something professional, and the most beneficial materials can only be chosen by instructors (n=11).
2. I don't think that students can analyze textbooks. They don't have enough knowledge about it, and may not be familiar with textbooks and their contents (n=9).
3. Textbook selection must be handled by experts; actually, I don't even think that all the teachers can do it (n=8).
4. Before starting teaching, textbooks are determined. Therefore, students have no chance of being involved (n=5).
5. Teachers already try their best while choosing the textbooks (n=1).
6. Materials should be decided by teacher in class, but they can choose their self-study materials outside (n=1).
7. Students are not experts but we can get feedback from them at the end of the term (n=1).

8. Textbook is the most important element in a course and students cannot do that (n=1).

Frequency of teachers who answered *partly* was 29 (26.9%). 15 of those teachers expressed their reasons. The teachers stated that this would help them increase student motivation. Most of the reasons imply collaboration and negotiation between learners and teachers. The reasons stated by the teachers are provided below:

1. It is necessary to increase learner motivation (n=6).
2. This is related with levels, needs and learning strategies of students, but they may be unaware of those (n=3).
3. Students should give their opinion on the type of the material but further steps require more professional decisions (n=3).
4. Students should be asked to state their opinions, but the final decision should be the responsibility of teachers (n=2).
5. Material is very important for students, for this reason, they should be given responsibility in material selection to have them motivated, but experts of the subject should make the final decision (n=1).

The number of teachers who stated that there should be *much* learner involvement in material selection was 8 (7.4%). The number of the ones who answered *very much* was 7 (6.5%). Cumulative percentage for both *much* and *very much* was 13.9%. 9 of the participants stated the following reasons for their answers.

1. If they choose the textbooks, students may be positive on every topic in the textbook. They'll be highly-motivated (n=4).
2. We must make students aware and enable them help us select the materials. This may prevent them criticise the teachers (n=3).
3. We are the ones who know what happens if learners don't like the books (n=1).
4. Students will be using these materials, so they should be given a chance to state their ideas (n=1).

4.2.3.2. Selecting Audio-visual Aids

Teachers' perspectives on learner involvement in selection of Audio-visual aids (AVA, henceforth) were not as negative as that of selection of textbooks. The number of

teachers who *partly* agreed on learner involvement in the selection of AVA was 39 (36.1%). 24 of the teachers stated their reasons for choosing *partly* as in the following:

1. Students may not find the suitable objectives to match the AVA, which they selected, to the topic they have (n=6).
2. Both teachers and the students should work together. We can select suitable AVA for our objectives only this way. Learning & teaching is a partnership (n=5).
3. Students can be asked about some of AVA to choose the interesting ones (n=3).
4. Students are not capable of choosing the appropriate materials alone, but their opinions must be asked (n=2).
5. Giving students opportunity to select AVA depends on the dynamics of a class (n=2).
6. It may increase motivation (n=2).
7. Students should be asked for their opinion on the type of the material, but further steps require more professional decisions (n=2).
8. As these are course/activity specific materials, students can be involved in selecting these materials under the guidance of teacher (n=2).

As for the teachers who answered *much* and *very much*, 31 (28.7%) of them answered *much*, and 15 (13.9) *very much*. 26 of those teachers expressed their reasons. They were:

1. Teachers must make students aware of the objectives and needs, and enable them to help the teacher select the materials. This may prevent them from criticising us (n=7).
2. It is ideal to involve students by having them bring in student generated or found materials since it will increase their motivation and involvement, but they need lots of free time to do this (n=5).
3. It will motivate the students, and sometimes teachers cannot predict what kind of materials will satisfy their students, so students should be let to state their preferences (n=4).
4. Students should comment on the materials to increase the productivity of the lesson (n=3).

5. Students can prepare them as a team project. As a result they would be involved more (n=3).
6. Students are the most important factor while choosing AVA; therefore, we should take their needs into consideration (n=2).
7. According to the topic and task we can ask students about this to motivate them and help their learning process (n=2).

Not at all received the lowest rate with 11(10.2%), followed by *little* with 12 (11.1%) teachers. Cumulative percentage for these two entries was 21.3%. 15 of the participants stated their reasons:

1. The person who chooses the material should know methodology. S/he must be able to answer the question, 'Which material are the most appropriate for our objectives?' I don't believe that learners can do this (n=6).
2. The most beneficial materials can only be chosen by instructors (n=5).
3. Students may not be knowledgeable enough (n=2).
4. Students may be involved in this selection up to a point since they may help teachers which ones will be more attractive to them (n=1).
5. Suggestions of students can work for extra materials to be used so that they would be more active (n=1).

4.2.3.3. Selecting Realia

Teachers' opinions for this item were similar to the ones stated for previous the item, the selection of AVA. 36 (33.3%) of teachers answered *partly* for this question, 24 of them stating their reasons as:

1. Students may be able to express themselves by this way (n=6).
2. Students may not find the suitable materials to match the topic (n=4).
3. Teachers should work together with students to find more effective authentic materials (n=3).
4. Students are not capable of choosing the appropriate materials (n=2).
5. Students can be asked to state their ideas about AVA and realia, but I don't think that they are conscious enough about these subjects (n=2).
6. Students should be able to state their opinions on the type of the material but further steps require more professional decisions (n=2).

7. To increase students' motivation, it should be, but the teachers mustn't be ignored (n=2).
8. Material is an important issue for students so they should be given an opportunity to be involved in the selection, but the initiative must be given to the experts of the subject (n=2).
9. As these are course/activity specific materials, students can be involved in selecting these materials under the guidance of a teacher (n=1).

Although their individual scores were lower than *partly*, *much* with 27 (25%) and *very much* with 21 (19.4%) received the highest rate with a cumulative percentage of 44.4%. 31 of those teachers expressed their reasons as follows:

1. Authentic materials help students learn the language more effectively (n=7).
2. Students should be allowed to help their teachers since it is an easy task for them (n=7).
3. Teachers must make students aware of the objectives and needs and let them help the teacher select the materials. This may prevent them from criticising us (n=6).
4. It is ideal to involve students in bringing in student generated or found materials to increase motivation and involvement, but it requires lots of free time to do this (n=4).
5. Students should comment on the materials to increase the productivity of the lesson (n=2).
6. Students feel involved in learning if they bring their own activities to the class (n=2).
7. Students will have a chance to state their opinions on materials that motivate them (n=1).
8. Teachers can help students become more active and have responsibility by assigning them to prepare such materials (n=1).
9. It increases motivation and sometimes teachers cannot predict what kind of materials will satisfy their students, so students should be let to state their preferences (n=1).

The number of teachers who answered *little* was 10 (9.3%) and *not at all* 14(13%). Cumulative percentage for these two entries was 22.3%. 17 of the participants expressed their reasons as follows:

1. Selection of realia requires professional touch (n=7).
2. General knowledge of students is not enough for preparing effective and objective-matching materials (n=6).
3. It is the teacher's job to choose materials because students are not aware enough to decide on this (n=4).

Results of the study for this question suggested that except for selection of textbooks, teachers supported learner involvement in AVA and realia. The results match with the suggestions made in the literature in terms of material selection. As it is expressed by Fenner and Newby (2000), there must be a room for freedom of choice of material for individual and group of learners to foster learner autonomy. Nunan (1999) suggests that learners can be given a greater sense of ownership and control over their learning by being encouraged to bring their own authentic data into the classroom.

4.2.4. Decisions on Time, Place and Pace of the Lesson

Fourth question in the questionnaire was investigating teachers' views on learner involvement in decisions on time, place and pace of the lesson. Time and place were considered as administrative issues by most of the participants. This consideration was assumed to be an effective factor in their answers. Table 4.5. presents the results of the study on learner involvement in decisions on the time, place and pace of the lesson.

Table 4.5. Teachers' opinions on learner involvement in decisions on time, place and pace of the lesson

ITEM NAME	SUBTITLE	NOT AT ALL		LITTLE		PARTLY		MUCH		VERY MUCH		TOTAL	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Time Place Pace	a) time	32	29,6	24	22,2	30	27,8	15	13,9	7	6,5	108	100
	b) place	42	38,9	25	23,1	24	22,2	10	9,3	7	6,5	108	100
	c) pace	10	9,3	21	19,4	35	32,4	30	27,8	12	11,1	108	100

4.2.4.1. Decisions on Time of the Lesson

56 (51.8%) participants stated that they were against learner involvement in decisions related to time by answering *not at all* (32; 29.6%) and *little* (24; 22.2%). 30 of the participants stated their reasons as follows:

1. Most of the students have a tendency to abuse the rights given to them (n=10).
2. Even we, as teachers, don't have the authority, to make decisions on this issue; I don't think students can. Also, for everyone the preferences change, so it is not possible (n=6).
3. Not feasible due to logistic and scheduling problems (n=5).
4. This decision must be given by teachers depending on the goals and objectives and the materials to be covered (n=3).
5. It may cause chaos among students, because they cannot reach a consensus (n=3).
6. They may criticise the hours due to lack of knowledge and awareness (n=2).
7. These are administrative decisions and even the teachers do not have much say, let alone students (n=1).

30 (27.8%) of teachers expressed preference of collaboration and negotiation with students by answering *partly*. 21 of them stated their reasons. While stating reasons, some of the participants referred to the time of the class while others referred to the

amount of time (duration) of classes. Reasons which refer to the time of the class were as follows:

1. Students will have different expectations (n=7).
2. It would be useful to ask students for their opinions, but we should not let students the decisions, rather a decision should be made as a result of negotiation and interaction with students (n=4).
3. Every individual has their own time for highest performance in learning (n=1).
4. We should ask their opinions, but not feasible in our system (n=1).

The teachers who referred to the amount of time (duration) of classes stated their reasons as follows:

1. Time is important for motivation, so students can determine the amount of it (n=5).
2. It is not our business to decide on how much they can concentrate on the lesson (n=1).
3. Teacher is not alone in the lesson and students are the most important elements. Timing, surrounding and the flow of the lesson may affect the students more than it does the teacher (n=1).
4. Their capacities, levels, needs determine the timing of the lesson (n=1).

Although the rate is lower, 15 (13.9%) of teachers answered *much* and 7 (6.5%) *very much* which makes 20.4% cumulatively. 13 of those teachers expressed their reasons to support their answers:

1. It would be motivating (n=4).
2. To satisfy physical needs of students (n=2).
3. Sometimes students do not want to have some classes, for example, grammar in the last two hours. They feel tired so they should decide on the time according to courses (n=2).
4. They are the ones who know the best for themselves (n=2).
5. It may increase learner participation (n=1).
6. It may increase the productivity of the lesson (n=1).
7. Having students decide on the time and place of the learning may help the development of intrinsic motivation (n=1).

4.2.4.2. Decisions on Place of the Lesson

Results, and even the reasons, of teachers' opinions on learner involvement in decisions of the place of a lesson were almost same with the previous item, time. 67 (62%) of the teachers expressed their objections against learners' having a say in the place of the lesson. 42 (38.9%) teachers responded *not at all*, and 25 (23.1%) responded *little*. 50 of the teachers wrote their reasons for choosing these entries. They were:

1. Most of the students have a tendency to abuse the rights given to them (n=11).
2. There is no alternative for this issue (n=6).
3. It is ridiculous and not practical (n=5).
4. Even we, as teachers, don't have the authority to make decisions on this issue; I don't think students can. Also, for everyone the preferences change, so it is not possible (n=5).
5. The place to study is always set in our country. I think there is no need to make too much of it (n=4).
6. Not feasible due to logistic and scheduling problems (n=4).
7. It is impossible in our condition because of administrative problems; even the teachers are not autonomous on this subject (n=4).
8. This can cause surprising results (n=4).
9. It may cause chaos among students, because they cannot reach a consensus (n=3).
10. Place is related to logistics and facilities, asking students may cause some problems. For example, if you don't have a suitable building it becomes impossible to lower the class populations (n=2).
11. It is planned by the authorities. Students do not have any chance to be involved in this decision (n=2).

24 (22.2%) of the teachers answered *partly* for the following reasons which were stated by 16 of the participants:

1. It is difficult for students to decide due to the restrictions imposed by the university (n=6).
2. Teachers cannot decide alone where the students might concentrate more (n=5).

3. Teacher is not alone in the lesson and students are the most important elements. Timing, surrounding and the flow of the lesson may affect the students more than it does the teacher (n=3).
4. Conditions are not usually appropriate for student involvement (n=2).

10 (9.3%) of the participants answered *much* and 7 (6.5%) *very much* for this question. 6 of the teachers stated reasons for this question. They were:

1. Sometimes students want to have lessons outside when the weather is good, and it should be possible (n=3).
2. It would facilitate teachers for a productive and motivating course (n=2).
3. Having students decide on the time and place of the learning may help the development of intrinsic motivation (n=1).

4.2.4.3. Decisions on Pace of the Lesson

As for the pace of the lesson, the opinions of teachers moved towards *partly*, *much* and *very much* rather than *not at all* and *little*. Compared to the previous two items, teachers were more positive to learner involvement in the pace of the lesson.

Partly had the highest frequency with 35 (32.4%). 26 of the participants expressed their reasons for choosing *partly*. Most of the teachers mentioned the importance of negotiation with learners about the pace of a lesson:

1. Pace of the lesson is an important factor. Both teaching and following the syllabus should be the teacher's responsibility, but learners should be asked for their opinions (n=7).
2. It is difficult for students to decide by themselves due to the restrictions imposed by the university (n=7).
3. Teachers cannot decide on the pace of the lesson alone, since it affects the concentration of students (n=3).
4. Some students can be slow learners, so it will be good to consider them too rather than a strict syllabus (n=2).
5. Teacher is not alone in the lesson and students are the most important elements. Timing, surrounding and the flow of the lesson may affect the students more than it does the teacher (n=2).
6. If the students cannot keep up with the pace, we already slow down (n=2).

7. Capacities, levels and needs of students should determine the pace of the lesson (n=1).
8. It depends on the syllabi. That is impossible for grammar (n=1).
9. Students should have a say on the pace of lesson in accordance with their learning pace (n=1).

Frequency of *much* and *very much* were also higher than the previous two items with 30 (27.8%) and 12 (11.1%). Cumulative percentage of these two items was 38.9% 25 of those teachers expressed that they supported learner involvement in pace of a lesson, because:

1. Pace should be decided by the students (n=5).
2. If the teacher is there to cover all the topics in the syllabus, and if students can't learn anything, what the teacher does in the class has no use (n=4).
3. It is necessary for better comprehension and internalization of the lessons (n=4).
4. The pace of the lesson should be established considering the learning styles and understanding capacities of students (n=4).
5. Individual differences should be taken into consideration (n=2).
6. Students should be asked for feedback, and pace should be adjusted based on their feedbacks (n=2).
7. It is certainly up to the students. Only they can decide when to go slowly or fast, teachers cannot present the lessons in the same pace every time (n=2).
8. Students should have a right to interfere as the teacher may not always be aware of his pace because of the obligation to keep up with the syllabus (n=2).

In contrast to previous items, *not at all* and *little* had lower frequencies with 10 (9.3%) and 21 (19.4%). 18 of the participants wrote their reasons for these two entries. They were:

1. Most of the students have a tendency to abuse the rights given to them (n=5).
2. Even we, as teachers, don't have authority, and cannot make decisions on this issue; I don't think students can. Also, for everyone the preferences change, so it is not possible (n=4).
3. If we let students participate in these kinds of decisions, we will end up with chaos (n=4).

4. Teachers have programs and syllabi to follow; students can't know the pace (n=3).
5. The topics and their length can be the only issues students should be asked about (n=1).
6. Only in exceptional situations students can decide on pace (n=1).

As it is stated by Benson (2001) and Dam (1995) accepting learners as equal partners and giving them opportunities for deciding on time, place and pace of the lesson would increase their responsibility in the learning process. This is the ideal way as it is stated by Nunan (1997) as well. However, some drawbacks in practical applications caused teachers to express their views as resistance to learner involvement in those issues. In the setting of this study, the teachers themselves do not have a say on the time and place of the lessons due to some limitations. This situation is assumed to affect the opinions of the teachers.

4.2.5. Decisions on the Choice of Learning Tasks

Teachers were asked to state their opinions about learner involvement in decisions on the choice of learning tasks in the fifth question of questionnaire. Table 4.6. presents the results related to this question.

Table 4.6. Teachers' Opinions on Learner Involvement in Decisions on the Choice of Learning Tasks

ITEM NAME	NOT AT ALL		LITTLE		PARTLY		MUCH		VERY MUCH		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Learning tasks	11	10,2	14	13	50	46,3	22	20,4	11	10,2	108	100

Results revealed that 50 (46.3%) of the teachers were for collaboration and negotiation as they responded *partly*. 38 of these participants' reasons were as follows:

1. Tasks which students like will help them participate in the lesson, but the final decision must be made by the teacher who has pedagogical knowledge (n=8).

2. Students do not have academic information about tasks. For this reason, teachers must organize the tasks, but they should consider the expectations of the students (n=6).
3. Depending on the objectives and curriculum, it seems hard to have students involved in (n=4).
4. Students may not be clear on why some tasks are performed, although they may be very effective. Tasks the students consider funny and effective would increase their motivation and participation (n=4).
5. Up to a certain degree, students can be involved, but the tasks' appropriateness should be decided by the teacher (n=4).
6. Students need to be aware of the types and strengths of each task. If they do not, they may choose only the easier ones or the ones they enjoy. They may also not know the most suitable tasks for a certain subject (n=3).
7. It requires expertise, thus students should only choose the topics (n=3).
8. Teachers should decide on it depending on the wishes of students (n=2).
9. Teacher's contribution should be at the point of negotiation of choosing the tasks (n=2).
10. Some extraordinary ideas may come up with this issue, and this may help teachers positively (n=2).

22 (20.4%) of the teachers answered *much* and 11 (10.2%) *very much* which had a cumulative percentage of 30.6%. 20 of those teachers stated their reasons as follows:

1. Students know which tasks attract them better, therefore, they should be the given right to state their ideas because if they are more successful at a specific task, they will enjoy it more (n=5).
2. Considering the interests of different students, it will be more effective (n=3).
3. Students will be motivated and feel they are important (n=3).
4. It depends on the level and needs of the students and this increases motivation (n=2).
5. It will increase student participation (n=2).
6. Students may contribute to the process of producing new ideas (n=2).
7. Students should choose them because they always ask for plausible tasks (n=1).

8. Students themselves know how they can learn better than anyone else (n=1).
9. The more students are given responsibilities the more successful they become (n=1).

11 (10.2%) teachers answered *not at all* and 14 (13%) teachers *little*. Cumulative percentage for these items was 24.2%. 14 of the participants expressed some reasons for choosing these two entries. They were:

1. Since the choice of learning tasks requires good knowledge of teaching skills, I don't think that students are capable of deciding on this issue (n=5).
2. Teacher should be the only authority for this issue (n=3).
3. Even a task which students don't enjoy may ease the learning process (n=2).
4. To achieve short term objectives successfully, very limited contribution of students can be useful (n=2).
5. They may be unable to decide on how necessary a task is (n=1).
6. They have inadequate information about it (n=1).

As it is mentioned by Littlejohn (1997) in attempting to open up facilities for autonomy in language use and self-direction in learning, learners should be given a chance for reorientation in learning tasks and activities to have initiative in a creative work. Tasks which lead to call upon the unique experiences, imagination and ideas of the learner should be preferred. It can be assumed from the results of this study that teachers had rather positive or supportive beliefs for learner involvement in learning tasks. Most of their scepticism was most probably rooting from the idea that students do not have enough knowledge about learning tasks.

4.2.6. Decisions on Methodology of the lesson

Teachers were asked to state their opinions on learner involvement in decisions related to methodological issues including individual/pair/group work, use of materials, type of classroom activities, and type of homework activities in the sixth question of the questionnaire. Overall results revealed that the majority of the teachers either expressed negotiation with learners by answering *partly* or supported learner involvement by answering *much* or *very much* in methodological subjects. Table 4.7. presents the results of the opinions of teachers for methodological issues.

Table 4.7. Teachers' Opinions on Learner Involvement in Decisions on Methodology of the Lesson

ITEM NAME	SUBTITLE	NOT AT ALL		LITTLE		PARTLY		MUCH		VERY MUCH		TOTAL	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Methodology	a) Ind./pair/group work	12	11,1	11	10,2	32	29,6	34	31,5	19	17,6	108	100
	b) Use of materials	17	15,7	15	13,9	51	47,2	19	17,6	6	5,6	108	100
	c) Type of class activities	6	5,6	16	14,8	38	35,2	41	38	7	6,5	108	100
	d) Type of homework act.	11	10,2	18	16,7	38	35,2	30	27,8	11	10,2	108	100

4.2.6.1. Decisions on Individual/Pair/Group Work

34 (31.5%) of the participants expressed their support for learner involvement in individual/pair/group work activities by answering *much*. 19 (17.6%) of teachers also stated their support by answering *very much*. 38 of those teachers expressed their reasons as follows:

1. Students may have different individual learning styles for different subjects (n=6).
2. It creates a positive atmosphere in class when student oriented program is provided, and it increases the motivation (n=6).
3. It is the student who will be active, so they should decide it (n=4).
4. Students should make the decision after a few trials because some like group work whereas others like individual work (n=4).
5. It may be the choice of students, they can state their preferences (n=3).
6. With the involvement of students, they guide the teacher to find the best way to teach, we should use that opportunity (n=3).

7. For the methodology, the involvement of the students would bring not only more motivation, but also an extended amount of success since they will do what they wanted to do (n=3).
8. The more the students are involved, the more they are interested in (n=3).
9. Students know best how they feel in different pairing activities. They should decide (n=3).
10. Students generally know what kind of individual/group pair work activities they like, so they can decide on it (n=3).

32 (29.6%) of teachers answered *partly* for the reasons stated by 23 of them as shown below:

1. Students overuse mother tongue in pair and group work activities (n=5).
2. These kinds of activities can be good opportunities for students, but the teacher should be the guide (n=4).
3. Considering the fact that each class has different student profile, individual differences should be taken into consideration, and this way we may increase student participation. However, we shouldn't ignore teacher at this point (n=4).
4. Students might feel more comfortable (n=4).
5. Although we need to address students' interest, we also need to consider what is really effective considering experience and research (n=3).
6. There should be an agreement between the teacher and the student in choosing these. Therefore, the choice should be balanced (n=3).

Not at all was answered by 12 (11.1%) of the teachers, and *little* by 11 (10.2%). Cumulative percentage of these two entries was 21.3%. 11 of teachers stated their reasons as follows:

1. This is an unpredictable thing. Students cannot make decisions (n=3).
2. If the teacher is mature and experienced enough to handle the lesson, there will be no need for learners to be involved in any decision (n=2).
3. Students generally choose the easiest way without knowing which is useful (n=2).
4. Tasks determine these methods; neither does the teacher, nor the students (n=1).

5. Students do not have much idea about this issue. It would be risky (n=1).
6. Personality of a student has something to do with the type of the activity (n=1).
7. Teachers as professionals should take the responsibility in such areas. Students without the educational training and background would be ill-equipped to contribute in any valid way (n=1).

4.2.6.2. Decisions on Use of Materials

51 (47.2%) of teachers answered *partly* for this item. 38 of the participants wrote their reasons for choosing partly. They were:

1. Students are unfamiliar with the material (n=10).
2. Students should be a part of the decision making process since they are the keys to education. They should have a right to decide the things that happen in the class (n=7).
3. Although the teacher can make the most suitable decisions, opinions of students should be asked occasionally (n=5).
4. Students are not really knowledgeable about how to use materials in class (n=4).
5. Students can be asked about this issue in a needs analysis process (n=3).
6. Objectives of the course should be the basic indicator of this. If students are given a chance to express their ideas, it may increase their performance (n=3).
7. Although we need to address students' interests, we also need to consider what is really effective considering experience and research (n=2).
8. There should be an agreement between the teacher and the student in choosing these. Therefore, the choice should be balanced (n=2).
9. Teachers should determine the use of materials according to the requirements of students (n=2).

Much was chosen by 19 (17.6%), and *very much* by 6 (5.6%) participants. Cumulative percentage for these two entries was 23.2%. 16 of the teachers wrote their reasons for their choices. Following list presents their reasons.

1. Some materials you have prepared may not work out, you must ask the opinions of students (n=5).

2. The involvement of students, would guide the teacher to find the best way to teach. We should use that opportunity (n=4).
3. For the methodology, the involvement of the students would bring not only more motivation, but also an extended amount of success since they will do what they wanted to do (n=3).
4. Students know their style and strategies best (n=2).
5. The more the students are involved, the more they are interested in. (n=1).
6. Students must be aware of what and how to use materials and activities (n=1).

The number of the teachers who responded *not at all* was 17 (15.7%). The number of teachers who responded *little* was 15 (13.9%). Cumulative percentage for *not at all* and *little* was 23.2%. 22 of teachers stated their reasons for choosing these entries:

1. If the teacher is mature and experienced enough to handle the lesson, there will be no need for learner to be involved in any decision (n=8).
2. Students don't know what will be beneficial to them (n=4).
3. Students are not able to judge the material (n=2).
4. Students should have a chance to decide on use of materials but they do not have enough knowledge (n=2).
5. As students do not know methodology, they cannot be involved in this (n=2).
6. Teachers should make use of their knowledge here (n=2).
7. Teachers as professionals should take the responsibility in such areas. Students without the educational training and background would be ill-equipped to contribute in any valid way (n=2).

4.2.6.3. Decisions on Type of Classroom Activities

Third item of the methodology question in the questionnaire was about the type of classroom activities. 41 (38%) of the participants expressed their support for this item by answering *much*. Rate of *very much* for this item was 7 (6.5%). Cumulative percentage for these two entries was 44.5%. 38 of teachers stated their reasons as follows:

1. If our aim is teaching in an enjoyable way, students should have the choice (n=8).
2. Motivation will be high and there are individual differences (n=7).

3. Some brilliant ideas may come out from the students (n=5).
4. The involvement of students would guide the teacher to find the best way to teach. We should use that opportunity (n=5).
5. For the methodology, the involvement of the students would bring not only more motivation, but also an extended amount of success since they will do what they wanted to do (n=4).
6. Styles of students should be matched with the activities (n=3).
7. Students know their styles and strategies best (n=2).
8. The more the students are involved, the more they are interested in (n=2).
9. Students must be aware of what and how to use the materials and activities (n=2).

Although not as high as *much*, the number of teachers who responded *partly* was also high; 38 (35.2%). 29 of the participants wrote their reasons for their choices. They were:

1. After a while most preferred activities will be dominant, and it may decrease variety (n=7).
2. Students should be a part of the decision making process since they are the keys to education. They should have a right to decide things that will happen in the class (n=6).
3. Teachers should consider their interests of students as well (n=4).
4. Objectives of the course should be the basic indicator of this. If students are given a chance to express their ideas, it may increase their performance (n=4).
5. After mentioning some alternatives, students can be asked to choose one or more activity. So they feel an ownership of the activity (n=4).
6. Although we need to address students' interest, we also need to consider what is really effective considering experience and research (n=2).
7. There should be an agreement between the teacher and the student in choosing these. Therefore, the choice should be balanced (n=2).

The number of teachers who responded *not at all* was the lowest with 6 (5.6%). The number of teachers who responded *little* was 16 (14.8%). Cumulative percentage for *not at all* and *little* was 20.4%. 14 of the teachers stated their reasons for answering *not at all* and *little*:

1. If the teacher is mature and experienced enough to handle the lesson, there won't be need for learner to be involved in any decision (n=8).
2. Students do not know what will be beneficial to them (n=2).
3. This can be productive but students are not knowledgeable enough (n=1).
4. Students can contribute to these only by suggestions (n=1).
5. The teacher must keep the control. He knows what is best for the students (n=1).
6. Teachers as professionals should take the responsibility in such areas. Students without the educational training and background would be ill-equipped to contribute in any valid way (n=1).

4.2.6.4. Decisions on Type of Homework Activities

The last item of the methodology question was investigating the beliefs of teachers on learner involvement in decisions on type of homework activities. 38 (35.2%) teachers stated that learners should be *partly* involved in decisions related to homework activities. 27 of the teachers stated their reasons for their choices as follows:

1. Students should be a part of the decision making process since they are the keys to education. They should have a right to decide the things that happen in the class (n=10).
2. Teachers should take the initiative for homework activities (n=8).
3. Although we need to address student interest, we also need to consider what is really effective considering experience and research (n=5).
4. Students do not like homework, so it is not a good idea to involve them in this issue (n=3).
5. Ideas of students can be asked, but they are not knowledgeable enough (n=1).

30 (27.8) of the teachers responded *much*, and 11 (10.2%) *very much*. The results show that 38% of the teachers supported learners to participate in decision-making process of homework activities. 29 of the participants wrote their reasons for choosing *much* and *very much*. They were:

1. Homework must be present, but type can be decided by students (n=9).
2. Asking students to express their ideas may help us create a relaxing environment (n=7).

3. If we ask the opinions of students, they will do the homework willingly, and this will increase the rate of learning (n=6).
4. Students can have more freedom, as it is extra activity and students can be more independent here (n=4).
5. It creates a positive atmosphere in class when student oriented program is provided, and it increases the motivation (n=2).
6. Their style should match with the type of homework (n=1).

Teachers who expressed a resistance to learner involvement in decision of homework activities consisted 26.9% of total with 11 (10.2%) *not at all* and 18 (16.7%) *little*. 17 teachers wrote reasons for choosing these two entries:

1. Most of the students hate homework, so if we give them chance to decide, they will not do any homework (n=9).
2. Students do not know what kind of homework may help them (n=3).
3. Teachers know the best homework as they teach the subject (n=2).
4. May be the topics of homework can be chosen by the students, but the type of homework must be decided by the teacher (n=1).
5. Homework should be compatible with the given objectives. Thus, the authority must be the teacher (n=1).
6. Teachers as professionals should take the responsibility in such areas. Students without the educational training and background would be ill-equipped to contribute in any valid way (n=1).

Overall results of the study indicated that the majority of teachers responded, *partly* or *much*, for learner involvement in deciding methodological issues. Studies in literature suggest the importance of methodological aspects for promotion of learner autonomy. Benson (2001), Nunan (1999) and Dam (1995) express the importance of pair/group work rather than individual work to encourage interaction and interdependence to foster learner autonomy. However, it is stated that learners are given limited control of these activities in practice. Use of materials and type of homework activities are the other issues that are suggested to require learner involvement. As it was suggested by the participants of this study in their reasons, 'since they are the ones who are learning, they should know what they need best.' It was proposed in the literature that involving learners in such decisions provide them choice of different

approaches and understandings to foster learner autonomy (Fenner and Newby, 2000). It can be concluded from the findings of the present study that, just like the previous items, practical applications of the teachers shape their beliefs for methodological issues. Although some of them stated their support for learner autonomy, due to the problems of feasibility, they answered *not at all*, *little* or *partly* in the questionnaire.

4.2.7. Decisions on Classroom Management

Seventh question in the questionnaire was investigating teachers' opinions on learner involvement in decisions on classroom management. It had three sub questions including position of desks, seating of students and discipline matters. Table 4.8. shows the results of these three items.

Table 4.8. Teachers' Opinions on Learner Involvement in Decisions on Classroom Management

ITEM NAME	SUBTITLE	NOT AT ALL		LITTLE		PARTLY		MUCH		VERY MUCH		TOTAL	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Classroom Management	a) position of desks	10	9,3	8	7,4	29	26,9	39	36,1	22	20,4	108	100
	b) seating of students	6	5,6	4	3,7	32	29,6	36	33,3	30	27,8	108	100
	c) discipline matters	23	21,3	17	15,7	38	35,2	23	21,3	7	6,5	108	100

4.2.7.1. Decisions on Position of Desks

The majority of teachers expressed that learners should make their own decisions in position of desks. The number of the teachers who responded *much* was the highest with 39 (36.1%). 22 (20.4%) of the teachers responded *very much*. Thus, cumulative percentage for these two entries was 56.5%. Most of the teachers mentioned about the comfort of students in their learning environment in the reasons for their choices. The

following list presents the reasons written by 48 of the teachers who responded *much* and *very much*:

1. However way students feel relaxed, they can sit that way (n=13).
2. Relaxed atmosphere and comfort are essential for learning (n=9).
3. It is practical and brings change in atmosphere (n=7).
4. Students need to be able to see the board, teacher, materials and other students comfortably (n=5).
5. To get the ultimate benefit from the lesson, students can also make decisions (n=4).
6. Students may have problems such as vision, so they must decide (n=4).
7. Students should sit in the position they feel most comfortable and with the student they can study well (n=3).
8. There is no need for the teacher to decide (n=3).

29 (26.9%) of the teachers responded *partly* stating that this issue affects both teachers and students. 20 of the participants wrote their reasons for choosing this entry. They were:

1. The position of desks may affect both students and teachers (n=4).
2. Because our classes are in a standard shape, there is no much need for student involvement (n=4).
3. Students must feel comfortable (n=3).
4. This issue affects both teachers and students. It is not feasible for some of our classrooms (n=3).
5. Teacher sometimes asks for help from students (n=3).
6. Classroom management should always be successful since a failure in this management would lead to serious problems in the class (n=3).

As it is understood from their reasons teachers who had some uncertainties on classroom management answered *not at all* and *little* with the frequencies of 10 (9.3%) and 8 (7.4%) respectively. Cumulative percentage for these two entries was 16.7%. 13 of teachers wrote reasons for their choices. They were:

1. Since our students do not have the ability to decide on these kinds of things, teachers should decide on this (n=6).
2. Students do not have much idea about this issue (n=2).

3. Students can easily abuse it (n=1).
4. Students may choose the positions which are appropriate for cheating and talking too much with their friends (n=1).
5. There is no situation for their choice (n=1).
6. Activity should determine this. Pair or group works may affect the position of desks (n=1).
7. Classroom management will be difficult (n=1).

4.2.7.2. Decisions on Seating of Students

Results and reasons for the answers given to seating of students exhibited a close similarity with the ones for the previous item, position of desks. 36 (33.3%) of the teachers answered *much* with the highest rate, and 30 (27.8%) *very much* which had a cumulative percentage of 61.1%. 47 of the teachers stated their reasons for choosing these two entries. They were:

1. However way students feel relaxed, they can sit that way (n=13).
2. It is important for concentration of students while listening to teacher and looking at the board (n=10).
3. The more relaxed students feel, the better the teaching and learning would be (n=10).
4. Students need to be able to see the board, teacher, materials and other students comfortably (n=4).
5. To get the ultimate benefit from the lesson, they can also make decisions (n=2).
6. Teachers should respect their choice so they will feel themselves more important (n=2).
7. Every student should be able to sit wherever s/he wants (n=2).
8. Students can arrange them by themselves (n=1).
9. Students should sit in the position they feel most comfortable and with the student they can study well (n=1).
10. Students can sit wherever or with whoever they want (n=1).
11. There is no need for the teacher to decide (n=1).

Partly was answered by 32 (29.6%) of the participants for the following reasons stated by 22 of participants.

1. As long as students keep themselves under control, they may be free to sit the wherever they want to (n=6).
2. Students should have right to state opinions, but teacher must have the control (n=5).
3. Especially for some activities, teacher should decide on the seating (n=4).
4. Activities decide on such issues, but students should be given a chance to choose their partners for activities (n=2).
5. Students must feel comfortable (n=2).
6. Classroom management should always be successful since a failure in this management would lead to serious problems in the class (n=1).
7. Students usually choose their best friends to work with in the class. But some of them tend to have a group to talk (n=1).
8. Mostly students dictate this as they already sit whomever they want to sit with (n=1).

Frequencies of the teachers who answered *not at all* and *little* were lower than the previous item. 6 (5.6%) of the participants answered *not at all* and 4 (3.7%) *little*. Total percentage for these two entries was 9.3%. 5 teachers stated some reasons for this item. They were:

1. Since our students do not have the ability to decide on these kinds of things, we shouldn't ask them (n=2).
2. Students can easily abuse it (n=1).
3. Students may choose the positions which are appropriate for cheating and talking too much with their friends (n=1).
4. It is important but students are not the ones to decide on this (n=1).

4.2.7.3. Decisions on Discipline Matters

Results of the study revealed that some teachers favoured negotiation for discipline matters, whereas others expressed more authoritative preferences. 38 (35.2%) of the teachers expressed that students should be *partly* involved in discipline matters. 31 of teachers expressed their reasons. In most of the reasons, teachers suggested that

the decision of disciplinary issues should be made together with the students. Following list presents the reasons.

1. If teachers decide on discipline matters together by discussing the rationale behind it, learners will obey the rules easily without any problem (n=10).
2. Too much flexibility may cause some discipline problems, so students should not primarily decide on this issue (n=6).
3. Rules should be discussed and set together with the students. This may help teachers overcome some problematic situations (n=6).
4. Teacher is the dominant character in this matter (n=3).
5. It is mostly related to the teacher. Teacher has to protect the rights of other students in class (n=3).
6. They can be emotional, too empathic and subjective, since it regards them. But some complaints should be taken into consideration (n=1).
7. There are some general rules to abide by. Except for these, teachers and students can reach a consensus (n=1).
8. If they have self-discipline this will be reflected to the general atmosphere of the class (n=1).

The number of teachers who answered *much* and *very much* were 23 (21.3%) and 7 (6.5%), respectively which was 27.8% cumulatively. 21 of those teachers stated reasons. They were:

1. Students must know that they are a sample of community. One single matter affects the whole. To gain awareness about social matters and feel responsible with discipline matters, this must be discussed together in a democratic atmosphere (n=19).
2. If students describe the best learning environment for themselves, that would determine the discipline matters automatically. Still, the teacher should define the lines and limits (n=2).

Rates of the participants who answered *not at all* and *little* were higher than that of previous items with 23 (21.3%) and 17 (15.7%) which made 37%. 30 of the teachers expressed reasons for these preferences. Most of these reasons were similar. They were:

1. Turkish students are not educated on this matter. They don't know what works better (n=13).

2. Students will use it for their own benefits, it might be abused (n=5).
3. Initiative of teacher is important; rules must be imposed on them (n=4).
4. It is difficult to find rules that make every single student happy. Therefore, teachers should apply the existing rules strictly (n=3).
5. We have crowded classes, and some repeat students cause much of the problems. If you ask them, it may cause chaos, so the teacher should decide (n=2).
6. Discipline matters are the general policies of the school. So the students should not be involved (n=1).
7. There should be a democratic environment but the authority must be the teacher (n=1).
8. Students should know the rights & freedom of everybody in the group but many times they do not (n=1).

Teachers in a traditional teaching environment were the authority. They were the ones who made the decisions on the teaching and learning process. However, in contemporary learner-centred approaches, this role has shifted to a more humanistic and learner centred understandings such as facilitator, negotiator and helper. Discipline matters are among the issues in which these characteristics have an active role to promote learner autonomy. As it is proposed by Voller (1997), teachers should negotiate with learners in the establishment of rules to help them develop responsibility of their own to cope with disciplinary matters. Some of the participants of the study expressed their reasons within the same point of view with Voller as, 'If we decide on discipline matters together by discussing the rationale behind them, learners will obey the rules easily without any problem.'

4.2.8. Decisions on Record-keeping

Eighth question in the questionnaire was about teachers' opinions on learner involvement in decisions on record-keeping. It had three sub questions as 'of work done', 'of marks gained', and 'attendance'. Table 4.9. presents the results for this question.

Table. 4.9. Teachers' Opinions on Learner Involvement in Decisions on Record-keeping

ITEM NAME	SUBTITLE	NOT AT ALL		LITTLE		PARTLY		MUCH		VERY MUCH		TOTAL	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Record keeping	a) of work done	19	17,6	18	16,7	21	19,4	25	23,1	25	23,1	108	100
	b) of marks gained	24	22,2	19	17,6	16	14,8	27	25	22	20,4	108	100
	c) attendance	22	20,4	17	15,7	17	15,7	25	23,1	27	25	108	100

4.2.8.1. Decisions on Record-keeping of Work Done

25 (23.1%) of teachers responded *much* and 25 (23.1%) responded *very much* for this question with a cumulative percentage of 46.2%. 36 of the participants stated their reasons for answering these two entries. Teachers supported their answers with the following reasons, most of them focusing on the 'responsibility' of students:

1. Taking responsibility of such issues is an important aspect of learner autonomy (n=21).
2. It will affect the intrinsic motivation of students for their lessons (n=5).
3. Students must learn to pursue their own records. In order not to complain all the time and to take the responsibility, they must be involved in these issues (n=4).
4. Students should keep journals or portfolios to see their progress (n=2).
5. It will increase participation in decision making (n=2).
6. They would produce more and they would feel safe (n=1).
7. If students keep records of these, it will help them decide if they want to do these or not (n=1).

21 (19.4 %) teachers responded *partly*. 13 of the participants stated reasons for this question. They were:

1. If students know its importance, they can keep a record, but they usually do not care (n=9).
2. Too much flexibility and learner autonomy can violate the efficiency of education (n=2).
3. Both teacher and students should be responsible for this (n=2).

From the reasons teachers stated for *not at all* and *little*, it can be deduced that the teachers interpreted this question as students being the only ones responsible to keep a record of their performance, whereas teachers would not do anything about this. The number of teachers who responded *not at all* and *little* were 19 (17.6%) and 18 (16.7%) respectively with a cumulative percentage of 34.3%. 26 of the participants wrote their reasons for these two entries. Their reasons for these preferences were:

1. This is the responsibility of teachers (n=13).
2. It is not practical (n=5).
3. These are the official documents and institutional aspects. Students should not be involved (n=4).
4. I am afraid I would not trust students at all. They will not be honest (n=2).
5. I do not think students would consider the importance of these issues (n=1).
6. They cannot be involved in written records but they can express their ideas orally (n=1).

4.2.8.2. Decisions on Record-keeping of Marks Gained

27 (25%) teachers responded *much* and 22 (20.4%) *very much* for this question. Cumulative percentage for these two entries was 49.4%. 37 participants who chose these two entries wrote reasons. They were:

1. Being involved in such decisions will make students more responsible about their duties (n=18).
2. It will affect the motivation of students (n=6).
3. Students should be able to see the marks for each lesson. However, if the class wants the marks not to be made public, they can be announced privately (n=4).
4. It is good for responsibility but there should be a control mechanism (n=2).

5. Students should record their marks. This way, they can catch the probable mistakes made by teacher about their marks, and they can have them corrected (n=2).
6. It will increase participation in decision making (n=2).
7. This is their free choice; whether keeping a record or not should be the responsibility of students (n=1).
8. Teachers keep a record of the marks. Students should do the same to know how they are doing in the course (n=1).
9. If they keep a record of these, it is helpful for them so they should decide if they want to do these or not (n=1).

Partly was answered by 16 (14.8%) teachers, 9 of whom stated the reasons as follows:

1. If students know its importance, they can keep a record, but they usually do not care about this (n=4).
2. Too much flexibility and learner autonomy can violate the efficiency of education (n=2).
3. I do not see any difference between students' or the system's keeping the records. For most of the students, process is not important; but the result is (n=2).
4. Sometimes students should have a say on marks such as which homework should be assessed (n=1).

21 (22.2%) teachers responded *not at all* and 19 (17.6%) *little* for this question. Cumulative percentage for these two entries was 39.8%. 29 teachers who chose these two entries expressed their reasons. Teachers expressed their hesitation in the reasons as follows:

1. This is the responsibility of the teacher (n=10).
2. It requires a maximum responsibility; students should not be given this responsibility (n=7).
3. These are the official documents and students should not be involved (n=5).
4. Teacher's authority can be limited by this way, and it can cause chaos in the system (n=3).
5. I am afraid I would not trust students at all (n=2).

6. These are institutional matters; there is a system and doers of these things. There is no need for adventures (n=2).

4.2.8.3. Decisions on Record-keeping of Attendance

Last sub item in the eighth question was about keeping records of attendance. Compared to previous questions, frequencies were closer to each other for this item.

27 (25%) of participants answered *very much* and 25 (23.1%) participants answered *much*. Cumulative percentage for these two entries was 48.1%. Reasons stated by 35 of the participants for these two entries were:

1. Being involved in such decisions will make students responsible for caring about their duties, especially for the ones who are obliged to attend classes regularly (n=22).
2. It will affect student motivation (n=6).
3. Students must learn to pursue their own records. In order not to complain all the time and feel the responsibility, they must be involved in these issues (n=4).
4. Students should see clearly the limits and try not to exceed them (n=3).

22 (20.4%) teachers answered *not at all* and 17 (15.7%) answered *little* with a cumulative percentage of 36.1%. The following reasons were expressed by 29 of the participants who chose these two entries.

1. This is the responsibility of the teacher. Most students cannot overcome this issue (n=13).
2. Even teachers have no say about this issue, system keeps the records. This is more objective (n=6).
3. It is not practical (n=4).
4. If you let students decide on attendance, none of them would be at school (n=2).
5. These are the official documents and students should not be involved (n=2).
6. I am afraid I would not trust students at all (n=2).

17 (15.7%) participants answered *partly* because of the following reasons stated by 13 of the participants:

1. If students know its importance, they can keep a record, but they do not care about this until the end of the semester when attendance record is announced (n=8).
2. As long as they are honest in their records, either they or the teacher can keep the records of attendance, however, they may abuse this sometimes (n=3).
3. Too much flexibility and learner autonomy can violate the efficiency of education (n=2).

Considering the overall results of the study for record-keeping it can be seen that the most frequent responses were *partly* and *much*. This finding suggests that most of the teachers have at least a degree of understanding and belief of learner involvement in keeping records of achievement and attendance. However, approximately 30% of the teachers stated their hesitations on these issues. Their opinions seem to be affected from the misunderstanding that these issues would be left to the complete responsibility of students. Moreover, the teachers were afraid of losing their authority in the class. However, studies argue against these hesitations. Benson (2001) suggests that learners should be encouraged to keep records of their own progress to gain responsibility for their own progress and develop self-reflection capacity. Özdere (2005) states that if the learners are fostered to keep their own records, it will develop their feeling of honesty as well as their responsibility. Distrust of some teachers against the learners should not be a barrier for their positive beliefs of encouraging the learners to keep records of their own performances.

4.2.9. Decisions on Homework Tasks

Ninth question in the questionnaire investigated teachers' opinions on learner involvement in homework tasks including, 'quantity', 'type' and 'frequency' of homework. Overall results of this question are presented in table 4.10. below:

Table 4.10. Teachers' Opinions on Learner Involvement in Decisions on Homework Tasks

ITEM NAME	SUBTITLE	NOT AT ALL		LITTLE		PARTLY		MUCH		VERY MUCH		TOTAL	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Homework Tasks	a) quantity	19	17,6	23	21,3	39	36,1	23	21,3	4	3,7	108	100
	b) type	11	10,2	17	15,7	37	34,3	30	27,8	13	12	108	100
	c) frequency	17	15,7	25	23,1	39	36,1	21	19,4	6	5,6	108	100

4.2.9.1. Decisions on Quantity of Homework Tasks

39 (36.1%) teachers answered *partly* for this item, 28 of the participants expressed their reasons. They were:

1. Students and teachers should meet on a common ground so that students are not overwhelmed by homework. Negotiation is needed (n=15).
2. Overburdening students with homework may distress them. Teachers should ask their opinions and then make our decisions (n=6).
3. We can ask for their opinions, but it is open to abuse (n=3).
4. For them, homework may not be necessary sometimes (n=2).
5. Student may not be aware what s/he needs, how much s/he needs (n=2).

23 (21.3%) teachers stated that students should be *much* involved in decisions on quantity of homework. The number of teachers who answered *very much* for this item was 4 (3.7%). Cumulative percentage of *much* and *very much* was 25%. 17 teachers stated their reasons for these choices. They were:

1. In order not to demotivate the students and not have an unproductive process teachers should ask students for their opinions (n=6).
2. Students are aware of how much homework is enough for them (n=4).
3. They are the ones to carry out these tasks, thus, they should be a part of this process as much as they could be (n=3).

4. They might have many other assignments, so students can be asked about the quantity and let them decide (n=2).
5. It affects the quality of work done (n=1).
6. It will be useful to have them gain responsibility as a student (n=1).

As for *not at all* and *little*, the number of teachers who responded *not at all* was 19 (17.6%) and *little* 23 (21.3%). Cumulative percentage for these two items was 38.9%. 28 of the teachers expressed their reasons for these two entries as follows:

1. Teacher knows the quantity of homework better. He/she should decide (n=9).
2. Students may abuse this, but we can give them chance of choice (n=6).
3. Students may be limited with time restrictions, and they may not find the time to cope with too much homework (n=3).
4. They will not be able to understand the goals of the homework (n=3).
5. Students cannot know how much homework they should be involved in (n=2).
6. Students tend to be easy going, so they still need to be pushed (n=2).
7. Teachers should set the minimum and maximum limits and students can move within these limits (n=1).
8. Students will ask for less homework (n=1).
9. Students would be subjective and not consider educational purposes (n=1).

4.2.9.2. Decisions on Type of Homework Tasks

Teachers expressed rather positive opinions for the type of homework tasks, compared to previous item, quantity of homework. 37 (34.3%) teachers answered *partly*, 28 of them stating the reasons as:

1. Due to the fact that each student has different interests, they can prefer different types of homework (n=11).
2. Students should be asked to state their opinions in order not to get bored, and teacher should make final decision with regard to these opinions (n=9).
3. The type of homework should be decided by the teacher (n=4).
4. Students may not be aware what they need, how much they need (n=2).
5. Students generally want easy and fun types of homework (n=2).

30 (27.8%) teachers answered *much* and 13 (12%) *very much*. Cumulative percentage for these two entries was 39.8%. 31 of the participants stated their reasons for these choices. They were:

1. If students are given homework types they enjoy then, their efforts can be affected positively (n=11).
2. If they choose the type, they will have higher motivation, and homework will not become painful and boring (n=6).
3. They could design their homework types according to their interests (n=4).
4. They are the ones to carry out these tasks, thus, they should be a part of this process as much as they could be (n=3).
5. If teachers manage to raise their consciousness level, students will have contributions naturally. Moreover, they will be able to understand that homework is not a punishment, but a necessary process for learning (n=3).
6. It will be useful to have students take responsibility and fun as a student (n=2).
7. Students must be free to choose the type provided that it serves the aim of the homework (n=2).

The number of teachers who responded *not at all* and *little* were lower than that of the previous item with 11 (10.2%) and 17 (15.7%) respectively which had a cumulative percentage of 25.9%. 20 of the participants wrote reasons for their choices. They were:

1. Students may abuse this; we can provide choices in type (n=4).
2. This is something related with methodology, students cannot decide (n=4).
3. I do not think they can understand the aim of homework, because they usually have prejudices against homework (n=3).
4. Teacher knows this issue better (n=3).
5. Type of homework is determined by the topic mostly. Suggestions might add variety (n=2).
6. If we involve them in the decisions, they will ask for the easiest type (n=2).
7. Students do not have much knowledge on objectives and goals (n=2).

4.2.9.3. Decisions on Frequency of Homework Tasks

Partly received the most frequent response answered entry with 39 (36.1%) for this question. Reasons which were stated by 37 participants for this were:

1. Flexibility for the frequency of homework may affect them positively (n=12).
2. Teachers should ask the ideas of students considering their work load, but teachers should make the decisions (n=8).
3. Teachers should take the overwhelming weeks into consideration (n=5).
4. Too often or rare frequencies of homework may not be effective, teachers must have a consensus with learners considering the difficulty of the topics (n=4).
5. It is defined by the curriculum beforehand. Students can inform the teacher about curriculum of other courses. Teacher would consider them as well (n=4).
6. Too much homework may lead students withdrawing from the learning process, too little homework would slow down the process (n=4).

Frequencies of *much* with 21 (19.4%) and *very much* with 6 (5.6%), which was 25% cumulatively, were lower than the previous two items. 16 of the participants wrote their reasons. Teachers' reasons for these two entries were:

1. Since homework is given to support learning, students should have a chance to decide on time in order not to get bored (n=4).
2. Students can be bored if they are given homework frequently (n=3).
3. Students are the ones to carry out these tasks, thus, they should be in this process as much as they could be (n=2).
4. Students should be given a chance to arrange their schedules (n=2).
5. It affects the quality of work done (n=2).
6. If teachers manage to raise consciousness level of students, they will have contributions naturally. Moreover, they will be able to understand that homework is not a punishment, but a necessary process for learning (n=1).
7. Each student may need different amount of time to do homework (n=1).
8. Students should be able to identify the frequency of homework according to their own performance and needs (n=1).

17 (15.7%) teachers answered *not at all*. Percentage of the ones who answered *little* was the second highest among all of the items in the questionnaire with 25

(23.1%). Cumulative percentage for *not at all* and *little* was 38.8%. 27 of teachers expressed their reasons for these opinions as follows:

1. The instructor should decide. There is a syllabus to follow (n=7).
2. Students cannot decide on which subject needs to be practiced. This depends on the topic (n=6).
3. Although it is useful, students will not want to be given homework very frequently (n=4).
4. The teacher can observe the needs of students and can decide on the frequency of homework considering their needs (n=4).
5. We as teachers know how to use homework most effectively (n=4).
6. Students would be subjective and not consider educational purposes (n=2).

4.2.10. Decisions on What is to be Learned from Materials

Tenth question in the questionnaire was investigating teachers' opinions on learner involvement in deciding what is to be learned from the materials given by teacher. This question had three sub questions including 'texts', 'Audio-visual aids (AVA)' and 'realia'. More teachers answered *partly* when compared to the other responses for all of these items. Table 4.11. presents the findings that are related to tenth question.

Table 4.11. Teachers' Opinions on Learner Involvement in Decisions on what is to be Learned from Materials

ITEM NAME	SUBTITLE	NOT AT ALL		LITTLE		PARTLY		MUCH		VERY MUCH		TOTAL	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
What is to be learned from materials	a) texts	16	14,8	27	25	34	31,5	22	20,4	9	8,3	108	100
	b) AVA	15	13,9	20	18,5	34	31,5	29	26,9	10	9,3	108	100
	c) realia	15	13,9	21	19,4	33	30,6	28	25,9	11	10,2	108	100

4.2.10.1. Decisions on What is to Be Learned from Texts

34 (31.5%) teachers answered *partly* for this question. 23 of the participants stated their reasons for answering this entry as follows:

1. Students should be able to decide on what to learn from texts under the guidance of teachers (n=12).
2. Students should be given the opportunity to make such explanations considering the objectives of the lesson (n=4).
3. The aim should be to increase learner awareness (n=3).
4. It requires a professional to see the pedagogical implications (n=2).
5. These are the materials used by the teacher depending on the method s/he uses. According to the phase of the lesson, teacher should decide, of course, based on the needs of students (n=2).

Not at all was preferred by 16 (14.8%) teachers, and *little* by 27 (25%). Cumulative percentage of these two entries was 39.8%. 28 teachers specified their reasons for choosing these two items as follows:

1. These are the issues a teacher, the professional, must think about (n=10).
2. Teachers are the authority, and they already consider student needs (n=5).
3. Only content can be decided by the students, not the language level (n=3).
4. Objectives of the course are major identifiers. If we give students the right to make decisions on objectives, they should have a chance to comment on the texts, but we do not give them any right (n=2).
5. Students' lack of knowledge would lead them to make preferences in accordance with their interests only (n=2).
6. Students should state their opinions to help teacher make a reflection, but it should be the teacher's decision whether to change something or not (n=2).
7. Things to be learned are usually predetermined points in lesson plans. Also, all materials are chosen according to lesson plans. If students have anything extra they want to offer, they can share them (n=2).
8. Students would lack competence in such decisions (n=2).

22 (20.4%) teachers answered *much* whereas 9 (8.3%) answered *very much* for this question. Cumulative percentage for these two items was 28.7%. 20 of the participants stated reasons. Their reasons for choosing *much* and *very much* were:

1. Teachers should think the needs and interests of students. If they appeal to their needs, we can create optimum learning conditions for them (n=16).
2. It will be a good idea to give students a chance to develop critical thinking and what is useful or not (n=2).
3. It will be useful for consciousness-raising (n=1).
4. It changes according to each student's learning style but it is important to ask students (n=1).

4.2.10.2. Decisions on What is to Be Learned from AVA

34 (31.5%) teachers answered *partly*, and the reasons, were expressed by 24 of the participants, listed below:

1. Students should be able to decide on what to learn from AVA under the guidance of a teacher (n=7).
2. Students will all decide on a popular AVA; and if they decide, they will enjoy it. (n=4).
3. Students should be given an opportunity to make such requests considering the objectives of the lesson (n=4).
4. Students should state their opinions but we should not forget the goals and objectives of the course (n=3).
5. The aim should be to increase learner awareness (n=3).
6. It requires a professional to see the pedagogical implications (n=2).
7. These are the materials used by the teacher depending on the method s/he uses. According to the phase of the lesson, teacher should decide, of course, based on the needs of students (n=1).

Much had the second highest frequency with 29 (26.9%). *Very much* was preferred by 10 (9.3%) teachers. These two entries had a cumulative percentage of 36.2%. 22 teachers expressed reasons for their answers. They were:

1. Students can create their own materials and feel involved (n=8).
2. Teachers should think about the needs and interests of students. If they appeal to their needs, we can create optimum learning conditions for them (n=5).
3. It will be a good idea to give them a chance to develop critical thinking and what is useful or not (n=4).

4. It can be useful for consciousness-raising of students (n=3).
5. It changes according to each student's learning style but it is important to ask students (n=2).

15 (13.9%) teachers answered *not at all* and 20 (18.5%) *little*. 21 of them stated their reasons:

1. Teachers are the authority. These are the issues a teacher must think about (n=11).
2. Objectives of the course are major identifiers here. If we give them the right to make decisions on objectives, they should have a chance to comment on the texts, but we do not give them any right (n=5).
3. Students' lack of knowledge would lead them to make preferences in accordance with their interests only (n=2).
4. There should be a negotiation between the teacher and students. Objectives of the course and interests of students should match (n=1).
5. Things to be learned are usually predetermined points in lesson plans. Also, all materials are chosen according to lesson plans. If students have anything extra they want to offer, they can share them (n=1).
6. Students would lack competence in such decisions (n=1).

4.2.10.3. Decisions on What is to Be Learned from Realia

Partly had the highest frequency with 33 (30.6%). 21 of teachers expressed their reasons for choosing *partly* as follows:

1. Students should make their decisions, but they should be informed about what is meant by realia by the teacher (n=6).
2. Students should state their opinions but we should not forget the goals and objectives of the course (n=5).
3. The aim should be to increase learner awareness (n=3).
4. It requires a professional to see the pedagogical implications (n=3).
5. These are the materials used by the teacher depending on the method s/he uses. According to the phase of the lesson, teacher should decide, of course, based on the needs of students (n=2).

6. Students may benefit from these kinds of materials individually according to their needs (n=2).

28 (25.9%) teachers answered *much* and 11 (10.2%) *very much* for this question. Cumulative percentage of these two entries was 36.1%. Reasons which were stated by 23 teachers for these choices were:

1. Teachers should think the needs and interests of students. If they appeal to their needs, we can create optimum learning conditions for them (n=10).
2. It will be a good idea to give students a chance to decide what is useful for them and to develop their critical thinking skills (n=5).
3. It is important for students to feel involved (n=5).
4. It changes according to each student's learning style but it is important to ask students (n=3).

Not at all received responses from 15 (13.9%) teachers, and *little* from 21 (19.4%). Cumulative percentage of these two entries was 33.3%. 19 teachers expressed their reasons for these two items as follows:

1. This is a professional decision. These are the issues a teacher must think about (n=12).
2. Students do not have enough information about realia as a course material (n=4).
3. Things to be learned are usually predetermined points in lesson plans. Also, all materials are chosen according to lesson plans. If students have anything extra they want to offer, they can share them (n=2).
4. They would lack competence in such decisions (n=1).

Overall results of the question investigating teachers' opinions on learner explanations on what is to be learned from course materials suggest that the majority of teachers were either supportive or for negotiation with students. It can be inferred from the answers of the ones who answered *not at all* or *little* that those teachers believed in the importance of professional knowledge and the authority of teachers. They considered students as being not capable of making explanations. However, it is suggested by various researchers that learners be promoted to criticise the materials and state opinions for modification of them for their needs and interests. This is thought to

increase awareness, critical thinking abilities and learner autonomy. (Fenner and Newby, 2000; Benson, 2001; Ryan, 1997; Dam, 1995).

4.2.11. Encouraging Learners to Find Their Own Explanations to Classroom Tasks

Eleventh question in the questionnaire was about teachers' opinions on encouragement of learners to find their own explanations to classroom tasks. Different from most of the previous questions, more than half of the teachers answered *much* and *very much*. Table 4.12. presents the results for this question.

Table 4.12. Teachers' Opinions on Encouraging Learners to Find His/Her Own Explanations to Classroom Tasks

ITEM NAME	NOT AT ALL		LITTLE		PARTLY		MUCH		VERY MUCH		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Explanations	3	2,8	2	1,9	33	30,6	35	32,4	35	32,4	108	100

As it is seen in the table above, *much* and *very much* received equal number of response with 35 (32.4%) which had a cumulative percentage of 64.8%. 55 teachers stated their reasons as follows:

1. This will help them develop more meaningful skills of analysis and association (n=13).
2. This kind of explanations may help them understand and learn the subject and tasks better (n=11).
3. They can learn more effectively and become aware of their learning process (n=8).
4. This will make the student think about the task (n=6).
5. It is necessary for the students to express themselves (n=5).
6. Students accustomed to test taking have lots of problems in creative thinking. If they are encouraged to do so, that would help them a lot (n=4).
7. By the help of this, you can check if s/he has learned or not (n=3).

8. If they find their own explanations, it means that they have got their own gist of the task (n=3).
9. This is the proof of what they've learned (n=2).

Partly was the second highest with a frequency of 33 (30.6%). Only three of the participants stated reasons for this question. They were:

1. This way, the teacher will be able to receive feedback from students (n=1).
2. To make it easier to understand, some level of teacher involvement is required (n=1).
3. It depends on the nature of the tasks. Sometimes they can make explanations (n=1).

3 (2.8%) teachers responded *not at all*, and 2 (1.9%) *little*. Cumulative percentage for these two items was 4.7%. Only one of the participants wrote a reason for this question. It was, "I do not think it is necessary".

As it is suggested by Healey (2002) and Littlewood (1999), if the students are provided an opportunity to state their opinions on classroom tasks, they will be able to have effective roles in directing their own learning and evaluating their learning process. Thus, they will be given an opportunity to take responsibility in their individual learning process. It is assumed from the outcomes for this question that teachers believed in the benefits of explanations of the learners for the classroom tasks. Deriving from this, it can be said that participants of this study supported the promotion of learner autonomy in terms of student encouragement for the explanations to classroom tasks.

4.2.12. Encouraging Learners to Find out about Learning Procedures by Themselves

Teachers' opinions on encouragement of learners to find out about learning procedures by themselves was the focal point for the twelfth question in the questionnaire. Majority of teachers answered *much* and *very much* for this question, as well as the previous one. *Very much* had the highest score of all. Results for this question are presented in Table 4.13. below.

Table 4.13. Encouraging Learners to Find out about Learning Procedures by Themselves

ITEM NAME	NOT AT ALL		LITTLE		PARTLY		MUCH		VERY MUCH		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Learning procedures	2	1,9	7	6,5	22	20,4	38	35,2	39	36,1	108	100

Very much had the highest frequency for this question with 39 (36.1%), and was followed by *much* with 38 (35.2%). Cumulative percentage for these two entries was 71.3% which was the highest of all the cumulative percentages in the study. 59 teachers wrote reasons for these two entries. They were:

1. Students can learn more effectively and become aware of their learning process (n=16).
2. Students may not want to study in the procedures identified by others. They should decide this individually or as a whole in the class (n=9).
3. Every learner has different skills, needs, abilities and learning style. Every person has his own way of perception and that causes differences in learning strategies. If students try to find the best way for themselves, it encourages creative thinking (n=7).
4. Student's responsibility and awareness for his own learning process may increase (n=6).
5. Students should be able to find out which ways of learning are beneficial for them and employ these learning procedures (n=4).
6. It is the person him/herself who finds out learning procedures (n=3).
7. An ideal student would try to find out ways to these procedures. However, many students need guidance (n=3).
8. It increases retention and internalization (n=2).
9. Teaching how to fish is better than giving fish (n=2).
10. It will help them become independent learners out of class (n=2).

11. Students, themselves, know best how they learn so they should choose it themselves (n=2).

12. We can only guide them if they choose a wrong learning procedure (n=2).

13. Students will be able to find the appropriate strategy for themselves (n=1).

Partly had a rate of 22 (20.4%). 14 teachers wrote reasons for choosing this entry.

They were:

1. Students aren't intrinsically motivated because they don't like English. That's why they shouldn't (n=5).

2. Students will feel more responsibility. Teachers should not leave them alone in this process. With the guidance of teachers, it is best for students to discover the steps they go through while learning (n=4).

3. Guidance of the teacher is needed here. Negotiation will make it better (n=2).

4. In my opinion, it should be, but it seems impossible in the conditions of our country (n=2).

5. It is a good idea but in practice, it is mostly taught by the instructor (n=1).

Not at all had the lowest frequency with 2 (1.9%), and *little* had 7 (6.5%).

Cumulative percentage for these two items was 8.4%. Three of the participants expressed their reasons for choosing *not at all* or *little* as follows:

- It is difficult for them to find out these procedures on their own without a professional help (n=1).

- I do not think it is necessary (n=1).

- It can be difficult for students, so teacher guidance may be needed (n=1).

Outcomes of the study for learner encouragement to learning procedures showed that teachers had supportive opinions for learners to take responsibility of their own learning and become autonomous learners. Even the ones who answered *not at all* and *little* did not express strong objection to this issue. Their hesitations were rooting from the belief that learners needed professional help to find out learning procedures.

4.2.13. Encouraging Learners to Assess Themselves Rather Than to be Tested

Last question in the questionnaire was investigating teachers' opinions on learner encouragement to assess themselves 'weekly', 'monthly' and 'annually'. Most of the

teachers stated supportive views for learners' self-assessment. Table 4.14 reveals the results for this question.

Table 4.14. Teachers' opinions on encouraging learners to assess themselves rather than to be tested

ITEM NAME	SUBTITLE	NOT AT ALL		LITTLE		PARTLY		MUCH		VERY MUCH		TOTAL	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Assessment	a) weekly	10	9,3	17	15,7	19	17,6	33	30,6	29	26,9	108	100
	b) monthly	4	3,7	12	11,1	22	20,4	40	37	30	27,8	108	100
	c) annually	15	13,9	24	22,2	20	18,9	30	27,8	19	17,6	108	100

4.2.13.1. Encouraging Learners to Assess Themselves Weekly

More than half of the teachers supported learners' assessing themselves weekly by answering *much* and *very much* with the frequencies of 33 (30.6%) and 29 (26.9%) respectively, which was 57.5% cumulatively. 16 of the participants stated their reasons for these choices. They were:

1. If the students assess their own progress, they will see their progress or regress, and it may help increase their intrinsic motivation (n=5).
2. When the students assess themselves constantly, they might see their weaknesses and strengths. However, too much assessment may have negative effects (n=3).
3. Short term objectives should be checked frequently (n=3).
4. A student's learning pace may not be as fast as the syllabus (n=2).
5. It will be more reliable and they will learn to be organised. They will see their own improvement (n=1).
6. Students should determine their weaknesses and strengths to proceed in the lessons (n=1).
7. It will be reliable and long lasting (n=1).

Partly had a frequency of 19 (17.6%). 12 of the participants stated their reasons as follows:

1. Since there is not much to assess, students can do this after a brief guidance of the teacher (n=7).
2. It can be demotivating and boring for students (n=3).
3. It may increase the feeling of responsibility (n=2).

10 (9.3%) teachers answered *not at all*, and 17 (15.7%) answered *little*, which had a cumulative percentage of 25%. 17 of the participants wrote some reasons for their choices. They were:

1. One week is too short to assess themselves and see changes (n=5).
2. It can be unfair and unrealistic (n=3).
3. It may be too hard to keep track a of (n=2).
4. It may cause problems for the teacher, since the time is too short to make accurate assessments (n=2).
5. Students may not be objective (n=2).
6. At first, they need education about assessing themselves then it could be possible (n=2).
7. As students are not qualified enough to assess themselves, they think they did very well, they can't see their own mistakes, so it is not a good idea to make them assess themselves (n=1).

4.2.13.2. Encouraging Learners to Assess Themselves Monthly

Much and *very much* had the highest scores with 40 (37%) and 30 (27.8%) respectively, which had a cumulative percentage of 64.8%. 41 teachers expressed their reasons for choosing these two entries as follows:

1. If the students assess their own progress, they will see their progress or regress, and it may help their intrinsic motivation to increase (n=10).
2. This is the ideal duration for self-assessment (n=9).
3. It will be useful for making them responsible for their own learning (n=6).
4. After seeing some results from quizzes/exams or assignments, students may have an idea about their success (n=5).

5. The student can see how much he has learned instead of how much he should have learned. This would be better for slow learners. For faster ones, it could give an extra opportunity to pursue extra studies (n=3).
6. A monthly assessment would suffice since it would not be too rare to be forgotten or too often to be boring (n=2).
7. This would make a good process report (n=2).
8. It will be more reliable and they will learn to be organised. They will see their own improvement (n=2).
9. It is an appropriate period for self-assessment to see how much one improved and what mistakes have been made (n=2).

Partly was preferred by 22 (20.4%) of the teachers. 14 of these teachers expressed their reasons. They were:

1. If students make their assessment and share it with their teachers, both teachers, and learners will have an opportunity to reflect on their performances, but both teachers and students should be objective (n=8).
2. To check the objectives, it can be (n=3).
3. It can be useful to find some miscalculations in the system (n=2).
4. Students might not be objective enough; they should do this under the guidance of their teachers (n=1).

4 (3.7%) of teachers answered *not at all*, and 12 (11.1%) answered *little* which had a cumulative score of 14.8%. 9 participants stated reasons for their choices. They were:

1. I do not think that it is necessary, the teachers already do this (n=3).
2. Assessment may be difficult for students, but they can make reflection (n=2).
3. Students may not be objective (n=2).
4. At first, they need education about assessing themselves then it could be possible (n=1).
5. As students are not qualified enough to assess themselves, they think they did very well, they can't see their own mistakes, so it is not a good idea to make them assess themselves (n=1).

4.2.13.3. Encouraging Learners to Assess Themselves Annually

Compared to others, all of the results were closer to each other for this question. *Much* and *very much* had the highest frequencies with 30 (27.8%) and 19 (17.6%) respectively. Cumulative percentage for these two entries was 45.4%. 25 participants stated their reasons for choosing these items. They were:

1. It will be useful to make students responsible for their own learning (n=5).
2. If the students assess their own progress, they will see their progress or regress, and it may help increase their intrinsic motivation (n=5).
3. When students assess themselves constantly, they might see their weaknesses and strengths. However too much assessment may have negative effects (n=3).
4. The annual assessment may be done by the institution to have an overall idea about the students (n=4).
5. Some sort of annual appraisal by students would be beneficial (n=2).
6. This may help their awareness to increase for long term objectives of their learning process (n=2).
7. It will be more reliable and they will learn to be organised. They will see their own improvement (n=2).
8. To get a clear picture of what is learnt or achieved, it is necessary (n=2).

20 (18.9%) teachers answered *partly*, and 12 of them expressed their reasons which are listed below:

1. Since it is too long, it may not be reliable (n=7).
2. Students might not be objective enough to assess themselves (n=3).
3. It can be good for students to see their own progress, but it is not very necessary I think (n=2).

Not at all was selected by 15 (13.9%), and *little* by 24 (22.2%) of the teachers. Cumulative percentage for these two items was 36.1%. 24 of the teachers had some reasons for their choices. They were:

1. It would be very difficult to make self-assessment in such a long time (n=7).
2. It is not meaningful in our system (n=5).
3. Students will not behave in the right side (n=3).
4. At first, students need education about assessing themselves then it could be possible (n=3).

5. Too long to see the details actually. A general assessment can be suitable, but that wouldn't be as useful as detailed ones (step by step) (n=2).
6. It is difficult to remember what you have learned or not (n=2).
7. As students are not qualified enough to assess themselves, they think they did very well, they can't see their own mistakes, so it is not a good idea to make them assess themselves (n=2).

As it is stated by Benson (2001), Dam (1995) and Nunan (1999) assessment plays a crucial role in learning. Principally, self-assessment has various positive effects on learners to promote autonomous learning. Outcomes of this study showed that teachers had rather supportive or negotiable opinions for encouraging learners to assess themselves weekly, monthly or annually. It can be implied from the findings that the participants of the study were aware of the essential function of assessment in teaching and learning process.

4.3. Perceptions of the Learner Autonomy Group Teachers and Other Participants

8 (7.4%) of the participants were in the learner autonomy group during the curriculum renewal project started in 2003. Opinions of these teachers were considered worth mentioning. However, these teachers constituted only 7.4% of all the participants whereas the other participants constituted 92.6%. For this reason, while comparing the results of learner autonomy group and other participants, the difference in the number of participants in each group should be kept in mind.

The comparison of the results for the learner autonomy and other participants groups are presented in Table 4.15. The comparison shows that the distribution of the highest rate responses is diverse in the learner autonomy group whereas in the other participants group, the highest rate responses are in *partly* and *much*.

Table 4.15. Frequencies of perceptions of the learner autonomy group teachers and the other participants.

ITEM NO	ITEM NAME	SUBTITLE	LEARNER AUTONOMY GROUP					OTHER PARTICIPANTS				
			NOT AT ALL %	LITTLE %	PARTLY %	MUCH %	VERY MUCH %	NOT AT ALL %	LITTLE %	PARTLY %	MUCH %	VERY MUCH %
1	Objectives	a) short-term			50	50		4	8	35	47	6
		b) long-term	12,5		62,5	25		6	14	38	35	7
2	Course Content	a) topics		50	25	25		6	6	29	43	16
		b) tasks		25	25	12,5	37,5	8	9	44	29	10
3	Selecting Materials	a) textbooks	25	62,5		12,5		32	25	29	7	7
		b) AVA			50	12,5	37,5	11	12	35	30	12
		c) realia	12,5		37,5	12,5	37,5	13	10	33	26	18
4	Time Place Pace	a) time	50	12,5	25	12,5		28	23	28	14	7
		b) place	75	12,5	12,5			36	24	23	10	7
		c) pace		12,5	62,5	12,5	12,5	10	20	30	29	11
5	Learning tasks		12,5	37,5	37,5	12,5	11	13	47	19	10	
6	Methodology	a) ind./pair/group work		37,5	12,5	12,5	37,5	12	8	31	33	16
		b) use of materials	25	12,5	25	25	12,5	15	14	49	17	5
		c) type of class activities		37,5	12,5	25	25	6	13	37	39	5
		d) type of homework act.	25	12,5	12,5	25	25	9	17	37	26	11
7	Classroom Management	a) position of desks				75	25	10	8	29	33	20
		b) seating of students			12,5	37,5	50	6	4	31	33	26
		c) discipline matters	25	25	37,5	12,5		21	15	35	22	7
8	Record-keeping	a) of work done	12,5	12,5	37,5	12,5	25	18	17	18	24	23
		b) of marks gained	25	25	25	12,5	12,5	22	17	14	26	21
		c) attendance	37,5	12,5	12,5	25	12,5	19	16	16	23	26
9	Homework Tasks	a) quantity	12,5	12,5	37,5	37,5		18	22	36	20	4
		b) type	12,5	12,5		37,5	37,5	10	16	37	27	10
		c) frequency	12,5		37,5	50		16	25	36	17	6
10	What is to be learned from materials	a) texts	12,5	25	25	25	12,5	15	25	32	20	8
		b) AVA	12,5		25	50	12,5	14	20	32	25	9
		c) realia	12,5		25	37,5	25	14	21	31	25	9
11	Explanations			25		50	3	2	31	33	31	
12	Learning Procedures			25	50	25	2	7	20	34	37	
13	Assessment	a) weekly	12,5	12,5	25	25	25	9	16	17	31	27
		b) monthly		12,5	37,5	37,5	12,5	4	11	19	37	29
		c) annually	12,5	25	12,5	37,5	12,5	14	22	19	27	18

KEY: Bold figures represent the highest score.

In the learner autonomy group, 50% of the participants answered *partly* and 50% answered *much* as the most frequent responses for short term objectives. 62.5% of these teachers responded *partly* as the most frequent item for long term objectives. According to the results of other participants, *much* was the most frequent answer for short term objectives with 47% and *partly* for long term objectives with 38%. It can be inferred from these results that the teachers both in the learner autonomy group and the other participants have similar perceptions in terms of objectives.

As to the course content, 50% of teachers in the learner autonomy group responded *little* as the most frequent response for the topics, and 37.5% responded *very much* for the tasks. However, results of the other participants revealed that *much* was the most frequent response for the topics with 43% and *partly* for the tasks with 44%. It can be inferred from these results that teachers in the learner autonomy group and the other participants had different perceptions on course content.

62.5% of the teachers in the learner autonomy group responded *little* on learner involvement in decisions related to textbook selection. 50% responded *partly* on Audio-visual aids (AVA) selection, and in realia selection, 37.5% responded *partly* and 37.5% *very much*. However, 32% of the other participants responded *not at all* as the most frequent answer for textbook selection. *Partly* was the most frequent item for AVA and realia with the percentages of 35% and 33% respectively. The results for the learner autonomy group and the other participants can be said to be similar for material selection.

Not at all was the most frequent response with 50% in the learner autonomy group for time. 75% of these teachers answered *not at all* for place of the lesson as well. 62.5% of the teachers in the learner autonomy group stated that students should be *partly* involved in decisions related to the pace of the lesson. The most frequent responses for time, place and the pace of the lesson were similar for the other participants. 28% answered *not at all* as the most frequent response for time, and 36% for place of the lesson. 30% of the other participants responded *partly* as the most frequent response for the pace of a lesson. As for learning tasks, 37.5% of teachers in the learner autonomy group answered *partly* and *much* as the most frequent responses with the same percentages. *Partly* was the most frequent response for the other participants with 47% as well. It can be concluded from these findings that both the

teachers in the learner autonomy group and the other participants share similar perceptions of learner involvement in time, place and pace of a lesson and learning tasks.

Opinions of the teachers in the learner autonomy group and the other participants had some differences in methodology issues. *Little* and *very much* were the most frequently answered items for individual/pair/group work activities with a percentage of 37.5% for each. However, 33% of the other participants responded *much* as most frequent response for this entry. Teachers in the learner autonomy group responded *not at all*, *partly* and *much* with the same percentage, 25%, as the most frequent response for the use of materials. 49% of the other participants responded *partly* as the most frequent answer for this entry. 37.5 % of the teachers in the learner autonomy group answered *little* as the most frequent response for the type of class activities. On the other hand, 39% of other participants stated *much* as the most frequent item for this entry. *Not at all*, *much* and *very much* had the same percentage of 25% for the type of homework activities by the teachers in the learner autonomy group. *Partly* was the most frequent response with 37% for this entry for the other participants. From these findings, it can be inferred that the teachers in the learner autonomy group and the other participants had different perceptions of learner autonomy. The other participants had more positive perceptions for student involvement in methodology issues.

75% of the teachers in the learner autonomy group supported learner autonomy in terms of position of desks by answering *much* as the most frequent response. 50% responded *very much* for seating of students as the most frequent response. Other participants stated their support for learner autonomy in position of desks and seating of students as well. 33% of the other participants answered *much* for each item as the most frequent response. As for discipline matters, teachers in the learner autonomy group had the same perceptions with the other participants. 37.5% of teachers in the learner autonomy group and 35% of the other participants responded *partly* as the most frequent answer for discipline matters.

37.5% of teachers in the learner autonomy group answered *partly* for record-keeping of work done as the most frequent item. *Much* was the most frequent response for 24% of the other participants for record-keeping of work done. Teachers in the learner autonomy group responded *not at all*, *little* and *partly* with the same percentage

of 25% for each as the most frequent item for record-keeping of marks gained. However, 26% of other participants answered *much* as the most frequent item for this entry. In contrast to the results of the other participants, in which *very much* had the highest percentage of 26%, 37.5% of teachers in the learner autonomy group answered *not at all* as the most frequent item for keeping a record of attendance by the students. In accordance with these findings, it can be said that the teachers in the learner autonomy group do not support learner autonomy as much as the other participants for record keeping.

Teachers in the learner autonomy group responded *partly* and *much* as the most frequent ones with the same percentage of 37.5% for quantity of homework tasks. 36% of the other participants responded *partly* as the most frequent answer for this item. Teachers in the learner autonomy group had rather supportive perceptions for the type of homework tasks. *Much* and *very much* had the same percentages of 37.5% for each as the most frequent ones for type of homework tasks. On the other hand, 37% of other participants responded *partly* as the most frequent answer. As for the frequency of homework tasks, 50% of the teachers in the learner autonomy group answered *much* as the most frequent response. However, 36% of the other participants responded *partly* as the most frequent item. It can be said that the teachers in the learner autonomy group has more supportive perceptions of learner autonomy compared to that of the other participants for homework tasks.

Little, *partly* and *much* had the same percentages of 25% as the most frequent responses for learner involvement in what is to be learned from texts by the teachers in the learner autonomy group. Teachers in the learner autonomy group answered *much* as the most frequent one for Audio-visual aids (AVA) and for realia. AVA was answered by 50% of the teachers and realia by 37.5%. However, *partly* was the most frequently answered item for these three entries by the other participants. It can be said that teachers in the learner autonomy group were more supportive of learner autonomy than the others in terms of what is to be learned from materials.

Results for learner encouragement in making explanations and learning procedures revealed that the teachers in the learner autonomy group supported both by answering *very much* for the former and *much* for the latter as the most frequent answers with the same rate of 50% for each. 35% of the other participants answered *much* for

explanations, and 37% answered *very much* for learning procedures. It can be inferred from these results that teachers both in the learner autonomy group and the other participants group have supportive perceptions of these issues.

As for learner encouragement in weekly, monthly and annually self-assessment, the teachers in the learner autonomy group answered *partly*, *much* and *very much* as the most frequent items with the same percentages of 25% for each for weekly assessment. *Partly* and *much* had the same percentages of 37.5% for monthly assessment. 37.5% of the teachers in the learner autonomy group responded *much* as the most frequent response for annual assessment. As for the other participants, *much* was the most frequently responded item with a percentage of 31% for weekly, 37% monthly and 27% for annual assessment. It can be derived from the results that the teachers in the learner autonomy group and the other participants had the same perceptions in terms of learner encouragement in self-assessment.

To sum up, teachers in the learner autonomy group and the other participants group responded similar perceptions for some of the questions, and different perceptions for some others, but the difference in the number of the participants should not be ignored.

4.4. Overall Comparison of Results

Looking at the overall results that are presented in Table 4.16, it can be seen that *partly* was the most frequently preferred entry by the majority of teachers with 15 items. It was followed by *much* with 12 items. *Very much* had majority in 4 items, and *not at all* in 3 items. Comparing the findings of the present study and Camilleri's (1999) study, some differences can be observed. *Partly* was answered by the majority of the participants in his study as well, however, the frequency of this entry was higher than the present study with 25 items. It was followed by *much* with 5 items, and *very much* with 2 items in Camilleri (1999). Neither *not at all*, nor *little* received majority in any item in his study.

Participants of the present study expressed their support for short term objectives of a course with the highest frequency. However, as for long term objectives, majority of the opinions shifted to *partly*. *Partly* was the most frequently answered entry for both short term and long term objectives in Camilleri's (1999) study. In addition, the

frequencies of *not at all* and *little* were higher than the ones in the present study. As it was stated in their reasons, most of the participants believed in the value and convenience of short term objectives, and they stated their support for learner involvement in decision of these objectives. However, considering the fact that learners had at most two years of education in the setting of the study, they most probably regarded that it would be difficult for learners to set long term goals.

Most of the teachers answered *much* for topics and *partly* for tasks of course content. Outcomes of the study revealed that teachers considered learners capable of making decisions on topics in accordance with their interests. In contrast, tasks were accepted to require more professional touch. Therefore, they stated their opinions for negotiation and collaboration with students. In Camilleri's study, both topics and tasks had the highest rate in *partly*. Frequencies of *not at all* and *little* for these two items were higher than the present study as well as the previous items. The comparison of the results of the present study with Camilleri's study suggests that Turkish EFL teachers have more positive views on learner involvement in decisions on objectives and content of a course than their European associates.

Outcomes of material selection presented remarkable differences, compared to the previous items. Most of the teachers answered *not at all*, and *little* for selection of textbooks, which can be accepted as strong resistance to learner involvement. Deriving from the reasons teachers stated, the main factor that led teachers to choose these two entries seems to be the predetermination of the course books, and the assumption that learners are not skilled and professional enough to decide on textbooks. As for the other items, AVA and realia, *partly* received the highest rate for both. Since they were accepted as extra or supplementary materials, learner involvement in collaboration with teacher was considered beneficial. Findings of Camilleri's study had the highest rate in *partly* for all of the items of material selection.

Table 4.16. Overall results

ITEM NO	ITEM NAME	SUBTITLE	NOT AT ALL		LITTLE		PARTLY		MUCH		VERY MUCH	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Objectives	a) short-term	4	3,7	8	7,4	39	36,1	51	47,2	6	5,6
		b) long-term	7	6,5	14	13	43	39,8	37	34,3	7	6,5
2	Course Content	a) topics	6	5,6	10	9,3	31	28,7	45	41,7	16	14,8
		b) tasks	8	7,4	11	10,2	46	42,6	30	27,8	13	12
3	Selecting Materials	a) textbooks	34	31,5	30	27,8	29	26,9	8	7,4	7	6,5
		b) AVA	11	10,2	12	11,1	39	36,1	31	28,7	15	13,9
		c) realia	14	13	10	9,3	36	33,3	27	25	21	19,4
4	Time Place Pace	a) time	32	29,6	24	22,2	30	27,8	15	13,9	7	6,5
		b) place	42	38,9	25	23,1	24	22,2	10	9,3	7	6,5
		c) pace	10	9,3	21	19,4	35	32,4	30	27,8	12	11,1
5	Learning tasks	11	10,2	14	13	50	46,3	22	20,4	11	10,2	
6	Methodology	a) ind./pair/group work	12	11,1	11	10,2	32	29,6	34	31,5	19	17,6
		b) use of materials	17	15,7	15	13,9	51	47,2	19	17,6	6	5,6
		c) type of class activities	6	5,6	16	14,8	38	35,2	41	38	7	6,5
		d) type of homework act.	11	10,2	18	16,7	38	35,2	30	27,8	11	10,2
7	Classroom Management	a) position of desks	10	9,3	8	7,4	29	26,9	39	36,1	22	20,4
		b) seating of students	6	5,6	4	3,7	32	29,6	36	33,3	30	27,8
		c) discipline matters	23	21,3	17	15,7	38	35,2	23	21,3	7	6,5
8	Record-keeping	a) of work done	19	17,6	18	16,7	21	19,4	25	23,1	25	23,1
		b) of marks gained	24	22,2	19	17,6	16	14,8	27	25	22	20,4
		c) attendance	22	20,4	17	15,7	17	15,7	25	23,1	27	25
9	Homework Tasks	a) quantity	19	17,6	23	21,3	39	36,1	23	21,3	4	3,7
		b) type	11	10,2	17	15,7	37	34,3	30	27,8	13	12
		c) frequency	17	15,7	25	23,1	39	36,1	21	19,4	6	5,6
10	What is to be learned from materials	a) texts	16	14,8	27	25	34	31,5	22	20,4	9	8,3
		b) AVA	15	13,9	20	18,5	34	31,5	29	26,9	10	9,3
		c) realia	15	13,9	21	19,4	33	30,6	28	25,9	11	10,2
11	Explanations	3	2,8	2	1,9	33	30,6	35	32,4	35	32,4	
12	Learning procedures	2	1,9	7	6,5	22	20,4	38	35,2	39	36,1	
13	Assessment	a) weekly	10	9,3	17	15,7	19	17,6	33	30,6	29	26,9
		b) monthly	4	3,7	12	11,1	22	20,4	40	37	30	27,8
		c) annually	15	13,9	24	22,2	20	18,9	30	27,8	19	17,6

KEY: Bold figures represent the highest score.

According to the results of Camilleri's study, time, place and pace were the issues which could be decided in collaboration with the teacher and learners. However, most of the participants in the present study expressed their resistance for learner involvement in decisions of time and place of the lesson. These two subjects were accepted as predetermined ones. Therefore, most of the teachers did not state any supportive opinion. Moreover, some of the teachers stated that even they did not have any say in the decision of these issues. As to the pace of the lesson, it can be inferred from the fact that most of them answered *partly*, the teachers were for cooperation with learners. They expressed that the pace should be adjusted for the needs of the students, however, some stated their hesitations in terms of catching up with the syllabus.

Both the findings of Camilleri's study and the present study revealed that teachers were for negotiation in deciding learning tasks of a course. However, the frequencies of *much* and *very much* in the present study were higher than the ones in Camilleri's study.

Teachers exhibited supportive or negotiable opinions for methodological matters. *Much* received the highest frequency for learner involvement in decisions on 'individual/pair/group work' and 'type of class activities'. As for the 'use of materials' and 'type of homework activities', *partly* was the most frequent response. *Partly* received the highest rate for all of the methodology questions in Camilleri's study. 'Individual/pair/group work' and 'type of class activities' were considered as terms related to individual differences and preferences. From the opinions and the reasons that participants in this study stated, teachers consider individual differences and support the view that learners should be given the responsibility for the organisation in class, and they should be able to state their preferences for the types of class activities. Since 'use of materials' and 'type of homework activities' were considered as terms that require professional decisions, teachers addressed negotiation and collaboration with learners for these activities.

Participants of the study support student involvement in the classroom management issues. Among the five entries, *much* was the most frequently answered one for 'position of desks' and 'seating of students'. Teachers stated that learners should feel comfortable for learning to be effective. As for the findings of Camilleri's (1999) study, *partly* was the most frequent entry for 'position of desks' and *much* for 'seating of students'. Another classroom management item, 'discipline matters', received the

most frequent response for *partly* in the present study, as well as in Camilleri's study. However, the cumulative frequency of *not at all* and *little* was higher than *partly* in the present study. Most of the teachers who responded *partly* stated that learners should be in the process of decision making in collaboration with teachers, and the rules should be decided together. Nevertheless, the ones who were against learner involvement in discipline matters expressed that it would cause chaos to leave the decisions of discipline matters to learners. It can be inferred from their reasons that authoritative role of teacher should be preserved for these teachers.

Most of the participants expressed that learners should be encouraged to keep records of their 'work done', 'marks gained' and 'attendance' by answering *much* and *very much* as the most frequent entries. Most of the participants chose *partly* for 'marks gained' and *much* for the others in Camilleri's study. It was emphasized by the participants in the present study that in order to increase responsibility and monitor their performance, learners should be promoted to keep records of their own performances.

Similar to Camilleri's findings, most of the teachers answered *partly* for homework tasks including 'quantity', 'type' and 'frequency'. Because teachers felt that learners were unable to make decisions on these issues alone. Most of the teachers answered *partly* which suggests negotiation. Provided that they were the ones to make the final decisions, teachers supported the idea to ask learners to state their opinions on homework tasks.

It can be inferred from the outcomes of the study that the majority of the teachers feel that there should be a cooperation for 'what is to be learned from text, AVA and realia' by answering *partly*. *Partly* was the most frequent response for these three items in Camilleri's study as well. The findings of the present study revealed that some teachers had questions about involving students in these issues considering the fact that students might ignore professional and pedagogical implications. On the other hand, others stated that this would increase learner awareness if done under the guidance of teacher.

Majority of teachers expressed their support for encouragement of learners to make their own explanations to classroom tasks. The findings of Camilleri's (1999) study were almost same with present study for this question. From the reasons stated by teachers, it can be inferred that fostering learners to make explanations for classroom

tasks would have positive contributions to both students' learning process, and teachers' professional development.

Very much had the highest frequency for learner encouragement to find out about his/her own learning procedures as in the Camilleri's study. Most of the participants in the study focused on individual differences while stating their supports.

As for the last question, encouragement of learners' assessing themselves 'weekly', 'monthly', and 'annually', most of the teachers expressed their support by answering *much* for all of these items. In Camilleri's study, *partly* was the most frequent response for annual assessment, and *much* for weekly and monthly assessment. Participants of the present study stated that encouraging learners to assess their own progress would facilitate them to make judgements on their progress and regress.

The findings of this study thus revealed that the teachers generally had collaborative or supportive views for the promotion of learner autonomy. The exceptions were in predetermined issues where teachers felt they themselves did not have a say or in issues which required decisions of professionals.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1. Summary of the Study

The aim of this study was to investigate the perceptions of Turkish EFL instructors through the promotion of learner autonomy in a setting where learner autonomy is a desirable goal. The study aimed to reveal different perceptions of learner autonomy raised from the classroom experiences by the teachers. The study also aimed to find out the underlying reasons of these perceptions about learner autonomy. In order to reach these aims the following research question was asked:

How do EFL teachers perceive learner autonomy?

Participants of the study were 108 EFL instructors working for Anadolu University School of Foreign Languages Basic Languages Department. The data of the study were collected by means of a learner autonomy questionnaire that was developed by Camilleri (1999). Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected through the same questionnaire. To find out the views of teachers in relation to learner autonomy, quantitative data of the study were analysed by calculating descriptive statistics including frequencies and percentages for each question in the questionnaire. Qualitative data of the study, which were reasons stated by teachers for each question, were categorised in terms of teachers' perceptions and used in the interpretation of quantitative data in the discussion of the results.

Findings of the study revealed that participants had collaborative and supportive perceptions of learner autonomy. Participants of the study expressed their support for learner autonomy in terms of short term objectives of a course, topics of course content, individual/pair/group work organizations, types of class activities, position of desks and seating of students, record-keeping of work done, marks gained and attendance, encouragement towards learner explanations, learning procedures and self-assessment of learners. As for the items which teachers expressed their opinions as 'partly,' which is interpreted as mentioned in section 4.2., as support for negotiation and collaboration with learners for making the decisions, frequency of these items was higher. They were long term objectives of a course, tasks of course content, selection of AVA (audio-

visual aids) and realia, pace of the lesson, learning tasks, use of materials and type of homework activities, discipline matters, quantity, type and frequency of homework tasks, and things to be learned from texts, AVA and realia. Although most of the teachers stated their opinions as support or negotiation for learner autonomy in most of the items in the questionnaire, three of the items received strong resistance by the teachers towards learner involvement in decision making process, namely, learner autonomy. These items were selection of textbooks, time and place of the lesson. These three items were considered issues which were predetermined; therefore, learner involvement in these issues was thought to be unnecessary by the participants of the study.

5.2. Conclusion and Implications of the Study

According to the analysis of the data about the perceptions of participants in terms of the promotion of learner autonomy, it can be said that participants of this study support the involvement of learners in the decisions of short-term objectives. For long-term objectives, participants of the study support collaboration and negotiation with learners. Since learners were not considered capable of making appropriate and feasible decisions for long term objectives, the teachers addressed the necessity of their guidance and direction. On the other hand, the teachers expressed their support for the active involvement of learners in short-term objectives. Moreover, short-term objectives seemed more achievable for most of the teachers. It can be concluded from the results that the majority of the participants supported learner involvement in realistic and achievable objectives. As for the teachers who stated their resistance to learner involvement in decisions of both short-term and long-term objectives of a course, it can be inferred from the reasons stated that they did not want to lose their authority and power in the classroom. They also did not believe in the capacity of learners. As it is mentioned by Dam (1995), Esch (1997), Cotterall (2000) and Benson (2001), learners should be given opportunities to set goals and objectives for their learning process both for short-term and long-term periods to take responsibility for their performances. It can be said that participants of the study shared similar views with these researchers up to a degree.

The opinions of participants on learner involvement in decisions related to course content, suggest that the teachers stated their support for topics of a course, but because of some hesitations, they expressed collaboration and negotiation for tasks. What this means is that the teachers supported the idea of giving learners responsibilities to identify the topics of a course in accordance with their interests, but they considered the choice of tasks a professional task. Learners were not regarded as competent to decide the tasks because they did not have pedagogical knowledge. Similarly, most of the participants expressed their views as a support for negotiation for learning tasks (question 5). Participants stated that students should be asked for suggestions, but teachers should make the final decisions. It can thus be said that although the highest number of teachers indicated a negotiable stance for learner involvement in learning tasks and tasks of a course, they felt that the final decision should be the teacher's. The teachers did not want to let learners engage in subjects which they felt required professional and pedagogical knowledge. This finding contradicts with the suggestions made in the literature. Learner empowerment is one of the principles suggested by Little (2000) to foster learner autonomy. In this study, participants supported learner empowerment for topics of a course, not for tasks.

Fenner and Newby (2000) suggested that learners take charge of all kinds of materials in an autonomous learning environment. However, the findings of the study revealed that most of the participants were against learner involvement in deciding textbooks, and they stated their stance for negotiation for AVA and realia. In the setting of the study, textbooks were the main course materials for most of the courses. The teachers considered themselves as the main authority to choose course books. They believed that learners were not equipped with the necessary knowledge to choose a textbook. Moreover, they stated that textbooks were determined before students came, and that they were already doing their best. Therefore, they felt that there was no need for learner involvement in choosing textbooks. In contrast to course book selection, teachers were rather positive towards student involvement in the selection of AVA and realia. Most of the teachers expressed their opinions of negotiation. It can be inferred from the reasons stated by the teachers that they considered AVA and realia as extra and supplementary materials which did not have much effect on the main flow of the course. For this reason, they agreed on learner involvement in selection of these kinds of

materials under their guidance and leadership. They stated that learners could and should bring materials, but it would be the decision of the teacher whether to use them or not. It can be concluded from the results that participants of the study were not very supportive of having learners take the responsibility in the selection of materials.

Since participants felt that they themselves did not have autonomy in the decision of the time and place of the lesson, they expressed their resistance to learner involvement in decision of these subjects. Moreover, they stated that it might cause a chaos and it might not be feasible. It can be concluded from these findings that real life conditions in a learning environment may have a strong effect on the opinions of teachers. As for pace of the lesson, majority stated that it should be decided together with learners considering the syllabus. It can be inferred from the findings that participants of the study were aware of individual differences in terms of different learning speeds.

Teachers' opinions on methodological issues revealed that they supported learner involvement in decisions related to individual/pair/group work organizations and type of class activities. The common point of these two items is that both are about organization and pre-activity aspects, rather than content and during-activity aspects. Individual differences among learners were also believed to be important factors in their reasons for these two aspects. Use of materials and type of homework activities which were considered as content items received opinions that supported collaboration and negotiation with learners. These findings suggest that teachers consider learners not to be competent to decide on how to use the materials and what type of homework activities to conduct alone. However, many researchers (Cotteral, 2000; Benson, 2001; Chan, 2001) consider methodological aspects essential for the development of learner autonomy.

The findings suggest that participants wanted learners to be comfortable in their learning environment. Therefore, they supported learners deciding the position of desks and seating. Discipline matters were considered as the subject of negotiation by most of the teachers. Teachers stated that learners should be involved in the process of deciding discipline issues. This way, students would obey the rules more, and as suggested by Dam (1995), the teacher would be able to cope with discipline problems successfully.

The results showed that teachers supported learners keeping records of their performance and attendance. Since students are the ones in the process, they were expected to reflect on their performance by keeping records. These opinions are in agreement with the suggestions of Benson (2001) and Dam (1995). The teachers who resisted learner involvement in record keeping misinterpreted the question because, as it was seen in their reasons, they considered this issue as leaving all the responsibility to the students, and they felt that it should not be the students' responsibility alone.

Quantity, type and frequency of homework tasks were also considered as issues of negotiation by most of the teachers. Awareness level, pedagogical knowledge and work load are the main factors why such decisions should not be left to students only. The teachers stated that students' suggestions should be taken into account, but teachers should make the decisions. It can be concluded from the findings that the teachers had some hesitations in having learners take the sole responsibility in homework tasks.

Learner involvement in what is to be learned from texts, AVA and realia was also a subject of negotiation for the participants in this study. The participants felt that learners are not equipped to decide on what to learn. However, as it is stated by Candy (1991; cited in Benson, 2001) if they are aware of their needs, learners should be encouraged to make their own preferences in their learning process. It can be inferred from the findings of this study that the participants considered learners not capable enough to make their own preferences; therefore, they stated that their guidance was necessary.

Encouragement of learner explanations to classroom tasks and learning procedures received strong support from the participants. It can be concluded from the results that participants of the study were aware of the essentiality of these issues since they increase awareness and motivation of learners in their learning process (Benson, 2001).

As it is stated by Dam (1995), Nunan (1999) and Benson (2001), self-assessment has various positive contributions to learning process. The participants of the study seemed to be aware of these positive contributions by supporting learner encouragement of assessing their weekly, monthly and annual performances.

In conclusion, considering the results of this study, it can be said that most of the participants expressed their collaborative stance, which is regarded as negotiation, towards the promotion of having learners take more responsibility in their learning,

whereas some of them stated their support. Following conclusions can be made within the light of overall findings of the study:

1. Teachers considered students not aware and professional enough to make decisions on some subjects. This consideration was thought to be effective in their opinions.
2. It was considered unnecessary to involve learners in some predetermined and fixed issues by the teachers.
3. Participants of the study were aware of the individual differences and their importance in teaching and learning process. For some items, they stated their opinions regarding this.
4. The issues which affected comfort and motivation of learners received strong support from teachers.
5. Teachers supported learners taking responsibility to reflect on their own learning process and assess their performance.

Little (2000) argues that teachers' having a capacity to state opinions and to argue the importance of autonomy does not mean that these teachers have the capacity to promote learner autonomy. It will be unreasonable to expect teachers to foster learner autonomy in their learners, if they themselves do not know how to be autonomous as learners and teachers. In addition, in determining the initiatives they take in their classrooms, the teachers must be able to shape their assumptions, perceptions and practices of autonomous learning (Breen & Mann, 1997). Learner autonomy is accepted as a desired goal in contemporary approaches to language teaching. To achieve this goal, teachers should be trained to believe in the promotion of learner autonomy without any prejudice.

5.3. Suggestions for Further Studies

The present study was conducted with the instructors working at Anadolu University School of Foreign Languages Basic Languages Department. A further study can be conducted with the students of the same department to determine the opinions of students towards the promotion of learner autonomy in the same setting. This way, it can be possible to compare the opinions of teachers and with those of students.

In addition, the present study focused on the views of teachers on the promotion of learner autonomy. A further study can be conducted to determine what teachers do to promote learner autonomy by observing their classroom applications. A comparison of their opinions and applications might provide beneficial insights for the promotion of learner autonomy.

A further study to determine teaching techniques and methods, and materials to promote learner autonomy in the curriculum in accordance with the needs of Turkish EFL students might be beneficial.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A**THE LEARNER AUTONOMY QUESTIONNAIRE**

Dear Colleague,

This questionnaire aims to collect data for a study conducted at Anadolu University, Institute of Educational Sciences, English Language and Education Master Program. The questionnaire is being distributed to the teachers of Anadolu University, School of Foreign Languages to gather information on teachers' perspectives on Learner Autonomy.

Your responses will be confidential. They will only be used in this study and will not be analyzed as individual responses.

Thank you for your contribution in advance

Abdulkadir DURMUŞ

Part A. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Age:
2. Gender:
3. Department graduated from:
4. When did you start teaching? :
5. Course(s) and level(s) taught at preparatory school at 2005 – 2006 academic year: (Please tick the appropriate ones in the table below)

Course \ Level	Level						
	Beg.	Elem.	Low.Int.	Int.	Up. Int	Adv.	
Grammar							
Reading							
Speaking							
Writing							

6. Which group were you in at the beginning of Curriculum Renewal process in July 2003?

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grammar | <input type="checkbox"/> Reading |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Writing | <input type="checkbox"/> Speaking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Listening | <input type="checkbox"/> Vocabulary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Learner Autonomy | <input type="checkbox"/> None |

7. How much do you know about “Learner Autonomy”? Please choose the appropriate box for you.

- I have no knowledge on learner autonomy.
- heard about learner autonomy but I don't know much about it.
- read about learner autonomy.
- done research which included issues on learner autonomy.

8. If your answer to the previous question is “I have read about Learner Autonomy”, please tick the box that best describes your knowledge of Learner Autonomy.

I have read books/articles directly about Learner Autonomy, and I know what Learner Autonomy is very well.

I have read books/articles in which Learner Autonomy was mentioned, and I felt enlightened about what Learner Autonomy is.

I have read books/articles in which Learner Autonomy was implied, but I don't know what Learner Autonomy is.

9. If your answer to the previous question is “I have read books/articles directly about Learner Autonomy, and I know what Learner Autonomy is very well”, please write a brief definition of Learner Autonomy according to your understanding of Learner Autonomy.

Part B. LEARNER AUTONOMY

Please circle the number of your choice.

KEY TO ANSWERS

0 = Not at all	1 = Little	2 = Partly	3 = Much	4 = Very much
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1. How much should the learner be involved in establishing the **objectives** of a course of study?

1a. short-term objectives

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

1b. long-term objectives

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

Please state your reasons: (You can write in Turkish)

1a)

1b)

2. How much should the learner be involved in deciding the **course content**?

2a. topics

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

2b. tasks

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

Please state your reasons: (You can write in Turkish)

2a)

2b)

3. How much should the learner be involved in **selecting materials**?

3a. textbooks

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

3b. audio-visual aids

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

3c. realia

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

0 = Not at all	1 = Little	2 = Partly	3 = Much	4 = Very much
-----------------------	-------------------	-------------------	-----------------	----------------------

Please state your reasons: (You can write in Turkish)

3a)

3b)

3c)

4. How much should the learner be involved in decisions on the **time**, **place** and **pace** of the lesson?

4a. time

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

4b. place

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

4c. pace

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

Please state your reasons: (You can write in Turkish)

4a)

4b)

4c)

5. How much should the learner be involved in decisions on the choice of **learning tasks**?

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

Please state your reasons: (You can write in Turkish)

0 = Not at all	1 = Little	2 = Partly	3 = Much	4 = Very much
-----------------------	-------------------	-------------------	-----------------	----------------------

6. How much should the learner be involved in decisions on the **methodology** of the lesson?

6a. individual/pair/group work

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

6b. use of materials

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

6c. type of classroom activities

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

6d. type of homework activities

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

Please state your reasons: (You can write in Turkish)

6a)

6b)

6c)

6d)

7. How much should the learner be involved in decisions on **classroom management**?

7a. position of desks

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

7b. seating of students

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

7c. discipline matters

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

Please state your reasons: (You can write in Turkish)

7a)

7b)

7c)

0 = Not at all	1 = Little	2 = Partly	3 = Much	4 = Very much
-----------------------	-------------------	-------------------	-----------------	----------------------

8. How much should the learner be involved in decisions about **record-keeping**?

8a. of work done

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

8b. of marks gained

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

8c. attendance

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

Please state your reasons: (You can write in Turkish)

8a)

8b)

8c)

9. How much should the learner be involved in decisions on **homework tasks**?

9a. quantity

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

9b. type

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

9c. frequency

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

Please state your reasons: (You can write in Turkish)

9a)

9b)

9c)

0 = Not at all	1 = Little	2 = Partly	3 = Much	4 = Very much
-----------------------	-------------------	-------------------	-----------------	----------------------

10. How much should the learner be involved in decisions on **what is to be learned from materials** given by the teacher?

10a. texts

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

10b. audio-visual aids

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

10c. realia

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

Please state your reasons: (You can write in Turkish)

10a)

10b)

10c)

11. How much should the learner be encouraged to find his or her own **explanations** to classroom tasks?

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

Please state your reasons: (You can write in Turkish)

12. How much should the learner be encouraged to find out **learning procedures** by him or herself?

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

Please state your reasons: (You can write in Turkish)

0 = Not at all	1 = Little	2 = Partly	3 = Much	4 = Very much
-----------------------	-------------------	-------------------	-----------------	----------------------

13. How much should the learner be encouraged to **assess** himself or herself, rather than be tested?

13a. weekly

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

13b. monthly

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

13c. annually

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

Please state your reasons: (You can write in Turkish)

13a)

13b)

13c)

APPENDIX B**OVERALL RESULTS OF CAMILLERI'S STUDY**

QUESTIONS	Not at All (%)	Little (%)	Partly (%)	Much (%)	Very Much (%)
1A	11	19	39	26	4
1B	14	22	35	20	7
2A	10	17	41	24	8
2B	9	19	39	23	9
3A	18	25	39	15	2
3B	10	13	43	22	5
3C	7	14	30	26	16
4A	16	28	33	16	5
4B	15	25	36	20	5
4C	10	17	32	28	11
5	8	18	44	22	6
6A	7	22	38	26	6
6B	7	19	40	27	5
6C	6	26	40	24	3
6D	12	16	38	27	6
7A	6	13	33	32	16
7B	6	13	27	34	18
7C	10	16	34	22	16
8A	20	15	20	29	14
8B	16	17	26	24	15
8C	20	18	21	22	17
9A	6	20	40	23	10
9B	10	24	33	25	7
9C	11	21	40	20	7
10A	13	24	36	17	8
10B	9	27	35	20	6
10C	10	22	32	24	9
11	1	6	13	37	41
12	3	5	10	36	43
13A	8	11	25	30	20
13B	4	12	30	35	11
13C	10	17	27	25	14

Key: Bold figures represent the highest score. Percentages of invalid results were not included in the results in the table.