

**REPUBLIC OF TURKEY  
ÇUKUROVA UNIVERSITY  
THE INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING**

**LEARNER AUTONOMY IN SECONDARY SCHOOL VIRTUAL  
CLASSROOMS: TURKISH EFL TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS AND  
PRACTICES**

**Semra KARAALI**

**MASTER OF ARTS**

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**MASTER OF ARTS**

**ADANA / 2021**

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## DEDICATION

*To my pride and joy,  
my sunshine,  
my beloved son,  
CEM...*



## ETİK BEYANI

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Semra KARAALİ

## ÖZET

### ORTAOKUL SANAL SINIFLARINDA ÖĞRENEN ÖZERKLİĞİ: YABANCI DİL OLARAK İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETEN TÜRK ÖĞRETMENLERİN ALGILARI VE UYGULAMALARI

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**Haziran 2021, 217 sayfa**

Yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğretimi ve öğrenimi bağlamında öğrenen özerkliği 21. Yüzyılın küreselleşen dünyasında daha büyük bir önem kazanmış olan etkili bir kanal olmuştur. Günümüzdeki yaşam, özerk olduğunda daha etkili olduğuna inanılan çevrimiçi eğitimin eğitim sürecine egemen olacağını göstermiştir. Ayrıca çevrimiçi eğitim bağlamlarındaki öğrenen özerkliği becerilerinin önemi son zamanlarda bilim insanlarının dikkatini çekmektedir. Bu çalışma yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğreten öğretmenlerin Hatay ilindeki ortaokul sanal sınıflarında öğrenen özerkliğine yönelik algıları ve uygulamalarını incelemektedir. Veri, nicel ve nitel veri toplama araçları kullanılarak elde edilmiştir. Nicel veri için öğrenen özerkliği algıları ve öğrenen özerkliğini destekleyen dil öğretim yöntemlerini araştırmak amacıyla özel ve devlet ortaokullarında çalışmakta olan 194 öğretmene bir anket uygulanmıştır. Nicel veriyi desteklemek üzere katılım için gönüllü olan 21 İngilizce öğretmeniyle yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bulgular öğretmenlerin çevrimiçi dil eğitiminde özerk öğrenen ve öğrenen özerkliğinin önemi ve anlamına yönelik yüksek farkındalığa sahip olduklarını göstermiştir. Öğrenen özerkliği ve çevrimiçi öğrenme ortamları arasında bir ilişki olduğu görülmüştür. Elde edilen sonuçlardan öğretmenlerin öğrenen özerkliğini geliştirmeye yönelik olan uygulamaları ile ilgili çok etkili görüşlere sahip oldukları çıkarılabilir. Ancak sanal sınıflarda uygun olmayan geleneksel yaklaşımları pratiğe döktükleri tahmin edildiğinden uygulama konusunda zorluk çekmektedirler. Buna ek olarak, çevrimiçi eğitimde öğrenen özerkliğini desteklemek, öğrenci ve öğretmen bazlı sınırlılıkların yanı sıra zaman, müfredat ve sınıf mevcudu sınırlamaları gibi çeşitli nedenlerle zorlayıcıdır. Bu çalışmanın bulguları öğrenen

özerkliği cesaretlendirmesindeki zorlukları belirleme bakımından İngilizce dil öğretimi alanına katkıda bulunabilir. Bulgular aynı zamanda İngilizce öğretmenlerinin etkili görüşlerini ve uygulamalarını sunarak sanal dil sınıflarında özerk öğrenme yaratmaya yönelik kavrayış sağlamaktadır.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Öğrenen özerkliği, özerk öğrenen, sanal sınıf, çevrimiçi eğitim.



**ABSTRACT****LEARNER AUTONOMY IN SECONDARY SCHOOL VIRTUAL  
CLASSROOMS: TURKISH EFL TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS AND  
PRACTICES****Semra KARAALI****Master Thesis, Department of English Language Teaching****Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Gülden İLİN****June 2021, 217 pages**

Learner autonomy in EFL teaching and learning context has long been taken as an efficient channel, which has gained more significance in the globalized world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Today's life has demonstrated that online education, which is believed to be more effective when autonomous, will dominate the education process. Besides, the significance of learner autonomy skills for online educational settings has recently attracted the attention of scholars. In this vein, this study investigates EFL teachers' perceptions and practices concerning learner autonomy in secondary school virtual classrooms in Hatay, Turkey. The data were collected using both quantitative and qualitative data collection tools. For the quantitative data, a questionnaire was administered to 194 teachers working at state and private secondary schools to explore learner autonomy perceptions and language teaching practices promoting learner autonomy. To support the quantitative data, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 21 EFL teachers volunteering to participate. Findings revealed that the EFL teachers have a high awareness of the meaning and significance of learner autonomy and an autonomous learner in online language education. There seems to be a connection between learner autonomy and online learning environments. It is deduced from the findings that teachers have compelling views concerning practices to foster learner autonomy. However, they are having difficulty promoting it due to the fact that they are assumed to be practising traditional approaches which cannot be appropriate in online EFL teaching and learning environment. Moreover, learner autonomy promotion is challenging in an online learning setting for several reasons, such as time, curriculum, and class-size limitations in addition to teacher-related and learner-related constraints.

The findings of this study may contribute to the ELT field in terms of identifying challenges in learner autonomy encouragement. They also provide insights into creating autonomous learning in virtual language classrooms presenting influential views and practices of EFL teachers.

**Keywords:** Learner autonomy, autonomous learner, virtual classroom, online education.



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|                                 | Page        |
|---------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>ÖZET .....</b>               | <b>iv</b>   |
| <b>ABSTRACT.....</b>            | <b>vi</b>   |
| <b>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....</b>    | <b>viii</b> |
| <b>ABBREVIATIONS.....</b>       | <b>xiv</b>  |
| <b>LIST OF TABLES .....</b>     | <b>xv</b>   |
| <b>LIST OF APPENDICES .....</b> | <b>xvi</b>  |

## CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

|                                     |    |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| 1.1. Background of the Study .....  | 1  |
| 1.2. Statement of the Problem.....  | 2  |
| 1.3. Purpose of the Study .....     | 3  |
| 1.4. Research Questions.....        | 4  |
| 1.5. Significance of the Study..... | 4  |
| 1.6. Limitations .....              | 7  |
| 1.7. Operational Definitions.....   | 8  |
| 1.7.1. Learner Autonomy.....        | 8  |
| 1.7.2. Autonomous Learners.....     | 8  |
| 1.7.3. Virtual Classroom.....       | 9  |
| 1.7.4. Self-regulation .....        | 9  |
| 1.7.5. Language.....                | 9  |
| 1.7.6. Gender.....                  | 10 |
| 1.7.7. Self-access learning .....   | 10 |
| 1.7.8. Independent learning .....   | 10 |
| 1.7.9. Self-directed learning.....  | 10 |
| 1.7.10. Self-instruction .....      | 11 |

## CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW

|                        |    |
|------------------------|----|
| 2.1. Introduction..... | 12 |
|------------------------|----|

|                                                                              |    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 2.2. Significant Definitions and Perspectives on Learner Autonomy.....       | 13 |
| 2.3. Misconceptions About Learner Autonomy.....                              | 15 |
| 2.4. Learner Autonomy as a General Concept in Teaching/Learning Context..... | 17 |
| 2.4.1. Learner Autonomy and Sociolinguistics .....                           | 17 |
| 2.4.2. Learner Autonomy and Metacognition.....                               | 17 |
| 2.4.3. Learner Autonomy and Motivation .....                                 | 18 |
| 2.4.4. Learner Autonomy and Self-regulation .....                            | 20 |
| 2.4.5. Learner Autonomy and Self-Access .....                                | 21 |
| 2.4.6. Learner Autonomy and Culture .....                                    | 22 |
| 2.4.7. Learner Autonomy and Identity.....                                    | 24 |
| 2.4.8. Learner Autonomy and Constructivism.....                              | 25 |
| 2.4.9. Learner Autonomy and Teacher Autonomy .....                           | 25 |
| 2.5. Autonomous Learning in Online EFL Teaching and Learning Context .....   | 26 |
| 2.5.1. The Sudden Switch to Online Teaching & Learning.....                  | 27 |
| 2.5.2. Promoting Learner Autonomy in Virtual Classrooms.....                 | 31 |
| 2.5.3. The Engagement of Learners in Online Education.....                   | 32 |
| 2.6. The Roles of the Learners and the Teachers in Autonomous Learning.....  | 34 |
| 2.6.1. Learner's Role .....                                                  | 34 |
| 2.6.2. Teacher's Role .....                                                  | 35 |
| 2.7. Autonomy Implementation and the Improvement of Learners .....           | 38 |
| 2.8. Reflections on Learner autonomy.....                                    | 38 |
| 2.9. Empirical Studies on Learner Autonomy in Various Contexts .....         | 40 |
| 2.10. EFL Teachers' Perceptions on Learner Autonomy .....                    | 49 |
| 2.11. Summary .....                                                          | 54 |

### **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

|                                                            |    |
|------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 3.1. Introduction.....                                     | 56 |
| 3.2. Context of the Study .....                            | 56 |
| 3.3. Research Design .....                                 | 57 |
| 3.4. Data Collection .....                                 | 58 |
| 3.5. Data Collection Tools .....                           | 59 |
| 3.5.1. Questionnaire: Perceptions on Learner Autonomy..... | 59 |

|                                      |    |
|--------------------------------------|----|
| 3.5.2. Interviews .....              | 61 |
| 3.6. Participants.....               | 64 |
| 3.7. Data collection procedure ..... | 67 |
| 3.8. Data analysis .....             | 67 |
| 3.9. Reliability and Validity.....   | 69 |

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **FINDINGS**

|                                                                                                                     |     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 4.1. Introduction.....                                                                                              | 72  |
| 4.2. EFL teachers' Perceptions on Learner Autonomy in Secondary School Virtual Classrooms.....                      | 72  |
| 4.2.1. The Ways Teachers Developed Their Views on Learner Autonomy and its Value .....                              | 76  |
| 4.3. EFL Teachers' Perceptions Towards Implementing Learner Autonomy in Online Language Education .....             | 79  |
| 4.3.1. Psychological Perspectives of Learner Autonomy .....                                                         | 79  |
| 4.3.2. Political Perspectives on Learner Autonomy .....                                                             | 81  |
| 4.3.3. Social Perspectives on Learner Autonomy.....                                                                 | 83  |
| 4.3.4. Technical Perspectives on Learner Autonomy .....                                                             | 84  |
| 4.3.5. Teachers' Perceptions Regarding Their Roles in Promoting Learner Autonomy.....                               | 85  |
| 4.3.6. Learner Autonomy Perceptions Regarding the Learners' Age.....                                                | 90  |
| 4.3.7. Learner Autonomy Perceptions Regarding the Learners' Proficiency.....                                        | 91  |
| 4.3.7.1. How Teachers Associate Learner Autonomy with Online Language Learning.....                                 | 92  |
| 4.3.8. Perceptions Regarding the Advantages Of Learner Autonomy .....                                               | 96  |
| 4.4. EFL Teachers' Practices to Implement Learner Autonomy in the Online English Teaching and Learning Context..... | 97  |
| 4.4.1. Feasibility and Desirability of Learner Involvement in Terms of Decision-Making.....                         | 98  |
| 4.4.2. Desirability and Feasibility of Decision-Involvement of Learners with Particular Abilities.....              | 101 |

|                                                                                                                            |     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 4.4.3. Views on Giving the Learners Opportunities to Promote Learner<br>Autonomy .....                                     | 103 |
| 4.4.4. EFL Teachers' Practices to Promote Learner Autonomy in Virtual<br>Classrooms .....                                  | 104 |
| 4.5. To What Extent Do EFL Teachers Believe That Their Students are Autonomous in<br>Online Learning? .....                | 114 |
| 4.6. Constraints EFL Teachers Confront regarding Promoting Learner Autonomy in<br>Online Education .....                   | 116 |
| 4.6.1. Learner-Related Constraints .....                                                                                   | 116 |
| 4.6.2. Teacher-Related Constraints.....                                                                                    | 117 |
| 4.6.3. Constraints Regarding the Way The School Operates.....                                                              | 118 |
| 4.6.4. EFL Teachers' Overall Thoughts Concerning the Challenges of Promoting<br>Learner Autonomy .....                     | 118 |
| 4.7. Teachers' Recommendations Concerning Encouraging Teachers in Promoting<br>Learner Autonomy in Virtual Classrooms..... | 123 |
| 4.8. EFL Teachers' Suggestions for The Workshops to Cover.....                                                             | 125 |

## **CHAPTER V**

### **DISCUSSION**

|                                                                                                                                                                  |     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 5.1. Introduction.....                                                                                                                                           | 128 |
| 5.2. Research Question 1: What are EFL Teachers' Perceptions on Learner Autonomy in<br>Secondary School Virtual Classrooms?.....                                 | 128 |
| 5.2.1. EFL Teachers' Definitions of Learner Autonomy .....                                                                                                       | 128 |
| 5.2.2. EFL Teachers' Definitions of Autonomous Learners .....                                                                                                    | 129 |
| 5.2.3. The Roots of the EFL Teachers' Current Opinions on Learner Autonomy .                                                                                     | 129 |
| 5.3. Research Question 2: What are EFL Teachers' Perceptions towards Implementing<br>Learner Autonomy in Online English Language Teaching/ Learning Context? ... | 130 |
| 5.3.1. Teachers' Perceptions on Psychological Perspectives of Learner<br>Autonomy.....                                                                           | 130 |
| 5.3.2. Teachers' Perceptions on Political Perspectives of Learner Autonomy .....                                                                                 | 132 |
| 5.3.3. Teachers' Perceptions on Social Perspectives of Learner Autonomy.....                                                                                     | 132 |
| 5.3.4. Teachers' Perceptions regarding their Roles in Promoting Learner<br>Autonomy.....                                                                         | 134 |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 5.3.5. Learner Autonomy Perceptions regarding the Learners' Age .....                                                                                                                                                       | 136 |
| 5.3.6. Learner Autonomy Perceptions regarding the Learners' Proficiency.....                                                                                                                                                | 136 |
| 5.3.7. Perceptions regarding the Advantages of Learner Autonomy in the Virtual<br>Classroom.....                                                                                                                            | 136 |
| 5.4. Research Question 3: What Kind of Practices do EFL Teachers Apply to Implement<br>Learner Autonomy in Online English Language Teaching/ Learning Context?...                                                           | 137 |
| 5.4.1. Feasibility and Desirability of Learner Autonomy in terms of Decision-<br>Making .....                                                                                                                               | 137 |
| 5.5. Research Question 4: To What Extent do EFL Teachers Believe that Their Students<br>are Autonomous in Online Education? .....                                                                                           | 143 |
| 5.6. Research Question 5: Do EFL Teachers Confront any Constraints regarding<br>Developing Learner Autonomy in Online Education? If yes, what are the<br>Significant Restrictions to Learner Autonomy Implementation? ..... | 145 |
| 5.6.1. Learner-Related Constraints .....                                                                                                                                                                                    | 145 |
| 5.6.2. Teacher-Related Constraints.....                                                                                                                                                                                     | 147 |
| 5.6.3. Constraints Regarding the way the School Operates.....                                                                                                                                                               | 149 |
| 5.7. Teachers' Recommendations on the Ways of Promoting Learner Autonomy in<br>Online Language Learning .....                                                                                                               | 151 |

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **CONCLUSION**

|                           |     |
|---------------------------|-----|
| 6.1. Introduction.....    | 153 |
| 6.3. Conclusion .....     | 154 |
| 6.4. Limitations .....    | 158 |
| 6.5. Implications .....   | 158 |
| 6.6. Recommendations..... | 160 |

|                        |            |
|------------------------|------------|
| <b>REREFENCES.....</b> | <b>162</b> |
|------------------------|------------|

|                         |            |
|-------------------------|------------|
| <b>APPENDICES .....</b> | <b>177</b> |
|-------------------------|------------|

|                              |            |
|------------------------------|------------|
| <b>CURRICULUM VITAE.....</b> | <b>217</b> |
|------------------------------|------------|

## ABBREVIATIONS

- MoNE:** Ministry of National Education
- CEFR:** Common European Framework of Reference
- EFL:** English as a foreign language
- ESL:** English as a second language
- ELT:** English Language Teaching
- LA:** Learner Autonomy
- SPSS:** Statistical Package for Social Sciences
- ZPD:** Zone of Proximal Development
- EBA:** Education Information Network
- TOEFL:** Test of English as a Foreign Language
- IELTS:** International English Language Testing System
- L1:** First Language
- L2:** Second Language
- UNESCO:** United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
- MOOLCs:** Massive Open Online Language Courses
- ELP:** English Language Portfolio
- CALL:** Computer Assisted Language Learning
- LMS:** Learning Management System
- ILL:** Independent Language Log
- GTM:** Grammar Translation Method
- DynED:** Dynamic Education

## LIST OF TABLES

|                                                                                                                  | <b>Page</b> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Table 1.</b> Research Design.....                                                                             | 57          |
| <b>Table 2.</b> Demographic Characteristics of the Questionnaire Participants.....                               | 64          |
| <b>Table 3.</b> Descriptive Statistics of the Participants Volunteering to Participate In The<br>Interviews..... | 65          |
| <b>Table 4.</b> Demographic Characteristics of the Interview Participants.....                                   | 66          |
| <b>Table 5.</b> EFL Teachers' Perceptions of Learner Autonomy .....                                              | 73          |
| <b>Table 6.</b> EFL Teachers' Perceptions of an Autonomous Learner.....                                          | 75          |
| <b>Table 7.</b> Psychological Perspectives on Learner Autonomy.....                                              | 80          |
| <b>Table 8.</b> Political Perspectives on Learner Autonomy .....                                                 | 82          |
| <b>Table 9.</b> Social Perspectives on Learner Autonomy .....                                                    | 83          |
| <b>Table 10.</b> Technical Perspectives on Learner Autonomy .....                                                | 85          |
| <b>Table 11.</b> Teachers' Perceptions Regarding Their Roles in Promoting Learner<br>Autonomy .....              | 86          |
| <b>Table 12.</b> Teachers' Perceptions of Their Roles .....                                                      | 88          |
| <b>Table 13.</b> Learner Autonomy Perceptions Regarding the Learners' Age.....                                   | 90          |
| <b>Table 14.</b> Learner Autonomy Perceptions Regarding the Learners' Proficiency .....                          | 91          |
| <b>Table 15.</b> Perceptions Regarding the Advantages Of Learner Autonomy .....                                  | 96          |
| <b>Table 16.</b> Views On Giving the Learners Opportunities to Promote Learner<br>Autonomy .....                 | 104         |
| <b>Table 17.</b> EFL Teachers' Practices To Promote Learner Autonomy .....                                       | 105         |
| <b>Table 18.</b> The Quotes Presented with The Codes That Emerged to Identify Practices                          | 108         |
| <b>Table 19.</b> Views on the Learners' Autonomy Level .....                                                     | 114         |
| <b>Table 20.</b> Learner-related Constraints.....                                                                | 116         |
| <b>Table 21.</b> Teacher-related Constraints .....                                                               | 117         |
| <b>Table 22.</b> The Way the School Operates.....                                                                | 118         |

**LIST OF APPENDICES**

|                                                                                     | <b>Page</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>APPENDIX A.</b> Consent and Information Form .....                               | 177         |
| <b>APPENDIX B.</b> Anket .....                                                      | 179         |
| <b>APPENDIX C.</b> Çevrimiçi Eğitimde Öğrenci Özerkliği Anketi (Öğretmen-Türkçe) .. | 200         |
| <b>APPENDIX D.</b> Interview Questions.....                                         | 207         |
| <b>APPENDIX E.</b> Görüşme Soruları (Türkçe).....                                   | 209         |
| <b>APPENDIX F.</b> Permission Letters .....                                         | 211         |



## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Background of the Study

Language teaching and learning practices and theories have been a significant debate topic among educators. The concept of learner autonomy has produced controversy during the period of transition from a teacher-centered environment towards creating learner-centered approaches in EFL teaching and learning context. The conflict occurs due to the challenge of defining what autonomy is. Numerous teachers believe that learner autonomy reflects learners having the responsibility for their learning. On the other hand, some teachers believe that it dispenses a teacher's necessity in the teaching and learning process. Indeed, the term autonomy stemmed from the moral philosophy area, and the political field has an ambiguous meaning since it changes according to peoples' perspectives. In this vein, Benson (2001) portrays the concept of learner autonomy as many-sided, and therefore, many theorists have had debates from multiple points of view. However, many theorists agree with Holec (1981) as he gives the most general and logical meaning, which is taking the responsibility of one's learning. The most important key to success might be setting goals in advance and reaching them by uncovering the learners' learning strategies and skills, such as learner autonomy.

Consequently, we can reach a consensus that learner autonomy improvement starts in a teaching and learning environment. Therefore, teachers and the context in which the teaching is offered have a vital role in developing autonomy. Furthermore, it may have a significant impact if employed in virtual classrooms. However, when we go through the literature, we find that there appears to be a need to examine the subject of learner autonomy deeper, especially in particular contexts such as online EFL learning. Hence, the issue will be discussed empirically to recognize the developments in this area of study for the last decades. In addition, various methods, techniques, and autonomy features that advocate learners' wish to be independent will also be investigated.

## 1.2. Statement of the Problem

Language learning in virtual classrooms is rapidly growing worldwide due to some factors such as its reasonable cost, broad reach, and convenience. The Covid-19 pandemic has also increased the significance of online learning recently. Many different platforms, including Zoom, EBA, and Microsoft Teams, have been used. EFL teachers deliver their online sessions in virtual classrooms using primarily EBA developed by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE).

Developing reasonable educational goals and implement appropriate methods to teach the English language following innovations in the field has become more considerable. While teaching the English language in virtual classrooms, implementing learner autonomy may be one of the most efficient ways to assist secondary school students in improving language learning and developing their higher-order thinking, critical, and analytical thinking skills, as well as self-confidence. However, many EFL teachers teaching at different levels in state and private schools do not feel sufficiently confident in the online teaching sessions.

Moreover, the efficiency of employing learner autonomy in the virtual classrooms is believed to largely depend on the teachers' talent, not having the theoretical knowledge concerning learner autonomy only but putting it into practice. Learner autonomy can be promoted by encouraging students to decide on the aims of the lesson, describe the contents, select methods to be used, monitor language acquisition operations, and measure what is adopted (Holec, 1981). However, according to Balçıkanlı (2008), learners cannot participate actively in the learning process because they lack the knowledge to handle it independently, which undoubtedly, necessitates some guidance.

Little (2008) argues that learner autonomy is often applied to process however its intended outcome is ignored in different contexts of foreign language learning. In a similar vein, this problem has been addressed by many scholars such as Lamb (2011), who puts forward that research is required to continue to discover autonomy in different teaching and learning settings. Furthermore, the realization that learner autonomy seldom considers students learning in isolation led to a systematic search of learner autonomy as a dynamic construct applied in multilateral ways (Lamb, 2017). Besides, the literature review confirms that studies exploring how learner autonomy in online learning environments is influenced and reshaped remain under-researched (Reinders &

White, 2016). Therefore, we hope that the thesis will address the lacuna in learner autonomy scholarship concerning teachers' learner autonomy perceptions and online education practices.

Moreover, in this study, the main links between learner autonomy and language learning in the virtual classrooms are explored and introduced to language teachers aiming at leading the learners to success by creating an autonomous learning environment surrounded by learners who are supposed to actively participate in the online learning by taking responsibility for their learning.

This study will address the perceptions and practices of Turkish EFL teachers teaching at secondary schools. We hope that it will contribute to the educators, teachers, students, and parents in gaining the awareness of taking the steps collectively towards success in the virtual classrooms. Besides, it will contribute to MoNE administrators who may originate or revise policies based upon the results, determine strategies to improve the virtual classrooms' efficiency and conduct more in-service teacher training for professional development. Finally, the study will benefit online education, a vital teaching and learning process in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **1.3. Purpose of the Study**

Understanding the nature and importance of learner autonomy in virtual classrooms is significant because it may promote and enable the learners to achieve independent and life-long learning abilities. Lamb (2011) emphasizes that the significance of teaching this independent learning ability to secondary school students has made learner autonomy an aspect of language education that is required to be researched and studied extensively. Therefore, EFL teachers' perceptions and practices of learner autonomy in secondary school virtual classrooms in Hatay, Turkey are aimed to be investigated in this study. In addition, various methods that are effective to encourage learner autonomy are aimed to be explored.

Teachers' perspectives determine the lesson's type and differentiate the learners' role from the teachers'. Even though the teachers are well-equipped to operationalize learner autonomy in the classroom, they may have difficulty having the same success in the online education process. However, it is necessary to improve learner autonomy in language education (Balçıkanlı, 2008). The efficiency of implementing learner autonomy in the online education process may largely depend on the teachers' talent for

putting the theoretical knowledge into practice.

This study investigates how a group of teachers in Hatay promotes learner autonomy and what learner autonomy means. Although learner autonomy is a significant concept that has been studied for so long, when we investigate the studies in the field, we find the need for more studies to be conducted about the practical sides of implementation. Therefore, the current research attempts to fill the gap related to EFL teachers' learner autonomy perceptions and practices in the virtual classrooms. The research also explores to what extent EFL teachers believe that their students are autonomous in online education. Additionally, it investigates whether EFL teachers confront any constraints regarding developing learner autonomy in the online language teaching and learning context.

#### **1.4. Research Questions**

1. What are EFL teachers' perceptions on learner autonomy in secondary school virtual classrooms?
2. What are EFL teachers' perceptions towards implementing learner autonomy in the online English language teaching/ learning context?
3. What kind of practices do EFL teachers apply to implement learner autonomy in the online English language teaching/ learning context?
4. To what extent do EFL teachers believe that their students are autonomous in online education?
5. Do EFL teachers confront any constraints regarding developing learner autonomy in online education? If yes, what are the significant restrictions to learner autonomy implementation?

#### **1.5. Significance of the Study**

The autonomy of learners has long been a central theme in the language learning field. However, in the literature, minimal space has been awarded for what learner autonomy implies to educators in virtual classrooms. Lamb (2008) notes that the worldwide rise in different kinds of independent learning, the growing curiosity in encouraging autonomous learning, and current learning opportunities in out-of-class environments had significant repercussions for language teachers.

In this study, learner autonomy is considered to crack prodigious opportunities for learning a foreign language in virtual classrooms. It stems from the new learning relationships that occur as digital tools and services become omnipresent between learners and teachers. Online learning environments facilitate a more effective involvement for students in education in building their expertise (Goulão, 2013). It is expected that teachers will generate quicker and simpler progress than anything seen in previous reform attempts. The implementation of autonomy is nascent in online education, but we can see it spreading rapidly as a positive contagion. It may become unstoppable when EFL teachers provide language learners with appropriate conditions to apply it in the virtual EFL classrooms. Teachers must create a learning environment or suitable conditions that could lead the learners to become autonomous and where learners can excise their learning agency that may become a primary objective in designing a course (Ribbe and Bezanilla, 2013).

There are modifications that we urgently need since there seem to be daunting problems the learners confront. Not many students seem to find their online learning meaningful, and they do not see it as a predictable road to a successful life. Thus, teachers are trying to find a way to broaden the educational creativity that addresses the challenges confronted so that they are translated through entire structures into broad, holistic change. This study describes a wealth of insight into how learner autonomy can be applied in the online education system, evolving. It also investigates how new practices of learner autonomy are already being involved in secondary school virtual classrooms that strive to achieve a large scale.

New approaches may require learners to create new knowledge through the power of using their autonomy. The contemporary teaching methods are robust and amplified by teachers' and students' ubiquitous skills and features such as being autonomous. The services facilitating learner independence in the education system also take hold within the online foreign language learning environment. Autonomy is widely thought to develop learning, making arrangements learners need to succeed throughout their life. This study describes the practices that focus on the special forces of learners' inquiry, imagination, and intention, unleashing the passion and enthusiasm of learners and teachers in new learning collaborations. The goal is to discover, enable and nurture powerful, meaningful, enjoyable and real learning encouraged by EFL teachers who serve as facilitators. Autonomous learning may apply to one of our core motivations: to be engaged in learning explicitly.

Teachers need to allow and intelligently encourage what's already evolving. Implementing learner autonomy in online education seems to liberate teaching and learning from the curricular limitations rapidly. When learner autonomy requirements are accomplished, learning outcomes can be significantly improved by implementing learner autonomy in virtual classrooms. However, for the new practices to be successful, a competent teaching capacity must be constructed. Encouraging students to master the learning process as autonomous learners; bringing more extensive attention to the significance of taking charge of one's own learning may require using the influence of individual learning as well as peer teaching, linking learning to the actual desires of students, and continually assessing as well as reviewing learning progress and selecting appropriate learning methods. This responsibility must become part of the core repertoire of EFL teachers' skills during their teaching experience.

Moreover, it is emphasized by İlin (2019) that if we dig closer at issue from a language education viewpoint, we realize that people worldwide communicate and collaborate more than any other period due to globalization. Besides, we can see that learners collaborate in more intimate and open learning processes. Teachers and students participate in the autonomous learning process where high standards are collectively negotiated and accomplished through demanding learning assignments that encourage learner autonomy. The emphasis may be on ensuring that students have the responsibility of mastering the learning process. This process may assist students in learning about themselves as learners and continuously encouraging them to analyze and reflect on their development.

In parallel, İlin (2019) states that students should possess particular qualities that could be instructed to monitor, take charge, and forward their learning as individuals. She also underscores that these qualities significantly impact learners in terms of taking responsibility for their learning. In this vein, the new approaches require learners to become successful academically by becoming autonomous to do things that matter in the online EFL learning environment. Therefore, new steps are required to give students, teachers, parents, and administrators a clear picture of what learner autonomy means in practice and how it can have a tangible effect on the efficiency of the virtual EFL classrooms.

The perspectives outlined in this study primarily focus on interactions and observations of the EFL teachers with students in their virtual classrooms. It represents learner autonomy that instinctively appeals to secondary school students. In this study,

the purpose is to draw attention to the significance of maintaining autonomous learning in the online EFL teaching and learning context and determine whether it can facilitate sustainable progress in virtual classrooms.

In conclusion, language learners have confronted a wide variety of opportunities to participate in their self-directed learning with the advances of technology. However, the literature review confirms that studies exploring how learner autonomy in virtual classrooms are influenced and reshaped remain under-researched (Reinders & White, 2016). In this respect, while students and teachers build the future through their acts and determine the quality of the teaching process, the significance of examining teachers' perceptions and practices concerning the implementation of learner autonomy in online education was noticed. Klimas (2017) suggests that classrooms are excellent places to equip students with the requisite facilities and train them for continuous improvement. However, this study seeks to determine whether maintaining and fostering the autonomy of secondary school students in virtual classrooms is possible. Furthermore, the study presents strategic steps that teachers and learners can take individually and collectively to create a positive environment by implementing practical strategies or approaches such as learner autonomy.

### **1.6. Limitations**

The current study does not include all secondary-school language teachers of many different schools in Turkey. If data from many other secondary schools in Turkey had been gathered, a more prominent possibility of having more reliable outcomes could have been had. Besides, supporting the quantitative data findings with the observation would have provided more precise results. The researcher of the study intended to observe teachers and students in classrooms. However, after the Coronavirus outbreak, having had to ensure physical distancing and self-isolation, the possibility of conducting observations and face-to-face meetings became scarce.

Due to the precautions, a questionnaire and an open-ended interview could not be administered to the learners. Convenience sampling was used since the participants were selected according to their availability and voluntariness. However, the results might have been prone to bias as those who volunteer to participate might have differed from those who chose not to. Therefore, sampling is likely not to be representative of other characteristics. Moreover, it could be more logical to extrapolate the effects for

the secondary school English language learners in Turkey, leading to a more holistic conclusion.

The results may yield dissimilar because of factors such as the profile of missing schools and their perceptions concerning learner autonomy and the need for further training in implementing it effectively. However, the generated data may provide valuable insights into the significance of learner autonomy in virtual classrooms. Since the aim is not to generalize the findings, the differences that may be found in other settings result from the cultural peculiarities that scholars have associated with autonomous learning.

### **1.7. Operational Definitions**

The following are the definitions of the key terms that we adopt and refer to throughout the study.

#### **1.7.1. Learner Autonomy**

According to Benson (2013), learner autonomy implies taking responsibility for one's learning. An independent learner is thought to be a learner who seeks a good and satisfying source of knowledge to clear something up. Teng (2019) points out that willingness alludes to the power of a student's goal to get familiar with a language or complete a specific learning task that starts with a particular reason. Furthermore, he notes that opportunity alludes to the degree to which students are permitted to control their engagement, either by explicit operators in the learning procedure or, all the more by and large, by the learning circumstances wherein they distinguish themselves. Learner autonomy is characterized by Holec (1981) as the capacity to assume responsibility for one's learning.

#### **1.7.2. Autonomous Learners**

Holec (1981) records the autonomous learners as deciding the destinations; characterizing the substance and movements; choosing strategies and methods; observing the technique of acquisition; and assessing what has been procured. His depiction seems to focus on the mechanics of every day learning the executives. Free learning is associated with autonomy from the interceding nearness of a teacher throughout learning by White (2008). On the other hand, Dickinson (1995) defines

autonomous learners as having the ability to realize their learning goals, the requirements to reach the goals, and achieve that with their fellow students and teachers.

### **1.7.3. Virtual Classroom**

Rockinson-Szapkiw and Walker (2009) point out that web-conferencing or e-conferencing systems are widely recognized as synchronous virtual classrooms. It is also suggested by Martin and Parker (2014) that virtual classrooms provide real-time communications, allowing users to connect via the Internet at the same time to hold meetings and seminars, provide classes, lead conversations, give presentations and complete many other tasks. Furthermore, according to Roberts (2007), a digital classroom is an authentic environment with digital tools in which learners actively participate in and govern their learning. When we go through the literature, we find that phrases such as online learning, e-learning, and digital learning may also be used interchangeably with virtual classrooms. Thus, all these terms/ phrases in this study refer to the context in which learners have been offered formal education.

### **1.7.4. Self-regulation**

Self-regulated learning is believed to be firmly identified with how individuals control their feelings, comprehensions, practices, and natural perspectives during a learning experience. Moreover, it can easily be noticed that it is essential to have the option to control your brain regarding learning forms. Therefore, the sooner it is figured out how to be done, the more fruitful and satisfying the instructive experience may be. In line with the social cognitive theory of learning (Bandura, 1989), Zimmerman (1989) underscores that self-regulation reflects the extent to which the learners are active in terms of motivation, meta-cognition, and behavior in their learning process (p.1).

### **1.7.5. Language**

A language is the most flexible and improved way of conveying our messages to others. The use of language is the most effective way to ensure successful communication and understand each other well. Language is equally equipped with facial expressions and gestures for effective communication. Language is the most advanced communication tool in transferring culture, emotion, knowledge, and

education (Yule, 2020). Therefore, learning English, which is spoken worldwide since it is the international language, is vital. In linguistics, the Sapir- Whorf Hypothesis put forth that an individual's ideas in one language might not be understood by those who live in another language. The hypothesis reflects that the way people think is strongly affected by their native languages.

#### **1.7.6. Gender**

It is revealed by Fichter (1994) that individuals of a society are naturally placed into determined classes known as status. Individuals accomplish this status or are conceived straightforwardly into the absolute position. Individuals can possess more than one status like; sister, traveler, patient, mother, or specialist, which comprises social stratum. All these statuses require specific jobs in the public eye to be part of the socialization procedure and comprehensiveness of socially fundamental jobs. Fichter (1994) indicates that it is a judgment applied to gender roles inside the general public and culture, which expect that being a lady and being a man are all-inclusive status individuals are brought into the world with.

#### **1.7.7. Self-access learning**

Dickinson (1987) describes self-access learning as learning through facilities or resources that are well-arranged to empower the self-instruction process.

#### **1.7.8. Independent learning**

Dickinson (1987) defines independent learning as taking the decisions required for the learning process that the students experience.

#### **1.7.9. Self-directed learning**

Holec (1981) relates the self-direction process to implementing appropriate methods to direct one's learning. Self-direction is defined by Dickinson (1987) as a particular behavior towards the tasks, whereby the learners take charge regarding all the learning-based decisions.

#### **1.7.10. Self-instruction**

According to Little (1991), self-instruction reflects a learning form without any teacher's support or instruction. In a similar vein, Dickinson (1987) also describes self-instruction as learning without an instructor's direct guidance or control.



## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1. Introduction

All forms of learning require the implementation of learner autonomy (Dickinson, 1987). On the other hand, Holec (1981) notes that autonomous learning requires a certain level of ability for autonomy. It is reported by Yen and Liu (2009) that the students ought to have a high level of autonomy in the online learning environment. Besides, the characteristics such as the ability to learn, resourcefulness, and determination significantly affect developing autonomy and the quality of learning (Yen and Liu, 2009).

According to Lamb (2008), numerous teachers have been restricted by their actual lack of experience of the innovations or restrictions emerging from the policy. Consequently, the resulting contributions reflect a wide-ranging spectrum of viewpoints, focusing on learners and teachers. It can be seen that it is quite clearly argued that one cannot be considered without the other. They are situated in several environments, including classrooms, out-of-school environments, self-access centers, and teacher education courses in pre-service and in-service. Besides, they are embedded in various frameworks, with the writers approaching their issues via many experimental frameworks, methods, and techniques.

Moreover, Lamb (2017) suggests that autonomy in language learning includes two broad orientations concerned with theories or hypotheses. One of these orientations prioritizes learning systems in which learners decide on the content and processes; one gives importance to the cognitive and metacognitive potentials. Likewise, Bedir (2016) states that encouraging learners to take responsibility for their education is vital. Lamb (2017) additionally delineates that learner autonomy as an excogitation is challenging to describe, as it manifests itself in various ways primarily contingent upon the context (secular, cultural, spatial, and so on) in which it is being exercised.

The recent research into learner autonomy in different cultural settings is highlighted by Kuchah and Smith (2011) to determine what excogitation means under challenging situations and how it can support an efficient learning environment. The difficulty is for teachers and students to discover the "spaces for maneuver," which will enlarge autonomy as much as possible and suitable within a specific setting (Lamb,

2000). Since learner autonomy is multifaceted, many dimensions should be explored to provide students with an efficient teaching and learning environment. The research conducted on secondary school EFL teachers' perceptions of learner autonomy and to what extent their perceptions lead them to promote learner autonomy in the online teaching and learning context in Turkey has been limited. The subsequent parts of the literature review section attempt to disclose learner autonomy-related issues and significant studies regarding autonomy in face-to-face and online education, which has recently gained greater significance.

The current literature review consists of ten distinct parts, including the significant definitions and perspectives, misconceptions regarding learner autonomy, autonomous learning in online EFL teaching and learning context, learner autonomy as a general concept in teaching and learning context, the roles of the learners, and the teachers in autonomous learning, autonomy implementation and improvement of learners, promoting autonomy in virtual classrooms, the engagement of learners in online learning, reflections on learner autonomy, empirical studies on learner autonomy in various contexts and teachers' perceptions of learner autonomy.

## **2.2. Significant Definitions and Perspectives on Learner Autonomy**

For the last two decades, learner autonomy has been widely accepted in teaching and learning foreign languages, although it has gained significance over the previous two decades. Scholars used different terms and concepts to define learner autonomy. For instance, White (2008) calls it "independent learning," while Holec (1996) describes it as "self-directed learning." Moreover, learner autonomy is claimed to be "self-access learning" by Reinders (2000).

Many scholars and educators have provided many definitions of learner autonomy in the literature. Holec (1981), the 'father' of learner autonomy, initially popularizes learner autonomy as essential in education. He describes learner autonomy as "the ability to take responsibility for one's learning." His explanation seems to concentrate on the daily dynamics of management of learning. Furthermore, this has been the specification most frequently quoted so far in the literature. Dickinson (1987) reiterates the concept of learner autonomy provided by Holec as the circumstance in which the students are fully responsible for decisions associated with their learning and applying those commitments. On the other hand, Benson (2013) defines it as the

capacity to be in charge of, accept responsibility for, or exert control over your learning.

Moreover, Rebenius (2003) describes the autonomy of learners as a way to enhance language learning performance. Besides, Sinclair (1999) argues that autonomy in EFL learning is essentially linked to providing students with opportunities for classroom activities. Furthermore, Vanijdee (2003) suggests that learner autonomy is a concept of skills and attitudes which enables learners to take more ownership of the learning. Little (1991) states that learner autonomy is a capacity for separation, reflective thinking, decision-making, and managing oneself. Little (1995) establishes a direct connection between performance and learners' autonomy by stating that it would be no exaggeration to say that high performers have always been autonomous.

Additionally, Little (2003) argues that language learning motivation can be one of the most significant learner autonomy features reflecting learners' inherent inspiration. Benson (2001) points out that it is simple to describe this obligation for learning with recognizable actions that students can apply to handle their learning preparation, coordination, and assessment. Three key reasons are identified by Cotterall (1995) to promote learner autonomy in the EFL learning environment. These reasons are stated as pedagogical, philosophical, and practical.

Learner development is a mutual and collaborative mechanism involving teacher and learner, aiming to provide a high degree of accountability and provide learners with the ability to monitor their learning management (Dickinson, 1993). Learning the management skill also means that a learner needs to make his/ her learning process crucial. For instance, students will change their learning, aligning their particular needs and aims. The elements of desire and independence relate directly to discovering something that has personal significance. Besides, learning management control, spatial cognition, and understanding the content have been considered different ways of aligning the learning processes of an international language of individual desires and intentions. Moreover, it is possible to identify this alignment as personal significance, which is related to independence.

On the other hand, Little (2008) notes that learner autonomy indicates learners doing things by themselves and for themselves since they are the individuals who will take advantage of being autonomous. It is also stressed by Grenfell and Harris (2002) that learner autonomy and learner training are not similar things, although they are directly connected and essential. Therefore, they define autonomy as the structured and deliberate education of students in basic learning strategies called meta-cognitive

strategies. What is more, students' language and communication management strategies are called cognitive approaches. They claim learner autonomy to consist of a concerted focus on the language and the learning experience.

In line with the concept of Grenfell and Harris (2002), it is argued by Dickinson (1993) that learner development is a mutual and cooperative process between teacher and learner that aims to provide learners with the ability to monitor their own learning by providing a high level of responsibility. Additionally, several scholars such as Benson (2001), Holec (1981), Little (1991), Cotterall (1995), and Littlewood (1996) have studied learner autonomy in language learning. They have concluded that learners take responsibility for their education through learner autonomy on the basic concept of learner autonomy. Thus, they learn to determine when and how to learn; they understand their needs; they critically ponder, self-assess, and optimize the prospects for practicing English within or outside the classroom.

In conclusion, that would be to say that learner autonomy provides learners with the freedom to keep track of their learning. Learners are conscious of whatever they need to learn and take advantage of language application opportunities. Given all the above concepts, statements, or the outcome of the analysis, it can be affirmed that learner autonomy is usually characterized as the duty of learners and the attempt to take control of their learning.

### **2.3. Misconceptions About Learner Autonomy**

It is stated by Little (1991) that learner autonomy could not be organized with lesson plans only. Instead, it can be gained within a life-long process (p.3). He also pointed out that learner autonomy is not a simple and easily defined behavior. We can say that we recognize autonomous learners by their attitudes and behaviors. However, their actions take a great many distinct forms. There are numerous methods to back up students' autonomy, including metacognitive training (Wenden, 1999) and recognizing and promoting different learning styles (Ng and Confessore, 2010).

Another misconception stated by Little (1991) is that not all learners but particular ones can achieve autonomy (p.4). As was also suggested by Little (1999) and Nunan (1997), learners may have different degrees of autonomy. However, claiming that particular students can succeed in becoming autonomous may be a misconception. In addition, Little (1995) puts forth that learner autonomy reflects significant

interdependence between the students and the teacher. One of the critical misconceptions Little (1991) informs us is that learner autonomy can be used with the term self-instruction interchangeably. In contrast, self-instruction reflects a learning form without any support or instruction by a teacher. In a similar vein, Dickinson (1987) also describes self-instruction as learning without an instructor's direct guidance or control. However, as many researchers suggest, learner autonomy implementation can be meaningful and efficient with teachers' guidance and facilitation throughout the lessons.

Self-directed, self-regulated, self-access, and independent learning forms have been substituted to define autonomy for learners. Holec (1981) relates the self-direction process to implementing appropriate methods to direct one's learning. Dickinson (1987) highlights that self-direction is a particular behavior towards the tasks, whereby the learners take charge regarding all the learning-based decisions. However, putting the decisions made into practice is not necessarily undertaken by the learners. Benson and Voller (1997) argue that if autonomy is exclusively defined with self-instruction, the teacher's job seems threatened.

In line with the social cognitive theory of learning (Bandura, 1989), Zimmerman (1989) suggests that self-regulation reflects the extent to which the learners are active in terms of motivation, meta-cognition, and behavior in their learning process (p.1). He also notes that self-regulated learning reflects reciprocal association among behavioral, environmental, and personal techniques. Thus, self-regulated students are the ones who accomplish create strategies to control individuals, attitudes, and the environment. On the other hand, Dickinson (1987) describes self-access learning as learning through facilities or resources that are well-arranged to empower the self-instruction process. In addition, Dickinson (1987) defines independent learning as taking the decisions required for the learning process that the students experience. However, learner autonomy reflects the significance of learners' interests and hobbies, rather than making decisions only.

Consequently, Benson (2001) points out that some factors have caused misconceptions of learner autonomy. The first one resulted from conceptual confusion in the research area and the similarities between learner autonomy and the other concepts. Another factor is that learner autonomy is regarded as a form in which control and instructor dominance are relinquished.

## **2.4. Learner Autonomy as a General Concept in Teaching/Learning Context**

### **2.4.1. Learner Autonomy and Sociolinguistics**

Since social reality shifts quickly, it should not be anticipated that teachers must teach all about a language available. That is, the teachers' only duty or responsibility should not be developing the students only academically. It is for sure that students become more valuable members of the learning environment via language. Moreover, most scholars claim that language is a device for correspondence, which happens in a social setting. Teng (2019) underscores that people use language to share, keep up, or change a particular social reality they should initially recognize. To do as such, they have to acknowledge this social reality.

Students' backgrounds should be considered in language learning while a meaningful learning environment is encouraged and stimulated by teachers (Teng, 2019, p. 8). A system could be free or tight, relying upon how individuals associate with one another (Wardhaugh, 2011). Students become progressively significant individuals in online teaching/ learning contexts through language. According to Teng (2019), students' experience should be considered an essential learning condition besides improvement. Additionally, Teng (2019) notes that a person's uniqueness is stressed since the social truth is permitted to be an atmosphere whereby instructing and learning occur effectively and meaningfully. What is more, as social reality quickly changes, instructors are not supposed to be relied upon to educate everything accessible about a language.

### **2.4.2. Learner Autonomy and Metacognition**

Insufficient meta-cognitive knowledge might negatively affect students' thinking processes (Bedir, 2016). He also underscores that students can manage cognitive skills with meta-cognition, learning how to perform skills (p. 230). On the other hand, Teng (2019) points out that convictions and observations engaged with meta-cognition are identified with the degree of learner autonomy present since students must settle on educated choices about their learning. Independent students might be increasingly viable at assuming what their responsibilities are for their very own education. Additionally, they might be capable of planning, screening, and assessing their understanding. When endeavoring to play out the given tasks, they should be mindful of

the procedure. In this way, estimating a person's meta-cognitive mindfulness passes on how self-governing a student is.

The experiences, objectives, actions, and metacognitive knowledge are regarded by Flavell (1979) as the metacognitive occurrences. According to Teng (2019), metacognitive experiences consist of ideas and emotions that coincide with cognitive assignments. It is also suggested by Teng (2019) that metacognitive strategies include the global and national goals of cognitive tasks. Lastly, metacognitive acts are techniques used to accomplish stated targets (p.10). Similarly, Kuluşaklı (2019) reports that strategy training has specifically integrated language learning strategies to increase learners' ability to recognize their responsibility for learning by offering them cognitive skills, meta-cognitive tactics, and the sense of strategy awareness. On the other hand, Goulão and Menedez (2014) report that many studies on learner autonomy pointed to the relevance of implementing learner autonomy in meta-cognitive techniques for self-control. They stated that meta-cognitive decisions have an essential role in the self-regulation of learning to provide students with the knowledge to permit them to make decisions on learning tasks.

Wei (2011) argues that seeing the growth of learner autonomy as a process of taking cognitive, affective, and behavioral domains can enable teachers to understand the perceptions and meta-cognitive techniques of learners whose learning habits are not readily detectable. Besides, Murphey and Jacobs (2000) claim that students gain independence more quickly (become more meta-cognitively conscious and take full responsibility) by directing cooperative learning. They interact to discover and build their independent and critical voices with peers.

### **2.4.3. Learner Autonomy and Motivation**

The motivation is discovered to account for individual differences (Gardner, 2010). Hence, the primary argument is that motivation plays a role in a variety of different ways. Similarly, Bedir and Yıldırım (2000) argue that various factors influence motivation in the teaching and learning process, and becoming involved in class activities determines learners' accomplishments. Gardner (2010) states that the educational context is significant, and for most subjects, it plays a vital role in the level of motivation.

When we go through the literature, autonomy and motivation appear to be two intently and commonly related components. Applying learner autonomy in the classroom can be very motivating for the students. In a similar vein, self-sufficient students are often convinced, and their independence regularly leads them to better, increasingly powerful work (Dickinson, 1995). If we asked educators to characterize a motivated student, their answers would probably include features like attention, effort, determination. According to Tremblay and Gardner (1995), motivation is strongly associated with learners' efforts to achieve a goal, their passion for learning the language, and satisfaction with the learning task (p.506). Usuki (2003) defines learners' autonomy as the internal attitudes of learners concerning self-motivation. Hence, the key to nurturing learner autonomy was associated with the students' internalization of their actions and beliefs towards taking responsibility for their learning. Therefore, the inference can be that there is a strong relationship between the learners' autonomy and motivation.

Motivation is defined as taking responsibility for why individuals make decisions, how long they desire to maintain the task, and how they will pursue it by Dornyei (2001). According to a significant majority of teachers, when learners have motivation sufficiently, they have a better possibility of succeeding in language learning. Thus, motivation guides learners to success in autonomous learning. It also helps us foresee and perceive rewards that accompany a defined behavior. Tremblay and Gardner (1995) delineate significant motivational consequences for our cognitive capacity to predict events or build expectations. They also note that in the language teaching and learning environment, it could be hypothesized that if language learners believe that their targets can be accomplished, they can commit considerable effort and persistence (p. 507).

It is emphasized by Gardner (2010) that the intensity of the motivation is significant in terms of integrating the cognitive, behavioral, and affective components. He also pointed out that analyzing motivation in terms of being extrinsic or intrinsic is insufficient to evaluate the role of motivation in language learning (p.20). On the other hand, the self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan, 1985) conceptualizes human learning motivation as existing on a spectrum from extrinsic motivation to intrinsic one. It offers ways of measuring the autonomy of learners and a justification for educational initiatives to build it. Ushioda (1996) claims that a self-governing student has a limit regarding viable management of inspiration and frequently acquaints a level of

motivation with the learning circumstance. Without provocation, there is no autonomy. Schormova (2017) reports that having learners feel in charge of their learning enhances motivation and helps them see the realistic implementation of their education. As a consequence, a simulation can be an effective instrument to help learners getting sovereignty.

In a similar vein, it is recommended by Dickinson (1995) that improved motivation is necessary for learners to be responsible individuals and be aware of their accomplishments and failures associated with their efforts. To exemplify, Ter Haseborg (2012) presents how college learners of a foreign language viewed student autonomy, its impact on student motivation, and its advantages for different language learning parts. The mixed-methods study with 90 undergraduate students attending courses at various levels confirms that most students responded very positively to learner autonomy implementation, particularly to the possibility of making content choices. Furthermore, based on the preferences of autonomous learning, the students unanimously registered an improvement in their motivation level. Interestingly, there was also a distinction between appreciation for independent learning options and demands for more targeted grammar instruction and practice as well as regular evaluations such as quizzes and exams.

As annotated by Ushioda (1996), in the educational era of learner autonomy and learner-centeredness, teachers' main concern is to lead students to motivate themselves rather than learn how to motivate them. Motivation, consequently, is considered to play a significant role in promoting effective autonomous learning.

#### **2.4.4. Learner Autonomy and Self-regulation**

In parallel with the social cognitive theory of learning (Bandura, 1989), Zimmerman (1989) outlines that how self-regulated the students are can be associated with how active they are in terms of motivation, meta-cognition, and behavior during the learning experience (p.1).

Progressively, many practitioners and researchers in the foreign language education field are involved in learners' self-regulation principles and autonomy. Many scholars have suggested that including the principle of self-regulation in the concept of the learner autonomy framework might help explain researchers' perspectives. Besides, self-regulations enhance our comprehension regarding how teachers should

encourage their students to be independent and contribute to the development of autonomy with the required conditions for this growth. There is, indeed, a shred of rising evidence emphasizing the significance of self-regulation in supporting learners in having independence. Goulão and Menedez (2014) regard students' self-direction for general or particular goals as crucial. They also propose that to attain the success factor in self-regulated learning is vital.

A significant issue to be explored for many practitioners is encouraging their students to have autonomy and becoming more self-regulated. However, just as it stands, the majority of studies on learner autonomy following this route of investigation have been considered within the context of strategies for language learning. Nakata (2011) attempts to fill this gap by contrasting the origin and growth avenues of learners' self-regulation and autonomy. Then, it incorporates self-regulation and other conceptions of control, autonomy for teachers, and scaffolding inside the theoretical context of learner autonomy.

Many scholars have suggested that including the principle of self-regulation in the concept of the learner autonomy framework might help explain researchers' perspectives. Moreover, it enhances our comprehension of how teachers should encourage their learners' independence and contribute to autonomy with the required conditions for this growth. According to Nakata (2011), with self-regulation assistance, teachers can better picture what kind of independence the learners should accomplish and how they can support students to self-regulate their foreign language education to improve learner autonomy. Goulão and Menedez (2014) examined the autonomy of the learner and self-regulation in e-learning. The findings of the study reveal that calibration relates to the precision of students' expectations of their academic success. Many studies point to its relevance in meta-cognitive techniques for self-control. Meta-cognitive decisions have a vital role in self-regulation to provide students with the knowledge to make decisions on learning tasks. Goulão and Menedez (2014) also add that e-learning offers the students versatility in time and space, enabling better management that fits their educational needs. One of the teacher's most significant positions in these learning structures is the facilitator/mediator.

#### **2.4.5. Learner Autonomy and Self-Access**

It is underscored by Benson (2007) that "with the advent of the Internet,

computer technology has played a pervasive role in institutionalized and non-institutionalized language learning" (p. 26). He also highlights that out-of-class learning has been a relatively new field in the literature on autonomy. Additionally, he portrays the correlation between learning outside of the classroom and autonomy as complicated.

Self-access learning is learning through facilities or well-organized materials to nurture self-instruction (Dickinson, 1987). The latest studies recommend that students are interested in participating in out-of-class learning environments more often, exhibiting central ingenuity in circumstances where out-of-class learning opportunities seem to be confined. The self-access center became an institutionalized language learning standard function in many places worldwide in the 1990s. Other options also arose to question the notion that classroom-centered learning is the standard. The challenge of manufacturing self-access centers that operate independently of teacher assistance for autonomy became a widely known concept for autonomy in the literature.

How autonomous learning and self-access are interrelated were explored by Sheerin (1997). Learners are initially drawn to self-access due to the obvious possibilities for individualization indicates, and the logical imperative entails a more comprehensive educational requirement to become more successful learners. Even though self-access does not inherently guarantee learners' independence, it offers the practical means by which learners can take a more active part in deciding what their priorities and goals are related to their learning programs (Sheerin, 1997).

#### **2.4.6. Learner Autonomy and Culture**

In different cultures, autonomy and its features can differ. Palfreyman (2003) informs that instructors view national culture as an obstacle to fostering autonomy. The attempts to encourage and export unique manifestations of learner autonomy to non-Western cultures are seen by other educationalists such as Holliday (1994) and Pennycook (1997) as a new type of imperialism and argued for the discovery of culturally appropriate options. Moreover, Ecclestone (2002) reports that post-modernist and post-structuralist perspectives that contradict the Western norms of personal agency, structure, and identity have criticized the notion of autonomy and that humanist interpretations of autonomy are still prominent in the existing literature on learner autonomy, primarily in Europe. The culture of schooling affects school life and learning more profoundly than the education ministry, the administrator, the staff, or even the

head of the school.

Additionally, Dhaif (1985) presents a significant point that learning and culture may impact each other in that the national culture is represented in the academic culture. Furthermore, Holliday (1994) highlights that the culture and its inherent association between the students and teachers are initiated outside the classroom. It is filled with cultural identity practices and tenets, affecting the students' learning attitudes and strategies. This form of culture is transferred to new members, and to incorporate it into the community, its members ought to know it (Holliday, 1994).

With the advancement of developing learners' autonomy in the West and East, language education has recently become one of the most striking themes. However, autonomy is interpreted differently by different cultures and nations. Ivanovska (2015) argues that autonomy also has multiple dimensions and a cultural and individual one. For instance, the development of autonomy for learners has a political and psychological aspect. Ivanovska (2015) also proposes that learner autonomy must be viewed as a dynamic mechanism in the learner autonomy process in a cultural setting and globally. Holliday (1999) notes that smaller cultures "are not anomalous, are not subservient to large cultures" (p. 240). A small culture can therefore be autonomous, and its members can build an environment of successful learning. Holliday's (1994) paradigm is that national or ethnic cultures do not hinder crossing boundaries by combining small cultures since they are independent of more influential cultures (p.29).

It is put forth by Gardner (2010) that the cultural background may affect the student's attitude to the school setting, and the context of education may play a key role, especially for young learners (p.15). Mısırlı et al. (2018) point out that introducing new learning ecologies may be confusing and frustrating with some restrictions in certain educational cultures. Palfreyman (2003) referred to understanding culture as a national or ethnic culture and argued that culture is commonly viewed regarding autonomy. Palfreyman (2003) therefore examined if independent learning is ethnocentric, or, for instance, if it is limited to Western societies. It is revealed that some cultures, such as Chinese and Arab cultures, are often regarded as barriers to autonomous learning. This belief is also supported by Chan (2001), suggesting that in a variety of non-Western cultures, including China, Japan, and Turkey, the systems of education are "examination-oriented" and "highly competitive." In an environment where language learners are obliged to prepare for the examination based on memorization, teachers may have difficulty implementing methods to promote their

learners' autonomy. Thus, the cultural characteristics in fostering learner autonomy should guide the learners in the right direction. Besides, the cultural context in which learning occurs should be paid attention to because different cultural environments can require various practices and generate additional findings maximizing learner autonomy in formal education settings (Chan, 2001).

#### **2.4.7. Learner Autonomy and Identity**

The issues regarding identity and investment in EFL learning should continue to be at the center of language education research. Current studies on learners' identity highlight the need to investigate how learners perceive themselves as EFL learners who influence their investment in learning English. It is also significant to examine the variables that affect investment and identity in EFL learning in the same vein. For example, Norton (2010) argues that an imagined community embraces an imagined identity, and in that context, the investment of a learner in language learning must be acknowledged. Zou (2012) points out that cultural identities might occur within cultural differences since cultural identity manifests differently from one society to another. Socio-cultural identity is believed to be vital in the formation of a person's worldview. Numerous studies demonstrate that identities are usually defined based on politics, sexual preference, and religion. Additionally, it is widely thought that when people speak the same language, it does not mean that they share the same culture.

Teng (2019) investigated how three Chinese college English primary students negotiated and navigated identity in the English language learning process. The study explored the complicated connection between EFL learning, identity, and investment. The results reveal that within and across multiple ethnicities, the learners exhibited “identity flux.” Firstly, Teng (2019) annotates that learners' identity is historically and socially shaped, affecting EFL learning. In connection with this, to establish an effective curriculum or English pedagogy, an awareness of students' needs, especially the unbalance between their perceived and performed communities, is essential.

Moreover, Teng (2019) remarks that it could also be adapted to students with varied backgrounds, varying proficiency levels of English, objectives, and aspirations. The EFL learning process is a social activity in which impressions are structured during encounters and identities are negotiated. An exquisitely entangled relation exists between investment, EFL learning, and the creation of identity. An emphasis on EFL

learners' social activities and experiences in communities is a cornerstone of understanding successful EFL learning. Finally, Teng (2019) remarks on the importance of assisting students in transitioning to a new learning community, e.g., from secondary to high school. It is also underscored by Teng(2019) that to dwell on their psychological instability, teachers should prepare students to guide them with handling, mediating, and monitoring their feelings in learning (p.56). Furthermore, the students are required to be directed towards enhancing their emotional intelligence.

#### **2.4.8. Learner Autonomy and Constructivism**

Constructivism is summarized by Hein (1991) as a learning philosophy that refers to the principle of learners' construct awareness for themselves. Similarly, It is also stated by Hein (1991) that learners can construct their knowledge centered on their current values and experiences. Many scholars suggest that constructivist approaches enhance self-directed learning as a critical condition to encourage learner autonomy. This process requires teachers to consider the students' constructs and principles substantially influenced by their attitudes. It is claimed by Little (1991) that learners are provided with the capacity to take charge of their learning with the personal construct. The psychological versions of autonomy are supported and expanded by constructivism. These contribute to learners' actions, attitudes, motivation, and self-concept (Benson and Voller, 1997).

In a similar vein, Balçıkanlı (2006) reports that the central principle of autonomy in language learning has been inherited from constructivism: The more active the learning is, the more efficient it is. Muir (2001) notes that students can construct the knowledge they are introduced to with a constructivist learning environment. Additionally, it provides multiple ways to solve problems, maintain an authentic setting, and create a student-centered and social environment. Moreover, constructivist learning promotes self-awareness regarding knowledge construction (Muir, 2001, p.8).

#### **2.4.9. Learner Autonomy and Teacher Autonomy**

Investigating how the concepts of learner autonomy and teacher autonomy are interrelated, Lamb (2008) links the principle of independence to the distribution of power and, as such, indicated that it involves a fight between change and the status quo. The growth of autonomy has been an initiative to establish or re-establish liberal

learning and teaching structures and, as such, requires dedication to negotiations and sharing of power in such a joint endeavor. Moreover, Nicolaides (2008) specifies a distinction between the way English teachers perceive their position in the sense of face-to-face learning and their role in learning outside of the classroom. The study implies that some students see a connection between knowledge and strength, learning material and awareness of the best learning style.

Some studies have analyzed various facets of programs for English teachers about teacher and learner autonomy (e.g., theoretical structure, strategies for instructor improvement, effects, etc.) to draw meaningful conclusions for the steps that can be taken in the area in the future. For example, the study conducted by Manzano Vázquez (2018) analyzed twenty pre-service and in-service language teacher education programs for learner autonomy and teacher autonomy. The study reveals that learner autonomy is not a reality in the learning setting. Additionally, a study conducted in Thailand by Shaw (2008) explains how teachers found their autonomy by agreeing to eliminate the timetable restrictions and continuously improve students' learning opportunities according to what they regarded as most fitting for their needs. Working collaboratively, they set out to define and decide what these criteria were and what fit the purpose. Shaw (2008) implies that learner autonomy as a purpose could restrict teacher autonomy, as it prohibits the teacher from adapting to situations flexibly and professionally.

On the other hand, Barkhuizen and Hacker (2008) correspond the notion of teacher autonomy to the potential to self-direct one's development. They suggest that this is contingent on a sense of knowledge and confidence in one's theories and, by making them simple, on the growth of reflectivity to allow them to reflect on and further grow them. They also signify the higher knowledge of one's freedom as a teacher can contribute significantly to more optimistic attitudes towards autonomy for learners.

## **2.5. Autonomous Learning in Online EFL Teaching and Learning Context**

The educational context applies to the educational system in which the student is registered, particularly to the actual classroom situation (Gardner, 2010). He also states that when we consider the academic sense, we concentrate on the system goals, program efficiency, interest, excitement, and skills of the lecturer, the adequacy of the content,

the curriculum, the class environment, and so on. These can affect the learner's level of motivation in any subject in school (p.14). On the other hand, Ivanovska (2015) highlights that despite consensus on its relevance, a great deal of confusion persists about learner autonomy's value in the EFL teaching and learning process. The learners have been given more prominence due to the recent changes in education style. Thus, the presence of these conditions (i.e., online EFL teaching and learning) prompted foreign language teachers to apply valuable characteristics of learner autonomy in the ELT environment. Wenden (1991) notes that improving the learner's role in language learning is one of the most valuable results of the transition to a more communicative language teaching style. Learners' autonomy has been a desirable objective in language teaching and learning for learners to increase their likelihood of succeeding in this rapidly evolving system (Kumaravadivelu, 2003).

### **2.5.1. The Sudden Switch to Online Teaching & Learning**

The COVID-19 pandemic caused a sudden, unexpected and unplanned switch to online teaching and learning by many educational institutions worldwide as an option for learners to complete the learning and teaching process. Therefore, the rapid transformation instilled a sense of frustration among EFL students to obtain sufficient technical support to accomplish the educational process. Hence, administrators and educators started to explore how it could be possible to supervise the students at an optimum level, not allow their students to give up, and lose their desire and curiosity to succeed in their lessons. Besides, many scholars have delineated the significance of learner autonomy in online education.

Many studies have demonstrated that online education can be used as a critical education framework in the same vein. According to UNESCO (2020), more than 1.5 billion children and young people are affected by coronavirus outbreaks in 188 countries worldwide. The educational institutions responded smoothly to e-learning. In conjunction, UNESCO (2020) notes that almost all officials are currently using online schooling due to the coronavirus outbreak. This technical phase may be a signal for all schools or educational institutions to move into the area of e-learning. UNESCO (2020) and Murphy (2020) delineate that the online education system will soon be as successful as classroom-based methods. Yang et al. (2007) suggest that e-learning allows learners to improve their capacity to use the English language by interacting with others in the

virtual environment rather than conventional classes.

Bacher-Hicks et al. (2021) used high-frequency web search evidence to examine how US households searched the online teaching and learning facilities as schools were closed because of the Covid-19. They argue that national search frequency had approximately doubled relative to pre-Covid levels for school-based and parent-centered online learning tools. Higher-income areas, fewer rural schools, and better internet access report far more significant search intensity rises. In light of schools' and parents' different involvements to compensate for lost or insufficient school-based learning time with online services, the pandemic is expected to exacerbate achievement disparities along these dimensions. It would be possible to account for such discrepancies and encourage equal access to online learning. It may improve the efficacy of the response of education policies to the pandemic.

Some reports clarify why online studies allow students to learn effectively. Thus, they emphasize that learners have more chances to consider and take charge of their studies. The relationship between distinct aspects should be investigated to help learners excel in online classes. According to Wang & Hu (2019), active online learners are more likely to coordinate and initiate. What is more, they manage to accomplish their work with great ease. Thus, this is a piece of evidence that the importance of learner autonomy is obvious. On the other hand, students' participation in online courses can be vague, and it might be challenging to comprehend than in face-to-face classroom settings. Instructors can feel reluctant to adequately gauge students' involvement and take appropriate action without face-to-face interaction. Moreover, many teachers and researchers are attempting to explore how teachers would nourish online student interaction when the online course layout theoretically attracts particular learners over some others.

During online learning, lecturers may support further (Bao, 2020) initiating discussions effectively with both groups and individuals. In line with what Bao (2020) believes, many studies emphasize that teachers are always ready to respond to learners' questions, prepare assignments appropriate for the students, and analyze students' learning. Effective online learning methods and the online learning environment that promotes peer collaboration are the aspects of the classes on which teachers will exert a great deal of control. Cole et al. (2019) examined the perceptions of learners regarding the practices of online learning. Some predictive components such as age and student grade point average (GPA) were noticed in the results to have the possibility to be far

beyond the control of teachers. The study concludes that promoting the elements such as cooperation and collaboration in an online course design might assist online learners with ambiguity about college social affiliation.

Additionally, Skulmowski and Rey (2020) argue that interactive learning technologies enabling a responsive teaching plan had been seen as a cause for the cognitive load. Blackmon and Major (2012) highlight that students with favorable experiences are more likely to re-enroll in online courses, so such knowledge will help an organization improve online enrolment. Student experience data may also provide information to help plan and execute better approaches. It is essential to explore students' overall experiences in online learning as online language learning keeps expanding. The synthesis of the qualitative study conducted by Blackmon and Major (2012) investigated students' online learning experiences. They found that some students were happy with the online classes, although they struggled to reconcile online courses and responsibilities. Other learners discovered that enrolling in an online program was very useful and practical. The five main common themes of the research include managing schooling and life, managing time, recognizing personal responsibility, teachers' accessibility, and peer relationships. These themes may be explicitly traced to those attributed to the instructor and those attributed to the learner.

Online learning allows for eliminating the spatial-temporal constraints used in face-to-face education (Smith, 2000). On the other hand, Muir (2001) explored if online learning could be adapted to individualized learning styles. It was observed that the classrooms where traditional teaching methods are implemented are not as adaptable as an online learning environment.

Some benefits and drawbacks to online learning that have become noticeable have been listed by Muir (2001, p.7):

### **The Advantages of Online Learning:**

- Teaching and learning are available everywhere.
- Learning can occur anytime and at any intensity.
- There is a synergy between the instructor, the student, and the context.
- It is possible to sustain high-quality conversation because it is not constrained by a conventional environment like classroom or time models.

- The setting can be student-centered, in which teachers can concentrate on various learning styles and issues.
- There is excellent access to a broader range of quality assets.
- Regardless of visual or physical handicap, there is a level playing field for all students.
- Teachers may use innovative teaching approaches in the delivery of materials.

### **The Disadvantages of Online Learning:**

- Equity and technology accessibility can be problematic.
- Computer literacy (Students have varying degrees of computer familiarity.)
- Technological limitations (Visualizations are beneficial but not as good as being there actually.)
- Synergy, trust, and mentor effectiveness may not be sufficient.

Hence, many researchers such as Farrah and al-Bakry (2020) suggest that the following should be considered by educational institutions that adopt e-learning:

1. There are many methods of teaching, but not all of them are sufficient for e-learning. Educational institutions should organize workshops and training programs for teachers on the most successful online delivery methods.
2. A technical support unit for both teachers and learners needs to be established to address the ongoing technical problems during the teaching and learning process.
3. As learning is the right of all students and not all students can provide reliable resources such as smartphones and computers to follow up the e-learning, academic institutions should strive to provide a convenient measure of e-learning.
4. Training students who do not have the technical skills required to uplift them to the degree that they could still have a greater chance of being engaged in e-learning (p. 75).

### **2.5.2. Promoting Learner Autonomy in Virtual Classrooms**

According to Blackmon and Major (2012), identifying students' understandings about their online courses or programs move far beyond the single issue of learner satisfaction with more complex concerns on how internal and external factors affect the online classroom. Bailly (2010) puts forward that the Internet's relationship with the pedagogy of autonomy stresses the need for new instructors who follow innovations and recent work. Moreover, it is reported by Bailly (2010) that the language learning process requires many skills, namely technical skills, understanding of cultures and languages, studying languages, interaction, and digital tools. Similarly, Abuhasna et al. (2020) present possible factors affecting students' academic success and satisfaction with online tools for learning. The research was built based on Bloom's Theory of Taxonomy and was performed on 243 learners using online technologies in higher education. The quantitative analysis highlights significant variables in using online learning platforms to enhance learners' academic accomplishments and motivation. The results reveal that autonomy collaboration, background, cooperation, interactions, and learners' experiences significantly affect learners' satisfaction. This study indicates a positive and vital connection between students' autonomy and online learning environments, which means students should feel dependent on online channels.

On the other hand, Bailly (2010) notes that it seems insufficient and obsolete to focus exclusively on training language teachers on the subject matter. He explored how promoting autonomy development in online language learning environments can be possible and what knowledge and skills teachers need to maintain. He recommends that new tasks and roles are embraced and put into practice by teachers skillfully and creatively. Thus, the research is significant since it discusses the importance of language and the Internet in learner autonomy growth, particularly in disseminating learning skills from counselor to beginner.

For Piaget, the human mind is a natural outcome of evolution, allowing one to discover balance within the atmosphere and adjust to various living conditions (Pass, 2004). Collins (2008) discusses autonomy-related concerns in the online setting to explore possible ties between autonomy and distance learning and map the language of autonomy in communication asynchronously. Data collected originated from asynchronous interaction in discussion boards. Outcomes reveal that autonomy could be mapped at the genre and register level. Whether autonomy and technology can develop

learning and demonstrate the correlations between autonomy and distance learning was analyzed. The study proposes that not all ties require the same principle of autonomy. Distance learning processes might enhance autonomy. Hence, it may be appropriate to have some level of autonomy to make distance learning efficient.

In the case study he conducted, Zhong (2018) explored how a learner interacts in technology-mediated environments to fulfill his/ her learning objectives and aspirations and how his autonomy has grown in online climates. The results correspond to the assertion that learner autonomy is complex and dynamic, indicating that environmental variables, such as learning environments, the instructor's guidance, also play a crucial role in developing various aspects of learner autonomy, apart from the psychological factors. Besides, the research revealed that the course structure and the task's design might lead the learner to exercise more autonomy. The results also indicate that teachers are instrumental in the creation of independence for learners. Homma (2015) points out that most students and teachers found interacting with each other influential. He recommends that incorporating flipped learning, ushering learners to practice more, using the communicative competence theory, and applying digital-interactive tasks may substantially influence learner autonomy. Furthermore, many scholars emphasize incorporating blended learning to influence learner autonomy.

### **2.5.3. The Engagement of Learners in Online Education**

In the lives of today's college students, the Internet and other emerging technologies seem to have been fully incorporated. However, many researchers point out that most students have engagement problems in online teaching and learning environments, and this circumstance decreases the possibility of having efficient classes and autonomous learners. In this respect, the more engaged the students are in their classes, the more influential the teaching sessions are. Furthermore, the more effective the sessions are, the more favorable environment can be maintained, which may increase the opportunities to create an autonomous learning environment.

Concordantly, Muir et al. (2019) aimed to understand students' online involvement throughout a semester. The report findings from weekly feedback on the learners' engagement in an online learning setting during the semester at a university in Australia. Addressing the variables that impact the learners' engagement in online classes is significant in optimizing educational performance, including completion and

persistence. Teachers, administrators, and course coordinators are recommended by Muir et al. (2019) to make learning materials fully available to encourage learners to move at their rhythm through the content provided. They also propose to ensure that the unit is represented and sequenced systematically, give all students feedback sufficiently, and quit producing time-bound obligatory tasks. The research outcomes provide a timely reminder of the effectiveness of preparation, design, and instructor presence in efficiently engaging the learner in online lessons.

One critical study recently conducted by Lie et al. (2020) has examined language teachers' online engagement throughout the Covid-19 outbreak in Indonesia. They disclosed how engaged the teachers are in online teaching and learning during the Covid-19 outbreak, the obstacles teachers encounter, how the suspension of face-to-face instructional sessions has modified teachers' practices, and their aspirations for the educational process. The data gathered through video conferencing software could not obtain vast amounts of data as via face-to-face sessions. The researchers highlight the imminent problems of the widening digital divide exacerbated by the outbreak. They encourage the government's intervention to act for the procurement and affordance of technology infrastructure and community-based interventions for teachers' development professionally (p.825).

Concerning engagement in online learning, Gray and DiLerato (2016) also investigated the connections between course structure, student interaction, engagement, and teachers' presence on student perceived learning satisfaction. The findings of this research were meant to guide practice to increase engagement and enhance the quality of online education. For example, when a course has clear aims, learners better understand their expectations of achievement. Therefore, it is vital that instructors develop well-structured systems, maintain interaction and facilitate student participation (p.15). It is also reported that students have a more optimistic view of what they have experienced and their general satisfaction in the learning environment if given opportunities to communicate with each other and when the teacher is present.

In a similar vein, Chen et al. (2010) point to a strong correlation between the use of web-based learning technologies, student engagement, and desirable results for learning. Their online education process may be more prone to using deep learning methods, such as higher-order thinking, reflective learning, and integrative learning. Moreover, higher gains in the classes, competence, as well as personal and social growth can be possible. Nobody would have rejected computers, and internet

technology has provided many people with educational opportunities. The goal should not be to provide all students with educational opportunities only but also with the highest standard of education (p.1230).

## **2.6. The Roles of the Learners and the Teachers in Autonomous Learning**

### **2.6.1. Learner's Role**

The literature proves that learners have significant roles in creating an autonomous learning environment in virtual classrooms. Benson (2008) points out that autonomy tends to mean that the learner takes control of agreements whose essential credibility is uncontested. From the students' viewpoint, which he perceived as ambiguous, autonomy is essentially associated with learning in a much broader context and its correlation with life beyond the classroom. Moreover, it is also emphasized by Benson (2008) that autonomy needs to be interpreted from the learner's viewpoint rather than from the more prevalent view of teachers to understand the circumstances conducive to realizing it. He focuses on his own learning experience.

The literature on learner autonomy has reported that the learner response to educational processes to encourage autonomy can vary. The variance can depend on factors such as how the teacher constructs the teaching practice and presents it to learners. Taplin (2000) emphasizes that since the learners are used to dependent learning patterns, they most probably have difficulty adjusting to self-directed learning. Then, they may become dissatisfied when help is decreased or eliminated. Greater independence in learning might cause the students to feel nervous or unsure regarding the new experience (Taplin, 2000)

When we go through the literature, there seems to be an emphasis on guiding students to promote autonomous learning. Cotterall and Crabbe (2008) outline the significance of guiding students by analyzing and solving their problems related to language learning. Yunus and Arshad (2015) state that education for learners is one of the main factors in the excellent practice of autonomous language learning. Unless learners are supported by their teachers to recognize the required methods to employ learning styles and interests, it may be challenging for them to become autonomous. Thus, educating the students having the potential to be promoted and improved in terms of the level of autonomy through enabling them to become more conscious of their capabilities in respect of second language competence, independence, or language

learner autonomy seems to Toffoli and Perrot (2017) to be a powerful way to promoting the empowerment of students. Reinders (2010) notes that students need to be aware that they are given importance as individuals, and they are motivated and facilitated by the teachers during the learning process.

In addition, Ivarsson and Pihl (2013) report that the teachers stressed the value of seeing the introduction of learner accountability as a process for which teachers are responsible. Furthermore, it is also stated by Ivarsson and Pihl (2013) that due to being more in control over their learning process, students pointed out that they are more inspired in their English classes. Moreover, inspiration, motivation, and understanding are emphasized to be core points for learners' responsibility.

### **2.6.2. Teacher's Role**

The teacher's role seems to be significant in promoting learner autonomy. Benson (2007) highlights that the support of the teacher affects learner autonomy positively. Not only learners' capacity but also teachers' support is significant in helping learners become autonomous. Macaro (2008) informs that the growth of language learners is the educators' core business. Klimas (2017) emphasizes that language learning can generate positive outcomes if students' attitudes based on reinforcing performance are also desirable. He also suggests that formal schooling does not restrict the growth of confidence and the potential to control one's learning. Furthermore, classrooms are excellent places to equip students with the requisite facilities and train them for continuous improvement.

Additionally, teachers must ensure that students are willing to recognize the language, take it as essential, and comprehend its active position in learning. Moreover, letting students follow their aims would certainly allow education to become a more genuine and independent experience. Lamb (2008) claims that teachers should shift beyond the conceptual framework of autonomy and those impacted by teachers' experiences.

In their study exploring teacher's roles, Yunus and Arshad (2015) indicate that teachers desire to practice autonomous language learning in their lessons by sharing ELT classes' control with the learners. Toffoli and Perrot (2017) portray depending on the learners' individual needs, developing an informed and open space for communication with learners as encouraging teachers to build a cohesive posture that

provides student guidance and more explicit second language counseling and teaching.

The study conducted by Voller (1997) regarding the teacher's role in the autonomous learning of languages clarifies that the teacher's concept as a learning facilitator and a supporter whose purpose has been to encourage learning is widely used in self-directed, self-instructional, individualized, and autonomous learning in distinct language learning settings. Furthermore, it is suggested that the frequently discussed learners' lack of preparedness for greater self-direction can probably be seen in the teacher's lack of readiness. Therefore, teachers should thoroughly focus on how they behave throughout a learning experience, their fundamental attitudes and convictions about the essence of language and the essence of learning, and other limitations, including the educational culture wherein they operate, affecting the learning conditions.

In a study carried out by Lamb (2008), it is reported that teachers strive to improve the potential of independence towards a more nuanced one that accepts the principle of the implementation of autonomy in life, where people are free to guide the course of their lives. Furthermore, Smith and Erdoğan (2008) emphasize the significance of teachers taking responsibility for their professional growth. On the other hand, Martinez (2008) regards the instructor's ability to use subjective ideas as material in teacher training courses to present alternate viewpoints and activate reassessing new teaching and learning theories by tapping into their perceptions. Ultimately, Nicolaides (2008) claims that prospective language teachers construct a sense of duty amongst their learners. Consequently, Yunus and Arshad (2015) propose that teachers realize that they need to support the learners as counselors, facilitators, mediators, and supervisors rather than knowledge sources.

Only when instructors have a rational and robust viewpoint of specific observations, practices, and restrictions would they efficiently negotiate with students and external authorities, thereby inspiring the learners and themselves (Voller, 1997). There are a lot of ways to empower ourselves as educators. Getting a good picture of the behaviors will be the first and most apparent. Besides, values that characterize our autonomous learning viewpoint significantly affect inspiring ourselves with great confidence and motivation. For example, suppose we perceive the autonomy of learners as a privilege or as a distant aim. In that case, Voller (1997) notes that we acknowledge that language learning is interpretative and an independent approach and that transfer of control to the learner is required for autonomous education. He concludes that we

should ensure that our teaching activities are focused on a negotiation process with students. Lastly, to track our teaching on our own, to analyze and evaluate the strategies we use for instruction were pointed out to be necessary to consider.

In a similar vein, Zorkaya (2019) states that teachers portrayed the teachers' most significant positions as guides, facilitators, resources, inspirers, moderators, leaders, and observers. The ethnographic study conducted by Elmahjoub (2014) indicates that teachers often had optimistic views regarding giving learners opportunities to be involved and responsible learners. It also reveals that teachers offering assistance and encouragement and scaffolding learners to take more independent stances in their learning process were vital modes favored by most teachers and learners.

New technologies allow educators to make learning engaging and collaborative through constructivist teaching and learning methods (Klemm and Snell, 1996). These include implementing student-centered learning, where instructors facilitate learning, and the students are engaged in interacting and learning with their peers. Therefore, teachers' online classes should be designed to be student-centered and foster students' leadership. Maor (2003) reports that students need practical guidance on how to be active online. They need scaffolding regarding the more demanding and elusive dimensions of online interactive learning and reflective thinking (p.135). The study promotes the idea that the online instructor and learners should become reflective practitioners to guarantee professional online interactive learning. Systems are required to be developed to interact quickly and benefit from the gains of the technology that is accessible. Accelerated technology shifts indicate that we need to prepare students for generic technical skills. They need to adapt to innovations, become flexible in various learning styles, and establish new perceptions regarding pedagogy needs.

On the other hand, Buelow et al. (2018) propose that elements of online sessions that students found engaging are online discussions. The interactive tasks encourage students to ask and answer thought-provoking questions and share their views. In addition, the students proposed that the instructor's daily presence and in-depth and timely reviews significantly contribute to engagement. Additionally, teachers' role is also significant in terms of rewarding. However, broader comprehension is required to adjust rewards to positively impact the students' behavior (Payne, 2015). It is also found out that it is very effective to contact parents and provide positive feedback. In addition, Payne (2015) underscores that positive feedback contributes to the relationship of the

teacher and student as well as academic contribution. Similarly, Hyland (2001) argues that teachers should be well-educated to give feedback regularly and appropriately in virtual classrooms. He also underlines the importance of providing feedback sufficiently since it is significant for the students in terms of having progress in their academic performance as well as many other terms such as developing autonomy.

## **2.7. Autonomy Implementation and the Improvement of Learners**

Some teachers may seem likely to think that moving from an educator-guided instructing environment to a potential student-focused environment is not easy. However, it is significant for instructors and students to create a learning network working in an atmosphere of trust, right intention, and respect to have the option to cultivate independent learning (Lazar, 2013). Perhaps the ideal approaches to student independence in an unknown language class are solid accentuation on pair and group work. Through steady utilization of this kind of in-class exercise, students will, in the long run, become minor subjects to the instructor by figuring out how to work together with their companions. Gathering exercises lead to student collaboration as well as companion coaching and offer help for student cooperation.

Another significant element of autonomous learning is validity. Lazar (2013) clarifies that an educational plan should prioritize learners' needs and desires to advance their autonomy since it is imperative to consider them. Therefore, educators need to give an actual life learning condition to assist students with becoming certified clients of the objective language, not while doing the exercises only, but also in their social life. This way, it can also be possible to make the schedule and educational plan increasingly adaptable.

## **2.8. Reflections on Learner autonomy**

It is required to focus on the variables identified with educating and learning. If instructors structure classes determined by learners' needs and interests and build up good, valuable compatibility, they will be progressively drawn in and included (Teng, 2019). It is also suggested by Teng (2019) that instructors' duties guide students to observe and evaluate their advancement. What's more, educators ought to be adaptable as indicated by their students' requirements or inclinations.

Many scholars strongly recommend that instructors offer guidance and assessment and instead produce learning as a result. There seems to be a need for educators to implement practical approaches to increase their students' advantages and inspiration by ensuring they have joy. Besides, teachers appear to complete most of the tasks and exercises with the learners successfully and enjoyably using appropriate approaches. Students need to succeed in their online learning process. Their accomplishment can be temperately managed by promoting them to be autonomous and engaged in their learning, as suggested by a majority of researchers that have worked in this area of research.

Learner autonomy eventually is considered by a majority of scholars as an educational objective. Despite the criticisms against learner autonomy, an agreement has been established on learner autonomy, which resulted in the following statements outlined by Teng (2019):

1. Autonomy is a capacity construct that should not be present at birth; in other words, innate.
2. Autonomy consists of the desire and the ability of learners to control their learning.
3. Autonomy can be adjustable and chaotic.
4. Autonomy can be promoted both inside and outside the classroom.
5. Autonomy has a social dimension as well as a personal one.
6. Autonomy can be encouraged when one has conscious knowledge of the learning process (p. 15).

Teng (2019) states that teachers are not merely supposed to offer education and assessment but, instead, generate learning as an outcome. Therefore, it is necessary to establish ways for teachers to increase their learners' curiosity and encouragement, provide gratification and relaxation, and make the lessons successful and enjoyable. Likewise, Wagner and McCombs (1995) recommend a teaching strategy to determine what is needed outside the classroom through instructional features, curriculum, evaluation, and leadership to achieve optimal learning results.

Consequently, if teachers design their language classes based on students' needs and desires and generate a meaningful, constructive environment, they can have a more significant possibility of being more active and interested in the language classes.

Hence, there seems to be a need for both teachers and learners to determine strategies to create an autonomous learning environment. The teacher can trigger the students' willingness to become liberated by giving them responsibilities that they can undertake willingly and enjoyably. Providing the students with too much academic knowledge rather than guiding, facilitating, and motivating them to create themselves as unique individuals may cause them to be dependent and passive in many terms. Giving them the independence to take charge of their learning and motivating them towards being autonomous, nurturing the awareness of autonomy in learning choices and practices in the virtual classroom and other contexts can lead students to be successful individuals with sufficient confidence.

## **2.9. Empirical Studies on Learner Autonomy in Various Contexts**

Some frameworks portray self-directed learning as a mechanism that focuses on learners' autonomy in the learning processes; others emphasize personal qualities, concentrating on learners' capacity to control the learning process. Yet, in different contexts, the degree of self-direction desired can differ. Song and Hill (2007) introduce a research-based framework in online learning contexts to understand self-directed learning. They suggest that effective learning requires efficient learning techniques in all learning settings (p.34). For instance, they claim that the interaction in a classroom environment is primarily verbal, while written in a virtual classroom environment. They recommend that to prevent misinterpretation and make better use of the potential for reflection in online communication, learners need to establish communication techniques that are more applicable to the context of text-based online learning.

Jarwis's (2013) projection trends and issues on computers and learner autonomy identify primary databases and information problems, communication and emerging technologies, teacher education, teaching, training aspects, cross-cultural cooperation, and political, social, and economic dimensions of English. It is also found out that students regularly and extensively make use of a large variety of materials. Furthermore, students are aware of the meaning of accessing and transmitting, particularly in English, apart from self-access centers where learning English appeared too substantial. Finally, the research concludes by proposing that teachers had to step beyond conventional computing-assisted language learning applications to comprehend and analyze the impact of technology in languages' pedagogy and that mobile-assisted

language use might be relevant and reasonable.

As is the case with other linguistic abilities and subsystems being learned, efficiency in learning foreign languages requires taking control of one's learning and moving beyond the instructor's demands, which are especially significant if recognized total supremacy of this subsystem is essential. Pawlak (2017) points out that the awareness of rules and the capacity to implement the regulations are limited to standard, regulated exercises and the ability to utilize specific random interaction activities. In addition, Pawlak (2017) outlines how learners' autonomy in language learning is defined and how measures are taken to enhance an autonomous approach to learning grammar. He discloses that learners must obtain both implicit and explicit control of the grammatical elements to integrate to such a degree that they can properly use the language characteristics in real time. Moreover, it is emphasized by Pawlak (2017) that if learners can achieve such a goal, they have to focus on grammar individually. In this area, the instruction needs to empower autonomous execution.

Learning through practical tasks that positively influence learners' cognitive skills and give them practical experience in communication and social skills improvement is crucial (Schormova, 2017). She also outlines that simulation as an educational technique in language teaching technology can improve these skills. As communicative language ideals are embodied, it performs well when teaching becomes a common element of the language learning phase. Moreover, when teachers lead students to take the responsibility of learning, their motivation is enhanced, and they have an opportunity to be aware of the realistic practices of their education. As a consequence, a simulation can be an effective way of supporting learners to be autonomous. Schormova's (2017) study is significant since it presents the nature and construction of simulations and proposes testing and evaluating learners' success in simulation tasks. In addition, it incorporates realistic examples of simulations that may be used to promote independent learning.

Moreover, Sobkowiak (2017) explored experiential learning, as ethnographic examples illustrate. With the projects assigned to promote learners' intercultural growth, he addressed the desire to improve learners' intercultural competence and handle their learning. It is claimed by Sobkowiak (2017) that ethnography projects as an arena of independent learning engage learners in exploring and delivering international culture and give them multiple opportunities to observe, evaluate, and interpret different contexts that use the target language. As a result, they promote their cognitive ability,

teach analytical skills, critical thinking skills, and the capacity to mediate. Additionally, these ethnographic research tasks can promote autonomy for learners. However, the research that examined whether and to what extent learner autonomy was applied in EFL classes concludes that learners have very few opportunities to become independent or autonomous in the foreign language learning environment. What is even more striking is that teachers achieve very little to foster the autonomy of their learners.

The study conducted by Wawrzyniak-Śliwska (2017) aimed to tackle autonomy among young learners and demonstrate that learner autonomy and young students are not inherently exclusive. Furthermore, it is underscored that although learners' autonomy is a widely accepted term whose value is primarily recognized by the Polish Ministry of National Education, it is not commonly applied at schools in Poland. Teachers may observe any signs of autonomy in secondary schools, high schools, or tertiary levels. However, the relation between independence and children has yet to be produced. Another significant issue hampering independence values is teachers' reluctance to use the target language with young learners during the lesson.

In a remarkable study on learner autonomy, Benson (2008) clarifies how the principle of autonomy can change color when viewed from a teacher or learner's perspective and how the different phases (e.g., technical, psychological, political) can adhere to the clear distinction of viewpoint. The underlying principle is that teachers and learners see the mechanisms and are ultimately engaged from very distinct views, which are likely to impact the forms in which a term such as autonomy makes sense to them. The point is that independence is mainly concerned with existing educational arrangements within established curricula from teachers' perspectives. In another significant research on learner autonomy, the definition of freedom and its connection to autonomy is discussed by Trebbi (2008), who argues that we are not free of restraints. Drawing on details from work in various educational environments in Norway, the study presents some limitations, particularly external ones (in the context of institutional and curricular regulations), internal (such as behaviors and convictions of teachers), and positive restrictions.

Learners' and teachers' autonomy are characterized by La Ganza (2008) as interrelational structures. The study reveals that in an orthodox learning-teaching setting, learner autonomy can only evolve in an environment where the collective forces are sensitive for teachers and learners. Likewise, it is also suggested by La Ganza (2008) that the sustainability of teachers' autonomy within the institution also depends

on knowledge of the dynamic essence of specific mutual interactions between teachers, coordinators, and directors. On the other hand, Cotterall and Crabbe (2008) propose the benefits of maintaining a database of such issues and solutions. Additionally, they add that one of the advantages of maintaining a database is to give learners assistance in analyzing and fixing their problems with language learning, thus encouraging them to become more autonomous in the learning process. A further advantage could be that educators can use it to increase their understanding of the meaning of debate, enabling learners to think independently.

On the other hand, Toffoli and Perrot (2017) propose that the varied Web 2.0 and informal online learning activities of learners and subsequent language acquisition would have numerous and nuanced ties to autonomy, influencing general autonomy, second language learning autonomy, and students' autonomy. Besides, Mısırlı et al. (2018) investigated learner autonomy perception with the Massive Open Online Language Course (MOOLCs). They examined how autonomous EFL learners were, learners' and teachers' perceptions and roles in autonomous learning, and their involvement in learner autonomy practices by attending the MOOLCs. They suggest that learners' improved autonomy in MOOLCs result in more inspiring, stimulating, and insightful language learning. Moreover, they conclude that learners ought to improve their globalized autonomous abilities to develop this massive online education ecology.

In the case study conducted at a state university, Bedoya Cuadros (2012) examined how graduate students manifest learner autonomy in an online reading comprehension course. It is emphasized that attitudes leading to autonomy, such as encouragement and dedication, were displayed by most students initially. Nevertheless, they also showed a lack of self-confidence as well as a high degree of reliance. By the end of the course, they were more optimistic and worked more individually. It can be inferred that the results suggest that these learners have not yet assumed that the online approach can be used to learn a foreign language. Besides, Bei et al. (2020) establish a reliable and accurate psychometric scale to assess Hellenic Open University postgraduate students' perceived autonomy and similar distance education settings. Two distinctive aspects of autonomy, educational and personal/ psychological autonomy, are verified by the research. The sense of its creation defines autonomy as a psychometric trait under cultural and educational conditions. For this reason, the generalization of the developed scale must be performed with caution outside this or somewhat similar settings, considering all relevant elements. Ultimately, they

recommend that since autonomy is mutually dependent on the educational and socio-cultural background of its growth, this warrants review in other distance education environments.

Fotiadou et al. (2017) investigated the relationship between learner autonomy and relevant aspects of the education process, such as student-to-student and teacher-to-student interaction in a Greek distance learning setting. Empirical research was carried out at Hellenic Open University, with a hundred postgraduate students taking part in a survey. The findings reveal that a positive association exists between specific sensibility to others, student-to-student interaction, and capacity to handle unfamiliar challenges, as well as self-awareness.

Some of the development-related teaching dimensions of learner autonomy were examined by Reinders (2010), and a skills system that teachers could use to guide learners' growth with transparency is presented. It is suggested that students must understand that they are respected as individuals and encouraged and facilitated by their teachers in their learning process, which would indicate that the mindset is more likely to be built by students. This way, teachers have better possibilities to consider the value of the students' management of their learning. In addition, Benson and Voller (1997) re-evaluate independence and autonomy, which they believe to be concepts in transition in a language learning context. For the teacher's position in the autonomous language, the central problem of learning is whether it is possible to teach learners how to be independent without refusing their autonomy. It was questioned whether the instructor has a role to play rather than a source of knowledge who organizes and supplies learning opportunities. Benson and Voller (1997) report that if autonomy is exclusively defined with self-instruction, the teacher's job seems threatened. However, altering roles in independent learning and adjusting the balance of power is strongly connected inside education. Such modifications increase the identity and adaptation-related problems for students and teachers.

In a study carried out by Yıldırım (2005), Turkish English Language Teaching (ELT) students' behaviors and perceptions regarding learner autonomy were investigated. Since ELT students are taken as foreign language learners and the prospective language teachers of Turkey, the research focused on these two things separately for EFL teachers. The study results reveal that the participants seem willing and prepared to take more responsibility and power over certain aspects of their learning as English learners. However, they need some assistance and support in some other

ways. The study also indicates that the participants generally expressed positive opinions concerning learner autonomy as potential English teachers.

Additionally, the learners' attitudes and perceptions regarding flipped learning environments in English classes were explored by Ediş (2017), examining the impact of flipped learning on learner autonomy, predicated on the premise that the learning process is still retained out of school and controllable by the students. As a result of the pre-test and the post-test performed, there was no substantial impact observed on the degree of learner autonomy due to the implementation of flipped learning. On the other hand, it is revealed that the students had optimistic attitudes toward the flipped class model. They were also incredibly pleased with the experience of flipped teaching and learning settings. Strategy training has specifically integrated language learning strategies to enhance learners' ability to notice their responsibility for learning by providing them with cognitive skills, meta-cognitive tactics, and a sense of strategy awareness. Kuluşaklı (2019) examined whether explicit strategy training improved learner autonomy in learning foreign languages and recognizing their attitudes towards strategy education. The research was performed with 22 preparatory course students whose CEFR level was A2 at the School of Foreign Languages from the University of İnönü. The data from the questionnaires and the diary reveal that the students generally displayed positive attitudes to the training since they believe it helps them understand and use the language learning strategies more successfully. Furthermore, it helps learners address learning problems, increase self-directed out-of-class activities, build up language proficiency, and observe their learning process.

The case study carried out by Chen (2018) investigated English learning as a foreign language by Chinese university students in an online, interactive sense. The study concentrates on students' expectations and participation in EFL learning in a context assisted by technology. Four theoretical concepts, informed by socio-cultural theory (communicative learning, scaffolding, learner autonomy, and Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)), form the theoretical basis for investigating the students' EFL learning in computer-assisted language learning. The collective data discloses that EFL students from Chinese universities had positive immersive online language learning views, enabling learners' autonomy. The study also concludes that the teachers were competent and confident to find suitable teaching resources and related well-scaffolded teaching tools within their Zone of Proximal Developments. Furthermore, it is stated that they enjoyed a growing degree of autonomy in the language learning process.

Digital tools, including learning resources and tasks and learning strategies, were chosen, coordinated, and committed autonomously.

In another study on learner autonomy, the impact of Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) on Vietnamese students' autonomy was explored by Van Han (2018). More precisely, the study examined how three aspects of autonomous learning, such as students' learning strategies, attitudes towards learning English, and desire to learn English, have changed through CALL within such a learning management system (LMS). The results conclude that CALL positively impacted Vietnamese students' learner autonomy in leading them to employ more learning strategies, apply cognitive and meta-cognitive techniques successfully, develop positive attitudes, and have significant intrinsic motivation.

In a study concerning learner autonomy, Phan (2015) examined how the idea of learner autonomy is understood and the proper pedagogy to encourage learner autonomy in the context of Vietnamese higher education in a particular environment of language education. The study results provide a theoretical and pedagogical basis for promoting learner autonomy in language learning. In particular, proof from government policy exploration and the cases of three EFL groups reflect the interpretation that learner autonomy and language acquisition support each other. On the other hand, Wei (2011) proposed a report on practitioner research over two semesters after the experience of teaching three distinct groups of language learners in online listening classes of Fu-Jen Taiwan's Catholic University. The study attempted to explore how Computer-Supported Collaborative Learning could help learners counteract the relative isolation of learning online. After the first step, a more significant emphasis was provided on reflecting. Students overlooked the online interactions and chose to express their ideas via reflective interactions and diaries for listening. The task design configuration determined the accomplishment or the failure of collaborative tasks.

Keeping a diary, which serves as an efficient pedagogical tool, is reported by Wei (2011) to be likely to raise the students' awareness of learning. In addition, the effectiveness of online conversations in terms of online modality contributed to students' sense of ownership, closely linked to their understanding of the style of a listening class. Finally, concerning studies on learner autonomy, it is helpful to obtain both the principles of action research and exploratory practice to guarantee that the study schedule is not imposed onto students by the teacher-researcher (Wei, 2011; Murphey and Jacobs, 2000).

In the modern age of informatics, if we could use fragmented time and develop a mobile autonomous learning mode beneath the mobile environment, individualized learning would go beyond traditional classroom learning. Thus, a new direction can be given for the English courses offered at colleges. Moreover, it may serve as a successful answer to the obstacles to contemporary English teaching at colleges. Qing (2016) investigated the effect of mobile technology on the autonomous learning ability of college students in the EFL curriculum. The study puts forth that mobile learning, pedagogically oriented, facilitates autonomous students' learning and proposes a blended learning setting for EFL learners. Another research mainly evaluates the growth of autonomous learning practice and the motivational effect of collaborative learning on fostering learner autonomy. In the study, Edwards et al. (2019) conducted action research to respond to growing concern about the high level of dependence of teachers among EFL learners at a university language center in Ambato, Ecuador. The feedback report reveals that the collaborative learning approach based on the platform substantially influenced students' motivation and commitment during the process. The feedback advises expanding and strengthening the intervention while adding a medium to it in real-time to generate higher interaction.

Using technology could enhance autonomy for learners and make them take responsibility for their learning. In this respect, the implementation of technology to enhance learner autonomy is recommended by Condrat (2014). It is emphasized that learners must be encouraged to use technology for their academic achievement as they are technologically friendly. Likewise, it is also underscored by Condrat (2014) that learner autonomy would increase the security required to take risks, i.e., learners would have to make their own choices knowing their repercussions. In a similar vein, Homma (2015) states that technology has been noticed to speed up teaching and learning in EFL classrooms, urging many educators to reconfigure methods and procedures that may resolve new demands for learning, modes of knowledge, and emerging literacy. Homma (2015) conducted a study regarding autonomy as learning with alternatives for home practice to exercise influence over the education process and its usefulness to current language practice. It also addresses how practicing more digital lesson opportunities at home could intensify learner autonomy, leading to more individual freedom for language learning outside the classroom. The study reveals that autonomy has been neglected, leaving many slow learners concentrating on written exercises for grammar and vocabulary but unable to execute even the necessary level of conversation in

confidence and willingness.

On the other hand, Lewis (2013) discusses the meaning of being an autonomous learner in online social contexts. The study suggests that the standard accounts of learners' autonomy as teleological intervention are insufficient to clarify learner behavior in group contexts. It also points out that the learners show fair treatment, empathy, cooperation, altruism, and reciprocity in such a context. In addition, it is recommended that knowing these characteristics will guide us to a more comprehensive view of what autonomy might entail when it reflects the principle of respect for others' autonomy in an age where learning is primarily considered a social activity where technical progress is made. New affordances are continuously provided in a social learning setting, so it is time for learners' broader knowledge of autonomy.

Learner autonomy may be strengthened in terms of strategy, actions, communication through the materials, social resources, and self-management. In that vein, Tsai (2019) examined the flipped classroom's impacts on learner autonomy in learning English as a foreign language in a content-based learning model. The findings indicate substantial correlations between online tasks for instruction and perceived autonomy for learners. After the flipped learning experience, the students enhanced their confidence and grew more autonomous and self-directed, applied online materials and technology to study linguistics with their own free will. Besides, they were involved in numerous in-class tasks that boosted their communication and collaboration with the instructor and classmates and obtained greater responsibility for their learning. The flipped learning was the philosophy of learning altered by learners and their attitude and discipline, which is not entirely clear in a non-flipped class.

Learner autonomy could be a valid indicator of course achievement in online classes. Yen and Liu (2009) analyzed the predictive relationships between learner autonomy and performance in online community college classes. Learner autonomy was described as the characteristic of a person whose intentional performance in learning tasks was exhibited. The effects of the findings are discussed in the sense of identification at an early stage and successful engagement. Blended learning methods as well as consulting and advisory services are the two proposed interventions proposed by Yen and Liu (2009).

Furthermore, it is emphasized that the students should be guided during their learning process with time and stress management advice, note-taking, reading, writing, test anxieties, health, and well-being. In the same vein, Tómasson (2014) explored

whether there was a correlation between academic achievement perceived learner autonomy in distance learning at the ELT Department at the University of Iceland. The study's findings indicate a moderate association between the perceived autonomy and academic accomplishment among the twenty distance learners. However, between the online learners, there is a low correlation between the two variables. Efficient activities can significantly impact students' affective states and methods, emphasizing how instructors can establish optimistic attitudes in their learners. For example, Ogawa (2012) recommends a vocabulary self-selection strategy to improve autonomous learning since most students find this technique inspiring for learning without the teacher's help. In addition, it enables them to encode new elements efficiently, compared to conventional approaches they were learning vocabulary through (p. 294).

Assessment for learning presents a pedagogical context and describes independence and authenticity in the learning and evaluation perspective. Davison (2011) examined the links between authentic learning experiences and creating various autonomy types for learners in the north of England. The study analyzed authentic learning experiences established within non-vocational academic modules (curriculum that was not associated with any specialized awarding organization). This study highlights that the creation of the educational setting is essential to the growth of learner autonomy. Furthermore, the constructions of credibility and perception of the learning process by tutors significantly affect student learning outcomes. Davison (2011) discloses that learning authenticity has excellent potential. Thus, authentic learning practices may provide successful pedagogical techniques that help learners develop a variety of higher-order learning skills and create learner autonomy by implementing the required measures (p.284).

## **2.10. EFL Teachers' Perceptions on Learner Autonomy**

Borg and Al- Busaidi (2012) determine the convictions and values through documented activities regarding learners' autonomy. English instructors at a large university language school took part in the questionnaires and interviews. The results demonstrate that teachers' learner autonomy conceptualized could be used in autonomous and individual learning tactics. The research sheds light on the constructive theoretical philosophy of both teachers' provisions for the learner's autonomy and their less optimistic thoughts of independence on the efficacy of encouraging its

implementation. Opinions of teachers on the dimensions that the growth of learner autonomy had been impeded by were also examined. Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012) suggest that the most prominent among these were those the instructors saw as the learner's unfavorable characteristics. A lack of motivation and minimal experience of autonomy learning are provided as an example. Moreover, institutional parameters are seen as a fixed learning program to restrain learners. Following the analytical work, Borg and Al- Busaidi's (2012) project comprises seminars for instructors' professional growth. They conclude that connecting model research and in-service education for teachers could promote institutional support for many EFL learning subjects.

Furthermore, Reinders and Lewis (2008) recommend that by being more familiar with the materials' capacity for learner autonomy, the more efficiently teachers would educate learners about their usage. Yunus and Arshad (2015) investigated the teachers' perceptions of autonomous language learning activities and opportunities, recognizing that their positions are significant in autonomous apprentice production. Thirty-five English teachers teaching in state secondary schools in Malaysia took part in a survey. The teachers' experiences and viewpoints on their attitudes, activities, and perspectives regarding learner autonomy were explored. The results prove that the teachers were very positive towards applying learner autonomy in the teaching and learning environment, although the conditions were not very suitable and encouraging. Furthermore, the study reveals that students in a multi-cultural environment could also be ready for autonomous language learning from the teachers' viewpoint, particularly assuming responsibility. Hence, teachers should be conscious of their students' educational backgrounds and expectations of autonomous language learning progress.

In another study, how teachers of English and students from the Thai EFL context perceived the actual usage of social media was disclosed by Manprasert (2017). Moreover, the expectations regarding what teachers must do to improve the English language learners' autonomy were explored through social media. This research also explored the concerns of teachers in fostering EFL learner autonomy with social media. The results demonstrate that teachers documented a high level of social media engagement in ELT, but students' perception level was of only modest involvement. The data collected through the interviews gave insight into that very misaligned perception, demonstrating that learners, especially those with low English proficiency levels, did not even seem to understand the teachers' social media use. Consequently, they could not feel like they were getting satisfactory recommendations about

integrating social media into their learners' autonomy inside and outside the classroom. Teachers are expected to provide learners with more valuable and appropriate social media networks. Besides, teachers advise that students' use of social media had to be carefully measured by parents and teachers as the absence of maturity could lead students to abuse social media, which was the teachers' substantial concern about social media involvement in ELT.

In the study conducted at state secondary schools of Kahramanmaraş, Manisa, and Samsun, Eren (2015) sought to examine English teachers' perspectives on the advancement of autonomy for learners. Secondary school English teachers' views on the significance of developing learner autonomy were reviewed on whether they believe there is a significant difference depending on age, gender, and seniority; there is a considerable difference. The study indicates that male teachers are more supportive of learner development of autonomy than female teachers on students' engagement in decisions related to short-term course accomplishments, preferences of textbooks, assignments, and seating arrangement. In contrast, female teachers mainly support learner autonomy in encouraging learners' phase of learning through self-discovery.

Similarly, the EFL teachers' perceptions and practices on learner autonomy were also investigated by Bekçi̇başı (2018). The mixed type research was conducted in primary, secondary, or high schools with 90 English teachers working in Menteş, Muğla. The results demonstrate that English teachers regard autonomy as a matter of "learning how to learn." They agree that it brings higher academic performance in the L2 learning process. A majority of teachers claimed that they frequently attempt to assist their learners in being autonomous. They support the idea that autonomy should be encouraged with young learners throughout English lessons. However, they do not have positive perspectives regarding promoting learner autonomy by using current English coursebooks.

Another study was conducted by Zorkaya (2019) to examine learner autonomy views of 72 English teachers offering courses at Istanbul Bilgi University and Yeditepe University preparatory programs. The quantitative aspect of the thesis puts forth that EFL teachers working at preparatory courses provide a constructive approach to the growth of autonomy. No statistically relevant impact of age on learner autonomy levels in EFL teachers' perceptions was observed. The semi-structured interviews indicate that teachers describe learner autonomy with particular terms or phrases, including individuality, knowledge, capability, responsibility, goals and objectives, weaknesses,

strengths, and constructive engagement. It is also underscored that as for the obstacles to learner autonomy growth, the teachers indicated that the education system, teacher-centered methods, students not being accustomed to self-guidance, lack of personal goals, and dependence on sources might prevent students from becoming autonomous.

Primary school English teachers' expectations of the students' autonomy and their opinions on promoting independence and implementing them in the classroom were delved into by Koşar (2019). The data gathered through a questionnaire disclose that private school teachers have more favorable views of their students' degree of autonomy than state school teachers. On the other hand, language teachers at private schools proved that they apply particular practices and methods to encourage their students to be autonomous. How autonomy is manifested and what impacts it was investigated by Elmahjoub (2014), delving into how secondary school teachers interpret and practice their roles in the teaching-learning process and how learners can take active roles in the Libyan context. The ethnographic study indicates that teachers often had optimistic attitudes about allowing learners to be involved and responsible learners. The learners usually viewed themselves as taking on these roles themselves. It also reveals that teachers offering assistance and encouragement and scaffolding learners to take more independent stances in their learning process were vital modes especially favored for most teachers and learners. Socio-culturally, the research achieves profound insights in recognition by the teachers of collaborative and collective practice.

Furthermore, the views shared by EFL female teachers and students about learner autonomy were examined by Alhejaily (2020) at a crucial period when new educational policies towards learner autonomy are being introduced in the context of Saudi secondary schools. It also sought what variations between the two sets of values were characterized. The combined results demonstrate that teachers' and students' views are more nuanced and incompatible in the Saudi context than existing studies would imply. While teachers seem to have a more technological perspective linked to learner autonomy practice, learners seem to convey a psychology standpoint, where learner autonomy can be seen as an ability inside any learner. In another study related to learner autonomy, how students, instructors, and principals view learners' responsibilities in learning and teaching were explored by Ivarson and Pihl (2013). The empirical study focuses on the interviews and observations with two instructors, two headteachers, and eight students. The teachers stress the value of seeing the introduction of learner accountability as an ongoing process for which they are responsible. Furthermore, due

to being more in control over their learning process, students communicate more inspired in their English classes. Finally, the headteachers emphasize inspiration and understanding as core points for the responsibility of learners.

The practices and concepts of autonomous learning were also explored in a Saudi higher education EFL setting. The study conducted by Halabi (2018) provided activities that could be employed in the classroom and characteristics that could enhance learner autonomy and language learning in Saudi Arabia. The survey conducted with 44 female teachers and 480 first-year female students reveals that instructors were more optimistic about learner autonomy than students. Besides, when students were interviewed, they displayed a high degree of motivation and willingness to be autonomous. The research is significant in terms of challenging the belief that Saudi students are not invested in becoming autonomous and outlining the social and systematic obstacles that need to be addressed by both teachers and students.

A case study highlighting the problems teachers may encounter in a language course while promoting autonomy was conducted by Ostrowska (2015). The study explored how learner autonomy was adopted as a curricular objective at a tertiary level Preparatory Programme in the United Arab Emirates. The exploratory-interpretive case study examined how different autonomy perceptions have influenced students' and teachers' attitudes towards independent learning log (ILL). The study concludes that learners' independence as an educational aim is incompatible with students' and teachers' conceptualization of education. Therefore, teachers should rethink how they coordinate language learning and what roles teachers and students assign for autonomy to become a viable educational objective. Identifying these challenges can enable potential language programs to enhance alternative methods at the institutional level to encourage learner autonomy. In addition, Nga (2014) delved into how Vietnamese teachers recognized learner autonomy and how their views about this concept were applied in educational practices. The study puts forth that the teachers typically lacked awareness of learner autonomy. Furthermore, there was an inconsistency between teachers' views and teaching practices concerning learner autonomy, culminating in little proof of learner autonomy observed in any case study classrooms.

In a similar vein, Murphey and Jacobs (2000) recommend that English teachers encourage their students to behave in a critical, cooperative, and autonomous way. The essential, collaborative, and autonomous components that work well together were addressed. Besides, the ideas for fostering their involvement and advancement were

analyzed. They reveal that the gradual assumption of control of language learning in a community speeds up the acquisition and changes the individual and the group. In agreement with Wei (2011), Murphey and Jacobs (2000) recommend that more involvement of teachers in exploratory teaching and action research is required to find further opportunities to generate collaborative critical autonomy.

Additionally, Thai teachers' perspectives on learner autonomy and how their teaching approaches equipped learners with autonomous learning were investigated by Chinpakdee (2020). The results indicate that while the teachers expressed optimistic views on learner autonomy and viewed it as a viable approach in their classroom practices, they could not adequately encourage autonomous learning. Furthermore, learners' accounts of their educational experiences suggest that the classes did not educate them to take charge of their education methodologically and mentally. The study concludes that using the grammar-translation method as a teaching approach and the inadequate skills and lack of self-confidence to guide their learning process could create significant challenges to learner autonomy.

The importance of autonomy for learners is stated to be recognized today. Still, some countries are not yet ready to implement it in their educational systems. Aljaser (2015) provided a qualitative comprehension exploring student language teachers' perceptions to establish learner autonomy in the current Kuwaiti public educational climate. The idea of learner autonomy is still vague to the Kuwaiti Ministry of Education and in-service educators. Independence remains a theoretical issue for them. The study concludes that the student language teachers could gain and implement autonomy to some extent; however, they need additional motivation by providing a suitable educational climate (p.239).

## **2.11. Summary**

Many definitions of learner autonomy have been provided in the literature review. However, the majority of researchers agree that learner autonomy is a concept that reflects learners taking responsibility for their learning. Most studies conducted on learner autonomy delve into the perceptions, understanding, and beliefs of EFL or ESL teachers working at primary, secondary, or high schools and the lecturers working at ELT departments or preparatory programs of universities. However, there are limited studies that have explored and analyzed their learner autonomy practices and

approaches. A significant number of empirical studies reveal that even after all the improvements in the 20<sup>th</sup> and the 21<sup>st</sup> century, most classrooms show that the majority of students still do not form their learning process. Moreover, most educational structures do not encourage collaborative autonomy in the east and the west, and critical methods or contemporary approaches are met with opposition more often than welcome.

The literature has proved that the teacher's role is vital in promoting learner autonomy. However, many studies have demonstrated that teachers need training on implementing learner autonomy in the EFL teaching and learning context. It still seems ambiguous whether teachers provide students with academic support by dominating the class in a teacher-centered environment or serving as facilitators by maintaining a student-centered environment. The literature consists of limited studies regarding secondary school EFL teachers' perceptions and practices of learner autonomy. Correspondingly, although the distinction of learner autonomy is commonly acknowledged and is believed to be desirable in language learning, there is currently a scarcity of research on language teachers' opinions and knowledge of the subject (Borg & Alshumaimeri, 2019). Moreover, there seem to be few studies on their perceptions and practices in virtual classrooms. Parallely, the literature review confirms that studies exploring how learner autonomy in online learning environments is influenced and reshaped remain under-researched (Reinders & White, 2016).

Most studies regarding learner autonomy in secondary schools of Turkey have been based on classroom context. Thus, more research is needed to explore teachers' learner autonomy perceptions and practices in online EFL teaching and learning. Furthermore, since learner autonomy is multifaceted and affected by the context, it should be explored in as many contexts as possible. The following statement proves the essence behind this requirement: Learner autonomy as implementation is hard to clearly describe since it manifests itself in different ways primarily contingent upon the contexts such as cultural, spatial, secular, and so on in which it is being exercised (Lamb, 2017). Consequently, the current study is significant in exploring the perceptions and practices of secondary school EFL teachers in online EFL education settings.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Introduction

This chapter provides details on the study's general nature, instrumentation, the procedure of the data collection and the procedure of the analysis, participants, context, and the purpose of choosing the tools and the phases of the research design. Finally, the research's reliability, ethical concerns, and possible problems and shortcomings are discussed.

#### 3.2. Context of the Study

The current research was conducted with secondary school EFL teachers in Hatay, Turkey, during the 2020-2021 Academic year. All English teachers working at state and private schools were invited to participate in the online questionnaire. As a result, a hundred and ninety-four EFL teachers working at various secondary schools in Hatay participated in the questionnaire. Besides, 21 EFL teachers from 18 secondary schools participated in the interviews conducted after the questionnaire was administered. The teachers had the experience of offering online English classes to the 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> graders. The level of English courses provided by teachers varied from beginner (A1) to upper-intermediate (B2) (see Common European Framework Reference (CEFR)). However, the level of the majority of the students was reported to be elementary (A2). The differences were pointed out to result from different schools, grades, and ages of the learners.

In their formal education period, the students in Turkey begin to be offered English when they are second graders at primary schools. They continue being offered English classes until they complete their high school education. That is remarkable since they are provided with English lessons for a total of eleven years. However, the frequency of the courses may change among the schools. Besides, due to the Covid-19 outbreak, the classes were offered as thirty-minute sessions rather than forty, provided through either face-to-face or online education using multiple platforms such as EBA and Microsoft Teams. Depending on the schools' conditions, such as class-size issues, the school administrations could make minor modifications in employing the schedule.

In addition, we can notice that the schools, regardless of the fact that they are private or state schools, are open to educational innovations, which attempt to implement contemporary approaches and support their teachers' ideas, productions, and recommendations.

### 3.3. Research Design

The current study examines the EFL teachers' perceptions and practices of learner autonomy concerning encouraging students to be responsible for their learning process. Both qualitative (a semi-structured interview) and quantitative (a questionnaire) data were collected. Thus, the mixed-method data collection was used to delve into the secondary school EFL teachers' perceptions and practices in virtual classrooms. The study is descriptive and explorative in nature. The design aims to use qualitative data to help understand and interpret the results of quantitative analysis. The research is distinguished by the collection and analysis of quantitative instrumentation tools in addition to the qualitative data collection (Creswell, 2003).

The current study sought answers to five research questions, as illustrated in Table 1. The data collection tools were a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. The tools used for analysis were content analysis and SPSS.

Table 1.

#### *Research Design*

| <b><i>Research questions</i></b>                                                                                                                                                         | <b><i>Research tools</i></b> | <b><i>Analysis tools</i></b> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. What are EFL teachers' perceptions on learner autonomy in secondary school virtual classrooms?                                                                                        | Interview                    | Content Analysis             |
| 2. What are EFL teachers' perceptions towards implementing learner autonomy in online English language teaching/ learning contexts?                                                      | Questionnaire<br>Interview   | SPSS<br>Content analysis     |
| 3. What kind of practices do EFL teachers apply to implement learner autonomy in online English language teaching/ learning context?                                                     | Questionnaire<br>Interview   | SPSS<br>Content analysis.    |
| 4. To what extent do EFL teachers believe that their students are autonomous in online education?                                                                                        | Questionnaire<br>Interview   | SPSS<br>Content analysis     |
| 5. Do EFL teachers confront any constraints regarding developing learner autonomy in online education? If yes, what are the significant restrictions to learner autonomy implementation? | Interview                    | Content analysis             |

A Likert-scale questionnaire (see Appendix B) with five sections designed by Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012) was administered to 194 EFL teachers working in Hatay,

Turkey. The questionnaire, which is the first phase of the current study, is significant in terms of reaching numerous participants to gather data related to learner autonomy in online education. In the questionnaire and the interview, the study explored, particularly, to what extent the secondary school students in Hatay are autonomous during their online learning experience. Besides, EFL teachers' particular approaches to increase the possibility of having autonomous students in online education were investigated. In this respect, the study attempted to determine the teachers' strategies for constructing learner autonomy and its efficiency in academic success in online teaching and learning.

Many researchers suggest that a quantitative analysis describes patterns, perceptions, or views of participants. Pajares (1992) emphasized the importance of measuring a person's views based on their intentions and plans. In this regard, administering a questionnaire was logical since the EFL teachers' definitions of learner autonomy and their implementations were aimed to be explored. The preliminary interviews with the teachers demonstrated that English language teachers try not to use orthodox language teaching methods. They mostly prefer implementing strategies such as task-based learning, a constructivist approach that leads to student-centered learning, and reacts against having a dominant teacher in a language learning environment. As many researchers have also suggested, the frequency and the level of the classes offered, the approach followed, the methodology implemented, and the materials used may dramatically differ.

### **3.4. Data Collection**

Both quantitative (questionnaire) and qualitative (interview) data were collected, so the study used mixed-method data collection. Mixed method study has various definitions, but it is generally suggested to combine quantitative and qualitative research tools, techniques, and approaches in a single research. In addition, the philosophical underpinnings of mixed methods research have recently been widely discussed, and whether multiple worldviews related to the methods used in a specific study are respected and used within the mixed methods project have been raised (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007; & Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2009; Yin, 2006; Rocco, Bliss, Gallagher, & Perez-Prado, 2003; Sandelowski, 2000).

The quantitative data gathered through a questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and means. Qualitative data, which are collected through a semi-structured interview, was analyzed using content analysis. After the institutional ethics committee approved the research to be conducted, the participants were given sufficient information to decide whether or not to participate in the study voluntarily. The information gathered was handled confidentially and in a way that protected respondents' identities.

The questionnaire designed by Borg and Al- Busaidi (2012) was administered to 194 secondary school EFL teachers in Hatay, Turkey. In addition, a semi-structured interview (see Appendix C), adapted from Borg and Al- Busaidi (2012), was conducted with 21 teachers who voluntarily partook in the research. The answers they provided were analyzed qualitatively, while the findings from the questionnaire were analyzed using SPSS. The study aimed to investigate the teachers' learner autonomy perceptions and practices in virtual classrooms using the questionnaire and open-ended semi-structured interviews. Convenience sampling was used since participants were selected depending upon availability and willingness to participate in the study.

### **3.5. Data Collection Tools**

The realistic instruments that can help the collaborative structure of a joint investigation are known as research methods. For example, Stake (1995) stated that we could highlight extraneous effects using several research approaches. In this respect, the researcher decided to use a questionnaire developed by Borg and Al- Busaidi (2012) and administered it to 194 secondary school EFL teachers. In addition, a semi-structured interview was conducted with 21 teachers who voluntarily partook in the research. Each approach offered a different perspective, and when combined, they generated validity.

#### **3.5.1. Questionnaire: Perceptions on Learner Autonomy**

A questionnaire with five sections (see Appendix B) originated by Borg and Al- Busaidi (2012) was administered to 194 secondary school EFL teachers in Hatay, Turkey. Participants were selected based on desire and availability to take part, so convenience sampling was used. The aim of designing a questionnaire was to understand teachers' implementations in the classroom concerning how far the teachers

succeed in putting into practice their theoretical knowledge regarding encouraging students to be responsible for their learning.

Although the questionnaire was not mainly designed to explore learner autonomy in the online learning context, it was decided to be adapted to the online learning environment with the confirmation of Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012). Originally, the first section of the questionnaire had thirty-seven items. In agreement with two researchers who have worked in this field, the three items that were not found relatively necessary to be explored in the online learning context were eliminated. Thus, the first part consisted of thirty-four five-point Likert scale items. The items measured the EFL teachers' perceptions and practices regarding learner autonomy. The thirty-four items were grouped into eight dimensions: psychological, political, social, and technical perspectives on learner autonomy, teachers' perceptions regarding their roles, learner autonomy perceptions regarding the students' age and proficiency, and the perceptions concerning the advantages of learner autonomy. Inter-rater reliability was used to ensure a high degree of consensus between different individuals witnessing the same phenomenon in determining the dimensions emerging from the thirty-four items of the first section of the questionnaire. Joppe (2000) puts forward that if the study's findings can be replicated using the same techniques, the research instrument is considered reliable (p.1). In this study, inter-rater reliability was utilized to test how similarly the questionnaire items were categorized to avoid subjectivity. The researcher of the present study scored the same variables with two researchers consistently and with slight bias when developing the scale and criteria for data collecting to determine the dimensions and which category each item will be placed in to ensure reliability. After that, the correlation between the various sets of data was computed. The test had high inter-rater reliability since all of the researchers assigned similar ratings.

With the second section of the questionnaire, the researcher aimed to determine how desirable and feasible learner autonomy implementation is during the online EFL education context. Each scale of this part consisted of seven items that attempted to explore what teachers' opinions are regarding the desirability and feasibility of learners' involvement in the process of decision-making and the abilities they have related to it. In section 3, the teachers were asked two questions to investigate their students and teaching. They were invited to respond to the two Likert-scale questions to discover whether they believe their students have a fair degree of autonomy. It was also explored if they give their students opportunities to develop autonomy. In the fourth part of the

questionnaire, the demographic characteristics of the teachers were aimed to be collected. The variables of the demographic section were; years of experience as an English language teacher, highest qualification, gender, the classes they teach most hours on, and nationality. In the fifth and the last section, the participants were invited for further discussion of the issue. The participants who volunteered to participate in the interview were requested to state their names and e-mail addresses. The questionnaire addressing EFL teachers was analyzed through descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and means. Descriptive analysis, including rates and frequencies, was considered to determine the answers to the research questions.

### **3.5.2. Interviews**

Debasish and Das (2009) define an interview as a qualitative data collection instrument that allows a researcher to converse with participants to gather information on a specific research subject. Furthermore, many scholars pointed out that interviews as data collection tools can provide the researchers with sufficient data in qualitative analysis. Therefore, an open-ended, semi-structured interview was chosen as one of two data-gathering instruments for the current research since it gathers in-depth information. The phrase in-depth is frequently used in the sense of research to refer to something extensive, informative, or neatly monitored data that has been analyzed (Debasish & Das, 2009).

Miles and Huberman (1994) state that participants could have an opportunity to provide answers according to the level of significance through semi-structured interviews. The interviews administered in this study aimed to help achieve in-depth perceptiveness into the quantitative findings by investigating the sensation under investigation. Without reviewing how each tool was used, the design process, and the data analysis process, a more thorough interpretation of the study would not be possible. Wood and Ross-Kerr (2011) recommend that as the interviewer may request further clarification or expansion when an ambiguous answer is elicited, semi-structured interviews enable the researcher to obtain more detailed data. While prescribed questions direct semi-structured interviews, they are versatile and allow the researcher to raise additional questions. One vital advantage of interviews is that they feature synchronous conversations and help the interviewer analyze and gather information

from nonverbal discriminative stimuli consisting of intonation, gestures, mimics, voice, and eye contact.

When people are encouraged to become specialists in their own lives, the interview procedure may become empowering (Anderson, 1994). Furthermore, Lave and Wenger (1991) highlight that personal stories build an identity and illustrate involvement (p.109). Thus, the interview was an interpretive and participatory process. EFL teachers' perspectives on the application of learner autonomy in the virtual classrooms were aimed to be explored. The core point behind their responses to the questionnaire was to be caught up, and how each speaker made sense of and built their engagement styles in their respective settings was investigated.

Most interviews were conducted online rather than face-to-face. Zoom served as the right solution despite the limitations, such as technical problems. Hence, although it had some drawbacks, online interviews were determined to be administered. Sixteen of the participants were interviewed on Zoom. However, five participants shared that they would feel more comfortable responding to the questions in face-to-face meetings. Thus, individual conversations were planned to be held out-of-doors, ensuring social distancing. The participants were requested if they could kindly answer the interview questions of the study. The preliminary information was provided to the volunteers about the research topic in general. Their attitudes were so positive, which was greatly appreciated. Moreover, they were very active and motivated as they answered all the interview questions patiently. The participants' interest in taking part in research on learner autonomy in online education was remarkable. The duration of the interviews conducted individually ranged from 20 to 47 minutes.

Gathering qualitative data was beneficial. Both face-to-face and online interviews were rewarding for both the researcher and the participants. Moreover, they pointed out to be excited that they took part in such a project. Even though it was not easy to organize and manage meetings with twenty-one participants, it was a meaningful experience that invaluabley contributed to the study. All teachers said they would prefer to be interviewed in their native language (L1) rather than English. They emphasized that they would express their perceptions, practices, and recommendations in detail and more comfortably. Open-ended questions enabled the researcher to give prompts when needed; however, the conversations were not dominated. Careful listening to the participant is crucial to gain more insight. A natural

interview that went smoothly was ensured, knowing that interaction is encouraged during interviews rather than the interviewer's dominance (Dornyei, 2007).

All the participants took part in the study voluntarily. They gave answers to six demographic questions, eight main questions, and ten sub-questions for the interview with three sections. In the first section, the participants were invited to define learner autonomy, the key characteristics of an autonomous learner, the relationship between language learning in online education, and learner autonomy. The core points behind their perspectives were aimed to be explored. In the second part of the questionnaire, the participants were requested to evaluate how feasible and desirable learner autonomy is in online education. Here, the main aim was to investigate to what extent the learners are involved in decisions and if the students with special abilities are advantageous in terms of being active in decision-making regarding many other phases of their educational process. Finally, in the third section, the participants were invited to share to what extent they believe their students are autonomous, the English language teachers' roles in fostering learner autonomy, and their practices to encourage autonomy. Besides, the restrictions they face to implement it in online EFL teaching and learning context were also addressed.

Since most participants preferred being interviewed online due to the Covid-19 pandemic, they were interviewed using Zoom, an online application. On the other hand, five participants stated that they would prefer face-to-face conversations. Therefore, the interviews administered through online and face-to-face conversations were recorded after the participant teachers provided permission. Besides, the interviews allowed the researcher to transcribe the recorded interviews conveniently. Furthermore, all the interviews were transcribed manually. Besides, as the researcher of the study attempted not to misinterpret the participants' thoughts or perceptions, sufficient time was spent looking for narration cohesiveness characteristics.

Technical problems may make the process more challenging than conducting it face to face. Except for a few internet connection problems, no severe inconveniences were confronted. Even the facial expressions were able to be observed clearly, although most interviews were conducted online. Visual clues were not displayed to assure that they would not feel obliged to give a particular response and behave in a particular way. Moreover, body language and tone of voice were cautiously used, and the way the questions were asked was adjusted sensitively. Some participants asked for more clarification or expansion so that they could give relevant answers. Some did not

provide concise responses to the questions; however, eliciting responses with extra details provided more insight and interesting ideas. The questions were asked, creating a natural atmosphere, giving prompts when needed. Furthermore, the participants were asked whether they would like to share any recommendations if there were any. Conclusively, it was a perfect experience to know the teachers' opinions, beliefs, and practices of learner autonomy.

### 3.6. Participants

The study outcomes are based on an open-ended semi-structured interview and a questionnaire administered to 194 EFL teachers working at secondary schools in Hatay, Turkey. The male and female teachers were selected randomly, without considering how experienced they are or their ages. Table 2 is presented to shed light on the demographic characteristics of the EFL teachers that took part in the questionnaire.

Table 2.

*Demographic Characteristics of the Questionnaire Participants*

| <b>Factor</b>                                             | <b>F</b> | <b>%</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|
| <i>Gender</i>                                             |          |          |
| Female                                                    | 59       | 30.4     |
| Male                                                      | 135      | 69.6     |
| <i>Highest qualification</i>                              |          |          |
| Certificate                                               | 4        | 2.1      |
| Diploma                                                   | 77       | 39.7     |
| Bachelor's                                                | 88       | 45.4     |
| Master's                                                  | 21       | 10.8     |
| Doctorate                                                 | 2        | 1.0      |
| Other                                                     | 2        | 1.0      |
| <i>Years of experience as an English language teacher</i> |          |          |
| 0-4                                                       | 44       | 22.7     |
| 5-9                                                       | 53       | 27.3     |
| 10-14                                                     | 45       | 23.2     |
| 15-19                                                     | 21       | 10.8     |
| 20-24                                                     | 20       | 10.3     |
| 25+                                                       | 11       | 5.7      |
| <i>Grades they teach most hours on</i>                    |          |          |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> grades                                    | 50       | 25.8     |
| 6 <sup>th</sup> grades                                    | 18       | 9.3      |
| 7 <sup>th</sup> grades                                    | 26       | 13.4     |
| 8 <sup>th</sup> grades                                    | 100      | 51.5     |

As illustrated in Table 2, 135 (69.6%) out of 194 participants were female teachers, whereas 59 (30.4%) were male teachers. Thus, the majority of the participants

who took part in the interview were female teachers. A significant number of the participants (n=88, 45.4%) had a Bachelor's degree. The second-biggest percentage (39,7%, n=77) consisted of participants with a diploma. 21 (10.8%) out of 194 participants had a Master's degree, while there were also two (1.0%) teachers with Ph.D.

Table 2 also illustrates the years of experience of 194 participants. As can be seen, 44 (22.7%) participants had the least time span (0-4 years), whereas those (n=53, 27.3%) had an experience of more than four years (5-9 years) of teaching. Besides, 45 (23.2%) participants had experience of more than nine years (10-14 years). Additionally, the number of participants who had experience of 15 to 19 years of teaching was 21 (10.8%). The number of participants with 20 to 24 years of teaching was 20 (10.3%). The most experienced participants were the ones (n=11, 5.7%) who had experience of more than 25 years. In conclusion, most participants (n=53, 27.3%) who took part in the questionnaire had 5 to 9 years of experience. As can be observed, many participants (n=100, 51,5%) had their most hours in 8<sup>th</sup> grades. On the other hand, 25,8 percent of the participants (n=50) had most hours in 5<sup>th</sup> grades. Twenty-six (13.4%) of the participants primarily teach 7<sup>th</sup> grades, and the minor percentage (n=18, 9,3%) consisted of teachers having most hours on 6<sup>th</sup> grades.

Table 3.

*Descriptive Statistics of the Participants Volunteering to Participate In The Interviews*

| Items                                                                                                                                                                                               | Valid | Frequency | Percent |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-----------|---------|
| In the next stage of the study, we would like to talk to individual teachers to learn more about their views on learner autonomy. Would you be interested in discussing this issue further with us? | No    | 149       | 76.8    |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                     | yes   | 45        | 23.2    |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Total | 194       | 100.0   |

In the last section of the questionnaire, we stated that we would like to talk to teachers individually to learn more about their opinions on learner autonomy. We attempted to learn whether they would be interested in discussing the issue further. 23,2 percent of the teachers (n= 45 out of 194 participants) volunteered to participate in the interviews. The participants who volunteered were requested to state their names and e-

mail addresses to be reached for the interview appointments. 45 (23.2%) teachers who volunteered to participate in the interview were sent an e-mail. However, 21 out of 45 participants said that they would be available for the interview. The 21 participants are experienced teachers who have been offering online education since the Covid-19 pandemic started.

Table 4.

*Demographic Characteristics of the Interview Participants*

| <b><i>Factor</i></b>                                             | <b><i>F</i></b> | <b><i>%</i></b> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| <b><i>Gender</i></b>                                             |                 |                 |
| Female                                                           | 15              | 71.4            |
| Male                                                             | 6               | 28.5            |
| <b><i>Highest qualification</i></b>                              |                 |                 |
| Bachelor's                                                       | 17              | 80.9            |
| Master's                                                         | 3               | 14.2            |
| Doctorate                                                        | 1               | 4.7             |
| <b><i>Years of experience as an English language teacher</i></b> |                 |                 |
| 0-4                                                              | 3               | 14.2            |
| 5-9                                                              | 4               | 19.04           |
| 10-14                                                            | 6               | 28.5            |
| 15-19                                                            | 3               | 14.2            |
| 20-24                                                            | 4               | 19.04           |
| 25+                                                              | 1               | 4.7             |
| <b><i>Grades they teach most hours on</i></b>                    |                 |                 |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> grades                                           | 5               | 23.8            |
| 6 <sup>th</sup> grades                                           | 4               | 19.04           |
| 7 <sup>th</sup> grades                                           | 5               | 23.8            |
| 8 <sup>th</sup> grades                                           | 7               | 33.3            |
| <b><i>Age</i></b>                                                |                 |                 |
| 20-30                                                            | 5               | 23.8            |
| 31-40                                                            | 10              | 47.6            |
| 41-50                                                            | 6               | 28.5            |
| 50+                                                              |                 |                 |

Table 4 demonstrates that a significant majority of the teachers (n=6, 28.5%) who volunteered for the interview had an experience of 10 to 14 years. Four (19.8%) volunteers had 20 to 24 years of teaching experience. The number of volunteers with 5 to 9 years of teaching experience was also four. Three (14.2%) volunteers had 15-19, and three (14.2%) had 0-4 years of experience. Hence, the total sampling was

$6+4+4+3+3+1=21$  participants out of 45 volunteers. The participants' ages varied from 26 to 50, and experiences ranged from 2 to 25+ years.

As illustrated in Table 4, most interview volunteers ( $n=15$ , 71.4%) were female, whereas 6 (28.5%) were male. Thus, the majority of the participants who took part in the interview were female teachers. Furthermore, a significant majority of the participants ( $n=17$ , 80.9%) had a Bachelor's degree. Three (14.2%) of the participants stated that they had a Master's degree, while one (4.7%) participant had a Ph.D. Besides, as displayed in Table 4, many interview participants ( $n=7$ , 33.3%) were having their most hours in 8<sup>th</sup> grades. Five (23.8%) participants had most hours in 5<sup>th</sup> grades. Similarly, Five (23.8%) of the participants shared that they taught 7<sup>th</sup> grades, and the minor percentage ( $n=4$ , 19.4%) includes teachers having most hours on 6<sup>th</sup> grades.

### **3.7. Data collection procedure**

The current research included data collection through a questionnaire and an open-ended semi-structured interview. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the questionnaire was converted to an online questionnaire since teachers would feel more comfortable. The participants of this research were reminded of their rights, procedures, and the issue of confidentiality. In interviews, the participants were asked to provide answers in detail regarding the problems raised. Twenty-four interview questions, including six demographic, eight primary, and ten sub-questions, were addressed to the participants.

### **3.8. Data analysis**

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the data collected through the questionnaire. The quantitative and qualitative data were determined to be analyzed separately and in conjunction. First and foremost, the validity and adequacy of data were double-checked and regulated. Second, all respondents were reported to complete the questionnaires fully. As a result, frequency, accurate percentages, means, and standard deviations were tabulated using descriptive statistics.

On the other hand, content analysis was conducted, and it was achieved in a few steps. Firstly, the interview transcripts were reviewed in terms of the regularity of the work (Merriam, 1998). Next, the transcripts were checked until it was clear that highlighted sections were consistently indicated. Weber (1990) underscores that textual material could be classified through content analysis, which reduces it to more practical,

manageable chunks of information. Significant phrases and quotes from the interviews conducted by the researcher of the study were highlighted. The numerous words that emerged from the teachers' responses to the semi-structured interview questions were assorted into fewer categories of content, which is the theory behind the content analysis. Each classification can contain one, a few, or a large number of terms (Weber, 1990). In the analysis of this study, each category had a few or a large number of codes. Additionally, Weber (1990) points out that the classification method is accurate in being compatible with drawing relevant inferences from the related section. Thus, the researcher attempted to guarantee that the definitions of terms, phrases, and other text units listed in the same classification are identical.

Content analysis was used as it has many advantages. For example, many studies demonstrate that the importance of communication in social interactions cannot be overstated in content analysis when we go through the literature. It may also be observed that the most successful content-analytic studies combine qualitative and quantitative textual operations. On the other hand, some scholars reported some drawbacks regarding content analysis. For example, Hoskins and Mariano (2004) argue that there are no clear rules for data analysis: each investigation is unique, and the findings are dependent on the investigator's expertise, insights, observational abilities, and style (as cited in Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). According to Elo and Kyngäs (2008), one of the challenges of content analysis is that it is versatile and has no one-size-fits-all approach. Furthermore, according to Polit and Beck (2004), since it is less systematic and formulaic, content analysis is more complex and sophisticated than quantitative (as cited in Elo & Kyngäs, 2008).

Having an awareness that a variable is relevant as long as it can measure or reflect what the researcher aims to be measured (Weber, 1990), the researcher ensured to produce valid variables in the classification process. The categories were given names, transcripts were coded, and different categories were originated. Saldana (2013) defines a code as a phrase or a single word in essence-capturing, conspicuous, summative, and redolent quality (p.3). Particular attention was paid in order not to lose the meaning that was inferred. It was also revised to ensure a connection between the data collected and the findings.

### 3.9. Reliability and Validity

The content-based analysis technique, which is extensively used to analyze qualitative investigations, was used to answer the interview questions. First, the primary categories, codes, and themes were identified by transcribing the responses of the participants from the audio recordings. Then, the codes produced from the responses were used to identify them.

A mixed-method approach was used in the research to reduce validity and reliability issues and derive more reliable conclusions. In the qualitative study, researchers use validity strategies such as triangulating and member searching to show the consistency of the results and persuade audiences of this authenticity (Creswell, 2014, p.250). To grasp the concept of validity in qualitative research, novice researchers may become highly perplexed (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 124). According to Guba and Lincoln (1989), member checking is the most effective form of credibility because it emphasizes the subject's voice. During the entire study, consisting of data analysis, all required measures were taken. The data collection methods were tested, and positive feedback from ELT academics was obtained. The data gathering was carefully completed, and the data collected was analyzed. Besides, since most participants were native or near-native speakers, the interviews were administered in Turkish. This way, more detailed responses were intended to be received. On the other hand, the online questionnaire was conducted in English, its original language. The researcher used SPSS to evaluate the statistical results, and the content analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data.

The methods were used consistently to make the study more reliable. The procedure was planned carefully to ensure that each measurement follows the steps correctly. In the interview, the researcher ensured spelling out how specific behaviors or responses would be counted and that the questions were written consistently. The circumstances were kept as uniform as feasible when collecting data to reduce external influences that could cause variation. It was also ensured that all participants received the same information and were tested under the same settings. Both the questionnaire and the interview questions were approved to be appropriate by the developers and some other outstanding scholars in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT). Additionally, the developers evaluated the validity and reliability of the questionnaire (Borg & Al-Busaidi, 2012). However, its reliability was calculated by the researcher of

the current study since it was administered to investigate learner autonomy in online language learning environments. The Cronbach's alpha value was .85, which demonstrates that the instrument had relatively high reliability.

Joppe (2000) states that reliability refers to the extent to which outcomes are consistent over time and accurately represent the overall population of the study. It is also pointed out by Joppe (2000) that if the findings of the study can be replicated using the same techniques, the research instrument is considered reliable (p.1). Moreover, Saldana (2013) underlines the need to establish inter-rater reliability while employing qualitative coding methodologies to verify the study's trustworthiness. Thus, to ensure a high degree of consensus between different individuals witnessing or judging the same phenomenon, inter-rater reliability was used to determine the scales of the study. In this study, inter-rater reliability was utilized to test how similarly the questionnaire items were categorized. Thus, subjectivity was ensured to be avoided. Parallely, according to Walther et al. (2013), inter-rater reliability implies mitigating interpretive bias and ensuring a continuous discussion amongst researchers to guarantee coding consistency. The consistency with which codes and categories are generated when different coders classify the same text affects the content analysis's credibility. Thus, it was significant to ensure that the same variables are scored consistently and with a slight bias to determine which category each item will be placed in to ensure reliability. Three researchers performed the same measurement on the same sample to determine inter-rater reliability. After that, the correlation between the various sets of data was computed. The test had high inter-rater reliability since all researchers assigned similar ratings to the same items. Since the trustworthiness of the qualitative analysis of the study was ensured, the study was found to be reliable as a high agreement amongst the three different coders was observed. Additionally, the interviews were taped and subsequently transcribed to attain reliability in the current research.

The analysis began with open coding processes, as recommended by Elo and Kyngas (2008). Then, to delve into greater detail, the transcription was read a few times, and labels were assigned to the emergent divisions, keeping records for each. The codes expected to fall under the emerging categories were recognized like axial coding after the categories were labeled and relabelled. In other words, the analysis was carried out inductively rather than searching for preconceived concepts within the interviews, with concepts formed from the data. After agreeing on the analysis process, three coders went through the same stages outlined above individually, labeling and relabelling

codes and categories until they reached a final consensus. The frequencies were then calculated, and the findings were shown.



## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS

#### 4.1. Introduction

In this section, the main findings collected through a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews are presented. A mixed-method was planned to be conducted, combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches to gather the data. Under the heading of each research question, findings from the interviews following the conclusions of the questionnaire are provided. Each of the research questions is addressed separately. The results of the questionnaire and the interviews are presented in tables. The interviews that represent teachers' additional insights and implementations of learner autonomy will be defined on the basis of codes, categories, and themes that emerged from the content review.

1. What are EFL teachers' perceptions on learner autonomy in secondary school virtual classrooms?
2. What are EFL teachers' perceptions towards implementing learner autonomy in online English language teaching/ learning context?
3. What kind of practices do EFL teachers apply to implement learner autonomy in online English language teaching/ learning context?
4. To what extent do EFL teachers believe that their students are autonomous in online education?
5. Do EFL teachers confront any constraints regarding developing learner autonomy in online education? If yes, what are the significant restrictions to learner autonomy implementation?

#### 4.2. EFL teachers' Perceptions on Learner Autonomy in Secondary School Virtual Classrooms

It may be realized that EFL teachers, touching on some remarkable issues related to autonomy, have a high awareness of learner autonomy. The teachers' answers to the first interview question reflecting the teachers' perceptions concerning learner autonomy in the virtual classrooms were investigated and the perceptions. The quotes of

21 participants chosen out of 45 volunteers depending on their convenience were analyzed. The definitions provided by the teachers in their own words were analyzed using content analysis. In order to design Table 5 and Table 6, the data was reduced, categorized, and coded. The themes, categories, and codes elicited from the data are presented in Table 5.

Table 5.

*EFL Teachers' Perceptions of Learner Autonomy*

| <b>Theme</b>                             | <b>Categories</b>           | <b>Codes</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| DEFINITIONS<br>OF<br>LEARNER<br>AUTONOMY | Responsibility (10)         | Taking responsibility for learning (2)<br>Being aware of one's responsibilities (7)<br>Ability to carry out the requirements the responsibility brings (1)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|                                          | Self-awareness (10)         | Being self-aware and behaving accordingly (4)<br>Being aware of one's learning (6)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|                                          | Individual Development (10) | Ability to act individually (4)<br>Becoming individual academically (1)<br>Becoming an individual in terms of improving one's core competencies (1)<br>Individual development (4)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|                                          | Freedom (2)                 | Being free to choose the time, instructor, or the channel (1)<br>Letting oneself create one's mind maps (1)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|                                          | An opportunity (1)          | An opportunity that should be directed to areas according to the learners' abilities (1)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|                                          | Special ability (20)        | Being able to receive the education they desire with high quality (1)<br>Ability to learn on one's own (4)<br>Improving oneself (2)<br>Doing the required preliminary preparation timely (2)<br>Succeeding in studying systematically (5)<br>Maintaining learning in a way through which the newly learned information can be kept in the long-term memory (2)<br>Creating flexibility and advantages to develop themselves (1)<br>Ability to get organized (1)<br>Being active in the process (2) |

|                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Independence (6)         | Being independent (2)<br>Behaving independently (1)<br>Thinking independently (3)                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Monitoring (6)           | Pursue one's learning process (2)<br>Administering oneself (1)<br>Growing up consciously (3)                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Decision Involvement (9) | Determining and practicing one's learning process in line with their decisions and desires (1)<br>Determining one's studying techniques (4)<br>Deciding what to learn (1)<br>Choosing one's method of learning (3)                                           |
| Self-sufficiency (8)     | Being self-sufficient (2)<br>Learning on one's own (1)<br>Method of studying by establishing one's system (3)<br>Not being limited with the teacher and the materials (1)<br>Planning, practicing, maintaining, and evaluating one's learning activities (1) |

The first research question investigates the teachers' learner autonomy perceptions. Table 5 displays categories with the codes inferred to help us understand their perceptions on the meaning of learner autonomy. As presented in Table 5, significant phrases and terms inferred from the participants' statements define learner autonomy according to the participants' perspectives. The categories and the codes are presented with the frequencies given in brackets. Ten categories grouped the responses provided by the participants. The categories provided in descending order of frequencies are; unique ability, individual development, responsibility, self-awareness, decision involvement, self-sufficiency, independence, monitoring, freedom, and opportunity. The findings proved that the definitions provided by the teachers were corresponding to the most remarkable definitions referred to in the literature. It is also apparent that EFL teachers have a significant degree of awareness regarding the learner autonomy concept.

With the second question of the interview, teachers were invited to define an autonomous learner. The report was provided based on the codes, themes, and categories that were developed. In order to be able to get a clearer insight, Table 6 presents the elegant themes, categories, and codes inferred through elicitation from the

responses. It provides a clear overview of the semi-structured open-ended interviews conducted.

Table 6.

*EFL Teachers' Perceptions of an Autonomous Learner*

| <b>Theme</b>                                | <b>Categories</b>             | <b>Codes</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Autonomous Learners' Characteristics</b> | Personal Characteristics (25) | Being self-disciplined (2)<br>Being self-assured (2)<br>Being aware of their abilities (2)<br>Being aware of their interests (2)<br>Being confident (2)<br>Being sociable (3)<br>Being motivated to learn (2)<br>Being eager to learn (4)<br>Being self-regulated (3)<br>Being conscious (2)<br>Standing firm (1)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|                                             | Learning Characteristics (74) | Being interested in researching (1)<br>Knowing how to process the information (1)<br>Being able to do self-assessment (3)<br>Deciding their learning process (3)<br>Being aware of their learning styles (6)<br>Having a systematic way of learning (5)<br>Dedication to their learning process (1)<br>Identifying the problems and knowing how to solve them (3)<br>Having the ability to do modifications (1)<br>Having the ability to use the language skills academically and socially (7)<br><br>Being independent of specific patterns (2)<br>Knowing the reason for learning (1)<br>Being aware of the responsibilities (3)<br>Benefitting from social websites and the internet (6)<br>Taking improvement as a requirement (1)<br>Being good at reinforcement and consolidation (2)<br>Fictionalizing their time management (1)<br>Knowing how to fill a gap in the learning process (3)<br>Seeing themselves in a new light (1)<br>Having a strong academic background (3)<br>Being good at associating things regarding the language (1)<br>Being good at expressing themselves (1)<br>Determining their own rules (1) |

Table 6 (continued)

|                                  |                                                                                                                        |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Learning<br>Characteristics (74) | Using their observations and determinations as a source in conducting research (1)                                     |
|                                  | Finding the similarities and the differences between languages and knowing how to reflect these into their studies (1) |
|                                  | Being interested in various languages not only the target one (2)                                                      |
|                                  | Maintaining permanent learning through their codes, rules, and associations (2)                                        |
|                                  | Knowing how to benefit from the materials (3)                                                                          |
|                                  | Being well-prepared (5)                                                                                                |
|                                  | Knowing that the effort will bring success (3)                                                                         |

In Table 6, the codes that emerged were categorized into two groups. The characteristics inferred from the participants' responses reflected the actions and the attitude of an autonomous learner. The features provided by the participants also reflected an autonomous learner's characteristics demonstrating their nature. Thus, the categories that emerged are the learning characteristics and personal characteristics of an autonomous learner. The total frequencies are provided with the categories in brackets. The codes were also presented with their frequencies in brackets. A significant number of positive qualities were attributed to autonomous learners. The codes and the categories that emerged indicated that teachers' definitions of autonomous learners are compatible with the terms highlighted in the literature. The remarkable codes (the ones with the highest frequency) that emerged to describe an autonomous learner are; being self-assured, well-prepared, conscious, eager, self-regulated, and motivated. Self-awareness, knowing the best way to learn, and a systematic learning process are also among the remarkable features autonomous learners have. It can be pointed out that teachers have a high awareness regarding learner autonomy and autonomous learner.

#### **4.2.1. The Ways Teachers Developed Their Views on Learner Autonomy and its Value**

The roots of the teachers' current opinions on learner autonomy have also been explored through the interviews. Only seven teachers acclaimed that they have worked in different contexts where autonomy has been considered essential for developing

learners. A significant number of participants emphasized that learner autonomy was not an issue they considered in their schools. Besides, when they thought about their own experiences as language learners, most teachers said autonomy was not an issue they were aware of. However, they have added that it has recently been an issue they give significance to since online education started. Only two participants shared that they were aware of what learner autonomy was during their university education. However, it was not something given much importance. Here are participants' quotes strikingly demonstrating how they have developed their current views on learner autonomy and its value.

*When I started to experience online education, I noticed the importance of learner autonomy. In online education, the learners had to do things independently, and I realized that they were successful with the tasks they covered at home (Participant 11).*

*Knowing that every student has different learning strategies, I noticed that autonomy is something that all students should have. Teachers may not know the learning styles or perspectives of students very well (Participant 14)*

The majority of participants became familiar with learner autonomy through teaching experience. The quotes provided prove that most participants noticed the importance of learner autonomy after online education started since the learners have to do things individually and independently.

*I developed my learner autonomy views in the process of time with experience. When I was at the university, we learned that living standards, conditions, lifestyle, and culture are the elements that may change the student's style or determine the level of their autonomy. I also observed that the more opportunities I gave my students, the more potential they showed (Participant 2).*

*My experiences have demonstrated that teaching the language based on the course books has disadvantages. However, later on, when technology was integrated into the learning process, everything changed positively. I had my studying techniques, and whenever I applied them, I was very successful. That's how I came to realize the value of autonomy (Participant 21).*

One of the teachers stated that she was offered a seminar touching on the significance of learner autonomy. Besides, two participants pointed out that they were offered online courses while getting an M.A. education. Therefore, experiencing online education became a great advantage since they can look at the situations from their students' shoes. Furthermore, being experienced in online language education helps the teachers handle the process more efficiently to choose the appropriate approaches and materials.

*I have been offered an online course while I was doing my MA in 2013. Since I have had a chance to see how it feels like to be a student in the online education context, I can understand their needs and expectations. As a student, you make much more effort than in face-to-face education, which requires developing your autonomy (Participant 20).*

*With the busy online education schedule, I have recently formed my ideas regarding learner autonomy. During this period, teachers have to observe and control their students. I have offered online courses to 240 students, and this formed an extensive area to be followed. As a result of my observations, I made sure that the autonomous students were the ones who had self-awareness and could monitor themselves. I was also offered online courses as an M.A. student and offered online English lessons, realizing how vital being autonomous is (Participant 13).*

They believe that students should know their learning styles, expectations, goals, and desires the most, making learner autonomy a must. Some participants stated that they learned what autonomy was from the books when they were university students. As a result, they are confident with the management, motivation, and engagement of the learners. They are more likely to minimize the problems that occur due to time management and class size problems while promoting learners' autonomy. One of the vital points made was the importance of learner autonomy in life-long learning. We understand that success in life-long learning is associated with having learner autonomy.

*I am aware of the importance of learner autonomy since my main aim as a teacher has been to take learner autonomy within the scope of life-long learning, learning a foreign*

*language, or focusing on a different field. To support life-long learning, we have to put learner autonomy at the center of the educational process, which gains even more importance in online language education. Therefore, my priorities are self-awareness and teaching them how to learn* (Participant 16).

Some participants stated that they knew the importance of social networking and technology even before the pandemic started. They also argued that teachers loving their job and, regarding it as an ideology, use technology effectively. One last point was that if teachers were autonomous, they would know how crucial learner autonomy is in the virtual classrooms and the whole educational context. When they actively use technology, online resources, activities, and anything regarding online language education, it can be possible to implement learner autonomy to succeed in their online education experience.

#### **4.3. EFL Teachers' Perceptions Towards Implementing Learner Autonomy in Online Language Education**

Teachers' views have a profound impact on their teaching behaviors, which directly influence students' learning. Therefore, this research sought to uncover EFL teachers' overall perceptions and practices of learner autonomy. The second research question in this study aims to discover how English teachers in Hatay perceive learner autonomy. This question will be answered with subtitles discussing teachers' social, psychological, political, and technical perspectives in addition to their perceptions about the meaning of learner autonomy and an autonomous learner. Besides, the teachers' perceptions regarding their roles, the advantages of learner autonomy, and how learner autonomy is associated with language learning, age, and proficiency in online education will be presented.

##### **4.3.1. Psychological Perspectives of Learner Autonomy**

Teachers' responses to questionnaire items related to teachers' perceptions on psychological perspectives of learner autonomy are presented in Table 7 with percentages, frequencies, means, and standard deviations. The highest mean was found 4.35, while the lowest mean was found 3.69.

As illustrated in Table 7, nearly all participants agreed (n=190 in total; n=82,

42.3% strongly agree; n=102, 52.6% agree) that *learning how to learn is the key to developing learner autonomy*. Only three students disagreed (n=2, 1.0% disagree; n=1, 0.5% strongly disagree), and two participants (n=2, 1.0%) were unsure. The mean score was 4.35, the highest score of this part, and the standard deviation was 0.652.

The percentage of agreement for the item *motivated language learners are more likely to develop learner autonomy than learners who are not motivated* was 92.3% (n=179 in total; n=75, 38.7% strongly agree; n=104, 53.6% agree). 3.1% (n=6) disagreed (n=5, 2.60% disagree; n=1, 0.5% strongly disagree) while 4.6% (n=9) were unsure. The mean score was 4.27, and the standard deviation was 0.714.

Table 7.

*Psychological Perspectives on Learner Autonomy*

| Items                                                                                                            | Strongly Agree | Agree        | Unsure      | Disagree   | Strongly Disagree | M    | SD    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|------------|-------------------|------|-------|
| 26. Learning how to learn is the key to developing learner autonomy.                                             | 82<br>42.3%    | 102<br>52.6% | 7<br>3.6%   | 2<br>1.0%  | 1<br>0.5%         | 4.35 | 0.652 |
| 30. Motivated language learners are more likely to develop learner autonomy than learners who are not motivated. | 75<br>38.7%    | 104<br>53.6% | 9<br>4.6%   | 5<br>2.6%  | 1<br>0.5%         | 4.27 | 0.714 |
| 34. To become autonomous, learners need to develop the ability to evaluate their own learning.                   | 52<br>26.8%    | 124<br>63.9% | 12<br>6.2%  | 3<br>1.5%  | 3<br>1.5%         | 4.13 | 0.719 |
| 10. Confident language learners are more likely to develop autonomy than those who lack confidence.              | 65<br>33.5%    | 109<br>56.2% | 14<br>7.2%  | 5<br>2.6%  | 1<br>0.5%         | 4.20 | 0.722 |
| 29. The ability to monitor one's learning is central to learner autonomy.                                        | 18<br>9.3%     | 118<br>60.8% | 40<br>20.6% | 16<br>8.2% | 2<br>1.0%         | 3.69 | 0.793 |

A vast majority of participants agreed (n=176, 90.7% in total; n=52, 26.8% strongly agree; n=124, 63.9% agree) that *learners need to develop the ability to evaluate their learning to become autonomous*. Six participants (3%) disagreed (n=3, 1.5% disagree; n=3, 1.5% strongly disagree) while 6.2% (n=12) were unsure. The mean score was found 4.13, and standard deviation was 0.719.

The agreement percentage for the item *confident language learners are more likely to develop autonomy than those who lack confidence* was 89.7% (n=174 in total;

n=65, 33.5% strongly agree; n=109, 56.2% agree). 3.1% (n=6) disagreed (n=5, 2.6% disagree; n=1, 0.5% strongly disagree). 7.2% (n=14) were unsure. The mean score was found 4.20, and standard deviation 0.722.

Seventy percent (n=136) agreed (n=18, 9.3% strongly agree; n=118, 60.8% agree) that *the ability to monitor one's learning is central to learner autonomy*. 9.2% (n=18) disagreed (n=16, 8.2% disagree; n=2, 1.0% strongly disagree) while two participants (1.0%) were unsure. The mean score was found 3.69, and standard deviation was 0.793.

#### 4.3.2. Political Perspectives on Learner Autonomy

Teachers' responses to questionnaire items related to teachers' perceptions on political perspectives of learner autonomy are illustrated in Table 8 with percentages, frequencies, means, and standard deviations. The highest mean of this part was 4.18, while the lowest mean score was 3.75.

The agreement percentage for the item *learner autonomy is promoted when learners have some choice in the kinds of activities they do during online education* was 91.8% (n=178 in total; n=32, 16.5% strongly agree; n=146, 75.3% agree). The disagreement percentage was 3.1% (n=6 in total; n=4, 2.1% disagree; n=2, 1.0% strongly disagree). The percentage of the unsure participants was 5.2% (n=10). The mean score of this item was found 4.04, and the standard deviation was 0.626.

A significant majority of the participants (n=175, 90.2%) agreed (n=58, 29.9% strongly agree; n=117, 60.3% agree) that *autonomy means that learners can choose how they learn in online education*. 2.6% (n=5) disagreed 7.2%, (n= 14) were unsure. The mean score of this item was found 4.18, which is the highest score, and the standard deviation was 0.668.

Table 8.

*Political Perspectives on Learner Autonomy*

| Items                                                                                                                       | Strongly Agree | Agree        | Unsure      | Disagree   | Strongly Disagree | M    | SD    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|------------|-------------------|------|-------|
| 12. Learner autonomy is promoted when learners have some choice in the kinds of activities they do during online education. | 32<br>16.5%    | 146<br>75.3% | 10<br>5.2%  | 4<br>2.1%  | 2<br>1.0%         | 4.04 | 0.626 |
| 3. In online education, autonomy means that learners can make choices about how they learn.                                 | 58<br>29.9%    | 117<br>60.3% | 14<br>7.2%  | 5<br>2.6%  | 0<br>0%           | 4.18 | 0.668 |
| 6. Involving learners in decisions about what to learn promotes learner autonomy.                                           | 46<br>23.7%    | 115<br>59.3% | 25<br>12.9% | 6<br>3.1%  | 2<br>1.0%         | 4.02 | 0.765 |
| 24. Learner autonomy is promoted when learners can choose their own learning materials.                                     | 19<br>9.8%     | 134<br>69.1% | 23<br>11.9% | 16<br>8.2% | 2<br>1.0%         | 3.78 | 0.772 |
| 20. Learner autonomy is promoted when learners are free to decide how their learning will be assessed.                      | 25<br>12.9%    | 120<br>61.9% | 29<br>14.9% | 16<br>8.2% | 4<br>2.1%         | 3.75 | 0.858 |

Eighty-three percent (n=161) agreed (n=46, 23.7% strongly agree; n=115, 59.3% agree) that *involving learners in decisions about what to learn promotes learner autonomy*. 4.1% (n=8) disagreed (n=6, 3.1% disagree; n=2, 1.0% strongly disagree). 12.9% (n=25) were unsure. The mean score was 4.02, and standard deviation was 0.765.

The agreement percentage for the item *learner autonomy is promoted when learners can choose their own learning materials* was 78.9% (n=153 in total; n=19, 9.8% strongly agree; n=134, 69.1% agree). 9.2% (n=18) disagreed (n=16, 8.2% disagree; n=2, 1.0% strongly disagree) while 11.9% (n=23) were unsure. The mean score was found 3.78, and standard deviation was found 0.722.

The agreement rate was 74.8% (n=145 in total; n=25, 12.9% strongly agree; n=120, 61.9% agree) to the item *learner autonomy is promoted when learners are free to decide how their learning will be assessed*. The disagreement was 10.3% (n=20 in total; n=16, 8.2% disagree; n=4, 2.1% strongly disagree). The percentage of unsure participants was 14.9% (n=29). The mean score of this item was 3.75, while the standard deviation was 0.858.

### 4.3.3. Social Perspectives on Learner Autonomy

Teachers' responses to questionnaire items related to teachers' perceptions on social perspectives of learner autonomy are shown in Table 9 with percentages, frequencies, means, and standard deviations. The highest mean of this part was 4.22, while the lowest mean score was 3.27.

A significant majority of teachers (91.7%) agreed (n=65, 33.5% strongly agree; n=113, 58.2% agree) that *co-operative group work activities support the development*. Few teachers (2.5%) disagreed (n=3, 1.5% disagree; n=2, 1.0% strongly disagree) while 5.7% (n=11) of the teachers were unsure. This item had the highest mean score; 4.22, and standard deviation was 0.709.

The agreement percentage for the item *learner autonomy is promoted through activities that give learners opportunities to learn from each other* was 86.1% (n=167 in total; n=51, 26.3% strongly agree; n=116, 59.8% agree). The disagreement percentage was 3.6% (n=7 in total; n=5, 2.6% disagree; n=2, 1.0% strongly disagree). The number of unsure teachers was twenty (10.3%). The mean score of the item was 4.08, while the standard deviation was 0.748.

Table 9.

*Social Perspectives on Learner Autonomy*

| Items                                                                                                           | Strongly Agree | Agree        | Unsure      | Disagree    | Strongly Disagree | M    | SD    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|------|-------|
| 22. Co-operative group work activities support the development.                                                 | 65<br>33.5%    | 113<br>58.2% | 11<br>5.7%  | 3<br>1.5%   | 2<br>1.0%         | 4.22 | 0.709 |
| 14. Learner autonomy is promoted through activities which give learners opportunities to learn from each other. | 51<br>26.3%    | 116<br>59.8% | 20<br>10.3% | 5<br>2.6%   | 2<br>1.0%         | 4.08 | 0.748 |
| 17. Learner autonomy is promoted by activities that encourage learners to work together.                        | 32<br>16.5%    | 129<br>66.5% | 19<br>9.8%  | 13<br>6.7%  | 1<br>0.5%         | 3.92 | 0.757 |
| 2. Learner autonomy is promoted through regular opportunities for learners to complete the tasks alone.         | 25<br>12.9%    | 113<br>58.2% | 31<br>16.0% | 24<br>12.4% | 1<br>0.5%         | 3.71 | 0.865 |
| 27. Learning to work alone is central to the development of learner autonomy.                                   | 14<br>7.2%     | 78<br>40.2%  | 52<br>26.8% | 47<br>24.2% | 3<br>1.5%         | 3.27 | 0.962 |

A significant number of the teachers (83 %, n=161) agreed (n=32, 16.5% strongly agree; n=129, 66.5% agree) that *learner autonomy is promoted by activities that encourage learners to work together*. The disagreement was 7.2%, n=014 in total; n=13, 6.7% disagree; n=1, 0.5% strongly disagree). 9.8% (n=19) were unsure. The mean score was found 3.92, and standard deviation was 0.757.

Many teachers (71.1%, n=138) agreed (n=25, 12.9% strongly agree; n=113, 58.2% agree) that *learner autonomy is promoted through regular opportunities for learners to complete the tasks alone*. Some teachers (12.9%) disagreed (n=25 in total; n=24, 12.4% disagree; n=1, 0.5% strongly disagree) while 16.0% (n=31) were unsure. The mean score was 3.71, and standard deviation was found 0.865.

The agreement percentage for the item *learning to work alone is central to the development of learner autonomy* was 47.9% (n=92 in total; n=14, 7.2% strongly agree; n=78, 40.2% agree). 25.7% (n=50) disagreed (n=47, 24.2% disagree; n=3, 1.5% strongly disagree). 26.8% (n=52) were unsure. The mean score of this item was found 3.27, and standard deviation was 0.962.

#### 4.3.4. Technical Perspectives on Learner Autonomy

Teachers' responses to questionnaire items related to teachers' perceptions on technical perspectives of learner autonomy are presented in Table 10 with percentages, frequencies, means, and standard deviations. The highest mean score was 3.71, while the lowest mean was 3.58.

The agreement percentage for the item *learner autonomy is promoted by independent work in a self-access centre* was 67% (n=130 in total; n= 21, 10.8% strongly agree; n=109, 56.2% agree). The disagreement percentage was 11.3% (n=22 in total; n=19, 9.8% disagree; n=3, 1.5% strongly disagree) while 21.6% (n=42) were unsure. The mean score was 3.65, and standard deviation was 0.858.

Sixty-four percent (n=124) agreed (n=10), 5.2% strongly agree; n=114, 58.8% agree) that *out-of-class tasks which require learners to use the internet promote learner autonomy*. 7.7% (n=15) disagreed (n=9, 4.6% disagree; n=6, 3.1% strongly disagree). 28.4% (n=55) were unsure. The mean score of the item was 3.58, and standard deviation 0.792.

Table 10.

*Technical Perspectives on Learner Autonomy*

| Items                                                                                                         | Strongly Agree | Agree        | Unsure      | Disagree   | Strongly Disagree | M    | SD    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|------------|-------------------|------|-------|
| 19. Learner autonomy is promoted by independent work in a self-access center.                                 | 21<br>10.8%    | 109<br>56.2% | 42<br>21.6% | 19<br>9.8% | 3<br>1.5%         | 3.65 | 0.858 |
| 28. Out-of-class tasks which require learners to use the internet promote learner autonomy.                   | 10<br>5.2%     | 114<br>58.8% | 55<br>28.4% | 9<br>4.6%  | 6<br>3.1%         | 3.58 | 0.792 |
| 5. Autonomy can develop most effectively through learning outside the classroom/ in online education context. | 36<br>18.6%    | 86<br>44.3%  | 53<br>27.3% | 17<br>8.8% | 2<br>1.0%         | 3.71 | 0.916 |

The agreement percentage for the item *autonomy can develop most effectively through learning outside the classroom in online education context* was 62.9% (n=122 in total; n=36, 18.6% strongly agree; n=86, 44.3% agree). The disagreement was 9.8% (n=19; n=17, 8.8% disagree; n=2, 1.0% strongly disagree) while 27.3% (n=53) were unsure. The mean score of this item was found 3.71, and standard deviation was 0.916.

#### 4.3.5. Teachers' Perceptions Regarding Their Roles in Promoting Learner Autonomy

Teachers' responses to questionnaire items related to teachers' perceptions regarding their roles in promoting learner autonomy are illustrated in Table 11 with percentages, frequencies, means, and standard deviations. The highest mean score was 4.14, while the lowest mean was 2.62.

Thirty-five percent (n=67) of the participants agreed (n=7, 3.6% strongly agree; n=61, 31.4% agree) that *learner autonomy means learning without a teacher in general*. 44.8% (n=37) disagreed (n=78, 40.2% disagree; n=9, 4.6% strongly disagree) and 20.1% (n=39) were unsure. The mean score of the item was 2.89, and standard deviation was 1.020. The agreement rate for the item *learner autonomy cannot be promoted in a teacher-centred environment* was 61.8% (n=120 in total; n=42, 21.6% strongly agree; n=78, 40.2% agree). The disagreement rate was 19.1% (n=37 in total; n=31, 16.0% disagree; n=6, 3.1% strongly disagree) while 19.1% (n=37) of the

participants were unsure. The mean score was found 3.61, and standard deviation was 1.087.

Table 11.

*Teachers' Perceptions Regarding Their Roles in Promoting Learner Autonomy*

| Items                                                                                      | Strongly Agree | Agree        | Unsure      | Disagree    | Strongly Disagree | M    | SD    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|------|-------|
| 7. Learner autonomy means learning without a teacher in general.                           | 7<br>3.6%      | 61<br>31.4%  | 39<br>20.1% | 78<br>40.2% | 9<br>4.6%         | 2.89 | 1.020 |
| 13. Learner autonomy cannot be promoted in a teacher-centered environment.                 | 42<br>21.6%    | 78<br>40.2%  | 37<br>19.1% | 31<br>16.0% | 6<br>3.1%         | 3.61 | 1.087 |
| 15. Learner autonomy implies a rejection of traditional teacher-led ways of teaching.      | 28<br>14.4%    | 81<br>41.8%  | 56<br>28.9% | 25<br>12.9% | 4<br>2.1%         | 3.54 | 0.961 |
| 16. Learner autonomy cannot develop without the help of the teacher.                       | 9<br>4.6%      | 57<br>29.4%  | 62<br>32.0% | 52<br>26.8% | 14<br>7.2%        | 2.97 | 1.020 |
| 21. Learner autonomy requires the learner to be totally independent of the teacher.        | 5<br>2.6%      | 35<br>18.0%  | 47<br>24.2% | 95<br>49.0% | 12<br>6.2%        | 2.62 | 0.938 |
| 25. Learner-centred environment provides ideal conditions for developing learner autonomy. | 50<br>25.8%    | 124<br>63.9% | 18<br>9.3%  | 2<br>1.0%   | 0<br>0%           | 4.14 | 0.611 |
| 32. The teacher has an important role to play in supporting learner autonomy.              | 51<br>26.3%    | 116<br>59.8% | 18<br>9.3%  | 8<br>4.1%   | 1<br>.5%          | 4.07 | 0.751 |

Numerous teachers (56.2%, n=109 in total; n=28, 14.4% strongly agree; n=81, 41.8% agree) agreed that *learner autonomy implies a rejection of traditional teacher-led way of teaching*. 15.1% (n=29; n=25, 12.9% disagree; n=4, 2.1% strongly disagree) was the disagreement percentage. 28.9% (n=56) were unsure. The mean score of this item was found 3.54, and standard deviation was 0.961.

The agreement to the item *learner autonomy cannot develop without the help of the teacher* was 34% (n=66; n=9, 4.6% strongly agree; n=57, 29.4% agree). The disagreement rate was 34% (n=66; n=52, 26.8% disagree; n=14, 7.2% strongly disagree). 32.0% (n=62) were unsure. The mean score was 2.97, and standard deviation was found 1.020.

Not many teachers (20.6%, n=40; n=5, 2.6% strongly agree; n=35, 18.0% agree) agreed that *learner autonomy requires the learner to be totally independent of the*

*teacher*. 55.2% (n=107 in total; n=95, 49.0% disagree; n=12, 6.2% strongly disagree). 24.2% (n=47) were unsure. The mean score of the item was 2.62, and standard deviation was 0.938.

The agreement percentage for the item *learner-centred environment provides ideal conditions for developing learner autonomy* was 89.7% (n=174 in total; n=50, 25.8% strongly agree; n=124, 63.9% agree). The disagreement rate was 1.0% (n=2, 1.0% disagree). 9.3% (n=18) were unsure. The mean score was 4.14, and standard deviation was 0.611.

Eighty-six percent of teachers (n=167) agreed (n=51, 26.3% strongly agree; n=116, 59.8% agree) that *the teacher has an important role to play in supporting learner autonomy*. 9.1% (n=9) disagreed (n=8, 4.1% disagree; n=1, 0.5% strongly disagree) while 9.3% (n=18) were unsure. This item had the highest mean score with 4.07, and standard deviation was 0.751.

EFL teachers' perceptions of their roles are crucial. It may be observed that teachers portray their role as pivotal in the efficiency of online education and promoting learner autonomy to achieve better academic, social, psychological, technical, and political results. In Table 12, data related to teachers' roles collected from the teachers' responses in the interview are presented through codes, categories, and themes. To get a clearer insight, the researcher attempted to get refined codes, themes, and categories were attempted to be achieved. A qualitative method of content analysis was utilized to support the quantitative data in this study. Different themes and categories such as analyzing, identifying, and reporting themes through the data collected emerged. Thus, to find out the roles of the teachers, both quantitative and qualitative data were used to examine the main points that are inferred. The themes, categories, and codes provide a brief picture of the qualitative data in the study.

Table 12.

*Teachers' Perceptions of Their Roles*

| <b>Theme</b>          | <b>Categories</b>          | <b>Codes</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Teacher's role</b> | Motivating (14)            | Creating addiction to study or learn (1)<br>Attracting and maintaining their attention (2)<br>Being a role model (3)<br>Encouraging them to be active (2)<br>Being a motivator (2)<br>Being encouraging (4)                                                                                                                                                                          |
|                       | Guiding (32)               | Making the learners notice that they can contribute to the lesson (1)<br>Being approver (1)<br>Being supervisor (5)<br>Giving responsibilities (4)<br>Helping them to achieve on their own (2)<br>Being a guide (7)<br>Being a leader (7)<br>Guiding them to discover themselves (1)<br>Reminding their responsibilities (1)<br>Determining the limits (3)                           |
|                       | Teaching (6)               | Teaching how to do it (1)<br>Teaching implicitly (1)<br>Teaching inductively (1)<br>Diversifying the activities (3)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|                       | Having responsibility (18) | Being aware of the innovations regarding online language teaching and learning (3)<br>Being good at educational technology (2)<br>Being aware of the individual differences (2)<br>Being aware of his/her duty as a teacher (2)<br>Analyzing learner's characteristics (2)<br>Noticing the learners' strengths and weaknesses (4)<br>Avoiding to behave as a source of knowledge (3) |
|                       | Giving freedom (10)        | Letting them take part in decisions (3)<br>Allowing the learners to practice (4)<br>Encouraging them to think independently (2)<br>Giving them an opportunity for self-assessment (1)                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|                       | Supporting (15)            | Increasing the level of the learners' self-awareness (3)<br>Being facilitator (2)<br>Being a supporter (4)<br>Helping them be confident (2)<br>Helping them notice their abilities (4)                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|                       | Monitoring (7)             | Being an observer (4)<br>Giving attention (1)<br>Controller (2)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

Table 12 demonstrates the principal codes and categories that emerged from the teachers' responses to the interview questions related to teachers' roles. Again, the most distinct details of the answers provided by the participants were chosen and listed. The list provided proves that teachers believe in having a considerable number of roles in promoting learner autonomy. The codes with the most prominent frequency are being a leader, being a guide, and being a supervisor. In addition, one of the participants emphasized the significance of creating an addiction to study or learn.

*I can clearly say that the teacher's role is to create and increase students' addiction, engage them in the lesson, and maintain their attention throughout the class. They should not allow students to be poorly affected by the context. A lesson's efficiency can be maintained no matter where it is, in a physical or online environment or space (Participant 7).*

The excerpt demonstrated that attracting and maintaining attention is crucial, which can be managed by making the students interested in the lesson, as many other participants also pointed out. First, the student's interest and willingness towards studying and learning should be ensured. Then, they should be given responsibilities so that they can develop awareness leading them to be autonomous.

*We need to create awareness in students and increase their awareness since we live in a technology age. To grow up healthy individuals, we need to remind them of their responsibilities (Participant 18).*

Additionally, some participants emphasized that it is not only students who should be aware of their responsibilities. Teachers should be mindful of their duties as well. Being a teacher does not mean teaching, providing information only but being a facilitator, motivator, and a good role model. Teachers are the ones who create opportunities for their students to be active in every dimension of the lesson. They should create confident and open-minded students promoting the students' autonomy.

*Teachers must be aware of their responsibilities. They should not dominate the lessons deciding on the elements regarding the class alone. They should also give roles to the students. The teachers should get rid of the feeling of being a boss. Instead, they will serve as a guide, and students will decide. The students noticing their contribution to the educational process will be more active, promoting their autonomy (Participant 20).*

*A teacher who serves as a guide rather than an information provider is more likely to lead students to reach the goals they set. Letting inhibited students expect to be directed by the teacher to be active is not logical (Participant 13).*

The majority of participants pointed out that setting goals is vital for learners. However, this can be possible with the guidance of a teacher, which emphasizes the importance of the teacher's role. Almost all participants believe that the classical or traditional methods are not desirable since students may have difficulty understanding their needs and expectations. Instead, they are forced to depend on the teacher's suggestions, directions, and decisions, which is undesirable.

#### 4.3.6. Learner Autonomy Perceptions Regarding the Learners' Age

Teachers' responses to questionnaire items concerning teachers' learner autonomy perceptions on the learners' age are presented in Table 13 with percentages, frequencies, means, and standard deviations. The highest mean score in this part was found 3.77, while the lowest mean was 2.08.

The agreement rate for the item *language learners of all ages can develop learner autonomy* was 62.4% (n=21 in total; n=25, 12.9% strongly agree; n=96, 49.5% agree). The disagreement percentage was 20.1% (n=39 in total; n=38, 19.6% disagree; n=1, 0.5% strongly disagree) while 17.5% (n=34) were unsure. The mean score was 3.55, and standard deviation was 0.966.

Table 13.

*Learner Autonomy Perceptions Regarding the Learners' Age*

| Items                                                                                            | Strongly Agree | Agree        | Unsure      | Disagree     | Strongly Disagree | M    | SD    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------------|------|-------|
| 1. Language learners of all ages can develop learner autonomy.                                   | 25<br>12.9%    | 96<br>49.5%  | 34<br>17.5% | 38<br>19.6%  | 1<br>0.5%         | 3.55 | 0.966 |
| 9. It is possible to promote learner autonomy with both young language learners and with adults. | 23<br>11.9%    | 127<br>65.5% | 21<br>10.8% | 23<br>11.9%  | 0<br>0%           | 3.77 | 0.808 |
| 18. Learner autonomy is only possible with adult learners.                                       | 3<br>1.5%      | 16<br>8.2%   | 22<br>11.3% | 105<br>54.1% | 48<br>24.7%       | 2.08 | 0.910 |

The percentage for the agreement was 77.4% (n=150 in total; n=23, 11.9% strongly agree; n=127, 65.5% agree) to the item *it is possible to promote learner autonomy with both young language learners and with adults*. The percentage for

disagreement was 11.9% (n=23, 11.9 disagree). 10.8% (n=21) were unsure. The mean score of the item was 3.77, and the standard deviation was 0.808. Few teachers (9.7%, n=19) agreed (n=3, 1.5% strongly agree; n=16, 8.2% agree) that *learner autonomy is only possible with adult learners*. 78.8% (n=153) disagreed (n=105, 54.1% disagree; n=48, 24.7% strongly disagree) while 11.3% (n=22) were unsure. The mean score was 2.08, and standard deviation 0.910.

#### 4.3.7. Learner Autonomy Perceptions Regarding the Learners' Proficiency

Teachers' responses to questionnaire items concerning teachers' learner autonomy perceptions on learners' proficiency are presented in Table 14 with percentages, frequencies, means, and standard deviations. The highest mean score was found 3.15, and the lowest mean was 2.71.

The agreement percentage for the item *it is harder to promote learner autonomy with proficient language learners than it is with beginners* was 37.6% (n=73 in total; n=6, 3.1% strongly agree; n=67, 34.5% agree). 30.9% (n=60) disagreed (n=52, 26.8% disagree; n=8, 4.1% strongly disagree) while 31.4% (n=61) were unsure. The mean score of the item was 3.06, and the standard deviation was 0.951.

Table 14.

*Learner Autonomy Perceptions Regarding the Learners' Proficiency*

| Items                                                                                                    | Strongly Agree | Agree       | Unsure      | Disagree    | Strongly Disagree | M    | SD    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|------|-------|
| 8. It is harder to promote learner autonomy with proficient language learners than it is with beginners. | 6<br>3.1%      | 67<br>34.5% | 61<br>31.4% | 52<br>26.8% | 8<br>4.1%         | 3.06 | 0.951 |
| 23. Promoting autonomy is easier with beginning language learners than with more proficient learners.    | 6<br>3.1%      | 73<br>37.6% | 68<br>35.1% | 39<br>20.1% | 8<br>4.1%         | 3.15 | 0.920 |
| 31. The proficiency of a language learner does not affect their ability to develop autonomy.             | 2<br>1.0%      | 46<br>23.7% | 52<br>26.8% | 82<br>42.3% | 12<br>6.2%        | 2.71 | 0.933 |

Not many teachers (40.7%, n=79) agreed (n=6, 3.1% strongly agree; n=73,

37.6% agree) that *promoting autonomy is easier with beginning language learners than with more proficient learners*. 24.2% (n=47) disagreed (n=39, 20.1% disagree; n=8, 4.1% strongly disagree) while 35.1% (n=68) were unsure. The mean score was 3.15, and standard deviation 0.920. The agreement to the item *the proficiency of a language learner does not affect their ability to develop autonomy* was 24.7% (n=48 in total; n=2, 1.0% strongly agree; n=46, 23.7% agree). 48.5% (n=94) disagreed (n=82, 42.3% disagree; n=12, 6.2% strongly disagree). The percentage of the unsure participants was 26.8% (n=52). The mean score was found 2.71, and the standard deviation was 0.933.

#### **4.3.7.1. How Teachers Associate Learner Autonomy with Online Language Learning**

To support the quantitative data presented in Table 14 to demonstrate EFL teachers' learner autonomy perceptions concerning the learners' proficiency, qualitative data collected through the interview are also exhibited in this part.

Most teachers stated that they believe learner autonomy significantly impacts language learners' success in online education. They suggested that succeeding in the online learning process is closely related to students being autonomous and taking responsibility for their learning. The following quotes from the interviews demonstrate how they see the relationship between learner autonomy and language learning in online education.

*I believe online education is advantageous since the students can access various materials and recordings on the platforms such as EBA. They can also take notes, do tests interactively. This way, they can have progress individually. Indeed, online education supports the learners' autonomy and independence. We as teachers take part in the process as a guide, not more than that* (Participant 16)

The excerpt suggested that language learning can be very effective in online teaching/learning contexts. Language education requires accessing a great variety of valuable materials. Besides, through platforms such as EBA, learners can access a great many educational materials, videos, and recordings. Furthermore, platforms such as EBA allow the learners to study individually and in groups. The majority of teachers pointed out that inhibited learners feel more confident and into online education. They

believe online learning sessions increase the learners' autonomy and independence. Similarly, when they are independent and autonomous, they get more efficiency from the classes.

*Online education has a significant impact on learners to gain independence, confidence, and autonomy. They have noticed that all of us are under the same conditions. Even the ones who rarely participate in the lessons during face-to-face education have become more active in online education (Participant 17)*

*Language is not a lesson but a lifestyle, so the learners should be given the sense that they are learning a new culture, and they need to be open to unique lifestyles, new philosophies, and cultures (Participant 2)*

The quote provided emphasized the interrelatedness of language and culture. The language teacher can succeed in offering the language lessons in an integrated way to the culture of the countries where the target language is spoken as a native language, which, when aimed, can be easily achieved in online education. Thus, many participants believe that learner autonomy can be promoted in online education by the teacher's guidance and the student's interest or willingness. Moreover, even if the students appeal to learning the target language, they may not know how to start and progress. Thus, teachers should serve as facilitators, guides, and leaders rather than a source of knowledge dominating the class. Through the online education process, teachers have had a chance to make the learners aware of the significance of the target language as an international language. The learners have also realized that the common language of technology is English, so they have started to consider improving their language skills more willingly. Hence, students need to be convinced to be able to be eager to learn something particularly. The majority of teachers emphasized that the learners need to have concrete goals to adjust themselves to be successful, knowing what they desire, and making an effort.

*Especially with online learning programs, people have become more interested in technology such as gamification. That is why online education has contributed to this significantly. Learners have noticed the significance of learning on one's own (Participant 21)*

The following excerpt is evidence of some teachers' beliefs concerning the difference between face-to-face and online education. Some participants associated face-to-face education with the implementation of a traditional method. In contrast, they associate online education with contemporary practices since it is relatively new for most teachers and learners. However, we live in the globalized world of the twenty-first century. Thus, teachers have been seeking the most appropriate contemporary teaching methods to approach students effectively.

*Teachers try to implement modern methods in online education, but they mostly use traditional teaching methods in face-to-face instruction. When we integrate technology, we can motivate language learners. In online education, the role of using various materials is essential (Participant 4).*

Some participants were found to view that there is no difference between face-to-face and online education. However, the fact that they found no difference between two different contexts was related to the number of the students and knowing the students very well. Furthermore, most participants pointed out that class size and the lesson duration affect the lesson's efficiency and the probability of promoting autonomy in learners. Hence, an online teaching session can be as fruitful as a face-to-face teaching session. On the other hand, a small number of teachers stated that they have to create a teacher-centered environment in their classes because of the time limitations. They believe that they have no time to allocate all students equally and participate during each session.

*Online education does not differ from face-to-face learning, but my advantage is that I do not have too many students in one group. Furthermore, I know my students very well, I can succeed in having practical online sessions. However, if the groups are crowded, the sessions cannot be applicable (Participant 8)*

*Unfortunately, we need to limit our students' autonomy since the length of each session is 30 minutes only; as we may also have technical problems, time becomes even more limited, so the sessions must be teacher-centered (Participant 14)*

A significant majority of participants believe that language learning has become more accessible with online education. Students feel freer and more confident to

participate since, for instance, they can keep their cameras off. Moreover, they can reach the material they need, so online education is exceptionally advantageous. Most participants related the success in online education to the learners' autonomy, eagerness, and assertiveness. However, they also stated that online education is something that we are not used to, which demonstrated the need for support to be efficient teachers in virtual classrooms. The following excerpt is evidence of the participants' thoughts concerning the effectiveness of a student-centered environment.

*Language learning should be student-centered so that they can be autonomous*  
(Participant 2)

Some participants stated that learner autonomy is a must in online education because, in face-to-face teaching, many things can be under the teacher's control. However, in online education, attending the sessions, overcoming technical problems, managing time, using the materials effectively and many other details require the learners to be autonomous. Hence, the learners need to direct their learning process since they have more responsibilities. As a result, they need to have autonomy. Thus, while most participants believe learner autonomy is necessary for face-to-face and online education, some participants only pointed out that it is required in online education. In a similar vein, some participants stated some limitations, including a lack of practice. They claimed that language learning is an area where much training is needed, which gets harder in online education.

Similarly, some claimed that online education concentrates students only on audio and visual learning. This learning situation forces students to acquire and learn in this way. The following quote urges a quick start of learner autonomy implementation. Once students are achieved be encouraged to become autonomous, they at the same time will have awareness and learn how to take responsibility.

*We see that concepts such as awareness, interest, and responsibility have been damaged in the online teaching and learning process* (Participant 3)

The majority of participants were found to view online education as beneficial for only motivated and successful language learners. It is dissatisfying and inappropriate for the ones who are not motivated, confident, and encouraged. However, the

consciousness of the process can help teachers to promote autonomy. Some teachers believe that online language learning cannot be compared with face-to-face language learning in terms of efficiency in promoting learner autonomy. However, many participants pointed out positive sides regarding the relationship between online language learning and learner autonomy.

#### 4.3.8. Perceptions Regarding the Advantages Of Learner Autonomy

Items 33, 11, and 4 demonstrate the EFL teachers' perceptions about the benefits of learner autonomy. Table 15 illustrates the descriptive statistics providing the frequency, percentages, means, and standard deviations of the participants' responses. The highest mean score was 4.35, while the lowest mean was 3.55.

The agreement percentage for the item *learner autonomy allows language learners to learn more effectively than they otherwise would* be 84% (n=163 in total; n=47, 24.2% strongly agree; n=116, 59.8% agree). The disagreement percentage was 3.6% (n=7 disagree), while the percentage of the unsure participants was 12.4% (n=24). The mean score of the item was 4.05, and the standard deviation was 0.715.

Table 15.

#### *Perceptions Regarding the Advantages of Learner Autonomy*

| Items                                                                                              | Strongly Agree | Agree        | Unsure      | Disagree    | Strongly Disagree | M    | SD    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|------|-------|
| 11. Learner autonomy allows language learners to learn more effectively than they otherwise would. | 47<br>24.2%    | 116<br>59.8% | 24<br>12.4% | 7<br>3.6%   | 0<br>0%           | 4.05 | 0.715 |
| 4. Individuals who lack autonomy are not likely to be effective language learners.                 | 25<br>12.9%    | 91<br>46.9%  | 45<br>23.2% | 31<br>16.0% | 2<br>1.0%         | 3.55 | 0.944 |
| 33. Learner autonomy has a positive effect on success as a language learner.                       | 82<br>42.5%    | 101<br>52.1% | 9<br>4.6%   | 1<br>0.5%   | 1<br>0.5          | 4.35 | 0.644 |

Almost sixty percent of the participants (n=116) agreed (n=25, 12.9% strongly agree; n=91, 46.9% agree). 17% (n=33) disagreed (n=31, 16.0% disagree; n=2, 1.0% strongly disagree). 23.2% (n=45) were unsure. The mean score was 3.55, whereas

standard deviation was 0.944. Nearly all participants (94.4%, n=183) agreed (n=82, 42.5% strongly agree; n=101, 52.1% agree) that learner autonomy has a positive effect on success as a language learner. 1.0% (n=2) disagreed (n=1, 0.5% disagree; n=1, 0.5% strongly disagree). 4.6% (n=9) were unsure. This item holds the highest mean score; 4.35. The standard deviation was found 0.644.

A vast majority of teachers believe that learner autonomy positively affects success as a language learner. The following quotes from the interview with the teachers show that teachers feel that being autonomous is advantageous. In addition, some excerpts found significant in the interviews are also displayed to demonstrate the perceptions regarding the advantages of learner autonomy to strengthen the quantitative data.

*The more autonomous the students are, the closer they are to achieve their learning objectives (Participant 7)*

*I think learning a language has become very easy recently. A learner can learn a language even without a teacher as there are many materials, online resources, and social networking. However, this can be achieved with the willingness and the autonomy of the students (Participant 6)*

Based on the quotes stated above, it can be inferred that autonomous learners can work independently. Furthermore, they are effective learners since they are always prepared and willing for the workload. Therefore, they can benefit from a great variety of resources without needing the assistance of anyone.

#### **4.4. EFL Teachers' Practices to Implement Learner Autonomy in the Online English Teaching and Learning Context**

This section will first touch upon the feasibility and the desirability of learner autonomy in terms of decision-making. Although investigating feasibility and desirability of learner autonomy was not within the limit of the study, and it was not mentioned in the research questions, we found it necessary to be acknowledged since it was already a part of the questionnaire and the interview and related to the items. Another reason to consist of the feasibility and desirability of learner autonomy is that

there were valuable suggestions provided by the participants. Subsequently, the practices teachers apply to stimulate learner autonomy will be presented.

#### **4.4.1. Feasibility and Desirability of Learner Involvement in Terms of Decision-Making**

Teachers' responses illustrated to what extent learners are involved in decisions in online language education. Before we state the teachers' practices to promote learner autonomy, it is vital to indicate how desirable and feasible learner autonomy is.

*To be honest, we do not usually ask students what their opinions are, although we desire them to do so. It is feasible, but we do not implement it. However, with the development of EBA, I became more hopeful. We need to enable the students to be motivated to work individually, get things done by them, and notice how they progress by working hard. We can also allow them to take responsibility and evaluate themselves since they can make the best evaluation because no one knows them better than they do. With the pandemic, the interest in EBA has been increased. Still, as soon as we are back to face-to-face education, the interest in EBA will rapidly be decreasing, unfortunately. However, with the development of technology and MoNE's political strategies to encourage learners and teachers to use the platforms such as EBA more, the feasibility will come up to a much higher level (Participant 21).*

Some participants stated that students should be active since the results cannot be beneficial if teachers decide on everything one-sidedly. However, they also added that there should be limitations; whatever they desire may not be approved, which is critical because they are supposed to know themselves very well in their decisions. Every single student has their style of learning and strategies. When they are making decisions, the students need to consider individual differences. The students should manage the process competently. Additionally, they should be conscious and speak knowledgeably or authoritatively about their education. An excerpt is provided below to demonstrate how learner autonomy can be feasible.

*When we create a democratic environment in online education, their autonomy is triggered. If everything is implemented with the students' consensus, they can send what*

*they learn through their choices and decisions into long-term memory. When a student decides, arrives at an agreement with his friends, and then implements it, it facilitates keeping everything in mind. However, this is not done in a traditional education environment. Even if it is a conventional environment, students should be encouraged to be autonomous since it helps them know what they want and how to receive it, facilitating learning. The more you incorporate your students into the learning process, the more prevalent and feasible learner autonomy may become (Participant 17).*

*The students' decisions can be limited by the games or simple activities. I do not think it is an excellent idea to let students decide on education phases since they are too young. When they make decisions, it creates a chaotic atmosphere since everyone desires something different since they have other interests and abilities. Therefore, I mostly try to choose activities that may make all of them contented (Participant 5).*

Teachers believe that learner autonomy is feasible and desirable as students are more active in this process; they can easily share their critical views. They are more comfortable in the online platform than they are in the classroom. Shy students have become more confident. However, they also think it is limited in online education while it can easily be enabled in face-to-face instruction. They stated the need for education to make learner autonomy feasible since it is a new experience. Based on the quotes below, we can point out that the feasibility and desirability of student involvement in decision-making and its efficiency depend on the curriculum, the teacher's style of teaching, and proficiency in the use of technology.

*When I think of today's technology and the curriculum, I can say that it is feasible for 30 percent of the students. The curriculum should be revised in a way no imbalance occurs. While one particular teacher successfully implements learner autonomy, another teacher can be very passive if specific baselines are not determined professionally, creating imbalanced results, not what we desire (Participant 7).*

*It is not very feasible. Only 30 or 35 percent can become autonomous as a result of the teacher's efforts. Nevertheless, the role of the teacher is significant in enabling the students to be active in decisions. For instance, I share the question types that I usually use in teaching particular topics at the beginning of the semester and ask for their ideas*

*if they have any suggestions. By communicating with them, I prove that I consider their desires and preferences, which triggers their autonomy. However, most teachers prefer dominating the class, taking all the decisions alone (Participant 19).*

As seen from the excerpt above, the teacher's effort enables the learner's involvement in decision-making in the online language learning process. A significant number of teachers believe that students mostly get a language education being exposed to teacher-centered environments where teachers dominate the classes giving the decisions alone. Thus, we can conclude that the feasibility of learner autonomy is more likely in a student-centered environment. The desirability of creating a student-centered learning environment increases the number of autonomous learners who can take responsibility for their learning in confidence. Teachers sometimes evaluate their students, ask them for their preferences, or give them assignments individually. They believe that learner autonomy is feasible once a suitable environment is created for students to be autonomous. When students feel that their views are taken into consideration, they feel free to share ideas and be active in planning. Notable quotes that reflect the viewpoints of teachers regarding the efficiency of motivation are presented below.

*We need to give students responsibilities, but the main problem is that we do not know how to motivate students to give responsibilities. However, by using appropriate methods and materials, it is possible to succeed in making autonomy feasible. Once the teacher is acknowledged and well-prepared regarding independence, they can encourage them to be autonomous (Participant 4).*

*By triggering their curiosity and raising their awareness, we enabled them to make decisions to reach their goals. When we observe even a tiny spark in students, we should immediately find a way to motivate them to take a step and develop it. However, for the students trying to make up stories or find excuses, the feasibility of autonomy is low. I send them many assignments on EBA very frequently, and I think I managed to make them active and autonomous to some extent. I convince them to use EBA by telling them that they will also be given performance scores considering their EBA use. I believe I am successful with this (Participant 18).*

Based on the findings displayed, learner autonomy is pointed out to be quite desirable by many teachers. As pointed out in the excerpt presented above, the function of motivation is obvious. As suggested earlier, having particular goals and being motivated positively affects the feasibility of learner autonomy. However, this must be enabled with the guidance of the teachers. Participant 18 suggested that she uses rewarding for motivation, increasing the possibility of students using the EBA platform. It is also apparent that the teacher is sufficiently confident in convincing her students to be active, which guarantees learner autonomy.

#### **4.4.2. Desirability and Feasibility of Decision-Involvement of Learners with Particular Abilities**

Based on the teachers' opinions concerning the feasibility and desirability of learner autonomy, we infer that it is a significant advantage for learners with special abilities since they are always ready to be involved. The quotes presented below demonstrate teachers' important points associating learner autonomy to social skills, emotional intelligence, peer learning, eagerness, and confidence.

*The students who have self-confidence are more prone to plow a lone furrow (Participant 19).*

*It is more desirable and feasible with learners having particular abilities, but others need to be encouraged and facilitated (Participant 10).*

*Some students have more developed social skills. I am doing a lot of research on emotional intelligence. Thus, I believe that emotional intelligence has come to the forefront. In this respect, learner autonomy can be implemented more easily on the students who have a higher level of intelligence and are more familiar with it. However, they are not familiar with the word itself mainly. Almost no student can come across you saying, "I am autonomous," but they are autonomous since they perform that way, demonstrating that they have special abilities (Participant 4).*

*When we have students with unique abilities, they are always in the limelight. Since they are eager, they are unstoppable and regarded as active and thriving. Thus, these*

*students should be given extra tasks such as conducting research. They also actively participate in activities like drama and painting (Participant 6).*

*I have a student who is a great musician, and I have another who has lived abroad for many years, so obviously, his level is so high. Since these students have unique talents and confidence, they can be more dominant than others in the online lessons. However, I use this as an advantage by emphasizing the importance of peer learning, which allows them to learn a lot from each other in the same environment and helps others' autonomy (Participant 17).*

When students are already confident and motivated, they can be self-sufficient, aware of their responsibilities, and handle their problems. Most teachers believe students with unique abilities to be self-regulated, programmed, well-prepared, eager to research and learn. They can contribute to managing the process and the curriculum. Moreover, they do not need to be reminded of their responsibilities. They have an awareness of the strengths and weaknesses they need to handle. Participant 4 emphasized the significance of emotional intelligence with regards to the implementation of learner autonomy. According to her perspective, learners with a higher level of intelligence and more familiar with autonomy are more likely to be autonomous. Thus, it is evident that feasibility and desirability levels of student involvement in decision-making increase dramatically.

*It may not be feasible due to some factors such as the school administration or the school conditions. However, a teacher should determine the framework and let the students feel free to move around the options and make decisions. This way, the student can feel the freedom not getting out of the framework determined by the teacher. Activities should be produced for the students to give them the feeling of space (Participant 20).*

The evidence presented above demonstrates some teachers' opinions concerning school administration-based constraints. However, it is also apparent that they believe that the teachers can sort out the limitations, the conditions can be adjusted in a way learners' autonomy can be promoted.

*Every student has their style of learning. Each of the students is special and has particular abilities. That is why autonomy can be promoted in every student as long as they discover their strengths and develop them in the right direction. For instance, I have a student with a unique musical ability; I always give him assignments and evaluate him using this channel (Participant 16).*

The memorable quote above indicates that the feasibility or desirability of student involvement in decision-making is not related to particular abilities. Instead, every single student has the potential to be autonomous when encouraged by the teacher, offering appropriate conditions.

*I believe feasibility and desirability are possible for 60 percent of students with particular abilities. We cannot say that the student can become autonomous if he is advantageous genetically; his background or language learning capacity is good. Encouragement by the teacher is significant here (Participant 7).*

*Students having particular abilities are more likely to become autonomous, but if the teacher limits them, their motivation is vulnerable, the probability of having autonomy becomes blunt. Currently, I do not think these students have a more voice than others in online education (Participant 12).*

*The typically autonomous students become even more autonomous in online education, so those who are not autonomous may be affected negatively. That is why it needs to be monitored and adjusted accordingly (Participant 8).*

The excerpts stated above are essential in displaying the teacher's crucial role in the feasibility of autonomy. We can point out that even though the students have particular abilities, they cannot use their abilities as an advantage when there are limitations. Additionally, the teacher must make adjustments for inhibited students not to be dominated by autonomous students.

#### **4.4.3. Views on Giving the Learners Opportunities to Promote Learner Autonomy**

Item 2 of Section 3 illustrates the EFL teachers' views on providing the learners

with the opportunities to encourage learner autonomy. Table 16 presents the descriptive statistics providing the frequency, percentages, means, and standard deviations of the participants' responses.

A hundred and sixty-one participants (82.10%) agreed (n=49, 25.3% strongly agree; n=112, 57.7% agree) that they give their students opportunities to develop learner autonomy while only seven teachers (3.6%) disagreed (n=6, 3.1% agree; n=1, .5% strongly disagree). The percentage of the unsure teachers was 13.4% (n=26). The mean score of the item was found 4.04, and the standard deviation was .747.

Table 16.

*Views On Giving the Learners Opportunities to Promote Learner Autonomy*

| Items                                                                                                       | Strongly Agree | Agree        | Unsure      | Disagree  | Strongly Disagree | M    | SD   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|-----------|-------------------|------|------|
| 2. In general, in teaching English at school, I give my students opportunities to develop learner autonomy. | 49<br>25.3%    | 112<br>57.7% | 26<br>13.4% | 6<br>3.1% | 1<br>0.5%         | 4.04 | .747 |

It is understood that a significant percentage of teachers create opportunities to promote their students' autonomy. Besides, as a part of the interview, teachers were asked to report what their practices are. The teachers who volunteered to participate in the interview (n=21) reported a significant number of practices. The results of the content analysis demonstrated that nearly all teachers attach importance to learner autonomy. Furthermore, they indicated how they manage to promote their students' autonomy by giving striking examples. Table 21 illustrates the themes, categories, and codes that emerged.

#### **4.4.4. EFL Teachers' Practices to Promote Learner Autonomy in Virtual Classrooms**

Teachers' practices of learner autonomy were also investigated qualitatively. Silver and Lewins (2014) originated a hierarchical scheme. They stated the scheme to include categories, subcategories, and codes as columns. They also suggested that the researcher determines the number of columns, themes, codes. The data regarding the

teachers' practices to promote learner autonomy collected through the interviews were analyzed by re-coding and categorizing as recommended by Saldana (2013).

As can be observed in Table 17, there can be many practices teachers may apply. The participants reported the practices they find compelling for language learning. The data was reduced, categorized, and coded to design Table 21. The report was provided based on the codes, themes, and categories that were developed. It gives a clear overview of the semi-structured open-ended interviews conducted. For a more transparent comprehension, the researcher attempted to get refined codes, themes, and categories. Six categories that emerged from the responses elicited from the participants are; evaluation, increasing willingness, creating a social environment, using online resources, motivation and monitoring.

Table 17.

*EFL Teachers' Practices To Promote Learner Autonomy*

| <b>Theme</b>               | <b>Categories</b>                  | <b>Codes</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Teachers' practices</b> | Creating a social environment (49) | Creating authentic atmosphere (3)<br>Collaborative group work (14)<br>Communication via social networking sites (13)<br>Verbal communication (2)<br>Non-verbal communication (2)<br>Interaction (4)<br>High output (1)<br>Initiating conversations (10) |
|                            | Motivation (22)                    | Rewarding (2)<br>Reinforcing (3)<br>Encouragement (4)<br>Facilitation (3)<br>Engagement (3)<br>Participation (2)<br>Creating positive climate (3)<br>Allocating sufficient and equal time (2)                                                           |
|                            | Monitoring (15)                    | Confidence (4)<br>Efficiency (2)<br>Beneficialness (1)<br>Performance (3)<br>Progress (5)                                                                                                                                                               |
|                            | Using online resources (22)        | Ensuring they benefit from a great variety of resources (7)<br>Ensuring they are confident (3)<br>Making recommendations (4)<br>Using the internet effectively (3)<br>Watching short educational videos (3)<br>Using visual materials (2)               |
|                            |                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

Table 17 (continued)

|                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Increasing willingness (60) | Choosing activities that may attract all students' attention (6)<br>Participation is voluntary (1)<br>Winning respect (1)<br>Preventing boredom (3)<br>Encouraging the passive students (5)<br>Asking for their preferences (21)<br>Expecting them to set goals (19)<br>Encouraging them to be productive (4) |
| Evaluation (40)             | Expecting them to evaluate their learning (19)<br>Expecting them to notice their progress, strengths, and weaknesses (16)<br>Peer evaluation (3)<br>Compensate for their deficiencies (2)                                                                                                                     |

Based on Table 17, we can point out that teachers know the importance of motivating and rewarding students. A student-centered environment is found more suitable for the implementation of learner autonomy. Participant 1 suggested that winning respect should be one of the primary aims of a teacher to convince students to be active. By creating a social environment with a favorable climate, they manage to arouse the willingness of the students to be autonomous. They ensure effective communication by guiding them to compensate for their deficiencies in confidence. They emphasize the significance of asking for their students' preferences, which means they try to give a sense of freedom to them. Teachers also expect their students to set goals by unearthing their talents, raising their curiosity and consciousness. Additionally, they give multiple tasks to increase their productivity with group work or individual work. The majority of participants stated that they select activities that are relevant to the students' needs.

*To manage this, I have to analyze their intelligence types first. Then, I give them assignments appropriate for their tastes, interests, and speed. I attended seminars to succeed in selecting appropriate activities for them (Participant 21).*

Asking students to keep a written record of their learning was one of the teachers' practices since they have limited technological opportunities. However, students are not obliged to take notes. The following statement demonstrates that they are free to choose what, when, and how to write.

*Instead of keeping a written record of their learning compulsory, I allow them to adjust it in a way they wish. I do not usually ask them to write what they need to register to keep in mind. After sharing their sentences with their teacher and peers, I mainly ask them to create sentences using the structure and write them on their notebooks (Participant 17).*

Significant codes emerged demonstrating the strategies that the teachers implement to promote learner autonomy in the virtual classrooms. In Table 18, both initial coding and descriptive coding were sensitively used since it is suggested that interpretations and analysis of the codes are more significant than writing the codes (Clarke et al., 2017). Table 18 displays the notable quotes of the teachers for the codes observed to identify their multiple practices.

The codes reflecting EFL teachers' notable practices emerged from the interviews are: motivation, student-centered environment, winning respect, arousing willingness, creating a favorable climate, guiding, facilitating, confidence, compensation, asking for their preferences, attracting attention, giving them freedom, setting goals, unearthing their talents, raising curiosity and consciousness, increasing productivity and individual work.

Table 18.

*The Quotes Presented with The Codes That Emerged to Identify Practices*

| <b>Codes</b>                                              | <b>Quotes from the interview</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Motivation</b>                                         | <i>When I notice students who are eager to improve themselves, I give them extra support. When I motivate them, I see how talented they are. When they are motivated, they have speedier progress (Participant 18).</i>                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Student-centered environment</b>                       | <i>Promoting learner autonomy becomes almost impossible if the teacher does not create a student-centered environment (Participant 1).</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Winning respect</b>                                    | <i>Students participate in all lessons if they respect you (Participant 1).</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Arousing willingness, Positive climate</b>             | <i>I provide them with an atmosphere they feel free to share their ideas and feelings. Most importantly, I always show them that I care about their opinions treating them all equally. My main objective is to uncover their strong potentials and guide them in the right direction. In addition, I help them get rid of their embarrassment (Participant 16).</i> |
| <b>Guiding and facilitating</b>                           | <i>To promote their autonomy, I encourage them to initiate conversations using their L1 and target language by getting help from the teacher when they have difficulty (Participant 13).</i>                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Confidence, compensation</b>                           | <i>To guarantee meaningful and effective communication, I compensate for their conversations when I find it necessary. I maintain an atmosphere where they compete and encourage them to raise their hands confidently (Participant 17).</i>                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Asking for their preferences, attracting attention</b> | <i>I always ask them their preferences, but I mostly decide on activities that attract all students' attention (Participant 5).<br/>I make sure that the material I am presenting to the students is interactive (Participant 3).</i>                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Giving them freedom</b>                                | <i>Sometimes, when they are bored, I allow them to cover unrelated tasks to the topic. For example, I share videos with them, create conversations, and even ask them to wear the clothes they design as a task of the lesson within the scope of the unit titled tourism (Participant 11).</i>                                                                      |

Table 18. (continued)

|                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Setting goals</b>                               | <i>If they have particular goals, such as making a high score, it becomes crucial for them to monitor their progress (Participant 17).</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Unearthing their talents, raising curiosity</b> | <i>I encourage them to watch short videos and short films. I give them roles that they can handle, encourage them to be curious, unearth their talents, ask them to research before attending the classes, and be well-prepared to give effective presentations (Participant 2).</i>                                                                           |
| <b>Raising consciousness</b>                       | <i>I give assignments that require them to do a considerable amount of listening. I remind them that they study not for me but to raise their consciousness to benefit from their opportunities. Finally, I inform them that I will determine whether they did the necessary work, give them feedback during the session, and reward them (Participant 5).</i> |
| <b>Increasing productivity</b>                     | <i>"I ask the students to prepare their product files on their own. The file includes a crossword puzzle and a vocabulary box they prepared themselves" (Participant 11).</i>                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Individual work</b>                             | <i>"I inspire my students to research and to attend contests, social activities, or voluntary activities" (Participant 17).</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

Based on the findings, one of the most considerable practices is creating situations whereby students initiate conversations.

*Suppose I believe that they can start conversations. In that case, I expect them to practice what I teach them during the lesson or outside; even if it is hard to expect it from the lower-level students, I encourage them to make more straightforward conversations (Participant 5).*

The minority of teachers do not encourage the students to use online resources since they recently have already been involved in their computers and mobile phones. However, students are usually encouraged to use online resources, considering that they will continue online education. The following excerpts are the evidence demonstrating teachers' encouragement to use online resources.

*Our age requires students to benefit from as many resources as possible. Therefore, I always have recommendations for them and make sure that they are confident enough to ask for help when needed (Participant 20).*

*I even ask them to do translations using online resources to become more proficient in using the internet effectively (Participant 5).*

*I frequently encourage them to watch short educational videos, use visual materials, make friends on social media, text message as much as possible, and create an authentic environment (Participant 13).*

The majority of participants stated that they ask students for their preferences while working on tasks or activities. They do not provide students with activities they will not enjoy. They also encourage collaborative work in groups. Participating in the lesson is based on their voluntariness since they reported that they have always observed that choosing students randomly to ask questions causes anxiety. Therefore, they ask what they would like to do and how. Additionally, they enable the inhibited learners to be inspired by their friends, who are more autonomous to share their opinions. Moreover, encouraging students to communicate in English via different social networking sites is one of the practices stated by some participants. However, as inferred from the following excerpts, not all teachers believe in the appropriateness of using social networking sites.

*I try to create open-minded students. I encourage them to use every resource to improve since they have tremendous learning to become competent language users (Participant 2).*

*They cannot benefit from the social networking sites other than a few words they frequently meet, such as download, upload, check, etc. That is why I do not suggest my students use the sites since they are unreliable (Participant 19).*

*I recommend using social networking sites to access word games to improve their pronunciation (Participant 11).*

*In WhatsApp groups, I usually prefer using English. Therefore, I encourage them to speak to each other using the target language by creating a social environment (Participant 17).*

Most teachers claimed that allowing students to use reference books during the online session is vital. On the other hand, some teachers choose to be cautious about letting their students use extra materials. Instead, they would rather encourage peer learning, as stated in the following quotes from the interview.

*I would not suggest using extra materials during the online session because they probably get distracted (Participant 7).*

*I rarely allow them to use materials during the online lesson. Instead, I inspire them to learn the meanings of the functions of the words by asking each other or the teacher or learning it through activities with a heuristic approach rather than being provided with direct information or an answer (Participant 13).*

Language learners are expected to evaluate their learning to notice their progress since the semester. In addition, they should be aware of the lesson's objectives at the beginning of the sessions by monitoring their improvement and identifying their learning needs. However, the minority of teachers think that secondary school students are not old enough to choose the right way to overcome the problem.

*The learner is the one who is supposed to compensate for their deficiencies (Participant 20).*

*I expect them to evaluate their learning by comparing their level in the past to their current level (Participant 13).*

*Secondary school students are too young to identify their problems. They may find out the problem, but they cannot determine how to address them (Participant 11).*

*I do it since it is significant in their zone of proximal development to notice what the problem is, take action to change the situation by trying to find a solution. When the student finds out the problem and starts to seek answers, he has a conflict overcome with the teacher and the peers (Participant 13).*

While some teachers do not encourage their students to set goals because they believe secondary school students are too young, some believe it effectively leads the language learners to autonomous learning.

*Their primary goal is to have fun, text messages, and create conversations rather than setting goals, so I do not believe they are mature enough to set goals at this age (Participant 11).*

*I always suggest setting goals such as making a particular score in some exams such as TOEFL or IELTS to ensure success by being more conscious of the requirements or the necessary steps required (Participant 17).*

*Setting goals is essential in the learning process to become autonomous. However, the teacher should control it externally when needed (Participant 13).*

The majority of the participants ensure that the students determine their methodological approaches and efforts to learn. They stated that they attempt to research how they can promote their students' independence in learning and become self-sufficient in many ways. They use gamification to help them gain the willingness to learn on their own by discovering. They teach them how to prepare for the lesson and notice the importance of curiosity. They recommend using DynEd, and they believe it to be adequate for most of the students. They often use EBA, and both teachers and students have always benefitted from what the system has proposed. The findings suggest that some teachers create situations whereby they do independent work since they have realized that it is beneficial. Besides, they promote language learners' autonomy by assigning them more online work. The following excerpts demonstrate how conscious and willing some teachers are as well as their efforts and practices to promote learner autonomy.

*I ask them to listen to the recordings of the lessons, take notes, use the materials offered in EBA, do tests interactively. We also use Z Book or Z-Library because it is multi-interactive. I think I trigger their independence. I always remind them that they can be more successful if they know themselves. I set them free to choose the projects they want to work on after they offer them options. No matter what they present, I give*

*significance to seeing a meaningful work originated by them. They write poems, short stories, or make a pen pal. I give them assignments to study individually and ask for their opinions before doing that (Participant 16).*

*We chat with my students on WhatsApp using English. I give them multi-interactive English materials, which develops their competence technologically. I inform them that they will be graded according to the frequency they use the EBA platform. I monitor their progress easily on EBA, and I tell them that whatever we do on EBA is recorded can always be accessed (Participant 18).*

*The best way is to use drama in the classes since it requires them to take roles and do what is needed within the time given (Participant 20).*

*They become autonomous through being given opportunities for impersonation, recreation, writing song lyrics or a play, preparing a poster or a placard (Participant 20).*

The teachers whose classes are not crowded outlined that they have a chance to allocate sufficient and equal time to the students to explain what they infer from the passages or the relationships they find out. Besides, they never provide direct answers; instead, they make them think and decide what the answer could be. To exemplify, they do not provide the grammatical structures but help them notice the forms and functions independently. They often give the students opportunities where they can freely communicate without being afraid of making mistakes. Furthermore, they try hard to enable students to have equal autonomy and encourage them to use their imagination. Since they believe that foreign language learning can be best maintained by the individual's effort to learn, they try hard to be productive. Participant teachers also reiterated that ensuring that the inhibited students come up to the active students' level may be possible when the virtual classrooms are not crowded. Moreover, they emphasized that they have transformed the virtual classroom into a workplace. Thus, we may infer that class size matters. Therefore, success in virtual classrooms can be related to having fewer students in each group.

#### 4.5. To What Extent Do EFL Teachers Believe That Their Students are Autonomous in Online Learning?

EFL teachers reported their evaluations on the extent to which their students are autonomous. Table 19 displays the participants' viewpoints about the autonomy level of their students. Descriptive statistics are presented, providing the frequency, percentages, means, and standard deviations of the participants' responses.

Table 19.

*Views on the Learners' Autonomy Level*

| Items                                                                                            | Strongly Agree | Agree       | Unsure      | Disagree    | Strongly Disagree | M    | SD    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|------|-------|
| 1. In general, the students I teach English most often to have a fair degree of learner autonomy | 9<br>4.6%      | 93<br>47.9% | 42<br>21.6% | 40<br>20.6% | 10<br>5.2%        | 3.26 | 1.007 |

Findings revealed that 52.5% (n=102) of the participants agreed (n=9, 4.6% strongly agree; n=93, 47.9% agree) that *the students they teach English most often to have a fair degree of learner autonomy*. 25.8% (n=50) disagreed (n=40, 20.6% disagree; n=10, 5.2% strongly disagree) while 21.6% (n=42) were unsure. The mean score of the item was 3.26, and standard deviation was 1.007.

Qualitative data gathered through the interviews demonstrating how the participants diagnosed the autonomy level of their students are also illustrated to strengthen the quantitative data displaying to what extent EFL teachers believe the learners are autonomous.

*Of course, autonomy is an essential aspect of education; the learners attach importance to their lives, have goals, and are conscious. Some of them are so good and are even ahead of me, always sharing what they do with me, being aware of everything since they are curious, interrogative, and doing things before asking them to do. However, the number of these students is not considerable due to technical constraints in online education (Participant 5).*

*In the beginning, both my students and I had hesitation, but we got rid of it while cooperatively constructing the online education process together. I noticed that they are much more involved in decisions than at the beginning of the process since I, as a teacher, feel more comfortable (Participant 16). They know that I attach importance to their feelings, needs, and values, encouraging them to share their opinions confidently.*

As it can be deduced, when students are autonomous, the teachers are pleased. Unfortunately, however, some teachers seem to have no hope for the lower-level students to become autonomous.

*I am so lucky that I am working with an excellent class and my students are autonomous. It is an academically high-level class. They are responsible for doing their assignments individually and participating effectively. I feel the pleasure of being the teacher of such a group, but I observe that most of the students in our school are not autonomous. Although we try our best, it is hard to encourage students with a lower academic level (Participant 6).*

*All my students are autonomous to some extent, except for the introverted ones. If students receive education at a private school, they are more likely to develop autonomy (Participant 17).*

Based on the quotes presented above, we can conclude that many teachers associated the autonomy level of their students with their academic level. They believe that students who are eager, open to learning, extroverted, motivated, and academically sound are autonomous. On the other hand, they think that demotivated, introverted, academically low students are not autonomous. It was also indicated that those who do not have short-term or long-term goals are not likely to become autonomous. Furthermore, it was underscored that the students who are competent and good at EFL learning and all subjects such as Maths and Science could easily acquire autonomy. Still, more than half cannot achieve this unless their peers and teachers encourage them.

#### 4.6. Constraints EFL Teachers Confront regarding Promoting Learner Autonomy in Online Education

Research Question 5 was attempted to be responded qualitatively. To balance out how teachers promote autonomy, they were requested to comment on the difficulties they face. They signaled some negative factors that impact learner autonomy promotion. The codes emerged from the teachers' responses divided into learner-centered, teacher-centered, and how the school operates. Teachers' perspectives indicated that learner-centered constraints could be related to learner's characteristics and learning habits, whereas teacher-centered restrictions can be associated with teacher's characteristics, inefficacy, and teaching habits. The following tables illustrate the themes, categories, and codes from the open-ended interviews conducted with the interview volunteers. The codes and the categories were presented with their frequency in brackets.

##### 4.6.1. Learner-Related Constraints

Table 20.

*Learner-related Constraints*

| <i>Theme</i>                       | <i>Categories</i>            | <i>Codes</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Learner-related constraints</b> | Learner characteristics (24) | Inadequately capable (2)<br>Unfamiliar (8)<br>Uninterested (3)<br>Demotivated (2)<br>Uncommunicative (2)<br>Unconfident (1)<br>Unconvinced (3)<br>Dissatisfied (1)<br>Unconscious (2)                                                     |
|                                    | Learning habits (14)         | Unwilling to participate (2)<br>Resistant towards learning (1)<br>Uses excuses and complaints (3)<br>Learns through memorization (2)<br>Lack of practice (2)<br>Accustomed to traditional learning and being offered direct knowledge (4) |

Based on Table 20, it can be inferred that English language teachers regard some learner characteristics and learning habits as constraints for learner autonomy. The learners who are thought to be less likely to become autonomous are the ones who are defined with some characteristics such as inadequately capable, unfamiliar with online language learning, and unconvinced. They are also thought to have a slight possibility to

become autonomous due to their learning habits, including using excuses and complaints, unwillingness, lack of practice, and being accustomed to traditional learning being offered direct knowledge.

#### 4.6.2. Teacher-Related Constraints

Table 21.

*Teacher-related Constraints*

| <i>Theme</i>                       | <i>Categories</i>           | <i>Codes</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Teacher-related constraints</b> | Teacher characteristics (6) | Uninformed (2)<br>Unpersuasive (2)<br>Hopeless (1)<br>Emotionally and mentally tired (1)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|                                    | Inefficiency (13)           | Inadequately qualified (3)<br>Insufficient preparation (1) and guiding (1)<br>Inefficiency in pedagogy (2), and in encouraging the students to be socialized (1)<br>Management problems (3)<br>Unaware of the educational dimension of teaching a language (1)<br>Unable to analyze the learners' characteristics, strengths, and weaknesses sufficiently (1) |
|                                    | Teaching habits (15)        | Feeling stuck with the curriculum, time management, and the number of students (6)<br>Neglecting priorities (3)<br>Implementing traditional approaches (5)<br>Applying inappropriate lesson plans, activities (1)                                                                                                                                             |

The findings of the content analysis demonstrating teachers' beliefs regarding teacher-related constraints for learner autonomy are presented in Table 21. Three categories emerged related to constraints associated with teachers: teacher characteristics, inefficiency, and teaching habits. The participants perceive emotionally and mentally tired, uninformed, unpersuasive, and hopeless teachers as constraints to foster learner autonomy. Moreover, they portray the characteristics reflecting inefficiencies such as inadequately qualified, insufficient preparation, and guidance in addition to management problems as the causes of difficulty or inefficiency in fostering learners' autonomy. Besides, teaching habits such as implementing traditional approaches and applying inappropriate lesson plans were also restricting autonomy.

#### 4.6.3. Constraints Regarding the Way The School Operates

Table 22.

##### *The Way the School Operates*

| <i>Theme</i>                                          | <i>Categories</i>       | <i>Codes</i>                                                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Constraints related to the way school operates</b> | Level specification (4) | Mostly grouped heterogeneously (2)<br>Very few homogeneous groups (2)                                                                        |
|                                                       | Curriculum (6)          | Abilities repressed by the curriculum (3)<br>Time and efficiency issues caused by the curriculum (3)                                         |
|                                                       | Imbalance (6)           | The sudden switch to online education (3)<br>The sudden switch to face-to-face education (3)                                                 |
|                                                       | Technical problems (7)  | Inadequate technical equipment (4)<br>Connection problems (3)                                                                                |
|                                                       | Class size (8)          | Incompatibility between the class size and the allocated time (8)                                                                            |
|                                                       | Duration (7)            | Inadequate time for learner autonomy promotion (6)<br>The formation of a teacher-centered environment due to the duration of the lessons (1) |

As it can be observed in Table 22 that codes inferred from the participants' answers were grouped under six categories: level specification, curriculum, imbalance, technical problems, class size, and duration. The codes elicited from the issues the participants underlined are grouping the students heterogeneously, curriculum, the sudden switch to online or face-to-face education, incompatibility between the class size, and the allocated time. The formation of a teacher-centered environment due to the class duration was also emphasized to be a limitation.

#### 4.6.4. EFL Teachers' Overall Thoughts Concerning the Challenges of Promoting Learner Autonomy

In addition to the codes, categories, and themes illustrated in tables to present the teacher-related, learner-related constraints and the constraints about how the school operates, we find it necessary to exhibit some quotes from the interviews reflecting the most prominent responses provided by the EFL teachers in the interviews.

Students were found to be insufficiently capable of making decisions in the virtual classrooms. Moreover, the students are still not very familiar with online education. Thus, they quickly get bored. Moreover, management was emphasized to become so hard in online education, while it is also challenging to guide them to work cooperatively. Thus, the teachers claim that the efforts in the virtual classrooms have not been as effective as what is done in the actual classrooms.

*The teacher needs to know what learner autonomy is and how it can be implemented. I have tried breakout rooms and debates, but it was not effective since it was tough to manage the groups; A thirty-minute lesson is not enough to achieve all our objectives as we also have a curriculum to follow. That is why (Participant 4).*

The success in virtual classrooms is believed to be ruined due to the way of its start. Besides, while the teachers and the students are not engaged and accustomed to such an educational context, planning to create autonomous students in the virtual classrooms seems to some teachers to be out of the question. They were also claimed to lack knowledge of psychological factors.

*Since online education started due to compulsion, we (both teachers and students) still have difficulty being engaged. Teachers usually teach English by giving the structures and the functions. They do not provide their students with socialized language or create a social environment to practice it to become more confident. Although we suggest using the target language as frequently as possible, it is challenging to convince our students to talk during an online session. Thus, the teacher must be well-educated or professional enough (Participant 17).*

*We prioritize other things, such as finishing the topic that we are supposed to. Due to time constraints, we do what we have to do or what is urgent. For instance, we never do group work this year (Participant 18).*

Moreover, teaching habits and the inefficiency of the teachers seem to be among significant constraints. Besides, teachers sometimes cannot analyze the students' characteristics and weaknesses to treat the students accordingly. So, teachers suggested that they learn how to know students and identify their weaknesses and strengths.

*Many teachers insist on using traditional methods of language teaching. As a result, they are never open to innovations and implementing contemporary approaches (Participant 16).*

*Sometimes, students are taught English by teachers who do not know what pedagogy is. They are unaware of the educational dimension of teaching a language. Thus, I believe that while these teachers themselves do not understand what learner autonomy is, how can they encourage their students to be autonomous? As teachers, we must respond to our students' needs (Participant 20).*

The following excerpts outline the teachers' efficiency and motivation as determined by the level of learners' willingness, attention, and the identification of their weaknesses.

*If the student is willing to participate, the teacher forgets their tiredness. Still, when the student is not eager or curious enough or does not actively participate, the teacher gets mentally and emotionally tired (Participant 17).*

*Students need to be convinced and motivated to learn the language by the teacher. Unfortunately, some students do not notice their potential, and they lack self-awareness (Participant 18).*

*In online education, we do not have a chance to give many examples. However, even if we do it, students do not pay sufficient attention (Participant 20).*

Disadvantages seem to differ depending upon the place the students live. Moreover, many students tend to use penalties. They frequently use excuses and complaints in this process, which causes them to have difficulty benefitting from the innovations and administering their responsibilities.

*The fact that they always have excuses aggravates the process. However, on the other hand, the pandemic caused us to neglect our priorities (Participant 18).*

*Many students avoid taking responsibility no matter how hard the teacher tries (Participant 9).*

Most students were pointed out to be accustomed to learning through memorization and studying to prepare for the exams. They do not know how to study. Their characteristics, state of mind, and current mood do not sometimes allow them to develop autonomy. Besides, most teachers believe that only the students who have special abilities can build autonomy. Hence, very few students can be regarded as autonomous. The students' autonomy was also associated with their grades and how eager they are to participate.

*5<sup>th</sup> graders may be so confident and eager to participate, while 8<sup>th</sup> graders are mostly embarrassed and unwilling to participate, most probably due to their developmental phases (Participant 16).*

Some teachers believe that it is necessary to group the students heterogeneously to increase the effectiveness of promoting autonomy. Based on the teachers' arguments, there seem to be very few schools that place students in language classes according to their exact level.

*Language classes must be formed homogeneously. Therefore, heterogeneous groups with entirely different levels are not meaningful, negatively affecting the students' autonomy (Participant 12).*

The following statement highlights the requirement of the careful adjustment of autonomy implementation. However, it becomes challenging when the educational context changes often.

*Learner autonomy can be dangerous when it is not adjusted carefully. For example, giving the autonomous students unlimited freedom during the online teaching session risks losing the passive students (Participant 8).*

*There has been a lot of imbalance that prevents us from being consistent and stabilized with the methods and system we have been using. First, a timetable is determined for online education; then, we suddenly switch to face-to-face instruction; thus, naturally, we get confused; we do not know what to implement and how (Participant 8).*

As can be inferred from the participants' quotes, challenges can be related to students, teachers, and how the school operates. The participants mostly touched on curriculum, time limitation, class size, engagement, management, insufficient opportunities, learning style, and characteristics in their quotes.

*We are in an extraordinary period, and knowing this affects students negatively. In online education, autonomous students become more autonomous, but those who are not active in the classroom become even more passive in online education. So, unfortunately, there is a vicious circle (Participant 10).*

*They can be active in decisions regarding the simple games that they want to play. However, when everyone takes part in decisions, chaos can be caused since all students have different suggestions or requests (Participant 5).*

It may be noticed that the teachers find it challenging to use their abilities while following the curriculum. Therefore, inconsistency happens between their rights and the curriculum requirements. In addition, some participants pointed out that students develop resistance to learning. Therefore, teachers may sometimes become hopeless. Thus, we can observe that psychology has a substantial impact on maintaining learner autonomy.

*Another constraint is that we have a curriculum to follow; we sometimes pass to the new topic before ensuring they learn the latest subject, which harms learner autonomy (Participant 10).*

When we analyze the teachers' responses, particular approaches are not employed in virtual classrooms. Instead, teachers do what they usually do during face-to-face education. Besides, they complained that they could not take advantage of body language use. Moreover, it is believed by the participant teachers that the most significant duty belongs to the teacher in the classroom where there is a standard way of learning. There are primarily teacher-centered classes. Thus, the students used to being in a teacher-centered environment have difficulty adapting to the new style where their autonomy gains significance. However, the needs may lead the conscious students to develop autonomy.

*Because only reading and writing have been evaluated in language education for ages, conscious students have been obliged to develop autonomy to assess their listening and speaking (Participant 21).*

As can be noticed, the practicality of implementing learner autonomy may depend on the language learners' grades, ages, or academic levels. Moreover, autonomous learning can easily be encouraged when learners are not limited to a particular way of studying. For example, if they are preparing for an exam where English is not required to be studied extensively, they are less likely to be fostered to be active in English classes. First, they need to feel that they need to do a particular task to succeed.

#### **4.7. Teachers' Recommendations Concerning Encouraging Teachers in Promoting Learner Autonomy in Virtual Classrooms**

When we go through the literature, motivation seems to be the most prominent element of promoting autonomy. Therefore, both teachers and the students should be motivated to achieve an autonomous environment in the virtual classrooms. Therefore, the participant EFL teachers emphasized the significance of motivating students, employing appropriate methods.

*Motivating students in virtual classrooms is challenging. Therefore, teachers need to understand how to motivate students and promote learner autonomy by implementing contemporary methods and techniques. Here, the teacher has significance in creating student awareness of learner autonomy, which requires substantial preparation, such as preparing appropriate lesson plans that lead students to benefit from multiple activities that strengthen their independence (Participant 4).*

Since having EFL teaching sessions in the virtual classrooms is a new experience for the teachers, it may be inferred that they need to be provided with webinars, offering them the main factors that may facilitate learning fostering autonomy.

*The experts should educate teachers in the field. The seminars should inform teachers about how to help students develop the values and emotions they do not typically experience during face-to-face education (Participant 1).*

*Courses must be arranged for the teachers; besides, applied training can be efficient since seminars may not be practical enough (Participant11).*

*The MoNE should arrange seminars with the support of higher education institutions; new approaches should be determined (Participant 7).*

Based on the excerpts above, we may infer that the seminars, courses, and webinars should be diligently planned to ensure the effectiveness, getting the support of the higher education institutes. Furthermore, it was recommended that the teachers be convinced to attend the seminars as most of them usually do not favor attending these kinds of educational activities, which were suggested to be arranged considering the most appropriate timing to ensure the attendance of nearly all teachers.

*All teachers should be experienced in this platform, knowing the possible problems they may confront (Participant 13).*

*Since most teachers see seminars as fatigue duty, they do not attend them. If the ones that follow the conferences are rewarded and those who do not are imposed sanctions, they can be persuaded or motivated to use the platform (Participant 13).*

*Seminars given at the end of the semester must be organized during the semester since the workshops provided at the end of the semester do not achieve the main objectives because teachers mostly talk about their summer plans instead of their educational issues (Participant 17).*

Some teachers signaled the requirement of being qualified in terms of the use of technology. They believe that teachers should be tested to determine if they are sufficiently good at incorporating technology into their teaching sessions, which is crucial since online education is growing worldwide.

*The teachers must take an exam to determine if they are qualified to use technology because there are still teachers who cannot use the smartboard. Then, the state schools can cooperate with the private schools to discover how they teach the language successfully (Participant 13).*

As can be inferred, the participants made a significant number of recommendations. They recommended that teachers arrange meetings during the online education process to share their experiences and observations and exchange ideas to promote learner autonomy. All participants suggested receiving in-service training, seminars, and webinars. It was pointed out that extra announcements and additional seminars can be arranged on EBA platforms. However, it was also stated that teachers should be convinced to attend the workshops they can find on EBA since most of them are thought to be uninterested. Some teachers indicated that learner autonomy should be implemented in small groups to see the methods' efficiency. They also signaled that the teachers should benefit from psychological science to promote autonomy.

#### **4.8. EFL Teachers' Suggestions for The Workshops to Cover**

The participants were also invited to suggest topics they find significant for the workshops to cover in the interview. They touched on multiple important points to contribute to autonomous learning. The most widely stated facts can be noticed from teachers' quotes.

*Since we are supposed to teach students what learner autonomy is and why it is needed, we are also considered informed on what it is and why we need it (Participant 7). Teachers should share their experiences continuously. Listening to each other's stories of success can be a source of inspiration. Our department should be following all parts of the world. Moreover, no teachers should be unaware of what the European Language Portfolio is (Participant 17).*

The excerpt emphasized a relatively vital issue: having an awareness of the European Language Portfolio (ELP), which is a crucial companion of CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages), the learners use to record their language accomplishments, and is improved alongside the CEFR (Little, 2005). With

the CEFR and the growing adoption of its companion piece, the ELP, the challenge of developing an assessment culture that facilitates learner self-assessment has been renewed.

*The feasibility of learner autonomy, motivating the teachers to promote autonomy, teaching methods, and applying them should be included in the seminar's contents, incorporating educational psychology and online resources (Participant 4).*

Another vital point teacher emphasized is that the requirement of the seminars to be supported by educational sciences, psychology, and information technologies while providing enlightening training on the ways of motivating the learners and developing an awareness of the meaning and the significance of learner autonomy in the virtual classroom.

*Teachers must be taught how to use the internet and access the materials through some platforms. They should be equipped with all technical needs. In-service training seminars should be given chiefly to elderly teachers to inform them about the contemporary methods. The workshops should suggest the processes which facilitate the promotion of learner autonomy (Participant 16).*

*Teachers should be educated regularly by the school with the support of the state to keep pace with the changing and developing system (Participant 2).*

Based on the excerpts above, it is necessary to reiterate that teachers are supposed to follow the innovations in the field, which may be initiated and enhanced through workshops that are regularly held to support the teachers in many terms, such as their technical needs.

*Teachers and parents should be given seminars on teaching the students to fish instead of giving them the fish. If they know it, parents can raise their children accordingly, and teachers can accomplish that more efficiently since they also support them. However, when parents' practices are incompatible with the teachers' practices, the aim is harder to achieve. MoNE already offers many practical seminars to the teachers, but promoting autonomy in learners can be explained systematically (Participant 21).*

As can be observed, all teachers recommended seminars to be organized, which must notably include offering approaches to promote learner autonomy, not only on a regional basis. Still, they suggested that the workshops should also be arranged nationally, bringing together experts in the field, many teachers, and even the parents. The convenience and easiness that the students' ideas suggest using the online education platform and how they put into practice their opinions were crucial. They reported that the students' expectations and whether their expectations are feasible should be interrogated. In addition, they believe that the teachers need to learn how to approach students in the virtual classrooms, understanding how students can be promoted and led, and be educated to use technology more professionally.



## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION

#### 5.1. Introduction

The current research explored EFL teachers' perceptions and applied practices concerning learner autonomy in online secondary school virtual classrooms in Hatay, Turkey. Moreover, various methods that are effective to encourage learner autonomy were investigated. This study also assessed how EFL teachers promote learner autonomy and what learner autonomy means to them. Furthermore, the current research attempted to fill the gap related to EFL teachers' learner autonomy perceptions and practices in online education. Moreover, it shed light on the extent to which EFL teachers believe that their students are autonomous in online education. Besides, whether EFL teachers confront any constraints in promoting autonomy was uncovered.

#### 5.2. Research Question 1: What are EFL Teachers' Perceptions on Learner Autonomy in Secondary School Virtual Classrooms?

##### 5.2.1. EFL Teachers' Definitions of Learner Autonomy

The teachers defined learner autonomy as a special ability, individual development, responsibility, self-awareness, decision involvement, self-sufficiency, independence, monitoring, freedom, and opportunity. The findings revealed that the definitions provided by the teachers were corresponding to the most remarkable definitions referred to in the literature. Holec (1981) popularizes learner autonomy as an essential term in education. He describes learner autonomy as "the ability to take responsibility for one's learning." Furthermore, this has been the specification most frequently quoted so far in the literature. Dickinson (1987) reiterates the concept of learner autonomy provided by Holec as the circumstance in which the students are fully responsible for decisions associated with their learning and applying those commitments. Since the definitions provided by the participant teachers concentrate on the daily dynamics of learning management, they correspond to the definition suggested by Holec (1981). Thus, it is apparent that EFL teachers have a significant degree of awareness regarding the learner autonomy concept. This result is incompatible with the study conducted by Nga (2014), suggesting that teachers typically lacked awareness of

learner autonomy. However, the two studies regarding inconsistency observed between teachers' views and their teaching practices concerning learner autonomy culminate in little proof.

### **5.2.2. EFL Teachers' Definitions of Autonomous Learners**

In conjunction with the definitions of learner autonomy provided by the teachers, a significant number of positive qualities were attributed to autonomous learners. Being self-assured, responsible, well-prepared, conscious, eager, self-regulated, and motivated are among the terms or phrases the teachers uttered to define autonomous learners. Knowing the best way to learn and having a systematic learning process are also among autonomous learners' features. Therefore, it may be inferred that teachers have a high awareness of learner autonomy and autonomous learner. It is necessary to underscore that findings are corresponding to the definitions of autonomous learners provided by some outstanding scholars such as Benson (2001), Holec (1981), Little (1991), Cotterall (1995), and Littlewood (1996). They put forward that learners take responsibility for their education through learner autonomy. They suggest that autonomous learners learn to determine when and how to learn; they understand their needs; they critically ponder and self-assess and optimize the prospects for practicing English within or outside the classroom.

### **5.2.3. The Roots of the EFL Teachers' Current Opinions on Learner Autonomy**

The roots of the teachers' current opinions on learner autonomy have also been addressed in this study. The findings revealed that learner autonomy is an issue they have focused on in their training as language teachers. Besides, most teachers were unaware of learner autonomy when they were language learners. As it has recently been a profound issue, they have given it significance since online education started. Data revealed that experiencing online language education as a language learner helps the teachers handle the process more effectively. They are confident with the management, motivation, and engagement of the learners. They are more likely to minimize the problems that occur due to time management and class size while promoting autonomy.

Additionally, teachers loving their job try to use technology effectively. When they actively use technology, online resources, activities, and anything regarding online language education, it can be possible to implement learner autonomy to succeed in

their online education experience. One significant point the participant teachers underscored is that they would know how crucial learner autonomy is in online education and the whole educational context if teachers were autonomous.

The current study also revealed that teachers find a strong correlation between face-to-face language learning and the classical learning method. On the other hand, online language learning was correlated with the implementation of contemporary language teaching methods. Thus, different methods are thought to be used in two different settings. The face-to-face language learning context implementations may not work well when tried in online language learning and vice versa. Each method, strategy, or teaching style may have a different impact on the development of autonomy. Hence, since online language learning was associated with modern language teaching approaches, which usually aim at enhancing creating a learner-centered environment, language learners are more likely to develop autonomy.

### **5.3. Research Question 2: What are EFL Teachers' Perceptions towards Implementing Learner Autonomy in Online English Language Teaching/ Learning Context?**

Teachers' perspectives determine the lesson's style and differentiate the learners' role from the teachers'. As teachers' thoughts profoundly impact their teaching methods, which may directly affect students' learning, the first research question sought responses concerning overall learner autonomy perceptions of EFL teachers. This question was aimed to discuss teachers' perceptions of social, psychological, political, and technical perspectives of learner autonomy. Besides, the teachers' perceptions of the meanings of learner autonomy and an autonomous learner were found out. Additionally, the teachers' beliefs on their primary roles and the advantages of being autonomous were investigated. One crucial issue that was also touched on was the relationship of learner autonomy with age and proficiency in online education.

#### **5.3.1. Teachers' Perceptions on Psychological Perspectives of Learner Autonomy**

Teachers' responses to the questionnaire items associated with teachers' beliefs on psychological perspectives of learner autonomy revealed that a significant majority of EFL teachers believe that learning how to learn is vital for learners in improving autonomy. Besides, teachers' responses to the interview questions emphasize teaching

students how to learn rather than offering the information directly. This result is compatible with Borg and Al-Busaidi's (2012) and Bekçi̇başı's (2018) findings that English teachers regard autonomy as a matter of learning how to learn. The participant teachers agreed that it brings higher academic performance in the EFL learning process. Thus, they frequently attempt to assist their learners in being autonomous. They support the idea that autonomy should be encouraged with young learners throughout English lessons. Significantly, students discover things on their own before a teacher provides them with an answer or clarification.

Moreover, many teachers believe that motivated learners have much better possibilities to improve autonomy than those not motivated, emphasizing the importance of motivation and rewarding. In parallel, Little (2003) stresses that language learning motivation could be one of the most significant features of learner autonomy, reflecting learners' inherent inspiration. Positive behavior and autonomy could also be increased effectively by praising students. However, it is crucial to provide behavior-specific praise that genuinely addresses the student's achievement, which is thought to be rewarded for triggering intrinsic motivation.

Based on the analysis, the need for learners' development of the ability to evaluate their learning to become autonomous was emphasized by many teachers, reflecting their perceptions of the psychological perspective of learner autonomy. In conjunction with this, confidence was reported to be a substantial element of developing autonomy. Learners who lack confidence are likely to be passive during online sessions. Thus, the learners' autonomy is determined depending on their level of confidence and activeness. Besides, monitoring oneself well is another psychological perspective of learner autonomy. Since the online education process is new to many teachers, they have difficulty monitoring students, which creates a compulsion for students to develop an ability to monitor their own needs, weaknesses, and improvements. In parallel, Dickinson (1993) argues that learner development is a mutual and collaborative mechanism involving teacher and learner, aiming to provide a high degree of accountability and provide learners with the ability to monitor their learning management. In conjunction with the suggestion provided by Dickinson (1993), the findings revealed that when students are developed through collaborative work, they can successfully monitor themselves and be regarded as autonomous. However, not many students could monitor themselves in their learning process.

### **5.3.2. Teachers' Perceptions on Political Perspectives of Learner Autonomy**

The elicited responses from the interviews with the EFL teachers and the data from the questionnaire demonstrated that learner autonomy is fostered when students are free to choose the kinds of activities, which is regarded as a political perspective of learner autonomy. Furthermore, many teachers considered learner autonomy as being promoted when learners choose the activities and are involved in deciding what to learn and choosing their materials.

A significant majority of teachers believe that learner autonomy is promoted when learners can decide how their learning will be assessed. Giving their students freedom, asking them for their ideas, letting them choose the tasks, materials, or style of the lesson are elements that the teachers support. On the other hand, there were unsure teachers about allowing students to choose these during online sessions. Some teachers suggested that secondary school students are too young to make appropriate choices, while others think chaos can occur due to different preferences and abilities. Thus, we can conclude that teachers have a high agreement in their perceptions of political perspectives of autonomy.

### **5.3.3. Teachers' Perceptions on Social Perspectives of Learner Autonomy**

Teachers' perceptions about the social perspectives on learner autonomy reflect that cooperative group work activities supporting the development, using exercises that give learners opportunities for peer learning, significantly impact autonomy development. Similarly, activities that encourage learners to work together promote learner autonomy. Thus, it can be said that encouraging students to socialize and cooperate, doing collaborative work communicatively increases success in promoting autonomy. Some scholars claim that language is a device for correspondence, which happens in a social setting. To exemplify, Teng (2019) suggested that people use language to share, keep up, or change a particular social reality they should initially recognize. To do as such, they have to acknowledge this social reality. Less than half of the participant teachers stated that creating situations where students work individually helps students develop autonomy is crucial. Contrarily, many teachers believe in the importance of social learning rather than individual. However, individual work has significance as well as social learning in promoting autonomy. Correspondingly, Teng (2019) puts forth that autonomy has a social dimension and a personal one.

The agreement rate was relatively low with the idea that learning outside the classroom may negatively affect learner autonomy and motivation. Most teachers believe that learner autonomy can be fostered outside the school too. However, the context should be appropriate since it is vital for the motivation of language learners. In the same vein, Gardner (2010) ascertains that the educational context is significant, and for most subjects, it plays a crucial role in the level of motivation (p.14). No matter what the educational context is, teachers can succeed in creating very efficient learning. Yet, teachers tend to use traditional teaching methods in the online language learning environment where the teacher usually dominates students. Hence, autonomy becomes harder to develop.

Moreover, it was stated that when they are not taught in a classroom environment, their freedom, confidence, and goals are limited in addition to becoming teacher-dependent. This idea is supported by the teachers asserting that they have to make the session teacher-centered due to limitations such as time and class size. Diversely, even the inhibited learners are believed by many teachers to participate in online sessions since they are free to keep their cameras on or off, reflecting their freedom. Thus, online learning decreases the level of embarrassment, which has a favorable impact on autonomy development. Furthermore, once the students develop autonomy, it enhances learning in addition to communicative, social, and behavioral skills.

Nonetheless, all these can be possible if the classes are student-centered. New technologies allow educators to make learning engaging and collaborative through constructivist teaching and learning methods (Klemm and Snell, 1996). In agreement with the current study's findings, Klemm and Snell (1996) outline student-centered learning as a constructivist method through which the instructors facilitate learning. As a result, the students are engaged in interacting and learning with their peers. Concordantly, it is widely recommended that teachers' online classes should be designed to be student-centered and foster students' leadership.

The data elicited from the interviews and the questionnaire prove that a student-centered environment is attempted to be maintained. Teachers desire their students to have goals, be aware of what they currently know, and plan to see in the following stages. They also vote for the students who feel free to share their demands and actively participate in the tasks. Withal, the teachers know that this can only be achieved by students aware of their responsibilities and academically advantageous. A small number

of teachers believe that a teacher-centered climate can promote autonomy. However, they disagreed that autonomy cannot be fostered in a teacher-centered environment, proving that teachers still apply conventional methods. One evidence is that almost half of the participants did not agree that learner autonomy implies rejecting traditional-led teaching methods. In the same vein, 34% of the teachers believe that students cannot reach their aims without their help. Along these lines, almost all teachers objected to the idea that learner autonomy means being totally independent of the teacher, proving the irreplaceableness of the teacher's role in the online setting and the whole education process.

#### **5.3.4. Teachers' Perceptions regarding their Roles in Promoting Learner Autonomy**

This research also examined EFL teachers' perceptions of their roles. It can be seen that teachers believe that they have a crucial role in the efficiency of lessons and promoting learner autonomy to achieve better academic results. Very few teachers believe that learner autonomy requires the learner to be totally independent of the teacher, highlighting the significance of teachers' role in building autonomy in online education. However, the teacher's efficiency in promoting learner autonomy depends on creating a student-centered environment. The primary roles of teachers emerged from the findings collected through the interview.

Teachers' most important role was reported by the participant teachers to be guiding. As a guide, they make the learners notice that they can contribute to the lesson, achieve independently, discover themselves, remember their responsibilities. Guiding is achieved by being a supervisor, an approver, a leader, determining the limits, and giving them responsibilities. It is compatible with Zorkaya's (2019) study disclosing teachers' most significant positions as guides, facilitators, resources, inspirers, moderators, leaders, and observers. Correspondingly, Yunus and Arshad (2015) propose that teachers should realize that they need to support the learners as counselors, facilitators, mediators, and supervisors rather than knowledge sources. When learner autonomy is discussed, responsibility is usually stated to be a characteristic that learners have. However, the data collected through the interviews revealed that teachers also have significant responsibilities in promoting autonomy. Equivalently, Smith and Erdoğan

(2008) emphasize the significance of teachers taking responsibility for their professional growth.

It was asserted that it is challenging to teach online due to some factors such as class size and time limitations. While the conditions are harsh, promoting autonomy becomes even more complicated. To make it easier, teachers must be aware of the innovations regarding online language education, be good at educational technology. Most profoundly, they are expected to be mindful of the individual differences by analyzing learners' characteristics and noticing their strengths and weaknesses. In the same vein, Yunus and Arshad (2015) found that teachers should be conscious of their students' educational backgrounds and expectations related to autonomous language learning progress. One critical issue to be underscored is that teachers should avoid behaving as a source of knowledge. It may be inferred that the teacher has more important responsibilities than teaching. Increasing the learners' awareness, helping them be confident, and noticing their abilities were entailed being amongst the teachers' roles to support the learners in developing autonomy.

Motivating students were regarded as being crucial. Teachers could achieve this by creating an addiction to learn, attracting and monitoring their attention throughout the lessons. Without engaging the learner in the lesson, achieving the learners' success in the class seems unlikely. Many students can be inspired by a teacher who is a good role model. A teacher who teaches inductively and implicitly can be a good role model. Teachers must teach the students how to learn, giving learners a sense of freedom to determine their learning and implicitly discover what is provided. Likewise, Voller (1997) outlines that only when instructors have a rational and robust viewpoint of specific observations, practices, and restrictions would they efficiently negotiate with students and external authorities, inspiring the learners and themselves. To such a degree, there are a lot of ways to empower ourselves as educators. Getting a good picture of the behaviors will be the first and most apparent.

The participant EFL teachers who seemed to be innovative stated that they apply practical activities to keep them engaged. Moreover, they keep them active by giving them as much freedom as possible in a constructivist learning environment. Likewise, Balçıkanlı (2006) underscores that the central principle of autonomy in language learning had been inherited from constructivism: The more active the learning is, the more efficient it is. Correspondingly, Muir (2001) highlights that students could construct the knowledge they are introduced to with a constructivist learning

environment. Thus, a social environment is maintained, creating an authentic setting. Moreover, constructivist learning promotes self-awareness regarding knowledge construction (Muir, 2001, p.8).

### **5.3.5. Learner Autonomy Perceptions regarding the Learners' Age**

Teachers' responses to questionnaire items concerning teachers' learner autonomy perceptions on the learners' age were presented with percentages, frequencies, means, and standard deviations.

Most teachers find it possible for language learners of all ages to develop autonomy. In conjunction, most teachers disagreed that learner autonomy is only possible with adult learners. Zorkaya (2019) agrees that no statistically relevant impact of age on learner autonomy levels in EFL teachers' perceptions was observed. However, the interview findings demonstrated that a significant majority of teachers find secondary school students too young to be involved in decisions.

### **5.3.6. Learner Autonomy Perceptions regarding the Learners' Proficiency**

It was acclaimed that the proficiency of a language learner affects their ability to develop autonomy. However, the rates of the teachers who agreed, disagreed, or were unsure were almost equal. Many teachers were uncertain if promoting autonomy is easier with beginners than proficient language learners. Therefore, it may be derived that language learners' proficiency does not affect the efficiency of implementing autonomy. Notwithstanding, the study revealed that learner autonomy has a significant impact on success.

As a consequence, success in online education can be the result of being autonomous, taking responsibility. Concordantly, Rebenius (2003) portrays the autonomy of learners as a way to enhance language learning performance. Likewise, Phan (2015) found out that LA and language acquisition support each other.

### **5.3.7. Perceptions regarding the Advantages of Learner Autonomy in the Virtual Classroom**

Findings revealed that learner autonomy positively affects success as a language learner since autonomous learners can work independently in the online EFL learning context. They are effective learners as they are always prepared for the workload. They

can benefit from a great variety of resources without needing the assistance of anyone. Some reports clarified why online studies allow students to learn effectively and encourage them to become autonomous. Thus, they emphasized that learners have more chances to consider and take charge of their studies. However, the relationship between distinct aspects should be investigated to help learners excel in online classes. In a similar vein, according to Wang & Hu (2019), active online learners are more likely to coordinate and initiate.

What is more, they manage to accomplish their work with great ease. Thus, this is a piece of evidence that the impact of learner autonomy is noticeable. On the other hand, experiencing an online language learning context also increases the advantages of being autonomous. In agreement, Smith (2000) argues that online learning eliminates the spatial-temporal constraints used in face-to-face education. Furthermore, the findings of the results comply with the findings of the study conducted by Muir (2001), disclosing that the classrooms where traditional teaching methods are implemented are not as adaptable as an online learning environment.

#### **5.4. Research Question 3: What Kind of Practices do EFL Teachers Apply to Implement Learner Autonomy in Online English Language Teaching/ Learning Context?**

The efficiency of implementing learner autonomy in virtual classrooms appears to depend on the teachers' talent for putting the theoretical knowledge into practice. Additionally, teachers' roles and efficiency are significant in encouraging their students to be autonomous. The study revealed that the efficiency of learner autonomy implementation might also be determined by the language learners' characteristics, abilities, readiness, and willingness.

This section first touches upon the feasibility and the desirability of learner autonomy in terms of decision-making. Subsequently, the practices teachers apply to stimulate learner autonomy are presented.

##### **5.4.1. Feasibility and Desirability of Learner Autonomy in terms of Decision-Making**

The data revealed that teachers should avoid deciding on everything one-sidedly. Language learners have their learning strategies and rights to state their opinions on

English language learning. The efficiency of the process increases when students are actively involved in decision-making, considering individual differences.

Based on the data, it may be inferred that learner autonomy is feasible and desirable. Students are more active in this process; they can easily share even their critical views. They are more comfortable in the online platform than they are in the classroom. However, education was alerted to make learner autonomy feasible since it is a new experience for most teachers and learners. The feasibility and desirability of student involvement in decision-making and its efficiency depend on the curriculum, learners' characteristics, the teacher's style of teaching, and proficiency in the use of technology. As previously emphasized, the feasibility of learner autonomy is more likely in a student-centered environment. In this manner, the desirability of creating a student-centered learning environment increases the number of autonomous learners who can take responsibility for their learning in confidence and learn by discovering rather than memorizing the information presented by the teacher. Richards and Rodgers (2014) trace the learning philosophy as facilitated if the learner discovers or creates rather than remembers and repeats what is learned.

We may conclude that learner autonomy is feasible when a suitable environment is ensured. When students are motivated, have goals, and feel that their views are considered, they share opinions and participate in classes and planning. However, this alerts the guidance and counseling of the teachers. Richards and Rodgers (2014) put forth that the goal of the language teacher as a counselor is to assist the client (learner) linguistically to communicate adequately and develop the ability to have independent language adequacy, which intensifies autonomy. Richards and Rodgers (2014) opine that learners could grow in their ability due to the teacher's supportive role. The teacher becomes dependent on the learner, which enhances the feasibility of autonomy.

Canter (1996) states that teachers should create an environment whereby sufficiently interactive learning is provided and maintained. He also recommends that teachers should pay all their attention to their students throughout the interactive activities. When teachers can make the students feel that their teachers spend a lot of attention on them, they notice their responsibilities. As a result, they have intrinsic motivation, which remarkably impacts learning (Grolnick, Ryan, and Deci, 1991). Consequently, the feasibility and desirability of autonomy are more likely when motivated and responsible learners increase.

#### **5.4.2. Views on the Feasibility and Desirability of Learner Autonomy with Learners Having Particular Abilities**

In light of the findings, language learners with special abilities are more likely to become autonomous. Learner autonomy was associated with social skills, emotional intelligence, peer learning, eagerness, and confidence. It may be inferred from the data collected that learners with special abilities are self-regulated, responsible, programmed, self-sufficient, well-prepared, and eager to research and learn. Richards and Rodgers (2014) underline that learners could quickly develop independence assume responsibility in the learning process. Thus, when given responsibility, they can contribute to even managing the process and the curriculum. They have an awareness of the strengths and weaknesses they need to handle. For instance, Richards and Rodgers (2014) highlight that learning is facilitated by problem-solving involving the material to be discovered. Thus, it is evident that feasibility and desirability levels of student involvement in decision-making increase dramatically. Only two teachers claimed that students do not need to have particular abilities to become autonomous. When encouraged, every single student can do great things.

Conversely, most teachers confirmed that students with special abilities are much more likely to be encouraged to develop autonomy. However, the conception that autonomy can be achieved by learners with special abilities is regarded as a misconception by Little (1991). Furthermore, Little (1991) states that it is a misconception that not all learners but particular ones can achieve autonomy (p.4). As is also suggested by Little (1999) and Nunan (1997), learners may have different degrees of autonomy. However, claiming that only particular students can succeed in becoming autonomous may be a misconception.

This study also found out that EFL teachers give learners opportunities to foster autonomy since they attach significance. They apply multiple compelling practices such as evaluation, raising consciousness, increasing willingness and productivity, creating a social environment, using online resources, motivation and monitoring. These results prove that EFL teachers have a strong awareness of how the practices should promote autonomy. Some scholars suggested similar views demonstrating the significance of certain practices the teachers should apply. Teng (2019) states that autonomy could be encouraged when one has conscious knowledge of the learning process (p. 15). Schormova (2017) found out that the student's motivation is enhanced. They have an opportunity to be aware of the realistic practices of their education when teachers lead

students to take the responsibility of learning. There are numerous methods to back up students' autonomy, including metacognitive training (Wenden, 1999) and recognizing and promoting different learning styles (Ng and Confessore, 2010).

The teachers portrayed the physical environment as a shortcoming since they cannot monitor whether they are in suitable conditions when the session is offered online. Therefore, they think that it is noncontrollable by the teachers. Similarly, the significance of the physical environment is emphasized by Koumi (2013), claiming that the brain can process a tremendous amount of material if comfortable and suitable conditions such as comfortable seats to relax are provided, which was suggested by Desuggestopedia, a learning approach. Koumi (2013) also points out that the learning environment should not be threatening to the learner. According to Richards and Rodgers (2014), removing the psychological obstacles learners have toward learning is essential. Thus, the fewer psychological obstacles learners have toward learning, the better the brain can process, the more active and autonomous they may become.

Some teachers claimed that online education concentrates students only on audio and visual learning. Richards and Rodgers (2014) characterized auditory and visual learning to be included in the Audio-Lingual method. In addition, they discovered that listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills are sequenced. These skills are trained and developed in order. Thus, basing the online EFL education on Audio-Lingual learning may be successful once all the skills are managed to be developed, ensuring the lessons integrate all the skills. Besides, the teachers suggested that individual learning or group learning is achieved by benefiting from many resources by learning structural patterns using repetitive drills on platforms such as EBA. This finding is compatible with Richards and Rodgers's (2014) principle that learning a language is possible with habit formation. It may also contribute to independent learning.

Besides, winning respect was emphasized as one of the primary aims of a teacher to convince students to be active. They emphasize the significance of asking for their students' preferences, which means they try to give a sense of freedom to them. Teachers also expect their students to set goals by unearthing their talents, raising their curiosity and consciousness. By creating a social environment with a favorable climate, they manage to arouse the willingness of the students to be autonomous. Furthermore, they ensure effective communication by guiding them to compensate for their deficiencies in confidence.

Sinclair (1999) argues that autonomy in EFL learning is essentially linked to providing students with opportunities for activities. Correspondingly, the teachers stated that they give multiple tasks to increase their productivity with collaborative group work or individual work and select activities relevant to their needs and preferences. Participating in the lesson depends on their voluntariness. Furthermore, they promote the inhibited learners to be inspired by their more autonomous friends. Encouraging students to communicate in English via different social networking sites is one of the practices stated. However, the appropriateness of using social networking sites is being interrogated by some teachers. In agreement with Manprasert (2017), teachers advised that students' use of social media had to be carefully measured by parents and teachers as the absence of maturity could lead students to abuse social media, which was the teachers' substantial concern about social media involvement in ELT.

Language learners are expected to evaluate their learning to notice how much progress they have made. In addition, they are supposed to be aware of the lesson's objectives and monitor their improvement and identify their learning needs. Some teachers seem to research how they can promote their students' independence in learning and become self-sufficient in many ways. For example, they use gamification to help them gain the willingness to learn on their own by discovering. In the same vein, Richards and Rodgers (2014) state that learning activities such as drama make learning fun and interesting. They teach them how to prepare for the lesson and notice the importance of curiosity. Besides, they promote language learners' autonomy by assigning them more online work.

The shorter teacher talking time enables learners to speak more during the learning process, which may be an excellent opportunity to encourage learner autonomy. This way, as Richard and Rodgers (2001) put forward, the teacher focuses on what the learners say and how they say it. Additionally, the teacher allows them to speak and encourages them to practice using the target language. Correspondingly, Richards and Rogers (2014) emphasize that many questions are asked and answered in the target language, reflecting what the teachers encourage them to apply. However, these exercises are usually based on the narratives and dialogues in the lesson plans, which can be effectively involved in online language learning to promote learner autonomy.

The participant EFL teachers outlined that they try to enable the learners to work on the tasks and tests. Knowing that the language forms are not enough to learn how to

use the language or the pragmatic importance of their utterances, the teacher should create situations whereby each learner has something to say during the lesson. The teacher stands by, encourages, and reinforces the learners as a facilitator to enhance interaction and communication. The tasks designed to foster autonomy primitively should also aim to advance linguistic knowledge and communicative competence; so, pair-work, group-work, and individual work can be done according to the course's assignments and content. However, the findings demonstrated no clear evidence that teachers can put their theoretical knowledge and influential perspectives into practice, corresponding to the study conducted by Sobkowiak (2017), finding out that learners have very few opportunities to become independent or autonomous in the foreign language learning environment. What is even more striking is that teachers achieve very little to foster the autonomy of their learners. In agreement with Chinpakdee (2020) and Elmahjoub (2014), the results indicated that the teachers expressed optimistic views on learner autonomy and viewed it as a viable approach in their practices. However, they could not adequately encourage autonomous learning.

Some teachers highlighted that language areas such as pronunciation could not be given priority. Therefore, students are not expected to reach a certain level of proficiency at pronunciation; students are not supposed to have native-like and almost perfect speech styles. However, even pronunciation improvement or native-like speech can be ensured when teachers encourage learners to be autonomous and give assignments that enable them to use many resources that the learner chooses or the teacher suggests. Most teachers believe in the importance of making mistakes, and they encourage self-correction, which is an effective way to foster autonomy. On the contrary, Hanifehzadeh and Ebrahimi (2015) remark that remarkable attention should be paid to prevent students' errors. Paying attention can be regarded as crucial as a teacher's practice. However, to encourage students to be active and autonomous, language teachers should give as much freedom as possible to prevent the students from hesitation and embarrassment towards talking rather than making mistakes.

In agreement with Mocanu (2015), the data revealed that once a learner understands that making mistakes is helpful in learning, they become more likely to start to learn, notice the mistake and attempt to sort it out. Thus, teachers can have adequate time also to develop students' pronunciation even though they think they have no chance and ignore it. However, correcting the learner's errors frequently is not an action that supports autonomy. Another striking issue is that the teachers do not give the

meanings of the words immediately when needed, which is logical as it might cause laziness and not require being autonomous. This finding is confirmed by the study of Taplin (2000), claiming that the learners are likely to have difficulty adjusting to autonomous learning as the learners are accustomed to dependent learning patterns.

It was remarked by the teachers that positive behaviors and successful responses must be rewarded and reinforced in a way no matter how hard they may think it is. However, the teachers did not state if they apply rewards and award their students, which disproves the idea that teachers implement effective awarding and praising. The teachers stated that they lighten the burden of the students in the learning process, such as trying not to put too much pressure on the learners for autonomy encouragement. Equivalently, Reed and Michaud (2010) opine that the learners are likely to give up and get bored when they feel as if they will never reach the teacher's knowledge level. Undoubtedly, the learners expect to be taught by professional teachers who know their subject matter very well. However, when teachers are always acting as if they are attempting to prove how knowledgeable they are, the learners might feel intimidated and may not enjoy this. Furthermore, they may lose their interest and engagement in the lesson.

#### **5.5. Research Question 4: To What Extent do EFL Teachers Believe that Their Students are Autonomous in Online Education?**

The research also examined the extent to which EFL teachers believe their students are autonomous in online EFL teaching and learning contexts.

The descriptive statistics revealed that 52.5% (n=102) of the teachers reported that their students are autonomous. On the other hand, 25.8% (n=50) of the teachers disagreed that their students are autonomous, while 21.6% (n=42) were unsure. In agreement with the findings of the study conducted by Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012), the findings demonstrate that the teachers' perceptions regarding what autonomous learners were expected to do differed. It may also be inferred that they could not clearly determine whether a student is autonomous.

Based on the data collected through the interviews, we can conclude that many teachers associated the autonomy level of their students with their academic level. They believe that students who are eager, open to learning, extroverted, motivated, competent, and academically sound are autonomous. In the same vein, Little (1995)

establishes a direct connection between performance and learners' autonomy by stating that it would be no exaggeration to say that high performers have always been autonomous. On the other hand, the participant teachers think that demotivated, introverted, academically low students are not autonomous. Parallely, Usuki (2003) associates learner autonomy with the internal attitudes of learners concerning self-motivation.

More than half of the students were claimed not to be autonomous. However, inhibited students may achieve being autonomous with their peers' and teachers' encouragement. Additionally, a small number of teachers asserted that all students are autonomous to some extent, except for the introverted ones. Moreover, the participant teachers from private and state schools suggested that private school language learners are more likely to develop autonomy. However, EFL teachers working at private schools claimed that most of their students are not autonomous, although they emphasized that many opportunities are created to promote learner autonomy in their schools, which disproves that private school students are more autonomous than those at state schools. Therefore, it may be inferred that the levels of autonomy of students from private and state schools do not differ considerably. However, knowing that private schools offer more English sessions may impact the English teachers' perceptions of how autonomous the language learners are. Therefore, we may conclude that the number of English language sessions may not effectively promote learner autonomy.

It is necessary to reiterate that teachers' interpretations regarding how autonomous the language learners are shaped by their students' characteristics and educational context. They regard responsible, extroverted, motivated, competent, interrogative, and curious students as autonomous. They also believe that private schools' opportunities for language learners encourage learner autonomy more than those offered at state schools. Correspondingly, Koşar (2019) found out that private school teachers have more favorable views of their students' degree of autonomy than state school teachers. On the other hand, language teachers at private schools acclaimed that they apply particular practices and methods to encourage their students to be autonomous. However, the findings demonstrated that the number of autonomous students is small in private and state schools.

## **5.6. Research Question 5: Do EFL Teachers Confront any Constraints regarding Developing Learner Autonomy in Online Education? If yes, what are the Significant Restrictions to Learner Autonomy Implementation?**

UNESCO (2020) notes that almost all officials use online schooling due to the coronavirus outbreak. This technical phase may be a signal for all schools or educational institutions to move into the area of online learning. Yang et al. (2007) remark that online learning allows learners to improve their capacity to use the English language by interacting with others in the virtual environment rather than conventional classes. Correspondingly, the teachers opined that online language learning could be advantageous in many terms, such as promoting learner autonomy. However, they also signaled several negative factors that impact learner autonomy promotion. According to teachers' views, the constraints were analyzed under three titles: learner-centered, teacher-centered constraints, and the restrictions concerning how the school operates. Teachers' perspectives indicated that learner-centered limitations could be related to learner's characteristics and learning habits, whereas teacher-centered constraints can be associated with teacher's characteristics, inefficiency, and teaching habits. The results regarding the limitations to learner autonomy development comply with Zorkaya's (2019) findings indicating that the education system, teacher-centered methods, students not being accustomed to self-guidance, lack of personal goals, and dependence on sources might prevent students from becoming autonomous.

### **5.6.1. Learner-Related Constraints**

The interviews conducted with the EFL teachers revealed that English language teachers regard some learner characteristics and learning habits as constraints for learner autonomy. The learners who are thought to be less likely to become autonomous are the ones who were defined with some characteristics such as inadequately capable, unfamiliar with online language learning, and unconvinced. They are also thought to have a slight possibility to become autonomous due to their learning habits, including using excuses and complaints, unwillingness, lack of practice, and being accustomed to traditional learning such as being offered direct knowledge. Taplin (2000) found out that since the learners are used to dependent learning patterns, they most probably have difficulty adjusting to autonomous learning.

The role of the students is vital in promoting learner autonomy. Most importantly, they need to remain enthusiastic about the learning process. They should remain encouraged to be interactive and communicative, being actively engaged in what is being done. Getting to know the main ideas, the content of the topics, and the structures, and being very well prepared for the classes before coming to class may enable them to have lots of confidence and decisiveness as becoming autonomous may be ensured. However, the EFL teachers claimed most of their students do not have most of these qualities and habits, which aggravates the success in autonomy promotion.

Solak and Bayar (2015) outline that meaningful materials should be provided to the students to become more effective learners being engaged. Many teachers complain about the boredom and disengagement of the students. Hence, the teachers are also required to prevent boredom. Some teachers touched upon that the duration of tasks should be kept short. Furthermore, some of them emphasized offering alternatives to the students to prevent them from getting bored during online learning sessions. Concordantly, Solak and Bayar (2015) propose that the drill periods could be kept short with brief alternatives to avoid boredom. Some teachers indicated that preventing boredom is easier in the classroom since you can observe who is bored and decide the following action or the activity accordingly. In a similar vein, Reed and Michaud (2010) opine that walking around the classroom, standing next to as many students as possible to check whether they are productive and attentive is very important. Identifying the students' needs and problems may be easier this way. However, maintaining this is more challenging since monitoring all students equally and effectively is not likely during online teaching and learning sessions.

Reed and Michaud (2010) put forward that learners tend to use the easy or most straightforward way to communicate, such as not using the target language. The most significant barrier in language learning is to make a mistake while speaking and feel ashamed about it, which can destroy the confidence and autonomy of young learners. According to the researcher's point of view, there are three discrete groups of students: Those already interested in learning a new language, those who find learning a new language just as a requirement, and those who have no interest at all. The differences among these groups should be considered to encourage students appropriately, choosing and applying the most practical methods and strategies to become autonomous.

### 5.6.2. Teacher-Related Constraints

The teacher characteristics, inefficiency, and teaching habits were the teacher-related constraints that emerged from the findings of the content analysis. The participants interpreted emotionally and mentally tired, uninformed, unpersuasive, and hopeless teachers as constraints to foster learner autonomy. Moreover, the characteristics that reflect inefficiencies such as inadequately qualified, insufficient preparation, and guidance and management problems may be the causes of difficulty in fostering learner autonomy. Besides, teaching habits such as implementing traditional approaches and applying inappropriate lesson plans were also pointed out to restrict autonomy implementation.

Many language teachers seem to start their classes passionately, and then they lose their ambition and zest to teach. When learners notice such unwillingness from their teachers, they also become unwilling to learn. Since language learning best occurs at the early stages, young learners need to be interested in learning a specific language. Following methods that aim to increase the decisiveness on both the teacher and the learners' side may ensure that the zeal and the desire to make young learners interested in learning the language are remarkably improved.

In an online language class, instead of teaching the linguistic rules in detail, the communication skills improved by increasing the students' receptiveness and expressiveness through class exercises were highlighted to be vital. The study revealed that although the EFL teachers are conscious of the importance and the appropriate practices that must be applied, they do not provide sufficient opportunities for students to be active orally. Moreover, they are prejudiced regarding achieving an autonomous environment during online English language sessions because of the time and class-size constraints. However, it is contradictory as they pointed out that students' attendance is relatively low. Teaching and learning must be joyful for students to engage in if making them autonomous is desired. Therefore, psychological and social conditions rather than physical environments should be ideally provided and catered for. When the teachers warrant appropriate conditions, the learners' productivity and readiness for hard work, such as writing essays and compositions, increase considerably. Therefore, if organized, they can significantly increase the number of practical tasks and time allocated to each student, which may increase the number of students attending the online language classes.

Data revealed that teachers are not persuasive sufficiently. The learners should be convinced to take part in decisions and get socialized with friends. Additionally, they should be adequately motivated and valued by the teacher and the peers to develop autonomy despite the restrictions regarding the physical conditions successfully. Even if the classes are held online, students would not feel any negativity when positive factors satisfy them. Besides, the teachers pointed out that overcoming the difficulty of the tests or a large variety of tasks may motivate the learners and contribute to the significance of autonomous learning and practices.

Most teachers do not seem to be sufficiently informed or conscious about the appropriate approaches that may be very beneficial for students to become autonomous. They appear not to be perfectly ready to overcome distractions that divert attention from setting goals, analyze the learners' needs as well as the quality of both teaching and learning process, face the problem of learner errors, set specific goals that are suitable for students' actual language needs and introduce appropriate lesson plans and sequences to implement during online language teaching sessions. Most of them complained that they still were not provided with any workshops educating the teachers on the fundamentals of online language teaching and the learning process in general. Naturally, promoting autonomy requires specific knowledge. For instance, the syllabus should be prepared accordingly. In agreement, Mocanu (2015) puts forth that the lack of syllabus in the method makes the objectives unclear and challenging to achieve.

The majority of teachers find face-to-face education much more effective and advantageous than online education. Teachers may not be sufficiently successful at implementing learner autonomy in a platform that they believe to be weak compared to face-to-face education. However, Cabaroğlu and Roberts (2000) put forth that moving away from the old belief toward a new one can be one way of minimizing a contradiction between one's existing beliefs and new experiences (p. 396). Hence, the efficiency of online education should be increased with necessary developments first to persuade the teachers that it is a very well-working platform to start to operationalize more effective approaches.

Warming-up sections must be done diligently to get the students ready to meet the new topic. Data revealed that the teachers do not give time to warming up sections due to context, class time, and size limitations. However, it is not very likely to engage the students in the lesson without the warming-up section. They should let their students know what they are expected to do, which is a fundamental characteristic of a language

class. The expectations should be given clearly. Nonetheless, when their attention is not powerfully attracted to the new tasks, they cannot understand whether their expectations, behaviors, and preparations coincide with the instructor's expectations, the specific objectives, and the lesson's goals. As a result, the teacher has difficulty controlling the exercises and the activities to enhance meaningful work and progress.

One of the most blazing characteristics of a language class must be offering alternatives to discrete tasks. It is helpful to allow the learners to be free at determining what to do and how to do it, which undoubtedly enables them to enjoy what they are doing in the learning process. However, since most teachers complained about the insufficient time, they do not provide students with many alternatives.

### **5.6.3. Constraints Regarding the way the School Operates**

Data revealed that the way school operates may also create challenges. Level specification, curriculum, imbalance, technical problems, class size, and duration were suggested to be among the constraints. In English classes, level specification is not usually done in most schools, creating a problem. Some teachers emphasized that in a class where the students are grouped heterogeneously, autonomy implementation may become challenging, demonstrating that autonomy implementation is more manageable and more likely with academically sound students. Thus, when learners academically good are together, the teacher will not have to pay extra effort to promote autonomy. Besides, when students are grouped homogeneously, the teacher will not have to apply diverging strategies depending on the level of each student when attempting to promote autonomy.

The curriculum, the sudden switch to online or face-to-face education, incompatibility between the class size, and the allocated time were emphasized as the challenges of learner autonomy. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic caused an unexpected and unplanned switch to online teaching and learning by many educational institutions worldwide as an option for learners to complete their education. Therefore, the rapid transformation instilled frustration among EFL students to obtain sufficient technical support to accomplish the educational process. Moreover, teachers complained that there is an imbalance since they had to switch to online education and then continue with face-to-face education again, depending on the rates concerning the pandemic. As a result, both students and the teachers were affected negatively. Thus, the schools

should explore how it could be possible to supervise the students and the teachers at an optimum level to prevent them from losing their desire to succeed.

Furthermore, although many scholars have delineated the significance of learner autonomy in online education, most schools do not organize seminars to inform the teachers, students, and parents. The formation of a teacher-centered environment due to the class duration was also noted to be a limitation. Some teachers asserted that many teachers still apply classical teaching methods such as the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) in language classes. GTM, as defined by Richards and Rogers (2014), is a method of studying a language by making a detailed analysis of its grammar rules and application.

Many scholars acclaim that GTM has contributed to language teaching in a significant way in terms of translation, grammar, and vocabulary; however, it does not seem to be very effective for English learners since it encourages memorization rather than giving students to discover things on their own, take part in decisions as the teacher is stated by Richards and Rodgers (2014) to be dominant in every stage of the language classes. They observed that little or no attention is given to the pronunciation, listening, and speaking aspects. Thus, through the workshops, the schools may prioritize training the language teachers to be convinced not to implement such traditional teaching methods since it is almost impossible to acquire the ability to speak and understand English and become autonomous. Furthermore, the learners are taught in their first language with very little use of the target language. Consequently, because almost all explanations are given in L1, students get used to quickly learning the language without paying extra effort to learn, which does not require the learners to be autonomous. The harder it is, the more effort is expended. The more effort is paid, the more learner autonomy is fostered; it may be inferred that the schools should encourage teachers to apply approaches that prioritize learning through discovering, analytical thinking, and perseverance which also trigger autonomy. In parallel, Chinpakdee (2020) found that using the grammar-translation method as a teaching approach and the inadequate skills and lack of self-confidence to guide their learning process could create significant challenges to learner autonomy. Moreover, as Homma (2015) asserts, autonomy has been neglected, leaving many slow learners concentrating on written exercises for grammar and vocabulary but unable to execute even the necessary level of conversation in confidence and willingness.

The Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE) improved the efficacy of the response of education policies to the pandemic. Correspondingly, Bacher-Hicks et al. (2021) acknowledge that in light of schools' and parents' different involvements to compensate for lost or insufficient school-based learning time with online services, the pandemic exacerbated achievement disparities among learners. It would be possible to account for such discrepancies and encourage equal access to online learning if the schools work cooperatively and take joint actions. However, the schools, teachers, learners, and parents should also align with the MoNE to prevent or minimize the constraints and the disparities.

### **5.7. Teachers' Recommendations on the Ways of Promoting Learner Autonomy in Online Language Learning**

All teachers recommended seminars to be organized, which must notably include offering approaches to promote learner autonomy, not only on a regional basis. Still, they suggested that the workshops should also be arranged on a national basis bringing together experts in the field and many teachers. The convenience and easiness that the students' ideas suggest using the online education platform and how they put into practice their opinions were crucial. They reported that the students' expectations and whether their expectations are feasible should be interrogated. In addition, they believe that some teachers need to learn how to approach students in online education, understanding how students can be promoted, led, and be educated to use technology more professionally.

Some teachers outlined the importance of providing the parents with workshops as well. Concordantly, Çelik and Kasapoğlu (2014) indicate that school administrators had been mandated to carry out the educational reform in collaboration with teachers, administrators, students, and their parents by recent developments. Therefore, it can be inferred that in all developments regarding language education, parents should also be incorporated into the process to increase efficiency. For instance, some participants noted that it is challenging to create autonomous learners when parents are not incorporated, no matter how supportive the administrators and the teachers are. In addition, the home environment may impact the learners' attitude. Therefore, it can be inferred that parents' and the schools' treatment styles should be compatible.

Students' participation in online courses can be vague, and it might be challenging to comprehend than in face-to-face classroom settings. Teachers can feel reluctant to adequately gauge students' involvement and take appropriate action without face-to-face interaction. The schools should explore how teachers would nourish online student interaction when the online course layout theoretically attracts particular learners over some others. The participant teachers complained that class size and duration limit their activities and their methodology. For instance, Richards and Rodgers (2014) assert that the pre-reading or warm-up period is lengthened at the beginning of the course but shortened as their level increases. Thus, how can a teacher with a time limitation and many students spend time effectively and adequately for pre-reading or warm-up sections of a course? In parallel, Lazar (2013) proposes that an educational plan should prioritize learners' needs and desires to advance their autonomy. Moreover, the syllabus and learning organization should be made diligently to make the learning process meaningful and efficient to enhance autonomous learning. This way, it can also be possible to make the schedule and academic program increasingly adaptable.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

#### 6.1. Introduction

The final chapter of the study provides an overview, presenting the summary, conclusion, limitations, and implications. Recommendations are also provided for further research.

The current study explored the EFL teachers' perceptions and applied practices concerning learner autonomy in online EFL teaching and learning context in secondary schools in Hatay, Turkey. This study aimed at (1) exploring EFL teachers' different perceptions on learner autonomy, (2) assessing how English language teachers promote learner autonomy, (3) discovering what learner autonomy and an autonomous learner mean to them, (4) exploring to what extent EFL teachers believe that their students are autonomous in online language education and (5) investigating whether EFL teachers confront any constraints regarding developing learner autonomy in online education. The following research questions guided this study.

1. What are EFL teachers' perceptions on learner autonomy in secondary school virtual classrooms?
2. What are EFL teachers' perceptions towards implementing learner autonomy in online English language teaching/ learning context?
3. What kind of practices do EFL teachers apply to implement learner autonomy in online English language teaching/ learning context?
4. To what extent do EFL teachers believe that their students are autonomous in online education?
5. Do EFL teachers confront any constraints regarding developing learner autonomy in online education? If yes, what are the significant restrictions to learner autonomy implementation?

Learner autonomy is a significant concept that has been studied for so long. The current research aimed to fill the gap related to EFL teachers' learner autonomy perceptions and practices in the online EFL teaching and learning context. The main findings of the study were collected through a questionnaire and semi-structured

interviews. Thus, a mixed-method was utilized, combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Under the heading of each research question, findings from the interviews following the conclusions of the questionnaire were presented. Each of the research questions was addressed separately. The results of the questionnaire and the interviews were presented in tables. The interviews representing teachers' additional insights and implementations of learner autonomy were defined based on codes, categories, and themes that emerged from the content analysis. Besides, the quantitative data were analyzed utilizing SPSS.

The findings of the study demonstrated that although EFL teachers had a high awareness of learner autonomy and autonomous learner, they had limited opportunities to promote autonomy to the learners due to learner-related, teacher-related constraints in addition to the constraints regarding the way the school operates. In addition, the teachers' views demonstrated that although they have diverging opinions on the practices of learner autonomy, they do not seem to be sufficiently successful with creating an autonomous learning environment since most of them admitted that they had few autonomous students.

### **6.3. Conclusion**

Teachers' perceptions have a significant impact on the style of the lesson and differentiate the learners' role from the teachers' role. Since teachers' perspectives influence their teaching strategies, which may directly affect students' learning, the first research question sought answers regarding EFL teachers' definitions of learner autonomy and autonomous learners in the virtual classrooms. The second research question explored the teachers' overall views on social, psychological, political, and technical perspectives of learner autonomy. Moreover, the beliefs on the EFL teachers' prominent roles and the advantages of being autonomous were analyzed. The third research question sought responses to the EFL teachers' practices to promote learner autonomy in the virtual classrooms. With the fourth research question, the study explored to what extent the teachers believe the learners are autonomous. At the same time, the constraints in promoting autonomy were disclosed with the fifth research question. Finally, the relationship of learner autonomy with age and proficiency in online education was disclosed.

Many definitions of learner autonomy have been provided in the literature review. However, most researchers agree that learner autonomy is a concept that reflects learners taking responsibility for their learning. The participant teachers of the study used multiple phrases to define learner autonomy, such as a special ability, individual development, taking responsibility, self-awareness, decision involvement, self-sufficiency, independence, monitoring, freedom, and opportunity. The findings revealed that the definitions provided by the teachers were corresponding to the most remarkable definitions referred to in the literature. For example, being self-assured, responsible, well-prepared, conscious, eager, self-regulated, and motivated were amongst the EFL teachers' definitions of an autonomous learner. Thus, the teachers have a high awareness of learner autonomy and autonomous learner.

The investigation of feasibility and desirability of promoting learner autonomy concluded that students with special skills are more likely to be encouraged to develop autonomy. Furthermore, the study revealed that the efficiency of learner autonomy implementation might also be determined by the language learners' characteristics, abilities, readiness, and willingness. However, the conception that autonomy can be achieved by learners with special abilities is regarded as a misconception by Little (1991).

Based on the preceding discussion of the findings, several conclusions were drawn from the current research. First, the results proved that the teachers were very positive towards applying learner autonomy in virtual classrooms although the conditions were not very suitable and encouraging. Hence, teachers should be conscious of their students' educational backgrounds and expectations of autonomous language learning progress. Second, the study discovered the EFL teachers' most profound psychological perspectives of learner autonomy in an online language education context. Learning how to learn was vital for learners in improving autonomy and bringing higher academic performance in the online EFL learning process. The learners' improvement of their ability to evaluate their learning, monitoring oneself, and collaborative work was also crucial. Moreover, motivated learners have much better possibilities to strengthen autonomy, agreeing with Little (2003), stressing the language learning motivation plays a significant role in building learner autonomy.

The results of this study highlighted that learner autonomy is fostered when students are free to choose the kinds of activities, which is regarded as a political perspective of learner autonomy, being promoted when students can freely decide how

their learning will be assessed. Furthermore, EFL teachers' perceptions about the social views on learner autonomy reflect that cooperative group work activities, using exercises that give learners opportunities for peer learning, social learning rather than individual learning significantly support autonomy development. The results also support that learner autonomy could be fostered outside the classroom once a student-centered environment is maintained. However, the results revealed that the students could not be successful by being independent of the teacher, proving the significance of the teacher's role in the online language education setting. It was also concluded that students who are aware of their responsibilities and academically advantageous are more likely to develop autonomy.

Teachers' most important role was guiding, which is achieved by being a supervisor, an approver, a leader, determining the limits, and giving them responsibilities. The most significant roles were guides, facilitators, resources, inspirers, moderators, mediators, and observers. Besides, EFL teachers must be aware of the innovations regarding online language education, be good at educational technology, be mindful of the individual differences by analyzing learners' characteristics and noticing their strengths and weaknesses, increasing awareness, motivating them, and being a role model to support the learners in developing autonomy in online language education setting.

Balçıklı (2006) points out that the central principle of autonomy in language learning has been inherited from constructivism: The more active the learning is, the more efficient it is. In addition, a social environment is maintained, creating an authentic setting. Therefore, success in online education can result from being autonomous, active, and responsible. Findings revealed that learner autonomy positively affects the success of a language learner since autonomous learners can work independently. It was also revealed that language learners of all ages could develop autonomy in the online EFL learning context.

This study also achieved its goal of exploring EFL teachers' practices to promote autonomy. Findings demonstrated that they apply multiple approaches such as raising consciousness and awareness, increasing willingness and productivity, creating a social environment, using online resources, motivation and monitoring. These results prove that EFL teachers apply multiple practices to promote autonomy. Besides, they emphasize the significance of asking for the students' preferences, expecting them to set goals, evaluate their learning, monitor their improvement, increasing their productivity,

select activities relevant to the student's needs and voluntariness. They encourage inhibited learners from being inspired by their more autonomous friends. However, the findings demonstrated no clear evidence to determine to what extent the teachers achieve to promote autonomy.

The autonomy level of the students was associated with their academic level. The students who are eager, open to learning, extroverted, motivated, competent, and academically sound were claimed to be autonomous. The teachers from private and state schools suggested that private school language learners are more likely to develop autonomy since they believe private schools' opportunities encourage learner autonomy more than those offered at state schools. However, the findings demonstrated that more than half of the students were claimed not to be autonomous in private and state schools.

Based on the preceding discussion of the findings, several negative factors were found to impact learner autonomy promotion, which was categorized as learner-centered, teacher-centered constraints, and the constraints concerning how the school operates. Teachers' perspectives indicated that learner-centered limitations could be related to learner's characteristics and learning habits, whereas teacher-centered constraints can be associated with teacher's characteristics, inefficiency, and teaching habits. The students' learning habits, including excuses and complaints, unwillingness, lack of practice, and being accustomed to traditional learning, were constraints to promoting autonomy. The participants interpreted the teachers' being emotionally and mentally tired, uninformed, unpersuasive, inadequately qualified, and hopeless as constraints to foster learner autonomy. Besides, teaching habits such as implementing traditional approaches and applying inappropriate lesson plans were also pointed out to restrict autonomy implementation.

The COVID-19 pandemic caused an unexpected and unplanned shift to online teaching and learning by many institutions. The rapid transformation to online or face-to-face education created challenges, instilling frustration among EFL students to obtain sufficient technical support to accomplish the educational process. Level specification, curriculum, incompatibility between the class size and the allocated time, and technical problems were also emphasized to be among the constraints.

#### **6.4. Limitations**

The study did not include all secondary-school English language teachers from many different schools in Turkey. If the data was gathered from a more significant number of schools, a more prominent possibility of having more reliable outcomes could have been had. Moreover, supporting the quantitative data findings with the observation method would provide more precise results. Besides, it could be more logical to extrapolate the effects for the secondary school English language learners in Turkey, which would help the researcher reach a more holistic conclusion. Because of the precautions due to the Covid-19 outbreak, the plan to conduct a questionnaire and an open-ended interview with the learners changed.

Convenience sampling was used since the participants were selected according to their availability and wish. However, the results might have been prone to bias as those who volunteer to participate may have diverged from those who chose not to. Therefore, sampling is likely not to be representative of other characteristics. Furthermore, the results may yield dissimilar because of factors such as the profile of missing schools concerning learner autonomy and their perceptions and the need for further training in implementing it effectively. However, the generated data provide valuable insights into the significance of learner autonomy in online language learning classes. Furthermore, since the aim was not generalizing the findings, the differences found in other contexts could be due to the cultural peculiarities that scholars have associated with autonomous learning.

#### **6.5. Implications**

In line with Abuhasna et al. (2020), this study revealed that autonomy, background, cooperation, interactions, and learners' experiences significantly affect learners' satisfaction. Thus, a positive and vital connection was identified between students' autonomy and online learning environments. As Yunus and Arshad (2015) remark, it does not seem possible to talk of being entirely non-autonomous or fully autonomous. However, it is vital to maintain an autonomous learning environment for the learners as a positive correlation was found between autonomy and online learning. In a similar vein, Toffoli and Perrot (2017) portray learner autonomy as a powerful way to promote students' empowerment.

Benson (2008) found that autonomy is mainly concerned with existing

educational arrangements within established curricula from teachers' perspectives. It is crucial to make the schedule and academic program increasingly adaptable. The class size and duration must be organized in a way that does not limit the activities and the methodology. Hence, this study is a valuable contribution to the ELT field in identifying challenges in learner autonomy encouragement, enabling potential language programs to enhance alternative methods at the institutional level to encourage learner autonomy. Besides, the study is vital since it provides insights into creating autonomous learning in an online language education context, presenting influential views and practices of EFL teachers.

We find it necessary to underscore here that online EFL teaching and learning context should be organized so that new rules are adopted to the needs of the learners and acceptable global practice. Therefore, workshops that offer approaches to promote learner autonomy in virtual classrooms should be organized on a regional, national, and even international basis. Besides, the workshops must be supported by educational sciences, psychology, and information technologies. One of the most important recommendations the researcher makes is that the schools or institutions should investigate how teachers would nourish online student interaction when the online course layout theoretically attracts particular learners over some others. It is also necessary to reiterate that parents should also be incorporated into the process to increase the efficiency of learner autonomy promotion in addition to the educators and administrators. For instance, some participants noted that it is challenging to create autonomous learners when parents are not incorporated.

As many researchers such as Farrah and al-Bakry (2020) underscore, the current study identified a need for a technical support unit for both teachers and learners to address the ongoing technical problems during the teaching and learning process. Additionally, educational institutions that adopt online learning should provide a convenient measure of online learning since not all students can give reliable resources such as smartphones and computers to follow up the online language learning sessions. Besides, training students and EFL teachers who do not have the technical skills required to uplift them to the degree that they could have a better chance of being engaged in online learning.

It is crucial to highlight that since this study has discovered a positive correlation between success in online learning and autonomy, it is necessary to reiterate that teachers' and students' fears and prejudgement towards online language learning should

be eliminated. In addition, an awareness of the value of learner autonomy should be prioritized to be raised. Last but not least, online lessons should be incorporated into the education system more, not only when extraordinary outbreaks such as Covid-19 occur. Increasing the number of online learning sessions would bring many advantages, such as eliminating spatial-temporal constraints (Smith, 2000), being adaptable (Muir, 2001), and demolishing teachers' and students' prejudgements and fears.

## **6.6. Recommendations**

Most studies on learner autonomy delve into the perceptions, understanding, and beliefs of the EFL or ESL teachers working at primary, secondary, or high schools. However, limited studies have explored and analyzed the EFL teachers' learner autonomy perceptions, practices, and approaches in online EFL teaching and learning. Many empirical studies revealed that even after all the improvements in the 20<sup>th</sup> and the 21<sup>st</sup> century, most language classes demonstrate that many students still do not take responsibility for their learning process and are not involved in decisions effectively. Moreover, many educational structures do not foster collaborative autonomy, and most interestingly, as the literature suggests, critical methods are met with opposition more often than welcome.

The literature has proved that the teacher's role is vital in promoting learner autonomy. However, many studies have demonstrated that teachers need training on implementing learner autonomy in the EFL teaching and learning context. In addition, it still seems ambiguous whether teachers provide students with academic support by dominating the class in a teacher-centered environment or serving as facilitators by maintaining a student-centered environment. However, the literature consists of limited studies regarding secondary school EFL teachers' perceptions and practices of learner autonomy in online EFL teaching and learning. Thus, the researcher of the current study aimed to fill the gap in the literature regarding teachers' learner autonomy perceptions and practices in the secondary school virtual classrooms. Besides, as Lamb (2017) underscores, learner autonomy should be explored in different settings since it is multifaceted and influenced by the context.

The study achieved its primary goal of exploring secondary school EFL teachers' learner autonomy perceptions and practices in an online EFL education setting in Hatay, Turkey. However, there is a need for sophisticated studies on autonomous language

learning in different environments, including online language learning settings. Ultimately, since autonomy is mutually dependent on the educational and socio-cultural background of its growth, this warrants review in other online education environments. The study should also continue progressively in different cultural backgrounds as countries worldwide escape from conventional pedagogical approaches and encompass contemporary orientations. On the other hand, sophisticated studies must be conducted comparing and contrasting the views of the EFL teachers working at private schools with those working at state schools to gain more comprehension.

The study did not consist of many English language teachers from many different schools in Turkey. The data could be gathered from a more considerable number of schools for more reliable outcomes. Observing the EFL teachers and learners could support the questionnaire and the interviews. The subsequent studies can also gather data from the learners to provide more insight into learner autonomy promotion in online language education.

In conclusion, this study demonstrates a need for further research on learner autonomy in virtual classrooms and how learner autonomy strategies vary in face-to-face and online language education. In addition, to what extent the strategies or particular methods are implemented should be explored using a bigger sampling size. Moreover, more effective learner autonomy strategies should be developed for interactive and communicative English classes in virtual classrooms. Lastly, since online education appears to continue accompanying face-to-face education in the following years, not only in Turkey but also worldwide, remarkable seminars, webinars and conferences should be held to increase the efficiency of online English language education.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A. Consent and Information Form

Sayın Katılımcımız

*Katılacağınız bu çalışma, Ortaokul İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Türkiye’de Çevrimiçi Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce Öğretimi ve Öğrenimi Bağlamında Öğrenen Özerkliğine Yönelik Algıları ve Uygulamaları*

” adıyla, Doç. Dr. Gülден İLİN danışmanlığında araştırmacı Semra KARAALI tarafından 2020-2021 akademik yılı içerisinde yapılacak bir araştırma uygulamasıdır.

Araştırmanın Hedefi: *Bu araştırmanın hedefi Ortaokul İngilizce öğretmenlerinin çevrimiçi eğitimde öğrenci özerkliğine yönelik algıları ve uygulamalarını ve öğrencilerinin ne düzeyde özerk olduklarına inandıklarını incelemenin yanı sıra öğrencileri özerk olma yolunda cesaretlendirirken karşılaştıkları zorlukları araştırma şeklindedir.*

Araştırmanın Nedeni: Tez çalışması

Araştırmanın Yapılacağı Yer(ler): Hatay İl Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğüne bağlı ortaokullar

Araştırma Uygulaması: Anket

*Görüşme*

Araştırma T.C. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı’nın ve okul/kurum yönetiminin izni ile gerçekleştirilmektedir. Araştırma uygulamasına katılım tamamıyla gönüllülük esasına dayalı olmaktadır. Çalışmada sizden kimlik belirleyici hiçbir bilgi istenmemektedir. Cevaplar tamamıyla gizli tutulacak ve sadece araştırmacılar tarafından değerlendirilecektir. Veriler sadece araştırmada kullanılacak ve üçüncü kişilerle paylaşılmayacaktır.

Uygulamalar, kişisel rahatsızlık verecek sorular ve durumlar içermemektedir. Ancak, katılım sırasında sorulardan ya da herhangi başka bir nedenden rahatsız hissederseniz cevaplama işini yarıda bırakabilirsiniz.

Katılımı onaylamadan önce sormak istediğiniz herhangi bir konu varsa sormaktan çekinmeyiniz. Çalışma bittikten sonra bizlere telefon veya e-posta ile ulaşarak soru sorabilir, sonuçlar hakkında bilgi isteyebilirsiniz. Saygılarımızla,

Arařtırmacı : Semra KARAALI

İletiřim Bilgileri : 05068607382 semrakaraali1@gmail.com

***Yukarıda bilgileri bulunan arařtırmaya katılmayı kabul ediyorum.***

12/12/2021

İsim-Soyisim İmza:

Katılımcı Adı-Soyadı :

Telefon Numarası :

## APPENDIX B. Questionnaire

19.04.2021

Secondary School EFL Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Learner Autonomy in Online EFL Teaching/ Learning Context in Tur..

# Secondary School EFL Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Learner Autonomy in Online EFL Teaching/ Learning Context in Turkey

AYDINLATILMIŞ ONAM FORMU (CONSENT FORM) (Anket araştırmaları için)

Secondary School EFL Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Learner Autonomy in Online EFL Teaching/ Learning Context in Turkey adlı çalışma İngilizce öğretmeni ve yüksek lisans öğrencisi olan Semra Karaali tarafından yürütülecektir. Bu araştırma Hatay 'da görev yapan ortaokul İngilizce öğretmenlerinin Türkiye'de çevrimiçi yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğretimi ve öğrenimi bağlamında öğrenen özerkliğine yönelik algıları ve uygulamaları ile ilgili anket ve mülakat yoluyla veri toplamaya yönelik hazırlanmıştır. Katılımda gönüllülük esastır. 5. bölüm kapsamında mülakat için gönüllü olduğunu bildiren öğretmenlerden irtibat kurabilmek adına isim ve telefon numarası istenmektedir. Bu bilgiler kesinlikle gizli tutulacaktır. Mülakata katılmayacak öğretmenlerin formun üzerine isim ve soy isim yazmaları gerekmemektedir. Bu anketle elde edilecek veriler sadece bilimsel amaçlarla kullanılacaktır, bu nedenle sorulara eksiksiz cevap vermeniz büyük önem taşımaktadır. Çalışmayla ilgili sorularınız için araştırmacı ile iletişime geçebilirsiniz.

Araştırmacının

Ünvanı, Adı Soyadı: Öğretmen- Semra KARAALI

Telefon numarası: 05068607382

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This questionnaire is part of a study on learner autonomy in ELT which is being conducted by Semra Karaali, an English teacher and a Master student at Çukurova University. The goal of the study is to explore the perceptions and practices of English teachers in relation to learner autonomy in online education. Participation is voluntary and all secondary school EFL teachers are being invited to contribute. Your responses are significant since they will inform the later stages of the study. There are no right and wrong answers. What we are interested in is your perceptions and practices on learner autonomy.

Thank you.

It will take about 20 minutes to complete this questionnaire.

\* Gerekli

### SECTION 1: LEARNER AUTONOMY IN ONLINE EDUCATION

Please give your opinion about the statements below by ticking ONE answer for each. Please consider your experience as a teacher more generally.

Semra Karaali, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Gülden İlin

19.04.2021

Secondary School EFL Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Learner Autonomy in Online EFL Teaching/ Learning Context in Tur...

1. 1. Language learners of all ages can develop learner autonomy. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Unsure  
☐ Agree  
☐ Strongly Agree

2. 2. Learner autonomy is promoted through regular opportunities for learners to complete the tasks alone. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Unsure  
☐ Agree  
☐ Strongly agree

3. 3. Autonomy means that learners can make choices about how they learn. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Unsure  
☐ Agree  
☐ Strongly Agree

19.04.2021

Secondary School EFL Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Learner Autonomy in Online EFL Teaching/ Learning Context in Tur...

4. 4. Individuals who lack autonomy are not likely to be effective language learners.

\*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

5. 5. Autonomy can develop most effectively through learning outside the classroom. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

6. 6. Involving learners in decisions about what to learn promotes learner autonomy.

\*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

19.04.2021

Secondary School EFL Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Learner Autonomy in Online EFL Teaching/ Learning Context in Tur...

7. 7. Learner autonomy means learning without a teacher in general. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

8. 8. It is harder to promote learner autonomy with proficient language learners than it is with beginners. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

9. 9. It is possible to promote learner autonomy with both young language learners and with adults. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

19.04.2021

Secondary School EFL Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Learner Autonomy in Online EFL Teaching/ Learning Context in Tur...

10. 10. Confident language learners are more likely to develop autonomy than those who lack confidence. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

11. 11. Learner autonomy allows language learners to learn more effectively than they otherwise would. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

12. 12. Learner autonomy is promoted when learners have some choice in the kinds of activities they do. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

19.04.2021

Secondary School EFL Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Learner Autonomy in Online EFL Teaching/ Learning Context in Tur...

13. 13. Learner autonomy cannot be promoted in a teacher-centred environment. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Unsure  
☐ Agree  
☐ Strongly agree

14. 14. Learner autonomy is promoted through activities which give learners opportunities to learn from each other. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Unsure  
☐ Agree  
☐ Strongly agree

15. 15. Learner autonomy implies a rejection of traditional teacher-led ways of teaching. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Unsure  
☐ Agree  
☐ Strongly agree

19.04.2021

Secondary School EFL Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Learner Autonomy in Online EFL Teaching/ Learning Context in Tur...

16. 16. Learner autonomy cannot develop without the help of the teacher. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Unsure  
☐ Agree  
☐ Strongly agree

17. 17. Learner autonomy is promoted by activities that encourage learners to work together. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Unsure  
☐ Agree  
☐ Strongly agree

18. 18. Learner autonomy is only possible with adult learners. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Unsure  
☐ Agree  
☐ Strongly agree

19.04.2021

Secondary School EFL Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Learner Autonomy in Online EFL Teaching/ Learning Context in Tur...

19. 19. Learner autonomy is promoted by independent work in a self-access centre.

\*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

20. 20. Learner autonomy is promoted when learners are free to decide how their learning will be assessed. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

21. 21. Learner autonomy requires the learner to be totally independent of the teacher. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

19.04.2021

Secondary School EFL Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Learner Autonomy in Online EFL Teaching/ Learning Context in Tur...

22. 22. Co-operative group work activities support the development. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Unsure  
☐ Agree  
☐ Strongly Agree

23. 23. Promoting autonomy is easier with beginning language learners than with more proficient learners. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Unsure  
☐ Agree  
☐ Strongly agree

24. 24. Learner autonomy is promoted when learners can choose their own learning materials. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Unsure  
☐ Agree  
☐ Strongly agree

19.04.2021

Secondary School EFL Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Learner Autonomy in Online EFL Teaching/ Learning Context in Tur...

25. 25. Learner-centred environment provides ideal conditions for developing learner autonomy. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Unsure  
☐ Agree  
☐ Strongly agree

26. 26. Learning how to learn is the key to developing learner autonomy. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Unsure  
☐ Agree  
☐ Strongly agree

27. 27. Learning to work alone is central to the development of learner autonomy. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Unsure  
☐ Agree  
☐ Strongly agree

19.04.2021

Secondary School EFL Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Learner Autonomy in Online EFL Teaching/ Learning Context in Tur...

28. 28. Out-of-class tasks which require learners to use the internet promote learner autonomy. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Unsure  
☐ Agree  
☐ Strongly Agree

29. 29. The ability to monitor one's learning is central to learner autonomy. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Unsure  
☐ Agree  
☐ Strongly agree

30. 30. Motivated language learners are more likely to develop learner autonomy than learners who are not motivated. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Unsure  
☐ Agree  
☐ Strongly agree

19.04.2021

Secondary School EFL Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Learner Autonomy in Online EFL Teaching/ Learning Context in Tur...

31. 31. The proficiency of a language learner does not affect their ability to develop autonomy. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Unsure  
☐ Agree  
☐ Strongly agree

32. 32. The teacher has an important role to play in supporting learner autonomy. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Unsure  
☐ Agree  
☐ Strongly agree

33. 33. Learner autonomy has a positive effect on success as a language learner. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Unsure  
☐ Agree  
☐ Strongly agree

19.04.2021

Secondary School EFL Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Learner Autonomy in Online EFL Teaching/ Learning Context in Tur...

34. 34. To become autonomous, learners need to develop the ability to evaluate their own learning. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

## Section 2: Desirability and Feasibility of Learner Autonomy in Online Education

Below there are two sets of statements. The first gives examples of decisions LEARNERS might be involved in; the second lists abilities that learners might have. For each statement:

- a. First say how desirable (i.e. ideally), you feel it is.  
b. Then say how feasible (i.e. realistically achievable) you think it is for the learners you currently teach most often.

## LEARNERS ARE INVOLVED IN DECISIONS ABOUT

Please tick TWO boxes for each statement – one for desirability and one for feasibility.

35. 1. The objectives of a course \*

*Uygun olanların tümünü işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Undesirable
- ☐ Slightly desirable
- ☐ Quite desirable
- ☐ Very desirable
- ☐ Unfeasible
- ☐ Slightly feasible
- ☐ Quite feasible
- ☐ Very feasible

19.04.2021

Secondary School EFL Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Learner Autonomy in Online EFL Teaching/ Learning Context in Tur...

## 36. 2. The materials used \*

*Uygun olanların tümünü işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Undesirable
- ☐ Slightly desirable
- ☐ Quite desirable
- ☐ Very desirable
- ☐ Unfeasible
- ☐ Slightly feasible
- ☐ Quite feasible
- ☐ Very feasible

## 37. 3. The kinds of tasks and activities they do \*

*Uygun olanların tümünü işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Undesirable
- ☐ Slightly desirable
- ☐ Quite desirable
- ☐ Very desirable
- ☐ Unfeasible
- ☐ Slightly feasible
- ☐ Quite feasible
- ☐ Very feasible

## 38. 4. The topics discussed \*

*Uygun olanların tümünü işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Undesirable
- ☐ Slightly desirable
- ☐ Quite desirable
- ☐ Very desirable
- ☐ Unfeasible
- ☐ Slightly feasible
- ☐ Quite feasible
- ☐ Very feasible

19.04.2021

Secondary School EFL Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Learner Autonomy in Online EFL Teaching/ Learning Context in Tur...

## 39. 5. How learning is assessed \*

*Uygun olanların tümünü işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Undesirable
- ☐ Slightly desirable
- ☐ Quite desirable
- ☐ Very desirable
- ☐ Unfeasible
- ☐ Slightly feasible
- ☐ Quite feasible
- ☐ Very feasible

## 40. 6. The teaching methods used \*

*Uygun olanların tümünü işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Undesirable
- ☐ Slightly desirable
- ☐ Quite desirable
- ☐ Very desirable
- ☐ Unfeasible
- ☐ Slightly feasible
- ☐ Quite feasible
- ☐ Very feasible

## 41. 7. Classroom management \*

*Uygun olanların tümünü işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Undesirable
- ☐ Slightly desirable
- ☐ Quite desirable
- ☐ Very desirable
- ☐ Unfeasible
- ☐ Slightly feasible
- ☐ Quite feasible
- ☐ Very feasible

**LEARNERS HAVE THE ABILITY TO:**

Please tick TWO boxes for each statement – one for desirability and one for feasibility.

**42. 1. Identify their own needs \***

*Uygun olanların tümünü işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Undesirable
- ☐ Slightly desirable
- ☐ Quite desirable
- ☐ Very desirable
- ☐ Unfeasible
- ☐ Slightly feasible
- ☐ Quite feasible
- ☐ Very feasible

**43. 2. Identify their own strengths \***

*Uygun olanların tümünü işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Undesirable
- ☐ Slightly desirable
- ☐ Quite desirable
- ☐ Very desirable
- ☐ Unfeasible
- ☐ Slightly feasible
- ☐ Quite feasible
- ☐ Very feasible

19.04.2021

Secondary School EFL Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Learner Autonomy in Online EFL Teaching/ Learning Context in Tur...

## 44. 3. Identify their own weaknesses \*

*Uygun olanların tümünü işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Undesirable
- ☐ Slightly desirable
- ☐ Quite desirable
- ☐ Very desirable
- ☐ Unfeasible
- ☐ Slightly feasible
- ☐ Quite feasible
- ☐ Very feasible

## 45. 4. Monitor their progress \*

*Uygun olanların tümünü işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Undesirable
- ☐ Slightly desirable
- ☐ Quite desirableVery desirable
- ☐ Unfeasible
- ☐ Slightly feasible
- ☐ Quite feasible
- ☐ Very feasible

## 46. 5. Evaluate their own learning \*

*Uygun olanların tümünü işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Undesirable
- ☐ Slightly desirable
- ☐ Quite desirable
- ☐ Very desirable
- ☐ Unfeasible
- ☐ Slightly feasible
- ☐ Quite feasible
- ☐ Very feasible

19.04.2021

Secondary School EFL Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Learner Autonomy in Online EFL Teaching/ Learning Context in Tur...

## 47. 6. Learn co-operatively \*

*Uygun olanların tümünü işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Undesirable
- ☐ Slightly desirable
- ☐ Quite desirable
- ☐ Very desirable
- ☐ Unfeasible
- ☐ Slightly feasible
- ☐ Quite feasible
- ☐ Very feasible

## 48. 7. Learn independently \*

*Uygun olanların tümünü işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Undesirable
- ☐ Slightly desirable
- ☐ Quite desirable
- ☐ Very desirable
- ☐ Unfeasible
- ☐ Slightly feasible
- ☐ Quite feasible
- ☐ Very feasible

## Section 3: Your Learners and Your Teaching in Online Context

## 49. 1. To what extent do you agree with the following statement? Choose ONE answer: In general, the students I teach English most often to have a fair degree of learner autonomy \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

19.04.2021

Secondary School EFL Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Learner Autonomy in Online EFL Teaching/ Learning Context in Tur...

50. 2. To what extent do you agree with the following statement? Choose ONE answer: In general, in teaching English at school I give my students opportunities to develop learner autonomy. \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

#### Section 4: About Yourself

Please tell us about your background.

51. 4. Years of experience as an English language teacher (Tick ONE): \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ 0-4
- ☐ 5-9
- ☐ 10-14
- ☐ 15-19
- ☐ 20-24
- ☐ 25+

52. 5. Highest qualification (Tick ONE): \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- ☐ Certificate
- ☐ Diploma
- ☐ Bachelor's
- ☐ Master's
- ☐ Doctorate
- ☐ Other

19.04.2021

Secondary School EFL Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Learner Autonomy in Online EFL Teaching/ Learning Context in Tur...

53. 6. Nationality \*

---

54. 7. Gender (Tick ONE): \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*☐ Female☐ Male

55. 8. Which grades do you teach most hours on? (Tick ONE): \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*☐ 5th grades☐ 6th grades☐ 7th grades☐ 8th grades

#### Section 5: Further Participation

56. 9. In the next stage of the study we would like to talk to individual teachers to learn more about their views on learner autonomy. Would you be interested in discussing this issue further with us? \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*☐ Yes☐ No

57. 10. If you answered YES to the question above, please write your name and email address here. \*

---

Thank you for taking the time to respond.

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Bu içerik Google tarafından oluşturulmamış veya onaylanmamıştır.

Google Formlar

|     |                                                                                                                                             | Kesinlikle<br>Katılmıyorum | Katılmıyorum             | Kararsızım               | Katılıyorum              | Kesinlikle<br>Katılıyorum |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1.  | Her yaştaki dil öğrencisi uzaktan eğitimde öğrenen özerkliğini geliştirebilir.                                                              | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 2.  | Uzaktan eğitimde öğrenen özerkliği, öğrenciye bir görevi tek başına tamamlaması için düzenli imkânlar verilerek desteklenir.                | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 3.  | Uzaktan eğitimde öğrenen özerkliği, öğrencilerin nasıl öğrenecekleri ile ilgili seçim yapabilmesidir.                                       | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 4.  | Uzaktan eğitimde özerkliği olmayan bireyler muhtemelen verimli dil öğrencisi olamazlar.                                                     | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 5.  | Uzaktan eğitim öğrenen özerkliğinin en etkin bir biçimde gelişimine katkıda bulunur.                                                        | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 6.  | Uzaktan eğitimde öğrencinin ders içeriği ile ilgili kararlar verme hakkının olması öğrenen özerkliğini geliştirir.                          | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 7.  | Uzaktan eğitimde öğrenen özerkliği, bir eğitmen olmadan öğrenmek demektir.                                                                  | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 8.  | Uzaktan eğitimde öğrenen özerkliğini ileri düzeydeki dil öğrencilerinde geliştirmek, yeni başlayanlarda geliştirmekten daha zordur.         | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 9.  | Uzaktan eğitimde öğrenen özerkliğini hem genç dil öğrencilerinde hem de yetişkinlerde desteklemek mümkündür.                                | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 10. | Kendine güvenen dil öğrencileri uzaktan eğitimde kendine güveni olmayanlara göre daha yüksek ihtimalle öğrenen özerkliği geliştirebilirler. | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 11. | Uzaktan eğitimde özerk öğrenciler, özerk olmayanlara göre daha verimli bir şekilde öğrenirler.                                              | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 12. | Uzaktan eğitimde öğrenciler yapacakları aktivitenin türünü seçebilir ise öğrenen özerkliği gelişir.                                         | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |

|     |                                                                                                                                                     |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 13. | Öğrenen özerkliğinin uzaktan eğitimde etkili olması öğretmenin dominant olmadığı ortamda mümkün olabilir.                                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14. | Uzaktan eğitimde öğrenen özerkliği, öğrencilere birbirlerinden öğrenmeye imkân veren aktivitelerle gelişir.                                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15. | Uzaktan eğitimde öğrenen özerkliği, öğretmenin yol gösterdiği geleneksel öğretim yollarının kullanılmaması anlamına gelir.                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 16. | Uzaktan eğitimde öğrenen özerkliği, öğretmenin yardımı olmadan geliştirilemez.                                                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 17. | Uzaktan eğitimde öğrenen özerkliği, öğrencileri birlikte çalışmaya teşvik eden aktivitelerle gelişir.                                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 18. | Uzaktan eğitimde öğrenen özerkliği, sadece yetişkin öğrencilerle mümkündür.                                                                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 19. | Uzaktan eğitimde öğrenen özerkliği bilgisayar başında bireysel çalışma ile desteklenir.                                                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 20. | Uzaktan eğitimde öğrenen özerkliği, öğrencilerin nasıl değerlendirileceğine kendileri karar verdiğinde desteklenir.                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 21. | Uzaktan eğitimde öğrenen özerkliği öğrencilerin öğretmenlerden tamamıyla bağımsız olmalarını gerektirir.                                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 22. | Uzaktan eğitimde grup çalışmaları öğrenen özerkliğinin gelişmesini destekler.                                                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 23. | Uzaktan eğitimde öğrenen özerkliğini yeni başlayan dil öğrencilerinde geliştirmek, ileri düzeydeki dil öğrencilerinde geliştirmekten daha kolaydır. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 24. | Uzaktan eğitimde öğrenen özerkliği öğrencilerin kendi öğrenme materyallerini seçebildiklerinde gelişir.                                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 25. | Uzaktan eğitimde öğrenci merkezli ders ortamı, öğrenen özerkliğini geliştirmek için ideal şartları                                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

|     |                                                                                                                                       |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
|     | sağlar.                                                                                                                               |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
| 26. | Nasıl öğrenileceğini öğrenmek, uzaktan eğitimde öğrenen özerkliğini geliştirmek için anahtardır.                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 27. | Uzaktan eğitimde öğrenen özerkliğinin geliştirilmesinin temeli yalnız çalışmayı öğrenmektir.                                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 28. | Uzaktan eğitimde öğrencinin internet kullanmasını gerektiren sınıf dışı görevler, öğrenen özerkliğini destekler.                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 29. | Uzaktan eğitimde öğrencinin kendi öğrenmesini gözlemleme becerisi, öğrenen özerkliğinin temelidir.                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 30. | Uzaktan eğitimde motive edilmiş dil öğrencileri motive edilmemiş öğrencilerden daha yüksek ihtimalle öğrenen özerkliği geliştirirler. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 31. | Uzaktan eğitimde dil öğrencisinin dil yetkinliği onların öğrenen özerkliği geliştirme becerisini etkilemez.                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 32. | Uzaktan eğitimde öğretmenin öğrenen özerkliğini desteklemede önemli bir rolü vardır.                                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 33. | Bir dil öğrencisinin uzaktan eğitimde başarılı olmasında, öğrenen özerkliğinin olumlu etkisi vardır.                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 34. | Uzaktan eğitimde özerk hale gelebilmek için öğrencilerin kendi öğrenmelerini değerlendirme yeteneğini geliştirmeleri gerekir.         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



## 2. BÖLÜM: Öğrencileriniz ve Öğretiminiz

### 1. Aşağıdaki cümleye ne kadar katılıyorsunuz? Uygun cevabı seçiniz.

*Genel anlamda okulumda öğretim yaptığım öğrencilerim belli bir düzeyde özerkliğe sahip.*

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum ☐ Katılmıyorum ☐ Kararsızım ☐ Katılıyorum ☐ Kesinlikle katılıyorum ☐

### 2. Aşağıdaki cümleye ne kadar katılıyorsunuz? Uygun cevabı seçiniz.

*Genel anlamda okulumda İngilizce öğretirken öğrenci özerkliğini geliştirmek için öğrencilerime fırsatlar veririm.*

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum ☐ Katılmıyorum ☐ Kararsızım ☐ Katılıyorum ☐ Kesinlikle katılıyorum ☐

## 4. BÖLÜM: Kendinizle İlgili

**Lütfen kendinizle ilgili bilgi verin.**

3. İngilizce Öğretmeni olarak deneyiminiz (Birini seçiniz):

0-4 ☐ 5-9 ☐ 10-14 ☐ 15-19 ☐ 20-24 ☐ 25+ ☐

4. Eğitim seviyeniz (Birini seçiniz):

Sertifika ☐ Diploma ☐ Lisans ☐ Yüksek Lisans ☐ Doktora ☐ Diğer ☐

5. Hangi sınıflara İngilizce öğretiyorsunuz? (Birini seçiniz):

5. sınıf ☐ 6.sınıf ☐ 7.sınıf ☐ 8. Sınıf ☐

## 5. BÖLÜM: Görüşme Katılımı

Çalışmanın sonraki aşamasında İngilizce öğretmenleriyle öğrenci özerkliğine yönelik görüşleri konusunda daha kapsamlı sohbet etmek isteriz. Bu konuda bizimle sohbet etmek ister misiniz?

Evet ☐ Hayır ☐

**Yukarıdaki soruya ‘Evet’ dediyseniz lütfen adınızı ve telefon numaranızı belirtiniz.**

**Adı, Soyadı:**

**Telefon numarası:**

Katılımınız için teşekkür ederim.

**Semra Karaali**

Çukurova Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Eğitim Fakültesi, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi  
Yüksek Lisans Öğrencisi, İngilizce Öğretmeni



#### **APPENDIX D. Interview Questions (Designed by Borg and Al-Busaidi, 2012)**

1. Age: (not compulsory)
2. Gender:
3. Nationality:
4. Can you describe your education level?
5. How long have you been teaching?
6. Which grade students do you teach?
7. Let's start by talking about your views on autonomy. In a few words, how would you define what learner autonomy means?
8. What for you are the key characteristics of an autonomous language learner?
9. Do you think learner autonomy has a positive effect on success of a language learner? Could you expand how you see the relationship between learner autonomy and language learning in online education?
10. How have you come to develop the views you hold today about learner autonomy and its value? (Prompt as required – the aim here is to explore the roots of their current opinions on learner autonomy):
  - a. Is it an issue you have focused on in your training as a language teacher?
  - b. Have you worked in other contexts where autonomy has been considered an important issue to develop with learners?
  - c. What about your own experience as a language learner- do you feel autonomy was/ has been an issue you were aware of?
11. Focus on Section 2: Desirability and feasibility of learner autonomy.
  - a. In terms of decision making, how do you feel about the desirability and feasibility of learner involvement? To what extent are learners involved in such decisions in online education?
  - b. What do you think about the feasibility and desirability of learners having particular abilities? What are your views of the situation you work in? (prompt- Do you have a favourable/unfavourable view of the situation you work in?)
12. Focus on Section 3 Question 1- 'In general, the students I teach English most often to at my school have a fair degree of learner autonomy.'
13. Focus on Section 3 Question 2- 'In general, during online English lessons I give my students opportunities to develop learner autonomy':

- a. **Firstly, what role, if any, do you feel the teacher has in promoting learner autonomy?**
- b. **Can you say more about what you do to encourage autonomy in your learners?**

*(For prompting)*

- I. Do you expect students to evaluate their learning?
- II. Do you encourage them to monitor their progress?
- III. Do you expect them to identify their learning problems or needs?
- IV. Do you encourage them to set goals?
- V. Do you encourage students to use online resources?
- VI. Do you ask students for their preferences while working on tasks?
- VII. Do you allow collaborative work in groups?

- c. **What changes in the way the school operates would allow you to promote learner autonomy better?**

- 14.** In your opinion what can be done to support teachers regarding learner autonomy in online education? Do you think teachers need to be provided with training workshops? Do you have any suggestions for the kinds of issues the workshops might cover?

## APPENDIX E. Görüşme Soruları (Türkçe)

### *Çevrimiçi eğitimde özerklik*

- 1- Yaşınız?
- 2- Cinsiyetiniz?
- 3- Ulusunuz?
- 4- Eğitim seviyenizden bahseder misiniz?
- 5- Ne kadar süredir çalışıyorsunuz?
- 6- Hangi sınıflara ders veriyorsunuz?
- 7- Öğrenci özerkliğine yönelik algılarınız ya da görüşleriniz ile ilgili konuşalım. Birkaç kelimeyle öğrenci özerkliğini nasıl tanımlarsınız?
- 8- Size göre özerk dil öğrencisinin belli başlı özellikleri nelerdir?
- 9- Online eğitimde öğrenci özerkliği ve dil öğrenimi arasındaki ilişkiyi nasıl değerlendiriyorsunuz?
- 10- Öğrenci özerkliği ve onun değerine yönelik olan mevcut görüşlerinizi nasıl geliştirdiniz?
- A- Bu sizin İngilizce öğretmeni olarak eğitiminizde odaklandığınız bir konu mudur?
- B- Otonominin öğrencilerin gelişimi ile ilgili önemli bir konu olarak dikkate alındığı başka bir bağlamda çalıştınız mı ya da çalışmakta mısınız?
- C- Dil öğrenen bir öğrenci olarak kendi deneyiminizi düşündüğünüzde otonomi sizin haberdar olduğunuz bir konu muydu?

### **11- Bölüm 2 : Otonomi istenilebilirliği ve uygulanabilirliği**

- A- Öğrencilerin karar verme bakımından süreçte aktif olmasının istenilebilirliği ve uygulanabilirliği ile ilgili neler hissediyorsunuz ve öğrenciler online eğitimde alınan kararlarda hangi aşamaya kadar etkililer?
- B- Özel ya da belirli becerileri olan öğrencilerin özerkliğinin uygulanabilirliği ve istenilebilirliği ile ilgili ne düşünüyorsunuz? Öğrenciler çevrimiçi eğitim-öğretim bağlamında kararlarda ne kadar yer alıyor?

### **12 – Bölüm 3 :**

Soru 1 – Genel Anlamda okulunda öğretim yaptığım öğrencilerimin belli bir seviyede öğrenci özerkliği var diyebilir misiniz?

### 13- Bölüm 3

Soru 2 – Genel anlamda çevrimiçi İngilizce dersleri süresince ben öğrencilerimdeki özerklik düzeyini geliştirmek için fırsatlar yaratırım diyebilir misiniz?

**A- Öncelikle size göre öğrenci özerkliği geliştirmede öğretmenin rolü nedir?**

**Örneğin : (gerekli görülürse sorulacak sorulacak)**

- 1- Öğrencileri çevrimiçi kaynaklar kullanmaya yönlendirir misiniz?
- 2- Öğrencilerin etkinliklerde rol alırken tercihlerinin neler olduğunu sorar mısınız?
- 3- Öğrencilerin iş birliği halinde oldukları grup çalışmalarına olanak tanır mısınız?
- 4- Kendi öğrenimlerini değerlendirmelerini bekler misiniz?
- 5 – Kendi ilerleme düzeylerini gözlemleme konusunda cesaretlendirir misiniz?
- 6 – Öğrenimleriyle ilgili problemleri ve ihtiyaçlarının farkında olup bunları ne şekilde belirlemeleri gerektiğini bilmelerini bekler misiniz?
- 7 – Onların kendi hedeflerini belirlemelerini ister misiniz?

**C – Okulun çalışma şeklindeki ne gibi değişiklikler sizin öğrenci özerkliğini artırma cabanız yolunda cesaretlenmenize olanak sağlar?**

14 – Size göre öğretmenlerin çevrimiçi eğitimde öğrenci özerkliği ile ilgili destek alması için ne yapılmalı? Sizce öğretmenler eğitim seminerleri almalı mı? Seminerlerin içermesi gerektiğini düşündüğünüz konularla ilgili önerileriniz var mı?

## APPENDIX F. Permission Letters

03/06/2021-108551



T.C.  
ÇUKUROVA ÜNİVERSİTESİ  
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Müdürlüğü

Sayı : E-95704281-604.02.02-108551  
Konu : Etik Kurul Onay Belgesi

03/06/2021

### YABANCI DİLLER EĞİTİMİ BÖLÜM BAŞKANLIĞINA

İlgi : a) 54767575 - 05/04/2021 tarihli, 72106 sayılı ve "Etik Kurulu (Semra KARAALİ)"  
konulu  
b) yazı,

İlgi yazınız ekinde Enstitümüz Müdürlüğüne gönderilen İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı Yüksek Lisans öğrencilerinden 2019931250 nolu Semra KARAALİ' nin danışmanı Doç. Dr. Gülten İLİN'in yönetiminde hazırladığı (Secondary School EFL Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Leramer Autonomy in Online EFL Teaching/ Learning Context (Ortaokul İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Türkiye'de Çevrimiçi Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce Öğretimi ve Öğrenimi Bağlamında Öğrenen Özerkliğine Yönelik Algıları ve Uygulamaları) başlıklı yüksek lisans tezi çalışmasının "Etik Kurul Onay Belgesi" ekte sunulmuştur.

Gereğini bilgilerinize rica ederim.

Prof.Dr. Serap ÇABUK  
Enstitü Müdürü

Ek:Etik Kurul Onay Belgesi

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