



Sınrsız Eđitim ve Arařtırma Dergisi



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The Journal of Limitless Education and Research, Volume 6, Issue 3

Dear Readers,

We are delighted to present you the November 2021 issue of the Journal of Limitless Education and Research.

Our journal has been published continually by the Limitless Education and Research Association (SEAD) since 2016. The aim of our journal is to publish theoretical and applied studies in the field of education and research, to share scientific information at national and international level, create an environment for the production of new information, announce innovations and thereby contribute to scientific production in our country. For this purpose, priority is given to qualified research and review publications in our Journal.

In our journal, the Editorial Board, the Scientific Committee, and the Referee Board members, who meticulously evaluate the manuscripts, are formed by academics that are prestigious experts in their field. Our journal that is strengthened much more with the priceless contributions of the scientists who serve on the boards, authors and you readers, continues to be published without compromising its academic quality.

The Journal of Limitless Education and Research is published three times a year, scanned in various national and international indexes, and it receives numerous citations. Our journal, which had a SOBIAD impact factor of 0.3 in 2019, will be published both in Turkish and English languages as of this issue. Thus, it is aimed at reaching wider audience.

We wish our journal to contribute to the scientific field, and acknowledge all editors, authors and referees who contributed to its preparation. With our best regards.

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Sınırsız Eğitim ve Araştırma Dergisi, Cilt 6, Sayı 3

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Sevgili Okurlar,

Sizlere Sınırsız Eğitim ve Araştırma Dergisinin Kasım 2021 sayısını sunmaktan büyük mutluluk duyuyoruz.

Dergimiz, Sınırsız Eğitim ve Araştırma Derneği tarafından 2016 yılından bu yana kesintisiz olarak yayınlanmaktadır. Amacımız, eğitim ve araştırma alanındaki kuramsal ve uygulamalı çalışmaları yayınlamak, bilimsel bilgileri ulusal ve uluslararası düzeyde paylaşmak, yeni bilgiler üretilmesine ortam hazırlamak, yenilikleri duyurmak ve böylece ülkemizdeki bilimsel üretime katkı sağlamaktır. Bu amaçla Dergimizde nitelikli araştırma ve derleme yayınlarına öncelik verilmektedir.

Dergimizin Editör Kurulu, Bilim Kurulu ve yayınları titizlikle değerlendiren Hakem Kurulu üyeleri alanında uzman akademisyenlerden oluşmaktadır. Kurullarda görev yapan bilim insanları, yazarlar ve siz okurların değerli katkılarıyla her sayıda biraz daha güçlenen Dergimiz, akademik kalitesinden ödün vermeden yayın hayatını sürdürmektedir.

Sınırsız Eğitim ve Araştırma Dergisi yılda üç sayı olarak yayınlanmakta, çeşitli ulusal ve uluslararası düzeydeki indekslerde taranmakta, çok sayıda atıf almaktadır. 2019 yılı SOBIAD etki faktörü 0,3 olan Dergimiz, artık hem Türkçe hem de İngilizce yayınlanmaktadır. Böylece daha geniş bir okur kitlesine ulaşılmaya çalışılmaktadır.

Dergimizin bilimsel alana katkıları getirmesini diliyor, hazırlanmasında emeği geçen bütün editör, yazar ve hakemlere teşekkür ediyoruz. Saygılarımızla.

SINIRSIZ EĞİTİM VE ARAŞTIRMA DERNEĞİ

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EFL Teachers' Perceptions on Learner Autonomy*

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Abstract: Learner autonomy is the ability to take charge of one's own learning, have the capacity for detachment, critical reflection, decision making, and independent action. There have been studies conducted on learner autonomy at university level but not at the secondary school level. The present mixed type research was aimed to explore secondary school EFL teachers' perceptions about what learner autonomy is, and what their role in promoting learner autonomy, desirability and feasibility of learner autonomy is. The participants were selected by purposive sampling method. A questionnaire and a structured interview, which were designed by Al-Busaidi (2012) were adopted and implemented. The data collected from the questionnaire was analyzed with SPSS software and the data collected through structured interviews was exposed to qualitative thematic analyses. The results reveal that one of the biggest challenges in implementing learner autonomy is students' lack of motivation, interest, and reluctance to take responsibility of their learning. It is also confirmed that there is a strong correlation between the motivation and learner autonomy both of which trigger the development of each other.

Keywords: Learner autonomy, perceptions, feasibility, desirability, EFL teachers,

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1. Introduction

Learner autonomy (LA) described as one's taking responsibility of their own learning has a positive impact on language efficiency (Little, 2004; Benson, 2001). LA is based on the notion that each individual evaluates the input they take differently and constructs different outputs. Therefore, they have their own needs; that is why they need to set their own goals, make their own decisions, and assess themselves. According to this view, learning best occurs when learners set their own goals, make their own decisions, which means that learners must have their own autonomy in their learning process. Scholars in the field give different definitions for learner autonomy. For instance, Holec (1981) defines learner autonomy as the ability to take charge of one's own learning, whereas Little (1991) adds another dimension as the capacity for detachment, critical reflection, decision making, and independent action. It is also accentuated as a sense of being in control of one's own future (O'Donnell, 2013).

LA has many functions in language acquisition. For instance, it can solve the problem of motivation for language learning as it means the intrinsic motivation to learners (Little, 2004) to create efficient and effective language learners, depending on the level of their autonomy level. In addition, it contributes to learners' communicative skills, not only in the classroom environment but also in their academic and social life. According to Dickenson (1987), learner autonomy is promoted for five reasons as of a) practical reasons, b) individual differences, c) educational aims, d) motivation, and e) learning how to learn foreign languages, whereas Cotterall (1995) underlines three reasons, *philosophical*, *pedagogical*, and *practical* to promote it. As afore-mentioned there appears a direct link between success and LA (Little, 1995). In this success, teachers' primary role seems to include learners in decision making, goal setting, and help them take responsibility of their learning. To Candy (1991), learner autonomy is not an inborn talent; learners should gain learner autonomy as a skill to be taught, and it requires practice. Therefore, it is the duty of teachers as a 'moral duty' (Shahsavari, 2014) to foster autonomy as defined by Nunan (1997) in five steps: a) 'raising awareness' of learners, b) 'involving' them in selecting their goals, c) having them 'intervene' in to modify their goals regarding the rising needs of their program, d) enabling them to 'create' their own learning materials, and e) 'transcendence' to let them go beyond their roles as learners and participate in the learning process as teachers, and share their experiences with other learners. In this respect, promoting LA requires teachers to forgo some of their responsibilities, and includes learners to take responsibility in goal setting, decision making, learning process, and allocating

time for each goal and assessment. However, this does not make the teaching job easier, it makes the process much tougher. Teachers encounter many problems in promoting LA in their classes, such as learners' attitudes towards autonomy, curriculum, and teachers' own perceptions about LA.

Ministry of National Education (MoNE) in Turkey went through for radical changes in the curriculum in 2005 so as to realize the needs of 21st century skills on several perspectives, one of which is evolving from teacher-centered approaches to the learner-centered ones. These approaches require promoting LA in class. However, there are only few studies conducted on how LA is perceived and promoted in class in Turkey. Doğan and Mirici (2017) found most of EFL teachers were positively disposed to LA in theory, yet, they had negative attitudes toward its practicality and feasibility in EFL classes. In the same vein, Inozu (2008) revealed that teachers struggle to boost LA in their classes, but they seem to be unsuccessful. Little (1995) and Smith (2000) put forward that teachers uneducated as autonomous instructors cannot foster LA in class efficiently. A study by Ho and Crookal (1995) revealed that the cultural background of the learners and teachers could prevent the promotion of LA. Teachers were also observed to become reluctant to leave their authority. Al Asmari (2013) conducted a study on teachers' perception for learner autonomy and the teachers revealed positive attitudes towards LA and its functions; nevertheless, the teachers themselves did not possess decent training and competence in this area. In the same vein, in the study by Yuzulia and Yusuf (2019), the teachers were conscious enough to promote LA as teaching goals and believed it was essential for students. However, they still faced some difficulties and problems in promoting autonomy, such as low motivated students, monotonous teaching strategy and lack of facilities at school. Aforementioned studies indicate the importance of the beliefs and perceptions of teachers in boosting LA generally at universities. There is a consensus among researchers that LA is of vital importance for efficient language learning, and they also share the idea that learner autonomy needs to be promoted in classrooms (Dickenson, 1987; Rebenius, 2003). The key role in promoting LA belongs to teachers; hence, what teachers perceive from learner autonomy and how they believe it should be promoted in their classes is extremely important, however very few studies were conducted about their perceptions. Therefore, the purpose of the study is to explore the beliefs and perceptions of secondary school English Language teachers about learner autonomy. In order to shed light on the issue, the research questions are framed as follows:

1. What are secondary school EFL teachers' perceptions of learner autonomy?

2. What are the secondary school EFL teachers' perceptions of the contribution of learner autonomy in L2 learning?

3. What are the secondary school EFL teachers' perceptions on the feasibility and desirability of learner autonomy?

2. Method

A mixed type of research design including quantitative and qualitative method was applied to investigate English teachers' perceptions on LA in secondary schools. According to Creswell (2012), teachers' unconscious beliefs may not be stated in questionnaire responses, and their answers to short-answer questionnaires may be impacted by the social desirability factor. To minimize such risks and understand teachers' beliefs more thoroughly, both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. The limitation of the study was curfew caused by Covid19 pandemic, and the interviews applied to participants were realized via mobile phone and e-mail rather than face-to-face.

2.1. Sampling and Participants

Sampling defined by as a small group from target population with whom a researcher can study to obtain data plays a vital role in any study. The participants of the study are 43 EFL teachers (28 Females; 15 Males) working at 29 secondary schools in the fall semester of the 2019-2020 Academic Year in Kozan province, Adana-Turkey. They were chosen by a purposive sampling method in which demographic information is given in the following table.

Table 1.

Demographic Information about Participants

Variables		f	%
Gender	Female	28	65.1
	Male	15	34.9
Year of experience	1-5	4	7.0
	6-10	20	46.5
	11-15	13	30.2
	16-20	4	9.3
	21-25	1	2.3
	Over 26	2	4.7
Age	20-30	24	57.8
	31-40	13	30.2
	41-50	4	9.3
	50 and over	2	4.7

As presented in Table 1, 28 out of 43 participants were female (65.1%) and 15 of them

were male (34,9%). Considering the teaching experience period, only four participants (one-to five years) were found to have the least period of experience, whereas 20 participants had the longer experience (six to ten years). In descending order, 13 participants (eleven to 15 years), and four participants (16 to 20 years); merely one participant had worked for more than 21 years and two participants worked more than 26 years. When their ages were taken into account, 24 (57.8%) of the participants were aged from 20 to 30 years old, 13 participants were aged of 31 to 40. In other words, 38 of the participants were between 20-40 years in range. Only four of the participants were between 41 and 50 years old (%9.3) and the number of the participants who were older than 50 years was only 2 participants with the 4.7% of the total. The majority of the participants (41.9%) teach English for the 8th Graders, which is important stage of cognition for these students as they get prepared for an extremely important exam for their education career.

2.2. Data Collection Instruments

In this mixed research design, a questionnaire and a structured interview, both of which were adapted from Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012), were utilized. The Learner Autonomy Questionnaire includes five parts, the first part of which consists of 37 Likert-scale Items ranging from 1 to 5 (1. Strongly Disagree, 2 Disagree, 3 Unsure, 4. Agree, 5 Strongly Agree) and is designed to collect data about ten constructs which are *technical, psychological, social, political aspects of learner autonomy, the teacher's role in developing learner autonomy, the application of learner autonomy to different cultural contexts, age and learner autonomy, language success and learner autonomy, the implications of learner autonomy for teaching*. The second part designed to examine the *desirability and feasibility* of learner autonomy in EFL classes included two basic questions of what participants think about the desirability and feasibility of learner involvement, and to what extent learners are actually involved in such decisions. The third part had two open-ended questions to understand teachers' beliefs about their students' autonomy level and to what extent they believe they promote LA in their classes. As for the reliability of the questionnaire including 37 Items, a pilot study was conducted, and Cronbach's Alpha value was found to be 87.3, which is considered as valid since over 60.0, which is accepted relevant and clarified.

The interview contains seven main and eleven sub-questions to obtain deeper insights into teachers' perceptions on what LA is, what key characteristics of an autonomous learner are, what the effect of LA on language success is, and how the participants developed their current

views on LA. The fifth question focuses on the participants' perception on the desirability and feasibility of learner autonomy. The sixth question was designed to understand how the participants feel about their students' autonomy level. In the last question the participants were asked whether they gave their students opportunities to develop LA. The semi-structured interviews were conducted with instructor participants so as to shed light on the research questions of this study.

2.3. Data Analyses

The quantitative data collected through the questionnaire was analyzed by using SPSS. The qualitative data collected through structured interviews was subjected to qualitative content analysis. The interviews were conducted through the e-mail and mobile phone due to the curfew that the government imposed as a precaution to prevent coronavirus from spreading. After this process, the steps of emergent coding method were employed. The data was examined thoroughly, and keywords were identified, then these keywords were organized in broader categories by the researcher. In order to enable reliability, this coding process was conducted by an expert in the same field to reach consensus with the researcher and the supervisor. As the study has a mixed type approach, the conclusions obtained from the qualitative and quantitative studies were elaborated and accentuated to get a final conclusion.

3. Findings

The first research question aimed at deducing the EFL teachers' perceptions on LA in classrooms. In order to get the answers for the quantitative data, the 43 participants were asked to answer the questionnaire including 37 items designed to explore teachers' views about what LA is, what the teachers' role is in promoting LA, and its success on language learning, learner-centered methods and LA relationship, technical, psychological and cultural aspects of LA, and age and LA. Table 3 below indicates results of the items (items 29, 33, 11, 37, and 32) related to the psychological perspective of LA.

Table 2
 Psychological Perspective of Learner Autonomy

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree
29 Learning how to learn is key to developing learner autonomy.	.0	.0	2.4	53.7	43.9
33 Motivated language learners are more likely to develop learner autonomy than learners who are not motivated.	.0	4.9	.0	36.6	58.5
11 Confident language learners are more likely to develop autonomy than those who lack confidence.	.0	2.4	7.3	48.8	41.5
37 To become autonomous, learners need to develop the ability to evaluate their own learning.	.0	4.9	4.9	56.1	34.1
32 The ability to monitor one's learning is central to learner autonomy.	.0	14.6	22.0	41.5	22.0

As indicated in Table 2, 53.7% of the participants agreed with the Item 29 which states that *learning how to learn is a key point from the point of learner autonomy*. The Item 33 revealed that 36.6% of the participants agreed and 58.5% of the participants agreed that the possibility of motivated language learners' developing autonomy is higher than unmotivated learners. Regarding Item 11 which states that *confident language learners are more likely to develop autonomy than those who lack confidence*, almost all of the participants think that confident language learners develop LA more easily than those who lack confidence (48.8% agree). The responds to the Item 37 indicate that the majority of the participants think that to become autonomous, learners need to develop the ability to evaluate their own learning (56.1% agree). When Item 32 is considered, most of the participants (41.5%) agree on the ability to monitor one's learning is central to LA and 22.0% of them strongly agree, 22.0% of them are unsure about the statement, whereas 14.6% of them disagree with the statement. Table 4 below indicates the results of teachers' role in promoting LA through the Items (28, 35, 15, 8, 17, 24 and 18).

Table 3.
Teachers' Role in Promoting Learner Autonomy

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree
28 Learner-centered classrooms provide ideal conditions for developing learner autonomy.	.0	2.4	4.9	58.5	24.1
35 The teacher has an important role to play in supporting learner autonomy.	.0	12.2	9.8	51.2	26.8
15 Learner autonomy cannot be promoted in teacher-centered classrooms.	7.3	12.2	26.8	24.4	29.3
8 Learner autonomy means learning without a teacher.	7.3	17.1	29.3	31.7	14.6
17 Learner autonomy implies a rejection of traditional teacher-led ways of teaching.	4.9	14.6	24.4	36.6	19.5
24 Learner autonomy requires the learner to be totally independent of the teacher.	9.8	31.7	29.3	17.1	12.2
18 Learner autonomy cannot develop without the help of the teacher.	19.5	34.1	24.4	22.0	.0

Table 3 indicates that the majority of the participants agree (58.5% agree) with the Item 28 of *learner-centered classrooms provide ideal conditions for developing learner autonomy*. Most of the participants also agree with the Item 35 related to *teacher has an important role to play in supporting learner autonomy*. %51.2 of the participants agreed, whereas 9.8% of them were unsure and 12.2% disagreed.

The Items 15, 8, and 17 appear to be relatively more homogeneous. The majority of the participants (29.3%) strongly agreed with the statement of *learner autonomy cannot be promoted in teacher-centered classrooms*; yet, 26.8% were still unsure, 12.2% disagreed, and 7.3% strongly disagreed with the statement. The Item 8 deduces that most of the participants share the opinion that *LA means learning without a teacher* while 29.3% of the participants were unsure, 17.1% disagree with the statement. The Item 17, stands for that *LA implies a rejection of traditional teacher-led ways of teaching differentiated*. 24.4% of the participants were unsure, while 36.6% agreed with the statement. The majority of the participants (31.7%) disagreed with Item 24 which asserts that *LA requires learner to be totally independent of the teacher*. 9.8% of the participants strongly disagreed with this statement while 29.3% of them were unsure. The Item 18 stands for *LA cannot develop without help of the teacher* that the majority of the participants disagree (34.1%), whereas 22.0% percent of the participants are agree. Table 4 displays the findings on teachers' perception on LA in age, and cultural background reflected in the Items (1, 10, 20, 13, and 23).

Table 4
Age and Cultural Background

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree
1 Language learners of all ages can develop learner autonomy.	.0	12.2	9.8	63.4	14.6
10 It is possible to promote learner autonomy with both young language learners and with adults.	2.4	14.6	7.3	53.7	22.0
20 Learner autonomy is only possible with adult learners.	26.8	36.6	19.5	14.6	2.4
13 Learner autonomy can be achieved by learners of all cultural backgrounds.	.0	14.6	41.5	26.8	17.1
23 Learner autonomy is a concept which is not suited to non-Western learners.	26.8	19.5	41.5	12.2	.0

Table 4 indicates that all ages can develop LA (63.4% agree), and promoting LA with both young language learners and adults is possible (53.7% agree). However, they were unsure about the effect of cultural background on LA. While the majority of the participants (46.3% in total) thought that LA was not a concept suited to non-western learners, 41.5% of them were still unsure. Yet, 17.1% of them strongly agreed that LA could be achieved by learners of all cultural backgrounds. Table 5 presents teachers' perceptions on LA regarding the proficiency of the learners through the Items (34, 26 and 9).

 Table 5.
Learner Autonomy and Proficiency of the Learners

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree
26 Promoting autonomy is easier with beginning language learners than with more proficient learners.	4.9	19.5	19.5	43.9	12.2
9 It is harder to promote learner autonomy with proficient language learners than it is with beginners	4.9	22.0	34.1	31.7	7.3
34 The proficiency of a language learner does not affect their ability to develop autonomy.	19.5	31.7	26.8	14.6	7.3

Table 5 displays the three items related to proficiency of the learner and LA. The Item 26 reveals that *promoting LA is easier with the beginners than with more proficient learners*. Majority, (43.9%) of the participants agreed while 19.5% disagreed. 31.7% of the participants agreed with the Item 9 standing for *its being harder to promote LA with proficient learners than to do it with beginners*, which was the opposite of the previous Item. 34.1% of the participants were still unsure. 31.7% of the participants disagreed with the Item 34 that expresses *the*

proficiency of a language learner does not affect their ability to develop LA while 26.8% of the participants are unsure about the statement. Table 6 below presents teachers' perception on political perspective of LA through the Items (4, 7, 14, 22, 24, 27, and 32).

Table 6.
Perceptions on Political Perspectives of Learner Autonomy

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree
4 Autonomy means that learners can make choices about how they learn.	.0	2.4	2.4	63.4	31.7
7 Involving learners in decisions about what to learn promotes learner autonomy.	.0	2.4	7.3	61.0	29.3
14 Learner autonomy is promoted when learners take part in decision-making to choose the activities they do.	.0	2.4	7.3	58.5	31.7
27 Learner autonomy is promoted when learners can choose their own learning materials.	.0	2.4	12.2	58.5	26.8
22 Learner autonomy is promoted when learners are free to decide how their learning will be assessed.	.0	12.2	17.1	43.9	26.8
32 The ability to monitor one's learning is central to learner autonomy.	.0	14.6	22.0	41.5	22.0
24 Learner autonomy requires the learner to be totally independent of the teacher.	9.8	31.7	29.3	17.1	12.2

The findings in Table 6 reveal the participants' agreement about that learners should involve in the decision-making process of choosing and how they learn (63.4% agree), what to learn (61.0 agree), activities they do (58.5% agree), and the materials they use (58.8% agree). For the Items 24 and 32, learners also should take part in monitoring (41.5% agree) and evaluating process (58.5% agree) to develop learner autonomy. Table 7 below presents teachers' perception on social perspective of LA through the Items (2, 3, 16, 19, 25, and 30).

Table 7.
Perceptions on Social Perspective of Learner Autonomy

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree
3 Learner autonomy is promoted through regular opportunities for learners to complete tasks alone.	.0	4.9	.0	70.7	24.4
2 Independent study in the library is an activity which develops learner autonomy.	.0	7.3	12.2	58.5	22.0
25 Cooperative group work activities support the development of learner autonomy.	.0	2.4	19.5	53.7	24.4
19 Learner autonomy is promoted by activities that encourage learners to work together.	.0	7.3	14.6	51.2	26.8
16 Learner autonomy is promoted through activities which give learners opportunities to learn from each other.	.0	2.4	14.6	43.9	39.0
30 Learning to work alone is central to the development of learner autonomy.	2.4	7.3	34.1	43.9	12.2

According to Table 7, almost all of the participants agree (70.7%) with the Item 3, stating that *LA is promoted through regular opportunities for learners to complete tasks alone*. The Item 2 confirms the same result, 58.5% of the participants agree that independent study in the library is an activity which develops LA. On the other hand, the Item 30 shows that the majority of the participants (43.9%) agree that *learning to work alone is central to the development of LA*, 34.1% of them are unsure about the statement. The Items 25, 19 and 16 reveal that the participants also think that *developing LA also requires cooperative group work activities*. Majority of the participants agreed with the Item 25 which asserts that *cooperative group work activities support the development of LA* (53.7% agree). They also agree with the Item 19 which is of *LA is promoted through activities which give learners opportunity to learn from each other* (43.9% agree). 51.2% of the participants agree that LA is promoted by activities that encourage learners to work together (Item 19).

For the qualitatively data, the participants were asked open-ended questions to get deeper insights about their perceptions on LA with responsibility of learners own learning, self-governing, decision-making, planning their own learning and having knowledge of what to learn and how to learn. Hereinbelow are some excerpts from the participants:

P-26: LA is to decide what, why and how to learn on their own and even be responsible for their own assessment.

P-10: It means self-governing. LA is planning learning activity yourself.

P-30: Autonomy means students' ability of self-learning. If the chance and time is given to learners, it is certainly going to be improved at any level of learners.

P-27: Autonomy in education is a process in which learners learn on their own. If a learner purposes to learn something without receiving help from a teacher and act accordingly, this way of learning is called as" autonomous.

Upon asking about the key characteristics of an autonomous learner, the answers the participants gave were different as below-mentioned:

P-32: The key is curiosity. Students should be curious about learning and what is beyond the information.

P-27: Autonomous learners must be self-confident, interested in the target language, curious, and capable of accessing sources that language learning requires. Self-confidence, interest, curiosity are important factors that are going to motivate autonomous language learners during the self-learning process.

The second research question is about what the secondary school EFL teachers' perception is for the contribution of LA in English learning as given in Table 8 below:

*Table 8.
Perceptions on Learner Autonomy and Language Success Relationship*

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree
12 Learner autonomy allows language learners to learn more effectively than they otherwise would.	.0	2.4	4.9	56.1	36.6
36 Learner autonomy has a positive effect on success as a language learner.	.0	4.9	2.4	53.7	39.0
5 Individuals who lack autonomy are not likely to be effective language learners.	.0	7.3	26.8	51.5	24.4

As indicated in Table 8, Items 12 and 36 support the participants' opinion about *developing LA has a positive effect on language success*. The majority of the participants (56.1%) agree with the Item 12 which asserts that *LA allows language learners to learn more effectively than they otherwise would*. 53.7% of them also agree with the Item 36 which expresses that *LA has a positive effect on success as a language learner*. For Item 5, the participants (51.5%) agree that individuals who lack autonomy are unlikely to be effective language learners.

The qualitative data of the structured interviews also confirmed the participants' agreement that LA has a crucial role in language learning success. They also think that LA is not just one of the factors for success in language learning but also a requirement as reflected by their excerpts below:

P-27: Autonomy is not only a factor that affects success positively but also a requirement for success. Repetition plays an important role in language learning and it is involved in autonomy. Besides, learning is limited to lesson time in non-autonomous learning processes and the limited time restricts the diversity of activities done as well.

P-32: English as a language needs learners' own efforts and investment of time and energy in it. Therefore, it is important to inform the students of LA and increase their awareness to facilitate the language learning process.

P-10: To gain much success, language learners should work properly by self-governing their studies.

P-40: "One knows oneself more than anybody else. That is why a learner who knows about his advantages and disadvantages can learn a language much more effectively and well with his autonomous studies."

P-29: To improve language skill, it is a need to use the target language. That is why autonomous learners become more successful. (Participant 29)

In order to shed light on the third research question of secondary school EFL teachers' perceptions on feasibility and desirability, the findings were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively and presented below. The questionnaire consisted of two sections, the first of which focused on the desirability of learner's involvement in decision making and the second of which was designed to explore teachers' thoughts about the feasibility of learners' involvement in decision-making. The table below lists the statistics of 7 Items which were asked to participants to understand their perceptions on desirability of student involvement in decision-making about the objective of a course, the materials used, the kind of tasks and activities they do, the topics discussed, how learning is assessed, the teaching methods used, and classroom management.

Table 9.

Desirability of Student Involvement in Decision-making

Learners are involved in decisions about:	Undesirable		Slightly Desirable		Quite Desirable		Very Desirable		SD	MEAN
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
1 The objectives of course	5	12.2	8	19.5	16	39.0	12	29.3	.98	2.85
2 The materials used	5	12.2	4	9.8	17	41.5	15	36.6	.98	3.02
3 The kinds of tasks and activities they do	5	12.2	5	12.2	16	39.0	15	36.6	1.00	3.00
4 The topics discussed	4	9.8	7	17.1	18	43.9	12	29.3	.93	2.92
5 How learning is assessed	6	14.6	9	22.0	14	34.1	12	29.3	1.03	2.78
6 The teaching methods used	10	24.4	6	14.6	12	29.3	13	31.3	1.17	2.68
7 Classroom management	12	29.3	9	22.0	11	26.8	9	22.0	1.13	2.41

According to Table 9, Item 2 referring to the learners' involvement in decisions about the materials used had the highest ratio. The majority of the participants (41.5%) rated as "quite desirable" ($X=3.02$). Then, Item 3 was about involving learners in decisions about the kinds of tasks and activities done and 39.0% of the participants rated it as "quite desirable" ($X=3.0$). The findings in Table 10 indicate that learners' involvement in decisions about classroom management (Item 7) which has a mean score of 2.41 (29.3% undesirable), and learners' involvement in decisions about the teaching methods used (Item 6) which has a mean score of 2.68 (24.4% undesirable) were the least desired Items. Regarding the feasibility of the learners' involvement in decisions about the objectives of a course, the materials used, the kinds of tasks and activities they do, the topics discussed, how learning is assessed, the teaching methods used and classroom management are displayed in Table 10.

Table 10.

Feasibility of Student Involvement in Decision-making

Learners are involved in decisions about:	Unfeasible		Slightly Feasible		Quite Feasible		Very Feasible		SD	MEAN
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
1 The objectives of course	6	14.6	9	22.0	20	48.8	6	14.6	.91	2.63
2 The materials used	5	12.2	9	22.0	20	48.8	7	17.1	.90	2.70
3 The kinds of tasks and activities they do	1	2.4	14	34.1	13	31.7	13	31.7	.87	2.92
4 The topics discussed	3	7.3	12	29.3	15	36.6	11	26.8	.91	2.82
5 How learning is assessed	1	12.2	5	26.8	11	43.9	17	17.1	.92	2.65
6 The teaching methods used	7	17.1	10	24.4	16	39.0	8	19.5	.99	2.60
7 Classroom management	8	19.5	10	24.4	15	36.6	8	19.5	1.02	2.56

Table 10 indicates teachers' perceptions on the feasibility of learners' involvement in decision-making process. When findings about the desirability of these same Items presented in Table 9 were compared, the feasibility of learners' involvement in decisions is found to be relatively lower than the desirability of the same Items. For the participants, the most feasible items were learners' involvement in deciding the kinds of tasks (Item 3), the topics discussed (Item 4), and the materials used (Item 2). Nonetheless, the least feasible item was learners' involvement in deciding classroom management (Item 7).

Items 8 to 14 in the third section of the questionnaire were to understand teachers' perceptions on desirability and feasibility of some skills that learners need to develop LA. Table 12 below presents the findings about the teachers' perceptions on desirability of the skills needed for the development of LA.

Table 11.

Desirability of Skills for Learner Autonomy in Students

	Learners have the ability to:	Undesirable		Slightly Desirable		Quite Desirable		Very Desirable		SD	MEAN
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
8	Identify their own needs	4	9.8	8	19.5	16	39.0	13	31.7	0.95	2.92
9	Identify their own strengths	2	4.9	6	14.6	18	43.9	15	36.6	0.84	3.12
10	Identify their own weaknesses	2	4.9	8	19.5	16	39.0	15	36.6	0.87	3.07
11	Monitor their progress	4	9.8	7	17.1	17	41.5	13	31.7	0.94	2.95
12	Evaluate their own learning	5	12.2	10	24.4	14	34.1	12	29.3	1.00	2.80
13	Learn co-operatively	1	2.4	7	17.1	18	43.9	15	36.6	0.79	3.14
14	Learn independently	3	7.3	10	24.4	12	29.3	16	39.0	0.97	3.00

Table 11 indicates the desirability of the skills that learners need to develop LA. For the participants, the most desirable item was learners' ability to learn co-operatively (Item 13). Almost all of the participants (43.9% quite desirable, 36.6% very desirable) thought it was desirable that learners have the ability to learn co-operatively, while merely 2.4% of the participants thought that it was undesirable. To the participants, ability to evaluate their own learning (Item 12) was the least desired one. The table below presents the findings about teachers' perceptions on the feasibility of certain abilities learners need to develop LA. The Items are the same as the ones above-mentioned; however, in this part, the participants were asked to assess the feasibility of the Items (8 to 14).

Table 12.

Feasibility of Skills for Learner Autonomy in Students

	Learners have the ability to:	Unfeasible		Slightly Feasible		Quite Feasible		Very Feasible		SD	MEAN
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
8	Identify their own needs	2	4.9	11	26.8	16	39.0	12	29.3	.87	2.92
9	Identify their own strengths	3	7.3	4	9.8	20	48.8	14	34.1	.86	3.09
10	Identify their own weaknesses	5	12.2	6	14.6	16	39.0	14	34.1	.99	2.95
11	Monitor their progress	2	4.9	11	26.8	16	39.0	12	29.3	.87	2.92
12	Evaluate their own learning	4	9.8	8	19.5	18	43.9	11	26.8	.92	2.87
13	Learn co-operatively	2	4.9	5	12.2	20	48.8	14	34.1	.81	3.12
14	Learn independently	2	4.9	9	22.0	14	34.1	16	39.0	.90	3.07

The findings in Table 12 reveal that teachers' perceptions on the feasibility for these skills are slightly lower than desirability of the same skills. However, their total mean score is 2.99 which stands for "quite feasible". According to the participants, ability to learn co-operatively (Item 13, X=3.12), ability to identify their own strengths (Item 9, X=3.09) and ability to learn independently (Item 14, X= 3.07) had the highest feasibility scores. According to the participants, the least feasible skill was the ability to evaluate their own learning (Item 12) with a mean score of 2.87.

When the data was analyzed qualitatively, it was observed that the majority of the participants agreed on the desirability of LA. They thought being an autonomous learner would a requirement to be able to succeed at learning the language; however, they had some doubts about the feasibility of promoting LA. They were of the opinion that LA needed some flexibility from the point of curriculum and schedule, which, they thought, did not exist in the public-school environment. One of the participants said that if there were not a curriculum, syllabus and any schedule, it would be much easier to teach.

P-27: In my opinion, autonomy is an important element that affects language learning positively. However, it is impossible to involve students widely at a public school.

P-29: We have to finish one unit in a month. I hate it. My students and I have no power to make a decision. In the class I listen to their offers, but mostly, they request me not to speak in English.

Involving learners in the decision-making process is desirable but not feasible, according to the participants. They agree that learner involvement in decision-making will improve their motivation; however, in the public-school environment, they claim that it is unfeasible. They, again, draw attention to limited time and curriculum as a hindrance in the way of promoting LA.

P-10: It is certain learner involvement motivates learners positively. Hence, they should be involved in decision making. Learners can choose what they learn at private language courses. On the other hand, it is not possible for learners at a public school to choose what they learn. As surely known, there is always a strictly scheduled learning syllabus at public schools. However, learners at public schools can choose what kind of activities they will do while they are learning the topics of the scheduled syllabus.

Conclusion, Discussion and Suggestions

The findings collected through the questionnaire and the interviews revealed that Secondary School EFL teachers associated LA with self-awareness, learning to learn, and taking responsibility of learning which matches with the findings in the literature (Al Asmari, 2013; Doğan and Mirici, 2017; Al Busaidi, 2012). This study reveals that collaborative activities, as well as individual activities, help learners develop LA. This result is also confirmed by the previous study (Cakici, 2015) as well as individual perspective of LA, which was confirmed by the study carried out by Doğan and Mirici (2017). According to the findings of this study, participants are of the opinion that learners should have a right to choose what to learn, how to learn and the learning materials in their classes however the desirability and feasibility of involving learners in the assessment of their learning was relatively low which was also confirmed by the study (Doğan and Mirici, 2017). They also think that involving learners in the decision-making process about what to learn and how to learn is not feasible in state school settings.

Considering the age and LA, participants think that it can be developed at any age; nevertheless, they give different responds for the cultural background. The majority of the participants were unsure about the effect of cultural background on LA, which means that there is a tendency to literature, which states that cultural background affects learner autonomy (Ho and Crookal, 1995).

Another finding of this study is that secondary school EFL teachers think that motivated and confident learners can develop LA easier than those who are non- motivated and self-confident. The previous studies (Dickinson, 1987; O'Donnell, Chang & Miller, 2013) reveal a

strong relationship between the motivation and LA. These studies confirm that it leads motivation and provides a shield against negative peer influences, therefore; teachers perceptions on the relationship of motivation and LA can be confirmed. This study confirms that secondary school EFL teachers promote LA primarily trying to motivate learners and trying to equip them with autonomous learning strategies by giving information about the importance of language learning, benefits explaining them learning how to learn, which are key factors in promoting LA. They try to promote it by giving task-based homework which will provide learners to do research to complete the task. Collaborative activities are also part of how to promote LA. These actions comply with Çakıcı's (2015) five steps to promote LA: increasing learners' awareness of learning strategies, using collaborative learning, self-reports, diaries, evaluation sheets and creating portfolios, and Nunan's (1997) five-step approach which emphasizes raising awareness of the learners about LA.

The findings of the second research question revealed that all the participants agreed on LA as a key point to achieve language success. They do not regard LA as one of the factors to affect language success but goes beyond it.

The findings of the third research question revealed that the participants implemented LA as a highly desirable factor, however, they disagree that promoting LA in classes is feasible. They find the curriculum and time as a hindrance to promote it, which complies with the previous studies (Dogan and Mirici, 2017). They explain this with the limitation of curriculum, lack of interest and lack of willingness to learn English which was expressed in the previous studies as a barrier in front of promoting LA (Benson, 2010; Littlewood, 1997). They also put stress on the usage of language on a daily basis. The learners lack of opportunity to use and need the language in their daily life, which affects their motivation and indirectly LA. According to the interviews, the participants see their learners to be accustomed to being spoon-fed as also found in the study by Inozu (2008) and also confirmed by Mirici (2017). They are reluctant to share the responsibility of evaluation part of the lesson which again complies with the study by Tursun (2010) indicating lesson planning and evaluating belonged to teachers.

In summary, one of the biggest challenges in implementing LA is students' lack of motivation, interest, and reluctance to take responsibility of their learning. It is also confirmed by the participants of this study that there is a strong correlation between the motivation and LA both of which trigger the development of each other; therefore, teachers should be aware

that LA requires teachers to forgo some of their responsibilities of searching for the reasons why learners lack of motivation and finding ways to increase their interest in their lessons.

This study found that secondary school EFL teachers are acquainted with the term learner autonomy and how to implement learner autonomy in their classes, however, it is clearly seen that they consider promoting learner autonomy as unfeasible because of the limitations of the curriculum and the time allotted for the syllabus. Teachers should be aware that the curriculum stands for a framework and teachers are free to stretch it and customize according to learners' needs. Although the 8th Graders at the secondary school get prepared for High school Entrance Exams (LGS), the 5th, 6th and 7th Graders do not feel this stress as much as 8th Graders, which shows that secondary school EFL teachers have three years of time to promote learner autonomy in their classes.

According to findings of this study, one of the biggest challenges in implementing learner autonomy is students' lack of motivation, interest, and reluctance to take responsibility of their learning. It is also confirmed by the participants of this study that there is a strong correlation between the motivation and learner autonomy both of which trigger the development of each other; motivated learners develop learner autonomy easily and learner autonomy help develop learner autonomy. Therefore, teachers should be aware that learner autonomy requires teachers to forgo some of their responsibilities; however, this does not make teachers' duty, including motivating learners easier. They should take the responsibility of searching for the reasons why learners lack of motivation and finding ways to increase their interest in their lessons.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in this study.

RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION ETHICS STATEMENT

The authors declare that research and publication ethics are followed in this study.

AUTHOR LIABILITY STATEMENT

The authors declare that the "Conceptual Framework, Method, Post Draft, Visualization, Review and Editing" part of this work was done by Ümit YAŞAR and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Gülден TÜM.

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