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**AN INVESTIGATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
ENGLISH PROFICIENCY AND LEARNER AUTONOMY THROUGH
OUT-OF-CLASS ACTIVITIES**

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SINIF DIŞI ETKİNLİKLER YOLUYLA ÖĞRENEN ÖZERKLİĞİ VE
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İmza

ABSTRACT

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ENGLISH PROFICIENCY AND LEARNER AUTONOMY THROUGH OUT-OF-CLASS ACTIVITIES

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Learner autonomy is a key concept in language learning. It means taking charge of one's own learning process (Holec, 1981). Reaching a good level of language proficiency requires taking responsibility for learning. A learner should have the autonomous ability, attitude, and action to reach achievement (Oxford, 1999). Thus, students should be encouraged to be autonomous in many ways. In this thesis, participants' learner autonomy was handled from different dimensions and the relationship between learner autonomy and language proficiency was discussed. In addition, students' out-of-class activities were examined as it is the reflection of learner autonomy on behavior. The main purpose of this thesis is to investigate the relationship between learner autonomy and language proficiency through a comparison of learner autonomy characteristics and out-of-class activity preferences with students' English course success. The participants are the 8th-grade students from a state secondary school in Turkey. Two questionnaires (Autonomy Learner Questionnaire which mostly measures ability and attitude and Out-of-class Activity Questionnaire which is based on actual behavior) were administered to the participants. Descriptive and ANOVA analysis methods were used to observe the characteristics of the students and the differences between the success groups which were determined according to students' course successes. Findings show that students generally have a moderate level of learner autonomy. On the other hand, significant differences were found in favor of successful students in terms of learner autonomy. Further findings show that successful students are more autonomous from the dimensions of readiness for self-direction, independent work in language learning, selection of content, and eagerness to learn the target language culture. In addition, it was observed that watching subtitled films and serials, individual work with English textbooks, and active listening to English songs are the most preferred out-of-class activities. It was observed that successful students devote more time to their out-of-class activities than unsuccessful students who spend quite little time. In conclusion, this thesis

suggests that being successful in language learning requires autonomous attitudes and abilities as well as autonomous behaviors such as out-of-class activities.

Keywords: learner autonomy, language proficiency, English course success, out-of-class activities.



ÖZET

SINIF DIŐI ETKİNLİKLER YOLUYLA ÖĞRENEN ÖZERKLİĐİ VE DİL YETERLİLİĐİ ARASINDAKİ İLİŐKİNİN İNCELENMESİ

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Öğrenen özerkliği, dil öğreniminde anahtar bir kavramdır. Kişinin kendi öğrenme sürecinin sorumluluğunu alması anlamına gelir (Holec, 1981). İyi bir dil yeterliliğı düzeyine ulaşmak, öğrenmek için sorumluluk almayı gerektirir. Bir öğrenci, başarıya ulaşmak için özerk yeteneğı, tutuma ve eyleme sahip olmalıdır (Oxford, 1999). Bu nedenle, öğrenciler birçok yönden özerk olmaya teşvik edilmelidir. Bu tez çalışmasında katılımcıların öğrenen özerkliği farklı boyutlarıyla ele alınmış ve öğrenen özerkliği ile dil yeterliliğı arasındaki ilişki tartışılmıştır. Ayrıca öğrencilerin ders dışı etkinlikleri de öğrenen özerkliğinin davranışa yansımaları olmasından ötürü incelenmiştir. Bu tezin temel amacı, öğrenen özerkliği ve dil yeterliliğı arasındaki ilişkiyi, öğrenen özerkliği özellikleri ve sınıf dışı etkinlik tercihleri ile öğrencilerin İngilizce dersi başarılarını karşılaştırarak araştırmaktır. Katılımcılar Türkiye'de bir devlet ortaokulunda öğrenim gören 8. sınıf öğrencileridir. Katılımcılara iki anket (çoğunlukla yetenek ve tutumu ölçen Özerk Öğrenci Anketi ve gerçek davranışa dayalı Sınıf Dışı Etkinlik Anketi) uygulanmıştır. Farklı ders başarısına sahip öğrenciler arasındaki farklılıkları ve öğrencilerin özelliklerini gözlemek için Betimsel ve ANOVA analizi yöntemleri kullanılmıştır. Bulgular öğrencilerin genel olarak orta seviyede öğrenen özerkliğine sahip olduklarını gösteriyor. Diğer yandan, öğrenen özerkliği açısından başarılı öğrencilerin lehine anlamlı farklılıklar bulunmuştur. Diğer bulgular başarılı öğrencilerin öz-yönetim için hazır bulunuşluk, dil öğreniminde bağımsız çalışma, içerik seçimi ve hedef dil kültürünü öğrenmeye isteklilik boyutlarından daha özerk olduklarını göstermektedir. Ayrıca altyazılı film ve dizi izleme, İngilizce ders kitaplarıyla bireysel çalışma ve İngilizce şarkıları aktif olarak dinlemenin ders dışı etkinlikler arasında en çok tercih edilenler olduğu görülmüştür. Başarılı öğrencilerin, başarısız öğrencilere göre sınıf dışı etkinliklere daha fazla zaman ayırdıkları görülmüştür. Sonuç olarak, bu tez, dil öğreniminde başarılı olmanın özerk tutum ve yetenekler kadar sınıf dışı etkinlikler gibi özerk davranışlar gerektirdiğini öne sürmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: öğrenen özerkliği, dil yeterliliği, İngilizce ders başarısı, sınıf dışı aktiviteler



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ETİK BEYAN.....	i
ABSTRACT.....	iv
ÖZET.....	iv
FOREWORD	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	viii
LIST OF TABLES.....	x
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xii
LIST OF ABBREVIATION.....	xiii
CHAPTER I	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1.Introduction to Thesis Focus and Key Terms.....	1
1.2.Statement of The Problem.....	2
1.3.Purpose of The Study.....	3
1.4.Research Questions.....	4
CHAPTER II	
2. LITERATURE REVIEW.....	6
2.1.Language Proficiency.....	6
2.1.1. Language Proficiency and EFL Teaching in Turkey.....	7
2.2.Learner Autonomy.....	11
2.2.1. Historical Background and Different Definitions.....	11
2.2.2. Autonomous Learners.....	13
2.2.3. What to Do to Promote Learner Autonomy.....	15
2.2.4. Learner Autonomy and Language Proficiency.....	17
2.2.5. Learner Autonomy in Turkish Context.....	19
2.2.6. Out-of-class Language Learning and Activities.....	21

CHAPTER III

3. METHODOLOGY.....	25
3.1.Research Design.....	25
3.2.Setting and Participants.....	25
3.3.Data Collection Tools and Procedure.....	26
3.3.1. Autonomy Learner Questionnaire.....	26
3.3.2. Out-of-class Activities Questionnaire.....	28
3.4.Reliability.....	29
3.5.Data Analysis.....	30

CHAPTER IV

4. FINDINGS.....	31
4.1.Scoring of The Autonomy Learner Questionnaire.....	31
4.1.1. Success Groups' Dimensional Scores.....	33
4.1.1.1.Dimension 1- Readiness for Self-Direction.....	33
4.1.1.2.Dimension 2- Independent Work in Language Learning.....	35
4.1.1.3.Dimension 3 – Importance of Class/Teacher.....	36
4.1.1.4.Dimension 4 – Role of Teachers.....	37
4.1.1.5.Dimension 5- Language Learning Activities.....	37
4.1.1.6.Dimension 6- Selection of Content.....	39
4.1.1.7.Dimension 7- Objectives/Evaluation.....	39
4.1.1.8.Dimension 8 - Assessment/Motivation.....	40
4.1.1.9.Dimension 9 – Other Cultures.....	41
4.1.2. Comparison of Each Group's Learner Autonomy via ANOVA.....	43
4.1.2.1.Multiple Comparisons between Sub-groups.....	44
4.2.Descriptive Statistics of Out-of-class Activity Questionnaire.....	45
4.2.1. Student's Answers to Open-ended Questions.....	53

CHAPTER V

5. DISCUSSION.....	55
5.1.What are the characteristics of the 8 th -grade learners' learner autonomy?.....	55
5.2.What types of out-of-class activities are preferred by 8 th -grade students learning English as a foreign language?	57
5.3.To what extent is the course success related to students' autonomous features and out-of-class activity preferences?.....	59
5.4.What is the relationship between learner autonomy and language proficiency?.....	60

CHAPTER VI

6. CONCLUSION.....	62
6.1.Pedagogical Implications.....	63
6.2.Limitations.....	64
6.3.Suggestions for Future Research.....	65
REFERENCES.....	66
APPENDICES.....	73
Appendix 1. Autonomy Learner Questionnaire.....	74
Appendix 2. Autonomy Learner Questionnaire in English.....	77
Appendix 3. Out-of-class Activities Questionnaire.....	80
Appendix 4. Out-of-class Activity Questionnaire in English.....	83
Appendix 5. Permissions for the Research Instruments.....	85
Appendix 6. Students' Responses to Autonomy Learner Questionnaire.....	86

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. 1997, 2005, and 2013 reforms made in Turkey.....	8
Table 2. Results of the English Proficiency Index.....	9
Table 3. Genders of the Participants.....	25
Table 4. Ages of the Participants.....	25
Table 5. Areas for Investigation in the Autonomy Learner Questionnaire	27
Table 6. The Content of Out-of-class Activity Questionnaire.....	29
Table 7. Skewness and Kurtosis Results of Autonomy Learner Questionnaire.....	29
Table 8. Skewness and Kurtosis Results of Out-of-class Activity Questionnaire.....	30
Table 9. Chart of ALQ Scores Determining the Degree of Learner Independency (Egel, 2003, p. 78).....	32
Table 10. General Autonomy Scores of 8 th Graders.....	32
Table 11. The Way of Scoring of Each Dimension.....	33
Table 12. The Items of Dimension 1.....	34
Table 13. The Items of Dimension 2.....	35
Table 14. The Items of Dimension 3.....	36
Table 15. The items of Dimension 4.....	37
Table 16. The Items of Dimension 5.....	38
Table 17. The Items of Dimension 6.....	39
Table 18. The Items of Dimension 7.....	40
Table 19. Items of Dimension 8.....	40
Table 20. The Items of Dimension 9.....	41
Table 21. Dimensional Dominances of the Success Groups and Total Students.....	42
Table 22. ANOVA Results of the Autonomy Learner Questionnaire (ALQ).....	43
Table 23. Scheffe Results of Autonomy Learner Questionnaire.....	44
Table 24. Students' Responses to Out-of-class Activities.....	45
Table 25. The Frequency Means of Out-of-Class Activities in Terms of Course Success.....	46
Table 26. Students' Responses to Time Dedication.....	48
Table 27. Duration of Out-of-class Activities on a Daily or Weekly Basis.....	49
Table 28. Students' Responses to Source of Motivation of Performing Out-of-class Activities.....	49

Table 29. The Means of Source of Motivation Items for Performing Out-of-class Activities.....	50
Table 30. Students' Responses to the Activities Helping to Reach the Current Level of English.....	51
Table 31. The Activities Helping to Reach the Current Level of English.....	51
Table 32. Students' Responses to the Importance of Future English Learning.....	52
Table 33. The Importance of Out-Of-Class English Learning for the Future of Life.....	53



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. “Readiness for Self-Direction” Scores of Success Groups.....	34
Figure 2. “Independent Work in Language Learning” scores of successful groups.....	35
Figure 3. “Importance of Class/Teacher” Scores of the Success Groups.....	36
Figure 4. “Role of Teacher” Scores of Success Groups.....	37
Figure 5. “Language Learning Activities” Scores of Success Groups.....	38
Figure 6. “Selection of Content” Scores of Success Groups.....	39
Figure 7. “Objectives/Evaluation” Score Results of Success Groups.....	40
Figure 8. “Assessment/Motivation” Results of Success Groups.....	41
Figure 9. “Other Cultures” Scores of Success Groups.	42
Figure 10. The Means of Out-of-Class Activities in Terms of Course Success.....	48

LIST OF ABBREVIATION

ALQ	Autonomy Learner Questionnaire
CALL	Computer Assisted Language Learning
CEFR	The Common European Framework of References for Languages
CoE	Council of Europe
EFL	English as Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
LGS	Liseye Giriş Sınavı (High School Entrance Exam)
MEB	Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı
MoNE	Ministry of National Education
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Science
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language

CHAPTER I

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction to Thesis Focus and Key Terms

Learner autonomy is a popular term since 1981 when Holec (1981) introduced it to the literature. It basically means learners' ability to take charge of their own learning process. Even if it was coined by Holec (1981), Little (2007) states that learner autonomy was shaped under the effect of learner-centered theories of education with the meaningfully close phrases such as 'independent learning' and 'critical thinking'. These terms (independent learning and critical thinking) do not fully meet the meaning of learner autonomy. The main difference of learner autonomy from independent learning is the absence of full independency from a teacher. A learner with autonomy constructs knowledge under the guidance of a teacher. What is confusing in defining learner autonomy is about the role of the teacher. In his study, Dam (2003, p. 137) quotes three statements from Little (1991, p. 3) to highlight the role of the teacher and what is not autonomy:

- Autonomy is not a synonym for self-instruction; in other words, autonomy is not limited to learning without a teacher.
- In the classroom context, autonomy does not entail an abdication of responsibility on the part of the teacher; it is not a matter of letting the learners get on with things as they best can.
- On the other hand, autonomy is not something that teachers do to learners; that is, it is not a teaching method.

When considered in the context of formal education, it is not possible for the students studying at school to be completely independent from a teacher and educational institution. In this respect, a student who analyzes and evaluates his/her own learning becomes an autonomous learner, not an independent one. Therefore, this study focuses on the autonomy of students in the context of formal education, not independency.

The other term (critical thinking) mentioned by Little (2007) as the shaper of learner autonomy is a skill that an autonomous learner should have. The definition of critical thinking made by Paul and Elder (1990, p. 2) is that "critical thinking is the art of analyzing and evaluating thinking with a view to improve it." Analyzing and evaluating are necessary to be an autonomous learner. Scholars (Benson, 2001; Dam, 2003; Little and Dam, 1998; Nunan, 2003) emphasize three abilities of autonomous learners as planning, monitoring, and

evaluating. The similarity between these abilities of autonomous learners and the definition of critical thinking tells us that autonomous learners should have a kind of critical thinking.

Language proficiency is a term defining the ability to use of language for real-life purposes (Clark, 1972). The given importance to this term started in the 1970s (Harsch, 2017). Since then, different steps have been taken to achieve a good level of language proficiency. Understanding the nature of language and what is beneficial in learning a language is one of these steps. Achieving a good level of language proficiency requires taking responsibility for learning. Therefore, learner autonomy is beneficial for language proficiency (Oxford, 1999). Understanding the relationship between learner autonomy and language proficiency is a current topic nowadays. Even if there are few studies whose findings show no relationship between learner autonomy and language proficiency (Ünal et al, 2017; Zarei and Zarei, 2015), most of the studies (Dafei, 2007; Jianfeng et al, 2018; Le Nguyen, 2008; Melvina and Julia, 2021; Sakai and Takagi, 2009) show a positive relationship between these two concepts.

In this thesis, the relationship between learner autonomy and language proficiency is discussed. However, language proficiency is handled indirectly. The reason for this is that the language proficiency of the participants could not be measured; instead, their success in the English course was looked at. English course success includes the results of the paper exams measuring the English subject knowledge they studied in the previous semester and the in-class participation grades. Here, it is focused on which aspects the students with different success in English courses are autonomous and their out-of-class activity preferences.

The other focus of this thesis is out-of-class activities which are non-prescribed activities independently performed by learners to improve their language proficiency (Benson, 2011). In order for language learning to be permanent, the learner must be constantly exposed to the language and do something about it. Therefore, learning should not be limited to the classroom environment. The classroom environment is very important for learning. However, only classroom teaching and activities are insufficient for permanent learning. Out-of-class activities are also important for permanent learning. In this thesis out-of-class activity preferences of the participants were questioned and compared according to their course success

1.2. Statement of The Problem

The literature review shows that the importance given to learner autonomy has increased recently in the world and in Turkey. For Turkey, the use of the term 'learner autonomy' in the 2013 curriculum program prepared by the Ministry of National Education

(MoNE) is a concrete indicator of this. However, there isn't much research investigating learner autonomy in the Turkish context. While some studies conducted in Turkey (Balçıklı, 2008; Çakıcı, 2015; Ergür, 2010) review learner autonomy in theoretical understanding, most of them (Çakıcı, 2017; Doğan and Mirici, 2017; Egel, 2003; Işık and Balçıklı, 2020; İnci, 2021; Karasu and Sarı, 2019; Kartal and Balçıklı, 2019; Ünal et al, 2017) are case studies. In this thesis, unlike other studies, learner autonomy and out-of-class activities which are autonomous behaviors are examined in terms of course success. In this respect, this research fills this gap and is thought to contribute to the literature. In addition, the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic forced the whole world to make changes. In this context, face-to-face education was suspended, and the distance education process was started almost all over the world. In the distance education process, students have taken more responsibility for their own learning and the importance of learner autonomy has increased.

Moreover, this thesis handles learners with different characteristics in terms of autonomy. Little (2007) suggests that everyone has learner autonomy while learning their mother tongue. This means that every human has a kind of autonomy because we are exposed to the language and begin to learn shortly after birth. Learning a second language is very similar to learning a first language. Therefore, we need learner autonomy in order to learn a second language. It can be said that every student who is able to learn has a kind of learner autonomy. However, some of them can be more autonomous than others, or they can have different characteristics of autonomy. In a nutshell, this thesis investigates the relationship between learner autonomy and language proficiency through a comparison of the students' out-of-class activities and learner autonomy characteristics with their English course success.

1.3. Purpose of The Study

All the efforts in language instruction are to reach a high level of proficiency. For this purpose, practices have changed throughout history. The most fundamental of these changes is the transition from teacher-centered understandings to student-centered understandings. Today, there are many teaching techniques, methods, and concepts that put the student at the center. Learner autonomy is one of these concepts. In general, learner autonomy consists of learners' acts for the sake of their own learning processes which are not completely dependent on their teachers. Out-of-class activities performed by learners can be given as examples for these acts.

Autonomous learners are supposed to plan, monitor and evaluate their own learning process. Thanks to these abilities, they can realize their shortcomings and choose different out-

of-class activities accordingly. From a different perspective, they can perform out-of-class activities for pleasure, not for their learning process. Performing out-of-class activities either for their learning process or for pleasure can contribute to their course success and language proficiency because they are exposed to the target language in some way. In this thesis, the general purpose is to discuss the relationship between learner autonomy, language proficiency, and out-of-class activity preferences of the students. Its specific aims are:

- To define the characteristics of 8th grade learners' learner autonomy.
- To determine the more dominant feature(s) of learner autonomy in 8th-grade learners.
- To identify the out-of-class activity preferences of the students.
- To determine the frequencies and reasons for the students' out-of-class activity preferences.
- To investigate the differences between the students with different course success in the context of learner autonomy characteristics.
- To determine students' out-of-class activity preferences in terms of their course success.
- To discuss the relationship between learner autonomy and language proficiency through a comparison of the students' out-of-class activities and learner autonomy characteristics with their English course success

1.4. Research Questions

The ability of autonomy forces learners to take responsibility for their own learning. Therefore, learner autonomy affects their way of practice. While a learner with autonomy does some kind of activities for his/her own learning, a learner without autonomy is always dependent on a teacher and can't make independent decisions about his/her learning process. Learners' autonomy can influence their routines and out-of-class activities. This thesis has considered language proficiency, learner autonomy, and out-of-class activities as key concepts and aims to examine the relationship between these three. To reach this aim, the followings were determined as the research questions;

1. What are the characteristics of the 8th-grade learners' learner autonomy?
 - 1.1. Do the 8th graders have a high or low level of learner autonomy?
 - 1.2. Which feature(s) of learner autonomy is/are more dominant in the 8th grade learners?
2. What types of out-of-class activities are preferred by the 8th-grade students learning English as a foreign language?

- 2.1. How frequently do students perform these activities?
- 2.2. Why do the students perform these activities?
3. To what extent is the course success related to students' autonomous features and out-of-class activity preferences?
 - 3.1. Are there any differences between the students with different course success in terms of learner autonomy characteristics?
 - 3.2. Are there any differences between the students with different course success in terms of out-of-class preferences?
4. What is the relationship between learner autonomy and language proficiency?



CHAPTER II

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents a comprehensive literature review on the basic concepts that form the subject of this topic and the previous studies.

2.1. Language Proficiency

Proficiency is a key term in English language teaching. In the 1970s, this term was taken seriously with the efforts of making language tests more communicative with the aim of evaluating authentic language performance (Harsch, 2017). Clark (1972) defines language proficiency as the ability to use language for real-life purposes. That's why he states that language proficiency tests shift their focus not to the classroom but to “the actual situations in which the language is used” (1972, p. 5) (quoted in Farhady, 1982). The Council of Europe's (2001, p. 183) definition of “what someone can do/knows in relation to the application of the subject in the real world” (quoted in Harsch, 2017) is mentioned as the widely accepted definition. Both definitions of Clark (1972) and the Council of Europe (2001) correlate language proficiency with real-life usage of the target language.

In a previous study by Harsch (2014), some issues related to language proficiency were discussed. One of them is whether the language proficiency is unitary or divisible. This debate was aroused due to Oller's (1979) claim of a global language factor. Unitary understanding sees language proficiency as one factor without any sub-skills such as being proficient in speaking, listening, or vocabulary skill. On the other hand, a divisible understanding considers language proficiency into its sub-skills. Accordingly, being proficient in one skill such as vocabulary knowledge doesn't mean being proficient in other skills such as speaking or writing. Harsch (2014) stated that unitary understanding was refuted in a few years even by Oller (1983) who had roused this understanding earlier.

Powers (1982) conducted a study about this dilemma in which he examined some studies with Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) samples whose participants were native and foreign language learners from different nationalities to compare unitary versus divisible language proficiency. The comparison showed that TOEFL samples support either divisible competencies or a unitary factor. Thus, in addition to the general language proficiency of the participants, it is possible to have different proficiency levels in each language competence or skill, just as vocabulary knowledge is at a higher level than grammar knowledge.

At present, conceptualizing language proficiency is more complicated due to the addition of communicative skills, strategies, and linguistic competencies (Harsch, 2017). For instance, CEFR (The Common European Framework of Reference)'s standardization which is one of the most accepted scales for language proficiency all around the world highlights communicative ability.

The methodological message of the CEFR is that language learning should be directed towards enabling learners to act in real-life situations, expressing themselves and accomplishing tasks of different natures. Thus, the criterion suggested for assessment is communicative ability in real life, in relation to a continuum of ability (Levels A1-C2) (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 29).

In the booklet of the Council of Europe (2020), it is also stated that the traditional model of the main four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) describing language proficiency is deficient to handle the complexity of communication and therefore CEFR replaced this model with the communicative language activities and strategies. In the CEFR descriptive scheme which is presented in the booklet, overall language proficiency is mentioned with four sub-sections as general competencies (ability to know, knowing how to know...) communicative language competencies, communicative language activities, and communicative language strategies. The CEFR's emphasis on communication has led Europe and beyond to turn to communication in terms of language proficiency.

2.1.1. Language Proficiency and EFL Teaching in Turkey

English is a lingua franca and the language of science. Thus, the given importance to English as a second or foreign language is increasing all over the world. Most countries try to reach a good language proficiency level. Turkey is one of the countries that attach increasing importance to English education and tries to reach a certain level of English proficiency. For this purpose, new policies and curriculum programs were made in the last decades.

The policy and program changes made in Turkey were investigated by different scholars (Aksoy et al., 2018; Bayyurt, 2012; Kırkgöz, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2017). In her paper, Kırkgöz (2017) discusses three major educational policy reforms (1997, 2005, and 2013 curriculum innovations) made in Turkey under headings. Although there were curriculum changes in 2018, the 2018 curriculum generally copied the 2013 curriculum. Acar (2019) stated that these changes are very small. He also mentions that there were no changes in approaches, goals, methods so on. Table 1 summarizes the main ideas, and concepts affecting the

curriculums and changes made on the main policies (1997, 2005, and 2013) according to the study of Kırkgöz (2017).

Table 1. 1997, 2005, and 2013 reforms made in Turkey

Policies	Effective ideas/concepts	Main changes
The 1997 Innovation	➤ Communicative approach ➤ Shifting to Student-centeredness from teacher-centeredness.	➤ Teacher education programs were restructured. ➤ English education became compulsory at younger ages ➤ A shift of English education from secondary schools to 4th and 5th grades.
The 2005 Innovation	➤ Constructivist approach ➤ Active learning ➤ Use of tasks ➤ Multiple intelligences theory ➤ Content and language-integrated learning	➤ English textbooks were updated ➤ English language preparation year were removed in Anatolian and Super High Schools. ➤ EFL lessons increased from 3 to 4 in all high schools. ➤ Teacher education was updated as 50% of subject-matter knowledge, 30% pedagogical knowledge, and 20% of general knowledge.
The 2013 Innovation	➤ Developing communicative competence ➤ Meeting CEFR standards ➤ Building learner autonomy and problem-solving skills	➤ 4+4+4 educational model has been started to be implemented. ➤ EFL courses were shifted from 4th grades to 2nd grades ➤ Textbooks were updated

When we look at Table 1 we can see that Turkey is trying to achieve world standards year by year. In the 2013 curriculum innovation, communicative competence, and reaching a good proficiency level were aimed with reference to CEFR. As stated before CEFR is one of the most common proficiency scales. It sets “standardization, transparency, coherence, and

consistency” (Çağatay and Gürocak, 2016, p. 705) for different countries all around the world. Çağatay and Gürocak (2016) give us a brief background of CEFR in Turkey in their study investigating the perceptions of English language instructors on CEFR-based curriculum and current instructional practices. The study states the efforts of the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) on adapting English language education to CEFR such as piloted curriculum programs basing CEFR. However, it also criticizes the universities for having a great variety of different curriculums in which some of them aren’t based on CEFR.

The changes made in the name of English education reveal the efforts of the MoNE to reach a better level of English. Despite these efforts, Turkey couldn’t reach the desired level of English proficiency. Table 2 is created according to the English Proficiency Index (<https://www.ef.com.tr/epi/regions/europe/turkey/>) results which show Turkey’s yearly level of English from 2011 to 2022 (EF EPI 2022 Turkey, n.d.).

Table 2. Results of the English Proficiency Index

Year	Number of participating countries	Turkey's Position	Result
2011	44	43	Very low proficiency
2012	54	32	Low proficiency
2013	60	41	Low proficiency
2014	61	47	Very low proficiency
2015	69	50	Very low proficiency
2016	72	51	Very low proficiency
2017	80	62	Very low proficiency
2018	88	73	Very low proficiency
2019	100	79	Very low proficiency
2020	99	69	Low proficiency
2021	112	70	Low proficiency
2022	111	64	Low proficiency

Table 2 shows us that Turkey got a ‘low proficiency’ level in the last three years and a ‘very low proficiency’ level in the remaining years except 2012 and 2013. Although there has been progressing in the last three years compared to previous years, there is no good score and

has fallen behind most of the participating countries. This shows that Turkey needs more progress.

Despite the policy changes, the goals could not be reflected in the classroom environment. There are various reasons for not reaching the desired level. Yücel et al. (2017) analyses the English courses' curricula published over the last 15 years. They suggest that even if the primary school curriculum is in line with curriculum design principles, it is not flexible because it didn't meet the recommended time. Kırkgöz (2008) investigates teachers' implementation of communicative-oriented curriculum. She highlights that teacher training and trainer training are needed especially in the first years of the innovation. Demirpolat (2015, p. 7) mentions "the insufficiency in teacher training, crowded classrooms, equipment problems, the lack of supervision of the foreign language teaching process, the unqualified materials, the lack of a common education method and philosophy" as the main problems in English education on her study investigating the problems and giving pieces of advice on English teaching in Turkey.

When we look at these studies mentioned above, it is obvious that Turkey wants to improve its language proficiency level and has taken steps for this purpose. However, due to various reasons, the changes made with the policies could not be reflected in the classroom environment. Thus, the language proficiency of Turkey remained at a low level.

Communicative competence is desired to be reached by the innovations and its principles are an important part of the curricula. The 2013 educational reform highlights the following statements:

In designing the new ELT curriculum, the principles and descriptors of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR): Learning, Teaching, Assessment were closely followed (CoE, 2001). Accordingly, the new curricular model emphasizes language use in an authentic communicative environment, drawing on an action-oriented approach in order to allow learners to experience English as a means of communication as learners work toward achieving communicative competence. At the second and third grade levels, speaking and listening are emphasized; while reading and writing are incorporated in higher grades as students become more advanced. Throughout each stage, developmentally appropriate learning tasks provide a continued focus on building the learner autonomy and problem-solving skills that are the basis for communicative competence (MEB 2013, p. 2, quoted in Kırkgöz, 2017, p. 247)

Here learner autonomy and problem-solving skills are mentioned as the bases of communicative competence. These abilities should be known by the educators and the students should be supported in order to acquire these abilities. Learner autonomy is one of the most important concepts for this study. Therefore, the next title will elaborate learner autonomy.

2.2. Learner Autonomy

Nowadays, the interest in teaching has shifted to learners from teachers all around the world. The same is true for English teaching. The recent changes made by the MoNE show that Turkey is also trying to catch up with this trend. In the previous section, these changes are summarized and it has been understood that these changes are learner-oriented. Learner autonomy is a concept that puts the learner at the center of learning.

2.2.1. Historical Background and Different Definitions

The history of autonomy goes back several centuries. We can see that many philosophers who lived in history mentioned autonomy in different ways (Benson, 2001). Galileo, Nietzsche, and Dewey are some of them. In his article Balçıkanlı (2008, p. 5) cites Galileo's saying as "you cannot teach a man anything, you can only help him find it within himself." The following well-known saying of Lao Tzu who is a Chinese philosopher also bears traces of autonomy: "Don't give me a fish, teach me how to fish." In other words, when we look at history, it is possible to come across some forms of autonomy in most of the philosophical understandings that put individuals in the center.

Learner autonomy has been shaped by the improvements in modern understandings of education. Because learners are at the center of learner autonomy, constructivism in education played a great deal of work in its development. Little (2007) states that learner-centeredness was highly derived from constructivist theory. The book *Democracy and Education* by John Dewey (1916) prepared the ground for the development of learner autonomy according to Benson (2001). Little (2007) summarizes the development of learner autonomy in language teaching with these sentences:

...partly under the impact of learner-centered theories of education, it was beginning to figure in discussion of language teaching, and through the 1990s more and more national curricula came to include learner autonomy (often dressed in borrowed clothes: 'independent learning', 'critical thinking') as a key goal. (Little, 2007, p. 14).

It seems that with the beginning of discussions in language teaching, the concept of learner autonomy has started to develop with different names in this area. However, the term was first coined by Henri Holec (1981, p. 3) with the generally accepted definition of learner autonomy as “the ability to take charge of one’s own learning” in his report titled ‘Autonomy and Foreign Language Learning. Holec (1981) wrote his report on behalf of the Council of Europe in the context of adult education and the term ‘learner autonomy’ was coined in the literature in this way (Little, 2007).

After Holec (1981), different definitions and explanations are made on learner autonomy. For instance, Little (1995) mentions the basis of learner autonomy as the learner’s acceptance of responsibility for her or his learning. Dickinson (1987) also highlights the responsibility of learning in his definition as “autonomy is a situation in which the learner is totally responsible for all the decisions concerned with his/her learning and the implementation of those decisions” (Dickinson, 1987 cited in Balçıkanlı, 2008, p. 7). Benson and Voller (1997, p. 1-2) mentioned that learner autonomy can be used in five different ways. These are:

- For the situations where learners can study entirely on their own;
- For some skills learned and applied in self-directed learning;
- For an inborn capacity suppressed by formal education;
- For the learners’ responsibility for their own learning
- For the right of learners on determining the direction of their own learning.

After these earlier definitions, it is emphasized that learner autonomy doesn’t mean being completely independent from the teacher (Smith, 2008). Independence is one of the concepts confused with learner autonomy. Although the two terms contain some kind of freedom, there is a difference between them. Little (2007) mentions in his study that being ‘independence means to do for yourself to not rely on others...’ (Deci, 1996, p. 89 cited in Little, 2007, p. 17) on the other hand ‘the freedom that autonomy entails is confirmed ... by our dependence on other.’ (Little, 2007, p. 17). Thus, the learner does not need to be the sole decision maker in the areas designated by an institute, teacher, or book. Smith (2008) lists these areas as; objectives, syllabus stages, contents, methods and techniques, pace-time-place, and evaluation procedures. So, being autonomous means being active in these areas, knowing responsibilities, and not being completely dependent on the teacher.

Oxford (1999) claims that learner autonomy causes a better achievement and proficiency and she summarizes this situation by “five A’s” with her words.

Ability, attitude, + action = autonomy → achievement (Oxford, 1999, p. 111)

Here, Oxford (1999) creates such a summarization based on the definitions of other scholar (Allwright, 1990; Holec, 1981; Littlewood, 1996). She tells us that *ability* to take charge of one's own learning (Holec, 1981) and *willingness (attitude)* to take responsibility (Littlewood, 1996) needs *action* in direction of learning process (Allwright, 1990), which is equal to learner autonomy with the outcome of achievement (Oxford, 1999, p. 110). As a result, Oxford (1999) presents three dimensions of learner autonomy with “five A’s”.

To foster learner autonomy, it is important to understand the characteristics of learners' learner autonomy. Macaro (2008) is another scholar who proposes (three) dimensions of language learner autonomy. The first one is the autonomy of language competence in which “learners move gradually towards the competence to generate their own utterances” (p. 50). The second one is the autonomy of language learning competence.

Autonomy of language learning competence, then, is having the awareness, the knowledge, and the experience of strategy use, together with the metacognition to evaluate the effectiveness not only of individual strategies, not only specific clusters against a task, but also how all these maps onto a much broader canvas of language learning over time (p. 54).

The third one is the autonomy of choice which should be “established through free choice and commitment of the individual, must be specific and explicit; they have to appear attainable” (p. 56).

2.2.2. Autonomous Learners

Nunan (2003) defines autonomous learners as individuals taking an active role in their own learning process. How can a learner be active in his or her learning? Three abilities are highly emphasized to be active learner. These are to plan, monitor and evaluate someone's own learning (Benson, 2001; Little and Dam, 1998; Nunan, 2003). Little (2003) highlights a consensus that the implementation of learner autonomy requires some key features. Thus, an autonomous learner should have these features which are to have insight, a positive attitude, a capacity for reflection, and a readiness to be proactive in self-management and interaction with others (Little, 2003). Intrinsic motivation is another concept an autonomous learner should have. Especially for young learners, intrinsic motivation should be encouraged. Intrinsic motivation helps young learners acquire knowledge about themselves and their world (Deci and Ryan, 2010).

Oxford (2015) indicates the characteristics of autonomous learners in a detailed way and suggests two broad perspectives on it. The first one is the *psychological perspective* including the ‘self-regulated learner, the emotionally intelligent learner and the self-determined learner’ among others (Oxford, 2015, p. 58). Self-regulated learners should have three behavioral managements as: belief management involving positive beliefs towards the importance of language learning and one’s ability, emotion management including positive feelings such as satisfaction towards learning and avoiding negative feelings such as despair, and lastly strategy management involving learning strategies such as concentrating, organizing, coding or efficient managing time. She suggests that the emotionally intelligent learner, the second concept in psychological perspective, has the ability of controlling his or her emotions, understanding others’ emotions, motivating oneself and managing relationships. The self-determined learner has the intrinsic motivation and a sense of personal autonomy.

Oxford’s (2015) second broad perspective on the characteristics of autonomous learners is the sociocultural perspective. This perspective includes the concepts as ‘the mediated learner, the cognitively apprenticed learner and the invested learner’ among others (Oxford, 2015, p. 58). She suggests that the mediated learner should move from social talk to inner talk through the more capable other (mediation) and thus develops self-regulation. The cognitively apprenticed learner similarly to mediated learner needs a more capable person. In another study from same author, cognitive apprenticeship explained as ‘cognitive apprenticeship helps students to acquire, develop, and use learning strategies in authentic activities via interaction, social construction of knowledge, scaffolding, modeling, goal setting, peer sharing, and learner reflection’ (Oxford, 2011, p. 29 cited in Oxford, 2015, p. 64). She points out that investment is a kind of manifestation of learner autonomy and the invested learner should have the desires and positive beliefs on themselves and social relations that can contribute to their learning.

Oxford’s (2015) theoretical perspectives on autonomous learners raise interest on certain concepts that may be relevant to learner autonomy and create a deeper understanding of autonomous learners to promote classroom practices. Understanding autonomous learners is one of the early steps to promote learner autonomy.

Çakıcı (2015) is another scholar touching on the characteristics of autonomous learners. She mentions about the characteristics of the autonomous learner based on other studies such as Dam (1995), Dickinson (1993), and Holec (1981). From her study (p. 35), mainly the following characteristics of autonomous learners can be deduced;

An autonomous learner should:

- identify and formulate the learning objectives
- consciously select and implement learning strategies
- take charge of their own learning
- be aware of their needs
- overcome the obstacles and be aware of their strengths
- be motivated and willing to learn

In addition, she suggests the pedagogical principles constructing the characteristics in language classrooms. According to her, the principles are ‘learner empowerment’, ‘reflectivity’, and ‘appropriate target language use’ (Çakıcı, 2015, p. 34). All the principles give importance to collaboration between learners and teachers. The first principle highlights the role of teacher. The learner is enabled to take responsibility for their own learning by the teacher. The second one highlights the collaboration of teacher and student to reach reflection. Reflection on learning process enables students to be aware of ‘how and why they choose the methods and strategies’ (p. 34). The last one mentions that teacher helps student to use the target language to express their own meanings with multiple scaffolding.

2.2.3. What to Do to Promote Learner Autonomy

Learner autonomy is a concept where different learners are at different levels. It is understood from Smith (2008) that autonomy is not something that should be trained but should be promoted. When we look at the Holec’s (1981) definition of the learner autonomy as “the ability to take charge of one’s own learning”, a question arises: Do autonomous learners need a teacher? Benson (2016) answers this question as “yes”. According to him, “being capable of directing one’s own learning” is a problematic definition. So, autonomous learners should be able to direct themselves according to the needs of “instructional, self-instructional or conscious learning processes” (Benson, 2016, p. 344). He also suggests that autonomy mainly develops in language classrooms in which students should be given more control over teaching processes. Benson (2016) is not the only scholar that emphasizes the importance of classroom instruction and the role of teacher. Nunan (2003) also highlights the importance of them, and he offers nine steps to teachers to promote students transition from dependency to autonomy. In these nine steps, Nunan (2003, p. 196-203) emphasizes the following items;

- clear instructions and goals,
- creativity of students,
- encouraging students to use target language outside of the classroom,

- raising awareness,
- students' preferences on learning style and strategy,
- encouraging learner choice,
- students generating their own tasks,
- encouraging students to become researchers and teachers.

Learner autonomy is important for learners due to self-discipline and academic success in education. A trainer or teacher should encourage learners to be autonomous because most of them are not aware what is best for them (Nunan, 2014).

In a foreign/second language classroom, teacher role is considerably important on fostering learner autonomy. Above all, a teacher should know what autonomy is and should be autonomous teacher (Little, 1995). Little (1995) implies that teachers who do not know how to be autonomous cannot encourage autonomy in their students and teachers must make autonomous decisions when projecting their own professional skills into the classroom.

In her document analysis, where she examines the role of the teacher for an autonomous classroom, Ergür (2010) collects the role of the teacher under three headings: 'the teacher as the manager' who manages the learning activities, 'the teacher as the resource' who produces creative activities by not being completely dependent on the textbooks, and 'the teacher as facilitator' who gives support and produces solutions to the problems occurring in learning process.

The role of the teacher and classroom practices are important in fostering learner autonomy. Apart from this, one aspect of promoting learner autonomy is the development of supportive curriculum. Cotterall (2000, p. 110-112) gives us five principles for designing a language course promoting learner autonomy. To put it briefly, these principles are:

- The courses should reflect learners' goals in its language, tasks, and strategies.
- The course tasks should be in a simplified/understandable model of the language learning process.
- Real world communicative tasks should be reflected in the course tasks.
- The course should include discussion and implementation of strategies known to facilitate task performance. Students' choice on strategic behaviors should be available.
- The course should encourage reflection on learning. This principle refers to the reviewing of past and future learning experiences as a metacognitive activity.

These principles generally support the abilities necessary for the learner to be autonomous; plan, monitor and evaluate. A learner who knows his/her goals in language, tasks and strategies can plan the learning process. To monitor the learning process the right choice of strategies is essential and to evaluate learning process a learner should reflect on his/her learning. In order to achieve all of these, the course tasks and learning process should be simple enough for the learner to understand.

The method suggestions (Nunan, 2003) that can be implemented by the teacher in the lessons or those suggested for the curriculum (Cotteral, 2000) are things that can contribute to students' autonomy and improve their language proficiency.

2.2.4. Learner Autonomy and Language Proficiency

If it is looked at the nature of the autonomous learners, it can be seen that they are more talented in planning, monitoring and evaluating of their own learning processes than the less autonomous learners. These skills enable students to see themselves and make up for their deficiencies while learning the target language. Thus, students with high autonomy are more likely to get desired goals. The 'desired goal' is to achieve a high proficiency level in learning a language. Nowadays the relationship between language proficiency and learning autonomy takes attention by scholars. According to Dafei (2007) there is a tendency on examining the relationship between learner autonomy and language proficiency for some reasons. He refers these reasons as researchers' increasingly understanding of the close relationship between learner autonomy and language proficiency; and the world-wide importance of inspecting in education which causes teachers to show the effectiveness of their practices in order to gain proficiency.

Little (2007) explains the basis of learner autonomy, its theoretical and pedagogical side, and its relationship with the growth language proficiency in his study. He discussed a child's development and language acquisition process in the context of constructivist theory. According to him, autonomy is essential when acquiring a language in the growth of language proficiency, whether it is a mother tongue or a foreign language. He suggests that learner autonomy and communicative proficiency should be developed simultaneously.

Oxford (1999) in her research discusses the relationship between learning strategies and language proficiency in context of self-regulation and learner autonomy. She identifies learner autonomy in language learning field as self-regulation in psychology field and similar to Little (2007), she mentions the traces of autonomy/self-regulation in Vygotsky's' constructivism.

According to her, self-regulation/autonomy is essential for learning strategies and to achieve a good level of proficiency.

Many studies done with participants show that the relationship between learner autonomy and proficiency is positive (Dafei, 2007; Jianfeng et al., 2018; Le Nguyen, 2008; Melvina and Julia, 2021; Sakai and Takagi, 2009). Dafei (2007) explores the relationship between learner autonomy and language proficiency with 129 Chinese college students whose average ages are nineteen and the results of his study show that students with different proficiency levels differ in autonomy levels. He suggests that there is a positive and significant relationship between learner autonomy and language proficiency. In her study with 177 Vietnamese university students, Le Nguyen (2008) reveals that learner autonomy and motivation are significantly related to proficiency measures. Melvina and Julia (2021) have a deeper look in this relationship. They handle learner autonomy with different variables as technical, psychological, political and sociocultural (these are the learner autonomy dimensions from Benson (2001)) and investigate language proficiency according to these variables with 40 Indonesian under-graduate university students aged 19-20 from English Study Program. They summarize these variables as follow:

To be precise, technical dimension includes behavioural and situational sub-dimensions, while psychological dimension consists of metacognitive, affective, and motivational sub-dimensions. Next, political-philosophical dimension involves both individual freedom and group freedom. Meanwhile, sociocultural dimension constitutes social interaction and cultural sub-dimensions (Melvina and Julia, 2021, p. 805).

The results of the study show that except the sociocultural variable the rest of them have a positive effect on English proficiency. In the research, it is stated that the possible reason for the ineffectiveness of sociocultural autonomy may be the perception of learner autonomy as a new and western concept. Sakai and Takagi (2009) and Jianfeng et al. (2018) are other scholars conducting studies in the Asian context showing positive relationship between learner autonomy and language proficiency.

It is beneficial to look at Zarei and Zarei's (2015) study conducting in Iran with 141 university students. The findings of this study reveal that there is no significant link between participants' language proficiency and learner autonomy. However the authors indicate that the possible reasons for this result may be the number of the samples, gender differences, age of the participants as 19 to 29 years old, social and cultural differences and Iran's teacher-centred education concept. In a teacher-centered education concept, students don't have active role in

classroom. Thus, students may feel strongly dependent on an instructor and avoid taking independent decisions. Zarei and Zarei (2015) conclude their study with some advice on teachers' training on autonomy and motivation.

In a similar study, Ünal et al. (2017) work with university students from engineering departments from Turkey. Their findings support the findings of Zarei and Zarei (2015). Ünal et al. (2017) collect the perceptions of the participants with different proficiency levels on learner autonomy and the findings reveal no significant difference between the perceptions of learner autonomy and students' proficiency level. However, they suggest that in general students have a positive attitude towards learner autonomy, regardless of their level of proficiency.

As Little (2007) and Oxford (1999) suggest, learner autonomy is one of the essential abilities to achieve a better level of language proficiency. Most of the studies pointing out a strong positive correlation between learner autonomy and language proficiency support this idea. A more learner-oriented classroom environment and the role of the teacher who will create it are very important in putting learner autonomy into practice. In order to get more positive results in the studies to be conducted, awareness towards learner centeredness and learner autonomy should be created in teachers. This is possible with teacher training.

2.2.5. Learner Autonomy in Turkish Context

With the modern understandings on education, Turkey turned its direction to learner-centered teachings. This change of direction is seen in the educational reforms (see, Table 1). In the 2013 educational reform and the 2018 curriculum program, CEFR standards are seen as the goals. The 2018 curriculum program has the following lines;

In framing the new curricular model for English, no single teaching methodology has been designated. Instead, an action-oriented approach grounded in current educational research and international teaching standards has been adopted, taking into account the three descriptors of the CEFR comprising learner autonomy, self-assessment, and appreciation for cultural diversity (CoE, 2001). In doing so, it is expected that learners will become confident and proficient users of English... (MEB, 2018, p. 8)

Learner autonomy, self-assessment and the appreciation for cultural diversity are taken into account as the descriptors of CEFR. Besides this, there are studies investigating learner autonomy from different aspects. Balçıkanlı (2008), Çakıcı (2015) and Ergür (2010) review learner autonomy from theoretical and conceptual aspects. While Balçıkanlı (2008) and Çakıcı

(2015) give us general knowledge about the main aspects such as the definitions of autonomy, historical development, characteristics of autonomous learners and implementation recommends, Ergür (2010) talks about teacher roles in addition to these.

Compared to review articles, the number of case studies with participants is greater. Researchers have touched on different aspects of learner autonomy. Şakrak-Ekin and Balçıkanlı (2019) studied the relationship between learner autonomy and academic success of the students and if there is a difference in terms of personal variables such as gender and age. The results of the study show a positive relationship between learner autonomy and academic success and only gender difference, in favor of females. The relationship between self-efficiency, learner autonomy and academic success was studied by Tilfaroğlu and Çiftçi (2011). They studied with 250 preparatory university students from EFL classrooms. In general, they found positive relationships between these concepts.

Çakıcı (2017) carried out an investigation on perception of prospective teachers on learner autonomy. She suggests that even if prospective teachers demand instructors' support on some areas, they are eager to take more control on some aspects of their own learning. The positive perceptions of the students are listed as "learning styles, strategies, assessment, record-keeping of work done, what is to be learned from materials, methodology, material selection, and objectives of the course" while the items students demand support and guidance are mentioned as "the quantity and type of homework tasks, selecting textbooks, what is to be learned from text books, time and place of the lessons and record-keeping of marks gained" (Çakıcı, 2017, p. 92-95). Çakıcı (2017) recommends teacher-training to increase the value of learner autonomy and awareness. Studies on culture of learning and readiness for learner autonomy which were conducted by Kartal and Balçıkanlı (2019) and Karabıyık (2018) show that students in Turkey do not go through an education that supports autonomy. Another research collecting perceptions on autonomy was conducted by Doğan and Mirici (2017). They conclude that most of the instructors think learner autonomy is desirable but not feasible.

Egel (2003) investigated the effects of European Language Portfolio on learner autonomy for primary school students and results show that it is a good tool for supporting learner autonomy. Kizmaz (2019) is the other researcher working on increasing autonomy. He explored the use of CALL to increase learner autonomy and revealed that the use of CALL can considerably improve learner autonomy.

In a nutshell, there are studies that examine the relationship between some phenomena and autonomy, studies that collect the perceptions of participants, and studies that show

whether some techniques support autonomy. These studies and their results should be taken into account by policy makers and practitioners.

In the Turkish context, very little research has given importance to out-of-class language learning. Karasu and Sarı (2019) investigated the relationship between learner autonomy and distance learning in language learning and suggest that distance learning gives learners self-managing opportunities. One factor mentioned in the article is the technology use. They highlighted the need for teacher trainings, even institutions, to be proficient on technology use. Işık and Balçıkanlı (2020) interviewed eleven teachers at tertiary level to examine to what extend the teachers help learners to be more autonomous. According to the results teachers perform many autonomy-supportive behaviors, such as affective, resource, capacity, technology and social support. Crowded classes, overloaded curriculum and low learner motivation are mentioned as the challenges. They suggest that especially technology use in the classroom can support out of class learning. Thus, teachers need to be efficient technology users. Very recent research on out of class learning was made by İnci (2021). He aimed to examine the frequencies and types of out-of-class language learning activities preferred by 253 secondary and high school students. He concluded that listening to music and watching movies are the most frequent ones preferred by students.

2.2.6. Out-of-class Language Learning and Activities

Language learning should not be limited with the classroom environment. The target language exposure occurring in the classroom setting is not enough to learn a language and a learner needs more exposure beyond the classroom. Benson (2011) emphasizes the importance of learning a language beyond the classroom and that a wise learner should balance in-class and out-of-class learning. He defines out-of-class learning as follows: “Out-of-class’ and ‘out-of-school learning’ are often used to describe non-prescribed activities that students carry out independently to broaden their knowledge of a subject...” (Benson, 2011, p. 9). From his definition, it is understood that the words 'non-prescribed', 'independently' and 'to broaden' define the principles of autonomous out-of-class activities. These activities should not be prescribed by a teacher or instructor, and they should be conducted without depending on a teacher and the activities should broaden their knowledge. He also states the activities not included in lessons but taking place at school as the out-of-class activities such as ‘English-only days, debates, school magazines.’ Tutorial lessons especially one-to-one tutorial lessons in the home are also mentioned as out-of-class activities in his study. Here, it is important that

the tutorial lessons are held independently of the school in order to improve the student's knowledge.

Richards (2015) is another scholar investigating out-of-class learning. He suggests that language learning based on classroom have limitations such as unfavourable class size and time limitations. On the other hand, out-of-class learning especially with the help of technology gives opportunities to communicate and meaningful, authentic language use. With this aspect, out-of-class activities are also beneficial for in class-learning. Richards (2015) explains the opportunities of out-of-class learning by giving example activities in a detailed way. The following items summarize these opportunities:

- To improve communicative skills through interaction in English via chat rooms, self-access centres, interviews, language villages.
- To improve different language skills via digital games, listening logs, online resources, using social media.
- To facilitate peer-supported learning with technology, e.g. 'E-mediated tandem learning' in which students having different first languages send each other e-mails in L2 on a topic they are interested in and using 'Voice Thread' which is an online program students use to upload their recordings on a topic in English. Both of them give opportunities for peer-evaluation and peer-suggestion.
- To improve language proficiency with the use of television as a source of material such as watching TV series, internet television and extensive viewing.

As well as being supportive to in-class learning, there are a number of advantages of these activities. Flexibility, raising motivation, authentic language use, providing more exposure and social interaction are mentioned as the benefits of out-of-class activities on Richards' (2015) paper.

In addition to such explanatory papers, there are also studies examining the cases of participants. Hyland (2004) investigates 228 student teachers' out-of-class activities in Hong Kong and suggests that students prefer more receptive activities than the productive activities and more private activities than public activities. The possible reasons were reported as the fear of negative judgements. Chan (2016) is another scholar investigating out-of-class activities of learners. He interviewed six very proficient students aged 20-21 about the English-medium out-of-class activities based on popular culture. He founds popular culture out-of-class activities beneficial to improve school performance. He gave advice to teachers to use social

media platforms and mobile applications and to design interest-driven materials to motivate students.

At the present time, popular culture attracts the attention of young people from all around the world. The wise use of activities involving popular culture and technology will greatly contribute to learning. The studies made by García Botero et al. (2018) and Lai et al. (2018) point to this. García Botero et al. (2018) investigate 118 university students' use of the mobile application 'Duolingo' in the context of out-of-class learning. They suggest that although 'Duolingo' supports students' learning outside the classroom, the lack of motivation, self-management and self-monitoring cause students to use the app less. Lai et al. (2018) investigated the university students' out-of-class learning in technological context. They identify three types of technological experience as instruction-oriented, entertainment and information-oriented and social-oriented. They suggest that the participants think the first one as the most useful for language learning and the second one as supportive for language learning. However, they report that most of the participants' social-oriented experience has a little purpose of language use. The possible reason could be the social anxiety on using target language to communicate on social networking sites.

In the Turkish context there are some studies on out-of-class language learning and activities (Bayat, 2011; Coşkun, 2016; Işık and Balçıkanlı, 2020; İnci, 2021). İnci (2021) aimed to determine the preferences of Turkish High and Secondary school students' out of class activities and he examined the differences based on ages and gender. He suggests that the participants preferred listening to music and watching movies mostly whereas the least ones are writing activities, reading newspapers and talking English with family members. He also suggests that female participants do more out-of-class activities than males with no significant difference depending on their ages.

Işık and Balçıkanlı (2020) interviewed eleven teachers working at a state university in Turkey with the aim of detecting practices applied in classrooms which supports autonomous out-of-class learning and discussing challenges on promoting learner autonomy. They suggest that teachers perform many autonomy-supportive practices such as resource, capacity, affective, social and technology support. On the other hand, they mention challenges as overloaded curriculum, crowded classes and lack of learner motivation.

Coşkun (2016) investigated the benefits of out-of-class speaking activities for EFL students. In his study, twenty-one Turkish university students were encouraged to choose some out-of-class speaking activities such as fantasy role-playing, continuous story, broadcasting on

periscope, debate, and radio program. They were wanted to carry out these activities for six weeks. After the end of this period, a survey consisting of open-ended questions was conducted to the participants. Coşkun (2016) suggests that out-of-class speaking activities contribute to students' fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary knowledge, and problem-solving skills.

In her study, Bayat (2011) aimed to investigate the effects of out-of-class English use on the autonomy perceptions of students. To reach this aim, 34 students learning English in preparation class at a state university were encouraged to write English letters to each other out-of-class in 10 weeks. She measured students' autonomy perceptions before and after this period. At the end of the study, she suggests that letter-writing activity contributes to students' autonomous learning experience and language learning.



CHAPTER III

3. METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the research design, the setting and participants, data collection tools and procedure, reliability, and data analysis.

3.1. Research Design

In this thesis, the main aim is to investigate the relationship between learner autonomy, out-of-class activities, and English course success of the 8th-grade students. To reach this aim, a quantitative research design was used. According to Watson (2015, p. 44), quantitative research includes “a systematic investigation of a social phenomenon, using statistical or numerical data”. Because of the investigation with questionnaires and defining the results statistically, in this study, the quantitative research design was preferred to use. The questionnaires were taken from Egel (2003) and Hrochová (2012). The participants are 8th-grade learners from a state secondary school. The data obtained from the questionnaires were analyzed via the SPSS Statistics 23 program.

3.2. Setting and Participants

This study was carried out at a state Imam Hatip secondary school in Şanlıurfa which is a province of Turkey in the South-eastern Anatolia Region. 212 students in the 8th grade participated in the surveys. However, 26 of them were excluded from the analysis because of their incomplete answers. Therefore, the number of participants is 186 in total. The socio-economic levels of the students were not asked. That variable is not examined in this study. The demographic information obtained was shown in the Table 3 and Table 4.

Table 3. Genders of the Participants

Gender	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Female	110	59.1
Male	76	40.9

Table 4. Ages of the Participants

Ages	Frequency (f)	Percentages (%)
12 years old	19	10.2
13 years old	103	55.4
14 years old	53	28.5

15 years old	11	5,9
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In Turkey, 8th-grade students are at the last level of secondary school and students take the high school entrance exam (LGS) at the end of the year. They are placed in a high school according to the scores they get from this exam. The English course is one of the main courses and in the LGS exam, students face questions about the English course. Students should give attention to English to be successful in this exam. The reason why 8th-grade students were chosen as participants in this study is the thought that students' awareness of learning English would be high due to the LGS exam.

The participants learn English as a foreign language in Turkey. This means that students don't face English very often after school, except for the out-of-class activities they do on their own. They take four English courses per week. The current curriculum includes four skills and corresponds to the A2 level from the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (MEB, 2018).

3.3. Data Collection Tools and Procedure

To collect the data, two questionnaires (an autonomy learner questionnaire and an out-of-class activity questionnaire) were used in this study. Before use, permissions were obtained from the authors of the questionnaires (see Appendix 5). The Autonomy Learner Questionnaire (see Appendix 1 for the Turkish version and Appendix 2 for the English version) collecting data for students' learner autonomy features was designed by Egel (2003), while the Out-of-class Activity Questionnaire (see Appendix 3 for the Turkish version and Appendix 4 for the English version) gathering data for the out-of-class activity preferences was designed by Hrochová (2012). After the permissions were obtained from both institution and parents to use the questionnaires, the data were collected in the scope of two weeks in the March of the 2021-2022 academic year. They were administered in two-course duration on the same day. Considering the length of the questionnaires, additional time was given to the students who requested it. Before giving the questionnaires to the students a brief explanation was made and they were asked to answer all the questions carefully and truly.

3.3.1. Autonomy Learner Questionnaire

One of the purposes of this study is to investigate students' autonomy characteristics. To reach this aim Egel's (2003) questionnaire from her doctoral thesis was chosen for this study. She (2003) states that she formed the statements under the influence of some scholars'

autonomy scales (Broady, 1996; Dickinson, 1987; Sancar, 2001). Egel (2003) designed this questionnaire for 4th and 5th-grade students to gather information about in what dimensions they are autonomous. She found the Cronbach Alpha level as 0.808023 which is a sufficient number for relativity. One of the reasons why this questionnaire was chosen for this thesis is that it was formed in Turkish and previously applied to Turkish students from a state school by her. In addition, it provides us the characteristics of the participants in terms of autonomy via the dimensions it contains.

The questionnaire consists of 44 statements with nine dimensions. Table 5 shows us how many items each dimension has and related questions about these dimensions. They give us information about from what dimension the students are autonomous.

Table 5. Areas for Investigation in the Autonomy Learner Questionnaire (Egel, 2003, p. 74)

Section	No. of Items	Focus	Questions
Dimension 1	6 items	Readiness for Self-direction	What are the learners' beliefs relating to self-directed learning in general?
Dimension 2	7 items	Independent Work in Language Learning	What are the learners' beliefs relating to independent work in language learning?
Dimension 3	8 items	Importance of Class/Teacher	How important do learners see the class/the teacher in their lang. learning?
Dimension 4	5 items	Role of Teacher: Explanation/Supervision	What importance do learners give to teacher explanation and supervision?
Dimension 5	4 items	Language Learning Activities	In relation to particular lang. learning activities, what are the learners' attitudes?
Dimension 6	3 items	Selection of Content	What are the learners' attitudes relating to the selection of content for lang. learning?
Dimension 7	2 items	Objectives/ Evaluation	How confident do learners feel about defining objectives?
Dimension 8	5 items	Assessment/ Motivation	How important is external assessment in motivating the learners' work?
Dimension 9	4 items	Other Cultures	What are the learners' attitudes relating to the culture of other countries?

3.3.2. Out-of-class Activities Questionnaire

Out-of-class activities questionnaire designed by Hrochová (2012) was used to obtain data about the students' out-of-class activity preferences. This questionnaire was deemed appropriate for this thesis because it had the appropriate items to search for answers to the research questions and it was previously used for secondary school students. Because the original version is in English, the questionnaire was translated into Turkish. Although the pilot study was not conducted because of the lack of sufficient participants, the opinions of two experts were taken regarding the translation of the questionnaire and it was generally found suitable to apply to secondary Turkish students. Some changes were made according to the recommendations of the experts. For item 8th of the first section of the questionnaire, the channels that students can watch in Turkey were added in parentheses and for the 11th item, extra explanations were added such as studying from a grammar book or reading book. In addition, extra explanations were added for the 4th and 5th items in the second section of the questionnaire such as the existence of only English versions of some activities and the English version of an activity being more attractive. In the fifth section of the questionnaire, the 'foreign stays and trips where you use English' item was changed to 'speaking English with a foreigner' to adapt it for Turkish students.

The questionnaire has six sections: The first section consists of common out-of-class activities and the students were asked to mark the suitable number from one to five to define how often they perform each activity. The second section has the items investigating the reasons why the students perform these activities (again, students were asked to mark suitable number from one to five to indicate how appropriate each item is for themselves). In the third section, the students were asked how many hours they spend these activities on a daily and weekly basis (consisting of eight options). In the fourth part of the questionnaire, one question was asked to learn the students' English course grades from the previous semester. Here, the possibility of students' misrepresentation or misremembering was taken into account and their grades were checked from the *e-okul* system which is an electronic school system developed by MoNE for teachers to do school-related works and for parents to monitor students' grades. In the following part, the students were asked to evaluate what types of language-related activities were helpful to reach their current level of English and in the last section, the students were wanted to evaluate the importance of English-related out-of-class activities for their future. The numbers of the items and the main focus of each section were showed on Table 6.

Table 6. The Content of Out-of-class Activity Questionnaire

The Section	Number of the items	Focus
Section 1	12 items	Out-of-class activities and students' frequencies of performing them.
Section 2	6 items	The source of motivation
Section 3	1 item	The time students spend doing these activities on daily or weekly basis.
Section 4	1 items	The English course success
Section 5	5 items	The activities helping to reach the current level of English.
Section 6	1 item	The importance of English for the future.

3.4. Reliability

The Cronbach alpha level of the Autonomy Learner Questionnaire was calculated as 0,86 and of Out-of-class Activity Questionnaire was calculated as 0,84 both of which are sufficient for reliability. For normality analysis, averages of similar data were taken and analyzed in this way for both questionnaires.

Table 7. Skewness and Kurtosis Results of Autonomy Learner Questionnaire

Dimensions	Skewness	Kurtosis
Readiness for Self-direction	,018	-,789
Independent Work in Language Learning	-,222	-,690
Importance of Class/Teacher	,116	-,211
Role of Teacher: Explanation/ Supervision	-,052	-,356
Language Learning Activities	-,223	-,323
Selection of Content	-,004	-,889
Objectives/ Evaluation	-,427	-,687
Assessment/ Motivation	-,074	-,738
Other Cultures	,219	-,862
Entire Questionnaire	-,323	-,521

Table 7 shows the Skewness and Kurtosis analysis results for each dimension. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) the values for normally distributed data should be between +1.50 and -1.5. This shows that the data for each dimension of Autonomy Learner Questionnaire is normally distributed and acceptable.

The normality rates were calculated for Out-of-class Activity Questionnaire by taking the arithmetic average of each focal point which is mentioned Table 6. Table 8 shows the skewness and kurtosis rates of Out-of-class Activity Questionnaire.

Table 8. Skewness and Kurtosis Results of Out-of-class Activity Questionnaire

Focus	Skewness	Kurtosis
Out-of-class activities and students' frequencies of performing them.	,216	-,513
The source of motivation	,043	-,885
The time students spend doing these activities on daily or weekly basis.	,257	-,807
The English course success	,082	-1,390
The activities helping to reach the current level of English.	-,210	-,591
The importance of English for the future.	-,793	-,676

The table shows each of the focal point is normally distributed and acceptable according to Tabachnick and Fidell (2013).

3.5. Data Analysis

To collect the data, two questionnaires were preferred, and numerical data were obtained. At the outset, the data input was ensured to SPSS (Statistical Program for Social Sciences) version 23 and the whole analysis process was made by using this program. Descriptive analysis was used for the dimensional features of autonomy, out-of-class activity preferences, and other related items. In addition to these, the students were grouped according to their course successes and One-way ANOVA analysis was used to see the differences between the success groups to understand the relationship between learner autonomy and course success of the students.

CHAPTER IV

4. FINDINGS

This thesis mainly examines the relationship between language proficiency and learner autonomy by comparing learner autonomy characteristics of students, the frequency and duration of their out-of-class activities with their English course success. For this aim, two instruments (Autonomy Learner Questionnaire that measures learner autonomy level and characteristics; and Out-of-class Activity Questionnaire that collects information on the participants' out-of-class activity preferences) were applied to the 8th graders from the same state secondary school located in the south-eastern region of Turkey.

The relationship between learner autonomy and language proficiency was discussed. However, language proficiency was handled indirectly. School success was deemed as the reflection of language proficiency and 5 success groups were formed according to the students' course success. There are 42 students in Group 1 whose course grades on the previous school report card are between 0-45 points, Group 2 consisting of 38 students with 45-60 points, Group 3 of 31 students with 60-70 points, Group 4 of 37 students with 70-85 points and Group 5 of 38 students with 85-100 points.

Two methods were used in the analysis of the data: descriptive analysis method and one-way ANOVA method. The score results of learner autonomy that were calculated based on the students' choices were presented to understand how autonomous the 8th graders are from different dimensions. The average autonomy score and dimensional scores were described with tables and graphs to visualize the differences between the success groups. In order to understand whether there is a significant difference in learner autonomy levels between the groups, the ANOVA test was also applied for the overall average of the Autonomy Learner Questionnaire. The out-of-class activities questionnaire, which includes the students' out-of-class activities, was also examined by giving descriptive statistics.

4.1. Scoring of The Autonomy Learner Questionnaire

The students' autonomous attitudes were collected with the Autonomy Learner Questionnaire, designed with Likert-style items (1=always true, 2=mostly true, 3=sometimes true, 2=rarely true, 1=never true). Students' responses were displayed in Appendix 6 on a percentage basis.

In order to determine the autonomy degree of the success groups and the total number of students, Egel's (2003) calculation method was used. Table 9 shows the way of scoring.

Three levels of scores with lower and upper limits exist as minimum, average and maximum scores. The intervals of the scores were calculated via the multiplication of the number of all items (44 items at all) with Likert scale points from 1 to 5 according to the participants' choices.

Table 9. Chart of ALQ Scores Determining the Degree of Learner Independency (Egel, 2003, p. 78)

Level of Scores		Calculation	Interval	Degree
Minimum Score	-Lower Limit	$44 \times 1 = 44$	0-44	More Dependent
	-Upper Limit	$44 \times 2 = 88$	45-88	Dependent
Average Score	-Upper Limit	$44 \times 3 = 132$	89-132	Neutral
Maximum Score	-Lower Limit	$44 \times 4 = 176$	133-176	Independent
	-Upper Limit	$44 \times 5 = 220$	177-220	More Independent

Egel (2003) used the 'dependency' term while naming the degrees of the scores' intervals. However, in this thesis 'autonomy' is preferred as the base in order not to create semantic confusion arising from the word choice. Thus, instead of 'more dependent, dependent, neutral, independent and more independent', the terms 'more non-autonomous, non-autonomous, neutral, autonomous and more autonomous' were used in describing the autonomy degrees of the students. Table 10 shows us the autonomy scores of the participants in total and the groups. The groups were formed according to students' course grades stated in their school reports of the previous semester. The autonomy score of Group 1 (students with very low course success) is 108,42 which is in neutral degree (89-132). Group 2 (students with low course success) and Group 3 (students with average course success) are in neutral degrees with very close scores as 122,34 and 127,03. Group 4 (students with high success) and Group 5 (students with very high course success) have also very close scores as 142,67 and 146,7 meaning they are autonomous. Although the autonomy scores of the groups are close to each other, they increase in parallel with the course success.

Table 10. General Autonomy Scores of 8th Graders

Groups	Autonomy Scores
Group 1- Students with very low course success	108, 42
Group 2- Students with low course success	122,34
Group 3- Average students	127,03
Group 4- Students with high course success	142

Group 5- Students with very high course success	142,7
Total	128,06

4.1.1. Success Groups' Dimensional Scores

The nine dimensions of the Autonomy Learner Questionnaire were analyzed and presented individually to brighten the dominances of the autonomy characteristics of the participants and display the differences between the groups. The items representing the dimensions were determined by the author of the questionnaire (Egel, 2003). In this thesis, the dimensional categorization of the items was preserved as in the original and the items of each dimension were shown on the tables.

The dimensions were scored as the way of scoring all the items. The numbers of the items the dimensions consist of were multiplied with the Likert scales' points based on the students' choices. The intervals of the scores and degrees were determined according to these multiplications. An example chart for scoring the dimensions was presented in Table 4. In this table, the number of the items of each dimension is specified by N, because the number of the items of each dimension is different from each other.

Table 11. The Way of Scoring of Each Dimension

Level of Scores		Calculation	Interval	Degree
Minimum Score	-Lower Limit	$N \times 1$	$0 - (N \times 1)$	More non-autonomous
	-Upper Limit	$N \times 2$	$(N \times 1) - (N \times 2)$	Non-autonomous
Average Score	-Upper Limit	$N \times 3$	$(N \times 2) - (N \times 3)$	Neutral
Maximum Score	-Lower Limit	$N \times 4$	$(N \times 3) - (N \times 4)$	Autonomous
	-Upper Limit	$N \times 5$	$(N \times 4) - (N \times 5)$	More autonomous

4.1.1.1. Dimension 1- Readiness for Self-Direction

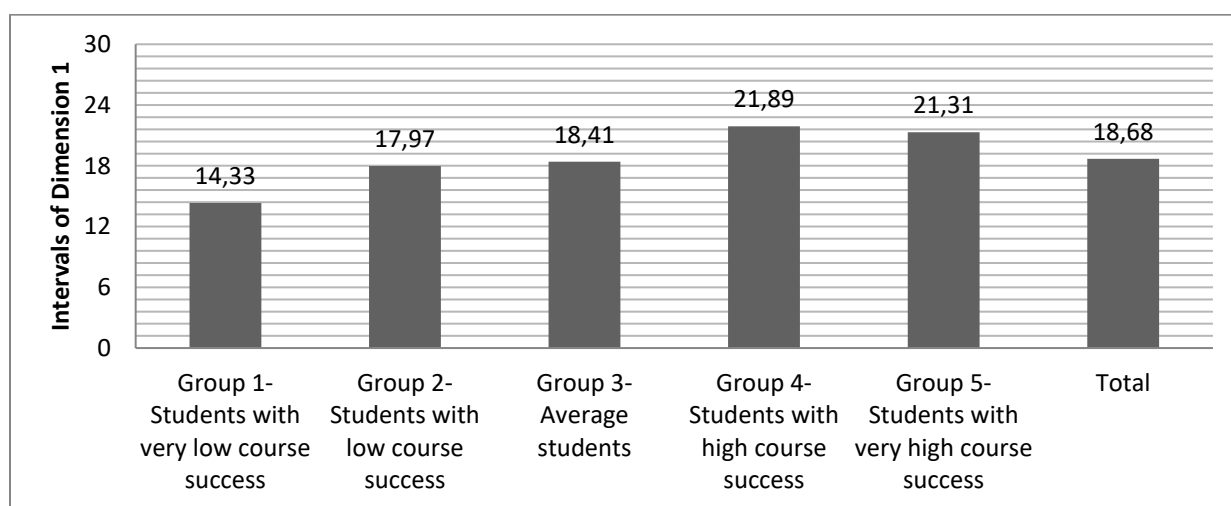
This dimension consists of six items investigating to what extent the 8th graders are ready for participating in self-directed activities for English learning. In some of the dimensions reverse coding was made because of having non-autonomous items. However, in this dimension all of the items are expressing autonomous behaviors. Thus, reverse coding wasn't deemed necessary. The items of this dimension are in Table 12 (Egel, 2003, p. 94-95).

Table 12. The Items of Dimension 1

Q- 1	When I am learning English, I try to relate the new things I have learned to my former knowledge.
Q- 3	When I hear someone talking in English, I listen very carefully.
Q- 4	I want to talk in English with my family or friends.
Q- 16	In the future, I would like to continue learning English on my own/ without a teacher.
Q- 28	If I haven't learnt something in my English lesson, I am responsible for it.
Q- 32	I hesitate on the matter of compensating what I have missed in English lessons.

Figure 1 shows us the mean results of each success group for Dimension 1. The possible maximum score a group can get is 30 (6 X 5) while the possible minimum score is 6 (6 X 1). The numbers on the vertical axis of the graph indicate the upper and lower rate of the intervals calculated based on Table 11. The students in Group 1 and Group 2 were found as neutral learners in terms of readiness for self-directed activities in learning English, because the scores are between the 12-18 interval. The other groups were found autonomous with scores between 18 and 24. In total the 8th graders displayed autonomous attitudes toward the readiness for self-direction with a score of 18,68.

Figure 1. "Readiness for Self-Direction" Scores of Success Groups



4.1.1.2. Dimension 2- Independent Work in Language Learning

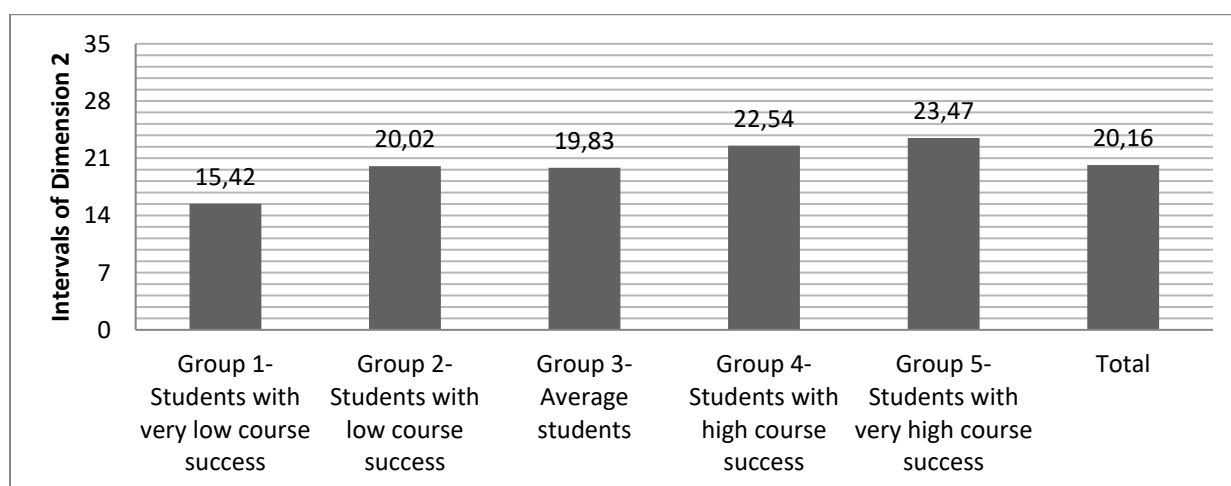
This dimension has seven items investigating students' general attitudes to independent work in which students were asked if they are capable of learning English without a teacher. The items are referred to in Table 13. (Egel, 2003, p. 96-97).

Table 13. The Items of Dimension 2

Q-5	It is my own preference to read English books written in basic English.
Q-6	While learning English, I like activities in which I can learn on my own
Q-7	I like trying new things while I am learning English.
Q-10	If I cannot learn English in the classroom, I can learn working on my own.
Q-20	I like learning English words by looking them up in a dictionary.
Q-35	I think that I learn English better when I work on my own.
Q-2	I use other English books and resources on my own will.

The maximum possible score that a group or student can gain is 35 (7 x 5) and the minimum possible score is 7 (7 x 1). Figure 2 shows us the mean scores of the success groups. As seen in the Figure 2, Group 4 and Group 5 are in autonomous degrees (the scores are between 21-28 intervals) while the other groups and the total mean score of the students are in neutral degrees (the scores are between 14-21 intervals). Although there is a decrease in Group 3 after Group 2, there is a general increase in scores in parallel with the course success.

Figure 2. "Independent Work in Language Learning" scores of successful groups.



4.1.1.3. Dimension 3 – Importance of Class/Teacher

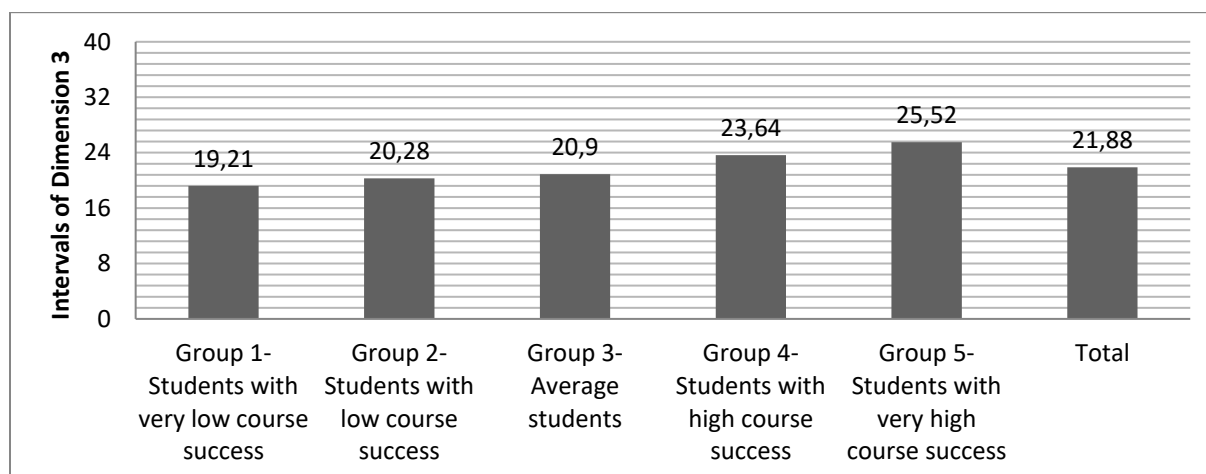
This dimension consists of eight items to gather information on the attitudes of the students about the importance of the EFL classroom and the teacher's role. Five of the items contain non-autonomous behaviors. Thus, reverse coding was made before analyzing the items Q-8, Q-11, Q-36, Q-13 and Q-12. Table 14. shows the items of this dimension (Egel, 2003, p. 98-99).

Table 14. The Items of Dimension 3

Q-8	I am afraid that I won't learn a topic if the teacher doesn't explain it in the English class.
Q-11	I feel confident when the teacher is beside me while I am learning English.
Q-36	I only study for the English lesson when the teacher gives homework.
Q-13	My teacher always has to guide me in learning English.
Q-12	I can learn English only with the help of my teacher.
Q-18	I can learn English grammar on my own/without needing a teacher.
Q-27	I know how I can learn English the best.
Q-19	I use my own methods to learn vocabulary in English.

Figure 3 displays the score results of the success groups. The maximum possible score a group or a student can get from this dimension is 40 (8 X 5) while the minimum is 8 (8 X 1). According to the results, only Group 5 got an autonomous degree with a 25,52 score being in 24-32 interval while the others had neural degrees with scores in 16-24 interval. A linear increase in the scores with the course success was observed for this dimension.

Figure 3. "Importance of Class/Teacher" Scores of the Success Groups.



4.1.1.4. Dimension 4 – Role of Teachers

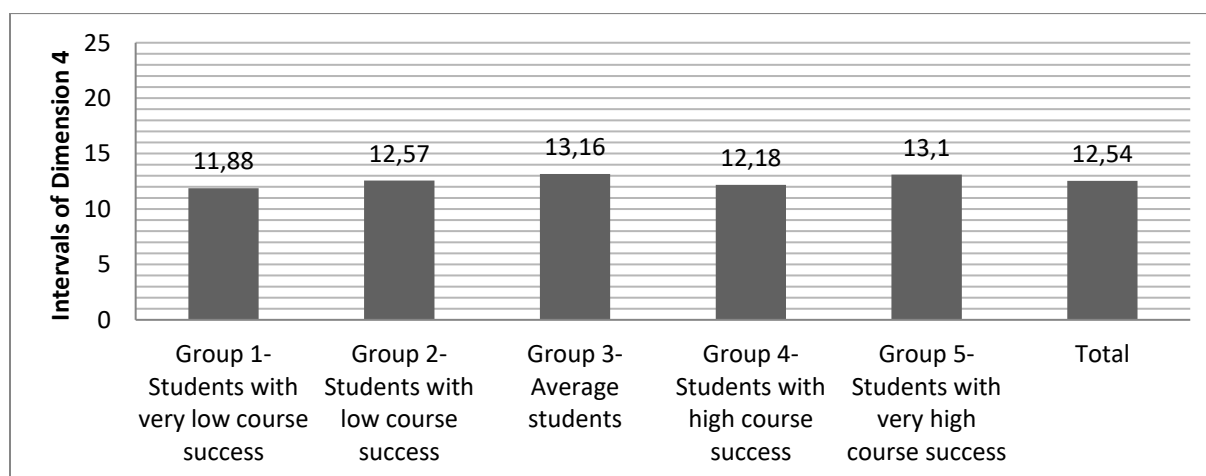
This dimension has 5 items that are reverse coded because of describing non-autonomous behaviors about dependency on the teacher. Dimensions 4 and 3 have got similar bases but while dimension 3 focuses on the role of the teacher, dimension 4 investigates the students' dependency on the teacher. The items were shown in Table 15 (Egel, 2003, p. 100).

Table 15. The items of Dimension 4

Q-15	I feel happy when my teacher explains every detail of English.
Q-14	While learning English I would like my teacher to repeat grammatical rules.
Q-22	I want the teacher to give us the words that we are to learn.
Q-21	Only my teacher can teach me the English grammar. I cannot learn on my own.
Q-9	I don't like learning English on my own.

Figure 4 shows the results of the success groups. In this dimension, the maximum possible score a group or a student can get is 25 (5 x 5) and the minimum is 5 (5 x 1). On the vertical left axis of the graph, the intervals were shown. According to the results, each of the groups and the total score of all students are in neutral degree with the scores in 10-15 intervals. In this dimension, a linear increase wasn't observed.

Figure 4. "Role of Teacher" Scores of Success Groups.



4.1.1.5. Dimension 5- Language Learning Activities

This dimension has 4 items investigating the independent attitudes of the students about language learning activities. Two of them (Q-17 and Q-37) are about group work and

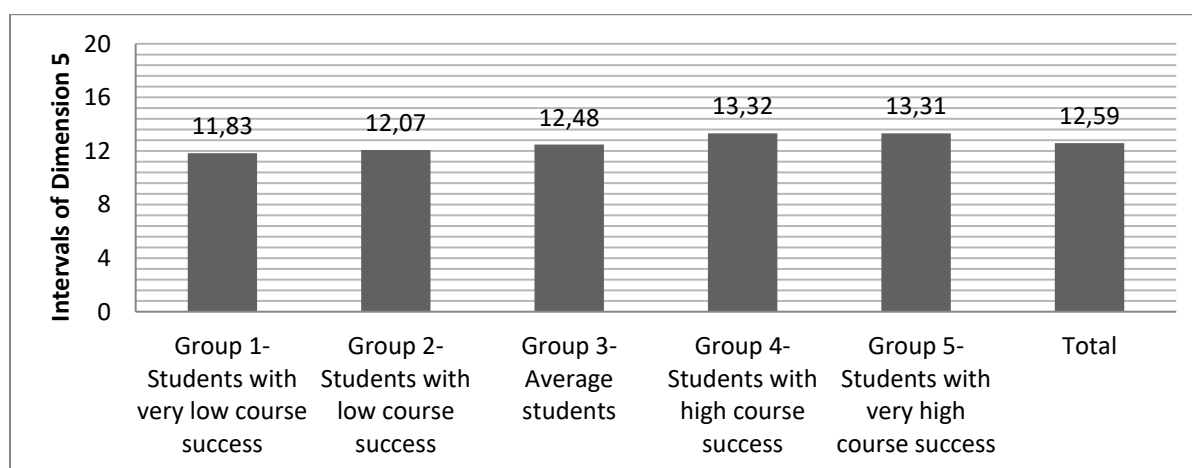
collaboration and the other two (Q-23 and Q-24) are about activities conducted outside the classroom. Even if items Q-17 and Q-37 are seen as dependency of the other students, they are about collaboration and teamwork which are autonomous behaviors. Thus, reverse coding wasn't seen as necessary for any of the items of this dimension. Table 16 shows the items (Egel, 2003, p. 102).

Table 16. The Items of Dimension 5

Q-17	In the English lesson, I like projects where I can work with other students
Q-37	I find it more useful to work with my friends than working on my own for the English lesson
Q- 23	I would like to use cassettes/videos/CDs in the foreign language, outside of the classroom.
Q-24	In fact, I like to listen and read in English outside of the classroom.

Figure 5 displays the score results of the success groups. The possible maximum score of this dimension is 20 (4 X 5) and the minimum is 4 (4 X 1). Results show that all of the groups and the total score of the students except Group 1 stayed at the autonomous degree with the scores in 12-16 intervals, but Group 1 is at neutral degree with the score in 8-12 intervals. Although a tiny decrease was observed in the score of Group 5 after Group 4, it was observed that there was an increase in parallel with the course success in general.

Figure 5. "Language Learning Activities" Scores of Success Groups.



4.1.1.6. Dimension 6- Selection of Content

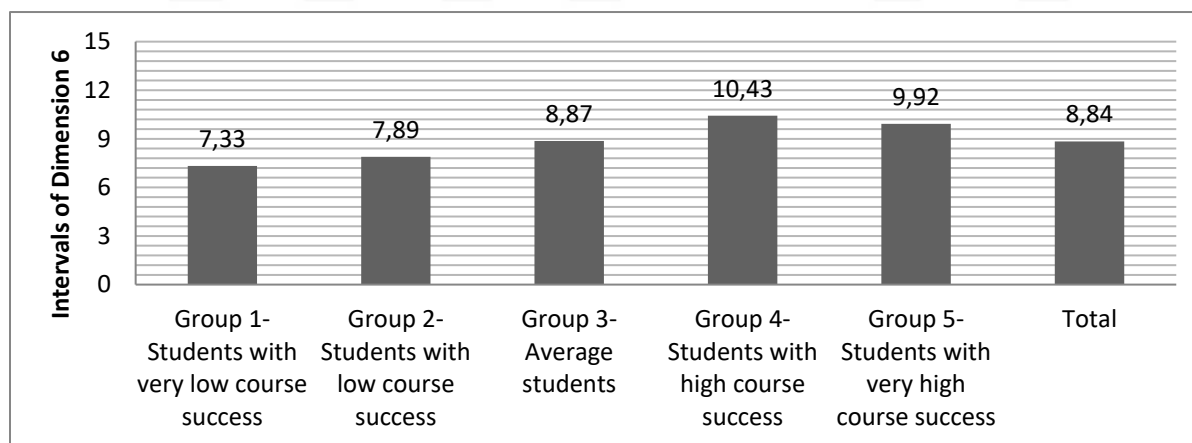
This dimension has only 3 items questioning students' thoughts on sharing responsibility for the selection of content and materials. Table 17 shows these three items (Egel, 2003, p. 104). All of the items consist of autonomous behaviours. The maximum possible score a group can get is 15 (3 X 5) and the minimum is 3 (3 X 1).

Table 17. The Items of Dimension 6

Q- 25	I would like to select the materials for my foreign language lessons.
Q- 26	I would like to share the responsibility of deciding what to do in the English lesson.
Q- 29	I would like to choose the content of what is to be taught in the English lesson.

Figure 6 shows the score results of the success groups for this dimension. According to the results, Group 1, 2, 3 and the total score of students stayed at neutral degrees, while Group 4 and 5 are at autonomous degrees. Similar to the previous dimension, it was observed that there was an increase in line with the course success in general although there is a small decrease in the score of Group 5 after Group 4.

Figure 6. "Selection of Content" Scores of Success Groups.



4.1.1.7. Dimension 7- Objectives/Evaluation

This dimension has only two items, Egel (2003) states that the items are investigating the intrinsic motivation of the students for language learning. When it is looked closer at the items, we can see that in both two items students intrinsically determine an objective for language learning and item Q-31 includes a kind of evaluation between students themselves

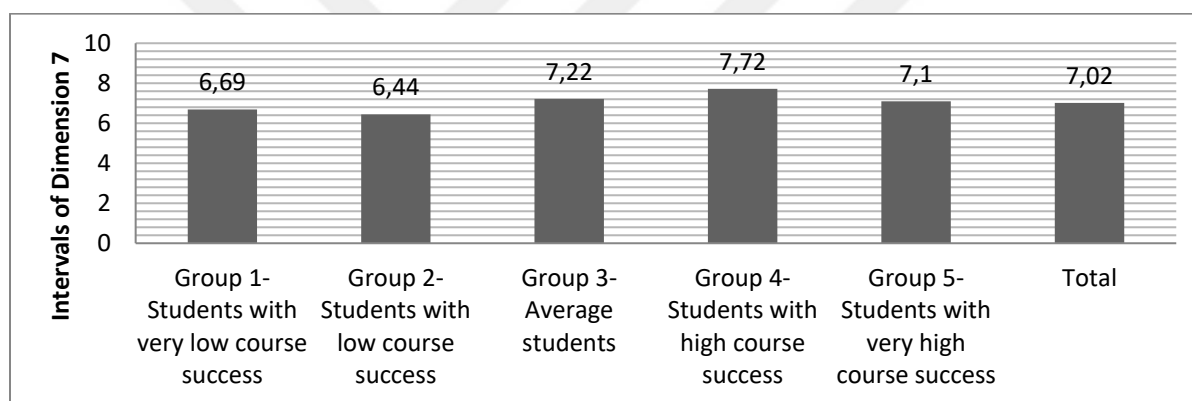
and their friends. Both of the items are in the autonomous direction. Thus, reverse coding wasn't required. Table 18 shows the items of this dimension (Egel, 2003, p. 105).

Table 18. The Items of Dimension 7

Q-31	I think my friends are better than me in the foreign language. I want to reach their level of English.
Q-33	I believe that I will reach a good level in the English language.

Figure 7 displays the score results of the success groups. Because it has only two items, the maximum possible score a group can get is 10 (2 X 5) and the minimum is 2 (2 X 1). It seems that the results are very close to each other, and all of the groups and the total score are in autonomous degree. This may be because of the few numbers of items.

Figure 7. "Objectives/Evaluation" Score Results of Success Groups



4.1.1.8. Dimension 8 - Assessment/Motivation

This dimension has 5 items related to the students' attitudes toward external grading and testing and the influence of these assessments on students' motivation. Reverse coding was made for the items Q-30, Q-34, Q-40 and Q-38 because they include non-autonomous behaviors. However, the Q-39 has an autonomous approach. Table 19 shows the items of this dimension (Egel, 2003, p. 107).

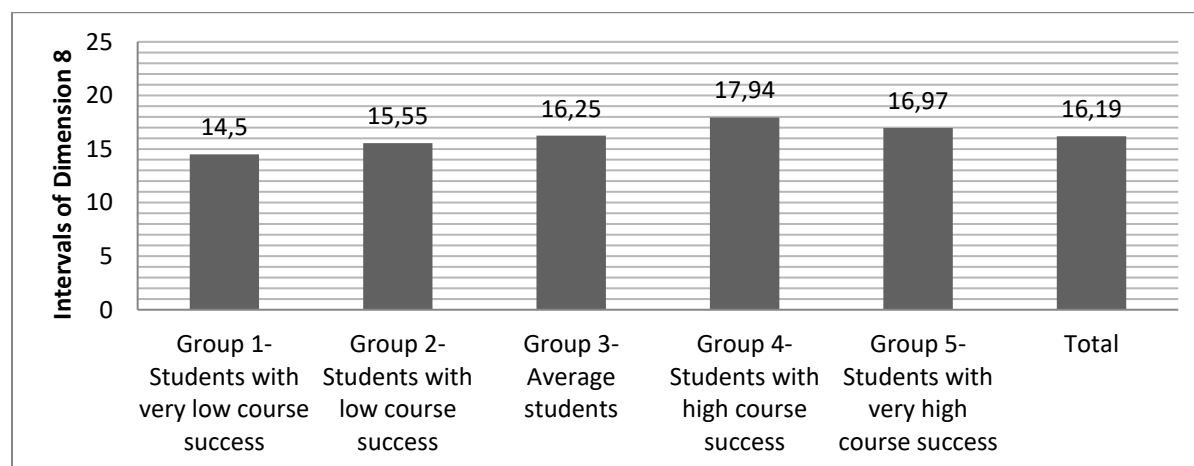
Table 19. Items of Dimension 8

Q-30	I don't study the topics after I get a good grade from my test.
Q-34	I study English when we are going to have a test.
Q-40	I like it when my teacher gives a lot of tests in our English lesson.
Q-38	I do the English lesson activities only when my teacher is going to grade me.

Q-39 I like it when my teacher gives us different test types, other than written tests.

The group results of this dimension can be seen in Figure 8. According to these results, only Group 1 is in the neutral degree, but the other groups and the total is in the autonomous degree. It can be seen that there is an increase in parallel with the course success in general. However, a decrease in the score of Group 5 after Group 4 was observed.

Figure 8. “Assessment/Motivation” Results of Success Groups.



4.1.1.9 Dimension 9 – Other Cultures

This dimension has four items about the students’ interests against the culture of the language they learn. These four items were shown in Table 20 (Egel, 2003, p. 109). Because of including autonomous behaviors, none of the items were coded reversely.

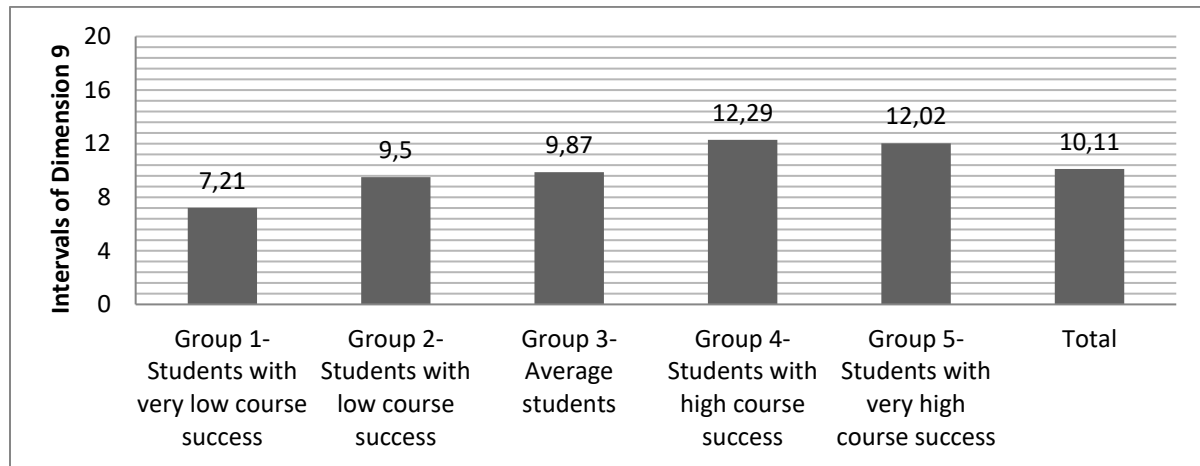
Table 20. The Items of Dimension 9

Q-41	I try to understand the jokes and riddles of the foreign language.
Q-42	I also investigate the culture of the foreign language I am learning.
Q-43	I also investigate the idioms and sayings of the foreign language I am learning.
Q-44	I ask people who have lived abroad about the lifestyle of the people living there.

Figure 9 displays the score results of the success groups for this dimension and the vertical left axis of the graph shows the intervals. The possible maximum score a group can get is 20 (4 X 5) and the minimum is 4 (4 X 1). According to these results, there are three different degrees, which makes this dimension the most diverse one. Group 1 stayed in non-autonomous degrees with the score between 4-8 interval, Groups 2 and 3 in neutral degrees with the scores

between 8-12 interval and Groups 4 and 5 in autonomous degrees with the scores between 12-16 intervals. Similar to Groups 2 and 3, the total mean score of the students is in neutral degree.

Figure 9. “Other Cultures” Scores of Success Groups.



The Figures and the tables presented in this part are necessary to understand the items of the dimensions and the intervals of these dimensions displaying the degrees of the groups. Table 21 was formed to provide a general view of the dominance of the dimensions by summarizing the tables and graphs mentioned above.

Table 21. Dimensional Dominances of the Success Groups and Total Students

Dimensions	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5	Average of All Students
1	Neutral	Neutral	Autonomous	Autonomous	Autonomous	Autonomous
2	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Autonomous	Autonomous	Neutral
3	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Autonomous	Neutral
4	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
5	Neutral	Autonomous	Autonomous	Autonomous	Autonomous	Autonomous
6	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Autonomous	Autonomous	Neutral
7	Autonomous	Autonomous	Autonomous	Autonomous	Autonomous	Autonomous
8	Neutral	Autonomous	Autonomous	Autonomous	Autonomous	Autonomous
9	Non-Autonomous	Neutral	Neutral	Autonomous	Autonomous	Neutral

E	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Autonomous	Autonomous	Neutral
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From Table 20, it is seen that the students are autonomous on average from dimensions 1 (readiness for self-directed learning), 5 (language learning activities), 7 (objectives/evaluation) and 8 (assessment/motivation) which was determined according to Table 9 and Table 11. In addition, the total result of the entire questionnaire (E) displays that Groups 4 and 5 are autonomous in general.

Even though the score results of this questionnaire were described by the graphs and the tables so far, to see the meaningful differences in terms of learner autonomy of the success groups one-way ANOVA analyzing method was used.

4.1.2. Comparison of Each Group's Learner Autonomy via ANOVA

One-way ANOVA analysis was used to observe if there is a significant difference between the success groups in terms of autonomy. Cardinal and Aitken (2013) assumed homogeneity of variance as the assumption of ANOVA and it should be above 0,05. The homogeneity of variances for the entire learner autonomy questionnaire was calculated as 0,051 which is acceptable. The ANOVA results were presented in Table 22.

Table 22. ANOVA Results of the Autonomy Learner Questionnaire (ALQ)

	Groups	N	M	SD	F	p
Entire ALQ	Group 1	42	2,4643	,53144	21,111	,000
	Group 2	38	2,7805	,43439		
	Group 3	31	2,8871	,45834		
	Group 4	37	3,2273	,42377		
	Group5	38	3,2446	,36982		
	Total	186	2,9106	,53709		

Based on these findings, group means (M) support the scores and the graphs which are determined according to Table 11. To have a meaningful difference p should be lower than 0.05. Thus, there is a meaningful difference between groups ($p < 0.05$) in terms of learner autonomy. To see the differences between groups post hoc analysis was conducted.

4.1.2.1. Multiple Comparisons between Sub-groups

Scheffe test which is the most versatile and conservative procedure (Homack, 2001) was preferred for post hoc analysis in order to multiple comparisons between sub-groups because it is sensitive to alpha-type error.

Table 23. Scheffe Results of Autonomy Learner Questionnaire

Groups (I)	Groups (J)	Mean	Std. Error	p
Differences (I-J)				
Group 1	Group 2	-,31622*	,10039	,046
	Group 3	-,42281*	,10617	,004
	Group 4	-,76299*	,10110	,000
	Group 5	-,78033*	,10039	,000
Group 2	Group 1	,31622*	,10039	,046
	Group 3	-,10659	,10852	,915
	Group 4	-,44677*	,10356	,001
	Group 5	-,46411*	,10287	,001
Group 3	Group 1	,42281*	,10617	,004
	Group 2	,10659	,10852	,915
	Group 4	-,34018*	,10917	,050
	Group 5	-,35752*	,10852	,031
Group 4	Group 1	,76299*	,10110	,000
	Group 2	,44677*	,10356	,001
	Group 3	,34018*	,10917	,050
	Group 5	-,01734	,10356	1,000
Group 5	Group 1	,78033*	,10039	,000
	Group 2	,46411*	,10287	,001
	Group 3	,35752*	,10852	,031
	Group 4	,01734	,10356	1,000

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The results of the entire questionnaire (Table 23) display that the difference is significant between Group 1 and the other groups in a disadvantageous way. Group 2 differs from the other groups except for Group 3, in an advantageous way from Group 1 and a disadvantageous way from Groups 4 and 5. Besides these, Group 3 has disadvantageous

differences from Groups 4 and 5. Group 4 has advantageous differences from all of the groups except for Group 5. Similarly, Group 5 has advantageous differences from all of the groups except for Group 4 (for each situation p is <0.05).

When we look at the numbers of the mean differences of Group 1, which has significant differences with all the groups, it can be seen that the numbers are increasing in parallel with success groups. This supports the findings of the learner autonomy scores calculated according to Table 9

4.2. Descriptive Statistics of Out-of-class Activity Questionnaire

For the analysis of the out-of-class activity questionnaire, descriptive statistics were used. The first section of the questionnaire consists of some common out-of-class activities and students were wanted to give points to these activities from 1 to 5 representing frequencies of performing the activities in which 1 stands for never, 2 for rarely, 3 for sometimes, 4 for often and 5 for always.

Table 24. Students' Responses to Out-of-class Activities

Out-of-class activities	Always (%)	Often (%)	Sometimes (%)	Rarely (%)	Never (%)
1. Active listening to English songs	14,5	10,8	26,3	19,9	28,5
2. Reading English texts	2,7	4,3	11,8	22,0	59,1
3. Browsing of English web pages	3,2	11,3	17,7	23,1	44,6
4. Playing Games in English with subtitles	10,8	11,8	17,7	11,8	47,8
5. Playing Games in English without subtitles	7,5	8,1	19,4	15,1	50,0
6. Watching films and serials with subtitles	21,5	17,7	15,1	17,2	28,5
7. Watching films and serials without subtitles	7,0	8,6	12,4	20,4	51,6
8. Watching English TV channels	3,2	3,8	9,7	18,8	64,5
9. Writing in English	4,3	5,4	11,3	17,7	61,3

10. Communication with English speakers	4,3	7,5	13,4	21,5	53,2
11. Individual work with English textbooks	11,8	23,1	24,2	15,1	25,8

Table 24 shows the percentages of the students' responses to the out-of-class activities. It is noteworthy that the never option mostly has higher rates than the other options. This can be a demonstration that most of the students don't perform out-of-class activities. The total mean scores and the group means of the activities can show us the differences between the groups. Table 25 includes the mean scores of groups and total students for out-of-class activities. It is clear that the total mean scores of each activity are not over 3 (sometimes). However, the means of the three activities (active listening to English songs (M=2,62), watching films and serials with subtitles (M=2,86) and individual work with English textbooks (M=2,80)) are between rarely and sometimes.

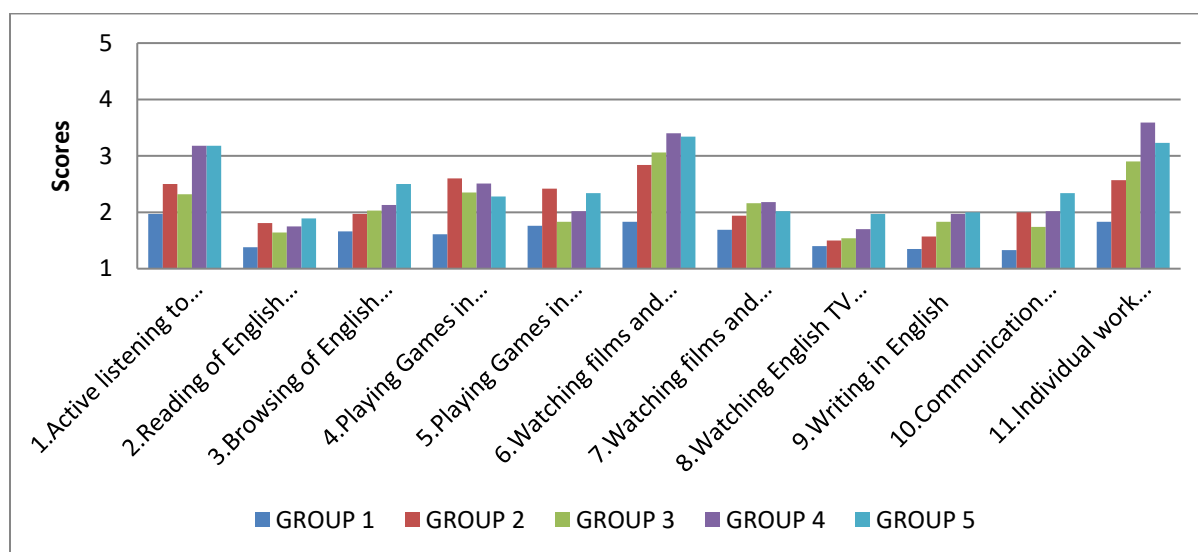
Table 25. The Frequency Means of Out-of-Class Activities in Terms of Course Success

Out-of-class Activities	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5	Total Mean
Active listening to English songs	1,97	2,5	2,32	3,18	3,18	2,62
Reading of English texts	1,38	1,81	1,64	1,75	1,89	1,69
Browsing of English web pages	1,66	1,97	2,03	2,13	2,5	2,05
Playing Games in English with subtitles	1,61	2,60	2,35	2,51	2,28	2,25
Playing Games in English without subtitles	1,76	2,42	1,83	2,02	2,34	2,08
Watching films and serials with subtitles	1,83	2,84	3,06	3,40	3,34	2,86
Watching films and serials without subtitles	1,69	1,94	2,16	2,18	2,02	1,98
Watching English TV channels	1,40	1,5	1,54	1,70	1,97	1,62
Writing in English	1,35	1,57	1,83	1,97	2	1,73
Communication with English speakers	1,33	2	1,74	2,02	2,34	1,88
Individual work with English textbooks	1,83	2,57	2,90	3,59	3,23	2,80

When it is looked at the groups' means, Group 1 doesn't have a mean score even beyond 2 standing for rarely which means most of the students with very low course success don't 'rarely' perform an activity. Group 2's mean scores of the six out-of-class activities (1, 4, 5, 6, 10 and 11) are between 2 and 3 meaning students with low course success perform these out-of-class activities between 'rarely' and 'sometimes', while five of the activities (2,3,7,8 and 9) are performed under rarely. Looking at the results of Group 3, it can be seen that one activity (watching films and serials with subtitles) is slightly above 'sometimes' (3) and five activities (1, 3, 4, 7 and 11) are above 'rarely' (2) and the remaining five activities (2, 5, 8, 9, and 10) are below 'rarely'. Students with high course success (Group 4) and students with very high course success (Group 5) have similar results. Both of them perform three out-of-class activities (1, 6 and 11) slightly over 'sometimes'. In addition, they perform out-of-class activities numbered 3, 4, 5, 7 and 10 above rarely, activity 2 below rarely. Even if these two groups differ in activity 9 as the time dedication category in which Group 4 is below rarely and Group 5 is in rarely, their means are very close to each other.

Figure 10 formed with the mean scores of the groups displays the differences between the five groups. From this, it can't be suggested that there is a significant difference among groups based on out-of-class activities. However, we can observe and interpret the increases and decreases of the means considering course success. According to Figure 10, browsing of English web pages, watching English TV channels and writing in English are directly proportional to course success but their scores are very low. This means that students from all groups rarely or below rarely practice these activities outside of the classroom and there are tiny differences. Active listening to English songs, watching films and serials in English with subtitles and individual work with English textbooks are almost directly proportional to course success. While the mean of Group 4 is equal in the active listening to English songs with Group 5, its means for watching films and serials with subtitles, and individual work with English textbooks are above the means of Group 5. When it is compared to the other activities, these three have the highest mean scores.

Figure 10. The Means of Out-of-Class Activities in Terms of Course Success



For a deeper understanding of how much time the students devote to these activities, the third section of the questionnaire investigated the time students spend doing these activities on a daily or weekly basis. Students were given eight options as ‘less than one hour a week, one to two hours a week, two to three hours a week, four to six hours a week, one to two hours a day, two to three hours a day, three to four hours a day and more than four hours a day’. The options were coded from 1 to 8 respectively. Table 26 shows the percentages of this section. According to the percentages, the most preferred option is ‘one to two hours a day’ (%23,1).

Table 26. Students’ Responses to Time Dedication

Time dedication	More than four hours a day (%)	three to four hours a day (%)	two to three hours a day (%)	one to two hours a day (%)	four to six hours a week (%)	two to three hours a week (%)	one to two hours a week (%)	less than one hour a week (%)
The Means of the answers	2,2	2,2	8,1	23,1	12,9	17,2	14,0	20,4

The group differences can be seen in Table 27. According to Table 27, the average time given to activities by all the students is more than two to three hours and less than four to six hours a week ($M=3,47$). The mean scores of the groups show that there is a linear increase in the duration given to English-related out-of-class activities in terms of course success. The

students with very low course success dedicate time to out-of-class activities slightly more than one to two hours a week ($M=2,19$). The students with low course success ($M=3,26$) and the students with average course success ($M=3,38$) spend more than two to three hours less than four to six hours a week on out-of-class activities. While students with high course success dedicate slightly more than four to six hours a week to their out-of-class activities ($M=4,18$), students with very high course success dedicate time between four to six hours a week and one to two hours a day on average ($M=4,5$).

Table 27. Duration of Out-of-class Activities on a Daily or Weekly Basis

Success Groups	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5	Total mean
Means	2,19	3,26	3,38	4,18	4,5	3,47

The source of motivation which can be a display of learner autonomy (Hrochová, 2012) is important to understand the reasons for doing out-of-class activities. The questionnaire's second section consists of external and internal motivation items. Students were wanted to give points to each item from 1(not suitable for me at all) to 5(very suitable for me). According to Table 28 displaying the percentages of the options, the rate of the students who find the first and third items suitable for themselves is higher than the other items.

Table 28. Students' Responses to Source of Motivation of Performing Out-of-class Activities

Source of Motivation	Very suitable for me (%)	Suitable for me (%)	Neutral (%)	Not Suitable for me (%)	Not suitable for me at all (%)
Personal Amusement	36,6	14,0	19,4	8,6	21,5
Parents' Support	25,8	11,8	16,7	12,4	33,3
Improvement of Learners' English level	31,2	16,7	19,9	8,6	23,7
No way of doing the activity other than in English	9,7	4,3	18,8	15,1	52,2
Preference for original version to avoid alteration	10,8	6,5	15,6	15,1	52,2

It is beneficial to consider the mean scores in order to understand why students do these activities on average and to see the differences between groups. Table 29 displays the means of sources of motivation items.

Table 29. The Means of Source of Motivation Items for Performing Out-of-class Activities.

Source of Motivation	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5	Total Mean
Personal Amusement	2,33	3,15	3,61	3,89	3,94	3,35
Parents' Support	1,83	2,78	2,87	3,04	3,44	2,84
Improvement of Learners' English level	1,85	3,10	3,51	3,94	3,94	3,23
No way of doing the activity other than in English	1,85	2,07	1,87	2,05	2,34	2,04
Preference for original version to avoid alteration	1,52	1,89	2,19	2,45	2,44	2,08

The items standing for personal amusement, improvement of learners' English level and preferences for the original version to avoid alteration were dedicated as internal motivation sources while parents' support and no way of doing the activity other than English were described as external motivation by the author of the questionnaire, Hrochová (2012). The total means of all the groups from Table 29 display that personal amusement has the highest score with 3,35, and performing out-of-class activities for improvement of learners' English level comes second with a very close score of 3,23. Both of the scores are between 'neutral' (3) and 'suitable for me' (4). The other three reasons are between 'not suitable for me (2)' and 'neutral (3)'.

The group results indicate that students with very low course success (Group 1) gave low scores for each item. This may be because they spend less time on out-of-class activities. Students with low course success (Group 2) and students with average course success (Group 3) have similar scores in which they have scores over 3 points in two items and over 2 points in two items and over 1 point in one item. There are also similarities between the students with high course success (Group 4) and very high course success (Group 5) in which the means are very close in each item (three of the mean scores are over 3 points and two of the scores are over 2 points). Even if there is no mean score over 4 standing for 'suitable for me', it is notable

that the mean scores of Groups 4 and 5 for the items personal amusement and improvement of Learner's English level are very close to 4 points.

It was asked students to give points from 1 (the activity didn't help at all) to 5 (the activity helped a lot) to the activities to reach their current level of English. While two of the activities 'English lessons taken at school' and 'homework given by teacher' demonstrates the dependency of students on a teacher and instruction, the other two activities 'voluntary out-of-class activities' and 'speaking English with a foreigner' may exhibit the learners' independency and autonomy. Table 30 presents students' responses to the activities helping to reach their current level of English. According to this, dependency items were mostly chosen by the students.

Table 30. Students' Responses to the Activities Helping to Reach the Current Level of English

Helpful Activities	Helped a lot (%)	Helped (%)	Neutral (%)	Didn't help (%)	Didn't help at all (%)
English lessons taken at school	50,0	14,0	16,7	5,4	14,0
Homework given by the teacher	43,0	16,1	18,3	5,9	16,7
Voluntary out-of-class activities	19,4	9,1	24,7	12,9	33,9
Speaking English with a foreigner	8,6	5,4	12,9	18,3	54,8

The means of these items were calculated to see the differences between groups. Table 31 shows the mean scores. The total means, which is supporting the percentages presented in Table 30, display that students think the most helpful activity as the English lessons taken at school (M=3,80), closely followed by homework given by their teacher (M=3,62). On the other hand, students' perception of voluntary out-of-class activities (M=2, 67) and speaking English with a foreigner (M=1, 94) was that they weren't helpful at all.

Table 31. The Activities Helping to Reach the Current Level of English

Helpful Activities	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5	Total Means
English lessons taken at school	2,80	3,34	4,33	4,32	4,44	3,80

Homework given by the teacher	2,52	3,68	4,16	3,94	4,05	3,62
Voluntary out-of-class activities	1,71	2,63	2,29	3,21	3,55	2,67
Speaking English with a foreigner	1,66	2,02	1,90	2,05	2,10	1,94

When the group scores are investigated, students in all groups gave low points for 'speaking English with a foreigner'. The probable reason for this may be that there are not many foreigners around the students whom they can speak English with. It is seen that Group 1's mean scores for all items are below the average which may be because they have very low course success and each activity mentioned in this part didn't help very much to improve their English. Results of Group 2 (students with low course success) showed an increase in each item compared to Group 1. It can be seen that each group gave more points to the dependency items (first and second items) than the independency items (third and fourth items). However, the mean scores of Group 4 (students with high course success) and 5 (students with very high course success) for the voluntary out-of-class activities are over 3 (neutral) points which can be a reflection of learner autonomy.

In the last part of the questionnaire, the perceptions of the students about the importance of out-of-class English learning for their future life were collected. They were asked one item as "How would you evaluate the importance of English learning outside of the classroom for your future life? Mark a number from 1 to 5 (1 - means English is not important at all and you will stop studying as soon as possible, 5- means English is very important to you and you will continue studying)". Table 32 shows the students' responses to these items. According to these results, half of the students think future English learning is important.

Table 32. Students' Responses to the Importance of Future English Learning

	Very Important For Me (%)	Important for Me (%)	Neutral (%)	Not Important for Me (%)	Not Important for Me at All (%)
Importance of Future English Learning	46,2	15,1	21,0	4,8	12,9

Table 33 shows the mean scores of the success groups and total students for this item. Remarkably, each group except for Group 1 has positive attitudes about the importance of out-

of-class English learning for their future life ($M > 3$). However, the mean score of Group 1 (students with very low course success) is below 3 points which means most of them aren't interested in learning English after compulsory education.

Table 33. The Importance of Out-Of-Class English Learning for the Future of Life

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5	Total Mean
Importance of Future English Learning	2,40	3,86	4	4,43	4,34	3,76

4.2.1. Student's Answers to Open-ended Questions

There are three open-ended questions at the end of the three parts of the questionnaire. In the first part of the questionnaire questioning the out-of-class activities and the frequencies, the students were asked to write out-of-class activities that are not mentioned on the questionnaire, and they do for English learning. Twelve of the students answered this part. All the answers were translated into English by the researcher and were presented as follows:

"I watch English YouTube videos" (Female, Group 4, given point is 5(always))"

"Matching exercises" (Male, Group 2, given point is 3(sometimes))"

"I make quizzes myself" (Female, Group 5, given point is 5(always))"

"I use word cards with Turkish on one side and English on the other" (Female, Group 3, given point is 3(sometimes))"

"I am learning English vocabulary from YouTube" (Female, Group 4, the given point is 4(often))

"English vocabulary puzzles" (Female, Group 5, the given point is 4(often))

"Memorizing vocabularies" (Female, Group 5, the given point is 4(often))

"Duolingo" (Female, Group 3, the given point is 4(often))

"I use mobile application Duolingo" (Male, Group 4, the given point is 3 (sometimes))

"I play with word box" (Female, Group 5, the given point is 5 (always))

"I am playing games from the site Wordwall" (Female, Group 3, the given point is 3(sometimes))

"Duolingo" (Female, Group 4, the given point is 4(often))

While 3 of them mentioned one of the most popular language-learning applications 'Duolingo', five of the answers are about learning vocabulary. The answers were mostly given by female students and students with high course success. YouTube is also mentioned by two

students to learn vocabulary. These answers show that vocabulary learning plays an important role as an out-of-class activity for the students.

At the end of the second part investigating the source of motivation for performing these activities, the students were asked to write any other reason for performing these activities if any. Three of the students gave answers and they are as follows:

“I like the way English speakers talk” (Female, Group 4, the given point is 5)

“I would like to learn English culture” (Female, Group 5, the given point is 5)

“To speak English when I go abroad” (Female, Group 4, the given point is 5)

From the answers, we can deduce that the students have interests in English and the English culture.

At the end of the sixth part, the students were asked to write any activity that helped them to reach their current level of English. There are only two answers for this item. The answers are:

“Applications” (Female, Group 4, the given point is 5)

“Applications, YouTube and serials” (Female, Group 4, the given point is 5)

In general, some of the students who answered the open-ended question of the first part answered other open-ended questions.

CHAPTER V

5. DISCUSSION

This thesis investigates the relationship between learner autonomy and language proficiency through a comparison of the students' out-of-class activities and autonomous features with their English course success. For this aim, two questionnaires were applied to the participants and the results of these questionnaires were presented in the previous section. In this section, the results are discussed under the main research questions. While the main questions were used as the titles, the sub-questions were addressed and answered under these titles.

5.1. What are the characteristics of the 8th-grade learners' learner autonomy?

It was investigated whether students have low or high learner autonomy levels, and in what ways they have autonomous attitudes. Students' learner autonomy level can be understood by examining the results of both questionnaires. To be specific, in the Autonomy Learner Questionnaire, both the students' general degree of autonomy and the dimensional features were measured. In addition, in the out-of-class activity questionnaire, the data on the extent of the students' performing of English-related out-of-class activities were collected. The fact that students independently do something to learn English outside the classroom is an indication that those students have learner autonomy. Hsieh and Hsieh (2019) and Hrochová (2012) handle out-of-class learning as autonomous behavior. In addition, Reinders and Benson (2017) refer that learning beyond the classroom has been identified by a few names including "autonomous, independent, self-directed and self-regulated learning" (p. 3) which points out a dimension of learning beyond the classroom. From these studies, it can be said that out-of-class activities students perform for English learning can be a concrete indicator and a dimension of learner autonomy.

If we look at the situation of all 8th graders who participated in this research, it can be said that the 8th graders participating in this study have a medium level of autonomy. The results shown in Tables and Figures from the findings section support this. To clarify, Table 21 shows the dimensional and total autonomy degrees of the students and it indicates that students are neutral in terms of general autonomy. Table 27 displaying the means of the duration of out-of-class activities on a daily or weekly basis indicates that the average time given to English-related activities by all the students is more than two to three hours and less than four to six hours a week. As stated earlier, out-of-class learning is an indicator of learner autonomy. Thus,

students' time dedication for the activities can show their efforts for learning. In this section, students were given 8 options and the highest possible score was 8. Even if Table 26 including the percentages of this item shows that the most preferred option is 'one to two hours a day', the mean score of the whole students is 3.47, below the median. In addition to these, Table 25 including the frequency means of the out-of-class activities shows that students perform their out-of-class activities below 'sometimes' on average. From this point of view, it can be said that students don't perform out-of-class activities so often.

When we look at Table 29 displaying the mean scores of the source of motivation for performing out-of-class activities, the highest scores belong to 'personal amusement' and 'improvement of learners' English level' items with scores above 3. Having a median-above score on these items shows the existence of learner autonomy because autonomous learners have intrinsic motivation (Deci and Ryan, 2010) and can take action for the sake of their learning (Nunan, 2003). Table 31 contains another section that show students' autonomy by displaying the attitudes of the students about the helpful activities for them to reach their current level of English. Here, dependency items (English lessons taken at school and homework given by the teacher) have higher scores than the independency items (voluntary out-of-class activities and speaking English with a foreigner). This may demonstrate that the dependency of the students predominates over their independency. In addition to these, the importance of learning English beyond the classroom for their future life was asked and Table 33 shows the results for this item. It demonstrates that students mostly have positive attitudes toward the importance of learning English beyond the classroom for their future life ($M=3,76$). Apart from these variables, students were asked about the out-of-class activities they perform which is the first part of the out-of-class activity questionnaire. Although this part shows the kinds of out-of-class activities students do, it would not be very accurate to make an inference about their autonomy levels. Students with the same levels of autonomy may prefer different types of out-of-class activities. However, this inference can be made from the time they spend on out-of-class learning. In a nutshell, it is seen that the students generally get average or slightly above-average scores except for the dependent attitudes of students toward activities that help language development. Based on these data, it can be said that 8th-grade students generally have a medium level of learner autonomy.

The Autonomy Learner Questionnaire collected data about the students' dimensional features of learner autonomy. The findings were described with the graphics and the tables showing the scores and the autonomy degrees. According to Table 21 summarizing the

dimensional degrees of the students, students are autonomous from four dimensions (readiness for self-direction (1), language learning activities (5), objectives/evaluation (7), and assessment/motivation (8)) while neutral from the other dimensions. In addition to these, the results of the out-of-class activity questionnaire demonstrate that students have intrinsic motivations as ‘personal amusement and desire to improve their English level’.

This means that the 8th-grade students who participated in this research show autonomous characteristics: being ready for self-direction, collaborating and doing language learning activities, self-evaluating and goal setting, not being so dependent on external testing/grading, and having intrinsic motivation. Since they are neutral in other dimensions and autonomous in these dimensions, it can be said that students are dominant in terms of these features.

5.2. What types of out-of-class activities are preferred by 8th-grade students learning English as a foreign language?

Autonomous learners take an active role in their own learning process. They can autonomously be active in class and out of class. Performing out-of-class activities which is an autonomous behavior can contribute to students’ language learning and be supportive to in-class instruction. Out-of-class activity questionnaire questioned the students’ out-of-class activities and related issues. According to Table 24 presenting the percentages of the out-of-class activities, the percentages are more evenly distributed in the three activities: active listening to English songs, watching films and serials with subtitles, and individual work with English textbooks. However, Table 25 shows that the means of the total number of students for all of the activities are below 3 (sometimes). This shows that students don’t perform out-of-class activities mostly. The most preferred activities with mean scores above 2 (rarely) are watching films and serials with subtitles (M=2,86), individual work with English textbooks (M=2,80), active listening to English songs (M=2,62), playing games in English with subtitles (M=2,25), playing games without a subtitle (M=2,08), browsing of English webpages (M=2,05). The least preferred activities with mean scores below 2 (rarely) are watching films and serials without subtitles (M=1,98), communicating with English speakers (M=1,88), writing in English (M=1,73), reading English texts (M=1,69), watching English TV channels (M=1,62). In addition to these, it is seen that students talk about vocabulary-based activities and the ‘Duolingo’ application in open-ended questions. However, the number of answers to open-ended questions is small.

Although the activities' rates are low, students' time dedication to out-of-class activities (Table 26) is at a medium level. It is seen that most of the preferred activities consist of receptive skills and popular activities related to technology. From this perspective, the study has come through similarities with some other studies (Lai et al, 2015; İnci, 2021). Lai et al (2015) suggest that middle school students gave positive ratings on using technology to enrich and expand their English resources and İnci (2021) suggests that Turkish high school and secondary school students mostly prefer listening to music, watching movies and playing online games. Unlikely, in this study, the findings show individual work with English textbooks is the second most preferred activity after watching films and serials with subtitles. This may be because of the 8th-grade students preparing for the high school entrance exam (LGS).

Some of the least popular activities are productive skills such as writing and communicating in English. İnci (2021) suggests that secondary and high school students don't prefer productive skills. However, from these findings, it is hard to say that students prefer receptive skills to productive skills because there are receptive skills among the less popular activities. On the other hand, all of the most preferred activities consist of receptive skills.

When scores of the out-of-class activities are compared with the autonomy scores of the students, it is seen that while the general autonomy level is medium, the frequency of doing their out-of-class activities is low. However, the time period students dedicate daily and weekly to their out-of-class activities shows that most students spend one to two hours a day or less on out-of-class activities. This shows students' performance in out-of-class activities is also at a medium level. It can be said that the participating students have a medium level of autonomy in terms of both autonomous attitude and behavior.

Why the students perform these activities is important to understand the source of motivation. In the out-of-class activity questionnaire, students were asked to give points from one to five to the items for why they performed the activities they chose in the previous section. According to the results, students mostly perform these activities because of personal amusement and to improve their English level. It is seen that the answers given to the open-ended question asked on this subject are also about personal amusement. Parents' support is also another reason for many students performing out-of-class activities. These results are very similar to Hrochová's (2012) findings, as she suggests that Czech secondary school students who participated in her study practice their out-of-class activities for the reasons of personal amusement, improvement of English level, and parental support respectively. Hrochová (2012) identifies these reasons as internal motivation sources which are signs of learner autonomy.

5.3. To what extent is the course success related to students' autonomous features and out-of-class activity preferences?

In order to understand the relationship between students' autonomous features and course success, learner autonomy characteristics and out-of-class activity preferences of the students with different course successes were examined. Whether there are any differences between the students with different course success in terms of learner autonomy characteristics can be seen by looking at students' differences in dimensions, time dedication to out-of-class activities, and source of motivation for out-of-class activities.

The summary of the groups' dimensional scorings (see Table 21) displays that students with high course success (Group 4 and Group 5) are obviously autonomous in more ways than the less successful students (Group 1, 2, and 3). However, all of the groups are not autonomous from the dimension of 'the role of the teacher' as well as only Group 5 is autonomous from the dimension of 'the importance of the class/teacher'. These results indicate that there is no difference between success groups in terms of students' dependence on a teacher or classroom teaching. A similar result can be seen in the 'helpful activities to achieve the current level of English' section of the out-of-class activities questionnaire. Most of the students think English lessons taken at school and homework given by the teacher are the most helpful activities for their improvement of English. The fact that these parts of both questionnaires containing items about the dependency on the teacher have parallel results indicates that students are not much autonomous in terms of dependency on the teacher. The reason for this may be that Turkey still has not fully come out of the teacher-centered teaching style (Kaymakamoğlu, 2017). Unlike this, most of the Groups are autonomous in dimensions 5 (language learning activities), 7 (objectives/evaluation), and 8 (assessment/motivation). This shows that there is no obvious difference between the groups in terms of the characteristics of 'collaborating and doing language learning activities, self-evaluating and goal setting, and not being so dependent on external testing/grading'. On the other hand, in dimensions 1 (readiness for self-direction), 2 (independent work in language learning), 6 (selection of content), and 9 (other cultures), successful groups are autonomous, while lesser groups are neutral. This means there are differences between groups in the characteristics of 'to be ready for self-direction, to independently work in language learning, to have a desire of sharing responsibility on the selection of content, and to have interests against the culture of the target language.'

When we look at the other items from the out-of-class activity questionnaire that shows students' learner autonomy, it is seen that successful students (Groups 4 and 5) spend more

time on their out-of-class activities than the less successful students (Groups 1, 2, and 3). It can also be seen that successful groups gave higher scores to motivation items (see Table 29). This indicates students with high course success are more motivated than students with low course success regardless of intrinsically or externally motivated. In addition to the characteristics mentioned above, differences among the success groups were observed in terms of 'to perform out-of-class activities' and 'to be motivated'. Beyond the difference between characteristics, significant differences were also observed between the students' general autonomy levels. As a result of the ANOVA analysis, it is seen that successful groups are more autonomous compared to unsuccessful groups (see, Table 23).

Whether there are differences in students' out-of-class activity preferences can be understood from Table 30 displaying the frequency means of out-of-class activity preferences. Especially for some of the activities (active listening to English songs, watching films and serials with subtitles and individual work with English textbooks), there is a parallel increase of the means with course success. While these three activities are performed sometimes and more by successful groups on average, the less successful groups perform them below-sometimes. In fact, it has been observed that students with low and very low course success do very little out-of-class activities. In addition, the means of the successful students (Groups 4 and 5) are higher than the means of the less successful students (Groups 1, 2, and 3) in most of the English-related out-of-class activities. The findings for the duration of these activities on a weekly and daily basis (Table 31) have similar and supportive results with the frequency means of the out-of-class activities.

5.4. What is the relationship between learner autonomy and language proficiency?

In conclusion, it was found that the participant students have a moderate level of learner autonomy in general. Considering that the research was carried out in a state school in a region, it would not be correct to generalize it to the whole of the country, Turkey. However, since the transition from traditional approaches to student-centered approaches continues in Turkey (Kaymakamoğlu, 2017), it can be said that this result is on a positive line. Şakrak-Ekin and Balçıkanlı (2019) refer that some research (Sert, 2006; Yumuk, 2002) carried out in Turkey at the beginning of the 2000s resulted in students being non-autonomous because of the traditional instructions. On the other hand, the studies conducted in recent years show that there are positive attitudes to learner autonomy (Ünal et al., 2017) and students have a high level of

autonomy (Şakrak-Ekin and Balçıkanlı, 2019). This is due to the growing emphasis on learner autonomy and student-centered approaches.

The ANOVA test suggests that there is a significant difference between the success groups in favor of successful students. From this point of view, this thesis' results support research that has found a positive relationship between language proficiency and learner autonomy (Dafei, 2007; Jianfeng et al., 2018; Le Nguyen, 2008; Melvina and Julia, 2021; Sakai and Takagi, 2009; Şakrak-Ekin and Balçıkanlı, 2019). However, it is notable that students with low course grades (Groups 1 and 2) have a moderate level of learner autonomy, but they devote very little time to their out-of-class activities. When we look at successful students, we see that they have a high level of autonomy and spend more time on their out-of-class activities. Deducing from here, it is seen that autonomous behaviors (such as doing enough activities outside the classroom) are very effective on students' course success as well as autonomous attitudes. In light of the findings, this thesis suggests that students who are more autonomous and regularly perform English-related out-of-class activities tend to be more successful in EFL courses and more proficient in English. Hrochová (2012) found a similar result with this. However, autonomy, which has not yet turned into behavior, may have little effect on course success and proficiency. Ünal et al. (2017) suggest that there is no significant difference between the perceptions of learner autonomy and students' proficiency level instead students have a positive attitude towards learner autonomy, regardless of their level of proficiency. This result also supports the dimensional figure of Oxford (1999) "Ability, attitude, + action = autonomy → achievement (Oxford, 1999, p. 111)". According to this, learner autonomy needs ability and attitude plus action and then achievement comes. Thus, for students to develop language proficiency and learner autonomy, autonomous actions/behaviors should be encouraged.

CHAPTER VI

6. CONCLUSION

In this chapter of the thesis, the research will be concluded by summarizing the key findings regarding the research aims. Also, it mentions the contributions of the findings to the literature, pedagogical implications, reviews the limitations, and proposes opportunities for future research.

The main purpose of this thesis is to investigate the relationship between learner autonomy and language proficiency through a comparison of learner autonomy characteristics and out-of-class activity preferences with EFL course success. With the learner autonomy characteristics and out-of-class activity preferences, it was aimed to investigate the students' learner autonomy features. The studies (Dafei, 2007; Jianfeng et al, 2018; Le Nguyen, 2008; Melvina and Julia, 2021; Sakai and Takagi, 2009) conducted around the world tell us there is a positive relationship between learner autonomy and language proficiency. Learner autonomy with the most accepted definition is the ability to take charge of one's own learning process. Learners having the autonomous ability, attitude, and action can reach achievement (Oxford, 1999). In the Turkish context, there are some studies investigating the relationship between learner autonomy and academic success (Şakrak-Ekin and Balçıkanlı, 2019; Tilfaroğlu and Çiftçi) and these studies suggest a positive relationship between these concepts. In this thesis, learner autonomy characteristics and out-of-class activities of students with different course successes were examined. The aim here is to look at whether successful and unsuccessful students have differences in terms of learner autonomy characteristics and out-of-class activities. To reach this aim, descriptive and ANOVA analysis methods were used. The results indicate that successful students have a high level of autonomy while less successful students have a moderate level of autonomy. ANOVA results show that there is a meaningful difference between successful and unsuccessful students in terms of learner autonomy.

Further findings show that students are generally autonomous from the dimensions of being ready for self-direction, collaborating and doing language learning activities, self-evaluating and goal setting, not being so dependent on external testing/grading, and having intrinsic motivation. On the other hand, successful students are more autonomous from the dimensions of readiness for self-direction, independent work in language learning, selection of content, and eagerness to learn the target language culture. Besides, the most preferred out-of-class activities are watching subtitled films and serials, individual work with English textbooks and actively listening to English songs. For these activities, there are differences between successful groups and unsuccessful groups in favor of successful ones. It is seen that

unsuccessful students, especially those with very low success, do very little of all these activities. However, the result of the Autonomy Learner Questionnaire indicates these students have a moderate level of learner autonomy. The primary reason for this may be that while the Autonomy Learner Questionnaire mostly measures ability and attitude, the Out-of-class Activity Questionnaire is more based on actual behaviors. From this point of view, it can be said that the 8th grade students should have both autonomous ability-attitude and out-of-class activities. Consequently, this study implies that being successful in language learning requires autonomous out-of-class activities in addition to attitudes and abilities and contributes to the literature with these findings.

6.1. Pedagogical Implications

The findings of this thesis have some pedagogical implications. The findings indicate that there is a positive relationship between learner autonomy and language proficiency. In addition, there are differences among students with different course successes in terms of learner autonomy characteristics and performing out-of-class activities. Successful students have more autonomous characteristics and perform more out-of-class activities. Therefore, students should be supported to develop learner autonomy in various dimensions. However, some studies (Karabiyik, 2018; Kartal and Balçıkanlı, 2019) show that students in Turkey don't go through an education that supports learner autonomy. Doğan and Mirici (2017) suggest that instructors at the tertiary education level in Turkey think learner autonomy is desirable but not feasible. These studies show that Turkey has serious problems in putting learner autonomy into practice. By providing educational training to teachers in the field of learner autonomy, information can be given about what learner autonomy is and how to support it and teachers' awareness on this issue can be increased. Apart from this, understanding students' features can help us to promote learner autonomy. The fact that students are familiar with technology makes it easier for them to access English resources. Bayat's (2011) study shows that out-of-class activities can raise students' learner autonomy. According to their interests, activities that they can do outside of the classroom can be encouraged. This research shows that students are interested in listening to English songs and watching subtitled serials and movies. This is likely because of the popularity of these activities. In addition to these, individual work with English textbooks is another preferred activity. This may be because of the effect of the LGS exam (High School Entrance Exam). Therefore, it is necessary to understand the interests of the students well and to guide them accordingly. However, it is seen that students aren't interested

in activities consisting of productive skills. Since English is taught as a foreign language in Turkey, there is no environment where students can actively use their English apart from English classes. To overcome this, it is necessary to encourage students to speak and write in English. In this regard, some activities in and out of class can be encouraged by teachers such as penfriends, online speaking with native speakers, only English days in which students speak English with each other and creating English magazines. In this context, some projects can be developed by curriculum or teacher. Thus, environments in which students are active and support learner autonomy are ensured.

6.2. Limitations

This thesis basically examines the relationship between learner autonomy and language proficiency through students' autonomous features and out-of-class activities. Even if the aims were reached, the data were collected by questionnaires. Students can express themselves better in open-ended questions or interviews compared to questionnaires. In addition, a comprehensive scale measuring students' language proficiency could not be used either. Instead, language proficiency was discussed based on course success. Since the lessons are measured with written exam papers in Turkey, the students' vocabulary and reading skills may have been measured the most. In this respect, course success does not fully reflect language proficiency. However, the fact that students have been successful in the English course may also mean that they have an interest and talent for language learning. Thus, we can say that the students' course successes can reflect their language proficiency to some extent.

The participants consisted of students studying at the same school in a district of Şanlıurfa, located in the Southeast Anatolian Region of Turkey. Because of this, there is no diversity in terms of the sample group. However, they could be a representative group for Turkey or for secondary school students with similar education systems. In terms of accessibility, this research was conducted at the school where the researcher works. The beneficial part is that the researcher can check students' course successes which they stated in the questionnaire from the *e-okul* (electronic school) system.

Another limitation is that no pilot study was conducted for the questionnaires. The reason for this is the thought that the number of participants wouldn't be sufficient for the actual research, since the data collection process coincides with the year the pandemic continues. While the total number of students enrolled in the school that year was 253, the number of students whose answers were used in the research was 186. However, two experts'

opinions were received on the use of the questionnaires and they were confirmed. Also, the reliability of the questionnaires is at acceptable levels.

6.3. Suggestions for Future Research

A similar study can be done via a comprehensive language proficiency scale. With a comprehensive language proficiency test, students' different skills can be measured and the correlation of these skills with their chosen out-of-class activities can be checked. In this way, the relationship between language skills and out-of-class activities is examined. In addition, considering the cultural differences of Turkey, conducting this study or a similar one in more than one region of Turkey may cause the results to be more generalizable. A regional comparison of learner autonomy characteristics of students can also be made in the context of Turkey.

In this study, learner autonomy and out-of-class activities were measured using questionnaires, and quantitative data were used. Open-ended questions can be used to gain a deeper understanding of students. In addition, students may also be doing out-of-class activities other than those mentioned in this study. Although an open-ended question was asked on this subject, activities such as 'using applications to learn English', 'taking private tutorial lessons', 'using the phone/computer/social media in English', and 'playing English games with friends outside of school' can be added to these activities. Adding as many activities as possible allows students to indicate activities that they have done but did not think of when solving the questionnaire.

When conducting the research, the question of 'what can be the possible effects of LGS (high school entrance exam) on the students' learner autonomy and language proficiency' aroused. This is because the out-of-class activity 'individual work with English textbooks' is one of the most preferred activities. This can be a positive washback effect of the LGS exam. Further research which is investigating the effects of the LGS exam on learner autonomy can contribute to the literature.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Autonomy Learner Questionnaire

Adı Soyadı (Name Surname):

Sınıf (class):

Cinsiyet (gender):

Sevgili öğrenciler aşağıdaki maddeleri dikkatlice düşünüp sizin için en doğru olan boşluğa (x) işareti koyunuz. Cevaplar notlarınızı etkilemeyecektir. Vereceğiniz dürüst cevaplar bizim için önemlidir.

5= Her zaman doğru (Always True)

4= Çoğu zaman doğru (Mostly True)

3= Bazen doğru (Sometimes True)

2= Nadiren doğru (Rarely True)

1= Hiçbir zaman doğru değil (Never True)

Items	5	4	3	2	1
1. İngilizce öğrenirken bildiklerimle yeni öğrendiklerim arasında ilişkiler kurmaya çalışırım.					
2. İngilizce yazılmış olan diğer kitaplardan ve kaynaklardan kendi isteğimle faydalanırım.					
3. İngilizce konuşan bir insanı duyduğumda onu çok dikkatli dinlemeye çalışırım.					
4. Arkadaşlarımla veya ailemle İngilizce konuşmak istiyorum					
5. Basit İngilizce ile yazılmış olan kitapları kendi isteğimle okurum.					
6. İngilizce öğrenirken kendi kendime öğrenebileceğim alıştırmaları severim.					
7. İngilizce öğrenirken kendi kendime yeni şeyler denemeyi severim.					
8. İngilizce bir konuyu öğretmen anlatmazsa, onu öğrenemeyeceğim diye korkarım.					
9. İngilizceyi kendi kendime öğrenmek zorunda kalmayı sevmem.					
10. İngilizce dersinde öğrenemediğim konuyu tek başıma çalışarak öğrenebilirim.					
11. İngilizce öğrenirken öğretmenimin yanımda olması beni rahatlatıyor.					
12. İngilizceyi sadece öğretmenin yardımıyla öğrenebilirim.					
13. İngilizce öğrenmem için öğretmenim bana her zaman yol göstermelidir.					

14. İngilizce öğrenirken öğretmenimin dilbilgisi kurallarını tekrarlayarak anlatmasını isterim.					
15. Öğretmenim bize İngilizce 'deki her ayrıntıyı anlatınca sevinirim.					
16. Gelecekte İngilizceyi tek başıma öğretmenim olmadan öğrenmeye devam etmek isterim.					
17. Diğer öğrencilerle çalışabileceğim İngilizce proje ödevlerinden hoşlanırım.					
18. İngilizcenin dil bilgisini kendi kendime/öğretmene gerek duymadan öğrenebilirim.					
19. İngilizce 'deki sözcükleri öğrenmek için kendi yöntemlerimi kullanırım.					
20. İngilizce 'deki sözcükleri sözlük karıştırarak geliştirmeyi severim.					
21. Sadece öğretmenim İngilizce dil bilgisi kurallarını bana öğretebilir. Tek başıma öğrenemem.					
22. Öğreneceğimiz sözcükleri öğretmenin vermesini isterim.					
23. Yabancı dil derslerimle ilgili kaset/video/CD' leri sınıf dışında kullanmak isterim.					
24. İngilizce okumayı ve dinlemeyi aslında sınıf dışında yapmayı tercih ederim.					
25. Yabancı dil derslerim için malzemeleri kendim seçmek isterim.					
26. İngilizce dersinde neler yapılacağı konusunda sorumluluk paylaşmak isterim.					
27. Ben İngilizce'yi nasıl en iyi şekilde öğrenebileceğimi bilirim.					
28. İngilizce dersindeki bir konuyu öğrenmemişsem, sorumlusu benim.					
29. İngilizce dersinde öğretilecek konuları kendim belirlemek isterim.					
30. Yazılıdan iyi bir not alınca, bir daha o ders konularını çalışmam.					
31. Arkadaşlarımdan yabancı dilde benden daha iyi olduklarını düşünürüm. Onların seviyesine ulaşmak isterim.					
32. İngilizce derslerimle ilgili eksiklikleri nasıl telafi edeceğim konusunda endişelenirim.					
33. İngilizce 'de iyi bir seviyeye geleceğime inanıyorum.					
34. İngilizceyi sınav olacağımız zaman çalışırım.					
35. İngilizceyi kendi kendime çalışınca daha iyi öğrendiğimi düşünüyorum.					
36. İngilizce dersini sadece öğretmenimin verdiği ödev için çalışırım.					

37. İngilizceyi yalnız çalışmaktansa arkadaşlarımla çalışmak bana daha faydalı oluyor					
38. İngilizce alıştırmaları sadece öğretmenim not vereceği zaman çalışırım.					
39. Öğretmenimin yazılı sınavlardan daha farklı sınav türleri yapması hoşuma gider.					
40. Öğretmenimin İngilizce dersi için çok sınav yapması hoşuma gider.					
41. Öğrendiğim yabancı dildeki fıkralarını anlamaya çalışırım.					
42. Öğrendiğim yabancı dilin kültürünü de araştırırım.					
43. Öğrendiğim yabancı dilin atasözlerini ve deyimlerini de araştırırım.					
44. Yurtdışında yaşamış olan insanlara, oradaki insanların yaşam biçimleriyle ilgili sorular sorarım.					

Appendix 2. Autonomy Learner Questionnaire

Name and Surname:

Class:

Gender:

Dear students, think carefully about the following items and put an (x) in the most appropriate space for you. Answers will not affect your grades. Your honest answers are important to us.

5= Always True

4= Mostly True

3= Sometimes True

2= Rarely True

1= Never True

	Items	1	2	3	4	5
1	When I am learning English I try to relate the new things I have learned to my former knowledge.					
2	I use other English books and resources on my own will.					
3	When I hear someone talking in English, I listen it carefully					
4	I want to talk in English with my family or friends					
5	It is my own preferences to read English books written in basic English					
6	While learning English, I like activities in which I can learn on my own					
7	I like trying new things while I am learning English					
8	I am afraid that I won't learn a topic if the teacher doesn't explain it in the English class.					
9	I don't like learning English on my own					
10	If I cannot learn English in the classroom, I can learn working on my own.					
11	I feel confident when the teacher is beside me while I am learning English.					
12	I can learn English only with the help of my teacher.					
13	My teacher always has to guide me in learning English.					
14	While learning English I would like my teacher to repeat grammatical rules.					
15	I feel happy when my teacher explains every detail of English					

16	In the future, I would like to continue learning English on my own/ without a teacher.					
17	In the English lesson, I like tasks where I can work with other students.					
18	I can learn English grammar on my own/ without needing a teacher.					
19	I use my own methods to learn grammar in English.					
20	I like learning English words by looking them up in a dictionary.					
21	Only my teacher can teach me English grammar. I cannot learn on my own.					
22	I want the teacher to give us the words that we are to learn.					
23	I would like to use cassettes/videos/CDs in the foreign language, outside of the classroom.					
24	In fact, I like to listen and read in English outside of the classroom					
25	I would like to select the materials for my foreign language lessons.					
26	I would like to share the responsibility of deciding what to do in the English lesson.					
27	I know how I can learn English the best.					
28	If I haven't learned something in my English lesson, I am responsible for it.					
29	I would like to choose the content of what is to be taught in the English lesson.					
30	I don't study the topics after getting a good grade on my test.					
31	I think my friends are better than me in the foreign language. I want to reach their level of English.					
32	I hesitate on the matter of compensating what I have missed in English lessons.					
33	I believe that I will reach a good level in the English language					
34	I study English when we are going to have a test					
35	I think that I learn English better when I work on my own.					
36	I only study for the English lesson when the teacher gives homework.					
37	I find it more useful to work with my friends than working on my own for the English lesson.					
38	I do the English lesson activities only when my teacher is going to grade me.					
39	I like it when my teacher gives us different test types, other than written tests.					
40	I like it when my teacher does a lot of tests in our English lesson					
41	I try to understand the jokes and riddles of the foreign language.					

42	I also investigate the culture of the foreign language I am learning.					
43	I also investigate the idioms and sayings of the foreign language I am learning.					
44	I ask people who have lived abroad about the lifestyle of the people living there.					



Appendix 3. Out-of-class Activity Questionnaire

Sevgili öğrenciler, bu anket sizin İngilizce öğrenirken yaptığınız sınıf dışı aktiviteleri belirlemek, bunları ne sıklıkta yaptığınızı tespit etmek için hazırlanmıştır. Aşağıdaki maddeleri dikkatlice düşünüp sizin için en doğru olan boşluğa (x) işareti koyunuz. Vereceğiniz dürüst cevaplar bizim için önemlidir.

Adı Soyadı (Name Surname):

Cinsiyet (gender):

Yaş (age)

1- Aşağıdaki aktivitelerden hangilerini boş zamanlarınızda uyguluyorsunuz? Uygulama sıklığınıza göre 1-5'e kadar puan veriniz. 1- hiç uygulamıyorum, 2 – nadiren uyguluyorum, 3- bazen uyguluyorum, 4- sık sık uyguluyorum ve 5- daima uyguluyorum demek.						
		1	2	3	4	5
1.	İngilizce şarkı dinlemek (sözlerine dikkat ederek)					
2.	İngilizce kitap, dergi ya da gazete okumak					
3.	İngilizce sitelerde gezinmek					
4.	Altyazılı İngilizce oyun oynamak					
5.	Altyazısız İngilizce oyun oynamak					
6.	Altyazılı İngilizce dizi-film izlemek					
7.	Altyazısız İngilizce dizi-film izlemek					
8.	İngilizce TV kanallarını izlemek (BBC, Trt World gibi)					
9.	İngilizce blog/günlük/mektup gibi herhangi bir yazı yazmak.					
10.	İngilizce konuşan biriyle yazılı veya konuşarak iletişim kurmak					
11.	Kitaplar ile kendi başına İngilizce çalışmak (<i>gramer kitabından, İngilizce okuma/ reading kitabından ders çalışmak gibi</i>)					
Öğretmen tarafından ödev olarak verilmemiş başka bir aktivite varsa belirtiniz						

2- Bu aktiviteleri neden yapıyorsunuz? 1 ile 5 arası puan veriniz. 1-bana hiç uygun değil, 5-bana çok uygun.	1	2	3	4	5
Bu aktiviteleri yapmak hoşuma gidiyor.					
İngilizcemi geliştirdiği için ailem beni bu aktiviteleri yapmam konusunda destekliyor.					
İngilizce öğrenmede bunların önemli olduğunu düşünüyorum					
Bu aktiviteyi sadece İngilizce yapabilirim. (izlediğiniz filmin Türkçesinin olmaması sadece İngilizcesinin olması veya oynadığınız oyunun İngilizce dilinde olması Türkçe olmaması gibi)					
Orijinali İngilizce olmasından dolayı İngilizce tercih ediyorum. (Bir filmin Türkçesi olmasına rağmen İngilizcesini tercih etmek gibi)					
Başka bir sebep varsa belirtiniz:					

3- Bu aktiviteleri kaç saat yapıyorsunuz? (Uygun olanı işaretleyin)

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Haftada bir saatte az | ☐ Günde bir-iki saat |
| ☐ Haftada bir-iki saat | ☐ günde iki üç saat |
| ☐ Haftada iki-üç saat | ☐ günde üç-dört saat |
| ☐ Haftada dört-altı saat | ☐ günde dört saatten fazla |

4- En son dönem aldığınız İngilizce notunuz nasıldı?	0-45	45-60	60-70	70-85	85-100

5- Her şeyden önce, şu anki İngilizce seviyenize ulaşmanıza neyin yardımcı olduğunu değerlendirin (1- hiç yardımcı olmadı, 5- çok yardımcı oldu)	1	2	3	4	5
Okulda aldığım İngilizce dersler					
Öğretmenimin verdiği ödevler					
Kendi kendime yaptığım sınıf dışı aktiviteleri					
Yabancı biriyle İngilizce konuşmak					
Varsa diğer şeyler. Belirtiniz:					

1- Sınıf dışı öğrenmenin gelecekteki yaşamınız için önemini nasıl değerlendirirsiniz? Önemine göre bir sayı işaretleyin (1 - İngilizcenin sizin için hiçbir önemi olmadığı ve mümkün olan en kısa sürede çalışmayı bırakacağınız anlamına gelir, 5- İngilizcenin sizin için önemli olduğu ve çalışmalara devam edeceğiniz anlamına gelir)	1	2	3	4	5
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Appendix 4. Out-of-class Activity Questionnaire.

Dear students, this questionnaire has been prepared to determine the extra-class activities you do while learning English and how often you do them. Please consider the following items carefully and put an (x) in the most appropriate space for you. Your honest answers are important to us.

Name Surname:

Gender:

Age:

1- To which of these activities are you dedicating yourself in your free time? Mark numbers from 1 to 5 where 5 means that you do this activity always, 4 often, 3 sometimes, 2 rarely and 1 never	1	2	3	4	5
1) Active listening to English songs (you try to really listen to words.)					
2) Reading of English books/magazines/newspapers					
3) Browsing of English web pages					
4) Playing games in English with subtitles					
5) Playing games in English without subtitles					
6) Watching English movies/series in English with subtitles					
7) Watching English movies/series in English without subtitles					
8) Watching English TV channels (BBC, TRT world...)					
9) Writing blogs/articles/texts in English.					
10) Written or spoken communication with an English speaker					
11) Independent work with textbooks (voluntary rehearsing of grammar, listing of vocabulary...)					
Another English related activity which was not assigned by the teacher:					

2- Why do you do these activities? Please mark one number for the following reasons according to their importance (5 for a very important reason, 1 for a not important reason at all)	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoy it					

my parents support me because it improves my English					
I think it is important for my English learning					
here is no way of doing it other than in English					
I prefer the original version because I want to avoid the alteration during its translation					
another reason:					

3- How many hours do you spent with these activities?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ less than an hour a <i>week</i> | ☐ one to two hours a <i>day</i> |
| ☐ one to two hours a <i>week</i> | ☐ two to three hours a <i>day</i> |
| ☐ two to three hours a <i>week</i> | ☐ three to four hours a <i>day</i> |
| ☐ four to six hours a <i>week</i> | ☐ more than four hours a <i>day</i> |

4- What was your English grade at your last school report?	0- 45	45- 60	60- 70	70- 85	85- 100
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5- Evaluate what, above all, helped you to attain your current level of English (choose from the number where 5 means that the activity helped a lot, 1 means that it did not help at all)	1	2	3	4	5
English lessons taken at school					
Homework given by the teacher.					
Your own English related out-of-class activities					
Talking English with a foreigner					
Other:					

How would you evaluate the importance of out-of-class learning for your future life? Mark a number according to its importance (1 means that English is a priority for you and that you will continue in its studies, 5 means that English is of no importance to you and you will cease studying as soon as you can)	1	2	3	4	5
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Appendix 5. Permissions for the Research Instruments



Appendix 6. Students Responses to Autonomy Learner Questionnaire

	Items	Always True (%)	Mostly True (%)	Sometimes True (%)	Rarely True (%)	Never True (%)
1	When I am learning English, I try to relate the new things I have learned to my former knowledge.	17,2	22	23,1	22,6	15,1
2	I use other English books and resources on my own will.	14	11,8	25,3	24,2	24,7
3	When I hear someone talking in English, I listen to it carefully	29	18,3	17,7	22,0	12,9
4	I want to talk in English with my family or friends	17,2	14,5	17,2	19,9	31,2
5	It is my own preferences to read English books written in basic English	14	10,8	29,6	20,4	25,3
6	While learning English, I like activities in which I can learn on my own	27,4	16,1	19,9	19,4	17,2
7	I like trying new things while I am learning English	27,4	17,7	14,0	24,2	16,7
8	I am afraid that I won't learn a topic if the teacher doesn't explain it in the English class.	26,2	11,3	23,1	16,7	22
9	I don't like learning English on my own	25,3	13,4	26,3	12,9	22
10	If I cannot learn English in the classroom, I can learn working on my own.	18,8	17,2	23,1	24,2	16,7
11	I feel confident when the teacher is beside me while I am learning English.	44,1	18,8	18,3	10,2	8,6
12	I can learn English only with the help of my teacher.	25,3	18,3	20,4	16,1	19,9
13	My teacher always has to guide me in learning English.	43	18,8	23,1	7	8,1
14	While learning English I would like my teacher to repeat grammatical rules.	36	18,8	25,3	11,8	8,1

15	I feel happy when my teacher explains every detail of English	51,6	22	15,1	4,8	6,5
16	In the future, I would like to continue learning English on my own/ without a teacher.	23,7	12,9	23,1	12,9	27,4
17	In the English lesson, I like tasks where I can work with other students.	32,3	17,2	22	11,3	17,2
18	I can learn English grammar on my own/ without needing a teacher.	6,5	14	20,4	25,3	33,9
19	I use my own methods to learn grammar in English.	24,7	15,1	26,3	14,0	19,9
20	I like learning English words by looking them up in a dictionary.	23,1	15,6	19,9	19,4	22
21	Only my teacher can teach me English grammar. I cannot learn on my own.	19,9	22,6	18,8	14,5	24,2
22	I want the teacher to give us the words that we are to learn.	37,6	23,1	20,4	7,5	11,3
23	I would like to use cassettes/videos/CDs in the foreign language, outside of the classroom.	22,6	18,8	22	14	22,6
24	In fact, I like to listen and read in English outside of the classroom	17,7	18,8	24,7	14,5	24,2
25	I would like to select the materials for my foreign language lessons.	19,4	14	19,4	22,6	24,7
26	I would like to share the responsibility of deciding what to do in the English lesson.	25,3	22,6	25,8	13,4	12,9
27	I know how I can learn English the best.	13,4	15,1	19,9	21,5	30,1
28	If I haven't learned something in my English lesson, I am responsible for it.	34,9	12,9	32,8	9,1	10,2
29	I would like to choose the content of what is to be taught in the English lesson.	15,1	15,6	21,5	20,4	27,4
30	I don't study the topics after getting a good grade on my test.	14	12,9	11,8	14	47,3
31	I think my friends are better than me in the foreign language. I want to reach their level of English.	34,9	16,1	16,7	10,2	22

32	I hesitate on the matter of compensating what I have missed in English lessons.	21,5	21,5	30,1	13,4	13,4
33	I believe that I will reach a good level in the English language	36,6	22,6	23,1	10,2	7,5
34	I study English when we are going to have a test	33,3	16,1	18,3	10,2	22
35	I think that I learn English better when I work on my own.	12,9	12,9	22,6	18,8	32,8
36	I only study for the English lesson when the teacher gives homework.	9,1	15,1	19,9	16,1	39,8
37	I find it more useful to work with my friends than working on my own for the English lesson.	24,2	25,3	21,5	11,3	17,7
38	I do the English lesson activities only when my teacher is going to grade me.	19,4	11,8	21	14	33,9
39	I like it when my teacher gives us different test types, other than written tests.	27,4	15,6	14	22,6	20,4
40	I like it when my teacher does a lot of tests in our English lesson	13,4	15,1	16,7	25,3	29,6
41	I try to understand the jokes and riddles of the foreign language.	14	15,1	23,1	17,7	30,1
42	I also investigate the culture of the foreign language I am learning.	12,4	14	28	17,2	28,5
43	I also investigate the idioms and sayings of the foreign language I am learning.	6,5	9,7	24,2	17,7	41,9
44	I ask people who have lived abroad about the lifestyle of the people living there.	18,8	10,8	18,8	16,1	35,5