ADULT EFL LEARNERS' PERCEPTIONS ON THE RELATIONS BETWEEN COMPUTER ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING AND LEARNER AUTONOMY[1]

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to gain insights into students' perception of learner autonomy development and to explore learners' perceptions of learning English within a CALL environment. In order to gain insights about the students' perceptions of learner autonomy development, four areas of learner autonomy were examined: (a) Learners' motivation level in learning English, (b) Learners' use of metacognitive strategies in learning English, (c) Learners' responsibility perception of their own and their teachers' in learning English and (d) Learners' practice of English in the outside class activities. In order to reach the goals mentioned above, both qualitative and quantitative data were collected by the help of questionnaires, semi-structured face-to-face interviews. The data collected from the questionnaire were subjected to descriptive analysis and the data collected from interviews were subjected to content analysis. The findings indicated that the majority of the students had a high motivation and most of them tended to use some metacognitive strategies like self-monitoring and self-evaluation. On the other hand, the findings revealed that most of the students considered the teacher as more responsible for most of the tasks during their own learning process, and tended to spend a little time for outside activities to improve their English. During the study, the students were encouraged to take an active involvement to the CALL classes to increase their motivation, use language learning strategies, take responsibility for their own learning and engage in outside class activities.

Keywords: *Computer assisted language learning, Learner autonomy.*

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INTRODUCTION

Among the approaches that language educators have advocated the instruction of language skills, teaching a language with computers and the Internet is presently the most innovative area in the practice of foreign or second language teaching and learning. Therefore, it has attracted many researchers' attention recently. Although computers and the internet have been available in language teaching and learning for little more than twenty years, there has been a dramatic change in the number of options open to language teachers and learners. Therefore, a lot of different types of studies have been conducted to investigate the effectiveness of using computers and internet while learning a language. However, most studies have focused on finding out about the students' and teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards computers and internet or their effects on the students' achievement level of understanding foreign cultural values.

It is a fact that most of the language teachers spend endless effort to make the students participate in the lessons, do their homework, cooperate with their friends, and listen to the teacher, but the teachers get little response from the students. The main reason of such behaviors is the learners' over reliance on the teacher, so the learners do not develop a sense of responsibility for their own learning. In that sense, the notion of learner autonomy becomes more of an issue which will help learners understand their roles in a language classroom. After the learners gain autonomy, they will become independent learners who are motivated to take their responsibility for their own language learning and make use of opportunities to learn outside the classroom.

With the advancing in technology, CALL has started to take a significant part in language education to foster learner autonomy. However, it is a new arena both for instructors and the learners, and there is not enough data about the effects of CALL on learner autonomy. This study provides empirical support for the identification of factors considered being crucial in the promotion of autonomy in a foreign language classrooms and helping language learners to become more autonomous by the help of CALL lessons. Thus, this study aims to contribute to the future implementation of CALL into language education in order to help students become more autonomous in their language learning process. Based upon the aim of this study, following questions are established to provide guidance for collecting applicable evidence:

1- What are the adult EFL students' perceptions of their role in developing autonomy in language learning?
2- What are adult EFL students' perceptions of the effects of Computer Assisted Language Learning on learner autonomy development in language education?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Learner Autonomy

In language teaching, a teacher can provide all the necessary circumstances and input, but learning can only happen if learners are willing to contribute (Scharle and Szabô, 2000). In other words, in order for learners to be actively involved in the learning process, they first need to realize and accept that success in learning depends as much on the student as on the teacher. That is, they share responsibility for the outcome.

Furthermore, Scharle and Szabô (2000, p.4) point out "success in learning very much depends on learners having a responsible attitude".

Little (1991) claims that if language learners are to be efficient communicators in their target language, they must be autonomous having enough independence, self reliance and confidence to accomplish a variety of social, psychological and discursive functions. Additionally, in order to highlight the importance of learner autonomy, Barnes (1976) claims that school knowledge is the knowledge which is presented by someone else. The learners partly grasp it, enough to answer the teacher's question, to do exercises, or to answer examination questions, but it remains someone else's knowledge, not learners'. If learners never use this knowledge, they probably forget it. As far as the learners use knowledge for their purposes and use parts of it to cope with the exigencies of living, they can integrate it into their view of the world. In that sense, practicing the knowledge to a greater responsibility on the part of the learner in planning and in conducting learning activities will lead to a greater degree of active involvement and better learning.

According to Little (1995), learner autonomy is important for two reasons. Firstly, if learners are themselves engaged in planning, monitoring and evaluating their learning, it should follow that their learning will be more successful than otherwise because it is more sharply focused; and the same reflective engagement should help to make what they learn a fully integrated part of what they are, so that they can use the knowledge and skills acquired in the classroom and the world beyond it. This means that the target language must be used as the channel through which teaching and learning take place including the reflective processes of planning, monitoring and evaluation.

As a conclusion, greater responsibility on the part of the learner in planning; conducting learning activities will lead to a greater degree of active involvement, and better learning in the actual teaching learning situation, which again will influence the learners' potential for evaluating the process (Dam, 1995). In addition, Roberts, et al (1992) point out that autonomy is a process, which needs to develop with all levels of language learners. That is why autonomous learning is a concept attracting increasing attention in language education (Cotterall and Crabbe, 1999).

Learner Autonomy and Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL)

In order to become autonomous, learners need an appropriate environment where they have the opportunities to develop language learning skills, increase their motivation, take the responsibility of their own learning and utilize the activities and materials outside the classroom. However, expecting learners to develop autonomy in the traditional classrooms where teachers control and dominate learners allowing them to take no responsibility for their own learning does not seem possible (Little, 1991:4). On the other hand, Dolan (2002) points out that technology can create such a learning environment by encouraging and fostering learner autonomy in the sense of learner differences, taking responsibility and control. In this respect, due to the fact that new technological advances such as computers and the Internet offer an appropriate environment where learners can develop autonomy technology has gained significant popularity among language educators.

There has been a disagreement about whether autonomy is "independence" which means taking responsibility for one's own learning, setting goals and making decisions and self evaluation of one's own progress in the learning process or "interdependence" which means implies working together with teachers and other learners towards shared goals

(Blin, 2005). Most of the researchers believe that autonomy does not imply interdependence. However, Benson (2001) claims that learners perform their independence within a specific socio-cultural context where independence, through socialization and interaction with teachers and peers will impact on the levels of control they exercise and develop. Accordingly, Little (1995) asserts that learner autonomy is the product of interdependence rather than independence because learners will not develop their capacity for autonomous learning within formal contexts by only being told that they are independent. The learners need help to achieve autonomy by processes of interaction. Additionally, Candy (1988) points out that the teacher and the learner can work towards autonomy by creating a friendly atmosphere characterized by low threat, unconditional positive regard, honest and open feedback, respect for the ideas and opinions of others, collaborating instead of completing and acknowledging self-improvement as a goal.

Although there have been many arguments on the learner autonomy, new technological advances including computers and the internet has helped learner autonomy expand. Shetzer and Warschauer (2000, cited in Mutlu, 2008) connect the concept of learner autonomy and technology as in the following;

> Autonomous learners know how to formulate research questions and devise plans to answer them. They answer their own questions through accessing learning tools and resources on-line and off-line. Moreover, autonomous learners are able to take charge of their own learning by working on individual and collaborative projects that result in communication opportunities in the form of presentations, Web sites, and traditional publications, accessible to local and global audiences. Language professionals who have access to an Internet computer classroom are in a position to teach students valuable lifelong learning skills and strategies for becoming autonomous learners (p. 379).

According to Shetzer and Warschauer (cited in Mutlu, 2010), working cooperatively and collaboratively not only with the teacher but also with other learners is important in order to become autonomous learners. In that sense, it is believed that computers and the Internet and tools that they offer such as emails, discussion forums and online chats provide the language learners with a sociable and collaborative authentic environment where learners develop autonomy and take increasing responsibility for their own learning.

As a result, language educators have started to use the computer and the Internet to provide additional learning material to develop autonomy. In recent years, advances in technology have motivated teachers to reexamine the role of computer in second language learning. Hence, more teachers are using CALL and numerous articles have been written about the role of computer in language learning. Though the potential of computer use has not been fully explored and the average school still makes limited use of computers, it is apparent that a new information age has begun for language learning in which technology will play a more important role (Kung, 2002).

METHODOLOGY

Setting and the Participants

This study was conducted with forty upper-intermediate students at Hasan Kalyoncu University. The students have to take English preparatory program in their first year. The Department of Foreign Languages offers an intensive program for students at four different levels. At the beginning of the academic year, a placement test is done and

according to their scores, the students are separated into four levels (from A- the lowest- to D- the highest).

The university where the study was carried out is well-equipped with technology. The university donates a personal laptop to each of the students enrolled in the university and to the instructors. Also, there is wireless internet access at the university. Each classroom has an overhead projector. However, it is a matter of fact that students are not guided well enough to use the internet for the benefit of their language learning process. Most of them waste their time in front of their laptops talking with their friends on some common social networks such as facebook and twitter or playing computer games instead of studying. Another main and common problem of the students at the university is that they do not know how to study and what to study when learning a language. Students get lost outside the classroom, due to depending on teacher too much in the classroom, and they start to get worried about their low level of English. Accordingly, they lose their motivation and stop studying. Like many learners in Turkey, they experienced the process of learning through traditional educational methods, which reinforced didactic and teacher-centered modes. Therefore, these learners prefer learning in which teacher is in full control of the learning process.

In order to help students develop their own language learning strategies, increase their motivational level, take responsibility for their own learning and engage in outside classroom activities, CALL lessons are integrated into the curriculum for each level. CALL syllabus consists of 7/24 software and web-based activities correlated to their levels. Students are supposed to buy the access code to use the software anywhere, and anytime they want.

The teacher researcher attempted to conduct a study to explore the effects of CALL on the students' development of learner autonomy to have a better understanding of the teaching context and if necessary to improve the language-teaching context and resources used to promote learner autonomy. The questionnaire was administered in two upper-intermediate classes and semi structured face-to-face interview was done with fifteen students. There were not any predetermined exclusion criteria, so forty of students from two upper-intermediate classes participated in the study.

3.1. Data Collection Tools

In this study, a four-section questionnaire was administered in order to collect data for the first research question. The questionnaire (Koçak, 2003) included four different sections with 48 items. These sections were motivation, metacognitive strategies, responsibilities and the outside class activities. The number of items in each section was as follows: 20 items in motivation, eight items in metacognitive strategies, 12 items in responsibilities and nine items in outside class activities.

Students were instructed to rate the items in two sections (Motivation and Metacognitive strategies) on a 6-point Likert scale, as in the Instrument 1; the weight for every answer changes between 6 and 1, in the direction from most positive to most negative. For the 'Responsibilities' section, students were asked to put a tick in the appropriate box. The first box indicated the students' perceptions of their teachers' responsibilities, the second box indicated the students' perceptions of not only their own but also their teachers' responsibilities, and the third box indicated the students' perceptions of their own responsibilities. For the 'Outside class activities' section, students were instructed to rate each item on a 5-point Likert type scale. The response options were from always (5) to

never (1), in the direction from most positive to most negative. To enrich the data obtained through questionnaire, semi structured face-to-face interviews were also employed in the researcher's office and recorded to conduct this study. Fifteen interviewees answered ten questions related to each other about their perception of CALL lesson and its effects on their autonomy development. The interviews were transcribed and matched with the questionnaire results through content analysis.

Data Analysis Procedure

For the data collected from the questionnaire, the statistical analyses were conducted by using SPSS software program. As a result, the data was subjected to 'descriptive analyses'. Additionally, the data collected from interviews were subjected to 'content analyses'.

RESULTS

As is aforementioned, the data about learner autonomy development, the questionnaire (adapted from Koçak, 2003), including four aspects of learner autonomy, which are regarded as indicators of learner autonomy development in related literature, was administered to forty students. These indicators included Motivation level, Language learning strategy use, Taking responsibility for their own learning and Out-of-class activity use.

Firstly, the level of motivation in learning English of preparatory students was investigated. As can be seen from the data, the majority of the students stated their enjoyment in the process of learning English (Item 1). However, only 4 out of 40 students indicated their disagreements to the opportunities of learning English without going to school (Item 2). Moreover, Items 3 and 5 show that the students were really eager to learn English and they wanted to continue to study English for a long time. As seen in Item 3, almost half of the students indicated that they were doing their best to improve their English. Additionally, 85% of the students showed their positive attitudes towards attending the English course regularly by stating that attendance was not an effective factor in learning English (Item 4).

Table 1. **Motivational Level of the Participants**

ITEM	Strongly Agree		Agree		Slightly Agree		Slightly Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%
1. Learning English is enjoyable for me.	19	47,5	11	27,5	7	17,5	0	0	2	5	1	2,5
2. I wish I could learn English in an easier way, without going to school.	17	42,5	12	30	4	10	3	7,5	2	5	2	5
3. I am trying to do my best to learn English.	9	22,5	9	22,5	16	40	5	12,5	1	2,5	0	0
4. Even if there is no attendance requirement in the English course, my attendance would be high.	12	30	7	17,5	15	37,5	3	7,5	1	2,5	2	5

5. I want to continue studying English for as long as possible.	19	47,5	11	27,5	7	17,5	1	2,5	1	2,5	1	2,5
6. I believe that I will be successful in the English class.	16	40	19	47,5	5	12,5	0	0	0	0	0	0
7. If I learn English better, I will be able to get a better and well-paid job.	33	82,5	7	17,5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8. I want to be the best in the English class.	12	30	13	32,5	10	25	4	10	0	0	1	2,5
9. I feel uncomfortable when I have to speak in the English class.	6	15	13	32,5	8	20	3	7,5	4	10	6	15,5
10. I cannot concentrate easily on the English class.	2	5	4	10	11	27,5	7	17,5	9	22,5	7	17,5
11. I am afraid I will not succeed in the English exams.	3	7,5	13	32,5	7	17,5	8	20	4	10	5	12,5
12. I like working in pairs in the English class.	5	12,5	11	27,5	8	20	7	17,5	5	12,5	4	10
13. I prefer individual work in the English class.	9	22,5	13	32,5	6	15	3	7,5	6	15	3	7,5
14. Group activities in the English class are not efficient.	6	15	8	20	12	30	7	17,5	5	12,5	2	5
15. In the English class, the teacher should be the one who talks more.	9	22,5	10	25	7	17,5	7	17,5	4	10	3	7,5
16. In an English class, I like activities that allow me to participate actively.	19	47,5	11	27,5	8	20	1	2,5	1	2,5	0	0
17. The teacher should encourage students to make contributions in the English lesson.	19	47,5	15	37,5	15	37,5	3	7,5	2	5	1	2,5
18. If I do well in this course, it will be because I have the ability for learning English.	11	27,5	14	35	12	30	1	2,5	1	2,5	1	2,5
19. If I do not do well in this course, it will be because I have not tried hard enough.	2	5	7	17,5	8	20	8	20	10	25	5	12,5
20. If I do not do well in this course, it will be because of the teacher.	8	20	17	42,5	13	32,5	2	5	0	0	0	0

Almost all of the students indicated their wish to be successful in the English class (Item 6). Only 5 students stated their disagreement to the belief of being successful in the English class. Additionally, 85% of the students indicated their agreement to the idea of struggling to be the best in the English class (Item 8). Besides being successful in the English class, all of the students reported that if they learn English better, they will be able to find better and well-paid jobs (Item7). In that sense, all of the students indicated their agreement to the necessity of English to find a better and well-paid job.

However, the data from the items 9 and 11 reflected considerable anxiety in students during the English learning process. For instance, 77.5% of the students seemed to feel uncomfortable when they had to speak in the English class (Item 9). In addition to this, 40% of the students indicated certain agreements (overall responses of strongly agree and agree) to having test anxiety in themselves and to the belief of being unsuccessful in the English exams (Item 11). However, not many students reported lack of concentration in the English class. Only 6 of the students (overall responses of strongly agree and agree) reported their certain agreement to having concentration problems in the English class (Item 10).

Responses to the items 12 and 14 reflected more than half of the students valued pair work and group work activities during the English learning process. For instance, 60% of the students seemed to be fond of working in pairs in the English class (Item 12). Additionally, %65 of the students showed their agreement to the idea of efficiency of group activities (Item 14). However, 70% of the students indicated their preferences to work individually in the English class (Item 13).

As for the active involvement in the English class, students' responses showed clearly that the majority of the students believed that the teacher is the one who has the role as an authority speaking more than the students and a helper creating opportunities for them to involve in the tasks (Items 15 and 17). For instance, 47.5% of students reported their agreement to the idea that the teacher should talk more than the students in the English class by indicating 'strongly agree' and 'agree' for the item 15. Although, 75% of the students reported that they like activities that allow them to participate actively (Item 16), almost all of the students (90%) stated that they needed the teacher's encouragement to make contributions in the English class (Item 17).

Responses to items 18, 19 and 20 displayed that the majority of the students had a tendency to attribute their failure and success to themselves. For instance, more than half of the students (62%) reported that if they do not do well in the English class, it would be because they have not tried hard enough (Item 19). Also, the students did not seem to consider the teacher as a significant factor in their failure. Only 8 out of 40 students believed that the teacher is the one who is responsible for their failure by indicating 'slightly agree' (Item 20). Finally, 62.5% of the students showed their agreement to the idea of attributing their success to their own ability for learning English by indicating 'strongly agree' and 'agree' to the item 18.

The second part of the questionnaire aimed to explore the language learning strategies used by the students during the English learning process. Responses from to item 27 displayed almost all of the students (95%) believed they learned better when they tried to find out the reasons of their own mistakes. On the other hand, only 20% of the students showed their agreement to the idea of arranging time to prepare before every English class (Item 28).

Table 2. **Language Learning Strategies Used by the Participants**

ITEM	Strongly Agree		Agree		Slightly Agree		Slightly Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
21. When I am learning a new grammar rule, I think about its relationship to the rules I have learned.	21	52,5	9	22,5	8	20	1	2,5	0	0	1	2,5
22. When I study for my English course, I pick out the most important points and make diagrams or tables for myself.	8	20	12	30	13	32,5	2	5	3	7,5	2	5
23. I try to find the meaning of a word by dividing it into parts that I can understand.	9	22,5	11	27,5	11	27,5	1	2,5	5	12,5	3	7,5
24. I use new English words in a sentence in order to remember them easily.	8	20	12	30	9	22,5	7	17,5	2	5	2	5
25. I always try to evaluate my progress in learning English.	6	15	11	27,5	14	35	6	15	2	5	1	2,5
26. When studying for my English exam, I try to find out which structures and terms I do not understand well.	12	30	18	45	7	17,5	1	2,5	1	2,5	1	2,5
27. I learn better when I try to understand the reasons of my mistakes I have done in English.	10	25	19	47,5	9	22,5	2	5	0	0	0	0
28. I arrange time to prepare before every English class.	3	7,5	5	12,5	6	15	11	27,5	9	22,5	6	15

Responses to the items 21, 22, 23 and 24 all of which reflect organizing learning are quite similar. For instance, item 21 revealed that almost all of the students (95%) had a tendency to find out the relationship of the new grammar rule to the rules they have learned before. Also, 82.5% of the students showed their agreement on making diagrams, summaries or tables of important points while they were studying English (Item 22).

As for vocabulary learning strategies, the students' responses are quite consistent. For instance, 77.5% of the students indicated that they tried to find out the meaning of a word by dividing into parts (Item 23). Additionally, 72.5% of the students indicated their agreement to using new English words in a sentence to remember them easily.

Also, for the self-monitoring and self-evaluation, most of the students considered they were significant strategies during learning English. For instance, 92.5% of the students indicated their agreement by stating they tried to identify the structures and terms they did not understand well before English exams (Item 26). In addition, 77.5% of the students indicated their agreement by stating they always tried to evaluate their progress during English learning process (Item 28).

The third part of the questionnaire aimed to investigate students' perceptions of their teachers' and their own responsibilities in learning English.

Table 3. Responsibility Perceptions of the Participants

ITEM	Teacher's Responsibility		Both Teacher's and my own Responsibility		My own Responsibility	
	F	%	f	%	f	%
29. stimulating my interest in learning English	2	5	36	90	2	5
30. identifying my weaknesses and strengths in learning English	4	10	27	68	9	23
31. deciding the objectives of the English course	8	20	21	52	11	28
32. deciding what will be learnt in the next English lesson	24	60	14	35	2	5
33. choosing what activities to use in the English lesson	19	47,5	19	48	2	5
34. deciding how long to spend on each activity	26	65	10	25	4	10
35. choosing what materials to use in the English lessons	22	55	16	40	2	5
36. evaluating my learning performance	16	40	22	55	2	5
37. evaluating the English course	7	17,5	27	68	6	15
38. deciding what I will learn outside the English class	1	2,5	14	35	25	63
39. making sure I make progress during English lessons	6	15	28	70	6	15
40. making sure I make progress outside the English class	2	5	19	48	19	48

As can be seen from the data, in four out of twelve items students gave more responsibility to their teacher rather than to themselves. These items consisted of concerns on deciding the content of English lessons to be learned, choosing the activities to be used during the English lessons, deciding time to be spent on each activity and choosing the materials to be used in the English lessons.

Responses to each of these items reveal small distinctions. For instance, 60% of the students were thinking the teacher was the one who is responsible for deciding what they will learn in the English lesson (Item 32). Also, almost 50% of the students indicated their agreement to giving the responsibility of choosing activities to be used during the learning process to the teacher (Item 33). Responses from items 34 and 35 display that most of the students considered the teacher as the responsible for deciding the time limit to be spent on each task or activity and materials to be used in the English lessons. As a result, most of the students gave more responsibility to the teacher for formal language instruction.

As for sharing responsibility with the teacher, students seemed to have a notion of shared responsibility. For instance, responses to item 29 displays almost all of the students agreed to share the responsibility with their teacher in stimulating their interest in learning English.

Additionally, almost 70% of the students reflected their willingness to share responsibility in identifying their weaknesses and strengths in learning English (Item 30). Similarly,

responses from items 36 and 37 indicated more than half of the students had the notion of shared responsibility in evaluating their learning performance (Item 36), evaluating the English lessons (Item 37) and making sure they make progress during English lessons (Item 39). However, the responses to item 40 divided the class in two. Almost half of the class agreed on sharing responsibility with the teacher in making sure they make progress outside the English class while the other half of the students showed their beliefs stating that it was their own responsibility. On the other hand, the responses to item 38 shows that students gave themselves more responsibility than the teacher, and 62.5% of the students reported that they were able to take responsibility in decisions related to what will be learnt outside the English class.

The last part of the questionnaire aimed to explore the students' out-of-class activity performances in learning English. As displayed by the data, more than half the respondents (62%) strongly stated they listened to English songs (Item 48). Similarly, 75% of students preferred to watch English movies or TV programs to improve their English (Item 45). Additionally, more than half of the students reported that they tried to learn a new word English (Item 43). Item 46 shows that more than half of the students preferred reading English written materials by indicating 'often' and 'sometimes' in the questionnaire. When compared the items 45 and 46, most of the students preferred watching movies and TV programs in English rather than reading.

Table 4. The Outside Class Activities Performed by the Participants

ITEM	Always		Often		Sometimes		Seldom		Never	
	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
41. I do grammar exercises though it is not homework.	3	7,5	7	17,5	17	42,5	10	25	3	7,5
42. I do assignments, which are not compulsory.	4	10	6	15	11	27,5	15	37,5	4	10
43. I try to learn new words in English.	12	30	15	37,5	12	30	1	2,5	0	0
44. I use internet in English. (for chat, search…)	13	32,5	12	30	9	22,5	5	12,5	1	2,5
45. I watch English movies or TV programs.	17	42,5	13	32,5	8	20	1	2,5	1	2,5
46. I read English written materials. (magazines, books, newspapers…)	3	7,5	16	40	13	32,5	6	15	2	5
47. I talk to foreigners in English.	12	30	10	25	8	20	10	25	0	0
48. I listen to English songs.	18	45	7	17,5	10	25	5	12,5	0	0

Moreover, over half of the students indicated that they tried to talk to foreigners in English to improve their speaking skills as an outside class activity (Item 47). Accordingly, 62.5% of the students reported that they preferred using the Internet to improve their English for chat and search (Item 44). Finally, the responses to items 41 and 42 presented students' unwillingness to do extra exercises outside the class. For instance, only 25% of the students seemed to have a habit of doing extra grammar exercises (Item 41), and doing optional assignments (Item 42).

Analysis of the Interviews

After two days following the questionnaire distribution, fifteen participants were interviewed one by one to elicit their opinion about CALL and its effects on autonomy development. The interview took place in the office of the researcher without a time limit, but took approximately, 7-10 minutes. The interviews with the students were tape recorded, and the researcher took notes. The students were asked 8 questions, and they were interviewed in Turkish to prevent any misunderstanding and anxiety.

First, the students were asked how long they had been learning English. On the whole, most of the students (10 out of 15 participants) claimed that they have been learning English since the 4th grade at primary school. However, 5 out of 15 students said that they have been learning English since 6th at secondary school. Although they have been learning English for 12-15 years, they claimed that it was only a lesson, which they had to pass.

Next, the students were asked what they think about using computers and Internet to learn English. Almost all of the students (14) claimed that using computer to learn English really work. One of the students stated:

Of course, it works. It is really easy to access. I can find any information at any time I want. For instance, I watch different TV series, movies, and I listen to songs on the Internet to improve my English. Also, I can search any kind of English topics that I do not understand or to learn about English in general. I believe the Internet provides a good resource and improves my understanding of English.

Most of the students claimed that there are many websites that they can practice their English. Also, they declared that using Internet and computer was better than using the books. They declared that they could search, watch, listen, write and speak in English easily, and to them, it was more enjoyable than being in the class. One of the students stated:

I have been using the internet for a year. I improved my English by checking and following the foreign websites, news sites and magazines. I tried to understand how they use the language in their daily life, to how they reflect to the situations. I believed I improved my English by listening songs, watching videos in English and following some English-teaching websites. In that sense, I can say that it certainly works.

Although the Internet presents so many opportunities to study English, there might be some distractive things for learners. It may cause some concentration problems. Accordingly, one student stated:

In fact, the answer depends on the person. To me, I do not think using computers and Internet was very useful to improve my English. There are so many things to distract the concentration on the Internet. It caused so much focusing problems for me. I could not use affectively because when I started to study on the computer, I wanted to use many other social media websites such as Facebook, Twitter, etc. Also, I think studying with the teacher in the class is more useful than studying on the computer.

In response to the question, "*What did you most like about using computers and Internet to study English both inside and outside the classroom?*" Almost all of the students mentioned they liked the activities and the software used in the class. They said they liked different online activities they did during the CALL classes. They also added they had fun while learning. For instance, most of them stated that they liked online-interactive activities done in the class, such as preparing a Facebook profile of a celebrity. Almost all of them mentioned they liked the video-making activities. They claimed while they were preparing videos, or writing subtitles for videos, they had fun and learnt better, because they felt that they produced something real. The students also added the activities in CALL lessons were different from the activities they did in the class. However, they mentioned that the activities in CALL classes were better because they involved in the activities actively. For instance, one of the students stated:

> *First of all, I liked the software we used in the CALL classes. The activities in the software were helping me reinforce the things I learnt in the other classes. Apart from that, making presentations was very enjoyable for me. I thought that I knew and learned something when I produced something during the learning process. I can say that I fondly participated in all of the activities we did in CALL classes such as preparing posters, videos, comics and CV in English.*

In response to the fourth question, *"Did you like individual or group work? Which one was better"* 12 of the students stated they like group work rather than working alone. They said it was easier to work with their friends, and they supported one another during the learning process. Also, they added that they produced better things in the CALL classes while working together. Although the majority believes that working in groups was better and more useful, 3 of the students mentioned that they preferred both working individually and in-group. They mentioned that while working in groups, they shared their knowledge with each other and improved themselves with the help of their friends. However, they added while working individually, they could measure what they knew and did.

In response to the fifth question, *"How did you feel in general while studying on the Internet?"* All of the students mentioned they felt relax and safe while working on the Internet. They said that they were alone with the computer and they were trying to do something. They claimed when they saw they could do and produce something alone or with their friends, they felt better and more self-confident. Also, they added they felt free and comfortable while working on the Internet. They said that there were no boundaries; they were able to search any kind of information to improve their English and only the book while working on the Internet did not limit them.

In response to the question, *"Do you think this process helped you to develop language learning strategies and your English language?"* All of the students had an agreement to developing a language learning strategy during this process. These are some language learning strategies the students developed:

- Using internet effectively for reading, speaking and listening,
- Trying to make connections among the grammar subjects,
- Keeping an online diary and dictionary,
- Making reviews and searching some tests on the internet,
- Using English in daily life,

Additionally, they stated that they developed some strategies to memorize the words. For instance, one of the students said:

> *First of all, I started to use English every time and every where even at home. I started to use every technological thing such as mobile phone, pc, etc. I have in English. I developed some methods to memorize the words. I have two jars at home. I put some unknown words in one of them. Then, I pick one word from that jar and try to remember its meaning and to make a sentence including it and if I am successful I put that word into the other jar. Now, I am doing this with the new words I learn in the class.*

Then, the students were asked, *"Do you think you can effectively use Internet and computer to learn a language different from English?"* Responses to that question showed that most of the students (11 out of 15) believed that they could use the Internet and computer to learn any other language effectively. Also, they emphasized some languages they wanted to learn in future such as Russian, Korean, Japanese, French, Italian, Arabic and German. They stated they wanted to learn these languages because of their department. They thought if they learn these languages, they would be successful businessman in future. They mentioned that after CALL classes, they know how to use the Internet to learn a language so that they can use the Internet for their purposes. One of the students said:

> *I believe that I can use the Internet to learn Arabic from now on. If you asked this question seven months ago, I would say just I could use it to search for the meanings of the words. However, thanks to CALL classes, now I know that the internet is much more than a dictionary, I can use it to learn a language in many ways.*

On the other hand, 4 students stated that they couldn't use the Internet to learn any other language they wanted to learn. They mentioned that they would be in need of a guide to use the Internet. Also, they stated that there are so many websites for language learning, but they do not know how to choose the correct one to help them learn the target language. Additionally, they said that they could use it for a while until they learn some basic words and structures, but then they will need a teacher to show them how to go further.

Ten out of fifteen students thought that they couldn't organize their learning without a teacher as regards the question *"Can you regulate you learning process on your own without a teacher?"* They explained that they would need a professional support to learn a language better. They stated that there are many opportunities on the Internet, but they can use them just to start to learn a language. To be an advanced learner, they mentioned they needed help from a teacher. Some of them explained that they needed a teacher who motivates and disciplines them during the learning process. On the other hand, 5 of them explained that they could organize their learning program without a teacher. They stated that they could search the language and a learning program to learn it on the Internet. They thought that they could find online tutors. They also added that there were many language-learning videos online.

Finally, the students were asked, *"Do you have any suggestions to improve the process?"* All of the students stated that they liked CALL classes, and they provided several suggestions to improve the learning process in CALL lessons. According to them there should be more speaking activities, be more hours allocated to CALL, be more different

activities used in the class, given more importance to group work, more outside class activities, and fewer students in the class for immediate feedback from the teacher.

DISCUSSION

Students' Motivation Level and CALL

The data regarding the motivation level of the students were gathered by the first section of the questionnaire, and supported by interviews done with the participants. The data indicated that the students seemed to have a high motivation level. Since the motivation is one of the most significant elements in order to become an autonomous learner, it can be said that the students in the study likely had enough level of motivation to be autonomous learners. Accordingly, it seems that there is a consistency with previous findings, which point out that autonomous learners are motivated learners (Ushido, 1996), and motivation has a significant role to enhance autonomous learning (Spratt, Humphery and Chan, 2002). The majority of the students reported they liked English classes and they wanted to improve their English as much as possible. In other words, most of the students had a high determination and willingness to learn English and to be the best in the English class. This result shows how important intrinsic motivation is to become an autonomous learner. According to Ushioda (2000), there is a significant relationship between learners' intrinsic motivation and learner autonomy. She adds that the interests and needs of learners and having freedom of control and choice identify intrinsic motivation. In that sense, it could be argued in the context of this study that the participants had the chance to practice the features of intrinsic motivation while using computers and the Internet to study English. Throughout the CALL classes the learners had the opportunity to regulate their process of learning and to match the content of the learning to their interests. In other words, they could control their learning process according to their needs. Therefore, motivating the students intrinsically provided an appropriate environment to promote autonomy. Additionally, most of the students stated that they wanted to learn English better to get a good and well-paid job. It showed that extrinsic motivation was also important for the students.

Furthermore, it seems that there were no significant concentration problems during the learning process. However, most of the participants mentioned that they have test anxiety and uncomfortable feelings while speaking in the class. However, if learners learn to be self-motivated or autonomous, they can easily overcome such kind of difficulties (Ho & Crookall, 1995).

Moreover, Little and Dam (1998) claim that autonomy focuses on attention, individuality and independence as well as collaborative work. Although some of the participants indicated they enjoyed pair and group work, some of them indicated their enjoyment to work individually. Throughout the learning process, there were different activities to do both individually and collaboratively for each week. However, interviews done with the participants show that almost all of the students stated that they enjoyed much more while working with friends in CALL classes. Also, they indicated that they liked to follow their process studying with computer and the Internet, individually.

As for the active involvement, the participants see the teacher as an authority who dominates the classroom. However, the autonomous learners are expected to take initiative role in many aspects and decrease the dependence on the teacher in the class (Victori & Lochart, 1995). When the interviews are taken into consideration, it becomes clear that the teacher is the one who guides them and shows them the way they should follow in the learning process.

When compared the results of questionnaire and interviews, it can be concluded that using computers and the Internet in the learning process increased learners' intrinsic motivation. Also, it made them aware of their effectiveness in the learning process. Moreover, it is believed that as the students had higher motivation, they were closer to become an autonomous learner in their learning process.

Language Learning Strategy Use and CALL

The data regarding language learning strategy used by the participants were collected in Section 2 of the questionnaire in four dimension factors: *Organizing learning, Organizing time, Self-monitoring and self-evaluation,* and supported by the interviews done with the students. As mentioned earlier, there has always been a correlation between language learning strategy use (metacognitive strategies) and learner autonomy (Wenden, 1991, Cohen, 1998). Accordingly, using language learning strategies help students develop more active and autonomous attitude, which enable them to take the control of their learning (Victori & Lockart, 1995).

For self-evaluation and self-monitoring strategies, the participants seemed they were aware of the importance of evaluating their progress and trying to find out the structures they do not understand, understand the reasons of their mistakes. However, for organizing time, more than half of the participants indicated that they did not organize their time to make preparations for the upcoming English lessons. Nevertheless, time management is one of the significant indicators of autonomy (Ho & Crookall, 1995).

According to Rivers (2001), use of effective language learning strategies to control language-learning process and learning environment is a characteristic of autonomous learner. In that sense, learners are expected to know what they need and they should have the freedom to take action to meet their needs in order to create such a learning environment for them. In this study, such environment was created with the help of CALL classes. The learners had a wide range of choices to use while studying English. They had the opportunities to use the language learning strategies appropriate to their learning styles.

As a result, it is hard to claim that the participants used all of the language learning strategies during the learning process. However, the results of the study showed that the participants increased their awareness of using these strategies while learning the target language. Also, they gained more awareness of the fact that these strategies helped them to meet their needs both inside and outside the classroom.

Responsibility Perceptions and CALL

The data regarding responsibility perceptions were collected in Section 3 of the questionnaire and supported by the interviews done with the participants. Taking responsibility in the language learning process is one of the most significant elements to promote learner autonomy (Wenden, 1991).

The results of the questionnaire showed that most of the participants saw the teacher as the one who has more responsibility in deciding the content of the English course, choosing relevant activities and tasks, selecting the materials and time limit for each activity during the language learning and teaching process. On the other hand, the results of interviews showed that the students believed in themselves while deciding how they organize their learning process, but they emphasized their needs for a guide to show

the way that they can go on further while learning the target language. When the characteristics of an autonomous learner suggested by Little (1997) are taken into consideration, it is hard to say the participants are totally autonomous. Little (1997, p.7) states that determining the objectives, defining the contents, selecting the methods and techniques to be used, monitoring the procedure of acquisition properly speaking (rhythm, time, place, etc.) and evaluating what has been required are the major components of learner autonomy. Ho and Crookall (1995) claim that being autonomous does not mean working independently, but learners should share some areas such as decision making. Stimulating their interests, identifying their weaknesses and strengths, evaluating their learning performance, evaluating English lesson and making sure they make progress during English lesson are the ones which require only learner's own responsibility. Besides, the participants showed their willingness to share these areas with the teacher. In addition, these five items are regarded as part of language learning strategies, which foster learner autonomy (Cotterall, 1999).

Furthermore, during the learning process the computers and the Internet offered different language learning materials to the participants and they gained the awareness of the importance of taking responsibility for their own learning. Throughout the study, the students were willing to complete the tasks they were assigned to, both during the classes and outside the classroom. Also, they all submitted their assignments on time. In that sense, the computers and the Internet helped the learners in the study develop responsibility for their language learning. In addition, it is believed the teacher-researcher raised the learners' awareness and encouraged them to take more responsibility for their own learning, by showing the required steps to use computers and the Internet to develop their language and strategy use during learning language process.

Outside Class Activity Performance and CALL

The data regarding learners' participation to outside class activities that is related to development of autonomous learning were collected in Section 4 of the questionnaire and supported with the interviews done with the participants.

The teacher-researcher in this study tried to provide different out-of-class activities, which would help the participants, develop autonomy, using mainly the computers and the Internet. The participants seemed willing to do the out-of-class assignments. In addition, the learners wanted to involve in the activities done through CALL and submitted their works on time, regularly. It might result from the fact that the assignments were compulsory to get the marks from CALL classes. However, the students declared that they used the computer and the Internet to watch movies and TV programs in English, to read English books and magazines, to listen to English songs and to talk to native speakers outside the class. In addition, they stated that they used the Internet effectively to study grammar before exams.

During the study, the teacher-researcher showed the learners how to use the computers and the Internet on the behalf of learning English outside the class to promote learner autonomy. According to the results of the study conducted by Sharp, Pocklington and Weindling (2002), outside class activities helped the learner develop their language learning strategies and have intrinsic motivation both of which are the significant components of learner autonomy development. Accordingly, the results of this study displayed that as the participants willingly took part in outside class activities, they took a further step in becoming autonomous in their language learning process.

CONCLUSION

One of the most important outcomes of educational research in the last two decades has been the enhancement of the learner's role in the language learning process as well as a growing awareness of the need to develop the ability to learn autonomously (Gewehr, 1998). Learning in the new millennium should be autonomous, active and learner-centered. Learners should be trained to exercise a high degree of autonomy in learning in order to meet the needs of the fast changing, information-loaded world. The primary focus of learner autonomy is on the learners' individual awareness of the learning process, which distinguishes it from a traditional classroom. In order to enhance autonomous learning, the Curriculum Unit needs to design the course objectives and design the materials accordingly.

Therefore, this study aimed to explore the autonomy development of the students and the effects of CALL on promoting learner autonomy. During the study, it was aimed to increase the students' motivation, develop their language learning strategies, encourage them to take responsibilities for their own learning and involve them in out-of-class activities. All of them are accepted as the indicators of learner autonomy in the related literature (Ushioda, 1996; Wenden, 1991; Little, 1991). The findings of the study showed that integrating CALL classes into the Curriculum increased the learners' awareness of the importance of learner autonomy. However, it would be better if both the instructors and the learners were given a training to have the necessary computer skills in order to prevent the learning process from being frustrating for both sides.

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