"I wish I had"

"They just sit, watch and wait for someone to say it"

DOCTORAL (PhD) DISSERTATION

TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF LANGUAGE LEARNING
AUTONOMY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS IN THE CLASSROOM: A CASE STUDY
OF ENGLISH AND GERMAN TEACHERS AND THEIR 9TH GRADE STUDENTS

Szőcs Krisztina

Consultant: Dr. Lugossy Réka

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Alulírott
név: _Szőcs Krisztina_

születési név: _Szőcs Krisztina_

anyja neve: _Falvó Irina - Eliza_

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című doktori értekezésemet a mai napon benyújtom a(z)

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Témavezető neve: _Dr. Lugossy Réka_

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Abstract

The present study explored English as a second language (EFL) and German as a foreign language (GFL) teachers' and learners' beliefs and classroom practices concerning learner autonomy at a secondary comprehensive school. Mixed methods were used: classroom observations, questionnaires consisting of both open-ended and Likert type items, and semi structured interviews revealed what the involved 12 language teachers understood by learner autonomy and in what ways they claimed that they incorporated it in their practice. The study also looked into language learners' beliefs and reported autonomous behaviours involving all the 9th graders (n=100) from the school. Students' questionnaire explored to what extent students felt responsible to influence their autonomy in language learning. Furthermore, classroom observations helped me gain insight into language teachers' classroom practices and language learners' autonomous behaviours. Finally, the study revealed correspondences and mismatches between teachers' and students' autonomous beliefs.

The results showed that although learner autonomy was listed among the stated educational aims in the curriculum, and teachers' attitudes towards autonomy was positive, their beliefs did not translate into practice. Teachers' attitudes towards autonomy seem to be strongly connected to their own learning experiences and influence their practices concerning autonomy support. Teachers believed that their students had low levels of autonomy, which coincided with students' views about themselves, who did not view their school as a space to develop their autonomy as language learners.

The findings of the research carry pedagogical implications to practicing teachers and teacher educators as teachers' awareness should be raised about the importance of learner autonomy to help teachers shape their learners' learning experiences positively regarding autonomy development.

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List of abbreviations

EFL   English as a Foreign Language

ESP   English for Special Purposes

FL   Foreign Language

GFL   German as a Foreign Language

GSP   German for Special Purposes

IT   Information Technology

L1   First language

L2   Second language

LA   Learner autonomy

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Rationale for the research

Learner autonomy (LA) and its implications for teaching and learning have been widely researched; teachers' voices have, however, been paid little attention. Given the influence that teachers' beliefs have on the way they teach, this is a significant gap. In this small-scale research I intend to address this gap using mixed methods to examine the nature of teachers' and students' beliefs about LA, and how these beliefs are related to teaching practice. The definition of LA for the present research is: learners' willingness and capacity to take responsibility to control their learning process inside and outside the classroom.

Justifications for promoting LA are manifold. Learner involvement in decision making concerning the learning process makes learning more purposeful, increases motivation (Cotterall, 1995a, 1995b; Dam, 1995; Dickinson, 1995; Little, 2007; Smith, 2008), thus leads to more effective learning. Benson (2008) suggested that LA helped students be able to act independently in various situations outside the classroom and become critically conscious members of society.

The paradigms for conceptualizing learning have inspired attempts to understand the process of language development, and they have shaped ideas about what counts as good teaching (Williams & Burden, 1997). One of the shifts in perceiving learning has been brought about by sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978), which understands cognition as inseparable from the social and cultural context. In this paradigm knowledge is constructed in community through interaction. Given the importance of the social environment of learning, Vygotsky's approach was contrasted

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with Piagetian theory (1972), as the latter was seen as individualistic and biological, where social interaction had little role in development, whereas Vygotsky's model was viewed as social and cultural. Looking for an understanding of cognition and development in social contexts, sociocognitive theorists shaped the "social-constructivist" or "social-interactionist" theoretical model (Williams & Burden, 1997). This approach embraces characteristics of both cognitive theory, where learners are active participants in the construction of knowledge, and the Vygotskian idea that development is embedded in social context.

The present dissertation draws on the explanatory power of the sociocultural theory: as the aim of this study is to examine the ways in which teachers conceptualize their work and make sense of their teaching and learning philosophies. It seemed important to take into account the complexity of the teaching and learning context, and to view the cognitive and social aspects as inseparable elements of development.

The study aims to gain a better understanding of teacher cognition and students' beliefs concerning LA, as well as to reveal the sources of possible mismatches between autonomous beliefs and behaviours. More specifically, it intends to present the findings of both quantitative and qualitative research. The rationale for adopting the mixed method approach is that combining methods enables us to investigate the phenomenon in its wider context, which, regarding LA means that the socially constructed nature of the classroom and external influences can also be taken into account (Williams & Burden, 1997).

1.2 Overview of the dissertation

The dissertation is organized in two major parts. In the first I provide a critical survey of the relevant literature, whereas the second part reports the research conducted for the present dissertation. Following this introduction, Chapter 2 provides a review of the literature focusing on two main themes. Firstly, it overviews the definitions of LA; this is followed by a critical analysis of the different approaches to LA and various implications of autonomous learning. Secondly, Chapter 2 discusses teachers' and learners' cognitions. It explores teachers' beliefs about LA and the association between teachers' perception of LA and their practices to develop LA. An overview of the literature concerning language learners' beliefs with a focus on learners' autonomous behaviours, as well as the relationship between teachers' and learners' beliefs is also provided.

Chapter 3 presents the rationale for research methodology along with the research questions, the context of FL teaching and learning in Hungary, the context and the participants of the present research. It also describes the process of designing the data collection instruments, as well as the procedures of data collection and analysis. For an overview of the main research questions see Table 1.

Chapter 4 provides the analysis of the data collected in the course of the research over six months. It is divided into four main sections which aim to answer the research questions. The first section draws the outlines of teachers' understanding of LA with further particular areas related to the focus. The second section focuses on the relationships between English as a foreign language (EFL) and German as a foreign language (GFL) teachers' beliefs and practices. The third section explores language learners' views about LA and their autonomous behaviours, whereas the fourth part analyses the relationship between teachers' and students' beliefs about LA. The aim is

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to identify what factors interact in the process of teachers' and learners' perceptions of autonomy in language learning and how.

Table 1

The data sources and methods of analysis used for the main research questions

Research question	Data sources	Participants	Methods of analysis
According to the teachers, to what extent does LA contribute to language learning?	Teachers' questionnaire Interviews with EFL and GFL teachers	9 language teachers 4 language teachers	Content analysis
How and to what extent do teachers claim they promote autonomy?	Teachers' questionnaire Interviews with EFL and GFL teachers	9 language teachers 4 language teachers	Content analysis
What do teachers understand by learner self-assessment and in what ways, if any, have they incorporated this idea?	Classroom observation Field notes Teachers' questionnaire Interviews with EFL and GFL teachers	12 language teachers 9 language teachers 4 language teachers	Content analysis
To what extent do teachers think their learners are autonomous?	Teachers' questionnaire Interviews with EFL and GFL teachers	9 language teachers 4 language teachers	Content analysis
What challenges do teachers claim they face in helping students become more autonomous?	Teachers' questionnaire Interviews with EFL and GFL teachers	9 language teachers 4 language teachers	Content analysis Descriptive statistics
To what extent do teachers feel autonomous in their professional development and teaching practice?	Teachers' questionnaire Interviews with EFL and GFL teachers	9 language teachers 4 language teachers	Content analysis
How are teachers' beliefs and self-reported practices related to their classroom practices regarding the development of LA?	Classroom observation Field notes Teachers' questionnaire Interviews with EFL and GFL teachers	12 language teachers 9 language teachers 4 language teachers	Content analysis Descriptive statistics

How do English and German teachers beliefs about autonomy compare to one another?	Teachers' questionnaire Interviews with EFL and GFL teachers	6 EFL and 3 GFL teachers 2 EFL and 2 GFL teachers	Content analysis Descriptive statistics
What differences, if any, can be found between English and German teachers' classroom practices regarding LA?	Classroom observation Field notes Teachers' questionnaire Interviews with EFL and GFL teachers	8 EFL and 4 GFL teachers 6 EFL and 3 GFL teachers 2 EFL and 2 GFL teachers	Content analysis
How do students perceive their own level of LA?	Students' questionnaire	100 students	Content analysis Descriptive statistics
What is the correspondence between students' autonomous beliefs and behaviours?	Classroom observation Field notes Students' questionnaire	103 students 100 students	Content analysis Descriptive statistics Independent samples T-tests Pearson's correlation tests
What difference, if any, can be found between EFL and GFL learners' autonomous beliefs and behaviours?	Classroom observation Field notes Students' questionnaire	66 EFL and 37 GFL learners 64 EFL and 36 GFL learners	Content analysis Descriptive statistics Independent samples T-tests
What is the relationship between teachers' and students' beliefs about LA?	Teachers' questionnaire Interviews with EFL and GFL teachers Students' questionnaire	9 language teachers 4 language teachers 100 students	Content analysis Descriptive statistics

The final chapter summarises the most important findings and the limitations of the study. In the conclusions, pedagogical implications and suggestions for further research are considered.

Despite the limitations, the findings of the research carry pedagogical implications to practicing teachers and teacher educators. Teachers' awareness should

be raised about the importance of LA, as well as their roles in autonomy development. It is also essential that language teachers understand their learners' expectations, as a mutual understanding between students' and teachers' perceptions may help to increase the level of motivation and satisfaction for both groups.

Chapter 2 Theoretical background to learner autonomy (LA) and to LA-related beliefs

Since the present dissertation is focused on LA and teachers' and learners' beliefs, this review of the literature focuses on two main themes. The first section overviews the definitions of LA and outlines the nature of LA; this is followed by a critical analysis of the different approaches to LA and various implications of autonomous learning, such as computer-assisted learning, self-access centres, self-assessment, classroom-based approach, teacher autonomy and motivation.

The second main section is devoted to beliefs, to the discussion of teachers' beliefs about LA, and an analysis of the roles of beliefs in language teaching and in supporting LA in particular is provided. This section explores the association between teachers' perception of LA and their supportive practices to develop LA. An overview on the literature of learners' beliefs with a special focus on learners' autonomous behaviours and recent research on the relationship between teachers' and learners' beliefs is also provided.

2.1 Learner autonomy

The idea of autonomy in learning is based on the assumption that knowledge is not simply transmitted and acquired, but it involves the active construction of meaning by individual participants in the learning process, it happens in social interaction with others, and it is co-constructed (Benson, 2001, 2013; Gremmo & Riley, 1995; Little, 1991). As it is impossible to teach everything students need to know, and given that learning does not stop outside the classroom, it is necessary to teach skills they can transfer to other learning situations (Nunan, 1988). Although teaching clearly

contributes to learning, learners themselves are the agents of their own learning. The increase in their involvement in the process of learning leads to more effective learning; as Little (1994) viewed it, "all genuinely successful learning is in the end autonomous" (p. 431). Autonomous learners are seen as

> … not automatically obliged to self-direct his learning either totally or even partially. The learner will make use of his ability to do this only if he so wishes and if he is permitted to do so by the material, social and psychological constraints to which he is subjected.
> (Holec, 1988, p. 8)

Benson (2013) identified a number of concepts related to LA from "independent learning", "self-directed learning", "self-instruction", "self-access", "self-study", "self-education", "out-of-class learning" to "distance learning" to be distinguished from LA, as they all describe various ways and degrees of learning by oneself, while autonomy is concerned with abilities and attitudes. These terms lead to several misconceptions, as discussed in the following section along with an overview on LA and dominant philosophies of learning, as well as implications of LA in different contexts.

2.1.1 Definitions of learner autonomy

Although there is no indication when the term LA was used for the first time, in second language education it appeared in Holec's seminal report Council of Europe Modern Languages Project in 1979 (Holec, 1981). Holec defines autonomy as an "ability to take charge of one's own learning" (p. 3) which implies that LA is an attribute of the learner, not of the learning process. Furthermore, ability is rather seen as acquired through systematic and purposeful learning than to be an in-born characteristic of the learner. Holec (1981) views LA as a potential capacity to be involved in a learning situation, and not the actual behaviour of the learner in a certain situation. He claimed that teaching

strategies to support autonomous behaviour would be counterproductive as learning would no longer be self-directed. Holec's definition states that "responsibility" and "capacity" are key features of LA, and that autonomous learners are able to take control of their learning and

> …to have, and to hold the responsibility for all the decisions concerning all aspects of this learning, i.e. determining the objectives; defining the contents and progressions; selecting methods and techniques to be used; monitoring the procedures of acquisition properly speaking (rhythm, time, place, etc.); evaluating what has been acquired.
> (Holec, 1981, p. 3)

Holec's influential definition was followed by several attempts to describe different versions of autonomy. Within the proliferation of interpretations of LA Benson (2009) identified three main strategies that researchers applied to define the construct: (1) researchers employing the "kaleidoscopic strategy" (p. 18) accept all existing definitions about LA equally and organise them into a wider frame. The researchers employing (2) "the exegetical strategy" (p. 19) go back to an earlier definition, such as Holec's (1981) original definition, and interpret it as the core definition of LA. The "quintessential strategy" (3), which Benson (2009) found the strongest of the three intends to reveal the basic elements of LA in the way Little (2007) combines his own definition (Little, 1995) with that of Holec's (1981).

LA has also been defined from many aspects; the words "ability" and "take charge of" have often been replaced by "capacity" and "take responsibility for". Researchers claim that LA has two central features: (1) learners take responsibility for the organisation of the learning process including the selection of the study materials to assessment and (2) they feel responsible for their own learning (Benson, 2001, 2013; Benson & Voller, 1997; Dickinson, 1995; Pemberton, Li, Or & Pierson, 1996), and have

"an attitude towards learning in which the learner is prepared to take, or does take, responsibility for his own learning" (Dickinson, 1995, p.167). Little (1991) described autonomy as "a capacity for detachment, critical reflection, decision making and independent action" (p. 4). In this definition, Little focused on the psychological aspect of LA (see section 2.1.2), which raised questions about the most essential elements of LA in language learning. Wenden (1991) stated that LA refers to the way students reflect on their learning and how they make use of learning opportunities. She highlighted the importance of metacognitive awareness and learners' attitudes. Oxford (2008) explored the relationship between LA and L2 learning strategies and tactics to be used in various independent learning arrangements. In Benson's (2001, 2013) view LA meant taking control over one's cognitive processes, learning content and learning management as shown in Figure 1. He argued that

> ...effective learning management depends upon the cognitive processes involved in learning, while control of cognitive processes necessarily has consequences for the self-management of learning. Autonomy also implies that self-management and control over cognitive processes should involve decisions concerning the content of learning.
> (Benson, 2013, p. 61)

As Benson and Voller (1997) put it, the concept of autonomy has been used at least in five ways: for situations in which students learn entirely on their own; for a group of skills which can be acquired and used in self-directed learning; for an inborn capacity which is not supported by formal education; for learners' responsibility for their own learning; and for the right of learners to decide about the direction of their own learning.

Dam (1995) found that autonomous learners are able to take charge of their own learning, they make decisions and act independently, and are motivated by their learning. She also included the notion of "willingness" to emphasise that regardless of

their capacity, learners would develop autonomy only if they were willing to take responsibility for their learning, resonating Holec's views (1988). Altogether, researchers agree that autonomous learners understand the purposes of their learning, show responsibility, are voluntarily involved in opportunities for practice, apply appropriate learning strategies, review and evaluate their learning progress regularly (Cotterall, 1995a, 1995b; Dickinson, 1995; Little 1991, 2007).

Figure 1. Defining autonomy: the capacity to take control over learning (Benson, 2013, p. 61)

Learning management

Learning behaviour

Control

Autonomy in language learning

Control

Control

Psychology of learning

Cognitive processes

Learning situations

Learning content
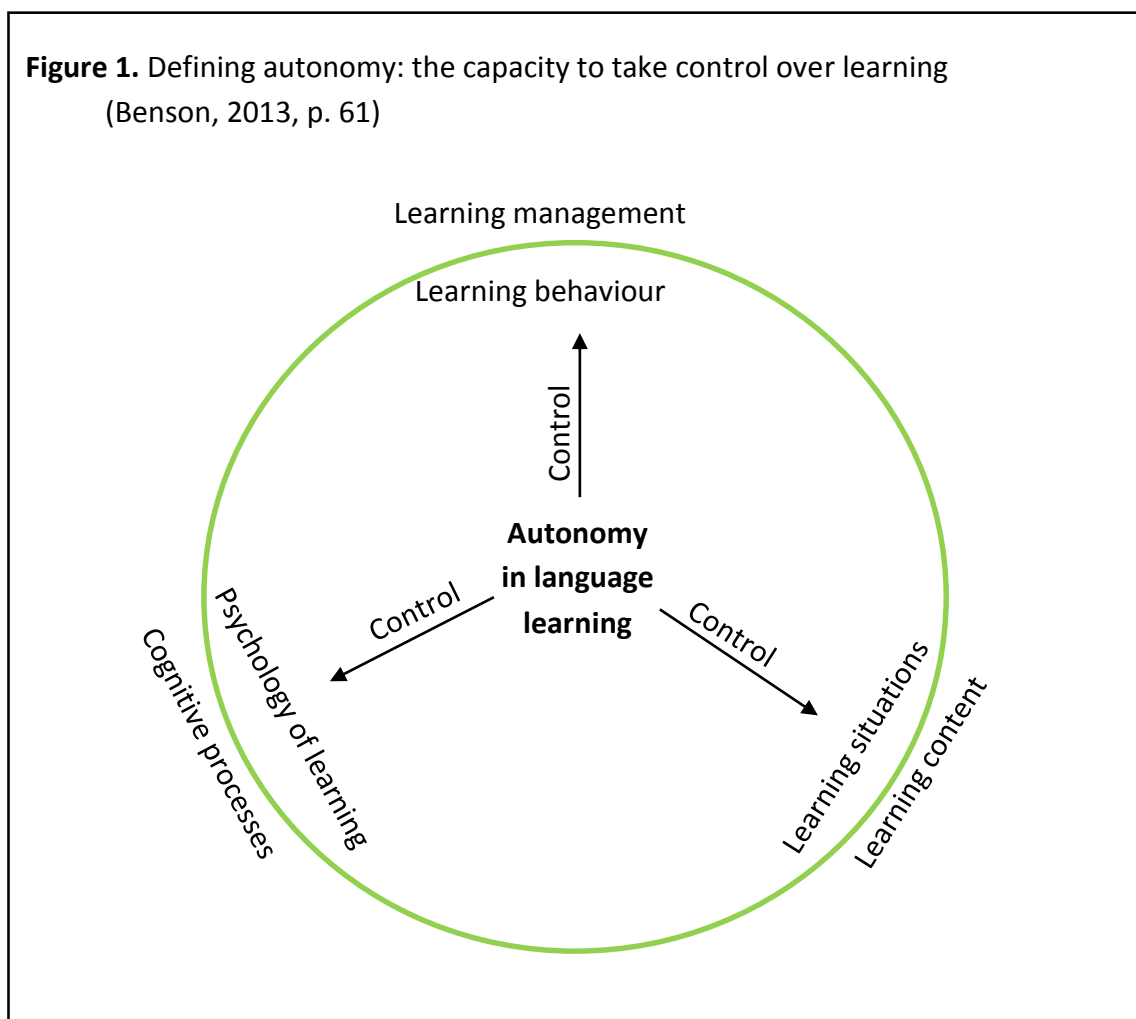
Littlewood (1996) defined autonomy as "learners' ability and willingness to make choices independently" (p. 427). He found that these attributes are interrelated and could be divided into further subcomponents; as he claimed, ability depends on knowledge about the learning possibilities and skills for making appropriate decisions.

Willingness was seen to be related to the motivation and confidence, implying that learners should have to take responsibility for their decisions. According to Littlewood (1996), the autonomous learner needs to have knowledge, skills, motivation, and confidence, suggesting that these components should be taken into account in the development of LA.

These definitions provide a more holistic view of the learner, who is perceived as a decision maker. They also explore the political aspect of LA where learners have the freedom to take control (see section 2.1.2), as well as the philosophical view of LA, where independence and the possibility of choice in learning are considered to be basic needs in preparing learners for full membership in a changing society (Cotterall, 1995a).

However, these definitions fail to consider the classroom element, the practical aspect of LA and the role of the teacher. Sinclair (2000) suggested further dimensions of LA, claiming that complete autonomy is an idealistic goal, that there are degrees of autonomy, which are unstable and variable. Trebbi (2008) claimed that people are never free from constraints and identified a number of external (institutional and curricular) and internal (attitudes and beliefs) constraints. Promoting autonomy is not simply a matter of teaching strategies; it can take place both inside and outside the classroom, thus emphasising that autonomy is interpreted differently in different cultures (for more details see section 2.1.6). Dam (1995) and Little (2007) were also concerned with classroom learning, and Little argued that the control over learners' autonomy remains external and mediated by the teacher. Benson (2008) claimed that LA from the teachers' perspective is primarily concerned with institutional constraints and classroom learning arrangements within curricular frameworks.

Benson (2011b) found that autonomy develops most in the space where ability, desire and freedom overlap. By freedom he meant the degree to which learners are allowed to control their own learning process. This space seems to be relatively small, but teachers have an influence on all these areas; they can impact their learners' skills and knowledge, their motivation to learn a language, and their students' degree of freedom to control their learning. However, in Benson's (2011b) view teachers can only influence the *capacity* for autonomy. Oxford (2003) suggested that although no single definition of LA is accepted, there is an agreement on what LA means and "consideration of all relevant perspectives is likely to provide a stronger, richer understanding of learner autonomy" (p. 81). The following section discusses the perspectives that researchers applied to explore LA.

2.1.2 Perspectives of learner autonomy

Benson (1997, 2007) systematised LA by distinguishing technical, psychological, sociocultural and political versions. His taxonomy has become a widely accepted model for discussions about LA. The technical perspective highlights the importance of external conditions in which LA can develop; as Benson (1997) stated, "research adopting this perspective values attributes from the learning environment" (p. 19). Most of the studies employing the technical perspective (Gardner & Miller, 1999, 2011; Morrison, 2008; Murray, 2011; Zaragoza, 2011) were conducted in self-access learning centres and found that access to authentic materials and opportunities for personalising learning according to learners' needs fostered LA. Within this perspective, autonomous learners are seen to have the necessary skills and strategies which enable them to learn a language without institutional constraints and without the presence of a teacher

(Benson, 1997). However, taking into consideration only the technical perspective of LA with the emphasis on situational conditions, would not lead to a complete understanding of the concept, as "without psychology, the technical perspective would be inert" (Oxford, 2003, p. 82).

The psychological perspective examines the "mental and emotional characteristics of learners who are viewed as individuals or members of a sociocultural group" (Oxford, 2003, p. 83). Researchers (Benson, 2001, 2013; 2007; Holec, 1981; Little, 1995) approaching LA from this perspective take in consideration learners' "ability" or "capacity", involving a cognitive factor (Little, 1995); or as Benson (2001) viewed, capacity consisting of behavioural and cognitive elements. These two elements were found to be interrelated and allow learners to plan, maintain and evaluate their learning processes. Autonomous learners are characterized by psychological characteristics such as self-efficacy, positive attitudes, they are also seen to have a combination of high extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, as well as a need for achievement (Benson, 2007).

The sociocultural perspective views social interaction as the most essential element of language development and of the construction of LA (Benson, 2007). LA is seen to be acquired while learners as members of a social context need to cope with different challenges and relationships. This perspective takes into account the influence of the personal and situational factors on fostering LA. Teachers approaching LA from this perspective tend to offer their learners choices, opportunities for negotiation and involve them in interactive situations (Breen & Littlejohn, 2000b; Ho & Crookal, 1995; Nikolov, 2000).

The political perspective takes into account the concepts of power, right, access, and ideology and views autonomy as a right of the learners to decide about the direction

of their own learning (Benson, 1997; Crabbe, 1993): "the individual has the right to be free to exercise his or her own choices as in other areas, and not become a victim (even if an unwitting one) of choices made by social institutions" (Crabbe, 1993, p. 443). Within this framework ideologies and attitudes are embedded in specific contexts, situations and groups, to be related to gender, age, religion, culture and socioeconomic status. Autonomy is understood as "the struggle to become the author of one's own world, to be able to create one's own meaning, to pursue cultural alternatives amid the cultural politics of everyday life" (Pennycook, 1997, p. 39).

As pointed out above, Benson (1997) viewed autonomy as "a complex and multifaceted concept" (p. 29) consisting of a wide range of elements, such as responsibility for one's own learning, control over the learning process, learning styles, motivation and others. Therefore, he claimed that it is impossible to explain LA comprehensibly from a single perspective. In this sense, the aforementioned technical, psychological, and socio-political perspectives are complementary and may serve as a springboard to explore the relationship between autonomy and language learning.

2.1.3 Models of learner autonomy

Several attempts have been made to define degrees of autonomy (Benson, 2001, 2013; Nunan, 1997; Littlewood, 1999). Nunan (1997) stated that "autonomy is not an absolute concept" (p. 193) and that "most learners do not come into the learning situation with the knowledge and skills to determine content and learning processes which will enable them to reach their objectives in learning another language" (p. 201); moreover, "fully autonomous learners are a rarity" (p. 201). Nunan identified five degrees concerning autonomous learner behaviour: "awareness, involvement, intervention, creation, and

transcendence" (p. 195). In his view, in the first stage, language learners are "made aware of the pedagogical goals and contents of the materials", and they can "identify their own learning styles" (p. 196). In the most developed stage, at the transcendence level learners are able "to make links between the content learnt in the classroom and the world beyond" and "become teachers and researchers" (p. 200).

Littlewood's (1999) model of LA consists of two levels: (1) proactive autonomy and (2) reactive autonomy. The proactive level refers to learners' "individuality and sets up directions in a world which they themselves have partially created" (p.75). At this level of autonomy learners are able to plan, control and evaluate their learning and they establish their own "directions for learning" (p. 75). Learners at the proactive level control partially or totally several elements of the learning process, such as learning objectives, learning methods, materials, and assessment, which have been traditionally considered to be teachers' responsibilities. The reactive level of autonomy, on the other hand, "does not create its own directions, but, once a direction has been initiated, enables learners to organize their resources autonomously in order to reach their goal" (p.75). Reactive autonomy is viewed as a lower level of autonomy as well as "a preliminary step towards the first or a goal in its own right" (p.75).

This classification becomes especially relevant when LA is investigated in different cultural and educational contexts, as described in section 2.1.6. Kumaravadivelu (2003) found the above described models problematic, as they involve a possible advancement from a lower level to a higher level of autonomy without taking into account the complex relationship between the level of autonomy and language proficiency. He argues that "it would be a mistake to try to correlate the initial, intermediary, and advanced stages of autonomy…with the beginning, intermediate, and

advanced levels of language proficiency" (p.144). Macaro (2008) suggested that the main goal of LA is the development of language learners; therefore his three-dimensional model consists of autonomy of language competence, autonomy of language learning competence, and autonomy of learner choice and emphasised teachers role in supporting LA in each dimension.

Despite the different definitions of LA in the literature, several elements are agreed to be attributes of LA. Autonomy is seen as a complex concept (Benson, 1997, 2013), an acquired ability as opposed to an inborn capacity and it is closely related to the learners' willingness to take responsibility for their own learning. Degrees of autonomy were identified which are unstable and variable. It also appears that promoting autonomy is not simply a matter of teaching strategies. Autonomous learning can take place both inside and outside the classroom and it has a social as well as an individual dimension. As mentioned earlier, autonomy is interpreted differently in different cultures; therefore, the promotion of LA requires awareness of the context and of the learning process (Sinclair, 2000). These characteristics will be taken into account in the framework of the present research.

The definition of LA for the present research is: *learners' willingness and capacity to take responsibility to control their learning process inside and outside the classroom*. Willingness refers here to the learner's intention to learn a language, it does not completely overlap with the broader concept of motivation. Capacity here comprises rather the individuals' potential and not a set of learning behaviours. It is concerned with the ability to use study skills and knowledge of the target language that enables control over the learning task, also referred to as more technical terms of "metacognitive" and "metalinguistic" knowledge and skills (Wenden, 1998; Little, 2007).

In the next section I will discuss misconceptions concerning LA and the dominant learning philosophies as well as implications of LA in different educational contexts along with the approaches to fostering LA.

2.1.4 Misconceptions about learner autonomy

The great variety of definitions which persist in the literature about what LA is has led to several misconceptions that need to be clarified. Little (1991) identified five most common misconceptions about LA. He suggests that the most widespread one is that (1) autonomy was understood as a synonym for self-instruction, which was seen as learning without a teacher (Benson, 2001, 2013; Dickinson, 1987; Little, 1991). Further expressions that have been used synonymously for LA are independent learning, self-directed learning, self-instruction, self-regulated- and self-access learning. Independent learning refers to learning situations in which learners, in agreement with others, make decisions needed to meet their own learning needs (Dickinson, 1987). Self-direction is understood as

> …a process in which individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes.
> Knowles (1975, p. 18)

Self-access learning refers to self-instructed learning from materials which were meant to facilitate learning (Dickinson, 1987). Zimmerman (1998) defined self-regulation as "the self-directive process through which learners transform their mental abilities into academic skills" (p.1). However, Little (1995) distinguished LA from these related terms; he claimed that besides being concerned with the decision-making process and learners' needs and interests, LA assumes strong interdependence between

teacher and learners (Esch, 1997; Little, 1991). This leads to another common misconception related to the notion of LA (2): teacher's control is not desired and any intervention on the part of the teacher can destroy LA (Benson, 2001).

A further (3) misconception is that LA is a teaching method that can be programmed into lesson plans, something that the teacher can "do" to their learners (Little, 1991), which would imply that teachers are in charge of control and students are passive partakers of the lessons. LA is also understood as (4) "a simple, easily described behaviour" (Little, 1991, p. 3). Although it is agreed that autonomous learners can be recognised by their behaviours, this behaviour "can manifest itself in very many different ways" (Little, 1991, p. 4) depending on learners' age, language proficiency, learning goals, etc. Finally, (5) LA is misunderstood for a certain level achieved only by particular learners. In fact, LA can be developed and can reach different degrees (Nunan, 1997; Littlewood, 1999), moreover, it may vary over time and across different fields of activity.

In addition to these, Esch (1997) identified the danger of reducing the notion of LA "to a set of skills" (p. 165) as a misconception about autonomous learning especially common in FL education: "the promotion of autonomous learning is to reduce it to a series of techniques to train language learning skills leading to the display of autonomous behaviour" (p. 165). Esch argued that LA in language learning differs from other learning areas; "it is also necessary to consider that language has specific features which need to be taken into account when we talk about autonomous learning" (p. 166). Misconceptions in how teachers perceive LA can lead to confusion about what LA is; therefore, clarification is needed to avoid teachers having difficulties when applying LA supportive practices.

2.1.5 Learner autonomy and major learning theories

As mentioned above, Holec's (1981) influential work provided a starting point for a proliferation of definitions concerning LA. However, the origin of the term LA appears to be unclear and there seems to be no particular learning theory related to LA. In this section I will discuss the relationship between LA and three dominant approaches to learning.

Positivism as one of the major learning theories states that knowledge reflects reality, which leads to the assumption that if teachers were providers of objective reality, learning would be restricted to the "transmission of knowledge from one individual to another" (Benson & Voller, 1997, p. 20). According to this view, teachers are the stakeholders of conveying knowledge, and learners are considered containers to be loaded with knowledge. Positivism welcomes the traditional power relations and practices in the classroom; it does not support the development of LA which is understood as a gradual shift of focus from conventions and constraints to self-instruction and self-assessment.

Research on human development had a major influence on the rise of constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978), which views cognition inseparable from its social and cultural context, and it accentuates more how knowledge is constructed than how it is acquired. As opposed to positivism, this paradigm claims that learning does not happen through internalising sets of rules and structures but through reorganising and restructuring experiences with the target language through interaction in community. Constructivism covers the psychological aspect of autonomy (see section 2.1.2) which takes into account learners' attitudes, self-concept and motivation; it encourages self-

directedness as an essential element of LA, where learners are active participants in the process of learning (Benson & Voller, 1997).

Finally, critical theory is in line with constructivism in the sense that knowledge is constructed rather than discovered. It suggests that knowledge does not reflect a single reality, but it accepts alternative versions of reality and it is concerned with issues of power and ideology expressing the interests of different social groups (Benson & Voller, 1997). This approach views learning as interaction with the social context and covers the sociocultural and the political aspects of LA. As learners become conscious about their social context which provides a framework and constraints for their learning, they gradually become independent, disentangle themselves of predetermined concepts, and can be viewed as "authors of their own worlds" (Benson & Voller, 1997, p. 53).

2.1.6 Learner autonomy in cultural context

Researchers (Ho & Croolkall, 1995; Oxford, 2003; Palfreyman; 2003, Sinclair, 2000) agree that LA has different meanings across cultures due to differences in cultural beliefs. Accepting that LA is perceived within the context of specific cultures, it is important to take into account the culturally constructed nature of the classroom when the procedures that are to be used to develop LA are chosen (Ho & Croolkall, 1995). Palfreyman (2003) suggested that learners from different cultures should have the opportunity to find cultural alternatives to the concept of LA constructed in Western contexts. This suggests that the definition of LA should take into consideration the perception of the teachers in the given cultural and educational context. As the teacher is involved in supporting and developing LA, it is essential to be also involved in

examining its definition and exploring classroom approaches and practices which are suitable to their teaching and learning setting (Oxford, 2003). Littlewood (1999) stated that although proactive autonomy was seen as "the only kind that counts" when LA was discussed in Western educational contexts, reactive autonomy should be considered as "a preliminary step" (p. 75) in the process of reaching higher levels of LA, especially for learners in non-Western contexts.

Holliday (2005) claimed that the problem with the concept of LA was not the principle of freedom, "but with the way these principles are translated into 'us'- 'them' discourse within native-speakerism" (p. 79) which has had a worldwide impact, permeating the teaching profession. The deep-rooted belief that the ideal speaker is the native speaker and the ideal methodology can only be provided by the native speaker teacher is the only acceptable ideology for native speakers of English who do not speak any foreign languages. Holliday argued against control-construction of LA describing two different approaches to LA: (1) the dominant, native-speakerist approach, and (2) the critical linguist approach, which he claimed to be still culturist in the sense that it also relies on cultural stereotypes. The first approach is in line with the positivist paradigm and suits the goals of professionalism where teachers are viewed as knowledge-transmitters (Benson, 2001, 2013; Pennycook, 1997). Native-speakerism encourages teachers to "change their students into 'better' thinkers and 'learners'" (Holliday, 2005, p. 80). This approach involves cultural stereotypes where learners and non-native speakers are viewed as problematic; and it promotes the view of the teacher and the native speaker as unproblematic. Within this framework, passivity is considered as opposite of LA which is associated with the generalised Other along with the stereotypes of learners and non-native speakers.

The critical linguist approach recognized the changing ownership of English and confirmed that native-speakerism was untenable. However, this approach is still native-speakerist in the sense that it perceives other cultures as being different to the extent that their members "should not be expected to play the same autonomy game as 'us'" (Holliday, 2005, p. 80), referring here to Western cultures. Palfreyman (2003) suggested that learners from other cultures should have the opportunity to find cultural alternatives to the concept of LA constructed in Western contexts. When considering the different models of autonomy in the literature from "proactive" and "reactive" (Littlewood 1999), "broad" and "narrow" (Kumaravadivelu 2003), or "strong" and "weak" (Smith, 2003), the learning contexts in which they are adopted should be taken into account as the approaches seen "strong"," proactive" and "broad" in a particular classroom may prove to be a "weak", "reactive" or "narrow" in another context (Benson, 2011a).

Adamson (2012), Ho and Croolkall (1995) and Littlewood (1999, 2000) argue that Asian learners, although they are affected by teacher-controlled and exam-oriented formal learning experiences, do have at their disposal strategies for LA. For example, Palfreyman (2003) explored teachers' interpretations of LA in a Turkish context and concluded that it made a significant difference whether autonomy was viewed to refer to study skills and strategies that foster learners to work individually or to denote critical reflectivity in language learning. Kuchah and Smith (2011) referred to an African cultural context to open up a South-North axis in the globalised discussion of LA, which served to complement the East-West dichotomy.

Pennycook (1997) stated that although political, psychological, or technical versions of autonomy were not culturally neutral, "globalizing discourses of applied

linguistics [...] tend to suggest that autonomy is a universally 'good thing' for everyone, irrespective of the social and cultural context in which it is applied" (p. 40). Schmenk (2005) argued that LA became a universal label that referred to efficient learners who could select the strategies that served best their needs. He claimed that LA could be promoted as a universal good if it is decontextualized: removed from its original, mostly Western, cultural, historical, and social backgrounds it can be a universally compatible notion. Moreover, Benson (2001) noted that LA had been neutralised to the extent that many descriptions of autonomous language learners resembled those of successful managers.

Therefore, when investigating LA, researchers should consider the cultural and social constraints that are present in the Hungarian teaching tradition and that may be different from those described as Western cultures (Benson, 2001; Little, 1997; Littlewood, 1999; Smith, 2008). Little is known at present about the way Hungarian teachers understand the notion of LA; therefore, it is important to gain insight into teachers' perception concerning LA in language learning and its implications in the teaching practice.

2.1.7 Approaches to fostering learner autonomy

Benson (2011a) recognized that autonomy has multiple dimensions and many different forms depending on the person and on the contextual factors. Learners show autonomous behaviours in various ways, which lead to different approaches to autonomy that should be followed to foster LA in particular contexts. This section focuses on the approaches to supporting LA with an emphasis on the strengths and weaknesses of each approach.

2.1.7.1 Resource-based approach

The resource-based approach emphasises the importance of providing learners with materials and resources to improve their LA (Benson, 2011b; Fisher, Hafner & Young, 2007; Gardner & Miller, 1999, 2011; Morrison, 2008) as the "major goal of the promotion of self-access learning is the fostering of autonomous learning" (Gardner & Miller, 2011, p. 78). Self-access learning is considered increasingly important in language education in many countries as it helps students become autonomous and lifelong learners (Morrison, 2008). The most common facilities fostering self-access learning are self-access centres, where learners can interact independently in variably controlled learning environments (Benson, 2001, 2013; Gardner & Miller, 1999, 2011). Opportunities for self-access learning range from possibilities for authentic language use without involving institutional control to self-access language learning integrated into taught courses.

Self-access centres offer resources designed for students who are involved in self-directed learning, leading to an increasing independence from teacher intervention (Esch, 1997; Gardner & Miller, 1999, 2011). As Gardner and Miller (1999) suggested, self-access centres are a "way of encouraging learners to move from teacher dependence towards autonomy" (p. 8) and that they allow for different degrees of autonomy. Due to the shift from the teacher-centred to a more learner-centred approach in language learning, self-access language learning has gradually become a "complement to the more traditional face-to-face learning model, with self-access centres now operating in many parts of the world" (Morrison, 2008, p. 123).

In his interview study, Morrison (2008) highlighted the importance of self-access centres in language learning in higher education, as they support independence in

language learning. However, he also identified constraints of self-access centres in the sense that learners need to be evaluated in order to identify their needs, and skills and strategies are needed for the effective use of self-access centres. Moreover, the quality, suitability and accessibility of the resources and materials raised concerns regarding the effectiveness of self-access centres, suggesting that a clear understanding of how self-access centres work is needed to allow the successful use of these centres.

Investigating language learners' experiences studying English in a self-access learning context combined with classroom-based instruction, Murray (2011) found that participants determined their own goals, then designed and carried out learning plans to meet these goals. He demonstrated that self-access learning had the potential of supporting learners' imagination of L2 selves and helps them reach their ideal selves (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009; Ushioda, 2009) as it "enabled them to plan and implement action aimed at making their visions of future selves" (Murray, 2011, p. 88). Zaragoza (2011) considered self-access centres multilingual based on the variety of the language learning resources they offer, and on the fact that advisors and learners can be native speakers of different languages. Therefore, self-access centres offer opportunities to investigate the link between multilingualism and LA. Zaragoza revealed in her interview study how learners developed multilingual identities with high intrinsic motivation in a context that did not have an explicit policy on multilingualism.

Reinders and Lazaro (2011) examined teachers' roles as facilitators of autonomous learning in a large- scale study in self-access centres. They found that although advisers could expect to be asked questions, therefore adequate professional knowledge was required, in reality many teachers lacked this preparation. Reinders and Lazaro explained this lack of readiness to fulfil the needs of such self-access centres in

accordance with Borg's (2003) framework: teachers' perceptions were shaped predominantly by classroom teaching. Most advisers do not have explicit training in self-access learning contexts, and they may not have opportunities to reflect on and develop their belief systems, which may lead to a lack of understanding of LA and of the facilitators' role to foster it. Reinders and Lazaro (2011) revealed that many teachers working in self-access centres felt both institutionally as well as professionally isolated. Given that the development of LA is strongly related to teacher autonomy (Joshi, 2011; Lamb, 2008; Little, 1995; Sinclair, 2008; Smith, 2008, see section 2.1.7.6), it undoubtedly needs to be explored further.

Tassinari (2012) suggested a model to assess learners' capacities for autonomy comprising competencies, skills, and decision- making. Components could be evaluated with descriptors meant to help learners and advisors identify learners' needs to be targeted in the process of autonomous learning. Tassinari also proposed that the role of the advisor should be to provide learners with opportunities for language learning and with strategies supporting the process of autonomous learning. Assessment using this model should be integrated in pedagogical interaction between learners and advisors. Therefore, the role of the teacher is seen to be important in offering possibilities, encouraging their learners to use self-access centres, helping their students in orientation among the huge amount of resources and subsequently in developing LA, even in self-access centres where the interaction between the teacher and the learner is not focused on.

2.1.7.2 Technology-based approach: computer-assisted learning

The technology-based approach serves as an alternative to self-access centres. Major forms of this approach include the application of computer-assisted language learning (CALL), computer-mediated communication (CMC) and mobile language learning (MALL). Egbert (2005) defined this approach as ''learners learning language in any context with, through, and around computer technologies'' (p. 4). Benson (2001) claimed that technology supports self-access in learning, as it provides learners with opportunities take control over their learning; therefore, it has a strong potential to develop autonomous behaviour. Benson (2001, 2011a) along with Blin (2004), Jarvis (2012), Reinders and White (2011) emphasised that technology increased the opportunities for interaction beyond the classroom and identified features of autonomous learning, such as control and evaluation of students' own learning process, decision-making, initiating interaction in the L2; all these derived from involvement in technology-based learning. Abraham and Williams (2011) and Ng, Confessore, Yusoff, Aziz and Lajiz (2011) stress the potential of supporting the lifelong learning dimension of autonomy development, which is especially relevant in the case of adult language learners.

Ushioda (2000) explored the affective dimension of computer mediated learning, and found that tandem email exchanges increased learners' intrinsic motivation and suggested that it improved their LA as well. Arikan and Bakla (2011) reported that blogging contributed to developing decision-making, independent action, critical reflection and detachment as core elements of LA. Figura and Jarvis (2007) found that learners involved in computer-mediated communication showed high levels of autonomy and metacognitive awareness, and could use appropriate strategies.

However, the students without any knowledge about computer mediated communication could not apply relevant strategies; therefore, they were not able to benefit from its potential to develop their autonomy. The authors emphasised the importance of classroom-based input on using computer assisted communication.

Some of the recent research in technology-based learning involve the use of mobile phones connected to the Internet. Kondo, Ishikawa, Smith, Sakamoto, Shimomura and Wada (2012) described a project which involved Japanese university students using a learning module developed to improve students' test scores. They found that MALL fostered an advanced form of LA, students took responsibility to maintain their motivation to carry out and evaluate their learning plans.

Researchers suggested that it is not clear how and to what extent wide access to learning opportunities and resources through CALL, CMC or MALL contributes to LA. As Reinders and White (2011) noted, "unrestricted access to information, without proper guidance and feedback, can in fact inhibit learners from taking more responsibility" (p.1). Benson (2001, 2011a) agreed that the effectiveness of technology-based learning is influenced by the way in which technology is used and by the degree of control that learners take to manipulate the content. Luzón and Ruiz-Madrid (2008) emphasised the teachers' role in helping learners in orientation in technology-based resources and by promoting strategies. They suggested that "it is necessary to carefully design learning environments or learning tasks that promote the active use of metacognitive strategies, that is, that prompt students to plan, monitor and evaluate their own learning" (p. 28). As Arikan and Bakla (2011) proposed, by "being guided by a knowledgeable teacher, learners can study a second language autonomously" (p. 241). As was shown, studies conducted within the technology-based approach emphasise the importance of the

teacher in the sense that teachers are expected have new roles as facilitators, advisors or helpers in orientation in resources as well as in helping students overcome the difficulties in using technology-based resources and to foster LA.

2.1.7.3 Curriculum-based approach

This approach emphasises the importance of negotiation between teachers and learners concerning the content of learning by involving learners in decision making (Breen & Littlejohn, 2000b; Cotterall, 1995b, 2000; Dam, 1995; Dickinson, 1995; Esch, 1996). The idea of the negotiated process syllabus emerged in the 80s (Breen & Littlejohn, 200b) and proposed that the content of learning should not be predefined, but determined by ongoing negotiation in the classroom (Breen & Littlejohn, 2000b, Nikolov, 2000). Chan (2001) and Yildirim (2008) explored learners' responsibilities, attitudes, and perceptions of their learning process within this approach.

Cotterall (2000) suggested that supporting LA should be "an important and appropriate goal in language course design" (p. 109). She identified five key principles to be taken into account when designing language courses to improve language proficiency and to enhance LA. The five principles (learning goals, the learning process, tasks, strategies and reflection on learning) were meant to support the transition of responsibility for leaning from the teachers to the learners. Cotterall stated that the teachers' role was to make learners aware of the key issues related to curriculum design, thus the increase in learners' awareness would result in the growth on their autonomy. Krashen (2006) proposed that curriculum development should not aim at making the learner into a very high level performer, but to "develop intermediates, those who know enough of the language, so that they can continue to improve on their own, after the

program has ended" (p. 3). In a longitudinal study Nikolov (2000) explored syllabus negotiation with Hungarian children and found that over the years, children developed a positive attitude towards the target language, language learning and the teacher. Moreover, having opportunities for decision making made them more self-confident and responsible for their learning. Also in a Hungarian context, Prievara (2015) experimented with applying the rules of gamification, that is collecting points to reach the next level (in their case the next stage in the syllabus), thus encouraging students plan their learning process and take responsibility in decision making.

Reinders and Balçikanli (2011) investigated how textbooks fostered LA in the classroom by evaluating five English textbooks which were common and available in their research context. They agreed that textbooks could provide students with opportunities for decision, self-assessment or for reflection on their learning. However, they found that textbooks "do not explicitly encourage learner autonomy" (p. 269). They did not offer knowledge about language learning strategies and did not provide many possibilities for decision-making concerning learning. The authors revealed that even in those few cases when textbooks encouraged autonomous learning, they provided "limited opportunity for practice" (p.265). Although some of the course books offered possibilities for the students to evaluate their progress in language learning, these opportunities focused more on memorisation. Nikolov (2000) and Reinders and Balçikanli (2011) suggested that instead of relying totally on predefined syllabuses or on the textbooks teachers should adapt them to shape the learning material to meet their learners needs and to improve LA in their class. The curriculum-based approach assumes that both teachers and students are aware of the benefits of LA to be able to negotiate and adapt the curriculum and the learning materials to facilitate LA in their contexts.

However, the effectiveness of this approach "depends upon implicit or explicit scaffolding structures that support learners in decision-making processes" (Benson, 2011a, p. 184).

2.1.7.4 Classroom- based approach

The classroom-based approach of fostering LA assumes that learners can be made feel responsible for their learning by working with their peers or teachers through cooperative learning in classroom contexts (Benson, 2001, 2013; Nunan, 1997). Within this approach control and responsibility should be negotiated between teachers and learners; learners should be involved in the whole process of learning from determining the goals to assessment. It is also important that teachers should be conscious about the advantages of self-assessment and peer-assessment and give the control over to the students gradually.

Teachers' main concern about the classroom-based approach is that it is impossible to teach everything students need to know (Nunan, 1988); therefore, it is better to teach skills they can transfer to other learning situations. Students need to be trained to be autonomous, since self-assessment, one of the most important elements of self-directed learning (Harris, 1997) relies on a complex set of skills (Bullock, 2010). Teachers should be aware of the need for instruction to foster autonomous behaviour, even though applying strategies in the classroom may be challenging, particularly when teachers themselves are not committed to fostering LA. Despite the general agreement on the benefits of autonomy and its importance as an educational goal, in most cases classroom practice is dominated by traditional, teacher-centred approaches to FL

learning, and the pedagogy for LA remains at a theoretical level (Raya & Vieira, 2015; Vázquez, 2015).

Implementation of self-assessment can also be challenged by contexts which traditionally support the teacher-centred approach of assessment (Butler, 2010). Bullock (2011) emphasised that self-assessment should be practical in terms of time and resources, and it should be integrated with peer-assessment into everyday classroom practice. Butler and Lee (2010) found that the practice of self-assessment had positive effects on students' language performance as well as on their language confidence; their ability to self-assess themselves also improved over time. Several factors proved to influence SA: students' proficiency levels and previous experience in language learning, their anxiety level (Blanche & Merino, 1989), the extent to which students understood items and scales, and the way items were constructed (Butler & Lee, 2010). Dragemark Oscarson (2009) found that students were self-critical concerning their writing skills and tended to underestimate their performance compared to objective assessment. Research also showed that training helped (Council of Europe, 2001; Dragemark Oscarson, 2009) and accuracy of self-assessment increased when language was self-assessed with clear descriptors which were connected to the learning context, and items of an abstract nature proved to be less accurate than functional (can do) skills (Butler & Lee, 2010; Council of Europe, 2001; Harris, 1997).

Brown (2009) concluded that self-assessment improved teaching and learning, with the warning that when introducing a new type of assessment the teachers' conceptions should be taken in consideration. In his study, students and teachers showed positive attitudes towards the implementation of self-assessment in the EFL writing classroom and viewed it as a skill that could be transferred to other learning

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situations. Butler and Lee (2010) showed that teachers and students perceived the effectiveness of self-assessment differently depending on their teaching or learning backgrounds. It was also found that although regular self-assessment had some effect on the students' confidence, it did not impact other affective domains, such as anxiety and motivation. Brown (2004) and Bullock (2011) found that teachers' overall attitudes to self-assessment were positive, but they faced challenges during the implementation and teachers' beliefs showed mismatches with their classroom practices concerning self-assessment (Bullock, 2011).

Peer assessment is viewed in the classroom-based approach as an alternative for traditional evaluation and feedback which has a positive influence on LA. Miller and Ng (1996) found that participation in peer assessment activities improved students' attitudes towards assessment and they became more self-regulated. However, the authors suggested that teachers' assistance was required to train learners to be able to assess their peers accurately and to accept feedback from their peers.

Little (2009a, 2009b) explored portfolio assessment as an alternative to the traditional methods of evaluation which he found problematic in the sense that they encourage rote learning and they can be unreliable indicators of student knowledge. Portfolio assessment, however, involves both the process and the product of learning, it fosters students' participation and provides supportive feedback. The key arguments for self-assessment, peer-assessment and portfolio assessment are that they develop learners' critical self-awareness; therefore, learners can identify their strengths and weaknesses. As a result, learners are better able to set realistic learning goals and direct their own learning process (Council of Europe, 2001). It is important for teachers to be

aware of the benefits of alternative ways of assessment and to incorporate them in their classroom practice to encourage self-directed learning.

2.1.7.5 Learner-based approach

Research within the learner-based approach emphasises the importance of teaching learners to improve their learning skills and strategies. As Nunan (1988) stated, it is impossible to teach learners everything they need to know; teachers should make choices to devote class time to teach "those aspects of the language which the learners themselves deem to be the most urgently required" (p. 3), to provide metacognitive knowledge (Benson, 2001, 2013; Ng & Confessore, 2010; Wenden, 1991) and to enhance motivation. It is widely agreed that autonomous learners are motivated (Little, 1995; Ushioda, 2011). Ushioda (2011) promoted autonomy "because we want them to fulfil their potential to be the persons they want to become and do the things they value in a healthy way" (p. 230). In their discourse analysis of logbooks Chateau and Candas (2015) found links between emotions, students' self-efficacy and the development of LA. They claimed that the traces of emotions the logbooks contained helped to identify important steps in the development of autonomy, showing that LA developed irregularly and unpredictably.

Ng and Confessore (2010) explored the relationship between learning styles and levels of LA; they found a close link between learning styles and LA, particularly "collaborative, competitive, dependent, independent, and participant" learning styles (p. 7). Their study concluded that "those learners who were flexible in using different learning styles according to their needs and in understanding how this kind of adaptation fits particular situations were found to be more autonomous" (p. 10).

Therefore, it is vital to take into account learners' characteristics and their learning style preferences when planning learning and to raise students' awareness of their roles in the learning process in order to develop their autonomy as language learners.

2.1.7.6 Teacher-based approach

The teacher-based approach focuses on teacher autonomy in teaching practice and in professional development, as well as on teacher's role in supporting LA (Benson, 2001, 2013; Borg & Al-Busaidi, 2012; Feryok, 2013). This approach assumes that the perceptions teachers hold impact on their attitudes towards the implementation of LA in their everyday classroom practices (Aoki, 2008; Borg & Al-Busaidi, 2012). Researchers agree (Benson, 2001, 2013; Joshi, 2011; La Ganza, 2008; Lamb, 2008; Little, 1995, 2007; Nakata, 2011; Sinclair, 2008; Smith, 2008; Smith & Ushioda, 2009) that LA depends on teacher autonomy. The term was brought into language education by Little (1995), who stated that "while learning strategies and learner training can play an important supporting role in the development of learner autonomy, the decisive factor will always be the nature of the pedagogical dialogue" (p. 175) and that "learning arises from interaction, and interaction is characterised by interdependence between the teacher and learners, the development of autonomy in learners presupposes the development of autonomy in teachers" (p.175). Little (1995) found teacher autonomy to be "the starting point in the (…) process of negotiation by which students can be brought to accept responsibility for their learning" (p. 179), and that "genuinely successful teachers have always been autonomous in the sense of having a strong sense of personal responsibility for their teaching, exercising via continuous reflection and analysis the highest degree of affective and cognitive control" (p. 179). Balçikanli (2009) also found

that "teacher autonomy is an essential aspect of successful language teacher education in a way that it enables teachers to conduct their own teaching more effectively, become more aware of whats and whys of teaching processes, and follow new trends in language teaching/learning" (p. 11). Looking at the characteristics of successful language teachers and those of autonomous teachers, one can easily see from the student teachers' responses that there are overlapping features, including awareness of their own teaching, creativity, and problem-solving skills. As Smith (2001) stated, "in order to promote learner autonomy teachers may need to have (…) capacity for self-directed teaching, (…) freedom from control over their teaching (…) capacity for self-directed teacher-learning" (p. 5). However, Smith suggests that "the freedom from control" aspect should be treated carefully as "constraints on independent action are necessary to prevent abuse, and one legitimate constraint could involve the argument that self-directed 'professional' action needs to benefit students' learning" (p. 7). Similarly, McGrath (2000) claimed that constraints from the institutional perspective constitute the structure of the professional activity and should serve as reference points, whereas from the teachers' perspective they are more likely to be viewed as the instruments of control. This view emphasises the importance of teacher professionalism as a prerequisite for teacher autonomy, and that "teachers need to understand the constraints upon their practice but, rather than feeling disempowered, they need to empower themselves by finding the spaces and opportunities for manoeuvre" (Lamb, 2008, p. 127), therefore,

> teacher autonomy is not about being free from external constraints and acting according to one's desires; it is essentially about being willing and able to challenge non-democratic traditions and developing a professional sense of

agency in teaching that is directly connected with promoting the learners' agency in learning (Raya & Vieira, 2015, p. 35).

As Dam (1995) also claimed, teachers should act "independently and in co-operation with others, as a socially responsible person" (p. 1). Hyland and Wong (2013) added that even though innovations are supported from above, these initiatives will die if the concept is not embraced by the teacher, as ultimately the teacher is who decides what innovations find their way into the classroom.

Several researchers agree that teachers cannot be expected to support the growth of their students' autonomy if they have no experience about what it is to be an autonomous learner (Joshi, 2011; Lamb, 2008; Little, 1995; Sinclair, 2008; Smith, 2008), "language teachers are more likely to succeed in promoting learner autonomy if their own education has encouraged them to be autonomous" (Little, 1995, p. 180). However, Aoki (2008) found that teacher autonomy is more closely related to teachers' classroom practices, the ways in which they promote LA than to teachers' capacity to implement LA. Feryok (2013) concluded that teachers' knowledge and understanding of LA are essential in fostering autonomous behaviour in language learning, which gives emphasis to the relevance of understanding teachers' beliefs concerning LA as well as the importance of incorporating the pedagogy for LA in teacher education. As Raya and Vieira (2015) argued, "the centrality of autonomy in current educational discourses and policies has remained mostly at theoretical level with little impact on modern language teaching practice" (p. 13). They proposed a case-based approach to promote pedagogy for autonomy,"which is based on the assumption that professional knowledge is built on prior knowledge, linked to experience, permeable, evolving, and consequential. Cases enhance narrative ways of knowing and encourage teachers to analyse

pedagogical practice from various perspectives. They highlight the situated nature of experience, the interrelationship between practical and theoretical knowledge and the moral nature of teaching" (p. 17).

Teacher-based approaches assume that "changing teachers is a first step towards changing learners" (Benson, 2011a, p. 196) and that "teachers' professional skills and commitment to the idea of autonomy will be a crucial factor in the effectiveness of any other approach to fostering learner autonomy" (p. 196). Moreover, it is likely that teachers will be more effective in their profession if they could experience strategies for LA as students, reflect on these strategies they applied in their learning as teachers and experiment with them in their teaching practice (Little, 1995).

2.1.8 Summary

Although, as was shown in the previous sections, the definitions of LA differ and LA can be approached from different aspects, it is agreed that the reasons for promoting LA are manifold. Learner involvement in decisions about different aspects of learning makes learning more purposeful, increases motivation (Cotterall, 1995a, 1995b; Dam, 1995; Dickinson, 1995; Little, 2007; Smith, 2008), and helps students become critically conscious members of society (Benson, 2008). However, as learners need to be able to act independently in various situations outside the classroom, where they do not have access to teachers and institutional support (Cotterall, 1995; Palfreyman, 2003), all the approaches welcome to different extent the presence of the teachers to advise and train learners to become more self-directed in their learning. The next section will provide insights into teachers' roles in fostering LA and will be followed by a discussion on motivation in classroom settings.

2.2 Teachers' roles in fostering learner autonomy

Although different approaches of LA welcome teacher assistance to various extents (see section 2.1.7) as Benson (2008), Cotterall (1995), Édes (2007), Little (1990) and Oxford (2003) put it, the role of the teacher is central to the development of LA. It has also been agreed (Benson, 1997; Dam, 2008; Little, 1991; Nunan, 1997; Voller, 1997) that the main role of the teachers in an autonomy-supportive classroom is different from their role in traditional educational settings. Teachers are expected to act as counsellors or facilitators in a classroom where learners are supported to become actively involved in every stage of their learning process.

Within the framework of the resource-based and technology-based approaches teachers are seen as advisors who offer possibilities, encourage their learners to use self-access centres, provide learners with strategies supporting the process of autonomous learning, help their students overcome the difficulties in using technology-based resources and serve as a compass in orientation among the huge amount of resources (Arikan & Bakla, 2011; Luzón & Ruiz-Madrid, 2008; Tassinari, 2012).

Cotterall (2000) stated that teachers should raise their learners' awareness about the key issues related to curriculum design, while Reinders and Balçikanli (2011) suggested that teachers should adapt and shape learning materials to meet their learners' needs. Nunan (1997) claimed that teachers need to encourage their learners to become autonomous, adding that this best takes place in the language classroom. While creating a classroom learning environment that is supportive of LA, teachers may address students' previous experiences to make them conscious about the benefits of independence in their learning. Nunan (1996) distinguished between (1) "institution-centred" classrooms, where "it is the institution or the teacher who makes all the

decisions about what will be taught and when it will be taught. These decisions will be made with little or no reference to the actual or potential communicative needs of the learners" (p. 21) and (2) "autonomy-focused" classrooms. He suggested that in an autonomy-supportive learning environment "the selection and sequencing of content will be made with reference to the sorts of uses to which the learner will want to put the language outside of the classroom, and learners themselves will be involved in the selection, modification and adaptation of both content and process" (p. 21). In such a classroom "the teacher will introduce a range of learning activities and tasks. There will also be an attempt to identify the learning style preferences of the learner, and use these as the starting point in making methodological selections" (p. 22). It is also suggested that concerning "assessment and evaluation, classrooms which have the development of autonomy as a goal will place great store on training learners in techniques of self-assessment, ongoing monitoring, self-evaluation and reflection" (p. 22).

As argued in Camilleri (1999), Ho and Crookall (1995), the main roles of a teacher should be more of a manager, a resource person and a counsellor. Joshi (2011) and Yang (1998) found that teachers played an important role in helping learners understand and use learning strategies to increase their independence in learning. Miller and Ng (1996) suggested that teachers' assistance was required to train learners to be able to assess their peers accurately and to accept feedback from their peers. Reeve (2006) found that learners' engagement in autonomous learning depends "on the supportive quality of classroom conditions in which their learning take place" (p. 225) and that teachers have an essential role in creating an autonomy-supportive, motivating atmosphere in the classroom. Reeve claimed that teachers can be high or low in autonomy support, and

that LA supportive teachers were likely to shape their classroom practices to meet learners' needs and provided them with rationales for the requested activities. Reeve also identified "instructional behaviours" (p. 231) to foster LA. For instance, teachers high in autonomy support were more open for their students' ideas and allowed students to alter the learning materials more often; they also asked about students' wishes, answered to student-generated questions, took into account their learners' emotional state and by structuring the learning environment (p. 234), teachers encouraged their learners to take control of their learning.

Voller (1997) claimed that teachers' main role is to facilitate learning and associated this role with "personal qualities (being caring, supportive, patient, tolerant, empathic, open, and non-judgmental), a capacity for motivating learners, and an ability to raise learners' awareness" (p. 102), as well as with technical support "to plan and carry out their independent language learning, objective setting, helping learners evaluate their learning, and helping them to acquire the skills and knowledge needed to implement the above" (p. 102). Teachers were seen as counsellors and as resources for students' learning. However, as Sheerin (1997) pointed out when discussing teachers' roles as counsellors, one should be aware of the "paradox of independent learning that almost all learners need to be prepared and supported on the path towards greater autonomy by teachers" (p. 63) and suggested that teachers should find the balance between too much and too little advising.

In the learner-based approach teachers were expected to make choices in order to devote class time to meet students' instant language needs (Nunan, 1988), to provide metacognitive knowledge and to enhance learners' motivation (Benson, 2001, 2013; Ng & Confessore, 2010; Wenden, 1991). On the other hand, as highlighted by Piniel (2004),

teachers' unclear instructions and explanations, unfair assessment, negative classroom atmosphere, as well as unpredictable classroom management lead to students' demotivation in the long run. The role of the teacher in shaping students' motivation was also seen essential by Nikolov (2001), who found that classroom experience, teaching and evaluation methods were accountable for learners' motivation and success in language learning in the long run.

LA was seen strongly related to proficiency, as Dam (1995) stated that autonomy was restricted by what the learners could do in the target language. Therefore he suggested that in order to foster LA, teachers should (1) use the target language as means of classroom communication and encourage their learners to do the same, (2) involve their learners in a search for learning activities, which are to be processed in a cooperative manner in the target language, (3) help learners to set their own goals and choose their own learning materials, (4) monitor them through collaborative work, (5) ask learners to keep a written record of their learning including plans of projects, lists of vocabulary or the texts they produced; and finally, (6) teachers should involve learners in regular evaluation of their progress.

Dam (2008) emphasised that teachers should foster LA by making learners aware of the challenges they could meet during planning their learning, by providing them with guidelines and supporting them in becoming capable of carrying out their plans. Moreover, teachers should also evaluate their learners' progress during and after the learning process, they should reduce their own talking time; and finally, they should be prepared to give gradually over the responsibility for planning, controlling and assessing their learning.

In order to be successful in implementing and supporting LA teachers should be conscious about their roles and they need to be prepared to accept them, and they should be also willing to negotiate with their students (Little, 1995). Little (2009a) claimed that in order to facilitate autonomy in second language learning, teachers have to encourage students for a more intensive language use an "give learners access to a full range of discourse roles, initiating, as well as responding" (p. 153). He views metalinguistic function part of language proficiency claiming that "all reflective processes should be carried out in the target language" (p. 153).

However, as Yildirim (2008) pointed out, teachers' roles in LA development could be influenced by teachers' negative attitudes towards autonomy originating from their own learning experiences. Teachers' roles and, more specifically, their teaching and communicative styles influence learners' motivation, which has an impact on autonomous behaviours.

2.3 Motivation

Researchers (see for example Benson & Voller, 1997; Csizér & Kormos, 2012; Dam, 1995; Dickinson, 1995; Little, 1995; Noels, 2000; Ushioda, 2011) agree that motivation and autonomy interact in learner behaviours and that motivation is crucial in autonomous language learning. In this chapter I will present the main theoretical issues concerning motivation as a psychological concept, and then I will provide a critical overview of some relevant approaches to motivation in the field of L2 learning. This will be followed by a discussion on previous research focusing on motivation in the classroom. The final section of this chapter will discuss the relationship between different aspects of motivation and LA. As the present dissertation focuses on LA, I do not intend to provide

an exhaustive critical analysis of issues concerning motivation, however, as it is a closely related concept I find it important to highlight aspects of motivation relevant within the framework of my research.

2.3.1 Motivation in psychology

Given the complex nature of human behaviour, the interest in understanding the guiding force of people's actions has been constantly increasing. Although psychologists and educationalists investigate the concept of motivation from different aspects, they agree that the main characteristics of motivation involve people's decision to do something, endurance in maintaining the activity and the effort people are ready to put into the chosen activity (Bandura, 1991; Dörnyei, 2001a).

The most influential theories in psychology concerning motivation are (1) expectancy-value theory, (2) goal-setting and (3) self-determination theory. According to expectancy-value theory, engagement in an activity depends on people's expectation that they are able to succeed and on the value they associate with the success of the task completion. Williams and Burden (1999) explained expectancy within the constructivist framework, which assumes that absolute knowledge does not exist, since individuals view things in different ways and therefore, they construct meaning individually. Students' self-conceptions and their attitudes towards learning are essential in the process of learning as they influence the way in which learners construct knowledge. The expectancy component of the framework is also determined by belief systems, as they help individuals to make sense of and to adapt to different situations (Abelson, 1979). Beliefs are known to influence people's behaviour as they have an important role in defining tasks (Bandura, 1986), moreover, they have an effect on how

people react in a new environment (White, 1999). Eccles and Wigfield (1995) emphasised the value component of the theory claiming that personal interest, importance of success, external values and costs should be considered along with the reasons why individuals engage in particular activities, as these factors were seen to influence the level of people's motivation.

The goal setting theory assumes that the specificity and difficulty of goals that people set for themselves have a deep impact on their commitment (Locke & Latham, 1990). People who set difficult goals are more focused on the given task and they employ better strategies; therefore, they are more successful in completing the task. Achievement goals were classified into (1) mastery and (2) performance orientation (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996), where mastery orientation refers to students' inquiry of learning goals, their effort to improve their skills and competences. This orientation focuses on the intrinsic value of the learning content, whereas performance orientation involves setting extrinsic goals such as grades, rewards or appraisal from teachers, parents and peers. In the Hungarian context, Józsa (2002) found that mastery motivation was characteristic in the early years and it decreased by the learners' age of 16, as it was influenced by external rewards such as grades or appraisal. Oxford and Shearin (1994) agreed that goal setting and performance are related concepts; however, while goal setting refers to individual differences in learning styles, performance is related to language learning attitudes. Oxford and Shearin (1994) found that learners set goals based on the amount of work the achievement of these goals involved, and their decision influenced the intensity of their motivation. Furthermore, they also emphasised the importance of feedback in maintaining learners' motivation.

The goal-setting theory appears to be related with two further cognitive factors of motivation, such as learned helplessness and self-efficacy theory. These terms refer to students' beliefs about their capabilities to complete a particular task by employing their previous knowledge (Schunk, 1989; Williams & Burden, 1997). Learned helplessness is associated with the pessimistic view about learners' abilities in succeeding in task completion. Similarly to low self-efficacy, learned helplessness could lead to task abandonment. High self-efficacy, on the other hand, involves higher effort. Individuals with high self-efficacy tend to set more challenging goals, which are likely to result in higher achievement (Cotterall, 1999; Locke & Latham, 1990). Another concept related to self-perception, self-confidence proved to be an important motivational factor in FL learning contexts. Similarly to self-efficacy, self-confidence is also concerned with learners' beliefs about their abilities, but while self-efficacy theory is task-focused, self-confidence is a more general construct (Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels, 1994).

Self-determination theory gave rise to investigations regarding the dichotomy of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Deci and Ryan (1985) suggested that the intrinsic and extrinsic motives reflect the individual's motivational orientation, where intrinsic orientation was understood as an inner force to engage in an activity for itself. Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand was associated with instrumental reasons and external rewards. They proposed that motivational levels depended on the intensity of the person's self-determination. Vallerand (1997) identified further subtypes of intrinsic motivation, such as (1) knowledge, which refers to the joy that originates from satisfying people's curiosity; (2) accomplishment associated with sense of achievement for completing a difficult task; and (3) stimulation, which refers to the cases when individuals engage in an activity to experience the enjoyment it causes. This subtype of

intrinsic motivation was defined by Csikszentmihalyi (1991) as "flow", or optimal experience. The theories of motivation discussed in this section have had a strong influence on educational research, and have provided basis for exploring language learning motivation.

2.3.2 Motivation in language learning

As motivation in second language acquisition and FL learning appears to be a particularly complex phenomenon, research on language learning motivation tends to utilise results of research on motivation in mainstream psychology. Although the amount of research on motivation in L2 learning suggests an increased interest in the concept, definitions provided by researchers show disagreement, which Dörnyei (1994) explained by the complex nature of the construct.

Research on language learning motivation was influenced by Gardner's (1985) seminal work which emphasised the importance of the social aspect of motivation. His model elaborated on the construct of (1) the integrative motive, (2) the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery, and (3) the socio-educational model. Originating from a bilingual context in Canada, proposed that motivation in language learning is influenced by other variables of individual differences, such as intelligence, language aptitude, language learning strategies, attitudes, and language anxiety. He emphasised the concept of the integrative motive which he defined as "the tripartite division of integrativeness, attitudes toward the learning situation and motivation" (p. 153). By integrativeness he meant interest and willingness to interact with members of the other group.

Gardner's (1985) model has been revised and extended, resulting in a proliferation of the literature regarding language learning motivation. Norton (2000), for example recast language learning motivation as investment, which she viewed as commitment to learning a language related to learners' social identities, a "socially and historically constructed relationship of learners' to the target language, and their often ambivalent desire to learn and practice it" (p. 10). In her view, learners invest in the target language and expect good return on their efforts. The notion of integrative orientation has been extended with a range of affective variables and its importance was recognised in contexts outside Canada (Dörnyei, 1990). With the growing role of English as the *lingua franca* and the intention for integration into an international community lead to the revision of the construct of integrativeness (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2002).

As a recent attempt to understand motivation from the perspective of the self, Dörnyei (2005) developed his *L2 Motivational Self System*. His model consists of three factors: (1) the ideal L2 self, which refers to the idealised image, that individuals have about themselves, (2) the ought-to L2 self, which defines what people ought to do to fulfil what they perceive that it is expected from them by their teachers, parents and peers, or to avoid failure; and finally, (3) the L2 learning experience referring to situation-specific motives related to learning environment and experience. Within this model Dörnyei (2005) integrated the major issues raised in the field of language learning motivation research, and as such, his model explains factors and processes which influence motivation in the age of the globalised world.

The complex nature of motivation resulted in applying psychological theories in language learning motivation research, which lead to an increased interest in investigating the field by revising models discussed in earlier research and proposing

new frameworks to reach a better understanding of the concept of motivation and how it works over time. In the next section I will present models of motivation which intended to explain the motivational processes in the language classroom.

2.3.3 Models of motivation in the language classroom

Research has shown that language learning classroom settings strongly influence language learning motivational processes and several models have been proposed to comprehend them. In this section I will present Dörnyei's (1994) three-level motivational model and Dörnyei and Ottó's (1998) process model.

Dörnyei (1994) integrated the range of existing motivational factors into a three-level model. These three levels relate to the social, the personal and the educational aspect of language learning, respectively. The language level (1) refers to general motives that point towards basic learning goals and it is divided into an integrative and an instrumental subcategory, borrowed from Gardner (1985), where the integrative subsystem involves affective variables, while instrumental category is related to the usefulness of engagement in language learning concerning future career prospects. The learner level (2) is defined by permanent personal characteristics such as students' need for achievement and self-confidence. Finally, the learning situation (3) level comprises language learning anxiety, self-perceived abilities and acknowledgements of past performances concerning language learning and use. The level of learning situation was further divided into three subsections covering the components of the learning environment: (1) the course, (2) the teacher and (3) the peer group (see Table 2).

Table 2.

Dörnyei's (1994, p. 280) model of FL motivation

Language level	Integrative motivational subsystem
	Instrumental motivational subsystem
Learner level	Need for achievement
	Self-confidence
	▪ language use anxiety
	▪ perceived L2 competence
	▪ causal attributions
	▪ self-efficacy
Learning situation level	
Course-specific motivational components	Interest
	Relevance
	Expectancy
	Satisfaction
Teacher-specific motivational components	Affiliate drive
	Authority type
	Direct socialisation of motivation
	▪ modelling
	▪ task presentation
	▪ feedback
Group-specific motivational components	Goal-orientedness
	Norm and reward system
	Group cohesion
	Classroom goal structure

The course-specific motivational factor is related to "the syllabus and the teaching materials, the teaching methods and the learning tasks" (Dörnyei, 1994, p. 277) and involves the concepts of interest, relevance, expectancy, and satisfaction. Here interest is associated with intrinsic motivation, students' curiosity and desire to understand their environment, while relevance coincides with instrumentality and refers to the extent to which students feel that instruction meets their personal learning

needs. Expectancy is related to likeliness of success, self-confidence and self-efficacy, as well as the effort required to succeed. Satisfaction is concerned with the learning outcome, and it represents the combination of extrinsic reward with intrinsic reward.

The teacher-specific motivational component includes motives like affiliate drive, authority type and direct socialisation of student motivation. Affiliate drive refers to students' intention to do well in school to please the teacher, authority expresses the extent to which teachers support autonomous behaviour to encourage students' self-determination and intrinsic motivation. Finally, socialisation of motivation refers to teachers' role "in direct and systematic socialization of student motivation" (p. 278) by serving as a model, presenting tasks and providing them with strategies to raise their metacognitive awareness and by giving clear and appropriate feedback.

The group-specific motivational component is associated with group dynamics and interrelationships within the group comprising four relevant aspects: goal-orientedness, norm and reward system, group cohesion and classroom goal structure. Within this framework goal-orientedness shows "the extent to which the group is attuned to pursuing its goal" (p. 278), in this context, L2 learning. The group's norm and reward system are concerned with extrinsic motives as grades or other external rewards accepted as common values by the individuals in the group. Group cohesion reveals the relationship of group members and the extent to which they contribute to group success. The final element of the group-specific motivational component, classroom goal structure can show competitive, co-operative or individualistic aspects of students' motivation.

The recognition that learning happens through social interaction (Vygotsky, 1978) shifted the focus of motivation research towards investigating language learners'

motivation in classroom settings. It also seemed necessary to expand the previously existing static models with a process-oriented view. Dörnyei and Ottó (1998) synthetized several approaches to explain motivational influences in FL in their comprehensive model; it was further elaborated in Dörnyei (2001b). The process-oriented model views motivation from a temporal aspect and distinguishes three stages in the process of motivation: (1) the preactional stage (2), the actional stage, and (3) the postactional stage.

Each phase is divided into two further subsections: motivational functions and motivational influences, where motivational functions refer to motivational behaviour, while motivational influences "include all the energy sources and motivational forces that underlie and fuel the behavioural process" (Dörnyei & Ottó, p. 48). The (1) preactional stage consists of three subphases: goal setting, intention formation and initiation of action. The motivational influences in this phase include subjective values, expectancy of success, environmental stimuli, target language- and community-related attitudes, students' beliefs about language learning, and urgency i.e. external demands. In the (2) actional stage, the focus shifts from the commitment generated in the preactional phase to the implementation of action. This phase is responsible for maintaining motivation during the learning process. Motivational influences here involve the quality of learning experience, the perceived progress, appraisals of the immediate learning environment, the feeling of autonomy, and the use of self-regulatory strategies. The (3) post-actional stage refers to learners' evaluation of the learning process in retrospect when the learning goal has been attained. This reflective stage will determine individuals' self-image as language learners as well as their

decisions concerning future actions. The motivational influences in this phase are self-concept beliefs and the effect of feedback.

While Dörnyei (1994) made L2 motivation research more education-friendly by grouping the motivational factors at three different levels, Dörnyei and Ottó (1998) designed a more elaborate model taking into account the instable nature of motivation. They found that all the motivational variables discussed in the literature are relevant, although they take place in different stages in the process of language learning.

Dörnyei (2005) in agreement with Ushioda (1996) claimed that motivation fluctuates between the ups and downs of effort and commitment during the learning process and besides adding the time dimension argued that motivation is impacted by a range of internal and external factors, which may extend over years. Heitzmann (2008) revealed that the changes in students' motivational behaviour indicated a trend corresponding to annual cycles. She found that at an early stage students' motivation was influenced by L2-related experiences and instrumental motives, which were later complemented by mastery motives which increased their intrinsic motivation. Due to the above discussed ideas, motivation is now considered a dynamic concept, where time is understood to be a key element (Dörnyei, 2005; Heitzmann, 2008; Ushioda, 1996).

2.3.4 Motivation in the classroom

Debates on the theories of motivation resulted in a shift towards the way attitudes and motivation are shaped, and influenced by teachers, peers and classroom atmosphere in particular learning environments. In this section I will discuss recent research concerning motivation in the classroom.

In her longitudinal study on young language learners Nikolov (1995) found that learning situation, teachers, intrinsically motivating activities and learning materials are main motivating factors in language learning. The acquired knowledge as a goal gradually takes over extrinsic motives as instrumental motives appear over the years, while integrative orientation was not found to play an important role in her research. However, in a later study (Nikolov, 2003) investigating language learners' attitudes and motivation on a representative sample of students in years 6 and 10 she concluded that instrumental motives were the strongest in the process of language learning as most learners wished to document their knowledge, i.e. take a language exam. Intrinsic and integrative motives were also identified as students' attitudes towards the target language and target language community and culture were positive. Although the relationship between age and language learning motivation raised researchers' interest, findings are inconclusive. Nikolov (1999) claimed that despite the fact that beginner young learners' attitudes towards language learning were more positive than those of older language learners at beginner level, the initial enthusiasm faded away over the years. On the other hand, Mihaljević Djigunović (1995) found that positive attitudes remain present even after a long period. She (2009) argued that the controversial results were due to the difference in research methods and in learning conditions, such as group size, intensity of teaching, teachers' qualifications. However, Mihaljević Djigunović (2009) also claimed that the status of the language can override the learning environment.

Investigating learners' attitudes towards different instructional activities Nikolov (1999a) revealed that that the main function of motivation is to evoke and maintain learners' commitment in the activity. She found that young learners became intrinsically

motivated by playful, but cognitively challenging tasks. Dörnyei (2002) argued for the dynamic nature of task motivation as he claimed that learners' engagement in specific tasks is affected by peers influencing each other's judgements of the task. In another study Nikolov (2003b) found a discrepancy between the frequency of tasks and students' attitudes towards these tasks. Students reported to prefer pair and group work activities to individual or teacher centred classroom tasks, which did not seem to be taken into account by their teachers as these task types were the least frequent in the context of the research.

Research showed that language classroom dynamics and classroom climate are also important motivational factors (Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels, 1994; Kormos & Lukóczki, 2004). Moreover, Dörnyei and Malderez (1997) suggested that the atmosphere of the whole school has an impact on teachers' and students' motivation. Kormos and Lukóczky (2004) concluded that negative classroom atmosphere could result in demotivation. They found that lack of group norms and discipline, peers' attitude, and the teacher's incoherent explanation might lead to decrease in motivation. Williams and Burden (1999) stated that achievement-oriented schools push learners to set performance goals rather than learning goals. Students socialised in such schools base their self-perceptions on external rewards as marks and exam results, which do not support their ability to become effective autonomous learners.

2.3.5 Motivation and learner autonomy
In autonomy research it has been acknowledged that motivation is essential in autonomous learning (Benson, 2007) and researchers increasingly see motivation and autonomy as interrelated concepts. Ushioda (1996), drawing on self-determination

theory, emphasised the importance of self-motivation. She viewed intrinsic motivation

embedded in the Vygotskian framework, thus highlighting the role of the social context

(Ushioda, 2006; 2011). She also pointed out the differences between the approaches

taken to understand the relationship between motivation and autonomy:

> …motivation theory has broadly developed in a positivist cognitive paradigm, which is characterised by psychometric measurement and the development of abstract computational models of mental processes and learning outcomes and behaviours. This is true for both mainstream motivational psychology as well as the specific field of language learning motivation research. Autonomy theory, on the other hand, originated in the very different domain of political and moral philosophy; and autonomy theory in language education has broadly developed in a constructivist paradigm, grounded in specific contexts of practice and the needs and concerns of particular learners.
> (Ushioda, 2011, p. 11)

Ushioda (2006) related the autonomy of the learner to Norton's (2000) notion of

motivation as "investment"; she argued that the "politicised notion of autonomy is

relevant to our understanding of the motivation concepts (…) because it casts the

spotlight, and thereby the responsibility, not just on the individual L2 learner/user, but

on society at large" (p. 156). Autonomous learners are seen motivated and willing to be

actively involved in the process of learning; and are as well as able to apply their

knowledge outside the classroom context (Dam, 1995; Little 1995). Noels, Pelletier,

Clément and Vallerand (2000) suggested that LA influences motivation, claiming that

autonomous learners find pleasure and feel more competent in learning, which is in line

with Csizér and Kormos (2012), Deci and Ryan (1985) and Vallerand (1997), who

emphasise the link between intrinsic motivation, self-direction and autonomy.

Moreover, Dörnyei and Csizér (1998) identified LA as one of the "ten commandments"

for motivating language learners.

On the other hand, Spratt, Humphreys and Chan (2002) suggested a reverse direction between motivation and autonomy, claiming that "motivation is a key factor that influences the extent to which learners are ready to learn autonomously, and that teachers might therefore endeavour to ensure motivation before they train students to become autonomous" (p. 245). Their findings were supported by Heitzmann (2008), who carried out research in a Hungarian secondary school context and found that intrinsic motivation lead to LA.

Paiva (2011) viewed identity, motivation and autonomy as elements of the complex dynamic system of SLA, where any change in an element would affect all the other parts of the system and would cause different results in the learning process. Murphy (2011) investigated the motivational impact of competence, feedback on performance, and autonomy. She found that learners' ideal L2-self had an important role in sustaining motivation; however, their multiple identities and different language learning contexts influenced the extent to which they behaved autonomously. Lamb (2011) also pointed out the importance of the learning context and he concluded that learners' ought-to L2 selves had weaker motivational power without a prevalent link with LA, as predicted in Dörnyei (2009).

This section provided an overview on the main theoretical issues concerning motivation as a psychological concept and a summary of approaches to motivation in the field of L2 learning. It also looked into previous research on motivation in the classroom and discussed the attempts at exploring the relationship between autonomy and different aspects of motivation. The next section will be devoted to the discussion of teachers' and learners' beliefs about LA, the roles of beliefs, and the relationship

between perceptions of LA, teachers' practices to develop their learners' autonomy and language learners' autonomous behaviours.

2.4. Beliefs

In this section I will present the main theoretical issues regarding beliefs, and then I will provide an overview of teachers' beliefs in the field of L2 learning. This will be followed by a discussion on previous research focusing on teachers' beliefs about LA, as well as on mismatches between teachers' beliefs and their classroom practices. The final part of this section will outline the nature of students' beliefs and the relationship between students' and teachers' beliefs.

Research found that beliefs have an important role in several aspects of life as they help individuals make sense of the world and influence the way in which new information is internalised (Borg, 2003, 2006; Pajares, 1992; Woods, 1996). The concept of beliefs led to confusion concerning the distinction between beliefs and knowledge. Pajares called it "a messy construct" (1992), and stated that while beliefs are "based on evaluation and judgment; knowledge is based on objective fact" (Pajares, 1992, p. 313). Borg (2001) claimed that the distinction between knowledge and beliefs is blurry and that the key difference between these two concepts lay in "the truth element": she viewed beliefs as "a mental state" which is held and "is accepted as true by the individual holding it, although the individual may recognise that alternative beliefs may be held by others" (p. 186), whereas "knowledge must actually be true in some external sense" (p. 186). In agreement with the previous, Nespor, (1987) noted that beliefs are more subjective than knowledge and individuals' beliefs influence the way their knowledge is used. He identified four characteristics of beliefs: "existential presumption, alternativity,

affective and evaluative loading, and episodic structure" (p. 318). This implies that beliefs may involve assumptions about the existence of entities, and have an influence on defining goals. Also, they rely more heavily on personal preferences, "feelings, moods, subjective evaluations" (p. 319) than knowledge, and are organised in episodic memory which is responsible for storing personal experiences. In his study, Pajares (1992) added that beliefs are based on judgments and inferences of people's statements, intentions and actions. He viewed beliefs, attitudes and values as interrelated concepts: when beliefs and knowledge are organised around a phenomenon, they are understood as attitudes; whereas when beliefs are used for evaluative or judgmental purposes they are described as values which are influential in perceiving knowledge as feasible or essential.

Significant shift in focus has occurred in research on beliefs in the last three decades (Barcelos & Kalaja, 2011). Research conducted in the 80s aimed at understanding types of teachers' and students' beliefs and the kind of the impact they had on different factors related to the process of learning; therefore viewed beliefs as solid, isolated phenomena approached in the cognitive dimension. However, emphasis has shifted recently to the contextual approach which acknowledges beliefs as a dynamic and complex construct. As beliefs cannot be directly observed but must be inferred (Borg, 2001; 2003, 2006; Bullock, 2011; Pajares, 1992), they are difficult to investigate because individuals are often reluctant to unveil their beliefs (Williams & Burden, 1997). Moreover, beliefs are often contradictory (Pajares, 1992), may change over time and they are inconsistent in the sense that beliefs and behaviours do not always correspond due to various reasons, such as previous experiences, contextual factors and situational constraints (Borg, 2001; 2006). To sum up, "a belief is a

proposition which may be consciously or unconsciously held, is evaluative in the sense

that it is accepted as true by individuals, and is therefore imbued with emotive

commitment; further, it serves as a guide to thought and behaviour" (Borg, 2001, p.

186).

2.4.1 Teachers' beliefs

Teacher cognition is an umbrella term for "the unobservable cognitive dimension of

teaching – what teachers know, believe, and think" (Borg, 2003, p. 81). As all teachers

hold beliefs about their profession and about themselves, as professionals, the term

teachers' beliefs is usually understood as educational beliefs (Pajares, 1992) or "beliefs

of relevance to an individual's teaching" (Borg, 2001, p. 187). Since the 1990s teachers

and their perceptions about language learning have attracted increasing attention,

resulting in a proliferation of terms: *beliefs, cognition, knowledge, perception,*

conceptions, theories, thinking, which may be justified by the complex nature of the

phenomena (Borg, 2006). Bullock (2010) stated that this trend had stemmed from

acknowledging that in order to understand teaching, it is essential to comprehend what

language teachers believe, know, and do.

In her overview of the ideas concerning teachers' beliefs, Johnson (2006) noted

that teachers' professional development and their perceptions about teaching had been

grounded in the positivistic paradigm, as teachers were expected to acknowledge the

content they were supposed to teach, then observe teaching practices, then finally gain

pedagogical expertise during their years of teaching. However, the reflective movement

(Schön, 1983) brought a turn in understanding teachers' work and shed light on the

complexity of teachers' cognition which was seen inseparable from their previous

experiences and social contexts. Reflective thinking is considered a key concept in professional development, as it brings unconscious beliefs to the level of awareness. Most definitions of reflective thinking are rooted in Dewey's (1938) inquiry, who was one of the first to consider reflection as an effective tool for professional development in teaching. Dewey, along with Schön (1983), claimed that critical reflection is teachers' most important quality and that it has stronger influence on the quality of instruction than the teaching techniques used. For teachers, reflection involves observation and critical thinking about teaching experiences occurring in the classroom, it helps them gain a deeper understanding of the teaching and learning process, influencing their decisions during teaching (Schön, 1987). Pacheco (2005) addressed the need to apply reflective practice in the classroom, as it requires practitioners to slow down to notice and analyse what they are doing, thus it helps teachers reveal mismatches between theory and practice. Farrell (2011) reported on implementing reflection to raise awareness about teachers' professional role identities. Understanding professional role identities is an important aspect of supporting experienced language teachers' professional development. As role identities are central to beliefs, values and practices, opportunities must be made for teachers to become more aware of their role identity and this seemed to be best encouraged through reflective practice.

Teaching has been recognised to require both thinking and action within the framework of Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, implying that the positivist view was no longer tenable in the research of second and FL education. In line with Vygotsky, Ennis (1994) claimed that beliefs are connected to teachers' social environment and may develop as a response to political or economic possibilities and constraints within the teaching context. Although researchers do not have direct information about how

beliefs change, some factors that affect teachers' beliefs were identified. For example, Bandura's (1986) theory of triadic reciprocity revealed the interrelatedness of beliefs, behaviours, and environment claiming that teachers' beliefs influence their behaviour and environment, and that teachers' behaviour and environment affect their beliefs. Apart from the importance of the social context as influencing factor Ernest's (1989) mentioned the teachers' level of consciousness about their own beliefs. Social context was viewed to include the parents', students', colleagues' and superiors' expectations, and the whole educational system, all these factors to be negotiated by teachers. However, it occurred that teachers in the same institutions utilised similar classroom practices, even though they held different beliefs. Teachers' level of awareness about their own beliefs was also found to have an impact on their instructional practices. Ernest (1989) viewed these two factors to influence teachers' beliefs and their teaching either negatively or positively.

Another finding surfacing from the literature on teacher cognition is that change in knowledge is seen as the reframing of earlier knowledge, as Borg (2003) puts it, relabeling. Figure 2 (Borg, 2003, p. 82) outlines conceptualization of teaching where teachers' cognition plays a central role in teachers' lives. It shows that teachers' cognition is influenced by all aspects of their work and also reveals the relationship among teachers' beliefs, teacher learning, classroom practice and contextual factors. The diagram also lists psychological constructs used to refer to as teacher cognition.

There seems to be strong interrelatedness between cognition and behaviour. Major areas of research in this field are pre-service, in-service and novice teachers' cognition in general, without attention to a specific curricular area and language teachers' perceptions in relation to particular fields like grammar, reading, writing and

error correction. Borg (2006, 2011) claimed that transfer of perceptions from teacher education to classroom practice did not happen in a smooth way, but it was altered by various external factors, such as school and classroom management, professional relationship with colleagues, which may outweigh principles promoted during pre-service teacher education.

Figure 2. Teacher cognition, schooling, professional education and classroom practice (Borg, 2003. p. 82)

Extensive experience of classrooms which defines early cognitions and shapes teachers' perceptionsof initial training.

May effect existing cognitions although especially when unacknowledged, these may limit its impact.

Schooling → **Professional Coursework**

Beliefs, knowledge, theories, attitudes, images, assumptions, methaphors, conceptions, perspectives.

TEACHER COGNITION

About teaching, teachers, learning, students, subject matter, curricula, materials, instructional activities, self.

Contextual Factors → **Classroom Practice including practice teaching**

Influence practice either by modifying cognitions or else directly, in which case incongruence between cognition and practice may result.

Defined by the interaction of cognitions and contextual factors. In turn, classroom experience influences cognitions unconsciously and/or through

Similarly, Polat (2010) also found significant differences between pre-service and in-service teachers' beliefs, which could be explained with the suggestion that teachers' beliefs are shaped through their teaching career by observations, as well as positive or negative experiences (Ennis, 1994). Or, as Woods and Çakir's (2011) results made evident:

> …theoretical and non-personal teacher knowledge, as derived from the literature and teacher education courses, is highly valued and considered "correct" but, at the same time, is isolated from the teacher's experience. However, once it is connected to the more fine-grained texture of actual experience, the theoretical concept is deconstructed, personalised and reinterpreted.
> (Woods & Çakir, 2011, p. 388-389)

Two further notions with their acronyms were coined in the literature of teachers' beliefs: BAK stands for beliefs, attitudes and knowledge, to highlight that these are not separate concepts but they are understood to be parts of a complex system (Woods, 1996) or "points on a spectrum of meaning" (Borg, 2003, p. 96). On the other hand, the abbreviation PPK, borrowed from educational research, was introduced to cover the term *personal practical knowledge,* which implies the knowledge of self, content knowledge, instruction and context (Golombek, 1998). Although researchers found that identifying the components of teacher knowledge is useful when an analysis is carried out, Golombek (1998) pointed out that most practicing teachers draw on their knowledge in rather holistic manner and believe that the elements of the knowledge of students, pedagogical knowledge and content knowledge are linked together in complex ways.

Researchers (Pajares, 1992; Williams & Burden, 1997) pointed out that teachers' deep-rooted beliefs which may have never been articulated about how language is

learnt influence their decisions in the classroom more than a particular methodology they are expected to adopt. Richardson (2010), exploring conceptions on learning in higher education found that teachers who perceive learning as an interpretative and conscious process, led by personal interests to obtain harmony, were likely to be the most autonomous teachers. Although beliefs about teaching showed great differences across various disciplines (Richardson, 2010), teachers involved in the same subject areas in different teaching contexts had relatively similar perceptions of teaching.

Teachers' beliefs and their awareness of the local contexts should be taken into account also when innovations are to be introduced, as Hyland and Wong (2013) pointed it out, teachers are at the heart of the classroom processes and decide what will happen to initiatives, therefore they "mark the difference between successful transformations of practice and superficial adjustments to the status quo" (p. 10) and determine whether innovations result in change. Similarly, integrating technological innovations into teaching and learning challenges teachers' established values and it is closely related to teachers' beliefs, as Wong (2013) worded it, "when IT fits into teachers' frameworks of beliefs and practices, the integration is much more effective" (p.260).

2.4.2 Teachers' beliefs about LA

Little is known about what LA means to language teachers in various cultural and educational contexts (Borg & Al-Busaidi, 2011, 2012). As it is widely assumed that teachers play a central role in the promotion of LA, examining their beliefs in this area is an important gap to fill. Benson (2008), Joshi (2011) and Martinez (2008) noted that misconceptions identified by Little (1991) persisted in how teachers viewed LA:

autonomy was perceived as synonymous with self-instruction, and teacher intervention was not something to be desired. Palfreyman (2003) acknowledged the gap existing between theoretical discussions of LA and teachers' beliefs about the concept, and he noted that "while it is useful to distinguish the different perspectives mentioned above […] in real educational settings such perspectives are not black and white alternatives" (p.4). Teachers should reflect on their perception of teaching and LA, otherwise they may constrain LA in the classroom "leading to a lack of authenticity in learning which can disconnect it from real life" (Lamb, 2008, p. 273). Whatever teachers perceive to be their role in the classroom, the key point in fostering LA lies in the teachers' clear "view and attitudes that underpin our view of autonomous language learning" (Voller, 1997, p. 112).

Camilleri (1999, 2007) pioneered in investigating teachers' views on LA, and she found that teachers were willing to develop their practice, and they supported the idea of incorporating LA in different areas of teaching; however, they were reluctant to involve students in methodological decisions, claiming that that institutional constraints made the promotion of LA less feasible. Teachers were positive about involving learners in activities where they decided about the position of the desks, assessing themselves or working out learning procedures, but they were reluctant to let students decide about the selection of learning material, or the time and place of the lessons. Chan's (2003) large-scale study conducted in a university context in Hong Kong supports Camilleri's findings about the responsibility for methodological decision. Chan investigated teachers' beliefs about LA by taking into consideration teachers' perceptions of their roles and of their students' abilities in decision making, as well as the teachers' and students' attitudes towards LA. Chan's respondents reported being aware of autonomy

as a desired goal of teaching and had positive attitudes towards their students' decision making concerning language learning. They also had "a well-defined view of their own role and responsibilities", although they "preferred the responsibilities for these activities to be mainly taken by themselves, rather than handed over to the students" (p. 49). This study concluded that in order to develop LA, support from the teacher was necessary.

Al-Shaqsi (2009) explored English teachers' beliefs about the characteristics of autonomous learners, and teachers' evaluation of their students' level of autonomy in Oman. In his study teachers defined LA in terms of learning independently, self-evaluation, taking responsibility and cooperating. Furthermore, they were positive about their learners' autonomous behaviour; however, the study did not reveal the extent to which teachers' optimistic views about LA were justified. Teachers' views about LA were also examined in a Turkish educational context where the focus was on exploring students' involvement in classroom management, assessment from the perspective of pre-service teachers. Balçıkanlı's (2010) results suggested that the student teachers were positively disposed towards LA, and similarly to the previous studies (Camilleri, 1999, 2007; Chan, 2003), participants were willing to involve learners in decisions about classroom activities. They showed a "clear view of learner autonomy and the involvement of students in the learning process" (Balcikanli, 2010, p. 98). Moreover, the same study found that "the student teachers would probably feel ready to pass onto their future students some responsibilities and choices" (p. 98), although they thought that involving students in the classroom management was less feasible. The study revealed some restricting factors in the development of LA: teacher-centred

approaches to teaching, traditional teaching methods, as well as the high level of teachers' authority in the process of teaching and learning.

Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012) administered a survey with 200 teachers to develop LA in Oman, and found that teachers held a wide range of beliefs concerning LA. Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012), along with Bullock (2011), Joshi (2011) and Yoshiyuki (2011) found that teachers had diverging views about the extent to which their learners were autonomous. Reinders and Lazaro (2011) highlighted that teachers felt that students did not understand the importance of autonomy, they lacked the skills and were reluctant to learn independently. In agreement with Reinders and Lazaro (2011), Nga (2014) found in a Vietnamese context that teachers were reluctant to shoulder responsibility and they also had negative views concerning their learners' abilities to become autonomous. Al-Asmari (2013) focused on teachers' notion of LA, their practices and prospects in a Saudi Arabian context. The results showed positive attitudes towards LA, but the teachers lacked proper training and experience in this field. In a diary study Reinders, Sakui and Akakura (2011) explored the experiences of novice language advisors who worked in university self-access centres. Advisors' comments revealed that the facilitation of LA required thorough preparation and training. Previous findings (Al-Asmari, 2013; Reinders et al., 2011) emphasised the importance of integrating the methodology for promoting LA in the curriculum of teacher training programmes.

As for self-assessment, research found that teachers were worried about implementing self-assessment, as they had doubts about learners' ability to assess their own proficiency accurately (Blanche & Merino, 1989). However, research revealed that training helped (Brantmeyer & Vanderplank, 2012; Council of Europe, 2001; Dragemark Oskarson, 2009), and accuracy increased when language was self-assessed with clear

descriptors which were connected to the learning context, and items of abstract nature proved to be less accurate than functional (can do) skills (Butler, 2010; Council of Europe, 2001; Harris, 1997). Teachers also felt challenged by the feasibility of self-assessment and expressed the need for it to be practical in terms of time and availability of resources (Harris, 1997).

Although previous studies helped understand the way teachers perceive autonomous learning and their roles in fostering LA, moreover, they revealed that teachers understood the concept of LA and had positive attitudes towards it, little is known about how autonomy is put into practice in the language classrooms. The extent to which teachers' and students' beliefs concerning LA correspond is also unclear. Understanding the way autonomy works in practice and the possible difficulties that may occur, could help teachers prepare for their roles as facilitators of autonomy. Their ability and willingness to deal with the emerging difficulties depends on their own beliefs concerning the learning process and given that cognition and practice are closely interrelated, understanding teachers' beliefs may give researchers and practitioners a clue about the driving force underlying their practices.

2.4.3 Relationships between teachers' beliefs and practices

Teachers' beliefs are seen inconsistent in the sense that beliefs and practices do not always correspond (Basturkmen, 2012; Borg, 2001, 2006; Ninisho, 2012). As Pajares (1992) stated, beliefs are unreliable guides to reality. It has also been proved that transfer of perceptions from teacher education to classroom practice is not swift or automatic (Borg, 2006, 2011; Lugossy, 2006, 2007). When it came to implementing ideas in practice, teachers did not rely on their knowledge acquired through formal education,

but rather on their own teaching theories and previous experiences as learners or as teachers. Even though finding a particular method or strategy, successful and motivating teachers tended to recycle direct instruction and form-focused activities, claiming that it saved time and complained about time constraints (Lugossy, 2006, 2007). This discrepancy was explored by Schön (1983,) who distinguished between (1) teachers' theories-in-action and (2) teachers' espoused theories. Theories-in-action stemmed from teachers' personal and professional biographies, as well as from their teaching and learning contexts and were slow to change (Johnson, 2006). Espoused theories were considered to be the externally imposed knowledge on the already existing belief systems. Breen, Hird, Milton, Oliver and Thwaite (2001) viewed teachers' theories and practices interrelated, as:

> The individual teacher appears to have a personal configuration of pedagogic principles that is realised, in selective ways, through a set of favoured practices. On the basis of background knowledge and experience and during further classroom experience, the influence of one upon the other is very likely to be interactive. For the teacher, the relationship between the two is seen as coherent in the sense that a particular principle entails certain practices- and vice versa. A single principle held by the individual teacher may be realised in action through several distinct practices. Conversely, a single practice may be an expression of more than one principle. (…) A group of language teachers of similar experience, working with ESL students in similar situation are likely to implement a shared principle through a diverse range of different practices. (Breen et al., 2001, pp. 495-496)

Therefore, it was suggested that "beneath individual diversity in action in the classroom and the personal dispositions that guide it, there appears to be a collective pedagogy wherein a widely adopted classroom practice is, from their perspective, an expression of a specific and largely distinctive set of principles" (Breen et al., 2001, p. 496). Kiss (2000) investigated the effects of deeply rooted beliefs regarding teacher learning, and suggested that teachers' practice frequently showed mismatches with their reported

beliefs about teaching and learning. She concluded that these inconsistencies were rooted in the discrepancy between knowledge received through formal instruction and beliefs about FL learning held unconsciously. In her case study, Feryok (2008) suggested that the reason for the mismatch between "fully developed practices" (p. 236) and stated beliefs may be due to reliance on familiar routines: "practices reflect the complex interplay of multiple cognitions from multiple sources acting as frames" (p. 236). She emphasised the importance of contextual factors, as they serve as frames for understanding the rationale behind teachers' practices.

Studies exploring tensions between teachers' beliefs and practices regarding grammar teaching (Borg, 2001; Borg & Burns, 2008; Borg & Phipps, 2009; Farrell & Lim, 2005) found that beliefs systems were not always reflected in classroom practices due to various, complicated reasons, including time factors, contextual issues or "teachers' reverence for traditional grammar instruction" (Farrell & Lim, 2005, p. 9). Borg and Burns (2008) found that teachers' approaches towards integrating grammar were "overwhelmingly experiential and practical" (p. 480) in nature, with little or no reference to theories of second language acquisition. The most influential beliefs were grounded in experience (Borg & Phipps, 2009). Research on stated beliefs about incidental focus on form and their implications in practice (Basturkmen, Loewen, & Ellis, 2004) revealed inconsistencies concerning the legitimacy of interrupting a communicative activity to focus on issues of form. Basturkmen et al. (2004) claimed that the reason for these mismatches could be that stated beliefs reflected technical knowledge, whereas "when confronted with contexts from the classroom, the teachers drew on their practical knowledge" (p. 267). Moreover, their results pointed towards a stronger relationship between beliefs and planned behaviours than that of incidental behaviours.

Exploring teachers' beliefs and practices concerning communicative language teaching (CLT), Ninisho (2012) found that teachers' beliefs about CLT alone did not lead to their use of CLT, but their practices were shaped by their teaching contexts, socio-educational factors, such as high-stakes exams and teaching policy. Lee (2009) researched mismatches between beliefs and practices connected to written feedback also identified pressure from exams and school policy as the main reasons for the mismatches, although "it is not certain whether these are real explanations for the mismatches or mere excuses that teachers use to justify their practices" (p. 19).

Moreover, large scale innovations in curriculum and pedagogy may not be perceived by teachers as changes because they either believe they have already incorporated it into their practice, or they continue relying on their traditional practices and rearticulate them in terms of the new. These reactions to innovation were labelled as "teacher resistance" by Freeman (2013), who proposed that changes should occur locally in order to lead to real reforms in pedagogy.

2.4.4 Students' beliefs

Since the mid-1980s interest in language learning beliefs, especially learners' beliefs as a variable of individual differences has increased. Although "it is difficult to conceive beliefs as an enduring, trait-like factor" (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 214), beliefs affect behaviour and have influence on learning outcomes. The importance of understanding students' beliefs was emphasised by Horwitz (1987), who stated that beliefs influence decision making and use of learning strategies, students' behaviour in the classroom, as well as the process of learning. Horwitz's (1988) questionnaire, the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) examined learners' beliefs in five domains: difficulties in FL

learning, language aptitude, the nature of language learning, learning strategies and motivation. In her study, Horwitz (1999) reviewing previous research which used BALLI to find correspondences and differences, found no significant evidence that beliefs vary by cultural groups, her results pointed to the possibility that age, proficiency and the learning context may be more closely related to beliefs than culture. Wenden (1987) also identified a relationship between students' beliefs about language learning and their choice of learning strategies.

Research conducted to explore the influence of different learning and cultural contexts on students' beliefs (Wenden, 1986; Horwitz, 1988) found that beliefs about language learning were general and were not influenced by the context of learning. Altan (2006) also researched the role of the context in learners' beliefs to reveal the way in which language learning beliefs were impacted by different target languages. Students, irrespective of their languages they learnt, held similar beliefs about language learning, which implies that students arrived at educational institutions with already existing preconceptions, which should be taken into account by teachers. However, these findings were contradicted by Rieger (2009), who investigated beliefs of learners of English and that of German in a Hungarian context, and found significant differences in the way learners perceived the difficulty and the way in which these languages were learnt.

Research showed (Cotteral, 1999; Horwitz, 1988; Rieger, 2009) that language learning beliefs play an important role in the outcome of the learning process as they impact learning efficacy. Therefore, understanding learners' beliefs could help teachers understand the expectations with which their students arrive at the language classroom and the factors influencing their efficacy in language learning (Horwitz, 1988). It has also

been proved that unsubstantiated beliefs are likely to lead to language learning anxiety. Moreover, if beliefs coincide with the expected good practice in a particular learning context, they enhance efficacy, while otherwise beliefs impact it negatively (Riley, 2009).

Exploring the relationship between perceptions and emotions in the context of language learning, Aragao (2011) found that these concepts were closely interrelated and that they influenced students' behaviour in the classroom. In the Hungarian context, Heitzmann (2008) examined the interaction between learners' beliefs and motivation at a secondary school, whereas Bacsa (2012) found that the most influential beliefs are concerned with self-efficacy, self-confidence and language awareness in the case of sixth graders. These factors seem to be the most closely related to other elements contributing to language learning, such as efficacy, sense of achievement and perceptions of the difficulty of the target language. Students' beliefs, however, also seem to be impacted by teachers themselves as learners view them as models and experts (Horwitz, 1988).

2.4.5 Students' autonomous beliefs

Students' beliefs about LA have not been widely and explicitly researched. Cotterall (1995b) asked university students questions related to readiness for LA; she identified six categories "which one might expect any student to have a more or less coherent set of beliefs" (p. 196) about: the role of the teacher, the role of feedback, learner independence, learner confidence in study ability, experience of language learning and approach to studying. Cotterall (1999) later extended her research: students' were also asked about learning strategies and self-efficacy. Chang (2007), in agreement with Édes (2008) found that learners' autonomous beliefs did not always result in autonomous

behaviours for several reasons. Chang (2007) stated that peer groups influenced individual students' level of autonomy; however, she found that there was "no correlation between group processes and individual learners' autonomous beliefs" (p. 332), suggesting that "behaviors are more easily influenced by others than beliefs" (p.332). She claimed that students' perceptions and actions should be examined simultaneously to provide a wider and more complex picture of LA. Researchers examining the effects of study abroad experience on formation of beliefs about language, learning (Amuzie & Winke, 2009; Yang & Kim 2011; Riley, 2009) found strong relationship between the amounts of time spent abroad and changes in students beliefs concerning LA.

2.4.6 Correspondences and mismatches between teachers' and students' beliefs

Horwitz (1987) compared students' and teachers' beliefs to reveal potential clashes and find the reasons for students losing confidence during the learning process. Few studies have compared and contrasted teachers' perceptions of effective learning and teaching with those of the students'. In their large-scale studies conducted in American contexts, Kern (1995) and Schulz (1996) suggested that learners' and teachers' cognition did not coincide at every point, as teachers tended to rely on communicative language teaching principles, while students held strong beliefs about the importance of explicit error correction and grammatical accuracy. They argued that mismatches between teachers' and students' expectation could have a negative impact on learners' motivation and on the learning outcome. Kern using BALLI in his study, concluded that teachers did not consider excellent accent in a FL essential, and that they found speaking easier than listening, whereas students' opinions tended to differ on these issues. He also claimed

that teachers' beliefs had less influence on learners than their peers' beliefs, classroom practices and textbooks. Barcelos (2000) explored the relationship and interaction between students' and teachers' beliefs, investigating their change over time and their influence on classroom practice. She claimed in agreement with Kern (1995) that "beliefs cannot be separated from identity, action and social experience" (p. 4), and suggested that when investigating beliefs the wider social context should be taken into consideration.

In line with Kern's (1995) and Schultz's (1996) findings, Brown (2009) revealed that teachers' and students' perceptions concerning language learning differed in several ways. He found that students preferred explicit grammar instruction, whereas teachers seemed to favour communicative language teaching, and they thought that grammar should be embedded in real-world context. Learners' and teachers' views differed on the importance of the target language use in the classroom and on error correction: while teachers supported the more frequent use of the L2, students expected an effective teacher to correct their mistakes immediately. Brown (2009) also argued that the reason for students' tendency to favour a "discrete-point assessment may be a product of teaching and assessment practices not only in their L2 classes but also in classes of other disciplines" (p. 57).

In their questionnaire study Akhtar and Kausar (2011) revealed that teachers and students agreed that languages should be learnt through imitation, that teachers should correct every occurrence of students' mistakes and they should present grammar explicitly, thus contradicting Schultz (1996) and Brown (2009) on this point. However, while learners tended to favour immediate error correction, most teachers wanted to correct students' errors afterwards, in order to not discourage them. Concerning pair

work and group work teachers viewed these forms of free interaction as opportunities for students to learn each other's mistakes, while only half of the students shared this opinion, the other half of the group believed that they would learn *from* the mistakes, without adopting them. Examining teachers' and learners' perceptions of corrective feedback, Yoshida (2009) revealed that students' responses to feedback did not always indicate that they noticed it and that teachers overestimated students' awareness about corrective feedback and their understanding of the correct forms. Teachers' tendency to use implicit rather than explicit feedback might be related to their inclination to avoid social strain and anxiety, a finding coinciding with that of Akhtar and Kausar (2011). Hasbún's (2009) study focused on mapping language learning problem areas, identifying groups of errors which teachers found unacceptable considering the students' level and students' views on the most frequent grammar mistakes they made. She reported that first- and second-year teachers believed that the most serious mistakes in their students' compositions were grammatical mistakes, while third-and fourth-year teachers considered organisation and content discrepancies more serious. As for students' beliefs, their remarks referred to vocabulary and punctuation rather than grammar.

Iwashita and Ngoc (2012) compared students' and teachers' attitudes towards communicative language teaching, and their results corresponded with those found by Brown (2009) and Schultz (1996). They also revealed relevant mismatches between teachers' and learners' perception of teachers' roles: whereas learners thought that teachers' most important role was to provide knowledge, teachers thought that their role as autonomy facilitator was more important. The single correspondence revealed in this study was that both groups had a favourable attitude towards group and pair

work. Wan, Low and Li (2011) reported how students and their teachers used 'teacher' metaphors to identify mismatches concerning beliefs about language teachers' roles. The research revealed that teachers expected their roles to be those of a guide, a helper in the process of language learning, rather than of a superior authority, which seemed to be inconsistent with their students' views on teachers' roles, in line with Iwashita and Ngoc's (2012) findings.

Griffiths (2007), Hu and Tian (2012) examined the overlap between teachers' and students' perceptions regarding language learning strategies. Griffiths (2007) found that teachers were not aware of their students learning strategies, and revealed several mismatches between students' and teachers' views on strategy use, as well as a significant relationship between course level and frequency of the strategy use, as higher level students reported to use more language learning strategies than lower level students. Moreover, Hu and Tian (2012) identified substantial difference when teaching strategies were discussed: students rated the efficacy of strategies more highly than teachers did. Students associated successful language learning with the use of these strategies almost independently from proficiency level, whereas in their teachers' views, the significance of strategies became weaker as the proficiency level rose. This means that the divergence between students' and teachers' beliefs is the most relevant at higher levels of proficiency as students' beliefs about the importance of strategies remain relatively the similar, regardless of their proficiency level.

2.4.7 Summary

The concepts discussed in this section gave insight into the complexity of beliefs concerning LA. However, it is clear that there is a gap in the literature to be filled: we need a better understanding of the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their practices concerning LA support. As Little (1991) has emphasized, LA is not a particular method; from this perspective the development of LA can be seen as an educational goal which is cross-culturally valid and desirable, even though promoting it requires different forms of pedagogy and is confronted with different kinds of constraints according to the context where students learn (Palfreyman, 2003). Research showed that the teacher is no longer the knowledge supplier but also a manager, resource person and counsellor. LA cannot be implemented without teacher autonomy. Therefore, understanding teachers' beliefs about autonomy is an essential element in the design of activities aimed at developing LA (Borg & Al-Busaidi, 2011, 2012), as well as developing strategies to help teachers become aware of their beliefs and to understand the complex ways in which beliefs influence their decisions they make in the language classroom.

Further research should be done to map the reasons for the mismatches between students' and teachers' beliefs and to investigate the relationships between beliefs, teaching practices and students' behaviour. A mutual understanding between students' and teachers' perceptions and expectations may help to increase the level of motivation and satisfaction for both groups. Therefore, the present research explored Hungarian EFL and GFL teachers' beliefs about LA, and investigated the relationship between their beliefs and teaching practices, as well as secondary school students' perceptions and their autonomous behaviours concerning language learning. The next

chapter will present the rationale for research methodology, the context of FL teaching and learning in Hungary, the context and the participants of my research project. It will also describe the developmental process of data collection instruments, as well as the procedures of data collection and analysis.

Chapter 3 Research design

3.1 Rationale for research methodology

The present study was conducted in my immediate teaching context along two lines to investigate the way teachers and students perceive LA. It applies an exploratory approach following the mixed method research tradition (Creswell, 2003; Dörnyei, 2007; Mackey & Gass, 2005). The rationale for adopting this approach is that combining methods enables the researcher to investigate and interpret the phenomenon in its wider context, which, regarding language learner autonomy means that the socially constructed nature of the classroom and influences outside the classroom can also be taken into account (Williams & Burden, 1997).

The novelty of this study lies in its multiple perspectives: the use of various data collection instruments made it possible for the researcher to gather as much information as possible. The choice of method used to collect data was also determined by the complex nature of beliefs affected by many factors (Barcellos, 2000; Borg, 2006; Dörnyei, 2005; Kern, 1995): an interest in the participants' experiences and personal opinions about LA; the low number (n=9) of teacher respondents with a relatively high number (n=100) of student participants; and most importantly a need to achieve an in-depth understanding of the datasets.

Although heated debates argued for the 'superiority' and the use of quantitative and qualitative research methods (Creswell, 2003; Dörnyei, 2007; Mackey & Gass, 2005; Riazi & Candlin, 2014), mixed methods seem to emerge as a continuum of these and is now considered a third approach in research methodology (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 42.). Traditional quantitative research was based on natural sciences, where researchers

generally carried out studies based on objective measurement in order to gain quantifiable data and relied on theories to focus on deduction. On the other hand, the qualitative approach, known as naturalistic and interpretive is associated with induction and exploration. While quantitative studies tend to use standardized data collection and statistical analyses which are based on logical considerations and lead to replicable studies, qualitative researchers gather non-statistical, naturalistic data, to find categories and discover relationships between them as qualitative research intends to explore different processes of the individual in the larger sociocultural context in which investigations take place (Creswell, 2003; Dörnyei, 2007; Griffee, 2012; Mackey & Gass, 2005; Riazi & Candlin, 2014).

The breakthrough in combining methods occurred in the 1970s when the concept of *triangulation* was introduced to maximize internal and external validity as utilization of multiple sources and methods (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 165). Triangulation is employed in all main research paradigms to compare results and provide a better understanding of the investigated phenomenon. Today it is accepted that combining measures has an increasingly important role in ensuring reliability, validity and credibility of findings. The value of mixing methods has been recognised to balance the inherent weaknesses of a single method with the strengths of other ones in order to enable the analysis of complex issues on multiple levels which could lead to results acceptable by a larger audience (Creswell, 2003; Dörnyei, 2007; Mackey & Gass, 2005; Riazi & Candlin, 2014).

The present cross-sectional study (Creswell, 2003; Dörnyei, 2007) draws on the complementary function of mixed methods which expands the explanatory and exploratory power of individual methods (Riazi & Candlin, 2014): findings which shed

light on different facets of the main concept can provide a more detailed portrait of the phenomenon under investigation. An additional purpose for combining methods was to utilise the results of the first method to develop the instruments for data collection in the further steps of the research (Dörnyei, 2008; Riazi & Candlin, 2014). Data collection follows sequential procedures (Creswell, 2003): the use of qualitative method with an exploratory purpose is followed by applying the quantitative method with a large sample, and a qualitative inquiry employing a parallel small sample.

The qualitative phases applied in this dissertation included the researcher's observational notes, semi-structured interviews with teachers, two questionnaires administered with teachers and students, partly consisting of open-ended questions. The classroom observation served as a springboard for selecting participants for the interview phase of my study and it was expected to provide data about teachers' practices and students' autonomous behaviours. The Likert-type items of the two questionnaires, as well as the sample-size of the student-participants contribute to the quantitative component of this study. The reason for using a questionnaire phase was to draw the profile of the three groups: EFL teachers, GFL teachers and those of their students.

Within the frame of mixed methods approach the present research can be considered an instrumental case-study (Duff, 2012; Stake, 2005) as "…a particular case is examined mainly to provide insight into an issue or to redraw generalisation. The case is of secondary interest, it plays a supporting role and it facilitates our understanding of something else" (Stake, 2005, p. 445). The present research provides rich data about perceptions concerning LA by involving all the students from the 9th grade and all the language teachers from the investigated context. Moreover, the study conducted also

offers an emic perspective, as the researcher being a member of the professional community investigated had an insider's perspective.

Although reliability and validity were originally introduced in quantitative research, because of the lack of universally accepted terminology (Dörnyei, 2007) I intend to use these terms as the two best known relevant concepts to describe quality criteria for research. To increase reliability of the findings I took care that the results were not influenced by accidental circumstances. As for research validity, the researcher was aware of the Hawthorne effect concerning the classroom observations, interviews and the questionnaires (Dörnyei, 2007; Mackey & Gass, 2005), which occurs because the participants know that they take part in a research and by intending to please the researcher they report what they think it is expected from them. To minimise the boredom and exhaustion factor, questionnaires were designed to be completed in a relatively short time. External validity, the extent to which the findings are generalizable (Dörnyei, 2007; Mackey & Gass, 2005), had multiple layers: as all the language teachers and all the 9th graders were involved in the research, it could be considered a case study, while the relatively large sample size of the student participants could allow a higher degree of generalizability. In order to increase measurement validity, data collection instruments went through several phases, as was shown in section 3.6 for a detailed description of the validation process. The trustworthiness of the study was achieved by triangulation of multiple perspectives: teachers' and students' views, as well as different data sources: classroom observations, questionnaires and interviews (Dörnyei, 2007; Mackey & Gass, 2005).

The research design of the present study can be seen in Table 3, whereas a detailed description of data collection is provided in section 3.7.

Table 3

Overview on the research strands

Research instrument	Research paradigm	Items	Participants
Classroom observation	Qualitative	12 semi structured observations	12 teachers, 103 students (4 classes)
Teachers' questionnaire	Qualitative and quantitative	17 open, 28 closed items	9
Students' questionnaire	Qualitative and quantitative	10 open, 18 closed items	100
Interviews with teachers	Qualitative	18 open questions	4

3.2. The context of foreign language teaching and learning in Hungary

The year of 1989 with the abrupt close of communism lead to many fundamental changes in Hungary, which influenced all the areas of public and social life including the field of education. FL learning has always been a part of the Hungarian school curriculum including the school leaving exams; however, it was characterised by the monopoly of the Russian language over forty years before the changes in the political system. After 1990 learning Russian ceased to be compulsory in schools (Bárdos & Medgyes, 1997; Enyedi & Medgyes, 1998): English and German became the two dominant foreign languages. This sudden change was followed by a shortage of FL teachers (Elekes, Magnuczné-Godó, Szabó, & Tóth, 1998; Enyedi & Medgyes, 1998), which led to recruitment of under- or unqualified teachers including retired teachers, secondary school graduates or native speakers of English or German (Elekes et al., 1998; Enyedi & Medgyes, 1998).

To increase the number of language teachers, the Hungarian government initiated the large-scale Russian Retraining Programme, which enabled the teachers of

Russian to qualify as teachers of another foreign language. To train teachers of English and German within a short time the Ministry of Education launched a project for teacher training with special emphasis on the quality and length of the courses (Bárdos & Medgyes, 1997). The original intention of the Ministry of Education was to create a single teacher training centre in Hungary; however, later more such centres were established at universities and colleges all over the country (Bárdos & Medgyes, 1997; Révész, 2005).

The change of the regime meant liberalisation from the previously uniform curriculum and the development of a National Core Curriculum (NCC). Put into practice in 1996 and modified several times, the new document set central criteria based on which every school was expected to take responsibility to create its local curriculum and educational programme. The NCC prescribes requirements and sets the standards to ten different knowledge areas, intending to take control over output rather than input (Nikolov, 1999b). The implementation of the NCC has been criticised as changes were imposed over the heads of teachers: although institutions had been asked to comment the different versions of the NCC, these suggestions had not been taken into consideration, moreover, teachers had not been asked to express their views at all (Medgyes & Nikolov, 2010). Schools were required to supervise again and modify if needed their local curriculum and educational programme by March 2014 (Governmental edict 7/2014. I. 17, 2014) in order to start the new academic year with applying the new NCC. Secondary comprehensive schools were restructured in 2016 June, therefore, these institutions were expected to revise their documents by the beginning of the new academic year.

The changes in the curriculum resulted in a shift from encyclopaedic knowledge to the application of knowledge and skills, key competencies were defined as the knowledge, abilities, skills and attitudes that are necessary for each person to become a useful member of society. Levels of proficiency defined in the Common European Framework of Reference (Council of Europe, 2001) were integrated into the school leaving exams. These changes affected the organisation and content of the school-leaving examination: since 2005 the new exam has been available at two levels (B1 and B2). The intermediate level was intended to assess all the students graduating from secondary education, while the advanced level was initially created for those who aimed at tertiary education. However, as colleges and universities accept certificates at both levels, students can decide which level to take, and this means that the single motivation to choose the advanced level exam is that when applying for tertiary education bonus points are given. Intermediate level exams are organised locally with centrally compiled written papers and tests are evaluated internally by following detailed evaluation criteria. All the components of the advanced level exam are compiled centrally and the exams are administered by the National Assessment and Examination Centre for Public Education and evaluated by external examiners. Not only the structure, but also the content of the exam has changed: the tasks have become more life-like, assessing students' capability to apply their knowledge, their communicative and problem solving skills.

Although the opening up of the borders, the growth in the tourist industry and economic relations, joining the European Union and the undeniable boom in the accessibility of media and Internet should have led to an increasing need for speaking foreign languages, Hungarians still seem to lag behind in FL proficiency (Eurobarometer,

2012). The overview on recent research in the Hungarian language teaching and learning context points towards dispiriting conclusions (Révész, 2011, Soproni, 2013): heavy workloads, sporadic communication among colleagues, teachers not informed about changes in policy, and scarce if any contact with training institutions. Although the NCC went through several modifications, language teachers kept teaching following their own hidden curriculum, adopting an eclectic approach (Nikolov, 2003b). Research showed that the most frequently used teaching methods were teacher-centred, LA was not supported and that teachers did not feel responsible for raising and maintaining motivation, claiming that students ought to come to English lessons motivated (Galántai & Csizér, 2009; Dombi, Nikolov & Turányi, 2011; Nikolov, Ottó, & Öveges, 2009).

Since the 90s the German language has become the second most popular FL in Hungary, although it is losing ground to English, as learners' attitudes towards English are more favourable than towards German (Nikolov, 2003a; 2003b). Rieger (2009) found that target language influenced how learners perceived the difficulty of the language they were studying: more learners of English believed that their target language was easy than learners of German. As Nikolov and Józsa (2006) revealed, students performed better on exams in English than in German, and learners of English set themselves higher goals. Furthermore, the same study pointed out that more learners of English came from families with higher socioeconomic status, whereas more learners of German were from less favourable family backgrounds.

Research revealed that students were not eager to make extra efforts to improve their English if they did not have to pass a language proficiency exam (Édes, 2008). Illés and Csizér (2010) found that although learners were conscious about the role of English

in international communication, this fact did not influence their openness and they did not seek opportunities to use English.

3.2.1 Implications of learner autonomy in the Hungarian teaching and learning context

The way the concept of self-regulated learning is defined and used by Csizér (2012), Csizér and Kormos (2012) and Mezei (2008) is in line with Benson's (2001) definition of LA: self-regulated learning is considered as an active process in which learners set goals for their learning and to reach them attempt to control their cognition, motivation, and behaviour. Self-regulation was found to increase with proficiency, although extrinsic motives were stronger than intrinsic motives even at high level of proficiency (Mezei, 2008). Although students were motivated, self-regulation and autonomous behaviour lagged behind as anxiety and beliefs about self-efficacy influenced students' self-regulated learning (Csizér, 2012; Csizér & Kormos, 2012). Younger students used more diverse learning strategies, made more effort to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning processes than secondary school students, who seemed to be more ignorant about strategy use (Józsa & Molnár, 2013). However, undergraduates (Molnár, 2005) paid more attention to the organisation of their learning than students in primary or secondary education. Édes (2008) identified a mismatch between students' autonomous beliefs and behaviour: she found that students were less self-directed than expected.

As Medgyes and Nikolov (2014) pointed out in their overview on research conducted in the Hungarian context, "however, both the philosophy and practice of teacher education have dramatically changed (...) the most exciting area of research is the study of synergy, or the lack thereof, between teachers' beliefs and practices.

Whereas both student motivation and teacher motivation have been examined fairly extensively, the interplay between the two is an area still waiting to be explored" (p. 515).

LA and its implications for teaching and learning have been widely researched; relationships between teachers' and students' beliefs have, however, been paid little attention. Given that teachers have a central role in developing LA, their beliefs have an influence on the way they teach (Borg, 2006), and that mismatches between teachers' and students' beliefs have a negative impact on learners' motivation, I found it essential to gain insight into language teachers' and learners' views regarding LA, teachers' classroom practices and their learners' autonomous behaviours in a Hungarian teaching and learning context.

3.3 The context of the study

The present dissertation was conducted in a medium-sized comprehensive secondary school in the south of Hungary. The school was specialised in economics, and as the increasing number of applications indicates, it was very popular in the region, mainly due to the growing interest in Economics and Information Technology. Apart from the usual four years of education, the school offers two-year-long post-secondary education in accounting, logistics and information technology. At the time of the research the school employed 51 full-time and four part-time teachers and had a total of 683 students.

Apart from the regular subjects (Hungarian Language and Literature, Mathematics, History, English, German, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Geography, Music, Art, Physical Education, and Information Technology) the school offered a choice in

special areas such as Economics, Programming and Management, and students could decide in their years 11 and 12 which subjects they wanted to study for the advanced level exam. At the time of the research the institution offered a year of intensive language learning; the last group enrolled in this programme was involved in the project. Due to its main profile, the school was relatively well-equipped with computers, it had five large computer rooms, a language lab (although rather obsolete) and there were projectors in nearly all of the classrooms.

Students were offered two foreign languages: their first foreign language, English or German was theoretically a continuation of their primary-school studies. In practice, however, students entering the school started learning English or German from course books designed for beginners and they had four classes a week. In years 11 and 12 students were offered a choice of ESP or GSP once a week. As for a second foreign language, they could choose from English and German in three classes weekly. The English language was taught by eight EFL teachers (including the researcher) in 39 groups, from which nine were ESP groups, five were advanced level groups, three second FL groups and 22 regular EFL groups. The number of German language groups was 24, including seven GSP groups and two second FL and advanced level groups respectively taught by four GFL teachers. A total of 437 students learned EFL and 208 students learned GFL as their second FL, 27 students decided to take EFL and 18 to take GFL as second FL. The mean of the school leaving exams taken in EFL and GFL was 3.70 and 3.72, respectively, in the 2013/14 academic year, while the mean of the end of the year grades of the same students was 3.61 (EFL) and 3.73 (GFL). The means of the school leaving exams taken in EFL in the 2014/2015 and 2015/2016 academic years were 3.67

and 3.70, whereas in GFL 3.81 and 4.09. Shool leavers' end of the year grades in these years were 3.7 and 3.73 (EFL), and 3.85 and 3.8 (GFL).

Most learners were motivated and intended to continue their studies: 28 % of the students who graduated in the school in the summer of 2014 chose tertiary education, whereas a further 40% enrolled in the post-secondary programmes launched by the institution, 17 % studied at other post-secondary programmes, and 8% have full time or part time jobs (the school did not have any data about the 7% of the school leavers). These numbers did not change notably in the following two years, data collected in 2015 and 2016 September showed that 30% and 29 % of the students chose tertiary education, 39% and 42 % studied at post-secondary programmes launched by the school, 19% and 17% of the students enrolled in other post-secondary programmes. Seven and 8 % of the students worked, whereas 5% and 4% did not provide any data. The explanation for the relatively high number of students opting for the post-secondary programmes was that up till the age of 21 students in them were supported by the state at the time of the research, but later on they would have to pay tuition fee. Many of the students applied for these educational programmes with the long term plan to continue their studies in tertiary education.

3.4 Research questions

My experience as an EFL teacher resulted in the idea that one of the main concerns as a teacher is to foster my students' autonomy in and beyond the EFL classes. In line with my work, I felt that it was important to identify and understand factors that lead to development in LA. The purpose of the dissertation is to gain a better understanding of autonomy in L2 learning by exploring the relationship among the following areas: (a) EFL

and GFL teachers' perceptions of LA; (b) EFL and GFL teachers' practices concerning LA; (c) students' beliefs about LA; and (d) students' autonomous behaviour. Thus the research questions addressed in this dissertation are as follows:

1. What does LA mean to language teachers?

   a. According to the teachers, to what extent and how does LA contribute to language learning?

   b. How and to what extent do teachers claim that they promote autonomy?

   c. What do teachers understand by learner self-assessment and in what ways, if any, have they incorporated this idea in their teaching?

   d. To what extent and in what ways do teachers think their learners are autonomous?

   e. What challenges do teachers claim they face in helping students become more autonomous?

   f. To what extent do teachers feel autonomous in their professional development and teaching practice?

   g. How are teacers' beliefs and self-reported practices related to their classroom work regarding the development of LA?

2. How are EFL and GFL teachers' beliefs and practices related to one another?

   a. How do English and German teachers' beliefs about autonomy compare to one another?

   b. What differences, if any, can be found between English and German teachers' classroom practices regarding LA?

3. What does LA mean to language learners?

   a. How do students perceive their own level of LA?

b. What is the correspondence between students' autonomous beliefs and behaviours?

c. What difference, if any, can be found between EFL and GFL learners' autonomous beliefs and behaviours?

4. What is the relationship between teachers' and students' beliefs about LA?

3.5 Participants of the study

I involved eight EFL teachers and four GFL teachers in the classroom observation and the questionnaire phase of my study; these teachers comprised the English and German departments of the school. The participants did not present a homogeneous group (Table 4): although all the teachers were women, they were aged between 36-58 years (mean 46.6 years), and their teaching experience varied between 10-35 years with a mean of 21 years. They were all qualified teachers of EFL and GFL, moreover, two EFL teachers and a GFL teacher were History majors, an EFL and a GFL teacher had masters' degree in Hungarian and a GFL teacher was qualified as teacher of the Russian language. Apart from the regular FL classes all the teachers taught ESP or GSP including special purposes such as informatics, logistics and accounting.

In order to achieve triangulation and with the objective to gain insight into the participants' beliefs and reported practices concerning LA, I asked four classroom teachers from those who completed the questionnaire, two EFL and two GFL teachers, to participate in the interview phase of my research. This decision was based on the results of the classroom observation: two of these teachers proved to have the most supportive approach towards LA and two other teachers the least LA supportive practices, both pairs included teachers of English and German.

Table 4

Teacher participants' data

Participants	Classes observed	Questionnaire completed	Interviewed	Language taught	Age	Teaching experience (years)	Other qualifications
Teacher 1	yes	yes	no	EFL	57	30	Hungarian MA
Teacher 2	yes	yes	no	EFL	41	13	-
Teacher 3	yes	yes	yes	EFL	47	25	History MA
Teacher 4	yes	yes	no	EFL	46	22	History MA
Teacher 5	yes	yes	yes	EFL	32	14	-
Teacher 6	yes	yes	yes	GFL	62	33	Russian Language
Teacher 7	yes	yes	no	GFL	56	29	History MA
Teacher 8	yes	yes	yes	GFL	43	16	Hungarian MA
Teacher 9	yes	yes	no	EFL	39	10	Biology MA
Teacher 10	yes	no	no	EFL	50	19	-
Teacher 11	yes	no	no	EFL	42	20	-
Teacher 12	yes	no	no	GFL	45	21	-

Besides the age difference (32, 42, 46 and 58) interviewees also differed in their work experience, which ranged from 14 to 35 years (Table 3). Three of the questionnaire participants had full-time jobs, and one of them worked part-time, another three teachers had previously taught in other secondary schools, two of the interviewed teachers had private students. The twelve teachers participating the classroom observations have been assigned different numbers to preserve their anonymity (e.g., Teacher 1, Teacher 2, etc.).

I considered including students' perceptions important: I asked those groups of students to participate in the questionnaire phase which were involved in the classroom observations. However, it was beyond the scope of the present study to investigate this

aspect of the core concept as deeply as that of teachers' perspective. All the four classes of the 9th graders participated in the study (n=100, 50 boys, 50 girls), as shown in Table 5. Their age varied from 14 to 17, 44% were 15 years old and 50% 16 years old. As for their academic orientations, 14 students attended a class specialised in Information Technology, 31 were enrolled in the year of intensive language learning, whereas two classes with 33 and 22 students specialised in Economics. Sixty-four of the student participants learnt EFL and 36 students learnt GFL. At the time of the research students had been learning their second languages for one to twelve years. Fourteen percent of the students reported that they learnt EFL or GFL for one to four years, while 86 % learned EFL or GFL for five to ten years (mean=7.42, standard deviation=2.39).

Table 5

Student participants' data

Group	Student number	Gender M/F	Studied language EFL/GFL	Means of the years of language instruction/SD	Means of the grades/SD
IT	14	14/0	14/0	7/2.1	3.29/1.2
Language	31	21/12	20/11	6.4/1.9	3.64/0.8
Economics 1	33	25/6	19/14	8/2.1	4/0.8
Economics 2	22	11/11	11/11	8/3	3.28/1.3
Total	100	50/50	64/36	7.42/2.39	3.64/1.0

Note. SD= standard deviation

81% of the questionnaire respondents did not learn any other foreign language, 4% studied English in primary school, 11% studied German, and 3% of the students had previous experiences with Serbo-Croatian and the Swedish language. The course-books used were *New Headway Elementary (Third Edition, Students' book and Workbook)* by Soars and Soars (2009) and *Kontakt 1* (Students' book and Workbook) by Maros (2009).

3.6 Design and development of data collection instruments

In the present research I examined LA from various angles by carrying out an in-depth analysis of data collected with the help of the following four types of instruments: (1) classroom observation, questionnaires designed for (2) teachers and for (3) students, as well as (4) interviews conducted with EFL and GFL teachers. The starting point was designing the research instruments: apart from enabling the researcher to collect relevant data, data collection instruments had to meet the needs of the research standards (Dörnyei, 2007; Mackey & Gass, 2005). Intentions to achieve validity and reliability influenced the stages of construction and development of the instruments as well as the procedures of the entire research. The methods of validation were based on the study of the literature, the cultural context and the objectives of the study as the process of validation was considered essential in obtaining valid and reliable data. Research instruments are presented in the order in which they were used for data collection.

3.6.1 Classroom observations

Observation is a powerful tool which allows researchers to gain insights into the classroom processes (Dörnyei, 2007; Griffee, 2012; Mackey & Gass, 2005). Its essential difference from the other instruments lies in the ability to lead to direct information, since "such data can provide more objective account of events and behaviours than second-hand self-report data" (Dörnyei, 2007, p.185). As the language classroom is a place where various processes of teaching and learning occur, it is extremely important to consider what to observe and how to observe it (Dörnyei, 2007; Griffee, 2012; Mackey

& Gass, 2005). It is necessary to capture what happens in the FL classroom as accurately as possible, what the teacher does and how learners contribute to the lesson.

Regarding the types of observation, structured and unstructured as well as quantitative and qualitative are used as distinctive terms (Dörnyei, 2007). Highly structured observation involves specific focus and clear observation categories, rating scales and coding, whereas during unstructured observation the researcher observes first the classroom processes before deciding on its importance for the research; therefore, unstructured observations require less preparation but are more time consuming to analyse (Dörnyei, 2007; Griffee, 2012; Mackey & Gass, 2005). Despite the differences of classroom observational schemes, some elements seem to be common even in descriptions of classroom processes with diverse foci, such as the grouping format of the students, the content of the lesson, the languages used, and the main features of the interaction (Dörnyei, 2007; Mackey & Gass, 2005). Structuring the observation makes the data collection more reliable and the results coming from different classrooms are comparable; however, it also limits the observer's perception and it may lead to data reduction as well as loss of important patterns (Mackey & Gass, 2005), for instance when low inference behaviour is expected.

Although I was aware that less structured observation could also result in losing valuable classroom data, to reach a deeper understanding of the classroom processes I focused on broader categories rather than specific issues. By conducting semi-structured classroom observations I hoped to gain insight into language teachers' supportive practice concerning LA (or the lack of it) as elaborated by Benson (2011b): encouraging student preparation, drawing on out-of-class experience, using authentic materials, encouraging independent inquiry, involving students in task design,

supporting student-student interaction, as well as divergent student outcomes, implementing self- and peer-assessment, encouraging students' reflection. Furthermore, the observations also focused on students' autonomous behaviours.

Observational notes consisted of the date and the place of the lessons, the code of the teachers, number of the students, course books or other printed materials used during the lessons, as well as the arrangement of the desks, availability of Internet access, computers, projectors and smart boards. Apart from taking fast notes about what happened on the lessons, I also tallied teachers' and students' behaviours as they occurred on a checklist (see Appendix A).

3.6.2 Teachers' questionnaire

Observational data helped to finalize the focal points of the questionnaires designed for teachers and students. Gradually, a list of key terms was compiled to generate ideas for the construction of the questions. This was followed by consultations with two experts whose involvement in the validation process of the instrument was extremely useful. The consultations were carried out personally or via the Internet on a regular basis. As a result, the concepts and categories identified in the literature and through my observations were reinforced.

When designing the teachers' questionnaire, I adapted Borg and Al-Busaidi's (2012) questionnaire by removing the items which were not suitable for the context of my research. I omitted the items referring to the culturally determined aspect of LA (Holliday, 2005): "Learner autonomy can be achieved by learners of all cultural backgrounds" and "Learner autonomy is a concept which is not suited to non-Western

learners"; and replaced them with an item inquiring about the influence of the local teaching and learning context on LA as I intended to focus on the Hungarian context.

In the next phase I translated the list of items to Hungarian. At this stage the instrument consisted of 36 closed items; answers were expected to be given on a five-point Likert scale, which were modified as a next step into four response options so that by omitting the "undecided" category participants had to make real decisions (Dörnyei, 2003). After consulting the two experts about the Hungarian version of the questionnaire I decided to reshape the instrument partially into open-ended questions in order to be sure that I would be able to collect rich data which is relevant for my research especially with a relatively small number of participants (Dörnyei, 2007; Griffee, 2012; Mackey & Gass, 2005).

Before the questionnaire was administered, it was tested for response validity in different ways. Apart from asking for expert opinion, the instrument was piloted with the help of a think-aloud protocol (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2011) with four colleagues not involved in the main part of the research. The emerging comments and suggestions generated various modifications. Wording was changed where it was necessary to elicit richer data. Item #8 "*What are those classroom activities which contribute to the growth of your learners' autonomy?*" and item #11 *"In which cases do you give opportunity for decision to your students?"* were reworded to ask for examples. The item *"To what extent do you incorporate self-assessment?"* was altered to *"In what cases do you offer space for self-assessment?"* Questions *"What are those classroom activities which contribute to the growth of your learners' autonomy? Mention five which you apply with success."* and *"How do you support your students' autonomy in language learning?"* were found to overlap, thus the second item was removed. Item "*In your view what is*

the relationship between learner autonomy and teacher autonomy?" was found ambiguous, therefore it resulted in two different items: "*How do you see your own autonomy as a language learner?"* and *"What do you think about your own autonomy as a language teacher?"* Three items asking about the teachers' views about the relationship of LA and age, language proficiency and motivation were summarised into *"What factors do you think to influence learner autonomy?"* to be asked later in the interview phase where more detailed explanation could be elicited. Questions *"In your view how does the Hungarian teaching tradition influence learner autonomy?"* and *"Can you recall a case when one of your students manifested autonomous behaviour in language learning?"* were withdrawn to be included in the interview schedule.

As I expected qualitative data also from German FL teachers, the questionnaire was designed to be completed in Hungarian by all the participants, and I expected that using the mother tongue would yield richer data. The final version of the teachers' questionnaire addressed issues in line with the research questions: teachers' views on various aspects of LA, their opinion about the desirability and feasibility of LA. It also asked questions about how autonomous teachers believed their learners were and the extent to which they promoted LA and self-assessment in their everyday teaching practice (Appendix B). The questionnaire consisted of 17 open questions and 14 closed items on a four-point Likert scale: the closed items were adapted from Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012). The final section of the instrument asked for demographic information, however, it was kept to the minimum in order to avoid fatigue and boredom (Dörnyei, 2003).

3.6.3 Students' questionnaire

The development of the students' questionnaire underwent several modifications. After compiling a list of key questions and adopting Chang's (2007) questionnaire I asked for expert advice; then, I designed a questionnaire consisting of open and closed items. The instrument was intended to be piloted and administered in Hungarian: as I did not intend to measure the students' language proficiency and I wanted to be sure that there would not be any distracting language elements in the questionnaire there was no reason to administer it in English.

The questionnaire was piloted with a group of 19 EFL learners attending the 9th grade of another comprehensive school. The validation study was found to be useful, as it revealed the weak points of the questionnaire which were to be modified. Instructions were made more obvious in order to avoid ambiguities, items that elicited unclear data were deleted, and a further question was added to inquire about what students thought could help them to become more autonomous in language learning. A subsequent think aloud protocol administered with a group of four students showed that the wording and the number of the items in the final questionnaire were suitable and sufficient; therefore, the instrument could be considered reliable (Dörnyei, 2003; 2007).

The first section of the final version of the students' questionnaire asked for demographic data about age, gender, language learning experience, end of the year grade; the second section included ten open questions focusing on students' attitudes towards LA, their learning and language use habits and preferences. The final section of the instrument consisted of 18 closed items on a four-point Likert scale adopted from Chang (2007) which asked learners how responsible they thought they should be for

doing things on their own and it also asked them to what extent they actually did so (Appendix C).

3.6.4 Teachers' interview

The semi-structured interviews offered a compromise between being prepared with a set of questions and being open for further elaboration on certain issues at the same time, when it was necessary (Dörnyei, 2007; Griffee, 2012). The interviews aimed to explore teachers' responses to the questionnaire about their experiences in connection with LA in more detail. Several interview questions were meant to elicit narratives about personal experiences and memories concerning LA, as narratives carry encoded life experience and knowledge (Abbott, 2003). When we investigate individual lives, we need to see them within the beliefs and traditions of their sociocultural context (Horsdal, 2012), as autobiographic narratives as well as teachers' narratives about their teaching are influenced by the cultural understandings of values. If teachers' beliefs are perceived as constructed from previous experiences through social interaction, their views become important in several ways: apart from providing authentic accounts of their actions and feelings, there is more to teachers' narratives than revealing information about their beliefs and reported practices and about their educational context. Bruner (1987) claimed that autobiographic narratives are both shaped by culture and shape culture itself, suggesting that making teachers tell their stories about teaching and making them reflect on their interpretations may lead to changes in their practice. In this sense, narratives can be considered not only data collection instruments, but also a powerful tool to influence the relationship between teaching and learning.

The process of constructing the final interview schedule had several stages. Firstly, in order to achieve construct reliability, a set of prompts was collected which resulted in carefully worded questions (Patton, 2002) related to the research questions. The first draft of the instrument was modified after consultations with the two experts, and then, to ensure content validity, the interview schedule was given to four FL teachers not participating in the main part of the research who were requested to comment on the questions concerning the content as well as possible ambiguities in wording. The final version of the instrument consisted of 20 guiding questions (Appendix D). The research instrument proved to gather a wide variety of rich data smoothly, which indicated that it could be relied on and that the number of questions could be considered sufficient.

3.7 Procedures of data collection

According to the original plan, the questionnaire phase was to be the first step to be followed by classroom observations. However, after consulting the two experts I decided to change the order of data collection: observations would precede the administration of the questionnaire and the interview phase, so that the FL teacher participants' classroom practice would not be influenced by the questions of the following stages of the research (Table 5). After asking permission from the headmaster in November, 2013 to conduct research at the school I faced difficulties: originally I planned to observe 11th and 12th graders, as I expected to experience more autonomous behaviour with this age group; however, the timetable did not make it possible. As classes were divided into smaller groups and the groups had language lessons at the same time intervals and as I taught both grades, these slots were not suitable. However,

the timetable allowed me to observe all twelve FL teachers' lessons from the school

teaching in the 9th grade; therefore, I had the opportunity to observe teaching practice

and student behaviour with a special focus on LA. I could observe eight EFL and four GFL

lessons in the 9th grade, overall involving four classes of students divided into eleven

language groups.

The lessons focused on various issues not only because of the difference in

timing I could visit these lessons, but also because one of the classes took part in a year

of intensive language learning where certain target areas (Grammar, Communication

and Culture) were taught by different teachers. My role was that of a non-participant

observer, sitting at the back of the classroom, completely detached from the group while

taking notes. Observations occurred during late January and February in 2014. Table 6

shows the timing and the focal points of the phases of data collection.

In the second stage of data collection teachers were requested to complete the

questionnaire addressing their views on various aspects of LA, their opinion about the

desirability and feasibility of LA in April, 2014. The questionnaire was a paper and pencil

instrument designed to be completed anonymously. However, when receiving back the

completed questionnaires, the concept of anonymity proved to be ambiguous: several

participants handed me their questionnaire in person, and one teacher even

commented on her answers. In order to guarantee anonymity, I coded the completed

nine questionnaires. After administering the questionnaire, semi-structured follow-up

interviews were conducted with two EFL teachers and two German FL teachers who

were selected after classroom observations (see Table 4, Teacher 3, 5, 6, 8). They agreed

to take part in the interview phase of the research.

Table 6

Phases of data collection

	Timing	Phase	Focus
1.	2014 January-February	Classroom observations	EFL/GFL teachers' practices and students' behaviour
2.	2014 February-March	Designing and validating teachers' questionnaire	EFL/GFL teachers' beliefs and attitudes, reported practice
3.	2014 April	Administering teachers questionnaire	EFL/GFL teachers' beliefs and attitudes, reported practice
4.	2014 May	Conducting interviews with teachers	Eliciting more detailed information as well as narratives
5.	2014 April-May	Designing and validating students' questionnaire	Students' attitudes and reported practices
6.	2014 June	Administering students' questionnaire	Students' attitudes and reported practices

As I was looking for supportive practice concerning LA, I chose participants from the two ends of the scale: Bernadett's (Teacher 6) and Róza's (Teacher 3) lessons were the richest in supportive practice, whereas in Luca's (Teacher 8) and Kata's (Teacher 5) case there was slight or no sign of such intention. Due to the qualitative nature of the interviews I preferred to use pseudonyms instead of numbers to discuss participants' views about LA.

The same procedure was followed in all the four interviews. Participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity before and throughout the procedure. The interviews were one-off face-to-face events taking place at the participants' workplace in a setting which assured no distraction or interruption by external factors. The interviews were conducted in Hungarian in May, 2014; they lasted 34, 37, 42 and 47 minutes, respectively. The reason for the language selection was that I wanted my

interviewees to feel natural and relaxed using their mother tongue with someone whose first language was also Hungarian. The semi-structured frame offered opportunities for interaction; participants could ask for clarification. Róza (see Table 4, Teacher 3) was the most eager to participate, she spoke with natural ease; Bernadett (Teacher 6) and Luca (Teacher 8) were willing to answer the questions, however, Kata (Teacher 5) became anxious and rather reluctant by the time of the interview, although previously she had agreed to participate. She said that she "should have prepared more for the interview". I think that in her case I had to be especially aware of the Hawthorne effect (Dörnyei, 2007; Mackey & Gass, 2005). Apart from Kata, all the three participants approved of their answers to be recorded and transcribed, and in Kata's case I used my notes taken during the interview for data analysis.

In the final stage of data collection I involved 100 students, four classes of 9th graders, who were requested to complete a paper and pencil questionnaire anonymously inquiring about their attitudes towards LA, their learning and language use habits. The completion of the questionnaire lasted about 25 to 30 minutes; it was administered in June, 2014. Participation was voluntary as participants were provided with enough information to be able to make an informed decision about whether to take part in the study. The data collected were treated confidentially; in the interviews pseudonyms were used for each teacher in order to protect participants' anonymity.

3.8 Procedures of data analysis

The main data sources used in the present research were various, therefore, the process of data analysis needed to follow different approaches (see Table 7).

Table 7

Data sources and methods of analysis

Research question	Data sources	Methods of analysis
According to the teachers, to what extent does LA contribute to language learning?	Teachers' questionnaire Interviews with EFL and GFL teachers	Content analysis
How and to what extent do teachers claim they promote autonomy?	Teachers' questionnaire Interviews with EFL and GFL teachers	Content analysis
What do teachers understand by learner self-assessment and in what ways, if any, have they incorporated this idea?	Classroom observation Field notes Teachers' questionnaire Interviews with EFL and GFL teachers	Content analysis
To what extent do teachers think their learners are autonomous?	Teachers' questionnaire Interviews with EFL and GFL teachers	Content analysis
What challenges do teachers claim they face in helping students become more autonomous?	Teachers' questionnaire Interviews with EFL and GFL teachers	Content analysis Descriptive statistics
To what extent do teachers feel autonomous in their professional development and teaching practice?	Teachers' questionnaire Interviews with EFL and GFL teachers	Content analysis
How are teachers' beliefs and self-reported practices related to their classroom practices regarding the development of LA?	Classroom observation Field notes Teachers' questionnaire Interviews with EFL and GFL teachers	Content analysis Descriptive statistics
How do English and German teachers beliefs about autonomy compare to one another?	Teachers' questionnaire Interviews with EFL and GFL teachers	Content analysis Descriptive statistics

What differences, if any, can be found between English and German teachers' classroom practices regarding LA?	Classroom observation Field notes Teachers' questionnaire Interviews with EFL and GFL teachers	Content analysis
How do students perceive their own level of LA?	Students' questionnaire	Content analysis Descriptive statistics
What is the correspondence between students' autonomous beliefs and behaviours?	Classroom observation Field notes Students' questionnaire	Content analysis Descriptive statistics Independent samples T-tests Pearson's correlation tests
What difference, if any, can be found between EFL and GFL learners' autonomous beliefs and behaviours?	Classroom observation Field notes Students' questionnaire	Content analysis Descriptive statistics Independent samples T-tests
What is the relationship between teachers' and students' beliefs about LA?	Teachers' questionnaire Interviews with EFL and GFL teachers Students' questionnaire	Content analysis Descriptive statistics

In this respect, concerning the qualitative strand of the research, an inductive approach to data analysis was adopted. Regarding the interpretation of the responses, hypotheses did not precede the qualitative data analysis. The data was analysed using the constant comparative method (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994), involving several stages. First, the data was prepared for analysis. The interviews were recorded, and then oral data was transcribed, questionnaire data was typed and organised according to the questions, quantitative data was transformed in order to be suitable for statistical analysis. The notes taken during the classroom observations were not typed as they were suitable for interpreting the information.

This stage was followed by organizing and coding the data. The answers given during the interviews were summarised into key points, then main themes identified after thorough reading and rereading and categorised according to the research questions. The length of the interviews, conducted in English, as well as the amount of data collected indicated that the number of questions was sufficient; the instrument covered all the issues investigated in the present research. The analysis of the classroom observation field notes proceeded in the same way as in the case of the interview data. The reason for following the same approach was the qualitative nature of the data.

After cleaning the questionnaire data, responses were coded and categorised according to the research questions and was made subject to content analysis, reoccurring concepts were identified, quantitative data was statistically analysed with the help of computer software Statistical Package for Social Sciences 23.0 for Windows. In case of the Likert-type answers due to the symmetry of the four-response options I assumed that the neighbouring options were equidistant and I treated the variables as interval data. Descriptive statistics were calculated, independent samples T-tests and Pearson's correlation test at two-tailed significance were also administered. I will present the results in different forms: besides the percentages of participants who chose the different response alternatives, the means and the standard deviations will be presented. As the data arrived from different types of sources, the procedures of the data analysis proved to be very complex and time-consuming.

3.9 Summary

This section discussed the rationale for the choice of the research design and presented the context and the participants of the present study along with the research questions. Design and development of data collection instruments along with procedures of data collection and analysis employed in the current research of secondary school FL teachers' and learners' beliefs about LA were presented. Figure 3 illustrates the procedures of data collection and the participants involved in the different stages of the research.

Figure 3. Summary of the data collection procedures and their participants

Classroom observations

12 lessons, 12 teachers,

4 classes of 9th graders

Teachers' questionnaire

8 EFL and 4 GFL teachers

Students' questionnaire

64 EFL and 36 GFL students

Teachers' interview

2 EFL and 2 GFL teachers
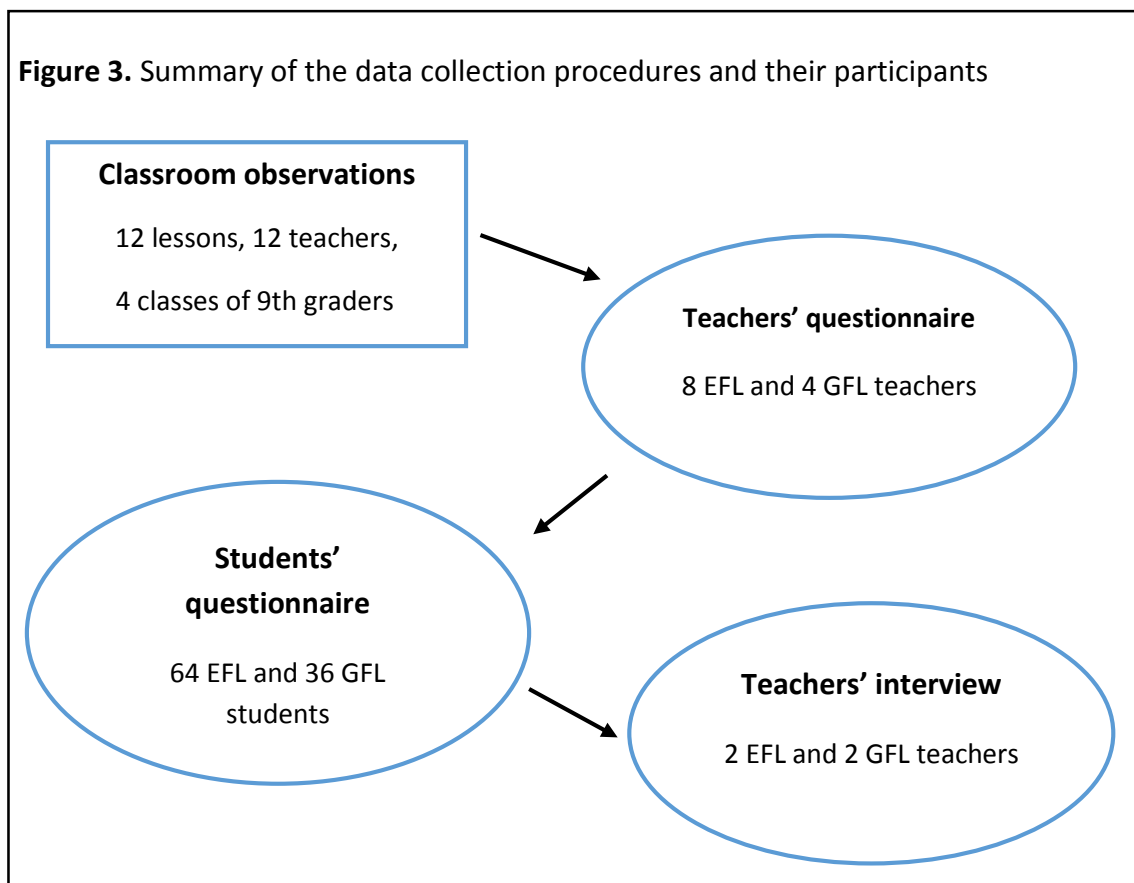
Chapter 4 Results and discussions

This chapter presents the results of my research. The aim is to analyse the outcomes of the study and draw conclusions from these findings. The chapter provides the analysis of the data collected in the course of the present research. It is divided into four main sections which cover the major areas of concern to answer the research questions. The first section draws the outlines of teachers' understanding about LA with further particular areas to be presented. The second section focuses on the relationships between EFL and GFL teachers' beliefs and practices. The third section explores language learners' views about LA and their autonomous behaviours, whereas the fourth section looks at the relationship between teachers' and students' beliefs about LA. The purpose is to identify what factors interact in the process of teachers' and learners' perceptions of autonomy in language learning. The final section summarizes the findings and reveals reasons why autonomous language learning behaviour should be encouraged.

4.1 Major areas of concern

The current section provides background to the discussion of the results. For a thorough understanding of the major areas of interest closely related to the final outcomes of the present dissertation several key considerations were highlighted. First, I assumed that LA had to be viewed from various angles. This guided the research to determine areas of interest to focus on. Then these essential issues were considered to be included in the instruments for data collection. The questions of the teachers' and students' questionnaire as well as interview schedules were designed to cover the particular topics (see Chapter 2). In the phase of data collection, the initial areas of interest

eventually expanded into a wider range of ideas. It must be noted that additional issues were expected to emerge in the course of the semi-structured interviews within the qualitative strand of the research, as the questions asked in the qualitative interviews not only determined the directions, but also developed discussions, which generated rich datasets. Therefore, further areas of concern were identified. To achieve reliable results and to accumulate sufficient support for the final outcomes, the data were analysed and examined thoroughly and repeatedly. Analyses and interpretations of the qualitative and quantitative data were carried out in close relation to the key issues identified. During the whole process of the research I paid particular attention to the emerging patterns and directions to arrive at more focused answers to the research questions of the present study. Finally, assumptions were summarized and organized: the main topics of interest are presented in Table 8. The results are presented and discussed following the order of the research questions.

This section gives a summary of the main points answering the first research question and discusses the results from the classroom observations, the teachers' questionnaire and the interviews with two EFL and two GFL teachers. Findings are to be presented about (1) language teachers' understanding of LA, (2) teachers' views about the extent to which LA contributes to language learning, (3) the way and the extent to which teachers claim to promote LA, (4) teachers' understanding about self-assessment and its implications concerning their classroom practices, (5) teachers' perceived level of their students' autonomy in language learning, (6) the challenges teachers claim to face in helping students become more autonomous, (7) the extent to which teachers feel autonomous in their professional development and teaching practice.

Table 8

Main areas of concern

	Beliefs	**Practices**	**Comparison**
EFL teachers	Teachers' beliefs about LA and SA	LA supportive practices	Relationships between EFL and GFL teachers' beliefs about LA and SA Relationships between EFL and GFL teachers' practices concerning LA and self-assessment Relationships between EFL teachers' and students' autonomous beliefs
GFL teachers	Teachers' beliefs about LA and SA	LA supportive practices	Relationships between EFL and GFL teachers' beliefs about LA and SA Relationships between EFL and GFL teachers' practices concerning LA and self-assessment Relationships between GFL teachers' and students' autonomous beliefs
Language learners	Students' beliefs about LA and SA	Autonomous behaviour in language learning	Relationships between EFL and GFL teachers' and language learners' autonomous beliefs Relationships between students' beliefs about LA and their autonomous behaviours

4.2 Language teachers' beliefs about LA

In recent years, several research (see section 2.1.7) has been done on the role of LA in the learning process (Cotterall, 1995a, 1995b; Dickinson, 1995; Little 1991, 2007, Nunan, 1988) and on the interrelatedness of teacher autonomy and LA (Benson, 2001, 2013; Joshi, 2011; La Ganza, 2008; Lamb, 2008; Little, 1995, 2007; Nakata, 2011; Sinclair, 2008; Smith, 2008; Smith & Ushioda, 2009). Therefore, it was considered important to find out the extent to which participants, both students and teachers, demonstrated autonomous behaviours through their professional development.

Firstly, classroom observations allowed me to learn about the teaching methodology that the different teachers applied, as well as to determine in what way the concept of LA was supported in the language classroom and the way it was implemented. Observational data helped to finalize the focal points of the questionnaire and to select the participants for the interview phase of the present study. The questionnaire, consisting of both open-ended and Likert-type questions made it possible to collect rich data relevant for my research, even with a relatively small number of participants. Finally, four respondents were asked to reflect on their views concerning LA through semi-structured interviews. Although the instrument was designed to trigger memories and views, it was meant to elicit more than simple recall. The interviews intended to look into FL teachers' beliefs about LA expressed in narratives: what LA meant to the teacher participants, what lived experiences they narrated to illustrate the process of arriving to their recent beliefs, and how they became aware of their own autonomy. This issue was included in the interview schedule to increase the depth of the discussion and to foster thinking about the concept of LA. In recognition of the importance of these areas of interest, each of them was probed in the interviews so that conclusions could be drawn together.

4.2.1 Language teachers' understanding of LA

According to the results of the questionnaire, the language teachers' understanding of LA was in line with previous findings (Benson, 2001; Dickinson, 1995; Little, 1991). Participants understood LA as responsibility for and control over one's own learning, goal-orientedness, self-direction, need and possibility for decision about the learning content, learning strategies and the pace of learning. Another recurring concept was

students' ability to identify their strengths and weaknesses; autonomous learning was viewed to happen at home or at school within non-frontal educational context. Respondents emphasised the importance of teacher-directedness, teachers' role in raising and maintaining motivation, identifying and meeting students' needs, as well as providing students with choice of decision.

The results showed that language teachers viewed motivation as the most powerful factor to influence LA (five mentions), with two explicit mentions of intrinsic motivation (interest in the language) and extrinsic motivation (school leaving exam, wish to take a language exam). The institutional context (four) and family background (three) were also believed to have an impact on LA. By institutional context participants understood the personality of the teacher, classroom atmosphere, group size, curriculum and the course books used in the language classes. Other external factors, such as peer influence (two), previous learning experience (two), students' age (one), learners' language aptitude (one) and self-knowledge (one) were also found to influence LA.

Further insight emerged into teachers' beliefs about LA from the interviews, where the opening question invited teachers to elaborate on what they meant by LA, which revealed the lack of agreement in understanding the concept of LA. For example, Kata defined LA as awareness of the need for learning outside the school, by which she meant completing course book-based language exercises and revision. Luca identified LA as the ability to control the learning process and to choose the most effective language learning strategies, whereas Róza claimed self-confidence and willingness to communicate to be the most important elements in LA. She also believed that autonomous learners would make teachers redundant. For Bernadett the concept

meant that "the learner tries to do her work independently, directed by the teacher or by her parents. So there has to be some directedness, but the emphasis is on independence".

According to the definition of LA for the present research, learners' willingness and capacity to take responsibility to control their learning process are key factors, and the learning process is understood to take place both inside and outside the classroom. Willingness refers here to the students' intention to learn a language and capacity comprises the ability to use study skills and knowledge of the target language that enables control over the learning task. Autonomous students are seen to be able to work independently, although with support from teachers.

The results resonate with Benson and Voller (1997) that concepts of autonomy have been used in various ways: for situations in which students learn entirely on their own, for skills which can be used in self-directed learning for learners' responsibility for their own learning, and for capacity which is may be supported by formal education. Autonomy is seen as a complex concept (Benson, 1997, 2011b), moreover, despite the different definitions of LA, two central features were identified to be attributes of LA: learners' willingness to take responsibility for the organisation of the learning process and responsibility for their own learning (Benson, 2001, 2013; Benson & Voller, 1997; Dickinson, 1995; Pemberton, Li, Or, & Pierson, 1996).

Teachers highlighted the psychological aspect of LA (Little, 1991), taking in consideration mental and emotional characteristics, learners' ability or capacity, involving psychological characteristics such as self-efficacy (Benson, 2001, 2007, 2013; Holec, 1981; Little, 1995). Participants seemed to touch upon the technical perspective of LA, which views autonomous learners to have the necessary skills and strategies

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(Oxford, 2008) which enable them to learn a language without institutional constraints and without the presence of a teacher (Benson, 1997). The latter concept was mentioned only by a single participant, which reveals to one of the most common misconceptions: participants understood autonomy as a synonym for self-instruction which was seen as learning without a teacher (Benson, 2001, 2013; Dickinson, 1987; Little, 1991).

4.2.1.1 Teachers' beliefs about the contributing factors to learner autonomy

Concerning the relationship between LA and age, all teachers considered life experience and language learning experience more relevant than age. Teachers agreed that language learners who were more mature and with more learning experiences were more likely to become aware of the benefits of LA as they become aware of their goals, strengths and weaknesses. However, Róza and Bernadett added that younger students were more receptive for LA as they grew to have positive attitudes unconsciously, "for example, they watch cartoons in English almost without even noticing the language barrier". Róza and Bernadett believed that an early support in autonomous learning contributes to achieving a higher level of autonomy by adulthood.

The results revealed that teachers were aware of the sociocultural aspect of LA (Benson, 2007), and recognised the influence of the personal and situational factors on autonomous learning. Participants viewed learners as members of a social context who need to cope with different challenges, and emphasised the importance of the family background in developing autonomy in language learning. They agreed that parental support and guidance were essential, and that models and directions to follow should be provided:

> Family background means a lot, if students are paid attention at home, and they are introduced to the right strategies. Obviously, if a child is not paid attention, it would not develop her autonomy, she would feel that her parents are not interested in her, she would lose her motivation and would not make any extra effort. (extract from the interview with Kata)

When teachers' views concerning the relationship between LA and language proficiency were explored, two interviewees needed clarification: Róza associated proficiency with knowledge that can be evaluated at school, while Kata mistook it for language learning aptitude. After clarifying the question, Róza said that in her view the increased level of autonomy does not necessarily mean a more proficient learner, and that most students need to be instructed as complete autonomy is an extremely rare phenomenon as pointed out by Nunan (1997). Kata agreed on LA not being dependent on proficiency and supported her view by narrating her own experience as a language learner. When she started secondary school she had difficulties with learning English, even though her teacher tried to differentiate:

> She taught us grammar in huge steps, at about the second lesson we were learning about present perfect, I will never forget how difficult it was, I never knew what was happening. I would revise after every lesson at home, I labelled everything in Hungarian, I bought a dictionary from my pocket money because I realised that I couldn't do it without it. I tried to figure out the 'why'-s, I really had hard time because nobody helped me, but I kept learning on my own because I wanted to understand what happened at the lessons.

The relationship between the development of autonomy and language proficiency was found to be complex. Teachers had diverging views about the interrelatedness of the two concepts. Bernadett had an inverted view about the direction of the relationship between language proficiency and LA: she claimed that "a more proficient language learner is more likely to become autonomous as she can improve herself more easily". However, three participants agreed that levels of language

proficiency cannot be correlated with stages of autonomy (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). As Luca worded it, "it is more a question of determination, therefore autonomy can exist at almost every level of language proficiency. I know many people who learned more languages from the beginning autonomously".

All interviewees agreed that motivation is crucial in autonomous language learning, as pointed out by previous research (Benson & Voller, 1997; Csizér & Kormos, 2012; Noels, 2000; Ushioda, 2011), claiming that if students made extra effort at home and arrived at the lesson more thoroughly prepared, through positive feedback they could become more motivated to learn autonomously, which would lead to more effective learning (Cotterall, 1995a, 1995b; Dam, 1995; Dickinson, 1995; Little, 2007; Smith, 2008). Teachers considered willingness and determination key factors in autonomous language learning behaviour, and emphasised that regardless of their language proficiency levels, students would develop autonomy only if they were willing to take responsibility for their learning (Dam, 1995). Luca stated that "motivation and language learning are strongly interrelated (…) if I know what I want, I can do it. I can find time for the things that are important for me". Every participant mentioned extrinsic motives (language exam, work abroad) to fuel learners' motivation, however, only Kata touched upon intrinsic motives as interest in the target language.

The interviews revealed diverging views regarding language teachers' understanding of autonomous behaviour in the classroom. Róza meant by the concept that students work individually, in pairs or in groups, this way they "have to use their brains", although as she mentioned, it often happened that only a single and mostly the same person was active in a group. Luca said that she disliked pair work as "students can hide behind each other". For Kata autonomous behaviour meant individual

presentations of freely chosen topics (e.g. favourite town) or individual work on topics to be prepared for the school leaving exam. By autonomy Bernadett meant a supportive classroom environment avoiding frontal teaching, decreased importance of teachers' role as authority. She also expressed her wish for more lessons and smaller groups, where teachers could differentiate according to students' needs and the teacher should not be present at every stage of learning. She envisaged that students "will have to do alone lots of things, (…) they would work in groups, as a teacher I do not have to instruct every moment, I would provide them with tasks, and they would work in a creative way". Obviously, Bernadett viewed autonomy as a desirable goal to reach, however, the language use (will, would) and the content of her answers implied that she did not see the development of LA feasible due to external constraints.

Participants' views support findings which claim that several misconceptions exist in the way teachers perceive autonomous behaviour (Benson, 2008; Joshi, 2011; Martinez, 2008). This was also expressed in their answers about manifestation of LA outside the classroom. According to Róza's understanding, an autonomous learner watches films in the target language, uses the Internet as self-access learning, and looks for opportunities to communicate in English. Kata added to this that autonomous learners use the Internet for contacting English speaking groups or individuals and make efforts to understand the lyrics of their favourite songs, buy and use a dictionary "instead of reaching out for the Google translator". In her view, autonomous learners involve the target language in many ways in their everyday life. Seemingly, Kata understood LA as learning outside the classroom without any teacher intervention (Benson, 2008; Joshi, 2011; Martinez, 2008), as she could give a long list of activities which could be done outside the classroom to enhance LA, but did mention any ways to

support LA in the classroom. Luca and Bernadett agreed that autonomous behaviour outside the classroom comprises completing language exercises to support classroom material, to prepare and revise for the language lessons.

Róza and Bernadett were aware of the strong potential of technology to develop autonomous behaviour as it provides learners with opportunities take control over their learning. Teachers claimed that with the help of technology students have access to more space for interaction beyond the classroom, which is in line with previous findings (Benson, 2001, 2011a; Jarvis, 2012; Reinders & White, 2011). However, participants also noted that access to computer and mobile mediated learning should occur with proper guidance, and agreed that the effectiveness of learning is influenced by the way in which technology is used. Bernadett mentioned that adult learners benefit less from technology based learning, they were not as accustomed to this way of learning as the more computer-literate younger generation.

When I asked the participants about the experiences that shaped their views on autonomy in teaching and in learning, and which influenced their practice to support autonomy in language learning, as a first reaction they tried to recall memories of formal instruction focusing on LA, revealing no explicit influencing factor. Moreover, Róza expressed her surprise as *"I've never thought about it".* When asked about the influences on the way they teach, all participants mentioned their own learning experiences, the efforts they made to reach their goals and the impact of their previous teachers. Róza reported to be led in her teaching practice by negative examples from her past as a learner: she explained that she knew what she intended to avoid, mentioning rote learning as an example. None of the participants could recall events, trainings, or readings that influenced them in the formation of their current views on

LA. Kata said that "maybe we had something about LA in the college or at the university, but I don't remember it at all", then she added that her views on LA were shaped by her own learning experience, which resonates with Borg (2006) and Yildrim (2008). This implies that interviewees acquired fostering and advising skills on–the-job, pointing towards the need for specific training to be prepared for supporting autonomy in language learning (Al Asmari, 2013; Reinders, Sakui & Akakura, 2011).

Seemingly, experience in language learning and in teaching influenced teachers' beliefs about LA. However, a key factor missing in participants' description of LA is teacher-student negotiation about the learning process (Benson, 2001, 2013b; Nunan, 1997). With their teacher training and working experience in Hungary, it is possible that the teachers' limited understanding of LA originates from the traditional teacher-centred approach to language teaching and learning. Within this approach, teachers are seen as controllers and knowledge providers in the class rather than counsellors and facilitators as it has been agreed by Benson (1997), Dam (2008), Little (1991), Nunan (1997) and Voller (1997) as roles expected in a classroom where learners are supported to become involved in their learning process.

4.2.2 Teachers' views about the extent to which LA contributes to language learning

The results of the questionnaire revealed that teachers agreed on the positive effects of LA on language learning. Participants mentioned a number of benefits among which the most prevalent were that through autonomous learning the pace of learning could be personalised to meet learners needs (five mentions), it loosens time and institutional constraints (four), leads to deeper understanding (four) and more efficient learning (two). Teachers also mentioned that LA gave learners a sense of achievement, helped in

goal-setting and decision making (one each). Among the drawbacks of LA teachers mentioned that autonomous behaviour needs strength of will, and self-discipline (three mentions), as in lack of these traits weaker students could fall behind. Teachers expressed their concern that learners may not be able to identify their strengths and weaknesses. Participants also considered error correction problematic when supporting LA (two), furthermore, they were afraid of error fossilisation (two) and feared to lose control over their lessons. Further views suggested that LA had no disadvantages, moreover, all school subjects should support it.

Participants agreed that an autonomous learner is conscious and goal-oriented (seven mentions), and is aware of her strengths and weaknesses (four). An autonomous learner was seen as a motivated person (two), who can maintain her motivation and is able to overcome the difficulties occurring during the learning process by asking for help (two). Teachers believed that autonomous learners benefit from learning opportunities outside the classroom, apply appropriate learning strategies, they are self-confident, creative and have good communicational skills (one mention each), characteristics which have been discussed in the literature (Cotterall, 1995a, 1995b; Dickinson, 1995; Little 1991, 2007). The questionnaire revealed that non-autonomous learners were considered demotivated (four mentions), who expect to be instructed by the teacher (three), they are disinterested (two), lazy and insecure (one mention each). Two respondents blamed lack of language learning aptitude for non-autonomous behaviour. Teachers associated non-autonomous learners with mostly negative terms, implying that autonomy is highly desirable.

Concerning teachers' roles in supporting autonomy, respondents' answers gravitated towards three concepts: teachers should strengthen motivation (five

mentions), teachers should provide knowledge about metacognitive strategies (five) and they should serve as a compass by giving direction (five). One participant claimed that teachers' main role was to organise and manage the process of learning.

In the interviews teachers were asked to elaborate on their views and they revealed beliefs that, while autonomous learners can learn on her own, without teacher intervention, non- autonomous learners have to be directed, lack of autonomy could originate from low learning ability and lack of motivation (Bernadett), implying helplessness, a set situation which cannot be changed. Luca claimed that the main difference lies in the ability to identify needs. This ability was believed to depend on personality traits, which means that teachers cannot change it. Moreover, Róza also showed reliance on individual differences as in her view autonomous leaners are self-confident, which was not seen to be necessarily related to the command of the target language.

4.2.3 The way and the extent to which teachers claim to promote LA

The questionnaire revealed that respondents claimed to support LA by encouraging their students to read in the target language (eight mentions), one of them suggested graded readers, while another respondent proposed the use of authentic material for reading. Teachers reported to prepare their learners for presentations (five), incited them to develop their listening skills by using modern media (five) and watching films (three), use the internet (three) to complete online language exercises (one). Furthermore, participants mentioned to provide learners with (unspecified) extra language exercises (three), writing tasks (two) and communicational tasks (two). Teachers also claimed to support LA by involving their students in group work (four) or

project work (two), while there was a single mention of pair work or playing language games in the classroom.

The interviews provided a more fine-grained picture about the way and the extent to which teachers promoted LA. Róza reported that she often brought extra materials to her History and English classes, such as magazines or internet resources. Her students were regularly asked to make presentations on topics of their own choice. She let her students come up with ideas and tried to find time for them, especially if it was related to recent events, even if she had to diverge from the syllabus: "like last year, when we had the flood, a student made a presentation about his grandfather's memories about the great flood in Baja". Students could bring in their favourite songs to listen with lyrics: "interestingly, this can be done extremely well even by the weakest students". She thought that giving too much homework was not a good idea, as uninterested students would simply copy it before the lesson. She found it important to create a stress-free classroom atmosphere, to provide even low-performing students with opportunities where they could have a sense of achievement. She also claimed that she intended to avoid rote learning.

As opposed to Róza, Bernadett said she fostered LA by providing her students with homework regularly, although she also mentioned students' reluctance to do their homework. She claimed to support her learners' autonomy by bringing extra reading and writing tasks to be done in the class individually, and also by encouraging project work or individual presentation. However, she mentioned as a drawback the frequent boredom of the audience, which she overcame with worksheets on the topic of the presentations to assess them. She claimed to be aware of the usefulness of smart boards, however, she said she preferred using the language lab, which she found more

effective for language learning, as students have the possibility to work at their own pace and to assess themselves when doing online tests. Bernadett's groups watched cartoons and films with worksheets three times during a school year to develop learners' vocabulary and listening comprehension skill. She expressed her worry about her students' perception of the German language, stating that most learners consider German only a school subject in their timetable, and they could not see its benefits as a language.

In agreement with Bernadett, Kata also supported LA by giving extra homework which later was rewarded with a mark "if it wasn't done with Google translator". She encouraged students from her advanced level group for individual elaboration of the topics for the school leaving exam, although she mentioned that this was a time consuming burden for her, as later she would correct these compositions, however, as "students know that their oral reports about these topics will be evaluated, they do these writings willingly". She also suggested that individual presentations should take place on a weekly basis, and to be graded accordingly. However, she expressed her pessimism about its feasibility, as "the whole material should be reshaped".

Luca said that she promoted LA by providing her learners with advice and learning strategies which worked for her as a language learner. She mentioned as examples individual memorisation of words in a set time, or writing conversations which students could use as patterns later. Luca claimed that she gave opportunities for reflection: before starting a new topic students were given two minutes to think through what they already knew. She preferred pair work to group work, as it made it easier to maintain class-discipline, moreover, she made her students sit alone when pair work

was not involved, as she was "fed up with them whenever sitting next to each other they would not stop talking".

The most prevalent issues emerging from the questionnaire were that participants offered possibilities for decision about the topics of the projects or presentations (four mentions), ways of processing topics (three), the order of the tasks (three), the dates of progress tests (two); and there was only one mention of free choice of reading and decision about the content of the lesson by making suggestions to the teachers about which song to listen to. The interviews revealed that although all teachers felt constrained by the curriculum and the syllabus, they had diverging views about the level of freedom their students should be given in the classroom. Kata, for example, let her students decide about the date of the tests, they could vote about it, but she didn't like to give them opportunities to decide about other issues, "or else they'll become spoilt". She thought that students needed constant control, monitoring and assessment, otherwise they would feel that there was no attention paid to them, "if there were no marks, there would be no stake, and they would do whatever they want". The reason for this could be that she was not comfortable handing over the control to her students. Interestingly, her views as autonomous learner did not result in supporting LA in teaching, they did not influence her teaching practice as she seemed to treat her students as talking heads (Krashen, 2009). Luca also gave a possibility for decision about the date of the tests, however, she said that her students could decide to elaborate on a chosen topic to be corrected and commented by the teacher later. She claimed to provide learners with possibilities for decision making concerning work form and content: "sometimes I am suggestible regarding methods, when I can see that they are not open for elaborating on a topic individually then we work on it together. Or at

the beginning of the months we discuss the topics and the order of them to be dealt with in the classroom, what are their preferences". Bernadett said that she shaped the difficulty of the discussed topics to meet her students' needs, and played language games when she sensed learners' fatigue. She also involved her learners into decisions about the films to be watched in the classroom. Róza gave freedom to her students by involving them in shaping the material: "I know that we should follow the curriculum and evaluate accordingly (…) but if they (the students) bring anything extra to the lesson, for example a journal article or songs or if they have ideas, it should be supported. (…) If they are interested in something, it might be of the others' benefit, although this depends on the group, too.

In order to be successful in developing LA, teachers need to be aware of their roles and responsibilities, willing to change and involve students in negotiation concerning the learning process. However, when considering teachers' roles as counsellors, teachers should find the balance between too much and too little advising, as pointed out by Sheerin (1997). The interview participants believed that their main roles as teachers were to facilitate learning by motivating their learners, identifying and fulfilling their students' needs, which resonates with Voller (1997). Answers pointed to another role in supporting LA, that of the resource person, as suggested by Camilleri (1999), Ho and Crookall (1995): Róza reported that she brought extra materials, to provide learners with a range of sources. Kata saw her main role in autonomy support as a model, Luca and Bernadett viewed themselves as counsellor: they served as guides, gave advice about how to learn, thus provided their students with metacognitive knowledge, which is in line with Joshi (2011) and Yang (1998), who emphasised teachers' role in helping learners understand learning strategies to facilitate their independence

in learning. However, this knowledge was reported to be acquired through participants' own learning experiences, not during teacher education. Seemingly, the strategies they could try in the past as learners had bigger influence on their teaching than the knowledge acquired through the years of teacher training as it was pointed out by Little (1995). Teachers' attitudes towards autonomy seem to be strongly connected to their own learning experiences and influence teachers' roles in fostering their learners' autonomy as was also claimed by Yildirim (2008).

Results revealed that teachers in the present study had limited and uneven knowledge of LA. Although the National Core Curriculum (1996), (NCC) went through several modifications, language teachers kept teaching following their own hidden curriculum (Nikolov, 2003b) and felt more confident using teacher-centred methods than experimenting with and applying a new approach. Although in this school LA has been listed among stated educational aims in the school curriculum, its presence was unevenly reflected by teachers' reported practice.

The NCC considers LA essential in the goal system of FL learning among communicative competence, knowledge of the target culture and intercultural competence. It also emphasises the importance of IT resources in providing possibility for authentic language use outside the school and supporting LA in language learning. The NCC also pointed out the relevance of strategies in efficient language learning which help maintaining and developing language proficiency and transferring skills to other languages. Moreover, the NCC proposed that learners should be able to identify their needs, be provided with knowledge about the available resources, as well as with opportunities for autonomous task completion. Students were also expected to make suggestions concerning learning materials, activities and methods. The pedagogical

programme of the school defined LA as applicable for every school subject, stating that

LA is a key competence meaning that

> The individual is able to learn persistently, he/she is able to organise the learning process individually and in group as well, efficient time and information management included. He/she identifies his/her needs and possibilities, understands the learning process. This, one the one hand means acquiring, processing and internalising new knowledge, on the other hand, it is understood as searching and applying guidance. The efficient and autonomous learning makes the learner build on previous learning and life experience and use his/her knowledge and skills in other situations, at home, at work or in education. (Excerpt from the local curriculum of the school)

The directives outlined in the NCC concerning FL learning were mirrored by the local curriculum of the school, with the additional emphasis on the importance of self-reflection, self-assessment and peer-assessment. Seemingly, although LA was present at the level of policy documents, it did not infiltrate to the level of execution. The expectation that teachers had to prepare students for examinations, the constraint to cover a certain content in a given amount of time led teachers conclude that LA was not on the list of their preferences or at least it was not their responsibility, as it was something that happens outside the classroom.

4.2.4 Teachers' understanding of self-assessment and its implications for their classroom practices

Results showed that teachers offered space for self-assessment through workbook exercises (two), homework (two), group work (two), online tests (two), vocabulary test, oral reports, or did not offer opportunities in any way (one mention each). Two respondents thought that in case of reading and in communication in the target language the level of comprehension was the feedback, which could be understood as

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SA. Two respondents emphasised the importance of the feedback given by the teacher parallel with SA. When asked about ways of self-assessment that could provide a real picture about their students' knowledge, they provided a wide range of answers that showed different approaches to self-assessment. Teachers who thought that workbook exercises with a key (four mentions), oral reports (two), grammar exercises with a key (one) or no way of self-assessment (one mention) would show a real picture about learners' knowledge. They seemed to be biased towards the traditional, formal ways of assessment and considered language rather a school subject, however, two participants provided space for self-assessment out of school in form of online tests where students could check their own answers. Three teachers showed a more real life like approach, viewing language as a tool for communication; they thought that the success of communication in the target language (two), or any kind of authentic language use such as watching films and listening to music (one mention) would mean real feedback to the language learner.

The interviews revealed a dichotomy in participants' approaches to self-assessment, saying that self-assessment made learners feel responsible for their own learning process, and that by revealing their own mistakes they could identify their weaknesses and decide about further actions in order to improve (Luca and Kata). Kata added that strong learners could be motivated by self-assessment, however, weaker students might be discouraged by it. It was not clear how teachers' attitude translated into practice, as the implementation of self-assessment was limited to certain tasks. Similarly, from the interviews no evidence emerged about how teachers encouraged their students to set learning goals. There was little evidence to suggest that self-assessment was a consequently sustained process.

Róza found that accuracy of self-assessment depended on students' age and language proficiency, reflecting findings in the literature (Blanche & Merino, 1989): "The problem is that they don't realise at this age that they are not cheating me, but themselves, and, especially the ninth and tenth graders would like the teacher to praise them (…) and they try to cheat. (…) but as they grow older they realise that self-assessment is good if it is done fairly". Along with Bernadett, Róza also had concerns about accuracy, as she had the impression that her students tended to overestimate their real performances (Blanche & Merino, 1989), and they did not dare to admit that they were falling behind. She added as a drawback of self-assessment that during the process students might only check their results without learning from their mistakes, and the teacher cannot be everywhere to control the situation, which again points to a teacher-centred approach to teaching. The feasibility of self-assessment was found to be challenging in terms of time and availability of resources (Harris, 1997), teachers felt the constraints of their contexts traditionally supporting the teacher-centred approach of assessment (Butler & Lee, 2010; Édes, 2008). The interviews revealed that participants' views on self-assessment were strongly influenced by their previous learning experience, which resonates with Joshi's (2011) and Yildirim's (2008) findings.

4.2.5 Teachers' perceived level of their students' autonomy in language learning

The results of the questionnaire showed that teachers found their students' level of autonomy as language learners rather low. Three teachers thought that although some of their students were motivated to set their own learning goals, most of their learners were reluctant to make extra efforts concerning language learning. Moreover, five participants described their students' attitude towards LA using the same adjectives

with which they characterised non-autonomous learners in general: passive, insecure, disinterested and demotivated, waiting for the others to decide, not being conscious enough for LA. Except of one participant, who claimed that her students tended to be more and more autonomous, all teachers thought that most of their learners showed low levels of autonomy, mostly due to lack of motivation (four mentions), socio-economic background (two), non-LA-supportive learning context, where students were socialised into reliance on the teacher and expecting guidance (two), experiencing difficulties in learning (two), immaturity, previous learning experience and influence of peers (one mention each).

When asked about the ways in which students improve in language learning autonomously, the respondents of the questionnaire referred to the prevalence of modern technology and media. They reported that most of their students developed their LA by watching films (seven mentions), listening to music (five) with special focus on the lyrics (three) and watching television programmes (one). The use of the Internet was mentioned nine times, from which three with the purpose of doing online language exercises and playing computer games respectively, two aiming to look for information, and one to chat in the target language, however, one respondent added that "many of them don't even know how to use the Internet purposefully". There was one mention of reading novels, articles, and revising the classroom material at home as a way for autonomous language improvement.

The interviews indicated that teachers did not have positive beliefs regarding their students' ability and willingness to take control over their own learning, they believed that that the majority of their learners had low levels of autonomy. Bernadett claimed that students liked working at their own pace, she also believed that students

preferred group work to pair work, although sometimes they couldn't handle it; they rather let one of the members take control over the task and relied totally on that person, avoiding any extra work. However, Bernadett also mentioned that some students volunteered to give individual presentations with the help of predefined guidelines, adding though that the main drives of these voluntary presentations were the grades they could earn, which means that she herself gave the extrinsic motive to these tasks. Luca and Kata claimed that students needed control as they expected help from the outside: "they should be told and explained how or what should be done in order to be able to start working", which reveals the importance of providing appropriate scaffolding. Kata added that students needed the sense of control as thus they felt they were paid attention to, otherwise they would lose interest in completing the given task. Along with Bernadett, Róza believed that very few students could capitalise on the available resources, which she perceived to be connected to students' socio-educational background and the lack of support part of the school. She claimed that "by the time they arrive at secondary school it's too late", only those students whose autonomy was supported from their childhood could be engaged easily in autonomous language learning.

Bernadett claimed that the reason for her students' low level of autonomy was their negative attitude towards learning German: "it's difficult, probably this language doesn't motivate them, they can't hear the language on the street, there is no possibility for practice, even if they watch television, they watch it in Hungarian". Bernadett perceived that her learners viewed the language as a school subject, although it should be mentioned that her own word usage suggests that she also tended to treat the German language as a school subject only: "there are lots of materials on the Internet,

they can download materials for every subject, pronunciation, grammar and others could be practiced". She said that even though some of their students planned to find work in Germany or in Austria, soon they would realise that only a restricted amount of vocabulary was needed in that particular job; therefore they would not be motivated by their future plans. As opposed to Bernadett, Róza viewed the prospect of working abroad rather motivating and also recalled her students boasting about the experience of helping out tourists with directions in English in their hometown. All teachers felt that students were not motivated enough unless they wished to pass a language exam, as was found in other studies (e.g. Édes, 2008). Participants thought that students should arrive at the lessons already motivated (Nikolov, Ottó & Öveges, 2009), thus sparing the effort to be made by the teachers. Teachers believed that their students were more concerned about immediate learning goals, rather than showing long-term engagement with language learning by developing their autonomy.

Bernadett and Kata agreed about students' laziness and disinterest. Both of them sounded rather pessimistic and disappointed regarding their students' attitudes towards LA and language learning. Bernadett, at the same time, expressed her empathy towards her students, saying that due to their high number of lessons and the huge amount of material to be processed, as well as teachers' high expectations, they were overburdened. This made it difficult for them to prepare for every lesson, let alone to relax or spend time with their family. As she concluded, "schools are not student-friendly institutions".

However negative teachers were concerning their learners' attitudes, all of them could recall individual cases when their students showed autonomy in language learning. For example, three interviewees reported to have students who learned to

speak the target language autonomously by watching films and by reading, although these students did not excel in other subjects: "the boy does badly in every subject, but he always knows everything in the English lesson. What's more, when I ask him, he always answers in English, not in Hungarian, he doesn't make any mistakes and he uses words which weren't learned in the class, and I know that he's been watching films since he was a child" (Kata). Luca reported about a student who would ask for the material in advance to prepare the topics for the school leaving exam. Bernadett had a group which prepared for a creative challenge of a competition willingly and enthusiastically: "they just showed me the task, then completed it brilliantly, made a PowerPoint-presentation about it, and they really did it on their own". She admitted that students could be motivated with creative tasks, "they would do it because they wanted to be good, not because I kept goading on it to be presented in the classroom". Similarly, Róza's advanced level group showed autonomous behaviour. She recalled that she had to make efforts to keep pace with the group: "it happened that I didn't know what a word meant and they did (…) and told me where they had met it". Róza's answers revealed her belief that the more proficient the students were, the more likely they were to become autonomous learners and she found self-confidence also related to LA, too.

Overall, participants thought that students liked to be given the possibility for making decisions, although these occasions seemed to be a scarcity. Bernadett mentioned a case when students realised with delight the opportunity to diverge from the prescribed path when completing a certain writing task. However, she added that lots of students had difficulties in composing texts, as apart from making mistakes they had no thoughts to express, "they are just sitting, staring and waiting for somebody else to tell them what to do". In agreement with Bernadett concerning learners' passivity,

Luca added that "too much autonomy isn't good, either, they (students) can't handle it, or they abuse it". She recalled the years when students in the Year of Intensive Language Learning were not given grades but written feedback: "it didn't work, didn't motivate them (…), therefore grades were introduced again, though they shouldn't learn for the grade". All participants agreed that encouraging individual interests and autonomy in language learning should start at an earlier age, which is in line with Nikolov's (2000) findings.

Teachers did not have positive attitudes towards their students' willingness to take responsibility for their own learning. Participants stated that, except for a few learners, most of their students had low levels of autonomy as they were not ready to take control over their learning. Therefore, they perceived students themselves as one of the constraints in fostering LA and believed that LA could not be achieved by all learners. Moreover, teachers referred to their learners' lack of motivation and willingness to make extra efforts, as well as their low level of FL proficiency as the reasons for their lack of or low level of LA. Therefore, teachers tended to believe that students were to blame for not becoming autonomous learners, they did not see their own role in contributing to their learners' autonomy in language learning.

4.2.6 The challenges teachers claim to face in helping students become more autonomous

The open items of the questionnaire revealed that teachers felt challenged by a variety of factors in promoting LA in the classroom, most prevalently by their students' lack of motivation (three mentions), laziness (two), disinterest (two), and lack of time (two). They also felt constrained by their students' frequent excuses, lack of responsibility, different abilities and socioeconomic backgrounds. One of the respondents claimed that students could not handle autonomy, and that too much freedom would lead to chaos in her group.

The second part of the questionnaire addressed two issues with a set of closed questions adapted from Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012): desirability and feasibility of involving learners in decision making about the learning process and of learning to learn skills according to teachers. Figure 4 provides a summary of the teachers' responses. It shows that participants were more positive about the feasibility of student involvement than about its desirability, which contradicts Borg and Al-Busaidi's (2012) findings. Student involvement in decision making was seen to be the most desirable and feasible in setting the objectives of a course, choices about materials and assessment. Teachers thought that the least desirable was to involve learners in decisions about activities, classroom management, topics and teaching methods. These ideas coincide with the least feasible issues for student involvement according to the teachers. The fact that means are higher on feasibility on all items, reveals that teachers believed that LA would be possible, but they didn't think it is applicable in their case.

Figure 4. Feasibility and desirability of student involvement in decision-making
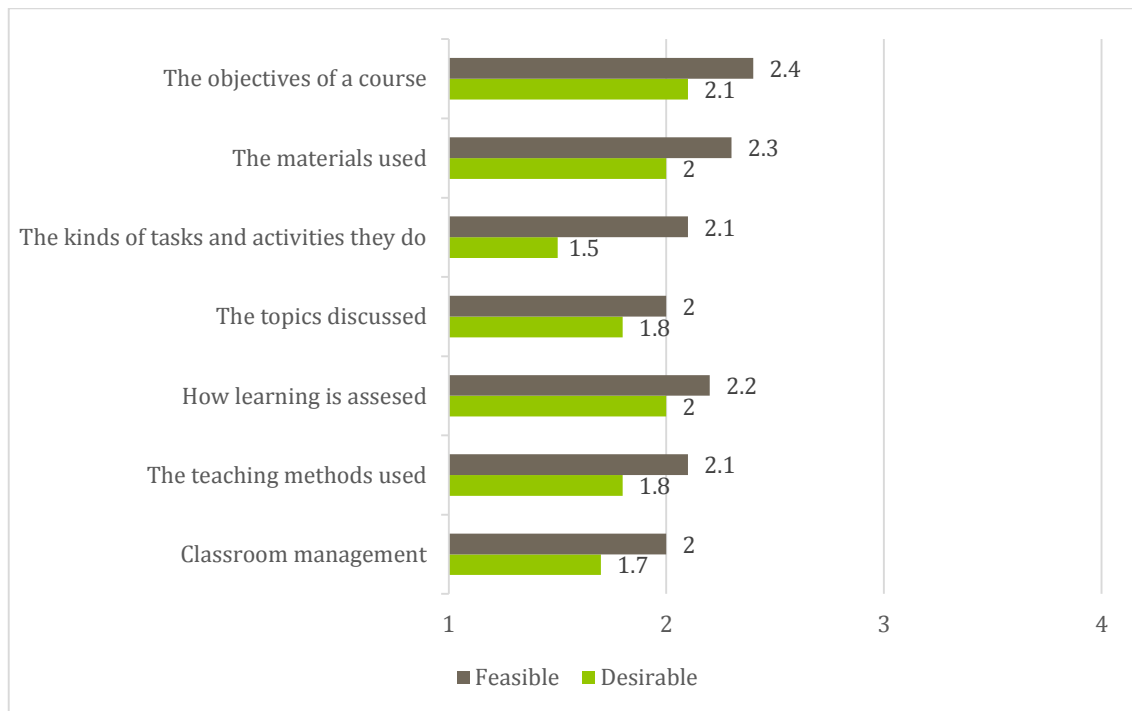
Note. 1= unfeasible/undesirable; 4=very feasible/ desirable, nine teachers' data included

The questionnaire also explored teachers' views about desirability and feasibility of their students developing a range of abilities that are identified as indicators of LA. As shown in Figure 5, desirability was consistently higher than feasibility in all cases. As opposed to the previous set of items, all factors listed here were seen highly desirable for learners: the most highly ranked items were to identify their own strengths and weaknesses and to learn independently and cooperatively. Monitoring progress and identifying needs were the least desirable. Teachers thought that learning independently was the most realistic expectation from students, while they considered monitoring their own progress the least feasible. Figures 4 and 5 revealed that teachers thought that they could do more to foster LA in their teaching contexts, however, they had negative views regarding their students' level of autonomy as language learners.

Figure 5. Feasibility and desirability of learning to learn skills
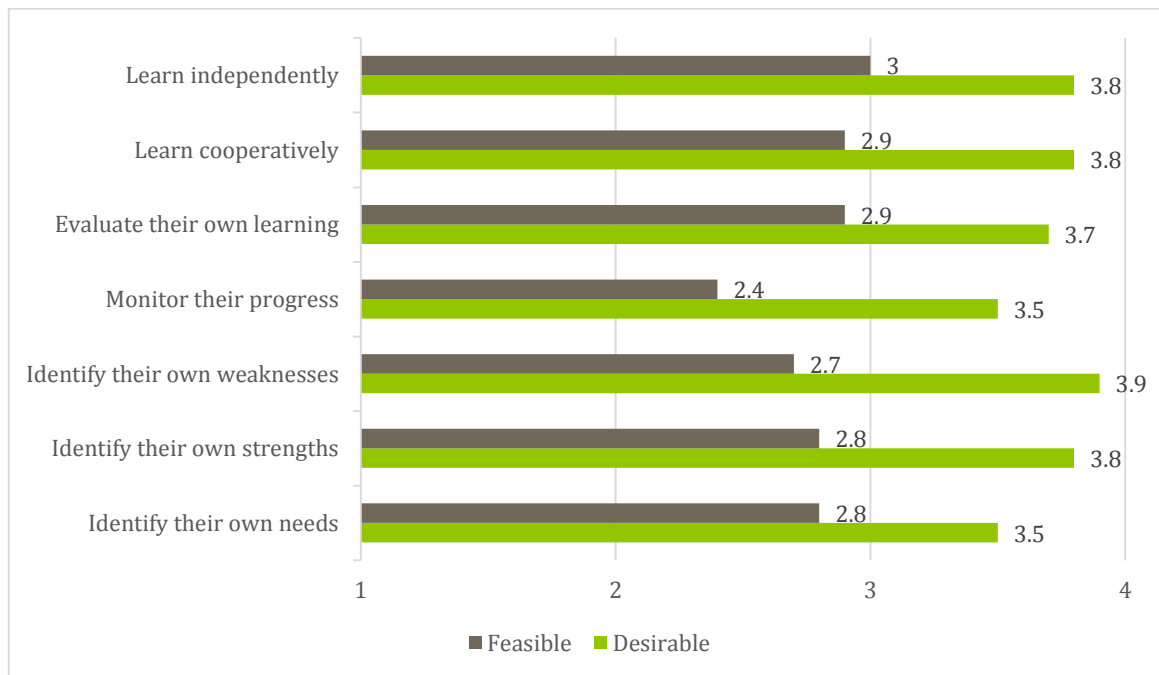
Note. 1= unfeasible/ undesirable; 4=very feasible/ desirable, nine teachers' data included

The interviews revealed a more detailed picture about the reasons why teachers did not feel it was feasible to develop in their learners' skills listed in Figures 4 and 5. Participants agreed that they felt the most challenged in developing LA by their students' lack of motivation, disinterest and frequent excuses which point towards negative attitudes towards learning. Bernadett and Róza thought that one of the reasons for students' negative attitudes is fatigue, the overwhelming amount of expectations student face daily in most of their lessons. Bernadett added that the situation is worsened by students' lack of metacognitive knowledge: "there is a problem with their learning strategies, I wish they could concentrate and were able to take notes, but there are students, who forget everything in seconds and can't apply what they have learnt". She thought that modern technology, which was supposed to save time, was rather time

consuming, as students wasted their time by "not using the Internet in the proper way". Róza added that lack of concentration may be due to the continuous distraction caused by the overuse of technology. Interestingly, three of the four interviewees emphasised the negative effect of technology and only one of them could see the benefits of using computers to facilitate autonomous learning.

Bernadett and Róza agreed that classroom management needed more energy than it had used to. As Róza worded it, "teachers can become tired too, but they have to pretend to be cheerful (…). Maybe because this generation was socialised in the culture of motion pictures (…), I have noticed that if I was tired to move around the classroom (…) and sat down, their (the students') attention declined. They need continuous stimuli". Luca admitted that if there had not been constraints she would have shaped her teaching to meet her students' needs and interests, and made assessment personalised, adding that it would be demanding and time-consuming. Kata said that "I would design the course material, I would be the one to decide what to teach and when to teach it. Obviously, I would emphasise communication, and not grammar, I know that grammar is important, but not the most important".

The participants also complained about institutional constraints, pressure from the expected outcome, and said that they were challenged by large and mixed ability groups. When asked about their perceptions concerning the effect of the Hungarian language teaching tradition on LA, they expressed rather negative views. Bernadett blamed the educational system and the structure of examinations for students' low performance in speaking skills: "even though they pass the language exam, very few of them can use the language. They don't dare, they are not used to it". She claimed that the language teaching tradition in Hungary is too grammar-centred and examination-

oriented: "you can achieve 117 points in the written part of the school leaving exam, while at the oral part of it you can have only 33 points, which suggests that reading and writing are more important than speaking, and this tendency is the same at the language exam". Bernadett expressed her expectation for external support by recalling the time when teaching assistants who were native speakers of the German language were employed at the school, "however, it was strange that students didn't dare to talk to them". She showed pessimism, "I don't know, how it can be changed, maybe generations, maybe this is why they perceive the German language a school subject". This remark points towards the need for change in the classroom, although there is no suggestion or plan how to take action, only the presumption that this is a process that takes a long time. Kata shared Bernadett's pessimism and her feeling of helplessness: "teachers don't have any possibility to do things differently. The whole system is forced on the teacher and the student (…). And I think that students know this, too, that this is pointless, that's why there are lots of students who have been learning (English) for eight years at the elementary school, yet they can only use the Simple Present".

Luca and Róza had opposing views about the role of course books concerning in developing autonomy. Róza thought that "these course books spoon-feed students, they provide ready-made information for consumption, they don't focus on autonomy", while Luca found her course books helpful in supporting LA, as students "can look up lots of things in them individually". Luca added that some students were more comfortable with traditional teaching methods. Róza thought that LA is in its infancy in Hungarian language education, as "there may be trends to support it, but it is not addressed at schools. (…) had it (LA) been supported, most of the language schools could

close down, because eventually a language can be learnt autonomously, even without travelling to the target country, one needs only stamina…".

The current study revealed cases when the teachers, although aware of the benefits of involving their students in the learning process were not confident or creative enough to make changes, and they reported to recycle direct instruction and form-focused activities, as was found in previous research (Lugossy, 2006, 2007). As is shown in Table 9, teachers were reluctant to involve their students in methodological decisions or to let them decide about the selection of learning materials. They also complained about external- and time constraints, similarly to teachers in other contexts (e.g., Camilleri, 1999, 2007; Chan, 2003). This discrepancy may be due to the difference between teachers' theories-in-action and teachers' espoused theories distinguished by Schön (1983). Seemingly, theories-in-action, stemming from teachers' personal and professional biographies, as well as from their teaching contexts are slow to change (Johnson, 2006). Although the NCC along with the Local Curriculum comprise LA among its explicit aims, teachers felt helpless, blamed their circumstances, claiming that that institutional constraints did not make the promotion of LA feasible and they expected external intervention, apparently not seeing how the vicious cycle of learnt helplessness could be broken and what their own role would be. Similarly, as McGrath (2000) claimed, although constraints from the institutional perspective constitute the structure of the professional activity and should serve as reference points, teachers viewed them as the instruments of control.

The present research revealed a conflict between what teachers claimed they wanted to do and what they believed they could do. The reason for this misalignment could be that participants felt pressured to work within the framework of the curriculum

Table 9

Summary of interviewees' beliefs about LA

	Bernadett	**Luca**	**Róza**	**Kata**
Understanding of LA	Individual learning directed by teachers and parents	Ability to control the learning process Choice of the most effective strategies	Individual engagement with the subject of interest Language use out of school	Awareness of the need for learning outside the school doing school-related tasks No teacher intervention
Factors that influence LA	Age Experience Socioeconomic background Parental support Motivation Proficiency	Age Experience Parental support Motivation	Age Experience Parental support Motivation Sense of achievement Self-confidence Willingness to communicate	Experience Parental support Motivation
Teachers' role	Controller Knowledge provider	Counsellor Controller	Supporter Knowledge provider	Controller Knowledge provider Model
Students' autonomous behaviour outside the classroom	Complete language exercises to support classroom material Prepare and revise for the lessons	Complete language exercises to support classroom material Prepare and revise for the lessons	Watch films in English Use the Internet as self-access learning Look for opportunities to communicate in English	Use the Internet for contacting speakers of English Invest in and use dictionary Involve English in everyday life Prepare for presentations individually

Factors that influenced teachers' practice	Own learning experience Previous teacher	Own learning experience Previous teacher	Own learning experience Previous teacher	Own learning experience
Reported practice to foster LA	Extra homework Project work Individual Presentations Shapes the difficulty of topics to students' needs	Provides learners with metacognitive knowledge Opportunity for reflection Pair work	Brings extra materials Class discussion Students can contribute to the content of learning Individual work Pair work Group work	Extra homework Individual elaboration of topics
Students can decide		Date of the test Work form Order of the topics Films to be watched	Content	Date of the test
Approach to SA	Not accurate Not effective	Useful Time consuming	Effective Not accurate if students cheat	Reveals weaknesses Discourages slow achievers
Views about own students' level of LA	Mostly do not feel responsible for their own learning Motivated by grades Negative attitude towards learning	Need control Expect help from the outside Not able to capitalise the available resources Demotivated	Not able to capitalise the available resources Demotivated	Need control Expect help from the outside Demotivated Negative attitude towards learning
Constraints to foster LA	Few lessons Large groups	Students' lack of motivation	Students' lack of motivation	Students' lack of motivation

Students' lack of motivation Students' lack of metacognitive knowledge Students are overburdened Difficulties in classroom management Negative effect of technology Pressure from curriculum Unsuitable exam structure Distraction of technology	Lack of time Negative effect of technology Pressure from curriculum	Students are overburdened Students' lack of metacognitive knowledge Difficulties in classroom management Pressure from curriculum	Negative effect of technology Pressure from curriculum

at a certain pace in order to cover the prescribed materials, with little perceived space for fostering LA. Teachers perceived various external constraints that prevented them from incorporating LA in their pedagogy in their immediate school contexts including lack of time, educational policies, examination-centred expectations, and distraction caused by technology.

Another factor that contributed to the discrepancy between teachers' beliefs about LA and their reported practices is that they found undesirable to pass to the students the responsibility for making decisions. They believed it was more time-saving and effective if the teachers made the decisions themselves, since students did not have the knowledge to make the right choices. Similarly, teachers did not mention negotiating learning with their students. They indicated students' lack of motivation as the main barrier in LA development, which implies that they released the teacher of any responsibility to develop LA and passed it on the learner, which is in line with Nga's (2014) findings.

Teachers' narratives revealed their beliefs that autonomy in language learning can only be achieved by very few learners, a misconception identified by Little (1991). Teachers may have this attitude due to their misunderstanding of LA. Although participants in the present study reported to be aware of the teaching content that had be covered, seemingly, LA was not prioritised as a particular pedagogy to achieve these learning goals, even though its promotion as well as covering the certain amount of material was included in the school documents. This finding is in line with Ennis (1994), who claimed that beliefs are connected to teachers' social environment and develop as a response to possibilities and constraints within the teaching context. Teachers need to understand the constraints upon their practice and find the spaces for integrating the

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development of LA in their pedagogy, as was argued by Lamb (2008). Taking into consideration that teachers felt influenced most by their own learning experience and by their mentor language teachers in their teaching practice and the fact that teachers lacked a clear understanding of LA, while they thought that they could do more to foster LA, it would be essential to incorporate awareness raising concerning LA in teacher training programmes. This would help teachers scaffold their learners' learning process and shape their learning experiences positively regarding autonomy development.

The next section explores the extent to which teachers feel autonomous in their professional development and in their teaching practice along with the way in which teachers think that autonomy in teaching interacts with autonomy in language learning.

4.2.7 Teachers' beliefs about teacher autonomy in professional development and teaching practice

The concept of teacher autonomy caused confusion for all teachers. The interviews revealed that all participants understood teacher autonomy as freedom in teaching, freedom from the curriculum and from course books. They viewed institutional constraints as the instruments of control rather than as reference points and structure for the professional activity (McGrath, 2000; Smith, 2001). Only Róza claimed explicitly that it was the teacher's responsibility to find the spaces within the constraints for manoeuvre, keeping in mind students' needs (Dam, 1995; Lamb, 2008). However, she also added that in her view teacher autonomy also meant freedom from students' influence, emphasising the importance of teacher authority: "TA is needed, otherwise there would be chaos in the classroom". According to her understanding "If I don't do

what I planned, I'm not autonomous". Thus, her concept of teacher autonomy seemed to overlap traits of personal autonomy (Benson, 2013).

4.2.7.1 Autonomy in professional development

As researchers agree that teachers cannot be expected to support the development of their students' autonomy if they have no experience concerning autonomous behaviour in language learning (Joshi, 2011; Lamb, 2008; Little, 1995; Sinclair, 2008; Smith, 2008), it was important to gain insight into teachers' views concerning their own autonomy in their professional development. According to the results of the questionnaire, five participants believed that they were autonomous as language learners, one of them added that "I became really autonomous after I finished school. Before that my teachers and the requirements determined when, what and how I should learn". Two respondents were insecure about their autonomy: "I'm motivated, I just need willpower" and "I feel my limits and weaknesses very often". Two participants did not answer this question.

When speaking about autonomy in their own professional development, the interviewees used strong words (decide, want) which showed determination, however, all answers were given in past tense: "I did everything I needed", "I was motivated", which could imply that they did not consider learning being part of their present. Participants reported out of class use of printed material, attending a language course or asking for help from their teachers. Bernadett recalled that one of her language teachers introduced a new way of keeping record of vocabulary items, which she found very useful. However, when her group got a new teacher, she did not continue learning vocabulary in the way the previous teacher taught them. This implies that teachers'

presence was needed to maintain a particular strategy in the process of learning. As her major experience in developing her own LA Bernadett mentioned reading an Economy textbook in Hungarian when she was teaching ESP and needed content knowledge to understand the notions in economics. She did not give other examples of autonomous behaviour, which may imply that she was probably not fully aware of what the concept of LA covered.

Róza said that she had a private tutor when she was at secondary school because she was interested in the German language, then she became motivated by the language exam, and later she decided to get a degree as an EFL teacher. She experimented with several languages with varying degrees of autonomy: she had no success with Russian during her school years, but as an adult she started learning Serbo-Croatian on her own from a self-study course-book, then she gave it up and started learning Italian on a language course. She mentioned that although she could learn autonomously, her motivation gradually faded away, she "simply didn't have the drive to keep learning". Róza also mentioned that her role as a teacher influenced her behaviour as a learner: when she was studying another FL she expected to be instructed. Luca, who said that "I was very autonomous as a language learner: I started learning German in secondary school and I decided very soon that I wanted to become a German teacher, and I worked really hard, but finally I could reach my goal", also recalled that she was affected by the personality of her teacher, who helped her in her learning process. Kata also reported strong determination, she said that she started to learn autonomously when she went to another school and wanted to catch up with the rest of the group. However, contrary to Luca, she recalled her learning process as solitary painful effort without any help from

teachers, revealing that she understood LA as a learning process where teacher interaction was not desired:

> The others in my group had been learning English for seven years, so the teacher tried to differentiate, she taught us grammar, but in huge steps, like, in the second week we were learning Present Perfect. I will never forget it, it was very difficult (…) Then I had to sit down after every lesson (…) I tried very hard, and I revised the whole material, I tried to explain the 'whys'. I will never forget it, it was a struggle (…) because nobody could help at that time, but I wanted to succeed (extract from the interview with Kata).

It should be noted that three interviewees emphasised the influence of their previous teachers, their attitudes towards language learning were shaped by their relationship with their teachers. As Bernadett worded it, "the teacher's personality is essential: you may get to like her or hate her, or even if you are neutral, learners' affective factors are very important, not only their language learning capacities, but also the relationship they have (with their teachers)", which resonates with Little (1995).

4.2.7.2 Autonomy in language teaching

The questionnaire shed light on a wide range of perceived levels of autonomy in language teaching. One participant misunderstood teacher autonomy for LA, and another did not elaborate on this question. The remaining answers revealed that teachers felt lucky for being English language teachers because of the many possibilities for supporting LA and the benefits of technology (two mentions), that there were some possibilities to act autonomously and shape the lesson to meet students' needs (two), that it was difficult but they tried hard (one), that they had no autonomy in teaching at all (one), and that there was too much autonomy (one): "there are lots of teachers who don't follow the syllabus, that's why it would be useful if we had some kind of a

supervising system". It should be noted here that the interviews were conducted before the programme for lifelong professional development for teachers was introduced.

The interviews also revealed different levels of autonomy in participants' teaching practice, which seemed to influence their awareness of their roles in supporting LA. Interviewees reported that they performed their professional tasks autonomously in the language classroom by tailoring the content and the difficulty of the materials to students' needs, as well as by choosing the activities according their students' energy levels: Bernadett mentioned that they played language games with her learners when they seemed tired, or offered them opportunities to contribute to the lessons with songs. Luca and Bernadett mentioned, although rarely, watching films in the target language and lessons in the language lab. They also reported to give students a chance to decide in the order of the topics discussed, the date and type and sometimes even in the content of the assessment.

As for the relationship between teacher autonomy and LA, teachers had diverging views. Kata thought that there was no space for autonomy for a teacher at her school, which she found problematic because she thought that students sensed lack of teacher autonomy as a weakness, which could affect students' attitude towards the teacher and the language lesson. She implied that lack of teacher autonomy affected LA negatively. Kata believed that teacher autonomy did not influence LA.: "I keep telling them about my own example, but I think that only those would listen to it who are interested (in language learning), so we are back to motivation again". Róza also said that she tried to influence her students by talking about her own experiences as an autonomous learner, adding, in agreement with Kata, that teachers had an important role as models to be followed. Luca also emphasised the importance of telling their own

stories as language learners, and she noted that, although the expected learning outcome should be kept in mind, "what the teacher does to reach it, is up to her, and if I can identify their needs, I can tailor the material accordingly".

Three of the participants emphasised the influence of their previous language teachers, mentioning positive influences ("to some extent I teach in the same way she did") and negative impacts as well. The negative influence led to practice fuelled by the wish to avoid the same mistakes that the teacher in the past had made. Kata, who learned alone without any support from her language teachers, blamed the school and the curriculum for her lack of autonomy as a teacher, she did not recall any specific way to act autonomously in her teaching practice.

As discussed in section 4.2.6, teachers felt challenged by their students' lack of motivation, lack of time, institutional constraints, and pressure due to the expected learning outcome. The frequent mention of external constraints point towards the conclusion that the participants did not feel responsible for their teaching, and thus their level of autonomy as teachers was low. The language they used, "could be", "should be", showed the strong influence of the powerful socio-educational tradition: learned helplessness (Dörnyei, 1994). Although, as Raya and Vieira (2015) argued, autonomy in teaching is not about being free from external constraints and following individual desires; willingness to challenge non-democratic traditions is essential in "developing a professional sense of agency in teaching that is directly connected with promoting the learners' agency in learning" (Raya & Vieira, 2015, p. 35).

Given that language teachers are more likely to promote autonomous language learning if their own education had encouraged LA or they had experience about what it is to be an autonomous learner (e. g., Joshi, 2011; Lamb, 2008), it was revealing that

all participants could recall learning experiences which they considered instances of autonomous learning. However, as they provided more details about these memories, it turned out that these occurrences of learning were not as autonomous as perceived. The interviewees showed different levels of self-direction, their learning was fuelled by both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation (Dörnyei, 1994): interest in a foreign language, wish to catch up with the rest of the group, intention to take a language exam, and the wish to become a language teacher. The importance of teachers' level of autonomy lies in findings showing that LA interacts with teacher autonomy (Joshi, 2011; Lamb, 2008; Little, 1995; Sinclair, 2008; Smith, 2008), as well as in the fact that teachers' supportive practices concerning LA could be influenced by their negative attitudes towards autonomy originating from their own learning experiences. The next section discusses the relationship between teachers' beliefs about LA, their self-reported classroom practices and their observed teaching practices to foster LA.

4.3 Relationships of beliefs and self-reported practices related to observed classroom practices regarding the development of LA.

Despite the general agreement on the benefits of implementing the pedagogy for LA in language education, autonomy seemed to remain at a theoretical level in the classroom as it was claimed by Raya and Vieira (2015), and Vázquez (2015). The connection between teachers' beliefs and their teaching practices and the imprint of the teaching context on these seem to contribute to the extent to which teachers apply teaching practices which foster LA, as discussed in section 2.4.1. This section explores the extent to which LA appeared as an educational goal in the FL classroom through seeking uses

of strategies for autonomy support and their correspondence with teachers' stated beliefs concerning LA.

Observation, as a powerful tool, allowed to gain insights into the classroom processes (Dörnyei, 2007; Griffee, 2012; Mackey & Gass, 2005) and provided direct information about teachers' actual classroom practices. Eight EFL teachers and four GFL teachers were involved in the classroom observation (see section 3.5). As mentioned in section 3.1, classroom observations, apart from providing data about teachers' practices, also served as springboard for selecting participants for the interview phase of the study. Therefore, as I was looking for autonomy supportive practices, I chose participants from the two ends of the scale: Bernadett and Róza seemed to support LA in the classroom to some extent, whereas in Luca's and Kata's case there was a slight trace or no sign of such an intention. This section will provide an overall discussion of all the observed classes comparing practices to views stated in the teachers' questionnaire, followed by a more detailed overview on the four interviewees' observed lessons examined in the light of their beliefs revealed in the interviews.

The observations focused on autonomy supportive pedagogical strategies, as elaborated by Benson (2011b): encouraging student preparation, drawing on out-of-class experience, using authentic materials, encouraging independent inquiry and divergent student outcomes, involving students in task design, supporting student-student interaction. Implementing self- and peer-assessment, encouraging students' reflection were also among the sought strategies. In an autonomy supportive classroom learners are encouraged to reflect on their learning experiences and on their opportunities for decision making, thus acquiring knowledge not only about the target language, but also about the learning process itself.

Concerning the physical arrangement of the classroom, observations revealed that the traditional straight-row arrangement with desks facing the blackboard was predominant in all the observed lessons. Although it would have been possible for the teachers to arrange the class differently, for example in small groups or in a U-shaped arrangement for better group interactions, none of the observed teachers intended to do so. The preference of the traditional seating arrangement where the teachers could hold control implies lack of awareness of the influence of the physical arrangement on learning or lack of confidence to allow students more opportunities for interaction in the class and to apply more learner-centred practices.

Through classroom observation I could collect data from very different types of lessons concerning LA, ranging from totally teacher-centred work to lessons based on students' presentations. Teachers used course books accompanied with workbooks in nine cases, two lessons were built on students' presentations completed with worksheets and copies from different course books, and one of the lessons was based on copies of grammar exercises. The most frequently occurring elements of LA supportive practice were allowing students choose the topic of their presentation or of their writing task to be done at home, guessing the meaning of words, involvement in individual work, pair work and less often in group work. The teachers motivated learners in various ways: praised them, showed interest in their free time activities, hobbies, raised their interest in the topics under discussion, tried to meet their needs with choice of topics. Teachers encouraged creativity and individual ideas when learners were involved in picture description, comforting them by stating that "English is easy".

However, the presence of the Prussian teaching tradition was definitely more prevalent, marked by frontal work, lengthy explanations provided by teachers,

abundance of teachers' instructions, explicit grammar instruction, students summarising texts as oral reports for a mark, teachers deciding the order of the respondents, reliance on the course book, students reading out loud one by one, repeating the teacher's words, frequent display questions, explicit correction, etc.

For successful autonomy support teachers need to be aware of their role and responsibilities, which require willingness to involve their students into negotiation concerning the whole process of learning. Respondents of the questionnaire stated that teachers should strengthen motivation, provide metacognitive knowledge, and should help by giving advice. The observations revealed that in their practice teachers most often acted as knowledge providers, controllers and managers, although in some cases they were also counsellors as they gave advice about learning vocabulary, taking notes or about presentation strategies. Teachers also tried to motivate their learners mostly by praising and encouraging them, but they also expressed criticism. They encouraged students to take part actively in the lesson by rewarding classwork with marks.

The questionnaire revealed that respondents claimed to support LA by encouraging their students to read in the target language and to prepare for presentations. Teachers mentioned that they supported LA by involving their students in group work or project work, sometimes in pair work or language games in the classroom and by providing learners with extra language exercises. They also encouraged students to develop their listening skills by using modern media.

The most frequently applied LA supportive classroom practices I observed were individual work, where students could work at their own pace, pair work, acting out role plays or writing scripts of situations, and group work. However, it should be noted that in some cases, when students were supposed to work in pairs, they rather worked alone

next to each other, or copied the others' work, instead of real cooperation. Teachers also encouraged students to guess the meaning of unknown words. Two of the observed classes were based on learners' individual presentations, where posters were used to introduce the presentations. Most presenters were not very confident and the attention of the audience shifted away soon. Teachers tried to make students follow the talks by making the content of these presentations part of a formal assessment. It also occurred that students made suggestion regarding the content of an upcoming assessment and the teacher rejected it, although she explained her reasons. In one of the classes students were invited to collect extra information to contribute to the content of the following lesson, in another class the teacher gave an option for doing an individual writing task as homework.

However, I could also observe exemplars to counterbalance the above mentioned supportive practices: in one of the classes students were made to sit alone in order to "increase diligence in the classroom", moreover, during the presentations the teacher dictated from the slides or students had to copy the text from the slides. In another class, students copied a table of grammar rules from the course book into their notebook. In the single class where technology was used (apart from the two classes of PowerPoint presentations) students had to copy grammar rules projected on the wall and read them aloud in choir.

According to the questionnaire, participants offered opportunities for decision about the topics of the projects or presentations, ways of processing topics, the order of the tasks, and the dates of the tests, with one mention of free choice of reading and contributing to the content of the lesson. Furthermore, they did not involve students into decision making concerning the ways of assessment, teaching methods and

classroom management. Teachers believed that although learner involvement into decision making was feasible, it was not desirable or applicable in their case. These perceptions were mirrored in teachers' observed practices: apart from deciding their topic of presentation from a predefined area and the date of the next formal assessment, I could witness only sporadic occurrence of student decision making. In one of the lessons students could decide about the person they wanted to do pair work with and the way to act out a role play. One of the teachers allowed students choose the topic of their oral report, in another case, students could decide about the content of their homework within a given framework.

Little evidence emerged from the observations to suggest that self-assessment was consistently supported through the process of language learning, which was in line with Bullock's (2011) findings. Teachers reported that they applied self-assessment only by asking students to check the answers in workbook exercises or online tests with the help of the answer key, and by inviting students to estimate their expected grade for oral reports. However, as observations revealed, students' estimate of their own oral performance did not influence the teacher's judgement, and were not followed by explanations concerning their decision on the final grade given. Another trace of self-assessment was observed when students were asked to draw smiley faces in their notebooks in the case they did not have any mistakes in their completed tasks. In another lesson, students were encouraged to correct each other.

Furthermore, observations revealed that the teaching objectives and content were obviously influenced by the instructional materials. Nine of the twelve teachers followed the course book strictly and managed the classroom activities according to it. Use of technology was a scarcity, except of the two classes where students made

PowerPoint presentations, and a lesson where an online exercise focusing on grammar was projected on the board, although in seven of the classrooms smart boards, projectors and computers with Internet access were available, which mirrors Wong's findings (2013) that integrating technological innovations into teaching challenges teachers' established values and integration can only be successful if it "fits into teachers' frameworks of beliefs and practices" (p. 260).

Seemingly, teachers followed written materials to meet the objectives of the lessons, mostly aiming at exam preparation, and not the students' interests or needs. Observations revealed a similarity in teaching patterns in that all teachers following the course book taught in the prescribed way. Students were not involved in decision making or in reflecting on their learning process, as it was mentioned by Luca. Teachers' control over content hindered students' taking responsibility for their learning; thus students were dependent on the teachers. Participants explained that the reason for relying on the course books to this extent was that they felt pressured by the curriculum and the exams, and believed that learning would not happen if they changed their current teaching practices, as they thought that their students were not autonomous enough. As Bernadett worded it: "the primary goal is the school leaving exam". Obviously, as I observed each participant only once, I could not expect to gain insight into all their means they applied to support autonomy in their classes.

The interviewees believed that their main roles as teachers were to facilitate learning by motivating their learners, identifying and fulfilling their students' needs. Furthermore, Kata saw her main role in autonomy support as a model, Róza as a resource person, while Luca and Bernadett viewed themselves as counsellors. However, as shown in Table 10, which provides a systematic picture of the results of the interviews

concerning teachers' beliefs and practices, teachers' perceived roles were not consistently mirrored in their teaching practice. Whereas Bernadett and Róza showed support, encouraged their learners and provided them with opportunities for autonomous behaviour, Kata and Luca manifested roles which were associated with the traditional approach towards teaching, that of knowledge supplier and controller.

Most probably, teachers' understanding of LA influenced the extent to which they fostered LA in the classroom. For example, Kata, who understood LA as synonymous with self-study, did not encourage autonomy in the classroom, as in her view autonomous learning happened outside the school, without teacher intervention. On the other hand, for Bernadett LA meant individual learning directed by teachers and parents; therefore, she mentioned a number of strategies she applied to support LA. Their observed practices clearly reflected their understanding of LA.

Róza reported that she often brought extra materials to classes and she asked her students to make presentations regularly on topics of their own choice. Bernadett and Kata said that they fostered LA by providing their students with extra homework, Bernadett also encouraged project work or individual presentations and brought extra reading and writing tasks to be done in the class individually. Kata mentioned that she encouraged individual elaboration of the topics for the school leaving exam, while Luca said that she promoted LA by providing her learners with advice and opportunities for reflection. She expressed that she preferred pair work to group work, as it made class-discipline easier to maintain.

Róza, whose observed lesson was based on her students' individual presentations, supported LA in the classroom by providing learners' with individual tasks.

Table 10

Relationships between teachers' beliefs and practices concerning LA

Interview participants	Beliefs	Reported practices	Observed practices	Underlying reasons
Bernadett	LA means individual learning directed by teachers and parents. Students have negative attitudes towards learning and they are motivated by grades.	Extra homework Project work Individual Presentations Shapes the difficulty of topics to students' needs	Textbook-based teaching Individual work Student-teacher interaction Pair work Teacher instructs, corrects, helps, encourages, and shows interest in students' free time activities.	Own learning experience Influence of a previous teacher Teacher's beliefs about the subject Few lessons Large groups Students' lack of motivation Students' lack of metacognitive knowledge Students are overburdened Difficulties in classroom management Negative effect of technology Pressure from curriculum Unsuitable exam structure Distraction of technology
Kata	LA means learning outside the school without teacher intervention, it is an attribute. Students have negative	Extra homework Individual elaboration of exam topics Students can decide about the date of the texts	Textbook-based teaching Teacher-centred Oral report Individual work Pair work Teacher instructs, asks display	Own learning experience Students' lack of motivation Negative effect of technology Pressure from curriculum

	attitudes towards learning, they need control, expect help from the outside, and they are demotivated.		questions, corrects.	
Luca	LA means ability to control the learning process, it is a developmental process. Students need control, expect help from the outside, they are demotivated and not able to capitalise the available resources.	Provides learners with metacognitive knowledge Opportunity for reflection Pair work Students can decide about the date of the test, work forms, the order of the topics, films to be watched	Textbook-based teaching Teacher-centred Oral report Individual work Pair work Teacher instructs, explains, asks display questions, corrects, criticises.	Own learning experience Influence of a previous teacher Students' lack of motivation Students' proficiency Lack of time Negative effect of technology Pressure from curriculum
Róza	LA means individual engagement with the subject of interest, language use out of school. Students are not able to capitalise the available resources, they are demotivated	Brings extra materials Class discussion Students can contribute to the content of learning Individual work Pair work Group work	Individual presentations Student-teacher interaction Teacher instructs, gives individual tasks, elicits, raises interest, encourages, corrects, praises.	Own learning experience Influence of a previous teacher Students' lack of motivation Students are overburdened Students' lack of metacognitive knowledge Difficulties in classroom management Pressure from curriculum

She raised their interest in the topics of their peers' presentations, encouraged on-task interaction and praised the students.

Although Bernadett, Luca and Kata all based their lesson on the course book, Bernadett provided space for student-teacher interaction in a relaxed classroom atmosphere and involved learners in individual work as well as in pair work. In addition to giving instructions and correcting errors she also gave positive feedback and showed interest in students' free time activities. I contrast, Luca's and Kata's lessons were more teacher centred where students had to give oral reports which were evaluated with marks. Although they involved students in individual and pair work, these activities were either overtly controlled by the teachers or in case of the pair work real cooperation tended to turn into less active students copying from their partners. These two lessons were marked by instructions, lengthy explanations, and an abundance of display questions, explicit correction and criticism. Although interviewees stated that self-assessment made learners feel responsible for their own learning process, they could identify their weaknesses and decide about further actions in order to improve, these beliefs did not translate into practice, as the implementation of self-assessment could be observed only when Kata asked her students to evaluate their oral reports.

The interviewees had diverging views about the desirability of their students' freedom. Kata and Luca, for example, said that they let their students decide the date of the tests. Luca also claimed to provide learners with possibilities for decision making concerning work form and content. Bernadett said that she shaped the difficulty of the discussed topics to meet her students' needs, they played language games, and her learners could decide about the films to be watched in the classroom. Róza mentioned that she gave freedom to her students by inviting them to contribute to the content of

the lessons. Observations unveiled that Kata's and Róza's beliefs concerning the desirability of students' freedom were mirrored in their practices: while Kata involved students only in deciding about the date of the upcoming written assessment, Róza invited students to contribute to the content of the next lesson by collecting information and bringing songs. She also let her learners decide the topic of their presentation and the way in which they wanted to present their chosen topic. Although Bernadett and Luca claimed to support autonomous behaviour in several ways, apart from completing tasks individually, students did not have opportunities for making decision.

Róza' views about LA were the most in line with her practice: she showed a high degree of autonomy as a teacher with relatively varied supportive practices concerning LA. Róza and Bernadett, whose classes were richer in supportive practice, seemed to be more aware of the positive effects of technology on autonomy development. Kata, who reported high levels of autonomy as a language learner, revealed low levels of autonomy as a teacher: her reported and observed autonomy in teaching were in alignment. In contrast, Luca's classroom practice did not suggest any positive attitude towards autonomy support, however, the interview revealed that her beliefs paradoxically contradicted her practice as she claimed to foster LA by providing learners with metacognitive knowledge, opportunities for decision and for reflection.

Although observations focused on LA supportive strategies, they could provide little evidence that LA development was a consciously sustained process. Even though all teachers expressed that they were aware of the benefits of LA in language learning, only sporadic occurrences of LA support could be traced: drawing on out-of-class experience, encouraging independent inquiry, involving students in task design, and supporting student-student interaction. Data coming from classroom observations,

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teachers' questionnaires and the interviews revealed several mismatches between the teachers' beliefs and practices, distinguishing teachers' theories-in-action and espoused theories as described by Schön (1983). This inconsistency may be due to teachers' previous experiences, contextual factors and institutional constraints, as discussed by Borg (2001, 2006).

Although LA is among the educational goals outlined in the NCC which is mirrored by the local curriculum, language teachers in this study seemed to follow traditional teaching. Seemingly, it was easier than to initiate changes in the approach to teaching, even though participants expressed that they faced problems in their practices. Teachers stated that due to heavy workload, as found by Révész (2011), they had little time to innovate their teaching practice in order to meet their students' ever changing needs. The teachers in the present research perceived barriers in their teaching environments, which influenced their confidence and attitudes towards fostering LA in their school contexts.

The current study revealed that the educational context had an impact on teachers' beliefs and practices and the triadic reciprocity discussed by Bandura (1986) can be clearly recognised: all interviewees emphasised that their teaching was influenced by their prior learning experiences and by their own educational background, which had been affected by contextual factors such as students, course books, and examinations. Even though teachers' understanding of LA varied, they were aware of the benefits of autonomy in language learning. Despite their positive views on LA they tended to rely on frontal classwork and form-focused activities and they emphasised how difficult it was to act differently when they were pressured by external constraints. They admitted that relying on direct instruction also saved time, as it was found by

Lugossy (2006, 2007). These findings, apart from correspondences, also revealed mismatches between language teachers' beliefs and practices concerning LA. Although the language teachers had positive attitudes towards LA, they were reluctant to involve their students in making decisions about their learning. Teachers thought that their students' level of autonomy was lower than desired, however, their frequent references to external constraints pointed towards low levels of teacher autonomy. Observations revealed that most participants did not implement pedagogical principles to support LA in their classes, even though the aim was included in educational policy documents, which is in line with Hyland and Wong's (2013) and Freeman's views (2013), who claimed that innovations are supported from above could only be successful if they are embraced by the teachers, as ultimately they are at the heart of the classroom processes and decide what initiatives find their way into the classroom.

Those teachers who intended to support their students' autonomy in language learning, feeling captured between learners and layers of constraints, often found that their authority was undermined because their view of what successful teaching and learning meant conflicted with the systemic view of what they were expected to convey to their students and question whether they were, in fact, teaching at all. Teachers either believed they had already incorporated LA support into their practice, or they continued relying on their traditional practices. These reactions to innovation are in line with Freeman's (2013) notion of "teacher resistance" to reform.

The findings of the present research suggest that including the notion of LA in policy was not followed by further information on what it meant in practice and points towards a need for training focusing on implementation of LA it in the classroom. Although developing LA depends on teachers' willingness to negotiate and support their

learners, teachers need have an appropriate understanding of LA to scaffold successfully the long process as their students in take responsibility and control of their learning.

4.4 Relationships between English and German teachers' beliefs and practices concerning learner autonomy

This section explores the differences between EFL and GFL teachers' understanding of LA and it also tends to reveal inequalities between their classroom practices. The reason why I expected to find mismatches in beliefs and in practices between the two groups was that although since the 90s the German language had become the second most popular FL in Hungary, recently it has been losing ground to English, as learners' attitudes towards English are more favourable than towards German as it was found by Nikolov (2003a, 2003b).

Concerning teachers' understanding of LA the questionnaire did not reveal any prevalent difference between EFL and GFL teachers. Respondents agreed that LA meant responsibility for and control over one's own learning, goal-orientedness, need and possibility for decision about the learning process. Similarly, they were in unison concerning the positive effects of LA on language learning. Other points of agreement were that LA helped students identify their strengths and weaknesses, and that through autonomous learning the pace of learning could be personalised to meet learners' needs. Regarding the drawbacks of LA, EFL teachers expressed worries about error correction; they considered it problematic that the lack of it may lead to error fossilisation.

Autonomous learning was viewed to happen at home or at school in non-frontal educational contexts, however, teachers emphasised the importance of teacher-

directedness. Both groups claimed that teachers' role was essential in raising and maintaining motivation. However, while GFL teachers emphasised motivation as teachers' ultimate aim to reach, EFL teachers mentioned other roles: serving as a compass, providing learners with metacognitive strategies, as well as acting as managers. Although all language teachers viewed motivation as the most powerful factor to influence LA, EFL teachers believed that family background also had a strong impact on LA.

According to the questionnaire, respondents reported that they supported LA by encouraging their students to read in the target language and both groups mentioned group work and pair work as work forms they used to develop their learners' autonomy. Remarks on preparing their learners for presentations or for project work and on the use of the different forms of modern media were present in answers given by both groups. However, even though both EFL and GFL teachers claimed that they supported their learners' autonomy in various ways, they all found their students' level of autonomy rather low.

When teachers were asked about the way in which their students act autonomously as language learners, all the respondents referred to the use of the modern media. EFL teachers gave more varied answers concerning the ways of using modern technology and media: apart from watching films, teachers of English also mentioned that their students used the target language when they were playing computer games, listening to music, chatting or searching the Internet. At this point findings of the questionnaire were supported by the results of the interviews. While Róza and Kata, the two interviewees who taught English reported on their learners' more real life-like use of internet resources and other forms of modern media usage

(see Table 9), Bernadett and Luca, the two GFL teachers said that their learners demonstrated their autonomy in language learning by doing mostly school-related activities, e.g., completing language exercises outside the classroom to supplement the classroom material, or by preparing for and revising the lessons.

The differences revealed by the questionnaires and the interviews may be due to the difference in the range and the availability of resources in English and German, and in the frequency of the naturally occurring opportunities to practice the target languages. As Róza mentioned, students could use English when they were asked by tourists for directions, while Bernadett complained about the scarcity of resources in the German language: "this is the fault of the Hungarian media that there aren't any channels that target language learners. Everything is dubbed (…) but there aren't any films with subtitles like in Croatia, for example, although it could help a lot in language learning".

Concerning self-assessment, GFL teachers seemed to be biased towards the traditional, formal ways of assessment, while EFL teachers showed a more real life like approach, viewing language as a tool for communication. The latter thought that successful communication in the target language and any kind of authentic language use, such as watching films and listening to music, mean real feedback to the language learner.

Both groups mentioned their own learning experiences when they were asked about the influences on their teaching, and none of the participants could recall events, trainings, or readings that had an impact on the formation of their current beliefs about LA. However, EFL teachers were more positive about their teacher autonomy, they revealed that felt lucky for being English language teachers because of the various

possibilities to support LA and the benefits of technology, whereas teachers of the German language felt rather helpless when they reflected on autonomy in their teaching.

Observing one of the lessons of the eight EFL teachers and the four GFL teachers of the school, prevalent differences concerning LA supportive practices emerged between the two groups of teachers. Individual work, occurrences of providing students with metacognitive knowledge and appraisal were more frequent in the observed EFL lessons as well as individualised homework, whereas explicit error correction was more typical in the GFL lessons. However, neither of the groups applied group work in the observed lessons. EFL and GFL teachers seemed to rely on the course book to the same extent, and similarly, expressions of criticism were also present in their lessons. The overall finding is that teachers in this project relied on traditional teaching techniques and failed to implement what they claimed to promote.

As I observed each participant only once, I was aware that I could not expect to gain insight into all their techniques they typically applied to support autonomy in their classes. Therefore the differences the observations revealed may not be applicable for other groups. Moreover, given that the interviewees were selected based on the difference in their practices concerning autonomy development I did not expect the interviews to reveal differences. However, even though the participants of two groups did not represent a large sample, emerging patterns were identified. GFL teachers approached the German language more as a school subject, whereas EFL teachers' practices reflected their awareness of English language as means of communication.

4.5 Students' beliefs about LA

This section gives a summary of the answers given to the third group of research questions focusing on language learners' views about LA and their autonomous behaviours. Findings are presented about (1) students' perception of their own level of autonomy in language learning, (2) students' views about their responsibilities in the learning process, (3) the relationship between EFL and GFL learners' beliefs concerning LA, and (4) the relationship between students' beliefs about LA and their autonomous behaviour.

Understanding learners' beliefs is essential as beliefs influence decision making and use of learning strategies, students' behaviour in the classroom, moreover, beliefs impact the process of learning as they influence learning efficacy (Cotteral, 1999; Horwitz, 1987, 1988; Rieger, 2009). As it has been proved that unsubstantiated beliefs are likely to lead to language learning anxiety and that if beliefs coincide with the expected good practice, they enhance efficacy, while otherwise it may impact it negatively, it is essential that language teachers understand the expectations with which their learners arrive at the classroom (Horwitz, 1988; Riley, 2009).

By applying an exploratory approach and following the mixed method research tradition (Creswell, 2003; Dörnyei, 2007; Mackey & Gass, 2005) I intended to investigate students' beliefs about LA in its wider context, which meant that the socially constructed nature of the classroom and influences outside the classroom were also taken into account (Williams & Burden, 1997). Classroom observations allowed me to learn about the way the concept of LA was supported in the language classroom and the way students reacted to it. All the four classes of the 9th graders were involved in the classroom observation and, subsequently, they were asked to participate in the

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questionnaire phase of the research (see section 3.5). Observational data also helped finalize the focal points of the students' questionnaire which consisted of both open-ended and Likert-type questions. The first section of the final version of the questionnaire asked for information about demographic data, language learning experience, and the end of the year grade. The second section included ten open questions focusing on students' attitudes towards LA, their learning preferences and language use habits. The final section asked learners how responsible they felt for the various aspect of the learning process and about the extent to which they acted autonomously in language learning (Appendix C).

4.5.1 Students' perceptions of their own language learning

A for learners' studying habits, out of class language use and their perception concerning their own level of autonomy in language learning, the questionnaire revealed a wide range of views. After categorising and quantifying learners' self-reports of their language knowledge, frequency counts (Table 11) showed that 3% of the learners felt that they did not have any command of language, 17% said that they were not good at languages, 30% of the respondents could use the language to some extent, 32% felt that they were quite good, whereas 17% reported that they were good and they could learn the language easily

As for the knowledge of the classroom material (Table 12), 2% answered that they did not know anything from what they covered in the classroom, 21% answered that it varied, but did not know much of the material, 31% felt more or less confident about what they learned in the language lesson and 43% had the sense of knowing the classroom material well.

Table 11

Students' perceived proficiency (in %; n=100)

Perceived proficiency	%
I can't speak the language at all	3
I'm not good at the language	17
I can use the language to some extent	30
I'm quite good at the language	32
I can use the language easily	17
Missing	1
Total	100

Table 12

Students' perceived knowledge of the classroom material (in %; n=100)

How well students think they know the classroom material?	%
I don't know the material at all	2
I don't know too much of the material	21
I'm more or less confident with the material	32
I know the material well	43
Missing	2
Total	100

As seen in Table 13, significant positive correlations were found, although the perceived knowledge of the classroom material and the end of the term grades (r=.642, p<.01), as well as the perceived knowledge of the classroom material and students' perceived proficiency (r=.676, p<.01) showed a strong relationship, a more moderate correlation was found between learners' perceived proficiency and end of the term grades (r=.592, p<.01).

Table 13

Correlations between perceived proficiency, perceived knowledge of the classroom material and end of year grades

	Perceived proficiency	Perceived knowledge of the material	End of year grade
Perceived proficiency	1	.676**	.592**
Perceived knowledge of the material	.676**	1	.642**
End of year grade	.592**		1

Note. ** Correlation is significant at P< 0.01 level (two-tailed).

This mismatch might point towards discrepancies between the content of the language lesson or of the course books and language learners' needs concerning language use.

4.5.2 Students' preferred work forms and learning habits

The questionnaire revealed that work forms considered autonomy-supportive (Benson 2011b) were popular among the students as shown in Table 14: 34% preferred individual work, 33% pair work, 8% group work, whereas 22% of the students preferred frontal teaching. When looking into the reasons for learners' preferences concerning work form, I found that students who believed that individual work suited them the best felt that it was more effective, as they could be more focused (50%), they could work in their own pace (20%), it was comfortable because they had always worked alone (14%), they could gather more information about their own language knowledge (12%), and 4% claimed that they benefitted from this work form because it helped them identify their weaknesses. These underlying reasons for choice of preferred work form are in line with

previous findings focusing on autonomous learners (e. g. Benson, 2007; Cotterall, 1995a;

Cotterall, 1995b; Holec, 1981; Little, 2007).

Table 14

Students' preferred work forms and the reasons for learning preferences (in %; n=100)

Preferred work form	Total respondents %	Reasons for preferring work form	Work form %
Individual work	34	I can be more focused	50
		I can work in my own pace	20
		It is comfortable, I have always worked alone	14
		It gives information about my own knowledge	12
		It helps me identify my weaknesses	4
		Subtotal	100
Pair work	33	We can help each other	75
		It is more interesting to work together	15
		It improves speaking skills	6
		It improves pronunciation	4
		Subtotal	100
Group work	8	We can help each other	85
		It is more interesting to work together	15
		Subtotal	100
Frontal work	22	I can understand the lesson better	35
		It is easier to rely on the teacher	30
		It is better to be corrected by the teacher	15
		It is more comfortable to be instructed by the teacher	10
		It is more interesting to discuss different things with the whole class	5
		Subtotal	100
Missing	3		
Total	100		

As for pair work and group work, it emerged that the most frequent reason for students' learning preferences was that they could be helped by each other (75% for pair work, 85% for group work), with sporadic mention that it was more interesting to work together (pair work 15%, group work 5%) and that it improved their speaking skills (pair work 6%). Those respondents who were in favour of frontal work found it more effective because they could understand the lesson better (35%), it was easier to rely on the teacher (30%), the teacher corrected them (15%), it was more comfortable to be instructed by the teacher (10%) and whole class discussions were more interesting (5%). Prevalent reliance on the other, could it be the partner, peers from the group or the teacher point towards lack of confidence, insecurity, as well as low levels of autonomy in language learning.

Frequency counts of preferred work form and end of the term grades (Table 15) showed that most high achievers (students with grades 4 and 5) preferred individual work and pair work, while low achievers (students with grades 1 and 2) gravitated towards frontal work. Furthermore, 64% of those who received grade 3 at the end of the term chose their preferred group form because they found that it was easier to rely on others. These findings imply that high achievement and autonomous behaviour are related as it was pointed out in the literature (e. g. Cotteral, 1999; Little, 1994).

Students reported that they prepared for formal assessment in various ways, revealing differences between high achievers and low achievers in this respect as well (Table 16). Cross tabulation of the grades and the way students prepare for the tests showed that 36% of the high achievers paid attention at the lesson, but otherwise did not prepare in any specific way, 31% revised and learned, 28% revised by skimming through the course book and the workbook. Low achievers most frequently (47%) chose

to scan the course book, 31% of them did not prepare at all, 12% revised and learned the most difficult parts of the material, and 6% wrote cheat sheets. Intermediate achievers gave a wide range of answers from revising (36%), revising and learning (22%), writing summaries of the lessons, asking for help, doing language exercises, paying attention at the lesson to not preparing at all (10% each respectively).

Table 15

Frequency of the end of the year grades and the preferred work forms

End of year grade	Preferred work form				Total (%)
	Individual	Pair work	Group work	Frontal work	
1	0	0	0	1	1
2	3	2	2	9	16
3	4	9	2	7	22
4	12	12	3	5	32
5	15	10	1	1	27
Missing					2
Subtotal (%)	34	33	8	23	
Total (%)					100
Means of grades	4.03	3.90	3.38	2.90	3.67

Students within every achievement group benefitted most frequently from feedback in their formal assessment by checking their mistakes and learning from them in order to avoid them in the future (42%). Twenty-two percent of the respondents did not pay any specific attention to the teachers' corrections, 17% copied the corrected answers into their notebooks following the teacher's instruction, and 7% checked the corrections superficially. Only 10% tried to find the reason of their mistakes and figure out the correct solution; all of them were high achievers. Students' overall reaction to the

feedback shows disinterest and passivity, reluctance to put effort into improving their language skills and to take responsibility for their own learning.

Table 16

Frequency of end of year grades and ways to prepare for tests

Way to prepare for tests	End of year grade					Total %
	1	2	3	4	5	
Do nothing	0	5	2	1	0	8
Pay attention at the lesson	0	0	2	10	11	23
Revise	1	7	8	9	8	33
Revise and learn	0	1	5	11	7	24
Practice	0	0	2	1	1	4
Write summary	0	0	2	0	0	2
Ask for help	0	0	2	0	0	2
Write cheat sheet	0	3	0	0	0	3
Missing						1
Subtotal	1	16	23	32	27	
Total						100

4.5.3 Students' out of classroom language use

When students were asked about the ways they used their second language outside of the school, away from teachers' instruction, as shown in Table 17, it emerged that 22% of the participants did not use the language at all, 20% mostly used it only to talk to others (speakers of other languages 11%, family members 5%, Hungarian peers 4%). Seventeen per cent of the students used the language to surf the Internet, 8% while playing computer games and the same amount reported that they used it in every field of their life, giving lengthy lists of examples (e.g., watching films, listening to music, reading articles online and chatting with others while playing computer games). Relying on their language knowledge was mentioned by an equal number of students (6%) while watching films, listening to music or during their holidays.

Examining students out of class language use through the different achievement levels, frequency counts showed that most low achievers (62%) avoided to use English or German outside the school, 29% of them used it in computer games, only one of them recalled using the language during holidays or surfing the net, and there was no mention of language use for personal communication. Moderately successful students with the end of the term grade 3 most frequently used the language in personal communication (35%), 26% did not use it outside of the school, and 22% used it on the Internet. As for the most successful group in language learning, they most frequently used for personal communication (21%, from which 11% with speakers of other languages, 7% with family members, 3% with Hungarian peers), and for going online (21%).

Table 17

Frequency of students' out of class language use and their end of year grades (in %; n=100)

Out of class language use	End of year grade					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	(%)
No language use	1	9	6	3	3	22
Everywhere	0	0	0	4	5	9
Computer games	0	5	3	2	1	11
Internet	0	1	5	7	5	18
Watching films	0	0	0	3	4	7
Listening to music	0	0	0	3	2	5
Travelling	0	1	0	3	2	6
Personal communication	0	0	8	7	5	20
Missing						2
Subtotal	1	16	22	32	27	
Total						100

Fifteen per cent of them claimed that they used the language everywhere they had the opportunity, 12% benefitted from their knowledge of the language when watching films

and 9% when listening to music or during their travels with a remaining 11% who used the language only at the language lesson.

Concerning the trends of language use among the groups with different achievement levels, results pointed to an emerging pattern within the ways of language use associated with entertainment and enjoyment: watching films in the FL and listening to music with special attention to the lyrics was only present among high achievers, while the lower the grade was, the more they tended to use the language only for gaming. Furthermore, only high achievers mentioned comprehensive language use. This finding is important as out of class language use has an important role in evoking and maintaining interest in language learning, creating a positive attitude towards the language, moreover, experiencing "flow" (Csíkszentmihályi, 1991) increases intrinsic motivation. The present findings support Csizér's and Kormos's (2012) results who emphasised the link between intrinsic motivation, self-direction and autonomy.

4.5.4 Students' motivation in language learning

As in autonomy research it has been acknowledged that motivation is essential in autonomous learning (Benson, 2007), and motivation and autonomy are seen as interrelated concepts, I found it important to investigate learners' attitudes towards language learning, and the way they overcame the difficulties they faced in the learning process. As can be seen in Table 18, loss of interest in language learning was the least frequent among the most successful language learners, while it became more prevalent among the weaker students: while 82% of the low achievers experienced loss of interest at some stage of their language learning, only 36% of the high achievers recalled such difficulties.

Table 18

Frequency of losing interest and the end of the year grades (in %; n=100)

Losing interest	End of the year grade					Total (%)
	1	2	3	4	5	
No	1	2	6	18	20	47
Yes	0	14	16	15	7	52
Missing						1
Subtotal (%)	1	16	22	33	27	
Total						100

The questionnaires revealed that students lost interest in language learning most frequently because they found the language too difficult and it required too much learning (39%), 17% because of bad grades, 16% found the language boring, 14% became tired, and 9% lost interest in language learning because of the teacher or because they did not like the language they had been learning. These findings partly support claims by Kormos and Lukóczky (2004), and Piniel (2004), who found that teachers' unclear instructions and explanations, unfair assessment lead to decrease in motivation. The most frequent reasons for demotivation among high achievers were bad grades (27%), difficulty of the language (27%), dislike of the language or becoming tired (14% each). Less successful learners faced difficulties most frequently because of the difficulty of the language (46%), or because they found the language boring (23%). Grades did not play an important role in their loss of interest in language learning (6%); and the role of the teacher seemed to be of the same importance in all groups.

As shown in Table 18, 52% of the students reported that they had lost interest in language learning at some stage of their learning process. The ways they overcame these difficulties varied (Table 19). The most prevalent in the way students coped with loss of interest in language learning was that the most powerful motivating factor for

successful language learners was that (1) they were aware of the usefulness of the language or (2) they wanted a better grade. These findings point towards Pintrich and Schunk's (1996) performance orientation and reflects Józsa's (2002) findings: by age 16, external rewards became important. Some of the high achievers applied self-motivating strategies by telling themselves that they were able to make progress in their studies. Weaker students overcame their disinterest because of external constraints, or even worse, they were still struggling at the time of the data collection. However, some of them realised that the source of their difficulties was fatigue; therefore, after taking time to relax they regained their interest in language learning.

Table 19

Students' ways of coping with interest loss and the end of the year grades (in %; n=100)

Way of coping with interest loss	End of the year grades				Total (%)
	2	3	4	5	
I changed school	1	0	1	0	2
I changed language	0	1	0	1	2
It changed by time	0	0	2	0	2
I had to	4	2	1	0	7
I knew it would be useful	1	0	4	3	8
I relaxed	3	2	1	0	6
I asked for help	0	3	0	0	3
I told myself I can do it	0	0	2	0	2
I wanted a better grade	0	2	0	3	5
I worked harder	1	4	2	0	7
I have not coped with it yet	4	1	2	0	7
Subtotal	14	15	15	7	51
Missing					1
Total					52

Concerning students' beliefs about the factors that could foster their autonomy in language learning, the questionnaire revealed that 16% of the respondents felt insecure about it or said that nothing could help become more autonomous. Others identified external factors as possible resources to strengthen their autonomy, such as changes to be made in the classroom (16%) (e. g., more interesting lessons, more communicative tasks, more individual work, more homework), more frequent trips or longer stays in the target language country (13%) or more private lessons (5%). Thirteen per cent of the students believed that more motivation could increase their LA and 26% mentioned activities that involved LA and could be implemented in a self-directed way: more out of class language use, more personal communication, watching more films and listening to music. Eleven per cent of the students claimed that they were autonomous in language learning.

The results revealed a difference between students' beliefs within achievement levels: 53% of the low achievers felt helpless about becoming more autonomous, 20% blamed lack of motivation and school settings (18%) for their lack of autonomy. As for moderate achievers, 37% felt to be autonomous, 26% made the lessons responsible for their levels of autonomy, 16% was insecure and further 16% identified motivation as an influencing factor concerning LA. The group of the more successful language learners identified motivation (8%) and activities that could be done in a self-directed way (25%) to support their autonomy, and 11% believed that they were autonomous. However, factors not depending on self-direction were also mentioned: 19% blamed the lessons, 13% believed that a longer stay in the target country could help them most to become more autonomous, and 6% longed for more private lessons. The frequent mention of classroom processes relates to the learning situation component of Dörnyei's (1994)

three level model (see section 2.3.3), as this motivational factor is concerned with the teaching materials, the teaching methods and the learning tasks and involves interest, relevance, expectancy, and satisfaction.

When I compared those student' perceptions who experienced loss of interest with those who did not concerning what could help them to improve their autonomy in language learning, the most prevalent difference that emerged from the answers was that those who could overcome their difficulties in language learning were more aware of the role of motivation in autonomous learning. The high number of respondents who felt helpless is worrying, as learners' pessimistic views about their own abilities to succeed in task completion could lead to task abandonment (Schunk, 1989; Williams & Burden, 1997). The present findings are in line with Bacsa's study (2012), which pointed out that the most influential beliefs are concerned with self-efficacy, self-confidence and language awareness. These factors seem to be most closely related to other elements contributing to language learning, such as efficacy, sense of achievement and perceptions of the difficulty of the target language.

4.5.5 Students' goal setting in language learning

The results showed that students' goals could be classified into mastery and performance orientation (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996), where mastery orientation refers to students' effort to improve their skills and competences (see section 2.3.1), whereas performance orientation involves setting extrinsic goals such as grades and examinations. As shown in Table 20, performance orientation outnumbered mastery orientation: 59% of the students set their goals to take the school leaving exam or a language proficiency exam, whereas 31% aim at fluency or high proficiency.

Table 20

Language learners' goals and the end of the year grades

Aim of language learning	End of the year grades					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
School leaving exam (B1)	1	5	4	3	1	14
B2 language exam	0	4	6	14	8	32
C1 language exam	0	0	2	4	7	13
Fluency	0	2	7	8	6	23
High proficiency	0	1	1	2	4	8
Does not know	0	4	2	1	1	8
Subtotal	1	16	22	32	27	98
Missing						2
Total						100

Not surprisingly, as goal setting and performance were found to be related in previous studies (Oxford & Shearin, 1994). Here results are similar: lower achievers set less challenging goals, whereas 59% of the more successful language learners intend to take B2 or C1 level language exams. Also, the presence of mastery orientation is more characteristic for the high achievers.

Comparing the frequency of different language learning goals between learners who experienced decrease in motivation with those who did not, the result showed a difference only in aiming for the B1 level school leaving exam, the minimum level to achieve for school leavers: 25% of those who faced difficulties during their learning did not intend to continue language learning after taking the exam, whereas only 8% of those who did not lose interest in language learning targeted this particular exam. However, it should be noted that this result could be foreseen, as only 25% of the high achievers reported loss of interest in language learning. This finding points towards a vicious circle for low achievers and a self-fulfilling prophecy for high achievers, increasing the gap between the two groups.

Examination of the frequency distribution of language learning aims and learners' preferred work forms revealed that those students who set higher goals (e. g. B2 or C1 level language exam), preferred to work alone or in pairs (81%), work forms which are considered to indicate high levels of autonomy (Benson, 2011b). These findings resonate with Locke and Latham's (1990) views, who claimed that people who set more challenging goals are more focused on the given task and employ better strategies; therefore, they are more successful in completing the task.

Language learners' general motives that point towards basic learning goals can also be divided into an integrative and an instrumental subcategory and relate to the language level in Dörnyei's (1994) motivational model (see section 2.3.3), where the integrative subsystem involves affective variables, and the instrumental category is related to the usefulness of engagement in language learning. This classification is reflected by students' reported reasons for language learning, as shown in Table 21. Most students (71%) were driven by instrumental motivation, they claimed that they learned the language to be admitted to tertiary education, to be able to apply for a better job, to work abroad, or to cope better in life in general. Only 5% of the students reported that they learned the target language because they liked it, and 13% was not fuelled by either types of motivations, they claimed to learn due to external pressure. These phenomena could be also explained by Dörnyei's model of L2 motivational Self-System (2005): the ought-to L2 self defines what students ought to do to fulfil what they think it is expected from them by their teachers, parents, or to avoid failure.

The most powerful motivating factor was the possibility to work abroad, which mirrors the trends identified in Eurobarometer (2012). Learning a language because of the wish to cope better in life was more characteristic of the successful learners, as well

as language learning targeting further education. Furthermore, integrative motives were mentioned only by high achievers, whereas reasons for learning the language because of external constraints were most prevalent among weaker students.

Table 21

Students' reasons for language learning (in %; n=100)

Reason for language learning	End of the year grades					Total (%)
	1	2	3	4	5	
Tertiary education	0	0	5	3	5	13
Work	0	0	4	6	2	12
Work abroad	0	4	7	14	6	31
To cope better in life	0	2	1	7	9	19
Have to	1	8	4	1	0	13
Joy of learning	0	0	0	1	4	5
Subtotal	1	14	21	32	26	94
Missing						6
Total						100

Motivational influences apart from the quality of learning experience, the perceived progress, feedback from the immediate learning environment, also involve the feeling of autonomy, and the use of self-regulatory strategies (Dörnyei & Ottó, 1998). Moreover, as motivation involves decision to do something, endurance in maintaining the activity and the effort put into the chosen activity (Dörnyei, 2001a), I found it relevant to inquire into the actional stage of learners' motivation described by Dörnyei and Ottó (1998). Table 22 shows the distributions of students' answers grouped by grades concerning the length of the period they intend to maintain their effort in language learning. Half of the students planned to continue language learning until they reached the desired level of proficiency, 20% did not intend to maintain the learning process after graduating from school and the same ratio could not tell the length they

intended to learn languages. The reason for students being concerned about their immediate learning goals, rather than showing long-term engagement with language learning by developing their autonomy may be that they expect to be in class only to receive lessons passively rather than finding ways to take control of their learning process. Low achievers seem to consider the FL a school subject and not a tool to achieve further goals or an area of intrinsic interest.

Table 22

Students' intended length of time for language learning (in %; n=100)

How long do students plan to continue language learning?	End of the year grade					Total (%)
	1	2	3	4	5	
Until the end of secondary school	1	7	6	5	1	20
Until reaching the desired level of proficiency	0	5	9	20	16	50
Lifelong	0	0	0	1	4	5
Does not know	0	4	6	5	5	20
Subtotal	1	16	21	31	27	95
Missing						5
Total						100

Only high achievers felt devoted to lifelong language learning, their distribution among grades corresponds totally to those who were driven by affective factors and claimed that they learned languages because they enjoyed the process (Table 21). Furthermore, another overlap could be traced between students targeting the B1 level school leaving exam (Table 20) and those who did not want to continue language learning after secondary school (Table 22). However, the higher ratio of those who intend to stop learning might include students who planned to have their set goals achieved by the end of their secondary education.

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4.5.6 Relationships between students' autonomous beliefs and behaviours

As previous research found, learners' autonomous beliefs did not always result in autonomous behaviours (Chang, 2007; Édes, 2008). Revealing the mismatches between students' thought and the extent to which they actually manifest various aspects of autonomous behaviour provided a more fine-grained picture about their levels of autonomy in language learning. Eighteen closed items on a four point Likert scale asked learners how responsible they thought they should be for doing things on their own (1: not responsible, 2: a little responsible, 3: responsible to some extent, 4: mainly responsible), and to what extent they actually acted accordingly (1: never, 2: sometimes, 3: often, 4: in general).

Students felt the most responsible for setting their own learning goals, stimulating their own interest in language learning and deciding what to learn outside the classroom. On the other hand, they felt the least responsible for deciding what to learn in the classroom, to learn from their peers and to evaluate their own learning progress (Table 23). At the same time, as shown in Table 24, students reported that they set up their own learning goals and stimulated their own interest in language learning, which is in line with their perceived responsibilities. They offered opinions the least often about what to do in the classroom, which reflects their beliefs; however, they decided what to learn outside the classroom less frequently than they believed it was their responsibility.

Comparing the means of the extent to which students believed it was their responsibility to act autonomously (3.01) and the extent to which they claimed to act autonomously (2.71) revealed a mismatch in favour of beliefs, implying that students' autonomous behaviours lagged behind their perceived responsibilities.

Table 23

Learners' beliefs about their responsibilities concerning LA

Learners feel responsible for	N	Mean	SD
Identifying their strengths and weaknesses	95	3.04	.837
Setting learning goals	95	3.47	.712
Deciding what to learn outside the classroom	96	3.20	.913
Evaluating their own learning progress	95	3.00	.851
Stimulating interest in language learning	96	3.27	.827
Learning from peers	96	2.82	.871
Becoming more self-directed in language learning	97	3.12	.869
Exploring the language alone without the help of the teacher	95	3.13	.914
Offering opinion about what to learn in the classroom	96	2.18	1.046
Total		3.01	

Note. N=number of cases; SD= Standard deviation

Moderately strong correlations were found in case beliefs and practices connected to giving opinion about what to do at the lesson, exploring the language without the help of the teacher, stimulating their own interest and learning from the peers at $p<0.01$ level of significance (see Table 25). The weakest positive correlations were found between perceived responsibilities and actual behaviours concerning identifying strengths and weaknesses, and decision making about what to learn outside the classroom at $p<0.05$ significance level, followed by setting learning goals, evaluating their own progress and becoming more self-directed at $p< 0.01$ level of significance. It is important to note that correlations reported here are not strong enough to arrive at definite conclusions, in-depth interviews with the students might have provided a more comprehensive picture about learners' autonomous beliefs and actual levels of autonomy.

Table 24

Learners' reported autonomous behaviours

Learners' autonomous behaviours	N	Mean	SD
Identify their strengths and weaknesses	98	2.66	.773
Set learning goals	97	3.01	.757
Decide what to learn outside the classroom	97	2.55	.890
Evaluate own learning progress	97	2.70	.926
Stimulate their own interest in language learning	97	3.01	.896
Learn from peers	98	2.76	.985
Become more self-directed in language learning	97	2.87	.799
Explore the language alone without the help of the teacher	99	2.79	.929
Offer opinion about what to learn in the classroom	99	2.06	1.028
Total		2.71	

Note. N= number of cases; SD= standard deviation

Correlation analysis of students' end of the year grades and their autonomous beliefs revealed moderately strong relationship only in case of responsibility to become more self-directed (r= .34, p<0.01). The results showed also moderately strong correlations between the grades and four of the investigated behavioural elements: setting learning goals (r= .36, p<0.01), stimulating interest (r= .31, p<0.01), becoming more self-directed (r= .31, p<0.01), exploring the language alone, without the help of the teachers (r= .33, p<0.01).

Classroom observations made it possible to gain insight into students' behaviours in the classroom. As autonomous learners are characterized by psychological characteristics such as self-efficacy and positive attitudes, with a combination of high extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, as well as a need for achievement (Benson, 2007), I was looking for behaviours showing that learners understood the purposes of their learning, they were voluntarily involved in opportunities for practice, applied

appropriate learning strategies, reviewed and evaluated their learning progress (Cotterall, 1995a, 1995b; Dickinson, 1995; Little 1991, 2007).

Table 25

Correlations between students' autonomous beliefs and behaviours

Beliefs and behaviours	Pearson correlation	Sig. (two-tailed)	N
Identify their strengths and weaknesses	.242*	.019	94
Set learning goals	.303**	.003	93
Decide what to learn outside the classroom	.261*	.010	95
Evaluate own learning progress	.345**	.001	93
Stimulate their own interest in language learning	.503**	.000	94
Learn from peers	.508**	.000	95
Become more self-directed in language learning	.385**	.000	95
Explore the language alone without the help of the teacher	.487**	.000	95
Offer opinion about what to learn in the classroom	.476**	.000	96

Note. * Correlation is significant at p< 0.05 level (two-tailed); ** Correlation is significant at P< 0.01 level (two-tailed).

However, the observations revealed that only a few students were willing to contribute actively to the lessons and to make suggestions, most of them were reluctant to participate. The majority of the interactions between the students happened in L1, moreover, off-task interactions could be observed whenever the teacher's attention diverted. Students used the target language only when they were answering display questions and in the cases when they would have needed clarification, they either did not ask for help or they did so in L1. Furthermore, when students were supposed to work in pairs, they rather worked alone next to each other, or copied their peers' work, which reflected that students' most frequent reason for preferring for pair work was that could rely on the others in this way. Two of the observed classes were based on

learners' individual presentations, where posters were to introduce the presentations. Presenters were not very confident, and their peers' attention shifted away at the beginning of the presentations.

Results of the questionnaires and classroom observations showed that language learners' beliefs about autonomous learning did not result in autonomous behaviours. This finding is important as it has been proved that unsubstantiated beliefs are likely to lead to language learning anxiety and impact language learning negatively, whereas beliefs coinciding with the expected good practice enhance efficacy (Riley, 2009).

4.5.7 Relationships between EFL and GFL students' autonomous beliefs and practices

In order to reveal possible differences between EFL learners' (N=64) and GFL learners' (N=36) autonomous beliefs and practices, descriptive statistics were calculated to compare students' answers given in the questionnaire. Students had been learning English for one to 11 years (mean 6.6 years) and German for four to 13 years (mean 8.9), the means of their end of the year grades were 3.85 (English) and 3.29 (German), which indicates that although students had been learning English for a shorter period, they received better grades. The comparison the frequencies of the two groups' preferred work forms did not reveal salient differences. However, looking into the reasons behind the preferred work forms showed that 28% of the EFL learners preferred their chosen work form because they found that it was easier to rely on the others as opposed to the 45% of the GFL learners who preferred a particular work form for the same reason.

As for out of class language use, only 16% of the EFL learners reported no use of English outside the school at all, 33% of the GFL learners claimed the same regarding the German language. According to the questionnaire data, 27% of EFL learners used the

language to surf the Internet and 14% to play computer games. In contrast, 9% and 6% of GFL learners' used German while going online or playing computer games. However, learners of German claimed to use the language more often in personal communication: 28% mentioned language use with speakers of other languages or family members as opposed to the EFL learners' 12%.

GFL learners made more efforts to prepare for the tests: 50% learned and revised the most difficult parts of the material as opposed to the 25% of the EFL learner. Moreover, while 20% of English learners did not prepare for formal assessments in any specific way, whereas only 5% of the GFL learners claimed to ignore preparation.

Table 26

The way EFL and GFL learners benefit from feedback (in %; n=100)

Way to benefit from feedback	EFL learners (%)	GFL learners (%)
Did not benefit from it	26	9
Figured out the reason for the mistake	64	41
Copied and corrected the mistakes to the notebook	12	29
Checked superficially	7	13
Checked and tried to avoid them in the future	11	8
Total	100	100

As shown in Table 26, whereas 26% of EFL learners and 9% of GFL learners did not feel that they benefited from feedback, 64% of EFL learners and 41% of the GFL learners learned from it by figuring out the reasons for their mistakes and trying to avoid them in the future. A further 29% of German learners reported that they handled their mistakes by copying the corrected items into their notebooks, whereas a 12% of EFL learners did the same.

Comparing the EFL and GFL learners' beliefs about their responsibilities concerning LA, EFL learners feel more responsible for their learning: the means of their answers given on the four point Likert scale were higher for every item with a single exception: GFL learners felt more responsible for learning from their peers than EFL learners (Table 27).

Table 27

EFL and GFL learners' beliefs about their responsibilities concerning LA

Learners feel responsible for	First foreign language learnt	N	Mean	SD
Identifying their strengths and weaknesses	English	61	3.08	.881
	German	34	2.97	.758
Setting learning goals	English	59	3.53	.679
	German	36	3.39	.766
Deciding what to learn outside the classroom	English	61	3.21	1.018
	German	35	3.17	.707
Evaluating their own learning progress	English	61	3.08	.843
	German	34	2.85	.857
Stimulating interest in language learning	English	60	3.27	.899
	German	36	3.28	.701
Learning from peers	English	62	2.79	.890
	German	34	2.88	.844
Becoming more self-directed in language learning	English	62	3.16	.909
	German	35	3.06	.802
Exploring the language alone without the help of the teacher	English	61	3.23	.956
	German	34	2.94	.814
Offering opinion about what to learn in the classroom	English	62	2.21	1.088
	German	34	2.12	.977
Total means	English		3.06	
	German		2.96	

Note. N=number of cases; SD= Standard deviation

The biggest differences in beliefs shown in favour of EFL learners were concerned with feeling responsible for evaluating their own learning progress and exploring the language alone, without the help of the teacher. The means of the items measuring

autonomous behaviours were lower in both groups than the means of the items focusing on beliefs. However, learners of English scored higher on seven of the items, with the biggest difference of the means in the cases of setting learning goals and stimulating interest in language learning.

Table 28

EFL and GFL learners' reported autonomous behaviours

Learners' autonomous behaviours	First foreign language learnt	N	Mean	SD
Identify their strengths and weaknesses	English	62	2.66	.767
	German	36	2.67	.793
Set learning goals	English	63	3.10	.756
	German	34	2.85	.744
Decide what to learn outside the classroom	English	62	2.58	.933
	German	35	2.49	.818
Evaluate their own learning progress	English	62	2.76	.900
	German	35	2.60	.976
Stimulate interest in language learning	English	63	3.19	.859
	German	34	2.68	.878
Learn from peers	English	63	2.70	.961
	German	35	2.86	1.033
Become more self-directed in language learning	English	62	2.92	.836
	German	35	2.77	.731
Explore the language alone without the help of the teacher	English	63	2.98	.907
	German	36	2.44	.877
Offer opinion about what to learn in the classroom	English	63	2.13	1.070
	German	36	1.94	.955
Total means	English		2.78	
	German		2.58	

Note. N=number of cases; SD= Standard deviation

The two groups reported that they identified their strengths and weaknesses almost to the same extent (see table 28), while learners of German claimed to learn more from their peers than EFL learners.

As seen in Table 29, the answers to the questionnaire revealed that while 62% of the EFL learners did not experience loss of motivation, 78% of the GFL learners reported that they faced such difficulties at certain stages in their learning process.

Table 29

Losing interest in language learning according to the learnt foreign language (in %; n=100)

Losing interest	Learnt foreign language		Total (%)
	English	German	
No	40	8	47
Yes	24	27	52
Total (%)	64	35	99
Missing			1

As for the reasons for losing interest in language learning, only EFL learners mentioned that they lost interest because of the teacher (12% of EFL learners who experienced interest loss) or claimed that they had never been interested in language learning (20%). The two groups blamed bad grades for their difficulties to the same extent (EFL: 20%, GFL: 18%), 16% of the EFL learners and 11% of the GFL learners lost their interest because they became tired. However, more learners of the German language (52%) found their language too difficult than EFL learners (32%), moreover, only GFL learners reported that they did not like their FL (18%). These results are in line with Rigger's (2009) findings that target language influenced how learners perceived the difficulty of the language they were studying, as more learners of English believed that their target language was easy than learners of German.

Comparing the way in which students coped with decreasing motivation, differences were prevalent at two points: 8% of EFL learners who lost their interest in language learning overcame their difficulties by working harder, whereas 23% of the GFL

learners claimed the same. Furthermore, while 22% of the learners of English did not overcame their loss of interest, only 11% of the GFL learners felt the same.

The main difference between what the two groups thought about what could have helped their autonomy in language learning was that while EFL learners mentioned mostly activities that could be done outside the classroom, GFL learners felt the need for classroom related changes, e.g. more interesting lessons, more speaking tasks at the lessons, and they also felt personal communication to be more important in their development than the members of the other group. On the other hand, more (14%) of the EFL learners claimed that they were autonomous, as opposed to the 6% of the GFL learners.

Concerning students' aims in language learning, the results showed that while only 9% of the EFL learners planned to stop language learning after passing the school leaving exam, 32% of the GFL learners did not intend to learn German after graduating from school. Moreover, lifelong learning was only mentioned by EFL learners. These findings reflect the results of Nikolov and Józsa's study (2006), which revealed that apart from students performing better on exams in English than in German, EFL learners set themselves higher goals than learners of the German language.

The questionnaire revealed differences in the motivational factors of the two groups. GFL learners seemed to be led by extrinsic motivation, while intrinsic motives were more often present in the group of the EFL learners. While 38% of the students learned English because of the hope for a better workplace or for finding a job abroad, a much higher ratio, 70% of the GFL learners were led by the same motives. On the other hand, 27% of the EFL learners learned English to cope better in life as opposed to the 7% of the GFL learners. Furthermore, only EFL learners (8%) mentioned that they were

motivated by their interest in the target language culture or they enjoyed the process of language learning.

The results of the questionnaire showed that learners' attitudes towards English were more favourable than towards German, which is in line with previous findings (Nikolov, 2003a; 2003b, Nikolov & Józsa, 2006). Moreover, GFL students were more concerned about their immediate learning goals, than showing long-term engagement by developing their autonomy. The reason for this could be that they expected to be in class only to receive lessons passively rather than finding ways to take control of their learning process. Students seemed to consider the German language a school subject and not a way of empowerment to allow them to achieve further goals or an area of intrinsic interest as opposed to EFL learners who seemed to be more aware of the benefits of English proficiency in making the most of the Internet and other modern media resources. A question arising from these results is whether EFL learners have higher levels of autonomy because they are better socialized into these practices by their EFL teachers, or, as their socioeconomic status tends to be higher as it was pointed out by Nikolov and Józsa (2006), it might imply a difference they bring with them rather than the outcome of teaching.

4.6 Relationships between language teachers' and students' beliefs about LA

This section compares students' and teachers' beliefs about autonomy in language learning to reveal potential clashes, which might be relevant, as it was suggested by Kern (1995) and Schulz (1996) that mismatches between teachers' and students' expectation could have a negative impact on learners' motivation and on the learning outcome.

The results of the present study showed that teachers considered motivation the most powerful factor to influence autonomous language learning behaviour, and emphasised that regardless of learners' language proficiency levels, students would develop autonomy only if they were willing to take responsibility for their learning. Another recurring idea was that students should be able to identify their strengths and weaknesses. Also, teachers expected autonomous learning to happen at home or at school within non-frontal educational context. However, teachers emphasised the importance of teacher-directedness, as most students needed to be instructed. Teachers did not have positive beliefs regarding their students' ability and willingness to take control over their own learning, therefore, they found their students' level of autonomy as language learners low, claiming that although some of their students were motivated to set their own learning goals, most of them were reluctant to make extra efforts in language learning.

Concerning students' beliefs about the factors that could foster their autonomy in language learning, the questionnaire revealed that only 13% of the students identified motivation as an important factor to increase their LA and while 11% of the students claimed that they were autonomous in language learning, 16% of the respondents felt insecure or helpless in becoming more autonomous. Others identified the role of external factors in strengthening their autonomy, such as changes to be made in the classroom (16%), and 26% mentioned activities that could be pursued in a self-directed way: they suggested more out of class language use, more personal communication, watching more films and listening to more music.

Teachers believed that students liked working at their own pace and that they preferred group work to pair work, although they expressed their worries that group

work gives less active students opportunities to hide behind others. Teachers thought that pair work lead to more balanced contributions to the lesson. However, the students' questionnaire revealed that 34% of the learners preferred individual work, 33% pair work, and 8% group work, whereas 22% of the students preferred work instructed by the teacher. However, classroom observations showed that the frequency of the applied work forms was not in line either with teachers' beliefs concerning how their students preferred to work, nor with their students' reported preferences. This discrepancy corresponds with Nikolov's findings (2003b).

As for the reasons for students' preferences, those who expressed their preference for individual work also claimed that they liked working at their own pace, whereas if they preferred other work forms, reliance on their peers or on the teacher was the most prevailing. This points towards students' lack of confidence, insecurity, which reflects teachers' views that students needed control and expected help from the outside and have low levels of autonomy in language learning. This view was supported by teachers' beliefs that error correction was problematic while taking LA into consideration and they worried about error fossilisation. This set of beliefs along with students' expectation to have their mistakes corrected immediately were in line with Akhtar's and Kausar's (2011) findings. They, however, contradict the results of Schultz (1996) and Brown (2009) on this point.

Teachers believed that their students improved their LA mostly by the use of modern technology and media: by watching films, listening to music, using the Internet with the purpose of doing online language exercises, playing computer games, looking for information, and chatting in the target language. Although teachers were aware of the benefits of using computers to facilitate autonomous learning, three of the four

interviewees emphasised the negative effect of technology, seemingly they believed that the disadvantages of the time spent with modern technology outnumbered its benefits.

Students claimed that they used their FL outside the school mostly for personal communication (20%) and it emerged that 22% did not use the language at all. Seventeen per cent of the students used the language to surf the Internet, 8% while playing computer games and the same ratio reported that they used it in every field of their life. Watching films in the target language, listening to music or language use during holiday travels were reported only by 6%. Clearly, they did not rely on modern media resources in their uses of the FL to the extent their teachers assumed.

Teachers thought that the main reasons for students' negative attitudes included fatigue: they were overburdened by their many lessons, the huge amount of materials they had to process, teachers' high expectations, and because learners viewed the language as a school subject. These beliefs were also reflected by students' answers given to the questionnaire. Although the reasons for students' demotivation varied depending on their achievement level (see section 4.5.4), students lost interest in language learning most frequently because they found the language too difficult and it required too much learning (39%), 17% lost interest because of bad grades they received, 16% found the language boring, 14% became tired, and 9% lost interest because of the teacher or because they did not like the language they were learning.

Teachers believed that their students were more concerned about immediate learning goals, rather than showing long-term engagement with language learning. As for long term engagement teachers mentioned instrumental motives, such as language proficiency exams and school leaving exams, and they claimed that their students

viewed the prospect of working abroad rather motivating. The results showed that the most students were driven by instrumental motivation: they claimed that they learned a language to be admitted to tertiary education, to be able to apply for a better job, to work abroad, to cope better in life in general or simply because they had to in order to be able to graduate from school. Integrative motives were mentioned only by 5% (high achiever EFL learners), whereas reasons for learning the language because of external constraints were most prevalent among weaker students.

In the teachers' view students liked to be given opportunities for decision making, although these occasions were scarcities. They feared to lose control over the lesson, therefore they were more positive about the feasibility of student involvement in decision making than about its desirability (see section 4.2.6). Teachers believed that student involvement was most desirable and feasible when setting the objectives of a course, choices about materials and assessment. On the other hand, they thought that the least desirable and feasible was to involve learners in decisions about activities, classroom management, topics and teaching methods. In fact, teachers believed that LA would be possible, but they didn't think it was applicable in their context. Teachers' ideas were controversial in that they thought that they could do more to improve their learners' autonomy, but they had negative views about their students' level of autonomy. Although they considered the development of a range of abilities identified as indicators of LA desirable, they expressed pessimism about the feasibility of these indicators. Teachers wished their learners had been able to identify their own strengths and weaknesses and to learn independently and cooperatively, although they found students' ability to monitor their own progress and identify their needs less desirable. Teachers thought that the most realistic expectation from their students was to learn

independently, whereas they considered students monitoring their own progress the least feasible.

Similar patterns could be observed in students' beliefs and autonomous behaviours (see section 4.5.6): although they believed that it was their responsibility to act autonomously, their autonomous behaviours lagged behind their perceived responsibilities. Students felt most responsible for setting their own learning goals, stimulating their own interest in language learning and deciding what to learn outside the classroom. On the other hand, they felt the least responsible for deciding what to learn in the classroom, to learn from their peers, to evaluate their own learning progress and to identify their strengths and weaknesses. The fact that students considered decision making in the classroom as the teacher's job may be due to the cultural impact: students viewed teachers as the absolute authority, in line with phenomena identified by Ho and Crookall (1995) in other contexts.

As shown in Table 30, comparing and contrasting teachers' perceptions of autonomous learning with those of the students' revealed that learners' and teachers' cognition did not coincide at all points. Whereas teachers were aware of the role of motivation and of the ability to identify strengths and weaknesses in language learning, students did not seem to realize the importance of these concepts. Moreover, teachers believed that autonomy in language learning could be developed both in the classroom and outside of it, whereas students did not consider school as a context where they could act autonomously. Furthermore, teachers were more positive about cooperative learning and out of class uses of modern media resources than students were. Also, discrepancies between beliefs concerning work form preferences were observed.

Table 30

Correspondences and mismatches between teachers' and language learners' beliefs concerning different aspects of LA

Teachers' and students' beliefs correspond	
Students are overburdened	
Students like working at their own pace	
FL is viewed as a school subject	
Teacher-directedness is desired	
Students have to be corrected	
Evaluation is the teachers' responsibility	
Students set immediate learning goals	
Students are led by instrumental motives	
LA is desired, although not feasible	
Students' level of autonomy is low	
Mismatches between the teachers' and students' beliefs	
Teachers	Students
Motivation is essential in developing LA	Not aware of the role of motivation in LA
LA should be supported in the classroom	Autonomous learning happens outside the school
Students prefer to work in groups to other work forms	Prefer individual work and pair work
Students use modern media resources to develop their FL outside the classroom	Do not use FL outside the classroom, or use it for personal communication, FL use with technology is less characteristic
Students like to be given opportunities for decision making	Decision making is the teacher's job in the classroom

As for the overlaps, both students and teachers expressed that (1) teacher-directedness was desired, (2) monitoring their own progress was not learners' responsibility, (3) students expected their improvement from the teacher, and (4) both groups emphasised the importance of immediate error correction. They agreed that (5) students set immediate learning goals and were led by extrinsic motives; (6) both groups believed that students were overburdened at schools.

The correspondences between teachers' and students' beliefs point towards dispiriting conclusions: learners' level of autonomy in language learning is low. The reason for students being concerned about their immediate learning goals rather than showing long-term engagement in language learning by developing their autonomy may be that they expect to be in class only to receive lessons passively rather than finding ways to take control of their learning process. Students seem to consider their FL only a school subject, not an instrument to achieve further goals or to cope better in life.

Chapter 5 Conclusions

Despite the substantial volume of research on LA, what teachers think and do in the classroom concerning LA and how their practices relate to students' autonomous beliefs and behaviours have not been widely researched. With this study I intended to address this gap to gain insight into how language teachers and learners relate to LA and to reveal the source of possible mismatches between autonomous beliefs and behaviours. The present cross-sectional study was conducted at a medium-sized comprehensive secondary school along two lines to investigate the way language teachers and learners perceive LA. It applied an exploratory approach following the mixed method research tradition. The qualitative phases described in this dissertation included the researcher's observational notes, semi-structured interviews with teachers, two questionnaires administered with teachers (n=12) and students (=100), comprising both closed and open-ended questions. Classroom observations allowed me to learn about the teaching methodology that the different teachers applied, as well as to determine in what ways the concept of LA was supported in the language classroom. The Likert-type items of the two questionnaires, as well as the sample size of the student-participants contributed to the quantitative component of this study.

5.1 Summary of findings

The purpose of the dissertation was to gain a better understanding of autonomy in L2 learning by exploring the relationships among the following areas: (a) language teachers' perceptions of LA; (b) language teachers' practices concerning LA; (c) language learners' autonomous beliefs and behaviours; and (d) teachers' and learners' beliefs about LA.

5.1.1 Language teachers' perspectives

The research revealed diverging views regarding language teachers' understanding of LA: teachers defined LA as responsibility to control one's own learning, self-direction, need for decision about the learning process. Another recurring concept was students' ability to identify their strengths and weaknesses and their awareness of the need for learning outside the school. However, respondents emphasised the importance of teacher-directedness, teachers' role in raising and maintaining motivation, identifying and meeting students' needs. The results showed that language teachers viewed students' motivation as the most powerful factor to influence LA (Ushioda, 2011), although every participant mentioned only extrinsic motives. Moreover, they also considered socioeconomic background and learning context crucial in autonomous language learning.

Teachers highlighted the psychological and sociocultural aspects of LA, as well as their technical perspectives (Benson, 2007). All teachers considered life experience and language learning experience more relevant than age, however, the relationship between LA and language proficiency was found to be complex. Teachers believed that autonomous language learners benefit from the available modern media resources outside the classroom in order to improve their language skills and look for opportunities to communicate in the target language in many ways in their everyday life. Teachers were aware of the strong potential of technology, although they emphasised the need for proper guidance in this sense.

All teachers agreed on the positive effects of LA on language learning and referred to the personalised pace of learning, deeper understanding and sense of achievement (Dam, 1995; Smith, 2008). As drawbacks teachers mentioned that

autonomous behaviour needed self-discipline; they found error correction problematic when supporting LA and feared to lose control over their lessons. Teachers' views on autonomy in teaching and in learning were shaped by their own learning experiences, the efforts they made to reach their goals and the impact of their previous teachers' practices (Borg, 2006).

Teachers claimed that they promoted LA by encouraging their students to use modern media, to make presentations on topics of their own choice, provided them with extra language exercises and with advice concerning learning strategies, furthermore, they introduced autonomy supportive activities in the classroom. Although autonomy was viewed as a desirable goal to reach, teachers had diverging views about the level of freedom their students should be given in the classroom. Teachers had positive attitudes towards self-assessment, although they had worries about its accuracy, since teachers cannot be everywhere to control the situations emerging in the classroom (Bulock, 2011).

Teachers thought that except for a few learners, most of their students had low levels of autonomy as they were not ready to take control over their learning, revealing an inherent contradiction: although teachers believed that LA was crucial, but they thought that their students were not ready for it (Borg & Al-Busaidi, 2011, 2012). They did not perceive development as an ongoing process where participants grow into routines and get socialised into ways of using language. Teachers believed that students were more concerned about immediate learning goals than showing long-term engagement. The most challenging factors in promoting LA were seen to be students' lack of motivation, lack of time, students' socioeconomic backgrounds, continuous distraction caused by the overuse of technology, and by institutional constraints.

Concerning the desirability and feasibility of student involvement in decision making, teachers believed that more autonomy would be possible, but they did not think it was applicable in their context, revealing the discrepancy of the world that was desirable but not available to them at the time of the research.

The present study shed light on teachers' different understandings concerning teacher autonomy as they associated the concept with freedom from external constraints, personal autonomy or teacher authority, rather than a personal responsibility for their teaching (Little, 1995). The exclusive use of past tense when speaking about autonomy in their own development suggested that teachers hardly perceived any space for professional growth in their career. The fact that teachers mostly blamed their circumstances and complained about external constrains revealed the influence of the powerful socio-educational tradition manifested in learned helplessness (Williams & Burden, 1997). Furthermore, it also points towards the conclusion that teachers did not feel responsible for their teaching, and thus their level of autonomy as teachers was low. The most prevalent emerging issue was the importance of previous learning experience and the influence of previous teachers, which implies that if teachers could experience strategies fostering autonomy as learners, reflect on these strategies and experiment with them in their teaching practice these activities could lead to more effective teachers.

5.1.2 Relationships between language teachers' beliefs and practices concerning LA

The present research unveiled a conflict between what teachers claimed they wanted to do and what they believed they could do. Although the NCC along with the Local Curriculum comprised LA among its explicit aims, teachers expected external

intervention, apparently not seeing how the vicious cycle of learnt helplessness could be broken and what their own role would be. Seemingly, theories-in-action, stemming from teachers' personal and professional biographies, as well as from their teaching contexts are slow to change (Schön, 1983).

Although classroom observations revealed elements of LA supportive practices, the presence of the Prussian teaching tradition was definitely more prevalent: the physical arrangement of the classrooms, the teaching objectives and the content influenced by the instructional materials, scarcity of technology use even though IT facilities were available and reliance on the course books because of the pressure associated with the curriculum provided little evidence that LA development was a consciously sustained process.

The perception that learner involvement into decision making was feasible but not desirable was mirrored in the teachers' observed practices. Even though teachers thought that students liked to be given the opportunity for making decisions, these occasions seemed to be a scarcity. It was not clear how teachers' attitude concerning self-assessment translated into practice, as its implementation was limited to certain tasks. Although teachers were aware of the benefits of LA in language learning, only sporadic occurrences of LA support could be traced; even these examples recycled direct instruction and form-focused activities.

Although LA has been listed among the explicitly stated educational aims in the curriculum of the school, its presence was unevenly mirrored by teachers' reported practices. Despite their positive views on LA they tended to rely on frontal classwork and form-focused activities. Teachers' attitudes towards autonomy seem to be strongly connected to their own learning experiences and influence teachers' roles in fostering

their learners' autonomy. These results point towards a need for change: even though innovations were supported from above, these initiatives did not find their way into the classroom as teachers did not embrace the concept (Hyland & Wong, 2013).

5.1.3 Relationships between EFL and GFL teachers' beliefs concerning LA

The comparison of EFL and GFL teachers' beliefs concerning LA revealed uneven views. Although all language teachers had positive attitude towards LA, viewed motivation as the most powerful factor to influence LA, and they all found their students' level of autonomy low, EFL teachers credited higher importance to students' socioeconomic background than GFL teachers. Teachers had diverging views on the ways in which students act autonomously: EFL teachers believed that students used modern technology and media in various ways, whereas GFL teachers believed that learners demonstrated their autonomy by doing mostly school-related activities.

Similarly, GFL teachers seemed to be biased towards the traditional, formal ways of assessment, whereas EFL teachers showed a more real life-like, pragmatic approach, viewing language as a tool for communication. EFL teachers were more positive about their teacher autonomy: occurrences of providing students with metacognitive knowledge and appraisal were more frequent in the observed EFL lessons, whereas explicit error correction was more typical in the GFL lessons. EFL and GFL teachers seemed to rely on the course book to the same extent; however, GFL teachers approached the German language more as a school subject, whereas EFL teachers' practices reflected their awareness of the English language as a means of communication.

5.1.4 Language learners' perspectives

Understanding learners' beliefs is essential as beliefs influence decision making, learning efficacy and students' behaviour in the classroom (Cotteral, 1999). As for language learners' attitudes towards LA the present research revealed that work forms considered autonomy-supportive were popular among the students, although only in the case of individual work was obvious that learners preferred it for reasons that pointed towards autonomy development. As for students' reasons for preferring pair work and group work, the prevalent reliance on peers implies low levels of autonomy in language learning. The results also showed that most high achievers preferred individual work suggesting that high achievement and autonomous behaviour are related.

As far as the trends of language use among the groups with different achievement levels are concerned, an emerging pattern in the ways of language use associated with entertainment and enjoyment was that most low achievers avoided to use English or German outside the school or mostly used their respective FL in computer games, whereas most of the high achievers used their FL everywhere they found the opportunity to do so.

The fact that loss of interest in language learning was the least frequent among the most successful language learners, whereas it was more prevalent among the weaker students, points towards the interrelatedness of autonomy and motivation. Students lost interest in language learning most frequently because they found the language difficult or too boring, because of bad grades, or because they became tired. The most powerful motivating factors in overcoming difficulties in language learning were good grades and their awareness of how useful the target language was. The results revealed a difference between students' beliefs within achievement levels: low

achievers felt helpless about becoming more autonomous, blamed lack of motivation or the school setting for their lack of autonomy. More successful language learners, in contrast, identified motivation and activities that could be done in a self-directed way to support their autonomy; those who could overcome their difficulties in language learning were also more aware of the role of motivation in autonomous learning.

As regards students' goal setting in language learning, performance orientation outnumbered mastery orientation. Most students were driven by instrumental motivation, intrinsic motives were mentioned only by high achievers, whereas reasons for learning the language because of external constraints were most prevalent among weaker students. The reason for students being concerned about their immediate learning goals may be that they expect to be in class only to receive lessons passively rather than find ways to take control of their learning process. Low achievers seem to consider the FL a school subject and they failed to see it as a tool to achieve further goals or an area of intrinsic interest. Only high achievers felt devoted to lifelong language learning.

Concerning students' autonomous beliefs and behaviours, the present research revealed a mismatch in favour of beliefs, implying that students' behaviours lagged behind their perceived responsibilities: language learners' beliefs about autonomous learning did not result in autonomous behaviours (Édes, 2008). Socialised in a context where teachers' roles were associated with that of authority, students tended not to take responsibility for their own learning but rather rely on their teachers to provide them with information and instruction.

5.1.5 Relationships between EFL and GFL learners' beliefs and behaviours concerning LA

Comparing EFL and GFL students' autonomous beliefs and practices the results did not reveal salient differences between the two groups' preferred work forms. However, looking into the reasons underlying the preferred work forms it turned out that GFL learners were more likely to choose a particular work form because they found it easier to rely on their peers when completing the tasks than EFL learners did. As for out of class language use, more GFL learners avoided the use of their FL than EFL learners, however, learners of German claimed to use the language more often in personal communication. EFL learners felt more responsible for their learning and they were less likely to experience loss of motivation as opposed to GFL learners.

The main difference between the views of the two groups concerning what could have helped their LA was that EFL learners referred mostly to activities that could be done outside the classroom, whereas GFL learners expressed the need for classroom-related changes. Concerning students' aims in language learning, EFL learners set themselves higher goals than learners of the German language. GFL learners seemed to be led exclusively by extrinsic motivation, whereas intrinsic motives were more often present in the group of the EFL learners and lifelong learning was only mentioned by EFL learners. EFL learners' attitudes towards English were more favourable than in the case of GFL learners, who tended to consider the German language a school subject as opposed to EFL learners who seemed to be more aware of the benefits of knowing English.

5.1.6 Relationships between language teachers' and learners' beliefs concerning LA

Learners' and teachers' perceptions of autonomous learning did not overlap at all points. Whereas teachers were aware of the role of motivation and of the ability to identify strengths and weaknesses in language learning, students did not seem to realize the importance of these abilities. Moreover, teachers believed that autonomous language learning could happen both in the classroom and outside of it, whereas students did not consider school as a context where they could act autonomously. Furthermore, teachers were more positive about out of class uses of modern media resources than their students. Similarly, mismatches were also found between beliefs concerning work form preferences.

As for the correspondences between teachers' and students' views, both groups found teacher-directedness desirable, expressed that monitoring the learning process was not among learners' responsibilities, students expected their improvement from the teacher, and both groups emphasised the importance of immediate error correction (Akhtar & Kausar, 2011). They agreed that students set immediate learning goals and were led by extrinsic motives. Both groups believed that students were overburdened at schools.

5.2 Limitations of the research

The weaknesses of the present dissertation are manifold: because of the small sample size results cannot be generalised beyond the samples involved in the project. Nevertheless, by using multiple methods and perspectives the study provides sufficient details to claim for some transferability of the results. Problems associated with self-report instruments used for data collection included subject expectancy and fatigue,

however, these techniques are effective means to attain a better understanding of teachers' and students' perceptions.

As I observed each participant teacher only once, I was aware that I could not expect to gain insight into all their techniques they typically applied to support autonomy in their classes. Therefore, the differences the observations revealed may not be applicable for other groups. Moreover, given that the interviewees were selected based on the difference in their practices concerning autonomy development I did not expect the interviews to reveal differences. However, even though the participants did not represent a large sample, several emerging patterns were identified. I also recognise that the teachers' responses to the interview questions might also have been influenced by the presence of the interviewer, but there is hardly any other way to tap into teachers' views.

Follow-up in-depth interviews with the students might have provided a more comprehensive picture about learners' autonomous beliefs and actual levels of autonomy. Although every effort was made to avoid potential pitfalls, as I involved only one age group, further research would be desirable to test the generalizability of the findings by involving a larger population from various age groups or by conducting a longitudinal study.

5.3 Pedagogical implications and suggestions for further research

Despite the limitations, the findings of the research carry pedagogical implications to practicing teachers and teacher educators. Teachers' awareness should be raised about the importance of LA, as well as the roles of the teachers which are central to the development of LA. Taking into consideration that teachers felt influenced most by their

own learning experience and that teachers apparently lacked a clear understanding of LA whereas they thought that they could do more to foster LA, it would be essential to incorporate awareness raising concerning LA in teacher training programmes. This would help teachers scaffold their learners' learning process and shape their learning experiences positively regarding autonomy development. Similarly, as beliefs coinciding with the expected good practice enhance efficacy, while otherwise they may impact it negatively, it is essential that language teachers understand the expectations with which their learners arrive at the classroom.

Further research should be done to map the reasons for the mismatches between students' and teachers' beliefs and to investigate the relationships between beliefs, teaching practices and students' behaviour. A mutual understanding between students' and teachers' perceptions and expectations may help to increase the level of motivation and satisfaction for both groups.

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Appendix A

Classroom observation

Date and time:
Teacher's name:
Number and gender of the students
Materials:
Classroom arrangement:
Available equipment:

Students:

	Frequency
Listen to a recording	
Make an oral report	
Understand the meaning of a text	
The whole group works with the teacher	
Work in groups	
Repeat the teacher's words	
Work individually	
Use L2	
Copy from the board/ course book	
Translate a text	
Talk about a picture	
Write a test	
Do a grammar exercise	
Guess the meaning of a word	
Guess a grammar rule	
Use L1	
Practice a situation	

Watch a film	
Write a letter/ essay	
Work in pairs	
Read aloud	
Learn a text by heart	
Play a language game	
Answer the teacher's questions	
Off task talk	
Do exercises from the course book	
Write after dictation	
Ask for help in L2	
Ask for help in L1	

2. The teacher:

	Frequency
Takes into account students' needs/ interests	
Gives space for individual work with homework	
Involves students in task design	
Encourages students for out of class language use	
Motivates	
Provides students with learning strategies	
Teacher gives instructions/ directions	
Dictates	
Explains a grammatical point.	

Explains meaning of a vocabulary item.	
Explains functional point	
Explains point relating to the content.	
Uses authentic material	
Carries out comprehension checks	
Asks a display question	
Corrects students' oral work	
Evaluates	
Gives space for self-assessment	
Gives space for peer assessment	
Asks a referential question	
Praises	
Criticizes	

Appendix B

Teachers' questionnaire

Dear Colleague,

I would like to ask you to fill in this questionnaire, in which there are no correct or incorrect answers as I am interested in Your views and Your experience. In the first section you are asked to answer open questions than to complete the table in the second section. With your answers you are helping me in data collection for my doctoral thesis.

Section 1:

1. What does learner autonomy mean for you?

2. What advantages do you think learner autonomy has?

3. What disadvantages do you think learner autonomy has?

4. What factors do you think to influence learner autonomy?

5. What is the role of the teacher in supporting language learner autonomy?

6. How do you see your own autonomy as a language learner?

7. What do you think about your own autonomy as a language teacher?

8. What are those classroom activities which contribute to the growth of your learners' autonomy? Mention five which you apply with success.

9. How do your students develop their own language knowledge? Write a few examples.

10. What is your students' attitude towards autonomous language learning?

11. In which cases do you give opportunity for decision to your students? Write two examples.

12. What challenges do you face while supporting learner autonomy? Write a few examples.

13. How would you describe an autonomous learner?

14. How would you describe a non-autonomous learner?

15. To what extent are your learners autonomous? Why? If they are not autonomous, what could be the reason for it?

16. In what cases do you offer space for self-assessment?

17. To what extent do you think self-assessment provides real picture about the knowledge of your students?

Section 2: Desirability and Feasibility of Learner Autonomy

Below there are two sets of statements. The first gives examples of decisions **LEARNERS** might be involved in; the second lists abilities that learners might have. For each statement:

a. First say how **desirable** (i.e. ideally), you feel it is.
b. Then say how **feasible** (i.e. realistically achievable) you think it is for *the learners you currently teach most often*.

You should tick **TWO** boxes for each statement – one for desirability and one for feasibility.

	Desirability				Feasibility			
	Undesirable	Slightly desirable	Quite desirable	Very desirable	Unfeasible	Slightly feasible	Quite feasible	Very feasible
Learners are involved in decisions about: The objectives of a course The materials used The kinds of tasks and activities they do The topics discussed How learning is assessed The teaching methods used Classroom management								
Learners have the ability to: Identify their own needs Identify their own strengths Identify their own weaknesses Monitor their progress Evaluate their own learning Learn co-operatively Learn independently								

Personal data

Teaching experience (years)
0-4   5-9   10-14   15-19   20-25   25+

Qualifications (You can mark more than one)
College   University MA   BA   PhD   Other

Thank You for taking the time to fill in the questionnaire.

Szőcs Krisztina

Appendix C

Students' questionnaire about learner autonomy

Dear Student,
I would like to ask you to complete a questionnaire in which there are no correct or incorrect answers as I am interested in your views and experience. In the first part I would like you to answer open questions, than to complete the table in the second part. The questionnaire is anonymous, with your answers you are helping me with data collection for my doctoral thesis.

Part 1

How old are you?   M/F (underline)   Class:
Your end of the year grade:

1. What languages and how long have you been learning?

Language	Years
English	
German	
Other	
Other	

2. How would you describe your English language knowledge?
3. How far do you think you have managed to learn what you have covered in class?
4. How do you prefer to work on the language lesson? Underline and give your reasons.
   •on my own, because
   •in pairs, because
   •in groups, because
   •directed by the teacher, because
5. How do you use the languages you have learned outside the classroom?
   •English
   •German
   •other
6. How do you prepare for tests?
7. How do you benefit from the evaluation received for the tests? How do you treat your mistakes made in tests?
8. Has it ever occurred that you lost interest in language learning?
   If yes, what was the reason for it?
   How did you get over?
9. What do you think could help you to become more autonomous in language learning?

10. How long do you think you will continue language learning?
    What level would you like to reach?
    For what reason?

Part 2

There are nine statements here regarding ways to learn English and two different columns. The one on the left asks how responsible you think you should be for doing this to yourself. The one on the right asks you to what extent you actually do it.

How responsible: 1----------------2-----------------3-----------------4

                 Not   a little   to some extent   mainly responsible

To what extent: 1----------------2-----------------3-----------------4

                 Never   sometimes   often   in general

Please circle your answer from 1 to 4 for EACH column according to your true feelings and experiences.

	How responsible for?	**Statement**	**To what extent?**
1.	1 2 3 4	identify my own strengths and weaknesses	1 2 3 4
2.	1 2 3 4	set my own learning goals	1 2 3 4
3.	1 2 3 4	decide what to learn outside the classroom	1 2 3 4
4.	1 2 3 4	evaluate my own learning progress	1 2 3 4
5.	1 2 3 4	stimulate my own interest in language learning	1 2 3 4
6.	1 2 3 4	learn from my peers, not just from the teachers	1 2 3 4
7.	1 2 3 4	become more self-directed in language learning	1 2 3 4
8.	1 2 3 4	discover knowledge in English on my own rather than waiting for knowledge from the teacher	1 2 3 4
9.	1 2 3 4	offer opinion about what to learn in the classroom	1 2 3 4

If you would like to participate in a short interview, please write here your name:

Thank you for taking the time to complete the questionnaire.
Szőcs Krisztina

Appendix D

Guiding questions for the interviews with the teachers

1. What does learner autonomy mean for you? What do you think is the difference between an autonomous and a non- autonomous learner concerning language learning?

2. What do you think about the relationship between learner autonomy and age?

3. What do you think about the relationship between learner autonomy and language proficiency?

4. What do you think about the relationship between learner autonomy and motivation?

5. What do you think learner autonomy means in the classroom and outside of it?

6. What language learning strategies are used by an autonomous learner?

7. To what extent were you autonomous as language learner?

8. What is the relationship between learner autonomy and teacher autonomy?

9. What factors influenced you to arrive to your present views regarding learner autonomy?

10. How do you see your own role in the development of your learners' autonomy?

11. What are those classroom activities which contribute to the growth of your learners' autonomy? Which do you apply with success?

12. What do you think about your own students' autonomy?

13. What is your students' attitude towards learner autonomy? How do they improve their language autonomously?

14. Can you recall a case when one of your learners revealed autonomous behaviour?

15. In which cases do you give your students opportunity for decision? How do they relate to it?

16. Can you recall a case when your students reacted in unusual way when possibility for decision was given to them?

17. What is your opinion about self-assessment? What practical uses or possible dangers do you see in connection with it?

18. What challenges do you face while supporting learner autonomy? Can you mention a case when you faced difficulties in supporting it?

19. If there weren't any constraints that you mentioned, how the way you teach would change?

20. What do you think, how does the Hungarian teaching tradition influence language learner autonomy?

APPENDIX E

Transcriptions of the interviews with the teachers

Transcription of the interview with Luca (GFL teacher)

Duration: 35 minutes

I: Köszönöm, hogy időt szakítasz a kérdéseim megválaszolására. Elsőként azt szeretném tudni, hogy számodra mit jelent a tanulói autonómia?

L: Szerintem a tanulói autonómia szervezőkészséget jelent, attól függ, hogy mennyire szervez, mennyire hatékony módszerekkel dolgozik a tanuló.

I: *Milyen különbséget látsz egy autonóm és egy nem autonóm tanuló között?*

L: A kettő közötti különbség leginkább abban mutatkozik meg, hogy egy autonóm tanuló képes tudatosan kiválasztani, mi az, amire szüksége van, a másik meg nyilván nem képes erre. Ez egészen biztosan személyiségfüggő is.

I: Mit gondolsz, hogyan függ össze a tanulói autonómia az életkorral?

L: Az élettapasztalat mindenképpen kell hozzá, azalatt alakul ki, hogy mi az, amire szüksége van, az alatt sajátít el kellő mértékű önismeretet. Itt van például ez a Holló Zsuzsi, aki tudatos, egyedül is sok mindent csinál, emelt szinten tanul, németes, és sokszor jön előre elkérni a tananyagot. Most is az érettségire készül, előre elkérte tőlem a témákat és kidolgozta magának. Életkor és élettapasztalat, a családi háttér sokat számít: hogy otthon foglalkoznak-e vele, megadják-e neki a megfelelő praktikákat, a stratégiákat megtanítják-e. Mert nyilván, ha nincsen foglalkozva a gyerekkel, akkor az nem fejleszti az autonómiáját, nem érzi úgy, hogy érdekli a szüleit, elveszti a motivációját és nem tesz bele plusz munkát.

I: Milyen összefüggést látsz a nyelvtudás és a tanulói autonómia között?

L: Elhatározás kérdése, tehát minden szinte minden nyelvtudási szinten létezhet autonómia. Sok ismerősöm van, aki több nyelvet a legelejétől tanult meg, önálló módon. Tehát ez megint elhatározás és motiváció kérdése. A motiváció és a nyelvtanulás nagyon szoros kapcsolatban áll egymással, egyik nem lehet a másik nélkül. Fegyelem kérdése az egész: ha tudom, hogy mit akarok, akkor megcsinálom, a fontos dolgokra időt kerítek.

I: *Mit jelent szerinted a tanulói autonómia az órán és órán kívül?*

L: A csoportmunkát annyira nem szeretem, mert el tudnak bújni egymás háta mögött. Önálló memorizálást szoktam, hogy X idő alatt hány szót tudnak megtanulni, de nyilván órán kívül lehet leginkább önállóan tanulni, a 90 százaléka ott történik. Mindig tanácsokat adok nekik ismétlésre, ismételjenek, meg a neten szótárazzanak.

I: *Szerinted milyen kapcsolat van a tanári autonómia és a tanulói autonómia között?*

L: Hát nyilván a kimenet az közös kell, hogy legyen, hogy közben mit csinál, az rajta múlik, és hogyha fel tudom mérni, hogy kinek mire van szüksége, dönthetek úgy, hogy autonóm módon azokat a szükségleteket kielégítem, tehát személyre szabom úgymond a tananyagot, és amit csinálok órán. Olyan tanácsokat adok nekik, amelyeket nyelvtanulóként megtapasztaltam, ez nyilván személyiségfüggő is, hogy kinek mi jön be. Én nyelvtanulóként nagyon autonóm voltam, a gimiben kezdtem el németül tanulni, akkor eldöntöttem, hogy némettanár szeretnék lenni és rengeteg sok munkát beletettem és végül sikerült elérni a célomat. A tanárom nagyon sokat segített, délutánonként külön foglalkozott velem, mert nemzetiségi irodalmat is kellett tanulnom és én nem Frankelos voltam, úgyhogy ezt pluszba meg kellett tanulnom és hát rengeteget ismételtem, elővettem a régi könyveket, újra átnéztem, gyakorló feladatokat csináltam megoldó kulccsal, nem írtam le, hanem fejben átalakítottam a mondatokat.

I: *Milyen hatások befolyásolták nézeteid kialakulását a tanulói autonómiával kapcsolatban? Volt olyan esemény vagy olvasmány, ami befolyásolt?*

L: Hogy mi volt rám a legnagyobb hatással, hát nem is tudom, talán a saját példám, hogy egyedül, önálló munkát belerakva mekkora eredményt sikerült elérni, és amit a leghatékonyabbnak találok, az az utánzás, ami emlékeztet a gyerekkori nyelvtanulásra, az életszagú tanulásra, amikor látás, hallás, utánzás alapján ragad az emberre. Itt jut eszembe a Villám Angol, amit a tesóm nagyon eredményesnek talált, ő nem akart hagyományos módszerekkel tanulni, nem akart nyelvtant és szavakat tanulni, ő ezt csinálta.

I: Hogyan látod saját szereped nyelvtanulóid önállóságának fejlődésében?

L: Megpróbálok tanácsokat adni, olyan tanácsokat, amik nekem bejöttek nyelvtanulóként.

I: Szerinted milyen típusú órai tevékenységek járulnak vagy járulnának hozzá leginkább ahhoz, hogy a diákok önállóan tudják nyelvtudásukat fejleszteni, és ezek közül melyeket alkalmazod sikerrel?

L: Dialógusokat építünk fel, olyanokat például, amelyek alapján ők más párbeszédeket tudnak építeni, vagy ha új témát veszünk, akkor adok nekik 2 percet, hogy átgondolják, hogy mi az, amit tanultak. Csoportmunkában ritkábban dolgozunk, inkább a pármunkát szeretem. Külön szoktam ültetni őket, mert már elegem volt, hogy ha egymás mellett ülnek, akkor beszélgetnek, de így nyilván, amikor pármunka van, akkor egymás mellé ülnek.

I: Mi a véleményed diákjaid önállóságáról?

L: Hát ez szerintem személyiségfüggő. Nyilván nagyfokú önfegyelemre van szükség, azt veszem észre, hogy amikor én irányítok, akkor könnyen együttműködnek, viszont ha olyan feladatot kapnak, ahol önállóan, önálló gondolatokat kellene beleadniuk, akkor nagyon nehezen jönnek a gondolatok, inkább kívülről várják a segítséget. Meg kell nekik mondani, vagy el kell nekik magyarázni, hogy mi az, amit ide lehetne, kellene mondani és akkor így el tudnak indulni önállóan.

I: Értem, és milyen a diákjaid hozzáállása az önálló nyelvtanuláshoz, hogyan fejlesztik önállóan nyelvtudásukat?

L: Nyilván internetet használnak, filmeket néznek. Az érettségi témák kidolgozása, az rájuk hárul. Azt szoktuk csinálni, hogy mindenki kidolgozza, én meg kijavítom, kijavítva visszaadom, és akkor abból lesznek számon kérve. Nyilván azt szoktam mondani, hogy ha csupa hibásan, csak azért írja meg hogy, meg legyen írva, akkor inkább meg se írja, mert akkor gyakorlatilag nekem kell helyette megírnom. Viszont nyugodtan használhat internetről leszedett témákat, de ha hiba van benne, akkor az értékelésben az már meg fog jelenni.

I: Fel tudsz idézni olyan esetet, amikor tanulóid autonómiája megnyilvánult?

L: Hát Holló Zsuzsi, akit említettem, hogy elkérte előre a tananyagot, mert fel akart készülni az előrehozott érettségire és egy délutánt rászántuk, illetve a másik emeltes, aki nagyon-nagyon jól beszél és csak tévéből tanult meg önállóan beszélni.

I: Milyen dolgokban adsz diákjaidnak döntési lehetőséget és milyen eredménnyel?

L: Hát ez nálunk a tétel kidolgozásának a lehetősége, ha úgy gondolják, hogy meg tudják csinálni, meg akarják csinálni rendesen, nagyon szívesen kijavítom, átnézem, és javaslatokkal ellátva visszaadom. Ez nem kötelező, de meg lehet csinálni. Mint mondtam, használhatnak más forrásokat is, ugyanakkor javításra is adok lehetőséget, tehát hogyha valaki jobb jegyet szeretne, akkor dönthet úgy, hogy megírja-e még egyszer vagy felel-e még egyszer. Néha a módszerekben is befolyásolható vagyok, ha úgy látom, hogy most nem ezt szeretnék, mert nem vevők arra, hogy ők maguk kidolgozzanak egy párbeszédet, hanem inkább közösen kéne megcsinálni, akkor megcsináljuk együtt, és utána hagyom, hogy ők az alapján dolgozzanak. Vagy hónap elején megbeszéljük, hogy milyen témák kerülnek feldolgozásra és eldönthetik, hogy melyikhez van inkább kedvük, melyikkel kezdjük. A dolgozat időpontját is meg szoktuk beszélni, dönthetnek. Volt olyan, hogy ők kérték, hogy két részben írjuk meg a dolgozatot, egyszer az egyik pénteken az első részt, hétfőn a másik részt, vagy hogy

külön részpontokat kapjanak és ne egy nagy jegyet, tehát az értékelésbe is volt, hogy beleszólhattak.

I: Fel tudsz idézni olyan esetet, amikor diákjaid a szokásostól eltérően reagáltak arra, hogy döntési lehetőséget kaptak?

L: Általában szeretik, ha dönthetnek, nyilván azért, mert akkor az ő akaratuk érvényesül. Legutóbb ez a dolgozat, amit említettem, hogy két részben írtuk meg, hétfőn, amikor sor került volna a második felének a megírására, akkor az egyik tanuló felháborodva kikérte magának, hogy a jogaik alapján először meg kell kapniuk a már kijavított dolgozatot, mielőtt megírnák a következőt. Na, erre pipa vagyok, erre érzékeny vagyok, úgyhogy rájuk is reccsentem, hogy ki van javítva, és miközben írják ki is osztom. Tehát fene se tudja, túl sok autonómia sem biztos, hogy jó, nem tudnak vele élni, vagy visszaélnek vele. Nem tudom, itt két vagy három éve volt a nulladikosoknál, hogy nem volt jegy pár éve, be volt vezetve és nem működött, nem motiválta őket, nem mozgatta őket. Csak írásos értékelés volt, de azzal nem mentünk semmire, úgyhogy vissza is vezették pár év után a jegyre való értékelést, pedig érdekes, hát nem a jegyekért kellene tanulni. Talán korábban kellene elkezdeni vagy nem is tudom, hogy mi lenne a jó megoldás erre, hogy ne a jegyekért tanuljanak.

I: Mi a véleményed az önellenőrzésről, milyen gyakorlati hasznát vagy hátrányait látod?

L: Az önellenőrzést hasznosnak találom, mert a diák fel tudja mérni a hibáit, tudja, hogy mire van szüksége, hogy jobb legyen. Például ha a szókincset ellenőrzi, csinálhat olyant, hogy leírja magyar szavakat és odaírja mellé a németet fejből. Hátránya? Időigényes, én más hátrányát nem látom.

I: Milyen kihívásokkal, nehézségekkel szembesülsz a tanulói autonómia erősítése során?

L: Talán a motiváció hiánya, igen, hiába adok tanácsot, vagy lelkesítem őket, ha ő nem akarja, akkor nem nagyon tudunk tenni semmit. Ha ez a körülmény nem lenne, ha nem lenne demotiváltság, akkor nyilván talán azt csinálnám máshogy, hogy jobban személyre

szabnám, ha látnám hogy érdekli, akarja csinálni, akkor odafigyelnék jobban, hogy mi az, amire neki szüksége volna, ahogyan neki kellene tanulnia és akkor nyilván az értékelés is ez alapján készülhetne, személyre szabott módszerekkel. Ez teljes embert kíván és nyilván időigényes is.

I: Mit gondolsz, milyen hatással van a hazai nyelvtanítási hagyomány az önálló nyelvtanulásra?

L: Ha a hagyományos módszerekre gondolsz, vannak tanulók, akiknek nem baj, hogyha a hagyományos módszerekkel tanítunk. A magyar oktatási környezet… én azt hiszem, hogy a német tankönyvek, amiket most használnunk, azok jók, és segítik az autonómiát és az önálló tanulást. Nagyon sok mindennek utána tudnak nézni egyedül, és hogyha betegek, mindig mondom, hogy lapozzák fel a munkafüzetben a nyelvtani részt, az magyarul nagyon szépen elmagyarázza nekik, vagy például van megoldó kulcs a munkafüzethez. Ha valaki pluszba akar valamit csinálni feladatot, akkor le tudja ellenőrizni magát, vagy a tankönyvben is vannak külön kis magyarázó részek, ez a Kontakt 1, külön kis párbeszédek vannak benne, amiben fix blokkok vannak és azon belül te tudod változtatni, hogy mi az, amit te beleírsz, és így tudod gyakorolni a párbeszédet.

I: Értem. Köszönöm szépen az interjút, nincs több kérdésem. Van esetleg valami, amit el szeretnél még mondani?

L: Még visszatérve a saját tanításomra, azt hiszem, hogy abban, hogy hogyan tanítok nagy szerepe volt a tanáromnak, nyilván abban, hogy ennyire nyelvtanár akartam lenni annak ellenére, hogy nem tanultam előtte nagy szerepe volt annak, hogy olyan némettanárom volt, hogy nagyon lelkesített, nagyon sok segítséget nyújtott és valószínűleg úgy tanítok én is egy kicsit, mint ő.

I: Értem, köszönöm szépen az interjút.

L: Nagyon szívesen.

Transcription of the interview with Róza (EFL teacher)

Duration: 35 minutes

I: Mit jelent számodra a tanulói autonómia és milyen különbséget látsz egy autonóm és egy nem autonóm tanuló között?

R: Egy autonóm diáknak sokkal nagyobb az önbizalma, a tudása nem biztos, hogy bővebb, bár a szókincse nyilván, az bővebb, de mindenképpen nagyobb önbizalma van, és aktívabb az órán, beszél, tehát látszik, hogy másol is használja nyelvet, nemcsak órán, kényszerből.

I: Mit gondolsz, hogyan függ össze a tanulói autonómia az életkorral?

R: Az életkorral annyiban függ össze szerintem, hogy egy bizonyos életkor után tudatossá válik, hogy valaki önállóan tanuljon, önállóan foglalkozik azzal, ami érdekli. Kisebb gyerekeknél inkább csak az, hogy mennyire érdeklődik, vagy kedvét leli benne, tehát nem tudatos, de nagyobb korban lehet tudatos. Számít a családi környezet, az autonómiára nevelésben meghatározó lehet. A számítógépeknél is figyelembe kell venni, hogy hagyják, hogy üljön előtte és nem nézik, mit csinál, nem irányítják, vagy a szülő egy kicsit irányíthatja, hogy miket néz, amiből kicsit tanulhat. És ami érdekes, és most személyes példát is tudok mondani, hogy mert az unokahúgom is kütyümániás, már a hóna alatt is gép van meg laptop plusz telefon, és mondta nekem, hogy szereti az angolt, de hát nem szorgalmas egyáltalán, viszont sokat van a gép előtt, és mutatta, milyen ingyenes online nyelvleckéket talált, de ilyen nagyon muris, játékos az egész, arra nagyon rákattant és csinálta egy jó darabig, aztán kinőtte, persze megunta, de egy ideig működött.

Lehet, hogy irányítani tudja a család, fiatalabb korban fogékonyabbak az autonómiára való nevelésre, ha ott nincs, ha fiatalabb korban nem alakult ki, később nagyon nehéz lesz rászoktatni, beléjük kántálni, hogy önállóan otthon is, magától legyen igénye, hogy foglalkozzon vele. Hát mondjuk, amikor bejöttek a műholdas csatornák a Cartoon Network, nagyon sok gyerek jött ide a suliba is, hogy végül is beszéltek, hát nem nagy szinten, de beszéltek, nem tudatosan, úgy mintha saját anyanyelvedet tanulnád,

és az is egy autonóm tanulási forma volt, és kicsik voltak, tehát ilyen ötéves hatéves, vagy lehet még kisebb is ült a tévé előtt és azt nézték. Ilyen kiskorban kell, hogy kialakuljon.

I: Mit gondolsz a nyelvtanulói autonómia és a nyelvtudás kapcsolatáról?

R: Arra a nyelvtudásra gondolsz, amit itt iskolában tudunk ellenőrizni meg mérni?

I: Arra a nyelvtudásra, aminek a tanuló a birtokában van.

R: Azt gondolom, hogy nagyon ritka az, aki abszolút autonóm módon meg tudna tanulni egy nyelvet, biztos van, nem mondom azt, hogy nincs ilyen, de nem nevezném általánosnak. Mindenképpen az autonóm nyelvtudás mellett szükség van arra, hogy irányítottan és foglalkozzon, foglalkozzanak a gyerekkel és az gondolom, hogy pozitív kölcsönhatásban vannak egymással az autonómia és a nyelvtudás. Nyilván, ha sikerélménye van az iskolában, akkor otthon valaminek utánanéz, hogy azt el tudja még mondani, az jóleső érzés, a következő órára is talán többet készül, akkor megint utánanéz. Szerintem pozitív hatása van, ha nem is tudatosan, most akár úgy, hogy leül a gép elé vagy a könyvvel és valamit elolvasok, vagy angol nyelvű filmet néz felirat vagy szinkron nélkül, az is ide tartozhat és ez pozitív, mindenképpen pozitív kölcsönhatásban van, erősítik egymást, legalábbis én ebben bízom, hogy így van.

I: Hogyan látod a nyelvtanulói autonómia és a motiváció kapcsolatát?

R: Azt már nem úgy látom, hogy az is kölcsönös, ha van valami cél, mert mondjuk nyelvvizsgára vagy érettségire készül, mást nem is nagyon tudok felhozni, még azt, hogy külföldön munkát vállal, vagy a szülők is úgy mennek el, hogy dolgozni mennek, tehát ha ilyen motivációja van, akkor rá lehet venni, hogy otthon is egyedül foglalkozzon, de egyébként általánosságban szerintem nincsenek motiválva gyerekek. Ezért nem látok olyan nagy pozitív hatást, kell egy olyan motiváló erő, ami fel tudja erősíteni azt, hogy otthon önállóan tanuljon vagy foglalkozzon vele.

I: Hogyan látod, mit jelent az autonómia a tanórán és azon kívül?

R: Tanórán is megnyilvánulhat, akár az egyéni foglalkozás, most ha nem frontális munkával, hanem egyéni, pár- vagy csoportmunka, az mind autonóm, mert akkor a diákok kénytelenek a saját tudásukat használni, csak hát a csoportmunkával meg a pármunkával is az a gond, hogy mindig csak egy ember dolgozik, a többi, az nem. Nehezen lehet elérni, hogy a többiek is bekapcsolódjanak, de hátha a többiek is kedvet kapnak, vagy ragad rájuk valami órán kívül, meg amit már említettem, hogy vagy filmet néznek vagy önállóan feladatokat, meg annyi lehetőség van az interneten, hogy se szeri se száma, és ingyenesen hozzáférhetőek. Azt csak mostanában hallottam egy-két gyerektől, hogy összefutnak külföldiekkel, és dicsekszenek nekem utána, hogy megkérdezték tőle, hogy ez hol van, az hol van. Ez sikerélmény, ezt csak most egy-két éve hallom, lehet, hogy Bajára is több idegen jön, nem tudom, de sokan vannak olyanok, akinek a hozzátartozója kint dolgozik Angliában, mennek oda, ott kénytelenek használni a nyelvet. Ők azért már látják, hogy mire jó egy nyelv, talán így jobban erősíthető a motiváció is, így foglalkoznak külön vele.

I: Szerinted milyen összefüggés van a tanulói és a tanári autonómia között?

R: Szerintem, ahogy a család esetében is mondtam, a gyerek példát követ, ahogy az iskolában is példát követne, biztos, hogy ez tudatos. Például szerintem látszik egy tanárom, hogy mennyire önálló, hogy a gyerekek rá tudják-e valamire beszélni, el tudják-e terelni, és akkor már nem önálló, nem azt csinálja, amit eltervezett, nem az ő saját személyisége kerül előtérbe az órán. Szerintem kell a tanári autonómia, mert ha nem, akkor káosz lesz, ha jól értettem a kérdést, sőt egy tanár mesélhet is arról, hogy hogyan tanult nyelvet, hogy mi a hobbija, és hogy hogyan tudnak utánanézni, igaz, ez nem idegen nyelv, hanem töri, de szoktam vinni be folyóiratokat, hogy ezt lehet megnézni, akkor ott vannak az internetes hírportálok, ahol ilyenekkel lehet foglalkozni.

I: Nyelvtanulóként mennyire voltál önálló?

R: Attól függ, hogy milyen nyelvnél, mert tanultam én önállóan is nyelvet, de nem az angolt, egyébként orosz tagozatos gimibe jártam, orosz-angol tagozatos osztályba. Hát ott nem volt ez divat, nem is volt erre lehetőség, habár ha azt veszem, hogy jártam német különórára és az szerintem az az önállósághoz tartozik, mert nem kényszerített rá senki, hogy oda is járjak, engem is ha valami motivált, mondjuk ha azt akartam, hogy legyen nyelvvizsgám, akkor jártam különórára. és akkor felkészültem. De nem tudom, az olasz nyelv is érdekelt, ott nem kényszerített rá senki, nem is tudom, hogy fogalmazzam, nem volt kényszerítő erő, saját magam döntöttem úgy, hogy ezt megtanulom. Fogtam egy nyelvkönyvet, ez szerbhorvát nyelvkönyv volt. Az a baj, hogy nem vagyok kitartó, az olaszt talán kivéve, de egy szintig eljutottam minden nyelvvel, nem is olyan rossz szintig, egész elfogadhatóan, önálló módon. Az olaszt külön tanfolyamon tanultam, nagyon érdekelt, és a gyerekeknél is így van biztos, nem csináltam volna egyébként én sem.

I: Mit gondolsz, milyen hatások befolyásolták nézeteid kialakítását kialakulását a tanulói autonómiával kapcsolatban?

R: Nem emlékszem ilyesmire, váratlanul ért ez a kérdés, mert életemben nem gondolkoztam ilyenen. Konkrét olvasás élmény szerintem nem volt, de annyi viszont eszembe jutott, azt tudtam, hogy mit nem szeretnék, tehát negatív példát tudok felhozni. Negatív példákon keresztül, azt megpróbáltam mindig elkerülni. Azt nem szeretném, hogyha tőlem rettegnének a gyerekek, nagyon negatív tapasztalataim vannak, emlékszem, a magolást, azt halálra gyűlöltem, mert nyelvórán azt kellett, szó szerint, és hogyha egy szót nem tudtam, akkor már nem lehetett ötös, csak négyes, ez volt oroszból. Ha a gyerek valaminek utánanéz, annak örülni kell. Ha egy gyenge tanuló szeretne valamiről előadást tartani, akkor csinálja meg, tartsa meg az előadást, nem baj az, ha gyenge. Amikor bent voltál órán, akkor is voltak, akik gyengébbek voltak, sőt aki gyengébb, annak egy ilyen előadás akár kitörési pont, és lehet, hogy nem a konkrét tananyagból feleltettem, hanem egy más plusz téma, amit keresett, tart egy beszámolót és azzal egy kicsit villoghat a többiek előtt is, legalább megmutathatja, hogy ő sem annyira gyenge.

I: Szerinted milyen típusú órai tevékenységek járulnak vagy járulnának hozzá leginkább ahhoz, hogy a diákok önállóan tudják nyelvtudásukat fejleszteni és ezek közül melyeket alkalmazod sikerrel?

R: Ez mindenképpen siker, akár a nyelvórán, akár a történelemnél, hogy prezentációkat készítenek, utánanéznek, mondjuk, én nem vagyok annak híve, hogy tartalmakat szó szerint megtanuljanak, mert később nem fogja tudni, elfelejti. Például szeretik a gyerekek, hogy az éppen aktuális kedvenc slágerszövegeket hozzuk vagy hozzák, és akkor azt lefordítjuk, megbeszéljük, mondjuk ezek régi dolgok, ki kell találni, hogy mi hiányzik belőle, mondjuk ez nem annyira nehéz, mert az ismert szövegeket már-már tudják. Azt még megfigyeltem, hogy házi feladatból hiába ad az ember sokat, mindegy, úgyis szünetben lemásolják mindig, egy-két szorgalmasabbja meg szorgalmasan megcsinálja, és a többi lemásolja.

I: Mi a véleményed diákjaid tanulói autonómiájáról?

R: Nem tudnak vele élni, kevés az a gyerek, aki ki tudná használni azt, ami körülötte van. Én mindig a családi háttérre mennék vissza, de lehet, hogy az iskola is hibás ebben, lehet, hogy mire idejutnak a középiskolába, már túl késő, ha közben nem találkoznak olyanokkal, akik ezt fejlesztenék. Ebben a korban találkoznak ezzel, a kamaszkorban, amikor zsizseg a fejük, annyi mindent akarnak csinálni vagy éppen semmihez nincs kedvük. Már kicsit nehezebb ilyenkor. Az olyan gyerek, aki otthonról hozza ezt az igényt, könnyebben vállalja, hogy otthon önállóan is dolgozzon. Nem tudom, hogy a szülők otthon a kicsikkel, az alsósokkal sokat foglalkoznak-e, de én találkoztam olyannal, bár annak is lehet káros hatása, ha túl sokat foglalkozik a gyerekkel a szülő. Nekem volt olyan tanítványom, tízedikes volt és az anyukája vezette a füzetét, 16 éves volt és még mindig az anyja húzta fel a cipőjét, borzasztó, úgy, hogy az iskolában magatartásbeli gondjaik voltak. Ezen is agyaltam, ez nem jó, a gyereknek az önállósága teljesen alá volt aknázva. Ez mehet jó és rossz irányba is, ha a szülők akarnak mindent megcsinálni a gyerek helyett.

I: Fel tudsz idézni olyan esetet, amikor diákjaid autonómiája megnyilvánult?

R: Igen, többet, mert emelt szintű csoportom is van és ott nekem is, mint nyelvtanárnak nagyon kellett igyekeznem, hogy lépést tudják tartani, annyira sokat foglalkoztak a nyelvvel. Vagy bizony volt, hogy fogalmam sincs, hogy a szó mit jelent és ők tudták és mondták, nem úgy, hogy engem akartak lefőzni. Egy témakörről beszélgettünk, és akkor mesélt, és nem értettem, hogy mit mond, ő meg mondta, hogy mi ez a szó, és hol látta, hol olvasta. Mondjuk, az a fiú eredetiben olvas angolt, és egyébként az angolon kívül nem érdekelte semmi, de angolból nagyon jó volt.

I: Milyen dolgokban adsz diákjaidnak döntési lehetőséget és milyen eredménnyel?

R: Miután a tantervet muszáj tartani, meg számon kérni, azt úgy nagyjából szem előtt kell tartani, de mondjuk bármi más, ami a tankönyvtől eltér, vagy egy újságot behoznak, ahogy említettem a dalokat és szerintem, ha van ötletük, akkor azt támogatni kell, nem azt mondani, hogy nem, mert nincs idő, hanem erre időt kell szánni. Aki ilyen szeretne, annak adni kell ilyen lehetőséget, mondjuk, én adok is ilyen lehetőséget. Mondtam, a tankönyv az tankönyv, azt vinni kell, meg kell nekik tanulni, de ha nem nagyon kapcsolódik az adott témámhoz, mondjuk éppen a család témában és a dunai árvíz jutott eszembe tavaly, vagy minden, ami aktuális politika, a környezetvédelem, bármi, ha az érdekli őket, akkor azt lehet, hogy a többiekre is jó hatással lesz, ez persze csoportfüggő is nagyon.

I: Fel tudsz idézni olyan esetet, amikor a diákok a szokásostól eltérően reagáltak arra, hogy döntési lehetőséget kaptak?

R: Hogy döntési lehetőséget kaptak? Föl tudok idézni, igen, volt ilyen, hogy ne ez a témakör, hanem a másik legyen inkább, mindig pozitív a viszonyuk, ha dönthetnek, nem volt elutasító, tehát általában ha erre lehetőségük van, jól reagálnak rá, nem tétováznak, vagy lehet, hogy szerencsém van a gyerekekkel? *(nevet)*

I: Mi a véleményed az önellenőrzésről, milyen hasznát vagy milyen veszélyeit látod?

R: Ezt próbáltam, jó az önellenőrzés, ha nem csalnak. Az a baj, hogy ebben az életkorban nem fogják föl, hogy igazából engem nem fognak becsapni, hanem saját magukat, és akkor itt még azért főleg kilenc-tízedikesek azt szeretnék, ha a tanár megdicsérné őket, hogy te milyen ügyes vagy, és akkor megpróbál csalni és örül, hogy neki milyen jól sikerült. Jó, egyszer-kétszer rájuk kell hagyni, had örüljön egy kicsit, hogy ő is ügyes volt, de minél idősebbek, annál inkább tudatában vannak, hogy az önellenőrzés jó dolog, hogyha szépen, becsületesen csinálja. Azt szeretik csinálni, hogy egymást kijavítják, de azért szeretik, mert ha a másik hibázott, akkor azt megjegyezhetik egymásnak. Habár mások hibáiból is lehet tanulni, de az jobban kedvelt tevékenység hogy egymásét javítani, a sajátjukat… hát, minden szentnek maga felé hajlik a keze *(nevet).*

I: Milyen kihívásokkal, nehézségekkel szembesülsz a tanulói autonómia erősítése során?

R: A motiváció hiánya és az érdektelenség, ez a legrosszabb, másrészt, mintha állandóan fáradtak lennének, ha hétfő fáradt, fáradt az első órában, fáradt az utolsó órában, nem tudnak koncentrálni. Megkérdezem őket, mikor feküdtek le, és sokan nagyjából időben, mert olyan 11 körül lefekszenek, hanem inkább szerintem a számítógép káros hatása lehet a gond, nem tudnak kikapcsolni, pihenni. Mindig jár valamin az agyuk, számítógép, telefon, valami kütyü mindig van körülötte. Szerintem ez lefárasztja őket, nem képesek koncentrálni, szerintem ez nagy probléma.

I: Ha nem lennének ezek az általad említett nehézségek, hogyan változna az, ahogyan tanítasz?

R: Szerintem alapvetően nem biztos, hogy változna vagy változnék. Mert tanítottam olyan korban is, amikor még nem voltak ezek a lehetőségek. De most visszatérve az előző kérdésre, a tanár is elfáradhat, de tanárnak mégis úgy kell csinálni, mintha jókedve lenne és rohadtul élvezné ezt az órát, mert nekünk legalább annyira fárasztó, hogy a topon legyünk. Lehet, hogy azért, mert ez a generáció a mozgóképre van beállítva, hogy a tévében is minden mozog. Azt vettem észre, hogy ha már elfáradtam, hogy cikázzak fel-alá teremben, hogy tábla, meg itt vagyok, meg ott vagyok, és véletlenül leülök, na, akkor már látom, hogy kész meghalt minden az egész órán, nem figyelnek. De hogyha megint

felállok, és ott vagyok közöttük, meg ők mondják is, hogy az, aki leül, és ott van egész órán, akkor nem figyelnek, tehát gőzük nincs, hogy mi volt egész órán. Kell az, hogy állandóan mozgásban legyen az ember, mondjuk nem biztos, hogy ennyire aktivizálnám magam, de kénytelen az ember, mert más az ingerküszöb, kiabálni is jobban kell velük, mint ezelőtt.

I: Mit gondolsz, milyen hatással van a hazai nyelvtanítási hagyomány az önálló nyelvtanulásra?

I: Szerintem gyerekcipőben jár. Biztos, hogy van ilyen törekvés, de szerintem az iskolai nyelvtanítás az nem erre mutat. A tankönyvek sem, mert annyira szájbarágósak, mindent készen kapsz, egészítsd ki, fogalmazd meg, jó, hát vannak ilyen kis szabad feladatok, de nem az önállóságra fókuszálnak, habár lehet, hogy máshol más, mert ezen az iskolán kívül máshol nem tanítottam. De mondjuk tanítottam felnőtteket, az is nagyon érdekes dolog volt, meg ruhaipari szakközepeseket, azok motiváltak voltak, és nagyon jó kis csapat voltak a művelődésszervezők. Szerintem a hazai nyelvoktatás nem épül a tanulói autonómiára. Rengeteg a könyv, mondják a gyerekek is, ezt a könyvet vették meg, a szülők meg amazt, és jó lesz-e ez a könyv? Persze, mindegyik könyv jó, ha kinyitják. Ha nem, akkor mindegy, igazából elég lenne nekik az az egy nyelvkönyv is. Mert egyébként jók, meg az gondolom, hogy nagy különbségek nincsenek a nyelvi tankönyvek között, csak a csomagolás, de hát a feladattípusokat tekintve szinte ugyanazok, a témakör se lehet olyan eltérő, mert az is adott, szerintem csak pénzkérdés, meg hogy a minisztérium mit tart elfogadhatónak. Ha a tanulói autonómiára nagyobb hangsúly lenne fektetve, lehet, hogy a nyelviskolák egy része is bezárhatná a kapuit, mert végül is meg lehet tanulni egy nyelvet önállóan és anélkül, hogy a célországba menne az ember, csak kitartás kell…

I: Nincs több kérdésem, van esetleg valami, amit szeretnél hozzáfűzni?

R: Nincs, szerintem nincs.

I: Köszönöm szépen az interjút.

Transcription of the interview with Kati (EFL teacher)

Duration: 37 minutes

I: Köszönöm, hogy időt szánsz erre az interjúra, először azt kérdezném meg, hogy mit jelent számodra a tanulói autonómia és mit gondolsz, mi a különbség egy önálló nyelvtanuló illetve egy nem önálló nyelvtanuló között?

K: Szerintem, aki önállóan is képes tanulni, az megérti azt, hogy nem elég, hogy az órán részt vesz, hanem a siker elérése érdekében neki magának is kell otthon plusz dolgokat beletenni. Illetve magának is kell akár, most nem azt mondom, hogy kutatásokat, de gyakorlatokat is végeznie. Tehát gyakorolni meg ismételni önállóan.

I: Hogyan jellemeznél egy nem autonóm diákot?

K: Egy, hogy lusta, érdektelen, passzív órán és egyáltalán nem motivált. Én az gondolom, hogy ez a négy így egyben…

I: Szerinted hogyan függ össze az autonómia az életkorral?

K: Hát szerintem összefügg, bár nem is annyira az életkorral, hanem talán az élettapasztalattal. Ez eléggé egy összetett kérdés, mert azért itt a képességeket is figyelembe kell szerintem venni, mert például egy másik iskolában, mondjuk valaki elvégezte a Jelkyt, de az értelmi szintje ott van egy nyolcadikosénál, az azután sem fogja önállóan tudni, ilyennel már találkoztam, 10 év múlva sem tudja, tehát magától nem jön rá, hogy hogy neki esetleg bármilyen téren fejlődnie kéne vagy tanulnia kéne önállóan valamit. Ezt kötelezően kijárjuk, aztán kész. Meg itt az ambíció is benne van szerintem. A családi háttér is nagyon számít, az is fontos hogy milyen példát lát, milyen modell van előtte, meg csak olyan szülővel találkozunk, főleg osztályfőnökként, aki egyáltalán nem törődik a gyerekkel, csak azt látja, csak azt mondja maximum, hogy csináld meg a leckét, de nagyon sok esetben még azt sem, még az sem érdekli a szülőt, vagy mert nagyon sokat dolgozik, vagy mert egyszerűen nem érdekli. Ha nem hívnak a suliból, akkor minden rendben van, azt gondolja, és sok helyen, hát, a gyerekek úgy általában nem

szeretnek tanulni, úgyhogy ha ezt otthon nem látja, és ha a gyerek nem olyan személyiség és magától nem jön rá, akkor önállóan nem fog tanulni. Csak ha esetleg otthon nem ezt látja, de mégis tudja, hogy nem ez az útja, hogyha olyan ambiciózusabb, meg ha picit értelmesebb a gyerek, akkor viszont még lehet önálló, tehát nem kizárólagos a családi háttér.

I: Mit gondolsz, hogyan függ össze az autonómia és a nyelvtudás?

K: Hát ugye itt is vannak viták, hogy valaki nem olyan ügyes angolból, mert nincs neki nyelvérzéke, aztán ezt bármire ráhúzzák. Nem tudom, én saját példámból tudok erre, én vagyok a legjobb példa erre, én úgy mentem be a középiskolába, hogy nyolcadikban tanultunk angolt és ugye akkor mindenki oroszt tanult. Én is oroszt tanultam, nem volt ott senki, akitől én ott segítséget kaptam volna, se különtanár, senki. Azaz egy angoltanár volt, de szerintem ő sem tudott akkor olyan nagyon angolul, amikor elkezdett tanítani. És akkor úgy mentem be a középiskolába, hogy akikkel együtt voltunk a csoportban, azok meg már hét éve tanultak és akkor először is differenciáltan próbált a tanárnő tanítani, hogy nekik már más feladatot adott, mi meg, akik faluról jöttünk páran, nekünk a nyelvtant tanította, de ilyen nagyon nagy léptékben, hogy kb. már a második héten a Present Perfect volt. De ezt sosem felejtem el, sose, hogy én azt sem tudtam, hogy mi van, nagyon nehéz volt. De én arra emlékszem, hogy otthon nekem egyedül minden egyes óra után le kellett ülnöm és én mindig mindent odaírtam magyarul, mert akkor se szótár nem volt és én saját kis pénzecskémből vettem, mert láttam, hogy hát ez annyira nem fog menni, akkor lehet, hogy nekem kéne vele foglalkozni és akkor én rájöttem erre. Meg látod, akartam az angolt és akkor én rengeteget otthon kinyitottam a füzetem és átvettem az egész órai anyagot. Fogtam a füzetet és akkor, hú, ez mi is volt, miért ez lett, még így fordítottuk, szóval így a miérteket próbáltam megmagyarázni. Sosem felejtem el ezeket, hogy én nagyon megszenvedtem, nagyon készültem is az angolra, de önállóan, mert nem tudott senki segíteni akkor és szerintem ez nagyon fontos. Én nem tudom, hogy ilyen van-e, hogy valakinek jó nyelvérzéke van, tanulással szerintem bárki elsajátíthatja a nyelvet.

I: Hogyan látod a motiváció és az önálló nyelvtanulás kapcsolatát?

K: Hát ez nagyon fontos és a hiánya sajnos megnehezíti a nyelvtanulást igazából, és ugye akkor, hogyha nem tanuljuk, akkor tudás sincs és nem is lesz. Szerintem ez nagyon lényeges, ez a leglényegesebb szerintem a nyelvtanulásban, ha érdekli, de ez mindenre igaz igazából, minden tantárgyra, hobbira, mindenre.

I: Szerinted mit jelent az önálló tanulás az órán és azon kívül?

K: Például az önálló prezentációt esetleg egy témában, vagy mondjuk akár valami diavetítéssel előadni My Favourite Town és akkor azt bemutatja, vagy akkor a szóbeli feleletnél is, hogy egy témakörről beszéljen, arra is önállóan készül fel.

I: Aha, és mit jelent az órán kívül?

K: Szerintem azt, hogy törekszik arra, hogy amit lehet, mondjuk filmeket, azt mindig angolul nézze, ne legyen lusta, és hogy keresse az alkalmat, hogy az angollal kapcsolatban legyen. Ugyanígy az interneten is, hogy nem csak magyar oldalakat néz, hanem angol oldalakat, pl. a Facebok-on csatlakozik olyan csoportokhoz, ahol angol nyelvtanulók vannak és külföldiek, tehát nemzetköziek. Filmeknél is, hogy ne csak feliratos filmeket nézzen, és a zenével is, ha van kedvenc dalszövege, akkor igenis nyissa ki az internetes szótárat, és hogyha nem tud valamit, akkor nézzen utána, akár le is fordíthatja, tehát az életét átfonja a nyelv. Meg szótárát is vesz, tehát nem sajnálja arra sem a pénzt, mert az ugye fontos a nyelvtanulásban, hiába, hogy ott van az internetes szótár meg a Google-fordító, meg ezek a hülyeségek, az nem ugyanaz.

I: Értem. Szerinted milyen kapcsolat van a tanári autonómia és a tanulói autonómia között?

K: Nem tudom, szerintem ez emberfüggő, úgy értem, hogy például nem mindent könyvből olvas ki, önálló ötletei vannak, önálló szituációkat csinál, tud mondani példát, nem a könyvből nézi ki. Mondjuk az önálló nyelvtanár szerintem ilyen, bár szerintem nincs hatása a tanári autonómiájának a nyelvtanulói autonómiára. Mondjuk az pozitív

hatás, hogy jó, akkor minél többféle példát ad arra az egyvalamire, hogy nem csak azt, ami a könyvben van, hanem a valós életből is hoz példákat, ilyen valódi autentikus példákat, esetleg a tanár életéből is, tehát úgy lehet hatása szerintem, hogy ha mondjuk olyan lecke van, akkor esetleg ő is abból merít, a sajátjából. Én mindig mondogatom nekik saját példámat, a magam példáját, de szerintem azt csak azok fogadják meg mondjuk a nyelvtanulással kapcsolatban, akiket tényleg érdekli, meg ezzel valamit akarnak, meg valamilyen szinten az életünkben szükségük lesz rá. Tehát hiába, hogy azt mondják, hogy nekik úgy sem kell, valamikor kelleni fog az életben. Tehát a tanári autonómia csak azokra van hatással, akik nem lusták, tehát megint ugyanúgy visszavezethető a motivációra szerintem

I: Milyen hatások befolyásolták nézeteid kialakulását a tanulói autonómiával kapcsolatban, volt-e olyan esemény vagy olvasmány, ami döntően befolyásolta?

K: Nyáron voltam egy képzésen, ott az autonómia nem került szóba vagy nem volt kiemelve külön, persze volt róla szó, nem mondható hogy nem. Nem tudom, nem emlékszem a pszichológiai tanulmányokra, akkor biztos, hogy volt, de arra meg már nem emlékszem, ezt a diplomámat már 14 éve szereztem, de biztos volt ilyesmiről szó a Juhász Gyulán. A mesterin pedig úgy külön, mint tantárgy, biztosan nem. Nem, engem a saját példám az, ami megerősített ebben. Jó, most itt ahol nyáron voltam, ott inkább a kommunikáció alapú oktatáson volt a hangsúly és a diákok nem egynyelvűek voltak, ez nemzetközi csapat volt, más volt, ott maguknak kellett megoldani és csak az angol volt a közös nyelv, tehát rá voltak utalva, így viszont a tanár csak felügyelt és fülelt, nem szólt bele, és ez hatékony. Nekem ez a módszer teljesen bejött, csak nem itt ebben az iskolában, ilyen 20 plusz nem tudom hány fős csoportokban.

I: Hogyan látod a saját szereped tanulóid önállóságának fejlődésében?

K: Egyrészt mivel én vagyok a modell, mivel az angol nyelvet tőlem hallják legtöbbször, biztos, hogy számít. Nem tudom, ha most a jutalmazásra gondolok, vagy mondjuk úgy, hogy adok ilyen szorgalmi feladatot és akkor is jutalmazom, hogyha önállóan megcsinálta, tehát aki Google fordítóval csinálja a fordítást vagy akár egy fogalmazást,

akkor arra azt mondom, hogy nem, mert arra nem adok, azt tudni fogom, mert az beírom a keresőbe és akkor kiadja. Volt olyan hogy egy sztorit kellett írniuk és beírtam a fordítóba az első sort és kiadta az egészet, tehát így próbálom. A legtöbben már úgy csinálják, hogy akkor megírják önállóan, mert egyébként nem kapnak ötöst, és csak ötös van, és ha nem, akkor semmit nem kap és akkor hiába dolgozott.

I: Szerinted azon kívül, amit említettél, a prezentáció, a diavetítés, a házi feladat, még milyen típusú órai tevékenységek járulnak vagy járulnának hozzá ahhoz, hogy a diákok önállóan tudják nyelvtudásukat fejleszteni?

K: A projekt munkák szerintem, ami Magyarországon nem nagy divat, ez a projekt alapú tanítás szerintem jó lehet.

I: Mi az, ami ebben az iskolában órákon esetleg működhet?

K: A prezentációk beiktatása szerintem, az heti szinten kellene, hogy történjen, kellene, hogy legyen legalább heti egy ilyen órám, vagy amikor többen, nem egy ember vagy két ember valamit bemutat, és akkor arra is olyan súlyú jegyet adnánk, ami nem egy kis szorgalmi. Esetleg egy félévnek lehetne az a követelménye, hogy ebben a félévben meg kell csinálnod egy prezentációt vagy kettőt, akár egy olvasott könyvről, vagy akár Your favourite town, nekem ez a vesszőparipám, én ezt raknám be, de komolyan, a tanmenetbe, és inkább a másik részekből vennék ki. De látod, így is le vagyunk maradva, tehát a tananyagot kéne átgyúrni.

I: Mi az, amit ténylegesen sikerrel alkalmazol, ami némiképp önállóság felé tolja a diákjaidat?

K: Szerintem ezen a szinten ezt tudom, ezek a szorgalmik, meg most az emeleteseknél az önálló témakidolgozás, de nekem ezzel piszok sok dolgom van, mert mindenki megcsinálja saját magának, és akkor nekem ezt át kell néznem és most fognak felelni belőle, már mondtam is nekik, hogy úgy nem mennek el, ebből most mindenki felel, és

erre a kidolgozásra nem adok jegyet, csak tudják hogy ebből majd felelni fognak és ez már úgy megy, tehát látom hogy maguktól csinálják.

I: Mi a véleményed a tanulóid önállóságáról?

K: Ilyen feladatokkal nyilván lehet ezt növelni vagy támogatni, csak az állandó felügyelet, úgy felügyelet, mint a mondjuk a monitoring, nem jut eszembe magyarul, monitorozni kell őket, egyfolytában megfigyelni, meg segíteni, tehát ezt folyamatosan kell, és csak úgy lehet. A tanárnak kell felügyelni ezt a munkafolyamatot, hogy a tanuló lássa, hogy te foglalkozol vele, mert ha ez nem történik, akkor a diák új látja, hogy engem sem érdekel, hogy nem foglalkozok vele, és akkor is minek foglalkozzon vele, ha úgy se nézem meg?

I: Hogy látod, milyen a diákoknak a hozzáállása az önálló nyelvtanuláshoz?

K: Kényelmes, vagy hát nem is tudom, szerintem ezt plusz munkának veszik, tanórán kívüli plusz, ami kötelező, tehát inkább meló. Sokan ezért nem is csinálják, csak az a pár ember, az az egy-két ember, akit érdekel, annak nem, annak szórakozás.

I: Fel tudsz idézni egy olyan esetet, amikor egyik diákod nyelvtanulói autonómiája megnyilvánult?

K: Igen mondhatok egy ilyet, idejár a fiú és mindenből nagyon rossz, és angolból meg mindig tud mindent és nem hitték el az osztályozó értekezleten, hogy ez a fiú bármit elmond angolul. Sőt, hogy ha kérdezem, nem magyarul szólal vissza, hanem angolul, de ő az, aki hibátlanul is mondja, és olyan szavakat használ, ami biztos, hogy nem az órán ragadt rá, és tudom, hogy otthon nézi a filmeket. De amikor először kezdtem el tanítani, nagyon meglepődtem rajta, mert én nem erre számítottam. Nem is tudom, miért, eleve a szinten belül sokkal kimagaslóbb, de azért, mert rengeteg filmet néz már kiskorától kezdve.

I: Miben adsz tanulóidnak döntési lehetőséget és milyen eredménnyel?

K: Aha, ez a nehéz kérdés a kérdőívből, erre én a dolgozatot mondtam, az időpontjánál döntéshez jutnak, és ha az akaratuk érvényesül, az történik, amit akarnak, akkor nyilván örülnek. Ilyent még, hogy két leckéből vagy egy leckéből legyen a dolgozat, mondjuk ilyenekben is szoktam hagyni, vagy, hogy hány szóból legyen a szó doga, amúgy nem szoktam különösebben döntéshelyzetbe hozni őket, mert ha gyakran csinálom, akkor azért ülnek a fejemre.

I: *Fel tudsz idézni olyan esetet, amikor a diákok a szokásostól eltérően reagáltak arra, hogy dönthettek valamiről?*

K: Nem, vagy ezzel csak ilyen dolgozatra tudok gondolni, úgy reagáltak, hogy szavazzunk, mert nem tudták, hogy eldönteni, hogy hétfő vagy csütörtök, tehát ilyen.

I: *Aha, értem. Milyen előnyeit vagy hátrányait látod az önellenőrzésnek?*

K: Hát a haszna az, hogy a hibáira rávilágít, nem csak azt látja, hogy a dogában ez a hibám van vagy az a hibám van, hanem saját magának is megtudja nézni. Vagy a kiejtés ellenőrzés, szoktam mondani, hogy hallgassák meg a hangos szótárakban a kiejtést. Esetleg veszélye az, hogy aki gyengébb, azt esetleg visszaveti, elbizonytalanítja. Aki erősebb, azt továbbviszi, hogy na, akkor egy hibám se legyen, de aki gyengébb, azt elbizonytalanítja, hogy na, jó, akkor megint nem jelentkezek, vagy még félénkebb lesz.

I: *Melyek azok a kihívások és nehézségek, amelyekkel szembesülsz a tanulói autonómia támogatása során?*

K: A kifogások, a gyerekek kifogásai, nincs internetünk, mondjuk nincs szótáram, se számítógép, se papír *(nevet),* ideje sincs, ha olyan a gyerek, ez visszacsatolható motivációhoz megint.

I: *Fel tudsz idézni olyan esetet, amikor akadályba ütköztél az önállóságra nevelés során?*

K: Nem, nem emlékszem… hát olyan, hogy azt mondta, hogy nem, írjam be inkább az egyest, úgyse csinálom meg, ilyen van, de amúgy… nincs.

I: Szerinted, ha nem lennének az általad említett nehezítő körülmények, hogyan változna az, ahogyan tanítasz?

K: Nyilván pozitív irányba, ha bármit lehetne, akkor pl. magam csinálnám meg a tananyagot, én osztanám be, hogy melyik órán mit csináljak, mikor van a nyelvtan, tehát én állítanám össze, és akkor sokkal több mindent meg tudnánk csinálni. Módosítanék a tananyag összetételén, nyilván a nyelvtanalapú oktatás helyett a kommunikáción legyen a hangsúly, a nyelvtan is fontos, de nem az a legfontosabb.

I: Szerinted a hazai nyelvtanítási hagyomány milyen hatással van az önálló nyelvtanulásra?

K: Demotiváló, ugye milyen jót mondtam? *(nevet)* Szerintem még a tanárnak sincs önállósága a tanév során, hogy esetleg bizonyos dolgokat másképp csináljon. Az egész rendszer ezt rákényszeríti a tanárra is, meg a diákra is, és a diák is csak ezt látja, hogy ezt most át kell vennünk, meg kell csinálnunk, és mi sem csinálhatunk mást, mert ezt kell, ez a törvény. És szerintem ezt látják, és tudják is a diákok igazából, hogy nem sok értelme van ennek az egésznek így. Ezért van az, hogy van egy csomó tanuló, aki már nyolc évet tanult az általános iskolában, mégse tud semmit, csak az egyszerű jelent.

I: Igen. Köszönöm a válaszaidat, nincs több kérdésem, van esetleg valami, amit még szeretnél hozzáfűzni?

K: Hát talán azt, hogy egymástól is tanulhatnánk, szívesen bejárnék órát látogatni, csak mert abból is sok mindent lehetne tanulni, de mindenki csak a gyanakvást látja mögötte, merthogy ez a magyar mentalitás, így aztán nem is próbálkozok.

I: Aha, értem. És köszönöm szépen még egyszer az interjút.

Transcription of the interview with Bernadett (GFL teacher)

Duration: 45 minutes

I: Köszönöm, hogy időt szakítottál rám,. Az első kérdésem az, hogy mit jelent számodra a tanulói autonómia?

B: Hát ez az autonóm kifejezés azt jelenti, hogy a tanuló próbálja önállóan végezni a munkáját tanári irányítással vagy szülői irányítással. Tehát kell, hogy legyen benne egy ilyen irányító jelleg is, de a hangsúly az önállóságon van.

I: *Milyen különbséget látsz egy autonóm és egy nem autonóm tanuló között?*

B: Sokkal jobban kell irányítani talán azt, aki nem autonóm, nem tudja feldolgozni úgy az anyagot, nem látja a lényeget és nem tudja azokat az eszközöket sem igénybe venni, amelyek a rendelkezésére állnak, talán a motivációja sem olyan. Ez adódhat abból is, hogy nincs megfelelő motiváció vagy a képességei nem olyanok. Az autonóm tanuló pedig akár irányítás nélkül is képes, tehát meghall egy fogalmat vagy meglát egy témát, akár maga is utánanéz, vagy képes böngészni utána.

I: Szerinted hogyan függ össze a tanulói autonómia az életkorral?

B: Azt gondolom, hogy itt a motiváció és az érettség az, ami számít, az életkor, hogy mennyire érett. Tehát ha veszünk egy felnőttet, aki még gyerekkorában nem kezdett ezen az ösvényen járni, ha mondjuk a középiskolás korosztályt nézzük, akkor lehet, hogy náluk később, vagy egyáltalán nem alakul ki. És ha gyerekkorban nem alakult ki, akkor később kialakulhat, úgy gondolom, mert az ön önfejlesztésre ráébredhet később is. Meg itt vannak ezek a modern technikák, majdnem mindenkinek van már ilyen modern telefonja, amin internetet tud elérni, sőt most már ezek a digitévék is olyanok, mint egy számítógép, és használhatja. De az idősebbek ezeket nem tudják olyan jól kezelni.
Én úgy gondolom, hogy a tapasztalat rengeteget jelent, és amikor egy felnőtt belép akár egy szervezett oktatásba, legyen az nyelvtanulás, sokkal hatékonyabban tudjuk azt elérni, amit ő szeretne, gyorsabban és hatékonyabban, és megint csak ez is tapasztalat,

hogy nehezebben kezeli, bonyolultabbnak érzi, és nem veszi úgy a fáradtságot. Nehezebben alakul ki, de kialakulhat, ez a véleményem. Itt, a középiskolás rétegnél is összefügg a képesség, a szellemi képesség az önálló tanulással.

I: Szerinted hogyan függ össze a tanulói autonómia nyelvtudással?

B: Szerintem egy magasabb szinten lévő nyelvtanuló nagyobb eséllyel válik önállóvá, hiszen saját magát könnyebben tudja fejleszteni, és aki most kezdi tanulni a nyelvet, az is lehet önálló ugyanúgy, ha megvan benne a motiváció, mert szeretne nyelvet tanulni, Lehet hogy van olyan szándéka, hogy kimegy dolgozni, vagy hogy megcsinálja a nyelvvizsgát, tehát bebizonyítja magának vagy a környezetének, hogy alkalmas rá, és keresi ezeket a módszereket, segédeszközöket, hogy jobban haladjon. A motiváció kihagyhatatlan az önállósághoz.

I: Szerinted mit jelent az önálló nyelvtanulás az órán és az órán kívül?

B: Hát mindenképpen a poroszos oktatás elhagyása persze, mert ilyenkor ez a front megvan, hogy én vagyok a tanár és én adom a feladatokat. Minél kisebb csoportban kellene tanítanunk és differenciálunk, módosíthatnánk a csoportokat megfelelő képességek szerint, csinálhatnánk szintfelmérő teszteket, de utána azon belül is újra kialakul az, hogy én jobb vagyok. És ha kevesebben lennének egy csoportban, vagy magasabb lenne az óraszám, akkor könnyebb lenne differenciálni és akkor nyilván önállóan kellene csinálniuk csomó mindent, hogy addig, amíg átnézem ezt, addig feladom a másiknak, azt megbeszélik, csoportban dolgoznak, de nem kell nekem, mint tanárnak mindenképpen az irányítással jelen lenni, hanem adom a feladatot és akkor ők kreatívan dolgoznának.

I: Mit jelent szerinted a tanulói autonómia az órán és órán kívül?

B: Órán kívül, talán ha olyan típusú házi feladatot adok, hogy akár egy projekt munkát hozzon, vagy kiselőadást tartson, és azt tudjuk, hogy ha felkészül egy kis előadással, az sokkal jobban megmarad, amit tart a többieknek. Csak az a kérdés, hogy a többieknek

mi marad meg, mert valószínű, hogy a többiek azon izgulnak, hogy jaj, mi lesz, amikor majd én sorra kerülök. Nyilván ezt visszakérhetjük, hogy mi maradt meg belőle, mert szerkeszthetünk feladatlapokat, amivel felmérem, hogy mire emlékszik belőle és az méri, hogy mennyire figyelt.

I: Nyelvtanulóként mennyire voltál önálló?

B: Gimnáziumban végeztem, oroszt meg németet tanultam, az orosz általános iskolában kezdtem, az volt a kötelező. A némettel meg csak a gimnázium első évében találkoztam. Nekem tetszettek, én jártam külön szakkörre, volt oroszból is meg németből is, meg az is motivált, hogy Németországba jártunk, mint KISZ-esek, építő táborba, és ez fontos volt, hogy oda kimenjek, és valamilyen szinten tudjak beszélni. Most oroszból nem volt ez a kapcsolat, de ott az órai munka meg a szakkör érdekelt, de németből akkor lettem aktív, amikor kimehettünk Berlinbe. Az orosznál nagyon sokat számított a tanár személyisége, hogy megkedveltem a nyelvet, mert nagyon jó volt az általános iskolában, és az orosztanárunk, aki a gimnáziumban tanított, az pedig orosz anyanyelvű volt és németet is tanított az első évben. És az nagyon jó volt, hogy úgy vezettük a szótárt- és ez is egy hasznos ötlet volt annak idején nekem, hogy orosz után a német és utána magyar megfelelője, de ezt csak egy évig tudtuk csinálni, mert utána jött egy másik tanár.

I: Saját tanári gyakorlatodban vélsz felfedezni olyan jeleket amelyeket ettől a tanártól származhatnak?

B: Nagyon régen végeztem, tehát ezek már régi módszerek voltak, de a szavak és a szókincsfejlesztésnél talán most, amikor elkezdtem tanítani az oroszt a második idegen nyelvnél visszaemlékeztem, hogy tényleg, órán nem írtunk először semmit, csak ez a szóbeli kezdő szakasz volt hosszú ideig és anélkül, hogy írtunk volna, tudtunk beszélgetni vagy társalogni és még nem tudtunk olvasni se egy fél évig. Meghatározó a tanár szerintem, vagy megkedveled, vagy közömbös, vagy megutálod, ez a három létezik. Lehet, hogy megutáltatja és nem, és azért sem csinálom. A tanulók érzelmi állapota is

nagyon fontos, nem csak az, hogy okos vagyok vagy képes vagyok rá, hanem hogy milyen kapcsolatom van.

I: Említetted a szakkört, ez igényelt iskolán kívüli tevékenységet?

B: Persze, voltak olyan gyakorlataink, amit külön otthon kellett magnóra felvenni és bevinni, bemutatni. Ezt nem annyira szerettem, hogy mondjam fel magamnak és visszahallgatom, de én is javasoltam a diákoknak és ők is húzodoztak tőle, mondták, hogy letörölték és újra felvették. Saját hangod visszahallani nem túl jó, de a kiejtést javítja, emlékszem még szalagos magnónk volt a régi időkben. Igen, kellett készülni rá és voltak külön feladatok, valóban.

I: Milyen hatások befolyásolták nézeteid kialakulását a tanulói autonómiával kapcsolatban? Volt olyan esemény vagy olvasmány, ami befolyásolt?

B: Nem is tudom, talán itt a szakmai nyelvnél, elkezdtem azt is tanítani és tanulni, és volt egy tanfolyam, amire el lehetett menni, hogy olyan szókincse legyen az embernek. És akkor nekem az volt a gondom, hogy tulajdonképpen nekem magyarul kellene ezeket a fogalmakat tisztáznom, és akkor ezután jött, hogy először vegyük elő a közgáz könyvet, kérjek makroökonómiáról könyveket és akkor muszáj volt ebből tanul tanulnom, hogy egyszerűbb legyen a német utána, enélkül nem ment, és ennek kapcsán nekifogtam és olvastam, tehát tanultam, ez nem jó szó rá, inkább megvilágosodást nyertem, hogy mit is jelent ez a szó, hát ez, amit így tudnék mondani erről.

I: Hogyan látod saját szereped nyelvtanulóid önállóságának fejlődésében?

B: Gyakran adok, majdnem mindig adok házi feladatot és azt ugye gyakorlatilag önállóan kellene megcsinálni, és azt látom, hogy amit korábban is, és összehasonlítok a mostani diákok és a korábbiak között, hogy nagyon-nagyon tantárgyként fogják föl sokan és nem gondolják azt, hogy nekik ez fontos és hasznos lenne ez a nyelvtanulás. Essek túl rajta, megnézi az órarendet, hogy most milyen órám van, ott órán aktív vagy nem aktív, de otthon már nem tesz hozzá, és azt kellene.

Azt kellene jobban elérni, hogy önállóak legyenek a tanulók otthon, hogy ne lemásolja szünetben gyorsan. Pedig hát egyre több szövegértési feladat van a tankönyvben, meg én is, amit viszek be, tehát azt önállóan kell csinálni, önálló íráskészség fejlesztés, plusz levélírás, az is megy, de szeretném, ha még aktívabbak lennének vagy önállóbbak, és mindig mondom nekik, hogy annyira szeretitek, telefonfüggők vagytok, eszközfüggők, és nem arra használják, amire kellene, amire lehetne. Nyelvből rengeteg anyag van, meg minden tantárgyhoz rengeteg anyagot letölthetnek és akkor a kiejtést meg nyelvtant meg bármit lehetne gyakorolni, erre kellene ösztönöznünk még jobban őket. Most ígérték, hogy nyáron majd így lesz, igen, de hát nem hiszem, kíváncsi vagyok, hogy ősszel mivel jönnek vissza, mit felejtettek. Kezdhetjük újra elölről megint.

I: Szerinted milyen típusú órai tevékenységek járulnak vagy járulhatnának hozzá ahhoz, hogy a tanulóid hatékonyabban tudják önállóságukat fejleszteni, és melyek azok, amelyeket sikerrel alkalmazol?

B: A nyelvi labornak van egy olyan előnye, hogy ott önállóan tudnak dolgozni és rögtön értékelni is tudják a teljesítményüket, mert online értékelés van. Ezt szeretik és a hibákat is meg tudjuk nézni, meg is kérdezhetik, önálló tempóban tudják csinálni, ezt szeretem. Ami még motiválja őket órán, az a film. Szeretik a meséket nagyon, az izgalmasabb filmeket, és akkor azokhoz szókincs meg egyéb feldolgozó kérdéseket adok, ezt szeretik. Órán, még ami hasznos, az interaktív tábla, hát azt nem sokat használom, de az hasonlít ahhoz tulajdonképpen, amit mi számítógépen csinálunk. Nyelvből már komplikáltabb lenne, tehát ugyanazt letölteni és ott mutogatom, vagy számítógépen ugyanazt megtalálja, és oda tudok menni egyenként hozzájuk, és azt szeretik, hogyha egyéni ritmusban csinálják, tehát ha közösen mindannyiuknak vetítek ki valamit, akkor elkalandoznak, meg nézik vagy hallgatják, hogy kik fociznak kint, eredményesebbnek látom, ha önállóan dolgozik.

I: Hogyan látod tanulóid önállóságát?

B: Az önálló tempót szeretik, csoport munkát is, de mintha nem tudnának mit kezdeni vele. Sokszor, ha csoportban vannak, ott is mindig megvan, hogy ki a hangadó, a határozottabb, és akkor a többi csak nézi, tehát attól függ, milyen feladatot kaptak, de párban jobb dolgozni. Hárman- négyen, ha együtt vannak, az már túl sok, azt látom, ha párban dolgoznak, akkor jobb, az is egyéni tempó és akkor mehet úgy a feldolgozás. Pluszmunkát nem szeretnek csinálni, a projekt munka az, ami még bejön, hogy egyéni témát mutass be, hogy te készülj és azt, hogy hogyan várom el, azt előre megkapják. Nem sok, de általában van vállalkozó szellemű. Hát, nem egyformák, van, aki számítógépen mutatja be, valaki egyszerűen csak egy előadást csinál. Ha nem kapnának jegyet, szerintem az nem lenne mozgatórugó, még mindig a jegy motivál, az az elsődleges és nem az, hogy jobb legyek. Lehet, hogy más csoportokkal működik, nem tudom, nekem olyan nincs ebben az évben, meg tavaly is úgy alakultak a csoportok, hogy amikor az év elején szétválasztottuk őket, akkor a gyengék kerültek hozzám.

I: Milyen a tanulóid hozzáállása az önálló nyelvtanuláshoz?

B: Nehéz, nem megy, lehet, hogy olyan ez a nyelv, hogy nem motiválja őket, hogy ha kimennek az utcára, nem hallják a nyelvet, a gyakorlás lehetősége nincs meg. Ha tévét néznek, akkor is csak magyar nyelven nézik, esetleg ha próbál nyelvvizsgára menni, akkor céltudatosan németül nézi. Ez a magyar médiának a hibája, hogy nincs olyan csatorna, ahol kimondottan a nyelvtanulóknak is lenne célozva műsor. Minden szinkronizálva van, tudod, hogy Kevin Costner-nek ki a hangja, de feliratos film, mint a horvátoknál, az nem létezik, pedig rengeteget lehetne tanulni belőle, a kiejtést hallaná rendesen, meg segítené őket, így meg kész, vége az órának, majd lesz valami, az elsődleges cél az érettségi, keveseknek a nyelvvizsga. Emelt szinten nagyon kevesen tanulnak, a nyelvvizsga meg pénzbe kerül. Régen is nehéz volt a szülőknek, de nagyon sokan paprikáztak itt a környéken meg mezőgazdasággal foglalkoztak meg állattenyésztéssel. Most meg azt lehet látni, hogy külföldre mennek a szülők és akkor csonka a család, páran mennek Németországba vagy Ausztriába, de a tanuló azt látja, hogy ott is csak egy adott szókincs kell, és azt megtanulja, meg van, aki nem is kell megszólalnia németül, ez sem motiválja.

I: Fel tudsz idézni egy olyan esetet, amikor diákod nyelvtanulói autonómiája megnyilvánult?

B: Voltak ilyen közgazdasági versenyek, amiben az iskolánk idén nem vett részt, ez az Ötök találkozója, és ott újabban másfajta verseny feladatok vannak, régebben ilyen nyelvvizsga típusú feladatok voltak, aztán utána átfordult és ilyen kreatív kihívások vannak. Nekem is volt egy csoportom, akiket fel kellett készíteni, és az írógépről kellett, az írógép mint eszköz. És a kis csoportomban a gyerekeknek össze kellett ülni, hogy találjunk ki valamit és németül is legyen, elő is kell adni, és akkor az látványos kellett hogy legyen, és ott láttam, hogy milyen ügyesek, és mindig hozták, hogy nézzem át, hogy milyen jellegű feladatokat találtak, és aztán olyan szuperül összeállították és egy ppt-ben megcsinálták, és azt tényleg önállóan csinálták. Nyelvtanilag én átnéztem, javítottam, amit kellett, de akkor azt mondtam, hogy na lám, és az ilyen típusú feladatok megmozgatják őket és a fantáziájukat, és akkor nem kell noszogatni őket, hogy na, csináld, mert órán be kell mutatni, ott külön csoport kellett, hogy létrejöjjön és akarták is, hogy jók legyenek. Meg tudnak jól nyilvánulni és mindenkiben benne van ez a képesség, ezért kellene, hogy piszkáljuk őket jobban, vagy korábban el kellene kezdeni, és nem itt, a középiskolában, már megszoktatni kicsi korban, a környezetének rá kellene szoktatnia az önállóságra.

Külföldön, Kanadában már nagyon régóta önállóan kell dolgozniuk és interneten kell leadni a feladatokat, és ott aztán tényleg önállóan kell, a férjem volt kint egyszer egy ilyen iskolalátogatáson több évvel ezelőtt egy szakmai kiránduláson. És úristen, hát itt mi van, számítógép kezelés sem megy, nagyon magas az óraszám, ez sem tetszik és a lényegest kevésbé tudják elválasztani a lényegtelentől, és annyira elfáradnak már kettő-negyed három felé és még vannak a plusz órák és a vidékiek még menjenek haza és nem ebédelt még rendesen a gyerek, csak szendvicset evett és akkor fogjál hozzá, mert másnap hát órád lesz. Hét órára nem tudsz normálisan felkészülni, mert minden tantárgyra kell egy fél óra, de akkor még nem ült a számítógép elé, nem beszélt a családjával. Az iskola nem egy gyerekbarát intézmény. Hogy mennyire alapos az ottani rendszer, azt nem tudjuk, azt tudjuk, hogy itt nagyon sok a tananyag, nagyon sokat várunk a gyerekektől.

I: Milyen dolgokban adsz a diákjainak döntési lehetőséget és milyen eredménnyel?

B: Hát a tanterv tanmenet meghatározza azt, hogy mit tanítunk. Az nyilván csoport függő, hogy milyen mélységgel tudom megtanítani ugyanazt és hát a témák az érettségire. Vannak témák, azokat nem hagyhatjuk el. Azt megtehetem, hogy a nehezebb témákat kisebb, alacsonyabb szókinccsel tanítom, tehát a szavakkal játszhatok, de azt nem tehetem meg, hogy elhagyok egy témát. Meg, ha elfáradnak, jól van, játék, az mindenképpen kell az órán, meg a nyelvi laborba is jó, ha tudunk menni, mert ott nem kell megnyilvánulniuk a gép előtt, mert nem szólítom fel őket. És a film még az, ami fejleszti a hallásértésüket, meg egy kicsit talán a motivációjukat is erősíti. Filmet úgy egy évben hármat nézünk meg, idén hármat néztük meg a csoporttal, valakivel csak egyet. A szókincset ki szoktam hozzá írni, és azt próbálom visszakérdezni, de inkább kifejezéseket írok. Ilyenkor igyekszem friss filmeket választani, utoljára a Jégvarázs volt, a gyerekek mondták, hogy azt nézzük és nagyon aranyos film volt. Olyan filmeket néztünk, amelyeknek egyszerűbb a nyelvezete, a története, szókincse. Komolyabb filmeket is néztünk azért, de a mostani csoporttal nem nagyon, kevés nekik való német film van. Nekik a német film túl gyors, vagy olasz filmről van szinkronizálva, vagy amerikai és német felirattal, azt szoktam, de gyors nekik, de hát így lehet tanulni.

I: Fel tudsz idézni új esetet, amikor a szokásostól eltérően reagáltak arra, hogy döntési lehetőséget kaptak?

B: Döntési lehetőségre máshogy... olyant, hogy van egy csoport munka és akkor hogyan dolgozzák fel, annak örülnek, hogyha beleegyezek, hogy az ő akaratuk érvényesüljön. De amikor csapatban vagy párban dolgozunk, olyan szokott lenni, hogy - ez lehet levélírás is- levélírásnál eljönnek rá, hogy ezt így is lehet, vagy azt is írhatja bele, és gondolkozik, persze örül, hogy ha rájön, hogy nem pont ugyanazt a sémát várom el tőlük, de vannak, akik nehezen fogalmaznak, képtelenek, és tele hibával, és nincsenek gondolataik. Ezt tartom furcsának egyébként, hogy nehezen szedi össze a gondolatait, hogy mit írjon abba a levélbe, a fogalmazásba. És van olyan, aki tavaly elégtelent kapott, úgy kettes körül mozog, hogy írjam föl, hogy fogalmazzam meg én, és akkor azt megtanulja. De

mondtam neki, hogy ez nem kreatív és mi van, hogyha azt elfelejted? Vázlatot kell tanulni gyakorlatilag, szókincset kell tanulni.

És amikor egy témát dolgozunk fel, ott is ugyanez előfordul, hogy nem tudja ezt a programot, ezt a témát egyedül összeállítani, és tizenegyedikesekről meg tizenkettedikesekről van szó. Ez furcsa, és elvárnám, hogy a kérdések és a szókincs alapján igenis neked össze kell raknod és le kell írnod és akkor hol az önállóság, ha én írom meg? Amit egyre jobban elvárnék, hogy önállóbb legyen, és legyen véleménye. Ez hiányzik, ülnek, néznek, és várják, hogy valaki más megmondja.

I: Mi a véleményed az önellenőrzésről, milyen a gyakorlati hasznát, avagy veszélyeit, hátrányait látod?

B: A gépnél ugye, mondjuk az önellenőrzés, hogyha fent van a számítógépen a feladat, mondjuk a melléknév ragozása, és egy csomó feladat van ott, van az is, hogy a százalékot kiadja, megnézheted a hibákat és mellette ott a megoldókulcs. És látom, hogy többször csinálják azt a gyengébbek, hogy rögtön a megoldást nézik meg, és aztán azt beírják, tehát önmagát becsapja. Önértékelés, ennek ez a veszélye, hogy mindenkinél nem tudok ott lenni, meg van, akit nem is érdekel, hogy mit rontott el, szerencsére azért többeket igen. Szerintem nem tudják elhelyezni magukat, hogy hol tartanak, és azt is hibának látom, amikor szétszedjük őket csoportokra, most ebben az évben nem szedtük szét a csoportokat, hanem csak ilyen „gyűjtők” vannak, hogy csak egyes, kettes, maximum hármas, és akkor azt mondom, hogy nincs húzóerő, és mindenki olyan, hogy jó lesz ez a csoport nekem, ide nem kell sok mindent tennem, hogy a kettes vagy hármas szintet hozzam, mert a képességeim olyanok. És kevés az, aki azt mondja, hogy mérges vagyok, amiért véletlenül ebbe a csoportba kerültem, mert írtam egy rossz tesztet, és inkább elfogadja, és nem is akar nagyon kilépni, fejlődni. A saját energiáját nem teszi hozzá, és ez rossz, hogy így nincs húzóerő, tehát nemcsak a képességgel van baj, hanem a hozzáállással, a lustasággal, hogy neki ennyi elég, nem akar továbbtanulni.

I: Melyek azok a kihívások, nehézségek, amelyekkel szembesülsz az autonómia támogatása során?

B: A motiváció hiánya, az előbb beszéltem arról, hogy borzasztóan megterheltek. Én is adom a feladatot, mert elvárom, hogy a következő órára megtanulja, amit meg kell tanulni, de írunk ebből, írunk abból, most nem ezt csinálom, hanem azt, mert a következő órára azt kell. Hát nem lesz jó, és még mindig szelektálnak, hogy mi az, ami sürgős vagy kevésbé sürgős. Ez a bajom, hogy csak akkor csinálják ezek a típusú gyerekek, amikor írunk belőle, és akkor utána meg kevésbé dolgoznak. A többi tanárnál is így van, hogy nem tudnak folyamatosan tanulni. Hiba van a tanulási módszereikkel, ha órán figyelne, ha minden órán tudna jegyzetelni - ezt sem alakult ki, pedig nagyon lényeges lenne, még mindig vannak olyan tanulók, nem is egy, hanem sok, aki utána pillanatok alatt elfelejti, és nem tudja alkalmazni azt, amit már egyszer megtanult.

I: Ha nem lennének a nehézségek, amelyeket említettél, hogyan változna, vagy változna-e az, ahogyan tanítasz?

B: Én úgy gondolom, hogy sokkal könnyebb volt korábban tanítanom. Nemcsak azért mert fiatalabb voltam, hanem más jellegű volt a tanulói hozzáállás, egészen más volt. Akartak, a szülő is jobban támogatta őket, kevesebb időt vett el a modern technika, a számítógép, a Facebook, amiről azt hinnénk, hogy időt takarít meg. De az a baj, hogy ezt sem tanulták meg a gyerekek, hogy hogyan használják jól, és a gyerek, ha a szülő engedi - de ha nem engedi, a gyerek akkor is csinálja – van, ahol két tévé van, tudja használni számítógépet tévéként, és ez rengeteg időt elvesz a hasznos időből és nem arra használják, amire kellene. És a terheltségük akkor is nagy volt a gyerekeknek, de nem volt ennyi fegyelmezetlenség, más volt, órán nem kellett ennyit erőlködni. És sokkal nehezebb volt az érettségi annakidején, mert nehezebb volt, mint a mostani, és mégis, mintha így mennénk lefelé. Nagyobb energiába kerül, nyilván az anyagiak miatt is nehezebb tanítani, de nem gondolom, hogy csak ezért, azt gondolom, hogy a gyerekek mások.

I: Mit gondolsz, milyen hatással van a nyelvtanulói autonómiára a hazai nyelvtanítási hagyomány?

B: Én úgy gondolom, hogy nem jó a nyelvoktatási rendszer, a vizsgáztatási rendszerünkkel is baj van, a méréssel is, mert Magyarországon nem tudnak beszélni. Hiába, hogy megvan a nyelvvizsgájuk, de kevés az, aki tudja használni. És nem mernek beszélni az emberek, nem is alakult ki. Onnan kezdve, hogy a nyelvtanár úgy javít, hogy a nyelvtan a fontos, és azt kérik. Az érettségin most is, hogy 117 pontos írásbeli mellett egy 33 pontos szóbelit produkálj, és ebből lesz meg a 150. És megint azt erősítjük, hogy olvass, írj, de ne beszélj, ez hát 33 pont. Ez nagyon kevés, és elmegy nyelvvizsgázni, ott is ugyanez van, a hangsúly az írásbelin van. Én úgy gondolom, hogy inkább beszéljen hibásan, de beszéljen, merjen beszélni. Tapasztalatból tudom, hogy én sem írok e-maileket, fogalmazásokat és cikkeket, mint amiket a vizsgákon kell. Az olvasásértés rendben van, mert azt kell, de hogy ilyen keveset tudjon beszélni egy vizsgán, ez baj. És órán is erre kell készíteni őket, hogy írjon, olvasson, és a másik, ami szintén probléma, hogy nem lenne szabad megmutatni a gyerekeknek az írásbeli eredményét, mert nagyon sokan, a többség, legalább 70 %-ban utána kiszámolja, hogy hány pont kell ahhoz, hogy leérettségizem, és emiatt a szóbelik, amik régen fergetegesek voltak bármilyen tantárgyból, azok most ilyen laposak, mert az írásbeli a fontosabb. És ha már megszerezte a nagyobb pontszámot, akkor nem tud megbukni, a szóbelivel elrontani és javítani sem nagyon tud. Biztos, hogy jó lenne az is, amit nem tudunk megvalósítani, hogy anyanyelvi asszisztens jöhetne. Voltak pályázatok, meg volt, már kétszer, hogy fél évig itt voltak, nagyon jó volt a kapcsolatunk, utána is tartottuk, meg mentünk ki hozzájuk, és ami furcsa volt, hogy nem mertek velük beszélgetni a gyerekek. Hívták őket programokra, hogy menjünk, egyikük fiatalabb volt, de maximum az egész iskolából hatan vették igénybe, nem mertek beszélgetni vele, merthogy akkor meg kell szólalni. Közlekedett a folyosón, mindenkivel németül beszélt és ezt akkor is láttam, hogy a magyar gyerekeknek ez probléma, hogy megszólaljanak. Máskor is, hogyha megszólítanak az utcán, akkor inkább nem beszélek vagy átmész a másik oldalra, csakhogy ne kelljen megszólalni. Hogy ezt hogyan lehet megváltoztatni, nem tudom, generációk, szerintem, ha van esélye és éppen ezért élik meg úgy, hogy ez egy tantárgy, javítok vagy rontok belőle, ugyanúgy, mint a többinél, és ennyi. A gyakorlatiasságot hiányolom és ezek a cserekapcsolatok régen voltak, de az is csak egy hét, évente egy hét, de nem ugyanaz, a fotelban tanulni nehéz, de az alapokat ott kell letenni, de a gyakorlatiasság akkor is hiányzik.

I: Nincs több kérdésem, Bernadett. Van esetleg még valami, amiről szeretnél beszélni?

B: Azt hiszem nincs…

I: Akkor köszönöm szépen az interjút.

B: Igazán nincs mit.

Az értekezés tézisei

1. Bevezetés

A tanulói autonómia és annak szerepe az idegen nyelv tanításában és tanulásában számos kutatás alapját képezte, ugyanakkor az irodalomból egyértelműen kitűnik, hogy kevés figyelem irányult a tanári meggyőződések szerepére a tanulói autonómia támogatásában.

Tekintve, hogy a tanári meggyőződések nagymértékben befolyásolják az osztálytermi folyamatokat, fontosnak találtam kevert módszertannal végzett kutatással hozzájárulni a terület feltárásához. A tanulói autonómia támogatása több okból is indokolt: a tanulók bevonása a tanulási folyamatokkal kapcsolatos döntéshozásba hozzájárul a motiváció szintjének növekedéséhez (Benson, 2013; Cotterall, 1995a, 1995b; Dam, 1995; Dickinson, 1995; Little, 2007; Smith, 2008), ezáltal célirányosabbá és hatékonyabbá teszi a tanulást.

A vizsgálat fő célja az volt, hogy betekintést nyújtson a tanári, valamint a tanulói meggyőződések és a nyelvtanulói autonómia kapcsolatába, továbbá, hogy rávilágítson a meggyőződések, tanári gyakorlat és a tanulói viselkedések összefüggéseire, illetve az esetleges különbségek okainak forrásaira.

A disszertáció a tanulást dialógusban létrehozott folyamatként értelmezi (Vygotsky, 1978), ahol a tanulók aktív résztvevői a szociális kapcsolatrendszerben épülő tudásnak, amelynek megszerzése beleágyazódik a szociokulturális kontextusba.

A kutatás kvalitatív és kvantitatív módszereket alkalmazott. Azért esett a választás a kutatási módszerek ötvözésére, mivel a módszerek kombinálása lehetővé teszi a jelenség tágabb kontextusban való vizsgálatát, ami a tanulói autonómia esetében azt jelenti, hogy így figyelembe vehettem az osztályterem jellegét, mint társadalmi konstruktumot, illetve a tanárokat és a tanulókat érő egyéb külső behatásokat (Williams & Burden, 1997). Ugyanígy, fontosnak találtam szem előtt tartani a tanítás és a tanulás folyamatának komplexitását, és a kognitív és társadalmi tényezőkre úgy tekintettem, mint a fejlődés egymástól elválaszthatatlan elemeire.

2. A disszertáció felépítése

A disszertáció két fő részből áll. Az első rész a jelen empirikus kutatáshoz kapcsolódó szakirodalom kritikai áttekintését tartalmazza. A második részben a longitudinális kutatás részleteiről esik szó. A bevezetőt követő fejezet két fő fókusszal tekinti át a szakirodalmat. Egyrészt bemutatja a tanulói autonómia meghatározásait, amelyet a tanulói autonómia megközelítéseinek és implikációinak, valamint a motiváció aspektusainak kritikai elemzése követ. Másrészt a fejezet kritikusan áttekinti a tanári és tanulói meggyőződések szakirodalmát, különös tekintettel a meggyőződések és a tanári gyakorlat kapcsolatára tanulói autonómia támogatását illetően. Továbbá, az irodalmi áttekintés szintén betekintést nyújt a nyelvtanulói meggyőződések valamint önállóságra utaló viselkedésminták feltárását és ezek kapcsolatát célzó kutatásokba.

A harmadik fejezet ismerteti a kutatás hátterét, módszereit és a kutatás kérdéseit. Szintén itt kerül bemutatásra az idegen nyelv tanításának és tanulásának kontextusa Magyarországon, valamint a kutatás közvetlen kontextusa annak résztvevőivel, illetve a kutatás eszközei. A fejezet betekintést nyújt az adatgyűjtő eszközök létrehozásának lépéseibe, illetve az adatgyűjtés és elemzés folyamatába.

A negyedik fejezet a hat hónap alatt összegyűjtött adatokat elemzi. A kutatás kérdéseire adott válaszok a négy fő kutatási kérdés köré csoportosulnak. Az első részben a nyelvtanárok tanulói autonómia fogalomköréhez kapcsolódó meggyőződései körvonalazódnak, míg a második rész az angol- illetve a német nyelvet tanító tanárok meggyőződésbeli és tanári gyakorlatában fellelhető különbségekre összpontosít. A harmadik rész a nyelvtanulók tanulói autonómiáról vallott nézeteit illetve az önálló nyelvtanulás viselkedésbeli megnyilvánulását vizsgálja, külön kitérve az angol- illetve a német nyelvet tanuló diákok között fellelhető különbségekre. A negyedik részben az autonómiához kapcsolódó tanári és tanulói meggyőződések viszonya kerül elemzésre. A cél annak feltárása, hogy milyen tényezők és hogyan játszanak közre a tanári és tanulói meggyőződések kialakulásának folyamatában, illetve, hogy a meggyőződések milyen összefüggést mutatnak a tanári gyakorlattal és a tanulói viselkedéssel a tanulói autonómiát illetően.

Az utolsó fejezet összegzi a kutatás eredményeit és ismerteti annak korlátait, pedagógiai vonatkozásait, valamint javaslatot tesz további kutatási irányokra a terület részletesebb feltárása érdekében.

3. A kutatás

Jelen keresztmetszeti vizsgálatot egy közepes méretű szakközépiskolában végeztem két fő vonalon, hogy részleteiben megértsem betekintést nyerjek, hogyan érzékelik és értelmezik a nyelvtanárok és nyelvtanulóik a tanulói autonómiát. A kutatás feltáró jellegű, vegyes módszertant alkalmazott. A kvalitatív összetevőt a tanári és tanulói kérdőívek, amelyek egyaránt tartalmaztak nyitott és Likert-típusú kérdéseket (ld. 1. táblázat), a tantermi megfigyelések jegyzetei, illetve a félig strukturált tanár-interjúk alkották (n=4). A tantermi megfigyelések lehetővé tették, hogy betekintést nyerjek különböző nyelvtanárok (n=9) órai gyakorlatába, illetve, hogy milyen módon erősítették a tanulók önállóságát a nyelvtanulás folyamatában. A Likert-típusú kérdések és a kutatásban résztvevő tanulók száma (n=100) alkották a kutatás kvantitatív részét.

1. táblázat: A kutatás eszközeinek áttekintése

Kutatási eszköz	Kutatási paradigma	Kérdések	Résztvevők
Osztálytermi megfigyelés	Kvalitatív	12 részben strukturált megfigyelés	12 nyelvtanár, 103 tanuló (4 osztály)
Tanári kérdőív	Kvalitatív és kvantitatív	17 nyitott, 28 zárt kérdés	9 nyelvtanár
Tanulói kérdőív	Kvalitatív és kvantitatív	10 nyitott, 18 zárt kérdés	100 tanuló
Tanári interjú	Kvalitatív	18 nyitott kérdés	4 nyelvtanár

3.1 A kutatás eredményei

A disszertáció célja, hogy mélyebb betekintést nyújtson az autonómia értelmezéseibe az idegen nyelv tanulása során, a következő területek közötti kapcsolatrendszert vizsgálva: (a) a nyelvtanárok meggyőződései a tanulói autonómiáról; (b) a tanulói autonómia támogatásának megnyilvánulásai a tanári gyakorlatban; (c) a nyelvtanulók autonómiával kapcsolatos meggyőződései és megnyilvánulása a viselkedésükben; valamint (d) tanári és tanulói meggyőződések a nyelvtanulási autonómiával kapcsolatban (ld. 2. táblázat).

Kutatási kérdés	Forrás	Az elemzés módszere
A nyelvtanárok szerint milyen mértékben járul hozzá a tanulói autonómia a nyelvtanulás sikeréhez?	Tanári kérdőív Tanári interjú	Tartalom elemzés
Saját elmondásuk szerint hogyan és milyen mértékben támogatják a nyelvtanárok a tanulói autonómiát?	Tanári kérdőív Tanári interjú	Tartalom elemzés
Hogyan értelmezik a nyelvtanárok az önellenőrzést; hogyan és milyen mértékben valósítják meg a gyakorlatban?	Osztálytermi megfigyelések jegyzetei Tanári kérdőív Tanári interjú	Tartalom elemzés
Milyen mértékűnek látják a nyelvtanárok a saját diákjaik önállóságát a nyelvtanulásban?	Tanári kérdőív Tanári interjú	Tartalom elemzés
Milyen kihívásokkal szembesülnek a nyelvtanárok a nyelvtanulói autonómia támogatása során?	Tanári kérdőív Tanári interjú	Tartalom elemzés Leíró statisztika
Milyen mértékben vélik magukat önállónak a nyelvtanárok a szakmai fejlődés folyamatában illetve a tanári gyakorlat során?	Tanári kérdőív Tanári interjú	Tartalom elemzés
Hogyan viszonyulnak egymáshoz a tanári meggyőződések, a megfigyelt és a beszámolókon alapuló tanári gyakorlat a tanulói autonómia támogatását illetően?	Osztálytermi megfigyelések jegyzetei Tanári kérdőív Tanári interjú	Tartalom elemzés Leíró statisztika
Hogyan különböznek az angol illetve a német nyelvet tanító tanárok	Tanári kérdőív	Tartalom elemzés Leíró statisztika

meggyőződései a tanulói autonómiát illetően?	Interjú angol és némettanárokkal	
Hogyan különbözik az angol illetve a német nyelvet tanító tanárok tantermi gyakorlata a tanulói autonómiát illetően?	Osztálytermi megfigyelések jegyzetei Tanári kérdőív Interjú angol és némettanárokkal	Tartalom elemzés
Hogyan vélekednek a tanulók a saját nyelvtanulói önállóságukról?	Tanulói kérdőív	Tartalom elemzés Leíró statisztika
Mi az összefüggés a tanulók meggyőződései és viselkedése között a tanulói autonómiát illetően?	Osztálytermi megfigyelések jegyzetei Tanulói kérdőív	Tartalom elemzés Leíró statisztika Kétmintás t-próba Pearson-féle korrelációs együttható
Milyen különbség található az angol és a német nyelvet tanuló diákok meggyőződései és viselkedése között a nyelvtanulói autonómiát illetően?	Osztálytermi megfigyelések jegyzetei Tanulói kérdőív	Tartalom elemzés Leíró statisztika Kétmintás t-próba
Mi az összefüggés a tanárok és a tanulók meggyőződései között a nyelvtanulói autonómiát illetően?	Tanári kérdőív Interjú angol és némettanárokkal Tanulói kérdőív	Tartalom elemzés Leíró statisztika

3.1.1 A tanulói autonómia a nyelvtanárok szemszögéből

A kutatás a tanulói autonómiáról vallott nézetek széles skáláját tárta fel: a nyelvtanárok meglátása alapján a tanulói autonómia jelenthet felelősségérzetet a tanulási folyamat irányítása iránt, önszabályozott tanulást, valamint igényt a döntéshozásra a tanulási

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folyamat során. A meghatározások között visszatérő motívum volt az autonómia értelmezése, mint a tanulók azon képessége, hogy azonosítsák gyengeségeiket és erősségeiket, valamint, hogy tudatában legyenek az iskolán kívüli tanulás szükségességének. Mindenesetre, a tanári interjúk résztvevői hangsúlyozták a tanári irányítás fontosságát és kiemelték a tanár szerepének jelentőségét a tanulói motiváció felébresztésében és fenntartásában, továbbá a tanulók nyelvtanulási igényeinek észrevételében és kielégítésében. Az eredmények azt mutatták, hogy a nyelvtanárok a tanulók motivációját találták a legerőteljesebb tényezőnek, amely befolyásolja az önálló nyelvtanulást (Ushioda, 2011), bár minden résztvevő kizárólag extrinzik motívumokat említett. Továbbá, egyetértettek abban, hogy a tanulók szocioökonómiai háttere és a tanulási környezet kulcsfontosságúak a tanulói autonómia kialakulásában.

A tanári kérdőívek és az interjúk eredményei azt mutatták, hogy a nyelvtanárok a tanulói autonómia pszichológiai és szociokulturális vonatkozásait emelték ki leginkább, ugyanakkor tudatában voltak a technológia jelentőségének az önálló nyelvtanulás fejlesztésében (Benson, 2007). A tanárok egyetértettek abban, hogy a nyelvtanulás során és az élet más területein szerzett tapasztalat nagyobb mértékben játszik közre a tanulói autonómia kialakulásában, mint az életkor, de nem találtak egyértelmű kapcsolatot a tanulói autonómia és a megszerzett nyelvtudás szintje között. A tanárok úgy vélekedtek, hogy az önálló nyelvtanuló a tantermen kívül is fejleszti nyelvtudását, elsősorban infokommunikációs eszközök használatával, valamint keresi az alkalmat, hogy sokrétűen használhassa az idegen nyelvet a hétköznapokban is. Annak ellenére, hogy a tanárok látták a modern technológiában rejlő potenciált, hangsúlyozták, hogy határozott irányításra és megfelelő felügyeletre van szükség ezen a területen.

A kutatásban résztvevő nyelvtanárok egyöntetűen úgy gondolták, hogy a tanulói autonómia pozitív hatással van a nyelvtanulásra és kiemelték az egyéni tanulási ritmusra való lehetőséget, hatékonyabb tanulást és a sikerélmény jelentőségét (Dam, 1995; Smith, 2008). A tanulói autonómia árnyoldalaiként említették, hogy az önálló nyelvtanulás fegyelmezettséget igényel, illetve a nyelvtanárok problémásnak találták a hibák kijavítását a tanulói autonómia támogatása során és tartottak attól, hogy elvesztik az irányítást a tanóra felett. A nyelvtanárok nézeteit az önállóságról a nyelvtanulásban- és tanításban egyértelműen befolyásolták a saját, nyelvtanulás során szerzett

tapasztalatok, az erőfeszítéseik, amelyeket a céljaik elérése érdekében tettek, valamint az előző tanárok tanítási gyakorlata (Borg, 2006).

A tanárok beszámolóik alapján különböző módokon támogatták tanulóik önállóságát: bátorították az infokommunikációs eszközök használatára, diákjaik maguk választotta témákból tartottak előadásokat, illetve ellátták a tanulókat további feladatokkal, tanácsokkal a nyelvtanulási stratégiákat illetően, továbbá autonóm tanulást segítő tevékenységeket vezettek be az órán. Ugyanakkor, annak ellenére, hogy az önálló nyelvtanulásra, mint elérendő célra tekintettek, a tanárok különbözőképpen vélekedtek arról, hogy milyen mértékben kívánatos hogy a tanulók dönthessenek a nyelvtanulás folyamatáról illetve a tanóra menetéről. A résztvevők pozitív hozzáállást mutattak az önellenőrzéssel kapcsolatban, bár aggályaikat fejezték ki annak pontosságát illetően, mivel úgy gondolták, hogy a tanár nem lehet jelen mindenhol, hogy irányítása alatt tartsa az osztályt (Bulock, 2011).

A tanárok úgy gondolták, hogy néhány kivétellel a tanulók többsége nem, vagy csak kismértékben önálló a nyelvtanulásban, a tanulók nem készek arra, hogy kézbe vegyék az irányítást a saját nyelvtanulásuk felett. Ezen a ponton ellentmondás mutatkozott a tanárok meggyőződéseiben: annak ellenére, hogy úgy vélték, hogy a tanulói autonómia elengedhetetlen a hatékony nyelvtanuláshoz, tanulóikat nem látták késznek az önállóságra (Borg & Al-Busaidi, 2012). Úgy gondolták, hogy a tanulók azonnali vagy rövid távú célokat tűznek ki, és nem kötelezik el magukat a nyelvtanulás hosszú távú folyamata felé. A legnagyobb kihívásnak az autonómia támogatásában a tanulói motiváció hiányát, az időhiányt, a tanulók szocioökonómiai hátterét, a modern technológia figyelemelterelő hatását, valamint az intézményi kötöttségeket, megszorításokat látták. A tanulók döntéshozatalba való bevonását illetően úgy gondolkodtak, hogy bár a tanulók kaphatnának több szabadságot, beleszólást a tanulás folyamatába, nem gondolták kívánatosnak, kivitelezhetőnek a saját tanítási kontextusukban, ezzel újabb ellentmondást tárva fel a meggyőződéseket illetően.

A disszertáció rávilágított arra, hogy a nyelvtanárok különbözőképpen értelmezték a tanári autonómia fogalmát: a leggyakrabban a külső körülményektől való függetlenség, személyes függetlenség, tanári autoritás képzeteit társították a tanári önállóság fogalmával a tanítás minőségéért vállalt felelősséggel szemben (Little, 1995). A múlt idő kizárólagos használata a saját, tanulásban alkalmazott autonómia említése

során arra enged következtetni, hogy a tanárok nem láttak lehetőséget a fejlődésre tanári pályájuk során. A tény, hogy a tanárok leginkább a külső tényezőket okolták, mutatja a szociokulturális tradíció erős hatását, amely tanult tehetetlenségben nyilvánult meg (Williams & Burden, 1997). Ezenkívül arra utal, hogy a tanárok nem éreztek felelősséget a tanításuk iránt, és tanári autonómiájuk alacsony volt. A tanárinterjúk és a kérdőívek válaszai rávilágítottak arra, hogy a tanulói autonómia támogatásával kapcsolatos tanári meggyőződésekre a nyelvtanulóként szerzett tapasztalatok és az előző tanárok által nyújtott minta volt a legnagyobb hatással. Ez arra enged következtetni, hogy ha tanárok a nyelvtanulóként kipróbálhatnának tanulói autonómiát erősítő tanulási stratégiákat, reflektálhatnának ezekre, majd alkalmaznák ezeket a stratégiákat a tanári gyakorlatban, eredményesebb lenne a munkájuk.

3.1.2 A nyelvtanulói autonómiával kapcsolatos tanári meggyőződések és a tanári gyakorlat összefüggései

A jelen kutatás rávilágított a konfliktusra aközött, amit a nyelvtanárok szerettek volna megtenni, illetve amiről úgy gondolták, hogy megtehetnek. Annak ellenére, hogy a Nemzeti Alaptanterv és az iskola helyi tanterve is a kulcskompetenciák közé sorolja az önálló tanulást, a tanárok kívülről vártak segítséget, nem látva, hogyan törhetnék meg a tanult tehetetlenség ördögi körét, nem ismerték fel saját szerepüket a tanulói autonómia támogatásában. Szemlátomást, az alkalmazott tanári tudás változása lassú, mivel a meggyőződések a személyes- illetve szakmai előéletben gyökereznek (Schön, 1983).

Bár az osztálytermi megfigyelések során nyomokban tapasztaltam a tanulói autonómia támogatására irányuló jeleket, nyilvánvaló volt a poroszos tanítási tradíció hangsúlyos jelenléte: a termekben a padok és a tanári asztal elhelyezése, az elenyésző IKT-használat- annak ellenére, hogy a megfigyelt tanórák többségében rendelkezésre állt-, a tankönyv használatának kizárólagossága azzal érvelve, hogy a tanmenetet tartani kell, mind arra utaltak, hogy a tanulói önállóság erősítése nem volt tudatosan fenntartott folyamat.

A megfigyelt tanári gyakorlat tükrözte a meggyőződést, hogy a tanulók bevonása a döntéshozásba kivitelezhető lenne ugyan, de nem feltétlenül kívánatos. Annak ellenére, hogy a tanárok úgy gondolták, hogy a szívesen vesznek részt döntéshozásban,

elenyésző volt azon alkalmak száma, ahol erre lehetőséget kaptak. Nem derült fény arra, hogy a nyelvtanárok pozitív attitűdje hogyan nyilvánul meg a gyakorlatban, mivel annak alkalmazása mindössze néhány gyakorlatra korlátozódott.   Bár a nyelvtanárok tudatában voltak az önálló nyelvtanulás előnyeinek, a tanulói autonómia támogatására csak szórványos jelek utaltak, szemben a direkt instrukciók gyakori alkalmazásával.

Az önállóságra nevelés egyenetlenül tükröződött a nyelvtanárok beszámolóiban, annak ellenére, hogy a tanulói autonómia erősítése egyike az iskola egyértelműen megfogalmazott céljainak. Kedvező megítélése ellenére az önállóság támogatása háttérbe szorult a tankönyv-központú frontális munka mögött. A tanári attitűd a tanulói autonómiával szemben erős kötődést mutatott a tanárok előző, nyelvtanulóként szerzett kapcsolataival, és nagymértékben befolyásolta az önálló nyelvtanulás elősegítésében betöltött szerepüket. Ezek az eredmények rámutattak a változás szükségességére: innováció nem képes elérni az osztálytermet, ha a tanárok nem állnak mögé, még akkor is, ha a döntéshozó, irányító szervek támogatják azt (Hyland & Wong, 2013).

3.1.3   Az angol- és a német nyelvet tanító tanárok meggyőződéseinek kapcsolata a tanulói autonómia tekintetében

Összehasonlítva az angol és a német nyelvet tanító tanárok meggyőződéseit, a kutatás hasonlóságokra és különbségekre egyaránt fényt derített. A résztvevő tanárok mindannyian pozitív hozzáállást mutattak a tanulói autonómiához, és úgy gondolták, hogy a motiváció a legfontosabb az önállóságot befolyásoló tényezők között, illetve egyetértettek abban, hogy a tanulóik többsége nem nyilvánul meg autonóm módon a nyelvtanulásban. Mindazonáltal, az angol nyelvet tanító tanárok nagyobb jelentőséget tulajdonítottak a tanulók szocioökonómiai hátterének, mint németes kollégáik. Továbbá, különbözőképpen látták tanulóik autonómiáját megnyilvánulni a nyelvtanulásban: az angoltanárok úgy gondolták, hogy tanulóik változatos módon élnek a modern technológia nyújtotta előnyökkel, míg a némettanárok szerint a tanulók önállósága leginkább órai munkához kapcsolódó feladatokban mutatkozott meg.

Úgyszintén eltérés mutatkozott a tanulók értékelése tekintetében: míg a némettanárok inkább előnyben részesítették a hagyományos formális értékelési módszereket, az angoltanárok hozzáállása az értékeléshez gyakorlatiasabb volt, inkább

tükrözte a valós helyzetek támasztotta igényeket, és hangsúlyozta ki az angol nyelv eszközjellegi jelentőségét. Az angoltanárok kedvezőbben ítélték meg a nyelvtanulói autonómiát, a megfigyelt órákon gyakoribbak volt az önállóság fejlesztését célzó tevékenységek, javaslattétel új tanulási stratégiák kipróbálására, illetve dicséret előfordulása; míg a németórákon gyakrabban fordult elő a tanulók hibáinak azonnali, explicit módon történő javítása. Az angol-és némettanárok egyaránt nagymértékben a tankönyvre támaszkodtak, bár a kutatás rávilágított arra, hogy a némettanárok túlnyomórészt úgy tekintettek a német nyelvre, mint iskolai tantárgyra, miközben az angoltanárok órai gyakorlata arra utalt, hogy az angol nyelvet inkább tekintik kommunikációs eszköznek, mint tantárgynak.

3.1.4 Tanulói autonómia a nyelvtanulók nézőpontjából

A tanulói meggyőződések megértése kulcsfontosságú, mivel befolyásolják a döntéshozást, a tanulás hatékonyságát, illetve a tanulók tanórai viselkedését (Cotteral, 1999). Jelen kutatás rávilágított arra, az önállóságot fejlesztő munkaformák népszerűek voltak a tanulók körében, bár csak az egyéni munkaforma esetében volt nyilvánvaló, hogy a tanulók olyan okokból kedvelték azt, amelyek autonóm tanulási törekvések irányába mutattak. A pármunkát és a csoportmunkát illeti, az elsődleges ok, amiért a tanulók ezeket részesítették előnyben, az az önbizalom vagy tudás hiányában a társakra támaszkodás lehetősége volt, ami a tanulói autonómia alacsony szintjére utal. A kutatás eredményei rámutattak arra is, hogy a legjobban teljesítő nyelvtanulók legszívesebben az egyéni munkaformát választották, ami a sikeres nyelvtanulás és a tanulói autonómia szoros kapcsolatára utal.

A különböző teljesítményű csoportok idegen nyelv használatát tekintve szembetűnő volt, hogy a gyengébben teljesítő tanulók kerülték vagy mindössze számítógépes játékokban használták az angol vagy a német nyelvet, míg a sikeresebb nyelvtanulók keresték az alkalmat, hogy használhassák az idegen nyelvet.

A tény, hogy a nyelvtanulási motiváció csökkenése a jól teljesítő nyelvtanulók között fordult elő legritkábban és hangsúlyosabban jelent meg a kevésbé sikeres nyelvtanulók között, rámutat az autonómia és a motiváció kölcsönhatására. A tanulók leggyakrabban azért veszítették el érdeklődésüket a nyelvtanulásban, mert nehéznek találták a nyelvet, unalmasnak a nyelvtanulást, kimerültek voltak, vagy a rossz jegyek

elkedvetlenítették őket. A legerőteljesebb motiváló tényezőt a nyelvtanulás során felbukkanó nehézségek legyőzésére a jó jegyek vagy az idegen nyelv hasznosságának felismerése jelentették. A kutatás eredményei különbséget mutattak a tanulók meggyőződéseiben teljesítményszint szerint: a gyengébben teljesítők tanácstalannak érezték magukat önállóságuk növelésében, motiváció hiányával vagy az iskolához kapcsolódó okokkal indokolták alacsony autonómiájukat. Ezzel szemben a sikeresebb nyelvtanulók úgy gondolták, hogy önállóságukat motivációjuk erősítésével tudnák növelni, illetve megneveztek tevékenységeket, amelyek önállóan végezhetőek és támogatják a tanulók autonómiáját. Azok a tanulók, akik le tudták győzni a nehézségeiket a nyelvtanulás során jobban tudatában voltak a motiváció hatásának az önálló nyelvtanulásra.

A tanulókat jobbára az instrumentális motiváció vezérelte, csak a legjobban teljesítő diákok említettek intrinzikus motívumokat, míg a gyengébb nyelvtanulókat külső kényszerítő körülményeket neveztek meg, mint motivációforrást. Az egyik ok, amiért a tanulók jellemzően rövid távú célokat tűztek ki az lehet, hogy az iskolai közegben passzív résztvevőként vannak jelen és nem keresik a módját, hogy átvegyék az irányítást a saját nyelvtanulási folyamatuk felett. A kevésbé sikeres nyelvtanulók számára az idegen nyelvnek mint iskolai tantárgy volt jelentősége, nem úgy tekintettek rá, mint eszközre, amely hozzásegítheti őket további céljaik eléréséhez. Csak a sikeres nyelvtanulók mutattak elkötelezettséget a hosszú távú nyelvtanulás iránt.

A kutatás rávilágított arra, hogy nem teljes az átfedés a tanulói meggyőződéseket és viselkedést tekintve a tanulói autonómiával kapcsolatban: a pozitív hozzáállás nem mutatkozott meg a gyakorlatban. A kérdőíves vizsgálat rámutatott az ellentmondásra, amely az ideális és a valós felelősségvállalás között feszült (Édes, 2008). Mivel a tanulók olyan kontextusban szocializálódtak, ahol a tanári szerepekhez hagyományosan az autoritás fogalma társult, szívesebben támaszkodtak a tanárra, mint irányítóra és információforrásra, mint hogy felelősségteljesen kézbe vegyék a saját nyelvtanulásuk folyamatát.

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3.1.5 Az angol és a német nyelvet tanuló diákok autonómiával kapcsolatos meggyőződései és viselkedése közötti különbség

Összehasonlítva az angol és a német nyelvet tanuló diákok meggyőződéseit és viselkedését, a kutatás nem talált szembetűnő különbséget a két csoport kedvelt tanulási munkaformái között. Mindazonáltal, a kedvelt munkaformák mögötti érveket megvizsgálva látható, hogy a német nyelvet tanulók nagyobb gyakorisággal indokolták a preferenciájukat azzal, hogy könnyebb úgy idegen nyelvet tanulni, ha mástól is kapnak segítséget. A tanórán kívüli nyelvhasználatot tekintve több német nyelvet tanuló számolt be arról, hogy kerüli a tanórán kívüli idegen nyelv használatát, mint angolos társaik, akik nagyobb felelősséget éreztek a nyelvtanulás iránt és ritkábban tapasztaltak csökkenést nyelvtanulói motivációjukban.

A leglényegesebb különbség a két csoport nézetei között azt illetően, hogy milyen tevékenységek erősíthetnék az önállóságukat a nyelvtanulásban az volt, hogy az angol nyelvet tanulók túlnyomórészt iskolán kívüli, tanórához nem kapcsolódó tevékenységeket említettek, míg a német nyelvet tanulók az osztálytermi tevékenységek változtatása iránti igényüket fejezték ki. A nyelvtanulással kapcsolatos célkitűzéseiket tekintve az angol nyelvtanulók magasabb célokat tűztek mi, mint a másik csoport tagjai. Ugyanakkor a német nyelvtanulókat kizárólag extrinzik motívumok vezérelték, intrinzik motiváció csak az angol nyelvtanulók által került említésre. Az angol nyelvet tanulók attitűdje kedvezőbbnek mutatkozott németes társaikénál, akik az idegen nyelvre, mint iskolai tantárgyra tekintettek, míg az angolosok inkább tudatában voltak a nyelvtudás előnyeivel, annak eszközjellegével.

3.1.6 A nyelvtanári és tanulói meggyőződések összefüggései a nyelvtanulói autonómiával kapcsolatban

A kutatás eredményei rávilágítottak arra, hogy a tanárok és a tanulók nézetei nem mutattak teljes átfedést az önálló nyelvtanulással kapcsolatban. Míg a tanárok tudatában voltak a motiváció jelentőségének, és annak a fontosságának, hogy a tanulók képesek legyenek felmérni a gyengeségeiket és erősségeiket a nyelvtanulásban, a tanulók nem ismerték fel ezeknek a tényezőknek a kulcsfontosságát. Továbbá, a tanárok úgy vélték, hogy önálló nyelvtanulásra a tanórán és az iskolán kívül is van lehetőség,

ezzel szemben a tanulók nem tekintettek az iskolai kontextusra úgy, mint tanulói autonómiájuk megnyilvánulásának színhelyére. Hasonlóképpen, a tanárok több lehetőséget láttak az infokommunikációs eszközök önállóságot növelő alkalmazásában, mint a tanulóik. Különbségek mutatkoztak a kedvelt munkaformákkal kapcsolatos meggyőződések tekintetében is.

A nézetbeli egyezéseket illetően mindkét csoport kívánatosnak találta a tanári irányítást, úgy gondolták, hogy a tanulási folyamat részeinek ellenőrzése nem a tanuló felelőssége, a tanulók a tanártól várták, hogy növelje a nyelvtudásukat, és mindkét csoport egyetértett az azonnali korrekció fontosságával (Akhtar & Kausar, 2011). Továbbá, mindannyian úgy látták, hogy a tanulók extrinzik módon motiváltak, és rövid távú célokat tűznek ki a nyelvtanulásban. Egybehangzóan állították, hogy a tanulókra túlzott terhet ró az iskola.

4. A kutatás korlátai

A disszertáció gyengesége, hogy kevés résztvevő bevonásával készült, tehát az eredmények nem általánosíthatók. Ugyanakkor arra törekedtem, hogy az az átvihetőség mértékét növeljem különböző résztvevői nézőpontok és vélemények bemutatásával, valamint különböző kutatási módszerek használatával (Dörnyei, 2007).

Mivel minden résztvevő tanárnak csak egy óráján vettem részt megfigyelőként, tudatában voltam annak, hogy nem várhatom el, hogy egyetlen tanórán betekintést nyerjek az autonómia támogatásának teljes pedagógiai tárházába. Éppen ezért a megfigyelések eredményei a tanári gyakorlat különbségeiben nem általánosíthatóak más csoportokra. Ugyanakkor, a résztvevők kis számának ellenére számos visszatérő jelenség körvonalazódott. Annak is tudatában voltam, hogy az interjúalanyok válaszait a jelenlétem befolyásolhatta, de aligha találhattam volna más módszert, hogy a nyelvtanárok meggyőződéseit feltárjam.

A kutatás eredményeit gazdagíthatták volna tanulókkal végzett interjúk, összetettebb képet nyújtva ezáltal a tanulói meggyőződésekről és a tanulók önállóságának valós mértékéről. Továbbá, mivel csak egy korosztályt vizsgáltam, további kutatás lenne szükséges nagyobb populáció és szélesebb korosztály bevonásával, vagy longitudinális kutatás elvégzésével az eredmények szélesebb körű általánosíthatósága érdekében.

5. A kutatás pedagógiai vonatkozásai

Korlátai ellenére, a kutatás eredményei gyakorló tanárok és tanárképzésben érintettek számára egyaránt jelentőséggel bírhatnak. Fontos, hogy a tanárok tudatában legyenek a tanulói autonómia fontosságának, és a tanulók önállóságának fejlesztésében betöltött szerepüknek. A nyelvtanárok úgy vélték, hogy a tanári gyakorlatukra saját tanulói tapasztalataik voltak a legnagyobb hatással, továbbá, nem voltak egyértelmű elképzeléseik a tanulói autonómiát illetően. Ezért lényeges lenne, hogy a tanárképző intézmények programjában szerepet kapjon az autonómia fontosságával kapcsolatos tudatosság növelése. Ez segítené a tanárokat abban, hogy úgy irányítsák a tanulási folyamatokat, hogy a tanulók pozitív tapasztalatokra tegyenek szert a nyelvtanulói önállóság növelésével kapcsolatban.

További kutatás javasolt a tanári és tanulói meggyőződések különbségeinek a forrásának feltárására, valamint a meggyőződések, a tanári gyakorlat és a tanulói viselkedések kapcsolatának megvilágítására. Fontos, hogy a tanárok és a tanulók megértsék egymás meggyőződéseit és elvárásait, mivel a kölcsönös megértés hozzájárul a motiváció növekedéséhez és mindkét csoport megelégedését szolgálja.

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