

TURKISH EFL LEARNERS' READINESS FOR AUTONOMY AND  
ATTITUDES TOWARD SELF-ACCESS CENTER

A MASTER'S THESIS

BY

MÜRÜVVET NASÖZ

THE PROGRAM OF TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE  
İHSAN DOĞRAMACI BILKENT UNIVERSITY  
ANKARA

JUNE 2015



*To the memory of my grandfather  
whose presence I always feel in my heart*

Turkish EFL Learners' Readiness for Autonomy and  
Attitudes towards Self-access Center

The Graduate School of Education

of

İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University

by

Mürüvvet Nasöz

In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

in

Teaching English as a Foreign Language

İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University

Ankara

June 2015

İHSAN DOĞRAMACI BILKENT UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Thesis Title: Turkish EFL Learners' Readiness for Autonomy and  
Attitudes towards Self-access

Mürüvvet NASÖZ

Oral Defence June 2015

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in Teaching English as a Foreign Language

-----

Prof. Dr. Kimberly Trimble (Supervisor)

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in Teaching English as a Foreign Language

-----

Asst. Prof. Dr. Deniz Ortaçtepe (Examining Committee Member)

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in Teaching English as a Foreign Language

-----

Asst. Prof. Dr. Babürhan Üzüm (Examining Committee Member)

Approval of the Graduate School of Education

-----

Prof. Dr. Margaret Sands (Director)

**ABSTRACT****TURKISH EFL LEARNERS' READINESS FOR AUTONOMY AND  
ATTITUDES TOWARD SELF-ACCESS CENTER**

Mürüvvet Nasöz

M.A., Program of Teaching English as a Foreign Language

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Kimberly Trimble

June 2015

This study investigates the Turkish EFL learners' attitudes toward the self-access center (SAC) and their readiness for autonomous language learning. It also explores whether learners' attitudes toward the SAC and their readiness for autonomy are related to frequency of SAC use. The study was carried out with 250 Turkish EFL learners at Yıldırım Beyazıt University, School of Foreign Languages. In order to collect data, a SAC attitude questionnaire and a learner autonomy readiness questionnaire were employed. The data gained through the quantitative analysis revealed a statistically significant difference between the attitudes of infrequent users and regular SAC users, suggesting that learners' attitudes toward the SAC and frequency of SAC use interconnected. The findings of the study also showed that Turkish EFL students were ready to take the responsibility for their own learning despite their inclination to accept the teacher's power and authority in the learning process. Additionally, the results revealed that the SAC users were not necessarily the autonomous learners who make decisions about their own learning. The findings suggest the necessity of training of the EFL learners for independent

learning and raising their awareness about the advantages of the SAC to increase the effective use of the centers.

Key words: self-access center, independent language learning, learner autonomy

## ÖZET

### İNGİLİZCEYİ YABANCI DİL OLARAK ÖĞRENEN TÜRK ÖĞRENCİLERİN ÖZERK DİL ÖĞRENMEYE HAZIR OLMA DURUMLARI VE BAĞIMSIZ ÖĞRENME MERKEZİNE KARŞI TUTUMLARI

Mürüvvet Nasöz

Yüksek Lisans, Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce Öğretimi  
Tez Yöneticisi: Prof. Dr. Kimberly Trimble

Haziran 2015

Bu çalışma İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen öğrencilerin bağımsız öğrenme merkezine karşı tutumlarını ve özerk dil öğrenmeye hazır olma durumlarını araştırmaktadır. Çalışma aynı zamanda öğrencilerin bağımsız öğrenme merkezine karşı tutumlarının ve özerk dil öğrenmeye hazır olma durumlarının merkezi kullanma sıklığıyla ilişkisini araştırmaktadır. Bu çalışma, Yıldırım Beyazıt Üniversitesi Yabancı diller okulunda İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen 250 Türk öğrencisiyle gerçekleştirilmiştir. Veri toplamak amacıyla bağımsız öğrenme merkezine karşı tutum anketi ve özerk çalışmaya hazır bulunma anketi uygulanmıştır. Nicel veri analiz sonuçları bağımsız öğrenme merkezini düzenli ve düzensiz kullananların tutumları arasında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir fark olduğunu göstermiştir. Bu sonuç ise öğrencilerin merkeze karşı tutumuyla merkezi kullanma sıklığı arasında ilişki olduğunu göstermiştir. Çalışmanın bulguları ayrıca İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen Türk öğrencilerin öğrenme sürecinde öğretmenin otoritesini kabul



etme eğilimine rağmen kendi öğrenme sorumluluklarını almaya hazır bulduklarını göstermiştir. Buna ek olarak, sonuçlar merkezi kullanan öğrencilerin kendi öğrenmesiyle ilgili kararları alabilen özerk öğrenciler olmadığını göstermiştir. Bulgular İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen öğrencilerin bağımsız çalışma konusunda eğitilmesinin ve bağımsız öğrenme merkezinin daha etkili kullanılabilmesi için merkezin yararları konusunda farkındalığının artırılması gerekliliğini ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: bağımsız öğrenme merkezi, bağımsız dil öğrenimi, öğrenci özerkliği

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Writing a thesis was such a demanding process for me from beginning to the end that it would not have been possible to accomplish without the support and guidance of many people to whom I would like to express my sincere gratitude.

First of all, I would like to thank, my thesis advisor Prof. Dr. Kimberly Trimble for his precious feedback on my research and assistance throughout this research project. He supported me in this challenging process by providing me encouragement, making me smile with his jokes even at times when I felt desperate. I also would like to thank Asst. Prof. Deniz Ortaçtepe for all her efforts in almost every step of this process from the selection of the thesis topic to the end. She was always ready to answer my questions, to give her suggestions whenever I approached her. I will never forget her sincerity, energy and enthusiasm to teach. I would like to thank my thesis committee member, Asst. Prof. Babürhan Üzüm for his encouragement with his positive comments and valuable feedback on my thesis.

I wish to express my deep gratitude to my institution, specifically Prof. Dr. Ömer Demir, who was the rector of Social Sciences University of Ankara, for giving me the permission to attend this outstanding master's program and supported my academic progress throughout the process. I also want to thank the administration of School of Foreign Languages, Yıldırım Beyazıt University for allowing me to conduct my research and making the data collection process much easier and faster for me. I owe much to my friend Tarık Uzun, who supported me with his professional ideas in the process. He was always there whenever I needed help. I also want to thank my true friends, Bilge Yatır and Bedriye Apaydın for their continuous support and their help in the translation process of my instrument into Turkish. My special thanks go to my life-long friend, Ziya Şenbayrak, who provided invaluable

contributions to my study, inspiration, and motivation for me to accomplish my degree. Thanks to his encouragement and suggestions in each and every step of my thesis, I regained momentum and was able to successfully finish my thesis. He was an excellent guide with his unceasing patience, understanding smile and affectionate heart. Thank you for always being right behind me in every step I take.

Moreover, I would like to thank my MA TEFL friends in 2014-2015 academic year. I feel really lucky to meet every single member of this great group. We had an unforgettable year together and supported each other in order to overcome the challenges we encountered during the process. Many thanks to my precious classmates especially *Toronto team* for their friendship and continuous support.

Last but not least, I owe my deepest thanks and appreciation to my family and would like to thank to my parents for their understanding through my master's program. Without their love and support I would not be who I am or where I am today.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .....	iii
ÖZET .....	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	ix
LIST OF TABLES .....	xiii
LIST OF FIGURES .....	xv
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION .....	1
Introduction .....	1
Background of the Study .....	2
Statement of the Problem .....	6
Research Questions .....	7
Significance of the Study .....	7
Conclusion.....	8
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW .....	10
Introduction .....	10
Learner Autonomy .....	10
Origins of Autonomy in Language Learning.....	10
Learner Autonomy: Definitions and Misconceptions.....	12
Autonomous Learner Characteristics.....	14
Factors affecting Readiness for Autonomy .....	15
Studies conducted on Readiness for Autonomy in Turkey .....	18
Fostering Learner Autonomy.....	20
Learner-based approaches.....	21
Teacher-based approaches. ....	22
Classroom-based approaches. ....	23

Curriculum-based approaches.....	24
Technology-based approaches.....	25
Resource-based approaches.....	25
Measuring Learner Autonomy.....	25
Self-access Centers.....	27
Key Terms and Definitions.....	27
Self-access Centers: Advantages.....	28
The Roles of Self-access Centers.....	30
Self-access Organizations: Types and Key Human Resources.....	31
Key Elements in Self-access Centers.....	33
Materials.....	33
Counseling system/ training.....	36
Innovation and technology.....	37
Studies on Self-access Center in Turkey.....	38
Conclusion.....	39
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY.....	40
Introduction.....	40
Setting.....	41
Participants.....	43
Research Design.....	45
Instrument and Materials.....	45
Demographic information.....	46
Learner autonomy readiness questionnaire (LARQ).....	46
Student attitudes toward the SAC questionnaire.....	49
Data Collection Procedures.....	50
Piloting.....	51
Data Analysis Procedures.....	52
Conclusion.....	53

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS .....	54
Introduction .....	54
Results .....	55
Research Question 1: EFL Learners' Attitudes toward the Self-access Center .	55
Research Question 2: The Comparison of Regular SAC Users' and Infrequent SAC Users' Attitudes toward the SAC.....	60
Research Question 3: EFL Learners' Readiness for Autonomous Language Learning.....	62
Decision-making abilities.....	64
Learners' views on their own and teacher's roles in language learning. ....	65
Motivation.....	67
Metacognitive strategy use.....	69
Research Question 4: EFL Learners' Readiness for Autonomy and Frequency of SAC Use .....	71
Conclusion.....	74
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS .....	76
Introduction .....	76
Discussion of Major Findings .....	77
EFL Learners' Attitudes toward the Self-access Center.....	77
The Comparison of Regular SAC Users' and Infrequent SAC Users' Attitudes toward the SAC.....	79
EFL Learners' Readiness for Autonomous Language Learning .....	80
EFL learners' perception of their own decision-making abilities.....	81
EFL learners' views on their own and teacher's roles in language learning ..	82
EFL learners' perception of their motivation in language learning .....	83
EFL learners' use of metacognitive strategies in language learning.....	83
EFL Learners' Readiness for Autonomy and Frequency of SAC Use.....	84
Pedagogical Implications .....	85
Limitations of the study.....	87

Suggestions for further research.....	88
Conclusion.....	89
REFERENCES.....	91
APPENDICES .....	101
Appendix A: Questionnaire (English).....	101
Appendix B: Questionnaire (Turkish).....	105
Appendix C: Normality Test Results .....	109
Appendix D: The Results for the Activities Done in the SAC.....	113
Appendix E: Pictures of the Self-access Center .....	114

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Demographic Information of the Participants in the Study .....	44
2. Components of the Learner Autonomy Readiness Questionnaire (LARQ) .....	47
3. Components of the SAC Attitude Questionnaire.....	50
4. Descriptives on Subcategories of SAC Attitude Questionnaire .....	55
5. Descriptives on EFL Learners' Attitudes toward Practical Aspects of SAC ....	56
6. Descriptives on EFL Learners' Attitudes toward SAC in terms of Language Skills.....	57
7. Descriptives on EFL Learners' Attitudes toward SAC in terms of Learning Activities .....	58
8. Descriptives on EFL Learners' Attitudes toward SAC Materials .....	59
9. Descriptives and Mann-Whitney U Results on Frequency of Use and SAC Attitudes .....	60
10. Mann-Whitney U Test on Frequency of Use and SAC Attitudes of the Subcategories .....	61
11. Descriptive Statistics on Components of Readiness for Learner Autonomy ....	63
12. Descriptives on EFL Learners' Perception of Decision-making Abilities .....	64
13. Descriptives on EFL Learners' Views on Their own and Teacher's Roles .....	66
14. Descriptives on EFL Learners' Motivation .....	68
15. Key to Strategy Inventory for Language Learning Averages (Oxford, 1990)...	69
16. Descriptives on EFL Learners' Metacognitive Strategy Use .....	70
17. Descriptives on EFL Learners' Readiness for Autonomy and Frequency of SAC Use .....	72
18. One-way ANOVA for Readiness for Autonomy and Frequency of SAC Use..	72
19. Kruskal Wallis H for Subcategories of Readiness for Autonomy and Frequency of SAC Use.....	73
20. Results of the Normality test for the Overall Attitudes toward SAC and Frequency of SAC use .....	109



21. Normality Test for the Subcategories of Attitudes toward SAC and Frequency of SAC use .....	110
22. Normality Test for Readiness for Learner Autonomy and Frequency of SAC use .....	111
23. Normality Test for Subcategories of Readiness for Autonomy and Frequency of SAC Use .....	111

**LIST OF FIGURES**

Figure	Page
1. Autonomy in language learning and related areas of practice .....	21
2. Groups of the participants in relation to frequency of SAC use .....	45
3. Activities done in the SAC by the SAC users.....	113
4. Reading desk .....	114
5. SAC bulletin board.....	114
6. Computer lab with study desks .....	115
7. Students working at study desks .....	115
8. In-house SAC Materials.....	116
9. Library.....	116

## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

### **Introduction**

Over the last years, there has been a significant shift from traditional teacher-centered instructional approaches towards student-centered ones in language teaching. This shift has put much emphasis on the promotion of learner autonomy in the learning process, which is harder to achieve through traditional teaching methods. The increasing necessity to foster learner autonomy in English learning has brought new perspectives to teaching profession and changed the traditional understanding of teaching. In this respect, self-access language learning (SALL) has become an increasingly important aspect of language instruction in all types of institutions in order to appeal to all kinds of learners with different needs (Gardner & Miller, 1997). Therefore, establishing these kinds of facilities to promote self-directed learning has become a priority at more and more institutions in all over the world.

Self-access center (SAC) provides learners with direct access to language learning resources and entails degree of learner decision making such as choices in mode, pace and content (Cotterall, 1995; Sheerin; 1989; Littlejohn, 1985). In Turkey, self-access centers (SACs) have been incorporated into many foreign language education institutions in order to help learners improve language proficiency as well as independent learning skills. Since SACs are considered to be efficient and effective alternatives to supplement classroom learning, the internal and external factors that inhibit or promote learners' use of SAC need to be investigated. In this respect, this study aims to investigate the effects of learners' attitudes towards the SAC and their readiness for autonomy on their SAC use.

## **Background of the Study**

In the context of foreign language teaching, the concept of learner autonomy originated from the Council of Europe's Modern Languages Project in 1971. As one of the outcomes of this project, the Centre de Recherches et d'Applications en Langues (CRAPEL) at the University of Nancy, France was established. The aim of this first self-access center was to provide learners with access to a variety of second language materials, which would offer opportunities for self-directed learning. An important figure within the field of autonomy and the project leader of CRAPEL, Henri Holec (1981), defined learner autonomy as "the ability to take charge of one's learning" (p. 3). He later elaborated the term on having the capacity to determine realistic learning objectives, select content and the progression, choose appropriate methods and techniques, monitor own learning process, and evaluate what has been learned. In the teaching and learning process, promoting autonomy is regarded as an ultimate goal of education rather than a procedure or a method (Benson & Voller, 1997; Chan, 2001) as learners' taking active and independent involvement in language education lead to permanent and effective learning (Dickinson, 1995; Gremmo & Riley, 1995).

With the advent of learner-centered approaches during the past half century, how to create autonomous learners has become a prominent concern of many researchers in the field of foreign language education (Benson, 2001). There has been a great deal of research conducted on the relationship between learners' readiness for autonomy and how this affects their learning in a language education context (Chan, Spratt, & Humphreys, 2002; Karabiyik, 2008; Koçak, 2003; Littlewood, 1999). One factor for readiness for autonomy is learners' developing metacognitive learning strategies. According to the research, these skills are necessary so that they can exercise their independence through self-directed learning

(Dickinson, 1991; Kumaravadivelu, 2006; Oxford, 1990; Victori & Lockhart, 1995). Another factor affecting manifestation of autonomy is motivation (Dickinson, 1995; Lee, 1998; Littlewood, 1996) as the motivation to achieve a particular goal is assumed to enhance self-regulated learning behavior (e.g., Kormos & Csizer, 2014; Lee, 1998). A third factor affecting learner's readiness for autonomy is students' views on the responsibilities of the teacher and themselves in the learning process (Chan, Spratt, & Humphreys, 2002; Cotterall, 1995; Gan, 2009; Lamb, 2008). As a last factor, students' decision-making abilities about their own learning process such as selecting materials, techniques to be used are found to be influential in the development of learner autonomy (Chan, Spratt, & Humphreys, 2002; Dickinson, 1991; Nunan, 1997).

In their studies on Turkish EFL learners' readiness for autonomy, Karabıyık (2008) and Koçak (2003) concluded that the students spent very little time for the actual autonomous learning activities out of the classroom. Moreover, they tended to consider the teacher as an authority, who should take most of the responsibilities and make most of the decisions about their learning in the classroom context. This situation necessitates teachers and administrators to apply the practices that encourage learners to take better control on their learning.

In the field of language education, certain practices have been identified in an attempt to promote learner autonomy by different practitioners. Benson (2001) described these practices to foster learner autonomy under the title of *Approaches to the Development of Learner Autonomy* and he provided six broad headings: resource-based, technology-based, learner-based, classroom-based, curriculum-based and teacher-based approaches. Resource-based approach refers to learners' independent interaction with learning resources, offering opportunities for learners to self-direct their own learning. Building on the idea of resources-based approach, in

the last years, there has been a number of attempts to create a setting as an integral part of schools to promote learner autonomy and independent learning in second language learning. In the literature, self-access center (SAC), self-access learning center and independent learning center are the common terms used to define that setting. Littlejohn (1985) described a typical setting:

The term self-access centre usually refers to a room where learning materials are provided for learners to use without direct teacher supervision. The materials are usually arranged in such a way that the students can find what they want easily and quickly. They may then work on these materials at their own pace and, through the use of answer keys, evaluate their own work. (p. 257)

These centers offer a wide range of opportunities for learners to control their decisions from selecting their materials to developing new learning strategies. These strategies assist learners to move from teacher dependence towards self-directed learning (Benson, 1997; Gardner & Miller, 1999; Sheerin, 1989). As described by Morrison (2008), SACs aim to promote both language learning and independent learning with the provision of necessary resources and learner support.

The evaluation of the centers is necessary to check whether they contribute to learners' learning and it also provides evidence for other institutions deciding to establish this facility (Gardner & Miller, 1999). The obvious way of defining the success or failure of centers is by the number of students who use them. Sturtridge (1997) discussed a number of factors contributing to the success or failure of self-access centers. Those factors are classified under the headings: the management of innovation, provision of suitable location and facilities, staff training and development, learner training and development, learner culture, and materials. In this respect, one of the significant factor affecting learners' acceptance or rejection of a

center is the quality and quantity of the materials offered by that center. In their study, Lin and Brown (1994) offered guidelines how to produce in-house self-access materials. Later, Lewis and Reinders (2006) proposed an evaluative checklist for self-access materials in order to enhance better SALL. Another factor that contributes to the effectiveness of a SAC is provision of learning training. Victori (2007) discussed the role of support mechanisms namely language advisers in a self-access center within a university context on learners' development. She concluded that the service offered by the language advisers was appreciated by the language learners and helped them to achieve learning goals to great extent. Moreover, the management of innovation is another factor that increases learners' access to the center. McMurry, Tanner and Anderson (2009) examined whether providing a website and a database for SAC materials maximize students' attendance. They reported that the database-driven website that gave students immediate access to the center resources led to an increase in learners' length of time spent in the SAC and amount of the books that they read.

The rapid growth of self-access centers particularly in the 1990s has been attributed to the increased number of language learners at universities all over the world (Gremmo & Riley, 1995). In Turkey, there has been considerable attempts to establish self-access centers in language learning environments. Koyalın (2009) conducted a study on the effectiveness of a SAC at İzmir University of Economics exploring learners' attitudes as well as their practices. The findings showed that the SAC was used by only one third of the preparatory students. The students who used the SAC, however, seemed to value it, and there was some evidence that it helped these learners change their learning approaches. Kocatürk (2011) conducted another study on students' perceptions about the SAC at the METU Northern Cyprus Campus and it was revealed that 40% of the students used the center frequently.

Another research by Uzun (2013) on the SAC users' learning styles at Yıldırım Beyazıt University also showed that only one fifth of the preparatory students used that center on a regular basis. All these studies conducted in Turkey indicated that SACs are not used effectively by the learners despite the all its listed advantages.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The arrival of a number of learner-centered approaches to language education has prompted research on ways to foster autonomy (e.g., Benson, 2001) such as training learners for the strategies (Cohen, 1998; O'Malley & Chamot, 2002; Oxford, 1990) and using learning technologies and computer-assisted language learning (Blin, 2004; Murray, 1999). Self-access centers (SACs) have been used as a practical means of promoting independent learning in educational setting for the last 30 years (Benson & Voller, 1997). There has been a number of studies on the evaluation of SAC effectiveness (Gardner, 2001; Klassen et al., 1998; Koyalán, 2009; Morrison, 2008), on SAC materials (Lewis & Reinders, 2006; Lin & Brown, 1994; Malcolm, 2004), and on advising system in SACs (Reinders, Hacker & Lewis, 2004; Victori, 2007). In considering the studies on self-access centers in language education, there is still a need to examine internal and external factors that inhibit or promote learners' use of SAC.

Most of the preparatory schools at tertiary level in Turkey have a self-access facility where students can get access to the materials and organizational systems and study independently. However, most of the Turkish learners tend to be either resistant or unwilling to be involved in various kinds of activities which require learner autonomy (e.g., Bozkurt, 2007). Yıldırım Beyazıt University also has a center which aims to help learners become independent learners and develop English skills with a variety of opportunities. In his study, Uzun (2012) concluded that only one fifth of the students were attending the SAC on a regular basis at the preparatory



school at Yıldırım Beyazıt University during 2011- 2012 academic year. Since then, a number of improvements have been made to attract more students to that place such as the physical environment, number of materials, the webpages and a newsletter to announce the activities etc. However, a preliminary study conducted by the researcher and the SAC coordinator in December, 2014 showed that the center had not been used by the large number of the students. The results indicated that of 936 students at Yıldırım Beyazıt University, 162 students were regularly attending the SAC, 383 students had used the center a few times but not regularly and 391 students stated that they had not used the center at all. Considering all the possible advantages that a self-access center offers (e.g., promoting linguistic proficiency and independent learning skills), the reasons behind Turkish students' reluctance or willingness to attend SAC are worth investigating.

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the EFL learners' attitudes toward the self-access center in their institution?
2. How do the regular SAC users' attitudes toward the SAC differ from infrequent SAC users?
3. To what extent are the university level EFL learners ready for autonomous language learning?
4. In what ways does student readiness for autonomy vary among students who attend the SAC with different frequencies?

### **Significance of the Study**

Literature in the area of self-directed and independent learning has confirmed the importance of promoting learner autonomy through teaching strategies (e.g., Oxford, 1990), learner-centered curriculum (Breen & Littlejohn, 2000; Nunan & Lamb, 2003) and computer-assisted learning (Blin, 2004; Murray, 1999) in language

education context. Previous research specifically related to self-access centers has mainly looked at resource availability and quality in those centers (Lewis & Reinders, 2006; Lin & Brown, 1994), effectiveness of technology tools in SAC (Castellao, Mynard & Rubesch, 2011; Reinders, 2007) or perceptions of SAC users (Cotterall & Reinders, 2001; Gardner & Miller, 1997; Kocatürk, 2011; Richards, 1999). Little research has examined the use of SAC in relation to student-related factors. This study may contribute to the existing literature by drawing attention to the role of readiness for autonomy and the attitudes of learners towards the SAC in relation to the SAC use.

At the local level, this study attempts to find out the effect of students' readiness for autonomy on their frequency of SAC use. It also investigates EFL learners' attitudes toward the SAC at Yildirim Beyazıt University in relation to their use of the center. The finding of the study may be of benefit to administrators and the SAC coordinator by providing some suggestions what to be improved related to current SAC and integrate a successful self-access system into the institution in order to increase the attendance of the students. For instructors, it may offer suggestions about how to foster learner autonomy. The study may also be a guideline for curriculum and material development units of language programs about updating the content of the curriculum by integrating teaching strategies to help students study independently.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter, an overview of literature has been provided. The statement of the problem, the significance of the study, and research questions have also been presented respectively. The second chapter presents a review of the literature on learner autonomy and self-access centers in the field of English language education in more detail. In the third chapter, the methodology of the study is described. In the

fourth chapter, the results of the study are presented with regard to research questions, and the last chapter discusses the conclusions are drawn from the data in the light of relevant literature.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Introduction**

This chapter is composed of two separate sections. The first section will cover learner autonomy in foreign language teaching. First, a brief historical background of learner autonomy accompanied by its definition and some misconceptions will be presented. The following sections will cover characteristics of autonomous learners and factors that have contributed to the emergence of learner autonomy and related studies in Turkey. The subsequent section will describe the six approaches to fostering autonomy. The second section will be about self-access centers (SACs). First, key terms and definitions will be presented. Next, the advantages and roles of a self-access center in language teaching will be reviewed. Then, types of human resources in self-access system will be covered and, lastly key elements in self-access center including materials, counseling system and technology will be discussed.

### **Learner Autonomy**

#### **Origins of Autonomy in Language Learning**

The concepts of autonomy and self-direction became the subject of intense analysis and debate among researchers and educators in the 20 to 25 years following the Second World War. Since that time these two concepts have become significant elements in educational research and practice of teaching and learning a foreign language. Gremmo and Riley (1995) pointed out a number of factors influential in the emergence and spread of the concept of autonomy and self-direction in history. Firstly, with the advent of various minority right movements such as feminist, ethnics, the concept of autonomy was used to express the political right to have

freedom of choice (Reinders, 2011). That development had a direct influence on the development of adult education in Europe. In addition, as a reaction against behaviorism, cognitivist and humanist psychology emphasized the learners' role and their active participation within the learning process. The notion of learner-centeredness arose from Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) "with its emphasis on communicative functions, individual needs, social norms—and autonomy" (Gremmo & Riley, 1995, p. 153). With the major shifts in language teaching, the development of fields of inquiry such as discourse analysis, pragmatics and sociolinguistics have led to more communicative approaches, which in turn puts learners at the center of the teaching and learning process (Littlewood, 1981 as cited in Benson, 2001). Moreover, developments in technology made a great contribution to the spread of autonomy because technological devices provide teachers with a rich collection of tools and techniques for the implementation of self-directed learning (Gremmo & Riley, 1995).

The most important manifestation of learner autonomy in the field of language education was the Council of Europe's Modern Languages Project, which was founded in 1971 (Trim, 1978 as cited in Gremmo & Riley, 1995). As an outcome of the that project, aiming initially to provide adults life-long learning, the *Centre de Recherches et d'Applications en Langues* (CRAPEL) was established at the University of Nancy, France. The idea behind that self-access center was to offer opportunities for learners to practice self-directed language learning, and the notion of autonomy was considered as a natural product of experimentation with self-directed learning. After Yves Chalon, who was the founder of the CRAPEL died, Henri Holec, an important researcher within the field of autonomy, became the leader of the center (Benson, 2001).

## **Learner Autonomy: Definitions and Misconceptions**

In the literature, there are a number of definitions of learner autonomy by different researchers and theorists. The most quoted definition of learner autonomy is the “ability to take charge of one’s own learning” (Holec, 1981, p. 3). He later elaborated on the concept by noting that autonomous learning requires one’s holding the responsibility for all the decisions regarding all aspects of learning: “determining the objectives, defining contents and progressions, selecting methods and techniques to be used, monitoring the procedure of acquisition properly speaking (rhythm, time, place, etc.), and evaluating what has been acquired” (Holec, 1981, p. 3). In another definition, Little (1991) stated:

... autonomy is a capacity— for detachment, critical reflection, decision-making, and independent action. It presupposes, but also entails, that the learner will develop a particular kind of psychological relation to the process and content of learning. The capacity for learner autonomy will be displayed both in the way the learner learns and in the way he or she transfers what has been learned to wider contexts. (p. 4)

In his definition, Little (1991) mentioned autonomy as a transferable concept which can be utilized in other parts of the learner’s life by drawing attention to psychological aspect and cognitive capacities of the learner. Benson (2001) simplified the definition of learner autonomy as the capacity to take control of one’s own learning and introduced three levels at which learning control may be exercised: learning management, cognitive processes and learning content. Those three levels of control are interdependent of each other. That is to say, cognitive processes involved in learning processes determine the degree to which learning management is used effectively. Autonomy also suggests the need for control over cognitive processes and over decisions regarding learning content (Benson, 2001).

Benson and Voller (1997) made a broader description of five different ways in which the term autonomy is used in language education: (a) for situations in which learners study entirely on their own; (b) for a set of skills which can be learned and applied in self-directed learning; (c) for an inborn capacity which is suppressed by institutional education; (d) for an exercise of learner's responsibility for their own learning; (e) for the right of learners to determine the direction of their own learning (p. 1-2). In order to clarify the meaning of autonomy, Dickinson (1991) and Little (1991) discussed several misconceptions related to learner autonomy. The first misconception is that learner autonomy is synonymous with self-instruction, individualized instruction, self-access learning, self-directed learning or distance learning. In fact, learner autonomy has a broader meaning than these terms which have an important role in the manifestation of autonomy. According to Dickinson (1991), self-instruction is a neutral term for situations in which learners work without direct control of a teacher. Self-direction, on the other hand, describes "a particular attitude to the learning task, where the learner accepts the responsibility for all the decisions concerned with his learning but does not necessarily undertake the implementation" (p. 11). Autonomy refers to a situation of not only making decisions on one's own learning but also implementing those decisions without direct teacher supervision. Another misconception is that learner autonomy is considered to be a new method in language teaching (Little, 1991). In fact, learner autonomy is neither a method nor an approach but rather the ultimate goal of learning process (Benson & Voller, 1997; Chan, 2001). The third misconception is that autonomy is a fixed state and that once acquired, can be applied to all areas of learning. In contrast, it has a developmental process that must be continuously nurtured (Benson, 2001; Dam, 1995; Little, 1991; Scharle & Szabo, 2000).

Looking at its various definitions, misconceptions and manifestations, one

can say that learner autonomy is regarded as an important concept to enable effective teaching and learning in the field of foreign language education. Different from the student roles in traditional learning methods, autonomous learners are capable of making decisions on their own learning without teacher supervision in order to achieve their learning goals. Having the ability to control over their learning, those students seek opportunities to work independently outside of the classroom setting. Therefore, it is necessary for teachers to understand the complex nature of the concept in order to create situations to foster learner autonomy.

### **Autonomous Learner Characteristics**

A number of researchers in the field of learner autonomy attempted to define characteristics of autonomous learners in the relevant literature. Most of the suggested autonomous learner characteristics are in line with Holec's (1981) elaborated definition. According to Dickinson (1993) these learners are aware of what is going on in the classroom and identify what is being taught. To illustrate, in order to understand the purpose of pedagogical preferences, they have enough knowledge in language learning process (Candy, 1991; Dickinson, 1993; Wenden, 1991). In other words, they can figure out the relationship to what is to be learnt, to how they will learn and the materials available (Breen & Mann, 1997). Also, autonomous learners are the ones who can set their own learning goals in collaboration with the teacher (Dickinson, 1993) and select the appropriate strategies from their rich repertoire (Breen & Mann, 1997; Dickinson, 1993; Wenden, 1991). In addition, they are able to implement and monitor the use of these strategies and have the capacity to self-assess the whole learning process (Candy, 1991; Dickinson, 1993). Self-assessment has a motivational effect on autonomous learning as it contributes to monitoring progress towards specific learning objectives and



providing learners with personalized feedback on the effectiveness of their learning strategies, methods and materials (Gardner, 2000).

In addition, Breen and Mann (1997) characterized autonomous learners as the ones who have a robust sense of self, a genuine desire to learn the language. Similarly, Candy (1991, as cited in Benson, 2001) stated that autonomous students demonstrate curiosity, openness and motivation in language learning. Littlewood (1996) also identified students' willingness which embraces confidence and motivation in learning as a key element in promoting learner autonomy. Lastly, autonomous learners possess the attitudes that make them use these skills and knowledge flexibly, appropriately and independently of a teacher (Breen & Mann, 1997; Candy, 1991; Wenden, 1991).

Considering all the characteristics given by different researchers, autonomous learners possess all desirable features required for effective language learning. That's why, teachers should be aware of all the factors affecting learners readiness for autonomy.

### **Factors affecting Readiness for Autonomy**

The relationship between learners' readiness and practice of autonomy has been the focus of a great number of studies in literature (Chan, Spratt, & Humphreys, 2002; Chan, 2011; Cotterall, 1995; Karabıyık, 2008; Koçak, 2003; Littlewood, 1999, 2000; Pierson, 1996). The first essential factor exert influence on the manifestation of learner autonomy is learners' decision making abilities in order to engage in autonomous language learning process. As Holec (1981) clarified, learners should be capable of making decisions such as setting the objectives, selecting the content and the techniques to be used. Dickinson (1991) and Nunan (1997) also put emphasis on not only learners' capacity to make decisions but also implementation of these decisions by going beyond the classroom setting. In order to investigate EFL

learners' readiness for autonomy, Chan, Spratt and Humphreys (2002) explored decision making abilities of a group of tertiary students at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. They concluded that the participants are not very competent about making decisions outside of the class.

The second factor essential affecting readiness for autonomy is students' beliefs about the roles and responsibilities of their own and teacher. Learners' beliefs about and the perspectives on roles in particular regarding who has responsibility for learning outcomes have a significant effect on development of autonomy (Lamb, 2008). That is the reason why, beliefs held by learners influence their learning behavior to a great extent. For instance, Gan (2009) and Chan, Spratt and Humphreys (2002) stated that heavy dependence on external guidance and lack of personal responsibility constitutes an obstacle for independent learning among local tertiary students. Also, in her study Cotterall (1995) indicated that the students who view teacher as facilitator or counselor are more ready for autonomous learning than those who view teacher having traditional authoritative role according to the finding related to students' perceptions about the role of teacher. In another study, Littlewood (2000) explored whether there are differences between Asian and European students in terms of their views related to learner autonomy. He asked 2307 Asian and 349 European students whether they see the teacher as an authority in their class, expect the teacher to pass on the knowledge rather than discovering themselves and evaluate their learning. The responses of two groups of students pinpointed that the stereotype of Asian students as obedient students does not reflect the roles that they would like to adopt in class. Rather than a passive receiver of the knowledge, they indicated that they want to be independent and active participants in the learning process.

The additional factor that is influential in the development of learner

autonomy is motivation either in extrinsic or intrinsic form. In fact, the relationship between motivation and autonomy is an obvious interface. Among scholars, there is still an argument whether motivation manifests autonomy or autonomy enhances motivation to learn. However, a number of cognitive motivational studies suggest that enhanced motivation is conditional on learners' taking responsibility for their own learning, being able to control their own learning (e.g., Dickinson, 1995). That is, voluntariness is regarded as a pre-requisite for independent language learning (Lee, 1998) as motivation determines the degree of effort learners put into foreign language learning, which affects learners' success.

In their study, Chan, Spratt and Humphreys (2002) concluded that higher motivation led to higher frequency of engagement in the autonomous practices outside the classroom. Littlewood (1996), who suggested that ability and willingness are two essential components of autonomy in foreign language learning, underlined the important role of motivation in autonomous actions. Another important study which yielded important results regarding autonomy and motivation came from Kormos and Csizer (2014) who concentrated on the influence of motivational factors and self-regulatory strategies on autonomous learning behavior. It was conducted with 638 Hungarian language learners in three settings, secondary schools, universities and private language schools. With regard to the results of the study, they concluded that motivational factors exert their influence on the manifestation of autonomous learning behavior.

Another essential factor for manifestation of autonomy is the use of metacognitive learning strategies. Metacognitive strategies, which are also called self-management strategies or regulatory skills in the literature, refer to behaviors such as planning for learning, monitoring the learning task, and evaluating how well one has learned (Chamot, 2009; O'Malley & Chamot, 2002; Wenden, 1991). The

planning stage involves setting goals, planning the task and content; monitoring refers to checking progress or production; the evaluation stage refers to assessing how well a task is accomplished (Chamot, 2009). According to Oxford (1990), metacognitive strategies refer to actions which enable learners to coordinate their own learning process. She emphasized that learners should seek and take the advantage of learning opportunities outside of the classroom, which is essential for language learners to build up autonomy. In other words, the use of effective metacognitive strategies enables students to develop autonomous attitude, which help them to take the control of their own learning (Victori & Lockhart, 1995). In their study, Nguyen and Gu (2013) conducted a study with an experimental group and two control groups of students at a Vietnamese university. The students in the experimental group were provided an eight-week metacognitive strategy-based training program as a part of writing course. The results of the study showed that students in the experimental group improved their ability to plan, monitor and evaluate a writing task more than students in the two control groups. In other words, explicit strategy training helped learners develop autonomy in both learning and their writing ability.

The relevant literature emphasized readiness for learner autonomy in language learning in relation to four factors: learners' decision making abilities, beliefs about the roles of their own and teachers, motivation and metacognitive strategy use.

### **Studies conducted on Readiness for Autonomy in Turkey**

As English has been widely taught throughout the university system of Turkey, readiness for autonomy has been a topic that has attracted a great deal of attention among researchers and practitioners. While these studies reinforced much

of the research done elsewhere, it also placed readiness for autonomy within the context of Turkish education.

In Turkey, Koçak (2003) conducted a study with 186 students attending English Language Preparatory School at Başkent University in order to investigate whether students were ready for autonomous language learning. The questionnaire administered in the study was composed of four parts: learners' motivation level, use of metacognitive strategies in learning English, responsibility perception of their own and their teachers' in learning English and practice of English in the outside class activities. The results of the study indicated that the participants had a certain amount of motivation and they were using certain metacognitive strategies. However, they considered the teacher more responsible than themselves for their learning process, which may imply their reluctance to spend time for the activities outside of the classroom to improve their English.

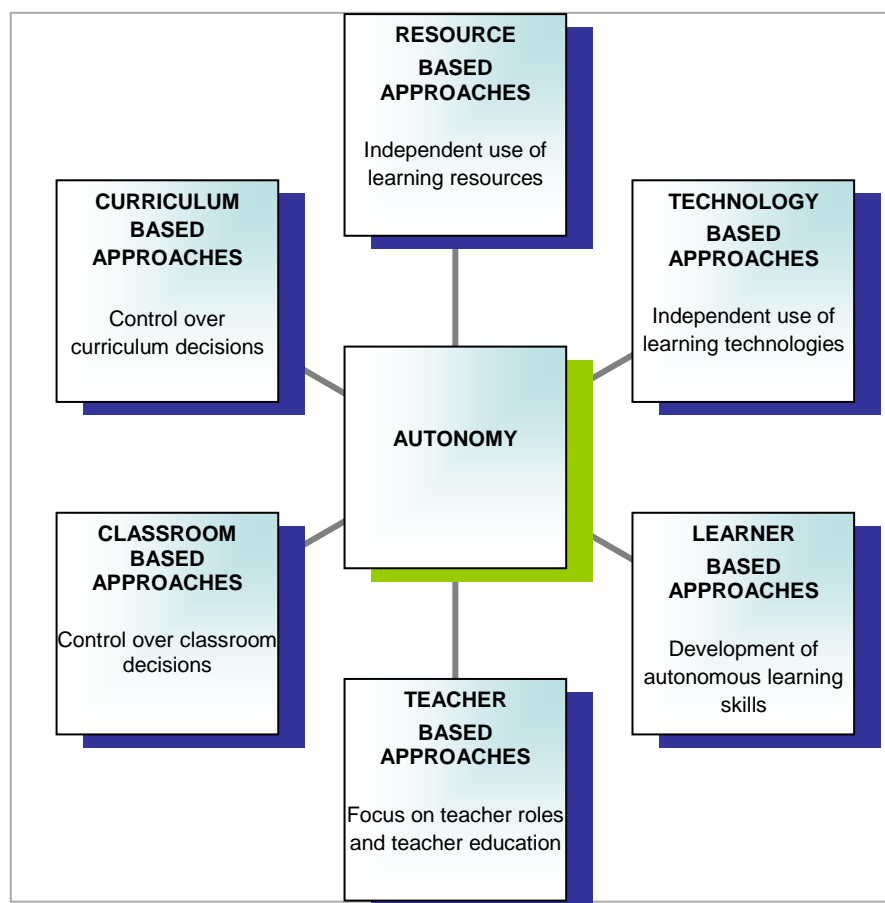
Yıldırım (2005) conducted another study with 179 Turkish English Language Teaching (ELT) department students to explore their perceptions and behaviors in relation to learner autonomy both as learners of English and as future teachers of English. The aim of the study was to answer the question whether the education they received on how to teach English make any difference in their perceptions. The data was collected both qualitatively and quantitatively through questionnaires and interviews. The results of the study revealed that they are ready to take responsibility of learning as learners and have positive attitude about learner autonomy as future teachers. Moreover, it was found that the first and fourth year participants of the study had very similar perceptions and behavior related to learner autonomy as learners and future teachers.

In her study, Karabıyık (2008) examined university level EFL learners' readiness for learner autonomy and its relationship with learners' culture of learning

in order to find out whether learners' approaches to learner autonomy were related to their cultural background. The data was collected through questionnaire from 408 preparatory schools students at seven universities in Turkey. The questionnaire was composed of five parts: students' perception of their own and teachers' responsibilities, perceptions of their decision making abilities in learning English, level of motivation for learning English, autonomous learning activities both inside and outside the classroom and metacognitive strategy use. The findings suggested that students' previous learning experiences had an effect on their subsequent perceptions and behaviors which require learner autonomy.

### **Fostering Learner Autonomy**

After discussing the elements that underpins readiness for learner autonomy, namely, motivation, learner beliefs and metacognitive strategies and related studies, this section will examine ways of enhancing autonomous behaviors. With respect to all the benefits of learner autonomy in foreign language education, Benson (2001) emphasized the necessity to promote autonomy through certain practices that allow learners to improve language learning by taking control over their learning. He discussed those practices under the heading of *Approaches to Development of Learner Autonomy* and classified them under six broad headings which are provided in Figure1.



*Figure 1.* Autonomy in language learning and related areas of practice (Benson, 2001, p. 112)

As shown in Figure 1, Benson's categories are helpful in identifying the multifaceted nature of autonomy. His framework will be used to discuss the literature on fostering learner autonomy.

**Learner-based approaches.** Learner-based approaches highlight the production of behavioral and psychological changes that enable learners to take control over their own learning (Benson, 2001). Learner-based approaches place emphasis on learner training and strategy training in order to equip learners with specific skills which help them take up learning opportunities. As stated by Chamot & O'Malley (1994) the goal of instructing L2 learners in the use of strategies is "to develop self-regulated learners who can approach new learning tasks with confidence and select the most appropriate strategies for completing the task" (p. 387-388). Explicit strategy training, which refers to teaching how and when to apply which

learning strategy, also enhances learners' efforts to meet language program goals, find their own pathways to success and foster self-direction and autonomy (Cohen, 1998).

**Teacher-based approaches.** In general, teacher-based approaches focus on teachers' role in the implementation of the practices designed to promote autonomy (Benson, 2001). Voller (1997) described the roles of teachers in self-directed and autonomous language learning as a facilitator, counselor and resource. To illustrate, a teacher as a facilitator should provide psycho-social and technical support, as a counselor offer one-to-one guidance and as a resource transfer expertise and knowledge. In order to help learners to exercise autonomy, teachers' adoption of these roles is important (Voller, 1997) as it is difficult for a teacher to transfer responsibility to the students who view teacher as an authoritative figure in the learning process (Cotterall, 1995).

Another necessary condition for the promotion of learner autonomy is teacher autonomy. Teacher autonomy is defined as "the teacher's ability and willingness to help learners take responsibility for their own learning" (Thavenius, 1999, p.160). According to McGrath (2000), the notion of teacher autonomy is based on the idea of freedom and capacity to self-direct actions. In other words, teachers should be capable of exploiting their professional skills autonomously with enough knowledge on self-directed learning. Little (1995) drew attention to the responsibility, control and freedom of teacher autonomy in parallel with learner autonomy:

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 possible degree of affective and cognitive control of the teaching process, and exploiting the freedom that this confers. (p. 179)



In the literature there has been an emphasis on teacher education or training in order to equip teachers with knowledge of issues (Benson, 2001; Lamb, 2008; Little, 1995). Benson (2010b) reported on a case study with Hong Kong secondary school teachers in order to explore their experiences of constraints on teacher autonomy in English language teaching. The results showed that teacher autonomy was limited by factors related to education systems such as the systems of supervision and guidelines defining the structure and content of a course. Because of these constraints, teachers tend to be unable to experiment with ideas from teacher education programs; therefore, the impact of teacher education courses is limited in many state school systems. Little (1995) indicated that teachers should be trained about the skills to enhance learner autonomy and given the opportunity to implement these skills in their training.

**Classroom-based approaches.** According to Benson (2001) classroom-based approaches emphasize learners' involvement in decision-making processes by taking control over planning and evaluation of classroom learning. He added that learners' having part in planning classroom activities lead to desirable behaviors and attitudes in learning such as increase in motivation. Littlejohn (1983) conducted a study in which students were given a degree of control over the content of learning. He concluded that students felt more motivated and displayed more enthusiasm in a student-directed classroom. Additionally, peer-support or peer-teaching is another factor for the development of autonomy (Benson, 2001). Dam (1995) drew attention to the social aspect of autonomy by stating, it entails "a capacity and willingness to act independently and in cooperation with others, as a socially responsible person" (p. 1). This highlights the importance of teachers enhancing interaction, negotiation, collaboration as critical factors in promoting learner autonomy (Lee, 1998). Also, through class activities, teachers should create situations for learners to assess their

own learning. As an important device for self-monitoring, self-assessment both provides learners with immediate feedback and helps them reflect on their learning strategies (Gardner, 2000), which are essential components of autonomous learning.

**Curriculum-based approaches.** Curriculum-based approaches may be regarded as the next step to take after classroom-based approaches because they imply the extension of learners' control from activities in classroom settings to the curriculum as a whole. To illustrate, curriculum-approaches refer to learner's control over the major decisions concerning the content and procedures of learning in collaboration with their teachers (Benson, 2001). This involvement has found its place in the literature as process syllabus, learner-centered curriculum and negotiated curriculum. A process syllabus, which is different from conventional and content syllabuses, create opportunities for learners to be actively involved in decision making processes related to content, procedures, choice of activities and ongoing evaluation (Simmons & Wheeler, 1995 as cited in Benson, 2001). Similarly, Nunan and Lamb (2003) emphasized the role of learners in planning, implementation and assessment of learner-centered curriculum. That is to say, they stated that learners are involved in setting, monitoring and modifying their learning goals with the help of the teacher in the planning stage. In the next stage, they develop skills through the use and reflection on language inside and outside the classroom, and lastly assess and monitor the progress and modify it accordingly. Talking about the advantages of negotiated curriculum, Breen and Littlejohn (2000) stated students' collaboration with the teachers in laying out course content, activities, purposes and evaluation promote them to understand their responsibilities and motivate them to engage in activities to achieve their learning goals. To conclude, learners play this kind of active role in learner-centered curriculum as they take control of their own learning by making decisions.

**Technology-based approaches.** Benson (2001) emphasized the development of autonomy through learning technologies used to access resources. Talking about these approaches, Murray (1999) stated that “advancements in technology enable educators to foster learner autonomy by encouraging agency and providing learners with the tools they need in order to make decisions and take action in harmony with their personal identity” (p. 306). In other words, with a variety of technological learning tools, learners can become active participants in their quest of knowledge and make decisions about their needs and find related information to meet their need, which implies taking control over learning. The development of new technologies gave rise to computer-assisted language learning (CALL), exposing learners to a variety of target language input and allowing them to use this input as output in a sociable environment. Having an important role in English language teaching, CALL applications offer a variety of choices of instructional, practice or testing modes which gives a degree of control (Benson, 2001).

**Resource-based approaches.** In resource-based learning, the emphasis is placed on learner’s independent interaction of materials for the development of learner autonomy as it helps learners to take control over learning plans, the choice of materials and the evaluation of learning (Benson, 2001). In literature, the role of self-access centers as a means of fostering learner autonomy has been of interest over the years.

### **Measuring Learner Autonomy**

In the literature, there has been a great deal of emphasis on the necessity for students to become autonomous learners in language education context (e.g., Kumaravadivelu, 2006; Nunan, 1997). Autonomy is a desirable goal in education because of its various advantages; however, it has been found to be difficult to measure for a variety of reasons. According to Benson (2010a), there are certain

problems with the measurement of autonomy based on observable behaviors. To illustrate, multidimensionality of autonomy as well as autonomy as a capacity and a developmental process make the assessment of autonomous behaviors difficult. These issues have posed challenges for accurately measuring autonomy, especially by observing learners for a short space of time.

However, the measurement of autonomy is necessary as it raises both learners' and teachers' awareness of what constructs the concept and can assist teachers in arranging their lessons in order to foster it (Lamb, 2010). In the field of language learning, both qualitative (e.g., Dam, 2000) and quantitative (e.g., Cotterall, 1995) research method designs have been used to investigate learners' level of autonomy. In the literature, one of the suggested ways to measure autonomy through qualitative research is by analyzing learner logbooks or diaries. In his study, Dam (2000) evaluated the autonomy of the learners in their learning process through semi-guided journals. Similarly, Blin (2005) collected data through diaries to assess learners' level of autonomy in terms of independence and interdependence.

There have also been attempts to measure autonomy quantitatively through questionnaires, which are composed of items related to the factors which are considered to construct the learner autonomy. For instance, Cotterall (1995) conducted a quantitative study with adult ESL learners who were enrolled in an intensive English for Academic Purposes course to assess their beliefs on readiness for autonomy. The questionnaire was composed of six different parts: role of teacher, role of feedback, learner independence, learner confidence, experience in language learning and approach to studying. Another quantitative study was conducted by Chan, Spratt and Humphreys (2002) to assess how the students at the tertiary level are ready for autonomous activities. The questionnaire included items related to students' views of their own and their teachers' responsibilities, students' decision-

making abilities, motivation level, and actual autonomous learning activities that they carried out inside and outside the classroom.

Within the literature regarding learner autonomy in the field of foreign language education, the research suggested there is a direct relationship between autonomy and metacognitive awareness and strategy use (e.g., Oxford, 1990; Wenden, 1991), certain kinds of learner beliefs about their and the teacher's roles (e.g., Cotterall, 1995) and motivation (e.g., Littlewood, 1996; Ushioda, 2011) and decision-making skills (Chan, Spratt & Humphreys, 2002). That multidimensional nature of autonomy should be taken into consideration by the researcher either in the qualitative or quantitative research.

### **Self-access Centers**

#### **Key Terms and Definitions**

In the literature, there has been a number of attempts to define the term *self-access* by different researchers and theorists. The mostly recognized definition of the term is put forward by Sheerin (1991) as “a way of describing materials that are designed and organized in such a way that students can select and work on tasks on their own” (p. 143). In a similar way, Dickinson (1991) defined *self-access* as organization of the learning materials to make them directly available to learners. As an approach, *self-access language learning* (SALL) refers to an individualized learning in which each learner interacts with controlled and/or uncontrolled learning environments in a unique way (Gardner & Miller, 1999).

With the advent of communicative language teaching, there has been a shift focus from teacher to learner in learning process. As an approach, learner-centeredness assumes that students cannot learn everything that they need in the classroom setting (Nunan, 1988 as cited in Jones, 1995). Emerging as a complement to traditional classroom learning, SALL contributes to learning where classroom

teaching is found to be unnecessary because of learners' limited or specific learning needs or when teaching is thought to be difficult or impossible due to diversity of student groups in large numbers (Reinders, 2007). At the core of the idea of SALL is the *self-access center*, which offers opportunities for every learner to study outside the classroom independently.

A self-access center (SAC) is also referred to as a self-access learning center, individual or independent learning center. By definition, a self-access center is an environment where learning materials are provided for learners to work on at their own pace and evaluate their own work without direct teacher supervision (Littlejohn, 1985). Over the past few years, they have been established in many schools and universities all over the world in order to provide SALL in an organized and systematic way (Gardner & Miller, 1999).

### **Self-access Centers: Advantages**

The fundamental function of self-access centers is to help learners study independently with many resources in order to develop English skills. The biggest advantage is that it appeals to every single learner with different learning styles and learning goals. Jones (1995) drew attention to this function of the SAC with the following statement.

The self-access centre, after all, is dedicated to recognizing the differences and fulfilling the needs of learners as individuals, who for their part, and with encouragement from teachers, are expected to take steps towards assuming active responsibility for their own language study. (p. 228-229)

Sheerin (1989) also emphasized the fact that every learner is different in terms of personality, study habits, motivation and psychological differences which should be taken into consideration by the educators. However, classroom-based courses following linear syllabuses are often unable to appeal to learners' interest and meet

individual learners' needs. Self-access facilities, on the other hand, recognize those differences and cater to the needs of learners as individuals offering ways to escape from binding syllabus (Barnett & Jordan, 1994). Jones (1995) also noted that these centers function as a practical means in the development of learner autonomy. In a self-access center, the materials are arranged in such a way that students can access them easily and quickly without the control of teacher (Littlejohn, 1985), which implies learner independence from teacher dependence.

Also, the provision of learner training through the counseling system of the center help learners to master learning strategies by encouraging them towards individualized learning (Benson, 2001; Gardner & Miller, 1999; Sheerin, 1997). Chaix and O'Neil (1978) described individualized learning/instruction as a learning process in which goals, content, methodology and pacing is adapted according to a particular learner's characteristics (as cited in Nunan & Lamb, 2003). Another advantage is that these centers can offer a wider and more flexible range of opportunities for language use compared to traditional classrooms (Aston, 1993). Gardner and Miller (1999) noted that in the late 90's, workshops, English clubs, television viewing and native-speaker contacts were the widely acknowledged activities in a self-access center.

The studies conducted in the field supported what is suggested in the relevant literature. Reinders (2000) conducted a study with an intention to explore learners' perception of self-access learning in relation to learner autonomy during a thirteen-week English Proficiency Program at Victoria University. The results of the study revealed that learners positively valued self-access language learning with regard to linguistic development and independent learning skills. The findings of the Richards' (1999) study conducted with five participants in order to find out the perceptions of learning gains and usefulness of SALL revealed similar results. The data on

reflection sheets together with the interviews indicated that five subjects appreciated the contribution of the SAC as a means to learn English and develop independent learning.

Also, in their study, Klassen et al. (1998) investigated the students' views on the effectiveness of the self-access program at tertiary level as well as the language gains of the students learning through self-access language learning mode. The data gathered from 718 students studying at the center showed that they found self-access language learning useful, motivating and helpful in increasing their confidence in learning English. The pre and post test results also showed that the students studied in the self-access mode made more improvement compared to the ones in the class mode.

Gardner and Miller (1997) conducted another study to find out the perceptions of SAC managers, tutors and SAC users in 5 tertiary institutions in Hong Kong. It was aimed to find out whether those centers are useful and effective to the learners in terms of practical aspects, materials, technology, and SAC staff. They sampled 58 tutors and 541 learners who had experience in SALL. A majority of the students rated the SALL a good way to learn and a good means to improve English skills. That kind of feedback from the users on certain aspects of the center may help to draw the general picture and gives clues about necessary changes that should be made.

### **The Roles of Self-access Centers**

In their 1997 article, Kell and Newton discussed the roles of self-access system that needed to be considered in designing and planning of a self-access center. They suggested potential roles of the self-access centers which are useful for schools and organizations to be able to cope with divergent needs and attitudes. Primarily, with the assumption that learners are used to teacher-directed learning and



are not confident working with their own initiatives, the center functions as a stepping stone to help users work independently. For those who are not familiar with various teaching materials, it functions as a sample to allow students access to range of teaching materials. Also, it has a motivator/coaxer role to help learners who do not trust a learning center without a teacher and help them realize they can make progress on their own. Assuming that the syllabus students have to follow is limited, it also functions as a release/escape/boost in order to help students get extra practice different from usual syllabi. For the lost learners, it operates as a map. As a last function, the self-access center is a counselor to make students familiar with the materials for their proficiency level and needs as well as learning strategies (Kell & Newton, 1997).

Morrison (2008) conducted a study to explore the roles of a self-access center in the tertiary language learning process in Hong Kong. He collected data through interviews from 16 participants including SAC staff members and users. According to the results of the study, he identified four main roles of the center: combining language learning and independent learning, helping the learner to develop both linguistic proficiency and independent learning skills, offering the necessary resources and providing learner support.

### **Self-access Organizations: Types and Key Human Resources**

There has been enormous variety of self-access organizations which are shaped by the context in which it exists. To illustrate, each center is uniquely designed to meet the needs of its users and the local community. Self-access models can be distinguished from each other in terms of their purposes, functions, the materials and services provided and the way they are presented. According to Adult Migration Program (AMEP 1990), six models of independent learning center models were described: study center, withdrawal center, programmed learning center, drop-

in center, self-directed learning center and learning resource center (Gardner & Miller, 1999).

In their article, Miller and Rogerson-Revell (1993) proposed another framework about types of self-access models in order to provide information to organizations with the intention to establish such center. They classified self-access centers into four different categories: menu-driven, supermarket, controlled access and open access. Menu-driven is a self-access model providing a catalogue which requires pre-training for learners to access materials either on hard copy or electronically. On the other hand, supermarket type emphasizes learners' browsing and choosing what to study from wide range of materials offered by the center. Controlled-access center where the focus is on homework activities aim to motivate and encourage students to study English outside the class. As an integral part of the library, open-access centers with no specialist teacher help learners with their language learning.

Each self-access organization requires specific types of experts in their fields described as *key human resources*: language specialist, computer consultant, librarian, materials development people, administration/clerical assistant, technician/AV specialist (Miller & Rogerson-Revell, 1993). In her article, Salvia (2000) underlined the function of the SAC coordinator who ensures the interaction and co-operation among the different parts, namely pedagogues (counselors and teachers), SAC staff (librarians and technicians) and the administrators. She stated that the role of the SAC coordinator is vital in order to check and assess whether the self-access system is working properly, which determines the effectiveness of the center.

## **Key Elements in Self-access Centers**

Holec (1985) listed three requirements for self-access centers: an infrastructure of appropriate materials and resources, teachers trained in providing support, and effective means of informing potential users about the system (as cited in Ashton, 1993). Sturtridge (1997) also discussed the factors affecting the success of a self-access center: the management of innovation, the provision of a suitable location, the training and development of the staff and students and the use of the cultural strengths of learners and suitable materials.

**Materials.** One factor affecting either acceptance or rejection of a self-access center is the quality and the quantity of the materials offered by the center. Considering quantity, Lin and Brown (1994) stated that the provision of a considerable number of materials is important in order to cater to a variety of different types of learners' needs. For instance, there should be a 'balanced diet', which refers to more or less the same quantity of SAC materials for each level and each skill in English (Sheerin, 1989, p. 24). In addition, she indicated that those materials should have clearly stated aims, clarity of rubric, attractive presentation, worthwhile activities, choice of presentation and feedback. Dickinson (1991) proposed a more detailed list about good self-access material features. Specifically, they should include:

- a clear statement of objectives
- meaningful language input
- exercise materials and activities
- flexibility of materials
- learning instructions
- language learning advice
- feedback and tests
- advice about record keeping
- reference materials

- indexing
- motivational factors
- advice about progression (p. 80)

In their study, Reinders and Lewis (2006) developed an evaluative checklist for self-access materials. With the intention to set criteria for effective SAC materials, in the study conducted by Sheerin (1989) and Lin and Brown (1994) the students were asked to rank the characteristics of good SAC materials that they took into consideration while searching for the materials which help them with English. They seemed to agree that materials should have several characteristics, including clear instructions and feedback except for the item 'look nice' related to attractive presentation.

Self-access materials come from two main sources: published materials and in-house materials which are produced by teachers and material developers (Dickinson, 1991; Gardner & Miller, 1999; Littlejohn, 1997; Sheerin, 1989). There is a need for in-house self-access materials due to the fact that commercially- published materials do not generally provide enough guidance and clarity required for self-directed learning and contain themes that are culturally familiar to learners (Lin & Brown, 1994). Gardner and Miller (1999) further explained that specially produced materials are effective educational resources as they address to variety of learners with specific learning goals and different learning styles in spite of some concerns related to their quality (e.g., accuracy). Besides these two resources, Little (1997) emphasized the provision of authentic materials in either written or spoken form, which are directly related to the development of learner autonomy. According to him, self-access centers should offer a wide range of authentic texts such as magazines, brochures as these materials are believed to help learners gain confidence in the target language and encourage the development of techniques for language

learning. The other important resource for producing self-access materials is SAC learners. Gardner and Miller (1999) argued that the active involvement of the students in the development of SAC materials lead to empowerment in learner autonomy as they feel commitment by taking the responsibility of their own learning. In a related study, Malcolm (2004) reported that as a part of a self-directed learning program at the Arabian Gulf University in Bahrain, students were made to contribute to the SAC in the development of language learning worksheets. Initially, the aim was to increase their investment in making that place serving their particular language needs through their efforts. As a result of the students' involvement in that process, the student-created materials were valued by most students (72%), who found the project helpful in improving their English.

Another point which emerges in the research is the need for easy accessibility of the SAC materials. As Littlejohn (1985) stated, the materials in SAC should be placed and arranged in such a way that students can access them easily and quickly without any help. For that reason, establishing a cataloguing system for SAC users to obtain the materials easily and match the individual needs to the metalinguistic categories was found to be an effective way to increase self-directed learning (Aston, 1993). The creation of a database system with indexes related to many fields allow students to search for materials according to a category such as level, topic etc. and see what materials are available (Barnett & Jordan, 1991). A study conducted at the self-access center at Brigham Young University suggested that the students use SAC resources more autonomously as a result of having a web-based database (McMurry, Tanner, & Anderson, 2009). These studies suggest the importance for every self-access center to be careful about the creation, collection and organization of materials.

**Counseling system/ training.** As a means to promote learner autonomy, self-access centers need to train learners, which is typically provided through a counselling system or by teachers in traditional classrooms (Aston, 1993). In the literature, there have been a number of terms used to refer to that SAC member who fills that role, such as advisor, helper and consultant. Those terms have been used to describe the teachers' role in self-directed language environment or programs involving self-access systems (Voller, 1997). According to Gardner and Miller (1999), teachers have to make a considerable shift in their roles, attitudes and approach to student-teacher relationship to take up the role of a counselor, which requires training and guidance. To illustrate, counselors need to be equipped with macro and micro strategies. Macro strategies involve initiating, goal-setting, guiding, modelling, supporting, giving feedback, evaluating and linking (p. 183).

Dickinson (1991) emphasized that the first step in training should be the identification and analysis of learners' needs in order to guide them towards self-instruction. Need analysis process involves the counselor's elicitation of information from the learners in order to diagnose the learners' problems and respond to their language needs. Reinders, Hacker and Lewis (2004) conducted a study in order to present a need analysis process in three initial advisory sessions with an adult student in a self-access center at a university. In sessions involving analysis of the needs, narrowing down focus and planning some action respectively, the advisor gave ample time for the student to talk about his language learning difficulties and the language that the adviser used was non-directive and suggestive.

In order to teach learners how to study independently, self-access centers should provide an ongoing counselling system. In other words, a single training on the first arrival to SAC is not sufficient to track learners' development and maintain efficient counseling (Sturtridge, 1997). In her article, Victori (2007) discussed an

effective counselling program provided to learners for one or more semesters to enhance self-directed learning. The program involved both one-to-one sessions with the counselor and group sessions of the students to talk on their concerns and find solutions to each other problems. The counseling system was appreciated by the students and found to be helpful in achieving their learning goals for most of the students.

**Innovation and technology.** With the introduction of computer-assisted language learning (CALL) in language learning, learners have started to use technology-based language learning tools in a wide range of settings in order to develop English skills. The research on the relationship of CALL and autonomy indicated that CALL has potential to contribute to the development of many aspects of learner autonomy (e.g., Blin, 2004). Today, in most of the self-access centers, technology plays an important role in supporting learners by providing access to language sources in a variety of forms. A recent study which investigated the technology-based language learning tools of SAC users at a university in Japan showed that video players (DVDs), MPRs (Multi-purpose rooms), Social networking (Facebook, Twitter, MySpace) and Wikis were the favorite tools respectively (Castellano, Mynard and Rubesch, 2011). The results also indicated that SAC users were more likely to focus on receptive language skills (listening and reading) rather than productive skills (speaking and writing).

Milton (1997) also underlined the problem of self-access methodologies that help learners acquire productive skills. He proposed three technologies used to develop writing skills in a self-access center: networking for collaborative writing, concordancing and wordprocessing. Additionally, Reinders (2007) reported on an electronic learning environment which provided learners access to materials with a catalogue easily, This system electronically provides learners with recommended

steps in their learning as well as strategies, enabling them to study independently by monitoring their work with the help of prompts. It was reported that this online monitoring system supported students' self-access language learning.

### **Studies on Self-access Center in Turkey**

There have been a small number of studies conducted specifically on SACs in Turkey although they have been incorporated into a lot of institutions in tertiary education. All the studies in that field suggested that SACs are used by limited number of students.

Koyalan (2009) conducted a study at Izmir University of Economics (IUE) in order to investigate the effectiveness of a SAC in terms of learners' attitudes and practices in relation to learner autonomy. The results of the study showed that the center was used by only one third of the preparatory students. The students who used the SAC, however, seemed to value it, and there was some evidence that it helped these learners change their learning approaches. She also emphasized that the students needed more counseling about the materials and learning strategies due to the fact that proactive autonomy is not encouraged in Turkish society.

Similarly, Kocatürk's (2011) study investigated students' understanding of SALL and their perceptions about SAC at Middle East Technical University Northern Cyprus Campus. The study revealed that 40% of the students, who were mostly low proficiency level students used the center frequently. The results showed that although the users viewed the center as quite helpful, they were not really aware of the functions of the SAC as a means to promote autonomous language learning activities. The working hours of SAC, the diversity of club events and the physical setting of the SAC were important elements affecting their attendance to the center.

Another research study by Uzun (2013) investigated SAC users' learning styles and their general tendency in using the center at Yıldırım Beyazıt University.



The findings of the study showed that only one fifth of students used that center on a regular basis. And surprisingly, according to Ehrman and Leaver's (2002) framework for learning styles, those users were found to be synoptic learners, which implies that these learners might not necessarily have conscious control over their own learning processes. Also, the most common purpose for using the center was found to be *to do homework*, which suggests the necessity of learner training and counselling.

All these studies conducted in Turkey indicated that SACs are not used effectively by many learners, which implies the necessity to study on the reasons behind learners' reluctance to use the center.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter provides an overview regarding learner autonomy in language learning education and a self-access center as a means to develop learner autonomy in two separate sections. The next chapter will provide information about the methodology of the study including the setting and participants, the research design, materials and instruments, and finally procedures and data analysis.

## **CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY**

### **Introduction**

This study aimed to reveal the attitudes of EFL learners toward the self-access center (SAC). It also explored the extent to which EFL learners were ready to be involved in autonomous language learning. In addition, this study examined the effect of university level EFL learners' readiness for autonomy and their attitudes towards the SAC on their frequency of SAC use. In this respect, the study addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the EFL learners' attitudes toward the self-access center in their institution?
2. How do the regular SAC users' attitudes toward the SAC differ from infrequent SAC users?
3. To what extent are the university level EFL learners ready for autonomous language learning?
4. In what ways does student readiness for autonomy vary among students who attend the SAC with different frequencies?

This chapter is comprised of five main sections: the setting and the participants, the research design, instruments, data collection and data analysis procedure. In the first section, the setting and participants of the study are described in detail. In the second section, the research design of this study is provided. In the third section, the instruments and materials used in the study are presented. In the fourth section, the chronologically-based description of the data collection procedure is explained step by step. In the last section, the procedure for data analysis is described.

## Setting

This study was conducted at the School of Foreign Languages of Yıldırım Beyazıt University which is located in Ankara, Turkey. This English-medium state university provides one-year compulsory English preparatory program for both undergraduate and graduate students at the School of Foreign Languages. As a primary goal, the school aims to ensure that the learners are able to use English effectively in their academic and professional life. To be able achieve that goal, in addition to in-course educational activities, the school provides support via a self-access center. The center is located on the third floor of the School of Foreign Languages. The working hours for the center are from 9.30-16.30 on weekdays. The purpose of the SAC is to help learners not only improve English skills such as reading, writing, listening and speaking, but also improve study habits and increase independent study without any direct teacher supervision.

According to the framework of types of self-access systems<sup>1</sup> by Miller and Rogerson-Revell's (1993), the center at Yıldırım Beyazıt University can be categorized as a *supermarket* in which students can easily find materials already categorized in levels and skills.

The SAC is composed of three main sections: a library, computer labs and study desks (see Appendix E for the photos of the SAC). The library provides a variety of resources for its users in a convenient and rapid way. Course books for the four skills and supplementary materials such as grammar and vocabulary books are offered to address the needs of every learner of all levels. CD-ROMs of the books are uploaded to the computers and made available for students to practice. There are also books aimed at strategy development and practice for international exams, such as Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), International English Language

---

<sup>1</sup> Detailed info is provided in Chapter 2, p. 33

Testing System (IELTS), Key English Test (KET), Preliminary English Test (PET), First Certificate in English (FCE) and Cambridge English: Advanced (CAE). In addition, graded readers (story-books at different levels) are also offered to improve the reading skills of students from of all levels. Monolingual dictionaries and reference books can also be found in the library section. Lastly, there are authentic materials like magazines and newspapers and in-house worksheets available for student use at the reading desk. The center publishes a bimonthly 4-page newsletter, *ILC (Independent Learning Center) Times*. This periodical informs students about the activities taking place in the center and gives suggestions to guide them on independent learning and study skills.

The center has an internet-based infrastructure with two computer-assisted language laboratories consisting of forty computers. Students have the opportunity to use these computers with a variety of resources through different modules. They can also do online assignments which are required in the English courses in the preparatory school program. Descriptions of websites are available on the computers through which learners can access and take advantage of many online resources. Additionally, the self-access center has self-study desks allocated for independent study. Students can either work with their own materials or self-access resources, and they can study on their own or in groups.

At the very beginning of the semester, all the classes from different levels at the School of Foreign Languages take a tour of the self-access center under the guidance of their teachers. They are all informed about the physical layout of the center, the resources and the services offered by the center. They are also informed about other services provided, including regular club activities such as a movie club and speaking club as well as workshops for the students to improve English skills. It

is also made clear that announcements for center events are made through the bulletin boards and Facebook and Twitter page of the center.

At Yıldırım Beyazıt University, the attendance in the self-access center for self-study or clubs is not any course requirement but is instead voluntary; therefore, the students do not get a credit for using the center. While the SAC staff can answer individual student questions, the center does not offer one-to-one counseling in which the students are guided and trained for the strategies to study independently by a professional counselor.

The SAC staff consists of a coordinator, a SAC team (two to four members), four part-time students and the technicians. The main responsibility of the SAC coordinator is to make sure that everything in the center runs smoothly by ensuring the coordination among administration, teachers, SAC users and the technicians. Moreover, he has several duties such as contacting publishers, managing the SAC staff, preparing orientation programs, selecting materials, cataloguing the resources, guiding the students if necessary, and setting up systems for the students. The SAC team is composed of English instructors who are opt to work in the center as a part of their duties. They work in the SAC 10 hours a week arranging the student clubs and developing SAC materials. The four part-time students are responsible for helping students to access appropriate materials, providing the SAC users with necessary equipment such as headphones, and ensuring the return of materials. Lastly, the technicians are in charge of maintenance of the technological equipment available in the center.

### **Participants**

Two-hundred fifty students took part in the study. As shown in Table 1, the students ranged in age from 18-26. One hundred and forty-nine students were male and one hundred one students were female. The participants of the study were from

different proficiency levels. In total, eight were elementary level students, one hundred and twenty-four were pre-intermediate level, ninety-seven were intermediate level and twenty-three were studying at the upper-intermediate level. Since the data collection process was administered during the third track in the second semester, the number of elementary students was low in number. Again, there were not many upper-intermediate students among the participants since most of those students had already passed the proficiency test held during the semester break in February, 2015, and started studying at their departments.

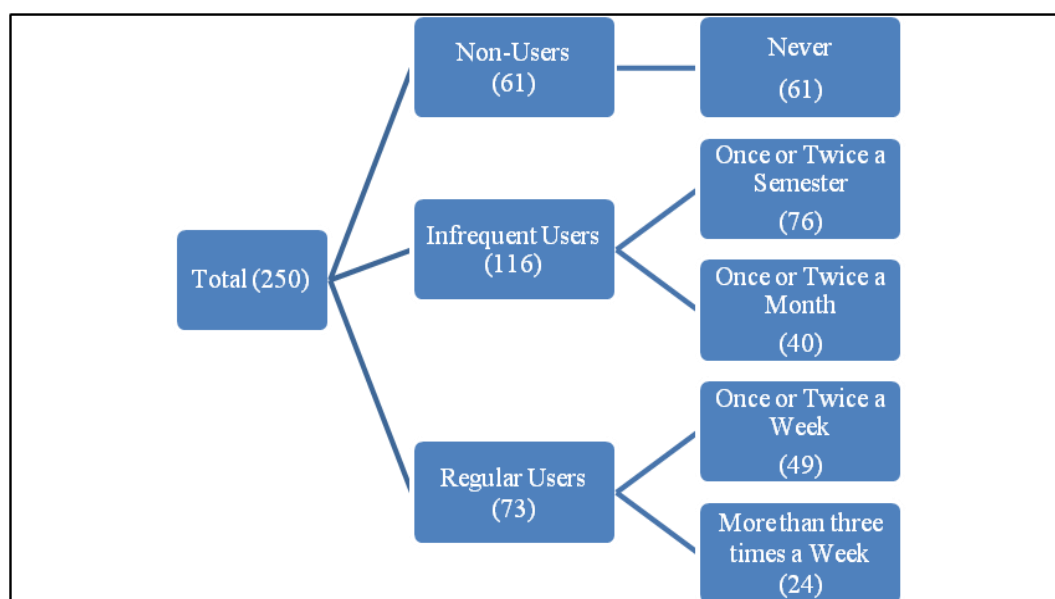
Table 1

*Demographic Information of the Participants in the Study*

	Groups	f	%
Gender	Male	149	59.6
	Female	101	40.4
Age	18-20	162	64.8
	21-23	80	32
	24-26	8	3.2
Proficiency Level	Elementary	8	3.2
	Pre-intermediate	122	48.8
	Intermediate	97	38.8
Years of learning English	Upper-intermediate	23	9.2
	Never	26	10.4
	1-3 Years	25	10
	4-6 Years	44	17.6
	7 Years +	155	62

Because of the nature of the study, it was necessary to include three groups of participants who regularly used the self-access center, as well as those who infrequently or never used the center. The regular SAC users were identified through a questionnaire given to all students on their arrival to the center during a three week period. In order to conduct the survey with a similar number of students with in the

other two groups (who use the center infrequently and never), the researcher gave the questionnaire to students in randomly selected classes from different levels.



*Figure 2.* Groups of the participants in relation to frequency of SAC use

As it is displayed in the Figure 2, in the study, there were 61 regular SAC users, 116 infrequent users and 73 non-users in total. Regular users were identified as the students who used the center every week at least once. Infrequent users of the self-access center were those who did not use the center regularly, but instead reported attending a few times during the semester. Lastly, non-users were the students who never attended the center.

### **Research Design**

This quantitative study used a variety of instruments and materials to investigate EFL learners' readiness for autonomous learning, their attitudes towards SAC in relation to their use of the center.

### **Instrument and Materials**

The data collection instrument of this study was a questionnaire which was employed to collect quantitative data. The questionnaire was composed of three sections: a) demographic information about the participants, b) readiness for learner

autonomy scale, and c) learners' attitudes toward the SAC scale (see Appendix A for the English version of the questionnaire, also see Appendix B for the Turkish translation of the questionnaire).

**Demographic information.** The first section of the questionnaire focused on the demographic information of the participants such as gender, age, proficiency level and length of learning English. The participants' names and contact details were not asked in order to assure confidentiality. The questions in this section were translated into Turkish to eliminate any miscomprehension problems.

**Learner autonomy readiness questionnaire (LARQ).** In light of the review of literature (Chan, Spratt & Humphreys, 2002; Cotterall, 1995; Oxford, 1990; Schmidt, Boraie & Kassabgy, 1996), a series of questions were employed in order to explore the readiness of preparatory school students at Yildirim Beyazit University for autonomous learning. These questions addressed four issues: (1) learners' views on their own and teacher's roles in language learning; (2) learners' decision-making abilities; (3) motivation, and (4) metacognitive strategy use (see Table 2). Specifically, the first set of questions focused on examining the students' view of their own and teacher's responsibilities; the second investigated the students' perceptions of their decision-making abilities in learning English; the third measured students' level of motivation to study English; the last section of the instrument was meant to examine students' metacognitive strategy use in language learning. The rationale behind the compilation of the four factors was that each was identified as having a profound effect in manifestation of autonomous behavior in language learning according to the relevant literature (Chan, Spratt & Humphreys, 2002; Cotterall, 1995; Dickinson, 1995; Lamb, 2008; Littlewood, 1996; Oxford, 1990; Ushioda, 2011; Victori & Lockhart, 1995; Wenden, 1991). Those items were mixed in the questionnaire and put into different order.



The data collection instrument used in this study was constructed by the researcher by employing four different instruments (Chan Spratt and Humphreys, 2002; Cotterall, 1995; Oxford, 1990; Schmidt, Boraie & Kassabgy, 1996) in the related field with some modifications in the light of the review of literature. All questions used a five-point Likert scale that ranged from 1 representing *strongly disagree* to 5 representing *strongly agree*. This questionnaire was composed of 31 items related to four components of autonomy in total (see Table 2 for the detailed information about the components of the questionnaire).

Table 2

*Components of the Learner Autonomy Readiness Questionnaire (LARQ)*

Components of LARQ	Source adapted from	Number of Items
Students' view on their own and teacher's roles	Chan Spratt and Humphreys (2002) Cotterall (1995)	7
Decision-making Abilities	Chan Spratt and Humphreys (2002) Cotterall (1995)	8
Motivation	Schmidt, Boraie and Kassabgy (1996)	8
Metacognitive Strategy use	Oxford (1990)	8

The first component of LARQ is about learners' view on their own and teacher's responsibilities/roles. The seven items was adapted from two different instruments: Spratt, Humphreys and Chan's (2002) study aiming to assess students' readiness for learner autonomy in language learning and Cotterall's (1995) study which investigated learners' beliefs about readiness for autonomy. In the existing literature, these two instruments are noted as being highly reliable and widely used. These questions relate directly to Holec's (1981) definition of learner autonomy as the "ability to take charge of one's own learning" (p. 3). In his detailed description of this concept, he discussed five dimensions of learning which are required for autonomous learning: (1) determining the objectives, (2) defining contents and

progressions, (3) selecting methods and techniques to be used, (4) monitoring the procedure and (5) evaluating what has been acquired (Holec, 1981). In that sense, learners' failure to take responsibility of their learning and heavy dependence on the teacher prevents autonomous learning (Gan, 2009). Hence, the first section of the questionnaire checks how learners perceived their own responsibilities and teacher's roles in language learning process.

The second component of the instrument is related to the learners' perceptions of their decision making abilities for autonomous learning in English outside the class. This part consisted of eight items that were also adapted from Spratt, Humphreys and Chan's (2002) study. The participants were asked to report on how they were able to implement the activities which required them to take the control over their learning.

Another component of the LARQ questionnaire was composed of eight items to gauge students' level of motivation. Littlewood (1996) and Dam (1995) indicated that *willingness* is a significant factor needed for learners to be able to behave autonomously. The items in this part were adapted from the instrument in Schmidt, Boraie and Kassabgy's (1996) study which investigated the relationship between the EFL learners' use of learning strategies and their motivation level.

The last component of the LARQ questionnaire investigated students' metacognitive strategy use which is considered to be an important element in manifestation of learner autonomy in the literature. Questions for this section were adapted from Oxford's (1990) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning in EFL context. These strategies refer to behaviors such as planning for learning, monitoring the learning task, and evaluating how well one has learned (Chamot, 2009; O'Malley & Chamot, 2002; Wenden, 1991), which are all essential for autonomous learning. As Victori and Lockhart (1995) indicated, metacognition gives rise to autonomy

through the use of efficient strategies and a wide variety of resources and it leads to more contact with the language. This section is composed of eight items with which students were asked to express their agreement. In reporting the participants' use of metacognitive strategy use, the researcher employs Oxford's (1990) Key to SILL (Strategy Inventory for Language Learning) averages in order to interpret the results.

The items belong to different components of the questionnaire were presented in a random order in order to increase the validity of the instrument. The LARQ was taken by all of the participants ( $N = 250$ ) in the study regardless of their frequency of SAC use.

**Student attitudes toward the SAC questionnaire.** The instrument was adopted to reveal the participants' attitudes toward the self-access center at Yıldırım Beyazıt University. It was adapted from two different instruments developed by Gardner and Miller (1997) and Klassen et al. (1998). The questionnaire was completed only by the SAC users who had been identified as using the center infrequently and regularly. The SAC questionnaire consisted of 18 items meant to explore students' attitudes toward practical aspects, benefits of the SAC in terms of language skills and learning activities, and materials (see Table 3). As Gardner and Miler (1997) suggested, each self-access center is unique because of the institution where it is established. Every institution has different objectives, learner profile or physical setting. For these reasons, adaptations of these two instruments were made to reflect the local context. As this instrument was intended to gauge the students' attitudes toward the center, it was taken by the students who used the center infrequently and regularly. In other words, non-users who have never been to the center did not take the questionnaire. Out of 250 participants, 189 of them took the SAC questionnaire. The participants again were asked to answer first 18 items on a

five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 Strongly disagree to me to 5 Strongly agree to measure the degree to which they agreed and disagreed.

Table 3

*Components of the SAC Attitude Questionnaire*

Components	Source adapted from	Number of Items
Attitudes toward Practical Aspects of SAC	Gardner and Miller (1997) Klassen et al. (1998)	4
Attitudes toward SAC in terms of Language Skills	Gardner and Miller (1997) Klassen et al. (1998)	4
Attitudes toward SAC in terms of Learning Activities	Gardner and Miller (1997)	5
Attitudes toward SAC Materials	Gardner and Miller (1997)	5

### **Data Collection Procedures**

After having feedback on the first draft of both LARQ and the SAC questionnaire from two EFL content specialists working at Bilkent MA TEFL program, the researcher made the changes in wording, misleading and unclear items and instructions, reverse-coded items. The researcher also made some revisions upon getting feedback from three experts in English language teaching to improve face validity. The items which were judged not to directly address the research topic of the study were deleted.

The LARQ and SAC attitude questionnaires were both originally in English. As the participants of the study were native speakers of Turkish, the items in both instruments were translated into Turkish in order to avoid possible misunderstandings that might have occurred due to language proficiency of the students. Then, two colleagues experienced in translation and interpretation were given the Turkish version of the questionnaires and asked to back-translate into English. The two versions of the questionnaires were compared to eliminate

inconsistency. A few changes were made on the structures, word order, and word choice.

### **Piloting**

After receiving permission from the directorate of the School of Foreign Languages, the pilot study was conducted on February 24, 2015 with 40 students from two classes at Yıldırım Beyazıt University in order to assure reliability, validity and clarity of the questionnaires. Two classes were randomly selected to get feedback on the items and they were asked to indicate any unclear and ambiguous parts in the questionnaires. Based on the responses from the participants in the piloting, necessary revisions on the questionnaires were made. Those two classes used in the pilot study were not included in the actual study.

After the administration of the questionnaires in the pilot study, a factor analysis using SPSS was conducted in order to establish the construct validity. The factor analysis was conducted separately for each section of the questionnaire to examine the overlap among the items. In the piloting sample, there were 47 items in the LARQ and 31 items in SAC questionnaire. Based on the results taken by the SPSS, 16 items from LARQ and 13 items from SAC were deleted. The items considered to be the most suitable for the purpose of the study were chosen to be used in the actual study. The Cronbach Alpha coefficient was also calculated in order to check the reliability and examine the internal consistency of the instruments. For the LARQ questionnaire, the measure of the Cronbach Alpha was .827 and it was .895 for the SAC questionnaire.

With the permission of the directorate of the School of Foreign Languages at Yıldırım Beyazıt University, a short survey of the all students at the school was conducted by the researcher and the SAC coordinator on December, 20 2014 during the fall semester. The results showed that out of 936 students at Yıldırım Beyazıt

University, 162 students regularly attended the SAC, 383 students had used the center a few times but not regularly and 391 students indicated that they had not used the center at all. The results of this preliminary survey allowed the researcher to frame the design of the study to best explore the reasons behind students' willingness and reluctance to use the SAC.

The data collection for the actual study was conducted in the spring semester during 2014-2015 academic year. In order to reach a larger number of participants and make the data analysis procedure quicker, the questionnaires were administered online through the website <http://kwiksurveys.com/>. Six random classes from different levels were selected and brought to the self-access center to take the online questionnaires. In order to reach the regular SAC users who were not included in these six classes, students were asked to fill out the questionnaires online on their arrival to the SAC during a three-week period.

### **Data Analysis Procedures**

The data obtained from the questionnaires were analyzed quantitatively by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were utilized in order to examine the data and draw conclusions. In order to answer research question 1 and 3, descriptive statistics were applied. That is, frequencies, percentages, mean scores and standard deviations were calculated for each item in both of the questionnaires. For the research question 2, Mann-Whitney U test, the non-parametric equivalent of independent samples t-test, was employed to establish whether there was a difference between regular and infrequent users in terms of their attitudes toward the SAC. Lastly, in order to answer the last research question, one-way ANOVA test was conducted to compare regular SAC users with other students who never and infrequently use the center in terms of level of readiness for autonomy. Moreover, Kruskal Wallis H test was conducted in

order to find out whether subcategories of learner autonomy was different among the students attending the SAC with different frequencies.

### **Conclusion**

In this methodology chapter, the setting and participants, research design, instruments and the procedure of data collection and data analysis were described in detail. The next chapter will present detailed analysis of the quantitative data gathered from the 250 participants through the questionnaires.

## CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

### Introduction

The present study aimed to explore the factors influential in university level Turkish EFL students' self-access center (SAC) use. To this end, the attitudes of EFL learners toward the SAC in their institution were examined. The study also explored the extent to which these learners were ready to be involved in autonomous language learning. Lastly, the effect of EFL learners' readiness for autonomy and their attitudes towards the SAC on their frequency of SAC use was investigated. In this regard, the research questions addressed in this study were as follows:

1. What are the EFL learners' attitudes toward the self-access center in their institution?
2. How do the regular SAC users' attitudes toward the SAC differ from infrequent SAC users?
3. To what extent are the university level EFL learners ready for autonomous language learning?
4. In what ways does student readiness for autonomy vary among students who attend the SAC with different frequencies?

This chapter presents the study's findings to the research questions in four sections. The first section discusses the participants' attitudes toward the self-access center in detail. In the second section, the attitudes of two frequency groups of the participants are compared in order to establish any difference. The third section presents the analysis of items related to learner autonomy readiness. The data on four components of the learner autonomy questionnaire are analyzed separately. The last section presents the analysis of readiness for autonomy of three groups of the



participants (non-users, infrequent and regular users) in order to examine any significant difference.

## Results

### Research Question 1: EFL Learners' Attitudes toward the Self-access Center

The first research question aimed to explore the SAC users' attitudes toward the center at Yildirim Beyazıt University. In order to analyze the responses from 189 participants (infrequent and regular SAC users), descriptive statistics were used. The percentages, frequencies, mean scores and standard deviations of the items were displayed to analyze the subcategories of the instrument. The statements in the SAC questionnaire are listed under four subcategories: Students' attitudes towards practical aspects of SAC, attitudes toward SAC in terms of language skills, attitudes toward SAC in terms of learning activities and attitudes toward the SAC materials. The results concerning the students' overall attitudes toward SAC are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

#### *Descriptives on Subcategories of SAC Attitude Questionnaire*

Subcategories	$\bar{x}$	SD
Practical Aspects	3.73	.71
Language Skills	3.86	.62
Learning Activities	3.86	.64
SAC Materials	3.80	.52
<b>Overall Mean Score</b>	<b>3.82</b>	<b>.53</b>

The participants were asked to answer the items on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. As it is shown in Table 4, the overall mean score of the SAC questionnaire was higher than 3 ( $\bar{x} = 3.82$ ,  $SD = .53$ ), indicating the SAC users surveyed had favorable attitudes toward the SAC with regard to its practicality, materials, and benefits in terms developing language skills and learning activities ( $\bar{x} = 3.73$ ,  $\bar{x} = 3.80$ ,  $\bar{x} = 3.86$  and  $\bar{x} = 3.86$ , respectively).

Table 5 below presents the results about the participants' attitudes toward practical aspects of the SAC.

Table 5

*Descriptives on EFL Learners' Attitudes toward Practical Aspects of SAC*

Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		$\bar{x}$	SD
	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f		
1- I find the SAC easy to get to.	3.7	7	12.7	24	13.8	26	46.6	88	23.3	44	3.73	1.07
2- The SAC is open at convenient times to meet my needs.	8.5	16	11.1	21	13.8	26	46.6	88	20.1	38	3.59	1.17
6- There is adequate support staff for the work of the SAC.	2.6	5	12.2	23	22.2	42	48.1	91	14.8	28	3.60	.97
8- The atmosphere in the SAC is suitable for studying.	1.6	3	4.2	8	11.6	22	56.1	106	26.5	50	4.02	.83

Regarding the practical aspects of the SAC, four items were asked to the participants. As their responses shown in Table 5 indicates, all of the students surveyed had positive attitudes toward the SAC in terms of practicality of the center with the overall mean score 3.73. The majority of the participants agreed that the SAC was convenient both in terms of its location ( $\bar{x} = 3.73$ ,  $SD = 1.07$ ) and opening times ( $\bar{x} = 3.57$ ,  $SD = 1.17$ ). Of all the respondents, 70% indicated that they found the SAC easy to get to (Item 1) and 67% stated that the SAC was open at convenient times for them to study (Item 2).

Responses to Item 8 with the highest mean score ( $\bar{x} = 4.02$ ,  $SD = .83$ ) indicated that the majority of the students (83%) were of the opinion that the atmosphere in the SAC was suitable for studying. Similarly, 63% of the respondents stated that there was sufficient number of support staff working in the SAC (Item 6).

Table 6 displays the responses of the participants for each item regarding their attitudes toward SAC in terms of language skills.

Table 6

*Descriptives on EFL Learners' Attitudes toward SAC in terms of Language Skills*

Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		$\bar{x}$	SD
	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f		
9- The SAC is effective in improving my English skills.	-	-	4.8	9	20.6	39	55	104	19.6	37	3.89	.76
10-I have become a more confident language user as a result of using the SAC.	1.1	2	6.9	13	24.9	47	49.7	94	17.5	33	3.76	.85
12- Using the SAC has helped to improve my learning strategies in English.	-	-	7.9	15	20.1	38	59.8	113	12.2	23	3.76	.76
13- The studying in the SAC reinforces what I have learned in the English class.	-	-	3.2	6	16.9	32	56.1	106	23.8	45	4.01	.73

The participants' responses to the four items regarding their attitudes towards SAC in terms of language skills revealed that the effect of the SAC on language skills was highly valued by students with Items 10, 12, 9 and 13 having high mean scores ( $\bar{x} = 3.76$ ,  $\bar{x} = 3.76$ ,  $\bar{x} = 3.89$ , and  $\bar{x} = 4.01$ , respectively). This shows that students had positive opinions about the SAC in terms its effects on language learning with an overall mean of 3.86 with the standard deviation of .62.

As Table 6 shows, the majority of the participants (80%) appeared to think that the SAC supplemented what they had learned in the class (Item 13). Likewise, 75% of the respondents showed their agreements (agree, strongly agree) with the Item 9, indicating the SAC was helpful in improving English skills. The responses to Item 10 and Item 12 with the same mean score ( $\bar{x} = 3.76$ ) indicated that most of the learners had satisfying results following the SAC use. That is to say, a large number of the participants (72%) believed that they improved learning strategies in English as a result of using the SAC (Item 12). Additionally, 67% of them felt that they became a more confident language user thanks to the SAC (Item 10). Table 7 below shows the results on participants' attitudes toward SAC regarding learning activities.

Table 7

*Descriptives on EFL Learners' Attitudes toward SAC in terms of Learning Activities*

Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		$\bar{x}$	SD
	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f		
3* - I think self-access is not a good way to learn.	31.7	60	37.6	71	16.9	32	10.1	19	3.7	7	1.16	1.09
4- The SAC has helped me to study independently.	-	-	7.4	14	29.6	56	40.2	76	22.8	43	3.78	.88
11- The SAC helps me to make good use of my time.	1.6	3	6.3	12	25.4	48	53.4	101	13.2	25	3.70	.83
16- Self-access work helps me develop good study habits.	.5	1	6.9	13	20.1	38	49.7	94	22.8	43	3.87	.86
17- I find the self-access mode of learning interesting.	1.1	2	3.7	7	13.8	26	48.1	91	33.3	63	4.09	.84

\*The mean score was reverse-coded for the later calculations

In order to gauge the participants' attitudes toward SAC in terms of learning activities, five items were asked as displayed in Table 7. Item 3 was reverse-coded. The overall mean score for their attitudes towards the SAC in terms of learning activities was 3.86 with the standard deviation of .64. The participants expressed their positive attitudes toward self-access language learning reflected in the high means for Item 3 ( $\bar{x} = 3.84$ ,  $SD = 1.09$ ) and item 17 ( $\bar{x} = 4.09$ ,  $SD = .84$ ). Of all the participants, 69% of them thought self-access learning was a good way to learn (Item 3). Similarly, 81% stated that they found self-access learning interesting (Item 17). A great number of participants agreed with the items (Item 4, 11, and 16) emphasizing that the self-access center contributed to their learning by helping them study effectively. More than half of the respondents (63%) stated that they could study independently thanks to the SAC as a response to Item 4. The responses to Item 11 showed that 67% of the participants used their time efficiently by studying at the SAC. Similar number (73%) of the participants thought that using the SAC helped them develop good study habits (Item 16). The results of the descriptive statistics on

participants' attitudes toward SAC materials are given in Table 8.

Table 8

*Descriptives on EFL Learners' Attitudes toward SAC Materials*

Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		$\bar{x}$	SD
	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f		
5- I find the resources (books, magazines etc.) useful in the SAC.	.5	1	2.6	5	13.8	26	52.9	100	30.2	57	4.10	.76
7- The materials in the SAC stimulate my interest in learning English.	-	-	9.5	18	31.7	60	43.9	83	14.8	28	3.64	.84
14- I can find materials easily in our SAC.	.5	1	6.3	12	24.3	46	48.1	91	20.6	39	3.82	.85
15- There is a variety of materials in our SAC.	2.1	4	7.9	15	28.6	54	40.7	77	20.6	39	3.70	.95
18- The materials in the SAC meet my needs.	-	-	8.5	16	24.9	47	49.7	94	16.9	32	3.75	.83

In order to examine the participants' attitudes toward the SAC regarding its materials, five items were asked. The overall mean score of responses to the items regarding SAC materials was 3.80 with the standard deviation of .52, indicating that the students had positive attitudes about the SAC materials available in their SAC in terms of developing their English skills. As Table 8 above displays, a majority of the students seemed to agree that those sources offer students opportunities to improve their English. To illustrate, a great number of the participants (83%) reflected that they found the resources useful in the SAC (Item 5). In addition, 67% of the respondents tended to think that the SAC materials met their needs (Item 18). Likewise, over half of the students (59%) reported that SAC materials stimulated their interest in English in their response to Item 7. Similar number of the participants (61%) thought that there were a variety of materials in the SAC (Item 15). Lastly, the responses to Item 14 indicated that they could find the materials easily (69%), which is believed to enhance independent learning.

Overall, the analysis in this section indicated that both regular and infrequent

SAC users had favorable attitudes toward the SAC. The analysis revealed that SAC users had a high value on the attitudes toward the SAC materials, practical aspects of the SAC and its effects on language skills and learning activities, suggesting that they appreciated all the four aspects.

### **Research Question 2: The Comparison of Regular SAC Users' and Infrequent SAC Users' Attitudes toward the SAC**

Another research question aimed to see whether there was a difference between two groups, namely infrequent and regular SAC users in terms of their overall attitudes toward SAC. The normality assumption test result showed that the groups' data were not normally distributed (see Appendix C for the test result). Following the normality test, the data on the attitudes with infrequent and regular groups were analyzed using Mann-Whitney U test, non-parametric equivalent of independent samples t-test. The results of the descriptive statistics and the Mann-Whitney U test are given in Table 9.

Table 9

#### *Descriptives and Mann-Whitney U Results on Frequency of Use and SAC Attitudes*

Group	n	$\bar{x}$	SD	U	Z	p
Infrequent Users	116	3.73	.519	3328.5	-2.489	.013
Regular Users	73	3.94	.515			

As displayed in in Table 9, the mean score of regular users ( $\bar{x} = 3.94$ ,  $SD = .515$ ) was greater than that of the infrequent user group ( $\bar{x} = 3.73$ ,  $SD = .519$ ). The results of the Mann-Whitney U test showed that there was a statistically significant difference between the mean scores on the students' attitudes toward the SAC of infrequent users and regular users,  $U = 3328.5$ ,  $p = .013 < .05$ ,  $r = .18$ . The finding suggested that regular group had significantly more positive attitude toward the SAC

than the infrequent users. The effect size for this analysis was found to be small ( $r = .18$ ).

Further analyses were conducted to explore the difference between two groups of SAC users in terms of subcategories of the SAC questionnaire (attitudes toward practical aspects, attitudes toward SAC in terms of learning activities and language skills and SAC materials). Therefore, in order to reveal whether there was any statistical difference between infrequent and regular SAC users, each category was analyzed using a Mann-Whitney U test separately after conducting the normality test (see Appendix C). The results of the Mann-Whitney U test are shown in the Table 10.

Table 10

*Mann-Whitney U Test on Frequency of Use and SAC Attitudes of the Subcategories*

	Groups	n	Mean Rank	Sums of Ranks	U	Z	p
Practical Aspects	Infrequent Users	116	92.1	10684	3898.0	-.925	.355
	Regular Users	73	99.6	7271			
Language Skills	Infrequent Users	116	87.5	10159	3373.0	-2.387	.017*
	Regular Users	73	106.7	7796			
Learning activities	Infrequent Users	116	85.5	9928.5	3142.5	-2.999	.003**
	Regular Users	73	109.9	8026.5			
SAC Materials	Infrequent Users	116	85.9	9964.5	3178.5	-2.908	.004**
	Regular Users	73	109.4	7990.5			

\*  $p < .05$

\*\*  $p < .01$

The findings indicated that mean rank of the regular SAC users was greater than the mean rank of the infrequent SAC users in terms of their attitudes toward practical aspects of SAC. However, there was not a statistically difference between the attitudes of the infrequent SAC users group and regular SAC users group.

With regard to participants' attitudes toward the SAC in terms of its effects on language skills, the analysis results showed that the mean rank of the group of regular users ( $R_i = 106.7$ ) overweighed that of infrequent users ( $R_i = 87.5$ ), there was a statistically significant difference among those two groups,  $U = 3373$ ,

$p = .017 < .05$ ,  $r = .17$ . This analysis yielded small effect size ( $r = .17$ ).

Based on the results considering participants' attitudes toward the SAC in terms learning activities, the findings of Mann-Whitney U test revealed a statistically significant difference between the two groups,  $U = 3142.5$ ,  $p = .003 < .01$ ,  $r = .21$ . This finding suggested that regular SAC user group had significantly more positive attitudes ( $R_i = 85.5$ ) toward the SAC in terms of its effects on learning activities than infrequent SAC users ( $R_i = 109.9$ ). The effect size for this analysis ( $r = .21$ ) was found to be small approaching to medium effect size.

As it is shown in the Table 10, the results of the Mann-Whitney U test indicated the statistically significant difference between the groups of infrequent users and regular users in terms of their attitudes toward the SAC materials. The difference was found to be with a small effect approaching to medium effect size,  $U = 3178.5$ ,  $p = .004 < .01$ ,  $r = .21$ .

The analysis based on the comparison of the attitudes of the regular and infrequent SAC users revealed statistically significant differences between both groups. This finding may be interpreted in two ways. First, the results conveyed the idea that the users' favorable attitudes may lead to an increase in the frequency of the SAC use. Second, the frequency of the SAC use may affect the attitudes of the users. That is to say, the more frequently the students used the SAC, the more positive attitudes they may have developed toward it.

### **Research Question 3: EFL Learners' Readiness for Autonomous Language Learning**

This study gathered data from 250 university level EFL students studying at Yildirim Beyazıt University. The Learner Autonomy Readiness Questionnaire (LARQ) was adopted to collect the data on the extent to which EFL learners were ready to be involved in autonomous language learning. On the questionnaire, the



respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with statements by assigning values ranging from 1 to 5.

The questionnaire consisted of thirty one items related to the four components of autonomy: decision-making abilities, students' views on their own and teacher's roles, motivation and metacognitive strategy use. Descriptive statistics were calculated to answer the third research question in the study. The frequencies, means, percentages and standard deviations of the individual items for each component were calculated separately in order to analyze the learners' readiness for autonomy. Table 11 displays the overall descriptive measures for each component of readiness for learner autonomy.

Table 11

*Descriptive Statistics on Components of Readiness for Learner Autonomy*

<b>Components</b>	$\bar{x}$	SD
Decision-making Abilities	3.15	.58
Views on roles of themselves and teacher	2.57	.70
Motivation	3.78	.64
Metacognitive Strategy use	3.8	.59
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.35</b>	<b>.41</b>

As it is shown the Table 11, participants' metacognitive strategy use reflected the highest mean score of 3.80 with the standard deviation of .59 within the components of learner autonomy. This was statistically higher than 3 (representing neutral) on the five-point scale, indicating the students tended to be capable of using metacognitive strategies in language learning. Following metacognitive strategy use, overall descriptive measures on participants' motivation showed that they were in general positively driven to learn English ( $\bar{x} = 3.78$ ,  $SD = .64$ ). The mean score for the decision-making abilities was 3.15 with a standard deviation of .58. The results showed that the participants were just above the average level of making decision on their own learning.

On the other hand, students' views on their teacher and their own roles displayed the lowest mean score of 2.57 with the standard deviation of .70. This was statistically lower than a rating of 3 on the five-point scale, indicating students were assigning more roles on their teacher in language learning process. The results of descriptive statistics for each component separately are presented in Table 12, Table 13, Table 14 and Table 16, respectively.

**Decision-making abilities.** The participants were asked to report on their decision-making abilities by responding to the eight items in the LARQ. As a group, these questions indicate the participants' capacity to make decisions about their own learning outside the class. The overall mean score for the decision-making abilities section was 3.15, implying the participants had tendency to make decisions in their learning process.

Two items (Item 17 and Item 22) in the scale were reverse-coded. That means because of the wording of these items, the responses *strongly disagree* and *disagree* on Item 17 and Item 22 express a positive attitude toward learner autonomy in terms of decision-making activities. Therefore, the scores of these items were reversed and interpreted accordingly. Table 12 shows the results on participants' perceptions of decision-making abilities.

Table 12

*Descriptives on EFL Learners' Perception of Decision-making Abilities*

Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		$\bar{x}$	SD
	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f		
4. I am able to identify my weaknesses in learning English.	3.2	8	15.2	38	38	95	33.2	83	10.4	26	3.32	.96
9. I am able to choose learning materials for myself	2.4	6	13.6	34	37.2	93	35.2	88	11.6	29	3.4	.94

Table 12 (continued)

*Descriptives on EFL Learners' Perception of Decision-making Abilities*

13. I like to look for solutions to my problems by myself.	1.2	3	7.6	19	22.8	57	48.8	122	19.6	49	3.78	.89
15. I have my own ways of assessing how much I have learned	4	10	19.6	49	35.2	88	31.6	79	9.6	24	3.23	1.00
17*. I have difficulty deciding what to study outside class	3.6	9	17.2	43	21.2	53	40.4	101	17.6	44	2.52	1.08
22*. It is difficult for me to know how long to spend on each activity.	3.6	9	17.6	44	24.4	61	43.6	109	10.8	27	2.41	1.01
28. I usually know myself what progress I have made without the teacher telling me	1.2	3	13.6	34	41.2	103	34	85	10	25	3.38	.88
30. I am able to decide what I should learn next in English	4.4	11	24.8	62	41.2	103	22.4	56	7.2	18	3.03	.96

\* The mean score was reverse-coded for later calculations.

As it can be drawn from the Table 12, among the items related to participants' decision making abilities, the highest mean value belonged to the Item 13, which suggested that the majority of the students' responses clustered around agree and strongly agree. In other words, out of 250 participants, 171 indicated that they liked to look for solutions to their problems on their own (68%). Almost half of the participants (47%) indicated that they were capable of choosing learning materials for themselves (agree or strongly agree) whereas 93 of them were neutral (Item 9). On the other hand, most of the participants (58%) stated that they had difficulty deciding what to study outside the class (Item 17). Similarly, 54% of the respondents ( $n = 136$ ) found it difficult to decide how long they should spend in each activity (Item 22). Also, just one third of the participants indicated that they were capable of deciding what to learn next in English as a response to Item 30 (30%).

#### **Learners' views on their own and teacher's roles in language learning.**

The participants in the study were asked to respond to six items to find out their

perceptions on their own and teachers' roles and responsibilities in language learning. The overall mean score for the scale was 2.57 with the standard deviation .70. This measure indicated that the participants did not feel more responsibility in their learning process and assign more roles to their teacher. Table 13 displays the percentages, frequencies, means and standard deviations of participants' responses item by item regarding their views on their teachers' and their own roles in English learning. Regarding the six items in the scale, four of them were reverse-coded (Item 6, Item 14, Item 20, Item 26 and Item 31). Because of the wording of these items, the scores were reversed before the analysis. That is, the responses of *strongly disagree* and *disagree* indicated participants' tendency towards learner autonomy.

Table 13

*Descriptives on EFL Learners' Views on Their own and Teacher's Roles*

Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		$\bar{x}$	SD
	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f		
1. I should evaluate my learning in English.	6.4	16	17.6	44	30	75	32.4	81	13.6	34	3.29	1.11
6*. I think it is the teacher's responsibility to decide what I should learn.	5.2	13	24	60	27.2	68	32.8	82	10.8	27	2.2	1.08
12. I should decide what to learn out of the class.	2.4	6	8.4	21	24.4	61	48.8	122	16	40	3.68	.92
14*. I expect the teacher to offer help to me.	3.2	8	6	15	9.6	24	40.8	102	40.4	101	3.09	1.01
20*. I need the teacher to tell me how I am progressing	2.4	6	3.6	9	18	45	40	100	36	90	3.04	.95
26*. The teacher should identify my learning weaknesses in English.	2.4	6	1.2	3	14.4	36	52.8	132	29.2	73	3.05	.83
31*. The teacher should tell me how long I should spend on an each activity	4	10	11.6	29	23.6	59	46	115	14.8	37	2.56	1.00

\*The mean score was reverse-coded for later calculations.

As presented in Table 13, the responses to Item 14, Item 26 and Item 20 with the lowest mean scores of 1.91, 1.95 and 1.96, respectively indicated that the majority of students tended to be dependent on teachers' assistance and feedback.

Over three out of four participants (81%) stated that they expected the teacher to offer them help (Item 14). Almost the same number of the students stated that they expected the teacher to identify their weaknesses (Item 26). Likewise, 190 out of 250 respondents (76%) reported that they needed feedback from the teacher on their progression while only 9 (4%) of them disagreed with the statement (Item 20). Similarly, the responses to Item 31 indicated that slightly over half of the participants (61%) tended to expect the teacher to tell them how long to spend on an activity. One hundred and nine respondents (44%) appeared to think that the teacher is responsible for deciding what to learn in general as a response to Item 6. On the other hand, 65% of the participants stated that they should decide what to learn out of the class (Item 12).

On the other hand, on Item 12 with the highest mean score of 3.68, 162 respondents (65%) indicated their willingness to decide the content of their learning themselves out of the class. Additionally, 46% of the participants reported that they should evaluate their learning in English (Item 1).

**Motivation.** In order to investigate students' level of motivation, participants were asked to answer eight items in the LARQ. The average motivation level of the respondents on this scale of questions is 3.78 with a standard deviation .57, which revealed respondents' general tendency to agree with the most of the relevant items. This descriptive measure indicates that the participants appeared to be motivated to learn English. Table 14 presents the percentages, frequencies, means and standard deviations of participants' responses to aspects of motivation in learning English item by item.

Table 14

*Descriptives on EFL Learners' Motivation*

Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		$\bar{x}$	SD
	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f		
2. Learning English is enjoyable for me.	5.6	14	10	25	26.8	67	38	95	19.6	49	3.56	1.08
7. I have a clear idea of what I need English for	1.6	4	1.2	3	4.4	11	31.6	79	61.2	153	4.5	.77
10. I often think about how I can learn English better.	3.2	8	10.4	26	28.4	71	35.2	88	22.8	57	3.64	1.04
19. If I learn English, I will be able to get a better and well-paid job.	1.2	3	3.6	9	4.4	11	18.4	46	72.4	181	4.57	.83
23. Even if there were no attendance requirement in the English course, my attendance would be high.	17.2	43	15.2	38	19.6	49	24.8	62	23.2	58	3.22	1.4
25. I believe that I will be successful in the English class.	4.8	12	5.6	14	39.6	74	29.6	99	20.4	51	3.65	1.01
27. English is important to me because it will broaden my point of view.	1.2	3	4	10	15.6	39	38	95	41.2	103	4.14	.90
29. I can honestly say that I really put my best effort into trying to learn English.	9.2	23	23.6	59	36	90	23.6	59	7.6	19	2.97	1.07

As shown by the data in Table 14, for Items 19, 7 and 27, the participants attained the highest scores with mean of 4.57, 4.5 and 4.14 respectively. Almost exactly 93% of the participants indicated that they had a clear idea of what they need English for (Item 7). Similarly, the responses to Item 19 revealed that a great number of the participants (91%) stated that learning English would lead to get a better and well-paid job. Also, slightly over three-fourths of the respondents ( $n = 198$ ) indicated that they found English important, as it would broaden their point of view (Item 27). For Item 25, 150 participants (60%) expressed their high expectation to be successful in English class, although almost 10% responded negatively to the statement. As it can be seen from the data, almost half of the students (48%) showed positive attitude

towards attending the English course regularly, agreeing that the attendance requirement was not a key factor in learning English (Item 23). Of all, over half of the respondents (58%) noted their enjoyment in the process of learning English (Item 2). Exactly the same number of the participants ( $n = 145$ ) indicated that they tended to think about how to learn English better (Item 10).

On the other hand, the responses to Item 29 with the lowest mean score of 2.93 in the scale indicated that nearly one third of the participants ( $n = 78$ ) tended to give their best effort to learn English. Almost the same number of the students ( $n = 82$ ) displayed a certain disagreement with that item.

**Metacognitive strategy use.** The eight items regarding metacognitive use were designed to check whether the participants employed strategy use or not. They were asked to rank their employment of these strategies on a 5 point Likert scale. The results for the participants' overall mean score on the employment of metacognitive strategy use was analyzed using the Oxford's (1990) Key to Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) Averages. The Table 15 represents the correspondence of the average scores that fall into a range and their interpretation with the descriptions and the frequency of strategy use. As shown in the Table 15, the average score that falls in the range of 3.5 to 5 is interpreted as high use of metacognitive strategy use in language learning, the average in 2.5 to 3.4 as medium use and the average in 1 to 2.4 as low frequency of use.

Table 15

*Key to Strategy Inventory for Language Learning Averages (Oxford, 1990)*

Frequency	Range	Description
High Use	4.5 to 5.00	Always or almost always used
	3.5 to 4.4	Generally used
Medium Use	2.5 to 3.4	Sometimes used
Low Use	1.5 to 2.4	Generally not used
	1.0 to 1.4	Never or almost never used

The results of this study showed that the overall mean score for the scale of metacognitive strategy use is 3.78 with standard deviation .64, indicating EFL learners' high use of strategy. This finding also suggested that the participants generally used the metacognitive strategies to develop English according to Oxford's (1990) key to SILL averages. The responses of the participants for each item regarding metacognitive strategy use are displayed in the Table 16 with the percentages, frequencies, means and standard deviations.

Table 16

*Descriptives on EFL Learners' Metacognitive Strategy Use*

Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		$\bar{x}$	SD
	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f		
3. I have clear goals for improving my English skills.	.8	2	2.8	7	7.2	18	27.6	69	61.6	154	4.46	.81
5. I look for opportunities to read as much as possible in English.	3.6	9	20.4	51	30.4	76	34.4	86	11.2	28	3.29	1.02
8. I try to find as many ways as I can to use my English.	3.6	9	17.2	43	32.4	81	34.8	87	12	30	3.34	1.01
11. I plan my schedule so I will have enough time to study English.	7.6	19	29.6	74	26	65	28.8	72	8	20	3	1.1
16. I look for people I can talk to in English.	1.6	4	.8	2	6	15	27.2	68	64.4	161	4.52	.782
18. I pay attention when someone is speaking English.	2	5	4	10	15.2	38	48.8	122	30	75	4.01	.89
21. I try to find out how to be a better learner of English	1.2	3	5.2	13	21.2	53	48.4	121	24	60	3.89	.87
24. I notice my English mistakes and use that information to help me do better.	1.6	4	4	10	17.6	44	54	135	22.8	57	3.92	.84

Item 16 with the highest mean score ( $\bar{x} = 4.52$ ,  $SD = .78$ ) revealed that almost 92% of the participants looked for people they can speak English with, which implied that they paid much attention to improve speaking skills. Based on the responses to Item 18 which measures listening strategy use in English, a great



number of the participants (79%) reported that they paid attention when someone was speaking in English. Similarly, 72% respondents reported that they were looking forward to people they could communicate in English (Item 16). As for reading skill strategy use, almost 46% of the respondents indicated their positive attitude towards looking for opportunities to read.

In addition, the majority (89%) of the participating students ( $n = 223$ ) stated that they had clear goals for improving English (Item 3). On the other hand, only one third of the students ( $n = 82$ ) appeared to plan their schedule for studying English (Item 11).

To sum up, the analyses conducted for the third research question indicated that the EFL learners' ability to make decisions on their learning was at just above average level, indicating some areas should be improved to help them take more responsibility for their learning. The students in general appeared to employ metacognitive strategy to improve English. They were also found to be positively driven to learn English, which is a good sign for readiness for learner autonomy. However, the results regarding learners' views on their own and teacher's roles showed that they saw the teacher an important figure in their learning process by assigning more roles to them.

#### **Research Question 4: EFL Learners' Readiness for Autonomy and Frequency of SAC Use**

The second research question aimed to find out whether there was a significant difference among non-users, regular users and infrequent users of SAC in terms of readiness for learner autonomy. The results of the descriptive statistics and One-Way ANOVA are given in Table 17 and Table 18, respectively.

Table 17

*Descriptives on EFL Learners' Readiness for Autonomy and Frequency of SAC Use*

Groups	<i>N</i>	$\bar{x}$	SD
Non-users	61	3.32	.50
Infrequent	116	3.34	.39
Regular	73	3.39	.36
Total	250	3.35	.41

As presented in Table 17, among the three groups, the regular SAC users scored the highest in readiness for autonomy ( $\bar{x} = 3.39$ ,  $SD = .36$ ). Non-users scored lower ( $\bar{x} = 3.32$ ,  $SD = .50$ ) in readiness for autonomy than infrequent SAC users ( $\bar{x} = 3.34$ ,  $SD = .39$ ).

The normality assumption test showed that the data were normally distributed (see Appendix C for the normality test result). Following the normality test, the data on readiness for autonomy of the three groups were analyzed using the parametric test One-Way Analysis of Variance (One-Way ANOVA).

Table 18

*One-way ANOVA for Readiness for Autonomy and Frequency of SAC Use*

	Sum of Squares (SS)	df	Mean Square (MS)	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	.191	2	.095	.546	.580
Within Groups	43.207	247	.175		
Total	43.398	249			

The independent variable, frequency of SAC use, included three groups: regular users, infrequent users and non-users. As shown in Table 18, there was not statistically significant difference on the scores of readiness for autonomy among the three frequency groups of SAC.

Moreover, in order to determine whether the subcategories of readiness for learner autonomy (motivation, metacognitive strategy use, views on roles and

abilities) were statistically different among the groups of frequency, namely non-users, infrequent SAC users and regular SAC users, Kruskal Wallis H test was conducted. Since data on each subcategory of readiness for learner autonomy were normally distributed (see Appendix C for the normality test result), Kruskal-Wallis H test, which is a non-parametric independent samples K test, was employed to analyze each of them separately. Table 19 displays the results of the Kruskal Wallis H test for the EFL learners' motivation, metacognitive use, views on their own and teacher's roles and decision-making abilities.

Table 19

*Kruskal Wallis H for Subcategories of Readiness for Autonomy and Frequency of SAC Use*

Subcategories		Groups			Total	<i>p</i>
		Non-users	Infrequent users	Regular users		
Motivation	n	61	116	73	250	.095
	$R_i^*$	120	118	140		
Metacognitive Strategy use	n	61	116	73	250	.044
	$R_i$	119	117	143		
Views on their own and teacher's roles	N	61	116	73	250	.070
	$R_i$	119	136	112		
Decision-making abilities	n	61	116	73	250	.661
	$R_i$	131	125	120		

\* $R_i$  : Mean Rank

As it is shown in the Table 19, the results revealed that the group of the regular SAC users had the highest mean rank for the motivation ( $R_i = 140$ ), followed by non-users ( $R_i = 120$ ) and infrequent users ( $R_i = 118$ ). However, the differences among the groups of frequency (non-user, infrequent and regular users) in terms of motivation were not significant.

The results of the Kruskal Wallis H test also showed a statistically significant difference among the mean scores on metacognitive strategy use of different frequency groups,  $H(2) = 6.233$ ,  $p = .044$ . As presented in the Table 19, mean rank scores on metacognitive strategy use indicate that regular users had the highest

scores ( $R_i = 143$ ), followed by nonusers ( $R_i = 119$ ) and infrequent users ( $R_i = 117$ ).

For the participants' views on their own and teacher's roles, a statistically significant difference was not found. Additionally, the results for the participants' decision-making abilities showed that there was not a statistically difference among the groups of frequency.

In terms of overall mean scores for the readiness for autonomy, no statistically difference result was observed amongst the three frequency groups of SAC. This finding conveyed that the regular SAC users did not necessarily have better control over their own learning compared to the other groups. The further analyses showed the significant difference in terms of metacognitive strategy use among the three groups, suggesting that regular SAC users were better at using the strategies in English.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter the findings of quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires were analyzed and discussed under four main sections. In the first section, participants' attitudes toward SAC pertaining to the first research question were presented through descriptive statistics. In the second section, the data regarding the attitudes of two groups towards the SAC (second research question) were compared to examine any differences using Mann-Whitney U test. In the third section, the findings related to learner autonomy readiness were presented. Since there were four components of the learner autonomy readiness questionnaire, each part was analyzed separately using descriptive statistics. In the last section, ANOVA analysis was run to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference in learner autonomy readiness amongst groups of students who attended the SAC with different frequencies in order to answer the fourth research question. For further analysis, Kruskal Wallis H test was conducted in order to find out whether

subcategories of learner autonomy were different among those three frequency groups. The following chapter will present a summary of the study, the findings and discussion, pedagogical implications, limitations of the study, and suggestions for further research.

## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

### Introduction

This study investigated whether EFL students' readiness for learner autonomy and attitudes toward SAC were influential in their SAC use. To this end, attitudes of EFL learners toward the self-access center were explored. This study also examined the extent to which EFL learners were ready to be involved in autonomous language learning. In addition, this study revealed the effect of EFL learners' readiness for autonomy and their attitudes towards the SAC on their frequency of SAC use. The research questions addressed in this study were:

1. What are the EFL learners' attitudes toward the self-access center in their institution?
2. How do the regular SAC users' attitudes toward SAC differ from infrequent SAC users?
3. To what extent are the university level EFL learners ready for autonomous language learning?
4. In what ways does student readiness for autonomy vary among students who attend the SAC with different frequencies?

This study gathered data from 250 EFL learners studying at Yıldırım Beyazıt University. Two different instruments were used in order to investigate the participants' readiness for learner autonomy and their attitudes toward the SAC. The data collected through the questionnaire (see Appendix A for English and see Appendix B for Turkish version of the questionnaire) were analyzed quantitatively. The data on participants' attitudes relevant to the first research question were presented after descriptive analysis. To address the second research question, a

Mann-Whitney U test was performed in order to establish the difference between the two groups in terms of their attitudes toward SAC. For the third research question, a descriptive analysis was conducted in order to explore the extent to which the participants were ready for autonomous learning in English. Responses to the four components of the learner autonomy readiness instrument were analyzed separately. For the fourth research question, one-way ANOVA test was run to compare three frequency groups of SAC in terms of readiness for learner autonomy. Further analyses were conducted to find out any differences among three frequency groups regarding subcategories of readiness for autonomy. For this purpose, Kruskal-Wallis H test, a non-parametric independent samples K test, was employed.

This chapter consists of four sections. The first section will discuss the findings from the study in the light of the relevant literature and research questions. The next section will discuss pedagogical implications based on the results. The third section will present the limitations of the study. Finally, the fourth section will give suggestions for further research based on those limitations.

### **Discussion of Major Findings**

#### **EFL Learners' Attitudes toward the Self-access Center**

A questionnaire was administered to the participants (infrequent and regular SAC users) to address the first research question which examined EFL learners' attitudes toward the SAC. The items in the questionnaire were classified into four areas: Student attitudes towards practical aspects of SAC, attitudes toward SAC in terms of language skills, attitudes toward SAC in terms of learning activities and attitudes toward SAC materials. The overall mean scores indicated a favorable student attitude toward the SAC.

First of all, the results of the present study indicated that the participants appreciated the practical aspects of the SAC. These findings coincide with the

research conducted by Gardner and Miller (1999) who found out that the SAC users appreciated the location and opening times of the center as well as the number of the staff working there. In terms of suitability of atmosphere, the finding of this study echoes Reinders' (2000) study whose participants reported that they valued working in a quiet environment of the SAC conducive to studying.

Secondly, the findings of this study indicated that the participants had positive attitudes regarding the effects of the SAC on learning English. This finding concurs with the findings of Farmer (1994), Gardner and Miller (1997), Klassen et al. (1998), Richards (1999) and Reinders (2000), all of whom revealed that most of the SAC users thought the SAC made contributions to their language skills. More specifically, in this study 75% of the respondents rated the SAC useful for improving English skills. This is lower than Farmer's (1994) and Reinders' (2000) finding (almost 90%) and a bit lower than what Gardner and Miller (1997) found (84%). Additionally, the results of this study revealed that most of the participants (67%) reported that they became more confident language users as a result of using the SAC, which is similar to the results of Klassen et al.'s (1998) study.

Thirdly, the participants of this study noted positive effects of the SAC on learning activities such as using time efficiently and developing study habits as a result of studying at the SAC. This result is in line with the findings of Gardner and Miller (1997), Richards (1999) and Reinders (2000), which approved the contributions of the SAC to independent learning skills. However, it contradicts Farmer's (1994) study. Unlike this study, Farmer (1994) found that almost just one third of the participants felt better able to study on their own after attending 20 hour course in the SAC, emphasizing the guidance of a teacher in the SAC. This may result from the participants' utilizing the SAC at limited times. This may underline the importance of the continuous use of the center in order to observe its long-term



effects on learning skills.

Lastly, the findings of this study showed that the SAC users highly valued the SAC materials. The results regarding the importance of materials' variety, usefulness and appropriateness coincide with what is suggested in the literature by Sheerin (1986), Lin and Brown (1994) who specified that there should be considerable number of SAC materials to address the different needs of the students. Additionally, the results of this study also revealed that many participants were satisfied with the accessibility of the materials, which is in parallel with what is proposed by Littlejohn (1985) emphasizing the necessity to arrange materials in a way that students can find easily and quickly.

#### **The Comparison of Regular SAC Users' and Infrequent SAC Users' Attitudes toward the SAC**

With regard to the second research question, the findings of the present study showed a significant difference between the regular SAC users' attitudes and infrequent SAC users' attitudes toward the SAC in their institution. This result revealed that the regular SAC users had more positive attitudes toward the SAC than the infrequent users.

To obtain a more detailed picture of the differences between the attitudes of both groups, further analyses were conducted. The results indicated that there was not a statistically significant difference between two groups of the SAC users in terms of their attitudes regarding practical aspects of the SAC. Both regular and infrequent users had similar attitudes about its location and opening times, number of staff and the suitability of its atmosphere for studying. Not surprisingly, this finding makes sense because these were more about objective aspects of the SAC.

On the other hand, the results also showed a statistically significant difference between regular and infrequent users regarding their attitudes toward effects of SAC

on language skills. In other words, the regular SAC users thought that studying at the SAC made more contributions to their language skills than the infrequent users. Similarly, according to the results of the present study, there was a significant difference between the two groups of the SAC users in terms of their attitudes toward effects of the SAC on learning activities. That is to say, the regular group possessed more positive attitudes about the effects of the SAC on their studying/learning activities than the infrequent users. It was also found that regular users had more favorable attitudes towards the SAC materials than the other group. This finding showed that user's attitudes towards the SAC materials may play an important role for SAC use. This result is in line with what is suggested by Sturtridge (1997) and Reinders (2000) who stated that suitable materials in the SAC foster either rejection or the acceptance of the center.

These findings based on the comparison of the two groups' attitudes can be interpreted in two ways. Firstly, EFL learners' favorable attitudes toward the SAC may determine the frequency of SAC use. Specifically, students' positive attitudes toward the effectiveness of the SAC in terms of language skills, learning activities and attitudes toward SAC materials may be influential in determining their frequency of attendance. Secondly, the result suggests that the frequency of the SAC use may influence the attitudes of its users. That is to say, the more frequently they used the SAC, the more positive attitudes they may have developed toward SAC.

### **EFL Learners' Readiness for Autonomous Language Learning**

The third research question explored whether EFL learners were ready to be involved in autonomous learning. Specifically, it looked at four areas: learners' decision-making abilities in learning English, learners' perceptions of their own and their teachers' roles in learning English, learners' motivation level and their use of metacognitive strategies in learning English.

**EFL learners' perception of their own decision-making abilities.** The first component of the readiness for learner autonomy instrument was learners' decision-making abilities in learning English. Based upon Holec's definition of learner autonomy (1981), the items focused on EFL learners' ability to determine learning objectives, content, appropriate methods to be used, the progression and the evaluation of the learning process. The results of the descriptive statistics analysis showed that the majority of the participants rated their decision-making abilities outside the class as average in most aspects of learning. The findings of this study regarding decision-making abilities outside of the class coincide with the research conducted by Chan, Spratt and Humphreys (2002), who reported that just one third of the students rated themselves good/very good at identifying the learning weakness and choosing learning materials as well as learning activities. This showed that Turkish EFL learners had a similar profile to students in Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

Of all the items related to decision-making abilities, it was found that the participants did not feel very competent in deciding what to study, what to learn next in English and how long to study on each activity outside of the class on their own. This findings of the present study were found to be in line with the results of Karabiyik's (2008) and Koçak's (2003) studies, suggesting Turkish EFL students tended to have problems with making decisions about their own learning. That may result from Turkey's exam oriented and rigid education system. To illustrate, from the very early stages of primary school, most of the students are provided with the necessary materials and told what to study both inside and outside of the class by their teacher, which hinders their ability to make instructional decisions.

Although most of the students reported that they liked to look for solutions to their problems, the responses to the items on choosing materials, identifying

weaknesses, assessing their own learning and monitoring progress were found to be a slightly higher than the average. This emerging profile of Turkish learners' autonomy suggests some reasons for optimism. However, the findings of the present study in regard to EFL learners' decision-making abilities indicate that the EFL learners need training and guidance on how to study independently as language learners in order to take more responsibility for their learning.

**EFL learners' views on their own and teacher's roles in language learning.** The second component of the questionnaire was EFL learners' perception of their own and teacher's roles in English language learning. The results of the present study regarding perception of roles suggested that participants tended to be heavily dependent on the feedback and the guidance of the teacher in the learning process. Particularly, the learners gave more responsibility to their teacher in the process in the following areas: offering help, providing feedback on progress, and deciding how long to spend on each activity. These results are similar to the findings of Chan, Spratt and Humphreys (2002), which concluded that students at Hong Kong Polytechnic University assigned more responsibility to their teacher as a source of knowledge and expertise. The findings of this study also coincided with the research conducted by Karabıyık (2008), Koçak (2003) and Yıldırım (2004). The findings of the Karabıyık's (2008) study revealed that the participants identified the teacher as responsible for in-class issues. Likewise, Yıldırım (2004) and Koçak (2003) reported that students assigned more responsibility to the teacher for the methodological aspects of their learning such as deciding what to learn, deciding how long to study or choosing materials.

The findings of the present study on Turkish EFL learners' perception of teacher's authoritative roles may result from Turkey's education system in which the teacher has mostly the traditional role in the teaching learning process. This can also

be explained by examining the Turkish culture in which the hierarchal system is dominant in every setting and organization.

**EFL learners' perception of their motivation in language learning.** The third component of the questionnaire was EFL learners' motivation, an important element in the development of learner autonomy. In the literature, a great number of researchers claim that there is a link between learners' level of motivation in language learning and autonomy (Chan, Spratt and Humphreys, 2002; Lee, 1998; Littlewood, 1996; Kormos & Csizer, 2014). The data gathered regarding this section revealed that the participants appeared to be motivated, which implies their tendency to engage in autonomous language learning activities.

The majority of the respondents reported their willingness to learn English based on intrinsic and extrinsic reasons. For instance, the high scores reported on the items related to the extrinsic motivation showed that the respondents were aware of the reasons why they were learning English such as finding a better job in a competitive market. With regard to intrinsic motivation, most of the respondents noted their enjoyment of learning English and confidence in their skills.

**EFL learners' use of metacognitive strategies in language learning.** The last component of readiness for learner autonomy is the employment of metacognitive strategies in language learning. The findings of the present study showed that the participants generally used these strategies in the range of high frequency use based on Oxford's key to SILL, which implies their use of regulatory skills such as planning, monitoring and evaluating strategies in language learning.

In the literature, researchers have suggested that the use of metacognitive strategies, also known as regulatory skills, enable learners to take control of their own learning (e.g., Victori & Lockhart, 1995). The results in this section revealed participants' positive readiness for learner autonomy in English language learning. In

other words, their level of strategy employment indicated that the participants were very likely to take control of their own learning. The findings of the present study were in line with the study by Karabıyık (2008), Koçak (2003) and Yıldırım (2004), which concluded Turkish EFL students' use of metacognitive strategies at a medium or high level. However, the participants' average score, specifically on the items related to planning of learning activities, suggests counselling of the students on that issue is needed.

### **EFL Learners' Readiness for Autonomy and Frequency of SAC Use**

The fourth research question investigated how learners' readiness for autonomy vary among the students who attend the SAC with different frequencies. In order to answer this question, the overall scores of all the participants (non-users, regular users and infrequent users) on readiness for autonomy were analyzed using one-way ANOVA. The results showed that there was not a statistically difference on the scores of readiness for autonomy among the three frequency groups of SAC. That is to say, the SAC users were not necessarily the learners who had better control over their language learning. The finding is in line with what Benson (2001) proposed with regard to the role of self-access centers. As indicated by Benson (1994), the use of SAC does not necessarily mean that students may direct their own learning simply by visiting a self-access center although the instructional materials can facilitate the development of learner autonomy. The results of the present study is also found to be parallel with Uzun's (2013) study, which explored the learning styles of SAC users implying that the regular SAC users did not have conscious control over their learning.

Further analysis on subcategories of readiness for autonomy among different frequency groups showed that regular SAC users employed more metacognitive strategy use than infrequent users and non-users. This finding may concur with the

literature which suggests that employment of strategies prepares students to be involved in independent learning activities (e.g., Victori & Lockhart, 1995). The result may also imply that the learners developed metacognitive strategy use as a result of using the SAC, which is in parallel with findings Law's (2011) study based on pre-test and post-test design.

The additional findings of the present study also suggested that the most frequent activity that the SAC users did in the center was *doing online homework*, followed by *self-study* and *using the computers and internet* (see Appendix D for the activities done in the SAC). This result presents interesting insights into how the center is used. The students seem to visit the center predominately to do work they were supposed to do at home rather than using the materials or attending the workshops offered by the center. This finding revealed very similar results with Chung's (2013) study and Koyalan's (2009) study who concluded that learners at tertiary level were using the center for mainly instrumental reasons such as meeting the course requirements. The fact that the center could not function its main roles suggests that EFL learners should be trained and supported for the autonomous practices outside the class. Moreover, their awareness about the roles of the SAC should be raised by the teachers.

### **Pedagogical Implications**

The findings of the present study suggest significant pedagogical implications that can inform future language teaching practices at the secondary and tertiary levels.

The primary pedagogical implication that can be derived from this study is that teachers should not assume that SAC users are able to take conscious control over their own learning. Both the findings of this research and the relevant literature suggested that SAC users are not necessarily autonomous learners. For that reason,

EFL students, especially at the beginning stages, should not be left alone when they start using the center. They should be supported and guided by the trainers or the teachers as to how to use the center effectively. In other words, as Sturtridge (1997) suggested, rather than a single training on their first arrival to the center, a continuous counseling system should be established in order to track students' development and teach them how to study independently.

Another pedagogical implication that can be drawn from the present study is that teachers should change the EFL learners' perception of their authoritative roles by sharing responsibility in learning. As pointed out by Cotterall (1995), in order to prepare EFL learners to work more independently, teachers should raise students' awareness of the language learning process and provide a gradual transfer of responsibility to make students feel more competent in making decisions in learning over time. In this regard, teachers should act as a facilitator or counselor rather than traditional authoritative figure in order to make the students move towards autonomous learning.

The last implication of the study is that the SAC use should be integrated into the existing curriculum. The results of the present study revealed that Turkish EFL learners' emerging ability to take control of their own learning and for what purposes the center is used by them. It was found that the learners did not use the services and materials provided by the center effectively. Therefore, it is teachers' responsibility to raise their awareness about self-access learning and how self-access language learning (SALL) may be of benefit in order to increase learners' effective use of SAC. Teachers also should foster links between independent learning at the SAC and classroom learning. As Reinders (2000) stated, students need to feel that using the SAC is an important part of the program to achieve their goals.



In conclusion, teachers, SAC coordinators and students can benefit from the findings of this study by changing the learners' perception of teachers' roles in learning process, providing EFL learners with counseling and guidance about independent learning and integrating the SAC use into classroom teaching.

### **Limitations of the study**

The current study had particular limitations that suggest the findings should be interpreted with caution. The first and foremost limitation of the study was the limited sample that the study was based on. Due to the shortness of time allocated to the researcher, the data were collected in one setting, at one self-access center at a state university in Turkey. However, every self-access center is uniquely designed with different objectives to meet its users' needs and each has a different physical setting to appeal to its learner profile. For that reason, it may not be possible to generalize the findings of the study to all other settings since the results can change.

The second limitation was that the results of the current study were based on the quantitative data collected from participants through questionnaires. Additional qualitative data to get in-depth information would be very useful. For instance, interview sessions could have been conducted with a few participants in order to examine the reasons behind their attendance or non-attendance in the SAC. Classroom observations would also have contributed to the results about the learners' readiness for autonomy in terms of their perception of teacher's roles. All of these would have given the researcher an opportunity to compare and refine the results provided through the questionnaires.

Another limitation of the present study was that the components of learner autonomy explored in this study were limited to metacognitive strategies, role perceptions of students, decision-making abilities and motivation. However, because of the multidimensionality of learner autonomy and its developmental process, the

measurement of autonomous behaviors is difficult (Benson, 2010) since it may emerge in various situations. The context in which it manifests itself needs to be considered. Therefore, only examining these four areas of learner autonomy may limit the understanding of autonomy and self-learning centers. Because of the developmental process, collecting data on learner autonomy only one time rather than tracking the participants' behavior over a certain period of time should also be regarded as a limitation.

### **Suggestions for further research**

In lights of the findings, some suggestions can be made for further studies. To begin with, the current study was limited to the data gathered through questionnaires. A further study could be conducted through a classroom observation or an interview sessions with the SAC users in order to get in-depth data regarding SAC users' behaviors. Moreover, the present study was conducted at one self-access center of a university in Turkey. Further research could be conducted in more than one SAC in order to compare the findings concerning the attitudes of SAC users toward the center together with the factors affecting attitudes. That would make findings more generalizable to other settings.

As this study explored existing attitudes of SAC users, another study may investigate the change in attitudes before and after attending the SAC based on pre-test and post-test design. A questionnaire similar to the one administered in the present study might be employed to track attitudes toward independent language learning over time. Such studies might shed light on the reasons behind any attitudinal changes and the role SACs might play. Other research might also gather achievement test scores (midterms, finals etc.) of the participants in order to compare them with their attitudinal scores.

This current study examined the reasons behind EFL learners' use of the SAC. A further study might be designed to explore the effects of self-access language learning (SALL) on language skills and learning habits. Qualitative studies with a few regular SAC users might also provide in-depth data about their learning behaviors and their language development in time.

### **Conclusion**

The present study, conducted with 250 university-level Turkish students, investigated the reasons behind Turkish EFL learners' SAC use. To this end, it investigated the effect of students' attitudes toward the SAC as well as their readiness for autonomy in relation to their frequency of SAC use. The findings revealed that users' attitudes toward the SAC materials and their beliefs about its effects on language skills and learning activities seem to influence the frequency of the SAC use, which is in parallel with the literature (e.g., Sturtridge, 1997; Reinders, 2000). The findings of the study also showed that Turkish EFL students were ready to take the responsibility for their own learning despite their strong tendency to accept the teacher's power and authority in the learning process. This result is consistent with the literature regarding Turkish EFL learners' autonomy (e.g., Karabıyık, 2008; Koçak, 2003; Yıldırım, 2004). Additionally, the results revealed that the SAC users were not necessarily autonomous learners who make decisions about their own learning, which is also in line with the literature (e.g., Benson, 1994; Chung; 2013; Koyalın, 2009; Uzun, 2013). This suggests the need for training EFL learners about independent learning and raising their awareness about the advantages of the SAC

To conclude, this study adds to previous research outlining the factors that may be influential in SAC use in language learning. In providing additional information about the student attitudes toward SAC and readiness to take the control

over their own learning, it is hoped that the findings and pedagogical implications of this study will benefit the teachers, administrators and SAC coordinators by drawing their attention to the factors affecting EFL learners SAC use.

## REFERENCES

- Aston, G. (1993). The learner's contribution to the self-access center. *ELT Journal*, 47(3), 219-227.
- Barnett, L., & Jordan, G. (1991). Self-access facilities: What are they for? *ELT Journal*, 45(4), 305-312.
- Benson, P. (2001). *Teaching and researching autonomy in language learning*. England: Pearson Education.
- Benson P. (2010a). Measuring autonomy: Should we put our ability to the test? In A. Paran & L. Sercu (Eds.), *Testing the untestable language education* (pp. 77-97). Buffalo, NY: Multilingual Matters.
- Benson, P. (2010b). Teacher education and teacher autonomy: Creating spaces for experimentation in secondary school English language teaching. *Language Teaching Research*, 14(3). 259-275.
- Benson, P., & Voller, P. (1997). *Autonomy and independence in language learning*. London: Longman.
- Blin, F. (2004). CALL and the development of learner autonomy: Towards and activity theoretical perspective. *ReCALL*, 16(2), 377-395.
- Blin, F. (2005). *CALL and the development of learner autonomy: An activity theoretical study* (Unpublished doctoral thesis). Institute of Educational Technology, The Open University, UK.
- Bozkurt, N. (2007). *The effect of vocabulary notebooks on vocabulary acquisition* (Unpublished master's thesis). Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey.

- Breen M. P., & Mann, S. J. (1997). Shooting arrows at the sun: Perspectives on a pedagogy for autonomy. In P. Benson & P. Voller (Eds.), *Autonomy and independence in language learning* (pp. 132-149). London: Longman.
- Breen, M., & Littlejohn, A. (2000). The significance of negotiation. In M.P. Breen & A. Littlejohn (Eds.), *Classroom decision-making: Negotiation and process syllabuses in practice* (pp. 5-38). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Candy, P. (1991). *Self-direction for lifelong learning: A comprehensive guide to theory and practice*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Castellano, J., Mynard, J., & Rubesch, T. (2011). Technology use in a self-access center. *Language Learning and Technology*, 15(3), 12-27.
- Chan, V. (2001). Readiness for learner autonomy: What do our learners tell us? *Teaching in Higher Education*, 6(4), 505-518.
- Chan, V., Spratt, M., & Humphreys, G. (2002). Autonomous language learning: Hong Kong tertiary students' attitudes and behaviours. *Evaluation & Research in Education*, 16(1), 1-18.
- Chan, V. (2011). Learner autonomy and the out-of-class English learning of proficient students in Hong Kong. *The International Journal of Learning*, 17(11), 45-62.
- Chamot, A. U. (2009). *The CALLA handbook: Implementing the cognitive academic language learning approach*. White Plains, NY: Pearson Education/Longman.
- Chung, I. (2013). Are learners becoming more autonomous? The role of self-access centers in EFL college students English learning in Taiwan. *The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher*, 22(4), 701-708.
- Cohen, A. D. (1998). *Strategies in learning and using a second language*. London: Longman.

- Cotterall, S. (1995). Readiness for autonomy: Investigating learner beliefs. *System*, 23(2), 195-205.
- Cotterall, S. & Reinders, H. (2001). Fortress or bridge? Learners' perceptions and practice in self access language learning. *Tesolanz*, 8, 23-38.
- Dam, L. (1995). *Learner autonomy 3: From theory to classroom practice*. Dublin: Authentik.
- Dam, L. (2000). Evaluating autonomous learning. In B. Sinclair, I. McGrath, & T. Lamb (Eds.), *Learner autonomy, teacher autonomy: Future directions* (pp. 48-59). London: Longman.
- Dickinson, L. (1991). *Self-instruction in language learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dickinson, L. (1993). Talking shop: Aspects of autonomous learning: An interview with Leslie Dickinson. *ELT Journal*, 47(4), 330-336.
- Dickinson, L. (1995). Autonomy and motivation a literature review. *System*, 23(2), 165-174.
- Farmer, R. (1994). The limits of learner independence in Hong Kong. In D. Gardner, D., & L. Miller (Eds.), *Directions in self-access language learning* (pp. 13-28). Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
- Gan, Z. (2009). Asian learners' re-examined: An empirical study of language learning attitudes, strategies and motivation among mainland Chinese and Hong Kong students. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 30(1), 41-58.
- Gardner, D. (2000). Self-assessment for autonomous language learners. *Links & Letters*, 7, 49-60.
- Gardner, D. (2001). Making self-access centres more effective. In D. K. Kember, S. Candlin, & L. Yan (Eds.), *Further case studies of improving teaching and*

- learning from the action learning project* (pp. 143-160). Hong Kong: Action Learning Project.
- Gardner, D., & Miller, L. (1997). *A study of tertiary level self-access facilities in Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: City University of Hong Kong.
- Gardner, D., & Miller, L. (1999). *Establishing self-access: From theory to practice*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Gremmo, M. J., & Riley, P. (1995). Autonomy, self-direction and self access in language teaching and learning: The history of an idea. *System*, 23(2), 151-164.
- Holec, H. (1981). *Autonomy and foreign language learning*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- Jones, J. F. (1995). Self-access and culture: Retreating from autonomy. *ELT Journal*, 49(3), 228-234.
- Karabıyık, A. (2008). *The Relationship between culture of learning and Turkish preparatory students' readiness for learner autonomy* (Unpublished master's thesis). Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey.
- Kell, J., & Newton, C. (1997). Roles of pathways in self-access centers. *ELT Journal*, 51(1), 48-53.
- Klassen, J., Detaramani, C., Lui, E., Patri, M., & Wu, J. (1998). Does self-access language learning at the tertiary level really work? *Asian Journal of English Language Teaching*, 8, 55-80.
- Kocatürk, C. (2011). *Learners' perceptions of self-access language learning and promotion of autonomy through the self-access center in METU NCC SFL* (Unpublished master's dissertation). European University of Lefke, Lefke, Cyprus.



- Koçak, A. (2003). *A study on learners' readiness for autonomous learning of English as a foreign language* (Unpublished master's dissertation). Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey.
- Kormos J., & Csizer, K. (2014). The interaction of motivation, self-regulatory strategies, and autonomous learning behavior in different learner groups. *Tesol Quarterly*, 48(2), 275-299.
- Koyalán, A. (2009). The evaluation of a self-access centre: A useful addition to class-based teaching? *System*, 37(4), 731-740.
- Kumaravadivelu B. (2006). *Understanding language teaching: From method to postmethod*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Lamb, T. (2008). Learner autonomy and teacher autonomy. In T. Lamb & H. Reinders (Eds.), *Learner and teacher autonomy: Concepts, realities and responses* (pp. 269-281). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Lamb, T. (2010). Assessment of autonomy or assessment for autonomy? Evaluating learner autonomy for formative purposes. In A. Paran & L. Sercu (Eds.), *Testing the untestable language education* (pp. 98- 119). Buffalo, NY: Multilingual Matters.
- Law, E. Y. Y. (2011). Evaluating learning gain in a self-access center. In D. Gardner (Eds.), *Fostering autonomy in language learning* (pp. 199-213). Gaziantep: Zirve University. Retrieved from <http://ilac2010.zirve.edu.tr>.
- Lee, I. (1998). Supporting greater autonomy in language learning. *ELT Journal*, 53(4), 282-290.
- Lin, L. Y., & Brown, R. (1994). Guidelines for the production of in-house self-access materials. *ELT Journal*, 48(2), 150-156.
- Little, D. (1991). *Learner autonomy 1: Definitions, issues and problems*. Dublin: Authentik.

- Little, D. (1995). Learning as dialogue: The dependence of learner autonomy on teacher autonomy. *System*, 23(2), 175-181.
- Little D. (1997). Responding authentically to authentic texts: a problem for self-access language learning? In P. Benson & P. Voller (Eds.), *Autonomy and independence in language learning* (pp. 225-236). London: Longman.
- Littlejohn, A. (1985). Learner choice in language study. *ELT Journal*, 39(4), 253-61.
- Littlejohn, A. (1997). Self-access work and curriculum ideologies. In P. Benson & P. Voller (Eds.), *Autonomy and independence in language learning* (pp. 181-191). London: Longman.
- Littlewood, W. (1996). "Autonomy": An anatomy and a framework. *System*, 24(4), 427-435.
- Littlewood, W. (1999). Defining and developing autonomy in East Asian contexts. *Applied Linguistics*, 20(1), 71-94.
- Littlewood W. (2000). Do Asian students really want to listen and obey? *ELT Journal*, 54(1), 31-36.
- McGrath, I. (2000). Teacher autonomy. In B. Sinclair, I. McGrath, & T. Lamb (Eds.), *Learner autonomy, teacher autonomy: Future directions* (pp. 100-110). London: Longman.
- Malcolm, D. (2004). Why should learners contribute to the self-access center? *ELT Journal*, 58(4), 346-354.
- McMurry, B., Tanner, M., & Anderson, N. (2009). Self-access centers: Maximizing learners' access to center resources. *TESL-EJ*, 12(4), 1-13.
- Miller, L., & Rogerson-Revell, P. (1993). Self-access systems. *ELT Journal*, 47(3), 228-233.

- Milton, J. (1997). Providing computerized self-access opportunities for the development of writing skills. In P. Benson & P. Voller (Eds.), *Autonomy and independence in language learning* (pp. 237-248). London: Longman.
- Morrison, B. (2008). The role of the self-access center in the tertiary learning process. *System*, 36(2), 123-140.
- Murray, G. L. (1999). Autonomy and language learning in a simulated environment. *System*, 27(3), 295-308.
- Nguyen, L. T. C., & Gu, Y. (2013). Strategy-based instruction: A learner-focused approach for developing learner autonomy. *Language Teaching Research*, 17(1), 9-30.
- Nunan D. (1997). Designing and adapting materials to encourage learner autonomy. In P. Benson & P. Voller (Eds.), *Autonomy and independence in language learning* (pp. 192-203). London: Longman.
- Nunan, D., & Lamb, C. (2003). *The self-directed teacher: Managing the learning process*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- O'Malley, J. M., & Chamot, A.U. (2002). *Learning strategies in second language acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Oxford, R. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. Boston : Heinle & Heinle Publisher.
- Pierson, H. (1996). Learner culture and learner autonomy in the Hong Kong Chinese context. In R. Pemberton (Ed.), *Taking control: Autonomy in language learning* (pp. 49-58). Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
- Reinders, H. (2000). *Do it yourself? A learners' perspective on learner autonomy and self-access language learning* (Unpublished master's dissertation). Groningen University, Groningen. Netherlands.

- Reinders, H. (2007). Big brother is helping you: Supporting self-access language learning with a student monitoring system. *System*, 35(1), 93-111
- Reinders, H. (2011). From autonomy to autonomous language learning. In A. Ahmed, G. Cane & M. Hanzala (Eds.), *Teaching English in multilingual contexts: Current challenges, future directions* (pp. 37-52). UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Reinders, H., Hacker, P. & Lewis, M. (2004). The language advisor's role: Identifying and responding to needs. *Language Learning Journal*, 30, 30-35.
- Reinders, H. & Lewis, M. (2006). An evaluative checklist for self-access materials. *ELT Journal*, 60(3), 272-278.
- Richards, H. (1999). *Learners' perceptions of learning gains in self-access* (Unpublished master's dissertation). Victoria University of Wellington, Wellington, New Zealand.
- Salvia, O. S. (2000). Integrating a self-access system in a language learning institution: A model for implementation. *Links & Letters*, 7, 95-109.
- Schmidt, R., Boraie, D., & Kassabgy, O. (1996). Foreign language motivation: Internal structure and external connections. In R. Oxford (Eds.), *Language learning motivation: Pathways to the new century (Technical report 11)* (pp. 9-70). Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Scharle, A., & Szabo, A. (2000). *Learner autonomy: A guide to developing learner responsibility*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sheerin, S. (1989). *Self-access*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Sheerin, S. (1991). Self-access. *Language Teaching*, 24(2), 143-167.
- Sherrin, S. (1997). An exploration of the relationship between self-access and independent learning. In P. Benson & P. Voller (Eds.), *Autonomy and independence in language learning* (pp. 54-65). London: Longman.

- Sturtridge, G. (1997). Teaching and language learning in self-access centers: Changing roles. In P. Benson & P. Voller (Eds.), *Autonomy and independence in language learning* (pp. 66-78). London: Longman.
- Thavenius, C. (1999). Teacher autonomy for learner autonomy. In S. Cotterall and D. Crabbe (Eds.), *Learner autonomy in language learning: Defining the field and effecting change* (pp. 159-163). Frankfurt: Lang.
- Ushioda, E. (2011). Why autonomy? Insights from motivation theory and research. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 5(2), 221-232.
- Uzun, T. (2013). *Yükseköğretimde bağımsız öğrenme merkezini kullanan ingilizce hazırlık sınıfı öğrencilerinin öğrenme eğilimleri ve biçimleri* (Unpublished master's dissertation). Ankara University, Ankara, Turkey.
- Victori, M. (2007). The development of learners' support mechanisms in a self-access center and their implementation in a credit-based self-directed learning program. *System*, 35, 10-31.
- Voller P. (1997). Does the teacher have a role in autonomous language learning? In P. Benson & P. Voller (Eds.), *Autonomy and independence in language learning* (pp. 98-113). London: Longman.
- Yıldırım, Ö. (2005). *ELT students' perception and behavior related to learner autonomy as learners and future teachers* (Unpublished master's dissertation). Anadolu University, Eskişehir, Turkey.
- Victori, M. (2007). The development of learners' support mechanisms in a self-access center and their implementation in a credit-based self-directed learning program. *System*, 35, 10-31.
- Victori, M., & Lockhart, W. (1995). Enhancing metacognition in self-directed language learning. *System*, 23(2), 223-234.

Wenden, A. (1991). *Learner strategies for learner autonomy*. New York: Prentice Hall International.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Questionnaire (English)

#### Dear Participant

The aim of this questionnaire is to get scientific data in order to conduct a study within MA TEFL program at Bilkent University. The name, surname and address of the participants will not be asked. The information you provide will be confidential. Thank you for your contributions by spending time to share your thoughts and ideas.

Mürtivvet NASÖZ  
MA TEFL student, Bilkent University  
Prof. Dr. Kimberly Trimble  
Supervisor

<b>Personal Information</b> <b>Gender?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <b>Age?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 18-20 <input type="checkbox"/> 21-23 <input type="checkbox"/> 24-26 <input type="checkbox"/> 27+ <b>At which level are you a student this term</b> <input type="checkbox"/> [A] <input type="checkbox"/> [A+] <input type="checkbox"/> [B] <input type="checkbox"/> [B+] <input type="checkbox"/> [C] <b>How long did you study English before you started the university?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> NEVER <input type="checkbox"/> 1-3 years <input type="checkbox"/> 4-6 years <input type="checkbox"/> 7 years and more					
<b>PART I</b>  <b>Please indicate to degree to which you agree or disagree with each of these statements about your language learning by circling the number which matches your answer</b> 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)                      4 = Agree (A) 2 = Disagree (D)                                      5 = Strongly Agree (SA) 3 = Neutral (N)					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1-I should evaluate my learning in English.	1	2	3	4	5
2- Learning English is enjoyable for me.	1	2	3	4	5
3- I have clear goals for improving my English skills.	1	2	3	4	5
4- I am able to identify my weaknesses in learning English	1	2	3	4	5
5- I look for opportunities to read as much as possible in English.	1	2	3	4	5
6- I think it is the teacher's responsibility to decide what I should learn.	1	2	3	4	5
7- I have a clear idea of what I need English for	1	2	3	4	5
8- I try to find as many ways as I can to use my English.	1	2	3	4	5
9- I am able to choose learning materials for myself	1	2	3	4	5

10- I often think about how I can learn English better.	1	2	3	4	5
11- I plan my schedule so I will have enough time to study English.	1	2	3	4	5
12- I should decide what to learn out of the class.	1	2	3	4	5
13- I like to look for solutions to my problems by myself.	1	2	3	4	5
14- I expect the teacher to offer help to me	1	2	3	4	5
15- I have my own ways of assessing how much I have learned	1	2	3	4	5
16- I look for people I can talk to in English.	1	2	3	4	5
17- I have difficulty deciding what to study outside class	1	2	3	4	5
18- I pay attention when someone is speaking English.	1	2	3	4	5
19- If I learn English, I will be able to get a better and well-paid job.	1	2	3	4	5
20- I need the teacher to tell me how I am progressing	1	2	3	4	5
21- I try to find out how to be a better learner of English	1	2	3	4	5
22- It is difficult for me to know how long to spend on each activity.	1	2	3	4	5
23- Even if there were no attendance requirement in the English course, my attendance would be high.	1	2	3	4	5
24- I notice my English mistakes and use that information to help me do better.	1	2	3	4	5
25- I believe that I will be successful in the English class.	1	2	3	4	5
26- The teacher should identify my learning weaknesses in English.	1	2	3	4	5
27- English is important to me because it will broaden my point of view.	1	2	3	4	5
28- I usually know myself what progress I have made without the teacher telling me	1	2	3	4	5
29- I can honestly say that I really put my best effort into trying to learn English.	1	2	3	4	5
30- I am able to decide what I should learn next in English	1	2	3	4	5
31- The teacher should tell me how long I should spend on an each activity	1	2	3	4	5



**PART II**

**How often do you go to the self-access center?**

- NEVER
- A few times a semester but not regularly
- 1-2 times a month
- 1-2 times a week
- More than 3 times a week

**I don't make use of the SAC because;**

- I have not heard of it
- I do not find it useful
- There are not enough useful materials in the center
- I do not like self-study
- I do not need to do extra work
- I have enough resources
- Other (reasons) ..... (Please indicate)

**How much time do you spend in SAC on average?**

- up to 30 minutes
- 30 min - 1 hour
- more than 1 hour

**For what purpose(s) do you use the self-access center?**

- Books (library)
- Computers & Internet
- Magazines & Newsletter
- Talking to the teacher
- Self-study
- Worksheets
- The internet
- Readers
- Movie club
- Online homework
- Speaking club
- Other

**Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of these statements about your language learning by circling the number which matches your answer**

- 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)
- 2 = Disagree (D)
- 3 = Neutral (N)
- 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)
- 2 = Disagree (D)
- 3 = Neutral (N)

Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly Agree

1- I find the SAC easy to get to.	1	2	3	4	5
2- The SAC is open at convenient times to meet my needs.	1	2	3	4	5
3- I think self-access is not a good way to learn.	1	2	3	4	5
4- The SAC has helped me to study independently.	1	2	3	4	5
5- I find the resources (books, magazines etc.) useful in the SAC.	1	2	3	4	5
6- There is adequate support staff for the work of the SAC.	1	2	3	4	5
7- The materials in the SAC stimulate my interest in learning English.	1	2	3	4	5
8- The atmosphere in the SAC is suitable for studying.	1	2	3	4	5
9- The SAC is effective in improving my English skills.	1	2	3	4	5
10- I have become a more confident language user as a result of using the SAC	1	2	3	4	5
11- The SAC helps me to make good use of my time.	1	2	3	4	5
12- Using the SAC has helped to improve my learning strategies.	1	2	3	4	5
13- The studying I do in the SAC reinforces what I have learned in class.	1	2	3	4	5
14- I can find materials easily in our SAC.	1	2	3	4	5
15- I get the necessary support from the SAC staff when I need it.	1	2	3	4	5
16- There ought to be a greater variety of materials in our SAC.	1	2	3	4	5
17- Self-access work helps me develop good study habits.	1	2	3	4	5
18- I find the self-access mode of learning interesting.	1	2	3	4	5
19- The materials in the SAC meet my needs.	1	2	3	4	5

## Appendix B: Questionnaire (Turkish)

Bu anket Bilkent Üniversitesi MA TEFL programı yüksek lisans tezi kapsamında bilimsel veri elde etmek için hazırlanmıştır. Sizden isim, soy isim ve adres istenmemektedir. Vereceğiniz her türlü bilgi tamamen gizli tutulacaktır. Anket için zaman ayırıp, görüş ve fikirlerinizi paylaştığınız ve katkılarınızdan dolayı şimdiden teşekkür ederim.

Mürüvvet NASÖZ

Bilkent Üniversitesi Yüksek lisans Öğrencisi

Prof. Dr. Kimberly Trimble

Tez Danışmanı

<b>Kişisel bilgiler</b>					
<b>Cinsiyet?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Erkek <input type="checkbox"/> Bayan					
<b>Yaş?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 18-20 <input type="checkbox"/> 21-23 <input type="checkbox"/> 24-26 <input type="checkbox"/> 27+					
<b>Bu dönemki kur seviyeniz</b>					
<input type="checkbox"/> [A] <input type="checkbox"/> [A+] <input type="checkbox"/> [B] <input type="checkbox"/> [B+] <input type="checkbox"/> [C]					
<b>Üniversiteye başlamadan önce ne kadar süredir İngilizce öğreniyordunuz?</b>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Hiçbir zaman <input type="checkbox"/> 1-3 yıl <input type="checkbox"/> 4-6 yıl <input type="checkbox"/> 7 yıl ve daha fazla					
<b>BÖLÜM I</b>					
<b>Aşağıda İngilizce öğrenmeye yönelik bazı ifadeler vardır. Lütfen ifadelerin her birini dikkatle okuyarak size en uygun gelen seçeneği işaretleyiniz.</b>					
1 = Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum    4 = Katılıyorum					
2 = Katılmıyorum    5 = Kesinlikle Katılıyorum					
3 = Kararsızım					
	Kesinlikle katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Kararsızım	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle katılıyorum
1- İngilizce öğrenme performansımı kendim değerlendirmeliyim.	1	2	3	4	5
2- İngilizce öğrenmek benim için zevklidir.	1	2	3	4	5
3- İngilizcemi belirlediğim amaçlara ulaşmak için geliştirmek istiyorum.	1	2	3	4	5

	Kesinlikle katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Kararsızım	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle katılıyorum
4- İngilizce öğrenmeyle ilgili eksiklerimi kendim tespit edebilirim.	1	2	3	4	5
5- İngilizce okuma yapmak için kendime fırsatlar yaratmaya çalışırım.	1	2	3	4	5
6- Neleri öğrenmem gerektiğine karar vermek o dersi veren okutmanın sorumluluğudur.	1	2	3	4	5
7- İngilizceye neden ihtiyacım olduğunun farkındayım.	1	2	3	4	5
8- İngilizce pratik yapmak için mümkün olan her yolu denerim.	1	2	3	4	5
9- Öğrenme materyallerimi kendim seçebilirim.	1	2	3	4	5
10- Sık sık İngilizceyi daha iyi nasıl öğrenebilirim diye sorgularım.	1	2	3	4	5
11- İngilizce çalışmak için zaman planlaması yaparım.	1	2	3	4	5
12- Ders zamanları dışında neyi öğrenmem gerektiğine ben karar vermeliyim.	1	2	3	4	5
13- Sorunlarıma kendim yanıt bulmaktan hoşlanırım.	1	2	3	4	5
14- Okutmanın bana zorlandığım konularda yardım teklif etmesini beklerim.	1	2	3	4	5
15- Ne kadar öğrendiğimi ölçmek için kendime ait yöntemlerim var.	1	2	3	4	5
16- Etrafımda İngilizce pratik yapabileceğim insanlar olmasını isterim.	1	2	3	4	5
17- Ders dışında neye çalışmam gerektiğine karar vermekte zorlanıyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
18- Birisi İngilizce konuşurken dikkatimi ona veririm.	1	2	3	4	5
19- İngilizce öğrenirsem daha iyi ve daha kazançlı bir işe sahip olacağıma inanıyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
20- Okutmanın bana ne kadar ilerleme kaydettiğimi söylemesine ihtiyaç duyarım.	1	2	3	4	5
21- İngilizceyi daha iyi nasıl öğrenebileceğimi bulmaya çalışırım.	1	2	3	4	5
22- Bir aktivitede ne kadar zaman harcamam gerektiğini karar vermek benim için zordur.	1	2	3	4	5
23- Hazırlık sınıfında devam zorunluluğu olmasaydı bile derse katılım oranım yüksek olurdu.	1	2	3	4	5
24- Fark ettiğim İngilizce hatalarımı daha iyi olmak için kullanırım.	1	2	3	4	5
25- Hazırlık okulunda başarılı olacağıma inanıyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
26- Okutman, İngilizce öğrenme konusundaki eksikliklerimi belirlemelidir.	1	2	3	4	5
27- İngilizcenin bakış açımı genişlettiğini düşünüyorum.	1	2	3	4	5

28- İngilizcede ne kadar ilerleme kaydettiğimi genellikle okutman bana söylemeden kendim fark ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
29- İngilizce öğrenmek için elimden gelenin en iyisini yaptığımı söyleyebilirim.	1	2	3	4	5
30- İngilizcede bir sonraki aşamada öğrenmem gerekenlere kendim karar verebilirim.	1	2	3	4	5
31- Okutman bana bir aktivitede ne kadar zaman harcamam gerektiğini söylemelidir.	1	2	3	4	5

## BÖLÜM 2

### Bağımsız Öğrenme Merkezine ne kadar sıklıkla gidiyorsunuz?

- Hiçbir zaman
  Haftada 1-2 kez  
 Birkaç kez gittim ama düzenli gitmiyorum
  Haftada 3 defadan daha fazla  
 Ayda birkaç kez

### Bağımsız Öğrenme Merkezini kullanmıyorum çünkü

- Haberdar değilim  
 Yararlı bulmuyorum  
 Merkezdeki kaynaklar “yetersiz”  
 Bağımsız çalışma yapmayı sevmiyorum  
 İhtiyacım olmadığını düşünüyorum  
 Kendi kaynaklarım yeterli  
 Diğer ..... ( Lütfen belirtiniz)

### Bağımsız Öğrenme Merkezinde ortalama ne kadar zaman harcıyorsunuz?

- 30 dakikaya kadar  
 Yaklaşık 30 dakika - 1 saat arası  
 1 saatten daha fazla

### Bağımsız Öğrenme Merkezini hangi amaçla kullanıyorsunuz?

- Kitaplar (kütüphane)
  Bireysel çalışma
  Film kulübü  
 Bilgisayar & internet
  Worksheet
  Online ödev  
 Dergiler & haberbülteni
  Konuşma kulübü
  Diğer  
 Hocalarla konuşmak
  Okuma kitapları (readers)  
 Arkadaşlarla buluşmak

### Aşağıda bağımsız öğrenme merkezine yönelik bazı ifadeler vardır. Lütfen ifadelerin her birini dikkatle okuyarak size en uygun gelen seçeneği işaretleyiniz.

- 1 = Kesinlikle katılmıyorum
  4 = Katılıyorum  
 2 = Katılmıyorum
  5 = Kesinlikle katılıyorum  
 3 = Kararsızım

	Kesinlikle katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Kararsızım	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle katılıyorum
--	-------------------------	--------------	------------	-------------	------------------------

1- Bağımsız öğrenme merkezinin konumunu ulaşım açısından elverişli buluyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
2- Bağımsız öğrenme merkezinin çalışma saatlerinin öğrenci ihtiyaçlarına uygun olduğunu düşünüyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
3- Bence bağımsız öğrenme (bağımsız çalışma) iyi bir öğrenme yöntemi değildir.	1	2	3	4	5
4- Bağımsız öğrenme merkezinin bana bağımsız çalışma alışkanlıkları kazandırdığını düşünüyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
5- Bağımsız öğrenme merkezindeki çeşitli kaynakları (kitap, dergi vb.) faydalı buluyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
6- Bağımsız öğrenme merkezinde yeterli personel vardır.	1	2	3	4	5
7- Bağımsız öğrenme merkezindeki materyaller İngilizce öğrenmeye olan ilgimi artırıyor.	1	2	3	4	5
8- Bağımsız öğrenme merkezinin ortamı ders çalışmak için uygundur.	1	2	3	4	5
9- Bağımsız öğrenme merkezinin İngilizcemizi geliştirmeme yardımcı olduğunu düşünüyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
10- Bağımsız öğrenme merkezindeki çalışmalarım dil konusunda kendime güvenimi artırıyor.	1	2	3	4	5
11- Bağımsız öğrenme merkezi zamanımı daha etkili kullanmamı sağlıyor.	1	2	3	4	5
12- Bağımsız öğrenme merkezini kullanmam İngilizce öğrenme yöntemleri geliştirmemi sağlıyor.	1	2	3	4	5
13- İngilizce dersinde (sınıfta) öğrendiklerimi bağımsız öğrenme merkezinde pekiştirebilirim.	1	2	3	4	5
14- Bağımsız öğrenme merkezindeki materyalleri kolaylıkla bulabilirim.	1	2	3	4	5
15- Bağımsız öğrenme merkezinde çeşitli materyaller mevcuttur.	1	2	3	4	5
16- Bağımsız öğrenme merkezinin bana yeni ders çalışma alışkanlıkları kazandırabileceğini düşünüyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
17- Bağımsız çalışma yöntemini faydalı buluyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
18- Bağımsız öğrenme merkezindeki materyallerin ihtiyaçlarımı karşıladığını düşünüyorum.	1	2	3	4	5

### Appendix C: Normality Test Results

Before going on with the analysis, the normality assumption was examined. The results of normality test are given in Table 20, Table 21, Table 22 and Table 23 respectively. Because the sizes of the three frequency groups (non-users, infrequent users and regular users) were greater than 50, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used for each test to check whether this group's data were normally distributed or not.

#### Research Question 2: Overall Attitudes toward SAC Normality Test Result

Table 20

*Results of the Normality test for the Overall Attitudes toward SAC and Frequency of SAC use*

Independent Variable	Kolmogorov-Smirnov		
	KS	df	<i>p</i>
Infrequent Users	.097	116	.009
Regular Users	.114	73	.020

The results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test showed that the both groups' data were not normally distributed at the significance level of .05,  $KS(116) = 0.097, p = .009 < .05$ ;  $KS(73) = .114, p = .020 < .05$ .

## Research Question 2: Attitudes toward SAC Subcategories Normality Test

### Result

Table 21

*Normality Test for the Subcategories of Attitudes toward SAC and Frequency of SAC use*

Subcategories	Independent Variable	Kolmogorov-Smirnov		
		KS	df	<i>p</i>
Practical Aspects	Infrequent Users	.145	116	.000
	Regular Users	.130	73	.004
Language Skills	Infrequent Users	.139	116	.000
	Regular Users	.188	73	.000
Learning Activities	Infrequent Users	.136	116	.000
	Regular Users	.107	73	.036
SAC Materials	Infrequent Users	.155	116	.000
	Regular Users	.115	73	.018

The results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for the Practical Aspects indicated that both infrequent and regular groups' data for these two groups were not normally distributed at the significance level of .05,  $KS(116) = .145, p = .000 < .05$ ;  $KS(73) = .130, p = .004 < .05$ . The results for the Language Skills also revealed that the data for both groups were not normally distributed at the significance level of .05,  $KS(116) = .139, p = .000 < .05$ ;  $KS(73) = .188, p = .000 < .05$ . For the Learning Activities, the results showed that the data for both groups were not normally distributed at the significance level of .05,  $KS(116) = .136, p = .000 < .05$ ;  $KS(73) = .107, p = .036 < .05$ . Finally, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test results for the SAC Materials showed that the data for these two groups were not normally distributed at the significance level of .05,  $KS(116) = .155, p = .000 < .05$ ;  $KS(73) = .018, p = .018 < .05$ .



#### Research Question 4: Readiness for Learner Autonomy Normality Test Result

Table 22

*Normality Test for Readiness for Learner Autonomy and Frequency of SAC use*

Independent Variable	Kolmogorov-Smirnov		
	KS	df	<i>p</i>
Non-user	.57	61	.200
Infrequent Users	.49	116	.200
Regular Users	.088	73	.200

The results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test showed that all the data by groups of non-user, infrequent user and regular users respectively, were normally distributed at the significance level of .05,  $KS(61) = .57, p = .200 > .05$ ;  $KS(116) = .49, p = .200 > .05$ ;  $KS(73) = .088, p = .200 > .05$ .

#### Research Question 4: Subcategories of Readiness for Autonomy Normality Test Result

Table 23

*Normality Test for Subcategories of Readiness for Autonomy and Frequency of SAC Use*

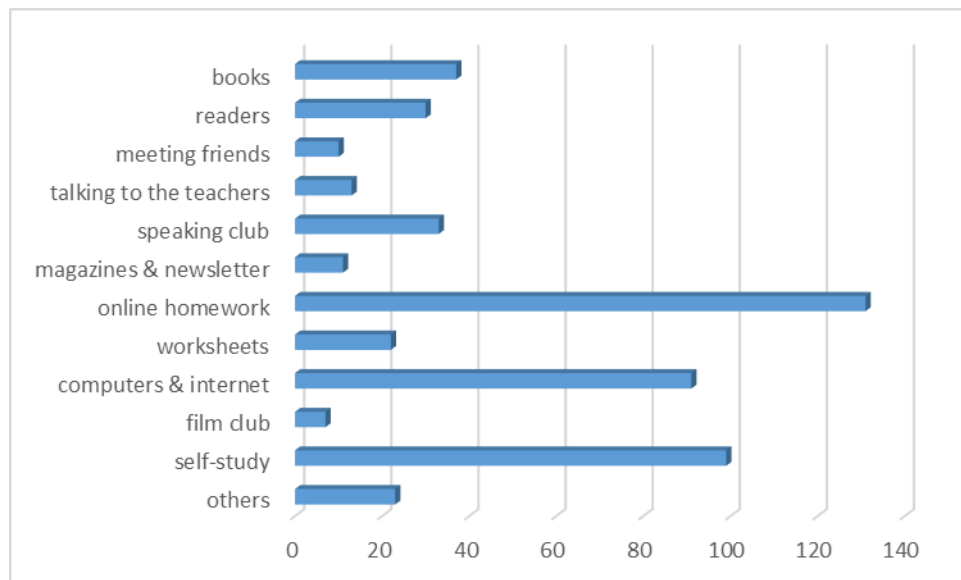
Subcategories		Kolmogorov-Smirnov		
		KS	df	<i>p</i>
Motivation	All groups	.93	250	.000
Metacognitive Strategy use	All groups	.107	250	.000
Views on their own and teacher's roles	All groups	.087	250	.000
Decision-making abilities	All groups	.088	250	.000

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test results for motivation, metacognitive Strategies, students' views on their own and teacher's roles and decision-making

abilities showed that the data for the groups were not normally distributed respectively at the significance level of .05,  $KS(250) = .93, p = .000 < .05$ ;  $KS(250) = .107, p = .000 < .05$ ;  $KS(250) = .087, p = .000 < .05$ ;  $KS(250) = .88, p = .000 < .05$ .

### Appendix D: The Results for the Activities Done in the SAC

The SAC users who used the center infrequently and regularly ( $n = 189$ ) were asked to report on the activities they did in the SAC during their visit the center. On the questionnaire, the students were asked to indicate the activities and they could select more than one option to identify the reasons why they were visiting the SAC.



*Figure 3.* Activities done in the SAC by the SAC users

As shown in the Figure 3, the most common activity done in the SAC is doing online homework, which is followed by self-study and using computers and the internet. This finding indicated that rather than using the services (e.g., clubs) or the materials (e.g., readers) offered by the center, the students mostly were visiting the center in order to meet the requirements of the course or study for the exams with their own materials.

## Appendix E: Pictures of the Self-access Center



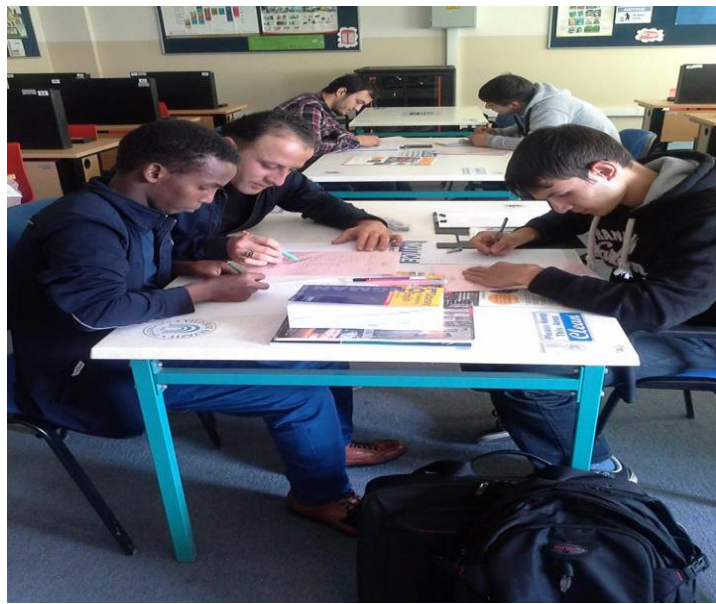
Figure 4. Reading desk



Figure 5. SAC bulletin board



*Figure 6.* Computer lab with study desks



*Figure 7.* Students working at study desks



*Figure 8. In-house SAC Materials*



*Figure 9. Library*