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Developing Learner Autonomy in Lower-secondary English Classes

Bc. Barbora Kubátová

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Zásady pro vypracování

Diplomantka se ve své práci bude zabývat problematikou rozvoje autonomie žáků v hodinách anglického jazyka na druhém stupni základní školy. V teoretické části nejprve představí koncept autonomie a jejího rozvoje u žáků, a to z pohledu synchronního a diachronního. Dále se diplomantka bude zabývat možnostmi, jak rozvíjet autonomii žáků 2. stupně základní školy v hodinách anglického jazyka – bude diskutovat role aktérů vzdělávacího procesu a různé strategie a techniky, který rozvoj autonomie v souladu s obecnými cíli základního vzdělávání podporují.

Empirická část bude obsahovat případovou studii jedné třídy vybrané základní školy, jejímž cílem bude zjistit, zda a jak učitel/ka rozvíjí v hodinách angličtiny autonomii žáků. V kvalitativně orientované případové studii diplomantka využije pro sběr dat pozorovací a dotazovací techniky.

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Vedoucí diplomové práce: **doc. PaedDr. Monika Černá, Ph.D.**
Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky

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doc. Mgr. Jiří Kubeš, Ph.D. v.r.   **Mgr. Olga Roebuck, Ph.D.** v.r.
děkan   vedoucí katedry

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Prohlašuji:

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ANNOTATION

This diploma thesis deals with the topic of developing learner autonomy in lower-secondary English classes. The theoretical part defines the concept of learner autonomy and puts it into the broader context of current educational paradigms and approaches to education. Subsequently, it discusses conditions for learner autonomy development and specific strategies and techniques supporting the development of learner autonomy in ELT classes. The practical part contains a case study. The aim of the study is to find out whether and how learner autonomy is being developed in the selected lower-secondary English class.

KEY WORDS

English language teaching, lifelong learning, learner autonomy, list of features of learner autonomy development, case study

ANOTACE

Tato diplomová práce se zabývá tématem rozvoje autonomie žáků v hodinách anglického jazyka na druhém stupni základní školy. Teoretická část definuje koncept autonomie žáka a zasazuje ho do širšího kontextu současných vzdělávacích paradigmat a přístupů ke vzdělávání. Následně rozebírá podmínky a konkrétní strategie a techniky, které podporují rozvoj autonomie v hodinách anglického jazyka. Praktická část obsahuje případovou studii, jejímž cílem je zjistit, zda a jak je v hodinách anglického jazyka ve vybrané třídě na druhém stupni základní školy rozvíjena autonomie žáků.

KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA

výuka anglického jazyka, celoživotní vzdělávání, autonomie žáka, seznam znaků rozvoje autonomie žáka, případová studie

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CEFR – Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

ELP – European Language Portfolio

ELT – English Language Teaching

FEP BE – Framework Educational Programme for Basic Education

FLT – Foreign Language Teaching

SDT – Self Determination Theory

SEP – School Educational Programme

SLA – Second Language Acquisition

SLT – Second Language Teaching

TL – Target Language

ZPD – Zone of Proximal Development

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, more than ever, people have to cope with a rapid development of the world. The flow of information is enormous. What was considered to be a truth yesterday does not have to be valid today. Therefore, the society requires that we learn throughout our lives. It is reflected in current approaches to education which emphasize the importance of lifelong learning and the necessity to develop learner autonomy. This thesis deals with the topic of learner autonomy development in ELT classes and explores the situation within Czech educational system. I opted for this topic because I think that the concept of learner autonomy is neglected in Czech schools. It became apparent when the pandemic started, and Czech schools had to switch to the mode of distance learning. Pupils were forced to take charge of their own learning and for most of them it turned out to be a very difficult task.

The aim of this thesis is to find out whether and how learner autonomy is being developed in the selected lower-secondary English class. The thesis is divided into two parts – the theoretical and practical part. The first chapter of the theoretical part puts the concept of learner autonomy into the broader context of current educational paradigms and approaches to education, i.e. it discusses learner autonomy in relation to the concept of lifelong learning, constructivist conception of learning and teaching, learner-centredness and individualisation and differentiation. The second chapter defines the term learner autonomy and describes its roots. Then, it deals with learner autonomy specifically in language learning. What follows is the discussion on how learner autonomy is embedded in Czech curriculum documents. The third chapter is concerned with conditions for learner autonomy development, i.e. it addresses, for example, how teacher's educational style and the roles he/she adopts can influence the development of learner autonomy in ELT classes. In the fourth chapter some specific strategies and techniques that are expected to develop learner autonomy are presented. The fifth chapter then briefly discusses the potential of some of the ELT methods to develop autonomy in learners.

The practical part defines and characterizes the research strategy of case study. Then, it describes the methods and individual tools through which data were collected. All data collection tools, i.e. the observation sheet, the questionnaire, and the interview, draw on the list of features of learner autonomy development that was created on the basis of the findings from the theoretical part. The data gained are then described and analysed. The practical part is concluded with presentation and discussion of the findings.

THEORETICAL PART

1 CURRENT EDUCATIONAL PARADIGMS AND APPROACHES TO EDUCATION

1.1 Lifelong Learning

As it has been expressed in the Introduction, the development of learner autonomy is an essential precondition for lifelong learning (Veteška and Tureckiová 2008, 16), which is one of the paradigms acknowledged in current educational systems (Demirel 2009, 1709). In the Decision No 1720/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 November 2006, which established an action programme in the field of lifelong learning, lifelong learning is defined as "all general education, vocational education and training, non-formal education and informal learning undertaken throughout life, resulting in an improvement in knowledge, skills and competences within a personal, civic, social and/or employment-related perspective." The definition indicates that lifelong learning accompanies people throughout their lives since it concerns not only learning in formal educational institutions, but also learning in various courses, seminars, or workshops, as well as learning happening in everyday situations. Thus, teachers should encourage learners to take responsibility for their own learning, or in other words, develop their autonomy, not only to help them function better in formal compulsory education, but also to promote learners' endeavour to continue learning after the formal instruction finishes (Field 2007, 1).

The concept of lifelong learning arose already in the 1960s (Yurdakul 2017, 16). However, it started to be emphasized only in the last decade of the 20th century in consequence of the changing needs of society that pointed to the necessity to cope with the rapid development in science and technology and changing conditions in the economy (Yurdakul 2017, 16). As Demirel (2009, 1709) explains, the flow of information accelerated significantly and in addition to that the information began to become obsolete in quite a short period of time. Thus, it is no longer considered enough to make do with restricted knowledge and skills acquired once in the past (Demirel 2009, 1709). This shift towards perceiving learning as a constant and never-ending process triggered the changes in general goals of education. Educational experts and scholars realized that it is not possible to equip learners with all the

knowledge and skills they will need in their future lives and started to make efforts to implement the concept of lifelong learning into the curriculum.

Regarding the Czech curriculum, the concept of lifelong learning was accentuated by the National Program for the Development of Education, the so-called White Paper, approved by the Government in 2001. The White Paper highlighted the fact that the implementation of the concept of lifelong learning does not mean only the expansion of the present educational system to include the sector of further education, but mainly a fundamental change in the concept, goals, and functions of education (MŠMT 2007, 22). The subsequent curriculum reform, that took place in the first decade of the 21st century and that established the concept of two-level curriculum documents (national and school level), continued to emphasize the importance of lifelong learning, besides other things, by the implementation of key competencies. As stated in the Framework Educational Programme for Basic Education (FEP BE), key competencies should help "prepare learners for their further education and their role in society" (MŠMT 2021, 10). See Chapter 2.5.

The concept of lifelong learning is by its nature related to the theories about how people learn. Since it views learning as something that comes from various sources including people's life experiences, it complies with the constructivist theory of learning. This theory derives from the assumption that "individuals are actively involved right from birth in constructing personal meaning, that is their own personal understanding, from their experiences" (Williams and Burden 1997, 21). See Chapter 1.2.

1.2   Constructivist Conception of Learning and Teaching

Constructivism is a theory of learning that draws on the cognitive psychology of Jean Piaget and social constructivist theories of Lev Vygotsky (Brown 2014, 12). Piaget represents the cognitive branch of constructivism and views learning as "a developmental process that involves change, self-generation, and construction, each building on prior learning experiences" (Kaufman 2004 in Brown 2014, 12). Piaget proposed a theory of cognitive development which asserts that children go through four pre-determined stages of mental development and perceived the individual cognitive development "as a relatively solitary act" (Brown 2014, 12). Vygotsky, on the other hand, highlighted the importance of social interaction in learning, thus he stands for social constructivism (Brown 2014, 12). He came up with the notion of a zone of proximal development (ZPD), which he defines as "the distance

between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky 1978 in Benson 2011, 41). In other words, the ZPD represents tasks that a learner cannot yet solve on his/her own, but he/she can solve them through the interaction with more competent persons. Vygotsky contributed to the theory of learner autonomy development by viewing collaboration and interaction as means of autonomous learning (Benson 2011, 42).

Another theory that relates to constructivism, and thus also to the concept of learner autonomy, is George Kelly's personal construct theory (1963). Kelly proceeds from the developmental psychology of Piaget and views all learning in life as "a continuous process of hypothesis-testing and theory-revision" (Little 1991, 17). To put it simply, personal construct theory is based on the idea that everybody has their own understanding of the world and that the existing understanding is constantly being tested and reconstructed. This theory follows Piaget's view according to which the developing mind is ceaselessly trying to find a balance between what is known and what is being experienced (the so-called equilibration), and that is accompanied by the complementary processes of assimilation and accommodation (Williams and Burden 1997, 22). Assimilation is the process by which we modify the newly coming information in our mind so that it fits into the existing knowledge (Williams and Burden 1997, 22). On the other hand, accommodation is the process by which we modify our current knowledge so that the new information can fit in (Williams and Burden 1997, 22). The interaction of these two processes contributes to what Piaget terms the adaptation (Williams and Burden 1997, 22). This process explains why learning sometimes tends to be more difficult than at other times. As Benson (2011, 39) puts it, when learning is about adding new information to the existing system of constructs, it is not supposed to be problematic. However, if the new knowledge somehow contradicts the existing system of constructs, learning is expected to be more painful (Benson 2011, 39).

According to Zormanová (2012, 11), constructivist approach to learning and teaching poses an effort to overcome the traditional, transmissive, approach. In transmissive instruction, a learner is a passive recipient of information that is usually provided by a teacher. It does not necessarily need to be the teacher who transmits the knowledge and information, instead it can be a textbook, or a similar source (Dvořáková et al. 2015, 68). Whatever the source is, the information is passed on to learners as "truths to be learnt" and learners are supposed to accept these truths and learn/memorize them. Therefore, one of the main problems of the

transmissive approach is that it shortens learners' cognitive processes as it provides them with "ready-made knowledge". Referring to Anderson's and Krathwohl's Revised Cognitive Taxonomy (2001), the transmissive instruction aims at learners' lower cognitive processes, i.e. the dimension of "remember" and "understand", but the higher cognitive processes, such as the dimension of "apply", "analyze", "evaluate" and "create", are not employed. Another issue is that transmissive instruction does not prepare learners for dealing with life difficulties (Skalková 1971 in Zormanová 2012, 10). Moreover, the focus is on the teacher, and what predominates is frontal teaching (Zormanová 2012, 9). The learner is thus sidelined, which contradicts the idea of learner-centredness (see Chapter 1.3). For the reasons given above, the transmissive instruction in general does not fit the concept of learner autonomy development.

By contrast, constructivist conception of learning and teaching focuses on the learner and regards him/her as an individual that is actively involved in constructing meaning (Williams and Burden 1997, 23). It is based on the idea that learning does not start at school; when learners enter the school, they already know something and have some experience that they somehow think about (Tonucci in Dvořáková et al. 2015, 68–69). Such knowledge and experience are called pre-concepts (Skalková 2008, 114). As suggested above, these pre-concepts are constantly being reconstructed; the new pieces of knowledge are confronted with the existing knowledge and then integrated into existing structures (Skalková 2008, 114). The important thing is that it is the learner who is active in this process of constructing and reconstructing meaning. In constructivist instruction learners are encouraged to make use of higher cognitive processes, as they create, analyze and evaluate the constructs. The teacher, instead of serving as a source of knowledge and information, acts rather as a facilitator and guide (Richards and Rodgers 2014, 27), which are teacher's roles that promote the development of learner autonomy (see Chapter 3.1.2).

To sum up, the most important idea that the theory of learner autonomy adopted from constructivist theories is that the effective learning is the one that is active (Benson 2011, 42). As Wang and Peverly states:

> Effective learners are characterised in the research literature as being cognitively and affectively active in the learning process. They are seen as being capable of learning independently and deliberately through identification, formulation and restructuring of goals; use of strategy planning; development and execution of plans; and engagement of self-monitoring.

<div align="right">(Wang and Peverly 1986 in Benson 2011, 42–43)</div>

Little (1994 in Benson 2011, 43) supports this point of view and claims that "all genuinely successful learning is in the end autonomous."

Finally, it should be mentioned that despite its popularity, constructivist conception of learning and teaching has met with criticism. As Alanazi (2016, 2) points out, there are some opponents who criticize constructivism, for example, for promoting a teaching style that uses unguided or minimally guided instructions, which may make students feel "lost and frustrated". Furthermore, Zormanová (2012, 12) draws attention to the fact that constructivist conception is being criticized by some researchers for its low efficiency when it comes to gaining complex system of knowledge. Therefore, she suggests that it may be appropriate to supplement constructivist approach to learning and teaching with some features of traditional instruction (Zormanová 2012, 12).

1.3 Learner-centredness

As it has been indicated in the previous chapter, it is the learner, not the teacher, to whom the attention is directed in contemporary education. This tendency towards learner-centredness emerged in the 1980s in connection with the increasing influence of humanistic-oriented approaches to learning and teaching (Richards and Rodgers 2014, 32). The humanistic approaches emphasized the importance of whole-person learning, meaning that learning is not only about the development of learners' cognitive skills, but also about their emotions and feelings (Williams and Burden 1997, 30). What also started to be stressed was that learners are diverse and that their needs should be considered (Benson 2012, 31).

In compliance with constructivism, as well as humanism, learner-centred approach highlights the activity of learners. This fact is reflected in Benson's interpretation of what tasks and activities promote learner-centred learning and teaching. According to Benson (2012, 34), tasks and activities make the instruction learner-centred on condition that they attain one or more of the following goals:

- Give students more control over their learning
- Encourage them to make more choices and decisions
- Give them a more active role in constructing knowledge in the classroom
- Encourage more student-student interaction
- Allow students to take on teaching and assessment roles
- Encourage independent inquiry inside or outside the classroom
- Bring out-of-class knowledge and learning into the classroom

- Make learning more personally relevant to the students
- Encourage students to reflect on content and processes of teaching/learning
- Encourage students to prepare for active participation in class activities

(Benson 2012, 34)

As Benson (2012, 34) adds, this list is not intended to be exhaustive, nevertheless it covers much of what learner-centred teachers claim that they do in their classes. The goals on the list apparently put the activity of learners into the centre of the process of teaching and learning and aim to develop learners' autonomy by passing responsibility on to them.

Humanistic approaches and learner-centredness significantly influenced also English language teaching[1] (ELT) methodology since they gave rise to various methods, of which Williams and Burden (1997, 37) name the Silent Way, Suggestopedia, and Community Language Learning. All these methods are based more on psychology than linguistics, treat the learner as a whole person that is being actively involved in the learning process, and regard affective aspects of learning as significant (Williams and Burden 1997, 37). Richards and Rodgers (2014) mention also Task-based Language Teaching, Cooperative Language Teaching, and Communicative Language Teaching as methods that have a great potential to be learner-oriented. See Chapter 5.

The shift from teaching towards learning and learner-centredness is on one hand very popular in current education. On the other hand, some educational experts observe certain problems this shift can carry. One of them is Gert Biesta, a specialist in educational theories and philosopher of social sciences, who perceive "learnification" of education as something rather problematic (Biesta, 2015). He asserts that "the point of education is *not* that students learn" (Biesta 2015, 76). In his opinion "the point of education is that students learn *something*, that they learn it for a *reason*, and that they learn it *from someone*" (Biesta 2015, 76). He thus points out to the fact that the key educational questions of content, purpose and relationships are slightly disappearing in today's education (Biesta 2015, 76).

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[1] When the term "teaching" is used in this thesis, it is perceived to be the process of both teaching and learning.

1.4 Individualisation and Differentiation

Learner-centred approach to learning and teaching is closely related to the terms of individualisation and differentiation, and as Benson (2011, 12–13) suggests also to the concept of autonomy. In his opinion individualisation and autonomy are connected to each other through the idea of learner-centredness because they overlap in their concern to comply with the needs of individual learners (Benson 2011, 13).

The roots of differentiation and individualisation go back to the turn of the 19th and 20th century when the idea of pedocentrism, i.e. pedagogical direction which put the child and his/her needs into the centre of interest (Kasper and Kasperová 2008, 111), started to influence the approach to learning and teaching. In 1900 Ellen Key, a Swedish feminist and writer on educational subjects, published her book The Century of the Child in which she stressed the need to respect children's individual specifics and individual development (Kasper and Kasperová 2008, 111), and thus gave rise to reform pedagogy whose proponents were, for instance, Maria Montessori, Helen Parkhurst or Célestine Freinet. Another influential source that promoted the idea of individualisation in education was Adler's individual psychology (Kasíková, Dittrich, and Valenta 2007, 154).

Both differentiation and individualisation are based on respect for the diversity of learners. Both recognize the fact that learners differ, besides other things, in their needs, interests, abilities, learning styles, learning pace, as well as in some factors specific for second language acquisition (SLA), such as starting age, first language, and cognitive (e.g. language aptitude), conative (e.g. motivation for learning a language) and affective (e.g. language anxiety) psychological factors (Ellis 2015). Nevertheless, differentiation and individualisation are not interchangeable terms. To delimit these two terms and to explain the relationship between them the definitions by Kasíková, Dittrich, and Valenta (2007) are used. They define differentiation as the act of dividing learners into homogeneous groups according to various criteria reflecting the diversity of learners, and individualisation as a "total" way of differentiation (Kasíková, Dittrich, and Valenta 2007, 154). They claim that "in the pure form of individualisation every child basically learns on his/her own" (Kasíková, Dittrich, and Valenta 2007, 154).

However, Ur (2012, 236) expresses herself that individualisation may be sometimes difficult to accomplish, especially in larger groups of learners. In such cases she recommends using a

form of instruction where individual learners have some freedom to decide on what to learn, how to learn, and suchlike, but within the conventional classroom framework (Ur 2012, 236).

In connection with individualisation, foreign specialized literature makes a distinction between individualised learning and self-directed learning. In self-directed learning the individualisation lies in the fact that "learners determine their own needs and act upon them" (Benson 2011, 13). While in individualised learning, learners "work their way, at their own pace, through materials prepared by teachers" (Benson 2011, 13). Thus, the main difference is that in self-directed learning the important decisions about learning are left to learners, whereas in individualised learning it is the teacher who makes decisions, although taking into consideration learners' needs. As Riley (1986 in Benson 2011, 13) argues, the individualised learning takes the freedom to decide away from learners and thus it does not contribute much to the development of their autonomy.

In conclusion of the first chapter, it should be noted that there are, of course, some more theories and approaches that influence current education. The ones discussed above are those that I perceive to be the most significant concerning the development of learner autonomy.

2 THE CONCEPT OF LEARNER AUTONOMY

2.1 Beginnings of the Concept of Learner Autonomy and Its Definition

As discussed in the previous chapter, the concept of learner autonomy has its roots in psychology and reform pedagogy. It entered the field of foreign language teaching (FLT) in the early 1970s through the Council of Europe's Modern Language Project within which the *Centre de Recherches et d'Applications Pédagogiques en Langues* (CRAPEL) at the University of Nancy in France was established (Benson 2011, 9). CRAPEL began to perform research on autonomy in language learning, and in 1981 its leader Henri Holec published a report for the Council of Europe in which he defined autonomy as "the ability to take charge of one's learning" (Holec 1981 in Little 1991, 7). He pointed out that to take charge of one's learning is

> to have, and to hold, the responsibility for all the decisions concerning all aspects of this learning, i.e.:
>
> - determining the objectives;
> - defining the contents and progressions;
> - selecting methods and techniques to be used;
> - monitoring the procedure of acquisition […];
> - evaluating what has been acquired.
>
> (Holec 1981 in Little 1991, 7)

In his report, besides other things, Holec (1981 in Little 2007, 16) states that language learning is "an active, creative operation by means of which the learner converts into acquired knowledge information provided for him in an organized manner (teaching) or in non-organized form ('natural' untreated information)." Although he does not explicitly express himself about the connection between learner autonomy and constructivist theories of learning, his claims make it clear that he believes learner autonomy is in conformity with constructivist approach (Little 2007, 16).

He also makes a point in the report that autonomy does not apply only to learning that is associated with education but also to other areas of life beyond the school context (Holec 1981 in Little 1991, 6). This corresponds with the concept of lifelong learning, which at that time started to appear as a new educational paradigm, and which also referred to its overlap to other than educational spheres of life.

Another claim which Holec makes, and which has implications for education practice, concerns the necessity to develop the autonomy intentionally, for the capacity for autonomous learning is not inborn (Little 1991, 7). Considering the broad scope of actions learners are required to be involved in, i.e. setting goals, choosing content, materials, methods and techniques, as well as reflecting on the process of learning, and evaluating its results, it seems to be obvious that they need to be trained to be able to perform all these actions. And to present specific techniques and conditions which are expected to help learners master these actions, i.e. to support the development of their autonomy, is one of the main aims of the theoretical part of this thesis.

Originally, at the time of the Holec's report publication, the concept of learner autonomy related to adult education and self-access language learning centres (Little 2007, 14). The idea behind self-access centres was that providing learners with a large number of second language materials tends to support self-directed learning, which is often used as a synonym for autonomous learning (Benson 2011, 10–11). However, as Benson (2011, 11) claims, it has not been proved that the self-instruction (i.e. learners learning on their own, independently of the teacher), which was practised in self-access centres, entails the development of autonomy. On the contrary, because self-instruction encouraged learners to study in isolation from teachers, as well as from other learners, it became a subject of criticism (Benson 2011, 14). This criticism seems to be justifiable since as recent research on autonomy has shown the development of autonomy inevitably involves collaboration and interdependence (Benson 2011, 14).

In connection with what has just been said, it appears appropriate to delimit the terms dependence, independence, and interdependence in relation to autonomy. Some researchers perceive the term autonomy to be synonymous with the term independence (Benson 2011, 15). In this case the opposite of autonomy is dependence, which denotes reliance on the teacher's control (Benson 2011, 15). This is in compliance with what autonomy implies. However, the problem is that the term independence can also be interpreted as the opposite of interdependence, which signifies cooperation with teachers and other learners on the way towards the common goals (Benson 2011, 15). Then, it is in contradiction with many researchers'

claims about the interconnectedness of autonomy and interdependence. Therefore, Benson (2011, 15) suggests using the term autonomy rather than independence.[2]

Since the time Holec defined the term learner autonomy in the report for the Council of Europe, there have been other authors who offered various definitions. However, as Benson (2007, 22) mentions, these definitions are in many cases just variations on the one provided by Holec. "Ability is often replaced by 'capacity' (a term used by Holec elsewhere), while 'take charge of' is often replaced by 'take responsibility for' or 'take control of' one's own learning (terms also used by Holec)" (Benson 2007, 22). Given that Holec's definition remains the most frequently cited and that it clearly specifies all the areas of the learning process in which autonomous learners are to assume responsibility, I will draw on it for the purposes of the thesis.

2.2   What Is and Is Not Autonomy?

Although it may seem that the definition of learner autonomy given by Holec is fully sufficient for explaining what the autonomy involves, it is not quite the case. Since this definition was published, many researchers on learner autonomy have attempted to propound a broader description of the concept, one of them being Little (1990), or Sinclair (2000). Sinclair (2000, 7–14) proposed thirteen aspects of learner autonomy which have been widely acknowledged in the field of language teaching (see Appendix A). However accurate and apposite these aspects are in terms of delimitation of the concept of learner autonomy, this thesis does not aim to elaborate on all of them; indeed, some of them have already been discussed, or are about to be dealt with later.

As for Little (1990), he strived to dispel misconceptions about the concept of learner autonomy and put together a list of five negative statements that explain what autonomy is not:

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

- Autonomy is **not** a steady state achieved by learners.

(Little 1990, 7)

The question then arises as to what learner autonomy is if it is not a mere question of how learning is organized, does not imply depriving the of teacher of his/her control over the instruction, is not a distinct teaching method, is not easily identified based on a single specific behaviour, and is not a stable state that learners simply gain and never lose. Little (1991, 4) states that "autonomy is a *capacity* – for detachment, critical reflection, decision-making, and independent action." His viewing of learner autonomy follows on from Holec, who emphasized that autonomy should be perceived as "a capacity of the learner" rather than a learning situation (Benson 2011, 14). Nevertheless, there is a difference in the way Holec and Little treat autonomy. In Holec's definition, autonomy is described from the point of view of areas of learning that learners are supposed to manage and organize, whereas Little allows for a psychological point of view. He construes autonomy "more in terms of control over the cognitive processes underlying effective self-management of learning" (Benson 2011, 60). Thus, Holec seems to have defined the application of autonomy rather than autonomy itself (Benson 2007, 23).

2.3   Learner Autonomy and Learner Agency

When inquiring into the term learner autonomy, it appears suitable to also mention the term learner agency and explain the relationship between them since they are close to each other and are sometimes confused. Thompson (2014 in Larsen-Freeman 2019, 62) defines agency as "the capacity to act in the world". When related to education, learner agency means that learners have the capacity to act in the learning process. It may imply the idea that learner agency is synonymous with learner autonomy. However, even though "the boundaries between autonomy and agency are often blurred and muddled" (Huang and Benson 2013, 16), these two terms are not interchangeable. Benson (2007, 30) makes the distinction between them based on the claim that agency is "a point of origin for the development of autonomy." This suggests that he considers learner agency to be a precondition for learners' endeavour to take responsibility for learning, i.e., a precondition for learner autonomy.

2.4   Language Learner Autonomy

As it has been stated in Chapter 2.1, the term learner autonomy was originally created and used in the area of FLT. Nevertheless, everything that has been expressed so far in Chapter 2 can be applied to learner autonomy in general, regardless of the field of education. Now, the focus of the thesis shifts onto autonomy specifically in language learning, i.e. language learner autonomy.

As far as Holec is concerned, he perceives developing language proficiency and becoming an autonomous learner as two separate processes, for he posits "two quite distinct objectives for language teaching: to help learners to achieve their linguistic and communicative goals on the one hand, and to become autonomous in their learning on the other" (Little, Dam, and Legenhausen 2017, 5). By contrast, for Little (2007, 15), "the development of learner autonomy and the growth of target language (TL) proficiency are not only mutually supporting but fully integrated with each other." He claims that only on the basis of this understanding of *language* learner autonomy it is possible to propose a set of general pedagogical principles that enable to develop some specific language teaching and learning procedures (Little 2007, 15).

2.4.1   General Pedagogical Principles Underlying Language Learner Autonomy

According to Little (2007, 23), an essential characteristic of language learner autonomy is that learners not only assume an initiative in setting learning goals, participate actively in determining what, how and why to learn, and reflect on the process and outcomes of their learning, but also that they do these actions in the TL. He holds the view that by using the TL as a medium for performing the tasks, and for reflecting on learning, the learners' language proficiency becomes an integral part of the autonomy (Little 2007, 23).

Based on these considerations, Little (2007, 23) propounds three interacting pedagogical principles that are supposed to support success in second and foreign language teaching (SLT and FLT): learner involvement, learner reflection, and TL use. The principle of learner involvement simply stands for the fact that learners are encouraged to involve actively in self-managing their learning, i.e. they are encouraged to share the responsibility for establishing objectives, selecting content, reflecting on and evaluating their learning, etc. (Little 2007, 23). The principle of learner reflection, as Little (2007, 24) explains, goes hand in hand with the principle of learner involvement since it is impossible to make decisions about one's learning

without thinking about it. However, the principle of learner reflection demands also the ability for 'reflective intervention', i.e. "explicitly detached reflection on the process and content of learning" (Little 2007, 24). Lastly, the principle of TL use, which entails that the TL should be serving as a medium of all classroom activities, i.e. communicative, as well as reflective, and organisational activities (Little 2007, 25). It is just this last principle that affects the extent to which the integration of learner autonomy with the TL proficiency will be achieved (Little 2007, 25).

These three general pedagogical principles that underlie the concept of language learner autonomy are being referred to later in the chapters discussing conditions and specific strategies and techniques which are expected to promote the development of learner autonomy.

2.4.2   The Dynamic Model of Learner Autonomy

In order to make the construct of learner autonomy researchable, it is necessary to operationalize it, i.e. to determine some observable phenomena (Benson 2011, 58). One of the researchers who tries to operationalize the concept of learner autonomy is Tassinari (2012). She proposes *the dynamic model of learner autonomy* in which she identifies the crucial components of learner autonomy and provides descriptions of learners' attitudes, competencies, and learning behaviours (Tassinari 2012, 26). The model has been designed as a tool for self-assessment and evaluation of learner autonomy in FLT; nevertheless, it can serve its purpose also in the context of teaching other subjects since most of the descriptors are defined in a non-specific way. Moreover, the model can be useful also for researching autonomy, as is the case of this thesis. Because it contains the descriptors of learner autonomy, I will draw on it when creating a list of features of learner autonomy development that will be used for observing the lessons, as well as when creating a questionnaire for pupils and questions for the interview with the teacher.

The dynamic model of learner autonomy is based on Tassinari's definition of learner autonomy, which reads as follows:

> Learner autonomy is the metacapacity, i.e. the second order capacity, of the learner to take control of their learning process to different extents and in different ways according to learning situation. Learner autonomy is a complex construct, a construct of constructs, entailing various dimensions and components.
>
> (Tassinari 2012, 28)

As Tassinari (2012, 26) states, this definition results from the critical analysis of existing definitions provided by Holec, Dickinson, Little, Littlewood, Benson, and others and it aims to be the basis for identifying both the components of learner autonomy and its descriptors.

Tassinari identifies the following components of learner autonomy:

- a cognitive and metacognitive component (cognitive and metacognitive knowledge, awareness, learners' beliefs);
- an affective and a motivational component (feelings, emotions, willingness, motivation);
- an action-oriented component (skills, learning behaviours, decisions);
- a social component (learning and negotiating learning with partners, advisors, teachers…).

(Tassinari 2012, 28)

She adds that an essential characteristic of learner autonomy is that learners are able to trigger an interaction and find a balance among these components depending on different learning contexts and situations. She further explains that "the dynamic model of learner autonomy sums up these components in terms of learners' competencies, skills, choices, and decision-making processes, and accounts for their mutual relationships" (see Figure 1) (Tassinari 2012, 28). The spheres of competencies, skills, and actions are expressed by verbs:

'structuring knowledge', 'dealing with my feelings', 'motivating myself', 'planning', 'choosing materials and methods', 'completing tasks', 'monitoring', 'evaluating', 'cooperating' and 'managing my own learning'.
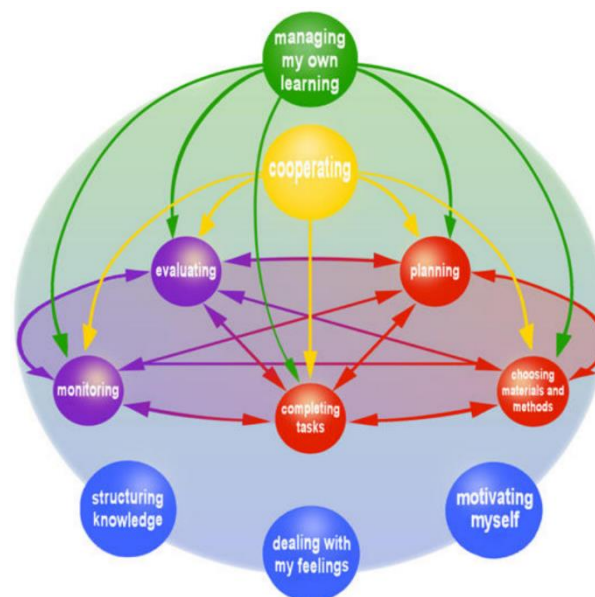
(Tassinari 2012, 28–29)

Figure 1. The dynamic model of learner autonomy (Tassinari 2010, 203 in Tassinari 2012, 29)

The components are not arranged in any hierarchy, except for 'managing my own learning', which is a superordinate term covering all other components (Tassinari 2012, 29).

Tassinari (2012, 30) classifies the individual components into three main dimensions as follows:

- a predominantly action-oriented dimension ('planning', 'choosing materials and methods', 'completing tasks', 'monitoring', 'evaluating', 'cooperating', 'managing my own learning'),
- a predominantly cognitive and metacognitive dimension ('structuring knowledge'),
- and a predominantly affective and motivational dimension ('dealing with my feelings', 'motivating myself').
- In addition, a social dimension ('cooperating') is integrated into each component.

(Tassinari 2012, 30)

However, she points out that in fact these dimensions and the components they are comprised of are interrelated and overlap (Tassinari 2012, 30). Concerning the content of individual components, it was found out, by exploring the model in detail, that the component called 'structuring knowledge', categorized as the predominantly cognitive and metacognitive dimension, includes all the components from the predominantly action-oriented dimension, and thus provides a well-arranged checklist for creating data collection tools used in the practical part of this thesis (see Appendix B).

Tassinari (2012, 29) also highlights the dynamic of the model claiming that it is dynamic with respect to both structure and function. The structural dynamic is brought about by the fact that each component directly relates to all the others, as indicated by the arrows in Figure 1 (Tassinari 2012, 29). As for the functional dynamic, it signifies the possibility of learners to start with whatever component they want to, and to move freely from one component to another just according to their preferences or needs (Tassinari 2012, 29). As Tassinari (2012, 29) argues, "this dynamic is an essential characteristic of the model, and makes it possible to account for the complexity of learner autonomy."

In the dynamic model each component (expressed by the verb) "entails a set of descriptors which give specific statements of individual competencies, skills and learning behaviours of learners" (Tassinari 2012, 30). These descriptors are formulated as "can-do" statements and are divided into macro-descriptors and micro-descriptors (Tassinari 2012, 30). The macro-

descriptors are rather general descriptions of what learners are able to do (see Appendices C, D), while micro-descriptors are more specific descriptions that enable to further differentiate learners' skills, behaviours, and attitudes (see Appendices E, F) (Tassinari 2012, 30). As Tassinari (2012, 30) states, there are 118 descriptors in total (33 macro-descriptors and 85 micro-descriptors) and together "they constitute a checklist which covers the main areas of autonomous language learning." The complete checklists for all the components are available online (see the link in Bibliography).

As mentioned above, the checklist arising from the dynamic model is very useful for the purposes of this thesis since it gives specific descriptors of learner autonomy. Nevertheless, when designing the data collection tools (observation sheet checklist, questionnaire, interview), it will be necessary to purposefully select the descriptors and adapt them for the usage in lower-secondary class, for as Tassinari (2012, 31) mentions, the dynamic model has been formulated for higher education context. But that is not a problem; Tassinari (2012, 31) herself expresses that "these descriptors are not intended to be exhaustive nor to be normative."

2.5 Learner Autonomy in Czech Curriculum Documents

The concept of learner autonomy started to appear as a key goal in many national curricula throughout the 1990s (Little 2007, 14). As far as the Czech curriculum is concerned, it did not begin to deal with learner autonomy until the first decade of the 21st century. Currently, there are two important documents, issued by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MŠMT), that need to be introduced when speaking of learner autonomy as one of the goals of lower-secondary education: *Strategy for the Education Policy of the Czech Republic up to 2030+* and *Framework Educational Programme for Basic Education (FEP BE)*. The former, as its name suggests, is a strategic and conceptual document that determines the basic aims of educational policy for the period 2020–2030+. It replaces the early issued strategic documents: *White Paper* and the subsequent *Strategy for the Education Policy of the Czech Republic up to 2020*. Besides many other things, this document accentuates the significance of the concept of life-long learning, competence-based approach to education, individualisation of education, support of self-assessment and self-reflection, and learner autonomy development (MŠMT 2020).

Regarding FEP BE, it represents the national level in the system of two-level curriculum documents, and it specifies general objectives of basic education:

> Basic education should help pupils to form, shape and gradually develop their key competencies and provide them with the dependable fundamentals of general education mainly aimed at situations that are close to their real life and at practical behaviour. Efforts are therefore made in basic education to meet the following goals:
>
> - create preconditions for pupils to **acquire basic learning strategies** and **motivate them to life-long learning**;
> - stimulate and **encourage pupils to creative thinking, logical reasoning** and **problem solving**;
> - guide pupils to engage in **efficient, effective and open communication**;
> - develop pupils' **abilities to cooperate** and to **value their own work and achievements** as well as the work and achievements of others;
> - guide pupils so that they should **become free and responsible individuals** who exercise their rights and meet their obligations;
> - induce in pupils the urge to express **positive feelings and emotions** in their behaviour, ways of acting and when experiencing important situations in their lives; develop in them sensitivity and responsiveness towards other people, the environment and nature;
> - teach pupils to **actively develop** and protect their physical, mental and social health and to **be responsible** for it;
> - guide pupils to tolerance and consideration for other people, to a respect for their culture and spiritual values; teach pupils to live **together with others**;
> - help pupils to **discover and develop their own abilities and skills in the context of actual opportunities and to use their abilities and skills in combination with their acquired knowledge when making decisions regarding the aims of their own life and profession**.
> - help pupils to be knowledgeable in the digital environment and lead them to **the safe, confident, critical, and creative use of digital technologies when working, learning, in leisure time, and when taking part in society and civic life**.
>
> (MŠMT 2021, 8–9)

The phrases in bold in the objectives given by FEP BE were highlighted by me for the purpose of marking the references to the concept of learner autonomy development. FEP BE categorizes the objectives into the so-called key competencies, which represent "the system of knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes and values that are important to the individual's personal development and to the individual's role in society" (MŠMT 2021, 10). Key competencies interrelate, overlap, and have interdisciplinary nature, and thus can be obtained only as a

result of the overall learning process (MŠMT 2021, 10). The following key competencies are presented in FEP BE: learning competencies, problem-solving competencies, communication competencies, social and personal competencies, civil competencies, working competencies, and digital competencies (MŠMT 2021, 10–13).

In relation to learner autonomy the most relevant key competencies seem to be learning competencies and problem-solving competencies. Learning competencies refer, among others, to learners' abilities to select and use suitable procedures, methods and strategies, to plan, organize and manage their own learning process, to recognize the meaning and goal of learning, to assess their own progress and identify possible obstacles or problems, to make plans as to how to improve their learning, to critically assess their learning results, etc. (MŠMT 2021, 10). As for problem-solving competencies, they include, for instance, learners' abilities to reflect on problems, to consider and plan ways to solve the problems based on their own reasoning and experience, to monitor their own progress in tackling problems, to be aware of the responsibility for their own decisions, and to evaluate the outcomes of their decisions (MŠMT 2021, 11). Nevertheless, the other competencies, i.e. communication, social and personal, civil, working, and digital competencies, also relate to the concept of learner autonomy; on account of some of the aims they imply, or simply because of the fact that to be achieved they need to be internalized by learners.

The objectives specified on the national level by FEP BE are reflected on the school level in School Educational Programmes (SEP) that are created, in compliance with FEP BE, by individual schools.

3 CONDITIONS FOR LEARNER AUTONOMY DEVELOPMENT IN ELT CLASSES

If learner autonomy is to be developed in ELT classes, certain conditions, such as teacher's roles and educational styles, learners' roles, interaction patterns, and learners' motivation, must be considered, for as Little (1991, 7) reminds, when the responsibility for learning is transferred from teacher to learners, it inevitably entails changes in the way the education is organized, as well as in power relationships between the teacher and learners.

3.1 Teacher's Educational Styles and Roles

3.1.1 Educational Styles

Teachers can adopt different educational styles. The style the teacher is inclined to has a considerable impact on the development of learner autonomy; it can perfectly support it, or totally undermine it. Literature usually distinguishes three types of educational styles: authoritarian, liberal, and democratic.

The authoritarian style is the one that undermines the autonomy development. It goes against the idea of freedom and possibility to choose (Kopřiva et al. 2012, 9), which are values that the concept of learner autonomy is based on. The essence of authoritarian style is teacher's control over learners and their learning processes, and as Kopřiva et al. (2012, 11) add, the inequality of the relationship between the teacher and learner.

As for the liberal style, it also does not match with learner autonomy development. Although the liberal teacher may intend to encourage learners' independence, he/she does it in a very permissive way, which causes that learners do not have any boundaries. And defining clear and firm boundaries in education is essential, otherwise, learners lose the sense of security (Kopřiva et al. 2012, 13), and begin to do what they want (Dvořáková 2015, 37).

The educational style that goes hand in hand with the concept of learner autonomy is the democratic one. It is based on the idea of equality between the teacher and learner, mutual respect, and cooperation (Kopřiva et al. 2012, 9). Teachers who adopt this educational style exploit learners' initiative and promote their independence (Dvořáková 2015, 38), and thus perform as facilitators rather than controllers (see Chapter 3.1.2). The point of the democratic educational style is to lead learners to take responsibility for their behaviour (Kopřiva et al.

2012, 21), or for their own learning when speaking of education. Leading learners not to be dependent on external authority, but rather act according to their own intrinsic values ensures that they would act as desirable even if nobody else urges them (Kopřiva et al. 2012, 21), which is crucial both for lifelong learning and other areas of life.

Finally, it must be said that the educational styles usually do not appear in their pure forms, in most cases they overlap (Dvořáková 2015, 38).

3.1.2 Teacher's Roles

In the instruction the teacher assumes a number of different roles, depending on long-term, as well as short-term aims, types of activities, and learners' needs. According to Harmer (2015, 116–117), teacher can act as: *controller*, *monitor and evidence gatherer*, *feedback provider, prompter and editor*, *resource and tutor*, *organiser/task-setter,* and *facilitator*. Concerning learner autonomy, some of these roles have greater potential to support it than others. Therefore, when aiming to develop learner autonomy, the teacher needs to consider which roles to adopt, and which restrict.

Teacher acts as a *controller*, for example, when he/she takes attendance, gives learners information, or instructs them what to do (Harmer 2015, 116). This is the role that typically predominates in transmissive instruction (see Chapter 1.2) and implies teacher's control over the teaching process. Although being a controller can be necessary or suitable in some situations (Harmer 2015, 116), it does not contribute to the development of autonomy in learners.

The role of *monitor and evidence gatherer* is assumed when the teacher monitors/observes learners performing the tasks. The teacher watches if learners are doing what they are supposed to be doing, and simultaneously gathers information about the language they are using to decide how much feedback should be provided to them (Harmer 2015, 116). This is connected to another role, that of *feedback provider* (Harmer 2015, 116). When the teacher monitors learners' work and silently gathers evidence, he/she does not take control over their learning; therefore, such a role does not collide with the concept of learner autonomy development. As for the feedback provider, if teachers intend to increase learners' autonomy, they should try to leave this role to learners in as many situations as possible.

Another role the teacher can have is that of *prompter and editor*. The teacher acts as a prompter when spurring the learners to keep going or suggesting what they might do next, and as an editor when suggesting, for example, what they may say/write when performing speaking/writing tasks (Harmer 2015, 117). This type of role is surely indispensable in the instruction, for learners need some encouragement. In any case, the teacher must remember not to take too much initiative away from learners.

The teacher may also serve as a *resource and tutor*; the role of resource is exercised when learners ask for some information or guidance, and the role of tutor when teacher stops by individuals or small groups to help them while they are working on a task (Harmer 2015, 117). As was the case with the previous role, to a certain degree, it is desirable from the teacher to be a resource and tutor. However, the teacher needs to be careful not to interfere too much, otherwise, the development of learner autonomy would be impeded.

The last but one teacher's role to be mentioned is that of *organiser/task-setter*. This is one of the teacher's most important roles which implies the responsibility for selecting the content of the lesson, giving instructions to learners, and organizing time and feedback (Harmer 2015, 117). If the teacher wants to support learner autonomy, he/she should pass, at least to some extent, the responsibility for deciding on the content or for organizing the activities and feedback on to learners. Nevertheless, as Biesta (2015) points out, it is important to still bear in mind that it is the teacher who is responsible for the content and process of instruction.

Facilitator is the last role Harmer (2015, 117) names. This role contributes greatly to the development of learner autonomy since it makes the teacher functioning as a helper and guide. As Janíková (2007, 45) states, if learners are to begin assuming the responsibility for their own learning, the teacher needs to start adopting this role in more and more situations. Another researcher who confirms that the teacher needs to assume this role in autonomous learning is Voller (1997), who provides an overview of salient features of a facilitator created on the basis of the analysis of other authors' lists (see Appendix G).

3.2 Learner's Roles

While teacher's roles have been quite systematically classified and listed by various authors, it is not the case with learner's roles. Generally, it could be said that in the context of learner autonomy development learners' role is to take charge of their own learning. However, for the purposes of this thesis, it is necessary to put together a list of more specific roles learners

should assume. Based on Holec's definition of learner autonomy (see Chapter 2.1), the following learner's roles could be identified: *organizer*, *monitor*, *feedback provider*, and *assessor/evaluator*. Obviously, these roles overlap with the teacher's roles discussed in the previous chapter. This confirms Tandlichová's (2004 in Janíková 2007, 47) claim that in the autonomous classroom, the roles of the teacher should be in many cases identical and interchangeable with those of the learners.

Dam (2020, 35) adds to the list another role as she speaks of learners as r*esearchers of their own learning*, which is a role exercised when they are documenting what, why and how they are doing. Besides, Richards and Rodgers (2014, 33), in relation to specific ELT methods that have potential to develop autonomy (see Chapter 5), mention the learner's role of *participant* and *active processor of language and information*.

As for Little, Dam, and Legenhausen (2017, 2), they assign language learners in the autonomy classrooms three interdependent roles: *communicators*, *experimenters with language*, *intentional learners*. The first mentioned role refers to the fact that learners use and develop their communicative skills in the TL, the second to the fact that learners develop "an explicit analytical knowledge of the TL system", and the third concerns developing "an explicit awareness of affective and metacognitive aspects of language learning" (Little, Dam, and Legenhausen 2017, 2).

To sum up, it can be stated that all the roles given above are basically in accordance with the general pedagogical principles of learner involvement, learner reflection, and TL use proposed by Little (see Chapter 2.4.1).

3.3 Interaction Patterns

What may also influence learner autonomy are interaction patterns used in the instruction since not all of them are expected to support its development. The basic interaction patterns are: individual work, pair work, group work, and whole-class work. Individual work means learners working on their own, pair work learners working in pairs, group work learners working in groups, and whole-class work signifies teacher working with the class as a whole (Harmer 1998, 21).

Whole-class work, though it can have some practical advantages and the teacher may have good grounds for using it in certain situations, is an interaction pattern that does not usually

promote learner autonomy. The reason is that "whole-class teaching favours the transmission of knowledge from teacher to student rather than having the students discover things or research things for themselves" (Harmer 2015, 178). Moreover, the teacher usually serves as a resource, organizer, and controller, which are roles that tend to impede the development of learner autonomy.

On the contrary, individual work may be good for developing learner autonomy (Harmer 2015, 180). But of course, it depends on how much control learners have over their learning, i.e. on the type of activities/tasks learners are to perform, and the roles the teacher and learners take in these activities.

As far as pair and group work is concerned, both "give the students chances for greater independence" (Harmer 1998, 21) because students can make their own decisions within the group without being controlled by the teacher (Harmer 2015, 182). Ur (2012, 234) confirms this point of view and adds that even if the decisions concern rather small matters, e.g. deciding on the pace of work, amount of work each person will do, or the order in which the tasks will be fulfilled, learner autonomy is fostered. When compared to individual work, the advantage of pair and group work is that it allows learners to share responsibility, i.e. they do not need to bear the whole weight themselves (Harmer 2015, 181). Moreover, for some learners, pair and group work may be very motivating (Ur 2012, 234).

Even though some interaction patterns have bigger potential to encourage learners' autonomy than others, teachers should not restrict to using just some. They should attempt to employ all of them to make the instruction varied, and thus appealing to learners.

3.4 Motivation

Motivation is another issue that needs to be discussed in relation to learner autonomy development. As Dörnyei (2001, 6–7) argues, it is a very complex concept whose explanations vary depending on the psychological approach or perspective. From a social constructivist perspective, Williams and Burden (1997, 120) define motivation as "a state of cognitive and emotional arousal, which leads to a conscious decision to act, and which gives rise to a period of sustained intellectual and/or physical effort in order to attain a previously set goal (or goals)."

The reasons why people decide to act in certain ways fall into different types (Williams and Burden 1997, 123). As Ushioda (2012, 79) states, contemporary motivational psychology typically distinguishes between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation; a distinction that was proposed by Deci and Ryan as a part of Self Determination Theory (SDT). "Intrinsic motivation concerns behaviour performed for its own sake in order to experience pleasure and satisfaction such as the joy of doing a particular activity or satisfying one's curiosity" (Dörnyei 2001, 11). Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, "involves performing a behaviour as a means to an end, that is, to receive some extrinsic reward (e.g. good grades) or to avoid punishment" (Dörnyei 2001, 11). Generally, it is the intrinsic motivation that is perceived as the desired one in educational field (Ushioda 2012, 79).

With regard to language teaching, it seems suitable to mention also Gardner and Lambert's distinction between integrative and instrumental motivation. This classification is based on the idea that the attitudes learners take towards the community of the TL speakers have a significant influence on learning the TL (Dörnyei 2001, 16). Integrative motivation refers to the situations when learners study a language because they want to be able to interact with or even want to identify themselves with the community of the TL speakers (Williams and Burden 1997, 116). It could be compared to intrinsic motivation because it is associated with learners' internal beliefs. Instrumental motivation, by contrast, corresponds with extrinsic motivation, i.e. learners learn a language, for example, to get a better job, or to pass an exam (Williams and Burden 1997, 116).

The connection between learner autonomy and motivation may be explained via Deci and Ryan's SDT. According to this theory "the freedom to choose and to have choices, rather than being forced or coerced to behave according to someone else's desire, is a prerequisite to motivation" (Dörnyei 2001, 103). Or it can be put vice versa, people who are intrinsically motivated are autonomous, i.e. they act with the feeling that they chose so (Mareš and Mareš 2014, 84).

Ushioda (1996, 2) affirms the link between motivation and learner autonomy as she views motivation as "a set of processes for sustaining learner involvement in learning." Besides, she points to two motivational concepts relevant to autonomous learning: intrinsic motivation and self-motivation. She explains that self-motivation "implies taking charge of the affective dimension of […] learning experience", and thus can be seen as something that helps promote autonomous learning (Ushioda 1996, 39). As for intrinsic motivation, it provides the

foundation for autonomous learning since intrinsically motivated learner develops a kind of psychological relation to the process and content of his/her learning (Ushioda 1996, 40). Nevertheless, it would be wrong to say that extrinsic motivation is bad or useless for learner autonomy development. If learners lack intrinsic motivation, it may be the external forces that make them take the responsibility for their learning (Williams and Burden 1997, 120). As van Lier (1996, 112) points out, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are not in opposition. In fact, they are two forces that work together to stimulate learning, e.g. when learners participate in classroom discussion because they want to get good grades, but also because they like the TL and enjoy the activity itself (van Lier 1996, 112–113).

Finally, it should be mentioned that different learners may get motivated differently, but generally, learners are motivated when they are allowed to take charge of their own learning (Dörnyei 2001, 102), when the goals are appropriate and achievable for them (Williams and Burden 1997, 131), and when they see that what they are learning is meaningful and relevant (Ushioda 1996, 42).

4 STRATEGIES AND TECHNIQUES SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNER AUTONOMY IN ELT CLASSES

4.1 Giving Choices to Learners

There is a consensus among authors that giving choices and decision-making opportunities to learners is a key principle for developing learner autonomy (e.g. Little 2007; Benson 2012; Harmer 2015; Berger, Strasser, and Woodfin 2015; Dörnyei 2001; Mareš and Mareš 2014). As Dörnyei (2001, 104) explains, "choice is the essence of responsibility as it permits learners to see that they are in charge of the learning experience." The choices and decisions can concern various aspects of the learning process; for example, learners can make choices about activities/tasks they will do, the order in which they will fulfil the tasks, the peers they will work with, the place where they will work, due dates, topics, homework, teaching materials and resources, strategies, goals, etc.

4.2 Encouraging Learners to Reflect on their Learning

While the strategy of giving choices to learners corresponds primarily with the principle of learner involvement, now the principle of learner reflection is about to be addressed (see Chapter 2.4.1). Encouraging learners to reflect on their learning and their existing system of constructs is important because this way learners may gain control over their mental processes, and thus gain control over their own learning (Janíková 2007, 27). Little (1997 in Benson 2011, 104) shares this view and claims that "conscious reflection on the learning process is a distinctive characteristic of autonomous learning." According to Tassinari's dynamic autonomy model (2012; see the component called 'monitoring' – link in Bibliography), teachers should encourage learners to reflect on their learning, on their strengths and weaknesses, on what prevents them from completing a task, on materials and resources they have used, and on methods and strategies they have employed. As for the format of reflection, Candy (1991 in Benson 2011, 106) suggests, for example, group discussions or writing reflective journals, both of which can be done in the TL to employ the principle of TL use.

4.3 Evaluating Techniques Supporting Learner Autonomy

Reflection is closely related to evaluation because if the teacher makes efforts to develop learners' autonomy, he/she needs to provide opportunities for self-evaluation/self-assessment[3] or peer-assessment (e.g. Dam 1995; Little 2007; Benson 2011), which require that learners reflect on learning. With reference to Little's (2007) principles, self- and peer-assessment follow the principle of learner involvement, learner reflection, and if carried out in English, then also TL use.

4.3.1 Self-assessment

Self-assessment undoubtedly promotes learner autonomy because it makes learners "reflect on and take responsibility for the evaluation of their own learning" (Ur 2012, 169). As Williams and Burden (1997, 37) point out, if learners are allowed to self-assess, learning becomes more personally relevant for them, and thus they are more willing to take charge of it.

Various techniques and tools may be used for self-assessment. Teachers can, for instance, organize sessions, either for individuals, or groups of learners, during which they support learners to self-assess, e.g. by asking formative questions (Brown and Abeywickrama 2010; Harris and McCann 1994; Kolář and Šikulová 2009). Alternatively, the self-assessment can be done with the whole class in the form of "self-assessment communicative circle", i.e. learners sit in a circle and, one by one, reflect on and assess their own learning (Kolář and Šikulová 2009, 153).

Another option is to provide learners with self-assessment sheets. Such sheets can consist of questions concerning the learning process and results, or a checklist in which learners mark what they are/are not able to do (Brown and Abeywickrama 2010; Harris and McCann 1994; Kolář and Šikulová 2009). Some learners might like the structured and guided format of self-assessment sheets, others, however, may prefer rather unguided types of self-assessment.

The example of the unguided, or minimally guided, self-assessment activities may be writing self-assessment essays or diaries in which learners reflect on and write about what they are able to do, what they have learnt, or what they should improve (Brown and Abeywickrama 2010; Harris and McCann 1994; Kolář and Šikulová 2009).

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[3] *self-assessment* and *self-evaluation* are perceived to be interchangeable terms in this thesis

Using self-correcting materials such as cards or sheets is another way to encourage learner autonomy and self-assessment. These aids usually contain the task on one side and key on the other. Thus, they provide immediate feedback and enable learners to reflect on and evaluate their learning (Kolář a Šikulová 2009, 153).

The last, but very useful, tool that can be used to promote learner autonomy and self-assessment is a portfolio. Arter and Spandel (in Jang 2014, 116) describe portfolio as "a purposeful collection of students' work samples that demonstrate learning progress, efforts, and achievement." It can be comprised of various materials, such as writing samples, reflection essays, projects, self-assessment materials, and sometimes also teacher records, e.g., of important learner behaviour or successes (Slavík 1999, 106). The materials may be selected by learners themselves, or in cooperation with the teacher or peers. In general, portfolios support the development of learner autonomy in two ways. Firstly, when creating them and selecting the materials, learners reflect on and make decisions about their learning. Secondly, they allow learners to self-assess, both the process and outcomes of their learning.

A specific type of portfolio which serves as a tool for self-assessment in FLT is the European Language Portfolio (ELP). It was developed by the Language Policy Programme of the Council of Europe to:

- support the development of learner autonomy, plurilingualism and intercultural awareness and competence;
- allow users to record their language learning achievements and their experience of learning and using languages.

(Council of Europe 2022)

The ELP has three basic components: a language passport, a language biography, and a dossier (Jang 2014, 119). The language passport aims to depict learner's linguistic identity, i.e. it includes records about learner's language education background, their experience and qualifications, and self-assessments of their language proficiency level (Jang 2014, 119). Another component, the language biography, records learner's language learning goals and progress, as well as key cross-cultural language learning experiences (Jang 2014, 119). Besides other things, it contains "can do statements" functioning as a checklist for self-evaluation. The last component, the dossier, is a collection of work samples, diplomas, certificates, and other materials that document learner's language proficiency (Jang 2014, 119). As

for the self-assessment in the ELP, it is based on six language proficiency levels defined in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR 2001), and it uses the so-called "self-assessment grid" which provides descriptions of what learners are able to do in five communicative activities: listening, reading, spoken interaction, spoken production, and writing. Since the ELP leads learners to self-assess, reflect on their learning, and record their language abilities and progress, it has a great potential for learner autonomy development.

To conclude, there is a variety of self-assessment techniques and tools that can be implemented in the instruction to promote learner autonomy. Nevertheless, Dörnyei (2001, 105) admits that in most school contexts self-assessment may not be sufficient, and learners need to be assessed by the teacher – in such cases he suggests that learners at least be invited to participate in decisions on when or how to be assessed.

4.3.2 Peer-assessment

It has already been indicated that peer-assessment, i.e. learners assessing the work of their peers, is another evaluating technique that supports learner autonomy as it encourages learners to reflect on learning and to take an active part in it. While some authors view peer-assessment rather as a preparatory step towards self-assessment (e.g. Dickinson 1992), others perceive both techniques as equally useful for learner autonomy development (e.g. Brown and Abeywickrama 2010).

As for the specific techniques that can be used for peer-assessment, they basically overlap with those stated in the chapter on self-assessment. Perhaps, one more could be added, and that is exchanging work for other classmates' work and checking through it for mistakes and then assessing it (Harris and McCann 1994, 77).

No matter how valuable peer-assessment may be, it is generally not very popular with learners since they find it difficult to assess the work of others and do not want to be critical to their classmates and friends (Harris and McCann 1994, 77). However, as Harris and McCann (1994, 77) state, being provided with some training and clearly defined criteria for what and how to assess usually helps learners feel more comfortable and confident about assessing their peers.

4.4 Learning Strategies Training

So far in this chapter, it has been stated that when intending to develop learner autonomy, the teacher should give learners choices and decision-making opportunities, encourage them to reflect on their learning and lead them to self- and peer-assessment. Another activity that a multitude of authors view as significant for the development of learner autonomy is learning strategies training, i.e. training learners how to learn (e.g. Little 1991, Dickinson 1992, Harris 1997, Benson 2011, Harmer 2015).

There are three mutually connected reasons why training learners in learning strategies is important. First, the strategies that learners use to learn and remember may have a big influence on how successful their learning will be (Harmer 2015, 98). Second, if learners are aware of different learning strategies and know which work best for them, it can help them to continue learning the TL after the formal instruction is completed (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson 2014, 186). Third, learning strategies training enable learners to become autonomous in their learning (Dickinson 1992, 13).

Many classifications of learning strategies have been presented; probably the most famous and also most detailed is the one by Oxford (1990), who divides learning strategies into two main classes, direct and indirect, each of which is further divided into 3 groups. However, the aim of this chapter is to point to the importance of learning strategies training in relation to learner autonomy, and not to provide extensive classifications. Therefore, the model by O'Malley and Chamot (1990), which is less complex but apposite, is used to explain what dimensions learning strategies may include.

Depending on the level or type of processing O'Malley and Chamot (1990, 44–47) differentiate between metacognitive, cognitive, and social-affective strategies. Metacognitive strategies are used for planning, monitoring, and evaluating learning processes (O'Malley and Chamot 1990, 44), thus they enable learners to have control over their learning. Cognitive strategies are directly concerned with the processing of incoming information to enhance learning (O'Malley and Chamot 1990, 44). In other words, they are used to understand, remember, and retrieve information. Lastly, social-affective strategies which make use of the interaction with others and control over one's emotions to assist learning (O'Malley and Chamot 1990, 45). Being familiarized with the classification is important for teachers because it helps them to instruct learners in learning strategies in a systematic way and to make sure that the instruction covers the whole range of strategies.

4.5 Learners' Diaries

Keeping a diary/logbook is recommended by many authors as a technique promoting the development of learner autonomy in ELT classes (e.g. Dam 1995, 2020; Harmer 2015; Little, Dam, and Legenhausen 2017). In the diary learners document their learning, i.e. they record activities undertaken during each lesson, new words or expressions, homework to be done, and comments on the work they have done that day (Dam 1995, 40). In the earlier stages of learning, the diaries may also contain texts that learners write; more extended texts are then kept in portfolios (Little, Dam, and Legenhausen 2017, 3). Moreover, the entries can include learners' comments about their learning progress, strategies they used, feelings they experienced, etc. (Harmer 2015, 98). The diaries are thus "powerful reflective tools" (Harmer 2015, 99) and tools through which learners exercise their autonomy (Little, Dam, and Legenhausen 2017, 2).

4.6 Posters

Creating posters and referring to them during the instruction is another way to support the development of learner autonomy (Dam 1995, 41–42). The posters may show, for example, some grammatical rules to remember, useful phrases learners need when working on certain tasks, strategies for learning vocabulary, ideas for activities, or individual learners' responsibilities for group work. Whatever the posters cover, it is important that their content is provided mostly by the learners (Little, Dam, and Legenhausen 2017, 3) and that they are, just as the diaries, written in the TL because "writing in logbooks and on posters is the way in which the TL becomes the channel of learners' agency in the autonomy classroom" (Little 2010, 8).

4.7 Grammar and Vocabulary Notebooks

Another technique Little (1991) suggests for autonomous learning is that learners keep their own notebooks into which they write down grammar and vocabulary they personally want to remember. The teacher should assist learners with the organization of the notebooks, for instance, advise them to write down words in semantic fields or thematic clusters, use colours to distinguish between word classes, and not to separate vocabulary from grammar (Little 1991, 54–55). However, the decisions about what to write down should be left up to learners because this enables them to exercise their autonomy.

4.8   Inductive Approach to Teaching Grammar

As mentioned above, learning grammar should not be separated from learning vocabulary and vice versa (Little 1991, 54–55). Regarding the ways grammar can be taught, there are two approaches: inductive and deductive. When deductive approach is applied, learners are given explanations or rules and after that they work on examples (Ur 2012, 81). While when teaching grammar inductively, learners are provided with a set of examples and based on that they are encouraged to work out the rules for themselves (Ur 2012, 81). In some contexts, teaching grammar deductively rather than inductively may be appropriate and more effective. However, there are significant benefits that come with the inductive approach. For one thing, learners remember better what they have come up with on their own (Harmer 2015, 236), and for another, it "prepares students for greater self-reliance and is therefore conducive to learner autonomy" (Thornbury 1999, 54).

4.9   Using Dictionaries

Another technique that promotes self-reliance in learning and helps develop learner autonomy is the use of dictionaries (Janíková 2007, 134). When learning a language, it happens all the time that learners do not know the meaning of words or are not sure how to use them in a sentence. In such cases, they should be encouraged to consult a dictionary rather than ask the teacher for translation or explanation because this way they are more active in their learning and become more autonomous. As Janíková (2007, 134) points out, the ability to use a dictionary must be systematically developed in learners. Suggestions for specific activities that can be suitable for training learners in dictionary work are presented, for example, by Scrivener (2011, 306–307) and Harmer (2015, 272–275).

To conclude, it should be said that this chapter does not mean to provide an exhaustive list of strategies and techniques that are expected to develop learner autonomy. It aims to introduce the ones that literature claims to be essential for developing learner autonomy and that may be commonly observed in autonomous classes. In the practical part of the thesis, these strategies and techniques are integral to the list of features of learner autonomy development used for creating all data collection tools. That list includes, among others, also some ELT methods which are briefly presented in the following chapter.

5   ELT METHODS SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNER AUTONOMY

Benson (2011, 56) states that "research on autonomy in language learning shares some of its sources with the humanistic, communicative and task-based approaches to language education with which it has been closely allied." There are various ELT methods arising from these approaches that hold the potential for learner autonomy development. From the older ones, that developed in the 1970s and 1980s, the Silent Way, and Community Language Learning can be named. Speaking about more recent methods, these are, for instance, Communicative Language Teaching, Task-based Language Teaching, and Cooperative Language Teaching.

The Silent Way is based on the idea that teaching should be subordinate to learning. The teacher is expected to be as silent as possible, while learners are active and produce as much language as possible (Richards and Rodgers 2014, 289). To promote independence from the teacher this method makes use of self- and peer-correction techniques, and specific aids, such as Cuisenaire rods, Fidel Charts, and Sound-Colour Charts (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson 2014, 65–67).

Another method supporting the development of learner autonomy is Community Language Learning. Generally, this method centres on learners; they are given choices about what to say, encouraged to reflect on and self-evaluate their learning. The teachers are in the role of counsellors who help learners overcome difficulties in their learning (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson 2014, 85).

Communicative Language Teaching is a current mainstream method which stresses the need to focus on communicative proficiency. Given that this method lacks exact specification of techniques to be used (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson 2014,115) and that the teacher can act as a facilitator rather than controller, it provides space for learner autonomy development.

Task-based Language Teaching, a current though not mainstream method, is based on real-world tasks that require learners to communicate (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson 2014,149). Depending on the situation, it may be more, or less learner-centred. Besides, it involves problem solving and meaningful tasks, and thus has a potential to promote learner autonomy.

The last method, Cooperative Language Teaching, is part of a more general instructional approach known as Collaborative or Cooperative Learning which is exercised in education

across the curriculum (Richards and Rodgers 2014, 244). It involves group activities in which learners need to join forces to be able to accomplish a common goal. Therefore, it not only develops learners' collaborative and social skills, but also allows learners to take charge of their learning.

6 FINAL REMARKS ON THE THEORETICAL PART

To sum it all up, the findings from the theoretical part give rise to the list of features of learner autonomy development, which serves as a basis for observations, questionnaire for pupils and interview with the teacher, i.e. as a basis for all the tools through which data in the empirical part are collected. This list is presented in the practical part of the thesis.

At the very end of the theoretical part, I feel an urge to quote Little (1991), who, in my opinion, nicely and, at the same time, critically explains and summarizes the point in developing learner autonomy. He says:

> I do not believe that learner autonomy offers infallible solutions to every problem encountered in classroom learning; nor do I believe that it guarantees success in every case. But I do believe that it makes sense, not only as the logical outcome of learner-centredness in education generally, but also as the approach to language learning that can best do justice to communicative ideals and the insights we are beginning to gain from empirical research into language acquisition.

<div align="right">(Little 1991, 56–57)</div>

PRACTICAL PART

7 RESEARCH AIM AND STRATEGY

The aim of the practical part is to find out whether and how learner autonomy is being developed in the particular English class. The research strategy used is a case study. The unit of the case study is a case, which is the main subject of the research (Mareš 2015, 115). The case is usually a particular entity, such as an individual, a group, an institution, an organization, or a community (Yin 2014, 237 in Mareš 2015, 115). In the educational context it may be, for example, a learner, a group of learners, a school class, a teacher, or a school as an institution. In the case of this thesis, it is the selected lower-secondary English class. According to Denscombe (2007, 37) and Mareš (2015, 116), a typical feature of the case study is that it can, or even should, be conducted with the use of variety of research methods, such as observations, interviews, discussions, questionnaires, and analysis of documents. Using the variety of research methods allows the researcher to see the thing from different perspectives and to understand the topic in its complexity (Denscombe 2007, 135). Therefore, as Denscombe (2007, 36) puts it, "case studies tend to be 'holistic' rather than deal with 'isolated factors'."

The advantage of the case study is, besides the possibility to see the problem from different angles, that it enables the researcher to study things in detail since it focuses on one or a few instances (Denscombe 2007, 45). Moreover, the case is studied in the real-life context (Mareš 2015, 116). Another benefit of the case study is that it serves two purposes and can be useful and valuable for two sides. Firstly, it enables the researcher to gain insight into how the topic (here the development of learner autonomy) is implemented in a real-life context. Secondly, "it can help practitioners enhance their understanding of, and solve problems related to, their own professional workplace" (Nunan 1992, 89). As for this thesis, it might provide the teacher with valuable data about how learner autonomy is/is not being developed in the particular English class, or possibly suggest how it could be enhanced.

The main weak point of the case study is in the degree of generalization. Since it restricts the range of study to just one or a few cases, scepticism about the findings can be expressed (Denscombe 2007, 42). Denscombe (2007, 43) suggests that the researcher should explicitly address this issue and provide some arguments to highlight the value of the case study. One of

the arguments may be that "thorough exploration of one case can help us to better understand other similar cases" (Hendl 2016, 102).

Regarding the approaches to case study, Hendl (2016, 104) states that they vary according to authors. As far as this thesis is concerned, it adopts Yin's approach in which case study is a strategy that examines a predetermined phenomenon in the present within its real context (Hendl 2016, 107).

7.1   The Case Studied

The case study necessarily involves the decision about which case to choose from among many possibilities. As Denscombe (2007, 39) points out, this choice should not be random, but deliberate and based on some criteria. Given the aim of this thesis, the main criterium for the selection of the case was that it must be a lower-secondary English class. Besides that, I wanted to choose a typical case because if the case is like most of the others, the generalizations can be made from the findings (Denscombe 2007, 40). The justification for the fact that the selected case is typical is that I have personally spoken with some of the teachers who teach there and have also observed some lessons before.

Firstly, the general characteristics of the school in which the research was carried out is provided, and the characterization of the selected lower-secondary English class follows. The school provides education from 1st to 9th grade. It is a relatively big school of a town type attended by approximately 700 pupils. It merges also an after-school club, a school canteen, and a nursery school. The school emphasizes foreign language teaching, i.e. in 6th–9th grade there is always one class called "a class with extended foreign language teaching" in which pupils start learning "the second" foreign language (German, French, or Russian) already in 6th grade and the curriculum and pace in English classes ("the first" foreign language) is slightly more demanding than in ordinary classes. As for the equipment and services that are available to pupils, there is a big garden with a new sports ground, two gyms, two language classrooms with interactive whiteboards and plenty of bilingual dictionaries, a school library, and a bookcase with English books (mainly graded readers) that pupils can borrow and read either at school or at home. Furthermore, there is a big hall where pupils can spend the main breaks relaxing on a sofa, playing table tennis or board and card games. In this hall there are also some notice boards with important information for pupils, as well as parents, and displays of pupils' works.

The selected case is the English class in 8th grade. I chose this grade given that the thesis is aimed at lower-secondary classes and that the teacher has been working with the class for some time (specifically since 6th grade), and thus nothing keeps her from focusing on the development of autonomy in learners. At the same time, it is not the final year, which could be specific because learners are about to leave the school. In the class there are normally 13 pupils. However, one of the pupils was absent throughout the research period. The teacher is a female fully qualified teacher of English who has 19 years of teaching experience. The instruction takes place either in a common or a language classroom. As far as the arrangement of the classroom is concerned, it is identical in both cases. There are desks in three rows and learners sit in pairs. At the front, there is a teacher's desk with a computer, a blackboard, and an interactive whiteboard. At the back, there are some cupboards and bookcases. On the walls, there is a noticeboard and some works of the pupils.

8 DATA COLLECTION

The data were collected between 31st March and 31st May 2022. To validate the findings, i.e. to increase the trustworthiness of the research[4], the strategy of triangulation was used. In general terms, triangulation is "viewing things from more than one perspective", which can mean the use of different methods, different sources of data, or even different researchers (Denscombe 2007, 134). In case of this thesis, the data were collected by using three research methods (observation, questionnaire, interview), which is the form of methodological triangulation, and from three different informants (observer/researcher, teacher, pupils), which is the informant triangulation (Denscombe 2007, 135–136). The rationale behind triangulation is that viewing something from more than one viewpoint increases accuracy of the research and provides the researcher with the fuller picture of the examined reality (Denscombe 2007, 134–137).

All data collection tools[5], i.e. the observation sheet, the questionnaire, and the interview, draw on the list of features of learner autonomy development which was created on the basis of the findings from the theoretical part (see Appendix H). The individual data collection tools, as well as the justification for using them, and the process of collecting data are described in the following three sub-chapters.

8.1 Observations

One of the methods that was used to collect data is observation. As Creswell (2012, 213) states, "observation is the process of gathering open-ended, firsthand information by observing people and places at a research site." In this case study, I opted for a structured non-participating observation meaning that it was based on the observation sheet prepared in advance, and that the researcher did not participate in the activities in order not to disrupt the naturalness of the setting. One of the main advantages of observation is the directness of data collection, i.e. it does not rely on what people say or report about a certain situation, but draws on direct evidence (Denscombe 2007, 206). Moreover, because it is based on the pre-

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[4] The term "trustworthiness" rather than "reliability" is used to describe the accuracy and credibility of the qualitative research (Creswell 2012, 259).
[5] In this thesis the term "data collection tools" refers to the particular devices/instruments used to collect data, such as a paper questionnaire, while the term "data collection method" or "research method" refers to data collection strategy in general, i.e. it refers, for example, to the act of eliciting answers by distributing questionnaires.

prepared observation sheet and the list of features to be observed, it produces pre-coded data which are ready for the analysis (Denscombe 2007, 214). On the other hand, there may be some disadvantages, such as that it provides data about what happens, but not about why it happens (Denscombe 2007, 214). Nevertheless, this disadvantage is overcome by using the other data collection methods, specifically the interview with the teacher. Another drawback might be that the data collected are possible to be influenced by the researcher's distinctive perceptions of situations, or some personal factors (Denscombe 2007, 207). To eliminate this happening, while observing, the researcher constantly tried to bear that fact in mind and made efforts to be as objective as possible.

Observation was the main source of data for this research, and it was meant to confirm or refute the data gained by the other two methods. It was the first method used, and thus in accordance with research ethics, before the observation/empirical research started all participants gave informed consent. In total, the researcher observed ten lessons, which seems to be sufficient to gain an insight into how learner autonomy is being developed in the class.

The observation sheet used (see Appendix I) consists of four parts. In the first part the researcher records the date, class observed, time and the aim of the lesson. What follows is the main part of the observation sheet which is in the form of a table. At the top of the table there is a box called "Introduction" used for recording the happening at the very beginning of the lesson. Then there are 7 columns into which information about individual activities are put down. The first column indicates the number of the activity. The second column shows the interaction patterns and the third how long the activity lasts. The fourth column serves for describing the activity and the fifth for recording materials and aids used. The next column is based on the list of features of learner autonomy development (see Appendix H). Into this column the researcher writes down letters representing the individual features possible to be observed. In the last column the researcher comments on the features observed and adds any other relevant information, such as what the roles of the teacher and learners are, how they behave, etc. At the bottom of the table there is a box called "Conclusion" into which the actions happening at the very end of the lesson are recorded. Another part of the observation sheet focuses on homework, i.e. if there is any, what type of homework it is, if it is voluntary or compulsory, and if it can help develop learner autonomy. The last part of the sheet is devoted to comments on teacher's educational style, teacher's and learners' roles, role of the TL, and any other observations relevant for learner autonomy development.

There are two remarks that need to be made about the process of collecting data with the use of the observation sheet. One of them relates to recording the interaction patterns. The list of features of learner autonomy development contains the point i) Pair work, group work and the point j) Individual work. When observing the lessons, the researcher decided to put down the letter j) only when she saw some potential for developing learner autonomy in the activity. On the other hand, she wrote down the letter i) whenever pair or group work appeared. The reason is that the researcher agrees with Harmer (1998, 21) and Ur (2012, 234), and believes that working in pairs or groups always, at least slightly, contributes to learner autonomy development since learners are not directly controlled by the teacher and it is inevitable for them to make some learning decisions in the group. If nothing else, they have to decide on the pace of work and the amount of work each of them will do. The second remark is that whenever the inductive approach to teaching grammar (point s)) was recorded, the researcher automatically put down also the letter b) which stands for making learners actively involved in constructing new knowledge since these two points are interrelated.

8.2 Questionnaire

Another method that was used to collect data is a questionnaire. As Denscombe (2007, 155) explains, "questionnaires rely on written information supplied directly by people in response to questions asked by the researcher." The main advantage of the questionnaire is that it enables the researcher to get information from a large number of respondents in a relatively short period of time. Besides, all respondents are asked exactly the same questions, which means that questionnaires provide standardized answers (Denscombe 2007, 169). Moreover, given that questionnaires are structured, they supply pre-coded answers (Denscombe 2007, 170). However, this last-mentioned advantage also entails some potential disadvantages. One of them is that pre-coded answers may make the respondents frustrated because they may not allow them to express their opinions fully, and that can discourage them from answering (Denscombe 2007, 170).

Since I needed to elicit standardized answers from 12 pupils, the questionnaire seemed to be a suitable tool through which the data could be collected. As in the case of the observation sheet, the questionnaire is based on the list of features of learner autonomy development (see Appendix H), i.e. each questionnaire item relates directly to one of the features from the list. This ensures that the data gained by the questionnaire can be easily compared to and interpreted in relation to the data gained by observation.

The questionnaire was written in Czech, so that it was understandable for all pupils. Then, for the purposes of this thesis it was translated into English (see Appendix J). As for the layout of the questionnaire, it starts with the instructions containing information about what the questionnaire covers and how to fill it in, as well as assurances about anonymity and thanks for cooperation. The body of the questionnaire is in the form of a table. At the top of the table there is the beginning of an unfinished statement that applies to all the questionnaire items which follow. As it has been already mentioned, the questionnaire items draw on the list features of learner autonomy development, and they come in the form of closed ended rate statements. For each item, the respondents are supposed to choose (circle) one of the rate expressions that are "often", "sometimes" and "never". The reason why the researcher opted for the closed ended statements is the easier collation and analysis of the data gained (Nunan 1992, 143) and the fact that it could be difficult for pupils to express and write down their own ideas. As Denscombe (2007, 155) suggests, the information the questionnaires supply can generally be of two types – 'facts' and 'opinions'. In this questionnaire pupils are supposed to judge how often the situation described by the statements occurs in their English classes. Therefore, the information provided is respondents' opinions, rather than factual information.

Before the questionnaire was used to collect data for the research, it was piloted in a different English class of 8th graders. Given that the pupils had no difficulty with understanding the statements, and no other problems occurred there, no amendments to the questionnaire had to be made. The administration was done face-to-face. At the beginning, the researcher orally explained what the purpose of the questionnaire was and instructed the learners how to complete it. No time limit was set. All questionnaires returned to the researcher correctly completed, and thus could be counted as applicable.

8.3 Interview

The last method employed was an interview. It is a method that enables the researcher to "gain insights into things like people's opinions, feelings, emotions and experiences" (Denscombe 2007, 174). Therefore, it suitably complements the other two methods used in this research – observation and questionnaire – both of which provide data about what happens, but not why the things happen. Moreover, by using another source of data, the trustworthiness of the research was increased. As for the type of interview, I decided to design a structured one. In this type of interview the researcher comes with a pre-arranged set of

questions which are asked in a pre-determined order (Nunan 1992, 149). This can be limiting in terms of interviewee's possibility to express his/her ideas, opinions, and feelings fully, as well as in terms of interviewer's flexibility to adapt questions to the particular situation and context. Nevertheless, it brings some advantages. Denscombe (2007, 175) mentions, for example, the advantage of standardization and pre-coded answers. Having the pre-coded data that are easier to be analysed was the main reason why I opted for the structured type of interview.

Regarding the content of the interview, it consists of twenty-four open-ended questions (see Appendix K). The first two questions inquire about the interviewee's (teacher's) opinion on the topic of learner autonomy, i.e. if she finds it important to develop learner autonomy in ELT classes, and if she thinks she develops it in her lower-secondary classes. The function of these questions is to begin the interview, induce a relaxed atmosphere and find out if the teacher engages in this topic. What follows is a set of twenty-two yes/no questions which draw on the list of features of learner autonomy development. The teacher is always asked not only to reply yes or no, but also to comment on her answers and explain why and how she does/does not do the particular things. This way the researcher gets the answer to the research question, i.e. whether and how learner autonomy is being developed in the selected class. In addition to that, the questionnaire also provides information about why the teacher does/does not do the things.

As far as the process of collecting data is concerned, the interview was carried out in the teacher's office on 31st May 2022 and lasted about 40 minutes. It was originally meant to be conducted in English. However, because of the interviewee's preference for using Czech language, the researcher changed the plans and asked the questions in Czech. In order to be able to go back to the answers and transcribe them for the analysis, the researcher wanted to record the interview. Therefore, before the interview began, she had to gain a permission from the teacher to record it. After that, the researcher familiarized the teacher with the nature and purpose of the interview and reassured her about the confidentiality of her replies. Then, the process of asking and answering questions started. Throughout the whole process the researcher tried to maintain a non-judgemental stance towards the interviewee's responses. The only way the researcher intervened was when she used probes to obtain some additional information or when she explained what some of the questions exactly meant. At the end of the interview, the researcher asked the teacher if she wanted to add anything, but she did not.

The researcher thus thanked for participating in the interview and informed the teacher where and when the results of the research would be accessible.

To sum it up, all data collection tools, that were introduced in this chapter, were designed to answer the research question of whether and how learner autonomy is being developed in the selected English class.

9 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

In this chapter the data gained through individual tools are described and analysed. There is also the description of the method of data analysis. Furthermore, the chapter presents the findings from individual analyses, which are then interpreted in relation to each other.

9.1 Analysis of Observations

The qualitative analysis of data obtained through observations was carried out by thorough examination of ten completed observation sheets. For each observation sheet the researcher recorded the interaction patterns used and then analysed the description of individual activities, as well as happenings described in the boxes "Introduction", "Conclusion" and "Homework". While doing this, the researcher noted down which features of learner autonomy development were observed in the lesson. For the sake of clarity, the results of the analysis were entered into a table (see Appendix L). Nevertheless, the findings in the table are rather quantitative, which is not sufficient for this research. Therefore, on the following pages the qualitative description of data gained by analysis is provided. At first, the individual lessons are described based on the list of features of learner autonomy development. What follows is the description of conditions and strategies enhancing learner autonomy that are better to be analysed on the basis of the overall view, rather than individual activities in the lessons. These are things such as teacher's educational style, teacher's and learners' roles, the role of the TL, working on portfolios, etc.

9.1.1 Lesson 1

At the beginning, the teacher quickly introduced the plan for the lesson. However, the formulation of the lesson aim was missing. In the introductory phase, the teacher encouraged learners to reflect on what they learnt in the previous class. During the lesson learners worked approximately equal time in pairs and in whole-class pattern. The pair work was based on cooperation on making up example sentences and creating a piece of work (a film trailer or a news report). Learners were given a choice of where and with whom they will work, as well as a choice of the topic and mode of the task (trailer/news report; written/spoken). In the activities aimed at learning new grammar, the teacher made learners actively involved in constructing the new knowledge. The teacher also referred to learning strategies when she was providing learners with a suggestion on how to remember the verbs followed by -ing/to.

In case that learners did not know the meaning and usage of the words they were learning, the teacher encouraged them to use a dictionary. During the lesson the teacher supported learners' motivation by trying to make learning more personally relevant for them (encouraging them to create their own example sentences that somehow relate to their life or personality). Learners were assigned a compulsory homework to be done for the next lesson. It was aimed at revising the vocabulary learnt in the previous lesson (completing a crossword in workbook). Owing to its nature, the homework did not contribute to the development of learner autonomy.

9.1.2   Lesson 2

At the start the teacher introduced the plan for the lesson (she did not state the aim). The first activity was checking homework (exercise in the textbook – completing sentences with correct verbs followed by -ing/to). The teacher inspected if all pupils had done it. Then, learners took a test on this topic. After the test, the teacher supported learners' reflection when she asked them to express how they feel about the test. They were supposed to show thumbs up, down or in the middle to indicate how they did – i.e. good, bad, or so-so. The reflection on the learning process was encouraged in one more activity, when the teacher wanted the learners to read a text and say which vocabulary is new for them. The teacher tried to make learners active in constructing new knowledge by asking them to explain the meaning of some vocabulary from the text, instead of translating it for them. In one case the teacher attempted to support learners' motivation by making learning more personally relevant for them (encouraging them to create their own personalized sentences). Another feature that appeared in this lesson was cooperative learning. Learners worked in groups and each member of the group was given a slip of paper with a picture on it representing a part of a story. Learners' task was to decide on the correct order of the pictures and to prepare a role-play. To be able to perform a coherent role-play they had to join forces and come up with a collective story. Regarding the interaction patterns, in this lesson whole-class, individual, and group work was used. At the end of the lesson, the teacher told pupils what they were going to learn in the next class, which contributes to learners' awareness of planning the learning process. However, the teacher did not give learners' the opportunity to plan their learning by themselves.

9.1.3 Lesson 3

In the very beginning the teacher stated the aim. The lesson included five activities – all of them, apart from one that was done individually, were in the whole-class pattern. The grammar was taught inductively. The learners were thus actively involved in constructing new knowledge. Practising the newly learnt grammar structure was done in the form of drill as well as less guided activities (but that was just one case). The teacher supported learners' motivation by using activities that are related to their immediate presence, i.e. she tried to make learning more personally relevant to them. She also referred to the meaningfulness and usefulness of the grammar structure they were learning. During one of the activities, she recommended a strategy that can be used for learning new vocabulary. At the end of the lesson, the teacher asked learners to reflect on what they had learnt. Then, learners were assigned homework (an exercise in workbook) to practise the newly learnt grammar structure. This type of homework did not support the development of their autonomy.

9.1.4 Lesson 4

The teacher started the lesson by introducing the aim. After that, she checked if everybody had done homework (an exercise in workbook). Then, in the form of whole-class work learners went through the exercise and checked their answers. The topic of the lesson was "Easter around the world". During the first Easter-related activity learners worked in pairs (they could choose the partner) and played a triomino (similar to a domino) that was aimed at learning vocabulary associated with Easter. At the end of this activity, the teacher attempted to relate new knowledge to learners' existing knowledge by asking which words were new for learners and what other vocabulary they would add (something they already know). The following activity was conducted in pairs (again, learners could choose with whom they wanted to cooperate). Each pair got a slip of paper with a hint about a certain tradition and the name of the country. Learners' task was to search the Internet and find out details about the tradition. Then, they were supposed to report their findings to the rest of the class. This way learners were made active in the process of learning. Given that learners knew from the beginning of the activity about the necessity to share their findings with their classmates (the aim was to teach others about the traditions) and were instructed to communicate and look up the information in English only, it could be considered as task-based learning. At the very end of the lesson, the teacher encouraged learners to reflect on what they had learnt.

9.1.5   Lesson 5

In the beginning, the teacher explained what activities learners were going to do, but she did not introduce the aim. During the lesson learners worked approximately the same amount of time in pairs and as a whole class. When doing a listening comprehension exercise, they worked individually. The teacher gave learners some choices and decision-making opportunities. However, the choices and decisions concerned rather less important aspects of learning, i.e. learners could decide which 3 new words they will write down, and if they want to work in pairs or in groups. A few times during the lesson the teacher referred to a strategy for learning vocabulary (particularly it was the strategy of derivation). She also tried to support learners' motivation by asking personalized questions. In addition to that, she encouraged learners to reflect on their learning by asking them which words they will remember from that lesson. In the end, learners were assigned homework – an exercise in workbook aimed at practising the structure used for describing a scene. The homework did not have a potential for developing learner autonomy.

9.1.6   Lesson 6

The teacher said what the plan for the lesson was. However, she did not formulate the aim. In the introductory phase of the lesson, the teacher attempted to support learners' motivation by asking some personalized questions. In this lesson no pair or group work appeared. The interaction pattern that prevailed was whole-class work and it was supplemented with individual work. Since all the activities in which learners worked individually were quite guided, they did not promote the development of learner autonomy. During one activity learners could decide themselves which words they would choose for their sentences. This was, however, just a minor decision. When teaching grammar (adjectives ending in -ed-/ing), the teacher used inductive approach as at first learners were asked to use the adjectives in the sentences and based on that they were encouraged to come up with the rule. The teacher adopted the role of facilitator since she guided learners to formulate and write down the rules by themselves, instead of dictating it to them. Moreover, the teacher employed learning strategies training when she was instructing learners how to work with an on-line dictionary and explaining how they can benefit from using it. At the end of the lesson, learners were asked to reflect on what they had learnt. The teacher then assigned homework – an exercise in workbook. In the exercise learners were to choose the correct adjectives and complete the sentences. This homework did not contribute to learner autonomy.

9.1.7 Lesson 7

At the beginning of the lesson, the teacher did not introduce the aim, she just stated the lesson plan. The interaction patterns used were whole-class work and individual work. The individual work, however, did not have a potential for learner autonomy development since learners were either taking a test or completing a Kahoot quiz. After the test, the teacher supported learners' reflection as she asked them to express their feelings about the test (showing thumbs up, down or in the middle). Another situation in which learners were encouraged to reflect on their learning was when they were supposed to underline words in the text which were new for them. During the lesson the teacher referred to learning strategies when she was suggesting a strategy for learning vocabulary (learning the words in the context, underlining them in the text, and writing them down into notebooks). For homework, learners were to write down vocabulary from the text they were reading during the class into their vocabulary notebooks. They had to consider themselves which words were new for them and needed to be put down. By providing this decision-making opportunity, the teacher passed on the responsibility for learning to pupils.

9.1.8 Lesson 8

The plan for the lesson was introduced, however, the formulation of the aim was missing. In the beginning the teacher asked a few personalized questions, which could be seen as an effort to support learners' motivation. During the lesson learners worked as a whole-class or individually. With one activity they could choose if they wanted to work individually or in pairs. It was the only opportunity for them to make their own decision. This activity was revision of adjectives ending in -ed/-ing and learners were supposed to go through three stations at which three different tasks were prepared for them. At the fourth station there was the answer key paper and learners were to check their answers. This way they were provided immediate feedback on how well they did and could evaluate their learning. However, the potential for self-assessment was not exploited by the teacher since she did not encourage learners to think about their performance. While working on the tasks, the teacher exhorted learners to use dictionaries. After the activity finished, the teacher suggested learners to highlight any new vocabulary and then write it down into their notebooks. By this she referred to a strategy for learning vocabulary.

9.1.9 Lesson 9

The teacher introduced the plan for the lesson but did not state the aim. In the introductory phase the teacher checked if everybody had done homework (an exercise in workbook). Then, in the form of whole-class work learners went through the exercise and checked their answers. The lesson then included five more activities. The first three did not contribute to learner autonomy development since they were based on filling in guided exercises in workbook. The only contribution was when learners were working on the exercise which presented a dialogue between a waiter and a guest, and the teacher referred to the meaningfulness and usefulness of being able to order a meal or take an order (e.g. learners may go to the restaurant while on holiday abroad, or they may have a summer job as a waiter). This could be considered as an attempt to increase learners' motivation to learn English. In the fourth activity the teacher decided to exploit the previous "restaurant" dialogue and asked learners to make pairs and prepare a similar dialogue to be performed in front of the class. For this activity learners could choose their partners. Again, the teacher referred to the usefulness. During the last activity learners worked in groups of three and were supposed to create a mind map for what they had learnt in Unit 4. This way the development of learner autonomy was promoted since learners had to make decisions in the group without being controlled by the teacher. Moreover, they were encouraged to reflect on the process of their learning. Besides, the teacher explained learners that it is, at the same time a good strategy how to prepare for the upcoming test (Unit 4 revision).

9.1.10 Lesson 10

In the beginning, the teacher introduced the lesson plan (revision for Unit 4 test) but did not formulate the aim. No pair or group work appeared in this lesson, learners worked as a whole class or individually. Given that most of the activities were based on filling in guided exercises in workbook, there was not much space for learner autonomy development. However, the teacher at least encouraged learners' reflection on the learning process when they were discussing what they included in the mind maps created in the previous lesson and when they were thinking about what they had learnt. Furthermore, she advised learners which strategies could be used for learning vocabulary or grammar and supported their motivation by referring to meaningfulness and usefulness of the curriculum. At the end of the lesson, there was space for pupils' self-assessment. Based on completing a few short exercises, learners were supposed to assess to what degree they have mastered the content of Unit 4.

9.1.11 Summary of the Findings

In most lessons the teacher did not explicitly state the aim of the lesson that would be formulated from the point of view of learners, she only introduced the plan for the lesson. Out of a total of 10 lessons observed the aim was introduced only twice. Nevertheless, even when the aim was presented, the teacher did not work with it any further. For example, during reflective activities that were conducted at the end of some of the lessons, there was no reference to the aim, i.e. learners were encouraged to think about what they had learnt but not in relation to the aim. In addition to that, when intending to develop learner autonomy, the teacher should invite learners to take part in setting the aims. But that was not observed at all. As far as the reflection on the learning process is concerned, learners were asked to reflect on what they had learnt, alternatively on what they had mastered well and what they would need to practise more. However, the teacher did not ask them to think about, for instance, what prevented them from being better at something, which materials or resources could help them to improve, or how the methods and strategies they had used influenced their learning results.

As for choices and decisions, the teacher provided learners with some opportunities to make them. Nearly in all pair or group work, learners were allowed to choose with whom they want to cooperate and where they want to work on the assigned task (within the space of the classroom). Furthermore, they were encouraged to make a decision about which words they will write down into their vocabulary notebooks (according to what they feel they personally need). In one case they could also choose a topic and mode of the task (film trailer or news report, spoken or written outcome). Generally, the choices, however, concerned rather less important aspects of learning.

The situation in which the teacher related new knowledge to learners' existing knowledge, constructs, and experience was observed once. It was during the activity that was aimed at developing learners' vocabulary. The teacher at first asked learners which words connected to the given topic they know and only after that they started to learn new words. Nevertheless, the teacher tried to make learners actively involved in constructing their knowledge, especially when learning new grammar. In most cases the grammar was taught inductively. Learners were provided with the examples of language use and based on that they were supposed to infer how it works and formulate the rules by themselves.

During the lessons, the teacher made references to learning strategies. She suggested learners which strategies they can use when they learn vocabulary or grammar. The references,

however, were made only to cognitive strategies. No occurrence of pointing out to metacognitive or social-affective strategies was observed. The teacher supported learners' motivation by making learning more personally relevant to pupils or by referring to meaningfulness and usefulness of what was taught. In a few instances the teacher encouraged learners to use dictionaries. However, sometimes, when learners were reading a text and came across a word they did not know, the teacher served as a resource and translated it for them, instead of spurring them on to use a dictionary.

Regarding the evaluation of the outcomes of learning, it was found out that the assessment was made mostly by the teacher. No opportunity for peer-assessment was observed and the opportunity for self-assessment appeared only sporadically. The self-assessment as such was carried out just once when learners were supposed to complete a sheet with "I can…" statements to assess to what degree they have mastered the content of the unit in the textbook.

In one lesson the method of task-based learning was used, but it was rather a "weak" version. The researcher also observed one case of cooperative learning. In connection with these two methods, it seems to be suitable to comment on the usage of interaction patterns. The teacher employed all of them. However, most of the time learners worked as a whole class. When they were supposed to work individually, the activities were guided with no potential to develop learner autonomy. As for pair work and group work activities, they enabled learners to be more autonomous by their nature, but as such they were not designed with the aim to develop learner autonomy.

What was completely missing in the lessons observed was encouraging learners to plan their learning. There was no time devoted to teaching learners how to set learning goals, how to put together a learning plan or how to effectively organize their learning time. The teacher also did not discuss with learners how to select suitable materials and resources for learning English or how to deal with feelings that accompany learning. Furthermore, she did not encourage learners to keep a diary or portfolio into which they would record their learning.

Regarding the teacher's educational style, I would label it as authoritarian with democratic features. On one hand, the teacher tried to bring about the feeling of mutual respect, cooperation, and equality to the relationship with learners. On the other hand, in most activities she acted as a controller rather than facilitator. As for the possibility of choices, learners were encouraged to make decisions about their learning, but it was only during some lessons and the decisions were related to minor issues. Basically, it was the teacher who made

most of the decisions and organized learning, i.e. the teacher determined objectives, selected content, organized time and instructed learners what to do. As for the roles, apart from being a controller and organizer, the teacher also acted as a monitor and evidence gatherer when she was observing learners working on individual, pair, or group tasks. Moreover, she adopted the role of feedback provider and resource (e.g. when learners asked for some information).

If the role of the TL is to be discussed, the teacher used TL almost all the time, except for the time when she was explaining grammar. Learners used TL when replying to teacher's questions. However, when Ls did not understand something, they asked the teacher in Czech. When working in pairs or group, they tended to use Czech language, or sometimes they communicated partly in Czech, partly in English. Generally, it could be said that the teacher tried, with a few exceptions, to use TL as a medium for communicative, as well as reflective and organisational activities.

9.2 Analysis of Questionnaires

The data gained by distribution of questionnaires were analysed in a qualitative, as well as quantitative way. The quantitative analysis was carried out first and it resided in counting the responses for each item (see Appendix M). Then, during the qualitative analysis the findings were summarized and interpreted in relation to the findings gained through observations. Before the actual analysis the researcher had to check if all questionnaires were valid, i.e. if learners chose just one option for each item. Nevertheless, no problem was detected.

The discussion of the findings is as follows:

1) All learners stated that, at least sometimes, they work on the assigned tasks individually. This coincides with what has been observed.
2) According to most pupils, the teacher uses pair and group work often. Nobody chose the option that the teacher never uses pair/group work. These findings are consistent with the observations. However, the researcher would not claim that pair/group work was used often since what predominated was whole-class work.
3) Ten out of twelve pupils responded that they can sometimes choose the peers for pair/group work. The remaining two pupils chose the option "often". This is in complete conformity with the observations.
4) All pupils agreed that the teacher never gives them a choice of several tasks. The teacher should certainly give learners choices more often since it is important for

learner autonomy development. During the observations the researcher recorded just one occurrence of a possibility to choose from two tasks.

5) Ten out of twelve pupils feel that they can never choose where they will work on the assigned tasks. The observations showed, however, that the teacher sometimes gave learners a choice of where they want to work.

6) Apart from one pupil, everybody stated that they can never decide if they want to do homework, i.e. homework is compulsory and learners are penalized for not doing it. This was confirmed by observations.

7) Most pupils feel that the teacher sometimes relates new knowledge to learners' existing knowledge and experience. One pupil thinks this never happens. There is not a discrepancy between pupils' responses and observations.

8) Two thirds of the learners stated that they set the goals (on their own or with the help of the teacher) that they want to achieve. The remaining pupils responded that this never happens. The observations showed that learners never participate in setting learning aims. The discrepancy between the findings may be caused by the fact that the researcher observed only ten lessons and the teacher simply did not integrate this action in these lessons.

9) Ten out of twelve pupils responded that they, at least sometimes, discuss which materials and aids they can use for learning English. During the observations no such situation was recorded. The reason may be the same as stated with the previous point.

10) Seven pupils responded that they never discuss how to choose the materials. The remaining five learners think they sometimes do that.

11) All learners stated that during the lessons they learn strategies how to learn. Half of them believes it happens often, the other half believes it is sometimes. This coincides with what has been observed.

12) Half of the learners responded that they never learn to plan their learning. Another five students think they do it sometimes, and one thinks they do it often. The observations showed that the teacher did not encourage learners to plan their learning. However, the reason for the discrepancy may be the limited number of observations.

13) Apart from one pupil, everybody stated that they discuss what they have learnt in the lesson. This is in accordance with the findings gained by observations.

14) All pupils responded that during the lessons they discuss what they are/are not good at and why it is so. Half of them believes it is often, half of them sometimes. The researcher, however, did not observe a situation in which learners would be

encouraged to reflect either on the reasons for their success or failure or on their strengths and weaknesses.

15) Two thirds of the learners stated that they assess their own learning. The observations showed, however, that opportunities for self-assessment are rare.

16) Half of the pupils stated that they never assess their peers' work. The other half stated that they sometimes do it. The researcher did not observe a single occurrence of peer-assessment.

17) Half of the respondents believe that they do not discuss what motivates them to learn. This finding is in conformity with what has been observed.

18) One third of the pupils responded that during the lessons they never discuss their feelings related to learning. The rest of the pupils responded that they sometimes do it. Discussion on learning-related feelings was not observed by the researcher.

19) Half of the learners stated that they never work with a portfolio. The other five learners think they sometimes do it. One stated they do it often. There is quite a big mismatch between pupils' responses. The truth, however, is that learners did not work with portfolios during the lessons observed.

20) One third of the pupils responded that they do not keep their own diary into which they would record what, how and why they learn. Six pupils responded that they do it sometimes, and the other two think they do it often. This discrepancy could be caused by the fact that keeping diaries is a voluntary activity. During the observations, however, the researcher did not notice a situation in which learners would use their diaries.

21) Nine out of twelve learners stated that they can decide themselves which vocabulary and grammar to write down into their notebooks. The rest stated it never happens. The observations showed that sometimes the teacher allows learners to decide what they want to write down but sometimes it is obligatory.

22) Half of the respondents stated that they never create posters which help develop their autonomy. During the lessons observed learners did not create any posters.

23) All pupils stated that they, at least sometimes, work with dictionaries. This is in conformity with the observations.

24) One third of the learners stated that the teacher does not use inductive approach to teaching grammar. The other five pupils believe the teacher sometimes does use it, and the remaining three believe the teacher uses it often. During the lessons observed the teacher opted for the inductive approach in most cases.

25) Eight out of twelve pupils responded that they are assigned real-world tasks. One of these pupils thinks it happens often. The remaining four learners stated that it never happens. During observations, only one occurrence of task-based learning was recorded, and it was not a very typical example. It was rather a "weak" version.

Given that some discrepancies between the findings from questionnaires and observations occurred, the results of the analysis of the interview with the teacher are very useful for clarifying the overall findings and the interpretation of data.

9.3   Analysis of Interview

The process of data analysis started by transcribing the interview. The researcher got a 6-page document which was subsequently analysed by using the method of open coding. In view of the fact that the interview questions were based on the list of features of learner autonomy development, the data were pre-coded to a certain degree. However, for each question, that was constructed as yes/no question, the researcher asked the teacher to develop her answers and explain why and how she does/does not do the particular things. The responses were thus quite extensive and required to be coded.

The analysis proceeded as follows. The researcher read the transcription many times and while reading it she was marking parts of the text with codes (see Appendix N). The codes were then organized into 7 categories (see Appendix O). The category "Importance of learner autonomy development" contains a code that relate to the parts of the transcript where the teacher expresses her opinions on the importance of learner autonomy development in ELT classes. The category called "Acknowledging implementation" includes a code referring to the parts in which the teacher expresses herself that she does employ the particular strategy in her classes. The category "Acknowledging nonperformance" then consists of a code related to situations in which the teacher claims that she does not implement the given strategy. As for the category of "Implementation", it comprises of codes describing the individual strategies or techniques that are employed. On the other hand, the category that contains codes for techniques the teacher does not employ is called "Nonperformance". The other two categories then include codes referring to reasons why the teacher either does or does not implement the strategies/techniques.

By the analysis, which was based on the above-mentioned categories and codes, it was found out that the teacher believes that developing learner autonomy is important in

lower-secondary English classes since it enhances learners' self-reliance and increases their motivation to learn. The teacher tries to develop autonomy in her learners by using group work during which learners are provided with choices and decision-making opportunities. Specifically, they can decide on the roles in the group, and they can choose partners and topics for the group work. Moreover, learners can choose from different tasks and topics. In addition to that, they may choose a working place, the difficulty of homework and the topic for projects. Besides, they may decide which vocabulary to write down into their notebooks. The teacher gives learners choices with the aim to pass responsibility for learning on to them and to make learning more enjoyable.

The teacher relates new knowledge to learners' existing knowledge and constructs, mainly when teaching grammar or vocabulary, because it makes more sense to learners and helps them remember new knowledge more easily. She also makes learners actively involved in constructing the new knowledge by teaching grammar inductively and encouraging learners to create the grammar rules by themselves. The reason why she does it this way is that it enhances chances of learners to remember.

The teacher believes planning is in important skill. Therefore, she encourages learners to plan their learning during project work. Furthermore, she thinks it is important to discuss with learners what materials and resources are suitable for learning, and she also discusses how to choose the aids. Besides, she tries to support learners' motivation by teaching about English-speaking countries, performing real-life role plays, and using authentic materials, such as newspaper articles, magazines, films, songs, etc. The teacher also deals with learners' feelings because it may have a big influence on learning.

As far as interaction patterns are concerned, the teacher quite often employs pair work as well as group work because it contributes to learners' self-reliance and develops their social skills. Less frequently she uses individual work, and that is mainly to provide learners with space for reflection on how well they personally perform. Another situation in which she enables learners to reflect on their learning is when she elicits what they remember from the lesson and when they are assigned to do the "progress check" section in their workbooks. Furthermore, she encourages learner to reflect on their learning when they are doing homework.

When speaking of assessment, the teacher provides opportunities for self-assessment at the end of the oral examination since she always asks learners to assess their performance

(strengths and weaknesses). Another opportunity to self-assess appears when they finish a unit in the textbook and learners work on the "progress check" section. As for peer-assessment, it occurs when learners present their project/group work. Another type of peer-assessment is when learners do an exercise in their workbook, swap the workbook with a peer, correct his/her mistakes, and then discuss it. The teacher includes these types of assessment to motivate learners and to learn them to give constructive feedback.

Another technique for learner autonomy development the teacher uses is learning strategies training. She also trains learners in dictionary work. However, she admits that she does not encourage learners to use a dictionary whenever they need to find out the meaning of a word. Learners are rather accustomed to her about the word and then she tries to explain the meaning in English to them.

As for teaching grammar, the teacher tries to adopt the inductive approach for she believes teaching grammar this way is more natural, and learners understand the grammar rules better when they see them in the context and based on that they create the rules. For recording the newly learnt grammar learners use a notebook. The teacher wants every pupil to have it. Then, they must keep a separate notebook for vocabulary. As for grammar notebooks, the pupils write down the rules as a whole class (to avoid mistakes) and with vocabulary notebooks learners are not forced to write down something compulsory, they can note down whatever they personally need.

During the lessons, the teacher tries to use task-based learning. The tasks are, for example, to create menus and do a restaurant role-play, to buy bus/train tickets, or to make a phone call. The teacher believes that this kind of learning increases learners' motivation and brings the real life to the classroom. Regarding cooperative learning, the teacher employs it mainly through project work.

The analysis also revealed some strategies/techniques the teacher does not employ. First, the teacher does not allow learners to participate in setting learning goals because there is not time for that. Second, learners do not work with portfolios. The reason is that it is difficult to find a place for storing the files at school and taking portfolios home did not work because some learners did not bring them back to school when it was needed. Third, learners do not keep a diary/logbook in which they would document their learning. The teacher is not used to it and she believes keeping a grammar and vocabulary notebook is enough. The last strategy for learner autonomy development the teacher does not follow is creating posters that would

be put on the wall in the classroom and that the teacher would refer to during the instruction. Pupils do create posters, but it is done rather as project work and once the posters are finished, they do not work with them anymore.

9.4 Findings and Discussion

The analysis of the observation sheets, questionnaires and the interview revealed that the teacher uses many strategies and techniques that are expected to develop learner autonomy. To begin with, she provides learners with choices and decision-making opportunities. Learners can choose peers for pair/group work, working place, and sometimes the topic or type of task. Nevertheless, the possibility to make a choice from several types of tasks is rare. The decisions thus relate to rather minor issues. What is definitely good is that the teacher makes learners actively involved in constructing new knowledge by asking questions, relating new knowledge to learners' existing knowledge and experience, using cooperative learning and mainly by teaching grammar inductively and encouraging learners to come up with the rules by themselves. Another positive finding is that the teacher supports learners' motivation by trying to make learning more personally relevant for them (e.g. using activities that are related to their immediate presence, or encouraging them to create example sentences related to their own life or personality) and by referring to meaningfulness and usefulness of the curriculum (e.g. ordering food in a restaurant during holidays). Besides that, the teacher instructs learners on learning strategies. It was observed, and the findings from the interview and questionnaire confirm it, that quite often the teacher provides learners with tips on which strategies can be used for learning grammar and vocabulary. She also trains learners in dictionary work. Furthermore, the results of the interview and questionnaires analyses show that the teacher discusses with learners what materials and resources can be used for learning English. However, they do not discuss how to select them. Another thing the teacher does to promote learner autonomy is that she encourages learners to reflect on their learning. At the end of most lessons the teacher elicits from learners what they have learnt. The teacher, however, does not ask learners to reflect on points such as what prevents them from being more successful, or what they could do to improve.

As for the interaction patterns used in the instruction, the teacher combines whole-class work with individual work, pair work and group work. Pair/group work is used quite often, but the nature of the activities that learners perform in pairs/groups is not very elaborated in terms of learner autonomy development. Nevertheless, as literature (e.g. Ur 2012; Harmer 2015)

proves, working in pairs or groups always makes, at least small, contribution to learner autonomy development, for learners need to make decisions and they are not controlled by the teacher. Regarding individual work, learners are given opportunities to work on their own, however, the activities are guided, and thus lack potential for learner autonomy development. All in all, the interaction pattern that prevails is whole-class work.

As far as the assessment is concerned, it is carried out mostly by the teacher, which is certainly not a positive finding, for when intending to develop learner autonomy, learners need to be allowed to take responsibility for the evaluation of their own learning. The analysis of the interview found out, however, that the teacher provides opportunities for self-assessment at the end of the oral examination (during observations no oral exam was taken, thus it could not be observed). And another situation in which learners assess their learning is when they work on the "progress check" section in workbooks (it is at the end of each unit). Nevertheless, to promote autonomy in learners they should be provided with opportunities for self-assessment more often. As for peer-assessment, the findings from the interview show that it occurs when learners present their project/group work and when they swap workbooks with a peer and correct his/her mistakes. This, however, did not occur in any of the lessons observed.

What impedes the development of learner autonomy in this class is that the teacher does not allow learners to participate in setting learning goals. Sometimes, she even does not introduce the aim at the beginning of the lesson. In most case she only states what the plan for the lesson is. Moreover, the teacher does not invite learners to plan their learning, i.e. she does not instruct them how to plan time and place for learning or how to make a learning plan. Furthermore, to enhance the development of learner autonomy it would be good if learners were encouraged to keep a diary/logbook and a portfolio in which they would record their learning. Using these two tools would, among others, promote learners' self-assessment.

To sum up, most of the strategies and techniques that are on the list of features of learner autonomy development in some form appear in the lessons. The teacher thus definitely creates conditions for enhancing learners' autonomy. Nevertheless, the teacher should provide more space to learners in spheres such as evaluation, selecting content, determining objectives, and planning the learning. In terms of the educational style the teacher adopts, it oscillates between authoritarian and democratic. Even though the teacher gives learners some choices, it is still her who makes most of the decisions and organizes the learning.

CONCLUSION

This diploma thesis dealt with the development of learner autonomy in lower-secondary English classes and was divided into two parts – the theoretical and practical part.

The aim of the theoretical part was to provide a theoretical framework based on which the list of features of learner autonomy development could be created. In the first chapter the concept of learner autonomy was put into the broader context of current educational paradigms and approaches to education, i.e. it was discussed in relation to the concept of lifelong learning, constructivist conception of learning and teaching, learner-centredness and individualisation and differentiation. The second chapter was devoted to delimitation of the term learner autonomy and to a brief discussion of the roots of the concept. The definition provided by Holec was presented. What followed was the discussion of learner autonomy specifically in language learning. After that, the text dealt with what position learner autonomy has in Czech curriculum documents. The third chapter was concerned with conditions for learner autonomy development. It discussed the influence of teacher's educational style, teacher's and learners' roles, interaction patterns and learners' motivation on the development of autonomy. The fourth chapter presented some specific techniques and strategies that are expected to develop learner autonomy, and thus should be used in the lessons. These techniques include giving choices and decision-making opportunities to learners, encouraging learners to reflect on their learning, using self- and peer-assessment, training learners in learning strategies, keeping diaries/logbooks in which learners would document their learning, creating posters to be referred to, keeping grammar and vocabulary notebooks, using inductive approach to teaching grammar and working with dictionaries. In the fifth chapter the ELT methods that can potentially develop learner autonomy were presented.

The practical part defined and characterized the research strategy of case study. The subject of the research, the case studied, was then described. It was an English class in 8th grade. After that, the individual data collection tools, i.e. the observation sheet, questionnaire, and the interview, were presented and the process of collecting data was described. The main source of data was the observations. Therefore, the results of the analysis of data gained by questionnaires and the interview were interpreted in relation to the observations. It was found out that the teacher uses many strategies and techniques that are expected to develop learner autonomy. For instance, learners are provided with choices and decision-making opportunities. However, these usually concern rather less important aspects of learning. The

good thing is that the teacher relates new knowledge to learners' existing knowledge and experience and makes learners actively involved in constructing the new knowledge. When teaching grammar in most cases she uses inductive approach, i.e. learners are provided with some examples of language use and based on that they are encouraged to work out the rules by themselves. Moreover, she encourages learners to reflect on their learning and tries to support their motivation by making learning more personally relevant to them and by referring to meaningfulness and usefulness of the curriculum. Furthermore, the teacher also employs all interaction patterns. Nevertheless, the most common interaction pattern is whole-class work which does not promote autonomy in learners.

On the other hand, some strategies and techniques that are crucial for developing learner autonomy are not employed. Alternatively, they are used but in very limited forms. This applies to providing more opportunities to carry out self- and peer-assessment, enabling learners to plan their learning, and giving opportunities to decide on the content and materials used. Besides, the teacher should more encourage learners to set the aims and to refer to them when reflecting their learning.

To summarize, the teacher definitely does develop learner autonomy during the classes. However, to enhance autonomy of her learners to a greater extent, she should give them more opportunities for choices, self-assessment and organizing their learning. She should also get rid of the slightly authoritarian style of leading learners.

The main contribution of the theoretical part of this thesis is that it sets out observable indicators of learner autonomy and presents a list of features of learner autonomy development. As for the practical part, it provides interesting findings on whether and how autonomy development is supported in lower-secondary English classes within the context of the Czech Republic. For me personally, these findings helped me to realise what I need to think about when I want to develop autonomy in my pupils. Moreover, it has provided me with particular techniques and strategies that I now use much more in my practice.

RESUMÉ

Tato diplomová práce se zabývá rozvojem autonomie žáků v hodinách anglického jazyka na druhém stupni základní školy. Práce je rozdělena do dvou hlavních částí – teoretické a praktické. Cílem teoretické části bylo poskytnout teoretický rámec pro vytvoření seznamu znaků rozvoje autonomie žáka. Cílem praktické části potom bylo na základě tohoto seznamu posoudit, zda a jak je ve vybrané třídě rozvíjena autonomie žáků.

První kapitola teoretické části zasazuje koncept rozvoje autonomie žáka do širšího kontextu současných vzdělávacích paradigmat. Nejdříve uvádí, že rozvoj autonomie žáků je důležitým předpokladem pro celoživotní učení. Dále se věnuje tomu, jak koncept rozvoje autonomie žáka souvisí s konstruktivistickým pojetím výuky, v rámci kterého je žák považován za aktivního účastníka výchovně vzdělávacího procesu. Poté se kapitola zabývá na žáka orientovaným pojetím výuky a tím, jak autonomie souvisí s individualizací a diferenciací ve výuce. Autonomii žáka spojuje s individualizací a diferenciací to, že oba tyto koncepty se zabývají snahou vyhovět individuálním potřebám žáka.

Druhá kapitola se věnuje vymezení pojmu autonomie, který má kořeny v psychologii a reformní pedagogice, a do výuky cizích jazyků pronikl v 70. letech 20. století, kdy Henri Holec definoval autonomii jako „schopnost převzít odpovědnost za vlastní učení". Dále tato kapitola uvádí obecné pedagogické přístupy, na nichž je založena autonomie studentů jazyka. Jedná se o princip zapojení žáka, princip žákovy reflexe a používání cílového jazyka. Poté je koncept autonomie žáka zasazen do kontextu českého vzdělávacího systému, tj. je diskutován ve vztahu k českým kurikulárním dokumentům – konkrétně ve vztahu ke Strategii vzdělávací politiky ČR do roku 2030+ a ve vztahu k Rámcovému vzdělávacímu programu pro základní vzdělávání platnému od roku 2021.

Třetí kapitola se zabývá podmínkami pro rozvoj autonomie žáka v hodinách anglického jazyka. Mezi tyto podmínky patří například výchovný/vzdělávací styl učitele, role učitele, role žáků, a vliv organizačních forem a motivace. To, zda učitel má spíše autoritativní, demokratický, či liberální styl má velký vliv na to, zda bude nebo nebude docházet k rozvoji autonomie žáků. Podobně je také s organizačními formami. Frontální výuka rozvoj autonomie tradičně nepodporuje, oproti tomu výuka párová, skupinová, či forma samostatné práce má dobrý potenciál autonomii žáků rozvíjet.

Čtvrtá kapitola poskytuje přehled konkrétních strategií a technik, které podporují rozvoj autonomie žáků (nejen) v hodinách anglického jazyka. Tyto strategie a techniky zahrnují poskytování možnosti volby a příležitostí pro rozhodování, podporování žáků v reflektování jejich učení, podporování sebehodnocení a vzájemného hodnocení žáků, trénink učebních strategií, vedení deníků, tvorba plakátů, vedení sešitů pro zapisování gramatiky a slovní zásoby, induktivní přístup k výuce gramatiky, a používání slovníků. Pátá kapitola zmiňuje některé metody specifické pro výuku anglického jazyka, jež mají potenciál rozvíjet autonomii žáků.

Praktická část nejprve charakterizuje zvolenou výzkumnou strategii, tj. případovou studii. Jednotkou této případové studie je vybraná třída na druhém stupni základní školy, ve které se vyučuje anglický jazyk. Pro účely tohoto výzkumu byl záměrně vybrán typický příklad, tj. třída, která není v žádném ohledu extrémní. Důvodem pro výběr typického příkladu bylo, aby výsledky této případové studie mohly být do určité míry generalizovány. Hlavní výhoda případové studie spočívá v tom, že se zaměřuje na jeden případ, který zkoumá do hloubky. Výzkumník má k dispozici širokou škálu metod, které může použít pro sběr dat. V případě této práce se jedná o pozorování, dotazníkové šetření a strukturovaný rozhovor. Z důvodu zvýšení spolehlivosti výzkumu byla uplatněna triangulace dat.

Další kapitola praktické části se zabývá sběrem dat. Podrobně popisuje jednotlivé nástroje, jakožto i způsob jejich použití a způsob, jakým byla získaná data analyzována. Pro pozorování byl vytvořen observační list, do kterého byly, mimo jiné, zaznamenávány výskyty jednotlivých znaků ze seznamu rozvoje autonomie žáka. Dále také byly zapisovány veškeré komentáře týkající se například rolí učitele/žáků, výchovného stylu učitele, role cílového jazyka, tj. cokoli, co by mohlo mít vliv na rozvoj autonomie. Dalším výzkumným nástrojem byl dotazník pro žáky. Položky tohoto dotazníku, stejně jako položky pro pozorování a otázky pro rozhovor, vycházely ze seznamu znaků rozvoje autonomie žáka. Pro získání přesnějších údajů o tom, co a jak se v rámci daného případu odehrává, byl realizován rozhovor s učitelem. Data získaná z tohoto rozhovoru byla analyzována metodou otevřeného kódování.

Na základě analýzy dat bylo zjištěno, že učitel ve výuce používá většinu strategií a technik z vytvořeného seznamu znaků rozvoje autonomie žáka. Poměrně často poskytuje žákům možnost volby. Nicméně, většinou se jedná o volbu toho, s kým a kde chtějí žáci pracovat na zadaném úkolu. Méně často dostávají například možnost vybrat si z různých typů úkolů. Výběr se tedy týká spíše méně podstatných aspektů učení. Podobně je to s využíváním

různých organizačních forem ve výuce. Učitel kombinuje frontální výuku s párovou a skupinovou výukou a se samostatnou prací. Nicméně, ve většině pozorovaných hodin převažovala frontální výuka, tj. práce učitele s celou třídou. Párové a skupinové aktivity většinou nebyly promyšleny tak, aby rozvíjely autonomii žáků. Avšak tyto organizační formy mají samy o sobě určitý potenciál podporovat rozvoj autonomie, jelikož při práci ve dvojicích/skupinách není činnost žáků přímo kontrolována učitelem a pro žáky je nevyhnutelné, aby činily určitá rozhodnutí. Tato rozhodnutí zahrnují minimálně to, že se žáci musí domluvit, jakým tempem, kdo a co bude dělat.

Pozitivním zjištěním je zcela jistě to, že učitelka při výuce vztahuje nové znalosti k dosavadním znalostem a zkušenostem žáků. Dále také podporuje žáky v tom, aby byli aktivní při konstruování nových poznatků. V tomto ohledu klade žákům vhodné otázky, zařazuje do výuky kooperativní učení a pro výuku gramatiky používá induktivní přístup. Navíc se snaží podporovat motivaci žáků, a to zejména tím, že často poukazuje na užitečnost daného učiva, či zařazením aktivit, které mají základ v reálném životě.

Na druhou stranu, některé strategie ze seznamu znaků rozvoje autonomie žáka ve výuce zcela chybí, nebo se vyskytují ve velmi omezené podobě. Jedná se například o to, že učitelka neumožňuje žákům podílet se na stanovování cílů a plánování jejich vlastního učení. Reflexi žáků sice podporuje, ale pouze tím, že se na konci (ne ovšem každé) hodiny ptá žáků, co nového se naučili a co si zapamatovali. Nicméně nepodporuje žáky například k přemýšlení o tom, proč se jim daná věc daří/nedaří, jak by se mohli zlepšit, a podobně. Dále také neposkytuje dostatek příležitostí pro sebehodnocení a vzájemné hodnocení žáků.

Souhrnně lze konstatovat, že učitelka ve svých hodinách rozvíjí autonomii žáků. Avšak, aby docházelo k intenzivnějšímu rozvoji, bylo by potřeba nechat žáky dělat více (a podstatnější) rozhodnutí, klást větší důraz na sebehodnocení žáků, a celkově umožnit žákům více organizovat své učení.

Hlavním přínosem teoretické části této práce je to, že stanovuje pozorovatelné indikátory autonomie a předkládá seznam znaků rozvoje autonomie. Pokud jde o část praktickou, ta přináší zajímavá zjištění o tom, zda a jak je na českých základních školách podporován rozvoj autonomie. Mě osobně tato zjištění pomohla uvědomit si, na co vše je potřeba myslet, když chci u svých žáků rozvíjet autonomii. Navíc mi poskytla konkrétní techniky a strategie, které ve své praxi nyní mnohem více využívám.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A *Thirteen aspects of learner autonomy (Sinclair 2000,* 7–14):

1. Autonomy is a construct of capacity
2. Autonomy involves a willingness on the part of the learner to take responsibility for their own learning
3. The capacity and willingness of learners to take such responsibility is not necessarily innate
4. Complete autonomy is an idealistic goal
5. There are degrees of autonomy
6. The degrees of autonomy are unstable and variable
7. Autonomy is not simply a matter of placing learners in situations where they have to be independent
8. Developing autonomy requires conscious awareness of the learning process, i.e., conscious reflection and decision making
9. Promoting autonomy is not simply a matter of teaching strategies
10. Autonomy can take place both inside and outside the classroom
11. Autonomy has a social as well as an individual dimension
12. The promotion of learner autonomy has a political as well as psychological dimension
13. Autonomy is interpreted differently by different cultures

Source: Sinclair, Barbara. 2000. "Learner Autonomy: the Next Phase?" In *Learner Autonomy, Teacher Autonomy: Future Directions*, edited by Barbara Sinclair, Ian McGrath and Terry Lamb, 4–14. Harlow: Pearson Education.

Appendix B *The component called 'structuring knowledge' from Tassinari's (2012) dynamic model of learner autonomy*

Structuring knowledge

Structuring knowledge is an area which plays a role in all autonomous learning phases and activities. That is why you will only find general descriptors here which lead to other areas. **If you find the descriptors relevant, then you can always go to the corresponding area.**

▾ Expand all

▾ I can evalutate my own language competencies.

▾ I can analyse my own needs.

▾ I can set myself goals.

▾ I can plan a time and place for my learning.

▾ I know what I need to complete a task or to achieve a goal (for example the competencies, steps of a task and language tools).

▾ I can put together a learning plan.

▾ I am familiar with a variety of materials and resources for language learning.

▾ I can choose materials and resources.

▾ I can try out new materials and resources.

▾ I am familiar with a variety of language learning methods and strategies.

▾ I can choose different methods and strategies.

▾ I can try out new methods and strategies.

▾ I can organise a time and place for my learning.

▾ I can set myself a task.

▾ I can structure my learning independently.

▾ I can use a variety of materials and resources when learning.

- ▼ I can employ a variety of methods and strategies when learning.
- ▼ I can carry out my learning plan.
- ▼ II can analyse elements of the foreign language to detect regularities, irregularities and reccurring patterns.
- ▼ I can analyse texts, conversations and other communication in the foreign language and recognise specific (cultural) aspects of the communication.
- ▼ I can recognise my strengths and weaknesses as a learner and/or reflect on these.
- ▼ I can recognise what prevents me from completing a task.
- ▼ II can reflect on materials and resources which I have used.
- ▼ I can reflect on methods and strategies which I have employed.
- ▼ I can reflect on my learning.
- ▼ I can evaluate materials and resources for language learning.
- ▼ I can evaluate language learning methods and strategies.
- ▼ I can evaluate my learning.
- ▼ I can learn with and from others (for example, other learners, teachers, learning advisors, native speakers and competent non-native speakers).
- ▼ I can decide when I want to cooperate with others (for example, with other learners, teachers, learning advisors, native speakers and competent non-native speakers) in order to structure my learning better.
- ▼ If you want to add further descriptors yourself, you can do so here.

Source: Sprachenzentrum Freie Universität Berlin. n. d. "Dynamic autonomy model with descriptors." Accessed March 5, 2022. https://www.sprachenzentrum.fu-berlin.de/en/slz/lernberatung/autonomiemodell/wissen/index.html

Planning

Planning is a key part of autonomous learning: to recognise one's own needs, to formulate these into realistic learning objectives, and to structure these into steps and create a learning plan. To plan, one has to be flexible enough to change the learning plan if one's situation or needs should change.

▼ Expand all

▼ I can evaluate my own language competencies.

▼ I can analyse my own needs.

▼ I can set myself goals.

▼ I can plan a time and place for my learning.

▼ I know what I need to complete a task or to achieve a goal (for example the competencies, steps of a task and language tools).

▼ I can put together a learning plan.

▼ If you want to add further descriptors yourself, you can do so here.

For planning in terms of learning materials and methods see choosing materials and methods. Do you like learning together with others? In that case, go to cooperating.

Source: Sprachenzentrum Freie Universität Berlin. n. d. "Dynamic autonomy model with descriptors." Accessed March 5, 2022. https://www.sprachenzentrum.fu-berlin.de/en/slz/lernberatung/autonomiemodell/planen/index.html

Appendix D *Some examples of macro-descriptors: evaluating*

Evaluating

Evaluating is at the core of the autonomous learning process. This term includes the evaluation of learning progress (i.e. what have I learnt?) and of the learning process itself (i.e. how have I learnt?). Evaluating one's own progress and one's own language competencies is the hardest part of autonomous language learning. It requires practice and normally exchange with other learners, native speakers, learning advisors and teachers.

▼ Expand all

▼ I can evaluate my own language competencies.

▼ I can evaluate materials and resources for language learning.

▼ I can evaluate language learning methods and strategies.

▼ I can evaluate my learning.

▼ If you want to add further descriptors yourself, you can do so here.

Are you satisfied with your evaluation? Would you like to change any aspects of your learning? If so you can go to planning, choosing materials and methods or completing tasks, and make the necessary changes to your learning process. Do you like learning with others? In that case, go to cooperating.

Source: Sprachenzentrum Freie Universität Berlin. n. d. "Dynamic autonomy model with descriptors." Accessed March 5, 2022. https://www.sprachenzentrum.fu-berlin.de/en/slz/lernberatung/autonomiemodell/evaluieren/index.html

Appendix E *Some examples of micro-descriptors: planning*

▾ I can evaluate my own language competencies.

▾ I can analyse my own needs.

▾ I can set myself goals.

	I can do this	I want to learn this	This isn't important for me
I can set myself goals (what I want to learn, for example, I want to be able to start a conversation, keep it going and finish it)			
on my own			
together with others			
with the help of checklists or learning tips			
with a learning advisor.			
I can set myself goals while bearing in mind			
my needs			
my language competencies			
the conditions I have to work within (for example, the time available).			
I can prioritise my goals.			

Source: Sprachenzentrum Freie Universität Berlin. n. d. "Dynamic autonomy model with descriptors." Accessed March 5, 2022. https://www.sprachenzentrum.fu-berlin.de/en/slz/lernberatung/autonomiemodell/planen/index.html#faq_4_4

Appendix F *Some examples of micro-descriptors: evaluating*

▼ I can evaluate my own language competencies.

▼ I can evaluate materials and resources for language learning.

▼ I can evaluate language learning methods and strategies.

▲ I can evaluate my learning.

	I can do this	I want to learn this	This isn't important for me
I can evaluate my learning and in particular I can state			
whether I have achieved my goal			
whether I have chosen a suitable goal for my language competencies and needs			
whether the materials and resources I have used are appropriate to my goal			
whether the tasks are suited to my goal and my learning style			
whether the methods and strategies I have used are suited to the goal, to the tasks and to my learning style			
whether my learning plan is suited to my language competencies, my goal, to the conditions (for example, the time available) and to my learning style			
whether I have been able to stick to my learning plan.			

For further descriptors see monitoring.

<u>Source</u>: Sprachenzentrum Freie Universität Berlin. n. d. "Dynamic autonomy model with descriptors." Accessed March 5, 2022. https://www.sprachenzentrum.fu-berlin.de/en/slz/lernberatung/autonomiemodell/evaluieren/index.html

Appendix G *Salient features of a facilitator presented by Voller (1997)*

The features of psycho-social support include:

- the personal qualities of the facilitator (being caring, supportive, patient, tolerant, empathic, open, non-judgemental);
- a capacity for motivating learners (encouraging commitment, dispersing uncertainty, helping learners to overcome obstacles, being prepared to enter into a dialogue with learners, avoiding manipulating, objectifying or interfering with, in other words, controlling them);
- an ability to raise learners' awareness (to 'decondition' them from preconceptions about learner and teacher roles, to help them perceive the utility of, or necessity for, autonomous learning).

The features of technical support include:

- helping learners to plan and carry out their independent language learning by means of needs analysis (both learning and language needs), objective setting (both short- and longer-term, achievable), work planning, selecting materials, and organizing interactions;
- helping learners to evaluate themselves (assessing initial proficiency, monitoring progress, and self- and peer-assessment);
- helping learners to acquire the skills and knowledge needed to implement the above (by raising their awareness of language and learning, by providing learner training to help them identify learning styles and appropriate learning strategies).

Source: Voller, Peter. 1997. "Does the teacher have a role in autonomous learning?" In *Autonomy and Independence in Language Learning,* edited by Phil Benson and Peter Voller, 98–113. London: Longman.

Appendix H *The list of features of learner autonomy development*

The list of features of learner autonomy development:

a) Relating new knowledge to learners' existing knowledge, constructs, and experience
b) Making learners actively involved in constructing new knowledge
c) Giving choices and decision-making opportunities to learners (e.g. choice of tasks, topics, strategies, peers for group work, working place, etc.),
d) Allowing learners to participate in setting learning goals
e) Encouraging learners to plan their learning (e.g. time and place of learning, learning objectives, putting together a learning plan, etc.)
f) Discussing with learners what materials and resources can be used for learning English
g) Supporting learners' motivation (e.g. making learning more personally relevant to pupils, referring to meaningfulness and usefulness of the curriculum)
h) Dealing with learners' feelings that accompany learning
i) Pair work, group work
j) Individual work
k) Reflection (e.g. on learning process and results, materials, strategies, etc.)
l) Self-assessment
m) Peer-assessment
n) Working on portfolios
o) Learning strategies training
p) Keeping a diary/logbook
q) Creating and using posters
r) Keeping personal grammar and vocabulary notebooks
s) Inductive approach to teaching grammar
t) Using dictionaries
u) Task-based learning
v) Cooperative learning

Appendix I *The example of a completed observation sheet*

Date: 31st March 2022   **Class**: 8th grade   **Time**: 45 min

Aim of the lesson: **By the end of the lesson, learners will be able to use selected verbs followed by -ing/to infinitive correctly in the sentences.** -> my formulation (the teacher just stated what the plan for the lesson was)

INTRO-DUCTION	Teacher asks: "Do you remember what we did last lesson?" + "What do you remember?" => eliciting answers from learners **k)** reflection					
	Learners' answers: 1) reading about King Arthur; 2) vocabulary – e.g. knight, crown, armour, sword, shield,…					
ACTIVITY NUMBER	INTERACTION PATTERNS	TIME	ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	MATERIAL AND AIDS	FEATURES OF LEARNER AUTONOMY DEVELOPMENT	COMMENTS
1	Whole-class work	4	T explains new grammar: "verb + ing/to infinitive" and asks Ls to give their own example sentences	blackboard, chalk	**g)**	**g)** Ls are encouraged to give their own personalized example sentences T: controller (explains grammar) Ls: passive recipients -> then active participants when creating their example sentences
2	Pair work	5	T places several slips of paper (each slip of paper contains one verb that needs to be followed by -ing or to infinitive) around the classroom and Ls are supposed to take 2 of them and make 2 sentences using the verbs followed by -ing/to infinitive.	slips of paper with the verbs, paper, pen, dictionaries	**g), i), t)**	**g)** Ls are encouraged to give their own personalized example sentences **i)** pair work (Ls themselves need to decide who will do what, what they will write down) **t)** if Ls do not know what their verbs mean, they are encouraged to use a dictionary

3	Whole-class work	5	T writes down "-ing" on one side of the blackboard and "to" on the other side. Ls then read their sentences and T sticks the slips of paper on the correct part of the board.	blackboard, chalk	**b)**	**b)** Ls decide to which group the verb belongs and create their sentences (i.e. they are active in constructing new knowledge) -> Ls: active participants and processors of language and information
4	Pair work	15	Ls are supposed to have a look into their textbooks where they have selected verbs divided into groups depending on what follows them (-ing; to infinitive; both; both but difference in meaning) and their task is to write down their own sentences for all the verbs. When finished, Ls read their sentences and the T writes them down on the blackboard.	textbook, notebook, pen, blackboard, chalk	**b), c), g), i), o)**	**b)** Ls actively create the sentences **c)** Ls can choose where and with whom they want to work **g)** Ls are encouraged to write down their own sentences that somehow relate to their lives **i)** pair work (Ls need to organize the pair work by themselves, the teacher does not interfere) **o)** T suggests Ls to sort the verbs/sentences into groups based on what follows them -> T suggests it is a good strategy for better remembering
5	Pair work	15	Ls are supposed to create a trailer for King Arthur movie or a news report about King Arthur. They are to use at least some of the verbs given. Then, each group presents what they have created.	paper, pen	**b), c), i)**	**b)** Ls are not just passive recipients of the knowledge, they are active (creating their own trailers/news reports with the given verbs) **c)** Ls can choose the mode – film trailer or news report + they can choose a partner **i)** pair work (Ls need to organize the pair work by themselves, the teacher does not interfere)

CONCLU-SION	T assigns homework

HOMEWORK

TYPE OF HW	COMMENTS
Completing a crossword in workbook (topic: vocabulary from the text about King Arthur – e.g. king, armour, knight,…)	HW is compulsory Does not contribute to the development of learner autonomy

* T = Teacher; Ls = Learners

OTHER COMMENTS:

- Teacher's educational style – mixture of authoritarian and democratic
- T = organizer (determines objectives, selects content, organizes time, instructs learners what to do)
- T uses TL almost all the time (except for explaining grammar). Ls use TL when replying to T's questions, but when Ls do not understand something, they ask the T in Czech (T's response = sometimes in TL sometimes not). When working in pairs, Ls tend to use Czech language, or they communicate partly in Czech, partly in English.
- Ls have a separate grammar notebook and a vocabulary notebook

QUESTIONNAIRE – LEARNER AUTONOMY IN ENGLISH CLASSES

Dear pupils, I would like to ask you to fill in the following questionnaire about your English classes at this school. For statements 1–25 please **always circle one option** which in your opinion is the most accurate. Please, answer truthfully, the questionnaire is entirely anonymous (do not sign your name). Thank you very much for your cooperation! 😊

	In the English classes…			
1	we work individually on assigned tasks.	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NEVER
2	we work in pairs/groups on assigned tasks.	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NEVER
3	if we work in pairs or groups, we can choose the peers we want to cooperate with on the assigned task.	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NEVER
4	the teacher gives us a choice of several tasks we will work on.	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NEVER
5	we can choose where we will work on the assigned tasks (e.g. at the desk, on the floor).	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NEVER
6	we can decide if we want to do homework or not (i.e. we are not penalized for not doing homework).	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NEVER
7	when we start to go through a new topic, the teacher elicits from us what we already know about the topic.	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NEVER
8	we set the goals (on our own or with the help of the teacher) that we want to achieve (i.e. what we want to learn).	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NEVER
9	we discuss which materials or aids we can use for learning English (e.g. textbooks, magazines, apps, websites).	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NEVER
10	we discuss how to choose the above-mentioned materials and aids.	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NEVER
11	we learn how to learn (e.g. which strategies we can use to learn new vocabulary/grammar/pronunciation or to improve our speaking/writing/listening/reading skills).	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NEVER
12	we learn to plan our learning (i.e. put together our learning plans – when, where, what and how we will learn).	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NEVER
13	we discuss what we have learnt in the lesson.	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NEVER

14	we discuss what we are/are not good at and why it is so.	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NEVER
15	we assess our own learning and work.	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NEVER
16	we assess our peers' work.	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NEVER
17	we discuss what motivates us to learn (i.e. why we learn).	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NEVER
18	we discuss our feelings relating to learning.	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NEVER
19	we work with a portfolio (i.e. we select and store materials that we have created and that we consider important in our learning).	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NEVER
20	we keep our own diary in which we write down what, how and why we learn.	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NEVER
21	we decide ourselves which vocabulary and grammar to write down in our notebooks.	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NEVER
22	we create posters (to be put on the wall) on which we write down e.g. some useful English phrases, strategies for learning vocabulary, individual learners' responsibilities for group work, etc.	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NEVER
23	we work with dictionaries.	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NEVER
24	when we learn new grammar, the teacher encourages us to figure out the given grammar rules on our own (e.g. based on reading a text, example sentences/phrases).	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NEVER
25	we are assigned real-world tasks (e.g. to plan an itinerary for a trip, to publish a school newspaper) that we are to perform in English.	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NEVER

Appendix K *Structured interview with the teacher - questions (translated into English)*

1) Do you think it is important to develop learner autonomy in lower-secondary English classes? + Why/Why not?
2) Do you think you develop learner autonomy in lower-secondary English classes? If so, how?

   The following questions refer to teaching English in lower-secondary classes, too. They are yes/no questions, so you are supposed to answer yes or no + I would like you to always comment on your answers. i.e. develop your answers and explain why and how you do/do not do the particular things.

3) Do you relate new knowledge to learners' existing knowledge, constructs, and experience?
4) Do you make learners actively involved in constructing new knowledge?
5) Do you give learners choices and decision-making opportunities (e.g. choices of tasks, topics, homework, peers for group work, working place, etc.)?
6) Do you allow learners to participate in setting learning goals?
7) Do you encourage learners to plan their learning (e.g. time and place of learning, learning objectives, putting together a learning plan, etc.)?
8) Do you discuss with your learners what materials and resources can be used for learning English?
9) Do you support learners' motivation to learn English?
10) Do you deal with learners' feelings that accompany learning?
11) Do you use pair and group work?
12) Do you use individual work?
13) Do you encourage learners to reflect on their learning (e.g. on the process and results of their learning, their strengths and weaknesses, etc)?
14) Do you provide learners with opportunities for self-assessment?
15) Do you provide learners with opportunities for peer-assessment?
16) Do you work with learners' portfolios?
17) Do you train learners in learning strategies, i.e. do you teach learners what strategies they can use for learning?
18) Do you require that your learners keep a diary/logbook in which they document their learning (i.e. they record activities undertaken during a lesson, new words or expressions, homework to be done, and comments about their learning progress, strategies they used, feelings they experienced, etc.)?
19) Do you create posters with your learners that you put on the wall and that you refer to during the instruction (e.g. posters with useful phrases learners need when working on certain tasks, strategies for learning vocabulary, ideas for activities, or individual learners' responsibilities for group work)?
20) Do you require that your learners keep their grammar and vocabulary notebooks into which they write down what they personally consider important to be remembered?
21) Do you teach grammar inductively?
22) Do you encourage learners to use dictionaries?
23) Do you use task-based learning, i.e. do you use real-world tasks that learners are to perform in English?
24) Do you use cooperative learning, i.e. do you use group activities in which learners need to join forces to be able to accomplish a common goal?

Appendix L *Results of the analysis of observation sheets*

<u>**LESSON 1**</u>

INTRODUCTION – features of learner autonomy development: k)		
Activity number	**Interaction patterns**	**Features of learner autonomy development**
1	whole-class work	g)
2	pair work	g), i), t)
3	whole-class work	b)
4	pair work	b), c), g), i), o)
5	pair work	b), c), i)
CONCLUSION – features of learner autonomy development:		
HOMEWORK – features of learner autonomy development:		

<u>**LESSON 2**</u>

INTRODUCTION – features of learner autonomy development:		
Activity number	**Interaction patterns**	**Features of learner autonomy development**
1	whole-class work	
2	whole-class work	g)
3	individual work	k)
4	whole-class work	b)
5	whole-class work	k)
6	whole-class work	
7	group work	i), v)
CONCLUSION – features of learner autonomy development:		
HOMEWORK – features of learner autonomy development:		

<u>**LESSON 3**</u>

INTRODUCTION – features of learner autonomy development:		
Activity number	**Interaction patterns**	**Features of learner autonomy development**
1	whole-class work	b), g), s)
2	whole-class work	
3	whole-class work	
4	individual work, whole-class	o)
5	whole-class work	g)
CONCLUSION – features of learner autonomy development: k)		
HOMEWORK – features of learner autonomy development: g)		

LESSON 4

INTRODUCTION – features of learner autonomy development:		
Activity number	**Interaction patterns**	**Features of learner autonomy development**
1	whole-class work	
2	pair work	a), c), i)
3	pair work	b), c), i), u)
CONCLUSION – features of learner autonomy development: k)		
HOMEWORK – features of learner autonomy development:		

LESSON 5

INTRODUCTION – features of learner autonomy development:		
Activity number	**Interaction patterns**	**Features of learner autonomy development**
1	whole-class work	g)
2	pair work	c), i), o)
3	individual work, whole-class	
4	whole-class work	
CONCLUSION – features of learner autonomy development: k)		
HOMEWORK – features of learner autonomy development:		

LESSON 6

INTRODUCTION – features of learner autonomy development: g)		
Activity number	**Interaction patterns**	**Features of learner autonomy development**
1	individual work, whole-class	b), c), s)
2	whole-class work	
3	individual work, whole-class	o)
4	individual work, whole-class	
CONCLUSION – features of learner autonomy development: k)		
HOMEWORK – features of learner autonomy development:		

LESSON 7

INTRODUCTION – features of learner autonomy development:		
Activity number	**Interaction patterns**	**Features of learner autonomy development**
1	individual work	k)
2	individual work	
3	whole-class work	
4	whole-class work	k), o)
5	whole-class work	o)
CONCLUSION – features of learner autonomy development:		
HOMEWORK – features of learner autonomy development: c)		

LESSON 8

INTRODUCTION – features of learner autonomy development:		
Activity number	**Interaction patterns**	**Features of learner autonomy development**
1	whole-class work	g)
2	individual work, whole-class	
3	individual work / pair work	c), i), l), o), t)
4	whole-class work	
CONCLUSION – features of learner autonomy development:		
HOMEWORK – features of learner autonomy development:		

LESSON 9

INTRODUCTION – features of learner autonomy development:		
Activity number	**Interaction patterns**	**Features of learner autonomy development**
1	individual work, whole-class	
2	individual work, whole-class	
3	individual work, whole-class	g)
4	pair work	c), g), i)
5	group work	c), i), k), o)
CONCLUSION – features of learner autonomy development:		
HOMEWORK – features of learner autonomy development:		

LESSON 10

INTRODUCTION – features of learner autonomy development:		
Activity number	**Interaction patterns**	**Features of learner autonomy development**
1	individual work	
2	individual work	
3	individual work	k)
4	individual work	
5	whole-class work	o)
6	individual work, whole-class	o)
7	individual work, whole-class	l)
8	whole-class work	g)
CONCLUSION – features of learner autonomy development: k)		
HOMEWORK – features of learner autonomy development:		

Appendix M *Results of the quantitative analysis of questionnaires*

Item No.	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NEVER
1	6	6	0
2	8	4	0
3	2	10	0
4	0	0	12
5	1	1	10
6	0	1	11
7	2	9	1
8	2	6	4
9	1	9	2
10	0	5	7
11	6	6	0
12	1	5	6
13	5	6	1
14	6	6	0
15	3	5	4
16	0	6	6
17	1	5	6
18	0	8	4
19	1	5	6
20	2	6	4
21	8	1	3
22	1	5	6
23	3	9	0
24	3	5	4
25	1	7	4
TOTAL	63	136	101

Appendix N *Sample of open coding*

1) **Do you think it is important to develop learner autonomy in lower-secondary English classes? + Why/Why not?**

acknowledging importance
Yes, I think it is important to develop learner autonomy in lower-secondary English
self-reliance   *meaningfulness*
classes because it can lead learners to self-reliance, to learning, so that they know why
motivation
they are learning, and it increases their motivation.

2) **Do you think you develop learner autonomy in lower-secondary English classes? If so, how?**

employing   *group work*
I do try to develop learner autonomy in classes, mainly during group work – when
choosing partners   *choosing roles*
learners can choose the partners for the group work, they choose various roles, they
choosing the topic
choose the topic they want to work on. Moreover, with homework they can choose for
choosing the difficulty of HW
example the difficulty of the homework, or when they are supposed to put down
making decisions
vocabulary into their vocabulary notebooks, they can decide which vocabulary they do
not already know and that they need to write down – they do not have to write down
reflection
everything. So, they can choose according to their level how they will perform the
projects
homework assignment. And also with various projects – the learners have space to
choosing the topic
make choices and work on what they are interested in.

The following questions refer to teaching English in lower-secondary classes, too. They are yes/no questions, so you are supposed to answer yes or no + I would like you to always comment on your answers. i.e. develop your answers and explain why and how you do/do not do the particular things.

3) **Do you relate new knowledge to learners' existing knowledge, constructs, and experience?**

employing
I always try to make use of what learners already know and build on that. For
using the existing knowledge
example, when explaining new grammar, we make use of what we already know, or if
using the existing knowledge
speaking of vocabulary, when learners have already encountered a word, we build on
that, i.e. we discuss where it is possible to use the word, in which phrase, we look for
employing
synonyms, and things like that. So, I surely do make use of learners' existing
meaningfulness   *better remembering*
knowledge because it makes more sense to learners, and they remember new
knowledge more easily.

4) Do you make learners actively involved in constructing new knowledge?

employing   *self-creation of rules*
I try to get learners actively involved in making rules by themselves, so that they figure out themselves various things related to language. For example, when we learn *self-creation of rules* new grammar, learners look for particular examples in the text and based on that they *self-creation of rules* try to figure out how the grammar is formed. They always make the rules by *strategies* *better remembering* themselves and then they try to write them down by themselves, so that they are able *employing* to understand it when they read it at home. I do this because when learners discover *better remembering* new rules by themselves, they understand them better and they can use them more naturally.

5) Do you give learners choices and decision-making opportunities (e.g. choices of tasks, topics, homework, peers for group work, working place, etc.)?

employing   *choosing tasks*   *choosing topics*   *choosing partners*
I try to give learners choices of various tasks, topics and ways of cooperation. When *group work* *choosing working place* they work in groups, they can even choose where they want to work on it – maybe, sometimes we go out, so then they can choose the space in the garden where they want *space restriction* to work, so they have a bigger space there, otherwise, in the classroom it is a little bit *choosing the topic* restricted. Furthermore, at home learners can perform homework according to what they are interested in, they can search for various information on the Internet that they *project* *employing* need, for example, to accomplish a project. So, I definitely give learners choices and *claiming responsibility* decision-making opportunities because it makes them feel more responsible for the *feelings and emotions* process of learning and makes it more fun.

6) Do you allow learners to participate in setting learning goals?

denying *setting goals*
To tell the truth, I don't allow learners to participate in setting learning goals very *time restriction* *T's decisions* much. I don't do that, because the 45-minute lesson is very short. I usually come into the class with a certain goal that I explain to children and that we try to accomplish *time restriction* together, but there is not much time to give space to children to set the goals themselves.

Appendix O *Analysis of the interview: the list of categories and its codes*

Importance of learner autonomy development

Acknowledging importance

Acknowledging implementation

Employing

Implementation

Group work, Pair work, Individual work, Projects, Choosing partners, Choosing roles, Choosing the topic, Choosing the difficulty of HW, Choosing tasks, Choosing working place, Using the existing knowledge, Self-creation of rules, Strategies, Feelings and emotions, Planning, Discussing materials and resources, Reflection, Self-assessment, Peer-assessment, Notebooks, Making decisions, Posters, Grammar inductively, Dictionaries, Task-based learning, Cooperative learning

Reasons for implementation

Self-reliance, Motivation, Meaningfulness, Better remembering, Claiming responsibility, Social skills

Acknowledging nonperformance

Denying

Nonperformance

Setting goals, Portfolio, Logbook

Reasons for nonperformance

Space restriction, Time restriction, Teacher's decisions, Negligent students, Mobiles forbidden, Habit