

## ABSTRACT

The learning experience of teachers has a great impact on the way they teach their students. This is because teachers are likely to teach the way they have experienced the instruction process as students. Teachers who have been taught with a traditional approach can be expected to teach their students in a similar way..

Autonomous learning, or the aspect of learning in which learners take major control over their own instructional development, is now playing an important role in education. The teacher plays an important role in fostering learner autonomy in the classroom. In order to do this effectively, however, teachers should have experience of autonomous learning in their teacher education course. Journal writing is regarded as one of the tasks that promote autonomous learning. This research study investigates the autonomous characteristics and the perspectives related to autonomy which prevail when student teachers write online journals in a writing course in an MA-ELT program. The journals were written in the form of a weblog (or blog) in which all the members could see each others' journals and give comments on them.

The analysis of the data proceeds in three stages. First, two sets of journals written by 23 student teachers were analyzed in order to identify their autonomous behaviors as a group. Secondly, a questionnaire was sent to all of these student teachers to find out their perceptions on the writing of online journals. 18 out of 23 participants ultimately replied to the questionnaire and thus participated to fulfill this stage of the research. Finally, the individual cases of five participants selected for their different personal and educational factors were studied to discover their autonomous behaviors and perceptions about online journal writing.

The autonomous characteristics of the participants were analyzed from the three different dimensions: *metacognitive*, *affective* and *social*. The results showed that learner autonomy is seen in all participants, although it is shown in different forms and to

different degrees. The answers to the questionnaire were analyzed according to the participants' positive and negative attitudes on the experience of online journaling. Most of them had positive attitudes about the online journal and believed that it helped them to become autonomous learners. A few of them, though, expressed a negative reaction to the relationship between online journal writing and autonomous learning. Because of the unique characteristics of each learner, different forms of autonomous characteristics and perceptions on online journal writing are found in the writings of the five selected individual participants. The results suggest, nevertheless, that since the participants have all studied in an autonomous learning environment and show autonomous behaviors as learners and future teachers, they are likely, in turn, to create an autonomous learning environment and foster learner autonomy in their own future students.

