



Teachers' Instructional Behaviors and Students' Self-Determination

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Abstract

Within SDT framework, many investigations have been done in the field of language learning showing teachers' instructional behaviors can affect students' perceived self-determination and learning outcomes (Noels, Clément, & Pelletier, 1999). In this paper, not only Iranian English teachers' instructional behaviors, but also the relationship between students' perceived instructional behaviors and their perceived self-determination were explored in a sample of 210 university students by means of questionnaires. The results indicated that the students agreed their teachers' instructional behaviors were autonomy supportive, whereas they agreed that their teachers' behaviors were controlling. They also indicated a significantly positive relationship between the students' perceived teachers' autonomy-supportive instructional behaviors and their perceived self-determination on the one hand, and on the other a non significant correlation between teachers' controlling behaviors and students' perceived self-determination. The findings of this study have implications for teachers to develop their autonomy-supportive behaviors to promote students' autonomy in learning English.

Keywords: autonomy, self determination, teacher's autonomy-supportive behaviors, teachers' controlling behaviors

1. Introduction

A number of studies have been conducted to investigate ways to improve learners' motivation in language learning. One major contribution of such studies is a theory of motivation called the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) which has been widely applied to the field of language education (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 1987). This theory asserts that on the one hand, human beings have a tendency to be intrinsically motivated, and on the other hand "People are motivated to internalize the regulation of uninteresting behaviors that are valuable for effective functioning" (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, & Ryan, 1991, p. 338). In other words, internalization is the basic concept of Self-Determination Theory.

According to SDT, autonomy-supportive social and interpersonal contexts are necessary to facilitate intrinsic motivation and self-determination. Teachers' instructional behaviors in language classrooms ranging from autonomy-supportive to controlling can affect the internalization of regulation, and subsequent autonomous self-regulation. Given that teachers' instructional behaviors result in intrinsic motivation and self-determination, many studies attempted to link intrinsic motivation and autonomous forms of extrinsic motivation to positive academic outcomes (Grolnick, Ryan & Deci, 1991; Pintrich & De Groot, 1990).

Deci and Ryan (1987) and Reeve, Bolt, and Cai, (1999) introduced students' rewards for engaging in an activity, imposing deadlines on students toward their engagement of an activity or performance, informing students about the evaluation of their performance, and setting a goal and criterion for students' progress and way of thinking or behaving as examples of teachers' controlling behaviors.

On the other hand, teachers' autonomy supportive behaviors are characterized by encouraging students' experience of autonomous learning, offering them choices in engaging in an activity, giving positive feedback toward their performance, and motivating them by supporting their initiation in activities and facilitating their internalization of academic values (Reeve et al., 1999). In fact, some prior studies confirmed that teachers' teaching behaviors could

influence students' achievements in learning language (Noels, Clément, & Pelletier, 1999). Since teachers' teaching styles enhance learners' achievements, these behaviors are investigated in this paper.

1.1 Statement of the problem

Some researchers argued that their studies confirmed that autonomy-supportive teaching behaviors can affect students' perceived self-determination and students' perceived self-determination correlates positively with learning outcomes such as students' perceptions of competence and their desire to continue studying language, and negatively with their learning anxiety (Noels, Clément, & Pelletier, 1999; Noels, Clément, & Pelletier, 2001; Noels, 2001).

However, other researchers argue that the concept autonomy is a "Western Term" and is not relevant to non-Western contexts (Markus & Kitayama, 2003). They even emphasize the negative effects of autonomy support on learners' perceived self-determination (Helwig, 2006; Littlewood, 1999). For instance Chirkov (2009) argued that:

The main argument of cultural determinists is that many cultures highly value obedience to authority, strict discipline, and a hierarchical, authoritarian style of teacher–student relations. In these societies, these scholars believe that supporting students' autonomy, providing them with choices, and acknowledging their feelings, thoughts, and opinions will not be appreciated and will even work against learners' efficient learning and optimal development. (P. 256)

To resolve this controversy, the applicability of SDT to Iranian academic context was investigated. More specifically, this study was an attempt to test whether teachers' autonomy-supportive and controlling behaviors affect learners' perceived self-determination or not.

1.2 The Significance of the Study

In Iranian language learning context, there has, so far, been no investigation within Self-Determination Theory which addresses the role of interpersonal factor and specifically the teachers' role. Consequently, the researchers adopted the theoretical perspective of SDT to investigate teachers' autonomy-supportive as well as controlling behaviors in Iranian academic context. In addition, some researchers argued that teachers' instructional styles in some contexts do not result in positive outcomes to enhance learners' perceived motivation and their psychological development. To test these claims, the researchers attempted to study the relationship between teachers' autonomy-supportive and controlling behaviors and students' perceived self-determination to investigate whether or not applying this theory in Iranian context would result in the same patterns in findings.

1.3 Literature review

Holec (1981) argued that the concept of autonomy entered the field of language education by Council of Europe's modern languages projects. At the end of 1960, self-directed learning was regarded as a kind of "learning in which the objectives, progress and evaluation of learning are determined by learners themselves" (Benson, 1991, p. 8). It also emphasized individuals' freedom with developing necessary abilities to act responsibly in society. In order to provide opportunities for self-directed learning, *centere de recherches et de' applications en langues (CARPEL)* innovated terms such as Self-Access Language Learning (Riley & Zoppis, 1985) or Learner Training (Holec, 1980) somehow associated with the idea of individualization. However there is no rationale or justification showing that this kind of learning automatically results in autonomy. Benson (1991) argued that "under certain conditions, self-instructional modes of learning may even inhibit autonomy" (p. 9). He also argued that learners who engage in autonomous language learning are not necessarily autonomous and that their autonomy depends on the kind of technology and the way it is used. As it was practiced at CARPEL and Self-Access Language Centers, autonomy was associated with individualization. In 1990s research on autonomy focused on collaboration, cooperation and negotiation. Kohonen (1992) argued that "Autonomy thus includes the notion of interdependence, that is being responsible for one's own conduct in the social context: being able to cooperate with others and solve conflicts in constructive ways" (p. 19).

Little (1991) took the psychological characteristics of learners into account and considered them as the precondition for the development of autonomy. He gave more importance to interdependence rather than independence. He also argued that the pedagogical dialogue between learner and teacher plays a crucial role in creating autonomy in learners. In addition, he argued that teachers play crucial roles in learners' autonomy.

This shift of focus from outside the classroom to classroom and individualized work for studying autonomy is considered an important development (Benson, 2001). At the same time, "Motivation" is recognized as the key element for effective learning, specifically in the field of language learning. One of the widely accepted theories in this regard is SDT (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 1987). For Deci and Ryan (2000), the term "Motivation" suggests being moved to do something. According to this theory, there are three important psychological needs necessary for optimal functioning of human being, their self-motivation and social integration. These basic needs are relatedness, competence, and autonomy.

On the basis of this theory, a motivated person has a feeling of impetus or inspiration to do something and to act to achieve a goal. The theory also rejects motivation as a unitary phenomenon, as it maintains that people not only differ in the amount of their motivation, but also in the kinds of their motivation. So it is believed that there is a variation among different people in both their level of motivation, and the orientation of their motivation which deals with "why of actions" (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 54). This is why SDT distinguishes between different kinds of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

Totally intrinsically motivated behaviors are behaviors with no underlying external control, and people are engaged in those activities, simply because they enjoy them and attach value to them. They are done not because of any instrumental reason, but because the experience is enjoyable. Intrinsic motivation is regarded as the natural source of learning and prosperity, which can be accelerated or stubbed by teachers' practices (Ryan & Stiller, 1991). This kind of motivation leads to "creativity and high quality learning" (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 55). Similarly Deci and Flaste (1995) argued that "When autonomous, people are fully willing to do what they are doing, and they embrace the activity with a sense of interest and commitment" (p. 2).

In SDT, autonomy has been regarded as the opposite of control. So the activities which are self-determined and done without any external force would result in autonomy. Obviously, educators cannot always rely solely on intrinsic motivation because there is no doubt that in many cases, students are asked to perform activities or do tasks which are not inherently enjoyable and pleasant. So knowing about different kinds of extrinsic motivation and the conditions facilitating each of them can help the educators. There are different kinds of extrinsic motivation ranging from external regulation to introjection, identification and integration which differ in the level of autonomy. According to Deci et al. (1991) "Internalization is a proactive process through which people transform regulation by external contingencies into regulation by internal processes" (p. 328).

Therefore, teachers are required to be aware of teaching strategies which result in "active and volitional forms of extrinsic motivation" (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 56). It means that students can develop intrinsic motivation by internalizing unenjoyable or uninteresting tasks. An autonomy-supportive teacher is the one who can make students feel there is congruency between her classroom behavior and her motivational resources. Reeve and Haulistic (2009) argued that in such a situation, "Students experience their classroom participation as an opportunity to experience, pursue, and enrich personally relevant interests and goals" (P. 147).

On the other hand, the controlling teacher prevents students from just acting upon their motivational resources. He makes students follow his centered agenda. Some of the characteristics of the controlling teachers are concerned with offering extrinsic incentives, imposing external goals, uttering pressuring communications, making external evaluations salient (Reeve & Jang, 2006). Boggiano, Flink, Shields, Seelbach, and Barrett (1993) showed the relationship of autonomy-supportive learning environment to better academic performance. It has been argued that these benefits are the result of the teacher's autonomy-supportive behaviors and students' self determined motivation (Reeve et al., 1999).

Reeve and Jang (2006) investigated what teachers say and do to support students' autonomy during a learning activity. They studied the instructional behaviors which correlated with students' autonomy. The results showed that autonomy-supportive teachers motivated students more with various instructional behaviors than controlling teachers. In addition, the results indicated that students' perceived autonomy correlated significantly and positively with their outcomes in the learning processes such as "interest-enjoyment", "school engagement", and "performance". Furthermore, eight instructional behaviors of autonomy support correlated significantly and positively with students' perceived autonomy, and finally, six instructional behaviors associated with controlling behaviors were found to correlate significantly and negatively with students' perceived autonomy.

Noels et al. (1999) also investigated the relationship between teachers' instructional styles and their motivational orientation in language learning. The results showed that there was a strong positive relationship between students' perception of autonomy support and intrinsic motivation and learning outcomes. On the other hand, less autonomy support and lower perception of self-determination were associated with higher levels of anxiety and lower levels of achievement while the students were less likely to continue studying the second language.

Reeve et al. (1999) investigated the relationship between teachers' autonomy-supportive and controlling styles and learners' motivational styles. The results showed that both the teachers who were actually autonomy-supportive and those who were relatively autonomy-supportive perceived themselves as autonomy-supportive.

In the context of Asia, Hsu (2008) investigated the teachers' autonomy-supportive and controlling styles in Taiwan academic context. He also examined the relationship between these behaviors and students' perceived self-determination. The results indicated that students generally agreed that their teachers had autonomy-supportive behaviors while relatively disagreeing that their teachers had controlling behaviors. The correlation results not only showed a positive correlation between students' perceptions of their teachers' autonomy-supportive behaviors and students' perceived self-determination, but also a negative correlation between students' perceptions of their teachers' instructional behaviors and students' perceived self-determination.

The concept of autonomy in Iranian language learning context has been the focus of some studies. Tamjid and Birjandi (2011) investigated the effects of self and peer assessment in fostering autonomy. The results of their experiment showed that the incorporation of peer and self assessment increased the autonomy of learners. In another article Ajideh (2009) considered metacognitive strategies and autonomous learning as basic requirements for teaching and learning ESP. In this study the concept of autonomy in language learning in Iranian academic context was investigated within Self Determination Theory.

1.4 Research questions and hypothesis

This study aims to answer the following questions.

1. How do students perceive their teachers' autonomy-supportive instructional behaviors?

2. How do students perceive their teachers' controlling instructional behaviors?
3. Is there any relationship between university students' perceived instructional behaviors of their teachers and their perceived self-determination?

Deci, Egheri, Patrick, and Leone (1994) argued that in teaching language, the internalization process, which results in enhancing autonomous motivation, can be facilitated by teachers' autonomy-supportive behaviors, despite the fact that teachers' controlling behaviors can negatively affect students' internalization and autonomous motivation. However, some scholars believe that developing learners' autonomy in non-Western context has the negative effects on students' perceived self-determination (Helwig, 2006; Littlewood, 1999). To investigate the probable correlation between learners' perceived autonomy and their teachers' instructional behaviors in Iranian academic context, the null hypotheses are proposed as:

HO1: There is no relationship between students' perception of their teachers' autonomy-supportive instructional behaviors and their perceived self-determination.

HO2: There is no relationship between students' perception of their teachers' controlling instructional behaviors and their perceived self-determination.

2. Methods

This study was an associational research, aiming to determine whether a relationship exist between teachers' autonomy-supportive and controlling behaviors and students' self-determination. In this study, the quantitative survey method was used aiming at exploring teachers' autonomy-supportive and controlling instructional behaviors from students' perspectives. It also explored the correlation between students' perceived teachers' instructional behaviors and their perceived self-determination.

2.1 Participants and sampling method

Participants of this study were the overall number of 274 students. Of this number of students, 64 participated in the pilot study and 210 participated in the main study. The students participated in the main study were all university-level sophomores (80 male students and 130 female students) from 7 non-English disciplines from the university of Guilan. Their age ranged from 18 to 33, with the mean range of 20.5. Persian was the native language of all of them. In this study the method of convenient data sampling was used. The students voluntarily participated in the present study.

2.2 Instruments

The instruments included three questionnaires for the students. The first questionnaire was on perceived teachers' autonomy-supportive instructional behaviors, consisting of 11 items. The questionnaire was designed on the basis of teachers' 21 instructional behaviors (Reeve & Jang, 2006) for students to identify students' perceived autonomy-supportive instructional behaviors (see Appendix 1). This questionnaire was a 6-point Likert-type scale with the range of 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). The second questionnaire centered on perceived teachers' controlling instructional behaviors consisting of 9 items on a 6 point Likert-scale similar to that of the questionnaire on perceived teachers' autonomy-supportive instructional behaviors (see Appendix 2). Both questionnaires were translated from English into Persian in order to ensure students' comprehensibility (see Appendices 5 and 6). The reliability of the questionnaires calculated through Cronbach's alpha coefficients turned out to be 0.835 for the 11 items of teachers' instructional behaviors as being autonomy-supportive, and 0.716 for the 9 items of teachers' instructional behaviors as being controlling. The third questionnaire, the Self-Determination Scale (see Appendix 3 and 4) included five items, rating on 6-point Likert-type scales, which ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). The SDS was the modified version of Sheldon and Deci (1993) questionnaire, showing how the students reflect on their perceived self-determination in the general English class. This questionnaire was also translated from English into Persian (see Appendices 7, 8).

For the overall number of 210 participants, Cronbach's alpha coefficient measuring the reliability was 0.90 for the 5 items of self-determination scale related to the teachers controlling behaviors, and 0.89 for the 5 items of teachers controlling behaviors respectively.

On the first page of the questionnaire, the items on teachers' perceived autonomy-supportive behaviors were given where the students were asked to answer the items, considering their English teachers' instructional behaviors. Below the instructional section of the questionnaire, the Self-Determination Scale (SDS) was introduced (see Appendix7), according to which the students were required to answer the items by considering 11 teachers' autonomy-supportive behaviors. This way, the students' perceptions of their teachers' instructional behavior and also their perceived self-determination regarding those behaviors were examined. On the second page, the questionnaire including 9 controlling instructional behaviors required the students to answer the items by considering their English teachers' instructional behaviors. The goal of this section was to study students' perceptions about their teachers' controlling behaviors. Just like the first page, these items were followed by the SDS (see Appendix 8) aiming to measure how self-determined the students perceived themselves toward their teachers controlling behaviors.

They were supplied with necessary information regarding the procedure and the purpose of research. To ensure anonymity of participants, they were not required to write their names. The results of this study shared with the students eager to know.

2.3 Procedure

To ensure the reliability of the questionnaires, a pilot study was conducted. For the 11 items of teachers' instructional behaviors as being autonomy-supportive the Cronbachs' alpha coefficient was 0.95 and 0.74, for the 9 items of teachers' instructional behaviors as being controlling.

The next stage of the study was also conducted by the administration of the Perceived Teachers' Autonomy-Supportive Instructional Behaviors Scale, the Perceived Teachers' controlling instructional Behaviors Scale, and the SDS in the second semester of 2011-2012 at the University of Guilan.

2.4 Data analysis

The quantitative data were analyzed. The Mean results and standard deviation of the scales were used to identify the students' perceptions of teachers' autonomy-supportive and controlling behaviors. The Pearson product-moment correlation was utilized to explore correlations between students' perceived teachers' autonomy-supportive and controlling instructional behaviors and their self-determination. The statistical significant level was set at .05.

3. Results

3.1 The results of mean score of teachers' autonomy-supportive behaviors scale and teachers' controlling behaviors scale.

Table 1 shows the mean of the Perceived Teachers' Autonomy-Supportive Instructional Behaviors Scale and the Perceived Teachers' controlling instructional Behaviors Scale in individual classes and for the all students. Accordingly, students generally agreed that their teachers' behaviors were controlling while they agreed that their teachers had controlling behaviors. Furthermore, the results of the individual classes were also in accordance with the results of the total participants.

Table 1. The Mean and Standard Deviation of Students' Perception regarding their Teachers' Autonomy-Supportive and Controlling Behaviors

	Students' perceived teachers' autonomy Supportive behaviors		Students' perceived Teachers' controlling behaviors	
	M	SD	M	SD
Class1	4.51	0.80	3.28	0.96
Class2	4.26	0.80	3.65	0.78
Class3	4.78	0.82	3.38	1.04
Class4	4.27	0.89	3.13	0.59
Class5	4.21	0.83	3.40	0.62
Class6	4.73	1.00	2.78	0.76
Class7	4.58	0.79	2.94	0.97
Class1-7	4.49	0.89	3.21	0.89

3.2 Analysis of correlations between students' perceived Instructional behaviors and perceived self- determination

To investigate, the relationship between teachers' instructional behaviors and students' perceived self-determination the Pearson correlation coefficient was computed showing the significant result ($r = .457$) according to which the more the participants perceived their teachers' behaviors to be autonomy-supportive, the higher their perceived self-determination was (see Table 2). So the null hypothesis stating that there was not any significant correlation between students' perceived self-determination and their perceptions of their teachers' autonomy-supportive instructional behavior was rejected.

Table 2. Correlation Matrix between overall Students' Perceived Autonomy-Supportive Behaviors and their Self-Determination (N=210)

		Autonomy-supportive behaviors	Self-determination
Autonomy-supportive behaviors	Pearson Correlation	1	.457**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	n	210	210
Self-determination	Pearson Correlation	.457**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	n	210	210

Note. ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

On the other hand, the correlation between their perceived teachers' controlling behaviors and their self-determination was not significant ($r = -0.098$, see Table 3). So the null hypothesis stating that there was not any significant correlation between students' perceived self-determination and their perceptions of their teachers' controlling instructional behavior was confirmed.

Table 3. Correlation Matrix between Overall Students' Perceived Controlling Behaviors and their Self-Determination (N=210)

		Controlling behaviors	Self-determination
Controlling behaviors	Pearson Correlation	1	-.098
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.166
	n	210	210
Self-determination	Pearson Correlation	-.098	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.166	
	n	210	210

Note. ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

To sum up, the results of the analysis of the responses to the questionnaires by all students and the individual class students indicated that the majority of the students agreed that their teachers' instructional behaviors were autonomy-supportive. On the other hand, in both overall results from all classes and the majority of individual classes, students (5 out of 7) relatively agreed that their teachers' behaviors were controlling. Regarding the third research question, the correlation between the students' perceptions of their teachers' autonomy-supportive instructional behaviors and their own self-determination toward those behaviors turned out to be significantly positive. Finally, the correlation between students' perceptions toward their teachers' controlling behaviors and their perceived self-determination was not statistically significant.

4. Discussion

Many prior research works showed the positive effects of teachers' autonomy-supportive style and negative effects of teachers' controlling behaviors on students' learning process (Assor, Kaplan, & Roth, 2002; Boggiano et al., 1993; Deci et al., 1991; Deci & Ryan, 1987; Noels et al., 1999; Reeve et al., 1999; Reeve et al., 2004). The results of this study indicate that teachers in Iranian academic context practice both autonomy-supportive and controlling instructional behaviors. Moreover they indicate that teachers shouldn't be much worried about their controlling behaviors in this context. Based on the positive effects of teachers' teaching style on the development of autonomy in students, teachers are recommended to practice more autonomy-supportive teaching behaviors by being "responsive", "expressive", and "explicative" as well as by providing choices for students in their classrooms to increase their sense of self-determination and to improve their academic outcomes (Sarrazin, Tessier, Pelletiere, Trouillot, & Chanal, 2006).

As mentioned in the previous sections, some scholars believe that providing learners with much freedom in a non-Western context is not valued resulting in negative effects on students' perceived autonomy and achievements (Helwig, 2006; Littlewood, 1999). However, the findings of this study seem to reject the above mentioned beliefs. Generally speaking, the results of the research show a similarity between the relationship of students' perceived self-determination and teachers' autonomy-supportive instructional behaviors in the EFL context and English spoken context. As mentioned, many studies were done to investigate the effects of autonomy in language learning in different cultures and contexts. Benson (2006) argued "Although the findings of these studies are mixed, they do show that many Asian students value freedom in language learning and the opportunity to direct their own learning" (p. 25).

In the case of teachers' controlling behaviors, the views that autonomy support negatively affects the students' perceived autonomy in non-Western context were refuted. However the findings were different from those of previous research in terms of teachers' controlling behaviors, still the significant positive correlation which exists between autonomy support and students' sense of self-determination suggests adopting more autonomy-supportive style. The difference found between findings of this research and those of the Western context might be due to the reason that learners still have "traditional beliefs of relational hierarchy in the classrooms" in Eastern context (Nguyen, 2012, p. 319). However, further investigations are needed to find the exact reasons.

5. Conclusion

Although a large amount of research on motivation and language learning has been done, the results did not have a great impact on the real classroom (Hiromori, 2004). In language classroom context, it is neither possible nor practical for a teacher to analyze each student's psychological characteristics to motivate each individual student. However, for teachers it is important to find ways to motivate their learners. One factor which relates to motivation and which teachers can control is autonomy. According to Self-Determination Theory, social contexts can affect both interpersonal and intrapersonal differences in motivation by developing autonomy in learners. It means people in some specific

situations are more self-motivated and psychologically developed rather than in others. Therefore teachers' instructional behaviors which, to some extent, shape classroom context can increase students' intrinsic motivation. The results of a number of studies showed that students benefit from teachers' autonomy-supportive styles which lead to positive outcomes as they affect students' intrinsic motivation or autonomy positively (Deci & Ryan, 1987; Noels et al., 1999; Reeve et al., 1999; Reeve et al., 2004; Reeve & Jang, 2006). So, SDT provides an applicable framework, according to which language teachers can develop autonomous motivation in their students by fulfillment of their psychological needs. The results of the present study have implications for, and contributions to, classroom applications of the Self-Determination Theory and teachers' instructional behaviors in order to enhance students' autonomous motivation in English learning.

According to Reeve and Jang (2006), an autonomy-supportive teacher develops autonomy in students by satisfying their three psychological needs- autonomy, competence, and autonomy. In order to satisfy students' three basic psychological needs described in Self-Determination Theory, foreign language teachers can use different strategies. It has been argued that teachers can support students' autonomy by giving them choice in learning activities, and by minimizing students' perceived pressure in the classroom (Neimic & Ryan, 2009). When teachers involve learners in some of the planning of the course, they feel that the course is more relevant to them. This in turn increases their intrinsic motivation, as they feel they are engaged in the teaching and learning activities. In addition, Reeve et al. (2002) argued that supporting students' autonomy by providing justification for a particular learning activity can facilitate students' internalization. It means that by expressing the value of being engaged in learning activities, teachers can shift students' motivation towards autonomous motivation. Consequently, when students understand the relevance and importance of topics, they study them more willingly and make greater effort to learn them.

To develop the sense of competence in students, teachers can provide appropriate materials and feedback for them. The way, feedback is presented to the students is important. The feedback should be given to the students in a non-threatening way. The teachers should suggest them rather than direct them. This way, they help students master their tasks, feel competent and succeed in their learning. In addition, the learning task given to the students should be "optimally challenging" (Neimic & Ryan, 2009, p. 139). It means in order to make students feel competent; the learning activity should be neither too easy, nor too difficult.

In order to increase students' sense of relatedness, teachers can encourage them to participate actively during the class. By assigning students in different groups and giving them some responsibility, the interaction among students and with the teacher can be facilitated which in turn increase student's sense of relatedness. Neimic and Ryan (2009) argued that this psychological need can be satisfied when a student feels "the teacher genuinely likes, respects, and values him or her" (p. 139). Teachers should spend time listening to students and empathizing with them, because students need to feel that their emotions seem important to the teacher. So feeling connected with the teacher and a sense of belonging to the learning context help students internalize the regulation of learning activity and develop more intrinsic types of motivation such as identified regulation and integrated regulation (Neimic & Ryan, 2009). The sense of belonging can be experienced by students when teachers support the students emotionally by providing a warm atmosphere in the classroom, where students feel comfortable to express their ideas and ask their questions.

In addition, the findings of the present study can have some implications for curriculum developers. According to some research works, teachers can learn to incorporate more autonomy-supportive behaviors in their teaching style. So autonomy support can be incorporated to pre-service teachers' courses. It was also argued that even experienced teachers can benefit from some informational sessions to incorporate the concept of autonomy in their instructional practices (Reeve et al., 2004).

In fact, there are limitations which can affect teachers' autonomy-supportive practices in classroom. Pelletier and Sharp (2009) mentioned the effects of context on teachers' teaching behaviors. They argued that when teachers' social context thwart their autonomy by placing pressures such as "time constraints" and "high standards curriculum constraints", teachers adopt more controlling teaching styles which affect students' motivation negatively (p.178). According to SDT, there are two reasons for the existence of this connection. The first reason is that external pressures undermine teachers' perceived autonomy which in turn results in less desire to be involved in teaching practice. Second, instead of implementing encouraging and exciting teaching practices, teachers rely more on "extrinsically focused strategies" for producing accountability (Neimic & Ryan, 2009, p. 140). In this regard, Deci and Ryan (2002) argued that instead of putting pressure on teachers to ensure accountability, policy makers should consider teachers' motivation connecting to learners' motivation. Otherwise students' learning outcomes will be suffered. In addition, Pelletier and Sharp (2009) argues that placing less pressure on teachers have positive impacts not only on learners' motivation, but also on teachers' well-being.

Moreover, teachers' self-reflection can improve their autonomy which in turn leads to the learner's autonomy. "Teacher Autonomy" is a term considered by some scholars to refer to the teacher as a learner, the one who goes through the process of learning and reflective process (Smith, 2003). In this regard, Graves and Vye (2007) argued that the term "Teacher autonomy" has to be the focus of teacher education courses.

So, in order to adopt more autonomy-supportive style, English teachers in Iran can reflect on their teaching practice, adjust their teaching style, and develop their autonomy-supportive behaviors. This way, they can increase students' learning motivation, autonomy, and self-determination in learning English.

This study, mainly examined the relationship between students' perceived teachers' instructional behaviors and their self-determination through correlational analysis. However, the causal relationship still remains unknown. More specifically, the non-significant correlation between perceived teachers' controlling behaviors and students' perceived self-determination in this study is not in harmony with the findings of the previous research works. . Therefore, further research works need to investigate the causal relationships. In addition, as quantitative method was used in this study, future research using qualitative approach can study teachers' and students' opinions toward autonomy-supportive and controlling teaching behaviors. Finally, research can investigate the reasons why teachers adopt particular instructional behaviors.

In conclusion, language learners can be supported by teachers' autonomy-supportive behaviors to develop intrinsic motivation to take part in classroom activities. Language teachers can also help students by providing opportunities for them to be autonomous learners. It is obvious that teachers cannot change the present curriculum in schools and universities. However, by satisfying their three psychological needs and adopting more autonomy-supportive style, they can encourage students to be more responsible for their own learning and to develop their self-determination in learning language.

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Appendix 1

This questionnaire consists of items that are related to your English teachers' instructional behaviors. Consider your English teacher's teaching behavior and answer the questions by marking the number. Your responses are confidential, and please be honest.

1. Strongly Disagree 2. Mostly Disagree 3. Partially Disagree 4. Partially Agree 5. Mostly Agree 6. Strongly Agree

	Strongly agree			Strongly disagree		
1. My teacher spends time listening to students in class.	6	5	4	3	2	1
2. My teacher asks what students want in learning.	6	5	4	3	2	1
3. My teacher saves time to allow students to work in own way.	6	5	4	3	2	1
4. My teacher lets students have opportunities to talk in class	6	5	4	3	2	1
5. My teacher arranges seating for students to access the learning materials.	6	5	4	3	2	1
6. My teacher provides rationales on a particular course of action.	6	5	4	3	2	1
7. My teacher gives students praise as positive feedback.	6	5	4	3	2	1
8. My teacher offers encouragements to have students sustain the engagement.	6	5	4	3	2	1
9. My teacher offers hints when students seem to be stuck in learning.	6	5	4	3	2	1
10. My teacher is responsive to student-generated questions	6	5	4	3	2	1
11. My teacher communicates with students from their perspectives.	6	5	4	3	2	1

Appendix 2

This questionnaire consists of items that are related to your English teachers' instructional behaviors. Consider your English teacher's teaching behavior and answer the questions by marking the number. Your responses are confidential, and please be honest.

	strongly agree			strongly disagree		
12. My teacher spends a lot of time talking in class.	6	5	4	3	2	1
13. My teacher physically exhibits solutions before students have opportunities to discover them.	6	5	4	3	2	1
14. My teacher utters answers before students have opportunities to discover them.	6	5	4	3	2	1
15. My teacher makes should/ought to statements.	6	5	4	3	2	1
16. My teacher utters commands for students' learning.	6	5	4	3	2	1
17. My teacher asks controlling questions by directing students to give intended answers.	6	5	4	3	2	1
18. My teacher states a shortage of time for students' completing an activity.	6	5	4	3	2	1
19. My teacher praises students when they follow his directives.	6	5	4	3	2	1
20. My teacher criticizes students when they lack compliance with him.	6	5	4	3	2	1

Appendix 3

According to item 1 to item 11 in the Questionnaire, please answer the questions by marking the number.

	strongly agree			strongly disagree		
1. I always feel like I choose the things I do.	6	5	4	3	2	1
2. I choose to do what I have to do.	6	5	4	3	2	1
3. I do what I do because it interests me.	6	5	4	3	2	1
4. I am free to do whatever I decide to do.	6	5	4	3	2	1
5. I feel pretty free to do whatever I choose to.	6	5	4	3	2	1

Appendix 4

According to item 12 to item 20 in the Questionnaire, please answer the questions by marking the number.

	strongly disagree	6	5	4	3	2	1	strongly agree
1. I always feel like I choose the things I do.		6	5	4	3	2	1	
2. I choose to do what I have to do.		6	5	4	3	2	1	
3. I do what I do because it interests me.		6	5	4	3	2	1	
4. I am free to do whatever I decide to		6	5	4	3	2	1	
5. I feel pretty free to do whatever I choose to.		6	5	4	3	2	1	

Appendix. 5

این پرسشنامه حاوی مواردی است که مربوط به رفتار آموزشی استاد شما می باشد. شیوه آموزشی استاد انگلیسی خود در کلاس را لحاظ کنید. لطفاً به هر سوال با علامت زدن شماره مورد نظر جواب دهید. پاسخ داده شده کاملاً محرمانه می ماند. لطفاً پاسجهای صحیح بدهید.

1. کاملاً مخالفم. 2. تقریباً مخالفم. 3. تا حدودی مخالفم. 4. تا حدودی موافقم. 5. تقریباً موافقم. 6. کاملاً موافقم.
1. استادم در کلاس برای گوش دادن به دانشجویان وقت صرف می کند. 6 5 4 3 2 1
2. استادم از دانشجویان می پرسد که چه می خواهند بیاموزند. 6 5 4 3 2 1
3. استادم به دانشجویان زمان میدهد تا مسایل را به شیوه خودشان حل کنند. 6 5 4 3 2 1
4. استادم به دانشجویان فرصت صحبت در کلاس می دهد. 6 5 4 3 2 1
5. استادم کلاس را به گونه ای طراحی میکند که دانشجویان توانایی دسترسی به مواد آموزشی را داشته باشند. 6 5 4 3 2 1
6. استادم توضیح می دهد که چرا دانشجویان فعالیت های خاصی را باید انجام دهند. 6 5 4 3 2 1
7. استادم دانشجویانی که جواب درست می دهند را تحسین می کند. 6 5 4 3 2 1
8. استادم دانشجویان را تشویق میکند تا همچنان در فعالیت کلاسی مشارکت داشته باشند. 6 5 4 3 2 1
9. استادم وقتی دانشجویان در یادگیری دچار مشکل می شوند آنها را راهنمایی می کند. 6 5 4 3 2 1
10. استادم پاسخگوی سوالاتی که دانش آموزان می پرسند است. 6 5 4 3 2 1
11. استادم وقتی که با دانشجویان ارتباط برقرار کردن می کند سعی می کند مسایل را از دیدگاه آنها ببیند. 6 5 4 3 2 1

Appendix 6

این پرسشنامه حاوی مواردی است که مربوط به رفتار آموزشی استاد شما می باشد. شیوه آموزشی استاد انگلیسی خود در کلاس را لحاظ کنید. لطفاً به هر سوال با علامت زدن شماره مورد نظر جواب دهید. پاسخ داده شده کاملاً محرمانه می ماند. لطفاً پاسجهای صحیح بدهید.

1. کاملاً مخالفم. 2. تقریباً مخالفم. 3. تا حدودی مخالفم. 4. تا حدودی موافقم. 5. تقریباً موافقم. 6. کاملاً موافقم.
12. استادم وقت زیادی صرف صحبت کردن در کلاس می کند. 6 5 4 3 2 1
13. استادم قبل از اینکه دانش جویان خودشان فرصت پیدا کردن راه حل را داشته باشند با حرکات بدنی راه حل یا جواب را به آنها نشان می دهد. 6 5 4 3 2 1
14. استادم قبل از اینکه دانش جویان فرصت پیدا کردن راه حل را داشته باشند جواب را می گوید. 6 5 4 3 2 1
15. استادم در جمله هایش از عبارات "باید" استفاده می کند. 6 5 4 3 2 1
16. استادم در یادگیری به آنها دستور می دهد. 6 5 4 3 2 1
17. استادم سوال هایی را از دانشجویان می پرسد که تنها یک جواب معین دارند. 6 5 4 3 2 1
18. استادم به دانشجویان وقت محدودی برای کامل کردن یک فعالیت می دهد. 6 5 4 3 2 1
19. استادم وقتی دانشجویان به دستور هایش گوش می دهند ایشان را تشویق می کند. 6 5 4 3 2 1
20. استادم از دانشجویانی که با نظراتش موافق نباشند انتقاد می کند. 6 5 4 3 2 1

این پرسشنامه شامل مواردی است که مربوط به شما و تحصیل شما در کلاس می باشد. لطفاً با توجه به سوال های شماره 1 تا 11 به هر سوال با علامت زدن شماره مورد نظر جواب دهید. پاسخ داده شده کاملاً محرمانه می ماند. لطفاً پاسخهای صحیح بدهید.

1. کاملاً مخالفم. 2. تقریباً مخالفم. 3. تا حدودی مخالفم. 4. تا حدودی موافقم. 5. تقریباً موافقم. 6. کاملاً موافقم

1. همیشه احساس می‌کنم که کارهایی را که انجام می‌دهم خودم انتخاب می‌کنم. 6 5 4 3 2 1
2. آنچه را که باید انجام دهم خودم انتخاب می‌کنم. 6 5 4 3 2 1
3. کاری را انجام می‌دهم که به آن علاقه دارم. 6 5 4 3 2 1
4. آزادانه هر آنچه را که خود می‌خواهم انجام می‌دهم. 6 5 4 3 2 1
5. کاملاً احساس آزادی می‌کنم که هر آنچه انتخاب می‌کنم انجام دهم. 6 5 4 3 2 1

Appendix 8

این پرسشنامه شامل مواردی است که مربوط به شما و تحصیل شما در کلاس می باشد. لطفاً با توجه به سوال های شماره 12 تا 20 به هر سوال با علامت زدن شماره مورد نظر جواب دهید. پاسخ داده شده کاملاً محرمانه می ماند. لطفاً پاسخهای صحیح بدهید.

1. کاملاً مخالفم. 2. تقریباً مخالفم. 3. تا حدودی مخالفم. 4. تا حدودی موافقم. 5. تقریباً موافقم. 6. کاملاً موافقم

1. همیشه احساس می‌کنم که کارهایی را که انجام می‌دهم خودم انتخاب می‌کنم. 6 5 4 3 2 1
2. آنچه را که باید انجام دهم خودم انتخاب می‌کنم. 6 5 4 3 2 1
3. کاری را انجام می‌دهم که به آن علاقه دارم. 6 5 4 3 2 1
4. آزادانه هر آنچه را که خود می‌خواهم انجام می‌دهم. 6 5 4 3 2 1
5. کاملاً احساس آزادی می‌کنم که هر آنچه انتخاب می‌کنم انجام دهم. 6 5 4 3 2 1