

Autonomy and European Language Portfolio Use among Turkish Adolescents

Türk Ergenlerde Özerklik ve Avrupa Dil Gelişim Dosyası Kullanımı

Nehir SERT*

John ADAMSON**

Şener BÜYÜKÖZTÜRK***

Başkent Üniversitesi University of Niigata Prefecture Gazi Üniversitesi

Abstract

This study aims to investigate the difference between perceptions among adolescents towards autonomy considering the European Language Portfolio Use (ELPU) and the effects of autonomy and ELPU on English attainment. It further scrutinizes how European Language Portfolios (ELP) and autonomy promoting strategies are used. The participants comprised 309 6th-8th year students in their early adolescence and 11 teachers in two private primary schools in Ankara and Adana. A 'sequential explanatory' research design was applied. Results revealed that the students who did not use ELP scored higher on the 'Adolescent Autonomy Scale' and 'Language Learning Autonomy Scale (LLAS)' than those who used ELPs. LLAS scores were the significant predictors of the English attainment. Furthermore, the ELPU was not supported with autonomy promoting strategies.

Keywords: Adolescent autonomy, autonomy in language learning, European Language Portfolio

Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı, Avrupa Dil Gelişim Dosyası (ADGD) kullanımı dikkate alındığında ergenlerin özerklik algılarının farklılaşp farklılaşmadığını ve ADGD kullanımı ve özerklik gelişimlerinin İngilizce başarıları üzerindeki etkilerini incelemektir. Ayrıca, ADGD'nin ve özerklik geliştirmeye yönelik stratejilerin nasıl kullanıldığı mercek altına alınmıştır. Çalışmanın katılımcıları Ankara ve Adana'da iki özel ilköğretim okulundaki erken ergenlik döneminde olan 309 6-8. Sınıf öğrencisi ve 11 öğretmendir. 'Aşamalı açıklayıcı' araştırma modeli kullanılmıştır. Sonuçlar ADGD kullanmayan öğrencilerin 'Ergen Özerklik Ölçeği' ve 'Dil Öğrenme Özerklik Ölçeği' puanlarının ADGD kullanan öğrencilerden daha yüksek olduğunu göstermiştir. 'Dil Öğrenme Özerklik Ölçeği' puanları İngilizce başarısının anlamlı yordayıcısıdır. Ayrıca, ADGD kullanımının özerk öğrenme stratejileriyle desteklenmediği anlaşılmaktadır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Ergen özerkliği, dil öğreniminde özerklik, Avrupa Dil Gelişim Dosyası

Introduction

Educational reforms in Turkish primary education curricula of 2005-2006 were based on a constructivist approach and have required the adoption of learner-centred pedagogy in schools. More learner-centred modes of learning which have been encouraged among learners have necessitated the introduction of autonomy in learning as a central component in the teaching/learning process. Autonomy development in early adolescence is also a central component for the learners aged between 12 and 15 in this process. In this study, we critically analyse some of the main issues surrounding autonomy and reveal how the main areas of investigation in this study, namely, Adolescent Autonomy (AA), Language Learning Autonomy (LLA), and European Language Portfolio Use (ELPU) among Turkish adolescents aged between twelve and fifteen -

* Dr. Nehir SERT, Başkent Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi, nsert@baskent.edu.tr

** Dr. John ADAMSON, University of Niigata Prefecture, johnadamson253@hotmail.com

*** Dr. Şener BÜYÜKÖZTÜRK, Gazi Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi, senerbuyukozturk@gmail.com

interface with socio-cognitive and cultural issues impacting upon primary classrooms. We argue in this paper that these considerations may have implications for the success or failure of the reforms mentioned above.

Adolescent Autonomy (AA)

Autonomy is often regarded as a key concept in adolescent development as they strive to detach themselves and form their own sense of individuality and identity (Steinberg & Silverberg, 1986; Steinberg et al., 1992; Zimmer-Gembeck, 2001). Noom (1999) defines autonomy as the ability to give direction to one's own life, by defining goals, feeling competent and being able to regulate one's actions (cited in Noom et al., 1999). Steinberg and Silverberg (1986) propose various dimensions of autonomy; behavioural, cognitive, and emotional, the latter being the main focus of research.

Feldman and Quatman, (1988), Feldman and Rosenthal (1991), and Sessa and Steinberg (1991) define behavioural autonomy as active, independent performance including self-governance, self-regulation of behaviour, and acting on personal decisions (cited in Zimmer-Gembeck & Collins 2003). Functional autonomy in the terminology of Noom et al., (2001) refers to the same regulatory aspect of adolescent behaviour and is defined as the regulatory process of developing strategies to achieve one's goals and taking control of their behaviour.

Cognitive autonomy has been understood as "a sense of self-reliance, a belief that one has control over his or her own life, and subjective feelings of being able to make decisions without excessive social validation" (Sessa & Steinberg, 1991, cited in Zimmer-Gembeck & Collins 2003: p. 176). Noom et al., (2001: p. 578) have labelled it as *attitudinal autonomy*, defining it as "the ability to specify several options, to make a decision, and to define a goal." It also includes weighing the influence of others on thinking, considering consequences, and self-evaluating practices (Beckert, 2005)

Emotional autonomy refers to the perception of independence through self-confidence and individuality (Noom et al., 1999) which means changing perceptions of and relations with parents. Steinberg and Silverberg (1986) see it as comprising four components: (1) Individuation: perceptions that parents do not know or understand the adolescent; (2) Nondependency on parents: a feeling of self-governance; (3) Parental deidealization: acknowledging the limitations of parents; and (4) Perceiving parents as people except for their parental role.

Although the dimensions of autonomy explained above have been measured separately, recent findings indicate considerable overlap between measures of emotional and behavioural autonomy (Collins et al., 2000; cited in Zimmer-Gembeck & Collins, 2003). Research also demonstrates some overlap among behavioural, cognitive and emotional autonomy, suggesting that they do not develop independently (see Collins & Repinski, 1994; Youniss & Smollar, 1985). Noom et al., (2001) admit that no theory corresponds perfectly with the three proposed dimensions so further research is needed to provide more robust theoretical background for the concept of autonomy, which in turn will benefit the development of instruments for evaluation and measurement (Spear & Kulbok, 2004).

Language Learning Autonomy (LLA)

Turning to the literature on Language Learning Autonomy (LLA), potentially a new learning context with which the adolescents in this study are faced, we firstly need to define autonomy related to language learning. Lynch (2001, p. 391) outlines "five accepted senses of autonomy in language learning": the situations in which students can study on their own; the skills needed for self-directed learning; the capacity to learn autonomously and whether the institution encourages or inhibits it; the responsibility that learners need to adopt; and finally, the right of learners to determine the direction of their learning. Such senses, or components embedded within LLA, have experienced shifts over time. Early studies on learner autonomy in the 1980s stressed concepts of self-instruction (Dickinson, 1987), strategies (Wenden & Rubin, 1987), and how

the curriculum could be made more learner-centred (Nunan, 1988). There was also a growing emphasis on the psychological aspects of this shift to self-determination away from teacher-led pedagogy in learning (Wenden & Rubin, 1987; Holec, 1981). As it became increasingly clearer that autonomy involved more than the study of an individual's cognition, a refocusing occurred to the social-cognitive influences at play, i.e. how the learner collaborates with and supports others when learning (Vygotsky, 1978). This shows that moves towards autonomous learning do not simply represent an internalised process. These themes of socio-cognition and collaboration, as well as how the individual student psychologically deals with self-determination in autonomous learning situations in turn relate directly with how adolescents may behave when using portfolios.

European Language Portfolio Use (ELPU)

One way in which learner autonomy is promoted in Turkish education in primary schools is through the use of European Language Portfolios. The ELP can take a number of forms, usually showing a collection of student work which according to Paulson et al., (1991, p. 60) can "exhibit the student's efforts, progress, and achievements in one or more areas." Significant to actually representing student work is the provision that the ELP must involve the student in selecting its content, how it is selected (selection criteria), judged (assessment criteria), and critically reflected upon. Emphasis is placed not simply on the product of learning but also the process of learning, typically showing drafts of writing which give clear insights as to how a student has progressed in their studies. In this sense, the student is assessed and assesses him or herself on an ongoing basis, and can even set and reset goals for learning, a process which provides fertile ground for reflection and also encourages a sense of ownership, both of the ELP in a physical sense and of the process of its compilation. There is also the element of collaboration, seen through the "pedagogical dialogue" (Little, 2000, p. 3), associated with keeping the ELP, that is, the content contains feedback from teachers and peers on written work and how that feedback is responded to in subsequent drafts. This continuous record of collaboration is a sign that the ELPs have the potential to accommodate "authentic assessment" (Mullins, 1998, p. 80), in contrast to the traditional outsider-evaluated end of term examination which ignores the longer pedagogical process in which the student has actively participated. The concept of the authenticity intrinsic to the ELP assessment has received strong support (Smith et al, 2003; Taşdemir et al, 2009) and is seen to benefit learners' long-term competence in self-evaluation, an integral part of learner autonomy (Cook-Benjamin, 2001; Lambin & Walker, 1994).

In summary, this review of AA, LLA, and the ELPU has investigated not only the benefits facing learners, but also the pivotal role that the social context plays in preparing them. The collaborative process among students, teachers, and parents has been stressed and we have argued that the ELPU may still best be seen as a pedagogic tool to work alongside autonomy granting social context.

Aim of the Study

This study aims to investigate the difference between perceptions towards autonomy among 6th-8th year students in their early adolescence regarding the ELPU; and effects of these variables on attaining English. Secondly, it focuses on how ELPU and autonomy promoting strategies are used. The following questions are addressed to achieve the aforementioned goals.

1. Is there a significant difference between the 'Adolescent Autonomy Scale' (AAS) scores and the 'Language Learning Autonomy Scale' (LLAS) scores of the students regarding ELPU?
2. Are AAS scores, LLAS scores, and ELPU significant predictors of the students':
 - a) Written Exam Scores (WES)?
 - b) Performance Task Scores (PTS)?
 - c) and GPAs?
3. Is there a correlation between AAS and LLAS scores of the students?
4. What are the views of the teachers and the students concerning the ELPU?

5. What are the teachers' behaviours promoting LLA of the students who use the ELPs and those who do not?

Method

In this study, a sequential explanatory design (Cresswell, 2009) has been adopted to better interpret the quantitative results. In the first phase, associational research methods were applied. Causal comparative design was used to determine the differences between the groups considering the ELP. And, correlational design was used to determine both significant predictors of the measures of the English attainment, and the correlation between AAS and LLAS scores of the students. In the second phase, qualitative data was collected through, semi-structured interviews and classroom observations to supplement the findings from the first phase. The data were collected in the spring term of the 2008-2009 academic year.

The participants

A total number of 309 6th-8th year students in their early adolescence (aged between 12- 15) participated in the study. Among all, 130 (42%) of them used ELP while 179 (58%) of them did not (Table 1). Also, 11 English teachers participated in the study.

Table 1.

Demographic Structure of the Students

ELPU	Year			Gender		Total	
	6 th	7 th	8 th	girl	boy		
Yes	n	39	68	23	75	55	130
	%	30.0	52.3	17.7	57.7	42.3	42.0
No	n	80	92	7	92	87	179
	%	44.7	51.4	3.9	51.4	48.6	58.0
Total	n	119	160	30	167	142	309
	%	38.5	51.8	9.7	54.0	46.0	100.0

Data collection and analyses

Scales

A scale originally designed by Noom, et al., (2001) for 12- 18 year old adolescents was used to investigate the students' perceptions of their AA. The scale had three dimensions; attitudinal, emotional, and functional autonomy. It was used in Turkish by Yılmaz (2007), yet differing from the original scale, items in the attitudinal and functional subscales overlapped in the adapted form. The new dimension of attitudinal and functional subscales was labelled as behavioural autonomy since they were mainly related to acting on personal decisions. Thus, the adapted version had two dimensions of behavioural and emotional autonomy with 19 items. Additionally, reliability in each part was examined using the Cronbach's alpha coefficients. It was found to be .79 for behavioural autonomy, .51 for emotional autonomy, and .80 for the whole. In this study, factor structure and reliability of the scores were re-examined using the data obtained. Exploratory factor analysis results indicated that a factor loading of 6 items (2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10) was low (<.30), and the scale had one factor. Excluding these items, the factor analysis was reapplied for the remaining 13 items. The variance described by one factor was 33.5%. Item factor loadings varied between .44 and .72. Corrected total correlations varied between .37 and .60. Also, the alfa coefficient for one factor was .82. As a result, this one dimensional and five-point Likert-type scale from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5) was labelled as an 'Adolescent Autonomy Scale' (AAS) the (Appendix 1).

The 'Language Learning Autonomy Scale' (LLAS) was developed by the researchers.

Firstly, 32 students were selected from the institutions under investigation to answer open-ended questions about their English language learning processes to construct the item pool of the scale. Next, content analysis of the students' responses specified the items in the draft form. Then, the draft form was designed in collaboration with experts after reviewing related literature and piloted on a sample of participants ($n = 5$) to assess applicability. Lastly, wording of the items and layout of the scale were improved. Consequently, a 25 itemed scale was ready for use with a five point Likert type scale of five options: never (1), rarely (2), sometimes (3) frequently (4), and always (5) administered in Turkish to provide standardised conditions for the research groups with different English backgrounds. A factor analysis was also conducted using data from the study. Results indicated two items had low factor loading (20, 25), and after exclusion, the scale had one factor with the remaining 23 items (Appendix 2). Subsequently, the variance that one factor explains is 33.1%. Item factor loading values are .42 and .72. Corrected total item correlation falls between .44 and .66. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient calculated for the scale scores is .91.

The difference among the students' AAS and LLAS scores considering ELPU was tested by multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). When results of MANOVA were significant, ANOVA results were given as a follow up test. Stepwise regression analysis was conducted to determine significant predictors of student English attainment. In the analysis; ELPU was recorded as yes=1, no=0 as dummy variables.

Interviews

Two semi-structured interview forms were developed for the teachers and the students. To assess reliability, draft interviews designed by three field experts were piloted on a sample of participants ($n=5$). Final versions of the interviews were designed after improving wording (Appendix 3). Audio recordings of 5 hours of interviews were content analyzed. Firstly, the interviews were fully transcribed and then reduced to identify relevant responses. All responses were categorized and key excerpts were selected to represent participants' views. The codes were cross-checked by two of the researchers to provide inter-coder agreement (91%). In all, 25 girls and 17 boys were randomly selected taking age and gender as strata for the interviews. Also, 11 English teachers attended the interviews voluntarily.

Observations

The researchers constructed an observation form to specify teachers' behaviours promoting student autonomy. Three field experts were tested whether the form was suitable and stated it was intelligible and applicable for the study purposes. Since feedback was mainly based on impressions, the observer graded each course according to frequency of behaviours on the observation form on a scale of 1-5. Functional definitions of the behaviours on the scale from two hour observations were hardly ever (1); for the behaviours occurring once at most, rarely (2); for those occurring twice at most, sometimes (3); for those occurring three times at most, frequently for those four times at most; and always for those occurring more than five times. In addition, notes were taken on other points to develop lesson profiles. Observations took place six hours a week for six weeks. Two hours devoted to each year from sixth to eighth (See Appendix 4).

Results

Results are introduced in five categories considering the research questions: a) the inter-group comparisons, b) the predictors of the English attainment, c) the correlation between AAS and LLAS scores d) the students' and the teachers' views concerning the ELPU, and e) the teachers' behaviours promoting LLA of the students.

a) The inter-group comparisons

Results of the analysis comparing AAS and LLAS scores are in Table 2.

Table 2.

The Mean Scores and the Standard Deviations of the AAS and LLAS and MANOVA Results

Factor		AAS		LLAS		MANOVA		
		M	SD	M	SD	F	df	p
ELPU	Yes	48.70	8.98	87.66	15.62	9.38	2, 306	.000
	No	52.72	7.25	91.72	12.49			
Year	6 th	52.73	9.06	92.48	14.96	3.43	4, 610	.009
	7 th	50.02	7.46	89.27	12.83			
	8 th	49.63	8.01	84.20	14.48			

Significant difference was found between AAS and LLAS scores of the students regarding the ELPU. $F(2, 306)=9.38, p=.00$. The ANOVA results following the MANOVA indicated that the difference between AAS $F(1, 307)=18.82, p=.001$ and LLAS scores, $F(1, 307)=6.41, p=.012$ of the groups was significant. The AAS and LLAS scores of the students who did not use ELP were higher than those of the students who used ELP.

a) Predictors of the English attainment and the correlation between AAS and LLAS scores

1) Predictors of the WES Scores: The results of stepwise regression analysis to ascertain significant predictors of the WES of the students are in Table 3. LLAS scores with the highest correlation with student WES was taken into the analysis in the first phase. It explained 2.5% of the total variance of the WES. Students with high LLAS scores had higher WES. ELPU was taken into the analysis in the second phase. The contribution of the ELPU to the variance of the WES was 1.3%. Students who did not use ELPs had higher WES. LLAS and ELPU together that had been proved to be significant predictors of the WES explained 3.8% of the total variance, $F(2, 306)=6.09, p=.003$.

Table 3.

The Results of Stepwise Regression Analysis for the WE scores

Step/Variables	B	SH _b	b	R ²
1.LLAS	.17	.06	.16**	.025
2. ELPU	3.47	1.71	.11*	.013

* $p<.05$ ** $p<.01$

2) Predictors of the PTS: Results of stepwise regression analysis to ascertain significant predictors of student PTS are seen in Table 4. ELPU that explained 1.9% of the PTS was taken into the analysis in the first phase. The students who did not use ELP had higher PTS. LLAS scores were taken into the analysis in the second phase. The contribution of the LLAS scores to the variance was 2.3%. Students with higher LLAS scores had higher PTS. ELPU and LLAS scores together explained 4.2% of the total variance, $F(2,306)=6.72, p=.001$.

Table 4.

The Results of Stepwise Regression Analysis for The PTS

Variables	B	SH _b	b	R ²
1. ELPU	3.30	1.34	.13*	.019
2. LLAS	.12	.04	.15**	.023

* $p<.05$ ** $p<.01$

3) Predictors of the GPAs: The results of stepwise regression analysis conducted to find out significant predictors of the GPAs of the students are seen in the Table 5 below. LLAS scores that had the highest correlation with GPAs of the students were taken into the analysis in the first phase. It explained 2.5% of the total variance of the GPAs. The students whose LLAS scores were high had higher GPAs. ELPU was taken into the analysis in the second phase. The contribution of the ELPU to the variance of their GPAs was 2.1%. The students who did not use ELP had higher

GPA. LLAS scores and ELPU together that had been proved to be significant predictors of the GPAs explained 4.6% of the total variance, $F(2, 306)=7.38, p=.001$.

Table 5.

The Results of Stepwise Regression Analysis for the GPAs

Variables	B	SH _B	b	R ²
1.LLAS	.14	.05	.15**	.025
2. ELPU	3.65	1.41	.14**	.021

**p<.01

c) The correlation between AAS and LLAS scores

AAS scores positively correlated with LLAS scores of the students at medium level (0.59).

d) The students' and the teachers' views concerning the ELPU

The participants believe ELPU is beneficial and promotes authentic communicative language use. However, students are not encouraged to determine ELP content and are not seriously evaluated by their ELPs. Additionally, self-evaluation through their ELPs is not permitted (Table 6). Extracts 1 and 2 of a teacher and a student views confirm these insights.

Table 6.

The teachers' and the students' views on the ELPU

Categories	Teacher views (n=11)	Student views (n=42)	
		Girls (n=25)	Boys (n=17)
Benefits	It helps the students keep a record of their products on a regular basis (n=11).	It stimulates creativity (n=25). It strengthens friendship (n=25).	It is very joyful (n=16).
Role of the participants in choosing the products to put into the portfolio	I decide myself as a teacher what to put into the students' portfolio. I check their products so as to specify which assignments or which activities are useful for them, and then I guide them accordingly (n=11).	Mostly the teacher guides us. (n=25).	Mostly the teacher guides us. (n=17).
Measurement and evaluation techniques	I mark the students' achievement on written exams (n=11). I only give positive feedback on the assignments saying very good or well done (n=4). I draw smiling faces on their assignments (n=7) I never say anything negative (n=11). I never mark my students on their portfolios (n=11). The students easily become reserved when they have low marks (n=3). The most important thing for me is how hard they try, or how seriously they take it (n=4).	The teacher draws smiling faces on our assignments (n=25). I cannot see my mistakes. Whatever I do seems to be good to me. (n=8). It is very difficult to evaluate myself (n=25). I would rather the teacher evaluated us (n=20).	The teacher says well done. She draws smiling faces on our assignments (n=17). I try to figure out my mistakes and missing points by checking my friends performance (n=8). I try to evaluate myself (n=6)
Difficulties in the evaluation process	Some students who are aware that portfolios are not marked sometimes become irresponsible (n=5).	-	-
Preferences regarding the evaluation process	Although we adopt process based education, we evaluate our students on their final products (n=5).	We want to be evaluated in terms of our portfolios. I can perform better since I feel relaxed and calm (n=25).	We want to be evaluated in terms of our portfolios. Written exams are really difficult (n=16).

Extract 1 (a teacher):

It is really difficult for me to evaluate their performance. We are faced with the dilemma of choosing between being fair or encouraging. I do not want to be unfair by giving high marks to the students who cannot perform well. However, I also do not want to demoralize them by giving low marks since they really try hard to do well. The feeling of failure makes them disinclined to learn English, yet we have to help them be lifelong learners.

Extract 2 (a student):

We should assess our portfolios. It is more logical for us to be able to assess our performance.

e) The teachers' behaviours promoting LLA of the students

The results of the classroom observations in both institutions (one utilizing the ELP) were similar. Most teachers' behavioural traits did not conform with those on the observation form promoting LLA. Firstly, each behaviour on the observation form was graded for each observed hour separately on the scale. Secondly, the grades given to each behaviour were averaged out to just one grade as it is marked on the table (Appendix 4). The average grade for all observations was found to be '1.7' in both institutions. Observations also indicated that teacher behaviours promoting LLA were just keeping diaries, and, to some extent, self/ peer editing only in the writing courses.

Conclusion and Discussion

Interestingly, analysis of the data of the inter-group comparisons indicated students who did not use ELPs scored higher on the AAS and the LLAS than those who used ELPs. LLAS scores were the significant predictors of the English attainment, yet the ELPU was not. The key point for consideration from these results is why ELPU did not contribute to student AAS scores, LLAS scores and English attainment although the literature suggests the opposite. When teachers listen to student suggestions, encourage choice, and involve students in decision-making to promote autonomy, students build positive attitudes towards school (Eccles, et al., 1997), and score higher GPAs (Barber & Olsen, 1997). ELPU requires such teacher behaviours to effectively contribute to student autonomy and attainment (Little, 2002). However, the interviews and the classroom observations indicated the students in both institutions were not encouraged to engage in activities promoting autonomy. In such a context, the use or non-use of ELPs apparently made no difference in terms of autonomy development and English attainment. Therefore, ELPs were utilised as folders of student work without sufficient self monitoring activities, self/peer/teacher assessment/editing or journal/diary writing within and outside class. Yet, Beckert (2005) advocates self-evaluation as an optimal means to make cognitive autonomy observable, and is a powerful incubator and predictor of cognitive autonomy. Furthermore, high cognitive (attitudinal) autonomy appears related to academic competence (Noom et al., 1999).

The positive correlation between the AAS and the LLAS scores indicated these two variables interacted, and mutually developed. Thus, positive and significant effects of LLAS scores can be considered together with student AAS scores. That the interactive structure of AA and LLA reemphasises the crucial role of the socio-cultural context which was not the direct focus of this study seems to require further research. One site of the study was located in Ankara, and the other in Adana where the students utilised portfolios. Whether parenting styles are the significant determinants of AA, and whether regional differences affect them are important questions since parents can influence adolescent capacity for self monitoring activities (Kobak & Cole 1994). Kağıtçıbaşı (2005) notes parenting styles differ according to Turkish socio-cultural contexts and advocates a culturally sensitive perspective to develop better understanding of healthy adolescent-other relationships. Although research regarding the relationship between parenting style and AA is scarce in the Turkish context, some evidence in Ankara shows authoritarian and

indulgent parenting styles were more common than authoritative and neglectful styles among college students, and authoritative and indulgent styles could positively affect development of adolescents (Tunc & Tezer, 2006; Cakir & Aydin, 2005; Turkel & Tezer, 2008), and were related to secure attachment style, a high level of self-esteem and self-concept (Sumer & Gungor, 1999) necessary for autonomy development. Thereby, it is worthwhile to examine whether the social context beyond the class may foster LLA, then in turn English attainment of the students who live in Ankara.

To resolve the aforementioned limitation of this study, in-depth investigation of parenting styles both in Ankara and Adana might have important educational implications. Some insights might also be gained in terms of ELPU. Hence, interdisciplinary studies bringing about the role of autonomy granting social context might be of importance to allow ELPU to realise its role in autonomous language learning, and the role attributed to ELPU could be revised for more effective use.

Regarding the other limitations of the study, additional research is required to further understand:

- the detailed impact of the collaborative process among students, teachers, and parents on AA and LLA,
- the impact of autonomy perceptions and teaching styles of the teachers on AA and LLA,
- the interaction among parenting styles, teaching styles, AA and LLA,
- critical factors promoting effective ELPU including key skills for self monitoring the learning process.
- the interaction between effective ELPU and autonomy development in adolescence.

References

- Barber, B. K., & Olsen J. A. (1997). Socialization in context: Connection, regulation, and autonomy in the family, school, and neighbourhood, and with peers. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 12*, 287-315.
- Beckert, T. E. (2005). Fostering autonomy in adolescents: a model of cognitive autonomy and self-evaluation. [Online] Retrieved on 12 January, 2010, at URL: <http://aabss.org/journal2005/AABSS%20Article%207%20FOSTERING%20AUTONOMY.pdf>
- Çakır, S. G., & Aydın, G. (2005). Parental attitudes and ego identity status of Turkish Adolescents. *Adolescence, 40*, 847-859.
- Collins, W. A., & Repinski, D. J. (1994). Relationships during adolescence: Continuity and change in interpersonal perspective. In R. Montemayor, G.R. Adams, & T.P. Gullotta (Eds.), *Advances in adolescent development: Vol. 6. Personal relationships during adolescence*. (pp. 7-36), Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Cook-Benjamin, L. (2001). Portfolio assessment: Benefits, issues of implementation, and reflections on its use. *Assessment Update, 13*, 6-7.
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Dickinson, L. (1987). *Self-instruction in Language Learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Eccles, J. S., Early D., Frasier K., Belansky E., & McCarthy K. (1997). The relation of connection, regulation, and support for autonomy to adolescents' functioning. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 12*, 263-286.
- Holec, H., 1981: *Autonomy and foreign language learning*. Oxford: Pergamon.

- Kağıtçıbaşı, C. (2005). Autonomy and relatedness in cultural context: Implications for self and family. *Journal of cross-cultural psychology*, 36(4), 403-422.
- Kobak, R., & Cole, H. (1994). Attachment and meta-monitoring: Implications for adolescent autonomy and psychopathology. In D. Cicchetti & S.L. Toth (Eds.), *Rochester symposium on developmental psychopathology: Vol. 5: Disorders and dysfunctions of the self* (pp.267-297). Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press.
- Lambin, D. V., & Walker, V. L. (1994). Planning for portfolio assessment. *Arithmetic Teacher*, 41, 318-324.
- Little, D. (2000). We're all in it together: Exploring the interdependence of teacher and learner autonomy. Proceeding of the 7th Nordic Conference and Workshop on Autonomous Language Learning, Helsinki, September 7th, 2000. Retrieved on 14 August, 2009, at URL: <http://www.iatefl.org.pl/sig/al/all.html>.
- Little, D. (2002). The European Language Portfolio: structure, origins, implementation and challenges, *Language Teaching* 35(3), 182-9.
- Little, D. (2005). The common European framework and the European language portfolio: Involving learners and their judgments in the assessment process. *Language Testing*, 22(3), 321-336.
- Lynch, T. (2001). Promoting EAP learner autonomy in a second language university context. In J. Flowerdew, & M. Peacock (Eds.), *Research Perspectives on English for Academic Purposes*, (pp. 390-403), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mullin, J. A. (1998). Portfolios: Purposeful collections of student work. *New Directions in Teaching and Learning*, 74, 79-87.
- Noon, M. J., Dekovic M., & Meeus W. H. J. (1999). Autonomy, attachment and psychosocial adjustment during adolescence: A double-edged sword? *Journal of Adolescence*, 22, 771-783.
- Noon, M. J., Dekovic M., & Meeus W. H. J. (2001). Conceptual analysis and measurement of adolescent autonomy. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 30, 577-595.
- Paulson, F. L., Paulson, P. R., & C. A. Meyer (1991). What makes a portfolio a portfolio? *Educational Leadership*, 48(5), 60-63.
- Ryan, R. M., & Lynch, J. H. (1989) Emotional autonomy versus detachment: Revisiting the vicissitudes of adolescence and young adulthood. *Child Development*, 60, 340-356.
- Smith, J, Brewer, D. M., & Heffner, T. (2003). Using portfolio assessment with young children who are at risk for school failure. *Preventing School Failure*, 48, 38-40.
- Spear, H. J., & Kulbok P., (2004). Autonomy and adolescence: A concept analysis. *Public Health Nursing* 21(2), 144 – 152.
- Steinberg, L., & Silverberg, S. B. (1986). The vicissitudes of autonomy in early adolescence. *Child Development*, 57, 841-851.
- Steinberg, L., Lamborn, S. D., Dornbusch, S. M., & Darling N. (1992). Impact of parenting practices on adolescent achievement: Authoritative parenting, school involvement, and encouragement to succeed. *Child Development*, 63, 1266-1281.
- Sümer, N., & Güngör, D. (1999). Çocuk Yetiştirme Stillerinin Bağlanma Stilleri, Benlik Değerlendirmeleri ve Yakın İlişkiler Üzerindeki Etkisi. *Turkish Journal of Psychology*, 14, 35-38.
- Tunç, A., & Tezer, E. (2006). Çocuk Yetiştirme Stilleri ve Benlik Saygısı Arasındaki İlişki. *Turkish Psychological Counselling and Guidance Journal*, 3(25), 37-44.
- Türkel, Y. D., & Tezer, E. (2008). Parenting styles and learned resourcefulness of Turkish adolescents. *Adolescence*, 43(169), 144-152.

- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological process*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Wenden, A. & Rubin, J. (Eds.) (1987). *Learner strategies in language learning*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Yılmaz, Y. (2007). Anne-Baba Tutumları ile İlköğretim İkinci Kademe Öğrencilerinin Okul Başarısı ve Özerkliklerinin Gelişimi Arasındaki İlişkinin İncelenmesi. Unpublished Master's Thesis, Hacettepe Üniversitesi, Sağlık Bilimleri Enstitüsü, Ankara.
- Youniss, J., & Smollar, J. (1985). *Adolescent relations with mothers, fathers, and friends*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Zimmer-Gembeck, M.J. (2001). Autonomy in adolescence. In J. V. Lerner & R. M. Lerner (Eds.), *Adolescence in America: An Encyclopedia*. (pp. 79-83). Denver, CO: ABC CLIO.
- Zimmer-Gembeck, M.J., & Collins, W.A. (2003). Autonomy development during adolescence. In G.R. Adams & M. Berzonsky (Eds.), *Blackwell handbook of adolescence* (pp. 175-204). Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Appendix 1

Items in the Adolescent Autonomy Scale

1. Whatever I do is under my control.
2. I know what I want.
3. I do not hesitate about what to do.
4. I know what my abilities are.
5. I can easily make choices.
6. I go straight for my goals.
7. Most of my goals are achievable for me.
8. I can easily make plans to achieve my goals.
9. I have a plan when I want to do something.
10. I know how to achieve my goals.
11. I can easily get prepared when I tend to do something.
12. I quickly feel at ease in a new situation.
13. I find it easy to start a new activity on my own.

Appendix 2

Items in the English Language Learning Autonomy Scale

1. I can easily reach the information that I need for a project or an assignment.
2. I can make plans for more effective learning.
3. I aim at acquiring new information.
4. I can specify the necessary methods and tools to reach the information I want to acquire.
5. I evaluate myself to specify my missing points/weak points.
6. It makes me happy to do research about the subjects I want to learn.
7. I use the instruments such as TV, cinema in order to learn better beyond the class.
8. I can learn anything that I want so long as I study.
9. I do not hesitate to ask questions in order to learn.
10. I am willing to take part in a project.
11. I try to make sense of what I have learned at school by using them in daily life.
12. I am aware of my strong and weak points while learning.
13. I can choose the most appropriate alternative among those offered during the learning process.
14. I share my thoughts and experiences regarding the learning process.
15. I use the learning strategies suitable for me (for example: writing, drawing, repeating etc.)
17. I acquire the necessary information by using the facilities such as the internet, library etc. or appealing to an expert.
18. I can easily specify the information.

19. I use the time effectively while doing assignments or projects.
20. I never enter the class unprepared.
21. I participate in the class activities through questions and explanations.
22. As soon as my teacher gives an assignment, I start to think about what to do and how to do it.
23. I try to reinforce what I have learnt at school through the activities outside the school.

Appendix 3

Interview form for the students/teachers:

1. How functional do you think the ELPU is?
2. Who decides what to put in your (students') portfolio?
3. How do you evaluate/assess your (students') portfolio?
4. How difficult do you think to evaluate your (student') portfolio? Why?
5. How useful do you think portfolio evaluation/assessment activities are for you?
6. What are the advantages/disadvantages of portfolio evaluation/assessment over written exams?
7. What are the problems you encounter in ELPU?

Appendix 4

Teachers' behaviours promoting student autonomy:

Teachers' behaviours promoting student autonomy:	1	2	3	4	5
1. S/he ensures student participation in choosing appropriate learning/teaching methods/techniques.		x			
2. S/he takes into consideration students' views in choosing materials for the lessons.		x			
3. S/he ensures student participation into the evaluation process through self-assessment/editing and/or peer assessment/editing.		x			
4 S/he designs activities appropriate to be used in real life situations.		x			
5. S/he takes into consideration students' views while developing learning/teaching activities in class.		x			
6 S/he takes into consideration students' views while organizing the objects in the class.		x			
7. S/he establishes the rules and principles with the students to provide class management.	x				
8 S/he designs activities to help students organize their learning process.	x				
9 S/he creates appropriate opportunities to help students transfer their real life experiences into the class situations.		x			
10. S/he designs activities to help students relate what they have learned from one subject to another.	x				