EXPLORING EFL STUDENTS' CAUSAL ATTRIBUTIONS OF

PERCEIVED SUCCESS AND FAILURE

IN LANGUAGE LEARNING PROCESS

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study was to analyze Anadolu University Preparatory School students' (elementary and Lower-Intermediate levels) causal attributions about their perceived success and failure in English language learning process. Their attributions were analyzed and compared in terms of perceived locus of causality, stability and controllability. Also, the study intended to find out whether causal dimensionality of the students was healthy / unhealthy for forming adaptive / maladaptive future behaviors. The sample consisted of 158 students. The participants responded to a self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire was composed of 6 questions. First three questions concerned their English background and perceived success or failure in language learning process. The other questions concerned the perceived causes of their outcomes, perceived underlying dimensions of their attributions and definition of the notion of success. Content analysis of the data was carried out independently by the researcher and one member of School of Foreign Languages at Anadolu University using Constant Comparison Method. The students were grouped according to their responses as success-oriented and failure-oriented. Each attribution was labeled and frequency percentages were calculated. For causal dimensionality of perceived success and failure situations, the number of the marks for yes/no questions that aimed to explore locus of causality, stability and controllability were calculated and frequency percentages were found. In order to explore possible differences between success-oriented and failure-oriented group's causal dimensionality profiles, chi-square analysis was done. The results indicated that

the number of the students who perceive themselves as unsuccessful was slightly more than those who perceive themselves successful. Participants reported more causal attributions for failure than they did for success. Success-oriented students demonstrated significantly more internal, controllable, and relatively more stable attributional styles than failure-oriented students, a finding supported by literature on attribution theory. Finally, repeat students' causal dimensionality of failure showed similar characteristics with that of failure-oriented group. The most frequently reported causes of success and failure, and causal dimensionality styles were discussed in the context of Weiner's attributional model of achievement motivation and possible classroom implications were suggested.

ÖZET

Bu çalışmanın temel amacı Anadolu Üniversitesi Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu Hazırlık sınıfı öğrencilerinin (başlangıç ve düşük orta kur) İngilizce öğrenme sürecindeki başarı ve başarısızlık algılarını ve bu algılara yaptıkları nedensel yüklemeleri incelemektir. Bu yüklemeler denetim odağı, değişmezlik ve kontrol odağı boyutları açısından incelenmiş ve karşılaştırılmıştır. Ayrıca, bu çalışma öğrencileri olumlu / olumsuz davranışlara yönlendiren sağlıklı / sağlıksız yüklem tarzlarını belirlemeyi hedeflemektedir. Çalışmanın örneklemini 158 öğrenci oluşturmaktadır. Katılımcılar çalışma için hazırlanmış sormacaya cevap vermişlerdir. Sormacada 6 soru bulunmaktadır. İlk 3 soru İngilizce altyapıyı ve İngilizce öğrenme süreci ile ilgili başarı başarısızlık algısını tespit etmeyi hedeflemektedir. Diğer 3 sorunun amacı ise başarı / başarısızlık algılarına atfedilen nedensel yüklemeleri ve öğrencilerin nedensel yüklem boyutu tarzlarını tespit etmektir. Ayrıca katılımcılardan başarı olgusunu kendilerince tanımlamaları istenmiştir. Elde edilen veriler birbirinden bağımsız olarak 2 araştırmacı tarafından sürekli karşılaştırma yöntemi kullanılarak incelenmiştir. Öğrenciler yaptıkları yüklemelere göre başarı odaklı ve başarısızlık odaklı olarak iki gruba ayrılmıştır. Her bir yükleme betimsel olarak etiketlendirilmiş ve yüzde istatistikleri hesaplanmıştır. Başarı ve başarısızlık algısına ilişkin nedensel yüklem boyutu tespiti için katılımcıların yüklemelerine verdikleri yüklem boyutunu tespit etmeyi hedefleyen evet / hayır cevaplarının sayısı ve yüzde istatistikleri hesaplanmıştır. Ki-Kare hesaplamasıyla başarı ve başarısızlık durumları arasındaki olası nedensel yükleme boyutu farklılıklarını tespit etmek

hedeflenmiştir. Bulgulara göre kendini başarısız olarak algılayan öğrenci sayısı başarılı olarak algılayanlarınkine göre biraz daha fazladır. Katılımcılar başarı durumuna kıyasla başarısızlık durumu için daha fazla nedensel yükleme yapmışlardır. Kendisini başarılı bulan öğrencilerin başarısız bulanlara oranla önemli derecede daha fazla içsel ve kontrol edilebilir, nispeten daha fazla değişmez yükleme tarzları olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Bu bulgu yükleme kuramı yazını ile paraleldir. Son olarak, tekrar öğrencilerin yüklem boyutlarının kendini başarısız bulan öğrencilerin yüklem boyutları ile benzer özellikler gösterdiği bulunmuştur. Başarı ve başarısızlık durumları için sıklıkla belirtilen nedensel yüklemeler ve yüklem boyutları Weiner'ın başarma güdüsü yükleme modeli çerçevesinde tartışılmış ve olası sınıf içi uygulamaları önerilmiştir.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1. Background to the Study

Understanding learners' beliefs, perceptions, and their learning experiences is a precondition for efficient learning (Meskill & Rangelova, 2000). In order to understand why some learners are more successful than others, researchers have tried to explore how the learners make sense of their own learning process. Particularly, attributions, which are defined as the interpretations of the causes of outcomes by individuals (Weiner, 1986), have been identified as the most significant factors influencing students' persistence, expectancy of future success, motivation, and in return, academic achievement (Brophy, 1998; Pintrich & Schunk, 1996; Weiner, 2000).

Attribution is a cognitive theory that considers the individual's beliefs about causes of outcomes and in what ways those beliefs influence expectancies and future behavior (Weiner, 1986). People attribute an infinite number of causes to their perceived successes and failures and these personal contributions will influence their subsequent actions. They will also create different affective and emotional reactions (Williams, Burden & Al-Baharna, 2001).

This theory is an important piece in the motivational puzzle, especially in education because if teachers can make sense of a student's attributions to their learning experiences, they can assist their students with the tasks they prepare and feedback they give (Tanner, McKibben, Beran, Fleenor, 2007). Therefore, attribution theory has drawn interest of many researchers as a dominant

conception in educational psychology, social psychology and motivation for almost three decades (Weiner, 2000).

An assumption of this theory is that future behavior is in part determined by the perceived causes of past events (Weiner, 1986). Individuals generate causal attributions during or after a performance and these attributions affect subsequent behavior, motivation in that situation, and strivings (Brophy, 1998; Gobel & Mori, 2007; Weiner, 1979).

This theory explains individual's motivation to discover underlying causes of their behavior or action. It focuses on individuals' thoughts about why they succeed or fail, so the notion of individual perception is at the core of the theory (Vispoel & Austin, 1995). In other words, the attributions that are made by individuals are just perceptions and they may not always reflect the actual causes.

In an achievement situation one can attribute failure to lack of aptitude and that attribution may have psychological consequence such as shame and behavioral consequence such as less future effort on the same subject area. However, the actual cause of that individual's failure might be lack of effort or difficulty of the task. Despite the inconsistencies between the attributions people make and the actual causes, "… the accuracy of attribution is not important in order for an attribution to have psychological and behavioral consequences" (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996, p. 109-110). In short, these person-to-person and even situation-to-situation variations make attributions much more complex.

This theory has its roots to 1950s and began with Heider's 'common-sense' concept, which explains how we interpret our own behavior, as well as that of others (Alderman, 1999). Heider (1958 cited in Can, 2005) suggests that people

have an innate desire to predict and control the events in their environment. In order to do so, they try to become aware of the possible causes of the outcomes. He argues that this awareness of the causal structure of human behavior is an important determinant of people's future expectancies and behaviors. Heider's attributional mechanism gave inspirations to many researchers about causal attributions and led Rotter to add one dimension, 'locus of control', to this theory. Rotter's locus of control dimension explains whether a cause is perceived as 'internal' (within the person) or external (outside) (Stipek, 1988).

Among plenty of research on attribution theory, Bernard Weiner is the one who has made the greatest contribution to attribution theory in achievement contexts (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996). Expanding on Rotter's locus dimension, Weiner has developed three separate dimensions: locus of causality (internal versus external), stability (stable versus unstable), and controllability (controllable versus uncontrollable) (Stipek, 1988).

Depending on the conclusions made in plenty of research, it is apparent that individuals potentially could make an infinite number of different attributions in achievement situations. However, according to the studies of Weiner (1979) certain attributions appear to be widespread: ability, effort, task difficulty, and luck. In simple classification of Weiner, ability and effort are both perceived as internal, and luck and task difficulty as external. Effort is perceived to be under the control of individuals and unstable; whereas ability is generally perceived to be uncontrollable and stable. While luck is perceived as uncontrollable and unstable, task difficulty is perceived as stable.

In attribution theory it is assumed that despite an infinite number of attributions, all can be categorized along these three dimensions. Although this classification seems relatively simple, it is stressed that there is variation both across individuals and across situations because categorization of a cause along these dimensions is based on cause's subjective meaning to individuals. In some cases an individual might perceive luck as a trait, which is stable, (I am a lucky person) or as a chance occurrence, which is unstable, (I was lucky today) (Stipek & Weisz, 1982). Russell (1982) has pointed out that an individual's classification of an attribution may not always match that of the researcher. Thus, although most researchers classify ability as an internal and stable attribution, some individuals may believe that their abilities are malleable and can be changed. If a person believes that his or her ability is changeable, he or she is more likely to expand effort at the task in the future. Therefore, it is the underlying cognitive dimension that represents the individual's beliefs about the nature of the attribution that is believed to be the key to the motivating properties of attributions (Martinko, 1995, p. 10).

Weiner points out that the specific content of the causal attributions does not explain the consequences of attributional processes. Instead, the positions of causal explanations in the causal space defined by the basic dimensions play a significant role (1985, 1986). In other words, according to Weiner's model, it can be assumed that dimensionality is detached from the specific causes they refer to and that "the relationship between the attributions and the consequences of attributional processes can be predicted entirely through the perceptions of the underlying dimensions" (Dresel, Schober & Ziegler, 2005, p. 32).

Among these dimensions locus refers to the cause explaining whether the outcomes are perceived to be reliant on conditions within the person (individual's characteristics) or on conditions within the environment. Aptitude and effort can be accepted as internal attributions, whereas chance occurrences or characteristics of task are considered to be external attributions. Stability dimension refers to the degree to which causes are perceived to change or remain constant. For example, effort, chance, or mood is generally considered to fluctuate, whereas ability is regarded as relatively stable. Finally, controllability dimension concerns how much control the individual has over the perceived cause (Carlyon, 1997; Stipek, 1988).

These dimensions are significant as they have the psychological force to influence expectancy for future success, affect and actual behavior. It is stated that individuals who attribute perceived success to internal factors have higher self-esteem than those who make external attributions (Santrock, 2004). Similarly, Wiener claims that the locus of causality dimension leads changes in pride and self-esteem.

The stability dimension is closely related to future expectancies which are linked to feelings of hopelessness and hopefulness. This dimension is quite important because it affects an individual's future expectations of success. If individuals attribute a positive outcome to a stable cause, they are more likely to expect future success; however, if they ascribe a negative outcome to a stable cause, they are more likely to expect future failure (Santrock, 2004).

The controllability dimension is in connection with emotions such as anger, gratitude, quilt, pity, and shame. According to Weiner (2000),

controllability, together with locus, affects the degree to which guilt or shame is experienced following unsuccessful attempt to attain a specific goal.

Consequently, all these affective states have certain behavioral consequences. Weiner (1985) claims that attributing **failure** to *internal / unstable / controllable* rather than *internal / stable / uncontrollable* causes will promise better results for future performance. Among the causal attributions effort is assumed to be the most productive for learning since effort, unlike ability or luck, is perceived to be controllable. Therefore, if learners attribute their past failure to low effort, they will have hope for success in the future, so they will put forth greater effort (Brophy, 1998; McLoughlin, 2007).

On the other hand, learners' ascription of past failure to an internal / stable / uncontrollable factor, namely lack of ability, will result in loss of hope for future success. If learners attribute failure to lack of ability, they are less likely to put forth effort on future tasks because of their bias of lack of ability will make them believe no amount of effort would bring success. This situation also results in maladaptive behavior, namely *learned helplessness*. Learned helpless learners believe that they can never avoid failure; therefore they put little effort on school tasks, and they have lower persistence levels, which in return make them, give up easily (Brophy, 1998). Likewise, attributing failure to the context or luck is accepted to be maladaptive because causes are perceived as beyond the control of the learner.

When it comes to success, attributing **success** to *internal /stable* causes such as ability is assumed to be adaptive because learners with ability attributions

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will possess high self-efficacy, which makes them expect future success (Schunk & Gunn, 1986; Tremblay & Gardner, 1995).

In short, there is no doubt that some causal attributions (namely healthy/adaptive attributions) are more likely to lead to constructive achievement-related behavior, while some others (namely unhealthy / maladaptive attributions) lead to destructive achievement-related behavior (Stipek, 1988).

With regard to these facts, many researchers in this field have intended to find out the attributions that individuals make for their success and failure in achievement contexts. Thereby, they have intended to become aware whether individuals have healthy or unhealthy attributional styles. Moreover, many researchers in education contexts have started to seek for an answer to the question: Is it possible to replace maladaptive attributions with more adaptive ones? In order to find an answer to this question, Forsterling (1985, 1988), and Weiner (1988) introduced attribution retraining literature. According to Försterling (1985), external, unstable attributions for success should be replaced with internal, more stable ones in order to maintain persistence and encourage expectations for future success. When it comes to failure outcomes, stable attributions should be replaced with unstable ones. For example, for failure outcomes ability attribution should be replaced with lack of effort so that the students would expect that existing, negative circumstances can be changed. By this way, following a failure outcome, students can still hold positive feelings and become motivated for future tasks instead of giving up. In order to change probable maladaptive attributional styles of the students, becoming more aware of their attributions and underlying causal dimensions has prior importance.

Therefore, the main concern of this study is to explore learners' attributions and causal dimensionality patterns.

There is no doubt that there are possible variables that contribute to success and failure attributions, such as gender, age, culture, teacher influence, like, dislike (Little, 1985; Vispoel & Austin, 1995). Culture is one of the most powerful contributing factors. Few studies suggest that different ethnic, religious, and cultural groups tend to cite different attributions for success and failure (Gobel & Mori, 2007; Williams, Burden, & Al-Baharna, 2001). Therefore, attribution research in different cultural contexts might give teachers a glimpse of how students think about their academic achievement in different contexts.

Even though many attribution studies have been carried out in EFL or ESL contexts in most countries, there has been very little research on the perceptions of language learners about the causes of their successes and failures in English language learning process in Turkey.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

There is a growing interest in attributions in the field of language learner motivation because attribution theory offers an insight into how learners' perceptions of the causes of their past performance affect their future expectancies, motivation, persistence, and achievement. As attributions are important determinants of subsequent performance, there is a need for further awareness of attributions. If we want students to persist at learning English, we should help them establish a sincere belief that they are competent and that occasional failures are the result of unstable and controllable factors. To be able to

achieve this, learning more about their attributional styles is necessary at the first place.

It is known that attributions vary across contexts. That is, individuals might demonstrate different attributional styles in different contexts or situations. Even though many attribution studies have been carried out in different EFL or ESL contexts, there has been very little research on this area in Turkish context, and no study in Anadolu University School of Foreign Languages. There is no doubt that success in learning English is significant for preparatory school students in most Turkish universities since medium of instruction is English in many departments. It is observed that although medium of instruction is English in most of the departments at Anadolu University, preparatory school students tend to demonstrate low persistence and motivation during their language learning process. Becoming more aware of the origins of students' failure is a prerequisite for helping them better. Therefore, there is a need for more information about Anadolu University's preparatory students' attributions for their successes and failures.

Moreover, certain dispositions such as a history of poor performance may influence learners' attributions for academic performance (Reyes, Medrano, & Carlson, 2005). Students tend to develop low self-esteem, poor motivation for language learning, low self-efficacy when they experience repeated failure (Labedina-Manzoni, 2004). At Anadolu University preparatory school there are such students who have to study English more than one year since they fail at the end of the semester. These repeat students are likely to show similar characteristics with at risk students who are described in literature. Therefore, the

answer to the question on how students who perceive themselves as unsuccessful in language learning process explain their failure can help teachers understand the cause of their problems as well as find the method to improve their motivation and persistence. This creates another need to study on attributions with students who are failure-oriented and who experienced repeated failure in foreign language learning.

1.3. The Purpose of the Study

Attribution theory has proved its importance through a great deal of research in social psychology, and educational psychology. There is no doubt that FL students' attribution of success and failure influences language learning motivation and level of acquisition (Tse, 2000).

Despite the increasing amount of research in many different cultural contexts, there is not much evidence on attributions in achievement situations, particularly on foreign language learning, in Turkey. With regard to the fact that attributions vary from culture to culture, context to context and individual to individual, there is a need for more attribution research in every education context. The relationships between attributions and emotions can be very complex and should be analyzed taking both the specifics of the situation and the students' perceptions of that situation into account. Also, it is clear that many university students in Turkey perceive English as an obstacle in their education lives as they cannot benefit from written sources in English, and cannot reach necessary information in information age (Ortaş, 2003).

Therefore, in order to minimize the gap in attribution research in FL context in Turkish culture, this study aims to explore English language learners'

attributions for their successes and failures in foreign language learning process at Anadolu University School of Foreign Languages Preparatory School. Thereby, it will be possible to gain insights about learners' beliefs related to possible causes of their successes and failures. It is known that individual perception is at the core of attribution research. That is why; this study aims to identify perceived origins of our students' success and failure.

A particular aim of the study is to find out different attributional patterns demonstrated by students who consider themselves successful in learning English compared to those of students who perceive themselves as unsuccessful. The study, also, intends to learn more about dimensions of learners' attributions. It is known that not only attributions but also underlying causal dimensions are significant determinants of subsequent performance. More importantly, this study aims to make our students decide on their perceived dimensional profiles by themselves. Instead of the researcher, the students themselves were asked to make classifications of their causal dimension. To be able to increase our students' persistence, self-efficacy, and motivation levels and in return their academic success, their dimensionality profiles should be explored as the first step. By this way, it might become easier to make conclusions about their attributions in terms of adaptive / maladaptive features. Subsequently, the teachers might have a chance to assist their students more easily as they become more aware of the attributional profiles of their students.

1.4. The Significance of the Study

Considering context-specific and individual-specific nature of attributions, this study is significant because it focuses on Turkish students' attributions in

Anadolu University School of Foreign Languages context. Since attributions vary from person-to-person and even situation-to-situation, there is a need for more research on attributions. By this way, it might be possible to increase persistence and expectancy levels of our students, which in return enhances academic achievement.

Weiner points out that the specific content of the causal attributions does not explain the consequences of attributional processes. Instead, the positions of causal explanations in the causal space defined by the basic dimensions play a significant role (1985, 1986). In other words, according to Weiner's model, it can be assumed that dimensionality is detached from the specific causes they refer to and that "the relationship between the attributions and the consequences of attributional processes can be predicted entirely through the perceptions of the underlying dimensions" (Dresel, Schober & Ziegler, 2005, p. 32).

There is no doubt that causal dimensionality profiles of the students are as significant as the causal attributions in making conclusions about how our students perceive their language learning achievement. Therefore, the examination of the dimensions of these perceived causes in terms of those leading either facilitative or debilitative behaviors will provide insights for language teachers who can assist their learners through the feedback they give or the tasks they prepare. Knowing more about how failure-oriented students think about their language learning achievement in the form of internal and external locus profiles will help language teachers to shape those students' attributional thinking away from dysfunctional attributions.

This study is significant because it focuses on perceived success rather than outside resource such as marks, grades, and teachers' evaluations. Also, instead of imposing pre-determined causes in the theory, this study aims to let the students report the causes of their perceived failures and success themselves. This study is important because it intends to make students decide not only on their perceived success or failure, but also on the causes of their perceived success and failure, and causal dimensionality profiles by themselves without interference of the researcher. By this way the application is parallel with the basics of Attribution Theory, which focuses on the notion of perception (Williams, Burden, Poulet, & Maun, 2004).

All in all, the data gathered from this study will help language teachers to provide optimum conditions for higher motivation and achievement for their students in language classrooms in Turkish context.

1.5. Research Questions

In this research, the answers to the following questions have been sought:

1) What are Turkish EFL learners' perceptions of success?

2) What are the attributions of success-oriented and failure-oriented students?

3) What are the causal dimensionality patterns of success and failure-oriented students?

   a) Do causal dimensionality patterns differ between success and failure-oriented students?

   b) What are the profiles of repeat students?

4) To what extent are learners' attributions favorable / unfavorable in terms of forming adaptive / maladaptive future behaviors?

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

This chapter contains information about the development of attribution theories, attributional dimensionality, consequences of attributions: adaptive / maladaptive attributions, and attributional change, concluding with related literature from Turkey.

2.1. *Attribution Theory*

Attribution theory is founded on the assumption that individuals seek to understand why events have occurred (Alderman, 1999; Weiner, 1974, 1979). Individuals are disposed to search for the causes of events; in other words, they attempt to explain why events happened. By doing so, they make causal inferences (Försterling, 2001). It is a theory about how common sense operates; therefore, the focus is on perceived causes rather than actual causes. To illustrate, the actual cause of a poor performance on an exam would not fall in the realm of attribution theory. However, what an individual perceives as the cause of the negative outcome is the main concern of this theory. (Försterling, 2001; Stipek, 1988; Weiner, 2000).

Origins of this theory go back to philosophers (Kant, Hume, and Mill) and it was shaped by Heider, who is considered to be the founder of attribution theory (Försterling, 2001). According to Heider, there are two groups of concepts for the explanation of behavioral outcomes. To illustrate, the outcome is either caused by the factors residing within the person, or by the factors residing within the environment (1958). Heider's basic premise about people's innate desire to understand and control their environments stimulated social psychologists (Kelley

& Michella, 1980; Jones, 1976; Weiner, 1986) to become concerned with the processes by which people explain their own successes and failures.

Expanding on Heider's ideas, Kelley (1967) studied on attribution theories. Heider claims that individuals can attribute their behaviors to either internal or external factors, whereas Kelly focuses on the conditions in which individuals ascribe their behaviors to internal or external factors (Kelley & Mihella, 1980). Kelly and Michela distinguish different attributional perspectives as self- and other attribution theories. Weiner's theory of achievement motivation (1986) is so concerned with how individuals explain their own successes and failures, whereas Kelley's ANOVA model (1967) focuses on how observers assign responsibility for the outcomes of others (Martinko, 1995).

It is important to note that individuals make attributions according to their perceptions; therefore, the attributions that are made by individuals may or may not be the actual causes. When one concludes that he did not do well in language test because he lacks language aptitude, then this perceived cause is the one that produced a psychological consequence (shame) and behavioral consequence (less future effort in language) , regardless of the actual causes of the outcome (he may not have tried hard or the test was very difficult).

> In this way, attribution theory is a phenomenological theory of motivation that gives precedence to the individual's construction of reality, not reality per se … although there may be concerns about the accuracy of individuals' attributions (Nisbett&Wilson, 1977) from a motivational perspective, the accuracy of an attribution is not important

in order for an attribution to have psychological and behavioral consequences. (Pintrich and Schunk, 1996, p. 109-110)

Potentially, individuals can make infinite number of causal explanations especially when the outcome is unexpected or when there is nonattainment of a goal. They are more likely to ask why-questions when they experience unexpected failures, and negative outcomes since they want to have more control over them in the future. When an individual expects to be successful at a task and succeeds it, this outcome does not require the same degree of control, since a change of outcome is not necessary (Weiner, 1979; Weiner, 2000). Despite the vast number of attributions an individual could make, certain attributions appear to be more common (Weiner, 1979). Ability, effort, task difficulty, and luck have traditionally been cited more often, although some recent studies have discovered a great range of attributions (Graham, 2004; Tse, 2000, Williams at al., 2004).

2.2. Causal Dimensionality

Heider formed the basis of this theory by distinguishing internal/external factors. However, the dimensional classification scheme of perceptions of control was first proposed by Rotter et al. in 1966. Rotter called this dimension "locus of control" since he classified controls as within (internal) or outside (external) to the person (Weiner, 1974, p.4-5).

Bernard Weiner, who has made the biggest contribution to attribution theories, and his friends suggested another dimension of causality (Weiner, Frieze, Kukla, Reed, Rest &Rosenbaum, 1971). According to Weiner, some of the

internal causes fluctuate over time, whereas some others remain relatively constant. While aptitude and effort are both considered to be internal, aptitude is perceived as stable; however, effort or mood is perceived to be unstable. Consequently, Weiner et al. proposed a 2x2 categorization scheme in 1971, where 'stability' became the second dimension.

In the following year Rosenbaum recognized conceptual difficulties about the degree of volitional influence people feel they have over a cause. For example, effort and mood are perceived to be internal and unstable, yet people tend to feel they have control over effort but not mood. Therefore, Rosenbaum (1972) had suggested 'intentionality' as a third dimension, to be included with the 'locus' and the 'stability' of the cause (Weiner, 1974, p.6). In 1979, Weiner renamed this dimension as 'controllability'. Finally, the categorization scheme of causal dimensionality was 2x2x2 with locus of causality (internal versus external), stability (stable versus unstable) and controllability (controllable vs. uncontrollable) as the three dimensions. Although attributions of causality may vary from context to context, from culture to culture, as well as from individual to individual, all of them can be quantitatively compared in terms of these causal dimensions (Gobel & Mori, 2007).

> Generally four attributions are associated with Attribution
> Theory. These are ability, effort, task difficulty and luck.
> Among these causal attributions, ability and effort are
> claimed to be internal-stable and internal-unstable, whereas
> task difficulty is considered to be external-stable; and luck,
> external-unstable. (Vispoel & Austin, 1995, p.378)

These assumptions have been accepted by many researchers who verified the role of attributional dimensions in the explanation of resulting motivational and emotional processes in numerous empirical studies (Graham, 1991). However, concrete proof for these assumptions is still lacking because one can assume that "specific attributions contain information above and beyond their dimensionality" (Dresel, Schober & Ziegler, 2005, p. 32).

2.3. Antecedents and Consequences of Attributions: Adaptive / Maladaptive Attributions

Kelley and Michela (1980) make a distinction between 'attribution process' and 'attributional process'. The first one includes two general types of antecedent conditions: environmental factors (specific information, social norms, and situational features) and personal factors (causal schemas, attributional bias, prior knowledge, and individual differences). These two factors affect the generation of attributions. Attributional process, on the other hand, is defined as the results of attributions for an individual's motivation, affect, and behavior. This process has both psychological (expectancy for success, self-efficacy, affect) and behavioral consequences (choice, persistence, level of effort, and achievement).

Weiner claims that each causal dimension is thought to be linked to particular affective states (1985); therefore, underlying causal structure, namely dimensions, are believed to be more significant than the actual causes to shape expectancies (Martinko, 1995; Weiner, 1979, 1985, 1986). "The significance of these causal properties is that they map into what are considered the two main determinants of motivation- namely, expectancy and value" (Weiner, 2000). Expectancy is explained as the subjective likelihood of future success. Value is

explained as the emotional results of outcomes. If a cause has a property of stability, then the same outcome will be expected in the future. This stability dimension is linked to feelings of hopelessness or hopefulness (McLoughlin, 2007). To illustrate, the ascription of a failure on exam to a stable factor such as ability or an unfair teacher will indicate another failure in the future (Weiner, 1986). Attributions of failure to stable and uncontrollable factors (e.g., low ability) are less likely to result in continued effort. On the other hand, attributions of failure to a lack of effort (unstable-controllable factors) are likely to lead to greater sustained efforts over time (Lim, 2007, p. 4). Similarly, locus of control dimension has behavioral and affective consequences. This dimension influences feelings of pride and self-esteem in success situations (Weiner, 2000). It is stated that individuals perceiving their success is due to internal factors have more self-esteem than the ones who ascribe success to external factors (Santrock, 2004). Lim (2007) claims that if learners have a sense of internal locus of control, which means they owe outcomes of their actions to their own efforts or actions, their previous successes affect their future expectations of success positively, while previous failures affect perceived probability of future success negatively. However, if individuals have perception of external locus of control such as luck or other uncontrollable factors, they are less likely to relate their previous failures or successes to expectancies of future outcomes. Like the other dimensions, controllability dimension influences the feelings of guilt or shame in failure situations.

> Attribution of failure to insufficient effort, which is internal
>
> and controllable, often elicits guilt, whereas an ascription to

lack of aptitude, which is internal but uncontrollable, often

evokes feelings of shame, embarrassment, and humiliation.

Other affects also are influenced by the controllability

dimension of causality, particularly anger and sympathy.

(Weiner, 2000, p.5)

In the light of this information, the importance of attribution theory of achievement motivation and emotion can be summarized as "the cognitive processes that produce attributions have consequences on the learning process because they affect individuals' expectancies for future success, their affective states, and their subsequent behavior and performance. Therefore, individuals' perceptions can at time lead to attributions that have negative consequences (maladaptive)" (McLoughlin, 2007, p.33).

Weiner (1985) points out that making more internal, unstable and controllable attributions in failure situations promises better results than making internal, stable and uncontrollable ones. In failure situations effort and persistence are greater when individuals make more internal, unstable and controllable attributions which can be altered such as insufficient knowledge or insufficient effort because they believe that they can improve their performance and achieve success (Brophy, 1998; Dörnyei, 1994). However, making uncontrollable and stable attributions in failure situations can lead to maladaptive behavior referred to as 'learned helplessness'. This behavior has negative consequences such as exerting less effort, and even giving up in achievement contexts (Stipek, 1988).

On the other hand, in success situations, internal, mostly stable and controllable causes give individuals a reason to believe that they can succeed in

similar tasks in the future (Brophy, 1998). An attribution of success to ability is considered to result in high self-efficacy and therefore could be labeled as adaptive, whereas attributions to the context or to luck in success situations would be maladaptive since they represent external factors that individuals cannot control (Tremblay & Gardner, 1995).

2.4. Attribution Retraining

It is a well known fact that attributional processes play a central role within the framework of motivational processes in educational contexts. There is no doubt that healthy attributional style has positive effects on a number of personal traits and behaviors. Consequently, many researchers have focused on attribution studies in order to identify students whose learning processes could be at risk at an early stage. Researchers have also attempted to convey adaptive attributions within in the framework of attributional retraining (Dresel, Schober & Ziegler, 2005; Forsterling, 1985; Hall, Hladkyj, Perry, & Ruthig, 2004; Hall, Perry, Chipperfield, Clifton, & Haynes, 2006).

It is known that in education contexts low-achieving students tend to attribute their academic failure to internal-stable-uncontrollable causes, such as low aptitude. Consequently, these maladaptive attributions make the student regard himself/herself as personally responsible for the negative outcome and feel embarrassment, sadness, and even depression. Moreover, these negative emotions would make the student experience lowered self-esteem. Therefore, the course would become much less attractive to the student and this would lead to avoidance. When high expectations of continued failure considered, assuming lack of ability as a stable cause, "these negative emotions would undermine the

student's motivation to succeed, thereby jeopardizing future performance and continuation in the course" (Perry, Hechter, Menec, Weinberg, 1993, p.690). In success situations low-achievers are more likely to ascribe their academic successes to external-uncontrollable causes that are relatively stable, such as ease of the task, or unstable, such as chance. Similarly, these uncontrollable causes would make these students feel less hopeful about the reoccurrence of success (Brophy, 1998). In contrast to low-achievers, successful students tend to have more behaviorally adaptive acsricptions, often attributing success to ability (internal-stable) or effort (internal- unstable), and failure to low effort (internal-unstable) (Carlyon, 1997). A lack of effort attribution is accepted as an adaptive one because although the student would feel responsible for the negative outcome, it would be far less harmful. Experience of shame is less likely, lowered self-esteem is less probable and helplessness-related emotions infrequent. More importantly, expectations about future performance would be much more positive (Perry, Hechter, Menec, Weinberg, 1993).

In the light of this information, many researchers have succeeded to 'retrain' low-achieving students "to ascribe unsuccessful academic outcomes to degree of effort" (Carlyon, 1997, p. 63). By this way, for unsuccessful students, expectations about future performance would be much more positive because lack of effort is an unstable and controllable cause and can be modified (Perry, Hechter, Menec, Weinberg, 1993). Depending on Weiner's model, Forsterling claims that it is possible to replace internal- stable attributions with internal and relatively unstable ones, such as low effort in order to increase motivation and persistence of unsuccessful students (1985).

Attribution retraining is the technique which is concerned with converting maladaptive into adaptive causal attributions (Försterling, 2001). This effort to change unhealthy attributional patterns and increase at-risk individuals' efforts toward achievement focuses on teaching individuals to attribute outcomes to their own effort in success situation or lack of sufficient effort in failure situations (Carlyon, 1997). The purpose of attribution retraining is to promote motivation for future success. "A maladaptive style is characterized by the belief that failure is due to stable, internal causes, such as low ability, and that success is a result of unstable, external causes such as luck" (Robertson, 2000, p.112). Individuals with maladaptive attributions are encouraged to attribute their failures to lack of effort or insufficient strategy use, namely to causes they believe they can control, so that they would be motivated to study. It is claimed that if individuals make internal, uncontrollable attributions (lack of intelligence) rather than internal controllable attributions (lack of effort) in failure situations, they would conclude that their efforts are unrelated to their outcomes, and therefore useless (Brophy, 1986).

Attribution retraining studies generally involve one-to-one or group interventions. The intervention programs generally focus on the causal dimensions of stability and controllability. Failure is frequently attributed to lack of effort and inadequate study strategies, whereas success is attributed to ability, proper study strategies, and effort. Occasionally, discussions and writing essays about the causes of failure are used (Perry, Hechter, Menec, Weinberg, 1993).

According to Robertson's (2000) review of 20 studies on attribution training, the majority of studies, especially the ones with individuals and small groups, demonstrated success. Robertson points out that ability and effort

attributions in attribution training should be accurate to contribute success. False attribution would discourage the individual's motivation. Also, attributions of strategy use both in failure and success situations are favorable because they protect self-esteem in failure situations (2000).

Similarly, according to Perry, Hechter, Menec and Weinberg's (1993) review of twelve studies which focused on attribution retraining and its effects on achievement levels among college students, it was revealed that students who received the attributional retraining, compared to those who did not, had higher GPA scores one year after training, and were less likely to leave college by the end of their sophomore year.

2.5. Attribution Research and Attributional Research

Kelley and Michela (1980) make another distinction between 'attribution research' and 'attributional research'. The first one concerns the manipulation and assessment of antecedents and does not consider consequences of the attributions. The latter, on the other hand, involves the measurement of perceived causes and their effects on behavior and expectancies.

The second category, 'attributional research', mainly aims to make use of theoretical and empirical advancements in the area of attributional theories and attributional principles in order to initiate behavioral change (Försterling, 1985).

For 'attribution research' a great deal of research has been done on attributions in achievement contexts (Cortés-Suárez & Sandiford 2008; Hau & Salili, 1993; Niles, 1984; Normandeau and Gobeil, 1998; Watkins & Regmi, 1993), on causal dimensionality (Watkins & Regmi, 1993), with young learners (Gibbs & Tunstall, 1998), on attributions in language learning (Gobel & Mori,

2007; Tse, 2000; Williams, Burden, Poulet & Maun, 2004), on gender differences (Fiorentine, 1988; Forgasz & Leder,1996; Graham, 2004; Lee, 1979; Ryckman & Peckham, 1987), on age differences (Graham,2004; Williams & Burden, 1999).

In the same way, attributional research has also drawn interest of many researchers leading studies on effects of attributions on helping behavior and students' interactions (Ahles & Contento, 2006; Juvonen & Weiner, 1993), on social skills training (Carlyon, 1997), on academic achievement (Dandy & Nettelbeck, 2000; Graham, 2004; Park & Kim, 1998; Robertson, 2000), on motivation (Kozminsky & Kozminsky, 2002; Rui & Liang, 2008; Perry, Hechter, Menec & Weinberg, 1993; Schunk, 2003; Stevens, Werkhoven & Catelijns, 2001; Tremblay & Gardner, 1995), on language learning anxiety (Lim, 2007), on affective responses (McAuley & Shaffer, 1993; Weiner, 2000), on students' cognitions about mathematics task (Seegers, Putten, & Wermeer, 2004), on self efficacy (Hsieh & Schallert, 2008; Schunk & Gunn, 1986), on self-esteem (Sinha & Gupta, 2006).

2.5. *Attribution Research in Foreign or Second Language*

Within the field of language learning a number of different models have been proposed to explain motivation (Dörnyei, 1994; Gardner, 1985). However, attribution theory has received increasing attention to provide a fully comprehensive theory of motivation (McGroarty, 2001).

In recent years, the role of attributions in foreign or second language learning motivation has increasingly been examined (Gobel & Mori, 2007; Graham, 2004; Hsieh & Schallert, 2008; Lim, 2007; Mcloughlin, 2004; Tse, 2000, Williams & Burden, 1999; Williams, Burden, Poulet & Maun, 2004). Gobel and

Mori (2007) conducted a study in Japanese context among college students in order to find whether there was a relationship between students' achievement levels and their attributions. It was found that the students were more likely to ascribe success to external reasons, and failure to internal reasons, which was quite contrary to findings of majority of the studies in that field. However, the results are in agreement with studies done in Asian groups. The study revealed that in Asian culture self-enhancing tendency or self-protective tendency is reduced. The students are likely to maintain a self-critical rather than self-enhancing attitude. It was claimed that those attributions might lead to learned helplessness. For data collection, the researchers preferred listing certain attributions from the findings of previous research in that field and asked students to rate them. However, this might be thought as a limitation because a lot more and different attributions might have emerged if the learners had been free to list their own attributions. Another attribution study in Asian context by Rui and Liang points out the importance of adaptive attributions focusing on causal dimensionality and its behavioral effects (2008). The study revealed that effort and persistence are greater when adult learners in China attribute their performance to internal and controllable causes rather than to external or uncontrollable causes. Attributing success in learning language to internal, and mostly stable and controllable causes makes the learners confident that they will continue to succeed on this and similar tasks in the future. On the other hand, attribution of success to more external, less stable and controllable reasons will result in experience of less confidence.

In order to overcome pure quantitative approach to data collection sentence completion questions together with interviews were added in Graham's (2004) study, which intends to explain the relationship between attributions and achievement level. The findings revealed that the English students who had high ability and effective learning strategies attributions had higher levels of achievement and persistence while learning French. Also, those who made more internal attributions had higher levels of achievement. It was concluded that students who have adaptive /positive attributional styles may attribute success to ability and perceive this ability as a fairly stable and internal factor.

Moreover, Hsieh and Schallert (2008) examined the relationship between student attributions and self efficacy ratings. In their study attributions were measured in two ways, using dimensions of attributions and asking about actual reasons for a real outcome. Results revealed that foreign language learners who made adaptive attributions for failure had higher self-efficacy ratings. To illustrate, students with adaptive attributions indicated that failure was not due to lack of ability, but rather to lack of effort.

The study of Tse (2000) focused on the importance of examining perceptions of foreign language learners and their attributions of success and failure. Tse's study aimed to provide students with opportunity to express how they perceive language learning via autobiographies. The study offered a qualitative data analysis of their perceptions in order to grant more inclusive look at students' beliefs about language learning. It is claimed that being aware of the perceptions of students has important pedagogical implications. With the help of information about students' opinions and attitudes toward language learning and

classroom activities, it is easier to become aware of their affective states and it becomes easier to decide how best to design certain classroom activities and methods in language classrooms. Participants' comments were generally critical for classroom activities, yet quite positive for teacher interactions. The participants believed that good student teacher interaction helped them improve their learning. Another important result was that success meant different to each student. Participants generally attributed their success to three different sources: (a) teacher or classroom environment, (b) family or community assistance, and (c) a personal drive to learn, and they attributed their failures to: (a) themselves for not studying enough or being sufficiently motivated, (b) the teacher or the teaching method, and (c) the student composition of the courses. Fortunately, very few students attributed their failure to lack of some innate ability.

Williams, Burden, Poulet and Maun's (2004) study focuses on attribution theory and language learning pointing out that there has not been enough attention given to students' attributions to success in language learning in the literature. 285 secondary school students (ages between 11 and 16) in UK participated in the study and were asked to answer open questionnaire to find out their perceptions of learning specific languages and their attributions to success and failure. The students' responses were categorized and 21 categories of attribution to success and 16 categories of attribution to failure were formed. Analysis showed that there were important discrepancies between boys and girls, ages, and the languages studied. According to results, in general, students attribute their success in language learning to effort, ability, interest and strategy use while they ignore luck and reward completely. Among these attributions effort found to be the most

widely used one for both success and failure. Also, when compared to success oriented students, failure oriented ones attributed their success to effort less. Older students were found to attribute their success and failures to strategy use more than younger ones. On the other hand, both younger and older learners attributed their success to effort, yet they tend not to relate their failures to effort.

As another study in language teaching and learning, Lim (2007) aimed to get information about learners' perceptions and beliefs about the ability to affect the learning outcomes in language classrooms and find out how this information related to the anxiety of these learners. One of the hypotheses of Lim's study was that students who had higher internal locus of control would experience less anxiety, which would show that there would be a negative correlation between locus of control and anxiety. Findings showed that learners' attributions of success and failure are directly related to their language learning anxiety. In contrast to the predictions, learners who attributed their achievements in foreign language learning to external factors, which they believe that they are beyond their control, had lower level of language anxiety compared to those who believed that their achievements were owed to internal factors that they could control. That unexpected result was related to the uniqueness of language learning anxiety.

2.6. Attribution Research in Turkish Context

Despite the plenty of attribution research in achievement contexts in literature, very little research has been done in Turkish context. Researchers mainly focused on internal/ external locus of control (Sivri, Gemlik, & Sur, 2007), the relationship between locus of control (internal/external) and achievement anxiety (Kapıkıran, 2008), locus of control and selected characteristics such as

class level and gender (Akbulut, 2006), locus of control and teacher burnout (Tümkaya, 2000), causal attributions for perceived success and failure in terms of causal dimensions (Can, 2005), attributional thinking of Turkish university students (Brown, Gray & Ferrara, 2005), the effect of attribution retraining on learned helplessness (Aydın, 1985 cited in Ersever, 1996)

Sivri, Gemlik and Sur (2007) intended to analyze internal/external locus of control of hospital personnel in Istanbul- Turkey. Although their study was not conducted in educational context, the results provide more information about locus of control dimension and its relation with age and experience. Results revealed that in the comparison of doctors with managers and nurses there was not statistically meaningful difference on internal/external locus of control. On the other hand age and experience were the variables that seemed to affect locus of control scores. As the age and work experience increased, the participants tended to behave more likely internally controlled.

Another attribution study by Kapıkıran (2008) focuses on the relationship between locus of control and achievement anxiety among 594 high school students in Denizli in education context. Results revealed that there is a negative correlation between internal locus of control and achievement anxiety. Students who attributed their academic successes to themselves felt they had more control over events and had better psychological state. It was concluded that internal locus of control helps students feel less stressed out and become more hopeful about future tasks.

One important study on causal dimensionality and attributions is Can's (2005) study. The aim of the study was to analyze elementary school teachers'

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causal attributions for their perceived successes and failures in their professions in terms of causal dimensionality. According to the results, participants made more internal, stable, and controllable attributions for success than they did for failure. Gender was examined as one of the variables and it was found that female teachers made more internal attributions for success than male teachers. Compared to female teachers, male teachers tended to believe that they were more in control of their failures.

In order to explore cultural differences, Brown, Gray, and Ferrara (2005) conducted a study among 94 Japanese, 71 Chinese and 61 Turkish students attending universities in Chigasaki, Japan, Beijing, China, and Ankara, Turkey, respectively. Results showed that all three samples believed internal causes were more potent than external factors for both success and failure. The Chinese and Turks made more internal attributions for success than they did for failure. On the other hand, the Japanese were more likely to ascribe their success to external factors and failures to internal factors. More importantly, all participants believed that effort is the key to success. The Turks and the Chinese endorsed ability and effort as causes of success and rejected luck and task. Also, the Japanese endorsed effort, ability, and luck, and rejected task, as causes of success. All three groups endorsed effort and ability for success and rejected task. In other words, they agreed that failure is the result of lack of effort.

Similarly, Akbulut (2006) conducted a research with 161 university students who were studying at music departments at Dokuz Eylül Universtiy, Pamukkale University, Süleyman Demirel University and Muğla University. The aim of the research was to explore the perceptions of university students towards

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their locus of control. Results were significant because 98 % of the students were found to have internal locus of control. When gender was considered, female students had more internal locus of control than male students.

As a result, there is a need for further awareness of attributions. Studying attributions will shed light on the way how we can help our students persist at learning English. Even though many attribution studies have been carried out in different EFL or ESL contexts, there has been very little research on this area in Turkish context. In this sense, this study will help minimize the gap in attribution research in FL context in Turkish culture.

CHAPTER 3
Methodology

This chapter contains information about the participants, the instrument that was used in the study, the procedure and the analyses that were carried out on the data.

3.1. Subjects

The questionnaire was given to 159 students. All were native speakers of Turkish. One of the subjects was excluded from the study because he filled out the questionnaire inappropriately. That is, although he perceived himself successful, he explained all reasons for not being successful. That is why, his responses were not analyzed and not included in the sample size above. Therefore, the final number of students who participated in this study was 158. According to the Michigan Placement Test administered by the School of Foreign Languages after the first term was over, 81 of the participants were placed in Elementary Level English classes and 77 of them were placed in the Lower Intermediate Level English classes. The participants were chosen according to convenience among other preparatory students. Although there are more than two levels at preparatory school, only lower intermediate and elementary classes were included in this study because most of the intermediate and upper intermediate students had passed their departments at the end of the fall term and there were no beginner classes in spring term. Among these 158 students, 17 of them were repeat students. They had failed in preparatory school last year, so they were taking the same classes again this year. All of these students were of various departments in the university, so the only reason they were grouped in those classes was their English proficiency levels.

The language program they were enrolled at preparatory school follows an intensive skill based curriculum in which they studied four different language skills, speaking-listening, writing, reading and grammar separately for 28 hours each week.

3.2. Instrument

The recent literature related to attribution theory points out that giving participants a range of causal explanations and asking them to select those that apply to them provide limited data because respondents might have range of quite different attributions (Tse, 2000; Williams and Burden, 1994; Wiliams, Burden, Poulet, and Maun, 2004; Hsieh and Schallert, 2008). Keeping in mind that attributions are context-specific and they might change from person-to-person, in this study the participants were not given pre-determined causal explanations. Therefore, a questionnaire compiled by the researcher was used. In the questionnaire the participants were asked to state the main reasons of their achievements in Turkish because expressing themselves freely was considered to be easier in their mother tongue.

Moreover, instead of using a specific causal dimension scale to measure underlying dimensions of attributions, the participants decided on the underlying dimensions of their attributions through yes/no questions by themselves. It is known that different individuals may place the same attribution in a different place in Weiner's dimensions (Stipek 1998). For instance, most researchers classify ability as an internal and stable attribution, but some subjects believe that their abilities are malleable and can be changed. Similarly, some individuals might perceive luck as a trait, which is stable, (I am a lucky person) while some

others might see luck as a chance occurrence, which is unstable (Stipek & Weisz, 1982). Vallerand and Richer (1988) claim that a strategy of asking subjects to write open-ended attributions that are later coded by experts in terms of their assumed properties is not as reliable as it is assumed to be. Russell (1982) also argued that the researcher and the subject may not always agree on the same meaning. "Factors such as the ambiguity of the attributional statement, individual differences, and situational variability may lead the researcher to misjudge the underlying properties of a given attribution" (Vallerand and Richer, 1988, p.705). Therefore, in this study the participants were asked to state the main reasons of their achievements themselves. Also, they were asked to decide whether those reasons were caused by themselves or outside factors, whether they might fluctuate in time or remain constant, and whether they feel they have control over those reasons or not by themselves.

The questionnaire consisted of 6 questions. The first two questions asked about subjects' personal information and their English education background for identifying repeat and new students. The third question was a yes/no type of question asking if they perceive themselves successful or not in language learning process. The fourth question asked students to write at least 5 causes of their success or failure as a list in their own words. Next to each cause there were 3 yes/no questions. These questions aimed to identify students' perceived causal dimensionality patterns. The participants were asked to put a mark in yes/no columns which asked whether the reason was internal or external, stable or unstable, controllable or uncontrollable. The fifth question aimed to find out students' further opinions considering their answers to the third question which

was asking if they find themselves successful or not. The final question asked a brief explanation for the notion of success. As the meaning of success changes from one person to the other, the conditions of success may also differ. Although it is more consistent in the first language acquisition, the components of success is more variable when it comes to second language learning (Gan, Humphreys & Hamp-Lyons, 2004).

The main focus was on perceived success rather than outside resource such as marks, grades, and teachers' evaluations or scenarios. In this sense, the application in this study was parallel with the basics of Attribution Theory, which focuses on the notion of perception (Williams, Burden, Poulet, and Maun, 2004).

3.3. Procedure

This research was carried out with 3 different lower intermediate classes and 3 different elementary classes at preparatory school at Anadolu University in order to explore learners' causal attributions for their perceived success and failure in foreign language learning process. A pilot study was conducted in April, 2009 with 27 lower intermediate students. During piloting, the students were asked to comment on the wording of the questionnaire to ensure that it was comprehensible. According to students' comments, instructions were made more comprehensible. For example, for the yes / no questions in the fourth question, the students tended to mark dimensions for only one cause. In fact, they were supposed to mark columns for each cause, which aimed to find out locus, stability, and controllability dimension. Therefore, the instruction was revised stating that they were supposed to mark columns for every cause that they reported. The final version of the questionnaire was administered in regular class time to 159

participants during the last week of April, 2009. By this way, the students who started preparatory school in September and who completed about six months of intensive language course would have a chance to reflect on their achievements more clearly. Before handing out the questionnaire to the students, they were informed that they would be participating in a study. All participants accepted to contribute and were willing to answer the questionnaires. The participants were not given any time limitation, but for all groups, answering the questions took approximately 15 minutes. The participants were told not to write their names and student numbers on the questionnaires so that they would feel comfortable while answering the questions freely.

3.4. Data Analysis

Content analysis of the data was carried out independently by the researcher and one member of School of Foreign Languages at Anadolu University using Constant Comparison Method (Glaser, 1992).

As the first step, since the questionnaires did not include students' names, each questionnaire was given a number in order to make clear identification of information. After that, the questionnaires were divided into two categories for the ones perceiving themselves successful and unsuccessful in language learning process. Those who answered 'yes' for the question asking if they perceive themselves as successful in learning English were named as 'Success-Oriented' group, and those who said 'no' were named as 'Failure- Oriented' group as in attribution research literature (Williams, Burden, Poulet and Maun, 2004).

In order to analyze what the students attributed their perceived failure and success to, each cause that the students mentioned for their perceived success and

failure was given a number. All causes were typed as two lists, one for 'Success-oriented' group and the other for 'Failure-oriented' group. By this way, there would be no confusion while reanalyzing the data. Two copies of the lists were made and taken by each researcher. Each researcher analyzed the causes and assigned a meaningful label to each cause independently. The researchers compared the resultant labels. The responses were discussed, and labels were assigned only when agreement had been reached. Meanwhile, the data was re-analyzed continually in the light of emerging labels.

After that, all resultant labels for success situation and failure situation were tabulated with the frequencies. The percentages of reasons for success situation were compared to those for failure situation descriptively because each group might include different labels which could not be compared statistically.

Answers given for the second question which asked about how long the students had been at preparatory school were used to identify repeat and new students. Those who answered that question stating 'more than 1 year' were sorted out as they were repeat students, and the reasons they gave for their success and failure were labeled and tabulated with the frequencies. The percentages of the reasons given by repeat students for success and failure were compared to those given by new students. The comparisons were done descriptively by using percentages of each label.

The students were asked to list at least 5 perceived causes of their success or failure. They also answered three yes/no questions for each cause. Yes/no questions aimed to identify underlying dimension profiles of the students. They were analyzed independently from the causal attributions. For the causal

dimensionality analysis, the marks that answered all yes/no questions were counted. By this way, the total number of the marks for each dimension was found in both success- and failure- oriented group.

In order to find if success-oriented group differs from failure-oriented group in terms of locus of control, stability and controllability dimension, chi-square analysis was done by using total number of marks given for each dimension.

Next, all yes/no marks for all causes by repeat students in 'Success oriented' and 'Failure oriented' groups were sorted out and counted in order to find out causal dimensionality patterns of repeat students.

Those dimensional calculations in all groups revealed the extent to which the attributions lead to adaptive behaviors or maladaptive behaviors with reference to mainstream psychology.

For the final question which asked the definition of perceived success in the questionnaires, all answers were typed as a list. Those definitions were analyzed by the researcher and general idea units were created by combining similar ideas. Those idea units were tabulated and their percentages were calculated.

CHAPTER 4

Result

In this chapter findings concerning each research question will be presented.

4.1. Perception of Success

The first research question concerned the preparatory school students' perceptions of success.

As seen in Table 4.1, among 158 students, 66 of them perceived themselves as successful language learners, and 92 of them believed that they were not successful in language learning.

Table 4.1

	students		causes	
Perception of Success	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
Success-oriented	66	41.77	246	39.8
Failure-oriented	92	58.23	372	60.2
Total	158	100	618	100

As we see in the table above, there are more preparatory students who perceive themselves as unsuccessful (58%) than unsuccessful (42%).

4.2. Attributions of Success-oriented and Failure-oriented Students

The second research question concerned the preparatory school students' attributions for their perceived successes and failures in language learning process. Among 618 stated causes, 246 (39.8%) of them belonged to the success-oriented students. Failure-oriented students identified 372 (60.2%) causes for their failure.

For causal attributions, the students were supposed to state at least 5 causes for their success or failure. However, while analyzing the data, it was

noticed that some of the items that the students wrote as the reason for their failure or success included more than one reason. For example, in success situation a student perceived himself/herself as successful and thought that one reason of that was because he/she was listening to music, reading English books and watching English movies. This response was counted as 3 different reasons. Also, even though the students were supposed to state 5 reasons for their perceived success or failure, some students stated more than 5 reasons, and some of them stated 3 or 2 reasons only. Eventually, the total amount of the reasons given by 158 students reached 641. 19 irrelevant reasons were eliminated because some students gave some reasons for failure even though they mentioned that they were successful. For example, they said "I do not have enough educational background", "Lessons are boring", "I do not have any foreign friends". Consequently, among 641 reasons given for both success and failure situations 19 of them were omitted. By this way, the number of the causes decreased to 622.

For the reliability of the data obtained, two experts with knowledge of the field and of qualitative research were asked for their views. The labels given by two researchers were compared. During the negotiations, between the 2 researchers labels given for 21 reasons among 622 did not match. By using the formula of [agreement / (disagreement + agreement)*100], inter-rater reliability was calculated as 93%. The value exceeding 80% was concluded as to prove the reliability of the study. At the end of the negotiations, 4 reasons were omitted because they were thought to be ambiguous by both researchers. For example, one of the omitted reasons given for success was 'personal' and one for failure was 'life'. In the end, the final number reached 618.

The causes reported by success-oriented students were grouped into 10 categories.The categories can be seen in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2
Perceived causes of self-identified success

	Categories	f	%
1	Effort	119	48.37
2	School/ Program/ System	28	11.38
3	Successful teachers	25	10.16
4	Interest	18	7.32
5	Consistent subject with future goals	18	7.32
6	Ability	13	5.28
7	Like	10	4.07
8	Strong educational background	10	4.07
9	Getting help	3	1.22
10	Low task difficulty	2	0.81
	Total	246	100

The most commonly reported cause of success was effort (48.37%). It was followed by school/program/system (11.38%), successful teachers (10.16%), and interest towards learning language (7.32%). The following causes were subject's being consistent with future goals (7.32%), ability (5.28%), like (4.07%), having a strong educational background (4.07%), getting help from others (1.22%), and low task difficulty (0.81%).

The causes reported by failure-oriented students were grouped under 14 categories. The categories can be seen in Table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3
Perceived causes of failure

	Categories	f	%
1	School /Program / System	103	27.69
2	Lack of effort	75	20.16
3	Unsuccessful teachers	38	10.21
4	Lack of ability	29	7.79
5	Lack of strong educational background	20	5.38
6	Dislike	20	5.38
7	Task difficulty	18	4.84
8	Boring subject	17	4.57
9	Lack of interest	16	4.30
10	Subject's being inconsistent with future goals	11	2.96
11	Adaptation problems	10	2.69
12	Crowded / noisy classrooms	7	1.88
13	Lack of concentration	6	1.61
14	Not getting help	2	0.54
	Total	372	100

The most commonly reported cause of failure was school / program / system (27.69%). It was followed by lack of effort (20.6%), and unsuccessful teachers (10.21%).Other causes were lack of ability (7.79%), lack of strong educational background (5.38%), dislike (5.38%), task difficulty (4.84%), boring subject (4.57%), lack of interest (4.30%), subject's being inconsistent with future goals (2.96%), adaptation problems (2.69%), crowded / noisy classrooms (1.88%). The last two causes were lack of concentration (1.61%), and not getting help (0.54%).

4.3. Causal Dimensionality Patterns of Success-oriented and Failure-oriented Students

The third research question concerned the causal dimensionality of the attributions demonstrated by success-oriented and failure-oriented students in the

language learning process. Table 4.4 shows causal dimensionality patterns of success-oriented students.

Table 4.4
Causal dimensionality of success

Locus of Causality		Stability		Controllability	
Internal	External	Unstable	Stable	Controllable	Uncontrollable
175	64	114	123	155	78
7 of the answers were not marked		9 of the answers were not marked		13 of the answers were not marked	
Total	246				

As seen in Table 4.4, for locus of causality dimension, among 246 causes given by 66 students who are success-oriented, 175 of them were internal, 64 of them were external, and 7 of the causes were not marked by the participants. For stability dimension, 114 of the causes were unstable, 123 of them were stable, and 9 of the answers were not marked by the students. For controllability dimension, 155 of the causes were controllable, 78 of them were uncontrollable, and 13 of the causes were not marked by the students.

Table 4.5 shows the causal dimensionality patterns of failure-oriented students.

Table 4.5
Causal dimensionality of failure

Locus of Causality		Stability		Controllability	
Internal	External	Unstable	Stable	Controllable	Uncontrollable
153	210	199	163	138	224
9 of the answers were not marked		10 of the answers were not marked		10 of the answers were not marked	
Total	372				

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As seen in Table 4.5, among 372 causes given for failure by 99 students, 153 of them were internal, 210 of them were external in terms of locus of causality. 9 of the causes were not marked by the participants. For stability dimension, 199 of them were unstable, 163 of them were stable, and 10 of the causes were not marked. For controllability dimension, 138 of the causes were controllable, 224 of them were uncontrollable, and 10 of the causes were not marked by the participants.

4.3.a. Comparison of causal dimensionality patterns

The research question 3.a. concerned whether causal dimensionality patterns demonstrated by success-oriented students differ from those of failure-oriented in terms of each dimension. Table 4.6 displays the comparison of locus of control (internal / external) dimension with percentages in success and failure situations.

Table 4.6
Locus of Control

	Missing (N)	(%)	Internal (N)	(%)	External (N)	(%)	Total (N)	(%)	
Success	7	2.8	175	71.1	64	26	246	100	$\chi2=56.16$
Failure	9	2.4	153	41.1	210	56.5	372	100	sd=2
									p=.000*
Total	16	2.6	328	3.1	274	44.3	618	100	

While the percentage of internal attributions in success situations is 71.1, it decreases to 41.1% in failure situations. Conversely, the percentage of external attributions in success situations is 26; however, it goes up to 56.5% in failure situations. Attributional dimensionality of the students with different perceptions of success creates a significant difference in terms of locus of control ($\chi2=56.16$, p<.05). In other words, internal attributions outnumber external attributions in

success situation, yet external attributions outnumber internal attributions in failure situation.

Figure 4.1 shows the difference between the amount of internal and external attributions in success and failure situations.

Figure 4.1
Locus of Control
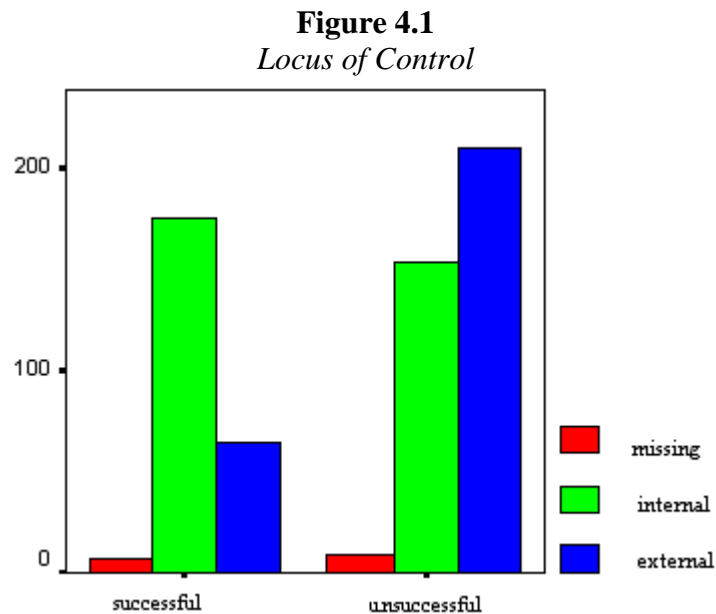
It is obvious that attributions of failure-oriented students are highly external when compared to success-oriented ones.

Table 4.7 displays the comparison of stability dimension with percentages in success and failure situations.

Table 4.7
Stability

	Missing (N)	(%)	Unstable (N)	(%)	Stable (N)	(%)	Total (N)	(%)	
Success	9	3.7	114	46.3	123	50	246	100	$\chi 2=3.17$
Failure	10	2.7	199	53.5	163	43.8	372	100	sd=2
									p=.205
Total	19	3.1	313	50.6	286	46.3	618	100	

Attributions of success-oriented students are slightly less unstable than those of failure-oriented students. 46.3% of the causes for success were thought to

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be unstable, and 50% of them were thought to be stable. In failure situation students make slightly more unstable attributions (53.5%) than those in success situations. The percentage of stability goes down to 43.8 in failure attributions. The causal dimensionality of success-oriented and failure-oriented students does not show significant difference in terms of stability dimension ($\chi2=3.7$, p>.05). In other words, attributions of both success and failure show similar characteristics of stability.

Figure 4.2 displays the amount of stable / unstable attributions of success-oriented and failure-oriented students.

Figure 4.2
Stability
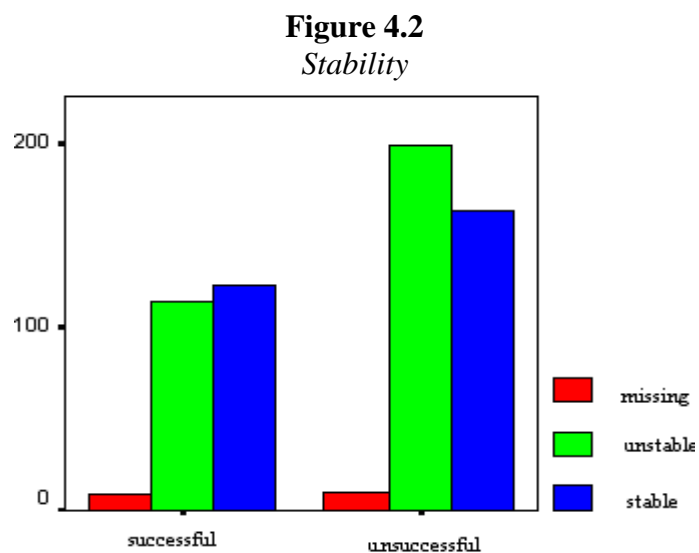
Attributions of success-oriented students are slightly more stable. On the other hand, attributions of failure-oriented students are less stable. In general, for stability dimension, the groups do not differ from each other significantly.

Table 4.8 displays the comparison of controllability dimension with percentages in success and failure situations.

Table 4.8

Controllability

	Missing (N)	(%)	controllable (N)	(%)	uncontrollable (N)	(%)	Total (N)	(%)	
Success	13	5.3	155	63	78	31.7	246	100	χ2=48.27 sd=2 p=.000*
Failure	10	2.7	138	37.1	224	60.2	372	100	
Total	23	3.7	293	47.4	302	48.9	618	100	

Success-oriented students report highly controllable attributions when compared to failure-oriented students. When the percentage of controllable attributions is 63 in success situations, it decreases to 37.1 in failure situations. Attributions for success were found to be 31% uncontrollable but the percentage of uncontrollable attributions for failure goes up to 60.2. Controllability extent of the attributions demonstrated by success and failure-oriented students was found to be significantly different (χ2=48.27, p<.05). In other words, success-oriented students make a lot more controllable attributions than failure-oriented students.
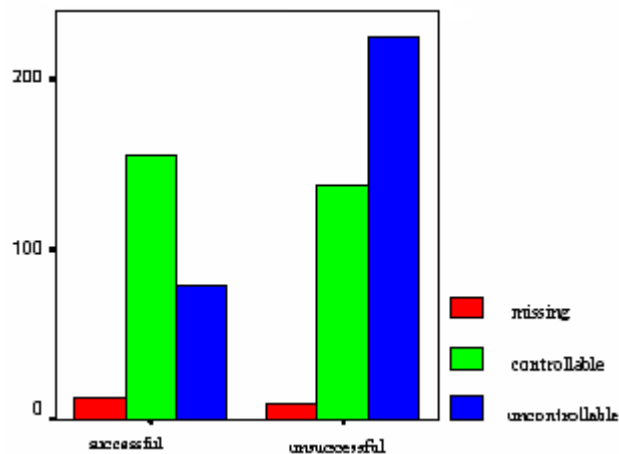
Figure 4.3

Controllability

Figure 4.3 shows the amount of controllable / uncontrollable attributions demonstrated by success / failure- oriented students. Success-oriented students believe that the causes behind their success are more likely to be controllable. In

contrast, failure-oriented students are more likely to believe that they do not have control over the causes of their failure.

4.3.b. Attributions of repeat students

The research question 3.b concerned the attributions of repeat students in success and failure situations. Among 158 students, 17 of them were repeat students and only 1 of them considered himself successful, yet 16 of them perceived themselves as unsuccessful. As seen in table 4.9, those who are failure-oriented reported 66 causes for failure and the one who was success-oriented gave 2 causes for his success.

Table 4.9
Repeat students' perceived causes of failure

	Categories	f	%
1	School /Program /System	21	31.82
2	Lack of effort	14	21.22
3	Task difficulty	6	9.1
4	Dislike	5	7.57
5	Lack of ability	5	7.57
6	Unsuccessful teachers	4	6.06
7	Boring subject	4	6.06
8	Lack of interest	2	3.03
9	Subject's being inconsistent with future purposes	2	3.03
10	Lack of strong educational background	2	3.03
11	Adaptation problems	1	1.51
	Total	66	100

The most commonly reported cause for failure by repeat students was school / program / system (31.82%), followed by lack of effort (21.22%), task difficulty (9.1%), dislike (7.57%), lack of ability (7.57%), unsuccessful teachers (6.06%), boring subject (6.06%), lack of interest (3.03%), subject's being inconsistent with future goals (3.03%), lack of strong formal educational background (3.03%), adaptation problems (1.51%). Only one student perceived

himself successful and he reported only two causes for his success. The two commonly reported cause for success by the repeat student was effort (100%).

For the causal dimensionality profiles of repeat students, only two causes were reported in success situation. Both of them were internal / stable and controllable.

Table 4.10 displays the causal dimensionality of the attributions demonstrated by repeat students in failure situations.

Table 4.10

Repeat students' causal dimensionality of failure

Locus of Causality		Stability		Controllability	
Internal	External	Unstable	Stable	Controllable	Uncontrollable
27	39	26	40	18	48
(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
40.90	59.09	39.39	60.60	27.27	72.72
Total					66

In failure situation, among 66 causes for failure 27 of them were internal, 39 of them were external. For stability dimension, 26 of the causes were unstable, while 40 of them were stable. For controllability dimension, 18 causes of repeat students were controllable, while 48 of them were uncontrollable.

4.4. Adaptive / Maladaptive Attributional Styles

The fourth research question concerned the extent to which learners' attributions are favorable / unfavorable in terms of forming adaptive / maladaptive future behaviors. The percentages of causal dimensionality in both success and failure situation can be seen in Table 4.11 below.

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Table 4.11

Causal dimensionality	Causal attributions			
	Success-oriented (N)	(%)	Failure-oriented (N)	(%)
Internal	175	**71.1**	153	41.1
External	64	26	210	**56.5**
Missing	7	2.8	9	2.4
Unstable	114	46.3	199	**53.5**
Stable	123	**50**	163	43.8
Missing	9	3.7	10	2.7
Controllable	155	**63**	138	37.1
Uncontrollable	78	31.7	224	**60.2**
Missing	13	5.3	10	2.7

The causal explanations given for **success** in language learning process were found to be highly internal, controllable, and relatively more stable. The students who found themselves successful reported approximately three times as many internal causes as external ones. For stability dimension the numbers of the causes for stable and unstable were more or less the same. For controllability dimension, the students reported two times as many controllable causes as uncontrollable ones. These findings prove that success oriented students are more likely to view future success highly probable as they believe that the causes behind their success are under their control. Also, internal attributions that they make for their success would enhance the personal responsibility and striving for success. Attributing success to relatively stable causes (50%) should lead to higher expectancies of future success. These attributional patterns are considered to be quite **healthy (adaptive)** for future behaviors as Brophy states " attributing a successful performance to internal and mostly stable and controllable causes gives us a reason to believe that we will continue to succeed on this and similar tasks in the future" (1998, p. 55)

In the case of **failure** the causal explanations given by 92 students were highly external, uncontrollable and relatively unstable. 56.5 % of the causes reported by failure-oriented students were external. They are less likely to take responsibility of their failure, which would hinder striving for success. Also, for controllability dimension, the students reported approximately two times as many uncontrollable causes as controllable ones. With highly external and uncontrollable attributional patterns, failure-oriented students seem to have **unhealthy (maladaptive)** attributional styles. However, more than half of the (53.5%) causes for stability dimension were reported as unstable. This finding is a sign of healthier attributional style for failure-oriented students as they might view that the situation would change and they might have a chance to do better in the future.

The last question in the questionnaire asked students to define the meaning of success. For 20 students did not fill out that part, total number of the definitions was 138. Table 4.12 shows the categories of the definition of success the students.

Table 4.12
Students' definitions of success

	Categories	f
1	Reaching one's own goals	31
2	To put effort on something	18
3	To put the things you learn into practice	18
4	To be the best at something	15
5	To show progress	9
6	Self satisfaction	8
7	To get high grades to pass classes	8
8	To get what one deserves	5
	Total	112

As seen in Table 4.12, among 138 definitions, 112 of them were grouped under 8 categories. The remaining 26 definitions which appeared singular and were not under any category heading are given in Appendix E. The most commonly reported definition was "reaching one's self-determined goals", followed by "putting effort on something", "putting things one learns into practice", "being the best at something", "showing progress", "self-satisfaction", "getting high grades to pass classes", and "getting what one deserves".

CHAPTER 5

Discussion and Conclusion

In this chapter, a summary of the study is given together with a discussion of the findings, and followed by the implications, conclusion, limitations of the study and suggestions for further research.

5.1 Summary and Discussion

The aim of the present study was to find out preparatory school students' perceptions of success in language learning process and to analyze their causal attributions related to successes and failures, in terms of perceived locus of causality, stability and controllability. Also, the study intended to find out whether causal dimensionality of the students was healthy / unhealthy for forming adaptive / maladaptive future behaviors.

The sample consisted of 158 students from Anadolu University School of Foreign Languages, Preparatory School. The instrument used in the study consisted of 6 questions. The first two questions asked about subjects' personal information and their English education background for identifying repeat and new students. The third question was a yes/no type of question asking their perceptions of success. The remaining questions in the questionnaire were open-ended. The fourth question asked participants to state at least 5 reasons for their perceived success or failure. This question was followed by a table on which there were spaces to list main causes of the participants' achievements and yes/no columns which asked whether the reason was internal or external, stable or unstable, controllable or uncontrollable. The fifth question aimed to find out if students had further opinions considering their answers to the third question

which asked their perception of success and failure. The final question asked subjects to make a brief explanation for the notion of success.

Content analysis was carried out to label perceived causes behind success and failure. Labels for perceived causes of success and failure were formed by two researchers independently. The responses were discussed, and labels were assigned only when agreement had been reached. The resultant labels were tabulated with the frequencies. The same procedure was followed for the responses of repeat students by sorting out their perceived causes for success and failure. The percentages of the reasons given by repeat students for success and failure were compared to those given by other failure-oriented students. The comparisons were done descriptively by using percentages of each label.

For the causal dimensionality analysis, the marks that answered all yes/no questions that aimed to explore locus of causality, stability and controllability of the attributions in success and failure situations were analyzed via chi-square. Those dimensional calculations in all groups revealed the extent to which the attributions lead to adaptive behaviors or maladaptive behaviors with reference to mainstream psychology.

For the definition of success, responses were analyzed by the researcher and general idea units were created by combining similar ideas. Those idea units were tabulated and their percentages were calculated.

Results revealed that 41.7 % of the participants perceived themselves as successful language learners by stating 246 causes behind their success and 58.3 % of them perceived themselves as unsuccessful by stating 372 causes. From these results, it is possible to conclude that there are more learners perceiving

themselves as unsuccessful than successful. It is also revealed that failure-oriented students reported more causes for their failure when compared to success-oriented students. This difference might be caused by the assumption that people tend to engage in spontaneous attributional search especially when they come up with unexpected or uncommon results (McLoughlin, 2007). This attributional "search is not undertaken following all events, and is particularly likely when an outcome is negative, unexpected, and/or important" (Weiner, 2000, p. 2).

With regard to causal attributions, 10 different labels emerged from causal attributions of success-oriented students. 6 of them were related to personal causes such as effort, interest, subject's being consistent with future goals, ability, like, strong educational background. 4 of them were impersonal causes such as school / program / system, successful teachers, getting help, and low task difficulty. In failure-oriented group 14 labels emerged from causal attributions for failure. When compared to success situation, more labels emerged from the causes reported for failure. For failure, 8 of the labels were about personal causes, such as lack of effort, lack of ability, lack of strong educational background, dislike, lack of interest, subject's being inconsistent with future goals, adaptation problems, and lack of concentration. The rest 6 labels were about impersonal causes such as school / program / system, unsuccessful teachers, crowded / noisy classrooms, high task difficulty, boring subject, and not getting help. These results reveal two conclusions. Firstly, it is possible to say that the widespread attributions identified in studies (Graham, 1984; Weiner, 1979, 1984) that is ability, effort, task difficulty, and luck were not found to have that much of importance according to Turkish students except from effort attribution. Neither for success nor for failure

did the students in this study consider luck or fate as an important factor. This shows that the students believe they have some control over the causes of their outcomes. If we consider Perry's (1993) argument that how students think about their successes and failures is significant for academic success, we might conclude that Turkish students' belief that they have control over their academic achievement will most probably help them experience good performance. When students believe that they have little control over their academic achievement, they experience poor performance. Another conclusion of the results is that more labels emerged from the causes reported for failure when compared to success situation. As McLouglin states, failure is more likely to lead to attributional search than success (2007).

Among 246 reasons cited for success, almost a half (119) was concerned with *effort* with the percentage of 48.37. This finding is in parallel with the findings of many attribution studies (Graham, 2004; McQuillan, 2000; Niles, 1984; Park& Kim, 1998; Watkins & Regmi, 2001; Williams & Burden, 1999; Williams, Burden & Al-Baharna, 2001; Williams, Burden, Poulet & Maun, 2005). This category included statements such as: I listen to the lectures, do my homework, work hard, try, pay attention, do my work, and take time. In other words, it involved a sense of trying hard. Among the causal attributions, effort is assumed to be the most productive for learning since effort, unlike ability or luck, is perceived to be controllable. Therefore, as Brophy and McLoughlin state, learners' attribution of their past failure to low effort will encourage them to have hope for success in the future, so they will put forth greater effort (1998; 2007). The students in this study point out lack of effort as an important cause behind

their failures, and high effort behind their successes, which is a quite healthy attribution.

Success-oriented group cited the internal attributions of effort significantly more than those who were in failure-oriented group (48.37 % as opposed to 20.16 %). Although students in failure-oriented group did not report effort attribution as often as the ones in success-oriented group, they still put the lack of effort attribution at the second place by stating it 75 times, which is almost one fifth of all causes. In the case of failure, lack of effort attribution would enhance the personal responsibility for the failure and increase striving for success (Rui & Liang, 2008; Tremblay & Gardner, 1995). From these results, it is possible to conclude that failure-oriented students in this study tend to take the responsibility of their failure.

Attributing failure to the context is accepted to be maladaptive because causes are perceived as beyond the control of the learner. In this study, school/program/system attribution was found to be quite common in both success-oriented group (11.38 %) and failure oriented group (27.69 %). In failure-oriented group this attribution appeared at the first place and it was repeated 103 times. Students who find themselves successful seem to owe their successes to intensive language program in which they have 28 hours of lesson in a week at school. However, failure-oriented group see this as a disadvantage for learning a language because that much intensive program is thought to be too challenging leading to exhaustion. When their causes in the open-ended question are considered, their responses reveal that they complain about not having enough free time for themselves after school, which lowers their motivation for learning English. That

seems to be the reason for their complaint about the school system. These opposing ideas may reflect the extent to which students are aware of the need for intensive study and exposure to target language for learning a foreign language in a short period of time.

Another finding among the groups is that teacher attribution came in the third place in both groups. In this study, teacher attribution in both success and failure situations is considered significant with the frequency of more than 10 %. In success-oriented group students reported their satisfaction with their teachers' high quality characteristics with 25 responses. On the other hand, those in failure-oriented group seemed to find their teachers quite unsuccessful, insufficient, and not skilled in teaching English by reporting 38 causes. Although both success-oriented and failure-oriented students have the same teachers in the same classroom, they have different perspectives of their teachers. Another cause might be the flaw of teachers who are good at rewarding success but not sufficient enough to provide adaptive feedback in case of failure.

A further finding was about ability attribution, which is regarded as one of the most common attributions in achievement motivation literature (Weiner, 1979). The students in this study; however, did not consider ability as an important cause neither in success nor in failure situations. In this study only 5.28 % of the causes were about ability attribution in success-oriented group. For success outcomes ability attribution is considered to be promising for motivation and striving for the future success. In Graham's (2004) study a positive correlation was found between ability attributions and academic achievement (actual, expected, and perceived). In this study, the percentage of ability

attribution goes up to only 7.79 in failure-oriented group. When learners attribute failure to lack of ability, they are less likely to expand effort on future tasks because their bias of lack of ability makes them believe no amount of effort would bring success. This situation also results in maladaptive behavior, namely learned helplessness (Brophy, 1998). In this study, students in failure-oriented group do not ascribe their failures to lack of ability, which shows that they might have high expectancy for success for future English classes.

The results about ability attribution are contradicting with the ones in the studies of Altan (2006) and Aydın (1999) about perception of learning English and sources of foreign language classroom anxiety. In Altan's study from fifty-two to seventy-three percent of all groups agreed with the statement: "some people are born with a special ability to learn a foreign language" (p.48). In Aydın's study with Anadolu University students, participants' journals and responses in interviews revealed three main categories of sources of foreign language classroom anxiety. One of the personal sources of classroom anxiety was found to be evaluating language learning ability negatively, like in Altan's study. However, in this study, the students at Anadolu University do not think that ability plays an important role in language learning, which is quite advantageous for expectations for future success in case of failure. Brown, Gray and Ferrara's study (2005) reveals similar findings pointing out that Japanese, Chinese, and Turkish students do not appear to believe that their learning outcomes will be limited by their inherent abilities.

Students with a history of poor performance are more likely to attribute success to external causes and failure to a lack of ability than successful students.

Those students with repeated academic failure are more likely to develop some characteristics such as a low self-esteem, poor motivation for long-lasting learning, tendency to give up because of maladaptive attributional styles shaped by uncontrollable, stable and external locus of control attributions (Lebedina-Manzoni, 2004; Waugh, 2002).

In this study; however, repeat students at preparatory school have different characteristics when compared to those students with repeated academic failure in terms of lack of ability attribution. The two most commonly reported attribution in failure is school / program / system (31.82 %) and lack of effort (21.82 %). They are less likely to report lack of ability attribution for their failure. These characteristics are the same with the other failure-oriented group. However, repeat students report task difficulty in the third place as the main cause behind their failure. Task difficulty attribution comes at the seventh place in failure-oriented new students group.

Weiner points out that not only the specific content of the attributions but also underlying dimensions play a significant role on the consequences of attributional processes (1985, 1986). Therefore, attributional processes can be better predicted through the analysis of causal dimensionality (Dresel, Schober & Ziegler, 2005). In this study, success-oriented students demonstrated significantly more internal and controllable attributional styles than failure-oriented students, a finding similar to Can's (2005) study on teacher attributions. Internal causal attributions were made for success (71.1 %) while relatively external causal attributions were made for failure (56.5 %). The difference between the means is statistically significant ($p<.05$). This finding suggests the

existence of self-serving attribution or "self protective tendencies that are widely recognized in cognitive psychology" (Gobel & Mori, 2007, p. 162) in our sample, and it supports the findings of a number of studies carried out in Western cultures (Mezulis, Abramson, Hyde & Hankin , 2004) but is not in agreement with studies done with Asian Groups (Gobel & Mori, 2007).

Success is attributed to more controllable causes (63 %), and failure to more uncontrollable ones (60.2 %). The difference between the means is statistically significant (p<.05). It can be considered that attributing a successful performance to internal and mostly controllable causes gives students a reason to believe that they will continue to succeed on this and similar tasks in the future (Brophy, 1998). The students in failure-oriented group, by way of 'reattribution training', can be trained to attribute unsuccessful outcomes to relatively more internal and controllable causes which could prevent learned helplessness and depression (Försterling, 1985, 1988).

Reasons for success are perceived as being relatively more stable than reasons for failure. However the difference between the means is not statistically significant. Success-oriented group demonstrated slightly more stable attributions. It might be concluded that having more stable attributions those students tend to have higher expectancy for future success. As Weiner (1980, 1992) claims, if people believe cause is stable, then the outcome is likely to be the same if they perform the same behavior on another occasion. The causes reported by failure-oriented group are slightly more unstable. This may be considered as a positive finding because if the reasons for failure were perceived as being stable, there could be a tendency for helplessness and despair. Weiner points out that if failure

ascribed to a stable cause, then the same negative outcome will be anticipated following a failure (2000).

Repeat students' causal dimensionality of failure shows similar characteristics with that of failure-oriented group. They demonstrated more external (59.09 %) and uncontrollable (72.72 %) attributions for their failures. However, repeat group slightly differs from failure-oriented new students group in terms of stability dimension. While repeat group perceived the causes behind their failures as more stable (60.6 %) the latter group perceived as more unstable (56.53 %). At this point, repeat students demonstrate typical characteristics that are described in literature for at risk students with repeated academic failure, which might result in learned helplessness. Most of the attribution research shows that students with past failure experiences tend to have less controllable, and more stable attributions such as ability or task difficulty for their failures (McLoughlin, 2007; Waugh, 2002).

The stability dimension is quite important because it affects an individual's future expectations of success. If individuals attribute a positive outcome to a stable cause, they are more likely to expect future success; however, if they ascribe a negative outcome to a stable cause, they are more likely to expect future failure (Santrock, 2004).These attributions "have the psychological force to influence expectancy of success, self efficacy beliefs, and actual behavior" (Gobel & Mori, 2007; Weiner, 1986). Consequently, those students would have a low expectancy for future success, which in return affects their test scores.

With regard to adaptive /maladaptive attributional styles, Weiner (1985) claims that attributing failure to internal / unstable / controllable rather than

internal / stable / uncontrollable causes will promise better results for future performance and this attributional style is considered to be *adaptive*. There is no doubt that some causal attributions (namely healthy / adaptive attributions) are more likely to lead to constructive achievement-related behavior, while some others (namely unhealthy / maladaptive attributions) lead to destructive achievement-related behavior (Stipek, 1988).

About causal dimensionality, in case of failure the students in this study had external / unstable / uncontrollable attributional styles. Except from stability dimension, it can be considered that the students in this study mostly have *maladaptive* attributional styles. They are less likely to take responsibility of their failure, which would hinder striving for success. It is possible to expect that they will believe they can never avoid failure; therefore they put little effort on school tasks, and they have lower persistence levels, which, in return, will make them give up easily (Brophy, 1998; Stipek, 1988). However, for stability dimension the findings seem promising as the students believe that the causes behind their failures are mostly unstable, which would make them believe the circumstances might change for better in the future.

When it comes to success, attributing success to internal /stable / controllable causes is assumed to be *adaptive* because learners with such attributional styles will possess high self-efficacy, which makes them expect future success (Schunk and Gunn, 1986; Tremblay and Gardner, 1995). In this study, the causal explanations given for success were found to be highly internal / controllable and relatively more stable. These findings prove that success oriented students tend to view future success highly probable as they believe that the

causes behind their success are under their control. Also, internal attributions that they make for their success would enhance the personal responsibility and striving for success. Attributing success to relatively stable causes (50 %) should lead to higher expectancies of future success. These attributional patterns are considered to be quite *adaptive* (healthy) for future behaviors as Brophy states " attributing a successful performance to internal and mostly stable and controllable causes gives us a reason to believe that we will continue to succeed on this and similar tasks in the future" (1998, p. 55)

5.2 Implications and Conclusion

From the findings of this study we can conclude that among the participants there are more Turkish students learning English at Anadolu University who perceive themselves as unsuccessful than students who perceive themselves as successful. This might be inferred as the necessity for encouraging the learners to alter their perceptions of themselves as successful learners or to review their perceptions of success, but first of all, teachers need to be aware of their students' attributions.

Another conclusion of this study is that failure-oriented students reported more causes for their failure than success-oriented students. This result might imply the language teachers the necessity of encouraging their failure-oriented students to become more successful language learners by finding ways of altering their perceptions depending on the causes of failure.

In success situations in this study, almost half of the causes cited concerned with effort. Once made, effort attributions of success are thought to have definite psychological consequences, usually classified by locus (high self-

esteem), expectancy of success (a sense of hopefulness), and controllability (leading to pride) (Tse, 2000; Weiner, 2000). Therefore, it may be advisable for teachers to reward the students' effort spent on practicing by providing opportunities to use what they practice in actual communicative situations.

For failure, the students in this study reported school / program / system attribution, which is related to learning context and thus can be accepted as external and maladaptive, as the most important cause of their failure. Unsuccessful students ascribe their failure mostly to intensive language program and heavy lesson schedules. At this point, the students should be enlightened about the aim and necessity of such a program at the very beginning of their learning process. Failure-oriented students in this study reported lack of effort as the second most important cause of their failure. This might imply the language teachers the necessity of encouraging those who believe their failure is due to lack of effort to put forth some more effort on tasks.

For both success and failure situations, teacher attribution came in the third place. In failure situations teachers were perceived as being ineffective; whereas, in success situations they were perceived as being qualified. There is no doubt that teachers have a significant role on students' academic achievement in language classrooms in terms of forming healthier attributions for forming adaptive behaviors (Ormrod, 2006; Weiner, 2000). Weiner (2000) points out that success and failure occur in a rich social context which includes peers, teachers, and parents. This social context affects and is affected by performance of actors. Within this view, the significant role of teachers on student motivation in language classrooms becomes more apparent. (Ormrod, 2006; Weiner, 2000).

This result might imply that if teachers become more aware of their students' attributions, achievement, then they can lead them to overcome their weaknesses and maintain motivation in failure situations. From the results of this study, we can also conclude that Turkish students believe they have some control over the causes of their outcomes and do not think luck or fate is important factor. On the contrary, they believe that effort counts as an effective factor in their success or failure. It might be inferred from this result that students' belief that they have control over their academic achievement will most probably help them experience better. In this sense, teacher feedback plays a crucial role on forming certain attributions such as strategy use, effort (Schunk and Gunn, 1986). Although strategy use attribution is considered seriously in research (Graham, 2004), in this study, none of the causes was about strategy use. There are also implications for teachers of foreign languages with regard to the value of strategy training in the language classroom to enable students to learn how to learn more effectively. This might show that some students are not aware of the importance of learning strategies. Consequently, the teachers should help students become more aware of skills and learning strategies they may need to develop (McLoughlin, 2007). Also, in both success and failure situations in this study, ability attribution is not taken seriously. Research points out that ability attribution in success situations should be considered to be promising (Graham, 2004; Hsieh & Schallert, 2008). At this point, encouraging ability attribution through teacher feedback in success situations might help learners to have higher self-esteem and expectancy. In failure situations teachers should encourage effort attribution rather than ability attribution.

In terms of attributional styles, findings of this study prove that failure-oriented students tend to have maladaptive attributional styles, and especially repeat students are more likely to be at risk, meaning that they might show low persistence and stop trying hard. This conclusion might get teachers to give more attention to failure-oriented students and those who experience repeated failure. When students fail repeatedly, they will either stop believing they are competent or stop trying hard to change results of similar tasks in the future. Teachers might provide such students with choices about classroom activities and prepare tasks with appropriate difficulty levels. Also, teachers might help them establish a belief that they can be competent if they expand enough effort and use appropriate strategies for future tasks. It is also important to make students believe that they have control over the causes of their performances. With regard to maladaptive attributional styles of failure-oriented students, certain precautions against unhealthy attributional styles of such students should be taken with the help of teachers via attribution retraining or teacher feedback. It is possible to sustain self-efficacy at a high level even for failure-oriented students when failure is attributed to internal, controllable, and unstable factors (Hsieh & Schallert, 2008). Teachers and their tasks can help a student set realistic goals by discussing with the student a task in which the student had performed poorly. Teachers should help students determine reasons for poor performance. It is known that attributions are not stable and can change in time. This might help teachers who can affect the future causal attributions of students, "influencing the way students view themselves as learners, how they construct notions of success and failure, and even their view of themselves and their progress in learning a language" (Gobel & Mori 2007, p.

166). At this point, it is advisable to encourage the students not to attribute their failures to stable dispositions such as task difficulty or inability (McLoughlin, 2007; Waugh, 2002). In order to overcome potential drawbacks that may appear in the low motivation situations, Brophy (1998) suggests teachers help their students learn to attribute their successes to internal factors, and to attribute failures to temporary factors (lack of task- relevant information, strategy use). This suggestion has no use if teachers are not aware of their students' causal attributions for their achievements. Therefore, findings of this study might shed light on learner perceptions so that teachers can help reshape their students' possible maladaptive attributional thinking.

Finally, the students in this study defined success as reaching one's self-determined goals. This definition has important messages for language teachers. Teachers can encourage their students to set realistic goals and help them how to use learning strategies effectively to reach their goals. As long as students do not measure their success according to exam grades, they can still be motivated to study after getting low grades on exams. Another most common definition was putting effort on something, which is quite promising as it shows that the students in this study believe the significance of correlation between effort and success. Therefore, teachers might provide the learners with effort feedback by pointing out the importance of sufficient effort in success. One more important definition was putting things one learns into practice. Learners believe that success means being able to use what they learn in classes. While preparing lessons teachers should give students more opportunities to use their productive skills.

All in all, the more teachers know about how learners evaluate their learning process and what factors they attribute their successes and failures to, the better they can assist their learners through the feedback they give or the tasks they prepare. Therefore, attribution research is significant for language teachers to provide optimum conditions for higher motivation and achievement in language classrooms.

5.3 Suggestions for further research

There are obvious limitations to the present study. One limitation is the size of the sample. Clearly, the larger the sample, the more stable the results would be across similar samples. Conclusions about Turkish learners' attributional styles would be more generalizable if more participants were involved.

The second concern is about the approach to analyze data. In this study an interpretative approach was used to analyze data gathered by means of an open-ended questionnaire. This has strengthened our belief in the value of such studies as compared with more statistically based methods. However, more in-depth interpretative research, possibly employing interviews to gain a deeper understanding of the underlying reasons for learners' attributions, would certainly seem to be warranted.

It is also important to note that this study revealed a wider range of attributions than is generally reported in attribution literature. This might prove that perceptions of success and failure are inevitably context-specific, which leads to a call for more attribution studies in different cultural contexts. Also, the extent

to which learner beliefs are variable over time, from person to person, and setting

to setting needs to be explored.

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Appendix A-

Questionnaire Form

Sevgili Öğrenci,

Aşağıdaki soruların amacı öğrencilerin İngilizce öğrenimi süreci içinde kendi başarı ya da başarısızlıkları üzerine kurdukları neden-sonuç ilişkileri hakkında bilgi edinmektir.Bu sorular yüksek lisans tez çalışması kapsamında hazırlanmıştır.Araştırmanın konusu hangi öğrencinin hangi soruya nasıl yanıt verdiği değil, genel olarak öğrencilerin algıları ve yargılarıdır. Bu nedenle ankette **isim belirtilmeyecektir**. Soruları dikkatlice yanıtlamanız bu araştırmanın güvenilir olması açısından önemlidir. Katılımınız için teşekkür ederiz.

Kişisel Bilgiler

1. Bu yıl hazırlıkta kaçıncı yılınız?   ( ) 1. yılım   ( ) 2. yılım   ( ) daha fazla
2. Anadolu Üniversitesi'ne gelmeden önce İngilizce eğitimi aldınız mı? ( ) Evet   ( ) Hayır

   Cevabınız 'Evet' ise nerede ve kaç yıl? …………………………………………………………………………..

3. İngilizce öğrenme süreci içinde kendinizi başarılı buluyor musunuz? Mutlaka sadece 1 seçeneği işaretleyiniz.

 ( ) Evet   ( ) Hayır

4. Size göre bunun temel nedenleri nelerdir ? Bu nedenlerden 5 tanesini aşağıdaki tabloda NEDENLER bölümüne yazınız ve her bir neden için ilgili soruları EVET / HAYIR sütunlarının yalnızca birine işaret koyarak cevaplayınız.

NEDENLER	Bu neden/durum sizden mi kaynaklanıyor?		Sizce bu neden/durum zaman içinde değişir mi?		Bu nedeni/durumu kontrol edebilir misiniz?	
	EVET	HAYIR	EVET	HAYIR	EVET	HAYIR
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						

5. Kendinizi başarılı ya da başarısız bulma durumunuza göre (3. soru) açıklamak istediğiniz başka durumlar var mı?

……….

6. Başarı kavramını tanımlayınız.

List of Responses Given by Students Who Perceive Themselves Successful

Questionnaire number	Cause number
1.	1. Düzenli çalışma
	2. Araştırma yapma
	3. İhtiyaç
2.	4. Farklı kaynaklardan gramer çalışmak
	5. İngilizce film izlemek
	6. İngilizce müzik dinlemek
	7. Yabancılarla sohbet etmek
	8. İngilizce gazete / kitap okumak
3.	9. Gelecekte gerekli
	10. Eğitim yoğun ve anlaşılır
	11. İng. yi seviyorum
	12. İng film izliyorum
4.	13. dersi derste öğrenmeye çalışıyorum
	14. tekrar yapıyorum
	15. farklı kaynaklardan araştırma yapıyorum
	16. öğretmenler iyi
	17. zorundayım
5.	18. üniversitenin ing alt yapısı sağlam
	19. seviyorum
	20. yeni şeyler öğrenmeyi seviyorum
	21. derslere ilgi duyuyorum
6.	22. ilgiliyim
	23. öğretmenler
	24. ing kitap/gazete okumak

25. zorundayım

26. müzik dinlemek/ film izlemek

7. 27. temelim var

28. dersi derste dinlemek

29. yabancılarla sohbet etmek

30. hocalar iyi

31. iyi not alınca gaza gelmek

8. 32. dersler zevkli geçiyor

33. öğretmenler iyi

34. kaynaklar iyi

35. yabancı arkadaşlarım var

36. zekiyim

9. 37. öğretmenler dersi iyi anlatıyor

38. dersler eğlenceli / öğretici geçiyor

39. iyi çalışıyorum

40. İngilizce müzik dinliyorum

41. öğrenmek isteyince öğreniyorum

10. 42. öğretmenler çok iyi

43. zekiyim

44. ders saati fazla

11. 45. okul disiplinli

46. öğretmenler hoşgörülü

47. istek

12. 48. derslere katılıyorum/dinliyorum

49. başarılı olmak istiyorum

13. 50 seviyorum/ilgi gösteriyorum

51. dersler ilgi çekici ve eğlenceli

52. ing şarkı dinlemek, film izlemek

53. zorundayım

14. 54. düzenli çalışma

55. derslere ilgi duyma

56. İngilizce film izliyorum

57. doğuştan yetenekliyim

15. 58. düzenli çalışıyorum

59 günlük hayatımda kullanıyorum

60. ing kitap okuyorum

61.ing günlük tutuyorum

62. amacım geçmek değil öğrenmek

16. 63. temelim iyi

64. çalışıyorum

65. konuşma hırsım var

66. mesleki açıdan önemli

67. üniversitemi sevdim

17. 68. ing yi çok seviyorum

18. 69. çalışıyorum çünkü bölümde gerekli

70. dersleri dinliyorum

71. devamsızlık yapmıyorum

72. ing şarkı dinliyorum

73. ing şiir yazıyorum

19. 74. temelim iyi

75 sürekli sadece ing görmemiz

76. zorunlu olması

77. dersi dinliyorum

78. sık sık quiz olması

20. 79. okuduğum seviye kolay

80. temelim iyi

21. 81. dersleri dinliyorum

82. sınıf ortamı iyi

83. ing müzik dinliyorum

84. ing şiir yazıyorum

85. ing film izliyorum

22. 86. seviye kolay

87. öğretmenler gayet iyi

23. 88. derslerime çalışıyorum

89. gayret ediyorum

90. başarmaya çalışıyorum

24. 92. düzenli çalıma sistemim var

93. öğretmenlerimizin katkısı büyük

94. doğru çalışma sistemim var

25. 95. hocaların katkısı

96. notlarım iyi

97. sene başından beri çok yol kat ettim

26. 98. seviyorum

99. hocalarla dialoğum iyi bu da çok faydalı

100. yoğun bir şekilde dil eğitimi alıyoruz

27. 101. hazırlık programı sayesinde

102. fazladan çalışmak

103. araştırma yapmak

104. ödev yapmak

105. dersi dinlemek

28. 106. sürekli ing ile iç içe olmak

107. hocaların başarılı olması

108. dersleri önemseme

109. tekrar yapmak

110. farklı derslerde öğrenilenleri pekiştirme

29. 111. yeterince tekrar yapıyorum

112. İngilizce film/dizi izliyorum

113. ing konuşmaya çalışıyorum

114. başkalarına konu anlatarak pekiştiriyorum

115. elektronik cihazlarımı ing kullanıyorum

30. 116. yabancı arkadaşlarım var

117. ing kursa gidiyorum

118. kelime ezberi yapıyorum

31. 119. dersleri iyi dinliyorum

120. ödevleri yaparak konuları pekiştiriyorum

121. ing yi seviyorum

32. 122. çalışıyorum

123. dersleri iyi dinliyorum

124. öğretmenlerin yardımı

125. gelecekte işime yarayacak

126. gerçekten öğrenmek istiyorum

33. 127. günlük çalışmaya çalışıyorum

128. kitap

129. film izliyorum 130. derslerde çok fazla pratik yapıyoruz

34. 131. her gün ders aldığımız için pratik oluyor

132. günlük ödevleri yapıyoruz

133. yabancı film izliyoruz

134. yabancı müzik dinliyoruz

35. 135. çok çalışıyorum

136. günlük tekrar ediyorum

137. ing film izliyorum

138. dersleri dinliyorum

36. 139. dersleri iyi dinliyorum

140. öğretmenler iyi iş yapıyorlar

141. çok çalışıyorum

142. tekrar yapıyorum

143. öğrenmeyi eğlenceli hale getiriyorum

37. 144. öğretmenler yardımcı oluyor

145. her gün görüyoruz kulak alışıyor

146. ödevlerimi yapıyorum

147. derslerdeki alıştırmalar sayesinde

38.   148. zekiyim

149. etrafımdaki çoğu insan ing konuşuyor

150. ing film izliyorum

151. günümüz şartlarında gerekli

39.   152. tekrar ediyorum

153. dersi iyi dinliyorum

154. yabancı dili öğrenebiliyorum

40.   155. ödevlerimi yapıyorum

156. tekrar yapıyorum

157. her gün ing görüyoruz

41.   158. derste anlatılanları dinliyorum

159. tekrar ile pekiştiriyorum

42.   160. çabalıyorum

161. öğretmenlerim çabalıyor

162. üniversitenin olanakları

43.   163. lisede hazırlık okumam

164. çalışınca yapabiliyorum

165. çalışmasam da başarırım

166. bölümümün ing olması

167. hayatımda hep ing nin olacağını bilmem

44.   168. öğrenme isteği

169. öğretmenlerim sayesinde

170. imkanlar, kaynaklar iyi

171. dünya düzenine göre hareket etmek

45.   172. öğretmenlerimi dinliyorum

173. derse katılmaya çalışıyorum

46. 174. öğrenmeye olan istek

175. küreselleşen dünyada ing nin önemini kavramak

176. verilen eğitimin en üst düzeyde olması

47. 177. lisede hazırlık okumam

178. bölümüm için gerekli

48. 179. dersi düzenli takip ediyorum

180. kaliteli öğretmenler

181. seviyorum

49. 182. yoğun program

183. dil öğrenmeye yatkınım

50. 184. lisede hazırlık okudum

185. aileden dolayı

186. verilen eğitimin iyi olması

51. 187. lisede hazırlık okumam

188. kelime bilgimin çok olması

52. 189. tekrar yapıyorum

190. programlı çalışıyorum

191. kendimi öğrenebileceğime inandırıyorum

192. üst sınıflardan yardım alıyorum

193. ing okumayı seviyorum

53. 194. film izlerken anlayabiliyorum

54. 195. ing temelimin olması

196. ing şarkı dinlemem

197. ing film izlemem

198. her gün altı saat ders görmem

199. zeki olmam

200. ing öğrenmeyi sevmem

55. 201. ing konuşulan yerlerde kaçınmıyorum

202. film izlerken takip etmeye çalışıyorum

203. yurtdışına gitme isteği

204. yoğun ders programı

56. 205. çalışmak

206. Internet kullanmak

207. öğretmenlerin iyi anlatması

57. 208. dersi iyi dinliyorum

209. öğretmenler dersi iyi anlatıyor

210. kaynaklar yeterli

211. bölümümde gerekli olması beni teşvik ediyor

212. tekrar yapıyorum

58. 213. istemek

214. Erasmus la Avrupa'ya gitmek

215. anne babama mahcup olmamak

216. öğretmenlere mahcup olmamak

217. kendime mahcup olmamak

59. 218. ders olarak değil bir ihtiyaç olarak görüyorum

219. ileride ing eğitimime devam etmeliyim

60. 220. gerektiği gibi çalışma

221. düzenli tekrar

222. derse ilgi duymak

223. konuyu derste anlamak

224. dil öğrenmeye olan yatkınlık

61. 225. tekrar etmek

226. dersi takip etmek

227. dil öğrenmeye olan yatkınlık

62. 228. yabancı kanalları izlemeye çalışıyorum

229. dersi dinliyorum

230. dersleri kaçırmamaya çalışıyorum

231. ödevleri düzenli yapıyorum

63. 232. düzenli çalışmak

233. hazırlıkta verilen iyi eğitim

234. doğru kaynaklardan yararlanma

235. ing yi okul dışında kullanabilmek

236. yabancı dili geliştirici aktiviteler

64.   237. dersi dinliyorum

238. tekrar yapıyorum

239. ing öğrenmek zorunda hissediyorum

240. sınıfta geçirdiğim zamanı en iyi şekilde değerlendiriyorum

241. gerçekten öğrenmek istiyorum, hayatımdan çıkarmayacağım

65.   242. dersleri dikkatli dinliyorum

243. öğrenmeye çalışıyorum

244. düzenli olarak çalışıyorum

66.   245. öğrenme süreci içinde aşama kaydediyorum

246. bazen eğlenceli buluyorum

Appendix C-

List of Responses Given by Students Who Perceive Themselves Unsuccessful

1. 1. temelim yok

    2. hazırlık çok sıkıcı

    3. ing yi sevmiyorum

    4. bölümüm için gereksiz

    5. ünv değil resmen lise

2. 6. derste sıkılıyorum

    7. çalışmıyorum

    8. nefret ediyorum

    9. geçme notunun 70 olması kalmamı sağlıyor

    10. her bölüme hazırlık çok saçma

3. 11. şehre alışma süreci uzun sürdü

    12. düzenli çalışmıyorum

    13. bazı hocalar yetersiz

    14. ing film seyredemiyorum

    15. günler yorucu ve yoğun geçiyor

4. 16. pratik yapma şansım yok

    17. zamanımın çoğu okulda geçiyor, kalanını iyi değerlendiremiyorum

    18. ing film izlemiyorum

    19. sıkılıyorum sürekli ing görmekten

    20. hocadan kaynaklanıyor derse adapte olamıyorum

5. 21. yeterince iyi konuşamıyorum

    22. kendimi eksik görüyorum

    23. yabancı film izlerken anlamıyorum

6. 24. ing yi sevmiyorum

    25. ders çalışmıyorum

    26. temelim yok

    27. anlamıyorum

28.sıkılıyorum

7.   29. ing yi sevmiyorum

30.düzenli çalışmıyorum

31.hazırlıktaki zorunluluklar bunaltıyor

32.derste dikkatim dağılıyor dinleyemiyorum

8.   33. hazırlık sistemi zor geliyor

34. sabahtan akşama sürekli ing sıkıyor

35 hazırlık sıkıcı

36. zorunlu olduğu için korkuyorum

9.   37. temelim yok

38.anlamıyorum

39. zorlanıyorum

40. bu dili başka bir dilde öğrenmek

41. düzenli çalışmıyorum

10. 42. düzenli çalışmıyorum

43.dersi iyi dinlemiyorum

44. temelim kötü

45. hoşlanmıyorum

46. isteğe bağlı okuyorum

11. 47. alt yapım iyi değil

48. yeterli çalışmıyorum

49. dersler çok yorucu

50 .derslere ilgim azaldı

51. devamsızlık sıkıntısı

12. 52. yeterli çalışmadım

53. eğitim sistemi kötü

54. bazı öğretmenler iyi anlatamıyorum

13. 55. İngilizce bölümde gereksiz yere zorunlu

56. devamsızlık sınırı çok az

57. sevmiyorum

58.geçme notu

59 dersler monoton geçiyor

14. 60 tembellik

61 hazırlık eğitiminin baskıcı olması

62 derslerin çok olması

63 canım istemiyor

64 ortam

15. 65 temelim yok

66 önyargıyla yaklaştım

67. bölüm için gereksiz

68 ders saatleri günleri çok fazla

69 zorunlu olması sinirlerimi bozuyor

16. 70. çalışamıyorum

71 sevmiyorum

72 bazı öğretmenleri yetersiz buluyorum

73 derste bazen gürültü oluyor

74 final sınavı stres yapıyor korkuyorum

17. 75 ders çalışamıyorum

76.derslerden sıkılıyorum

77. hazırlığın zorunlu olması

78 sınıf geçmenin sıkıntı yaratması

79.ing zor

80. temelim yetersiz

18. 81 hazırlık okulu çok zorluyor

82 ders sayısı çok fazla

83 çalışmıyorum

84 sıkılıyorum

85.ödevler,sınavlar,projeler çok sıkıyor

19. 86 zorunlu olması beni sıkıyor

87 dersler sıkıcı

88 bölümünde zorunlu olmayanların derste gürültü yapması

89. yüzde yüz ing zorunlu olan bölüm öğrencilerine ayrı / daha iyi eğitim verilmemesi

90. ing ye gereken önemi vermiyorum

20. 91. temelim yok

92 sınıflar kalabalık gürültülü

93 yeterli pratik yapmıyorum

94 ailemden uzakta olmak kötü etkiliyor

95. yardım alamıyorum

21. 96 yeterince çalışmıyorum

97 okuldaki eğitim yavaş

98. ing yi sevmiyorum

99 sıkılıyorum

100 sınıf kalabalık

22. 101 alıştırmaları yapamıyorum çalıştığım halde

102 adapte olamıyorum

103 çalıştıklarımı çok çabuk unutuyorum

104 hocanın anlatımını anlamıyorum

105 temelim yok

23. 106 derste anladığım halde sınavlarda bocalıyorum

107 uzun süre aklımda tutamıyorum her yöntemi denediğim halde

108 ileride işime yaramayacak

109 başarılı olamayacağımı düşünerek demoralize oluyorum

110. kendimi İngilizce'yi sevmediğime inandırdım

24. 111 ders çalışmıyorum

112 derse konsantre olamıyorum

113 sınıfta çok konuşan oluyor

114 tekrar etmiyorum

115 işten derse yetişemiyorum

25. 116 akıcı konuşamıyorum

117 sınıf kalabalık gürültülü

118 türkçeden farklı zorlanıyorum

119 kalma korkusu

120 düzenli çalışmıyorum

26. 121 ders çalışmıyorum

122 yoğun ders programı

123 öğrenci görüşleri önemsenmiyor

124 ikinci yılım olduğu için sıkılıyorum

125 canım istemiyor

27. 126 güzel sanatlarda hazırlık gereksiz

127 çalışamıyorum çünkü çok ders var yorgun oluyorum

128 dersler zevkli hale getirilmiyor

129 finalden korkuyoruz

130 GSF öğrencilerine hazırlık zorunlu olması

28. 131 ders çalışmak için zaman bulamıyorum

132 sınıflar kalabalık

133 hocalar öğrencilere karşı önyargılı

134 derste anlasam da ödevlerde zorlanıyorum

135 kur belirleme sınavı yetersiz

29. 136 ders çalışamıyorum

137 hazırlık sıkıcı

138 ders saatleri erken

139 neden zorunlu

140 hazırlık beni ünv den soğuttu

30. 141 çalışmamak

142. devamsızlık

143 ilgisizlik

144 dersi sevmemek

145 sorumsuzluk

31. 146 çalışmamak

147. sıkılmak

32. 148 öğrenmeye karşı isteksiz olmak

    149 derslerden hep kaçmak

    150 konuşurken çekiniyorum

    151 öğrenmeye çalışmak sıfırdan başlamak çok zor

    152 hocalar ilgi çekecek nitelikte ders anlatmıyor

    153 öğretmenlerin isteksizliği

33. 154 işlenen konuda yeterli örnek verilmiyor

    155 tekrar yapmıyorum

    156 dersle ilgili yeterli kaynak yok

34. 157 yeni bir dil öğrenmek kolay değil

    158 verimli ders çalışmamak

    159 hocaların isteklere cevap verememesi

    160 sınıf ortamına alışamadım

35. 161 ders çalışmamak

36. 162 geçme notunu yüksek olması

    163 yeteri kadar ders çalışmama

37 164 devamsızlık

38. 165 az tekrar yapma

    166 nefret etmeye başladım

39. 167 alt yapı yok

    168 eğitim yetersiz

    169 yoğun ders programı yoruyor çalışamıyoruz

40. 170 yurttaki kötü koşullar

    171 hocaların baskı kurmaya çalışması

    172 final sınavının zorluğu ve yarattığı stres

41. 173 hazırlığa alışamadım

    174 ders çalışmıyorum

    175 hazırlık çok sıkıcı

42. 176 isteksizlik

177 çalışmamak

178 öğrenme zorunluluğu

179 çevresel sebepler

43. 180 çok çalışmamak

181 ders programının yoğunluğu

182 gün içinde çok yorulmak

183 ders çıkışı çalışmaya zaman yok

184 bazı hocalar dersi etkili anlatamıyor

44. 185 hazırlık zorunlu olduğu için kalma korkusu

186 korkuyorum

187 çok ödev olunca yetiştiremiyoruz

188 ders saatleri çok fazla

189 devamsızlık hakkı az

45. 190 ing yi sevmiyorum

191 yeterli çalışmıyorum

192 çevresel faktörler

193 dışarıda derslerime yardımcı olacak kimse yok

194 hafızam kuvvetli değil unutuyorum

46. 195 yeterli çalışmıyorum

196 konuları anlamıyorum

197 beceriksizim

198 dersi sevmiyorum

47. 199 finale kadar alt kurların üst kurların seviyesine ulaşamamaları

200 hocaların yetersiz ve isteksiz oluşu

201 devamsızlık hakkı az

202 hocaların aşağılaması, ilkokul çocuğu gibi davranması

48. 203 hocalar dersi zevkli etkili anlatamıyorlar

204 hocaların anlatış tarzı

205 ders çalışmamak

206 ders programının yoğunluğu

207 buraya alışamamak

49. 208dersler yoğun bunalıyoruz

209 ders dışı kalan süre yetersiz

210 çalışma heyecanının kalmaması

50. 211 ders anlatacağız diye kafa ütülüyorlar

212 ing siz de yapabilirim

213 aşırı disiplinli bir sistem

51. 214 fazla ders çalışmamak

215 temelim yok

216 bu eğitim öğretim sisteminin aksak ve eksik yönleri zorluk yaratıyor

52. 217 ing bir yıl içinde öğrenilemez bu bir süreçtir

218 ders içinde pratik çok az çünkü konular yoğun

219 hocalar yetersiz

220 psikolojik baskı var

221 final sınavı kurumuza göre çok zor

53. 222 okulun lise formatından kurtulamamış olması

223 zorunlu tutulup baskı oluşturulması

224 lise ve ortaokulda ing yi ciddiye almamış olmam

54. 225. çalışmaya konsantre olamıyorum

226. stresliyim

227. çalışamıyorum

228. dikkat dağınıklığım var

229. öğretmenlerimin bazılarından memnun değilim

55. 230. ing yi sevmiyorum

231. düzenli çalışmıyorum

232. sınavlar zor

233. dersler zor

234. öğretmenler yetersiz

56. 235. kelime haznem yetersiz

236. kompozisyon yazamıyorum

237.çalışma isteksizliği

238. pratik eksikliği

57. 239. kelime bilgisi eksik

240. çalışma isteği yok

241. konular hakkında fikir bulmakta zorlanıyorum

242. hızlı düşünemiyorum

243. pratik yapmıyorum

58. 244. çok baskı var

245. ing yi sevmiyorum

246. bazı hocalar çok sert

247. sürekli quizler stres yaratıyor

59. 248. yeterli çalışmıyorum

249. dersler sıkıcı

250. hocalar derslere renk katmıyor

60. 251. pratik yapma şansı yok

252. speaking derslerini sevmiyorum

253. önce Türkçe düşünüp sonra ing ye çevirmeye çalıştığım için

61. 254. yeterli çalışmıyorum

255. öğretmenlerin bazıları başarısız

256. bir yıl boyunca sadece tek ders olması sıkıcı

62. 257. tüm gün olması

258. bölümümle ing nin alakası yok

259. sevmiyorum

260. hocalar çok sıkıyor

63. 261. hocalar notlara gereksiz yere çok önem veriyor

262. ders saati çok fazla (lise gibi)

263. writing e gereksiz yere önem veriliyor

264. final sınavı zormuş

265. hocalar bir konu hakkında farklı şeyler söylüyor

64. 266. speaking zor , zamanla gelişir, finalden kaldırılsın

267. pratik yapmıyorum

268. ders sayısı çok fazla (sabahtan akşama)

269. bazı hocaların derslere ilgisi az

65. 270. hep kitap üstünde öğretiliyor

66. 271. temelim yok

272. ders çalışamadım

67. 273. ing ye yatkınlığım yok

274. ing nin bölümümle alakası yok

275. ing zor

276. öğretmenlerin performansı iyi değil

277. ne kadar çalışsam da nafile

68. 278. dersler sıkıcı

279. ders çalışmıyorum

280. kitaplar öğrenme için yeterli değil

281. bazı hocaların performansı kötü

282. kalıplaşmış eğitim sisteminin dışına çıkılmaması

69. 283. kelime haznem dar

284. kelime ezberleyemiyorum

285. essay i biliyorum ama body lerde zorlanıyorum

286. çalışmıyorum

287. az pratik yapıyorum

288. speaking zamanla gelişebilir

289. sabahtan akşama ders olmasın

290. akşam ders çalışamıyorum

70. 291. ders saatleri fazla

292. sıkılıyorum

71. 293. çalışmıyorum

294. kendi kendime çalışamıyorum

295. dil öğrenmeye yeteneğim yok

72. 296. konular çok fazla ve zor

297. kelimeleri aklımda tutamıyorum

73. 298. ders saatleri fazla

299. ders çalışmaktan çabuk sıkılıyorum

300. sistem ağır ve yorucu

301. bazı öğretmenlerin tarzı bana uymuyor

74. 302. ing yi sevmiyorum

303. dile yeteneğim yok

304. zorunlu hazırlık (dayatma)

305. bölümüme yönelik öğretilmiyor

75. 306. yoğun ders programı

307. öğretmenlerin bazıları ders anlatamıyor

308. temelim yok

309. aşırı yoğunluk

310. zaman yetersizliği

76. 311. zorunlu tutulması ilgiyi azaltıyor

77. 312. yenilik yok(kitaplar eski yetersiz)

313. çok fazla kural (gereksiz)

314. final sınavı saçma

315. sistem berbat

316. hazırlık öğrencisi çok fazla

78. 317. motivasyon kaybı

318. öğretmenlerin ç ok yüzeysel anlatımı

319. derslerin ilginç/zevkli anlatılmaması

320. final sınavının içeriği

321. devamsızlık sınırlandırması

322. hocaların derse ilgisinin olmaması

79. 323. zorunlu olması stres yapıyor

324. bölüme geçme garantimin olmaması başarısızlığımı getiriyor

80. 325. çok zaman ayıramıyorum

326. seviye belirleme testi gerçekten çok zor oluyor

327. devam zorunluluğu bezdirici

81. 328. tekrar etmiyorum

   329. ders çalışıp başaramayınca şevkim kırılıyor dersi bırakıyorum

     330. dikkat dağınıklığım var

     331. çok fazla Internet de vakit harcıyorum

     332. internet dışındaki zamanlarda sürekli uyuyorum

82.   333. çalışmıyorum

     334. okulun kalitesi

     335. boş vermişlik

     336. okul kurallarının saçmalığı

83.   337. pratik yapmıyorum

     338. öğretmenlerin kalitesi

     339. dile yatkınlığım yok

84.   340. eğitim sisteminin yetersizliği

     341. bireysel çalışma eksikliği

     342. ing yi günlük yaşantıda kullanamama

85.   343. fazla ders saati

     344. derse konsantre olamama

86.   345. yeterli tekrar yapmıyorum

     346. dersler yoğun akşam eve gidince yorgun oluyorum

     347. öğrendiğim kelimeleri çok çabuk unutuyorum

87.   348. yeteri kadar ilgilenmiyorum

     349. derslere önem vermiyorum

     350. ing yi öğrenmeye çalışmıyorum

     351. ing kitap okumuyorum

     352. ing müzik dinlemiyorum

     353. ing film izlemiyorum

88.   354. yeterli ve gerekli özeni göstermiyorum

     355. sevmiyorum

     356. öğrenmek için çaba göstermiyorum

357. grameri biliyorum ama konuşamıyorum

358. kelime eksikliğim çok fazla

89. 359. temelim yok

360. fazla çalışmıyorum

361. ing nin bu kadar önemli olduğunu lisedeyken düşünmemem

362. hazırlık programı lise gibi

90. 363. yeterli çalışmıyorum

364. final sınavı çok zor

365. yeterince ilgilenmiyorum

366. İngilizce'yi sevemedim

91. 367. ilk yılımda derslere pek çalışmadım

368. başarı not sınırı çok yüksek

369. kur atlama sınavı yeterli bir ölçü değil geçen yıl oraya ait olmadığım halde Int sınıfındaydım

92. 370. bölümde yüzde 30 göreceklere daha az ing eğitim verilmeli

371. sıkılıyorum

372. devamsızlık az

Appendix D-

List of Categorized Definitions of Success

To be the best at something

_____

1. To be able to do something perfectly
2. To do something well
3. To be the best at everyting
4. The be the best, the strongest, the superb
5. To reach to the highest level
6. To be proficient in my major
7. To be the best at comprehnding what you read and transferring what you comprehend
8. To reach the highest level of my capacity
9. To be the best
10. To achieve what is asked from us perfectly
11. To be good at something
12. To be able to speak English as my mother tongue
13. To become the best in one's major
14. To reach to the highest point on a specific subject by doing your best
15. To promote in your major

Reaching one's own goals

_____

1. one becomes successful when he achieves his own goals
2. reaching one's own goals
3. reaching one's own goals
4. determinig a goal and achieving it
5. to achieve one's goals and aims

6. to determine your own goals , strive for them and achieve them

7. to focus on your goals, and reach them by not being afraid of making mistakes when you meet obstacles

8. to reach to the position that you dreamed of

9. to improve oneself to reach your goals

10. catching the target

11. reaching one's personally determined goal

12. aiming

13. reachşng self-determined goals

14. getting your desired score

15. making one's dreams come true by struggling

16. getting positive results on reaching your goals

17. making your goals become real

18. reaching your desired aims

19. reaching our desired aims

20. setting one's own goals and reaching them

21. having aims till the end

22. reaching a goal

23. seeing oneself in your dream position

24. struggling to reach a goal

25. achieving one's aims

26. achieving one's aims

27. reaching one's goals

28. reaching goals

29. having the desired result

30. reaching one's goals

31. achieving what you desired to do

To put things you learn into practice

_____

1. if you put the things you learn into practice it means you suceed
2. to be able to remember things you learned and use them in your real life
3. to be able to use knowledge you gain in real life situations sufficiently
4. kişinin aldığı bilgiyi kullanabilir duruma gelmesi ve bunu göstermesidir
5. improving yourself by putting things into practice
6. to be able to speak English fluently in real life contexts
7. To able to practice what you learn
8. Learning something and using it in real life
9. gaining respect by applying things you learn in real life appropriately
10. to be able to chat with a foreigner and to be able to watch English movies
11. to become proficient in English in order to use it in business life
12. applying things you learn in real life
13. putting things you learn into practice
14. not to forget things you learn by applying them
15. understanding things that are taught and applying them
16. adding value to the things you learn by applying them
17. expressing ourselves in English
18. knowing something so well that you can Express yourself or draw attention of others

To get high grades and pass the classes

_____

1. passing the final exam
2. getting 80 or higher grades in exams
3. getting higher grades than before in exams
4. passing the class
5. passing classes at university

6. passing the prep school

7. passing the class

8. passing the final exam

To put effort on something

_____

1. endeavour and effort

2. struggling to achieve what you desire

3. humming to be the best

4. studying enthusiastically

5. studying regularly

6. studying

7. enjoying lessons and studying hard

8. endeavour and effort

9. constancy and determination

10. studying regularly and pertinaciously in order to achieve your goal

11. studying regularly and believing yourself to reach your goal

12. putting effort on something that you desire to achieve

13. struggling to overcome difficulties

14. cramming

15. revising constantly without giving up

16. constancy, determination and self-confidence

17. studying hard

18. struggling and overcoming difficulties

To get what one deserves

_____

1. achievement after doing your best

2. gaining what you deserve

3. getting the prize of your effort
4. getting the payoff for your effort
5. getting the payoff for your effort

To show progress

___

1. reaching a certain a point better than before
2. starting learning English from elementary level reaching lower-intermediate level at the graduation
3. doing something that used to be difficult easily
4. showing progress and becoming beter than before
5. progress in time
6. konwing more than before when compared to beginning
7. reaching higher level than the level at the beginning
8. showing progress in a process
9. progressing with accumulation of information

Self Satisfaction

___

1. doing things that satisfies you at the end
2. financial sufficiency and having peace of mind
3. feeling the peace of mind on achieving something
4. learning something and feeling happiness
5. something that makes one happy
6. doing things that are satisfying
7. feeling satisfied with the result
8. doing something with relish and feeling satisfied on fulfilling it

___

Total

112

Appendix E-
List of Uncategorized Definitions of Success

1. bir kuşun kanatları olmadan da uçabilmesidir
2. Başarı genel toplumda kabul görmüş bir işi yapabilme yeteneğidir
3. derste öğretilenlerin öğrenilmesidir
4. insanın kendisiyle yarışmasıdır
5. ilgili olduğun alanlarda sayılı kişilerle anılmak
6. ciddiye almamaktır
7. hayata ayak uydurma
8. insanın tüm hayatı boyunca kendine güvenmesi ve başarı merdivenlerini tırmanmasıdır
9. birşeyi tam olarak tamamlayınca gerçekleşir ing yi tam olarak öğrendiğimde başarılıyım demektir
10. derslerden yüksek not almak değildir. Birçok alanda bilgili olması ve faaliyetlere katılmasıdır
11. insanın kendi içindedir, fakat dışarıdan da yardım alması gerekir
12. inanmak ve istemek
13. bence başarı isteğe bağlı olmalı, zorla güzellik olmaz
14. başarı eşittir daha iyi bir gelecek
15. başardım diyebilmektir
16. daha fazlasını kazanmaktır
17. gerçekten öğrendiğine inanmaktır
18. o dili sevmektir, sevmeden öğrenilmez
19. yolda olmaktır
20. istenileni verebilmek
21. insanın kendini tanıması ve yapabileceklerinin farkında olmasıdır
22. az çaba çok iş
23. sınıf geçmek için değil gerçekten öğrenmek için öğrenilen şeylerin tamamıdır
24. istediğin şeyi üretebilme özgürlüğü
25. yeterli olanak sağlandığında benim sorumluluğuma düşen şey
26. sadece not değil