

T.C.

MALTEPE UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

**SELF EVALUATION OF STUDENTS IN THE
COMMON EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK AND
TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THESE
EVALUATIONS**

Master of Arts Thesis

Özler AYAR

081113201

Supervisor Assist Prof. Dr. Nesrin BAKIRCI

İstanbul, October 2010

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ABSTRACT

SELF EVALUATION OF STUDENTS IN COMMON EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK AND TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THESE EVALUATIONS

This research study aimed to focus on the aspects of the Common European Framework which are related to 'the role of self evaluation in the process of language learning' and 'teachers' attitudes towards these evaluations'.

The study was carried out with the students and teachers of the 9th grade, and 11th and 12th grade language classes of a private high school, depending on qualitative research design. Data were collected by making focus group interviews with the students and individual interviews with the teachers, and by analyzing the portfolio studies of the students.

The evaluation of the interviews with the students revealed that they had different ideas in relation to how they benefitted from portfolio studies in terms of the progress they observed in their language skills and their learning behavior. These differences can be explained as an indication of the differences in students' awareness of their learning process, the strategies they used during that process and the extent to which they developed autonomy. The evaluation of students' ideas also revealed that by the help of portfolio studies they not only became aware of the kind of language difficulties they had but also identified the reasons of them and tried to find ways of overcoming their problems. This kind of awareness of the students reflected in their statements in the interviews can be evaluated as an important benefit of the portfolio application made in the institution where this study was carried out.

Analysis and evaluation of the portfolio studies was made by focusing on the objective statements identified by the students in two sections of the European Language Portfolio titled 'Assessing the Language Learning Process' and 'My Personal Language Achievement'. In the light of the analysis, suggestions were made for the teachers in terms of how they can take students' evaluation into consideration.

Analysis and evaluation of the interviews with the teachers helped to identify their ideas about how students benefitted from the portfolio studies. In the light of the overall evaluation of the interviews, it can be stated that different attitudes of teachers towards portfolio studies may effect the methodological decisions they may make as a result of their evaluation of the students' reports.

Key Words: Common European Framework, self evaluation, portfolio studies, learner autonomy

TEZ ÖZETİ

AVRUPA DİLLERİ ÖĞRETİMİ ORTAK ÇERÇEVE PROGRAMINDA ÖĞRENCİLERİN KENDİLERİNİ DEĞERLENDİRMELERİ VE ÖĞRETMENLERİN BU DEĞERLENDİRMELERE YÖNELİK TUTUMU

Bu çalışmada Avrupa Dilleri Öğretimi Ortak Çerçeve Programının, “dil öğrenim sürecinde bireysel değerlendirmenin rolü” ve “öğretmenlerin bu değerlendirmelere yönelik tutumu”na ilişkin yönleri üzerinde durulması amaçlanmıştır.

Çalışma, özel bir lisede 9’uncu, 11’inci ve 12’nci sınıftaki dil sınıfı öğrencileri ve öğretmenleriyle niteliksel araştırma yöntemine dayalı olarak yürütülmüştür. Araştırma verisi, öğrenci ve öğretmenlerle yapılan görüşmeler ve öğrencilerin portfolyo çalışmalarının çözümlenmesi yoluyla derlenmiştir.

Öğrenci görüşmelerinin değerlendirilmesi, öğrencilerin dil becerileri ve öğrenme davranışlarında gözlemledikleri gelişim açısından portfolyo çalışmalarından ne şekilde yararlandıklarına ilişkin farklı düşünceleri olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Bu farklılıklar, öğrencilerin kendi dil öğrenim süreçlerine, bu süreçte kullandıkları stratejilere ve bağımsız öğrenme becerilerini ne derece geliştirdiklerine ilişkin farkındalıklarındaki değişikliğin bir göstergesi olarak ele alınabilir. Öğrenci görüşlerinin değerlendirilmesi, onların, portfolyo çalışmaları yoluyla sadece yaşadıkları dil öğrenme güçlüklerinin farkına varmadıklarını; aynı zamanda bu güçlüklerin nedenlerini de belirleyebildiklerini ve dil sorunlarını çözmeye yolları bulmaya çalıştıklarını ortaya koymuştur. Öğrencilerin kendileriyle yapılan görüşmelerdeki anlatım biçimlerine yansıyan bu tür farkındalık, bu araştırmanın yürütüldüğü kurumda yapılan portfolyo uygulamasının önemli bir yararı biçiminde yorumlanabilir.

Portfolyo çalışmalarının çözümlenmesi, öğrencilerin, Avrupa Dil Portfolyosunda yer alan “Dil Öğrenme Sürecinin Değerlendirilmesi” ve “Kişisel Dil Başarılarım ” başlıklı iki bölümdeki hedef davranışlara ilişkin cümlelerinin incelenmesine dayalı olarak yapılmıştır. Her öğrencinin belirlemiş olduğu hedef davranışlar ışığında öğretmenlerin, öğrenci değerlendirmelerini ne şekilde dikkate alabilecekleri yönünde önerilerde bulunulmuştur.

Öğretmen görüşmelerinin çözümlenmesi ve değerlendirilmesi, onların, öğrenci portfolyo çalışmalarından ne şekilde yararlandıkları konusundaki görüşlerinin belirlenmesini sağlamıştır. Öğrenci ve öğretmen görüşmelerine ilişkin genel değerlendirme ışığında, öğretmenlerin portfolyo çalışmalarına yönelik farklı tutumlarının, öğrenci raporlarını değerlendirmeleri sonucu alabilecekleri yönetsel kararları etkileyebileceği ileri sürülebilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Avrupa Dilleri Öğretimi Ortak Çerçeve Programı, kişisel değerlendirme, portfolyo çalışmaları, öğrenme özerkliği.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Changes in language teaching since 1970's reflect changing trends in linguistics, second language acquisition research studies and changes in learners' needs. With the emergence of communicative approaches to language teaching, the main focus has shifted from teaching to learning, entailing the need to take into consideration different aspects of language teaching from a different point of view. It has been stated that effective teaching can be achieved better when learners take the responsibility of their own learning. In other words, learners should learn 'how to learn' and 'how to evaluate their own learning process'.

This requirement of effective teaching has taken place as an essential part in the European Language Portfolio which has been recommended by the Council of Europe to support and give recognition to language learning with the Common European Framework (CEF for short). The main aim of the CEF has been stated as *"keeping track of students' language learning as it happens"* (ELP, 2003, p.2). This aim can be seen as a reflection of the need to help learners learn how to learn.

Developed through a process of scientific research and wide consultation, this document provides a practical tool for setting clear standards to be attained at successive stages of learning and for evaluating outcomes in an internationally comparable manner and describes in a comprehensive manner i) the competences necessary for communication, ii) the related knowledge and skills and iii) the situations and domains of communication. The Common European Framework for Reference (CEFR) defines levels of attainment in different aspects of its descriptive scheme with illustrative descriptors scale.

This study has started with the necessity of evaluating the application of the CEF in Turkey by focusing on two aspects of the document stated as “Assessing the Language Learning Process” and “My Personal Language Achievement”. For this reason, in the following sections, first of all the literature related to the rationale behind the CEF will be presented together with the research studies on the application of the CEF in different educational settings. Then, the role of European language portfolio in promoting learner autonomy will be explained by making reference to the related studies. Depending on the discussions to be presented about the underlying principles behind the CEF, the aim and significance of the present study will be presented.

1.1. The Rationale behind the Application of the Common European Framework in Different Educational Settings

1.1.1. The Rationale behind the CEF

The Common European Framework is intended to overcome the barriers to communication among professionals working in the field of modern languages arising from the different educational systems in Europe (CEFR, 2001).

The Framework was written with the following two main aims:

1. To encourage practitioners of all kinds in the language field, including language learners themselves, to reflect on such questions as:
 - what do we actually do when we speak (or write) to each other?
 - what enables us to act in this way?
 - how much of this do we need to learn when we try to use a new language?

- how do we set our objectives and mark our progress along the path from total ignorance to effective mastery?
 - how does language learning take place?
 - what can we do to help ourselves and other people to learn a language better?
2. To make it easier for practitioners to tell each other and their clientèle what they wish to help learners to achieve, and how they attempt to do so.

The intention in publishing the Framework is to encourage all those concerned with the organisation of language learning to base their work on the needs, motivations, characteristics and resources of learners. This means answering questions such as:

- what will learners need to do with the language?
- what do they need to learn in order to be able to use the language to achieve those ends?
- what makes them want to learn?
- what sort of people are they (age, sex, social and educational background, etc.)
- what knowledge, skills and experiences do their teachers possess?
- what access do they have to course books, works of reference (dictionaries, grammars, etc.), audio-visual aids, computer hard - and software, etc.?
- how much time can they afford (or are willing, or able) to spend? (p. 7-8).

The Council's work on language education has also expressed a political agenda, promoting plurilingualism as a means to facilitate mobility in Europe and encouraging linguistic tolerance and respect (Heyworth, 2006). Plurilingualism differs from multilingualism, which is the knowledge of a number of languages, or

the coexistence of different languages in a given society. The plurilingual approach emphasizes the fact that as an individual person's experience of language in its cultural contexts expands, from the language of the home to that of society at large and then to the languages of other peoples, he or she does not keep these languages and cultures in strictly separated mental compartments, but rather builds up a communicative competence to which all knowledge and experience of language contributes and in which languages interrelate and interact (CEFR, 2000, p.15).

The uses of the Framework include:

- The planning of language learning programmes in terms of:
 - their assumptions regarding prior knowledge, and their articulation with earlier learning, particularly at interfaces between primary, lower secondary, upper secondary and higher/further education;
 - their objectives;
 - their content.
- The planning of language certification in terms of:
 - the content syllabus of examinations;
 - assessment criteria, in terms of positive achievement rather than negative deficiencies.
- The planning of self-directed learning, including:
 - raising the learner's awareness of his or her present state of knowledge;
 - self-setting of feasible and worthwhile objectives;
 - selection of materials;
 - self-assessment.

The Common European Framework is constructed to accommodate various forms. In considering the role of a common framework at more advanced stages of language learning, it is necessary to take into account changes in the nature of needs of learners and the context in which they live, study and work. There is a need for general qualifications at a level beyond threshold, which may be situated with reference to the CEF. They have, of course, to be well defined, properly adapted to national situations and embrace new areas, particularly in the cultural field and more specialized domains (Council of Europe, 2000, p.17).

In order to fulfill its functions, such a Common European Framework must be comprehensive, transparent and coherent. By 'comprehensive' is meant that the Common European Framework should attempt to specify as full a range of language knowledge, skills and use as possible (without of course attempting to forecast a priori all possible uses of language in all situations – an impossible task), and that all users should be able to describe their objectives, etc., by reference to it. CEF should differentiate the various dimensions in which language proficiency is described, and provide a series of reference points (levels or steps) by which progress in learning can be calibrated. It should be borne in mind that the development of communicative proficiency involves other dimensions than the strictly linguistic (e.g. sociocultural awareness, imaginative experience, affective relations, learning to learn, etc.). 'Transparent' means that information must be clearly formulated and explicit, available and readily comprehensible to users and 'coherent' means that the description is free from internal contradictions. With regard to educational systems, coherence requires that there is a harmonious relation among their components (CoE, 2000 p.18):

- the identification of needs;
- the determination of objectives;
- the definition of content;
- the selection or creation of material;
- the establishment of teaching/learning programmes;
- the teaching and learning methods employed;
- evaluation, testing and assessment.

The construction of a comprehensive, transparent and coherent framework for language learning and teaching does not imply the imposition of one single uniform system. On the contrary, the framework should be open and flexible, so that it can be applied, with such adaptations as prove necessary, to particular situations. CEF should be:

- multi-purpose: usable for the full variety of purposes involved in the planning and provision of facilities for language learning
- flexible: adaptable for use in different circumstances
- open: capable of further extension and refinement
- dynamic: in continuous evolution in response to experience in its use
- user-friendly: presented in a form readily understandable and usable by those to whom it is addressed
- non-dogmatic: not irrevocably and exclusively attached to any one of a number of competing linguistic or educational theories or practices (p. 17-18).

The Framework or the CEF as it is referred to throughout the resource is said to be “*much talked about at the moment but little understood*” (Morrow 2004a, p.1).

Morrow (2004b) gives an overview of the CEF stating the reasons for and aims of its development since the late 1950s, and presents a useful outline of the structure of the Framework, with its six global levels covering a number of different aspects of language development. He closes with a discussion of whether the CEF actually works by making reference to the core of many of its criticisms and responds to these (p.3).

Morrow’s (2004b) reflections on and responses to the Framework attempts to familiarise people with its background and content. He looks at some of the implications of the CEF and includes examples of how it has been applied practically in a number of different contexts. Approaches to language learning developed by the Council of Europe which are focused on by Morrow (2004b) are also handled by Heyworth (2004) with an emphasis on the application of action based research.

Heyworth (2004) sets out reasons why he thinks the CEF is important with the following questions: ‘*Why should we learn languages?*’; ‘*What do we mean by learning language?*’; ‘*What are the levels? Can they be described and standardized?*’; ‘*How do we decide on learning objectives?*’; ‘*How do teachers make reasoned methodological choices while applying CEF for Reference?*’; ‘*What issues are involved in the assessment of learners?*’.

Depending on the discussion made in the light of these questions, the general importance of the CEF for all those involved in language teaching is stated by Heyworth (2004) as providing “*a stimulus to think about language teaching and*

learning in a broader, more coherent way; a set of resources for planning, implementing, and assessing learner- centered, action-based language learning and teaching” (p.21).

Research studies and pilot projects carried out reflecting the rationale behind the CEF have provided insights for teachers in terms of the methodological choices they may need to make in their teaching situations.

1.1.2. The Application of the CEF in Different Educational Settings

In this section, in what ways the criteria offered in the CEF related to certain aspects of language teaching have been applied in different educational settings will be presented. These aspects are course / syllabus design, teacher training / education; and assessment / evaluation.

Kedde (2004) describes her experiences of the CEF in her context as a materials developer for 11 – 16 year olds in a secondary school in Italy. She noted a problem in that the CEF did not allow for description of progress in terms of grammar knowledge, which was the system used by secondary schools where she worked. However, she was able to integrate the CEF into her new syllabuses and outlined several advantages as well as disadvantages of working with the CEF. One of the strengths of the CEF is defined by Kedde (2004) as *“the accompanying Language Portfolio, as this promotes self-assessment, autonomy, and continuity across school levels and into the real world”* (p.43). However, she highlights the challenges in using the CEF in schools, by saying *“it does not measure grammar-based*

progression, and this creates a barrier between the descriptors and the students' achievements" (p.43).

The CEF self – assessment checklist can look very daunting to students, especially to younger teenagers, and even to teachers. Students must feel that what they are doing in the classroom corresponds with the boxes they tick in their portfolio, and that the whole way of describing their performance makes sense. If this link is not clear they will become demotivated, and in fact the descriptors will become counterproductive. Keddle (2004) tries to create an interface between the CEF and the classroom. She is committed to using the CEF as a tool to re-evaluate the standard syllabus strands, and create a syllabus that genuinely links the CEF with tried and tested expectations. She thinks that it is a challenging task, but it is aided by the fact that both the CEF and the standard teaching program knowledge. Both starting points are valid, but they have to work together in order to create something that brings language alive in the classroom, improves student performance, and makes life easier for the teacher. Despite some weaknesses, the CEF provides a broad, well-thought-out provoking tool for language teachers (p.52).

Komorowska (2002) discusses her experience and various approaches to incorporating the CEF into teacher training in Poland. He states that over the last two decades, Poland has had a rich experience in using the documentation of the Council of Europe, especially in two fields: curriculum construction and teacher education, but also recently in evaluation and assessment.

Though the approach adopted in the CEF becomes part of the Polish teachers' professional knowledge and practical classroom skills, the document itself is not really widely known. So far, for reasons of availability, only top teacher trainers, academic teachers and syllabus designers had a chance to get well acquainted with the CEF documentation, usually at Council of Europe conferences and workshops.

Komorowska (2004) describes how she used the CEF in pre- and in-service teacher education to highlight learners' perspectives and identifies problems with the CEF, highlighting the difficulty teachers from language backgrounds other than English has with accessing the document, as follows:.

The Common European Framework is not particularly user-friendly when it comes to the individual work of the trainee with the text. Introducing the document is, therefore, greatly facilitated if the teacher-trainer gives a presentation of a mini-lecture type preceding discussion, as this helps to clarify ideas and to explain terminology used differently from the way it is used in most writing about foreign language teaching.

Individual work can be safely introduced later and combined with students' project work and assessment.

Trainees in pre-service teacher education seem to benefit from the CEF ideas if they look at them from the learner's perspective, possibly reflecting on the course of their present and past language education, analyzing outcomes of their learning, and reflecting on how their learning was affected by:

- teachers' role*
- methods and techniques used by teachers*

- *assessment functioning in their schools*
- *their own learning strategies*

Teachers in in-service teacher training seem to benefit more when they take the teacher's perspective, and use the CEF categories to do the following:

a) to work on a profile of a selected learner looking at his / her strengths and weaknesses, in particular at:

- competences
- language activities
- learning strategies
- levels attained

and then present as well as justify decisions to be taken.

b) to work on a case study of a group of learners with the view to modeling future decisions related to:

- the curriculum scenario to be implemented
- levels to be attained
- activities to be emphasized
- learning to be trained and / or supported (Komorowska, 2004).

Students in academic tracks who decide to work towards their teaching qualification in parallel to their university diploma seem to benefit, both

during class discussions and in their term papers, from attempts to apply the CEF categories to the content of the academic courses they actually take.

Difficulties are, however, to be expected connected with the overlap of issues discussed in particular chapters of the Framework, and with terminology which tends to confuse readers. When difficulties prove insurmountable, the teacher trainer can always turn to levels and descriptors which – through ‘can do’ statements – unfailingly show the value of the CEF both for those who take the learner’s perspective and those who take that of the teacher. Most probably that is why this has become the best known part of the document so far (p.62).

The study carried out by Garrido and Beaven (2002) about course and material development in UK at the open university is based on the development of the Spanish courses at the British Open University. The researchers present a detailed account of how the CEF was consulted in order to develop Spanish courses at tertiary level, and in particular both the syllabus and accompanying audio-visual materials. Depending on their studies they suggest that when producing a course it is not only important to think about the syllabus but also to insure “*audio visual materials*” and they add that the CEF is very useful beyond the development of materials. Language practitioners will find it very valuable to:

- help them justify their own approach to language teaching;
- consider the main questions that will help them to define language course objectives and make decisions regarding transparent levels of language competence to be pursued;

- determine how to achieve those objectives taking into account the various types of competences required to develop students into autonomous learners capable of interacting effectively with the foreign culture, and in whichever role they are likely to perform;
- help them to identify the range of authentic materials (audio-visual or printed) they want to use in their own teaching, and decide the purpose for which they will exploit those materials;
- analyze the purpose of their assessment strategy and make decisions on how to implement it via formative and summative means (p.27).

Figueras and Melcion (2002) state that in Catalonia, the Common European Framework has not been received as a new product to trigger off brand-new approaches. All Council of Europe documents have been used both as a point of reference and as a reflection tool, informing the teaching, the learning and the assessment of first, second, and foreign languages. They briefly review how the Common European Framework has been used in different institutional contexts, governmental and academic and for which purposes, and makes proposals for a way forward in the achievement of real transparency in foreign language certification in Europe. Researchers look forward to future developments in the region in the use of the CEF, but closes with a number of important questions addressed at administrators, and arguably, at the Council of Europe itself. The authors ask who will be responsible for ensuring that syllabuses, tests, assessment portfolios and the like, that claim to be based on and related to the CEF, are indeed actually so based and do indeed reflect the philosophy.

Self-assessment has recently become a prominent component of learning and teaching English as a second or foreign language, so it is now entirely evident that self-assessment is key to the ELP in that the passport involves the learners in assessing their own proficiency in line with the levels and descriptors derived from the Common European Framework, and the biography requires regular determining on learning aims, which is only probable via the learners' regularly assessing their own progress. This focal point on self-assessment indicates the Council of Europe's concern to maximize autonomous lifelong learning, which is a powerful proof of the fact that the ELP is possessed by the individual learner. The amalgamation of self-assessment into the ELP gives rise to the learners' comprehending their problems about their learning process and evaluating their own language skills and competences (Hismanoglu, 2010, p.675).

Little and Perclova (2001) mention that self-assessment is vital for using the ELP. Self-assessment is summative in the language passport, where the learners periodically review their proficiency in languages; and formative in the language biography, where the learners set learning targets, monitor learning progress, and evaluate learning outcomes regularly; and both formative and summative in the dossier, which include up-to-date overview of the learners' proficiency and experience.

Assessment is dealt with in the studies by Huhta and Figueras (2004, p.65) with a focus on how the CEF can be used to promote language learning through diagnostic assessment, and North's (2004, p.77) point of views on how existing assessment

events, examinations and courses can be related to the CEF, including a sample table outlining how institutions can demonstrate their assessment outcomes being consistent with the CEF descriptors.

Dialang is an on-line language assessment system, which contains tests in 14 European languages and is based on the Common European Framework of Reference. It is the first major testing system that is oriented towards diagnosing language skills and providing feedback to users rather than certifying their proficiency (Huhta et. al., 2002). The study carried out by Huhta et al (2002) describes the contents of Version 1 of Dialang tests and of the pilot testing and standart setting procedures; and focuses on the results for English and findings for some other languages. Huhta and Figueras (2004) emphasize that *the CEF is usable and worth using in the field of language assessment. The DIALANG has indeed contributed to the dissemination of the principels and the levels of the CEF* (p.75).

North (2004) attempts to demonstrate that the CEF descriptors offer a practical, accessible tool that can be used

- *to relate course, assessment, and examination content to the CEF categories and levels (specification)*
- *to train teachers, assessors, and item writers in a standard interpretation of the CEF levels (standardization)*
- *to provide criteria for ratings by trained teachers/assessors (external validation)* (p.77).

He provides “*a profile of a continuous assessment task for Dutch as a foreign language used in Belgium which is based on a thematically linked integrated skills model*” (p.78). Examination providers, schools and networks of teachers are encouraged to use the Portfolio by using the same principles to relate their assessments to the CEF.

The study carried out by Kaftandjieva and Takala (2002) at the University of Jyväskylä, in Finland, describes how a European-Union-funded project, DIALANG, took the CEF scales and validated them for its own purposes. The purpose of this study is to present validity evidence for the Council of Europe scales of language proficiency in Listening, Reading and Writing, as gathered in the DIALANG project. Kaftandjieva and Takala (2002) report on the collection, which took the form of a sorting task, where raters – specialists in teaching Finnish as a second/foreign language – were asked to sort the scale descriptor units for Listening, Reading and Writing into six successive piles representing the six levels of Council of Europe scales: Breakthrough, Waystage, Threshold, Vantage, Effective-Proficiency and Mastery.

They report the statistical results in some detail, in the hope that this will encourage other developers of scales relating to the CEF to report in similar detail the results of their validation studies, and they present a detailed content analysis of some of the descriptors, to illustrate how some of the statistical data can be interpreted in terms of the wording of the descriptors in the scales. This study aimed to analyse the validity of the CEF scales of language proficiency in Listening, Reading and Writing. The finding that the scales have a high degree of validity does not mean that the scales

are perfect and need no improvement. The concrete results of the study show some of the directions of further development and revision. The comparison between the three analyzed scales demonstrated that the scale for language proficiency in Reading is the best one and that the scale for Writing needs more detailed reconsideration and revision, especially its higher level descriptors (levels C1 and C2). Although the results of the study indicate that the CEF scales of language proficiency are valid enough to be used as a framework for foreign language learning, teaching and assessment, the generalizability of this finding needs further investigation (pp.106-127).

Lenz and Schneider (2002) from the University of Fribourg, go into much more detail on the background to, and the nature of the European Language Portfolio and its development. Entitled *Developing the Swiss version of the European Language Portfolio* this research is an excellent introduction and guide to the work of the Council of Europe in fostering the development of alternative assessment methods to traditional language examinations. The authors clearly illustrate the synergy between the CEF and the ELP, present an account of how the Swiss Portfolio was developed, and reflect on future developments in portfolio work (pp.68-83).

In Hong Kong, although Portfolio Assessment (PA) has been recommended as one useful means of implementing assessment for learning and is given a high priority on the education reform agenda (Curriculum Development Council 2007), the idea of using writing portfolios is not popular with teachers (Bryant 2002). There are several reasons to account for the under-use of PA. First, the exam oriented culture in Hong Kong has made it difficult for innovative pedagogical ideas, such as process pedagogy to flourish (Sengupta 1998; Hamp-Lyons 2007). Multiple drafting is

considered a luxury because teachers are hard pressed to cover the syllabus to help students prepare for public exams. Second, most practising teachers have not received training in the implementation of school-based portfolio programmes. They tend to think that asking students to document all their drafts in a folder and grading it summatively amounts to PA. They have little idea about how to utilize the formative functions of PA to enhance the teaching and learning of writing. Third, teachers and principals may not be convinced that such an assessment initiative will work in Hong Kong, unless there is established local research that testifies to its benefits (cited in Lam and Lee, 2009, p.55).

The development of ELP models in Turkey was investigated and presented by Egel (2009) with a focus on the origin of the ELP within the Turkish National Education system and the issues related to the present stage of ELP implementation.

The Ministry of Turkish National Education decided to officially start the European Language Portfolio for learners aged 15+ and learners aged 10-14. in the academic year of 2009-2010. Ankara University and Bilfen schools have developed ELP models which have been validated by the Council of Europe. The implementation of the ELP has progressed well, and almost all member states of the CoE have developed models which have either been validated by the European Validation Committee and are currently implemented, or they have developed models which are being used on a pilot basis. Being a member of the CoE, the Ministry of Turkish National Education (MNE) investigated and evaluated the ELP project documents supplied by the Modern Languages Section of the CoE. It is pointed out by Demirel (2003) that Turkey, as a member state of the CoE, is fulfilling the requirements for

the ELP and CEF under the auspices of the MNE by reforming foreign language curricula, developing the Turkish ELP model and improving the quality of language instruction in the educational system. According to Demirel (2003, p.3) “these efforts will contribute to the language learning process in Turkey in order to harmonize with European Standards and also to support the language policy of the CoE by training plurilingual Turkish citizens as part of the integration process for a multicultural European society.” When embarking on a national program for development, the essentialness of the efforts of linking the Turkish language teaching policy and language teaching practices in Europe cannot be underestimated because Turkey has to be alert for significant developments and the outflows of research in this field.

The Ministers of Education of all the member States of the CoE recommended that governments, in keeping with their education policy, support the introduction of an ELP. In the “2002 Yılı Basında Milli Egitim” (National Education at the Beginning of the Year 2002) periodical dated December 2001 and published by the MNE, it is stated that there are Special Expertise Commissions (Özel İhtisas Komisyonları) within this ministry and that one of them is the CoE Language Portfolio Special Expertise Commission MNE, 2001. This commission was formed after the European Ministers of Education met in Cracow, Poland, 15-17 October 2000. In this periodical, it is also noted that in Turkey, the CoE Language Portfolio Special Expertise Commission was formed under the coordination of Özcan Demirel from Hacettepe University. This commission presented a seminar in the year 2001 to 30 secondary school foreign language teachers chosen from Antalya and Ankara, the ELP pilot provinces of Turkey.

The piloting procedures of the ELP in the Turkish Educational system began with the MNE's Board of National Education's acceptance of piloting the ELP project in 24 piloting schools at secondary education level appointed in the Ankara and Antalya provinces.

The Turkish pilot project as reported by Demirel (2002) began with the determining of the long term and short-term objectives of the ELP to be attained. Then, an in-service teaching program for piloting teachers was designed accordingly, and finally, a seminar on the ELP was held in October 2001 in Ankara. In this seminar, the ELP project was introduced in detail, existing sample ELP models of other European countries were examined, language descriptors used in the portfolio were analyzed and the implementation process of the ELP in Turkey was discussed. As a result of the seminar, a steering committee for the ELP project was established in order to design the ELP model for Turkish high school students 15 years of age and older.

The Turkish ELP project committee had developed a sample ELP model for high school students, which the MNE had published under the name "European Language Portfolio - Avrupa Dil Gelisim Dosyasi". The MNE found it suitable to first implement the ELP in 20 piloting high schools located in Ankara and in Antalya. A teacher from each piloting school took part in the project and they were all obliged to take part in an in-service training program for the ELP seminar held in October 2001 by the Board of Education in Ankara, then the ELP implementation process of the project started at the beginning of the 2002-2003 academic year (Demirel, 2003). In 2004, the number of piloting schools reached 30 and the ELP was implemented in 9 different cities located all around Turkey.

Demirel (2003) reports that before the implementation phase of the Turkish ELP project, a number of seminars were organized to support and train teachers in the use of the CEF of Reference for Languages and the ELP. The first Turkish ELP model for students aged 15+, after being submitted for validation to the CoE Secretariat of the Language Policy Division in the year 2003, was approved by the European Validation Committee. This first validated Turkish ELP model, being the 47th validated ELP model of the CoE was numbered 47.2003 (to find the list of validated ELP models see: www.coe.int/T/DG4/Portfolio/documents). This validated model was prepared in CD format by the MNE and distributed to the employment of teachers and students at piloting schools. Another reason why the year 2003 was very important for Turkey was that it held the European Language Portfolio Council of Europe Seminar.

In Turkey, under the auspices of the MNE the second ELP commission was formed in order to design a junior ELP model for children aged 05-09 and 10-14. This ELP model was prepared and piloted in 15 primary schools. This model was sent to the CoE for validation and in 2006 the Turkish Model for learners aged from 10-14 was approved by the European Validation Committee.

Özcan Demirel, the first co-coordinator for the Turkish ELP piloting project also applied to the CoE for the translating of the book titled “Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Teaching, Learning, Assessment” into Turkish. This application was approved and the right for translation and publication of the book was given to the Turkish MNE. Under the coordination of the Board of Education, a translation commission was formed in 2005 and the book was translated. However, the book is still not officially published by the MNE.

The CoE notes that different ELP models are being or will be developed in member States by educational authorities or institutions undertaking to produce an ELP according to the age of learners and differing national contexts. Ankara University was the first institution to develop and implement an ELP model for adult learners. This model gained validation by the CoE in 2004 and at present is the only validated ELP model for adults in Turkey. Ankara University has a Turkish and Foreign Languages Research and Application Centre (TÖMER) which was founded in 1984 as a part of Ankara University for the purpose of teaching Turkish to foreigners. TÖMER is the institution which issues, upon payment, the ELP to adults in Turkey.

Scharer (2004) reports that until the year 2004, while the number of learners having worked with ELP was over 1,250,000, in Turkey the number of learners who had come into acquaintance with the ELP from various age levels was 9800.

In Turkey, a private educational institution named Bilfen Schools, entered this educational arena by developing another ELP Model for learners aged from 10-14. This model was approved of and gained validation by the committee in the year 2006. The following year Bilfen Schools submitted another ELP model which was designed for young learners in primary education aged 05-09 and was validated by the CoE in 2007 (see www.coe.int.) The ELP is used in the English lessons at Private Bilfen Schools (see www.bilfen.com).

Mirici, the coordinator of the Bilfen Schools ELP Project in his article titled “Development and Validation Process of a European Language Portfolio for Young Learners” (2008) states that Bilfen Schools --from kindergarten to middle school

educate 3500 students and that they aim to use the ELP to promote effective teaching and to promote all 10-14 year old children in private schools where intensive foreign language teaching programs are implemented. The development of this ELP took over a year to complete and consisted of the following four phases: training, drafting, trialing and validation.

According to Mirici (2008) according to most foreign language teachers in Turkey the already existing descriptors in the various validated ELP models seemed too limited and that they had to adapt these descriptors according to their teaching situations in terms of the objectives of their curriculum, for example one of the Speaking A1 level descriptors is about the students being able to describe the place where they live in simple phrases. After the trialing phase of the ELP, the ELP Bilfen Model was accredited in 2006.

According to the official website of MNE (<http://www.adp.meb.gov.tr>) it is noted that in the globalizing world, foreign language teaching in Turkey, like in many other countries, has become a fundamental problem in education. An important step in the solving of this problem is going to be put into practice on a national basis in the following academic year. This practice is called “European Language Portfolio - Avrupa Dil Portfolyosu”. While at the phase of piloting project, the ELP was translated as and named “Avrupa Dil Gelisim Dosyası”, with the official implementation it is now renamed as “Avrupa Dil Portfolyosu”.

As Egel (2009, p.1) states “the implementation change in Turkey necessitates continual movement to support the concepts of the European Language Portfolio so as to reach long lasting effects”.

The ELP has also been implemented at university level preparatory schools. The case study (Glover et al. 2005) carried out in university prep school in Muğla describes the results of ELP implementation with two classes with a focus on the following research questions: (1) How did the ELP work in this situation?, (2) To what extent were important factors present; ELP integration with the curriculum, teacher and learner training and clarity of status and purpose of ELP?, (3) How did teachers and students respond to the ELP? The general conclusion of the study was that “*the ELP received a positive response from teachers and students as it did elsewhere in Europe. Many participants expressed a desire to use and benefit from the ELP in the future. However, in this case program integration, teacher and student training and clarity of status and purpose of the ELP do not seem to have been sufficiently present*” (p.96).

All of these studies illustrate in rich detail how the Common European Framework has been implemented after consultation and adapted in different educational settings abroad. Clearly the influence of the Framework has been widespread and deep, impacting on curricula, syllabuses, teaching materials, tests and assessment systems and the development of scales of language proficiency geared to the six main levels of the CEF. There is no doubt that the influence of this Framework will grow over the coming decade both in Turkey and abroad.

1.2. European Language Portfolio and Autonomy

Language learning is a life-long task to be promoted and facilitated throughout educational systems, from pre-school to adult education. Drawing from the aims and philosophy of CEF, European Language Portfolio (ELP) takes its roots from the principles of learner autonomy and self-assessment in the language learning process. It aims to make the language learning process more transparent to learners, develop their capacity for reflection and self-assessment, provide them gradually to adopt more and more responsibility for their own learning, and thus make them more autonomous. In other words, ELP helps students see their strengths and weaknesses, and gives them the chance to study on their weaknesses and to make them better for their own learning process with the help of the self-assessment parts.

The ELP's checklists of target skills can be an assistant to the teacher in planning dynamically and flexibly. Mediating between the syllabus and the textbook, they help to move the planning process away from the structure of the textbook towards the teacher's sense of where the learners are now and where they need to go next. The ELP can also aid learners to understand syllabus objectives in terms of their developing communicative repertoire, to analyze textbook units and examination tasks in terms of underlying target skills, and to understand what they are doing and why they are doing it (Little, 2002, p.28).

Mariani (2004) makes a discussion of how effectively learning skills and strategies have been incorporated into the CEF with portfolio studies. Apart from summarizing

the main strategies for language learning in the CEF, he highlights the implications for both instructors and learners.

The ELP has three main components approved by the Council of Europe which are *the Language Passport*, *the Language Biography* and *the Dossier*. The Language Passport section:

- provides an overview of the individual's proficiency in different languages at a given point in time, defined in terms of skills and the common reference levels in the Common European Framework;
- records formal qualifications and describes language competencies and significant language and intercultural learning experiences;
- includes information on partial and specific competence; it allows for self-assessment, teacher assessment and assessment by educational institutions and examination board;
- requires that information entered in the Passport states on what basis, when and by whom the assessment was carried out

The skills referred to in the language passport are understanding (listening and reading), speaking (spoken interaction and spoken production) and writing in the Language Passport, while the levels, according to the Council of Europe's Common European Framework, are basic users (A1: breakthrough and A2: waystage), independent users (B1: threshold and B2: vantage), and proficient users (C1: effective operational proficiency and C2: mastery).

The Language Biography which is the part for recording the learners' personal language learning history encourages students to state what they can do in each language and to include information on linguistic and cultural experiences gained in and outside formal educational contexts. It facilitates their involvement in planning, reflecting upon and assessing their learning process and progress. What the learner knows and achieves in every language in terms of language skills such as listening, reading, speaking, and writing is expressed through "can do" statements. In addition, it promotes plurilingualism by developing competencies in different languages.

Language Biography consists of different sections such as my language learning aims, my language learning history, my most significant linguistic and intercultural experiences, and my current language learning priorities. In this part the learners can state the Common European Framework for Reference Level (CEFRL) they desire to acquire, the concrete objectives in the different skills, the time intended for achieving those objectives, the reasons of taking that task, the strategies they intend to use, and the activities and the work they will realize.

The Dossier offers the opportunity to select materials, to document and illustrate achievements or experiences recorded in the Language Biography or Passport. The dossier is the part of the ELP in which target language materials are collected to complement the textbook and provide a focus for ownership of foreign language learning process and the language itself. It contains sample letters, projects, reports, memoranda, showing their writing skills, and also video cassettes, CDs, VCDs, and like, demonstrating their speaking skills.

Little (2008) states that in principle the ELP can support the exercise and development of learner autonomy in three ways:

1. When “I can” checklists reflect the demands of the official curriculum, they provide learners (and teachers) with an inventory of learning tasks that they can use to plan, monitor and evaluate learning over a school year, a term, a month or a week
2. The Language Biography is explicitly designed to associate goal setting and self-assessment with reflection on learning styles and strategies, and the cultural dimension of L2 learning and use.
3. When the ELP is presented (partly) in the learners’ target language, it can help to promote the use of the target language as medium of learning and reflection (slayt 6).

According to the *Principles and Guidelines* that define the ELP and its functions (Council of Europe 2004), the ELP reflects the Council of Europe’s concern with “the development of the language learner”, which by implication includes the development of learning skills, and “the development of the capacity for independent language learning”. The ELP, in other words, “*is a tool to promote learner autonomy*”. Self-assessment plays a central role with the ongoing, formative self-assessment that is supported by the “*can do*” checklists attached to the language biography and the periodic, summative self-assessment of the language passport, which is related to the so-called self-assessment grid in the CEF (p.26–27).

The development of autonomy in language learning is governed by three basic pedagogical principles (Little 2006):

- *learner involvement* – engaging learners to share responsibility for the learning process (the affective and the metacognitive dimensions);

- *learner reflection* – helping learners to think critically when they plan, monitor and evaluate their learning (the metacognitive dimensions);
 - *appropriate target language use* – using the target language as the principal medium of language learning (the communicative and the metacognitive dimensions)
- (p.2)

According to these three principles, the teacher should:

- *use the target language as the preferred medium of classroom communication and require the same of her learners;*
- *involve her learners in a non-stop quest for good learning activities, which are shared, discussed, analyzed and evaluated with the whole class – in the target language, to begin with in very simple terms;*
- *help her learners to set their own learning targets and choose their own learning activities, subjecting them to discussion, analysis and evaluation – again, in the target language;*
- *require her learners to identify individual goals but pursue them through collaborative work in small groups;*
- *require her learners to keep a written record of their learning – plans of lessons and projects, lists of useful vocabulary, whatever texts they themselves produce;*
- *engage her learners in regular evaluation of their progress as individual learners and as a class – in the target language.* (Little, 2006, p.4).

The aim and function of all European Language Portfolio models are defined by Little and Perclova (2001) as:

- a) to motivate learners by acknowledging their efforts to extend and diversify their language skills at all levels;
- b) to provide a record of the linguistic and cultural skills they have acquired (to be consulted, for example, when they are moving to a higher learning level or seeking employment at home or abroad).

These two aims refer to the two basic functions of the European Language Portfolio: a pedagogic function and a reporting one, which connect it to its well-known companion, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

An ELP model, pedagogically, should:

- enhance the motivation of the learners to improve their ability to communicate in different languages, to learn additional languages, and to seek new intercultural experiences;
- help learners to reflect upon their objectives, ways of learning and success in language learning, to plan their learning, and to learn autonomously;
- encourage learners to enhance their plurilingual and intercultural experience, for example through contacts and visits, reading, use of the media, and projects (Council of Europe 2005, p.1).

The pedagogic function of the ELP which emphasizes the process aspect of language learning is stated as helping the students to identify their learning aims, to make action plans, to reflect, monitor and modify the processes, and to evaluate the outcomes through self-assessment and reflection. In other words, one of the main purposes of the European Language Portfolio in terms of its pedagogical function is

to help learners to reflect on their success in language learning and to encourage them to learn autonomously (Schneider and Lenz, 2002).

ELP has not only a pedagogic function to stimulate, guide and foster the student in the process of learning but also a reporting function to record proficiency language levels (Council of Europe, 2001), which can be stated as:

- to supplement certificates and diplomas by presenting information about the owner's foreign language experience and concrete evidence of his or her foreign language achievements, and a pedagogical function
- to make the language learning process more transparent to learners, help them to develop their capacity for reflection and self-assessment, and thus enable them gradually to assume more and more responsibility for their own learning.

The reporting function of the ELP which is concerned with the product aspect of foreign language learning aims to provide a record of learner's language skills and cultural experiences by relating their communicative skills to the proficiency levels according to the CEF. This function of ELP depends on successful implementation of its pedagogical function.

To advance learners' individual reflection and to enable them to undertake more responsibility for their own language learning, it is found necessary:

- *to make learners establish their own learning goals and be aware of them*
- *to suggest active learning tasks and getting the learners to reflect on their learning strategies*
- *to let them do group work or pair work and receive some reciprocal feedback*

- *to make the learners devise learning activities either at home or in the language class and utilize them in the language learning setting*
- *to give the learners the chance to choose with whom they wish to work*
- *to devise discussion activities with the class*
- *to get students to reflect on prior learning* (Little and Perclova, 2001; cited in Hismanoğlu, 2010, p.674)

The institutions aiming at developing learner autonomy through ELP studies should have a clear understanding of the term ‘autonomy’ which has been defined in different ways by the researchers.

Little (1991) defines the term as *“a capacity – for detachment, critical reflection, decision-making, and independent action. It presupposes, but also entails, that the learner will develop a particular kind of psychological relation to the process and content of his/her learning. The capacity for autonomy will be displayed both in the way the learners learn and in the way s/he transfers what has been learned to wider contexts”* (p.4).

Depending on this definition, to identify the role of autonomy in ELP, Little (2005) states *“by using the ELP, language learners can assess their language and intercultural skills as well as their approaches to learning”* (p.2). He emphasizes the central role played by self assessment in learner centered pedagogies in that it enables learners to take responsibility for their own learning

According to Boud (1988), autonomy “*is a notion to learning which makes students take some responsibility for their own learning over and above responding to the teaching*” (p.23). In the same way, Cotteral (1995) expresses that “*autonomy is a desirable aim in language learning for philosophical, pedagogical, and practical reasons. The philosophical rationale behind the autonomy is learners’ rights to make choices about their learning process*” (p.197).

To Holec (1981), autonomy signifies the ability to take charge of one’s learning. With a more general definition, autonomy is delineated in the following five ways:

- for situation in which learners study entirely on their own;
- for a set of skills which can be learned and applied in self-directed learning;
- for an inborn capacity which is suppressed by institutional education;
- for the exercise of learners’ responsibility for their own learning;
- for the right of learners to determine the direction of their own learning (p.3)

In the vein of Holec (1981), Dam (1990) explains autonomy “*in terms of the learners’ willingness and capacity to control or oversee their own learning*” (cited in Thanasoulas, 2000, p.16).

The main characteristics of an autonomous learner identified by Holec (1981) and Little (1991) are as follows:

- understanding the purpose of their learning programme;
- explicitly accepting responsibility for their learning;
- sharing in the setting of learning goals;

- taking initiatives in planning and executing learning activities;
- regularly reviewing learning and evaluate its effectiveness.

Being autonomous means doing things for yourself, not necessarily doing things on your own. The development and practice of learner autonomy require “*the full involvement of the learner in planning, monitoring and evaluating learning*” (Holec 1981, Dam 1995). Such involvement entails “*the development of explicit skills of reflection and analysis*”. Learner autonomy is thus a matter of learning how to learn “*intentionally*” (cited in Little, 2009, p.105).

Holec (1996) also states “*learning ‘without being taught’ or ‘self-directed learning’ means that learners take their ‘own decisions with respect to the objectives to achieve, the resources and techniques to use, evaluation, and management over time of the learning programme, with or without help from an outside agent*” (p.102).

When learners engage with the ELP, it raises their awareness of language and language learning, supports the development of their capacity to monitor their learning and assess their own progress, and fosters the growth of learner autonomy in a transparent and consistent way. The ELP also helps to develop learners’ ability to identify individual learning needs and course objectives, so that language learning becomes more focused and more relevant for each individual learner. With the growth of awareness and knowledge, learners are increasingly empowered, and with the growth in their ability to self-monitor and self-assess they become more confident. Also, they develop learning skills that they can transfer to other learning

domains (Little, 2001, p.1), which helps them “*exploit*” and “*nourish their intrinsic motivation*”, by involving them in their own learning” (Deci and Ryan 1985, p.32).

Lenz (2004) explains in what ways the learner can be guided through the CEF with portfolio studies and outlines how the ELP provides “*a learning companion, a reporting and a documentation tool*” for learners (p. 23). He presents the rationale behind the European Language Portfolio by stating the reasons for the development of portfolio and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. As he states, different forms of application of portfolios have been produced to be applied in a number of European countries (p.23-31).

ELP experiences have showed that students seem to have misunderstood the purpose of the ELP, and the use of the expression ‘*passport*’ caused some confusion; because the students did not realise that the ELP language passport has a similar purpose to a curriculum vitae and does not replace formal qualifications or travel documents. This kind of difficulty observed has led to the idea that a high level of teacher support is necessary to make learners make the best of the ELP. and more training for the teachers involved may help to clarify this issue (Glover et al., 2005).

The main focus of the research study carried out by Jaakkola et. al. (2002) in Finland was on how to promote learning to learn in first language classrooms. The purpose of the project was to explore the practicability of the CEF in Finnish schools. The aim of this work was to promote learning skills in first foreign language classes systematically from the primary level up to the upper secondary level. Eleven teachers, each from a different school, were involved in the project, which they carried out as classroom action research in their regular classes during the school

year of 1998 – 1999. The research questions dealt with learners' existential competence, their study skills, heuristic skills and self- and peer-assessment. The results showed that the learners profited from the explicit development work although the time available was too short to bring about permanent changes in their behaviour. The teachers felt that the CEF could support their work and found the experience of action research valuable for their professional growth. The teachers at each level considered self-assessment especially beneficial in developing learner reflection and consequently learners' metacognitive knowledge and strategies. They observed that when learners' metacognitive knowledge and strategies grew, their ability to take responsibility for their learning increased. They were able to plan, carry out and assess their own learning in a self-directed way. The teachers also stated that systematic awareness-raising in the learning and teaching processes greatly benefited not only the students, but also themselves in their professional growth.

The cooperation with colleagues from the same school level were appreciated. However, all teachers complained about the constant lack of time and the increased work load. They also found doing classroom action research and reporting on it difficult because of too little preparation time and training before the project started. More support and advice were needed.

The overall evaluation revealed that the difficulties could have been avoided to a great extent through good preparation, adequate training and thorough planning before the actual research and development work began.

The findings of Kohonen's (2003) pilot project carried out with Finnish teachers and students between 1998- 2001 reveal similar results to the ones stated by Jaakkola et. al. (2002). He states "*The regular use of the ELP does motivate and enable students to take more responsibility for their learning*" (p.11) and development of autonomy in language learning entails teachers' "*support and teacher education*" to raise their awareness and understanding of "*learner needs*" (p.14).

The suggestion made is '*to start students' reflection with a more general reflective orientation to learning*' (p.12) depending on the observation that "*it is natural to teach student reflection in connection with concrete learning tasks, with support tutoring and comments by the teacher*" (p.14).

The findings of the study are explained by Kohonen (2003) as follows:

The descriptors and checklist helped students to gradually develop a meta-cognitive understanding of language in terms of the different skills, linguistic forms and communication strategies.....They began to see the aims of their language learning in more specific terms than just as the "mark" in the school report. They got new tools for understanding the big picture of language learning and saw more possibilities for improving their skills, based on the concrete evidence. They were thus learning the meta-language that was necessary for talking and negotiating about their learning (p. 8).

Another study was carried out by Gonzalez (2002) in two adult language schools in northern Spain with the aim of "*promoting student autonomy through the use of the European Language Portfolio*". The author has coordinated trials of the ELP in two

adult language schools in northern Spain. Following a preparatory training period, the project was carried out for a year. A number of problems were detected and solutions for them were found. In addition, students were encouraged to use e-Portfolios and 'Europass' as well as the online 'Dialang' test to help them in the self-assessment process. The ELP has proved to be extremely useful as a pedagogical rather than a reporting tool. It has raised student awareness about the language learning process and promoted learner autonomy to a very high degree (p.1).

The findings of the study are summarized as follows:

“Students felt that, by self-assessing their linguistic competence, they had been able to become aware of their strengths and weaknesses. They also understood that language learning was a life-long process and that therefore they should take responsibility for it and use a variety of learning strategies, both inside and outside the class. On the other hand the students also complained about the bulkiness of the format and the density of the ELP: some of the forms (particularly in the Biography) were repetitive and redundant and the students found it very time consuming to fill in all the forms” (p.4). The teachers’ responses were very positive on the whole: they felt that the students who used the ELP had become more autonomous and more aware of their learning process. They had understood, some of them for the first time, that language learning was an action – oriented process, as described in the CEF, and that therefore grammar structures and vocabulary were important, but only as a means towards communication.” (p.5).

Since research on the implementation of portfolio studies depends on on-going evaluation of the projects, the results of most of these studies are relayed on the internet. Glover et al. (2005) present their investigation of such studies in their paper titled *“Preparing for the European Language Portfolio: Internet Connections”* providing full internet links for the readers to access the same documents. Based on Scharer (2000), they state that the study of these documents shows the value of 4 elements: Program integration, staff commitment, teacher and student training and responses to the ELP. The findings of the projects carried out in Finland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Germany, Italy, France and Holland by focusing on these four elements are discussed.

Reports on the results of the ongoing pilot projects carried out in the Czech Republic, France, Ireland and Greece provide insights into different aspects of ELP applications. Novakova and Davidova (2001) present their evaluation of the pilot project carried out in Czech Republic by focusing on the impact of ELP application on the learning process. The developer of the ELP model used in this country with 902 pupils aged between 8 and 15 from April 1999 to June 2000 is said to “have opted for a hard-backed ring-binder of the standard format used in schools, into which pages can be inserted” (p.2). The evaluation of the study was made by asking learners the following questions:

- Do you find that the ELP helps you to learn foreign languages and how?
- Is everything in the ELP clear or do you need your teacher’s help? If you do, what with?
- What is missing from the ELP? What would you like to improve? (p.3)

The researchers concluded that “the idea of focusing on the learner has had a favourable impact on the learning process” (p.3).

L’Hotellier and Troisgros (2001) present their application of the portfolio studies at a French technical secondary school where students had been observed to “encounter difficulties in general subjects, particularly in languages”. Although the first step of their study was towards learner autonomy, after a 3-day-seminar with David Little, it was realized that “self-assessment can only be carried out effectively once learners have really become involved in the learning process and once they have worked out for themselves what they want to achieve in their language learning” (p.13). As a result of this realization, the following steps were taken:

1. Getting the students used to the method from their arrival of the lycee.
2. Getting them to take more responsibility for their own learning.
3. Getting them to reflect on their attitude towards learning and to define what they enjoyed and they did not enjoy during ELP studies (p. 13-14).

Although the researchers find it early to comment on the results, they discuss how their system functions in practical terms to realize the objectives of the project by stating

within the constraints of our programme, it seems difficult for the moment to let the students decide for themselves which points of grammar or functions they want to study, but we leave them free to choose how they will reach the objective which we have defined together. Each student has an individual progression sheet on which he or she notes the activities that have been chosen with the date and individual

assessment: “I can do this correctly with a lot of help/some help/ no help” – the aim being to transfer these assessments periodically to the ELP.

They also add “students can see they are making progress and are capable of analysing their own progress which sums up “Portfolio attitudes” (p.18).

O’Toole (2001) presents a brief commentary on the use of the ELP in a boys’ school in Ireland for secondary level learners of Irish, French, Spanish and Italian. The aim of the 4-year project is stated as *“to introduce the principles of learner autonomy, to language classroom with a focus on the language biography and dossier by involving learners in their own learning”* (p.35). The evaluation of the project was made by asking learners how they liked learning French in the way they did. As they state *“the students’ comments show how the use of the ELP can contribute positively to the learners’ learning process”* (p.36).

Giovousoglou (2001) reports the results of the pilot project carried out in Greece in lower (12-15 years) and secondary (15-18 years) schools with the following aims:

- Motivate learners with a view to diversified, life-long language-learning at all levels.*
- Develop ability to live in a multilingual, multicultural Europe.*
- Assess and enhance partial abilities, not recognised by official diplomas (for instance intercultural skills) (p. 27).*

The researcher presents the general and specific objectives identified for the application of ELP in their specific teaching situation and the results of the project

from the point of view of the learners as follows *“Most learners state that the ELP encourages them to think about their own learning process and to develop strategies for acquiring communication skills. They think that it helps them to identify their strengths and weaknesses, to improve their performance and rectify their errors. They can determine their learning needs and understand the hows and whys”*. The students made individual action plans on the basis of their self-assessments and reflections carried out at the end of each course (p.28).

The research studies and pilot projects presented in this section illustrate different ways of applying principles behind the CEF as suggested in CEFR. That is to say, each learning environment is unique and while preparing courses for learners in different educational settings, the characteristics of the learning environment, language policies of the countries should be taken into consideration.

1.3. The Aim of the Research Study

In recent years not only abroad but also in Turkey the new aspects suggested in the CEF have been integrated into the curriculum in different educational settings. It is found essential to evaluate the applications made to find out in what ways the principles behind the CEF have been reflected in course and syllabus design, material development, assessment and evaluation and teacher training.

This research study aims to focus on one of the aspects of the CEF which is related to the role of self evaluation in the process of language learning. It is believed that to help students develop their awareness of how and in what ways they learn,

teachers should take into consideration their students' learning process depending on the reports to be prepared in the light of portfolio studies. For this reason, this research will also deal with teachers' attitudes towards their students' self evaluation.

Based on the purposes stated above this study addresses the following research questions:

- 1) How do students make use of self evaluation process in the CEF?
- 2) How do teachers take students' self evaluation into consideration?

1.4. Significance of the Research Study

Application of the CEF in different educational settings has made us take into consideration different aspects of teaching and learning processes. This research study which focuses on the students' self evaluation of their own learning process is believed to bring insights into how principles behind the CEF in relation to the use of European Language Portfolio may help us have an understanding of ways of promoting learner autonomy.

It is also thought that suggestions made for the teachers depending on the analysis of the objectives stated by the students related to different levels and skills will be enlightening for the teachers in terms of the methodological decisions they may make in the light of their evaluation of the students' reports.

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this section information will be given about the research design and data collection instruments used by stating the reasons for the choices made in terms of research methodology.

2.1. Qualitative Research Design

This research study has been carried out depending on qualitative research design, which is based more on contextualism, a “*system of thought that focuses on the event in its context*” (Roberts, 1982, p.277). This perspective acknowledges that one cannot make sense of events in their context simply by counting things or knowing their form and generating correlations. It seeks to find out what the event is all about.

In the explanations made about the nature of qualitative research, different aspects of the inquiry have been stated. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) define qualitative research as “*multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter*”. This kind of approach entails “*studying things in their natural*

settings, attempting to make sense of or interpreting phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (p.2).

On the other hand, Cresswell (1998) emphasizes the main problems dealt with in this kind of research by defining qualitative study as “*an inquiry process of understanding which is based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem*”. Therefore, “*the researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting*” (p.15).

The goal of qualitative research is defined by Maykut and Morehouse (1994) as “*discovering patterns which emerge after close observation, careful documentation, and thoughtful analysis of the research topic*”. What can be discovered by qualitative research is “*not sweeping generalizations but contextual findings*”. This process of discovery is “*basic to the philosophic underpinning of the qualitative approach*” (p.21).

There have been different views about the kind of questions qualitative researcher may ask. Mack et. al (2005) state that “*qualitative methods allow the researcher the flexibility to probe initial participant responses – that is, to ask why or how*”. According to them, “*the researcher must listen carefully to what participants say, engage with them according to their individual personalities and styles, and use ‘probes’ to encourage them to elaborate on their answers*” (p.4).

Mack et.al (2005) also explain the function of “*open-ended questions and probing*” as “*giving participants the opportunity to respond in their own words, rather than forcing them to choose from fixed responses, as quantitative methods do*”. Open-ended questions evoke responses that are “*meaningful and culturally salient to the participant; unanticipated by the researcher and rich and explanatory in nature*” (p.4).

According to Ereat (2007), “*qualitative research seeks out the ‘why’, not the ‘how’ of its topic through the analysis of unstructured information – things like interview transcripts, e-mails, notes, feedback forms, photos and videos*” (p.1).

Many writers in the field of educational and social science research have dealt with the idea of “*reconceptualizing generalizability*” (Eisner & Peshkin, 1990, p. 206). For example, Guba and Lincoln (1982) state the aim of (naturalistic) qualitative inquiry as “*to develop an ideographic body of knowledge*”. They suggest “*this knowledge is best summarized in a series of ‘working hypotheses’ that describe the individual case. Generalizations are impossible since phenomena are neither time- nor context-free (although some transferability of these hypotheses may be possible from situation to situation, depending on the degree of temporal and contextual similarity*” (p. 238).

Naturalistic inquiry entails collecting qualitative data which help the researcher get insights into people's attitudes, behaviours, value systems, concerns, motivations, and aspirations.

Since this study aims to evaluate the application of portfolio studies depending on students' evaluations of their learning processes and teachers' attitudes to their students' evaluation, research design has been made in the light of the principles of naturalistic inquiry. In this sense, the research was carried out by asking "why" and "how" questions to the participants "to encourage them to elaborate on their own answers" and "to get rich and explanatory responses in nature" as suggested by Mack et.al. (2005, p.4).

2.2. Data Collection Instruments

Qualitative research involves different methods of gathering and collecting of empirical materials such as case study, personal experience and introspective life story interview, observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts. This method of data collection is about exploring issues, understanding phenomena and answering questions.

There are two major approaches to gathering information about a situation, person, problem or phenomenon. Sometimes, information required is already available and it only needs to be extracted. However, there are times when the information must be collected. Based upon these broad approaches to information gathering, data are categorized as 'secondary' and 'primary' (Kumar, 1996). Primary sources provide first-hand information and secondary sources provide second-hand data. Observation, interviewing and questionnaires are examples of first sources; documents such as publications and personal records are examples of secondary sources (p.104).

In this study as the source of primary data, focus group interviews were conducted with students to get insights about the evaluations they made in relation to their learning process and achievements; and interviews were made with teachers to learn about their attitude to students' evaluation. As a secondary source, portfolio studies of the students were analyzed as "personal records" of students' self evaluation.

2.2.1. Interviews with Students and Teachers

Research methods used in this study are of qualitative nature which combines survey with focus group discussions and interviews with participants.

Focus groups are used as a method on their own or in combination with other methods, such as surveys, observations, single interviews and so on. Focus groups are useful for orienting oneself to a new field, generating hypothesis based on informants' insights, evaluating different research sites or study populations, developing interview schedules and questionnaires, and getting participants' interpretations of results from earlier studies. In this method, the aim is "*to contextualize the data collected and to create an interactional situation that comes closer to everyday life*" (Flick, 1998, p.114). The number of groups may change from 4 to 8 depending on the research question and on the number of different population subgroups required (p. 122).

Kreuger (1988) suggests that focus group interviews were born in the late 1930s by social scientists who had doubts about the accuracy of traditional information

gathering methods. Rice (1931) expressed concern in 1931 by stating that *"a defect of the interview for the purposes of fact-finding in scientific research is that the questioner takes the lead. Data obtained from an interview are likely to embody the preconceived ideas of the interviewer as the attitude of the subject interviewed. This leads to a more non-directive approach to interviewing where the emphasis is shifted from the interviewer to the interviewee"* (p.56, cited in Kreuger, 1988, p.18)

An important feature of a focus group is that it is a *"carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions in a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment"* (Kreuger 1988, p.18).

The common uses of focus groups which can be used at any point in a research program include:

1. obtaining general background information about a topic of interest;
2. stimulating new ideas and creative concepts;
3. diagnosing the potential for problems with a new program, service or product;
4. generating impressions of products, programs, services, institutions, or other objects of interest;
5. learning how respondents talk about the phenomenon of interest which may facilitate quantitative research tools (Stewart and Shamdasani 1990, p.15).

According to Patton (1990), focus group interviews are essential in the evaluation process as part of a needs assessment, during a program, at the end of the program, or months after the completion of a program to gather perceptions on the outcome of that program (p.39).

The strengths of focus group research are thought to stem from two characteristics: *“reliance on the researcher’s focus and group interaction”*. The researcher’s focus is evaluated as *“strength because it helps the researcher obtain data efficiently. The researcher forms the focus group and directs its interaction. The group’s interaction is another strength of focus group research because it sheds light on complex participant behaviors and motivations”* (Morgan 1997, p.13). Morgan (1997) states these features of focus group research may also be seen as a weakness if / when individuals are influenced from each other in a negative way.

The decision of whether to use focus groups depends on the limitations and strengths of focus groups in contrast to other evaluation techniques. A potential weakness of focus groups may occur when members do not express their real ideas (Davis and Cosenza, 1994). As it will be seen in the analysis of the interviews carried out with the students, all of the students participating in the interviews did not express their ideas in details since some extrovert students were more dominant.

Other weaknesses of focus group research can be stated as gathering opinions from a small number of people, participants not being representatives of population, and opinions being influenced by others in the group.

In the interviews with the students and teachers, opinions from a small number of participants were gathered due to the intensive program and limited time they had; so the participants cannot be seen as representing the population. In addition, some students were observed to be influenced by their friends and instead of expressing their original ideas they just repeated what another student had said.

Strengths of focus group research can be stated as understanding the *why* behind behaviors and attitudes, being able to clarify responses and probe for additional information, and incorporating group dynamics to enable further discussion around varying opinions shared.

In focus group interviews, it is easy to understand the background of the behaviors and attitudes of the group members. For instance, in the focus group interviews with the students, some passive ones who were not reluctant to speak at the beginning were observed to have involved in the discussions with their own ideas being impressed by the students speaking willingly. It was the group dynamics that enabled the participants to carry out a much more developed, strong and detailed discussion around varying opinions shared.

It can be concluded that the focus group research has much more positive and stronger points than its weak points. As Barbour (2007) states, focus groups are particularly useful for “*providing insights into process rather than outcome*” (p. 30).

In this study, the evaluation of the interviews with students and teachers were made depending on five axioms identified for naturalistic inquiry by Guba and Lincoln (1982).

According to the first axiom, in the naturalistic research study, it is possible to identify “*multiple, intangible realities of the participants*”. The naturalistic paradigm states that “*realities are multiple, constructed and holistic*”. The aim of such an inquiry is to seek information about the “*reality of the person or group being studied. This is in contrast to the positivist view that reality is single and*

fragmented” (p.237). This study sought information from the participants about their own perceptions of their learning process, which is believed to reflect their reality.

The second feature is “*the inquirer – object relationship*”. According to this axiom, “*the inquirer and the object influence each other*” (p.238). In this study, the researcher, that is the inquirer, got the students and teachers who were the object of the study to reflect on the application of portfolio studies. In the same way, the interviews made with them guided and influenced the researcher in making decisions about how to evaluate the portfolio studies (e.g. decision was made to analyze the portfolio studies of only the students of language classes).

The third axiom is related to “*the nature of truth statements*”. The aim of naturalistic inquiry is “*to develop an idiographic body of knowledge*” which is “*best encapsulated in a series of working hypotheses that describe the individual case, and that’s why generalizations are not possible*” (p.238). Since this study was carried out with a group of students and teachers in one institution and idiographic body of knowledge was obtained, it appears to be impossible to generalize the results although some transferability may be possible depending on the degree of contextual similarity.

The fourth axiom is “*the explanation of action*”. An action may be explainable in terms of “*multiple interacting factors, events, and processes that shape it and are part of it. The best method for assessing these patterns and webs is the field study that deals with them holistically and in their natural contexts*” (p.238). In this study, evaluation of students’ and teachers’ opinions was made holistically by taking into consideration multiple interacting factors that are believed to be influential in learning / teaching process.

The fifth axiom is related to “*the role of values in inquiry*”. Two premises have been taken into consideration in the light of this axiom, stated as:

- *Inquiries are influenced by inquirer values as expressed in the choice of a problem, evaluation, or policy option, and in the framing, bounding, and focusing of that problem, evaluation, or policy option; and*
- *Inquiry is influenced by the choice of the substantive theory utilized to guide the collection and analysis of data and in the interpretation of findings”*
(p.238).

It should be noted that to have an understanding of the rationale behind the CEF entails development of an understanding of the learning process and the need to focus on the learner in the same line with the principles suggested in the CEF. Therefore, naturalistic inquiry to be carried out with a qualitative research design is believed to make it possible to reflect this kind of understanding.

2.2.2. Portfolio Studies

As a secondary source of data collection, portfolio analysis has been made to evaluate students’ ‘personal records’ of their learning process, to identify the changes they observed in the way they learned, and to have an understanding of the role of self assessment in learning ‘how to learn’.

Depending on the aim of the study, the analysis of portfolio studies was limited to two sections of the European Portfolio titled ‘Assessing the Language Learning Process’, and ‘My Personal Language Achievement’; that is to say, the research inquiry was influenced by the choice of the inquirer expressed in the choice of the problem.

Participants and Research Setting

The participants in this study were from the 9th, 11th and 12th grade of a private high school in İstanbul. 9th grade students were all within the frame of A1 and / or A2 reference levels – which is elementary. 11th and 12th grade students were in the language classes. 11th grade students were all within the frame of B1 and / or B2 reference levels – which is intermediate. 12th grade students were in level B2, C1 and / or C2. The study took place in a private high school appreciated for its studies in the European Language Portfolio. The current study was carried out in the Fall Term of 2009 – 2010 academic year. Focus group interviews were conducted with 7 students from 9-A, 6 students from 9-B, 6 students from 11th grade, 13 students from 12th grade. The number of students whose portfolios were analyzed was 34.

Before conducting interviews with students and teachers, an interview was carried out with the head of the English Language Department to learn about the application of the CEF / portfolio and it was learned that preparatory class students and high school students were carrying out these studies. Through consultations with the head of the department to make decision about the classes to carry out the study with, the research was decided to be limited with the 9th grade students because they were said to be carrying out these studies regularly. The first focus group interviews were made

and later on these students' portfolios were analyzed. After the analysis of portfolios of these students, by consulting the head of the department decision was made to extent the reserach with the students of language classes in order to provide information about the ongoing process of portfolio applications.

CHAPTER 3

ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION OF INTERVIEWS AND PORTFOLIO STUDIES

In this section analysis and evaluation of the interviews made with the students and teachers and the students' portfolio studies will be presented.

The interviews were conducted in Turkish, and then the tape scripts of the spoken data were translated into English. (See Appendices 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; p. 138-147 for the tape scripts of the Turkish spoken data; and Appendices 6,7,8,9, 10; p. 148-156 for the English translation).

3.1. Analysis and Evaluation of Focus Group Interviews with the Students

To evaluate students' ideas about their own evaluation, first of all, tape scripts of focus group interviews were written by indicating how each student participated in the interview to illustrate the flow of the conversation among the students. In the second step, analysis of the interviews was made depending on the aspects of the research study related to the students' ideas about how they benefitted from portfolio studies, and how their teachers took their studies into consideration.

Since all the ideas are believed to have significance in this kind of research, all the utterances were analyzed in the light of the research questions. When it was thought necessary to give specific reference to specific expressions of the participants,

explanations were made depending on the actual statements of the participants in the evaluation section.

Focus group interviews with the students were conducted in four separate sessions. The first interview was made with 7 students from 9-A. The questions asked to them were as follows:

Question 1 – In what ways did you benefit from the portfolio study, what do you think about the portfolios?

Question 2 – Are there any concrete examples of the things you can do now, which you were not able to do before? When you consider your fundamental skills, in which one do you think you made the greatest progress; reading / writing / listening?

Question 3 – Have you improved equally at each skill, or are you at level B1 for some skills and at A2 for others? Are there any situations in which you say, for example, my writing is good but I have difficulty in learning?

Question 4 – Would you prefer keeping the portfolios?

Question 5 – Do you make such remarks as “thanks to this study I saw that” or “I wouldn’t have seen that” or is it expectable that we made a certain amount of progress in the program? Do the statements here guide you well?

Question 6 – Do you think that changes are being made in the studies in the light of your opinions concerning the portfolios? How do the teachers make use of these evaluations? How do you think they are taken into account?

Question 7 – I see that you are very conscious of the necessity of English in your lives; do all of your classmates agree with you?

Question 8 – Are there any expressions that you find insufficient in term of representing your learning style? Or do you think there are items the expressions of which would be better?

Question 9 – Are there any expressions for which you would say “I could not do these, but now I can”?

The 2nd interview was conducted with 4 students from 9-B and all of the students participated in the interview expressing their ideas.

The questions asked in this interview were as follows:

Question 1- In what ways did you benefit from the portfolio study?

Question 2- Would you like to keep the portfolios?

Question 3- Why do you think portfolio studies are done?

Question 4- Were you given feedback by your teachers after the portfolio studies?

Question 5- How do you think your teachers make use of portfolio studies?

Question 6- Do you think there is anything that you could not do before but now you can do?

Question 7- How do your teachers make use of portfolio studies in your opinion?

(In the 2nd interview, the 5th question was repeated in this way for one student who participated in the interview later).

Question 8- Do you believe in the benefits of portfolio?

Question 9- Do you think you are at the same level for all the skills: writing, reading and speaking? Are you at level B1 in all of them?

The 3rd interview was conducted with 6 students from 11th grade; and 4th interview, with 13 students from 12th grade. The number of students participating in the interview from 11th grades was 2 out of 6; and from 12th grade, 4 students out of 13.

Although the interview questions had been predetermined to get students' ideas about certain aspects of the application of portfolio studies, the flow of the interview led the researcher to make changes in the expressions and the order of the questions. Moreover, in the 3rd and 4th interviews conducted with 11th and 12th grade students, the same interview questions had been planned to be directed to them; however, the interviewer could get students' ideas only about 'how they benefitted from portfolio studies' in general. Therefore, other questions were not directed to them.

To present students' ideas about how they benefitted from the portfolio studies, in the 1st interview, the answers given to the questions except the 6th one; and in the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th interviews, all the answers given to the questions except the 4th, 5th and 7th one were analyzed and evaluated. Students' answers to the other questions (the 6th question in the first interview; the 4th, 5th, and 7th questions in the 2nd interview) were analyzed and evaluated as a reflection of their ideas about how their teachers took portfolio studies into consideration.

It should be noted that although the analysis of focus group interviews was made in two sections in the light of the research questions, there were some expressions of the students which could be evaluated as related to both aspects of the study. For example; while student A from 9-B stated her opinion in terms of how she thought

her teachers made use of their reports by saying “our teachers check our inadequacies”, she also reflected her ideas about how she benefitted from portfolio studies by indicating that “they were made aware of their inadequacies by their teachers who checked their reports”. This kind of overlap in students’ expressions was identified in the analysis of the answers given to different kinds of questions.

An important reason why some answers given to different questions in focus group interviews may overlap with each other results from the fact that the interviewer may need to make modifications in either the type of questions or order of them depending on the responses of the participants. This natural feature of focus group interviews is an important factor leading to difficulties in the analysis of verbal data, which entails detailed analysis of all utterances of the participants.

Decisions about how to present students’ ideas in the analysis and evaluation section were made by analyzing the answers given to the questions which had been written in the order of expression to indicate which students answered the questions in the flow of the interview. This first analysis revealed that the answers could be evaluated under three groups to identify different aspects of the benefits of portfolio studies.

In the following section, the analysis and evaluation will be made depending on these three aspects:

- a) What the students think about the benefits of portfolio studies.
- b) What the students think they could not do but they can do now.
- c) What the students think about their level in different skills.

The students are indicated with the first letter of their names not to reveal their identity. Since there are two students the initials of whose names are the same, one of these students is indicated with the letter 'A', the other one with 'X'.

3.1.1. Students' ideas about how they benefitted from the portfolio studies

a) What the students think about the benefits of portfolio studies

When the first question of the first interview was directed to the students to get their ideas about the benefits of portfolios, 2 students out of 7 expressed their ideas as follows:

Student M: *We see our weaknesses as a part of this study and what we can and cannot do, and then we work on these and try to improve ourselves.*

Student V: *We try and examine ourselves while filling these portfolio documents out.*

It has been seen that while Student M expresses his ideas about how they benefitted from the portfolio studies as “*seeing their weaknesses*” and “*understanding what they can and cannot do*”, student V states “*they try and examine themselves*” with the help of these studies.

As an answer to the 1st question of the 2nd interview, 2 students out of 6 stated their ideas as follows:

Student A: *I saw myself, I realized what I lacked, where I was correct and I tried to complete them, I started to fulfill my inadequacies and do things better than I did*

before. I became aware of that and normally I wasn't even aware that I did those things inadequately.

Student B: I was disregarding the things that I couldn't do, then these things (which I disregarded) came up before me, and then by thinking that these were my inadequacies I got ahead of them. I kept them under control.

Both of the students A and B emphasized the benefit of portfolio as “*helping them realize (their) inadequacies and the progress (they) made*”. Student B also stated that he had overcome his inadequacies becoming aware of the reasons of the difficulties he had related to certain aspects of his language studies.

After getting students' ideas about the benefits of portfolio studies in general, the interviewer asked the students ‘why they thought portfolio projects were carried out’ with the 3rd question and the following answers were given:

Student A: It may be to evaluate ourselves. It may be for the future, for the university, it is intended for us eventually.

Student B: It may be to see ourselves or to learn about certain language studies it could be a project for our future. I heard that other countries don't request a visa when you hold a portfolio or it could be a different key to enter a country.

Student E: I find it useful; I saw my deficiencies and corrected them when necessary.

As seen in their statements, while student E sees the aim of the application of portfolio studies as ‘*helping them become aware of their deficiencies*’, student A and B emphasize ‘*the significance of these studies for their future education abroad*’.

During the interview, since all the students did not express their ideas about how they benefitted from the portfolio studies, the researcher found it necessary to ask the students “whether they believed in the benefits of these studies” to encourage them to participate in the interview with the 8th question. This time only one more student (X) stated his ideas together with the other students (A, B and E).

The students expressed their ideas as follows:

Student E: *It is useful. I noticed that it is harder to write and speak by thinking in Turkish; I noticed that I have to think in English.*

Student B: *It enables us to see where we have inadequacies, it helps for the studies that we will make abroad, I mean there are a lot of benefits. I had a few foreign friends, when I sat with them and made conversation, my expression style was different, I advanced to higher levels, I started using different words, there were questions like the questions in portfolio, I compared those questions with mine and I found some of my inadequacies, it enabled me to reflect myself better and in a shorter way by correcting this inadequacies.*

Student A: *It would be useful if we cared about it. It told me to repeat the words aloud, and then I decided to do so at home and I realized that it was more useful. Also, I didn't use to read the paragraphs fully, I used to skip the bits of information and I make a lot of mistakes. Now I read them thoroughly.*

Student X: *I started using the English-English dictionary more often. I used to look up the meanings of words in Turkish when I used to try looking them up in English but it was difficult for me, now it is easy and I am capable of using English-English dictionaries thanks to the portfolio studies. It helped me understand the written texts;*

it enabled me to notice more easily its subject and what it was really about, it helped me to better understand and answer questions about the text.

The benefits of portfolio studies mentioned by the students as an answer to the last question can be summarized as follows:

- Starting to speak and write by thinking in English (student B)
- Having a chance to have education abroad (student B)
- Developing level of proficiency (student B)
- Learning different ways of asking questions and ways of expression (student B)
- Learning how to learn vocabulary (student A)
- Developing reading skills (student A,X)
- Learning how to use dictionaries (student X)

In the interview with the 11th grades, 2 students expressed their ideas about the portfolio studies as follows:

Student H: *I think it will be good for us because there is a passport in it. The passport covers lots of things in it that's why it will be good for the university. It is also good for our teachers since they can see what we can do and what we cannot do at the same time. You see how good you are or not, you see your weaknesses and it is also possible to see the teachers' opinions about us.*

Student T: *I think it will be useful in the future but not now. And I don't really remember much because I filled it just once. I believe in the benefits of the portfolio studies. It will be good for us in the future. We could have evaluated the portfolios if*

we had done it properly in the past years but we filled them in only once last year. That's why we can't find anything to say.

Although 6 students took part in the interview, only 2 students' active participation may indicate that the others were not much aware of these studies because they had not carried out the portfolio studies at all or they just did not want to be involved in the conversation.

Student T's statement revealed that he had some ideas about the portfolio studies. However, since they filled in the portfolios only once the previous year, they could not make use of the study. This is the reason why he had nothing to say about it. On the other hand, student H stated in what way he thought portfolio studies were useful both for the students and for the teachers.

In the interviews with the 12th grades, just like the students of 11th grade, students did not seem to be willing to participate in the interview actively. 4 students out of 13 stated their ideas as follows:

Student C: I have got the language passport but I really don't have any idea about it. But I think this passport can be useful for the students who want to go abroad and study there. I think the portfolio studies make some contributions to our learning but not completely. Maybe it is useful to know students more closely but not one hundred percent. It does not matter whether we carry out this study or not.

Student G: I understood that I have to use the sources while doing research during the process of project. I saw the need of making use of sources more with the help of

portfolio studies. Our teachers directed us better. The language passport is necessary and important for me because I want to study abroad.

Student L.E: It helped me improve my oral interaction skills. I see myself better in reading. I see that I can write poems.

Student K. A.: We don't really remember much about portfolio studies because it is our last year at school.

Student C's statement revealed that he was not aware of the function of language passport. Although he had some ideas about portfolio studies and in what ways it might be useful for them, it was clear that he did not benefit of the study at all. Students G stated his awareness of the need to make use of different sources in research studies and how their teachers directed them. Student L. E. mentioned the improvement he made in oral interaction skills, reading and writing poems. On the other hand, what student K.A said showed that being a 12th grade student, his main concern was not the portfolio studies since they would be taking the university exam at the end of the year.

Main differences observed in the number of the students participating in the interviews and in the way they expressed their ideas as an answer to the questions related to "how they benefitted from the portfolio studies" revealed significant differences among the students of 9th, 11th and 12th grade students. While the 9th grades made more detailed explanations about their learning process, 11th and 12th grades preferred to make comments on these studies in more general terms. This kind of difference may have resulted from the differences in the application of the study with students of different grades. The 9th grade students' comments reflected the

effect of the long lasting and regular application of the study on their awareness of their weaknesses and strengths, the progress they made in certain aspects of language study, and their understanding of ‘how they learn’ better. On the other hand, 11th and 12th grade students who expressed their ideas were observed to have been aware of the use of the studies; however, the number of the students participating in the interview gave the impression that most of the students had not made use of these studies at all.

b) What the students think they could not do but they can do now

Another aspect of the analysis and evaluation of the portfolio studies was about the students’ ideas related to the progress they observed in their learning process. In the 1st interview, the students were asked “*Are there any concrete examples of the things you can do now which you were not able to do before?*”. When no answer was given to that question,, another question was asked to elicit their ideas. The question was: When you consider your fundamental skills, in which one do you think you made the greatest progress? In reading? In writing or listening?

2 students out of 7 explained what kind of changes they observed in their learning behaviors with the help of portfolio studies as follows:

Student Ö: *I wanted the teachers to speak slowly when teaching and I did not prefer them to speak quickly, but now I can follow with ease.*

Student N: *When we read the text on our own at home, we don’t understand much, but for example, when we read it with our teachers in the classroom we understand well because they provide us with explanations when needed.*

As an answer to question 9 “Are there any expressions for which you would say ‘I couldn’t do these, but now I can’, the following explanations were given by 4 of the students out of 7:

Student M: *I didn’t choose “I understand well while dramatizing”, but in literature class, we dramatized a subject and I understood better, I was thinking wrong then. For example, while I speak I understand very well now, because I say ‘I know this word.*

Student V: *I didn’t choose the part “when I see pictures of words” but now actually I remember pictures of a text more easily and understand well when it is visual.*

Student N: *I didn’t mark “I understand well when I underline” but I noticed that I remember the underlined sentences better in an examination.*

Student Ö: *I was able to understand easier when I underlined at the beginning of the year but now I understand easier without underlining.*

The expressions of the students illustrate in what ways they became aware of the change in their learning behavior. These changes also reflect in what ways the courses they had (e.g. drama course) changed their understanding of ‘how they learn better’.

In the 2nd interview, as an answer to question 6 which was about what they thought they had not been able to do but could do as a result of the portfolio studies, 3 students out of 6 stated their ideas as follows:

Student X: *I noticed how I improved my foreign language more and more. I learned that foreign language passport should be used while going to foreign countries or*

universities. I hadn't known those kinds of applications before; I learned them during the preparatory year. We were working a little bit harder in the preparatory class, this year we do less, at the beginning of the year and at the end of the year. Naturally we make mistakes. Because it's a new language, you don't know anything, you start from the beginning. At the beginning it made me see my inadequacies..... I wasn't able to write articles from the scratch, thanks to that I learned how to write.... I started noticing my faults over the examples, and because of this, I started thinking about the information given, and it helped my studies a lot. I know that it is something prepared by the whole European Union and the European Language schools and I think that it is necessary.

Student A and B gave specific examples of their learning process. Student A said she didn't know anything about writing “*formal letters*” but later on she realized that she started to use this kind of information.

Student B stated “*When I was asked to compose a paragraph with little notes at preparatory class I used to find the words meaningless but now I think I can write more easily*”, and added “*When I compare the things that I did during the preparatory year and the things that I do now, I find them ridiculous; I mean I make none of those mistakes now, I now know how to deal with these*”.

The answers given to question 8 (Do you believe in the benefits of portfolio?) in the 2nd interview were also related to this aspect of the analysis made here. This is the reason why the analysis and evaluation made for this question in the previous section can also be evaluated as providing insights into the improvement they had during the portfolio studies.

c) What the students think about their level in different skills

The third aspect of the analysis and evaluation of the portfolio studies was about what the students thought in terms of the progress they observed in 4 skills (Interview 1 with 9A students, question 2 / second statement). First of all 2 students out of 7 stated their ideas.

Student Ö said *“I wanted the teachers to speak slowly when teaching and I did not prefer them to speak quickly, but now I can follow with ease”*.

Student N was seen to be aware of the difficulty they had in understanding reading texts and in what ways their teacher helped them overcome their difficulties with necessary explanations. She expressed her ideas as follows:

When we read the text on our own at home, we don't understand much, but for example, when we read it with our teachers in the classroom we understand well because they provide us with explanations when needed.

To encourage other students to express their ideas, the question was repeated for them (question 3). This time only one more student (student V) answered the question by saying *“we haven't had the opportunity to analyze ourselves concerning our improvements in the four skills, we didn't keep those documents with us, we filled out the parts that the teachers told us to do”*.

The differences in students' ideas reflect the fact that students in the same class may get different benefits of the same study depending on their level of proficiency, learning behavior and study habits. This kind of awareness of the students reflected in their statements in the interviews can be evaluated as an important benefit of the portfolio application for these students' learning process.

In the 2nd interview conducted with 9-B, as an answer to question 9, 3 students out of 6 stated their ideas.

Student E just said at which level he thought he was by saying, “*I believe that I’m at level B1*”.

Student B said “*I go abroad frequently as well, I speak to foreigners. I developed my ability to express myself there. I’m higher than B1*”, which shows that he did not think he made benefit of the study.

Student A expressed her ideas in more details:

- *It differs a lot. It’s different in listening or speaking, I understand easier when I’m listening, when I’m speaking I have to think about the sentences and the sentence structures, I have to make the correct choice of words and therefore I have a little difficulty. I believe I’m at higher levels in reading.*
- *I believe that I’m better at every skill because I stayed abroad in the past. I believe I’m a little higher than B1. Generally I can speak very well in English. I understand quite well what I read. I understand quite well so long as there aren’t any difficult words that even the English have difficulty in understanding.*

Overall analysis of the students’ statements about their ideas related to the progress they made at different levels revealed that they not only became aware of the kind of language difficulties they had but also the reasons of them and ways of overcoming their problems. However, differences in the students’ ideas in terms of how they benefitted from the portfolio studies may be interpreted as a reflection of

- different applications of the teachers in different classes as a result of their attitudes to these studies;
- the students' willingness or unwillingness to carry out the studies; or
- the differences in their understanding of the rationale behind the portfolio studies.

3.1.2. Students' ideas about how their teachers take portfolio studies into consideration:

In the 1st and 2nd interviews carried out with 9th grades students were asked about a) how their teachers take portfolio studies into consideration to learn in what ways their teachers make use of their reports and b) if they were given feedback about their own evaluation.

a) The first question directed to the students in 1st interview (question number 6) to get their ideas about their teachers' attitude was "Do you think that changes are being made in the studies in the light of your opinions concerning the portfolios?" Since no answer was given to that question, another question was asked as "How do the teachers make use of these evaluations? How do you think they are taken into account?"

3 students out of 7 answered the question. One of the students (Student M) stated his ideas, saying "*they pay more attention to us when they see our writings and deficiencies there*".

However two students had different ideas. Student V said "*they never look at them; they evaluate according to class work and MY P(middle year program) studies*". Student Ö stated "*The teachers don't need it, they already know our situation*".

Although these 3 students were from the same class, differences were observed in their evaluation of their teachers' attitude to portfolio studies, which may be evaluated in different ways.

The students may not be aware of how their teachers benefit from the portfolio studies because they have not made them aware of the rationale behind portfolio studies. It can also be inferred that teachers may have already internalized and assimilated the rationale behind the CEF in such a way that they make the evaluation of their students depending on their class work being good observers.

In the 2nd interview as an answer to the question "how their teachers make use of portfolio studies" (question numbers 5 and 7), 3 students out of 6 stated their ideas as follows:

Student A: *They can check our inadequacies. They may think to consider these or maybe they think someone marked it just to have it done. They can use them to help us mostly*

Student B: *They can test us.*

Student X: *They find my inadequacies when they compare the way I see myself and their opinions, so I learn my deficiencies and it helps me, so the teachers are right to utilize them*

These students from 9-B are seen to be aware of the rationale behind portfolio studies which shows that their teachers have made them aware of their positive attitude to their students' assessments by providing them with feedback or designing classroom tasks in the light of their evaluation.

b) In the 2nd interview as an answer to the other question “whether they were given feedback by their teachers or not after the portfolio studies” (question number 4), 3 students out of 6 stated their ideas as follows:

Student A: We did something, I mean we were given a photocopy and we filled them in but we didn't talk much about it, we filled and stuck it on our notebooks, nothing more is done. Maybe we haven't started yet, but until now sometimes they gave us our portfolios, took them back, sometimes they gave us the part B1, we filled the parts of B1

Student X: No feedback given to me.

Student B: They were filled in and we left them aside. Teachers didn't do much of anything, our preparatory class teachers did something last year. None of the teachers ask us to work about this subject currently. In fact, we studied language in the preparatory class there, so the teachers considered this important but here I never did it. I mean sticking them on notebooks, furthermore they assigned it as homework, and they considered so...

While student A and X state that they were not given feedback by their teachers student B compares the preparatory class application with the current situation. Depending on student B's comment, it can be thought that his preparatory class teacher was sensitive in applying these studies and providing students with feedback. This kind of difference in students' comments reveal that effectiveness of portfolio studies depend mostly on the teachers' attitude.

3.2. Analysis and Evaluation of Interviews with the Teachers

Focus group interviews were planned to be conducted with 4 teachers together; however, due to the heavy program of the teachers, 2 teachers were interviewed together and then individual interviews were made with 2 other teachers (See Appendix 5, p. 145 for the tape script of the interviews with the teachers; and Appendix 10, p. 154 for the English translations).

The following questions were asked to the teachers:

Question 1- How do you make use of the students' evaluations? How do you generally rate the studies based on European Language Portfolio? How do you think the students evaluate their own learning processes, specifically based on the "*I can do*" and "*How I learn*" parts in the portfolio studies?

Question 2- Do the students' responses match your viewpoint?

Question 3- Are there any changes made in the content of the program based on the information there?

The analysis of the answers given to these questions were analyzed in two groups under the titles of "How teachers think students benefitted / might benefit from the portfolio studies" and "How teachers take their students' evaluation into consideration". As in the analysis of the interviews with the students, since all the ideas expressed by the teachers are believed to have significance in this kind of research, all the utterances have been taken into consideration in the analysis and evaluation.

3.2.1. How teachers think students benefitted / might benefit from the portfolio studies:

Teachers expressed their ideas about how students benefitted from the portfolio studies as follows:

- they become more aware of what and how much they know (teacher N)
- they gain consciousness (teacher N, Ç)
- they take the studies seriously in terms of identifying their difficulties (teacher E)

Teacher N stated her ideas as follows:

“This part helps the students gain consciousness. They may know it subconsciously but they gain more awareness while they fill in the portfolio”.

Another benefit of portfolio studies for the students was stated by the same teacher as follows:

The first part helps them develop awareness. I was surprised; I mean, they behave very honestly. They would simply tick the boxes out and pass them over, but about ninety percent have evaluated themselves correctly, if not all. I also told them not to mark ‘I can do’ unless they are a hundred percent sure, with no hesitations. They take those parts very seriously since they perceive that they are given an opportunity and responsibility.

Teacher Ç expressed similar ideas to teacher N by making explanations about how she provided feedback to students by analyzing their reports as follows:

I noticed that when using the portfolios, filling the 'I can do' part, when they select what they can do the students become very happy to see how much they can do. I review the points that the student selects and I tick them if I agree that they can do it. Generally it is very useful for the students' awareness of what they do and do not know and it is a very good study to precisely show them what the level A1 or B1 is. When we say "your level is A1" to the student, they do not understand it; but they understand their level better when they see what a person at level A1 needs to know. I think it is very useful for self evaluation and to understand what these levels are. This study is useful for them. It provides the students with self awareness."

Teacher E not only stated her views about how students' benefitted from the portfolio studies but also explained the kind of questions students asked to her during these studies:

They take it very seriously when they fill out the "I can do" part, and I believe they become more aware of what and how much they know once they complete the portfolio. Or they pose questions because there are some statements them. They ask how they should write these. Then they appreciate the benefit of the "How I learn" part because they notice how they learn. I believe that this part is useful."

One benefit of portfolio studies was stated by teacher S as "becoming aware of the need to get students' views about their own learning process and also making them aware of self evaluation". Here is how she expressed her ideas:

Before the European Union Language Portfolio study the students' views weren't asked, there was no such concept. It began with the self-checks in the books and the students evaluated themselves in those parts. But for the first time, with this study, the concept of the self-evaluation of the student emerged and I find it very useful. Years ago, when I was selecting books I brought samples to my students and asked them to choose one and this caused some unrest at the department. But at the moment, the aim is to adjust the education based on their ideas and integrate them into education."

3.2.2. How teachers take their students' evaluation into consideration

Four of the teachers with whom interviews were conducted expressed different ideas in terms of "how they take their students' evaluation into consideration". One of the teachers (teacher N) said she "*encouraged the students to go on their studies in the way they thought they could learn better*".

Two teachers (teacher E and N) stated that their evaluations match those of the students by saying "*(their) evaluations match those of the students. There aren't many different points*" (teacher N), and "*(they) do not make use of these evaluations*" (teacher E).

Teacher E expressed her ideas as follows:

I believe that the most important thing is that the students are aware of their own learning. Awareness is very important because they have not questioned how they learned until that point; or they notice their abilities and difficulties as they read the

statements there. At least they think and evaluate what and how much they know. I don't benefit much from these evaluations but they are very useful for the students".

Teacher N who stated that she did not make much use of students' evaluation explained how they made their students aware of their expectation from them in the light of the objectives of portfolio studies as follows:

We printed the targets in there and hung them in the classrooms. They notice them as they pass, not only when the file is opened, but the whole year. For instance, if they have any difficulty writing short messages, the target to learn that becomes clear. Otherwise, they are not aware of what they learn or what they do in the textbooks. Here they make what they learn and what they aim more precise. It is a very good study but it puts a lot of weight on the teachers' shoulders, especially at private schools."

Another teacher (Ç) said that they did not directly make use of the students' reports. They already knew about the process and observed their progress.

An important way of taking into consideration students' reports in the courses was stated as "*integrating the deficiencies marked in the portfolio and repeating that subject in their classes*". This was teacher S who was observed to be taking her students' evaluation into consideration being aware of the rationale behind portfolio studies. She reflected her ideas as follows:

There is an item 'when someone asks for direction, I can describe it using simple instructions'" the student set this statement as a target or not, if it is marked as a target teachers definitely plan a classroom activity about the directions for the next lesson she says and she adds "with the instruction given by our head, we certainly

integrate the deficiencies marked in the portfolio and we repeat that subject in our classes.”

This teacher also thinks that students’ ideas must be taken into consideration by course book writers and they must be asked about their own learning process. She stated her ideas as follows:

I believe that even the book writers need to utilize these studies. I believe that they should see these parts that they believe the students lack and focus on these in their books. The students’ views must definitely be asked about their own learning process.

Apart from the benefits of portfolio studies in general, the teachers also expressed their criticisms about the passport although this was not the main concern of this study and no question was directed to them about it. Teachers E, Ç and S stated their criticisms as follows:

E: It’s very complicated and I get very confused on how to get it filled. I believe it should be re-evaluated.

Ç: There is not precise information that we are supposed to put in on the certificates that the students receive. I still don’t understand what the language passport is good for.

S: But I have some worries and questions about how the student will precisely benefit from this language passport. I don’t have much knowledge on where, which schools and how it will work.

Teacher Ç focused on another dimension of difficulties related to the application portfolio studies regularly:

Discrepancies normally occur when there are students leaving for other schools or students coming from other schools. We encounter some first years' problems in the portfolio study. It is a very good practice, assuming the student passes the whole four years here and good follow-up is done. There may be some problems the next year when they select their area of specialization. The files are re-distributed according to the classes, the names and classes of the students are re-written and some losses occur.

What she suggests to overcome this kind of difficulty is “to keep making the necessary changes regularly since the same portfolio is used every year.”

At the end of the interview, the same teacher (Ç) also made suggestions for effective application of portfolio studies as follows:

A separate unit should be formed for the portfolio studies. Portfolio follow-up is a separate job, considering the teacher's other works and class load. This job should be done by forming a separate proper unit in order for the portfolio study to be more useful.

The portfolio study is very useful if it is conducted as required here and applied accordingly.

As it is seen in the analysis made above, teachers differ in the way they evaluate students' reports and in the way they take students' evaluation into consideration. Four of the teachers are observed to have almost the same ideas about how students benefitted from the portfolio studies; however, there are different ideas in terms of

how they take the students' evaluation into consideration. Two teachers think that it is very useful for them to see the students' needs while two others think that they already know about their progress, their needs and their objectives. As they state this is the reason why they do not make use of the students' reports.

3.3. Analysis and Evaluation of Portfolio Studies

In this section, analysis and evaluation of students' reports on their learning experiences will be presented depending on the evaluation they made under two subsections titled 'Assessing the Language Learning Process' and 'My Personal Language Achievement' in the Language Biography section of the European Language Portfolio.

In the part titled 'Assessing the Language Learning Process', students are expected to recognize the most effective learning styles and the way they learn languages by evaluating themselves in terms of 'how they assess their learning process'; 'when they understand written or oral text better' and 'when they learn the words and grammatical rules better'. In the part titled 'My Personal Language Achievement' students are expected to record what they think they can do under normal circumstances, what they can do easily, what their objectives and priorities are related to four skills. Depending on the analysis of students' evaluation, in each section suggestions will be given in terms of what insights teachers may get from students' records and what kind of methodological decisions they may take.

In the analysis of portfolio studies made in the institution where this study was carried out, it was found out that only 9th grade students filled both of the sections titled ‘Assessing the Language Learning Process’ and ‘Assessment of Personal Language Achievement’. There were students who did not set any targets in specific sections.

3.3.1. Assessing the Language Learning Process

In the part ‘Assessing the Language Learning Process’ there are three sub-sections under the titles of:

- when they learn better
- when they understand written or oral text better
- when they learn the words and grammatical rules better

To illustrate in what ways students’ assessment of their language learning process may be taken into consideration by the teachers, analysis of 5 students’ reports from the 9th grade is presented as a reflection of their perception about their learning process. As it will be seen in the presentation of the analysis made there are common statements indicated by the students in relation to their assessment of their learning process. While documentation of these statements was made for each student to make suggestions for the teachers, all the items were re-written with the aim of identifying each student’s learning behavior as a whole and making decisions related to how the teacher can help the learner by analyzing the students’ statements.

a) 'I learn better when.....'

'How they learn better' When.....	What insights teachers may get from students' records: Teachers will learn that...
1. I have to study for a test or an exam.	the student is exam oriented
2. I study alone without being disturbed.	the student prefers individual study
3. I listen to music while studying on my own.	the student is musical
4. I have enough time to accomplish my studies.	the student needs extra time
5. The tasks are clearly explained.	the student expects clear instructions
6. I cooperate with others.	the student is interpersonal
7. Someone explains the unknown words to me.	the student needs teacher explanation for unknown words
8. I underline some sentences.	the student underlines sentences while learning
9. I see words and pictures.	the student is visual
10. I take part in role-playing.	the student is kinesthetic

Student E states that he learns better in the situations given with the numbers 4,5,6,9.

The teacher who analyzes this student's statements will learn

- the student needs extra time;
- the student expects clear instructions;
- the student is interpersonal;
- the student is visual.

The kind of information the teacher will get from this kind of analysis will help him decide in what ways he can help this learner. That is to say, the teacher may decide whether he needs to prepare tasks to provide the student with more opportunities for interaction, and whether or not these tasks should include more visual elements. The teacher should also make sure that the instructions for the tasks are clearly explained.

Student X states that he learns better in the situations given with the numbers 1,2,3,5,7,9,10.

The teacher who analyzes these statements will see that student X

- is exam oriented;
- prefers individual study;
- is musical, visual, kinesthetic
- expects clear instructions;
- needs teacher explanation for unknown words.

In this specific learning situation, the teacher needs to decide whether or not the tasks should include more visual and musical elements which are also compatible with role-playing activities and the tasks should also mostly be appropriate for self-study and clear for this special kind of learner.

Student A states that he learns better in the situations given with the numbers 2,3,7,8,10.

The teacher who analyzes student A's statements will learn that

- the student prefers individual study;
- she is musical and kinesthetic;
- she needs teacher explanation;
- she underlines sentences while learning.

It is seen that student X and A have common statements in terms of how they learn better, the only difference being in items 1, 5, 9. This is the reason why the suggestions made for student X above will be valid for student A, too. However, student A's statement indicating that "she learns better when she underlines sentences while learning" will also help the teacher learn that this student learns better when she highlights the most important elements in the text or teaching materials.

Student B states that he learns better in the situations given with the numbers 2,4,5,7,8,9.

The teacher who analyzes student B's statements will see that

- he prefers individual study;
- he needs extra time;
- the student expects clear instructions;
- he needs teacher explanation for unknown words;
- this student underlines sentences while learning English;
- he is a visual learner.

In this specific learning situation, the teacher primarily needs to adjust time necessities for his student. That is to say, he needs to consider the possibility of his students' needing more time than expected in an ordinary learning situation. The teacher also needs to decide whether or not the tasks should include more visual elements which are also compatible with self-study and finally the tasks might need to be prepared more clearly in consideration of this special kind of learner's needs

and learning process. Student B is seen to have similar comments with student A in the items 2, 7, 8, which indicates that the teachers observing similar learning behaviors in different students should take into consideration not only the differences but also the similarities of their students' learning process in the design of their courses.

Student V states that he learns better in the situations given with the numbers 2,4,5,7.

The teacher who analyzes these statements will see that student V

- prefers individual study;
- needs extra time;
- the student expects clear instructions;
- needs teacher explanation for unknown words.

The teacher needs to decide whether or not the tasks are appropriate for self-study and clear for this special kind of learner. Time management is another consequential factor to be considered.

b) ‘How they understand a written or oral text better’

‘How they understand a written or oral text better’	What insights teachers may get from students’ records: The teacher will learn (that)
1. I have an idea on the subject in advance.	the student expects background knowledge for the pre-reading and pre-listening tasks
2. The subject of the text makes me interested in it.	the subject of the text should be interesting for the student to be involved in the lesson
3. I take note of the important words.	the student recognizes and pays special attention to important key words in a written/oral text for comprehension
4. Someone explains the unknown words to me.	the student learns better when someone explains unknown words
5. I translate the text.	the student learns better when he translates the text
6. I take notes.	the student learns by taking notes
7. I talk to someone about the text.	the student learns by talking to someone; that is, s/he is extroverted and interaction is important for the student
8. I have the chance to listen to the text several times.	the student learns by listening in depth
9. I have to answer questions about the text.	the student learns by testing her/his comprehension through practice of acquired knowledge
10. I discuss the content of the text.	the student learns by interacting with others

Student E states that he understands a written or an oral text better in the situations given with the numbers 1, 2, 4,5,7,8.

The student’s teacher who analyzes these statements will learn that;

- the student expects background knowledge for pre-reading and pre-listening tasks;
- the subject of the text should be interesting for the student to be involved in the lesson;
- the student learns better when someone explains unknown words;
- the student learns better when he translates the text;

- the student learns by talking to someone; that is, he/she is extroverted and interaction is important for the students;
- the student learns by listening in depth.

In this learning situation the teacher needs to decide whether he needs to prepare pre-reading or pre-listening tasks to warm the students to the subject of discussion which, in addition, needs to be chosen carefully in consideration of such students' interests. The teacher may also need to explain words when necessary and/or let this kind of learner utilize L1 when s/he needs. Finally, the teacher needs to know that this student learns better through listening and interaction and thus he needs to focus on creating such learning atmosphere.

Student X states that he understands a written or an oral text better in the situations given with the numbers 1, 2, 3,4,5,6,7,8,9.

The teacher who analyzes these statements will learn that;

- the student expects background knowledge for pre-reading and pre-listening tasks;
- the subject of the text should be interesting for the student to be involved in the lesson;
- the student recognizes and pays special attention to important key words in a written/oral text for comprehension;
- the student learns better when someone explains unknown words;
- the student learns better when he translates the text;

- the student learns by taking notes;
- the student learns by talking to someone that is s/he is extroverted and interaction is important for the student;
- the student learns by listening;
- the student learns by testing her/his comprehension through practice of acquired knowledge.

In this specific learning situation, in addition to the suggestions made above for student E, another suggestion for the teachers is to encourage the learner to take notes when / if he needs and provide more comprehension questions for him to check his understanding of the text.

Student A states that he understands a written or an oral text better in the situations given with the numbers 1,3,4,6,8,10.

The teacher who analyzes these statements will learn (that) (about)

- the student expects background knowledge for pre-reading and pre-listening tasks
- the student recognizes and pays special attention to important key words in a written / oral text for comprehension
- the student learns better when someone explains unknown words
- the student learns by taking notes
- the student learns by listening

- the student learns by interacting with others

In this specific learning situation, the teacher needs to decide whether s/he needs to prepare pre-reading or pre-listening tasks to warm the students to the subject of discussion. The teacher may also need to explain words when necessary and encourage this learner to take notes when she needs. Finally the teacher needs to know that this student learns better through listening and interaction and thus she needs to focus on creating such learning atmosphere.

Student B states that he understands a written or an oral text better in the situations given with the numbers 1,2,3,4,5,6,7.

The teacher who analyzes these statements will learn (that)

- the student expects background knowledge for pre-reading and pre-listening tasks;
- the subject of the text should be interesting for the student to be involved in the lesson;
- the student recognizes and pays special attention to important key words in a written/oral text for comprehension;
- the student learns better when someone explains unknown words;
- the student learns better when he translates the text;
- the student learns by taking notes;
- the student learns by talking to someone that is s/he is extroverted – interaction is important for the student.

Apart from the suggestions made above, it can be stated that the teacher of this kind of learner should make choices of the text to study by taking student's interests into consideration, lead the learner make use of L1 while studying the text and provide opportunities for the student to learn through interaction.

Student V states that he understands a written or an oral text better in the situations given with the numbers 2, 4, 10.

The teacher who analyzes these statements will learn (that)

- the subject of the text should be interesting for the student to be involved in the lesson;
- the student learns better when someone explains unknown words;
- the student learns by interacting with others.

In this specific learning situation, the teacher needs to decide whether or not the tasks are chosen aptly in consideration of such students' interests. The teacher may also need to explain words when necessary. The teacher needs to know that this student learns better through interaction and thus s/he needs to focus on creating such learning atmosphere in which this type of learner feels confident to discuss the tasks at hand with her/his fellow students.

c) 'I learn the words and grammatical rules better when....'

'How they learn the words and grammatical rules better'	What insights teachers may get from students' records: The teacher will learn (that) the student
1. I remember the situations when I have heard them.	needs listening task
2. I use them while I am speaking.	needs oral interaction
3. Someone corrects me while I am speaking.	needs evaluative feedback
4. I take notes.	needs taking notes
5. I write them several times.	needs to write to learn better
6. I write them in short texts.	needs to write in short texts
7. I understand the rules well.	is analytical and needs the rules
8. I figure out the rules by myself.	is holistic and can figure out by himself/herself
9. I practice examples.	needs practice with examples
10. I study them for a test.	is exam oriented
11. I list the words.	learns better by making word lists

Student E states that he learns the words and grammatical rules better in the situations given with the numbers 1,2,3,6,7,8,9.

The teacher who analyzes these statements will see that the student

- needs listening task;
- needs oral interaction;
- needs evaluated feedback;
- needs to write in short text;
- is analytical and needs the rules;
- is holistic and can figure out by himself;
- needs practice with examples.

The kind of information the teacher will get from this kind of analysis will help her/him to decide whether s/he needs to consider using memorable real-life examples

through which such a learner can comprehend the correct use of vocabulary and grammar rules by hearing the teacher. Moreover, the teacher needs to encourage this student to use acquired knowledge in action through examples, dialogues and/or class-participation. The teacher should not hesitate to provide evaluative feedback for this student when he makes mistakes in oral production. The teacher should also bear in mind that this learner needs to write down the newly-learned words and grammar rules. Finally, the teacher should take into consideration analytical and holistic learner characteristics in the light of principles behind whole language education while providing learning opportunities in the lesson.

Student X states that he learns the words and grammatical rules better in the situations given with the numbers 1,2,3,4,5,7,8,9,10.

The teacher who analyzes these statements will see that the student

- needs listening task;
- needs oral interaction;
- needs evaluated feedback;
- needs taking notes;
- needs to write to learn better;
- is analytical and needs the rules;
- is holistic and can figure out by himself;
- needs practice with examples;
- is exam oriented.

It is seen that student E and X have common statements in terms of when they learn better the grammatical rules, the only difference being in items 4, 5, 10. This is the reason why the suggestions made for student E above will be valid for student X, too. For the teacher of this specific learner in addition to the suggestions given above it can be said the teacher should bear in mind that this learner needs to write down the newly-learned words and grammar rules and should also know that exams are important and that is one of the factors he studies carefully.

Student A states that he learns the words and grammatical rules better in the situations given with the numbers 1,2,4,7,9,10,11.

The teacher who analyzes these statements will see that the student

- needs listening task;
- needs oral interaction;
- needs taking notes;
- is analytical and needs the rules;
- needs practice with examples;
- is exam oriented;
- learns better by making word lists.

In this specific learning situation, the teacher needs to decide whether s/he needs to consider using memorable real-life examples through which such a learner can comprehend the correct use of vocabulary and grammar rules by hearing the teacher. S/he should encourage this student to use acquired knowledge in action through

examples, dialogues and/or class-participation and let the student to take notes while following the lesson and studying text. The teacher should guide and encourage this learner to make wordlists and preferably introduce her to using newly-acquired vocabulary words in sentences produced by her. For this student exams are important and that is one of the factors she studies carefully. Finally, s/he needs to feel free about introducing this student the rules behind what she is learning given that she is able to deal with that kind of information.

Student B states that he learns the words and grammatical rules better in the situations given with the numbers 1,2,4,5,6,7,8,9.

The teacher who analyzes these statements will see that the student (needs)

- listening task;
- oral interaction;
- taking notes;
- to write to learn better;
- to write in short text;
- is analytical and needs the rules;
- is holistic and he can figure out by himself;
- to practice with examples.

Student B is seen to have common learning behaviors with student E and student X in three aspects: having a need for listening tasks and oral interaction; learning by taking notes and having characteristics of both an analytical and holistic learner.

In the light of these three aspects the teacher is suggested to design tasks for analytical and holistic learners by including listening and speaking activities for the development of oral interaction and at the same time by designing the kind of activities that will help the learner apply and develop note taking behavior as a learning strategy.

Student V states that he learns the words and grammatical rules better in the situations given with the numbers 1,2,7,9.

The teacher who analyzes these statements will see that the student

- needs listening task;
- needs oral interaction;
- is analytical and needs the rules;
- needs practice with examples.

It is seen in the analysis of this student's statements that he has common statements with student A in terms of when he learns better. For this reason, suggestions made for student A in relation to the above mentioned items are also valid for student V.

While the section titled 'Assessing the Language Learning Process' was filled in by 9th grade students, the section titled 'My Personal Language Achievement' was filled in by all grades.

3.3.2. Assessment of Personal Language Achievement

In this section, analysis of students' portfolio studies will be presented by indicating which statements have been identified as objectives related to specific skills at different levels. To classify the objective statements at each level, first of all, portfolios of each student were analyzed to find out which ones they thought they could do and which items they stated as their objectives. Analysis of students' objective statements showed that there were certain objectives identified by different students. Depending on this analysis, suggestions were provided in terms of what kind of methodological decisions teachers should make to help students realize their objectives.

LISTENING

A2 (9th grades)

1. I can understand words and expressions related to everyday life such as basic personal and family information, school life, local area and employment. -Student M.E.
2. I can identify the main points of TV news such as interviews, events, accidents etc. when the topic is supported visually. -Student V. – Student Ö.

Suggestions: In case 1, the teacher who analyzes this kind of objective should identify the reasons for the student's difficulty in understanding basic information about daily life and try to find out whether this problem results from lack of grammatical knowledge or transferring this knowledge to audial comprehension. In the direction of the identification of the problem, the teacher may provide opportunities for the student to be exposed to different listening tasks and to develop his understanding of

basic personal information. In case 2, the teacher may initially need to change how this kind of information is given; that is to say, he / she may try activities to develop listening and reading skills instead of using visual materials. Secondly, the teacher may provide opportunities for this kind of students to practise a variety of activities in which they are encouraged to produce interviews and TV news themselves to become aware of what actually exists in such a piece of information.

B2 (11th grades)

1. I can understand TV documentaries, live interviews, talk shows, plays and the majority of films in standard dialect. - Student O.

2. I can understand the main ideas of complex speech on both concrete and abstract topics delivered in a standard dialect, including technical discussions in my field of specialization – Student K.A. – Student M.R.

3. I can use a variety of strategies to achieve comprehension, including listening for main points and checking comprehension by using contextual clues. – Student K.A. – Student M.R. – Student E.C. – Student S.

Suggestions: In case 1, the teacher may provide opportunities for this student to practise a variety of activities in which he is encouraged to produce the kind of language that is used in TV documentaries, live interviews, talk shows, plays and the majority of films. This sort of activities are believed to help students become aware of kind of words, structures, interaction patterns and discourse features that are actually used in them. The student can also be motivated to make interviews and/or organize short talk shows with classmates. In case 2, the teacher needs to teach basic vocabulary used in complex speech on both concrete and abstract topics and consolidate

presumed knowledge through practice in which the students are encouraged to produce similar language use. The students can also be motivated to take part in discussions in which use of technical vocabulary is necessary. In case 3, the teacher needs to allot a certain amount of teaching time to listening strategies and finding clues which will undoubtedly be to the benefit of this kind of students.

C1 (12th grades)

1. I can understand a wide range of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms, appreciating shifts in style and register. - Student E.
2. I can extract specific information from even poor quality, audibly distorted public announcements, such as in a station, stadium, etc. - Student E. – Student S. – Student B.Y.
3. I can understand complex technical information, such as operating instructions, specifications for familiar products and services. - Student U.
4. I can understand lectures, talks and reports in my field of professional or academic interest even when they are presented in a complex way. – Student B.Y. – Student U.
5. I can, without too much effort, understand films, which contain a considerable degree of slang and idiomatic usage. - Student E. – Student U.
6. I can understand radio and television programs in my field, even when they are demanding in content and linguistically complex. - Student U.
7. I can take detailed notes during a lecture on familiar topics in my field of interest, recording the information so accurately and so closely to the original that they are also useful to other people. - Student E.

Suggestions: In case 1, the teacher may provide opportunities for the student to practise the use of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms in class with classmates and to become familiar with such language use. In cases 2,3, 4, and 5, the teacher may need to introduce to the students the very basic vocabulary in such conditions so that even in an audibly difficult situation, they can presuppose or even figure out what is being said. In case 6, the teacher needs to introduce to the students the linguistically complex vocabulary in such conditions, in this case radio and television programs etc., so that they can know what to expect and presuppose or even figure out what is being said. The teacher may also need to prepare reading and vocabulary activities to maximize affinity to the vocabulary in such programs. In case 7, the teacher needs to introduce to the students the listening strategies in such conditions, so that they can decide what to include and what to exclude in their note taking.

READING

B1 (11th grades)

I can read and understand articles or interviews in newspaper and magazines in which someone takes a stand on a particular topic. – Student R.

Suggestions: In this case, the teacher who analyzes this kind of objective should identify the reasons for the student's difficulty in reading and understanding this kind of texts to find out whether this problem results from lack of grammatical or vocabulary knowledge or from the difficulty in transferring this knowledge to textual comprehension. In the direction of the identification of the problem, the teacher may provide opportunities for this student to overcome his difficulties in dealing with texts in the field of journalism.

B2 (11th grades)

1. I can rapidly grasp the content and the significance of news, articles and reports on topics connected with my interest (or my job), and decide if a closer reading is worthwhile. – Student K.A.

2. I can read and understand articles and reports on current problems in which the writers express specific attitudes and points of view. – Student K.A. – Student M.R. – Student O.

3. I can read letters on topics within my areas of academic or professional specialty or interest and grasp the most important points. – Student D. – Student S.

Suggestions: In these cases, the teacher may provide opportunities for the student to practice reading skills as skimming and scanning in order to ensure a better comprehension of the content of a text in different fields.

C1 (12th grades)

1. I can understand fairly long and demanding texts and summarize them orally. –Student B.Y. – Student U. - Student K.

2. I can read complex reports, analyses and commentaries where opinions, viewpoints and connections are discussed. - Student E. – Student S. – Student B.

3. I can extract information, ideas and opinions from highly specialized texts in my own field, such as, research reports - Student E. – Student B.Y. - Student K.

4. I can understand long complex instructions, for example, for a new piece of equipment, even if these are not related to my job or field of interest, provided I have enough time to reread them. - Student S.

5. I can easily read contemporary literary texts. - Student U. – Student K.

6. I can go beyond the concrete plot of a narrative and grasp implicit meanings, ideas and connections. - Student E. – Student S.

7. I can recognize the social, political or historical background of a literary work. - Student E. - Student K.

Suggestions: In case 1, the teacher may provide opportunities for the students to practise such reading skills as skimming and scanning in order to ensure a better comprehension of the general portion of a text. In cases 2, 3 and 4, the teacher may try teaching these students how to deduce the important points from such texts and also get them accustomed to the structure of different types of texts. In addition to these suggestions in case 5, the teacher may also teach the students such methods as reading for the gist instead of the bulk of the text at hand. In case 6, the teacher may help them become familiar with the discourse features of texts and work with them on rephrasing certain explicit sentences so that they can develop inferencing skills to grasp implicit meanings. In case 7, the teacher may try giving students background information about the topic discussed in the text and help them become aware of the significance of having background knowledge about the content of a text in developing reading skills. .

C2 (12th grades)

1. I can recognize puns on words and appreciate texts whose real meaning is not explicit (for ex. irony, satire.) - Student S.

2. I can understand texts written in a very colloquial style and containing many idiomatic expressions or slang. - Student G.

3. I can understand manuals, regulations, and contracts even within unfamiliar fields.

- Student S.

4. I can understand contemporary and classical literary texts of different genres (poetry, prose, drama) - Student G.

5. I can read texts such as literary columns or satirical glosses where much is said in an indirect and ambiguous way and which contain hidden value judgments. - Student S.

6. I can recognize different stylistic means (puns, metaphors, symbols, connotations, ambiguity) and appreciate and evaluate their function within the text. - Student G.

Suggestions: In the cases stated above, the teacher may identify what kind of difficulties students have in reading. In the light of the analysis of each objective statement, he/she may design tasks for the students to work with texts of different genres and help them develop reading skills and strategies to enable them to cope with specific problems related to recognizing colloquial style, different stylistic means and grasping the implied meanings and ambiguous expressions.

SPOKEN INTERACTION

A1 (9th grades)

I can ask people questions about where they live, people they know, things they have, etc. and answer such questions addressed to me provided they are articulated slowly and clearly.- Student X

Suggestions: The teacher may provide opportunities for this student to take part in conversations in class with classmates so that he can be encouraged to interact with others.

A2 (9th grades)

1. I can make simple transactions in post offices, shops or banks. - Student X – Student N.

2. I can ask for and give directions by referring to a map or plan. - Student N.

Suggestions: In case 1, the teacher may provide the students with necessary vocabulary to use in those kinds of formal places and have the students use that vocabulary with related real life exercises in role-playing. In case 2, the teacher may provide the basic vocabulary for directions and have the students make as many examples as possible in class.

B1 (11th grades)

I can agree and disagree politely. - Student M. - Student Ī.

Suggestions: In this case, the teacher may make up situations that the students may relate to their own lives and answer questions relating to those situations comfortably. To support their responding skills, the teacher may provide them with set phrases to be used in such cases.

B2 (11th grades)

1. I can initiate, maintain and end conversation naturally with effective turn-taking. - Student O.

2. I can exchange detailed factual information on matters within my fields of interest. - Student M.R. - Student O.

3. I can engage in extended conversation in a clearly participatory way on most general topics. – Student K.A. – Student O.

4. I can contribute to a discussion on familiar topics by confirming comprehension, inviting others in, etc. - Student K.A. – Student O.

5. I can carry out a prepared interview, checking and confirming information, following up interesting replies - Student M.R.

Suggestions: In cases 1,2, 3 and 4, the teacher may provide the students with different kinds of dialogues from books, tapes and films, have the student prepare written dialogues for specific situations and act them out in class with classmates. The teacher can also bring up various conversation topics in class and encourage these students to participate in the topics discussed and separate the students into smaller groups in order to encourage these weaker ones to participate. In case 5, the teacher may provide a variety of activities and tasks for this student to be involved in different contexts of situations like TV documentaries, live interviews and talk shows.

C1 (12th grades)

1 I can keep up with an animated conversation between native speakers. - Student E. – Student G. - Student K.

2. I can use the language fluently, accurately and effectively on a wide range of general, professional or academic topics. - Student C. – Student S. – Student B.Y. – Student U. – Student S. – Student B. – Student G.

3. I can use language flexibly and effectively for social purposes, including emotional, allusive and joking usage. - Student E. – Student U. – Student K.

4. I can express my ideas and opinions clearly and precisely, and can present and respond to complex lines of reasoning convincingly. - Student G.

Suggestions: In case 1, the teacher may provide the students with films containing different accents, interviews, and TV shows to get them to become familiar with the language and information utilized in such programs. In case 2, the teacher may try to find out what the students lack in this kind of language use and then provide the students with necessary vocabulary and assign them presentations on various general, professional or academic topics. In case 3, the teacher may provide the students with colloquial conversational language, expressions and idioms to be used in specific situations. In case 4, the teacher may assign a debate topic and give the student time to do research on the topic given to be discussed in class.

C2 (12th grade)

I can take part effortlessly in all conversations and discussions with native speakers, just like a native speaker. - Student S.

Suggestions: In this case, the teacher may encourage the student to observe how the native speakers use language in movies, shows and interviews and to try to use the language the way he/she has observed as much as possible in class while discussing a topic.

SPOKEN PRODUCTION

A2 (9th grades)

I can describe past activities such as last week or my last holiday. – Student I.Y.

Suggestions: In this case, the teacher may provide the student with extra tasks that entail the use of the simple past tense and ask him/her to write journals about his/her own experiences.

B1 (11th grades)

I can narrate a story. – Student H. – Student A.Y. - Student T.

Suggestions: In this case, the student may be lacking the necessary set phrases and linkers to be used while narrating a story. The teacher may provide the student with those and may assign a narrative to be told in class.

B2 (11th grades)

1. I can understand and summarize orally short extracts from news items, interviews or documentaries containing opinions, argument and discussion - Student O.

2. I can understand and summarize orally the plot and sequence of events in an extract from a film or play. - Student O.

3. I can speculate about causes, consequences and hypothetical situations. Student E.C. – Student D.

Suggestions: In case 1, the teacher may provide the student with listening tasks with questions so that he/she can develop the ability to identify the main points of discussion in the spoken texts such as news, interviews and documentaries. In case 2, the teacher may ask the student to write summaries of what he understands from a film or play. In case 3, the teacher may provide the students with various situations in class, show them news extracts, clips from movies, etc., and ask the students to work in groups to talk amongst themselves about the situation given.

C1 (11th grades)

1. I can give clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects. - Student E. – Student S. – Student B.Y. – Student U. – Student B. – Student G. – Student K.

2. I can orally summarize long, demanding texts. - Student C. – Student U. – Student S. – Student K.

3. I can give an extended descriptions or account of something, integrating themes, developing particular points and concluding appropriately. - Student S. – Student B. – Student G.

4. I can give a clearly developed presentation on a subject in my field of personal or professional interest, departing when necessary from the prepared text and spontaneously following up points raised by members of the audience. - Student E. – Student B.Y. – Student G. – Student K.

C2 (12th grade)

I can summarize orally information from different sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. – Student G.

Suggestions: The objectives stated by the students for listening and spoken production parts show that they need training in communication strategy use.

WRITING

A1 (9th grade)

I can write a greeting card for a birthday, new year, etc. - Student X

Suggestions: In this case, the teacher needs to make sure that this student has the knowledge of the working vocabulary and formulaic language used in such forms of writing and consolidate the student's knowledge of this kind of tasks.

A2 (9th grade)

I can describe an event or a social activity such as an accident or a party in simple sentences and report what happened, when and where it happened. - Student X

Suggestions: In this case, the teacher needs to make sure that this student has the basic knowledge of the working vocabulary used in such situations, that is the basic descriptive adjectives and nouns and consolidate the student's knowledge with both speaking exercises in order to ensure practice and fluency and writing exercises to ensure that this student can also reflect his thoughts on paper on, for instance, an exam. The teacher should also help the students have an understanding of narrative structure of written texts.

B2 (11th grades)

1. I can write clear and detailed texts, such as compositions, reports or texts of presentations on various topics related to my field of interest. – Student K.A. – Student O.

2. I can write summaries of articles on topics of general interest. - Student M.R. – Student E.C. – Student D.

3. I can discuss a topic in a composition or "letter to the editor," giving reasons for or against a specific point of view. – Student K.A. – Student M.R. - Student O.

4. I can develop an argument systematically in a composition or report, emphasizing decisive points and including supporting details. - Student M.R. - Student O.

Suggestions: In case 1 and 3 the teacher needs to make sure that these students have the basic knowledge of the working vocabulary and the writing rules used in such writing forms. These students may also need to do various activities in order to improve their writing skills for these specific purposes. In case 2, as well, the teacher needs to make sure

that these students comprehend the texts, in this case the articles that they work on, so as to be able to reduce their comprehension to a minimum degree possible for a properly written summary. In case 4, the teacher needs to make sure that these students have the basic knowledge of the working vocabulary and the writing rules used in this kind of texts. In addition to basic information on these elements, the teacher may need to expose his/her students to the extensive reading of such writing samples so that they can turn what is theoretical into practice while writing their own compositions etc.

C1 (12th grades)

1. I can express myself in writing on a wide range of general or professional topics clearly. - Student K.
2. I can present a complex topic in a clear and well-structured way, highlighting the most important points, for example in a composition or a report. - Student E. – Student S. – Student S. – Student B. – Student G. - Student K.
3. I can present points of view in a comment on a topic or an event, underlining the main ideas and supporting my reasoning with detailed examples. - Student E. – Student B.
4. I can put together information from different sources and present it in a coherent summary. - Student G.
5. I can write formally correct letters, for example to complain or to take a stand in favor of or against something. - Student E. – Student G.
6. I can write texts, which show a high degree of grammatical correctness and vary my vocabulary and style according to the addressee, the kind of text and the topic. - Student E. – Student U. – Student B. – Student G.

7. I can select a style appropriate to the target reader. - Student E. – Student B.

Suggestions: In case 1, the teacher needs to make sure that this student has the basic knowledge of the working vocabulary and the writing rules used in such writing forms. This student certainly needs to do various activities which involve both reading samples and writing similar compositions in order to improve his/her writing skills for these specific purposes. In case 2, the teacher needs to make sure that these students are able to summarize a text that they properly understand. These students certainly needs to do various activities which involve both speaking and writing about similar compositions in order to improve his/her writing skills for these specific purposes. Similarly in case 3, the teacher needs to make sure that these students have the basic knowledge of the main and supporting ideas in a text. In addition to basic information on these elements, the teacher may need to expose his/her students to the extensive reading of such writing samples so that they can turn what is theoretical into practice while summarizing events or topics. In case 4, the teacher may provide students with writing tasks to produce coherent texts by getting information from different sources. In cases 5 and 6, the students need to do various activities which involve both reading samples and writing similar compositions in order to improve their writing skills for these specific purposes. In case 7, the teacher needs to work on the register of a piece of writing in order to be sure that these students know how to write whatever it is they wish to write. These students certainly need to do various activities which involve both reading various samples and writing similar articles etc. by way of imitating and/or taking those samples as their model in order to improve their writing skills for specific purposes.

C2 (12th grades)

1. I can write well-structured and easily readable reports and articles on complex topics. - Student C.

2. In a report or an essay I can give a complete account of a topic based on research I have carried out, make a summary of the opinions of others, and give and evaluate detailed information and facts. - Student G.

3. I can write a well-structured review of a paper or a project giving reasons for my opinion. - Student S.

4. I can write a critical review of cultural events (film, book, music, theatre, literature, radio, TV). - Student G.

5. I can write summaries of factual texts and literary works. - Student C. – Student S.

6. I can write narratives about experiences in a clear, fluent style appropriate to the genre. - Student S. – Student G.

7. In a letter or an e-mail I can express myself in a consciously ironical, ambiguous and humorous way. - Student S. – Student G.

Suggestions: In these cases teachers may model revising strategies (elaborating, sentence combining, eliminating unnecessary words or phrases, checking for sentence variety, and so on) that help students review and improve their writing. They can also teach grammar and mechanical skills in relation to students' current writing experiences and encourage students to proofread their own work (checking for punctuation, capitalization, and spelling).

Overall analysis of the interviews and portfolio studies was made in the light of the research questions. The analysis revealed that it is possible to get insights into

- each student's perceptions about his/her learning process,
- the way they evaluate their achievements, and
- the development of their awareness of their learning behavior.

The evaluation made depending on detailed analysis of the students' reports also made it possible to identify the changes they observed in their learning process, and to have an understanding of the role of self-assessment in 'learning how to learn'.

With the suggestions made for the teachers depending on the analysis of the students' objective statement, it was aimed to present in detail in what ways teachers might make methodological decisions to guide their students in their studies and to help them overcome the difficulties they had related to different skills.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION AND EVALUATION

4.1. Discussion and Evaluation of Interviews and Portfolio Studies

The research design applied in this study which reflects principles of naturalistic inquiry is believed to provide insights into how to evaluate 'self evaluation process of students' and 'teachers' attitudes towards these evaluations'.

In the direction of requirements of this kind of research, focus group and individual interviews were conducted to learn about students' and teachers' ideas related to the significance of portfolio studies for the assessment of language learning process. The research design used in the study to get insights into students' evaluation of their learning process and achievement is believed to present an 'instrument' that may be used to evaluate this kind of studies. As Mack et al. (2005) state the evaluation of learning behavior can be realized better with 'why' and 'how' questions to be directed to the participants. Based on this point of view, the questions of focus group interviews which had been predetermined beforehand were modified and rephrased with 'why' and 'how' questions during the interview to make it possible to encourage students to reflect their insights into their own learning process.

The questions of the interviews with students are seen to be similar to those used by Novakova and Davidova (2001) with an important difference. In this study, students were not asked about what they thought was missing from the ELP and what they would like to improve in the portfolio. Another difference observed in these

researchers' study was seen in how students' ideas were gathered. As they state, the ELP booklet they prepared included a number of blank pages which the learner could use to note what else he or she could do according to his or her needs. In this study, students' objectives were identified by analyzing which statements they determined as their objectives among the ones that had already been given in the ELP.

The focus group interview as a data collection instrument in naturalistic inquiry has both weaknesses and strengths as stated by Davis and Cosenza (1994, p.3). A potential weakness is that "*all members may not express their real ideas*". In this study, some of the students were not willing to participate in the interview since some extrovert students were more dominant in terms of taking the turn to express their ideas.

While the focus group interviews served as a primary source, as a secondary source, the portfolio studies of the students were analyzed as the personal records of their evaluation. Depending on this evaluation, suggestions were given in terms of what insights the teachers may get from students' records and what kind of methodological decisions they may take. In this sense, this study is believed to contribute to the field not only by accounting for the application of ELP studies in a specific educational setting but also by presenting methodological choices for the teachers in terms of how to evaluate students' self-assessment process and how to improve classroom practices.

In the following section, discussion and evaluation of the findings of the study will be presented in the light of the research questions of the study:

- How do students make use of self evaluation process in the CEF?
- How do teachers take students' self evaluation into consideration?

Discussion about how students evaluate their learning process will be made by depending on the analysis of focus group interviews and portfolio studies. Findings about how teachers should take students' evaluation into consideration will be discussed;

- a) by evaluating the interviews conducted with them and
- b) depending on the suggestions made as a result of the analysis of students' portfolio studies.

4.1.1. Discussion and Evaluation of Focus Group Interviews with Students: How Students Make Use of Self Evaluation Process

Differences have been observed in students' ideas about how they benefitted from the self evaluation process, which can be evaluated as a reflection of differences in their awareness of their learning process. These differences reflect the students' learning style and the strategies they use while learning English. This finding is in line with what Little (2001) states about the benefit of portfolio studies as "*enhancing the learners' self-assessment skills*" (p.30) and helping them see "*what they have achieved*" (p.41).

The differences observed between the ideas of the students from 9th grade and the students of 11th and 12th grade language classes in terms of how they benefitted from portfolio studies showed that if each student had been provided with

opportunities for on going process, 11th and 12th grades could have benefitted from the same study better. This finding is in line with Hismanoğlu (2010) who says “*the biography requires regular determining on learning aims, which is only probable via the learners’ regularly assessing their own progress*” (p.675).

At the very beginning of the high school years it is seen that students are open to innovations, they are eager to improve themselves whereas in the last year when they are getting ready for the university entrance exam, all their attention is focused on the exam; however, this does not mean that this should not be interpreted as volubility of this kind of studies when students are face to face with exams. The suggestion we may make is that even while getting ready for exams if students are given opportunities to become more autonomous and more aware of their own studies, they will become more successful. This finding of the study is similar to the findings of the research carried out by Lam and Lee (2009) in Hong Kong where “*the exam oriented culture has made it difficult for innovative pedagogical ideas, such as process pedagogy to flourish*” (p.55).

In the interview with students, it was seen that the function of language passport is misunderstood, which can be illustrated with what one of the students says: “I heard that other countries don’t request a visa when you hold a portfolio or it could be a different key to enter a country.” This statement is in the same with Glover et al.’s (2005) results stated as “*students seem to have misunderstood the purpose of the ELP and the use of the expression “passport” in the ELP may have caused this confusion. Students did not realise that the ELP language passport has a similar purpose to a curriculum vitae and does not replace formal qualifications or travel documents.*”

This kind of misunderstanding mentioned by these researchers as well shows that more training is needed for both students and teachers involved in these applications to clarify this issue.

In the focus group interviews as an answer to the question about how they benefitted from portfolio studies, students expressed not only their weaknesses but also their strengths they became aware of as a result of the studies they carried out. This is in the same line with what Gonzalez (2002) states: *“Students felt that, by self-assessing their linguistic competence, they had been able to become aware of their strengths and weaknesses. They also understood that language learning was a life-long process and that therefore they should take responsibility for it and use a variety of learning strategies, both inside and outside the class”* (p.4).

In the interview one of the students says “I go abroad frequently as well, I speak to foreigners. I developed my ability to express myself there.” This statement confirms that the learner is not seen as someone engaged in a *“never-ending”* struggle to learn ever more complex aspects of language. The language learnt must be of immediate practical application in the world outside the classroom (Morrow, 2004b, p.10).

The expressions of the students illustrate in what ways they became aware of the change in their learning behavior and in what ways the courses they had have changed their understanding of “how they learn better”. This reflects the basic principle behind the CEF in relation to the development of learner autonomy as a result of portfolio studies.

4.1.2. Discussion and Evaluation of Interviews with Teachers: How Teachers Take Students' Evaluation into Consideration

The main aim of the interviews with the teachers was to learn about their attitude to students' self assessment. These interviews provided insights into how they benefitted from students' portfolio reports in terms of the reflection of their learning process.

Interviews with the teachers revealed that depending on different factors they have different ideas about the ways they take portfolio studies and students' evaluation into consideration. One of the teachers stated that they were not aware of the benefit of the studies because they had not been informed about it. Two teachers said they checked the portfolios to identify students' inadequacies and these teachers were seen to be developing new activities according to students' objectives. These differences observed in the teachers' comments reflect their different beliefs in the use of portfolio studies, which gives the idea that teachers' attitude is the main factor in determining the way they evaluate portfolio studies. This finding of the study supports the finding of the research carried out by Komorowska (2004) who emphasizes the significance of teachers' assumptions about the rationale behind the CEF.

Teacher S says "the students' views must definitely be asked about their own learning process" and she also thinks "for the first time, with this study, the concept of the self-evaluation of the student emerged". This finding is in the same line with Heyworth (2004) who states that as language teachers of modern learners we must

have in mind the underlying principles of the CEF. That is to say, ‘the involvement of the learner and learner motivation as a central feature; the idea of cooperative relationship between learner and teacher; and a realistic way of fitting the course to the resources available, not to an abstract goal of perfection’ (p.14).

Teacher E and N emphasize the importance of making students aware of their abilities and difficulties for effective learning and believe that these studies help the students learn how to think and evaluate what and how much they know.

These two teachers’ views reveal that this study has achieved one of the main purposes of the European Language Portfolio in terms of its pedagogical function, which is stated as “*to help learners to reflect on their success in language learning and to encourage them to learn autonomously*” (Schneider and Lenz, 2002, p.20).

Teacher Ç directly says that “the portfolio study is very useful if it is conducted as required here and applied accordingly.” This statement of the teacher is similar to Kohonen’s (2003), evaluation of the Finnish pilot project reports, which has been stated as: “*The regular use of the ELP does motivate and enable students to take more responsibility for their learning*” (p.15).

An important benefit of portfolio studies is stated by the same teacher as students’ becoming happy by realizing what and how much they can do, and seeing their improvement. One of the strengths of the CEF (2000) is its emphasis not on what the learners cannot do or do wrong, but on what they are able to do. Teacher Ç’s comments reveal that the students made use of the portfolio studies by becoming aware of what they are able to do.

The teacher E, Ç and S criticize the language used in CEFR, especially in the section related to the passport by saying “it is very complicated and it should be re-evaluated”. This comment is in the same line with Komorowska’s (2004) ideas which are stated as

experience so far has clearly demonstrated that: The Common European Framework is not particularly user-friendly when it comes to the individual work of the trainee with the text. Introducing the document is, therefore, greatly facilitated if the teacher-trainer gives a presentation of a mini-lecture type preceding discussion, as this helps to clarify ideas and to explain terminology used differently from the way it is used in most writing about foreign language teaching (p.62).

In this study suggestions were made in terms of how teachers can make use of the CEF. What has been done here is in the same line with what Komorowska (2004) suggests for in –service teacher education. As they put forward, it has been found necessary

to work on a case study of a group of learners with the view to modeling future decisions related to: the curriculum scenario to be implemented, levels to be attained, activities to be emphasized, learning to be trained and / or supported (p.62).

During the process of collecting data through interviews with students and teachers and analyzing the data, sharing the findings with the head of the English department revealed the fact that teachers should be made more aware of what is expected from

them, what they should do, how they should apply the CEF, and in what ways they can make benefit from the CEF. This kind of realization about the process to be followed in an effective application of ELP was also emphasized by Little and Perclová (2001) and L'Hotellier and Troisgros (2001).

4.1.3. Discussion and Evaluation of Portfolio Studies

Portfolio analysis has been made by focusing on students' evaluation of their learning process depending on two sections: 'Assessing the Language Learning Process' and 'Assessment of Personal Language Achievement'.

4.1.3.1. Assessing the Language Learning Process

In the 'assessing the language learning process' section of the ELP, students were expected to recognize the most effective learning styles, the way they learn English, when they understand written and oral texts, and when they learn the words and grammatical words better.

The analysis of this section provided insights into students' assessment of their language learning process as a reflection of:

- their learning behavior in general terms,
- which interaction patterns help them learn better (pair-work, group work, individual),
- what kind of learners they are (whether they are visual, auditory, kinesthetic), and
- what kind of intelligence they have.

The teachers expressed their ideas about the benefits of the students' assessment of their learning process as "helping them gain consciousness and awareness". This kind of evaluation of the teachers supported what Little (2002) stated for the ELP studies as: *ELP makes the language learning process clearer to learners, develops their capacity for reflection and self-assessment, and provides them with opportunities to get more responsibility so that they can be more autonomous learners* (p.30).

As seen in the review of literature, the research studies and pilot projects focused on the application of the portfolio studies from the point of view of students' progress and the teachers' role in the implementation in general terms. In this study, besides this kind of evaluation, suggestions were made for the teachers in terms of what kind of methodological decisions they may make for the students having different learning behaviors in details. This aspect of the evaluation made in this study can be regarded as a valuable contribution to the field.

4.1.3.2. Assessment of Personal Language Achievement

In the section of the ELP titled 'My Personal Achievement', students were expected to record what they thought they could do under normal circumstances and what their objectives and priorities were related to language skills.

The analysis and evaluation of the students' objective statements in this section provided insights into their evaluation of their success and/or difficulties related to

certain language skills and areas of language. It has been seen that teachers evaluating students' reports should take into consideration the significance of the personal factors in foreign language learning. Keeping this in mind, suggestions were made in terms of how the teachers can support the students by helping them to achieve the objectives they identified related to each skill by designing tasks or activities.

The teacher may find out whether the students' difficulties related to spoken interaction depend on their being introverted or their lower proficiency. By identifying individual differences in terms of the reasons for the difficulties of the students, teachers may try out different ways to help these students. If the reason is their being introverted, the teacher may be encouraging to help them initiate conversation in language classrooms or engage them in extended conversation; however, if the reason of the students' difficulties in these areas depend on their lower proficiency, then the teacher may identify the language problems of these students to help them. This kind of analysis is believed to make it possible to reveal that the same objective may result from different reasons of the students' difficulties.

The differences observed in the objective statements of the students have been evaluated as a reflection of the different benefits students had depending on their level of proficiency, learning behavior and study habits. This finding of the study proves the contribution of the ELP studies on students' learning process.

When students' objectives are analyzed in different skills it is easily seen that students express their objectives related to the production stages both in writing and

speaking. This kind of identification of students' objectives leads us to the idea that these students have difficulty in providing coherent spoken and written texts. The actual source of the students' problems- which appear to be the inefficiency of making up coherent texts, making transactions, using spoken and written text- need to be found out. This finding may bring about the fact that some students may be in need of lower-level knowledge, and that gaps in acquired knowledge need also be discovered. However, the teacher should pay attention to setting achievable short term learning targets to help them solve problems in producing text. These students should be made aware of long term learning objectives not to lose their motivation. As Komorowska (2002) states this finding provides insights into the need to take "teacher" factor into consideration in conducting this kind of studies (p.12).

The objectives stated by the students for listening and spoken production parts also show that they need training in communication strategy use.

When previous research about course/syllabus design and material development aspects of the CEF are evaluated in the light of the suggestions made in this study in terms of how to develop students' language skills, it can be said that the need to train students in communication strategy use was not mentioned. For example, depending on their studies Garrido and Beaven (2002) suggest that when producing a course it is not only important to think about the syllabus but also to insure "audio visual materials" (p.25). Suggestions were made for the teachers in this study not only about the kind of materials that should be provided for the students with different needs but also about the kind of tasks that should be designed for students having different learning strategies and behaviors. In addition to these, the need to train students in communication strategy use and language learning strategies was seen.

Depending on this finding, it can be concluded that teachers should be trained about how to train their students in terms of strategy use.

As also seen in the long term study carried out by Kohonen (2003), this kind of findings are valuable in terms of providing insights for research to be carried out in different educational settings in order to emphasize individual differences.

In terms of the significance of teachers' attitude to successful application of portfolio studies, overall evaluation of these studies in the educational setting where this study was conducted has revealed that the teachers have an important role in increasing the effectiveness of the implementation. With the suggestions made for the teachers depending on the evaluation of interviews and the objective statements of the students, it has been aimed to emphasize that teachers should support the development of learner autonomy and their learners' thinking about their language learning by helping them to understand the central aim of language learning and to learn how to assess themselves.

This study is believed to contribute to the application of the CEF in Turkey by providing insights for the Ministry of Turkish National Education which aims "*to harmonize with the European Standarts*" (Demirel, 2003, p.3). The Turkish pilot studies carried out since 2001 have been concerned with the application of the CEF in different educational settings; however, how these applications should be evaluated is another issue to take into consideration in this kind of research studies.

4.2. Limitation of the Research Study and Suggestions for further Research Studies

In this study the analysis of portfolio studies was made by presenting the statements that have been identified as objectives related to specific skills. Depending on these objectives, suggestions were made for the teachers concerning the support they can provide in each skill for the students.

As a first step each student's portfolio studies were analyzed; however, suggestions were not made in terms of how teachers may help each student. In further studies this can be taken into consideration because this kind of analysis is believed to help teachers see each student's difficulties in each skill and at each level.

This research study was carried out in one private school with a group of students. For this reason findings of the study are expected to provide insights into the use of portfolio studies to help learners become aware of their own learning processes; however, different results may be obtained in research studies that may be carried out in different educational settings.

In this study suggestions have been made about how teachers might help students by designing different tasks depending on the objectives stated by the students in their portfolios. In further studies researchers may provide different suggestions for the teachers in terms of the type of tasks and activities that can be designed related to all the objectives given in the portfolios with the idea that different students in different institutions may identify different objectives.

This study was conducted in a private high school where the head of the English Department was supportive not only by making the data collection procedure easy but also by sharing his ideas in terms of the decisions that had to be made during the process of conducting the research. The future researchers aiming at carrying out this kind of research should consider the kind of difficulties they may have in terms of conducting qualitative research which entails willingness of the administrators of the educational settings to provide opportunities for the researcher to collect data and to get insights of the participants.

4.3. Implication for the Application of Portfolio Studies

In the light of the findings of the study the following suggestions may be made for the institutions where the portfolio studies are planned to be carried out:

1. The analysis of the interviews with the teachers revealed that teachers had different attitudes to their students' evaluations. The effectiveness of the application of portfolio studies depends on the teachers who are expected to guide their students while carrying out these studies. This entails training teachers in 'training the students' to take responsibility for their own learning. However, teachers' beliefs behind their practices which result from different factors play an important role in the way they evaluate students' learning process and determine the kind of methodological decisions they make. Therefore, the first step in the applications of portfolio studies should be to

help teachers become aware of the sources of their beliefs related to language learning, assessment and evaluation.

2. It was observed that with the 11th and 12th grade students who were getting ready for the university exam, portfolio studies were not carried out regularly. This can be regarded as a reflection of a misunderstanding in our education system. Exam-oriented study is thought to lead to success in exams however it should be kept in mind that if portfolio studies are carried out as suggested in the rationale behind CEF, students will become more successful because the items here are related to their awareness and that is how they can identify their own learning problems and perhaps more importantly how they can develop their learning strategies.
3. Carrying out portfolio studies regularly will help the learners in many occasions such as in the event of a transfer to another school, change to a higher educational sector, the beginning of a language course, a meeting with a career advisor, or an application for a new post. Making teachers and students aware of these kinds of benefits of the portfolio studies is believed to help them take this task more seriously.
4. Depending on the portfolio studies and the analysis of ‘what I can do’ and ‘how I learn’ statements, that is the students’ involvement in these two task, it should not be thought that these strategies or abilities should be developed just for English language learning. However, it may be suggested that if these

kinds of studies are carried out in the other courses as well, students' success in terms of becoming autonomous learners and their capabilities to identify their own difficulties will increase and that will undoubtedly contribute to the outcome of the study in its entirety.

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6. APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

TAPE SCRIPTS OF INTERVIEW 1 WITH 9-A STUDENTS

Soru 1 - Size ne kattı portfolyo çalışması, ne düşünüyorsunuz portfolyolarla ilgili?

Öğrenci M: İlk öncelikle eksiklerimizi görüyoruz burda hangisini yapabiliyoruz hangisini yapamıyoruz. Daha sonra onun üstünde çalışıp kendimizi daha geliştiriyoruz.

Öğrenci V: Kendimizi deniyoruz bir nevi sınıyoruz bunları doldurarak.

Soru 2 - Özellikle dönem başında şunu yapamıyordum ama şimdi yapabiliyorum dediğiniz somut örnekler var mı? Temel becerileri düşündüğünüzde okuma / yazma / dinleme gibi en çok hangisinde ilerleme kaydettiğinizi düşünüyorsunuz?

Öğrenci Ö: Ben ilk başta yavaş yavaş anlatılmasını istiyordum hızlı konuşulmasını istemiyordum ama şimdianlıyorum.

Öğrenci N: Metni evde kendimiz okuduğumuzda fazla anlamıyoruz ama mesela sınıfta öğretmenlerimizle okuduğumuzda sınıfta öğretmenler açıklayarak gittiği için daha çok anlıyoruz.

Soru 3 - Her beceride seviye aynı mı bazı becerilerde B1 ya da bazı becerilerde A2 düzeyinde misiniz? Mesela kompozisyonum artık çok iyi ama okumada zorluk çekiyorum dediğiniz durumlar var mı?

Öğrenci V: Şu an inceleme fırsatımız olmadı bunlar bizde kalmadı, derste hocaların söylediği bölümleri doldurduk.

Soru 4 - Kalmasını ister miydiniz portfolyoların sizde?

Öğrenci N: Yok istemezdik başına bişey gelebilir.

Student Ö: Bunlar ilerde çok işimize yarayacak. Üniversiteye girerken hazırlık okumadan geçebiliriz mesela.

Soru 5 - Bu çalışma sayesinde ben şunu gördüm yoksa göremezdim mi diyorsunuz yoksa bi şekilde program içinde ilerleme kaydetmemiz normal mi? Buradaki ifadeler sizi iyi yönlendiriyor mu?

Öğrenci M: İyi yönlendiriyor.

Soru 6 - Portfolyodaki görüşleriniz doğrultusunda sizce yapılan çalışmalarda bir değişiklik oluyor mu / öğretmenleriniz bu değerlendirmelerden nasıl yararlanıyor, nasıl dikkate alınıyor bunlar sizce?

Öğrenci M: Oraya yazdıklarımızı, eksiklerimizi görüp ona göre daha çok ilgileniyorlardır bizimle.

Student V: Bence buna hiç bakmıyorlar sınıftaki çalışmÖğrenci A ve MYP çalışmalarına göre değerlendiriyorlar.

Öğrenci Ö: Bence öğretmenlerin buna ihtiyacı yok zaten onlar biliyorlar bizim durumumuzu.

Öğrenci V: Sanırım bu daha çok ilerde, yurtdışında bir üniversiteye girersek ayrı bir sınava girmememize yardımcı olacak. Şu an Türkiye’de bir yararı olduğunu sanmıyorum.

Soru 7 - Sizlerin çok bilinçli olduğunuzu görüyorum, bütün arkadaşlarınız böyle mi düşünüyor?

Öğrenci V: Bazıları İngilizceyi sevmiyor. Türk okuluna gideceğim deyip bunu önemsemeyenler de var.

Öğrenci Ö: Yurtdışına gitmesek bile burada hazırlık okumadan üniversiteye devam edebiliriz.

Soru 8 - İfadelerde sizce öğrenme biçiminize ilişkin yeterli gelmeyen ya da olmadığını düşündüğünüz, sizi çok anlatmayan, aslında ifadeler şöyle olsa daha iyi olurdu dediğiniz maddeler var mı?

Öğrenci V: Bazen yalnız yapmak isteyebiliyor insanlar aktiviteleri pair work yapmak istemiyor mesela!

Öğrenci M: O kişilerin özelliğine bağlı.

Soru 9 - Bu ifadelerde ben şunları yapmıyordum ama artık yapıyorum dediğiniz şeyler var mı?

Öğrenci M: Mesela ben burda drama etkinlikleri yaparak daha iyi anlıyorum işaretlememişim ama literature dersinde bir konuyu sahneleyerek oynadık daha iyi anladım, o zaman yanlış düşünüyordum mesela.

Öğrenci M: Mesela kendim konuşurken çok daha iyi anlıyorum artık çünkü bu kelimeyi de biliyorum diyorsun.

Öğrenci V: Mesela ben de sözcüklerin resimlerini gördüğümde bölümünü işaretlememişim ama aslında şimdi bir textin resimleri daha çok aklımda kalıyor ve daha iyi anlıyorum görsel olduğunda.

Öğrenci Ö: Ben de senenin başında altını çizince daha rahat anlıyordum ama şimdi çizmeden daha rahat anlıyorum.

Öğrenci N: Altını çizdiğimde daha iyi anlıyorum işaretlememişim ama bir sınavda aklımda daha iyi kaldığını gördüm altını çizdiğim yerlerin.

APPENDIX 2

TAPE SCRIPTS OF INTERVIEW 2 WITH 9-B STUDENTS

Soru 1 - Portfolyo çalışmaları size ne kattı?

Öğrenci A: Kendimi gördüm neyim eksik neyim tam onu fark ettim ve onları tamamlamaya çalıştım eksiklerimi tamamlamaya ve iyi yaptığım şeyleri daha iyi yapmaya başladım yani bunun farkında oldum ve normalde ben onları öyle eksik yaptığımın farkında bile değilmişim.

Öğrenci B: Öğrenci A'nınkiyle benimki de aynı değerde bakıyorum. Sonuçta, yapamadığım şeyleri gözardına atıyordum ondan sonra bunlar önüme çıktı sonra bunlar eksikmiş diye onların önüne geçtim, kontrol altına aldım.

Soru 2- Portfolyoların sizde kalmasını ister miydiniz?

Öğrenci A: Bir fotokopisi kalabilir en azından bakmak için.

Öğrenci B: Okulda daha güvende olacağını düşünüyorum.

Soru 3- Sizce portfolyo çalışmaları neden yapılıyor?

Öğrenci A: Kendimizi görmek için falan olabilir.

Öğrenci B: Kendimizi görmek için veya lisanla ilgili yapılacak çalışmaları görmek için olabilir.

Öğrenci A: İleriye yönelik de olabilir yani üniversite için.

Öğrenci B: Yani sonuçta bizim geleceğimiz istikbalimiz için yapılan bir proje de olabilir.

Öğrenci A: Yani bize yönelik sonuçta.

Öğrenci E: Faydalı buluyorum ben eksiklerimi gördüm ve düzeltiyorum yeri geldiğinde.

Öğrenci B: Bir de ben portfolyo alınca başka ülkelerde vize istemiyor diye duydum veya ülkeye giriş olarak farklı bir anahtar görevi de görebilir.

Soru 4- Portfolyo çalışmalarından sonra size dönüt verildi mi öğretmenleriniz tarafından?

Öğrenci A: Aslında şey yaptık hani böyle fotokopisi verildi dolduruldu ama onun hakkında çok konuşmadık.

Öğrenci B: Dolduruldu ve kaldırdık.

Öğrenci A: Evet doldurup defterimize yapıştırdık fazla birşey yapılmadı.

Öğrenci B: Hocaların bunlarda pek birşey yapmadı bizim geçen sene hazırlıkta ki hocalar yapmıştı şu andaki hocalar hiçbiri bu konu hakkında bir çalışma yaptırmadı.

Hazırlıkta zaten dil amaçlı bir öğretim görüyoruz orda o yüzden hocalar bunu daha çok göz önünde tuttular ama burda hiç yapmadım yani deftere yapıştır hatta ödev olarak verdiler o kadar düşürdüler.

Öğrenci A: Ya da biz daha başlamadık yapmaya ama şimdiye kadar bi zaman geldi verdiler bize geri topladılar bi zaman geçti işte B kısmını verdiler orayı doldurduk B1 kısmını yani şimdiye kadar öle oldu.

Soru 5- Sizce yapılan portfolyo çalışmalarından öğretmenleriniz nasıl yararlanıyor?

Öğrenci A: Eksiklerimizi onlar da açıp bakarlar demek ki bundan eksik ona göre yardım edelim falan olabilir ya da acaba buna tik atmış gerçekten böyle mi yoksa sadece tik atmak için mi

Öğrenci B: Sınıyabilirler bizi

Öğrenci A: Ya da yardım ederler yani daha çok bize yardım etmek için kullanabilirler.

Soru 6- Somut olarak ilk başta yapıp da artık yapmadığınızı düşündüğünüz şeyler var mı?

Öğrenci A: Ben oraya şey işaretlemiştim demiştim ki “formal letters” ı okumak gibi birşey vardı ben yurt dışından geldim ama öyle şeyler o kadar formal’a giremiyorum formal okuyamıyorum diye işaretlemiştim ama onu gördüm ve okumaya başladım internette falan şey yaparak.

Öğrenci B: Aslında Öğrenci A’yla aynı şeyler, aynı sorunlar sonuçta hazırlıkta yaptığım şeyleri şuandaki yaptığım şeyleri karşılaştırınca gülünç geliyor yani şuanda o hataların hiçbirini yapmıyorum sonuçta göz önünde bulunduruyorum. Paragraf yazabiliyor musun mesela küçük notlar falan hazırlıktayken kelimeler bazen anlamlarıyla bağdaşmıyordu ama şimdi daha rahat yazıyorum.

Öğrenci X: Yabancı dilimi daha çok nasıl geliştirdiğimi gördüm yabancı ülkelere giderken üniversitelere giderken yabancı dil pasaportunun kullanılması gerektiğini öğrendim bu tarz uygulamaları daha önce bilmiyordum hazırlık sınıfında bunları öğrendim. Hazırlıkta biraz daha fazla çalışıyorduk bu sene daha az sene başında ve sonunda yapıyoruz.

Hatalar oluyor tabi ki yeni bir dil çünkü hiç bilmiyorsun sıfırdan başlıyorsun başlarken eksiklerimi görmemi sağladı.....makalelerde sıfırdan yazmayı beceremezdim bunun sayesinde nasıl yazıldığını öğrendim....örneklerde hatalarımı görmeye başladım bunun için de verilen bilgileri düşünerek ilerlemeye başladım derslerimde daha çok yardımcı oldu.

Tüm Avrupa Birliği’nin düzenlediği birşey diye biliyorum. Avrupa Dil okullarının ve gerekli diye düşünüyorum. Bana hiçbir geri dönüt olmadı.

Soru 7 - Öğretmenleriniz sizce bu çalışmalardan nasıl faydalanıyorlardır?

Öğrenci X: Kendimi nasıl gördüğümü ve onların gözünden görüşlerini karşılaştırdıkları zaman eksiklerimi buluyorlar ben de eksiklerimi öğreniyorum

yardımcı oluyor o bakımdan öğretmenler bunu kullanmakta doğru bir karar almış oluyorlar.

Soru 8- Portfolyonun yararına inanıyor musunuz?

Öğrenci E: Bence yararlı.

Öğrenci B: Yani nelerde eksiklerimiz var sonuçta eksiklerimizi görmemizi sağlıyor, yurt dışında yapacağımız çalışmalarda yardımcı oluyor yani bir çok faydası var gerçi Avrupa'da ki eğitim sistemiyle aynı şeyi de kullanıyor olabiliriz.

Öğrenci A: Önemsersek yararlı olur.

Öğrenci X: Bu çalışma sayesinde ben daha çok İngilizce – Türkçe sözlük kullanmaya başladım İngilizce kelimelerin İngilizce anlamlarını öğrenmeye başladım. Hazırlık sınıfındayken Türkçe olarak bakıyordum İngilizce'yi denemiştım ama çok zor geliyordu şimdi rahat rahat oldu ve bunun payı var tabi ki bunun sayesinde farkettim. Yazılı olarak da metinleri anlamama da yardımcı oldu konusunu hangi çevre etrafında döndüğünü daha kolay farketmemi sağladı onun dışında parçayla ilgili soruları daha iyi anlayıp cevaplamama yardımcı oldu.

Öğrenci E: Ben yazılı ve sözlü yani Türkçe düşünerek yapınca daha zor olduğunu farkettim yani İngilizce düşünüp yapmaya çalışmam gerektiğini farkettim.

Öğrenci A: Kelimeleri tekrarlayarak sesli olarak diye bir şey yazıyordu orda ben dedim evde deneyeyim yaparım herhalde ve denedim daha faydalı oluyormuş. Bir de paragrafları tam olarak okumazdım hemen kısa kısa bilgilere ulaşırdım daha sonra da çok yanlışım çıkıyordu şimdi daha derin okuyorum.

Öğrenci B: Benim de mesela birkaç tane yabancı arkadaşım vardı onlarla oturup karşılıklı konuşunca kendimi ifade etme şeklim farklılaştı daha üst seviyelere geçtim daha farklı kelimeler kullanmaya başladım, yani bu portfolyodaki gibi bazı sorular soruluyordu ben de bu sorularla kendi sorularımı karşılaştırdım ve bazı açıklarımı buldum bu açıklarımı kapatarak konuşmada kendimi daha iyi daha kısa belirtmemi sağladı.

Soru 9 - Okuma, yazma, konuşma, dinleme yani tüm becerilerde de aynı seviyede olduğunuzu mu düşünüyorsunuz, sizce hepsinde B1 misiniz?

Öğrenci X: Çok değişiyor tabi dinlemede farklı ya da anlatırken karşımdaki anlatırken yani dinleme olurken daha rahat anlıyorum, anlattığımı düşünerek yapıyorum ama konuşurken hem cümleleri düşünmem gerekiyor hem de cümle yapılarını, doğru kelime seçimini yapmam gerekiyor o yüzden biraz daha zorluk oluyor onun dışında okumada daha yüksek seviyelerde olduğumu düşünüyorum.

Öğrenci E: Ben birşey anlatmada çok iyi değilimdir ama diğerlerinde B1 olduğumu düşünüyorum.

Öğrenci A: Ben daha iyi olduğumu düşünüyorum her konuda çünkü benim geçmişimde yurtdışında kalmışlığım var biraz daha B1 den iyi olduğumu düşünüyorum genel olarak İngilizce çok iyi anlatabilirim, okuduğumu gayet iyi

anlarım çok ağır İngilizlerin bile zor anladığı kelimeler olmadığı sürece gayet iyi anlıyorum.

Öğrenci B: Ben de sürekli yurtdışına gidiyorum yabancılarla konuşuyorum kendimi anlatma becerim de orda başladı ilk olarak ben de B1'in üstünde olduğumu düşünüyorum.

APPENDIX 3

TAPE SCRIPTS OF INTERVIEW 3 WITH 11- LANGUAGE CLASS STUDENTS

Öğrenci H: İçinde pasaport olduğu için bizim için iyi olacağını düşünüyorum. Pasaport içinde pek çok şeyi kapsadığı için üniversite için iyi olabilir.

Öğrenci H: Öğretmenlerimiz için de iyi çünkü ne yaptığımızı ve ne yapamadığımızı aynı anda görebilirler.

Öğrenci H: Ne kadar iyi olup olmadığını görüyorsun, öğretmenlerin görüşlerini de görebiliyorsun buarad ne eksiklerinin olduğunu görüyorsun bu sayede.

Öğrenci T: Şimdi değil ama ileride daha çok faydalı olacağını düşünüyorum. Sadece bir kere doldurduğum için gerçekten fazla birşey hatırlamıyorum.

Öğrenci T: Yararı olduğuna inanıyorum bu çalışmaların. Gelekte bizim için iyi olacak.

Öğrenci T: Önceki yıllarda portfolyoları düzgün doldurmuş olsaydık ama sadece geçen yıl bir kere doldurduk. Bu yüzden söyleyecek hiçbirşey bulamıyoruz.

APPENDIX 4

TAPE SCRIPTS OF INTERVIEW 4 WITH 12-LANGUAGE CLASS STUDENTS

Öğrenci C: Dil pasaportu aldım ama ne işe yaradığını bilmiyorum. Ama yurtdışında okumak isteyen olursa onlara kolaylık sağlayabilir.

Öğrenci C: Bu çalışmanın katkısı oldu ama başarıya tamamen bir katkısı olduğunu düşünmüyorum.

Öğrenci G: Bir konuyu araştırırken kaynaklardan yararlanmam gerektiğini projeleri yaptıkça daha iyi anladım portfolio sayesinde.

Öğrenci G: Öğretmenlerimiz bizi bunun sayesinde daha iyi yönlendirmişlerdir.

Öğrenci C: Öğrenciyi tanımak için yararlı olabilir ama yüzde yüz yararlı olduğunu düşünmüyorum.

Öğrenci G: Benim için gerekli çünkü yurt dışında okumak istiyorum ve dil pasaportu benim için önemli.

Öğrenci L.E.: Karşılıklı konuşma becerilerinde gelişmemize yardımcı oldu. Ben kendimi okumada daha iyi görüyorum. İngilizce şiirler yazabildiğimi gördüm.

Öğrenci K.A: Son senemiz olduğu için çok fazla hatırlamıyoruz portfolio çalışmalarlarıyla ilgili şeyleri.

APPENDIX 5

TAPE SCRIPTS OF INTERVIEWS WITH TEACHERS

Soru 1- Avrupa Dil Portfolyosu'na dayalı olarak yapılan çalışmaları genel olarak nasıl değerlendiriyorsunuz? Özellikle portfolyo çalışmaları içerisinde "I can do" ve "How I learn" başlıklarına dayalı olarak öğrencilerin kendi öğrenme süreçlerini nasıl değerlendirdiklerini düşünüyorsunuz?

Öğretmen E : "I can do" kısmını doldururken çok ciddiye alıyorlar ve bence neyi ne kadar bildiklerinin daha çok farkına varıyorlar portfolyoyu doldurunca ya da soru soruyorlar çünkü orda bir takım tanımlayıcılar var bunu ben nasıl yazayım gibi sorular soruyorlar How I learn kısmında o zaman yararını görüyorlar çünkü bunları doldururken nasıl öğrendiklerinin ayırdına varıyorlar bu bölüm bence yararlı.

Öğretmen N: Bence de bu bölüm çocukların bilinçlenmesine yardımcı oluyor belki bilinç altında biliyor nasıl yaptığını ama bunu doldururken daha bilinçleniyor o zaman diyoruz ki demek ki bu şekilde daha iyi öğreniyorsun böyle çalışmaya devam et ya da bazı bölümlerde eksiği varsa o zaman da onları geliştirmekte yarar var diye söylüyoruz ilk bölüm onların bilinçlenmelerinde çok yararlı oluyor.

Soru 2- Sizin bakış açınızla örtüşüyor mu öğrencilerin verdikleri cevaplar?

Öğretmen N: Ben şaşardım yani çok dürüst davranıyorlar yüzde doksanının tik atıp geçeceğini düşünüyordum ama hepsi olmasa da yüzde doksan oranında kendilerini güzel değerlendirmişler, bir de bunu doldururken yüzde yüz içinizde hiç tereddüt kalmadan yapabiliyorsanız tik atın emin değilseniz I can do'yu işaretlemeyin dedim. Onlara bir şans tanınması, kendileri açısından daha bir sorumluluk veriliyor olması açısından önemli bir iş yapıyoruz deyip ciddiye alıyorlar o bölümleri.

Soru 3- Öğrencilerin değerlendirmelerinden ne şekilde yararlanıyorsunuz?

Öğretmen E: Aslında burda baktığınızda bizim bilmediğimiz şey çok az çıkıyor o yüzden o değerlendirmelerden çok yararlandığımı söyleyemeyeceğim ben yani bizimle tutarlı oluyor, çocuğun bu yönü de varmış dediğim oluyor.

Öğretmen N: Evet çoğunlukla bizim değerlendirmemizle çocukların ki aynı oluyor çok farklı birşey çıkmıyor.

Öğretmen E: En önemli şey bence çocuğun kendi öğrenmesinin farkında olması farkındalık çok önemli çünkü o zamana kadar sorgulamamış nasıl öğrendiğini ya da orda ki tanımlayıcıları okuduğunda düşünüyor evet ben bunu yapabiliyorum ama bunda zorlanıyorum diyor yani en azından düşünüyor neyi ne kadar bildiğini de tartmış oluyor. Ama ben çok yararlanmıyorum bu değerlendirmelerden ama öğrenci için çok faydalı oluyor.

Soru 4- Program içeriğinde ordaki bilgilere dayanarak herhangi bir değişiklik yapılmıyor mu?

Öğretmen N: Hayır yapılmıyor. Ama biz oradaki hedefleri büyüterek sınıflara astık sadece dosya açılıp kapandığında değil de bütün bir sene boyunca hedefimiz bu şekilde ona gözleri takılıyor ve mesela short message yazmakta zorlanıyorsa benim

bu sene onu öğrenmem gerekiyor diye hedefi belirginleştiriyor. Diğer türlü ders kitaplarında ben ne öğreniyorum ne yapıyorum'un farkında değil burda daha bir belirginleştiriyor ne öğrendiğini ve amaçlarını.

Çok güzel bir çalışma ama öğretmenlere özellikle özel okullarda baya bi yük bindiriyor. Artı bi çalışma yüklüyor.

Öğretmen E: Dil portfolyosu içindeki pasaportu eleştiriyorum ben, çok karmaşık benim kafam onu nasıl doldurtacağım konusunda çok karışıyor bence o yeniden düzenlenmeli.

Öğretmen Ç: Portfolyo çalışması burada istendiği gibi yapılırsa tam olarak uygulanırsa çok faydalı ama başka okullara giden ya da başka okuldan gelen çocuklar olduğunda asksaklıklar normal olarak olabiliyor. İlk yılların vermiş olduğu bazı sorunlar çıkabiliyor portfolyo çalışmasında. Dört seneyi de bu okulda okuduğu ve takibinin iyi yapıldığını varsayarsak çok güzel bir uygulama. Bir sonraki seneye geçildiğinde alan seçimi yapıldıktan sonra da bazı problemler çıkabiliyor. Dosyalar dağılıyor sınıflara göre öğrencilerin isimleri ve sınıfları tekrar yazılıyor ve bu aşamada bazı kayıplar yaşanabiliyor.

Her yıl aynı portfolyo kullanıldığı için her sene bu değişikliklerin düzenli bir şekilde sertifikalarla beraber içine yerleştirilmesi gerekiyor. Öğrencilerin aldığı hangi sertifikaları içine koyacağımıza dair net bir bilgi yok. Portfolyoları kullanırken dikkatimi çeken "I can do" bölümünü yaparken çocuklar yapabildikleri maddeleri işaretlediklerinde ne kadar çok şeyi yapabildiklerini görüyorlar ve seviniyorlar bu onları mutlu ediyor. Portfolyoda öğrencinin işaretlediği noktayı Öğrenci A tek tek bakıp ben de onu yapabildiğini düşünüyorsam yanına tik atıyorum.

Ama bu çalışma öğrencinin kendi farkındalığını sağlıyor ben zaten biliyorum onlar için faydalı buluyorum yoksa ben burdan bakıp öğrenmiyorum. Dil pasaportunun ne işe yaradığını hala anlamadım bilmiyorum. Genel olarak öğrencinin farkındalığı neyi bilip bilmediği açısından çok faydalı ve onlara somut olarak A1 ya da B1 seviyesinin ne demek olduğunu göstermek adına güzel bir çalışma. Öğrenciye senin seviyen A1 dediğimizde anlamıyor ama burada A1 seviyesindeki birinin neleri bilmesi gerektiğini görünce daha iyi anlıyorlar hangi seviyede olduklarını.

Kendi kendini değerlendirme ve bu seviyelerin ne olduğunu anlamaları açısından çok yararlı olduğunu düşünüyorum. Ama portfolyo çalışmaları için ayrı bir birim kurulması gerektiğine inanıyorum, öğretmenin diğer işlerini ve ders yükünü düşünürsek portfolyo takibi ayrı bir iş ve bu iş daha ciddi ayrı bir birim oluşturularak yapılmalı diye düşünüyorum daha verimli olması adına.

Öğretmen S: Avrupa Birliği Dil Portfolyosu çalışmasından önce öğrencinin fikri sorulmuyordu böyle bir kavram yoktu. Kitapların içindeki self-check'lerle başladı öğrenci o bölümlerde kendini değerlendiriyordu. Ama ilk defa bu proje ile öğrencinin kendi kendini değerlendirmesi kavramı çıktığı ortaya ve bence bu çok güzel birşey.

Çok belirgin sorular var içinde mesela birisi benden yol tarifi istediğinde basit talimatlarla tarif edebiliyorum maddesi var öğrenci oraya evet ya da hayır diye işaretliyor ya da hedeflerim olarak işaretliyor. Biz öğretmenler bu maddenin hedef

olarak işaretlendiğini görünce bir sonraki derse mutlaka yol tarifıyla ilgili bir çalışma koyuyoruz. Biz öğretmenler için çok faydalı bu çalışmayla öğrencilerin esas ihtiyaçlarını öğrenmek. Kitap yazarlarının bile bu çalışmaları kullanmaları gerektiğini düşünüyorum buradaki eksiklikleri görüp kendi hazırladıkları kitaplara öğrencilerin eksik olduklarını düşündükleri bölümlerle ilgili konulara ağırlık vermeleri gerektiğini düşünüyorum.

Öğrenciye kendi öğrenme süreciyle ilgili kendi fikri kesinlikle sorulmalı seneler önce kitap seçerken öğrencilerime örnek kitapları götürüp onların seçmesini istediğimde bölümde büyük olay olmuştu ama şu anda yapılmak istenen aslında onların fikirlerine göre eğitim ve öğretime öğrencileri de katarak çalışmak.

Ama bu dil pasaportunun gerçekten somut olarak öğrenciye ne getireceğiyle ilgili bazı endişelerim ve sorularım var gerçekten nerede, hangi okullarda ve nasıl işe yarayacağıyla ilgili çok bilgim yok. Bölüm başkanımızın da vermiş olduğu direktifle portfolyodaki eksikleri mutlaka dersimize katarak o konunun tekrarını sağlıyoruz.

APPENDIX 6

TRANSLATION OF TAPE SCRIPTS OF INTERVIEW 1 WITH 9-A STUDENTS

Question 1 - In what ways did you benefit from the portfolio study, what do you think about the portfolios?

Student M: First of all, we see our weaknesses as a part of this study and what we can and cannot do. Then we work on these and try to improve ourselves.

Student V: We try and examine ourselves while filling these portfolio documents out.

Question 2 – Are there any concrete examples of the things you can do now, which you were not able to do before? When you consider your fundamental skills, in which one do you think you made the greatest progress; reading / writing / listening?

Student Ö: For example, I wanted the teachers to speak slowly when teaching and I did not prefer them to speak quickly, but now I can follow with ease.

Student N: When we read the text on our own at home, we don't understand much, but for example, when we read it with our teachers in the classroom we understand well because they provide us with explanations when need be.

Question 3 – Have you improved equally at each skill, or are you at level B1 for some skills and at A2 for others? Are there any situations in which you say, for example, my writing is good but I have difficulty in learning?

Student V: Until now we haven't had the opportunity to analyze ourselves concerning our improvements in the four skills, we didn't keep those documents with us, we filled out the parts that the teachers told us to do.

Question 4 – Would you prefer keeping the portfolios?

Student N: No, I wouldn't because something bad would have happened to it if I had.

Student Ö: These will come in handy for us in the future. For example, we can skip the preparatory class once we start a university.

Question 5 – Do you make such remarks as “thanks to this study I saw that” or “I wouldn't have seen that” or is it expectable that we made a certain amount of progress in the program? Do the statements here guide you well?

Student M: They guide us well.

Question 6 – Do you think that changes are being made in the studies in the light of your opinions concerning the portfolios? How do the teachers make use of these evaluations? How do you think they are taken into account?

Student M: I assume that, they pay more attention to us when they see our writings and deficiencies there.

Student V: In my opinion, they never look at them; they evaluate according to class work and MYP studies.

Student Ö: In my opinion, the teachers don't need it, they already know our situation.

Student V: I guess, it will help us mainly to avoid a separate examination if we enter a university abroad in the future. I don't think that it is useful in Turkey now.

Question 7 – I see that you are very conscious of the necessity of English in your lives; do all of your classmates agree with you?

Student V: Some of them don't like English. There are some who say "I will go to a Turkish school" and I don't care much about learning English.

Student Ö: We can skip the preparatory class once we start a university.

Question 8 – Are there any expressions that you find insufficient in term of representing your learning style? Or do you think there are items the expressions of which would be better?

Student V: Sometimes people may want to exercise the activities on their own, for example, they don't want to be in a pair work.

Student M: It depends on their personalities.

Question 9 – Are there any expressions for which you would say "I could not do these, but now I can"?

Student M: For example, I didn't choose "I understand well while dramatizing", but in literature class, we dramatized a subject and I understood better, I was thinking wrong then.

Student M: For example, while I speak I understand very well now, because I say "I know this word".

Student V: For example, I didn't choose the part "when I see pictures of words" but now actually I remember pictures of a text more easily and understand well when it is visual.

Student Ö: I was able to understand easier when I underlined at the beginning of the year but now I understand easier without underlining.

Student N: I didn't mark "I understand well when I underline" but I noticed that I remember the underlined sentences better in an examination.

APPENDIX 7

TRANSLATION OF TAPE SCRIPTS OF INTERVIEW 2 WITH 9-B STUDENTS

Question 1 - In what ways did you benefit from the portfolio study?

Student A: I saw myself, I realized what I lacked, where I was correct and I tried to complete them, I started to fulfill my inadequacies and do things better than I did before. I mean, I became aware of that and normally I wasn't even aware that I did those things inadequately.

Student B: I see that my opinions are same as Öğrenci A's. In other words, I was disregarding the things that I couldn't do, then these things (which I this regarded) came up before me, and then by thinking that these were my inadequacies I got ahead of them, (I overcame these inadequacies). I kept them under control.

Question 2- Would you like to keep the portfolios?

Student A: I can keep a photocopy, to at least look at them.

Student B: I believe that they would be safer at school.

Question 3 - Why do you think portfolio projects are done?

Student A: It may be to evaluate ourselves.

Student A: It may be for the future, I mean for the university.

Student A: I mean it is intended for us eventually.

Student B: It may be to see ourselves or to learn about certain language studies.

Student B: I mean it could be a project for our future.

Student B: Moreover I heard that other countries don't request a visa when you hold a portfolio or it could be a different key to enter a country.

Student E: I find it useful; I saw my deficiencies and corrected them when necessary.

Question 4- Were you given feedback by your teachers after the portfolio studies?

Student A: Actually we did something, I mean we were given a photocopy and we filled them out but we didn't talk much about it.

Student A: Yes, we filled and stuck it onto our notebooks, nothing more is done.

Student A: Maybe we haven't started yet, but until now sometimes they gave us our forms, took them back, sometimes they gave us the parts of B, we filled the parts of B1, I mean it has been that way so far.

Student B: They were filled out and we left them aside.

Student B: Teachers didn't do much of anything. Our preparatory class teachers did something last year. None of the teachers have us to work about this subject currently. In fact, we studied language in the preparatory class there, so the teachers considered this important but here I never did it. I mean sticking them on notebooks, furthermore they assigned it as homework, and they considered so...

Question 5 - How do you think your teachers make use of portfolio studies?

Student A: They can check our inadequacies, they may think to consider these or maybe they think someone marked it just to have it done.

Student A: Or they may help, I mean they can use them to help us mostly.

Student B: They can test us.

Question 6 - Do you think there is anything that you could not do before but now you can do?

Student A: I marked something there. I marked something like reading "formal letters", I came from abroad but I cannot manage formal language, I cannot read formal texts, but after I saw a few examples of texts written in formal language, I started to read such texts on the internet.

Student B: Actually, same things as Öğrenci A's. Eventually, same problems. When I compare the things that I did during the preparatory year and the things that I do now, I find them ridiculous; I mean I make none of those mistakes now, I now know how to deal with these. For example, when I'm asked to compose a paragraph with little notes and so on; at the preparatory year words sometimes were meaningless, but now I can write more easily.

Student X: I noticed how I improved my foreign language more and more. I learned that foreign language passport should be used while going to foreign countries or universities. I hadn't known those kinds of applications before; I learned them during the preparatory year. We were working a little bit harder in the preparatory class, this year we do less, at the beginning of the year and at the end of the year. Naturally we make mistakes. Because it's a new language, you don't know anything, you start from the beginning. At the beginning it made me see my inadequacies..... I wasn't able to write articles from the scratch, thanks to that I learned how to write.... I started noticing my faults over the examples, and because of this, I started thinking about the information given, and it helped my studies a lot. I know that it is something prepared by the whole European Union and the European Language schools and I think that it is necessary. There was no feedback given to me.

Question 7- How do your teachers make use of portfolio studies in your opinion? 5th Question repeated for the late comer.

Student X: They find my inadequacies when they compare the way I see myself and their opinions. So I learn my deficiencies and it helps me, so the teachers are right to utilize them.

Question 8 - Do you believe in the benefits of portfolio?

Student E: In my opinion, it is useful.

Student E: I noticed that it is harder to write and speak thinking in Turkish, I mean I noticed that I have to think in English.

Student B: I mean, it enables us to see where we have inadequacies eventually, it helps for the studies that we will make abroad, I mean there are a lot of benefits, and actually we may be using the same thing with the training system in Europe.

Student B: For example, I had a few foreign friends, when I sat with them and made conversation, my expression style was different, I advanced to higher levels, I started using different words, I mean there were questions like the questions in portfolio, I compared those questions with mine and I found some of my inadequacies, it enabled me to reflect myself better and in a shorter way by correcting this inadequacies.

Student A: It would be useful if we cared about it.

Student A: There, it told me to repeat the words aloud, and then I decided to do so at home. I tried and realized that it was more useful. Also, I didn't use to read the paragraphs fully, I used to skip the bits of information and I make a lot of mistakes. Now I read them thoroughly.

Student X: I started using the English-Turkish dictionary more often thanks to this study. I started learning the English meanings of English words. I used to look up the meanings of words in Turkish when I was in preparatory class, I used to try looking them up in English but it was difficult for me, now it is easy and I am capable of using English-English dictionaries thanks to the portfolio studies. It helped me understand the written texts; it enabled me to notice more easily its subject and what it was really about. Besides, it helped me better understand and answer questions about the text.

Question 9- Do you think you are at the same level for all the skills: writing, reading and speaking? Are you at level B1 in all of them?

Student X: Of course, it differs a lot. It's different in listening or speaking, I understand easier when I'm listening, I think about it. But when I'm speaking I have to think about the sentences and the sentence structures, I have to make the correct choice of words and therefore I have a little difficulty. Other than that, I believe I'm at higher levels in reading.

Student E: I'm not very good at telling things but I believe that I'm at level B1 in others.

Student A: I believe that I'm better at every skill because I stayed abroad in the past. I believe I'm a little higher than B1. Generally I can speak very well in English, I understand quite well what I read, I understand quite well so long as there aren't any difficult words that even the English have difficulty in understanding.

Student B: I go abroad frequently as well, I speak to foreigners. I developed my ability to express myself there. I also think I'm higher than B1.

APPENDIX 8

TRANSLATION OF TAPE SCRIPTS OF INTERVIEW 3 WITH 11-LANGUAGE CLASS STUDENTS

Student H: I think it will be good for us because there is a passport in it. The passport covers lots of things in it that's why it will be good for the university.

Student H: It is also good for our teachers since they can see what we can do and what we cannot do at the same time.

Student H: You see how good you are or not, you see your weaknesses and it is also possible to see the teachers' opinions about us.

Student T: I think it will be useful in the future but not now. And I don't really remember much because I filled it just once.

Student T: I believe in the benefits of the portfolio studies. It will be good for us in the future.

Student T: We could have evaluated the portfolios if we had done it properly in the past years but we filled them only once last year. That's why we can't find anything to say.

APPENDIX 9

TRANSLATION OF TAPE SCRIPTS OF INTERVIEW 4 WITH 12-LANGUAGE CLASS

Student C: I have got the language passport but I really don't have any idea about it. But I think this passport can be useful for the students who want to go abroad and study there.

Student C: I think the portfolio studies make some contributions to our learning but not completely.

Student C: Maybe it is useful to know students more closely but not one hundred percent. It does not matter whether we carry out this study or not.

Student G: I understood that I have to use the sources while doing research during the process of project. I saw the need of making use of sources more with the help of portfolio studies.

Student G: Our teachers directed us better.

Student G: The language passport is necessary and important for me because I want to study abroad.

Student E: It helped me improve my oral interaction skills. I see myself better in reading. I see that I can write poems.

Student K.L.: We don't really remember much about portfolio studies because it is our last year at school.

APPENDIX 10

TRANSLATION OF TAPE SCRIPTS OF INTERVIEWS WITH TEACHERS

Question 1- How do you generally rate the studies based on European Language Portfolio? How do you think the students evaluate their own learning processes, specifically based on the “I can do” and “How I learn” parts in the portfolio studies?

Teacher E: They take it very seriously when they fill out the “I can do” part, and I believe they become more aware of what and how much they know once they complete the portfolio. Or they pose questions because there are some determinants there. They ask how they should write these. Then they appreciate the benefit of the “How I learn” part because they notice how they learn. I believe that this part is useful.

N: I agree that this part helps the students gain consciousness. They may know it subconsciously but they gain more awareness while they fill this up. Then we say “so you learn better this way, keep studying like this”. Or, if they lack in some parts, it’s better to improve them. The first part helps them develop awareness.

Question 2- Do the students’ responses match your viewpoint?

N: I was surprised; I mean, they behave very honestly. They would simply tick the boxes out and pass them over, but about ninety percent have evaluated themselves correctly, if not all. I also told them not to mark “I can do” unless they are a hundred percent sure, with no hesitations. They take those parts very seriously since they perceive that they are given an opportunity and responsibility.

Question 3- How do you make use of the students’ evaluations?

Teacher E: Actually, when we look at it, there are a few points which we don’t already know. Therefore I can’t say I make a lot of use of these evaluations. The results match our views, we don’t find out new aspects of students.

Teacher N: Yes, generally our evaluations match those of the students’. There aren’t many different points.

Teacher E: I believe that the most important thing is that the students are aware of their own learning. Awareness is very important because they have not questioned how they learned until that point; or they notice their abilities and difficulties as they read the determinants there. At least they think and evaluate what and how much they know. I don’t benefit much from these evaluations but they are very useful for the students.

Question 4- Are there any changes made in the context of the program based on the information there?

Teacher N: No, there aren’t. But we printed the targets in there and hung them in the classrooms. They notice them as they pass, not only when the file is opened, but the whole year. For instance, if they have any difficulty writing short messages, the target to learn that becomes clear. Otherwise, they are not aware of what they learn

or what they do in the textbooks. Here they make what they learn and what they aim more precise. It is a very good study but it puts a lot of weight on the teachers' shoulders, especially at private schools.

Teacher E: I criticize the passport in the language portfolio, it's very complicated and I get very confused on how to get it filled. I believe it should be re-evaluated.

Teacher Ç: The portfolio study is very useful if it is conducted as required here and applied accordingly. But discrepancies normally occur when there are students leaving for other schools or students coming from other schools. We encounter some first years' problems in the portfolio study. It is a very good practice, assuming the student passes the whole four years here and good follow-up is done. There may be some problems the next year when they select their area of specialization. The files are re-distributed according to the classes, the names and classes of the students are re-written and some losses occur. Each year, these changes should be placed in the portfolio regularly along with the certificates, since the same portfolio is used every year.

Teacher Ç: There is not precise information that we are supposed to put in on the certificates that the students receive.

I noticed that when using the portfolios, filling the "I can do" part, when they select what they can do the students get very happy to see how much they can do. I review the points that the student selects and I tick them if I agree that they can do it.

But this study is useful for them, it provides the students with self awareness; I already know. I don't learn them by looking here. I still don't understand what the language passport is good for.

Generally it is very useful for the students' awareness on what they do and do not know and it is a very good study to precisely show them what the level A1 or B1 is. When we say "your level is A1" to the student, they do not understand it; but they understand their level better when they see what a person at level A1 needs to know.

I think it is very useful for self evaluation and to understand what these levels are.

But I believe that a separate unit should be formed for the portfolio studies; portfolio follow-up is a separate job, considering the teacher's other works and class load. This job should be done by forming a separate proper unit in order for the portfolio study to be more useful.

Teacher S: Before the European Union Language Portfolio study the students' views weren't asked, there was no such concept. It began with the "self-check"s in the books and the students evaluated themselves in those parts.

But for the first time, with this study, the concept of the self-evaluation of the student emerged and I find it very useful.

It includes precise questions, for instance there is an item "when someone asks for direction, I can describe it using simple instructions". The student marks yes or no or selects it as a target. When we, the teachers see that item selected as a target, we

definitely plan a classroom study about directions for the next lesson. It is very useful for us, the teachers, to learn the exact needs of the students.

I believe that even the book writers need to utilize these studies. I believe that they should see these parts that they believe the students lack and focus on these in their books.

The students' views must definitely be asked about their own learning process.

Years ago, when I was selecting books I brought samples to my students and asked them to choose one and this caused some unrest at the department. But at the moment, the aim is to adjust the education based on their ideas and integrate them into education.

But I have some worries and questions about how the student will precisely benefit from this language passport. I don't have much knowledge on where, which schools and how it will work.

Consistent with the instructions given by our department's head, we certainly integrate the deficiencies marked in the portfolio and repeat that subject in our classes.

7. CURRICULUM VITAE



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