PERCEPTIONS OF EFL LEARNERS TOWARDS PORTFOLIOS AS A METHOD OF ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT: A CASE STUDY AT A TURKISH STATE UNIVERSITY

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Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

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ABSTRACT

PERCEPTIONS OF EFL LEARNERS TOWARDS PORTFOLIOS AS A METHOD OF ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT:
A CASE STUDY AT A TURKISH STATE UNIVERSITY

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This study investigated perceptions of EFL learners towards the benefits and the challenges of keeping a portfolio. The study also examined the students' perceptions towards the effect of keeping a portfolio on learner autonomy. The study was conducted with 21 intermediate level students at Galatasaray University Foreign Languages School in the fall semester of 2010 – 2011 academic year.

The data for this study were gathered through a pre-portfolio study survey and an open-ended question survey before the implementation; a post-portfolio study survey and in-depth interviews with the students after the implementation. A thirteen-week portfolio implementation was started after the administration of pre-portfolio study surveys and open-ended question surveys. When the implementation finished, a post-portfolio study survey was administered and at the end of the term in-depth interviews were conducted with the students.

The findings of the study indicated that the perceptions of the students towards keeping a portfolio were positive before and after the implementation of portfolio assessment. In general students preferred portfolio assessment to traditional assessment because participants believed that traditional assessment involved time pressure, it led to memorization and it did not measure English speaking skills effectively. Moreover, the students, who were not satisfied with and complained about traditional assessment system, pointed out that they became more autonomous than before the portfolio implementation. The analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data also supported these results and indicated that the students were positive towards keeping a portfolio as an alternative assessment tool.

Keywords: English as a foreign language education, alternative assessment, portfolio, learner autonomy.

ÖZ

İNGİLİZCEYİ YABANCI DİL OLARAK ÖĞRENEN ÖĞRENCİLERİN ALTERNATİF BİR DEĞERLENDİRME YÖNTEMİ OLARAK PORTFOLYOYA KARŞI TUTUMLARI: DEVLET ÜNİVERSİTESİNDE BİR DURUM ÇALIŞMASI

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Bu çalışma portfolyo tutmanın faydalarına ve zorluklarına ilişkin İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen öğrencilerin tutumlarını araştırmıştır. Çalışma ayrıca öğrencilerin portfolyo tutmanın öğrenci özerkliğine etkisine ilişkin tutumlarını incelemiştir. Çalışma 2010 – 2011 akademik yılı güz döneminde Galatasaray Üniversitesi Yabancı Diller Bölümü'nde, 21 orta düzeyde İngilizce öğrenen öğrenci ile gerçekleşmiştir.

Bu çalışma için veriler uygulama öncesinde yapılmış bir ön portfolyo çalışması anketi ve bir açık uçlu soru anketi; uygulama sonrasında yapılmış bir portfolyo çalışması sonrası anketi ve öğrencilerle bireysel görüşmeler aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Ön portfolyo çalışması anketi ve açık uçlu soru anketinin yapılmasının ardından on üç haftalık bir portfolyo uygulamasına başlanmıştır. Uygulama sona erdiğinde portfolyo çalışması sonrası anketi yapılmış ve öğrencilerle bireysel görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiştir.

Çalışmada elde edilen bulgular portfolyo uygulamasının öncesinde ve sonrasında öğrencilerin portfolyo tutmaya karşı tutumlarının olumlu olduğunu göstermiştir. Genel olarak öğrenciler portfolyo ile değerlendirme yöntemini geleneksel değerlendirme yöntemine tercih etmişlerdir çünkü öğrenciler geleneksel değerlendirme yönteminin zaman baskısı yaptığına, ezbere yönelttiğine ve İngilizce konuşma becerilerini etkili bir şekilde ölçmediğine inanmışlardır. Ayrıca geleneksel değerlendirme yönteminden memnun olmayan ve şikayet eden öğrenciler portfolyo uygulaması öncesine kıyasla daha özerk olduklarını belirtmişlerdir. Nicel ve nitel veri analizleri de bu sonuçları desteklemiş, alternatif bir değerlendirme yöntemi olarak portfolyo tutmaya karşı öğrencilerin tutumlarının olumlu olduğunu göstermiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Yabancı dil olarak İngilizce eğitimi, alternatif değerlendirme, portfolyo, öğrenci özerliği

To my beloved husband and my parents

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter introduces the background to the study, statement of the problem, research questions, significance of the study and key terms used in this study.

1.1 Background to the Study

Since English as a Foreign Language (EFL) studies focused on more learner-centred communicative approaches, assessment techniques in EFL setting have also shifted their focus from traditional forms of testing to the use of alternative methods of assessing and recording student achievement (Jacobs & Farrell, 2001). In the past, traditional assessment techniques such as multiple-choice, fill-in-the blanks and comprehension questions were used as effective tools in EFL setting because the classroom practices were also parallel to these techniques. However, traditional assessment techniques have become inconsistent with current EFL teaching methods which encourage student learning, increase student motivation and provide a clear understanding of student achievement because these techniques are not enough to assess multiple dimensions of language learning. In other words, teaching methods has become parallel with Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) principles; thus, traditional assessment techniques fail to assess the full range of student outcomes.

When the shortcomings of traditional assessment techniques emerged, a new form of assessment needed to be developed. At this point, alternative assessment techniques became the centre of an increased interest among educators and scholars who were interested in assessment techniques. As one of the most popular alternative assessment techniques, portfolio has

been used in English as a foreign language education for more than two decades. There have been various definitions for portfolios in the literature. For example, Paulson, Paulson and Meyer (1991) define portfolio as "a purposeful collection of student work that exhibits the student's efforts, progress, and achievements in one or more areas" (p. 60). They also add that "the collection must include student participation in selecting contents, the criteria for selection, the criteria for judging merit, and evidence of student self-reflection". The artefacts in the portfolios may include writing samples, reading logs, reflections, drawings, journals, audio or videotape recordings, peers' comments and teachers' feedback.

Portfolios became one of the most popular tools of alternative assessment since they offer lots of benefits to both students and teachers. Portfolio keeping provides an opportunity for students to monitor their own progress and to take responsibility in their learning. Also, by using portfolios in EFL classrooms, the teachers do not only discover the learners' skills and competences, but also diagnose their preferences, styles, dispositions, and learning strategies, thus are able to adopt a more learner-centred practice (Nunes, 2004). Some educators consider the portfolio as an alternative assessment tool which includes students' achievement records and assignments, while other educators consider the portfolio as a document of students' learning process in terms of promoting learner reflection.

There are lots of benefits of keeping a portfolio as an alternative assessment tool. However, the fact that keeping a portfolio fosters learner autonomy and increases motivation of the students is one of the most significant features of portfolio assessment. According to Banfi (2003), "the flexibility of portfolios is considered to make them ideal tools for encouraging learner autonomy" (p. 34). By means of portfolio, students become fully engaged in the learning process, which promotes learner autonomy and increases motivation. The students become active in learning since they produce their own works and follow the activities which are necessary for keeping a portfolio.

Also, the students gain some habits by means of portfolio, which leads them to be autonomous learners. For instance, the students learn to take responsibility as a part of their developmental process because portfolio requires self-discipline with its assignment submission deadlines, the process of keeping portfolio assignment papers in folders and the feeling of creating a personal work. Also, keeping a portfolio raises awareness among the students, which enables them to feel that they are active participants of the courses instead of being passive listeners. All of these features of keeping a portfolio lead the students to be autonomous learners, which is, no doubt, one of the most significant aims of the educators.

The present study attempts to investigate whether some of the benefits of portfolios mentioned in the literature are perceived in similar ways by FLE learners via a case study done in an English course at a state university school in Turkey. Particularly, the study focuses on the EFL students' perceptions towards the benefits and the challenges of keeping a portfolio in general. The study also aims at learning the students' perceptions towards the effect of keeping a portfolio on learner autonomy.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In the literature, it appears that the use of portfolio assessment has been widespread in some countries; however, it is difficult to find studies on portfolio implementation in an EFL context in Turkey. In addition, there have been limited attempts to implement portfolios at all levels of education apart from preparatory schools of some Turkish universities which use portfolios for measuring the students' writing skills or doing extra activities like group projects and presentations. The reason why there have been limited attempts to implement portfolio might be as follows: the instructors may find portfolio implementation overwhelming and time consuming since preparing paper and pen exam papers are much easier than checking portfolio assignment paper regularly; they may not be aware of the positive effect of keep-

ing a portfolio on students' personal development; they may be unaware of existence of portfolio as an alternative assessment tool.

The research available about portfolio implementation mostly deals with the effect of portfolios on students' proficiency development or the perceptions of the instructors towards using portfolios in their institutions. However, it is difficult to find studies on students' perceptions towards keeping a portfolio and the effect of keeping a portfolio on learner autonomy although it is important to administer student-centred learning in foreign language education. Therefore, the present study may be beneficial by filling a gap in the literature on portfolio assessment in the EFL context in relation to student perceptions.

Portfolios may be more widespreadly used at a variety of levels of education in the following years; thus, it is important to learn the students' perceptions towards the benefits and the challenges of keeping a portfolio. Students' perceptions should be taken into consideration while making decisions about using portfolios because their feedback can be helpful in designing and implementing successful portfolio tasks that would lead to effective learning. Thus, this study intends to serve as a study of portfolio implementation from the point of students, and it aims at finding out the students' perceptions towards the benefits and the challenges of keeping a portfolio, and the effect of keeping a portfolio on learner autonomy.

1.3 Research Questions

In this study the following research questions will be explored:

1. What are the perceptions of the students towards the benefits and challenges of portfolio assessment in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) course at a Turkish state university?

2. What are the perceptions of the EFL students towards the effect of portfolio assessment in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) course on learner autonomy?

1.4 Significance of the Study

Keeping a portfolio, no doubt, offers a number of benefits. However, in the literature there are not many studies on the effects of keeping a portfolio on learner autonomy and the perceptions of the students towards keeping a portfolio as an alternative assessment tool. Yet, instructors and administrators need to learn the perceptions of the students towards keeping a portfolio in order to administer this method and learn the efficiency in language learning and assessment. Hence, this study may contribute to the literature by indicating the perceptions of the students towards keeping a portfolio and the effect of portfolio on learner autonomy.

This study may provide information for other foreign language schools or preparatory programs which consider implementing portfolio in their institutions. The results of the study may lead the other institutions to get better results since the benefits and the challenges of this study were revealed from the students' point of view. Therefore, any EFL teacher or instructor, foreign language school or preparatory program can make necessary modifications related to portfolio in order to put this method into practice.

1.5 Key Terms

The following concepts are frequently used in this thesis.

English as a Foreign Language: English as a foreign language is used to refer to English instruction that occurs in a non-English speaking context such as in Turkey, where the language of mass communication is Turkish.

Alternative Assessment: An assessment that is alternative to standardized, norm-referenced, multiple choice testing and requires active construction of

meaning. Alternative assessment techniques include portfolios, performance-based assessments, exhibitions, journals, demonstrations, reflections, etc. (McMillan & Workman, 1998).

Portfolio: A purposeful and systematic collection of thoughtfully selected student work that demonstrates effort, progress, and achievement gained over a certain period of time.

Learner Autonomy: The student's ability to take responsibility for their own learning and continue learning outside of the classroom.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature on assessment in English language teaching, traditional and alternative assessment, portfolios as an alternative method of assessment, research on portfolios, learner autonomy, characteristics of autonomous learner, portfolios as a tool for promoting autonomy, studies on the use of portfolios to promote learner autonomy and on the learner perceptions on the use of portfolios.

2.1 Assessment in English Language Teaching

Assessment is an inseparable and crucial component of education and a tool for teachers to know their students well. Cheng, Rogers & Hu (2004) defines assessment as "the process of collecting information about a student to aid in decision making about the progress and language development of the student" (p. 363). According to Troudi (2009) assessment continues to play a major role in learning and teaching and is extensively and intensively addressed in research studies and theoretical articles both in mainstream education.

Assessment is also necessary for learners to evaluate their own performances and knowledge about the subject. By means of assessment learners have an opportunity to identify their abilities; therefore, they feel motivated and try to meet the challenges of the lesson. However, while choosing the type of assessment some factors such as the learners' needs, perceptions and abilities must be taken into consideration to maintain a reliable and relevant assessment system.

2.1.1 Traditional Assessment

Traditional assessment tools were commonly used and very popular before alternative assessment tools. They were intended to measure point in time skills and facts (Schackelford, 1996). The most widely used traditional assessment tools were multiple choice tests, true-false tests, matching tests, fill-in-the-blank tests, short answers and essays. Traditional assessment tasks and techniques were used as effective tools in educational settings since the teaching methods were also parallel to these techniques. Memorization by repetition was considered to be an essential outcome and traditional assessment techniques were designed to measure this outcome. However, these techniques seemed insufficient to evaluate learner progress.

In addition, some drawbacks of traditional assessment have been suggested. For example, Franklin (2002) lists some of them as follows:

- Traditional assessment tools fail to take into account students' growth and development and inhibit their progress.
- Frustrating- educators try to accurately summarize students' achievement with simple letter grades and a few words of condensed commentary.
- Evaluation of students' higher-order thinking skills, problem solving, attitudes, and other abilities cannot be quantified easily.
- Traditional assessment does not involve discussions, classroom projects, and other programs designed to show material to students and impart knowledge that the teachers can then observe and measure (p.8).

Moreover, Bailey (1998) points out traditional assessments are indirect and inauthentic. She also stresses that traditional assessment is standardized and for that reason, it is one-shot, speed-based, and norm-referenced. However, test scores may not always successfully indicate learners' progression. In addition, they may cause anxiety. As the most important criterion is getting high grades from these tests, it is inevitable for learners to feel anxiety. The

testing situation itself often produces anxiety within the student such that he is unable to think clearly. The student may also be facing extenuating circumstances at the time she is being tested, thus also hampering her performance on the test. The problems associated with traditional testing often mask what the student really knows, or, in the case of ESL what the student can do in her second language (Huerta-Macias, 1995, p.14). Moreover, there is a long time between instruction and exam date; thus, the students feel that they grow apart from the lessons, which is another reason creating anxiety on the learners.

In addition to the limitations of traditional assessment, it should be stressed that via traditional assessment tools, it is difficult to evaluate speaking skills fully. Traditional assessment does not focus on the growth and the performance of the student, but speaking skills are measured over time and in a variety of areas and situations. Bailey (1998) also mentions that there is no feedback provided to learners in this type of assessment. Without feedback, teaching and learning would be incomplete.

2.1.2 Alternative Assessment

In order to compensate for the limitations of traditional assessment, the scholars interested in assessment methods and tools proposed the term "alternative assessment" as a reforming movement and a shift from standardized assessment method for the last several decades. Hancock (1994) describes alternative assessment as an ongoing process involving the student and teacher in making judgments about the student's progress in language using non-conventional strategies. There have been some terms used to define alternatives to traditional assessment. The most known ones are 'direct assessment', 'authentic assessment', 'performance assessment', while the most generic one is 'alternative assessment' (Worthen, 1992).

Alternative assessment procedures include portfolio assessment, personal response assessments (checklists of student behaviours or products, jour-

nals, reading logs, videos of role plays, audiotapes of discussions, self-evaluation questionnaires, exhibitions, conferences, self and peer assessment questionnaires) and performance assessments (role plays, debates, oral presentations).

Characteristics of Alternative Assessment are summarized by Brown and Hudson (1998) as follows:

Alternative assessment procedures:

1. require students to perform, create, produce, or to actively participate;
2. use real-world contexts or simulations;
3. are non-intrusive in that they extend the day-to-day classroom activities;
4. allow students to be assessed on what they normally do in class every day;
5. use tasks that represent meaningful instructional activities;
6. focus on processes as well as products;
7. tap into higher level thinking and problem-solving skills;
8. provide information about both the strengths and weaknesses of students;
9. are multiculturally sensitive when properly administered;
10. ensure that people, not machines, do the scoring, using human judgment;
11. encourage open disclosure of standards and rating criteria; and
12. call upon teachers to perform new instructional and assessment roles (p. 654).

Jacobs and Farrell (2001) claim that alternative assessment tools are developed to mirror real-life conditions and involve thinking skills. On the basis of this assertion they mention three principles for assessment in ELT setting. First, alternative assessment tools emphasize meaning rather than form. Second, alternative assessment methods, such as think-aloud protocols, seek to investigate the learning process. Third, alternative assessment provides the social nature of learning through peer assessment and the use of group tasks. On the basis of these characteristics and arguments alternative assessment is opted by ESL/EFL teachers and has been commonly used in the classrooms instead of paper-pencil tests known as standardized tests.

2.2 Portfolios as an Alternative Assessment Tool

Portfolios have been one of the most commonly used types of alternative assessment. There have been various research and studies about portfolio assessment in ELT setting and also definitions for portfolios in the literature. Even if these definitions seem different from each other they have common points according to their purposes.

According to Richards and Renandya (2002) a typical portfolio contains the student's total writing output to represent his or her overall performance or student's work from the beginning of the term to the end, giving both the teacher and student a chance to assess how much the latter's writing has progressed (p. 347).

Paulson, Paulson and Meyer (1991) define portfolio as "a purposeful collection of student work that exhibits the student's efforts, progress, and achievements in one or more areas" (p. 60). They also add that "the collection must include student participation in selecting contents, the criteria for selection, the criteria for judging merit, and evidence of student self-reflection". According to Valeri-Gold, Olson & Deming (1991) "portfolios are alternative assessment tools by which students become active learners and question thinkers" (p. 298).

Coombe and Barlow (2004) give a definition of portfolio as follows:

> "As far as portfolios are defined in writing assessment, a portfolio is a purposive collection of student writing over time that shows the stages in the writing process a text has gone through and the stages of the writer's growth" (p. 19).

Coombe and Barlow stress the significance of portfolios in revealing the students' growth and the effective aspect of the portfolio application process.

Harlin, Lipa, & Phelps (1992) view portfolio assessment as "a multidimensional system which provides teachers with a complete picture of student's abilities and literacy development" (p. 203). Gallehr (1993) argues that no system of assessment is as perfect as portfolio assessment because students are required to write, but within this requirement, they can choose the topic, audience, responders in the class, revision strategies. Wolf (1989) believes that the role of portfolios is to demonstrate the extent of a student's communicative competence in the target language through samples of oral and written work.

The definitions cited above are explained from different perspectives, but they all have common points in respect of their effectiveness. In addition, they all emphasize that portfolios reveal students' progress throughout the duration of instruction and learning process. Whatever the effect of portfolios on students is, the scholars all share the same idea that portfolios are at the forefront of alternative assessment approaches as noted by Hamp-Lyons (1996).

Although there have been many alternative assessment procedures in second language learning, portfolio is one of the most popular assessment tools preferred by ESL/EFL teachers. The reason why the teachers prefer portfolio most can be the fact that portfolios provide lots of facilities for purposes of assessment. As Bailey (1998) points out, the portfolio application provides continuous, longitudinal assessment whereas classical paper tests are applied in one-shot. Also the portfolio application does not limit learners with time constraints while the classical speeded assessment tools create pressure for learners. Hancock (1994) also explains portfolio assessment as an alternative assessment tool as follows:

> Portfolio assessment is an ongoing process involving the student and the teacher in selecting samples of student work for inclusion in a collection, the main purpose of which is to show the student's progress. The use of this procedure is increasing in the language field, particularly with respect to the writing skill. It makes intuitive sense to involve students in decisions about which pieces of their work to assess and to assure that feedback is provided. Both teacher and peer reviews are important (p. 2).

Foreign language teachers can use portfolios to collect a student's writing samples, classroom tests, work in cooperative group projects, teacher observations, interviews, and think-aloud protocol (Cohen, 1990, 1998).

Gottlieb (2000) states that in portfolio assessment process "second language learners are acknowledged as contributors and the multicultural resources that the students bring to assessment situations serve as rich data sources" (p. 96). He claims that developmental portfolios also enable learners to demonstrate their growth in language proficiency, including oral language and literacy development, academic achievement, attitudinal variation in terms of acculturation and learning and acquisition of learning strategies (Gottlieb, 2000).

Gottlieb (1995) proposes a developmental scheme as a means of clarifying the variety of portfolios, their audience, and their uses considering the fact that there is not a single way to develop or implement portfolios in second language classrooms (Figure 1). He creates the acronym CRADLE referring six prototype portfolio categories: "collecting, reflecting, assessing, documenting, linking, and evaluating" to set realistic goals for designing and implementing portfolios as well as to be aware of their parameters and limitations. In collecting, learners express their lives and their identities with a flexibility to choose what to put in their portfolios. In reflecting, students use journals and self-assessment checklists to compare their present level with their prior performance level. In assessing, students involve in self-evaluation and monitor their own progress. In documenting, students incorporate various data sources into their portfolios unlike standardized tests or

any form of traditional assessment. In linking, students' portfolios are used as a connection between student and teacher, parents, also classmates. In evaluating, as the last part of this continuum, students' portfolios provide summary data for educational decision making. Finally Gottlieb asserts that in CRADLE continuum each category has equal weight, importance, and validity.

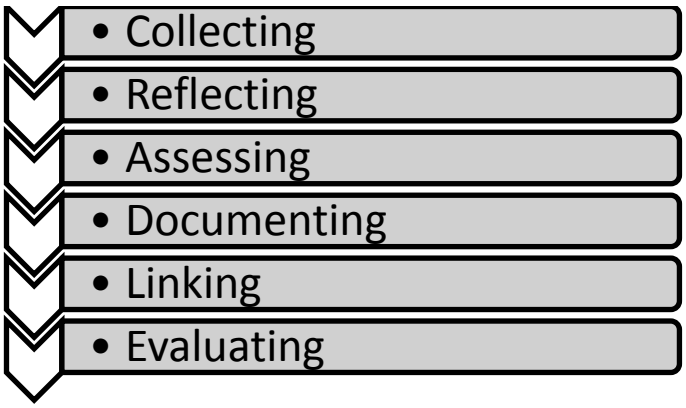

Figure 2.1 *CRADLE: Developmental Scheme for Portfolio Assessment (Gottlieb, 1995)*

Hamp-Lyons and Condon (2000) claims that portfolios are particularly beneficial for foreign language learners because portfolios provide a broader measure of what learners can do, and they replace timed writing contexts, which has long been claimed to be particularly discriminatory against non-native writers. In the opinion of Oxford and Shearin (1994), foreign language classrooms should focus on achieving goals, rather than comparing students' performance. Learners have an opportunity to share their motivations for study with an audience by means of portfolios. Therefore, foreign language teachers use portfolios in order to encourage their students to select, compile and display their studies in a more natural and less stressful way.

Regarding the content of the portfolio, it can be said that the content chosen for inclusion in the portfolio can be selected by both the teacher and the

learners. Including the students in this process triggers motivation as they can choose the topic or activity according to their interests. In addition to the needs and interests of the students, purpose of the portfolio determines what to put in it. “What is called a portfolio can range from a collection of personalized student products to a comprehensive array of student work and teacher records to standardized student assessments” (Wolf & Siu-Runyan, 1996, p. 30). Staff (1990) points out that "portfolios can contain anything that reflects the student's strengths, growth, and goals: self-assessments, teacher observations, metacognitive interviews, samples of writing, attitude and interest surveys, retellings, summaries, journal entries, and samples of the student's best work" (p. 646). According to Hancock (1994) samples of creative work, tests, quizzes, homework, projects and assignments, audio-tapes of oral work, student diary entries, self-assessments, comments from peers, and comments from teachers are among the items that can be found in a portfolio. As most of the scholars stress, portfolios should include lots of items, that is, they should be multisourced, for they are used to assess different aspects of language learning process. Another essential point about portfolio is the fact that they should include student reflection to promote learner awareness and higher order thinking skills. Without student reflection a portfolio is only a simple folder including students’ works.

2.2.1 Advantages of Using Portfolios in English Language Teaching

Portfolios offer a number of advantages to both teachers and learners. They are not only assessment tools enabling learners to involve in the assessment process, but they are also tools promoting motivation, collaboration and language learning. Brown and Hudson (1998) underline the same issue and states that portfolio assessment strengthens learning by increasing learners’ attention, motivation and involvement in their learning processes, promoting student-teacher and student-student collaboration and encouraging students to learn the metalanguage necessary for students and teachers to talk about language growth (p. 664).

According to Paulson, Paulson and Meyer (1991), "portfolios have the potential to reveal a lot about their creators and they can become a window into the students' heads" (p.61). As Brown and Hudson (1998) state, portfolios provide unique insights into the progress of each student.

Portfolios can be considered as powerful assessment tools since they encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning. Hirvela and Pierson (2000) draw attention to this point and state that "one advantage cited frequently in the portfolio literature is the notion of student authority or ownership caused by the opportunity students have to review their writing and decide which pieces they will present to their teachers and/or what they would like teachers to see in that writing" (p. 109).

Another important advantage of using portfolios in language classrooms is that it enables learners to see their weaknesses, strengths and development over time in different skill areas such as reading, writing and speaking. Furthermore, students can learn how to work collaboratively through peer critiques, assume responsibility for their own learning, and become independent learners in the process of portfolio assessment (Paulson et al., 1991).

Portfolios also help teachers to understand students' thoughts and individual differences via self-reflection. This information improves student – teacher collaboration and dialogues about how learning process occur. Hirvela and Pierson (2000) clearly show that self-reflection and self-assessment give students a greater sense of ownership of their learning, which increases their motivation for learning and makes students more engaged in the learning process.

2.2.2 Challenges of Using Portfolios in English Language Teaching

In order to use portfolios effectively in ELT, potential challenges of portfolios should be taken into consideration. Brown and Hudson (1998) itemized the challenges of using portfolios under five categories that can influence

portfolio implementation: design decision, logistics, interpretation, reliability and validity.

Design decision issues are related to content of the portfolio and its grading criteria. The issues about who will decide upon the content and who will specify the purposes are the most challenging issues for the teachers who implement portfolio in their classrooms. At the beginning of the term teacher must decide what to put into the portfolio and how to evaluate them. If the teacher does not make decisions about these issues, it cannot be possible to prepare grading criteria. According to Hamp-Lyons & Condon (1993), establishment of grading criteria is also a critical issue, since it has been found that portfolio readers often lack explicit criteria and standards to measure portfolios.

Another main concern about portfolios is dealing with logical issues such as lack of time and increased paper load and workload. Bushman et al (1995) delineates that time management is the biggest challenge of portfolio assessment. Teachers help students to develop their portfolios in their planning, collecting, editing and revising stages. Student – teacher dialogue during the portfolio implementation process increases the amount of time and effort used by the teachers while developing this process. Song and August (2002) claim that "while planning portfolio tasks and lessons, coaching students on drafts, and helping them compile portfolios can be comfortably folded into a process-oriented course, the actual evaluation of portfolios is inevitably labour intensive, requiring a significant amount of time from instructors" (p. 51).

Setting standards in grading, ensuring fairness to students and training teachers to make fair evaluations are interpretation issues challenging portfolio implementation. Gottlieb (2000) believes that teachers need sustained professional development to support portfolio implementation. Guiding and evaluating students in portfolio assessment is not an easy job and it is

claimed that teachers need professional assistance on how to guide and evaluate students in this process.

Another criticism surrounding portfolio assessment is the issue of reliability and validity. According to O'Malley et al. (1996) there might be a possibility of subjectivity and lack of consensus with other teachers because portfolio assessment relies on teacher judgement to produce a score. Without reliability while producing the same score with different raters, there might be concerns about inconsistent rating in portfolio assessment. If an assessment system is not reliable, it is not also valid. Validity is about determining how adequately portfolios exemplify students' work, development and abilities, and whether portfolio purposes and the decisions made according to these purposes match (Brown & Hudson, 1998).

Dealing with these challenges is not easy for teachers and requires commitment. Despite these challenges, it is important to ensure the balance between the benefits and challenges of portfolio implementation with a careful design in parallel with the objectives.

2.2.3 Research on the Use of Portfolios in English Language Teaching

Under this heading previous studies carried out on the use of portfolios in ELT settings will be presented. Such studies were mostly about the perceptions of EFL learners about portfolio assessment system and the implementation process. The researchers who investigate portfolio assessment emphasize the benefits of keeping portfolios from different perspectives and this section will present these perspectives.

Barootchi and Keshavarz (2002) set out a study to investigate if portfolio assessment contributed to EFL learners' achievement and their sense of responsibility toward monitoring their progress. The participants were 60 Iranian 16 year-old high school sophomores. The experimental group were assessed through both teacher-made tests and portfolios, whereas control

group was assessed through only teacher-made tests. The results suggested that the subjects of the research had positive perceptions towards portfolio assessment and this procedure contributed to their achievement and their feeling of responsibility towards monitoring their progress.

Song and Augusts' (2002) study examined the correlation between standardized assessment and portfolio in an ESL setting. In this study two groups from advanced ESL students were compared. One group was assessed by portfolio and the writing assessment test (WAT) which requires students to write an essay arguing for or against a position of general interest, whereas the other group was assessed only by the WAT. The findings indicated that the students who were assessed by both portfolio and the WAT were more likely to pass into a more advanced level than the students who were only assessed only by WAT. In consequence, Song and August (2002) proposed that portfolio assessment enables students to be more successful in passing into a more advanced level in English courses.

Nunes (2004) conducted a case study lasting over one year with a group of 10^{th} grade students in a Portuguese high school. The study was carried out to indicate how important students' reflection and students' involvement in the teaching – learning process are. According to the results, Nunes (2004) suggested that portfolios help EFL learners monitor their own learning and become more autonomous. She also claimed that portfolios could be used as pedagogical tools to facilitate the use of learner – centred practice.

Banfi (2003) conducted a study on portfolios with seven groups of advanced language university students and teacher training college students in Argentina. The study lasted over three years. The aim of the study was to explore whether the portfolio based approach develops linguistic, academic, and professional skills or not. Banfi (2003) concluded that portfolio based approach has many advantages on learners and the learners were satisfied with the portfolio implementation process. She also added that that the flexibility

of portfolios was the key element in making them ideal tools for encouraging learner autonomy and a useful means of demonstrating progress in the development of linguistic, academic and professional skills.

2.3 Learner Autonomy

The term of learner autonomy has been discussed in ELT setting mostly in the past decades and there have been many definitions and interpretations of learner autonomy raised by many scholars in the literature. The concept of learner autonomy was formed firstly through the Council of Europe's Modern Languages Project, which was established by the University of Nancy, France, in 1971 and it was based on social movements to improve the 'quality of life' by developing one's ability to 'act more responsibly in running the affairs of the society' (Holec, 1980). Within these movements autonomy was defined by Holec (1980) as "the capacity to take charge of one's own learning".

Confessore et al. (2004) described learner autonomy as the ability to effectively take part in learning opportunities and the willingness to participate in the selection and formulation of projects that involve individual or collaborative efforts (p. 41). In a more detailed description, Derrick and Carr (2003) claimed that learner autonomy is the process in which the learner makes an intentional decision to assume the responsibility for goal setting, planning and action in a learning situation (p.6). Derrick (2001) also described the characteristics of learner autonomy and claimed that "the characteristics of learner autonomy are those of independence of action-thought, will, and behaviour – and are incorporated into the larger construct of autonomous learning" (p.23). Benson and Voller (1997) suggested that the term of learner autonomy is used in five ways in language education as follows:

1. situations in which learners study entirely on their own;
2. a set of skills which can be learned and applied in self-directed learning;
3. an inborn capacity which is suppressed by institutional education;

4. the exercise of learners' responsibility for their own learning;
5. for the right of learners to determine the direction of their own learning (p.2).

Little (1991) had a different approach and listed what learner autonomy is not:

1. Autonomy is not a synonym for self-instruction; in other words, autonomy is not limited to learning without a teacher.
2. In the classroom context, autonomy does not entail an abdication of responsibility on the part of the teacher; it is not a matter of letting the learners get on with things as best they can.
3. On the other hand, autonomy is not something that teachers do to learners; that is, it is not another teaching method.
4. Autonomy is not a single, easily described behaviour.
5. Autonomy is not a steady state achieved by learners (pp.3-4).

Despite the variation in approaches to define learner autonomy, all the scholars mentioned above focus on the responsibility learners take for their own learning process. Other conditions for the development of learner autonomy are motivation and metacognitive strategies. Dam (1995) claims that the responsibility requires capacity and willingness of the learner to behave independently and in cooperation with others. As another condition, motivation has an essential role in autonomous learning. Dickinson (1995) asserts that motivation is a must for learners taking responsibility for their own learning, noticing that their successes or failures are related to their own reports rather than to the factors out of their control. Metacognitive strategies are also crucial in the learning process to develop learner autonomy. Wenden (1991) explains metacognitive strategies as the combination of planning of learning, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation. Without developing metacognitive strategies, learners cannot be fully autonomous.

2.3.1 Characteristics of Autonomous Learner

In order to understand learner autonomy deeply, it is important to know who an autonomous learner is. Thanasoulas (2000) defines the autonomous learner as "the one whose life has a consistency that drives form a coherent

set of beliefs, values and principles and the one who engages in a still-continuing process of criticism and re-evaluation". In the simplest way, autonomous learners are those who are aware of what is going on in their classes (Dickinson, 1993). Dickinson (1993) adds that autonomous learners are able to formulate their own learning objectives. As another characteristic, they are capable of selecting and making use of appropriate learning strategies. Moreover, they can monitor the effectiveness of their own learning and identify whether their learning strategies are effective or not. Having these characteristics, autonomous learners are likely to be involved in the learning process more than non-autonomous learners. Cotterall (1995) agrees with Dickinson on self-assessment and says "autonomous learners not only monitor their language learning, but also assess their efforts" (p. 199).

Breen and Mann (1997; p.134) suggest that autonomous learners:

- see their relationship to what is to be learned, to how they will learn and to the resources available as one in which they are in charge or in control;
- are in an authentic relationship to the language are learning and have a genuine desire to learn that particular language;
- have a robust sense of self that is unlikely to be undermined by any actual or assumed negative assessments of themselves or their work;
- are able to step back from what they are doing and reflect upon it in order to make decisions about what they next need to do and experience;
- are alert to change and able to change in an adaptable, resourceful and opportunistic way;
- have a capacity to learn that is independent of the educational processes in which they are engaged;
- are able to make use of the environment they find themselves strategically;
- are able to negotiate between the strategic meeting of their own needs and responding to the needs and desires of other group members.

Additionally, Candy (1991) describes an autonomous learner as methodical, disciplined, logical, analytical, reflective and self-aware, flexible, interdependent, interpersonally competent, persistent, responsible, venturesome,

creative, independent and self-sufficient. Also, Candy (1991) states that an autonomous learner demonstrates curiosity and develops information seeking and retrieval skills. He or she shows confidence and has a positive self-concept. In addition, an autonomous learner has knowledge about, and skill at, learning process. He develops and uses criteria for evaluating.

To investigate the 'characteristics of autonomous learners', Chan (2001) carried out a study about the students' perceptions of learner autonomy. The subjects of the study were 20 language major students studying at Hong Kong Polytechnic University. In the interview the students described autonomous learner as ""highly motivated, goal-oriented, having an inquisitive mind, well-organized, hardworking, curious about language, interested and enthusiastic about what is learnt, active, having initiative, making use of every opportunity to improve one's standard and flexible" (Chan, 2001, p. 513).

2.3.2 Learner Autonomy in English Language Classrooms

2.3.2.1 Historical Background of Learner Autonomy in Language Teaching

The concept of learner autonomy is not a recent one and it has existed in language teaching field since 1960s. Benson (2001) explains the brief history of learner autonomy in language teaching setting:

> "The concept of autonomy first entered the field of language teaching through the Council of Europe's Modern Languages Project, established in 1971. One of the outcomes of this project was the establishment of the Centre de Recherches et d'Applications en Langues (CRAPEL) at the University of Nancy, France, which rapidly became a focal point for research and practice in the field. Yves Chalon, who is regarded as the father of the autonomy in language learning by many today, is the founder of CRAPEL. After his death, Henri Holec remains a prominent figure within the field of autonomy today. Holec's (1981) project report to the Council of Europe is a key early document on autonomy in language learning. Holec (1981 cited in Benson, 2001:7) began his report of the social and ideologi-

> cal context within which ideas of autonomy in learning emerged. The journal Melanges Pedagogiues has also played an important role in the dissemination of research on autonomy from 1970 to the present day. The Council of Europe's Modern Languages Project aimed to provide adults with opportunities for lifelong learning. The approach developed at CRAPEL was influenced by the self-directed learning" (p.8).

According to Gremmo and Riley (1995) educational research and practices started to focus on learner autonomy in 1960s. They set forth six factors which contributed to the emergence of and spread the ideas related to learner autonomy in the field of language teaching:

1. The minority rights movements had an influence on the development of the learner autonomy in language learning.
2. The reaction against behaviourism in psychology, education and linguistics affected the development of the learner autonomy in language learning.
3. The interest in minority rights accelerated the development of adult education in Europe.
4. The growth of technology played a crucial role in the spread of autonomy.
5. The demand for learning foreign languages grew in consequence of political alternations (European Union, the United Nations) and the rise of multinational corporations (IBM, Renault, Shell).
6. The huge increase in the school and university population obliged educators to develop new structures to deal with many students (p. 152).

2.3.2.2 Promoting Learner Autonomy in English Language Classrooms

There are many reasons for promoting learner autonomy in English classes. For example, Jiao (2005) claims that motivation is the first reason which may lead to more effective learning. If the learner is motivated to learn the language, learning will likely to occur in rapid succession.

Second reason for promoting autonomy is that autonomous learners can establish an environment to use target language in a non-native environment. They can create their own opportunities to communicate in the target language. Moreover, development of technology will also give chance to

autonomous learners to learn effectively, because technology, especially the internet facilitates access to whatever the student try to learn.

The other reason is the fact that "learner autonomy caters to the individual needs of learners at all levels" (Jiao, 2005, p.28). If the learners are autonomous, they will turn out each condition to an opportunity for learning language and if the learners once become autonomous, they will acquire a skill to last through their lives, which is the way of independent thinking (Jiao, 2005).

Benson (2001) points out that the development of learner autonomy brings about better language learning and autonomous learners are more successful and motivated than non-autonomous ones in language learning process. Brown (2001) listed the following characteristics of good language learners.

Good language learners:

1. find their own way, taking charge of their learning
2. organize information about language
3. are creative, developing a "feel" for the language by experimenting with its grammar and words
4. make their own opportunities for practice in using the language inside and outside the classroom
5. learn to live with uncertainty by not getting flustered and by continuing to talk or listen without understanding every word.
6. use mnemonics and other memory strategies to recall what has been learned
7. make errors work for and against them
8. use linguistic knowledge, including knowledge of their first language, in learning a second language
9. use contextual cues to help them in comprehension
10. learn to make intelligent guesses
11. learn chunks of language as wholes and formalized routines to help them perform "beyond their competence"
12. learn certain tricks that help to keep conversations going
13. learn certain production strategies to fill in gaps in their own competence
14. learn different styles of speech and writing and learn to vary their language according to the formality of the situation (p.209).

Nunan (1995) states that it is a mistake to assume that learners come into the language classroom with a natural ability to make choices about what and how to learn. He suggests that there are relatively few learners who are naturally endowed with the ability to make informed choices about what to learn, how to learn it, and when to learn. At this point he suggests that - all other things being equal - the gap between teaching and learning will be narrowed when learners are given a more active role in the three key domains of content, process, and language and he proposes a hypothesis to increase autonomy in a language learning program:

In the experiential content domain, when:

- instructional goals are made explicit to learners
- learners are involved in selecting, modifying, or adapting goals and content
- learners create their own goals and generate their own content
- active links are created between the content of the classroom and the world beyond the classroom.

In the learning process domain, when:

- learners are trained to identify the strategies underlying pedagogical tasks
- learners are encouraged to identify their own preferred learning styles and to experiment with alternative styles.
- learners are given space to make choices and select alternative learning processes
- learners are encouraged to become their own teachers and researchers

In the language content domain, when:

- learners are given opportunities to explore the organic, nonlinear relationships between language forms and communicative functions or … to explore the relationships between what language is and what it does
- classroom learning opportunities are created which enable learners to draw on the external factors of instruction and interactional opportunities in order to articulate their understanding of how language works as well as putting language to communicative use in real or simulated contexts (Nunan, 1995, p.154).

2.4 Portfolios as a Tool for Promoting Autonomy

According to Knowles (1975) students who are active in learning are more motivated than those who are passive and wait for learning to come to them. When learners are involved in the learning process, they become autonomous. As portfolio requires learners to be fully engaged in the learning process, it can be said that portfolio is an effective way to foster autonomy for learning and it increases the learner autonomy level. Banfi (2003) underlines the same issue and says "the flexibility of portfolios is considered to make them ideal tools for encouraging learner autonomy" (p. 34). Portfolio implementation leads learners to be autonomous by some of its characteristics.

First of all, students feel a sense of responsibility while preparing their portfolio assignments as a part of their development process. They take responsibility by keeping their portfolios for their learning. As Harvey (2000) points out portfolios enable students to become more aware of themselves as learners and to take ownership in the processes and outcomes of their learning. Awareness brings about autonomy in this process.

Making learning individualized is another characteristic of portfolio implementation. A portfolio belongs to an individual; therefore, each student chooses and applies his /her own learning strategies to his / her portfolio which is process enabling learner autonomy (Richards and Renandya, 2002).

Third, learners do their best as they create their own products and put each piece in their portfolios regularly. They also make their own decisions about their work's range, quality and utility, which enables them a sense of personal achievement. That is, the learners decide their portfolio content within the limits that the teacher mentioned in advance. This is also a way for learners to become autonomous.

Finally, while keeping portfolio, the learner uses some skills such as finding and selecting relevant information using library, internet, etc; presenting information clearly; using technology throughout the process as a tool to facilitate the work and all of these skills develop learner autonomy in the course of time (Banfi, 2003).

2.4.1 Research on the use of Portfolios to Promote Learner Autonomy

There have been some studies related to portfolios or learner autonomy in the literature on different contexts. Although researches on the use of portfolios to promote learner autonomy are not as various as the others, there are some studies carried out to find out how portfolios are used to promote learner autonomy.

Nae-Dong Yang (2003) conducted a study in which she investigated the use of portfolios to facilitate learning and encourage learner autonomy in an EFL classroom. The study was carried out with 45 students at a state university in Taiwan. The study was about the perceptions of the students about the use of portfolios in their class, the challenges and benefits they faced with, and whether portfolio or standardized tests were more effective in facilitating learning and promoting autonomy. The researcher used open-ended and Likert-scaled questionnaires to assess students' beliefs, perceptions about using portfolios and their learning style preferences. The results indicated that students had positive reactions to the use of portfolios for learning and assessment. 23% of the students preferred paper & pencil tests, while 51% of the students chose portfolios. Yang (2003) concluded that portfolio implementation raised EFL students' awareness of language learning strategies, facilitated their learning process, and enhanced their self directed learning.

Another study named "Translang Project" was carried out by Ruth Pilkington and Joanne Garner (2004) in University of Central Lanchasire. During the project portfolio is used within one institution, to investigate the quality

of learning experienced by students and the learning drawn from the experience. Also, initial questions about whether and how students apply the techniques acquired were asked. The results of the study indicated that portfolio is a useful tool for autonomous learning and a means of both supporting more independent approaches to languages and countering reduced class contact.

Pollari (2000) set out a study with 108 students from a upper secondary school in Finland. The goal of the research was to find out if portfolios promote the students' empowerment which is a process towards autonomy. As a result of some surveys and interviews with the students, Pollari (2000) concluded that approximately 80 students out of the 108 were considered to have high learner empowerment.

According to the studies on the use of portfolios to promote learner autonomy, it can be concluded that the use of portfolios and learner autonomy have mainly positive correlation.

2.4.2 Research on the Learner Perceptions on the use of Portfolios

Students have different perceptions of assessment and these perceptions change according to their opinions and attitudes about the assessment and its properties. They ask questions like "Are assessment tasks important? Are the tasks fair? Do they match with the learning activities of the classroom? Do they relate to real-life situations?" (Dorman and Knightley, 2006, p.49).

Davis et al (2001) conducted a study to identify and analyse students' attitudes to the portfolio assessment process over time. The participants of the study were the students studying at the University of Dundee Medical School in Scotland. In the study six sources of evidence were used to evaluate the portfolio assessment process: analysis of student results; observer documentation; examiner evaluation questionnaire; student evaluation questionnaire, verbal report from student representatives, and external examiner

reports. Student perceptions were discussed under four headings based on the factor analysis: portfolio building and learning; achievement of outcomes and portfolio building; potentially contentious issues, and portfolio assessment and reflection. According to the results, student reactions to the portfolio process were initially negative. However, their attitudes changed and became more positive during the process. Portfolio assessment was recognised as supporting student learning.

Segers et al's (2008) study examined students' perceptions of portfolio assessment practices and the relationships to their learning approaches. In addition, differences in perceptions and learning approaches between first-year students and second-year students, who have already had one year of experience with the portfolio assessment practice, were investigated. 64 first-year and 34 second-year students –110 students in total - participated in the study and completed two questionnaires at the end of the academic year. The findings indicated that feedback is essential implementing portfolio assessment. This implied the importance of teachers encouraging students to make explicit how they used feedback to reorient, or reshape, their learning activities.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

In this chapter of the study, information about setting, participants, data collection instruments, portfolio activity/data collection procedures and data analysis methods will be described.

3.1 Background of the Study

3.1.1 Setting and Participants

The study was conducted at Galatasaray University Foreign Languages School because of its convenience for the researcher. The aim of Foreign Languages School is to help students improve their language skills needed for academic settings and have at least B2 level of English according to Common European Framework criteria before graduation. In Foreign Languages School English is a must course, whereas German and Spanish are elective courses.

Galatasaray University is the only Francophone University in Turkey and the courses are in French. Thus, French language and culture are taught for a year in the Preparatory School. After the Preparatory School the students enter English Proficiency Exam of Galatasaray University and they are placed into different levels of English classes according to their exam results.

In this study the participants were 21 intermediate level students. The ages of the students ranged between 18 and 22. Twelve of these students were studying law, six of them were studying communication and three of them were studying sociology. Among 21 participants, eleven of the students were female and ten of them were male. In Table 3.1 demographic profiles of the participants are displayed. According to the demographic profile data,

more than half of the students in this class had graduated from private school, while the others had graduated from state schools in which English-medium instruction was provided. Therefore, all the participants were exposed to English as a Foreign Language instruction beforehand. The total amount of English courses at Galatasaray University was two hours in a day and two days in a week.

Table 3.1 *Demographic Profiles of the Participants*

Participants	**Level of English**	**Age**	**Sex**	**Department**	**Alma Mater**
Participant 1	Intermediate	20	Female	Communication	Anatolian High School
Participant 2	Intermediate	22	Female	Communication	Super High School
Participant 3	Intermediate	20	Female	Sociology	Private School
Participant 4	Intermediate	20	Male	Law	Private School
Participant 5	Intermediate	20	Male	Law	Private School
Participant 6	Intermediate	20	Female	Sociology	Anatolian High School
Participant 7	Intermediate	18	Male	Law	Anatolian High School
Participant 8	Intermediate	21	Male	Law	Private School
Participant 9	Intermediate	21	Male	Law	Private School
Participant 10	Intermediate	19	Female	Law	Private School

Table 3.1 *Demographic Profiles of the Participants (continued)*

Participants	Level of English	Age	Sex	Department	Alma Mater
Participant 11	Intermediate	20	Female	Communication	Private School
Participant 12	Intermediate	20	Male	Law	Private School
Participant 13	Intermediate	22	Male	Law	Private School
Participant 14	Intermediate	22	Male	Communication	General High School
Participant 15	Intermediate	21	Male	Law	Private School
Participant 16	Intermediate	22	Female	Communication	General High School
Participant 17	Intermediate	21	Male	Law	Private School
Participant 18	Intermediate	20	Male	Law	Anatolian High School
Participant 19	Intermediate	19	Female	Law	Private School
Participant 20	Intermediate	20	Female	Sociology	Teacher High School
Participant 21	Intermediate	21	Female	Communication	Private School

The participants were given a consent form indicating that filling in the questionnaires and participating in the interviews to collect data were purely voluntary and their answers would have no positive or negative impact on

their overall grade in the course. In addition, the participants were allowed to stop taking part in the data collection processes whenever they wanted (Please, see Appendix A for a copy of the Informed Consent Form). The study lasted 13 weeks. During the study, the students were able to contact the researcher both via e-mails and in person because the researcher was also the students' instructor of English. Being both the instructor and the researcher enabled the researcher to observe participants' progress, involvement, and perceptions in relation to the use of portfolios more closely. In addition, when the participants had problems about the tasks implemented and mentioned in the class, they had an opportunity to consult the researcher in weekly class meetings.

3.1.2 The Role of the Researcher in the Study

The researcher was also the instructor of the students who participated in the study so that she could have a chance to organize and observe every detail and step of the study as a researcher. .Moreover, she kept logs of the portfolio implementation period regularly and got feedback from the students. On the other hand, while implementing the portfolio study and gathering data she tried to remain objective and she did not interfere with the process of forming the participants' perceptions about portfolios, which was essential to obtain reliable and objective results as well as well as answers to the research questions of the study.

3.2 Data Collection

3.2.1 Data Collection Instruments

In order to conclude this study, as illustrated in Figure 3.1 four instruments were used to collect the data: a pre-portfolio study survey which was distributed to the students before the portfolio implementation process; an open-ended question form given before implementation; a post-portfolio study survey which was distributed at the end of the process; and an in-depth interview done with the students at the end of the term.

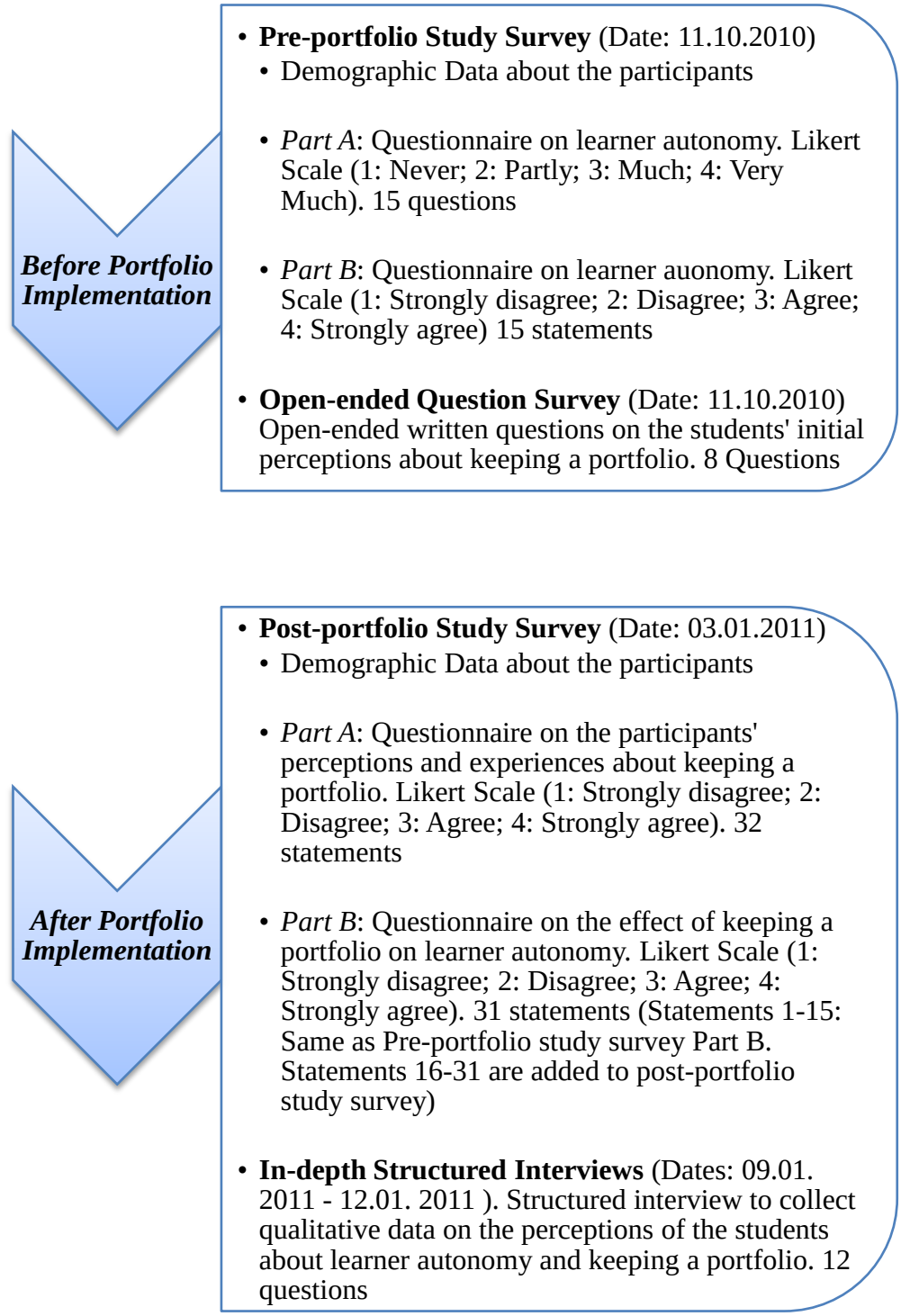

Figure 3.1 *Data Collection Instruments*

3.2.1.1 Pre-Portfolio Study Survey

Pre-portfolio study survey was adapted from Balçıkanlı's (2002) survey whose validity and reliability had been checked and verified. It consisted of nine items for demographic information section, fifteen questions for part A and fifteen statements for part B. In the demographic information section the students were asked about their gender, age, type of high school they graduated from, their faculties, if they liked learning English, if they had preparatory school experience, how many years they had been learning English, and their own opinion about their level of English proficiency. In the other two sections the questions and statements were designed to test students' perceptions of autonomous learning. Part A consisted of fifteen questions about "motivation, study methods, assessment" and "learner choice". This part was designed in a four-point Likert scale with 'never', 'partly', 'much', 'very much' options. Part B included fifteen statements about "self-awareness, responsibility, independent study methods" and "independent language learning methods". Part B was also designed in a four-point Likert scale with 'strongly disagree', 'disagree', 'agree', and 'strongly agree' options. In order to prevent any potential language interference which could disrupt implementation, the survey was distributed to the students in Turkish concerning the students' proficiency level in English (Please see Appendix B for a copy of pre-portfolio study survey in Turkish).

3.2.1.2 Open-Ended Question Survey

After the pre-portfolio study survey including learner autonomy questionnaires, an open-ended question survey which included eight questions was given to the students before the implementation (Please, see Appendix C for a copy of the open-ended question survey). This survey was designed by the researcher to explore the students' perceptions of assessment tools, particularly portfolio as an alternative assessment tool. In addition, open-ended question survey was opted by the researcher because it would give more detailed data getting the students' comments about alternative assessment.

Also, this survey was designed to collect qualitative data in order to explore the students' knowledge and experiences about the portfolio assessment system before implementation.

3.2.1.3 Post-Portfolio Study Survey

Post-portfolio study survey had a demographic information section and two main parts with sixty three statements. Demographic information section was the same as the pre-portfolio study survey's demographic information section's questions. However, five more questions related to computer and internet literacy of the participants were also added to the demographic information section. Part A of the post-portfolio study survey consisted of a questionnaire about the use of portfolio including thirty two statements. The questionnaire was designed in a four-point Likert scale with 'strongly disagree', 'disagree', 'agree', and 'strongly agree' options. This questionnaire was designed to find out the participants' general perceptions of their experiences in keeping a portfolio and to explore whether the implementation of portfolios as an assessment tool changed participants' perceptions towards keeping portfolio or not. First fifteen statements of post-portfolio study survey Part B were the same questions that were asked in pre-portfolio study survey Part B in order to compare the participants' perceptions of learner autonomy before and after the portfolio implementation. However, the last part was also revised and sixteen more statements were added in order to get further knowledge (Please, see Appendix D for a copy of the Post-Portfolio Study Survey)

3.2.1.4 In-depth Interviews

The last data collection instrument was face-to-face structured in-depth interviews which enabled the researcher to collect qualitative data about students' perceptions towards the use of portfolios as an assessment tool and their effect on learner autonomy. In-depth interviews were held at the end of the semester after the portfolio implementation is over in order to learn the

students' perceptions of keeping a portfolio. The questions were designed by the researcher in order to find answers to the research questions of the study.

After the portfolio implementation process, the students were given an empty schedule for interviews and asked to write their names in the spaces considering their free time. According to the schedule the students were interviewed one by one in the meeting room of the Foreign Languages School. They were asked twelve questions about keeping a portfolio and autonomous learning. They were also asked questions to reveal their ideas about self-reflection and peer-evaluation. The questions were asked in Turkish to encourage participants to answer the questions fully and to express their opinions without being under the pressure of English language proficiency. All the interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed for data analysis (Please, see Appendix E for a copy of the in-depth interview questions).

3.2.2 Portfolio Activity and Data Collection Procedures

3.2.2.1 Introduction to the Students

The researcher obtained ethical approval from the Foreign Languages School of Galatasaray University to conduct the study on September 27, 2010 and all the ethical rules were taken into consideration. According to the objectives of the study an intermediate class was determined to apply the research. Then, students were distributed informed consent forms to identify the volunteer participants for the study.

On October 11, 2010 Turkish versions of pre-portfolio study survey and open-ended question survey were distributed to the students. After the students filled in the questionnaire, they were informed about educational portfolio and the portfolio assessment system. The course book named 'New English File for Intermediate Level' which would be used in the classroom throughout the term was also introduced to the students.

3.2.2.2 Reflection

When the students were acquainted with the portfolio, they were also informed about writing reflection papers with each portfolio task and putting them in their portfolio folders. They were trained how to write self-reflection papers and were mentioned the significance of these papers for their portfolios. In order to help the students, the instructor prepared a sample student assignment paper with four predetermined self-reflection questions which were:

1. What do you think the strengths of this assignment are?
2. What kind of troubles did you experience while doing this assignment?
3. How could you improve your assignment?
4. What are the most valuable things you've learned in this assignment?

All participants used the same format to write their reflection papers in their portfolios. (See Appendix F for the sample assignment paper)

3.2.2.3 Feedback

Each portfolio assignment had a different focus to assess different skills. Table 3.2 below shows each weekly portfolio assignment in relation to its focus together with the intervals of giving feedback to the students.

Table 3.2 *Schedule of Portfolio Study and Data Collection*

Weeks	**Portfolio Activities**
Week 1	• Pre-portfolio study survey and open-ended question survey were distributed to the students. • Portfolio and the terms related to portfolio were introduced to the students. • Reflection was defined to the students and student assignment paper with reflection questions were given to the students.
Week 2	• Artefact collection: A diet quiz and writing a paragraph according to the result of the quiz
Week 3	• Instructor feedback on the first draft • Artefact collection: Story reading and comprehension questions.
Week 4	• Instructor feedback on the first draft • Artefact collection: Writing letter of application using personality adjectives learnt in the classroom • Watching 'Scrubs' (two episodes of the TV series) and taking notes about the unknown words
Week 5	• Instructor feedback on the first draft • Artefact collection: Defining the unknown words in the TV series and using these words in sentences • Oral presentations
Week 6	• Instructor feedback on the first draft • Artefact collection: Writing 9 short paragraphs for 9 different activities using present perfect tense • Oral presentations
Week 7	• Instructor feedback on the first draft • Artefact collection: Watching a video about the topic on the internet and describing the events in the video • Oral Presentations
Week 8	• Peer feedback on the first draft • Artefact collection: Making sentences using 'have to, must, should, their interrogative and negative forms' on the given forms. • Oral Presentations
Week 9	• Instructor feedback on the first draft • Artefact collection: Inserting photos of the family members or friends in the portfolio file and describing their physical appearances and characteristic features according to the vocabulary learnt in the class • Oral Presentations

Table 3.2 *Schedule of Portfolio Study and Data Collection (continued)*

Weeks	**Portfolio Activities**
Week 10	• Instructor feedback on the first draft • Artefact collection: Guessing people's jobs looking at the photos of these people and making sentences using deduction modals 'may, might, must, cannot' • Oral Presentations
Week 11	• Instructor feedback on the first draft • Completion of the artefacts
Week 12	• Portfolio files were submitted to the instructor • Post- portfolio study surveys were distributed • In-depth interview schedule was determined
Week 13	• In- depth interviews were held

As it can be seen in Table 3.2, the students were expected to write the same assignment two times. After being informed about the weekly task, they wrote their first drafts on the given topic and sent their assignments to the researcher via e-mail by the deadline set beforehand. Then, the researcher gave feedback on both linguistic and content aspects and distributed their assignments in hard-copy. While giving feedback, the instructor did not correct the students' errors but marked the errors with codes shown in Table 3.3. The reason why she did not correct the errors was to show the students their errors and make them try to find the correct words or phrases on their own. Having got their marked papers, the students revised their assignments and put them in their folders. Therefore, they had two assignment papers for one task in their portfolios (In Appendix G a student's first assignment paper with instructors' error correction codes and the corrected assignment paper are presented).

Table 3.3 *Error Correction Codes*

Codes	Meanings
Gr	grammar
Wf	wrong form
Ww	wrong word
Prep	preposition
Sp	spelling
A	article

3.2.2.4 Oral Presentations

All of the assignments were not in written forms because speaking skills in English were also needed to be assessed. Therefore, oral presentations became a component of the portfolio. Considering time limitation and the number of the students, it was determined that the students would make presentations in pairs. The students were free to choose their partners and the topic they would present on the condition that the topic should be informative for their peers. After the topics were checked and approved by the instructor, the students started to get prepared for their presentations. All of the presentations were prepared by MS Power Point program and lasted from fifteen to twenty-five minutes. The presentations were video-recorded by a digital camera by the instructor and were uploaded to an educational video platform on the Internet, called 'www.viddler.com' for the students' access. Then, the presenters watched their own presentations and saved their videos in a CD to put them in their portfolio files. Moreover, the students wrote a reflection report about their presentations (See Appendix H for a sample reflection report about presentations). This report included a paragraph about advantages and disadvantages of making a presentation in English and watching it after demonstration. The aim of having the students write the reflection reports was to raise awareness.

3.2.2.5 Grading

There is not a universally accepted assessment criteria for portfolios because the criteria can change according to the aims of the course or the purpose of the instructor. However, grading the portfolio assignments is not more difficult or confusing than grading a writing assignment or project. The validity and quality of the student's outputs may be influenced by how explicitly the instructor define and state the purpose of his/her instruction. Hence, in this study the instructor informed the students about the process and explained the grading system explicitly at the beginning of the term. In Table 3.4 course requirements for grading is presented. It was told the students that traditional assessment tools would not be used in that semester and the students would be assessed with their portfolio assignments. Also, it was stated that possible grammar – vocabulary errors or typos would not be evaluated; however, second drafts of the assignment papers after the instructor marked the first drafts of the assignment papers would be evaluated. Therefore, finding the mistakes and correcting them were important in this study for the students in order to learn from their mistakes.

Table 3.4 *Course Requirements*

Participation to the Topics in the Classroom	**Presentation**	**Portfolio**
20%	20%	60%

The students' first assignment papers were marked by the instructor with the error correction codes and then the students corrected their first drafts. The students' portfolios were graded according to these corrected second assignment papers for each task. The instructor used the following criteria for grading:

- 20% Submission by deadline
- 20% Correction of the mistakes
- 10% Understanding of the task
- 5% Coherence, originality and organization
- 5% Grammatical – Lexical Correctness, punctuation and spelling

3.2.2.6 Completion

The implementation process started on October 11, 2010 and ended on January 3, 2011. In the last week of the study, the students were required to put the finishing touches to their portfolios and submit their folders to the instructor. Then, they were given the post-portfolio study surveys.

As the last step of the study and to collect qualitative data to answer the research questions of the study the students were interviewed one by one. The structured interviews done with the students were tape-recorded (See the In-depth Interview Questions Appendix E). Each interview lasted approximately thirteen minutes and all of the interviews took four days. Table 3.5 shows interview dates and duration of the interviews for each participant.

Table 3.5 *The interview dates and duration of the interviews with the participants*

Participants	**Interview Dates**	**Duration of Interviews**
Participant 1	09/01/2011	16 min. 22 sec.
Participant 2	09/01/2011	15 min. 13 sec.
Participant 3	09/01/2011	11 min. 27 sec.
Participant 4	09/01/2011	15 min. 06 sec.
Participant 5	10/01/2011	11 min. 42 sec.
Participant 6	10/01/2011	13 min. 23 sec.
Participant 7	10/01/2011	14 min 09 sec.
Participant 8	10/01/2011	11 min. 40 sec.
Participant 9	10/01/2011	13 min. 35 sec.

Table 3.5 *The interview dates and duration of the interviews with the participants (continued)*

Participants	**Interview Dates**	**Duration of Interviews**
Participant 10	11/01/2011	14 min. 41 sec.
Participant 11	11/01/2011	14 min. 02 sec.
Participant 12	11/01/2011	13 min 34 sec.
Participant 13	11/01/2011	13 min. 30 sec.
Participant 14	11/01/2011	11 min. 23 sec.
Participant 15	11/01/2011	11 min. 14 sec.
Participant 16	12/01/2011	11 min. 51 sec.
Participant 17	12/01/2011	13 min. 40 sec.
Participant 18	12/01/2011	13 min. 36 sec.
Participant 19	12/01/2011	11 min. 12 sec.
Participant 20	12/01/2011	14 min. 10 sec.
Participant 21	12/01/2011	15 min. 34 sec.

3.3 Data Analysis

In this study both qualitative and quantitative data were gathered and analyzed. Qualitative data were gathered through open-ended question surveys and in-depth structured interviews. In order to analyze open-ended question survey and in-depth structured interviews, the constant comparative method which is a method for analyzing qualitative data was used. The constant comparative method was defined by Maykut and Morehouse (1994) as:

> a method of analyzing qualitative data which combines inductive category coding with a simultaneous comparison of all units of meaning obtained. As each unit of meaning is selected for analysis, it is compared to all other units of meaning and subsequently grouped (categorizing and coded) with similar units of meaning. If there are no similar units of meaning, a new category is formed. In this process, there is room for continuous refinement; initial categories are changed, merged, or omitted; new categories are generated; and new relationships can be discovered (p. 134).

Open-ended question surveys were analyzed after the answers of the students were translated into English and combed into the categories. In-depth interviews were analyzed after the transcription. Then the main themes in the interviews were determined. After the transcription process, the interviews were translated into English by the researcher. The interviews revealed most of the research question answers and the perceptions of the students towards keeping a portfolio.

The quantitative data was collected from the pre-portfolio study survey and the post-portfolio study survey. The data gathered through these surveys were statistically compiled and analyzed using the Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS 15.0). In order to analyze the pre and post portfolio study surveys the items in the Likert-scale were assessed values ranging from 1 to 4. The scoring for the statements were as follows: Never = 1, Little = 2, Much = 3, Very much = 4 and Strongly disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Agree = 3, Strongly agree = 4. Pre-portfolio study Part B and the first fifteen statements of post-portfolio study survey Part B were also analyzed by running an ANOVA test in order to indicate the significant answers of the students before and after the implementation.

This chapter gave descriptive information about the research setting and participants, the instruments used in this study, the procedures and the data analysis of the study. In chapter four the results of the data analysis and the specific outcomes will be presented.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the data analyses obtained from two questionnaires conducted before and after the implementation of portfolio assessment in EFL, an open-ended question survey given at the beginning of the semester and an in-depth interview done with the students when the implementation of portfolio assessment was over. The analyses were explained in terms of both quantitative and qualitative data and were used to answer the research questions. In order to reach a conclusion, two research questions were formulated:

1. What are the perceptions of the students towards the benefits and challenges of portfolio assessment in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) course at a Turkish state university?
2. What are the perceptions of the EFL students towards the effect of portfolio assessment in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) course on learner autonomy?

4.1 Pre-Portfolio Study Survey Results

As the first instrument of data collection process, pre-portfolio study survey was administered to gather quantitative data about the perceptions and expectations of participants' on the use of portfolio assessment in EFL. In addition, pre-portfolio study survey helped the researcher to gather quantitative data on whether participants viewed themselves as autonomous learners or not. The survey was administered to the research class before the thirteen-week portfolio implementation period. The data collected from pre-portfolio study survey was statistically analyzed using the SPSS, version 15.0.

4.1.1 Pre-Portfolio Study Survey Part A: Results

The first part of pre-portfolio study survey was a learner autonomy questionnaire adapted from Balcikanli's study (2002). It consisted of fifteen questions designed on a four-point Likert scale which were assessed values ranging from 1 to 4. The scoring for the answers was as follows: Very much=4, Much=3, Partly=2, Never=1. Part A was implemented to the students in order to gather quantitative data about the students' perceptions of language learning process and being an autonomous learner. Table 4.1 shows the analysis of the results.

Table 4.1 *Results of the questions in pre-portfolio study survey Part A*

	Question	**N**	**M**	**SD**	**Answers**	**f**	**%**
1	How much are you involved in establishing the objectives of a course?	16	1.44	0.512	Never Partly Total	9 7 16	56.3 43.8 100
2	How much are you involved in deciding the course content?	16	1.38	0.619	Never Partly Much Total	11 4 1 16	68.8 25 6.3 100
3	How much are you involved in selecting course materials?	16	1.5	0.632	Never Partly Much Total	9 6 1 16	56.3 37.5 6.3 100
4	How much are you involved in decisions on the time, place and pace of the course?	16	1.44	0.814	Never Partly Very much Total	11 4 1 16	68.8 25 6.3 100
5	How much do you comment on the decisions related to course methodology?	16	1.75	0.856	Never Partly Much Very much Total	7 7 1 1 16	43.8 43.8 6.3 6.3 100

Table 4.1 Results of the questions in pre-portfolio study survey Part A (continued)

	Question	N	M	SD	Answers	f	%
6	How much are you involved in decisions on classroom management?	16	1.5	0.816	Never Partly Very much Total	10 5 1 16	62.5 31.3 6.3 100
7	How much are you involved in decisions on homework tasks?	16	1.69	0.873	Never Partly Much Very Much Total	8 6 1 1 16	50 37.5 6.3 6.3 100
8	How much are you encouraged to assess yourself?	16	2.25	0.931	Never Partly Much Very Much Total	3 8 3 2 16	18.8 50 18.8 12.5 100
9	How much are you involved in decisions on what to focus on from materials given by the teacher?	16	1.56	0.814	Never Partly Very much Total	9 6 1 16	56.3 37.5 6.3 100
10	How much are you involved in decisions on the choice of learning tasks (projects, presentations, etc.)?	16	1.81	0.544	Never Partly Much Total	4 11 1 16	25 68.8 6.3 100
11	How much are you encouraged to formulate your own explanations for classroom tasks?	16	1.81	0.834	Never Partly Much Very much Total	6 8 1 1 16	37.5 50 6.3 6.3 100

Table 4.1 Results of the questions in pre-portfolio study survey Part A (continued)

	Question	N	M	SD	Answers	f	%
12	How much are you encouraged to find out learning strategies by yourself?	16	1.56	0.727	Never Partly Much Total	9 5 2 16	56.3 31.3 12.5 100
13	How much are you informed about how to study English better on your own?	16	1.69	0.602	Never Partly Much Total	6 9 1 16	37.5 56.3 6.3 100
14	How much are you encouraged to keep journals or take notes to follow your progress during learning English?	16	1.69	0.602	Never Partly Much Total	6 9 1 16	37.5 56.3 6.3 100
15	How much are you encouraged while you are preparing your learning plans?	16	1.56	0.629	Never Partly Much Total	8 7 1 16	50 43.8 6.3 100

Note. N = number, M = mean, SD = standard deviation, f= frequency

The result of the *Questions 1,2,3,4,5,6,7* and *9* shows that more than half of the participants (between 43.8% and 68.8%) had no involvement in making decisions on any component of the course, the other participants stated that they were "partly" involved and only one participant stated he/she was involved in decisions of the components in the course. Most of the participants did not select "Much" or "Very much" as the options to *Questions 1,2,3,4,5,6,7* and *9*. This indicated that the students had no or little experi-

ence in being a decision-maker in relation to the selection of any component in their courses before the portfolio study. However, the result of *Question 10* shows that more than half of the participants (68.8%) were "partly" involved in decisions on the choice of learning tasks (projects, presentations), while only 25% of the students stated that they were "never" involved. This result shows that the students had involvement in decisions on the choice of learning tasks more than any other decisions in relation to the course.

The answers given to the *Question 8* show that half of the participants (50%) were "partly" encouraged to assess themselves, 18.8% of the participants stated that they were "never" encouraged. Another 18.8% of the participants answered the same question stating that they were encouraged "much" and 12.5% of the participants pointed out that they were encouraged "very much" to assess themselves. The results indicate that most of the students were not adequately encouraged to assess themselves before the portfolio study.

The results of the *Questions 11, 12, 14* and *15* indicate that more than half of the participants were "never" or "partly" encouraged to involve in learning process by formulating explanations for classroom tasks, finding out learning strategies, following their progress or preparing learning plans. The results show that most of the students were not encouraged to be a part of learning process, which prevents autonomous learning.

The result of the *13th Question* shows that 37.5% of the students were not informed and 56.3% of the students were "partly" informed about how to study better on their own except one student who stated that he/she was informed. This result indicates that the students were not encouraged to study as autonomous learners before the portfolio study.

According to the overall result of pre-portfolio study survey part B, the majority of the participants had not been involved in decisions related to course; had not been encouraged to assess themselves and to be a part of the

learning process; had not been informed about how to study better on their own before the portfolio implementation period. These results show that most of the participants were passive members of the classroom and were not involved in the learning process in terms of making major decisions.

4.1.2 Pre-Portfolio Study Survey Part B: Results

The second part of pre-portfolio study survey was also a learner autonomy questionnaire like pre-portfolio study survey part A. It consisted of fifteen statements designed on a four-point Likert scale which were assessed values ranging from 1 to 4. The scoring for the answers was as follows: *Strongly agree=4, Agree=3, Disagree=2, Strongly disagree=1*. Part B was implemented to the students as a second part of pre-portfolio survey in order to gather further quantitative data about the students' perceptions of language learning process and being an autonomous learner before they started keeping a portfolio. Table 4.2 shows the analysis of the results.

Table 4.2 *Results of the statements in pre-portfolio study survey Part B*

	Statement	**N**	**M**	**SD**	**Answers**	**f**	**%**
1	I want to learn more than I am required with my all efforts.	16	2.94	0.854	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	1 3 8 4 16	6.3 18.8 50 25 100
2	I track my progress while learning English.	16	2.38	0.885	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	2 8 4 2 16	12.5 50 25 12.5 100
3	I like projects and activities where I can work on my own.	16	2.94	0.854	Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	6 5 5 16	37.5 31.3 31.3 100

Table 4.2 *Results of the statements in pre-portfolio study survey Part B (continued)*

	Statement	N	M	SD	Answers	f	%
4	I can learn English grammar on my own/without needing a teacher.	16	2.44	0.964	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	2 8 3 3 16	12.5 50 18.8 18.8 100
5	I deduce the meaning of a word by identifying the prefix and suffix of the word.	16	2.38	0.806	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	1 10 3 2 16	6.3 62.5 18.8 12.5 100
7	I can evaluate myself in terms of my assignments and projects.	16	2.63	0.806	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	1 6 7 2 16	6.3 37.5 43.8 12.5 100
8	I like to actively participate in the course.	16	2.25	1.065	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	4 7 2 3 16	25 43.8 12.5 18.8 100
9	I have several strategies to understand and remember English grammar.	16	2.13	0.806	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	3 9 3 1 16	18.8 56.3 18.8 6.3 100
10	I can learn a topic by studying on my own if I cannot learn it in the classroom.	16	2.38	0.957	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	3 6 5 2 16	18.8 37.5 31.3 12.5 100

Table 4.2 *Results of the statements in pre-portfolio study survey Part B (continued)*

	Statement	N	M	SD	Answers	f	%
11	I am aware of my learning strategies.	16	2.31	1.138	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	5 4 4 3 16	31.3 25 25 18.8 100
12	I have some games to keep the words I learn in my mind.	16	2	0.894	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	5 7 3 1 16	31.3 43.8 18.8 6.3 100
13	I am responsible for my own learning.	16	3	0.966	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	1 4 5 6 16	6.3 25 31.3 37.5 100
14	I like my way of studying English.	16	2	1.155	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	7 5 1 3 16	43.8 31.3 6.3 18.8 100
15	I know how to study English by myself.	16	2.13	1.025	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	5 6 3 2 16	31.3 37.5 18.8 12.5 100

Note. N = number, M = mean, SD = standard deviation, f= frequency

According to the results of the statements in pre-portfolio study survey part B questionnaire, the answers of the participants were divided into two categories: the ones who supported the statement and chose “strongly agree” or “agree” options and the ones who did not support the statement and chose “strongly disagree” or “disagree” options.

The results of *Statement 1* and *Statement 2* show that the participants were not satisfied with their English level. However, they did not try to do something to maximize their English level. In *Statement 1* half of the participants (50%) pointed out that they agreed with the statement "I want to learn more than I am required with my all efforts" and 25% of the participants chose "strongly agree" option for this statement. The minority of the participants noted that they did not want to learn more than they were required with their all efforts. In *Statement 2* more than half of the participants (62.5%) pointed out that they did not follow their progress while learning English. When the results of the first two statements were compared, it can be said that the students were aware of their inadequacy of their English level, but they also stated that they did not follow their progress. This result indicates that the students did not make enough effort to improve their English level although they stated that they needed to learn more than they required.

The result of *Statement 3* shows that more than half of the participants (62.5%) liked projects and activities where they could work on their own. However, in *Statement 4* and *Statement 10* most of the participants (72.5% for the *Statement 4* and 56.5% for the *Statement 10*) noted that they were against working on their own to learn English. These results indicate that the students like working on a project or activity on their own, but they prefer learning English in a classroom or by the help of a teacher instead of being on their own.

Another remarkable result is shown in *Statement 8*. The result of *Statement 8* shows that 43.8% of the participants disagree that they actively participated in the course and 25% of the participants strongly disagree that they were active in the course. Only 12.5% of the participants agreed and 18.8% strongly agreed that they were active in the course. This result indicates that the students were in general not active participants in the classroom before the portfolio study.

The result of *Statement 13* indicates that more than half of the students (68.8%) agreed that they were responsible for their own learning. However, in *Statement 14* and *Statement 15* more than half of the participants (75.1% for *Statement 14* and 68.8% for *Statement 15*) pointed out that they did not like their way of studying English and they did not know how to study English by themselves. The results show that most of the students did not consider the instructor or another person responsible for their own learning, but they did not know how to study English. Therefore, it can be said that most of the students had troubles about their way of studying English before the portfolio study.

The overall result of pre-portfolio study survey part B indicates that more than half of the participants were aware of their language inefficiency; however, they did not try to improve their language. Also, most of the students preferred doing activities on their own rather than with their classmates; however, they did not prefer studying on their own and stated that they needed the help of the teacher. Besides, more than half of the students had not been active participants before the portfolio implementation period. Lastly, they did not have an idea about how to study better and in an autonomous way.

4.1.3 Open-Ended Question Survey Results

Open-Ended Question Survey was designed and carried out by the researcher in order to collect qualitative data and gain information about what the students thought about assessment systems in general and about portfolio assessment as an alternative assessment tool in EFL. The survey was first written in English and then it was translated into Turkish before it was distributed to the students concerning the students' proficiency level in English (See Open-Ended Question Survey Appendix C). The questions in the survey were as follows:

1. Do you think that traditional assessment methods are good enough to measure your proficiency level in English?
2. Have you ever kept a portfolio for a school subject? If your answer is 'yes', write the name of the subject and explain the benefits and challenges of keeping a portfolio.
3. What do you think about the differences between traditional assessment and portfolio assessment?
4. Do you think keeping a portfolio contributes to your proficiency level in English? If your answer is 'yes', what will these contributions be?
5. Do you think your language skills (writing-reading-listening-speaking-vocabulary-grammar in English) will develop as a result of portfolio preparation? Which one/ones? Why?
6. What kind of support do you think you will need while preparing your portfolio?
7. What kind of difficulties do you think you will have while preparing your portfolio?
8. Do you think you will use you portfolios in the future? Please explain briefly.

Open-Ended Question survey was administered to the students before the portfolio implementation period. The data collected from this survey were analyzed through constant-comparative method. First, the students' answers to the open-ended questions were translated from Turkish to English. Second, basic themes in the answers were determined and identified. Third, the themes in the answers were categorized under following headings:

1. Participants' Perceptions on Traditional Assessment
2. Participants' perceptions about the differences between Traditional Assessment and Portfolios as an Alternative Assessment
3. Participants' expectations of the use of Portfolios
    a) General Language Proficiency

b) Specific Language skills and Topics
c) Support systems throughout the Portfolio assessment
d) Participants' Perceptions on possible difficulties expected related to Portfolio Keeping

In the following sections of the chapter each of the categories above will be explained in relation to the data analysis results and with references to representative participant comments and quotations

4.1.3.1 Participants' Perceptions on Traditional Assessment

The responses of the students revealed that none of the students were satisfied with traditional assessment methods since the students believed that these methods did not measure their language skills completely, especially speaking and listening skills in English. There were three main reasons for the students' dissatisfaction with traditional assessment:

a. It does not measure speaking skill
b. It involves time pressure
c. It leads to memorization

For example, the students said that all the exams were written and written exams could not measure speaking skills. Some of the comments made by the students were as follows:

> I do not think traditional assessment methods are good enough to measure our proficiency level in English because it cannot be understood whether I can understand an English speaking person or whether I can speak English via a written exam (Participant 2, Male).

> Traditional assessment methods do not completely measure our language skills since language skills cannot be evaluated only via written exams. Speaking skill must be included (Participant 21, Female).

The comments above indicate that students gave importance to enhancing and testing speaking in English and lack of speaking exams was an important handicap in traditional assessment.

Traditional assessment was also criticized by the students in terms of time limit. One student mentioned this issue in his answer:

> Learning a language requires a process, it cannot be tested through only a written exam and it is not reasonable to test a student's knowledge about language in a short period of time (Participant 14, Male).

Another issue about the disadvantages of traditional assessment was students' tendency to memorize information for the exams.

> Traditional assessment forces us to memorize what we are taught in the class. There are always standardized tests and we get accustomed to memorizing typical forms (Participant 9, Female).

As seen in the comment above, students were not happy with memorization. They viewed it as an ineffective learning method.

4.1.3.2 Participants' perceptions about the differences between Traditional Assessment and Portfolios as an Alternative Assessment

Although none of the students had experienced portfolio assessment before the implementation, they were informed briefly about some terms like portfolio and portfolio assessment by the researcher. The students also asked questions about keeping a portfolio and all the questions were answered by the researcher. Having had an idea about portfolio assessment, the students' answers revealed their perceptions about the differences between traditional assessment and portfolio assessment and these differences mentioned by the students were grouped under two main headings:

a. Duration of the time devoted for the assessment by the students
b. Content

The first issue which was frequently mentioned in the answers of the students was the time dedicated to the assessment methods. The students pointed out that portfolio would require a long time; however, they believed that they did not need to study that long for the paper and pencil tests. For example, the students stated:

> We will study regularly and weekly to keep a portfolio, but in traditional assessment we study just before the exams. I think paper and pencil tests measure the knowledge we memorised rather than the knowledge we learned by reading and searching (Participant 9, Female).

> We are assessed only in a few hours in traditional assessment. However, in portfolio assessment we will be assessed each week (Participant 7, Female).

> Both of them are used to measure the learners' language skills. However, I think portfolio will keep our knowledge alive since we will focus on our portfolios consistently throughout the term (Participant 12, Male).

Although all the students supported the idea that keeping a portfolio would enable them to study regularly, one of the students had a different stand in terms of portfolio assessment:

> It is obvious that studying weekly will improve our English, but it is easier and more preferable for us not to study till the exam date and to study the last night before the exam. Portfolio requires more effort (Participant 10, Male).

The second issue that students mentioned about the differences between traditional and portfolio assessment was related to content:

> Traditional assessment focuses on GPA (grade point average) and assesses the students' knowledge in general. Portfolio focuses on the details mostly (Participant 20, Male).

> Traditional assessment is more theory-based. However, portfolio is a practical assessment tool. We will have an opportunity to practise what we learn since we prepare papers related to that topic. We will not have long breaks after learning a topic. As a result, we will learn better (Participant 7, Female).

Students in general viewed portfolios as assessment tools that involve hands-on experience and practical applications of EFL learning rather than one-time assessment of theoretical information. This indicated that students expected portfolios to be more process-oriented.

4.1.3.3 Participants' expectations of the use of Portfolios

Although the students did not have an experience about keeping a portfolio, they were asked whether they had some expectations of the use of portfolios in terms of its contribution to the students' proficiency level and language skills. Also, they were asked what kind of support they would need in the process of keeping a portfolio.

4.1.3.3.1 General Language Proficiency

As the students were aware of the fact that portfolio requires a process, they mostly mentioned the benefits of being assessed throughout the term rather than in one or two hours. They stated that this period would bring lots of benefits to them:

> Portfolio enables us to observe our own development in English since we will prepare an assignment each week. Furthermore, we will repeat what we learn in the class while preparing our portfolios (Participant 17, Female).

> I believe that language learning requires a process and also effort. Since portfolio implementation system will last by the end of the term, we will learn lots of new topics in English (Participant 7, Female).

> No doubt portfolio contributes to our proficiency level in English. It will enable us to improve our language skills, to express ourselves properly, to be more disciplined, and to follow the courses regularly (Participant 21, Female).

The students were satisfied with the fact that keeping a portfolio required a process, which was an opportunity for students to observe their development and learn all of the topics deeply.

4.1.3.3.2 Specific Language skills and Topics

The open-ended question survey results showed that almost all students were eager to take part in portfolio keeping as an alternative assessment method and wrote positive sentences about it before the implementation of the portfolio assessment. They thought portfolio would contribute to their language skills most. The analysis of open-ended question surveys revealed that all students expected keeping a portfolio to be helpful particularly in writing skills and learning vocabulary in English. Regarding speaking and listening skills, only one student wrote that keeping a portfolio would contribute to their speaking and listening skills:

> I believe that all language skills will develop in this process because we will focus on using the language and learning new topics. Our

> portfolios must include activities related to speaking and listening in addition to writing, reading, grammar and vocabulary. For instance, we may watch a movie and use it in our portfolios. While watching this movie, we will listen to the actors and actresses as native speakers and we may share our ideas about the movie later (Participant 14, Male).

20 of 21 students believed that portfolios would contribute to their writing skills in English since they perceived portfolios as written documents of language development activities:

> I think we will learn new grammar points and vocabulary in the process of preparing our portfolios. We will transfer what we learn into our assignment papers; thus, our writing skill will be improved (Participant 1, Male).

> I guess we will mostly study on writing while keeping a portfolio. I do not think our speaking and listening skills will improve in this process since I do not believe that we will record our voice or do something similar. We will only write and express ourselves in this way (Participant 16, Male).

16 of 21 students focused on the relationship between keeping a portfolio and improving their reading in addition to writing. They thought that they would do research and read some sources in order to write about a topic.

> Keeping a portfolio requires doing research since I have to write about a topic. I have to read articles or find sources related to my topic (Participant 12, Male).

All students believed that their vocabulary would improve in the process of keeping a portfolio. They thought learning new words would co-occur with improving their writing and reading skills in English. They complained

about forgetting new words they learnt in the class in a short time. However, they thought that keeping a portfolio would give them opportunities to recycle newly learnt words and transfer these words from passive into active vocabulary knowledge:

> Keeping a portfolio will improve our vocabulary. In all lessons we hear or learn new words but we forget them since we do not repeat or use them at home. However, portfolio will enable us to learn new words and use them in our assignment papers. Therefore, we will have chance to remember these words and not to forget easily (Participant 4, Female).

> In order to write a paragraph about a topic, I need to look up new words in the dictionary. Hence, I believe that I will improve my vocabulary (Participant 3, Female).

As for the contribution of keeping a portfolio to students' grammar knowledge in English, 17 of 21 students stated that keeping a portfolio would increase their grammar knowledge. They thought writing would require wide grammar knowledge and vocabulary.

> While writing my portfolio assignment paper, I think I will always ask the same question: "Which form should I use in order to transform my ideas into sentences?" and search for the correct forms, which will improve my grammar knowledge (Participant 12, Male).

> Without grammar knowledge the sentences will be meaningless words so we will learn more about grammar to write meaningful paragraphs (Participant 13, Male).

The students' answers about contribution of keeping a portfolio to specific language skills and topics indicated that they all had positive thoughts about

the portfolio system before the implementation and they considered at least one language skill would develop at the end of portfolio keeping process.

4.1.3.3.3 Support systems throughout the Portfolio assessment

Although all students had positive ideas about portfolio assessment system, they also had hesitations in expressing themselves correctly. Therefore, they said that they would need to refer to some sources in the process of keeping a portfolio.

All students thought that the Internet would be the main source for searching and finding what they would look for.

20 of 21 students stated that dictionary would be the first source they would need because they believed that they would need lots of new words to express themselves in English.

3 students wrote that they would need specific instructions to portfolio tasks and the help of the instructor.

4.1.3.3.4 Participants' Perceptions on possible difficulties expected related to Portfolio Keeping

Having had no experience of keeping a portfolio before, the students had some concerns about the possible difficulties they would experience. Although they believed that they would improve their English language skills in this process, they also emphasized that their English language skills might not be enough to express themselves:

> I think the most difficult part of keeping a portfolio will be expressing what I want to say correctly because I sometimes want to say something in English but I cannot find appropriate words and forms. My vocabulary is not enough to write about different topics. There-

> fore, I think it will be a difficult process for me (Participant 4, Female).
>
> I know keeping a portfolio will be beneficial for us to improve our English but we will study much more than before because we have lack of vocabulary and grammar knowledge. Thus, we will spend lots of time to search for appropriate words and correct forms (Participant 17, Male).

One of the students pointed out that for her the most difficult part of keeping a portfolio would be the organization of the assignment papers:

> It will be beneficial but also tiring for us to prepare an assignment paper each week. I am anxious that I may not submit my portfolio assignment paper in time because you (the instructor) said that we would have deadlines for submission each week. I am anxious about not being organized (Participant 21, Female).

Apart from being insecure about their English language proficiency in general, almost all students had positive perceptions towards keeping a portfolio before the implementation.

To sum up, the answers of the participants to the open-ended question survey indicate that all of the students were not satisfied with traditional assessment methods because they believed that traditional assessment methods did not measure speaking skill in English; such methods involved time pressure and lead the students to memorization. As for the comparison between alternative assessment and traditional assessment, most of the students stated that they would study more effectively in portfolio assessment than traditional assessment as they believed that they would study to learn in portfolio assessment; whereas they only focused on GPA in traditional assessment. Besides, most of the students pointed out that portfolio assessment would require practical applications rather than one-time assessment

of theoretical information as was seen in traditional assessment. Although the students had not experienced keeping a portfolio before the study, the majority of the students stated that they expected improving specific language skills in English, especially writing skills and vocabulary knowledge via portfolio keeping. However, they also had hesitations in expressing themselves in English in this process and organizing the assignment papers properly; thus, so they mentioned that they would refer to the Internet, dictionaries and sometimes the help of the instructor in order to deal with the possible difficulties. In short, the general perceptions and expectations of the participants towards keeping a portfolio were positive and they were eager to keep a portfolio.

4.2 Post-Portfolio Study Survey Results

Post-portfolio study survey, as the second quantitative data instrument of this research, was administered to the research class after the thirteen-week portfolio implementation period. Post-portfolio study survey consisted of two parts: Part A and Part B. In Part A to gather quantitative data about the perceptions of the students about keeping a portfolio, 32 statements were designed by the researcher. Part B consisted of both the same statements as pre-portfolio study survey Part B and additional 16 statements to get further data on learner autonomy. The first fifteen statements of Part B included the same questions as pre-portfolio study survey Part B because the researcher aimed to compare the students' perceptions before and after the portfolio study. The data collected from post-portfolio study survey was statistically analyzed using the SPSS, version 15.0 and the responses for the first fifteen statements of Part B were analyzed by running an ANOVA test.

4.2.1 Post-Portfolio Study Survey Part A: Results

The first part of post-portfolio study survey was keeping a portfolio questionnaire designed by the researcher. It consisted of thirty two statements designed on a four-point Likert scale with values ranging from 1 to 4. The

scoring for the answers was as follows: Strongly agree=4, Agree=3, Disagree=2, Strongly disagree=1. Part A was implemented to the students in order to gather quantitative data about the students' perceptions of keeping a portfolio and portfolio implementation process. Table 4.3 shows the analysis of the results.

Table 4.3 *Results of the statements in post-portfolio study survey Part A*

	Statement	**N**	**M**	**SD**	**Answers**	**f**	**%**
1	I had not known anything about keeping a portfolio at the beginning of the term.	21	2.67	1.017	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	3 6 7 5 21	14.3 28.6 33.3 23.8 100
2	Keeping a portfolio contributed to improving my English language skills.	21	2.9	0.889	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	2 3 11 5 21	9.5 14.3 52.4 23.8 100
3	The effort and the time that I spent to prepare a portfolio were worthwhile.	21	2.71	0.784	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	2 4 13 2 21	9.5 19 61.9 9.5 100
4	My English improved while keeping a portfolio.	21	2.76	0.768	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	2 3 14 2 21	9.5 14.3 66.7 9.5 100
5	Knowing that our portfolios would be assessed beforehand enhanced my performance in a positive way.	21	2.29	0.845	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	4 8 8 1 21	19 38.1 38.1 4.8 100

Table 4.3 *Results of the statements in post-portfolio study survey Part A (continued)*

	Statement	N	M	SD	Answers	f	%
6	Portfolio is a good assessment system.	21	2.81	0.928	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	3 2 12 4 21	14.3 9.5 57.1 19 100
7	When I look back on what I did in English lesson, I believe that this term was beneficial for me	21	2.9	0.944	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	2 4 9 6 21	9.5 19 42.9 28.6 100
8	My first and my present opinion about portfolio are different from each other in a positive way.	21	2.76	0.831	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	1 7 9 4 21	4.8 33.3 42.9 19 100
9	The activities that I expected to do in the beginning and the activities that I did during the term were different from each other.	21	2.05	0.805	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	5 11 4 1 21	23.8 52.4 19 4.8 100
10	Overall I am satisfied with the studies I have done.	21	2.9	0.768	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	2 1 15 3 21	9.5 4.8 71.4 14.3 100

Table 4.3 *Results of the statements in post-portfolio study survey Part A (continued)*

	Statement	N	M	SD	Answers	f	%
11	I had lots of difficulties while keeping a portfolio.	21	2.43	0.746	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	1 12 6 2 21	4.8 57.1 28.6 9.5 100
12	Self-reflection questions at the end of each portfolio week enabled me to gain self-awareness in my studies.	21	1.86	0.964	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	9 8 2 2 21	42.9 38.1 9.5 9.5 100
13	Negative aspects of keeping a portfolio are more than its positive aspects.	21	2.14	0.727	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	2 16 1 2 21	9.5 76.2 4.8 9.5 100
14	Keeping a portfolio enabled me to practice what I learnt and have long-term learning.	21	2.76	0.768	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	2 3 14 2 21	9.5 14.3 66.7 9.5 100
15	Keeping a portfolio contributed to improving my writing skill in English.	21	3	0.949	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	2 3 9 7 21	9.5 14.3 42.9 33.3 100
16	Keeping a portfolio contributed to my reading skill.	21	2.38	0.865	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	3 9 7 2 21	14.3 42.9 33.3 9.5 100

Table 4.3 *Results of the statements in post-portfolio study survey Part A (continued)*

	Statement	N	M	SD	Answers	f	%
17	Keeping a portfolio contributed to improving my listening skill in English.	21	2.05	0.865	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	6 9 5 1 21	28.6 42.9 23.8 4.8 100
18	Keeping a portfolio contributed to improving my speaking skill in English.	21	2.1	0.944	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	7 6 7 1 21	33.3 28.6 33.3 4.8 100
19	Keeping a portfolio contributed to improving vocabulary knowledge in English.	21	3.1	0.768	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	1 2 12 6 21	4.8 9.5 57.1 28.6 100
20	Keeping a portfolio contributed to improving my grammar knowledge in English.	21	2.95	0.74	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	1 3 13 4 21	4.8 14.3 61.9 19 100
21	Error corrections made by my teacher enabled me to learn from mistakes and to correct them.	21	3.19	0.75	Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	4 9 8 21	19 42.9 38.1 100
22	Peer-evaluation enabled me to learn from mistakes and to correct them.	21	2.05	0.805	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	5 11 4 1 21	23.8 52.4 19 4.8 100

Table 4.3 *Results of the statements in post-portfolio study survey Part A (continued)*

	Statement	N	M	SD	Answers	f	%
23	I got support from other people in addition to my teacher and my classmates.	21	2.1	0.944	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	7 6 7 1 21	33.3 28.6 33.3 4.8 100
24	I could easily access presentation files via the Internet.	21	3.1	0.7	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	1 1 14 5 21	4.8 4.8 66.7 23.8 100
25	Having had the chance to watch my presentations that were uploaded to a website had a positive effect on my learning.	21	3	1	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	2 4 7 8 21	9.5 19.9 33.3 38.1 100
26	The portfolio activities which required the use of Internet were beneficial for my learning.	21	2.95	0.74	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	1 3 13 4 21	4.8 14.3 61.9 19 100
27	Writing my assignments with a computer provided convenience.	21	3.24	0.7	Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	3 10 8 21	14.3 47.6 38.1 100
28	Being able to access the topics of portfolio activities via e-mail provided convenience.	21	3.43	0.811	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	1 1 7 12 21	4.8 4.8 33.3 57.1 100

Table 4.3 *Results of the statements in post-portfolio study survey Part A (continued)*

	Statement	N	M	SD	Answers	f	%
29	Sending my portfolio assignments to my teacher via e-mail provided convenience.	21	3.43	0.87	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	1 2 5 13 21	4.8 9.5 23.8 61.9 100
30	Watching my own presentation which is a part of my portfolio studies afterwards enabled me to assess myself.	21	3.24	0.831	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	1 2 9 9 21	4.8 9.5 42.9 42.9 100
31	I prefer keeping a portfolio to traditional assessment system.	21	2.95	1.161	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	3 5 3 10 21	14.3 23.8 14.3 47.6 100
32	I would like to continue keeping a portfolio next term.	21	3.14	1.108	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	3 2 5 11 21	14.3 9.5 23.8 52.4 100

Note. N = number, M = mean, SD = standard deviation, f= frequency

According to the pre-portfolio study survey Part A, overall perception of the students about keeping a portfolio was positive, although there are also a few negative results.

The result of *Statement 1* shows that more than half of the students (57.1%) did not know anything about keeping a portfolio at the beginning of the term. In open-ended question survey the same result was also revealed. In this survey all of the students pointed out that they had not had experience

in keeping a portfolio before the research study. The others who stated that they had an idea about portfolio at the beginning of the term referred to the instructor's instruction about keeping a portfolio at the beginning of the term to receive preliminary information about portfolios.

In *Statement 2* and *Statement 4* more than half of the students (76.2% for *Statement 2* and 76.2% for *Statement 4*) noted that keeping a portfolio contributed to their English language skills and their development. In *Statement 7* 71.5% of the participants also pointed out that they were aware of the fact that keeping a portfolio was a beneficial method for them. In *Statement 14* 66.7% of the students agreed that keeping a portfolio contributed to long-term learning and recovery of knowledge.

In *Statements 3, 6, 10* and *13* the results show that more than half of the students (71.4% for the *Statement 3*, 76.1% for *Statement 6*, 85.7% for *Statement 10* and 85.7% for *Statement 13*) were satisfied with the studies during the portfolio implementation process and they believed that keeping a portfolio was worthwhile of their time and effort. Most of the students (76.1%) considered keeping a portfolio as a good assessment method.

The result of *Statement 5* shows that more than half of the participants (57.1%) disagreed that knowing grading system at the beginning of the term enhanced the students' performances in a positive way. According to this result, it can be concluded that the students' performances were not dependent on the grading system.

Another remarkable result is seen in *Statement 11* which indicated the perceptions of the students towards difficulties of keeping a portfolio. More than half of the students (61.9%) disagreed that they had lots of difficulties while keeping a portfolio. This result shows that most of the students in the research did not consider keeping a portfolio as an overwhelming activity.

The result of *Statement 12* indicates that 81% of the participants had negative thoughts about self-reflection questions in the study. The same result was revealed in the interviews in details.

The results of the *Statements 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20* had indications for the perceptions of the students about the contribution of keeping a portfolio to English language skills. While most of the students either "strongly agreed" or "agreed" that keeping a portfolio contributed to their writing skills (76.2%), vocabulary knowledge (85.7%) and grammar knowledge (80.9%), they either "strongly disagreed" or disagreed" that keeping a portfolio did not contribute to their reading (57.2%), listening (71.5%) and speaking skills (61.9%).

The result of the *Statement 21* shows that the participants were aware of the benefits of error corrections. Only 19% of the participants disagreed that error connections enabled the students to learn from their mistakes, but the rest of the students agreed that error correction was beneficial for their development.

The result of *Statement 22* is related to the benefits of peer-evaluation. More than half of the students (76.2%) disagreed that peer-evaluation enabled them to learn from mistakes and correct them.

The results of *24th, 25th, and 30th Statements* show that more than half of the students (%90.5) pointed out that accessing presentation files on the Internet and having the chance to watch the presentations on a video website (%71.4) were quite beneficial for the students. Most of the students (85.8%) agreed that accessing their own presentation videos on the internet provided convenience for them.

The results of the *Statements 26, 27, 28, and 29* indicate that almost all of the students agreed that communication with the instructor (85.7%) and availability of the portfolio activity topics via e-mails (90.4%) provided

convenience for the students. In addition, more than half of the students (80.9%) agreed that the portfolio activities which required the use of Internet were beneficial for their learning and most of the students (85.7%) agreed that writing their assignments with a computer provided convenience for them.

The result of the *Statement 31* indicates that more than half of the students (61.9%) preferred keeping a portfolio to traditional assessment system. This result shows that overall perception of the students is positive about keeping a portfolio.

As the last statement of the questionnaire, *Statement 32* indicates that most of the students (76.2%) wanted to continue keeping a portfolio the following academic term. *Statement 32* also reflects positive perceptions of the students towards portfolio like *Statement 31*.

According to the overall result of post-portfolio study survey part A, the majority of the students thought that keeping a portfolio contributed to their English language skills, long-term learning and recovery of knowledge. They were also satisfied with their studies and considered keeping a portfolio as a good assessment method. In addition, more than half of the students did not consider keeping a portfolio as a difficult and overwhelming activity. As for improving language skills, most of the students pointed out that keeping a portfolio contributed to their writing skills, grammar knowledge and vocabulary knowledge; however more than half of the students stated that it did not contribute to the students' reading, listening and speaking skills. Moreover, most of the students agreed that error correction was beneficial for them. The only negative result was about peer-evaluation and answering self-reflection questions. More than half of the students were not satisfied with peer-evaluation and answering self-reflection questions. Another important result was related to the use of the Internet and computer in this process. The majority of the students were satisfied with accessing

presentation files on the Internet, communication with the instructor and availability of the portfolio activity topics via e-mails. Lastly, more than half of the students preferred keeping a portfolio to traditional assessment system and they wanted to continue keeping a portfolio in the following academic term, which shows that the overall perception and experience of the students was positive about keeping a portfolio.

4.2.2 Post-Portfolio Study Survey Part B: Results

The second part of post-portfolio study survey included a learner autonomy questionnaire. The first fifteen statements of the questionnaire were the same as pre-portfolio study survey Part B statements and the last sixteen statements are additional ones for further data. In order to compare students' perceptions towards autonomous learning before and after the portfolio implementation process, the first fifteen statements' results and pre-portfolio study survey Part B's results were analyzed by using an ANOVA test to explore if portfolio assessment had an influence on increasing learning autonomy of participants. Post-portfolio study survey Part B consisted of thirty one statements designed on a four-point Likert scale which were assessed values ranging from 1 to 4. The scoring for the answers was as follows: Strongly agree=4, Agree=3, Disagree=2, Strongly disagree=1.

The analysis of the results of the Table 4.4 includes the last sixteen statements instead of the first fifteen ones since the first fifteen statements were analyzed by ANOVA test and were compared with the pre-portfolio study survey Part B in Table 4.5.

Table 4.4 *Results of the statements in post-portfolio study survey Part B*

	Statement	**N**	**M**	**SD**	**Answers**	**f**	**%**
1	I want to learn more than I am required with my all efforts.	21	2.52	0.928	Strongly disagree	3	14.3
					Disagree	7	33.3
					Agree	8	38.1
					Strongly agree	3	14.3
					Total	21	100

Table 4.4 *Results of the statements in post-portfolio study survey Part B (continued)*

	Statement	N	M	SD	Answers	f	%
2	I track my progress while learning English.	21	2.48	0.68	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	1 10 9 1 21	4.8 47.6 42.9 4.8 100
3	I like projects and activities where I can work on my own.	21	2.62	0.805	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	1 9 8 3 21	4.8 42.9 38.1 14.3 100
4	I can learn English grammar on my own/without needing a teacher.	21	2.24	0.7	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	2 13 5 1 21	9.5 61.9 23.8 4.8 100
5	I deduce the meaning of a word by identifying the prefix and suffix of the word.	21	2.52	0.814	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	2 8 9 2 21	9.5 38.1 42.9 9.5 100
6	I can identify and select the additional materials to support the subjects I study.	21	2.67	0.796	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	1 8 9 3 21	4.8 38.1 42.9 14.3 100
7	I can evaluate myself in terms of my assignments and projects.	21	2.95	0.74	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	1 3 13 4 21	4.8 14.3 61.9 19 100
8	I like to actively participate in the course.	16	2.25	1.065	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	4 7 2 3 16	25 43.8 12.5 18.8 100

Table 4.4 *Results of the statements in post-portfolio study survey Part B (continued)*

	Statement	N	M	SD	Answers	f	%
9	I have several strategies to understand and remember English grammar.	21	2.43	0.978	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	3 10 4 4 21	14.3 47.6 19 19 100
10	I can learn a topic by studying on my own if I cannot learn it in the classroom.	21	2.95	0.59	Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	4 14 3 21	19 66.7 14.3 100
11	I am aware of my learning strategies.	21	2.9	0.7	Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	6 11 4 21	28.6 52.4 19 100
12	I have some games to keep the words I learn in my mind.	21	2.33	0.796	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	2 12 5 2 21	9.5 57.1 23.8 9.5 100
13	I am responsible for my own learning.	21	3.14	0.573	Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	2 14 5 21	9.5 66.7 23.8 100
14	I like my way of studying English.	21	2.76	0.831	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	1 7 9 4 21	4.8 33.3 42.9 19 100
15	I know how to study English by myself.	21	2.76	0.7	Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	8 10 3 21	38.1 47.6 14.3 100

Table 4.4 *Results of the statements in post-portfolio study survey Part B (continued)*

	Statement	N	M	SD	Answers	f	%
16	I am good at organizing my time.	21	2.48	1.078	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	5 5 7 4 21	23.8 23.8 33.3 19 100
17	I am a self-disciplined student.	21	2.62	1.117	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	4 6 5 6 21	19 28.6 23.8 28.6 100
18	I prefer scheduling my study on my own.	21	3.29	0.561	Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	1 13 7 21	4.8 61.9 33.3 100
19	I am open to get new information.	21	3.33	0.577	Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	1 12 8 21	4.8 57.1 38.1 100
20	I like getting new information.	21	3.24	0.625	Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	2 12 7 21	9.5 57.1 33.3 100
21	In general I like studying.	21	2.48	1.03	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	5 4 9 3 21	23.8 19 42.9 14.3 100
22	I definitely learn from my mistakes.	21	2.86	0.573	Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	5 14 2 21	23.8 66.7 9.5 100
23	I look into the reason of a problem which I cannot solve.	21	2.9	0.889	Strongly disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	3 14 4 21	14.3 66.7 19 100

Table 4.4 *Results of the statements in post-portfolio study survey Part B (continued)*

	Statement	N	M	SD	Answers	f	%
24	If I cannot solve a problem, I ask for help.	21	2.9	0.625	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	1 2 16 2 21	4.8 9.5 76.2 9.5 100
25	I make my own decisions.	21	3.1	0.7	Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	4 11 6 21	19 52.4 28.6 100
26	I could observe my development by means of portfolio.	21	2.76	0.768	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	2 3 14 2 21	9.5 14.3 66.7 9.5 100
27	I learnt new methods to study English by means of portfolio.	21	2.71	0.784	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	1 7 10 3 21	4.8 33.3 47.6 14.3 100
28	I learnt to participate in the courses more actively by means of portfolio.	21	2.43	0.746	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	1 12 6 2 21	4.8 57.1 28.6 9.5 100
29	I learnt to correct my mistakes by means of portfolio.	21	2.9	0.7	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	1 3 14 3 21	4.8 14.3 66.7 14.3 100
30	I learnt to be an autonomous learner by means of portfolio.	21	2.86	0.793	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	1 5 11 4 21	4.8 23.8 52.4 19 100

Table 4.4 *Results of the statements in post-portfolio study survey Part B (continued)*

	Statement	N	M	SD	Answers	f	%
31	I felt more motivated to study and learn English by means of portfolio.	21	2.76	0.944	Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Total	2 6 8 5 21	9.5 28.6 38.1 23.8 100

Note. N = number, M = mean, SD = standard deviation, f= frequency

The result of *Statement 16* indicates that there is not a significant difference between the participants who managed to organize their time well and the participants who did not. Only one more student agreed that he / she was good at organizing time well, but it cannot be a determiner for the result. The result of *Statement 17* is also the same as *Statement 16* as there is not a significant difference between two opinions. Only one more participant pointed that he/she was a self-disciplined person. It can be concluded that nearly half of the participants stated that they were self-disciplined, while the others were not self-disciplined.

In *Statement 18*, all of the students noted that they preferred scheduling their studies on their own except only one student. In *Statement 25* a similar result can be seen which indicates more than half of the students (81%) preferred making their own decisions. The result indicates that the students did not prefer being directed by anybody else to schedule their studies and to make decisions.

In *Statement 19* and *Statement 20*, the results show that almost all of the students (95.2% for *Statement 19* and 90.5% for *Statement 20*) were open to get new information and liked getting new information. The result of the S*tatement 21* shows 57.2% of the participants agreed that the students liked studying in general. These results indicate that the students were quite autonomous and eager to learn.

The result of *Statement 22* indicates that more than half of the students (76.2%) agreed that they definitely learnt from their mistakes. This result shows that error correction method used in the portfolios worked in the research class.

The results of *Statement 23* and *Statement 24* indicate that more than half of the students (85.7% for *Statement 23* and 85.7% for *Statement 24*) pointed out that they tried to find the reason of a problem which they could not solve and the students also stated that they would ask for help if they could not solve a problem. The results show that most of the students were determined to learn the reasons of the problems instead of ignoring them.

The results of the *Statements 26, 27, 28,* and *29* were related to the perceptions of the students about the effect of keeping a portfolio on their learning strategies. More than half of the students noted that keeping a portfolio enabled them to observe their developments (76.2%), to learn new methods in studying English (61.9%) and to learn correct their own mistakes (81%). The results show that nearly all of the students were aware of the benefits of keeping a portfolio and satisfied with their studies. However, most of the students (61.9%) also disagreed that they learnt to participate in the courses more actively by means of portfolio. This result indicates that the participants did not consider a relation between keeping a portfolio and being active participants in class. This result may stem from the participants' perceptions of the relationship between portfolios and speaking skills. As participants did not see portfolios mainly targeting improving speaking skills, they might have believed that their oral participation in class did not have an effect as well.

The results of *Statement 30* and *Statement 31* were focus on the perceptions of the students about the effects of keeping a portfolio on learner autonomy. More than half of the participants (71.4%) pointed out that they learnt to be autonomous learners and 61.9% of the participants felt motivated to study

and to learn English by means of portfolio. This result indicates that there was a positive effect of keeping a portfolio on being an autonomous learner among the participants.

Table 4.5 *Comparison of Mean Values of pre-portfolio study survey Part B statements and post-portfolio study survey Part B*

	Statement	**Pre-Post**	**N**	**M**	**sd**	**F**	**Sig**
1	I want to learn more than I am required with my all efforts.	Pre	16	2.94	0.854	1.931	0.173
		Post	21	2.52	0.928		
2	I track my progress while learning English.	Pre	16	2.38	0.885	0.155	0.696
		Post	21	2.48	0.68		
3	I like projects and activities where I can work on my own.	Pre	16	2.94	0.854	1.349	0.253
		Post	21	2.62	0.805		
4	I can learn English grammar on my own/without needing a teacher.	Pre	16	2.44	0.964	0.532	0.471
		Post	21	2.24	0.7		
5	I deduce the meaning of a word by identifying the prefix and suffix of the word.	Pre	16	2.38	0.806	0.306	0.584
		Post	21	2.52	0.814		

Table 4.5 *Comparison of Mean Values of pre-portfolio study survey Part B statements and post-portfolio study survey Part B (continued)*

	Statement	Pre-Post	N	M	sd	F	Sig
6	I can identify and select the additional materials to support the subjects I study.	Pre	16	2.56	0.892	0.14	0.71
		Post	21	2.67	0.796		
7	I can evaluate myself in terms of my assign-ments and projects.	Pre	16	2.63	0.806	1.645	0.208
		Post	21	2.95	0.74		
8	I like to actively par-ticipate in the course.	Pre	16	2.25	1.065	3.294	0.078
		Post	21	2.86	0.964		
9	I have several strategies to understand and re-member English gram-mar.	Pre	16	2.13	0.806	1.014	0.321
		Post	21	2.43	0.978		
10	I can learn a topic by studying on my own if I cannot learn it in the classroom.	Pre	16	2.38	0.957	5.118	0.03**
		Post	21	2.95	0.59		
11	I am aware of my learn-ing strategies.	Pre	16	2.31	1.138	3.812	0.059
		Post	21	2.9	0.7		

Table 4.5 *Comparison of Mean Values of pre-portfolio study survey Part B statements and post-portfolio study survey Part B (continued)*

	Statement	Pre-Post	N	M	Sd	F	Sig
12	I have some games to keep the words I learn in my mind.	Pre	16	2	0.894	1.432	0.24
		Post	21	2.33	0.796		
13	I am responsible for my own learning.	Pre	16	3	0.966	0.315	0.578
		Post	21	3.14	0.573		
14	I like my way of studying English.	Pre	16	2	1.155	5.457	0.025**
		Post	21	2.76	0.831		
15	I know how to study English by myself.	Pre	16	2.13	1.025	5.044	0.031**
		Post	21	2.76	0.7		

Note. N=number, M=mean, SD=standard deviation, F=variance, Sig=significance of difference **p < .005

As is described above, Part B was analyzed by running an ANOVA test. The answers of the students before and after portfolio implementation were compared and significant differences were found in the ANOVA. In addition to significant differences between pre-portfolio study survey part B and post-portfolio study part B, there were also differences in the answers. Al-

though these differences were not significant, they contribute to the results of the research.

The result of the Statement 5 indicates a difference in understanding the meaning of a word identifying prefix and suffix of a word. Before portfolio study, 18.8% agreed and 12.5% strongly disagreed with this statement. However, after portfolio study, 42.9% agreed and 2% strongly agreed with understanding the meaning of a word identifying prefix and suffix of a word. It can be seen that there is an increase in positive attitude to understand a word's meaning by its prefix and suffix. It may also be the result of perceptions of the students about the effect of the portfolio on vocabulary development.

The difference in the answers of Statement 6 shows that there is an increase in students who agree with the statement 'I can identify and select the additional materials to support the subject'. While 25% of the students agreed and 18.8% of the students strongly agreed with this statement before portfolio study, 42.9% of the students agreed and 9.5% of the students strongly agreed that they could identify and select additional materials after portfolio study. This result may indicate that keeping a portfolio enabled the students to do more research and take more responsibility for their own studies.

The result of Statement 8 shows that there is an increase in the students who agreed that they actively participated in the course after portfolio study. At the beginning of the term only 12.5% of the students agreed and 18.8% of the students strongly agreed with the statement, while 38.1% of the students agreed and 28.6% of the students strongly agreed that they actively participated in the course after portfolio study. The result shows that keeping a portfolio may have increased participation in the courses.

In Statement 11, the result indicates that there is also an increase in the students who were aware of their learning strategies after portfolio study. At the beginning of the term the percent of the students who agreed with this

statement was 25% and who strongly agreed with the statement was 18.8%. However, after portfolio study 52.4% of the students agreed that they were aware of their learning strategies and 19% of the students strongly agreed. The result indicates that keeping a portfolio may have raised awareness among students about their learning strategies.

In addition to the differences in Statements 5, 6, 8, and 11between pre and post questionnaires, there are other significant differences related to the result of the study.

According to ANOVA test, the first significant difference is seen between pre and post questionnaire results of Statement 10. In pre-portfolio study survey Part B only 31.3% of the students agreed that they could work on their own if they could not learn English in the classroom. However, after portfolio study 66.7% of the students agreed and 14.3% of the students strongly agreed with this statement. This result indicates that there is a significant difference between the rates. This result also shows that keeping a portfolio made the students take more responsibility and self-reliance in their own learning.

The second significant difference is in Statement 14. Before the portfolio study, only 6.3% of the students agreed and 18.8% of the students strongly agreed that they liked their ways of studying English. However, after portfolio study 42.9% of the students agreed and 19% of the students strongly agreed with this statement. The result indicates that keeping a portfolio increased the number of the students who liked their own ways of studying English, which may also indicate the increase in learner autonomy and motivation among students.

The third and last significant difference is in Statement 15. In this statement only 18.8% of the students agreed and 12.5% of the students strongly agreed that they knew how to study English by themselves before portfolio study. However, after portfolio study, 47.6% of the students agreed and 14.3% of

the students strongly agreed with this statement. This result obviously indicates that keeping a portfolio contributed to learner autonomy. Before portfolio study the students were not allowed to study and learn the topics on their own and they complained about this issue in the in-debt interviews. However, after portfolio study the students learnt how to study and how to prepare assignments on their own, which promoted learner autonomy in time.

To sum up, the results of the post-portfolio study survey part B indicates that more than half of the students did more research; took more responsibility for their own studies; observe and evaluate themselves after portfolio study. According to the results keeping a portfolio also raised awareness among students about their learning strategies and assessment methods. Most of the students agreed that they liked their own ways of studying English, which may also indicate the increase in learner autonomy and motivation among students. As for the language skills, the students stated that they needed the help of the instructor while learning English grammar. However, most of the students agreed that they could understand the meaning of a word identifying prefix and suffix of a word after the portfolio study. It may indicate a positive effect of the portfolio on vocabulary development. Most of the students stated that the error correction method was beneficial for them and they were determined to learn the reasons of the problems instead of ignoring them. In short, according to the results keeping a portfolio had a positive effect on being an autonomous learner among the participants.

4.3 Interview Results

In order to collect further qualitative data about the perceptions of the students about the overall process of keeping a portfolio, the difficulties they had, their opinions about the benefits and challenges of the portfolio; the researcher prepared an interview agenda that consisted of 12 questions in English and translated these questions into Turkish for students. The aim to conduct the interviews in Turkish with the students was to decrease the con-

straints students might experience due to speaking in their foreign language and to increase the amount of the feedback taken from the students (See the In-depth Interview Questions Appendix E). The questions in the interview agenda were as follows:

1. When you compare the process before and after portfolio, has the portfolio process contributed to your autonomy in learning English? Why, why not?
2. Why are not we autonomous learners in general? Why do we tend to be dependent on the teacher in the course of learning?
3. Which one is more lasting than the other: learning on your own or learning by the help of the teacher? Why?
4. What do you think about the self-reflection questions in the portfolios?
5. What are your opinions about peer-evaluation? Why?
6. What are the differences and similarities between traditional assessment system and portfolio assessment system?
7. Which assessment type leads to more memorable learning for you: traditional assessment or portfolio assessment? Why?
8. Which one was more important for you in the course of keeping a portfolio: being graded by the instructor for your assignment papers or observing your development in English? Why?
9. After the instructor marked your errors in your assignment paper, you tried to find your error and to correct them. Did it contribute to your English? Why, why not? Please give examples.
10. Was there any missing activity throughout the portfolio implementation process? Can you suggest different activities which can be included in the portfolios?
11. Which activities were the most challenging and which activities were the most beneficial for you? Why, why not?
12. Do you have any other comments about the overall keeping a portfolio process?

The researcher conducted interviews with each student one by one and recorded the interviews via an audio recording software compatible with a mobile phone. After the interviews had finished, all the recordings were transcribed and then translated into English. The interviews were conducted with the students in four days.

To analyze the data obtained through the interviews, constant comparative method (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994) was used. The transcripts of the in-depth interviews were read line by line and initial categories were identified. The basic themes in the answers of the students were identified and categorized. The following themes which are in line with the research questions of the study will be discussed in the following sections:

1. Participants' Perceptions on Keeping a Portfolio
    a) Benefits of Keeping a Portfolio
    b) Challenges of Keeping a Portfolio
2. Participants' Perceptions on Being an Autonomous Learner
3. Participants' Perceptions on the Effects of Keeping a Portfolio on Being an Autonomous Learner

As the second qualitative data instrument of this study, in-depth interviews presented the most detailed data to answer the research questions of the study because the students gave direct answers to the interview questions which were designed in parallel with the research questions.

4.3.1 Participants' Perceptions of Keeping a Portfolio

When students were asked about their perceptions of keeping a portfolio in an English language lesson, almost all students gave positive answers in general. There were only three students who had some negative comments about some potential problems related to keeping a portfolio; nevertheless, they were not completely against portfolio assessment system.

In general, the students' responses to the in-depth interview questions were categorized as benefits of keeping a portfolio and challenges of keeping a portfolio.

4.3.1.1 Benefits of Keeping a Portfolio

During the interviews, the participants stated several benefits of keeping a portfolio while learning English as a Foreign Language. The results of the constant comparison method done on the interview transcriptions showed that these benefits can be grouped and listed as:

1. Keeping a portfolio leads to long-term learning
2. Portfolio activities help students improve their language skills in English
3. By keeping a portfolio students can learn from their mistakes

4.3.1.1.1 Long-Term Learning

According to the responses of the students, keeping a portfolio enabled students to keep what they learnt more alive than standardized paper and pencil tests. The students pointed out that they did not forget even the first topic of the portfolio since they studied on each topic in detail and tried to do their best in this process. All students explicitly reported this issue in the interviews:

> Keeping a portfolio contributes to long-term learning. It is important for us to keep what we have learnt in mind because English must be a part of our life instead of a subject at school. Portfolio enabled us to consider English as a part of our lives. For example, I started to think that spending at least two or three hours studying English is beneficial for me instead of going to a language course because I started to learn for myself not to pass the exams (Participant 1, Male, 09/01/2011).

> Practising right after learning a topic is quite beneficial. Therefore, I learn each topic in detail and do not forget it easily (Participant 2, Male, 09/01/2011).
>
> Portfolio requires studying hard and focusing on the assignment for a long time so we spent much time preparing our assignment papers and learning each detail of the topic. I know that I will not forget them easily (Participant 7, Female, 10/01/2011).
>
> I cannot compare studying for exams with studying for writing my portfolio assignment papers since in portfolio system I create something on my own and learn what I create very well. My assignment paper is my production so it is more permanent (Participant 14, Male, 11/01/2011).
>
> While keeping a portfolio I always thought that it should be worth what I had done since I spent much time preparing my assignment paper. In fact, I had never experienced this system before we kept portfolio this term but I can say that it contributes to long-term learning more than any system. I have been studying English since primary school and I must have entered more than thirty exams in English, yet I do not remember anything about what I learnt. However, I know that every topic in my portfolio will be in my mind (Participant 16, Male, 12/01/2011).

The responses above indicated that the students believed that their learning was more permanent thanks to the process of keeping a portfolio. They had many reasons to assert that portfolio contributed to long-term learning. Some of these reasons were having opportunities to practise English, spending time on each assignment paper and students' creating something on their own.

4.3.1.1.2 Improving Language Skills through Portfolio Activities

Another benefit of keeping a portfolio which was frequently mentioned by the students was improving specific language skills through portfolio activities. Fifteen students stated that they improved their language skills in English throughout keeping a portfolio process and saw the difference in their progress before and after portfolio:

> In order to write a portfolio assignment paper, I used at least 300 words and learnt lots of new words. Therefore, my vocabulary has substantially enhanced. Moreover, presentation activities for our portfolio also improved our speaking skills. I spent time studying on pronunciation of the words that I would use in my presentation. It was very beneficial (Participant 16, Male, 12/01/2011).

> I learnt a lot of grammar rules during keeping a portfolio process. For example, I assumed that I had known the differences among 'should',' have to' and 'must', but I did not know. I learnt how to use them while writing my assignment paper (Participant 17, Female, 09/01/2011).

> I used to look up new words in Turkish-English dictionary before portfolio, but I started to use monolingual dictionary to check how to form sentences correctly. If we had not kept portfolio and had been assessed by standardized tests, I would not have studied so much. For example, when we learnt a new topic in class, I read 'Grammar in Use' after class and study on this topic in order to understand better and not to make an error in my assignment paper (Participant 1, Male, 09/01/2011).

> I learnt a large number of phrasal verbs due to watching TV series activity. We took notes of the phrasal verbs and idioms in the series and used these vocabularies in sentences that we formed on our own.

> As we heard these vocabularies in the TV series, they were easier to remember. It was an effective way to keep vocabulary in mind (Participant 11, Male, 11/01/2011).

As the students' responses indicate, keeping a portfolio enabled them to focus on improving language skills further in order to perform well both in their assignment papers and presentations. The students studied to prepare their assignment papers well and put these well-prepared papers in their portfolio files instead of studying just for passing an exam and forgetting everything in a short time.

4.3.1.1.3 Learning from Mistakes

One of the benefits of keeping a portfolio for students is no doubt the opportunity of learning from mistakes. In standardized tests students generally focus on their scores, and they may not pay attention to their mistakes as much as they should. However, portfolio system gave students the chance to analyze their mistakes and correct them. Moreover, the students also mentioned the benefit of the indirect error correction method. As the researcher did not correct the mistakes directly on the students' papers, but used symbols to point out to the mistakes and asked the students to correct their own mistakes according to the symbols; the students stated that they learnt better and this method also contributed to long term learning. 18 students out of 21 mentioned the benefits of learning from mistakes during the interviews.

> Instructor's error correction method was beneficial four us not to make the same mistakes again. I know that I did not make the same mistake once more because I tried to find my mistakes and then I tried to correct them (Participant 14, Male, 11/01/2011).

> If the instructor had corrected our mistakes on our papers, I would not have learnt anything. Instead, I would have written my second draft copying the instructor's corrections. It is like doing homework

> of a little child. If you do his homework, he cannot learn anything. I learnt lots of structures and forms via the instructor's error correction method. For example, I had not known how to use prepositions and articles before keeping a portfolio process, but I learnt them through this method (Participant 13, Male, 11/01/2011).
>
> This type of error correction is in accord with portfolio system. In this system we made mistakes but we also tried to find the correct versions of these mistakes. If the instructor had written the correct forms of my mistakes on my paper, it would not have made any sense for me (Participant 11, Male, 11/01/2011).
>
> If I had received my first assignment paper on which the correct versions were written, I would not have thought about it and tried to find the correct forms. For instance, I learned the differences between the tenses thanks to this error correction method (Participant 10, Male, 11/01/2011).

The responses above indicate that the students learnt from their mistakes by trying to find the correct forms on their own. The students also stated that they would not have learnt anything if the instructor corrected their mistakes explicitly on their papers. Instead, they pointed out that they made an effort to find the mistakes and then the correct versions of these mistakes. This process helped the students work on their own mistakes and learnt from these mistakes in order not to make the same mistakes again.

4.3.1.2 Challenges of Keeping a Portfolio

Although the general perceptions of the students towards keeping a portfolio were positive, there were also some challenges the students faced. According to the results of the constant comparison method done on the interview transcriptions, challenges of keeping a portfolio can be grouped and listed as:

1. Portfolio assessment was more time-consuming than traditional assessment
2. Answering self-reflection questions was difficult
3. Peer-Evaluation was not as preferable as self-correction or teacher correction

4.3.1.2.1 Time-consuming

Apart from being an alternative assessment tool, keeping a portfolio is also a learning process and it takes a long time such as an academic term or an academic year. Therefore, some of the students who are accustomed to studying just before the exams might have some troubles with the portfolio system. In the research group, 3 students mentioned that keeping a portfolio was more time-consuming compared to traditional in-class exams:

> I could not get accustomed to preparing a portfolio assignment paper each week instead of entering only two exams in an academic term. It was overwhelming for me. I know that keeping a portfolio is more beneficial for us, but it took a long time, especially in our final exam week (Participant 2, Male, 09/01/2011).

> It is certain that portfolio system is more beneficial but I had difficulty in preparing an assignment paper each week. It took too much time to do something for my portfolio. If we had only paper and pencil tests, I would not have attended the classes regularly and I would have entered only the exams, because studying only three hours for an exam is enough. However, I admit that in traditional assessment system we learn up to the exam and then forget everything (Participant 10, Male, 11/01/2011).

> I think we should have reduced the number of the assignments. Instead of doing a portfolio activity each week, we would have done a portfolio activity once in two weeks. I was under stress since I had to

> submit my portfolio assignment paper before the deadline and prepare a paper each week (Participant 21, Female, 12/01/2011).

As they mentioned in the interviews, three students had difficulty in keeping a portfolio weekly and regularly because it was time-consuming for them. However, they also indicated that keeping a portfolio is more beneficial for their learning.

4.3.1.2.2 Answering Self-Reflection Questions

In order to raise awareness, the students were asked to response four self-reflection questions after each portfolio activity and to put the self-reflection papers in their portfolio folders attaching to the related assignment papers. These self-reflection questions were:

1. What do you think the strengths of this assignment are?
2. What kind of difficulties did you experience while doing this assignment?
3. How could you improve your assignment?
4. What are the most valuable things you've learned in this assignment?

According to the responses of the students in the interviews, answering self-reflection questions were mostly challenging or overwhelming for the students. Thirteen students mentioned that it was difficult to answer the self-reflection questions:

> I cannot say that I wrote different answers to each self-reflection question. For example, I always wrote the same answer to the second question: "What kind of troubles did you experience while doing this assignment?" My answer was "I do not have enough vocabulary knowledge, so I had trouble with finding appropriate words to express what I thought". Maybe these questions were beneficial for you

(the researcher) to understand our feelings, but it was difficult for me to answer these questions each time (Participant 15, Female, 11/01/2011).

I did not answer these questions sincerely. I usually wrote the same answers. In fact, I was aware of doing something beneficial while preparing my portfolio assignment paper, so there was no need to answer the self-reflection questions (Participant 9, Female, 10/01/2011).

While answering those questions, I got bored. I sometimes could not find anything to write, but I also did not want to skip the questions. Therefore, I sometimes wrote meaningless sentences (Participant 21, Female, 12/01/2011).

I think self-reflection questions were not necessary. I was always too lazy to answer the questions. I paid attention to the assignment papers, but not to the self-reflection questions. However, I must admit that these questions reminded me what I learnt from the portfolio activities and raised awareness (Participant 1, Male, 09/01/2011).

The responses of the students indicate that they did not pay the same attention to answer self-reflection questions as portfolio assignment papers. Answering these questions became a compulsory work for them. Although there were also the students who considered answering self-reflection questions as a very useful part of keeping a portfolio, most of the students thought that these questions were unnecessary and overwhelming. In order to prevent the problems of the students about self-reflection questions, different self-reflection questions for each assignment could be asked. Therefore, self-reflection questions could not be such a monotonous and overwhelming activity.

4.3.1.2.3 Peer-Evaluation

As an alternative assessment tool, portfolios provide opportunities for peer-evaluation or group assessment tasks. Taking this information into consideration, the researcher tried peer-evaluation in one of the portfolio activities in order to enhance the variety of the tasks. However, almost all students resisted this method stating that they were not satisfied with peer-evaluation. 16 students pointed out that peer-evaluation was a prominent challenge of keeping a portfolio:

> It is not useful to assess our peers' papers because it is very difficult for us to see someone else's errors and to correct these errors. Peer-Evaluation requires further knowledge (Participant 3, Female, 09/01/2011).

> I have negative thoughts about peer-evaluation. I could not find any error on my peer's paper. If I could see the errors, I would not make the same errors. Therefore, teacher should assess our papers (Participant 9, Female, 10/01/2011).

> I think the teacher should assess our papers because our peer's assessment can lead us to learn wrong knowledge (Participant 10, Male, 11/01/2011).

> I think peer-evaluation is not a right method. I also believe that it is not right for two students both of whom have the same level of English to practise because two students who are not in enough proficiency level cannot practise within each other. It is also possible that they prevent improvement of each other (Participant 11, Male, 11/01/2011).

> I did not like peer-evaluation. The teacher should check our corrections even if we assess our peers' papers because I cannot be sure

that the corrections of my peer are really correct or not (Participant 13, Male, 11/01/2011).

The comments about peer-evaluation indicate that they could not adapt to assessing their peers' papers. One of the reasons why they were against peer-evaluation was that they did not consider themselves well-informed about English to assess someone else's paper. The other reason was that they did not trust their peers to assess their own papers. As a conclusion, peer-evaluation was not successful in portfolio keeping process in the research classroom. However, peer-evaluation could be successful in higher levels such as upper- intermediate or advanced level since the students in these levels could trust each of their knowledge and corrections more than intermediate level students.

4.3.2 Participants' Perceptions on Being an Autonomous Learner

When the students were asked about their perceptions on being an autonomous learner, they generally complained about impositions. If there is an implosion in learning process, it is no doubt impossible for students to feel autonomous. The students pointed out that there were some reasons which influence the level of learner autonomy:

1. Study Habits of the Students
2. Need for a Control Mechanism
3. Turkish Educational System

4.3.2.1 Study Habits of the Students

While talking about learner autonomy during the interviews, the students stated that their study habits evolved in the course of time and they perceived their existing study habits as "bad". Even though they wanted to be autonomous in their learning, their learnt study habits prevented them from being more autonomous learners:

> I want to be an autonomous learner, but I cannot. I always tend to do something different instead of studying lesson in my spare time. I cannot study in peace. For example, I do not study for my exams one month before to feel more relaxed in exam week. Instead, I start to study one or two days before the exam and feel anxious. I cannot adapt myself to study regularly and willingly (Participant 10, Male, 11/01/2011).

> I cannot say that we are autonomous learners because we get accustomed to studying just before the exams and to forget everything that we had learnt when we pass the exams. However, we should change our study habits and we should study to improve ourselves not to pass the exams (Participant 17, Female, 12/01/2011).

> We have been studying only for exams since primary school years. Teachers teach us topics and we study on these topics before the exams. We still use the same method, but we should change it. It does not contribute to long-term learning (Participant 4, Female, 09/01/2011).

According to the responses of the students about learner autonomy, it was determined that the students were unsatisfied with their study habits. They admitted that they studied only for saving the day and their study habits were not beneficial for their future development. Moreover, the students knew that they were not autonomous learners in general, but they were eager to be autonomous learners and also aware of the benefits of learner autonomy.

4.3.2.2 Need for a Control Mechanism

While talking about learner autonomy during the interviews, the students mentioned that one of the factors that affected autonomy was being accustomed to a need for a control mechanism. They pointed out that needed a

person who followed their studies continuously in order to study hard. The people who would follow the students' studies could be their teacher, their parents, a friend or a family member. Not all students talked about need for a control mechanism during the interviews, but as a considerable number, 7 students mentioned this control mechanism:

> I cannot study unless somebody forces me to study. At the beginning of the term I promised myself to study English for my future career, but after one or two weeks, I forgot my promise. I am always like that. I need somebody to force me to study. I want to give another example: while preparing for university entrance exam, my math teacher asked us to find the answers of 100 questions in a test each day, and I would answer these 100 questions, but not one more question (Participant 2, Male, 09/01/2011).

> I think the problem is that we cannot study to learn a lesson well or to improve ourselves, but we can only study under pressure. The teacher should warn us to study or our mothers should check our homework to see whether we study or not (Participant 21, Male, 12/01/2011).

> It is certain that we cannot study for our own sake. We should be forced to study by our teacher or parents. Maybe we get accustomed to being forced, so we wait for a force. It can be cause and effect relation (Participant 12, Male, 11/01/2011).

The responses of the students above indicated that the students were aware of the fact that they got accustomed to being led by a control mechanism to study. The students also knew that this control mechanism prevented them from being autonomous learners even though they were not satisfied with this circumstance.

4.3.2.3 Turkish Educational System

In Turkey student often have to attend selection exams from primary school to university. Therefore, the educational system may lead the students to study mostly to be successful in these exams. Getting used to studying for the tests and exams, the students in Turkey generally do not study for their self-improvement and this kind of approach to learning and education becomes a life-long pattern for them. The participants of the present study also complained about the general educational system in Turkey and associated learner autonomy with Turkish educational system. 18 students mentioned this issue in their interviews:

> We study our lessons in the same way that we learned in primary school. We always want the teachers to explain every detail about a topic instead of studying on our own. We were not taught to read extra materials or do extra exercises to learn a topic. For example, I had lots of troubles due to these reasons when I first entered the university. Our professors let us study on our own and we really had difficulty to do something without a teacher's help. Because of this difficulty I lost one year at university, but I adapted myself to study in this way in my second year (Participant 8, Female, 10/01/2011).

> I do not think that I am an autonomous learner, but it is not due to the fact that I do not want to study, it is due to our educational system. When I think about our educational system up to now, we have never been self-reliant learners. The teachers did not let me learn a topic on my own. Instead, they tried to teach everything. I could not learn a topic thinking that it was useful for me, I learned a topic only to pass an exam (Participant 11, Male, 11/01/2011).

> We gain our studying habits in primary school years. We always get used to learning from a teacher and answering the questions asked to

> us. At university this situation changes a bit and the students become more self-reliant (Participant 20, Male, 12/01/2011).
>
> We are not autonomous learners owing to the examination system. For example, teachers want us to memorize everything in books and to write the same sentences in the exam as the sentences in the books. Some teachers even states that we should use the same words in the books. We should not be forced to memorize. The students always depend on the books to learn something instead of improving themselves independently because the authorities do not let us be autonomous (Participant 7, Female, 10/01/2011).

The students pointed out that the educational system did not let them be self-reliant, autonomous learners. They complained about being forced to study only for exams and to memorize knowledge as a part of the educational system.

4.3.3 Participants' Perceptions on the Effects of Keeping a Portfolio on Being an Autonomous Learner

When the students were asked about their perceptions about keeping a portfolio, almost all of the students had positive perceptions and they mentioned that keeping a portfolio changed their point of views about being assessed. The students also mentioned that keeping a portfolio changed their study habits in a positive way. The students' responses were categorized as follows:

1. Responsibility
2. Motivation – Encouragement
3. Autonomy

4.3.3.1 Responsibility

As seen in the responses of the students, one of the most frequently mentioned issues was responsibility. The students stated that keeping a portfolio required and also enhanced responsibility since they had assignments each week and these assignments had deadlines. Even though they had difficulties to submit a paper each week, they got accustomed to this process and took responsibility for submitting their papers by deadline after a short period of time. 8 students mentioned this issue in their interviews and the representative comments of the three are as follows:

> We prepared our assignment papers for our portfolios each week. While I was preparing my assignment papers, I always felt the responsibility and thought that I should finish my assignment paper on time. I tried to do my best in this process (Participant 4, Female, 09/01/2011).

> Keeping a portfolio enabled me to have the sense of responsibility. Portfolio system was not controlled by only the teacher, but also the students. Thus, we gained autonomy and became autonomous learners (Participant 16, Male, 12/01/2011).

> While keeping a portfolio, we attended almost all courses not to miss any topic. Since we used the topics which we had learnt in the classroom in our portfolio activities, we all followed the courses. If we had been assessed by paper and pencil tests, I would have rarely come to the lessons (Participant 12, Male, 11/01/2011).

The students' answers indicated that keeping a portfolio made the students feel the sense of responsibility towards both themselves and the lesson. They tried to do their best for their portfolio files and to submit their assignment on time. Another issue mentioned in the interviews was the responsibility of following courses regularly. Although the students were

given leave of absence for fourteen hours in one semester, they attended nearly all courses in order not to miss the topics and not to have difficulty in preparing assignment papers for their portfolios.

4.3.3.2 Motivation

As a different and alternative assessment tool, keeping a portfolio increased the level of motivation among the students. Since the students produced their own works, they stated that they felt more encouraged to study and do research in English. The portfolio activities were also chosen according to the students' interests. Therefore, the students enjoyed the process of keeping a portfolio. 10 students talked about motivation factor in their interviews.

> At the beginning of the term I had bias against English lesson. When I first learnt that we would not have paper and pencil test, I felt happy, but I had difficulties in preparing an assignment paper in the first weeks. Later, I started to feel that I learnt the topics enjoying myself. I was keeping my own portfolio and trying to do my best to put good assignment papers in my folder. For example, although I did not like English at the beginning of the term, I started to like studying English. Also, I even want to go to America to have a master degree instead of Belgium or France which were the countries that I imagined to go for a master degree (Participant 5, Female, 10/01/2011).

> I enjoyed most of our portfolio activities. I started to like writing day by day and did not get bored while preparing my assignments. I never thought about the marks, but I only wanted to submit my portfolio assignments regularly (Participant 17, Male, 12/01/2011).

> I never thought about getting marks. I believe that doing my best is more motivational than getting high marks (Participant 6, Male, 10/01/2011).

> Keeping a portfolio encouraged us to study on our own. When we followed the courses, our interests to the topics increased. For instance, describing people activity was very enjoyable. We learnt how to describe a person's height, weight, eye colour, character etc, which were motivating for us since we would use these forms in our lives (Participant 8, Female, 10/01/2011).

As it is understood from the responses of the students, they felt more motivated and more encouraged to study than before. The students liked keeping a portfolio since they created their own works and were responsible for their own portfolio files. Keeping a portfolio also helped students to develop more positive perceptions toward learning English and the course as a whole.

4.3.3.3 Autonomy

One of the most frequently mentioned themes in the interviews was the autonomy issue. 14 students indicated that they felt autonomous while keeping a portfolio. They stated that they did not have to memorize sentences or use an obligatory pattern to keep portfolio. The students were free and independent while preparing their assignments on the condition that their assignments would be related to weekly topics.

> Keeping a portfolio made us more autonomous. First of all, the assignments did not restrict or force us, so we studied on our own both enjoying and improving ourselves. I can say that I felt more autonomous than before (Participant 7, Male, 10/01/2011).

> Keeping a portfolio contributes to autonomy. It is even the exact equivalent of autonomy. In my opinion the most important thing in language learning is that the teacher should teach us how to learn. That is enough for us. In this point of view, keeping a portfolio is the best method which supports autonomous learner model. In this model how to study is taught to the students (Participant 11, Male, 11/01/2011).

> Keeping a portfolio encourages the students to be autonomous learners. For instance, we learnt how to study and prepare assignments on our own without help of anybody. I think keeping a portfolio supports the autonomous learner model (Participant 3, Female, 09/01/2011).

According to the responses of the students, they became autonomous while keeping a portfolio. It was good for students to study on their own without being forced. The students also thought that creating an assignment paper independently enlarged their point of views instead of getting stuck in specific patterns.

To sum up, the in-depth interview results indicate that the participants benefited from the portfolio assessment. They mentioned that keeping a portfolio led to long-term learning and enabled students to keep what they learnt more alive than standardized tests. The students also stated that they improved their language skills in English seeing the difference in their progress before and after portfolio. Moreover, the students pointed out that they learnt from their mistakes. In addition to the benefits of portfolio assessment, the students also mentioned the challenges of portfolio assessment such as the time devoted to the portfolio assessment, answering self-reflection questions and peer-evaluation. Not all of the students, but a few students stated that studying regularly and weekly for keeping a portfolio was time consuming. However, nearly all of the students were not satisfied

with answering self-reflection questions and peer-evaluation. As for the students' perceptions of their own study habits, they generally were not satisfied with their study habits. They knew the benefits of being autonomous, but they did not consider themselves as autonomous. Moreover, some of the students stated that they needed a control mechanism to study which also proved that they were not autonomous. One of the reasons why they were not autonomous learners for the students was Turkish educational system. They complained about the general education system in Turkey and pointed out that Turkish educational system did not let them be self-reliant, autonomous learners. Although they stated that they did not consider themselves as autonomous learners, the students pointed out that keeping a portfolio enabled them to be autonomous. They mentioned that keeping a portfolio enhanced their sense of responsibility and motivation for the course. They felt encouraged and motivated. In short, the answers of the students indicate that they were satisfied with and benefited from portfolio assessment.

In this chapter the results of pre and post study surveys and interviews which were conducted to investigate the perceptions of the students about keeping a portfolio and the effect of keeping a portfolio on learner autonomy was reported. The results of the study were presented both quantitatively and qualitatively. In quantitative data analysis, positive significant differences were revealed. In qualitative data analysis, students' positive perceptions towards the portfolio system which was implemented for thirteen weeks were shown. The benefits of keeping a portfolio were mentioned by the students.

In the following chapter, findings and implications will be presented as the follow-up of the results of the data analysis which were reported in this chapter.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

This study was carried out in order to investigate perceptions of the students about keeping a portfolio as an alternative assessment tool. In addition, the present study examined perceptions of the students about the effect of the portfolio assessment in an EFL course on learner autonomy. The study was conducted with 21 intermediate level students at Galatasaray University Foreign Languages School. The participants kept portfolios during thirteen weeks of study.

A pre-portfolio study survey including two questionnaires about learner autonomy and an open-ended question survey were administered to the participants at the beginning of the study. Then, the portfolio implementation process started. The students kept portfolios and prepared portfolio assignment papers each week for thirteen weeks. When the study ended, a post-portfolio study survey including two questionnaires first of which was about portfolios in general and second of which was about learner autonomy were given to the students. Second part of post-portfolio study survey was the same as the second part of pre-portfolio study survey, which enabled the researcher to make a comparison between the results of two surveys. In addition to pre and post questionnaires an in-depth interview was conducted with the participants at the end of the study.

The results of the pre-portfolio study surveys and post-portfolio study surveys were analyzed using SPSS version 15.0 and ANOVA test were run in order to compare the results of the same questionnaire existed in both pre and post surveys. Open-ended question surveys and in-depth interviews were analyzed via constant-comparison method in which the themes were identified and categorized under some headings.

In this chapter the findings derived from pre and post portfolio study surveys, open ended question surveys and in-depth interviews with the students; discussion, the pedagogical implications, the limitations of the study and suggestions for further research will be presented.

5.1 Findings and Discussion

The major findings of the study will be presented in two different sections: perceptions of the students about portfolio assessment system in an EFL course and perceptions of the students about the effect of keeping a portfolio on learner autonomy.

5.1.1 The Students' Perceptions of the Portfolio Assessment System in an EFL Course at a State University

In order to understand the participants' perceptions of the portfolio assessment system, the researcher administered two surveys and conducted an interview with the students. Firstly, an open-ended question survey was given to the students at the beginning of the term in order to see the students' perceptions towards keeping a portfolio which was a new assessment tool for them. Secondly, the post-portfolio study survey including a questionnaire about keeping a portfolio and the portfolio implementation process was administered to the students to indicate the students' perceptions of keeping a portfolio after the portfolio study. Lastly, an in-depth interview was conducted with the students to learn more about their perceptions and comments on keeping a portfolio. All of these data instruments helped the researcher answer the research questions of the study. In Table 5.1 the participants' perceptions towards the benefits and challenges of keeping a portfolio, which is the answer to *Research Question1* of this study, is presented.

Table 5.1 *The benefits and challenges of keeping a portfolio based on participants' perceptions*

Benefits of portfolio keeping based on participants' perceptions	**Challenges of portfolio keeping based on participants' perceptions**
1. Chance of having a long time devoted to the students for the assessment	1. Time consuming
2. Practical applications of EFL learning rather than one-time assessment of theoretical information	2. Inadequate contribution to reading, speaking and listening skills in English
3. Improving students' writing skills, vocabulary and grammar knowledge in English.	3. Answering self-reflection questions for each portfolio task
4. Recycling newly learnt words and transferring these words from passive into active vocabulary knowledge in English	4. Peer-Evaluation
5. Leading to long-term learning	
6. Students' satisfaction with their portfolios.	
7. Learning from mistakes by means of Error Correction Method	
8. Availability of the portfolio activity topics via e-mails	
9. Improving motivation for learning English	
10. Enhancing interest in the English course	
11. Enhancing students' attendance to the English course.	

The results of the open-ended question survey analysis indicated that the majority of the students' perceptions towards keeping a portfolio were overall positive at the beginning of the term although the students had not had any experience with portfolio assessment system beforehand. In open-ended question survey the students' answers showed that they were not satisfied with traditional assessment system and complained about it. Therefore, the students were open to a new alternative assessment tool. Their positive perceptions towards keeping a portfolio did not change after the portfolio implementation period and the students expressed their satisfaction with this alternative assessment tool in the surveys and in-depth interviews.

According to the post-portfolio study survey part A which included a questionnaire about keeping a portfolio and the portfolio implementation period, more than half of the students thought that keeping a portfolio contributed to their proficiency level in English and positive aspects of keeping a portfolio were more than its negative aspects. In this respect, the findings of the present study is in line with the ones of Nae-Dong Yang's (2003).

In the post-portfolio study survey part A the students' answers also indicated that they improved their writing skills, vocabulary knowledge and grammar knowledge by means of keeping portfolio. However, more than half of the students' answers showed that they did not agree that they improved their speaking, listening and reading skills by means of keeping a portfolio. Although there were portfolio activities which were based on improving speaking, reading and listening skills, the results indicated that these activities were not as much and effective as the portfolio activities based on improving vocabulary and grammar knowledge or writing skills.

In-depth interview results indicated that more than half of the students agreed that keeping a portfolio leaded to long-term learning. Similar to what Bailey (1998) claimed the students believed that portfolios provided continuous and longitudinal assessment, which was motivating. The students

complained that they memorize the information they need before the standardized paper and pencil exams and forget it immediately after the exams. They claimed that traditional assessment system did not allow the students to learn and keep the information in their long-term memory. However, the students also stressed that keeping a portfolio needed an effort and did not require any information to be memorized. Therefore, most of the students stated that they even remembered their first portfolio assignment topics and papers clearly at the end of the term. The students pointed out most of the handicaps of traditional assessment stated in the literature (Bailey, 1998; Franklin, 2002).

Another point that the students mentioned in the interviews was learning from mistakes by means of portfolio assignment papers. Almost all the students pointed out that they were not allowed to see their mistakes in their examination papers or ignored checking their mistakes after the exam. Therefore, they could not learn from their mistakes and repeated the same mistakes when they are assessed via traditional assessment. However, the students stated that they learnt from their mistakes and corrected them by means of keeping a portfolio.

As is mentioned in the results of the data analysis, nearly all of the students' perceptions towards keeping a portfolio and the process of portfolio implementation were positive. The students were satisfied with this alternative assessment tool and more than 70% of the participants in the post-portfolio study survey agreed that they wanted to continue keeping a portfolio in the following terms.

5.1.2 Perceptions of the Students about the Effect of Keeping a Portfolio on Learner Autonomy

The students' answers to the questions about learner autonomy indicated that they perceived themselves as more autonomous after keeping a portfolio because the students stated that they felt more motivated and self-reliant

which were some of the most important characteristics of an autonomous learner. Table 5.2 below also shows an overview of the participants' perceptions towards the effect of keeping a portfolio on learner autonomy.

Table 5.2 *The effect of keeping a portfolio on learner autonomy on participants' perceptions*

Overall, portfolio assessment increased learner autonomy among participants on the following areas
1. changing study habits in a positive way
2. enhancing responsibility in their own learning
3. feeling more encouraged to study English as a foreign language
4. being more willing to do research on topics for English lessons
5. feeling more motivated in English lessons
6. feeling self-reliant as a learner

The results of the statistical analysis showed some significant changes in the perceptions of the students about the effect of portfolio on learner autonomy and about being more autonomous learners. In pre-portfolio study survey part B and post-portfolio study part B, the same questionnaire was administered to the students and this questionnaire was analyzed by running ANOVA test. According to the results of the analyses, it is indicated that the participants' autonomy and self-reliance were promoted after the portfolio implementation period. In addition, the students clearly pointed out that keeping a portfolio changed their study habits in a positive way since this process raised awareness and enabled the students to compare their study habits with traditional assessment and portfolio assessment process.

As for the effect of keeping a portfolio on learner autonomy, the students pointed out that portfolio implementation period enhanced their responsibility since keeping a portfolio required regular work and submission of the

assignments before deadline. Again, based on the participants' responses, the findings of the present study confirmed the claims of Barootchi and Keshavarz (2002), Nunes (2004) and Pollari (2000) as the participants believed that they gained more responsibility in their own learning and became more autonomous as a result of keeping a portfolio for thirteen weeks.

Also, more than half of the students stated that they were more motivated and encouraged as they created a work on their own. As a must characteristic of an autonomous learner (Dickinson, 1995), motivation and self-reliance is another gain for the students in the portfolio implementation period. The students also stressed that they gained self-reliance as they were not forced to get stuck in some patterns and created their own works independently. The feeling of being able to succeed in creating their own works made the students feel self-reliant.

In addition to the positive perceptions of the students towards keeping a portfolio and learner autonomy relationship, the students' answers also indicated that there was a problem about being autonomous learners in relation to Turkish educational system. In the in-depth interviews the students stressed that being autonomous learners is related to educational background of the students and primary school years. The students believed that they might have become autonomous learners if Turkish educational system did not force them to memorize the information they need for exams and forget the same information after exams. Therefore, almost all participants drew attention to the educational system while talking about learner autonomy.

To conclude the students' answers indicated that they believed keeping a portfolio promoted learner autonomy and they felt more autonomous than before by means of keeping a portfolio, which was a significant result for the present study.

5.2 The Pedagogical Implications

The analysis of the data and the findings of the study suggest some pedagogical implications both for the instructors and administrators.

First of all, positive reactions of the students and the results of the analyses show that the instructors and the administrators of EFL schools or departments should consider integrating portfolio use into their assessment system as either a supplementary or main assessment tool. However, it should be taken into consideration that careful, systematic and a well-organized preparation is necessary. Before the implementation period, portfolio keeping should be introduced to the learners in order to guide them especially if portfolios will be used as an assessment method for the first time.

Secondly, according to the results of the data analyses, almost all of the students had positive perceptions towards keeping a portfolio even though none of them had had any experience with portfolio as an alternative assessment tool. Nevertheless, they were satisfied with the progress they had and their portfolios provided them with extra source of motivation in learning English. Instructors who wish to increase motivation in their EFL classrooms can make use of portfolios rather than traditional assessment.

According to the results of the study, the students felt more autonomous and motivated at the end of the portfolio implementation. They pointed out that they had always wanted to be autonomous learners; however, they had not experienced any learning tasks or opportunities which would promote learner autonomy. As mentioned in the study, portfolio is one of the assessment tools which may enhance learner autonomy. Considering these findings, educators who wish to create a motivating atmosphere with autonomous learners in a classroom may use portfolio as an alternative assessment method.

Another important implication derived from the study is related to the students' perceptions of age – autonomy relationship. In the interviews, the students stated that learner autonomy started in the earlier ages and it was very difficult to become an autonomous learner in later stages of their lives. They pointed out that Turkish educational system did not allow the students to be autonomous learners; therefore, the study habits got fossilized and the students are used to having a control mechanism to learn a topic or study for an exam because of traditional teaching methods and assessment tools. As adult learners the participants of the study stated that keeping a portfolio changed their study habits and foster learner autonomy. Therefore, the educators interested in young learners can also try changing traditional methods and imply alternative methods such as portfolio to see if similar effects will be present among young learners.

The results of the study also indicated that portfolio as an alternative assessment tool should be used as a supplementary tool even if traditional assessment tools are obligatory in the institution since portfolio as an alternative assessment tool might foster critical thinking and creativity in terms of the fact that portfolio enables the students to do research, create their own works and focus on producing more than receiving.

To conclude, portfolio keeping may be recommended as an effective instructional tool in terms of both learning and assessment.

5.3 Limitations to the Study and Suggestions for Further Research

Considering the findings and the feedback of the students gave about keeping a portfolio, some limitations to the study and suggestions for further research are presented in this section.

The present study was carried out with 21 intermediate level students in an EFL setting at Galatasaray University Foreign Languages School. Hence, the findings of the study can be an example for whom is interested in portfo-

lio keeping, but this study cannot be generalized for all levels and all EFL learners. A further research can be done with more participants and at different levels to explore the effect of portfolio with students at different levels of English such as beginners, upper-intermediate and advanced.

In addition, this study had to be completed in a limited amount of time (thirteen weeks - one semester). In order to observe the long-term effects of portfolio keeping, longitudinal studies that take more than a year can be carried out. Longitudinal studies can also reveal the influence of portfolio keeping on students' proficiency levels and general academic achievement in EFL classrooms.

Another study that can be done to explore the effect of keeping a portfolio on proficiency level and success of the students can be done via an experimental study. For this study a control group with whom traditional assessment tools are used and an experimental group with whom portfolio as an alternative assessment tool is used can be compared and investigated.

The researcher could have also used some web 2.0 tools such as wikis, blogs, social network pages and administered e-portfolio. However, technological opportunities of the university in which the study was conducted did not let the researcher use web 2.0 tools. Using these tools would have enabled the researcher to get more data. Therefore, researchers who have access to these resources can implement an e- portfolio using web 2.0 tools such as wikis, blogs, social network web sites and the perceptions of the students towards keeping a portfolio via these web 2.0 tools can be studied.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

BİLGİ VE KABUL FORMU

Görüşlerinizi alıp veri toplamak amacıyla yapılacak anket çalışmaları ve bireysel görüşmelerin dersleriniz ya da notlarınız ile hiç bir bağlantısı yoktur. Yapılan hiç bir çalışmada isminiz ya da kişisel bilgileriniz kayıtlarda geçmeyecektir. Yapılan bireysel çalışmalar ortak bir sonuca ulaşmak ve genel bir görüş elde etmek amacıyla düzenlenmiştir. Çalışmanın amacı portfolyo sisteminin öğrenci üzerindeki etkisini saptamak ve çalışmalarında daha bağımsız olup olmadıklarını tespit etmektir.

Anket çalışmalarına ve görüşmelere katılmak gönüllülük esasına dayanmaktadır. Bu çalışmalar süresince sizden hiç bir kişisel bilgi istenmeyecektir. Portfolyolarınız sadece araştırmacılar tarafından değerlendirilecek ve elde edilen bilgiler bilimsel yayınlarda kullanılacaktır.

Bu formdaki bilgileri okudum ve araştırmaya katılmayı kabul ediyorum. Çalışmanın sonunda hiçbir raporda araştırmacı tarafından adımın kullanılmayacağını biliyorum.Verdiğim bilgilerin akademik amaçlı kullanılmasını onaylıyorum.

Adınız Soyadınız:

Tarih: __/__/____

İmza:

APPENDIX B

PRE-PORTFOLIO STUDY SURVEY

GALATASARAY ÜNİVERSİTESİ
YABANCI DİLLER (İNGİLİZCE) BÖLÜMÜ
ÇALIŞMA ÖNCESİ ANKETİ

KATILIMCIYA

Bu anket *Kişisel Bilgiler*, *Öğrenci Özerkliği Anketi-1* ve *Öğrenci Özerkliği Anketi-2* olmak üzere üç ana bölümden oluşmaktadır. İlk bölüm kişisel bilgilerinizi içermektedir. *Öğrenci Özerkliği Anketi-1* bölümünde öğrenen özerkliğiyle ilgili soruları cevaplamanız, *Öğrenci Özerkliği Anketi-2* bölümünde ise verilen durumlara ilişkin görüşleriniz istenecektir. Yapılan çalışmanın dil öğrenmenizi daha etkin kılmak için düzenlendiğini hatırlatarak vereceğiniz cevaplar için teşekkür ederim.

Okt. Yeşim Erden Burnaz

KİŞİSEL BİLGİLER

1. Cinsiyetiniz: Bay ( ) Bayan ( )

2. Yaşınız

3. Mezun Olduğunuz Okul Türü:

a. Düz Lise ( )
b. Anadolu Lisesi ( )
c. Anadolu Öğretmen Lisesi ( )
d. Süper Lise ( )
e. Özel Okul ( )
f. Kolej ( )
g. Teknik/Meslek Lise ( )

Diğer:_____

4. Fakülteniz:

a. Hukuk Fakültesi ( )
b. İletişim Fakültesi ( )
c. Fen Edebiyat Fakültesi ( )
d. Diğer : _____

5. İngilizce öğrenmeyi seviyor musunuz?

Evet ( ) Hayır ( )

7. Daha önce İngilizce Hazırlık Eğitimi aldınız mı?

Evet ( ) Hayır ( )

8. Kaç yıldır İngilizce öğreniyorsunuz?

a. 6 yıldan az ( )
b. 6 yıldan çok ( )

9. İngilizce seviyenizi nasıl buluyorsunuz?

a. iyi ( ) b. orta ( ) c. kötü ( )

BÖLÜM – A

Bu bölüm, öğrenen özerkliği kavramıyla ilgili 15 soruyu içermektedir. Size en uygun gelen bir seçeneğe ait boş kutuya **çarpı (X)** işareti koyarak işaretleyin.

1. Hiç
2. Kısmen
3. Fazla
4. Çok Fazla

	ÖĞRENCİ ÖZERKLİĞİ ANKETİ - 1	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1	Dersin amaçlarını oluşturma aşamasında ne kadar bulunuyorsunuz?				
2	Dersin içeriğine karar verme aşamasında ne kadar bulunuyorsunuz?				
3	Derste kullanılacak materyallerin seçiminde ne kadar bulunuyorsunuz?				
4	Dersin zamanı, yeri ve aşamalarıyla ilgili kararların alınmasında ne kadar bulunuyorsunuz?				
5	Dersin nasıl işlenmesi gerektiğiyle ilgili kararlar üzerine ne kadar yorumda bulunuyorsunuz?				
6	Sınıf yönetimiyle ilgili kararların alınması aşamasında ne kadar bulunuyorsunuz?				
7	Verilen ödevlerle ilgili kararların oluşturulması aşamasında ne kadar bulunuyorsunuz?				
8	Kendinizi değerlendirilmenizle ilgili olarak ne kadar cesaretlendiriliyorsunuz?(motive ediliyorsunuz)				
9	Size sağlanan materyallerden neye odaklanacağınızla ilgili kararlar aşamasında ne kadar bulunuyorsunuz?				
10	Öğrenim etkinliklerinizin (projeler, sunular,vb) seçiminde ne kadar bulunuyorsunuz?				
11	Öğrenim etkinlikleriniz için kendi açıklamalarınızı oluşturmanızda ne kadar motive ediliyorsunuz?				
12	Kendi öğrenme stratejilerinizi keşfetmeniz ve geliştirmeniz konusunda ne kadar destekleniyorsunuz?				
13	İngilizce'yi yalnız başınıza daha iyi çalışabilmeniz için ne kadar bilgilendiriliyorsunuz?				
14	İngilizce öğrenme sürecinizdeki gelişiminizi takip edebilmek için günlük veya not tutmanız için ne kadar cesaretlendiriliyorsunuz?				
15	Öğrenme planlarınızı hazırlarken ne kadar motive ediliyorsunuz?				

BÖLÜM – B

Bu bölümde toplam 15 durum bulunmaktadır. En uygun olduğunu düşündüğünüz seçeneği işaretleyiniz.

1: Hiç katılmıyorum
2: Katılmıyorum
3: Katılıyorum
4: Tamamen katılıyorum

	ÖĞRENCİ ÖZERKLİĞİ ANKETİ - 2	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
1	Öğrenmem istenenden daha fazlasını kendi çabalarımla öğrenmeye istek duyarım.					
2	İngilizce öğrenirken gösterdiğim gelişimi izlerim.					
3	Kendi başıma çalışabileceğim projeleri veya aktiviteleri yapmaktan hoşlanırım.					
4	İngilizce dilbilgisini kendi kendime/öğretmene gerek duymadan öğrenebilirim.					
5	İngilizce bir kelimenin anlamını, kelimenin ön ve son eklerini belirleyerek çıkarırım**.**					
6	Çalıştığım konuları destekleyen ek materyalleri belirleyip seçebilirim.					
7	Kendimi ödevlerim veya projelerim açısından değerlendirebiliyorum.					
8	Derse etkin katılmayı severim.					
9	Grameri daha iyi anlayabilmek ve hatırlamak için bazı stratejilerim vardır.					
10	Derste öğrenemediğim bir konuyu tek başıma çalışarak öğrenebilirim.					
11	Öğrenme yöntemlerimin farkındayım.					
12	Öğrendiğim kelimeleri aklımda tutmak için kendime ait oyunlarım var.					
13	Öğrenmemden kendim sorumluyum.					
14	İngilizce çalışma yöntemimi seviyorum.					
15	İngilizce'yi yalnız başıma nasıl çalışacağımı biliyorum.					

APPENDIX C

OPEN-ENDED QUESTION SURVEY

GALATASARAY ÜNİVERSİTESİ
YABANCI DİLLER (İNGİLİZCE) BÖLÜMÜ
PORTFOLYO İLE DEĞERLENDİRME ANKETİ

1. Normal sınav sisteminin İngilizce becerilerinizi ölçmede yeterli olduğunu düşünüyor musunuz? Neden?

2. Daha önce bir ders için portfolyo hazırladınız mı? Cevabınız 'evet' ise hangi ders olduğunu, portofolyo hazırlamanın avantajları ve dezavantajlarını kısaca açıklayınız.

3. Sınav ile değerlendirme ve portfolyo ile değerlendirme arasında ne gibi farklar olduğunu düşünüyorsunuz?

4. Portfolyo'nun İngilizce eğitiminize katkısının olacağını düşünüyor musunuz? Düşünüyorsanız ne gibi katkıları olacaktır?

5. Portfolyo hazırlama sonrasında hangi becerilerinizin (yazma – okuma – dinleme – konuşma – kelime öğrenimi – gramer) daha çok gelişeceğini düşünüyorsunuz? Neden?

6. Portfolyo hazırlarken ne tür bir desteğe ihtiyaç duyacağınızı düşünüyorsunuz?

7. Portfolyo hazırlarken ne gibi zorluklarla karşılaşacağınızı düşünüyorsunuz?

8. Dönem boyunca hazırlayacağınız portfolyonuzu gelecekte kullanacağınızı düşünüyor musunuz? Kısaca açıklayınız.

APPENDIX D

POST-PORTFOLIO STUDY SURVEY

GALATASARAY ÜNİVERSİTESİ
YABANCI DİLLER (İNGİLİZCE) BÖLÜMÜ
ÇALIŞMA SONRASI ANKETİ

KATILIMCIYA

Bu anket *Kişisel Bilgiler*, *Portfolyo ile Değerlendirme Anketi* ve *Öğrenci Özerkliği Anketi* olmak üzere üç ana bölümden oluşmaktadır. İlk bölüm kişisel bilgilerinizi içermektedir. *Portfolyo ile Değerlendirme Anketi* bölümünde portfolyo ile ilgili soruları cevaplamanız, *Öğrenci Özerkliği Anketi* bölümünde ise öğrenci özerkliğine ilişkin görüşleriniz istenecektir. Yapılan çalışmanın dil öğrenmenizi daha etkin kılmak için düzenlendiğini hatırlatarak vereceğiniz cevaplar için teşekkür ederim.

Okt. Yeşim Erden Burnaz

KİŞİSEL BİLGİLER

1. Cinsiyetiniz: Bay ( ) Bayan ( )

2. Yaşınız: ( )

3. Mezun Olduğunuz Okul Türü:

a. Düz Lise ( ) d. Özel Okul ( )
b. Anadolu Lisesi ( ) e. Teknik/Meslek Lise ( )
c. Anadolu Öğretmen Lisesi ( ) f. Süper Lise ( )
Diğer:_____

4. Fakülteniz:

a. Hukuk Fakültesi ( ) b. İletişim Fakültesi ( )
c. Fen Edebiyat Fakültesi ( ) d. Diğer : _____

5. Sınıfınız:

a. 1. sınıf ( )
b. 2. sınıf ( )
c. 3. sınıf ( )
d. 4. sınıf ( )

6. Daha önce İngilizce Hazırlık Eğitimi aldınız mı?

Evet ( ) Hayır ( )

7. Kaç yıldır İngilizce öğreniyorsunuz?
a. 6 yıldan az ( ) b. 6 yıldan çok ( )

8. İngilizce seviyenizi nasıl buluyorsunuz?
a. iyi ( ) b. orta ( ) c. kötü ( )

9. Ms Office Word kullanma seviyenizi nasıl buluyorsunuz?
a. iyi ( ) b. orta ( ) c. kötü ( )

10. Kişisel bilgisayarınız var mı?
Evet ( ) Hayır ( )

11. İnternet erişiminizi hangisi ile sağlıyorsunuz?
a. Kendime ait dizüstü bilgisayarım ( )
b. Evimde bulunan desktop bilgisayarım ( )
c. Okuldaki bilgisayarlar ( )
d. Arkadaşımın bilgisayarı ( )
e. İnternet Cafe ( )
f. Diğer: _____

12. Haftada ortalama kaç saat bilgisayar kullanıyorsunuz?
a. 3 saatten az b. 7 – 14 saat arasında c. 14 saatten fazla

13. İnterneti hangi amaçlarla kullanıyorsunuz? Öncelik sırasına göre 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 şeklinde sıralayınız.
a. Sosyal ağ siteleri için (Facebook, Hi5, Myspace vb) ( )
b. Haber ve Gazeteleri takip etmek için ( )
c. İngilizce dersi dışında derslerimle ilgili çalışma, ödev ve araştırmalarım için ( )
d. İngilizce portfolyo çalışmalarım için ( )
e. Arkadaşlarım ve ailemle sohbet etmek için ( )

BÖLÜM – A

Bu bölüm, portfolyo oluşturma ve değerlendirme ilgili 32 durumu içermektedir. Size en uygun gelen seçeneğe ait boş kutuya **çarpı (X)** işareti koyarak işaretleyin.

1. Hiç katılmıyorum
2. Katılmıyorum
3. Katılıyorum
4. Tamamen katılıyorum

	PORTFOLYO HAZIRLAMA ANKETİ	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1	Dönem başında porfolyo ile ilgili hiç bir şey bilmiyordum.				
2	Portfolyo hazırlamanın İngilizce'mi geliştirmeme katkısı oldu.				
3	Portfolyo hazırlarken sarf ettiğim çaba ve zaman yaptıklarıma değdi.				
4	Portfolyo çalışmalarını uyguladıkça İngilizce'm gelişti.				
5	Portfolyo çalışmalarının nasıl değerlendirileceğini daha önceden bilmem performansımı olumlu yönde arttırdı.				
6	Portfolyo iyi bir değerlendirme sistemidir.				
7	İngilizce dersinde yaptıklarıma baktığımda bu dönemin benim için faydalı geçtiğine inanıyorum.				
8	Portfolyo hakkındaki ilk düşüncelerim ile şimdiki düşüncelerim olumlu yönde birbirinden farklıdır.				
9	Bu projeye ilk başladığımda yapmayı beklediğim aktiviteler ile dönem boyunca yaptığım aktiviteler birbirinden farklıdır.				
10	Yaptığım çalışmalardan genel olarak memnunum.				
11	Portfolyo hazırlarken pek çok zorlukla karşılaştım.				
12	Her portfolyo çalışmasının ardından cevapladığım 'çalışma sonrası değerlendirme soruları' yaptığım çalışmalara farkındalık katmıştır.				
13	Portfolyo hazırlamanın negatif yanları pozitif yanlarından fazladır.				
14	Portfolyo hazırlama öğrendiklerimi pekiştirmeme ve öğrendiklerimin daha kalıcı olmasına yardımcı oldu.				
15	Portfolyo hazırlama yazma becerimi geliştirmeme yardımcı oldu.				
16	Portfolyo hazırlama okuma becerimi geliştirmeme yardımcı oldu.				
17	Portfolyo hazırlama dinleme becerimi geliştirmeme yardımcı oldu.				
18	Portfolyo hazırlama konuşma becerimi geliştirmeme yardımcı oldu.				

19	Portfolyo hazırlama kelime dağarcığımı geliştirmeme yardımcı oldu.				
20	Portfolyo hazırlama gramer bilgimi artırmama yardımcı oldu.				
21	Öğretmenim tarafından yapılan düzeltmeler hatalarımı öğrenmeme ve düzeltmeme yardımcı oldu.				
22	Sınıf arkadaşlarım tarafından yapılan düzeltmeler hatalarımı öğrenmeme ve düzeltmeme yardımcı oldu.				
23	Çalışmalarım sırasında öğretmenim ve sınıf arkadaşlarıma ek olarak başka kişilerden de destek aldım.				
24	Sunumlara internetten kolay erişebildim.				
25	Yaptığım sunumların video sitesine aktarılması ve ardından izleme şansına sahip olmam öğrenmemde olumlu etkiler yaratmıştır.				
26	İnternet kullanımı gerektiren portfolyo aktiviteleri öğrenmemi olumlu yönde etkilemiştir.				
27	Çalışmalarımı bilgisayarda yazmak bana kolaylık sağlamıştır.				
28	Portfolyo çalışma konularımın e-mail yoluyla iletilmesi bana kolaylık sağlamıştır.				
29	Portfolyo çalışmalarımı e-mail yolu ile öğretmenime ulaştırmam bana kolaylık sağlamıştır.				
30	Portfolyo çalışmalarımın bir parçası olan sunumumu sonradan izlemek kendimi değerlendirmeme yardımcı olmuştur.				
31	Portfolyo hazırlamayı geleneksel sınav sistemine (belli bir süre içerisinde öğrencilerin bilgi derecesini ölçmek için yapılan imtihan) tercih ederim.				
32	Portfolyo çalışmalarına önümüzdeki dönem de devam etmek isterim.				

BÖLÜM – B

Bu bölümde toplam 31 durum bulunmaktadır. En uygun olduğunu düşündüğünüz seçeneği işaretleyiniz.

1: Hiç katılmıyorum
2: Katılmıyorum
3: Katılıyorum
4: Tamamen katılıyorum

	ÖĞRENCİ ÖZERKLİĞİ ANKETİ	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1	Öğrenmem istenenden daha fazlasını kendi çabalarımla öğrenmeye istek duyarım.				
2	İngilizce öğrenirken gösterdiğim gelişimi izlerim.				
3	Kendi başıma çalışabileceğim projeleri veya aktiviteleri yapmaktan hoşlanırım.				
4	İngilizce dilbilgisini kendi kendime/öğretmene gerek duymadan öğrenebilirim.				
5	İngilizce bir kelimenin anlamını, kelimenin ön ve son eklerini belirleyerek çıkarırım**.**				
6	Çalıştığım konuları destekleyen ek materyalleri belirleyip seçebilirim.				
7	Kendimi ödevlerim veya projelerim açısından değerlendirebiliyorum.				
8	Derse etkin katılmayı severim.				
9	Grameri daha iyi anlayabilmek ve hatırlamak için bazı stratejilerim vardır.				
10	Derste öğrenemediğim bir konuyu tek başıma çalışarak öğrenebilirim.				
11	Öğrenme yöntemlerimin farkındayım.				
12	Öğrendiğim kelimeleri aklımda tutmak için kendime ait oyunlarım var.				
13	Öğrenmemden kendim sorumluyum.				
14	İngilizce çalışma yöntemimi seviyorum.				
15	İngilizce'yi yalnız başıma nasıl çalışacağımı biliyorum.				
16	Zamanımı iyi planlamayı başarırım**.**				
17	Disiplinli bir öğrenciyimdir.				
18	Kendi çalışmamı kendim planlamayı tercih ederim.				
19	Yeni bilgiler edinmeye açığımdır.				
20	Yeni bilgiler edinmekten zevk alırım**.**				
21	Ders çalışmayı genel anlamda severim**.**				
22	Hatalarımdan mutlaka bir şeyler öğrenirim.				
23	Çözemediğim bir problemin nedenini sorgularım.				
24	Bir sorunu çözemediğimde yardım isterim.				
25	Kararlarımı kendim veririm.				
26	Portfolyo sayesinde öğrenme gelişimimi daha kolay izleyebildim**.**				
27	Portfolyo sayesinde yeni İngilizce çalışma yöntemleri öğrendim.				
28	Portfolyo sayesinde derse daha etkin katılmayı öğrendim.				
29	Portfolyo sayesinde hatalarımı düzeltmeyi öğrendim.				
30	Portfolyo sayesinde daha bağımsız çalışabilen bir öğrenci olmayı öğrendim.				
31	Portfolyo sayesinde İng. öğrenmeye ve çalışmaya daha motive oldum.				

APPENDIX E

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

BİREYSEL GÖRÜŞME SORULARI

1. Portfolyodan önceki ve sonraki durumunuzu kıyasladığınızda portfolyo size daha bağımsız bir İngilizce öğrenimi sağladı mı? (Tek başına başkasının yardımı olmadan çalışmanda katkısı oldu mu?) Neden?
2. Genel olarak neden bağımsız değiliz? Neden öğrenirken öğretmene bağımlılık yaşıyoruz?
3. Bir konuyu kendi başına öğrenmen mi öğretmenin öğretmesi mi uzun vadede daha kalıcı? Neden?
4. Self-reflection sorularını cevaplamada zorlandınız mı? Neden?
5. Peer- evaluation konusunda olumlu/olumsuzmusunuz? Neden?
6. Portfolyo sistemi ile sınav sistemini karşılaştırır mısın?
7. Sizce hangisi daha kalıcı öğrenme sağlar: Sınav sistemimi, portfolyo sistemi ile değerlendirilmemi? Neden?
8. Portfolyo aktivitelerinizi hazırlarken her hafta her aktivitenin sonunda bir not almayımı yoksa dönem sonunda genel gelişiminizi görmekmi önemliydi? Neden?
9. Öğretmenin portfolyo aktivitelerinde hatalarınızı düzeltmesinden sonra yanlışlarınızı düzelterek aktiviteleri tekrar düzelterek yapmanızın İngilizce öğrenmenize faydası oldu mu? Nasıl? Bir örnek verebilirmisiniz?
10. Eksik bulduğunuz aktivite nedir? Hangi aktivite olsa daha iyi olurdu?
11. En çok faydalı olan ve en zorlayan aktivite hangisidir? Neden?
12. Ankette size sorulmayan ve ya bu görüşmede konuşmadığımız portfolyo değerlendirmesi ile ilgili eklemek istediğiniz bir şey varmı?

APPENDIX F

SAMPLE STUDENT ASSIGNMENT PAPER FORMAT

Name/Surname:	Dept.:
Task Description:	Task No:
Due Date:	

Student Self – Reflection Questions

1. What do you think the strengths of this assignment are?

2. What kind of troubles did you experience while doing this assignment?

3. How could you improve your assignment?

4. What are the most valuable things you've learned in this assignment?

APPENDIX G

SAMPLE STUDENT ASSIGNMENT PAPER

(FIRST AND SECOND DRAFT)

FIRST DRAFT

Student Assignment Paper

Name/Surname:		Dept.: Law
Task Description:	letter of application	Task No: 3
Due Date:	04.11.2010	

First of all, I want to start my letter with why i am interested in this job. I dreamt of being a good lawyer .It's not just because they wear a suit and carry a briefcase but i also want to communicate with people and have an effective place in real life.

I studied the primary school at a state school. Then I continued my education at a private high school. After passing the examen to have access to colleges, I studied law atUniversity of Galatasaray for 6 years. During that period, I acquired a qualified education. I know french and english. I can say i'm a responsible person. I don't like to praise myself. I think if i try to do my best, People would praise me. We just must focus on what we really want to do. It's not necessary to accentuate again the fact according to that people who do jobs they like are more succesfull than others.I'm a self-confident person. I don't hesitate to say what i think about a subject I consider myself good at, if i don't know much about it, I prefer to not talking

I want to inform you about my weaknesses too. Because i'm not a perfect human. I have weaknesses.Honestly, i'm not very extraverted but not shy too.I try to be a balanced person.Furthermore,i'm not perfectionist.I do my obligations but it's hard to say that I'm meticulous.

Consequently, i want to get the job. I tried to be honest while i'm talking about myself. I wrote my strengths and weaknesses for you to be able to evaluate me in an objective way.

vocabulaire

Acquire
Praise
meticulous
state
private
accentuate
self-confident
determined

SECOND DRAFT

Student Assignment Paper

Name/Surname:		Dept.: Law
Task Description:	letter of application	Task No: 3
Due Date:	04.11.2010	

First of all, I want to start my letter with why I am interested in this job. I dreamt of being a good lawyer .The only reason isn't because they wear a suit and carry a briefcase but I also want to communicate with people and have an effective place in real life.

I studied the primary school at a state school. Then I continued my education at a private high school. After passing the examination to have access to colleges, I studied law at Galatasaray University for 6 years. During that period, I acquired a qualified education. I know French and English. I can say I'm a responsible person. . I think if I try to do my best, people would praise me. We must just focus on what we really want to do.There is no need to accentuate again the fact according to that people who do jobs they like are more succesfull than others.I'm a self-confident person. I don't hesitate to say what ı think about a subject. if ı don't know much about it, I prefer not to talk about

I want to inform you about my weaknesses too.. I have weaknesses.Honestly, I'm not very extravert but not shy too.I try to be a balanced person.Furthermore ,I'm not perfectionist.I do my obligations but it's hard to say that I'm meticulous.

Consequently, ı want to get the job. I tried to be honest while I'm talking about myself. I wrote my strengths and weaknesses for you to be able to evaluate me in an objective way.

vocabulary

Acquire
Praise
meticulous
state
private
accentuate
self-confident
determined

APPENDIX H

SAMPLE STUDENT REFLECTION REPORT ABOUT PRESENTATIONS

Analysis about my presentation

Speech

I think there is not a big problem in my way of speaking but because of the absence of practice I had some troubles while speaking. I could not articulate some parts of the presentation. In the video I could not hear my voice very well so I would speak loud. Besides I think I have spoken a bit fast. As it was a presentation I would have spoken slowly.

Pronunciation

I have paid attention to the pronunciation of the words very much. Because I receive the education in French, in high school and I continue at university sometimes I have some problems of the pronunciation of the common words in English and in French. In my opinion in this presentation I could arrive to pronounce rightly the words even the little wrongs. However with the same reason my accent is not very good. I have spoken exactly like a Turk. If I could practice more my pronunciation my speech would be more fluent.

Advantages and disadvantages of making a presentation in English and watching after my demonstration

I think making a presentation in English is useful for me because it ensures the possibility of making practice in English. In English lessons generally we learn many things. Through to these kinds of presentations I achieve my speech. However it has some disadvantages. I spent much time to prepare my presentation in English because I do not have a command of English. But I learned many vocabularies and knowledge, so it was very useful.

Watching my presentation is beneficial because I had the occasion to see my faults. I could not realize my faults while doing my presentation because of the excitement or the concentration of the study. So it’s advantageous to repair my wrongs.

The only disadvantage of watching my presentation is to see myself in a video because I did not like myself. I would have spoken loud and present well.