

A Comparative Study of Irish and Turkish Students' Attitudinal
Changes towards Foreign Language Learning through the
Dossier Component of the European Language Portfolio

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this is my own work and that it has not been submitted for the award of any degree at any other university. I agree that the Library may lend or copy this dissertation on request.

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Summary

This thesis investigates the attitudinal changes of learners towards the foreign language learning through the dossier component of the European Language Portfolio. It is a comparative study of Irish and Turkish learners' attitudes towards the target language. The study also explores the students' perception of the dossier component and the professional, peer and self-assessment. The study did not consider the influence of gender, class, socio-economic level and cultural bias on the attitudes in foreign language learning.

The study was conducted with fifteen Turkish and twelve Irish learners. At the time of the research, Turkish students were learning English and Irish students were studying German. This study was carried out with the learners of two different foreign languages. The study took place in a high school in Dublin and Istanbul. Students' age were ranged between fifteen and seventeen.

The findings of the study revealed the similarities and differences in terms of their attitudes towards the foreign language learning. The most notable differences were drawn out from their attitudes towards the peer and self-assessment. No differences were observed in their perception of professional assessment. Nevertheless, peer and self-assessment revealed some discriminating factors. In peer assessment, Irish students expressed their fear of hurting their friends more than Turkish students did. Irish students found the peer assessment beneficial in terms of engaging in different perspectives and finding out their weaknesses and strengths. The responses of the Turkish group revealed that the peer assessment introduced them to various points of views and helped them track their development. Conversely, self-assessment displayed more interesting results. All Irish students were pleased with the self-assessment, whereas less than half of the Turkish students expressed dissatisfaction towards assessing themselves. The reason for this might be that it was the first time both Irish and Turkish learners used self-assessment. Nonetheless, students were given a workshop on how to do a self-assessment before the implementation. The Turkish learners also avoided to express their feelings about the self-assessment. Therefore, not many patterns were elicited from their responses. The research findings revealed that self-assessment helped Irish students see their progress and be aware of their needs,

whereas Turkish students' responses displayed that they became more aware of their needs and more active and critical in their learning process. Like Irish students, the Turkish learners were able to monitor their development.

Students' opinions about keeping a dossier were also asked. According to their responses, all students were willing to continue keeping a dossier as they had experienced the benefits of it. They listed the benefits of the dossier as; being organized, improving their level of foreign language and increasing success in their exams.

Both groups of students' responses indicated that dossier component and alternative assessment are highly correlated with the motivation and achievement in the study of foreign language. The willingness to improve their knowledge and the competence in the target language also increased.

This study attempted to identify the dominant patterns in their foreign language learning process through the ELP and the alternative assessments. It also presented pedagogical implications and emphasized the necessity of Professional, peer and self-assessment in target language learning process. Furthermore, it also pointed out the potential contribution of keeping dossier to the progress of foreign language learning.

ABSTRACT

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A Comparative Study of Irish and Turkish Students' Attitudinal Changes towards Foreign Language Learning through the Dossier Component of the European Language Portfolio

This study questions the foreign language learning perception of Irish and Turkish learners' through the dossier component of the European Language Portfolio and the professional, peer and self-assessment under the framework of motivation, attitudes and learner autonomy.

The study was conducted by twelve Irish students in Ireland and fifteen Turkish learners in Turkey. Irish students were studying German and Turkish students were studying English as a foreign language at a high school. The case study took place during the spring semester of 2008.

The data for the study collected through pre-questionnaire, professional, peer and self-assessment sheets, reflection papers and post-questionnaire. During the study, the students prepared four projects to be submitted at regular intervals. The projects were prepared individually. After each assignment, students were provided with teacher and peer feedback which is followed by the learner's self-assessment and self reflection procedure. The research was qualitative. The research findings of the case study revealed the distinctions between two groups of learners. Irish and Turkish learners are analyzed separately as a group according to their perception of professional, peer and self-assessment. Later on, their dominant patterns in the use of dossier experience was drawn out and grouped. Finally, the drawbacks of the dossier component and students ideas about continuing keeping a dossier were presented. The findings of the case study revealed that the most notable distinction in their perception of peer and self-assessment. Students expressed that the dossier component had been useful in terms of developing their foreign language proficiency, improving self-confidence in the target language, promoting motivation and discipline. The findings of the case study underlined the importance and the need for the teacher support in self and peer assessment and more frequent use of peer, teacher feedback and self reflection in foreign language study.

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List of Abbreviations

AMTB	Attitude/Motivation Test Battery
CEFR	Common European Framework
ELP	European Language Portfolio
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Backgrounds to the study

Foreign language learning is essential in today's global world. It is one of the priorities of every society and nation. Foreign Language learning and teaching can be challenging both for teachers and students since there are a number of variables affecting it. Motivations, learner autonomy, attitudes towards the foreign language learning process are some of the major factors which are influential in any language learning process. Many studies have been conducted to find out the effects of these variables on the learning process (Clement et al., 1994; Ushioda, 1996; Dörnyei et al., 2006). These studies are discussed in detail in the second chapter.

Gardner (1985) is one of the leading researchers in the field of motivation in foreign language learning. His studies suggest that attitudes and motivation determine the extent individuals engage in the language learning process. Therefore, motivation is of great importance for foreign language learning (Gardner, 1985). Gardner's socio-educational model suggests two kinds of motivations; instrumental and integrative. The integrative motivation is related to learners' desires to learn, whereas the instrumental motivation is related to external factors or needs such as wanting to get a good job, to travel abroad or to get a promotion.

Learner autonomy, on the other hand, makes up an important part of the language learning process. From a pedagogical perspective, learner autonomy helps the learner to be more proficient and active in his/her learning process. Little (1999) highlights the essence of autonomy in the study of language. Learner independence directly steers the learners into their learning process; planning monitoring and evaluating. This reflective involvement results in increased success.

The European Language Portfolio has been developed by Council of Europe. It is a new type of portfolio in which students record their language learning process, experiences, reports, assignments and intercultural experiences. It supports the learner autonomy and foreign language learning process. It transfers the learning into a lifelong

learning process. It has three components; language passport, language biography and dossier. Each component contributes to self reflection and promotes language study.

The ELP has been piloted in various European countries since its inception. Many case studies have been carried out all around the Europe on the ELP. These studies reveal that the ELP is an effective pedagogical tool that promotes motivation and contributes greatly to the language learning process (Schärer, 2002 cited in Little, 2002b). The studies and research on this new portfolio brought necessary amendments to the ELP and drastically contributed to its development. Carrying numerous case studies on a continental platform enriched the content of the ELP. The Irish ELP for second-level Irish, French, German and Spanish was constituted as a result of a four-year project. The aims of the project are stated as to encourage learners to reflect on their language learning experiences, to pinpoint the origin of their own motivation and to get the learners involved in learning process (Little, 2003).

The ELP is a fairly new implementation for Turkey. The first ELP project started in 2001, supported by the Ministry of Education. The first ELP project focused on English learners at a second-level education. The ELP Turkish model was approved in 2003 by the Validation Committee of ELP in Strasbourg (Demirel, 2005). Before the Turkish model, the ELP models of other involved European countries were analyzed, their implementations were discussed and a model aimed at 15 year-old and above learners was designed. This model was also piloted in specific schools selected by the Ministry of National Education. Later on, an ELP model for adults learning Turkish as a foreign/second language was also designed by the TOMER Language Teaching Center. In this study, we aim to find out the ideas and perception of Irish and Turkish learners about the ELP and the effects of the ELP on their learning process. We put a special emphasis on the notions of motivation and learner autonomy in our study and in particular we attempt to explore whether these patterns can be achieved through the ELP on different groups of learners. The ELP implementation of this study has also been supported by professional, peer and self-assessment, which can be called alternative assessments. The study also presents the students' perceptions of these three types of assessments. Furthermore, the study was specifically drawn from a comparative context by conducting the study with Irish students who are learning German and Turkish students who are learning English as a foreign language.

Statement of the Problem

A number of studies have been carried out to explore the relationship and interdependence between motivation, attitudinal changes and the ELP. However, there have not been many studies exploring the attitudes of students towards the ELP within a cultural comparative context. Furthermore, there are only few studies focusing on a single particular component: the dossier component of the ELP (Kohonen & Westhoff, 2003). Additionally, motivation, regardless of its various forms, is highly effective in foreign language learning. Motivation increases the amount of learned knowledge and develops the desire of individuals to further their learning. Furthermore, motivation can be intensified by learner autonomy. Learner autonomy is as significant as motivation and helps to construct positive attitudes toward foreign language learning. As the learners gain responsibility, they become more conscious about their learning needs and develop learning strategies accordingly. Thus, this study intends to introduce the use of the dossier and alternative assessments to foreign language classrooms. It aims to present how different types of students react and develop an understanding of their learning process through the same tools and implementation. It also aims to explore the possible changes in students' attitudes towards the ELP, and its possible effects on their motivation. Furthermore, the study involves the students' perceptions about this experience.

Purpose of the Study

This study attempts to demonstrate the role of alternative assessments and the dossier component of the ELP on Irish and Turkish learners who are learning German and English respectively in a high school. Therefore, the study is a modification of the ELP as it focuses on only one component of it. The study also aims to display the students' feelings about the implementation and their ideas about continuing to keep a dossier. Within this framework, study discusses motivation and learner autonomy.

It is hoped that this work will be beneficial to the literature relevant to the ELP in a cultural comparative foreign language learning setting. The study may also contribute to the literature by presenting the effects of the ELP implementation on different groups of learners and nationalities. It enables students to evaluate themselves and their

friends, to see different opinions and to engage in their own learning. Study can be regarded as an empirical study, designed to display that the ELP and alternative assessment methods are efficient in the language learning process when combined. It might form a platform for future researchers who wish to carry out comparative studies with the ELP.

Method Outline

To accommodate the research goals stated above, students were informed about the study and were asked whether they were willing to participate. Pre and post questionnaires, assessment sheets and reflections papers were prepared, and were completed by the students and the teachers throughout the study. A mini workshop was also provided for those who had never done peer and self-assessment. It was the first ELP experience of both groups of students. The students were expected to carry out a project individually every three weeks. After each project, their teacher and assigned peer gave them feedback according to the criteria and guiding questions provided in the forms. Upon receiving the feedback, they were asked to evaluate themselves with the help of guiding questions. After that, they filled in the reflection sheets, expressing their ideas about their projects and feedback. They were encouraged to make comments on the effects of the assessments on their learning process. They kept all these projects, assessment sheets and the reflection papers in their dossier in order to be able to track their development and to read the comments when preparing the following assignments. The dossiers did not have any place in grading, so it can be assumed that the learners were free from stress. They were encouraged to focus on making progress and on tracking their development through the assessments.

Structure of the thesis

This chapter has presented an overview of the historical background of the research, statement of the problem, purpose of the study and an outline of the methodology. The second chapter outlines a relevant literature review. It will mainly focus on the interdependence between motivation, the ELP, learner autonomy and the alternative

assessment types. The third chapter sets out methodology. It gives detailed information on the participants, instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis and limitations of the study. The fourth chapter presents the research findings in a comparative context and focuses on the findings drawn out from each instrument. The fifth chapter is the discussion section, in which the findings are discussed with reference to relevant literature presented in the second chapter. The literature and suggestions for further research have also been presented in this section. Finally, the conclusion part takes place in the sixth chapter, in which a summary of research findings and pedagogical implications are discussed.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW of LITERATURE

SECTION I

Motivation

Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of current research on European Language Portfolio and the study of motivation and assessment in foreign language learning. Theories related to motivation and attitudes towards foreign language and learning are presented and discussed in detail. The following section examines the purpose, function of the ELP and its interface with motivation and learner autonomy. Finally, the role of self, peer and teacher's assessment in students' learning process are covered.

Definition of motivation in an educational context

In the available literature, discussions about foreign language learning mainly focus on influential factors in the language learning process. Motivation has been regarded as the main concern that affects the attitudes and learning activities of the individual (Gardner, 1985; Ushioda, 1996; Dörnyei, 2001). In relation to this issue, there are two significant early studies on the role of motivation in language learning that form the basis for subsequent research on language learning motivation. The first was conducted by Gardner and Lambert (1972) at McGill University in Canada; the second took place at the University of Western Ontario, conducted by Gardner and his colleagues. These early studies have mainly focused on the learner's attitudes and perceptions towards the target language and the society that speaks it.

From the perspective of educational studies, motivation is regarded as a formation of positive attitudes and desires to learn the language. As a consequence of extensive research studies, Gardner defines the motivation as follows:

Motivation refers to the combination of effort, plus the desire to achieve the goal of learning the language, plus favorable attitudes towards learning the language (Gardner, 1985, p.10).

According to Dörnyei & Otto (1998, p. 65):

Motivation can be defined as the dynamically changing cumulative arousal in a person that initiates, directs, coordinates, and evaluates the cognitive and motor process whereby initial wishes and desires are selected, prioritized, operationalised and acted out.

Dörnyei (2001, p. 7), in his further studies, extends his above definition and considers the motivation in a general sense, as a natural part of daily life:

The term motivation presents a real mystery: people use it widely in a variety of everyday and professional contexts without the slightest hint of there being a problem with its meaning, and most of us would agree that it denotes something high importance.

In a language learning context, each learner has a goal or aim to learn the language, for example to travel abroad, to have better job opportunities, to be able to communicate with the people of target language. All these goals to learn a language make up part of the learner's motivation. Gardner stresses the importance of setting goals in motivation. He explains the role of orientation, namely the goal, in motivation as follows:

Only if this orientation is linked with effort expended to achieve this goal, a desire to learn the language and favorable reactions to the language learning context can you meaningfully speak of an integrative motivation. On its own the orientation reflects simply a goal which may lack motive power (Gardner, 1985, p.54-55).

According to Gardner's definition, motivation is composed of three elements; effort, desire to achieve goal, and positive attitudes. These components are linked to each other. A learner may have the desire to learn a language, but s/he cannot have a real motivation if s/he does not strive to learn. The level of motivation is linked to the intensity of these components.

Lambert & Gardner (1972) defined two kinds of motivation as a consequence of their studies; integrative motivation and instrumental motivation. Integrative motivation occurs when the learner aims at learning the target culture in order to become a part of

the target society. On the contrary, instrumental motivation refers to the use of foreign language learning as a tool for his/her goals, such as career, education, translation, etc. Gardner & Lambert (1972) make a distinction between these two motivation constructs:

The orientation is said to be instrumental in form if the purposes of language study reflect the more utilitarian value of linguistic achievement, such as getting ahead in one's occupation. In contrast; the orientation is integrative if the student wishes to learn more about the other cultural community, he is interested in it in an open-minded way to the point eventually of being accepted as a member of that group (Gardner and Lambert, 1972, p.3).

In this study, Gardner & Lambert (1972) emphasize the value of integrative motivation in language learning process and imply the superiority of integrative motivation to instrumental motivation. However, they also stress that the utilitarian aspect of language learning was achieved through instrumental motivation. Therefore, integrative and instrumental motivation should not be considered two opposing motivation types, as they are necessarily related to different aspects of language learning such as learning aims.

To find out to what extent their theories can be generalized, Lambert & Gardner (1972) carried out several studies in Louisiana, Maine and Connecticut on students learning French and a study in the Philippines where the target language was English. As a result of these studies, Lambert & Gardner (1972) conclude that integrative motivation results in higher proficiency and success in foreign language learning since the individual wishes to integrate himself/herself in the target language. However, the related studies on the area aiming at finding the correlation between achievement and motivation suggest that either type of motivation is effective in propelling students to learn language if positive attitudes are incorporated (Au, 1988; Svanes, 1987).

Gardner & MacIntyre (1991) tested the socio-educational model of Gardner and the construct of integrative motivation in language learning on 92 Canadian students who were learning French. They gave 10 dollars reward as an instrumental motivation to learn a certain number of French words. They administered a questionnaire to assess the integrative motivation as well. The goal to be achieved was to memorize the administered vocabulary items. At the end of the study, both types of motivation were found to be crucial for language learning, whereas it was also highlighted that when the

instrumental motivation tool (10 dollars) was removed, the orientation ceased. They concluded that instrumental motivation is valid till the orientation (goal) is achieved.

Williams & Burden (1997) state that there are circumstances where integrative or instrumental motivation might be more efficient than the other. For example, integrative motivation is more significant in learning French in Canada since French is a means of communication in French-speaking regions of the country. Conversely, instrumental motivation might be more effective in learning English in a country like Japan where the people do not regard or need English as a means of communication.

Au (1988) brings serious criticism to Gardner's socio-educational model. He argues that his model does not sufficiently explain why integrative motivation was superior to instrumental motivation and emphasizes the studies where the instrumental motivation proved itself to be successful. He adds that Gardner also failed to explain fully how the cultural differences or settings affected the relationship between achievement and integrative motivation.

Gardner (1985) stresses that there is a correlation between the motivation and language learning proficiency. With the intention of measuring and explaining this correlation he developed Attitude/Motivation Test Battery. AMTB is composed of over 130 items and is designed to measure attitudes towards learning a language, the desire to learn a language, and motivational intensity. It also measures language anxiety. The test has been adapted many times and used in several L2 motivation studies (Clément et al., 1994; Kraemer, 1993). It is still the only standardized test to measure L2 motivation.

A substantial amount of research has been done in motivation and its interplay among language learning and motivation variables. Among all these studies, Gardner and Lambert's research on motivation has been pioneering and revealed that motivation and foreign/second language learning are closely related to each other and considerably affects one another. With respect to the studies of motivation, the attitudes in foreign/second language learning have been noted as another influential learner factor (Gardner & Lambert, 1972).

Attitudes in Foreign/second language learning

Attitudes in foreign language learning and motivation are found out to be closely linked to each other as a result of research of Gardner & Lambert at Mc Gill University in

1972. Gardner & Lambert (1972, p. 192) defined attitude in relation to motivation and foreign/second language learning:

An attitude is the intention on the part of students to learn the language with various aims in mind to pursue these aims with varying degrees of drives strength facilities or hinders achievement.

Within the realm of language learning, Gardner (1985) classified different kinds of attitudes in language learning:

a) Specific and general attitudes: Gardner (1985) explains this attitude by making a distinction between learning French and interest in learning a foreign language. Learning French is more specific, whereas interest in foreign languages is a more general attitude.

b) Educational attitudes; these are related to the educational aspects of language learning. They can be sub-categorized as attitudes towards the teacher, attitudes towards the course and attitudes towards language learning.

c) Social attitudes; these attitudes can be generalized as attitudes towards the target language community based on cultural implications of foreign language learning.

There are various factors that influence the formation of attitudes. Personal experiences, environmental influences such as parents, friends or mass media are quite effective in forming any kind of negative and positive attitudes. Gardner (1985) proposes that individual's cultural beliefs of language learning in the community and ideas about the target society greatly affect the level and amount of learned target language. Nationalism, prejudices and interests are some of the factors affecting the language learning and attitudes towards the target language. Nonetheless, individuals with positive attitudes find the language learning process rewarding and approach it in a serious manner. Thus, they show a high degree of achievement when compared to others with negative attitudes.

Intrinsic and Extrinsic motivation

Within the educational perspective, extrinsic and intrinsic motivation are the basic drives in an individual's learning activities. Dörnyei (1994) makes a distinction between these two terms. Extrinsically motivated behaviors are driven by an external

reward and usually it is a process of satisfying an aim (e.g. to achieve good grades, for parental approval). Intrinsically motivated behaviors are related with one's desire to learn, interest in the topic and satisfaction of one's curiosity (e.g. the joy of doing a particular activity). An intrinsically motivated student would learn a subject or acquire knowledge for the sake of their own interest in the subject or for the pleasure of learning, whereas extrinsically motivated student would be directed by external sources other than his/her own interest, joy, pleasure or curiosity. Their learning aims would be related to passing a course, teacher appraisal, obtaining a reward etc.

In the context of the foreign language learning environment, these motivation types have a core central role in learning activities. Gardner & Lambert (1985) regard intrinsic motivation more important and more effective than extrinsic motivation in language study. They point out that in language learning processes students frequently end up with extrinsic motivation. Those with intrinsic motivation are usually more successful in language learning since they are more motivated (Gardner & Lambert, 1985). Similarly, Ellis (1997) indicates that intrinsic motivation is efficient in long-term success in the foreign language learning process.

Although intrinsic motivation is more favorable and preferred, the researchers conclude that there is still ambiguity as to how intrinsic motivation can be promoted or integrated in a school setting or in course content. Stipek (1998) highlights the importance and dominance of extrinsic motivation in the classroom and suggests that intrinsic motivation should also be encouraged. The following conditions can be maintained to promote intrinsic motivation (Stipek, 1998, p. 73):

- The threat of external evaluation is not salient;
- Attention is not focused on extrinsic reasons for completing tasks;
- Learners take responsibility for their own success;

On the other hand, Vallerand (1997) as cited by Dörnyei (2001) conclude three types of intrinsic motivation. According to Vallerand, "learning" is the first component of intrinsic motivation, which deals with satisfying one's curiosity or engaging in an activity just for pleasure. His term, "towards achievement" is related with the engaging in an activity to accomplish something, to overcome challenges or to create something. "To experience stimulation" is related with the desire of gaining pleasant experiences.

The significance of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations in language study and to the success of the individual cannot be underestimated. It would also be wrong to make a generalization on which one is more effective.

The interface of Learner Autonomy and Motivation

Based on an understanding, learner autonomy can be defined as learner's consciousness of language learning aims, process and progress in the foreign language learning process. Autonomy is the learners' responsibility for their own learning process and their freedom to set their own learning goals, methods, teaching content and activities. Learner autonomy should not be regarded as a teaching method, nor should it be regarded as an easily acquired behavior (Little, 1999).

Little (1999) states the ultimate aim of foreign language learning as the ability to communicate. To be able to communicate effectively in a foreign language, learners need a certain level of confidence. In order to achieve this, Little (1999) argues they should take initiative steps. Learner-centered classrooms and approaches foster students' initiative and increase learner autonomy (Little, 2000). Providing learners with the opportunity to do learner-centered activities or a choice of topics they would like to learn promotes their autonomy (Little, 1999).

Ushioda (1996, p. 39) indicates the interplay between motivation and learner autonomy in a language learning context:

Learner autonomy, however, not only entails a capacity for effective self-management of motivation; it also presupposes that the learner will bring a degree of motivation to the learning situations, since without motivation there is no autonomy.

Intrinsic motivation is a desirable outcome of the language study. However, without the interaction with the outer world, it does not necessarily lead to learning. Ushioda (1996) suggests that motivational thinking in language learning is relative, dynamic, flexible and interdependent. Ushioda (1996, p. 43) explains this with an example:

The student whose motivation for learning German is predominantly shaped by the desire to work in Germany needs nevertheless to engage intrinsic motivational processes to support and sustain that long term goal-directed motivation.

The promotion of intrinsic motivation is related to the promotion of autonomy since language study should be embedded in living. Therefore, learners' needs should be taken into account and they should be given the opportunity of expressing their wishes relevant to their lives. In this way, students can discover that foreign language learning is not merely a study composed of rules, but also a means of experiencing their passions and indulging other interests in their lives (Ushioda, 1996). However, students cannot achieve learner autonomy on their own; a teacher's guidance is essential. According to this school of thought, teachers should act like counselors and take initiative steps to facilitate learner autonomy. They should share the burden of responsibility and of learning a language to foster independent learning (Little, 1999). I have mentioned the general aspects, theories and essential role played by motivation in an educational context and have discussed the interplay between motivation and learner autonomy. One of the aims of this study is to clarify how students are motivated through the dossier component of the ELP. In the following section, I will introduce the ELP and discuss it with reference to motivation, learner autonomy and alternative assessments.

SECTION II

The European Language Portfolio (ELP)

Definition of the ELP

The European Language Portfolio (ELP) was designed by the Council Europe on the basis of the Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR), within the project of "Language Learning for the European Citizenship" between the years 1989 and 1996. The CEFR is designed with the intention of promoting co-operation among educational institutions in different countries, maintaining a mutual recognition of language qualifications, facilitating co-operation in the development of language curriculum, language learning, teaching processes and the assessment of language learning outcomes (Council of Europe, 2001).

The Council Europe is interested in foreign language learning and teaching, with the particular aim of strengthening the links between European countries. It is this interest that led them to develop the ELP to achieve the goals set out below:

1. the deepening of mutual understanding among citizens in Europe
2. respect for diversity of cultures and ways of life; the protection and promotion of linguistic and cultural diversity
3. the development of plurilingualism as a life-long process
4. the development of the language learner
5. the development of the capacity for independent language learning
6. transparency and coherence in language learning programmes
7. the clear description of language competence and qualifications in order to facilitate mobility

(Council of Europe, 2000; p. 2)

The ELP promotes life-long learning within an educational context. Little (2002a) regards the ELP as an educational reform and development in the area of language learning and defines it thus:

It is based on the belief that learning should have a communicative purpose; it provides a means of reporting second/foreign language proficiency that transcends the limitations of national systems of grading; it encourages learners and authorities of all kinds to value partial competences; it emphasizes the importance of plurilingualism and cultural exchange; and it supports the development of learner autonomy, partly out of a commitment to democracy in education and partly because learner autonomy is the most likely guarantee of lifelong learning (Little, 2002a, p. 188).

The ELP has six reference levels for each skill; listening, reading, speaking (spoken production, spoken interaction), and writing. Each level describes the criteria for successions and outcomes of a learner should have. The CEFR scales present a hierarchy of each task or skill and outline the underlying degree of linguistic competences to be considered successful at any given level. Learners proceed to the next stage only after mastering the expectations of each level. For example, if a learner cannot achieve the requirements of the C1 level, s/he is unlikely progress to the C2 level and master in the required criteria of C2 (see appendix E).

Components of the ELP

The ELP consists of three main obligatory components: a language passport, a language biography and a dossier. Each component focuses on the student's development and presents progress through different documents. In relation to the aim of this study, a special emphasis will be placed on the dossier component of the ELP.

A Language passport

The passport presents a brief record of the learner's linguistic identity, foreign languages learnt, formal language qualifications achieved, experiences of foreign language, the learner's self-assessment and his/her current proficiency in the target languages (Little, 2002a).

A language biography

The biography is used to set the language learning goals and learning strategies and also records significant language learning and intercultural experiences (Little, 2002a). The learners' progress and development of skills and achievements in the target language can also be monitored through the biography (Little, 2005). The biography encourages the student's involvement in their learning process through reflecting upon and assessing their language learning process.

Dossier

The dossier is a collection of the learner's work, containing evidence of language learning experiences, intercultural experiences and proficiency in the target language. Little (2002a, p. 182) defines the dossier as "... a selection of work that in the owner's judgment best represents his/her second/foreign language proficiency". It enables the learner to record and keep his/her work. The dossier is designed to help learners monitor their progress and see evidence of their capabilities in the target language and development over time.

Function of the ELP

The ELP has two significant educational functions: reporting and pedagogical. The reporting function presents individual's language learning experiences with concrete evidence of his/her second language proficiency and achievement, both of which are based on formal assessments (Little, 2002a). Little & Perclova (2001) compare the

“reporting” function of the ELP to an artist’s portfolio, where the owner displays his/her capabilities. According to them, the aim of reporting function is to present supplemental information about the owner’s foreign language learning experience and concrete evidence of foreign language proficiency.

The reporting function also provides a record of linguistic and cultural skills which the learner has gained both inside and outside of the classroom. This process can be seen in each component of the ELP; passport, biography and dossier. Self-assessment makes up the most significant element of reporting since students are encouraged to recognize the important techniques or elements of foreign language learning that enhance their learning outcomes. Thus, they comprehend the importance of intercultural input for enhancing their learning education and developing their skills (Kohenen & Westhoff, 2003).

The pedagogical function intends to help the learner become aware of his/her learning. It promotes self-reflection and self-assessment to create autonomous learners. Students plan, take responsibility for their own learning, become aware of their goals, gradually develop an understanding of their learning process, and develop their capacity to reflect on their learning. The pedagogical function helps to increase motivation to develop learners’ communicative abilities in target language and to encourage them in to learn new languages. This aspect of the pedagogical function of the ELP aims at promoting plurilingualism and intercultural learning, raising cultural awareness and developing learner autonomy (Little, 2002a).

Reflection, goal-setting and self-assessments are crucial aspects on the pedagogical function of the ELP, all of which contribute to the intellectual knowledge of the individual. Furthermore, self-assessment and reflection combine the two functions of ELP (Little, 2002a). This property of the ELP is consistent with the aims of Council of Europe’s language policies, which supports the idea life long learning (Little& Perclova, 2001).

Self-Reflection in the ELP

The pedagogical function of the ELP provides for self reflection, with the aim of creating independent learners. Learners can evaluate their learning and apply a critical eye to their learning process through self-assessment. Self reflection can be defined as

an education tool essential for the development of learner autonomy, which has been the primary aim of the educational projects of the Council of Europe, as in the ELP for example.

Learner Autonomy does not materialize by telling learners that they should be responsible for their own learning process. Learner autonomy means learners should consciously strive to learn and be aware of what they are learning, how much they are learning and to what extent they are successful. This is a gradual development which can be enhanced by monitoring, evaluating and assessing one's own learning procedure. That is why self-reflection plays a crucial role in learner autonomy and the ELP (Little, 2002). Students' engagement in self-reflection and in the assessment of their second language learning process creates conscious learners who aim for progress and proficiency in the target language.

The ELP has three kinds of reflection: planning, monitoring and evaluation. Planning occurs before the learner engages in a learning activity or a task. It is done by setting goals in advance and writing them in the biography. Monitoring takes place while the learner is carrying out the activity. The learner actually has an opportunity of monitoring his/her performance when s/he is performing a task. Evaluation occurs after the completion of the task. Upon completing the task, learners select the materials they wish to include in their dossier, review their goals in the biography and, finally, evaluate their own proficiency (Little & Perclova, 2001). The students develop their autonomy systematically and consciously while experiencing each stage of the learning process.

Self-reflection and learner autonomy are integrated into each other within the ELP. As students learn to be critical and draw constructive conclusions about their learning process, they learn how to plan and manage their learning.

The Finnish Dossier Work: Research of Kohonen & Westhoff

Kohonen & Westhoff's study on the Finish ELP, which particularly focuses on the dossier, provides the theoretical basis for the research set out in this thesis. The ultimate goals of my study include exploring students' motivation, attitudes, autonomy, and namely any attitudinal changes in language learning project through the dossier component of the ELP. To serve these aims, the reflection forms and assessment forms

handed out to students after each project aiming at promoting the three principles- personal identity and self direction, awareness of language and communication, monitoring and reflection of learning processes- that Kohonen & Westhoff suggested have been explained in this section with a particular emphasis on the dossier work.

According to Kohonen & Westhoff (2003, p.13):

Dossier provides an opportunity for them to select relevant learning documents of their own and illustrate their current language skills or experiences through authentic personal documentation. This function of the dossier is consequently part of the reporting function of the whole ELP: to document relevant language learning and reflect the learning experiences.”

Kohonen & Westhoff (2003) suggest that the dossier component plays a central role in developing portfolio-oriented foreign language learning and makes language learning more visible to the learner. In relation to the scope of this study, Kohonen & Westhoff (2003) conducted an extensive study specifically focusing on the dossier component of the ELP. The study focused on the pedagogical aspect of the dossier through integrating self-assessment into the language learning process. The study discussed the role of the dossier both as a pedagogical and as a reporting tool. It mainly aimed at promoting students’ awareness of language learning through the pedagogical function of the dossier.

In his study of Finnish ELP, Kohonen & Westhoff (2003) suggest that independent language learning is supported by a holistic and experiential approach in which student’s (i) personal identity and self direction, (ii) awareness of language and communication, (iii) monitoring and reflection of learning processes should be developed.

Personal identity and self direction develop throughout one’s life. However, in an educational context, these areas can be developed through providing a safe environment for students where they can explore the problematic areas in their language learning process. It should also be noted that each student has a different background and comes to the class with different expectations, presuppositions and assumptions.

The teacher’s formative assessment should overlap with the aim of promoting the student’s autonomy in the learning process. Based on a shared understanding of

autonomy, the teacher can stimulate students' self reflection by asking them to keep a personal diary of their language learning experiences, ideas and challenges. This reflective diary can be encouraged by short questions at the end of each class or task. These diaries are beneficial both for teacher and learner. The teacher can record students' development and monitor their intercultural and communicative competence, whereas the learner is able to realize his/her own progress and become aware of his/her strengths and weaknesses (Kohonen & Westhoff, 2003).

Awareness of language and communication is one of the qualities of an efficient language learner, which allows him/her to communicate well in a second/foreign language. However, this awareness can take place both in informal contexts as well as in the classroom. It should aim at encouraging students to become aware of their task of language learning (Kohonen & Westhoff, 2003).

Awareness of the learning process enables learners to monitor their learning and to utilise language learning strategies in order to meet their learning communication needs. What is necessary for learners is to see where they stand in the learning process and how well they have achieved their goals. However, before contemplating these tasks, the learner should plan his/her learning, set his/her aims, form a scheme to reach his/her goals, state the expected outcomes and set the requirements for an acceptable work and, finally, reflect on the work accomplished (Kohonen & Westhoff, 2003).

Kohonen & Westhoff (2003) elaborate on the three notions explained above in order to promote the learner's awareness of language learning and autonomy through the pedagogical function of the dossier. This function of the dossier is evaluated in the discussion part in relation to our research findings.

The ELP and Motivation

Lack of motivation is one the most challenging factors of learning process that affects students' language learning experiences negatively. Teacher's endeavours to make the lesson enjoyable and interesting are often difficult to achieve. Including a selection of attractive materials, and creation of interest-arousing and intriguing activities are common ways of drawing students' attention within the classroom in order to increase their motivation. All these methods are short-term however, and often lose efficiency

once the class is over (Little & Perclova, 2001). Therefore, teachers need to repeat these activities and do his/her best to catch students' attention every class.

The pedagogical consideration of the ELP overlaps with the aim of creating a dynamic class where students are both involved in their own learning and kept motivated over a longer period. Little & Perclova (2001) point out that learners involved in pilot projects who felt that they had participated in the ELP with an enthusiasm and pleasure formed positive attitudes towards it. They were delighted with the freedom of managing their own learning. This, in return stimulated their desire to learn and 'their sense of ownership of ELP'.

Self-assessment and Peer-assessment in an educational context with a particular reference to the ELP

Assessment is an important part of learning. It informs the teacher about learner's learning and enables learners to identify their weaknesses and strengths in their learning process. Hence using different assessments empowers the assessment procedure and its outcomes. Concerning this educational dimension of the assessment and the ELP, self-assessment, peer assessment and professional assessment have been used in this study.

Self-assessment is the fundamental aspect of the ELP. In the educational literature, much qualitative research has been carried out to explore the educational benefits, the problematic aspects and the impacts of self-assessment on students (Dochy et al., 1999; Tan, 2004; Brown & Hudson, 1998; Hanrahan & Isaacs, 2001). It has become a popular approach and has significantly contributed to students' learning processes. It is presented as a learning method by many researchers (Boud 1995; Purchase 2000; Rust et al., 2003; Tan 2004). Oscarson (1989) has pointed out that self-assessment is an integral part of evaluation that gives both teacher and learner a shared responsibility and brings new outlooks to the learning process.

As described in the literature, self-assessment has a number of pedagogical and developmental benefits. The most significant aspect of self-assessment is its ability to increase motivation and learner awareness in learning. It enables learners to recognize their strengths and weaknesses. It is considered worthwhile from the perspective of student-involved approaches as it gives learners ample opportunity to take

responsibility, to reflect on their learning and to collaborate with the teacher and the peers. Since students are actively steered into assessment, they take an active role in improving their learning behaviors, regulating their learning practices and monitoring their progress (Kim, 2008). Therefore, the involvement of students in the assessment procedure helps them to gain learner autonomy. Thereby, their autonomy results in a significant increase in motivation to learn the target language (Brown & Hudson, 1998).

Self-assessment can also make students realize that language learning differs from many other courses, since the primary aim of language study is performance rather than acquired knowledge. Harris (1997) explains this situation with a comparative example with other courses. Many students in school generally leave their serious study until just before an exam. This approach might work for courses like history and geography but it does not work for language study (Harris, 1997). Foreign language learning is a cumulative process which develops over time. Similarly, self-assessment leads to learner development over a period of time.

Little (2005) claims that the self-assessment aspect of ELP has two limitations. Self-assessment of the ELP depends on the behavioral dimensions mentioned in the CEFR scales. Therefore, it deals only with the qualitative aspects of language use (e.g., grammatical accuracy, phonological control, sociolinguistic appropriateness). The second limitation lies in its definition of each level. It has not been clearly mentioned how many tasks should be completed or how many of the criteria should be achieved to proceed to next level. This ambiguity may create a problem for both teachers and learners who may think they have mastered enough after completing one or two tasks.

In piloting phase of the ELP, there have been some concerns and controversial issues related to the self-assessment aspect of it among teachers. Some teachers were doubtful whether students would be able to evaluate themselves as a non-guide assessment or the students who would assess their proficiency for the first time might overestimate their performance. At the same time, it may also cause more proficient students to underestimate their performances. (Blanche, 1988; Yasmashita, 1996, cited in Brown & Hudson, 1998). Little (2002a) has cleared these worries and stressed that self-assessment of the ELP is based on “can do” checklists where students read the statements and decide whether they can perform the specified tasks. He also mentions that the concerns were based on summative functions of the ELP rather than formative

functions, which concentrate on qualitative assessment and aims to promote students' achievement.

Whenever the ELP owner updates the language passport he/she must engage in a form of self-assessment that performs much the same function as an exam at the end of a phase of learning. But the self-assessment that comes into play when the ELP owner uses the language biography to set learning goals or monitor progress is formative rather than summative: it supports and guides learning as it takes place. Of course, whether its function is summative or formative, self-assessment draws on the same complex of knowledge, self-knowledge and skills, which means that the more the ELP owner engages in formative self-assessment, the better he/she should become at summative self-assessment (Little, 2002a, p. 186).

There are number of factors that affect the efficiency of self-assessment. A self-assessment might not come up with efficient results if students are asked to assess themselves for a language placement level as they would be under pressure and carry grade concerns. However, it might be more successful and accurate if it is carried out with the intention of research where students would be in a more tension-free and comfortable environment (Brown & Hudson, 1998). Furthermore, self-assessment should be considered in terms of its benefits to student, the concern of increasing learner autonomy should be avoided. When autonomy is set as the goal in self-assessment, the instinctive response tends to produce a concern for how autonomy can be checked and how much autonomy is gained (Tan, 2004). For better efficiency, self-assessment should be flexible and practical in terms of time and should fit into to the schedule of the course. Therefore, the integration of self-assessment with everyday classroom activities will make self-assessment part of the course and develop the main language learning skills. Training is another important factor in the efficiency of self-assessment since younger students need more guidance and support than older students. Therefore, training will help them elaborate on their learning and assessing strategies (Harris, 1997).

Further efficiency of self-assessment can be obtained through additional assessments. There are a number of research studies which indicate that providing students with teacher and peer assessment will increase the efficiency of the former one. Harris (1997) pointed out that self-assessment can increase the efficiency of professional assessment when they are used consecutively. Self-assessment can provide additional feedback and insight to their learning through continuous and personalized assessment.

Thereby, students can compare two assessments and find out in what ways they need to improve. This also saves time, especially in classrooms with larger number of students. Self-assessment also supplies student with concepts not mentioned by the tutor. The combination of both assessment types forms a complete whole and expands the range of benefits in terms of pedagogical and developmental goals. Teacher assessment can help to share the assessment burden when it is provided together with self-assessment (Dickson, 1987 cited in Harris, 1997).

Self and peer assessment also constructively collaborate with each other. Hanrahan & Isaacs (2001) conducted a study with a large number of students (N=233) to find out the students' perception of benefits and problematic aspects of peer and self-assessment when used together. In this study, Hanrahan & Isaacs (2001) state their aim to be developing assessment techniques that would increase the benefits and eradicate the negative effects of self-assessment. The frequently mentioned dimensions he identified were as follows: gaining an understanding of marking, productivity, read others' work; and developing empathy and motivation. His study reveals that the interplay between peer and self-assessment has a positive effect on student learning, motivation and productivity as students are exposed to more than one feedback and learn about different perspectives.

Falchikov (1986) carried out a study of peer, self and tutor assessment of essays, in which s/he focuses on the students' views of this range of assessment issues. She finds that self and peer assessment schemes made the students learn, think critically and provide them with more structure. Another qualitative study reported by Falchikov (1986) aimed at eliciting the most and the enjoyable aspects of peer and self-assessment. The best liked feature of the system that Falchikov (1986) investigated was the "provision of an outline of the essay as an aid to writing". This dimension was followed by increased awareness. Other features mentioned are learning about mistakes and the possibility of subsequent improvement. The least liked features of the study were listed as; difficulty of task, lack of knowledge of peer topic and the possibility of being marked down.

Harris (1997) explains the necessity of self-assessment as an opportunity to make learners more active in their learning process. Many secondary and university students are passive learners whose sole aims are to pass the exams. In light of this, Harris (1997) sees self-assessment as a tool to help learners find out their strengths and

weaknesses, and to work on their needs. Thereby, students learn how to reflect on their learning. Chamot & O'Malley (1994, cited in Harris,1997) also point out:

Self-rating requires the student to exercise a variety of learning strategies and higher order thinking skills that not only provide feedback to the student but also provide direction for future learning.

In relation to the preponderant benefits of self-assessment, Harris (1997) suggests that the use of a portfolio is a practical approach to facilitate the learner's monitoring, as it contains the students' work, self, peer or teacher assessments and learner diaries and is expected to bring insight into performance quality.

In addition to the self-assessment discussed above, the peer-assessment is another crucial alternative assessment, which is highly influential on learning process and performance of the learner.

Providing feedback is an integral part of assessment that enables the learner to monitor progress and to increase their understanding of learning strategies (Carless, 2003). Vickerman (2008) describes peer assessment as a form of shared learning where students give feedback to each other's work. According to Mc Dowell and Mowl (1996, cited in Vickerman, 2008), peer assessment is as an alternative method that improves the quality of learning and introduces students to innovative methods which cater to learner's unique feelings, as will be outlined below.

Peer assessment motivates students to engage in their peers' work and requires independent judgments from students (Brown & Knight, 1994; Brown et al., 1995; Brown et al., 1997; Boud et al., 2001). In peer assessment, students review, clarify, draw out incorrect or misconceived knowledge and identify any significant gaps in their knowledge (Topping 1998). It is a mutual process and is beneficial both for the assessor and the assessee. Therefore, self-assessment should not be merely regarded from the perspective of assessor. The assessee's role in peer assessment should not be considered as passive. With the intention of exploring the assessee's role and assigning an active role to him/her, Kim (2008) conducted a study with 82 pre-service teachers who were taking an 'Introduction to educational technology' course at a university in Korea. The qualitative results demonstrated that peer assessment was a successful factor in developing their learning and that it was a positive experience to see each other's perspective. Many students indicated agreement with the idea that peer assessment was fun and helpful to understand each other's views. Not only did they

receive feedback but also regulated effective learning strategies (Kim, 2008). When asked for negative aspects, participants stated that the peer assessment was sometimes time-consuming, tedious and boring.

Donaldson & Topping (1996 cited in Vickerman, 2008) state that peer assessment offers advantages both for the instructor and the students. They list some of the advantages as development of evaluation, justifying skills, and the use of knowledge. Topping et al. (1996 cited in Vickerman, 2008) also suggest that the interplay between self and peer assessment results in pedagogical benefits. For example, as the learner evaluates and gives feedback on the work of other students, s/he develops insight into his/her own performances. Thus s/he tends to become more reflective in the self-assessment procedure. Furthermore, Van Den Berg (2006) reports that students who actively carried out peer assessment became more productive and efficient in organizing their work.

Race (1998 cited in Kim, 2008) sets out the probable advantages of peer assessment: promoting motivation, giving a sense of autonomy, encouraging students to take responsibility in their own learning process, supporting life-long learning, and teaching students to learn through their mistakes. One of the most valuable aspects of peer assessment is increased learning from peers which helps learners diversify their learning approaches and strategies. Having seen a variety of examples, students can easily draw a distinction between low and high quality performance (Gibbs, 1999; Sambell, et al., 1997).

Another study completed by Ballantyne, Hughes, and Mylonas (2002) points out that self-assessment and peer assessment have a positive effect on motivation, and help to increase students' knowledge, deepening their learning and their enhanced learning outcomes. Learners also comprehend the assessment process more instinctively. Students' ability to judge and to think critically develops. This helps a great deal in their professional life in the future.

Vu & Alba (2007) conducted a case study to explore strategies for implementing peer assessment and measuring the impact of peer assessment on students' learning experiences. Peer assessment had positive effects on students. Learners expressed that they learned from the process and their peers. Unlike other studies (Brown & Knight, 1994; Lapham & Webster, 1999), this study also reveals that the quality of feedback from peers varied and was not considered as constructive as the teacher feedback.

In an effort to explore students' opinions about peer assessment, Lindblom, Pihlajamki and Kotkas (2006) conducted a comparison study of self, peer and teacher assessment of student essays. They came up with interesting findings. Students regarded the self-assessment challenging as they found it hard to be objective while reviewing their work. In peer-assessment learners were also reluctant to be critical when providing feedback to their peers. They also found it much easier to give feedback on technical aspects of the work and tried to avoid the content of the work as much as possible. Therefore, Lindblom et al. (2006) concluded that both peer and self-assessment would need to be supervised by the teacher and they should include guiding questions or tips that engage the learners into assessment process.

According to Mok. et al. (2006), the ultimate aim of providing feedback is to help students learn to expand their knowledge, to help learners replace the misconceived knowledge with the accurate information and to activate learner's schemata. It also directs students to build higher self-efficacy about learning beliefs, practices and experience and increase their learner awareness.

There are also some pitfalls of peer-assessment. It takes time and effort, therefore the timing should be arranged carefully. Secondly, it might be an unfamiliar process for some students; therefore, they might be unrealistic or might not be willing to express their real thoughts. One of the most commonly explored limitations is the fear of feeling hurt. Students might seem to be reluctant to judge their peer's work. (Brown & Knight, 1994; Brew, 1999; Boud et al., 2001). Similarly, Vu & Alba (2007) lists another potential drawback of peer assessment. Peer assessment takes time and sometimes can cause a burden both for teacher and student as it requires attention. If the learner is not familiar with the peer assessment process, it is unlikely that they will come up with realistic feedback and comments.

To get wider effects and benefits from peer-assessment, Vu & Alba (2007) propose four conditions that alleviate the personal and intellectual challenges in peer assessment. According to Vu & Alba (2007) adequate preparation of peer assessment, setting out learning objectives, the assistance of teacher throughout the learning process, and discussions after the peer assessment held by teacher all improve the peer assessment process.

Under the light of mentioned numerous research above, it can be concluded that aside from the advantages explained, both peer and self assessment might have some

drawbacks in some circumstances. The intention of using these assessments in this study is to provide the learners with a rich interpretation of their learning so that students can build a wide perspective about their learning process. To be successful in the assessment processes, all the factors discussed above will be taken into consideration to minimize or to eradicate the possible drawbacks. It is also hoped that the use of these assessments together will strengthen the effect of each other and will be useful for students.

Conclusion

This chapter reviews the important notions of motivation from the language learning perspective. It discusses the important relevant literature that corresponds to the scope of the study. Having discussed the motivation aspect of the study, The European Language Portfolio is presented with reference to alternative assessment types. The following chapter introduces the methodology of the study.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter presents to design of the study, participants, instruments, data collection procedure, analysis procedure and the limitations of the study. This chapter also outlines how the qualitative analysis was conducted.

The study aims to investigate Irish and Turkish students' attitudes and motivation towards a foreign language by using the dossier component of the European Language Portfolio. The ELP study specifically focuses on gaining insights into the attitudes, ideas and views of Turkish and Irish students' language learning experiences and the effects on their motivation of keeping a dossier of which their project work. It compares the motivational factors of two different groups of learners going through the same implementation but sharing different values.

This research has been inspired by the dossier component of the ELP which specifically focuses on some selected work that best reflects the owner's achievements and language abilities (Little, 2005). The study can be viewed as a modification of the ELP since the 'dossier' is regarded as the central discussion point of this thesis. With the intention and motivation of introducing how the dossier affects Irish and Turkish students' learning attitudes and process, the following research questions were proposed.

Research Questions

1. What are the attitudes of students towards using portfolios in class? Do they view the dossier as a useful tool in learning a new language?
2. Which are the discriminating patterns of Turkish and Irish students' attitudes towards the dossier and alternative assessments?
3. Does the dossier create an atmosphere where the learners are encouraged to identify their own needs, interests, challenges and goals?
4. How do learners feel about the dossier and respond to keeping a dossier?

5. Is it a useful way of increasing motivation and enthusiasm or changing their attitudes to learning a foreign language? How?
6. How did professional, peer and self-assessment contribute to their language learning process?
7. How did the dossier component of the ELP contribute to their language learning process?

Participants

This study was conducted with 12 volunteer Irish students and a German teacher in an Irish institution and 15 volunteer Turkish students and an English teacher in a Turkish institution, with a total of 29 participants. At the time of the study, the Turkish students were studying English as a foreign language in a high school in Istanbul. The Irish students were studying German in a high school in Dublin.

Since the study is planned as a qualitative study, the aim is to understand the case in detail and from different perspectives. Therefore, close attention was paid to the selection of the participants. The students were not randomly selected, but were chosen for their potential to reveal a greater amount of information in the clearest way possible regarding the case. Therefore, both groups of students were at the same proficiency level of L2. We chose students whose ages range from 15 to 17 since they would have less difficulty expressing their ideas and thoughts as compared to younger students. It is assumed that this age group would be aware of their actions, their performance and the aim of the study. I preferred to conduct this study with intermediate level language learners as they can engage in a wide variety of language tasks and can perform tasks in the four main skills: listening, speaking, writing and reading. They can also integrate these skills with each other in their projects, activities or assignments. Gender has not been taken into consideration since gender differences are not the focus of this study.

The main reason for studying these schools was that they were familiar with the ELP and the teachers have applied the ELP to their previous classes. It should be noted however that it was the first time for these particular students to use the ELP.

The participants completed a background questionnaire in which they were asked for personal information such as age, their native language and the number of years they studied the foreign language and whether they had ever been the country of the target language they were studying.

Two out of fifteen Turkish students had been to English-speaking countries for vacation whereas of the twelve Irish students, three of them had been to Germany for vacation. None of the students had studied in these countries. The selection of teachers was also important. Both of the teachers had thirteen years teaching experience.

Procedure

Table 1. Timetable and stages of Research

Applied Instrument	Time	Aim of implementation
Seminar	December/ January	To introduce the study to the students and make them aware of the study's objectives. To train them on reflection papers and to present the procedure of the whole case study.
Pre-questionnaire	February	To find out the attitudes of students towards the language learning experience and to form a profile of the students
Dossier Implementation	February/ May	To see the effects of the dossier component on forming positive attitudes and promoting motivation
Observations	February/May	To encourage students and see their development in attitudes
Post-questionnaire	May	To see elicit their views and perception of the study.

Data was collected in the second term of 2007/2008 academic year over a period of 3 months. The study started on started on February 4, 2008 and ended in the first week of June, 2008. Before February starting the study, I met the students both in Turkey and Ireland in the first term and introduced the study in detail over two class hours. The Bayram holidays in Turkey and The Easter holiday in Ireland allowed extra time for the students to complete their assigned projects and postponed the end of the study until early June.

The required permission was obtained from both the schools' management in Turkey and Ireland. Both of the schools were state schools. I also received permission from the teachers, who were willing to collaborate and carry out this study with me. I explained the entire project and allocated time for data collection to instructors. We formed a schedule to assign projects at regular intervals and decided on the topics to be learned in this study. We took careful note of the syllabus of the course and made sure that the study would not cause students to fall behind in the curriculum. Accordingly, we chose the topics and integrated our study and aims with the original curriculum.

I met the classes to introduce this project to the students. They were assured that their identity would be kept confidential and that their decision to participate or not would not affect their class grades. Students were also told that the projects and assessment forms they would fill in would not be marked. All students volunteered to participate in the study and all completed the study. Precaution was taken to re-assure them and to develop mutual trust between the researcher and the students in order to ensure, as far as possible unbiased and reliable results.

A pre-questionnaire was administered in the first week to find out the students' profiles and to elicit their attitudes towards previous learning experiences, and to language learning procedure.

Then, during the fourteen weeks of the semester, students were asked to prepare small project-based assignments on specific topics individually. As mentioned previously, the topics of the assignments were determined together with the teacher beforehand, without disrupting the class programme. The assigned topics were studied for two weeks in the class before students began to prepare their work. The students were asked to keep their work in a folder and form a portfolio of their work, which is called the dossier within the framework of the ELP.

Since the language learning is a holistic and cumulative process, the assigned projects did not address a particular unique skill. Students were asked to prepare more than just written projects. Throughout this study, students prepared four small projects/assignments at regular intervals. Three of these projects were submitted in written form and one of them was presented orally as a demonstration to the whole class. I recorded their oral presentations. I did not record them on video because some of the students told me that this would make them uncomfortable during their presentation.

Three different feedback mechanisms were provided to the students' projects: self-assessment, peer assessment/feedback and teacher's assessment/feedback. Professional assessment forms were composed of questions to evaluate students' linguistic competence and performance in the target language. Peer forms and student feedback forms consisted of questions that focus on the challenges and benefits of the students' work. After each project the student's peer and teacher evaluated his/her work according to the guiding questions in the form. Later on, the student evaluated his/her own project and performance. In the light of teacher's, peer's and student's own feedback, students wrote a diary/reflection form guided by questions after each project, offering their ideas and thoughts on their performance. Starting from the very first week, I collected the students' projects and completed feedback forms, copied them and gave them back to be kept in their dossier.

This empirical period was followed with a post-questionnaire to determine the students' attitudes and assessment impressions, and the ideas and experiences of the students concerning forming a dossier. The questionnaire was composed of open-ended questions and contained an essay component. Such an approach enables the researcher to acquire deeper insight and to explore the questions fully.

The questions in feedback forms, reflection sheets and questionnaires were asked in the native language of participants to allow them express their ideas easily and explicitly. Because some students might see using the target language as a 'job' or would cut their ideas short as they come across difficulty in stating their ideas in the target language. However, students were also able to fill in forms in the target language if they so wished. All students preferred to complete them in their mother tongue. The post-questionnaire, which was handed out to finalize the study and to record their learning experiences was, at first, intended as an interview. However, I realized in their oral presentation of work that some students appeared to be very excited and nervous at the prospect of being recorded. Therefore, I found it more appropriate to hand out the questions in a written form. Later on, as a part of the post-questionnaire, I asked each student to write an essay on what they had thought of keeping dossier, and the benefits and drawbacks of the dossier. They were free to add anything else, if they would like to comment or criticize this study.

The following instruments were used for this study: a pre-questionnaire, feedback forms, reflection papers and a post- questionnaire.

Instruments

The Attitude/Motivation Test Battery

The pre-questionnaire used to measure levels of motivation and attitudes towards the second/foreign language learning is the modified Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) which was developed by Gardner (1985). The questionnaire includes some items which were adapted from AMTB and slightly changed. It is composed of 32 questions. This instrument aims to investigate the factors affecting the student's desire to learn English/German and his/her attitudes towards learning English/German. A five point Likert scale response was used for each item so that participants could indicate the degree to which they agreed with the statements. The statements were also both positively and negatively constructed. The scoring for statements was as follows: Strongly agree = 5, Agree = 4, Neutral = 3, Disagree = 2, Strongly disagree = 1.

Open-ended questionnaires

In an effort to find out the general language beliefs on language learning and attitudes towards the foreign language classes and to elaborate on participants' apprehensions, motivations, initiatives, and the confidence they felt throughout the semester, open-ended questions were included both in the pre-questionnaire (see appendix A) and post-questionnaire (see appendix D). The open-ended questionnaire allows learners to reveal more concrete and explanatory answers, which constructs a realistic model. The topics and questions mentioned in Little and Perclova (2001) and Little (2003) were taken into consideration in the preparation of the questionnaire.

The questionnaires were prepared in English, which I translated into Turkish for the group of Turkish learners. The teacher in Turkey also translated the questionnaires. Thereby, we had a chance to compare our translations and ensure that the questions were clear and accessible.

Classroom Observations

The Classroom observations were carried out in order to get to know the students better, to observe their attitudes towards the class, to see how enthusiastic they were

participating classes and also to find out whether they were developing positive feelings towards their language classes. I had the chance to observe the classrooms both in Turkey and Ireland over a period of time at random intervals.

The classroom observations were excellent opportunities to develop a close relationship with the students, and a positive rapport was established. This good relationship helped me to engage in dialogue with students before and after classes. My interaction with the students created a much more comfortable environment for them and increased the mutual trust. I believe this warm relationship resulted in providing much more sincere responses and information during the case study.

Assessment forms

An important aspect of the ELP is the assessment/feedback students get at the end of their work. Three different evaluation forms were handed out after each completed project; professional (teacher) feedback form, peer feedback form and self-evaluation form.

The first form was the teacher's evaluation form (see appendix B), which includes open-ended questions on the student's performance. Questions in this form were also asked to the teacher, who provided feedback on numerous points in their work ranging from grammatical patterns used to the general layout of the project. Teachers also commented on students' performances on these forms and pointed out what they should develop and avoid in their following projects. Upon completing these forms, the teacher handed them back to the students to be kept in their dossier.

The second form was the peer's feedback form. Each student's work was provided with peer feedback. The questions in the peer's feedback form were different from the teacher's form, but they both had a similar slant. The questions were designed with the aim of providing constructive feedback to the students and avoiding possible discouraging or humiliating feedback. For example, the item "Can you recommend him/ her one thing s/he should pay attention to next time?" is a positive statement that prevents any negative criticisms from the peer that might discourage students. On the other hand, the item "What did you learn from your friend's project?" is a constructive question that gives positive sense to the student about their work since they feel that their project has been beneficial to his/her friend. It also contributes to peers in two

ways: the peer reads the assignment in detail consciously as s/he is going to provide feedback, and thus the student becomes aware of what s/he has learnt from his friend's project and how this feedback procedure has contributed to him/her.

The third form was the student's self-evaluation. The first part of the form was a self-assessment checklist for student's project and the second part was composed of several questions. Upon getting feedback from teacher and a peer, the student evaluated his/her performance in light of those guiding questions and discussed his/her own learning challenges in this study.

Reflection paper

Students filled in a reflection sheet (see appendix C) after receiving feedback of each completed project. Students were asked some guiding questions to help them reflect on their learning experiences and to share their ideas and feelings on language learning processes. They were also asked what they found challenging about keeping a dossier. The questions were flexible enough to collect data beyond the asked questions.

Reflection papers were intended to get more information about the participants' comments and suggestions in relation to attitudinal change with keeping a dossier. These reflection sheets proved to have been quite useful in helping the students express their ideas about the dossier. The sheets also encouraged each student to share his/her feelings after each project, allowing me to see regularly whether there have been any positive or negative attitudinal changes.

The students were not familiar with how to write reflection papers; therefore one class of training was given to students. There were also four guiding questions in the reflection sheet and the students were allowed to write anything they would like to mention in their papers. Each student wrote four reflection papers throughout the study. None of the students failed to submit their forms and none quit the study. Basic themes in these papers were identified and each participant's answer for the same question was analyzed together.

Pilot work

The questionnaires were pilot-tested both in Turkey and Ireland to find out whether there were any ambiguous items or the questionnaires before data collection. The

questions were pre-tested by students comparable in background and profile to those used in the actual study in their native language. Students were encouraged to ask questions while completing their questionnaires if they needed any clarification. Upon getting feedback from students, items that caused confusion were modified or discarded.

Data Analysis

This study is based on mainly qualitative data analysis since the number of participants is limited to 27. The aim is to study whether the use of a dossier promotes motivation and constructs positive attitudes in a comparative context of two different groups of learners who share different linguistic features.

The study is also a comparative, discussing the motivational variables and the effects of the dossier component of the ELP in constructing positive attitudes on different student profiles in two countries. In this particular situation, it is believed that qualitative data reveal more relevant information than quantitative data. However, the quantitative data has also been used in the explanation of Likert questionnaire. Likert results were processed in SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). Mean and standard derivation has been presented in histograms to display the general foreign language attitudes of learners.

The reflection sheets, self-assessment forms and the essays students wrote after finishing the case study were grouped according to various topics mentioned in Little and Perclova (2001). Dominant patterns that students have demonstrated in their forms and commonly mentioned points have been highlighted.

Limitations

The present study has a number of limitations. While attempting to draw out comparative findings for both groups of learners and investigating the effect of the dossier component of the ELP on students' learning process.

First of all, the study could not control the possible cultural predispositions that might influence on Turkish and Irish students' responses to the questionnaire. For example, Turkish students' responses to 'agree' in the 5 point Likert-scale may not mean the same degree of accord as those on the Irish students' responses. A further study is needed to

control the possible bias in the students' responses in the light of the different cultural backgrounds.

Another limitation is the number of students. Considering the number of participants, a logical generalization has been carried out in this study rather than a statistical generalization. It would be wrong to generalize the study to a national level with only 12 and 15 students from each country. For a statistical generalization, larger groups of people ought to be tested from each country.

The study also focused on only one part of the ELP. The dossier component of the ELP was the main concern and study of this research. Therefore, we did not gain a full comprehension of students' perception about the ELP. A study including the three components of the ELP has yet to be conducted.

A further limitation, which can also be regarded as a positive aspect of the study, was the use of native language in completion of forms. The use of native language in the completion of forms goes against the ELP standard practice. However, it also allowed full expression of their ideas.

Lastly, the gender was also one of the constraints of the study. Although the gender factor was not considered during the study, the study was conducted with 12 female Irish learners, 12 female Turkish learners and 3 male Turkish learners. The dominance of female students in the study can be added as another constraint of this research.

Conclusion

In this chapter, instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis and participants have been presented. In the next chapter, the research findings will be presented in a comparative context.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter presents the research findings of qualitative analysis on the collected data and is divided into three main sections.

- Student profiles and attitudes towards foreign language learning;
- Student feelings and ideas about professional assessment, peer assessment and self-assessment;
- Students' perception of the dossier experience;

The findings displays the attitudes of students towards foreign language learning, the ELP the dossier component, professional, peer, and self-assessments and records any changes in their motivation and interest levels by using pre-questionnaire, reflection papers, assessment sheets and post-questionnaire.

The student profiles and their general pattern of motivation and attitudes towards foreign language learning are presented. Before engaging in the study, a pre-questionnaire was employed to find out the students' profiles, their general attitudes towards language learning and towards the process of keeping a dossier. The first section of this thesis presents the results of pre-questionnaire. A Likert style questionnaire was administered to discriminate the learner profiles of Turkish and Irish students. The graphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 illustrate the results of the Likert questionnaire. The second part of the questionnaire was composed of open-ended questions designed to receive subjective and interpretative answers from students. The main focus of the open-ended questions was to discover student's feelings about the experience of learning a foreign language and to make students interpret these feelings. The aims and formation of this questionnaire are explained in detail in chapter three, under the subheading of methodology.

Section II presents the results of the assessment forms and reflection sheets to be filled after each project. These forms were handed out as a part of the study and they were designed to elicit the students' feelings about three different assessment procedure and the effects of these assessments on their motivation, learner autonomy and proficiency

in the foreign language. After the study, the post questionnaire, which was composed of open-ended questions and an essay, was administered to learners. Section III focuses on the interpretation of post-questionnaire. The aim of this questionnaire was to find out learners' reflections on their learning experience, their ideas about the ELP implementation and to illustrate any attitudinal changes of the students towards foreign language. The results of questionnaire are presented under four main headings which students frequently mentioned in their answers.

Since the students were asked not to write their names for confidentiality, it was not possible to match the respondents of pre-questionnaire, assessment sheets and post-questionnaires with the students. In the first section, the extracts from the pre-questionnaire are presented as IRE 1, IRE 2 or TR 1, TR 2 etc. In the second section, the extracts taken from the assessment and reflections sheets of students are entitled as IRE A, IRE B etc. and TR A, TR B etc. In the third section, the extracts taken from the post questionnaire are presented in roman numerals, e.g. IRE I, IRE II etc. and TR I, TR II.

SECTION I

Student Profiles and their perception of foreign language learning

Student Profiles

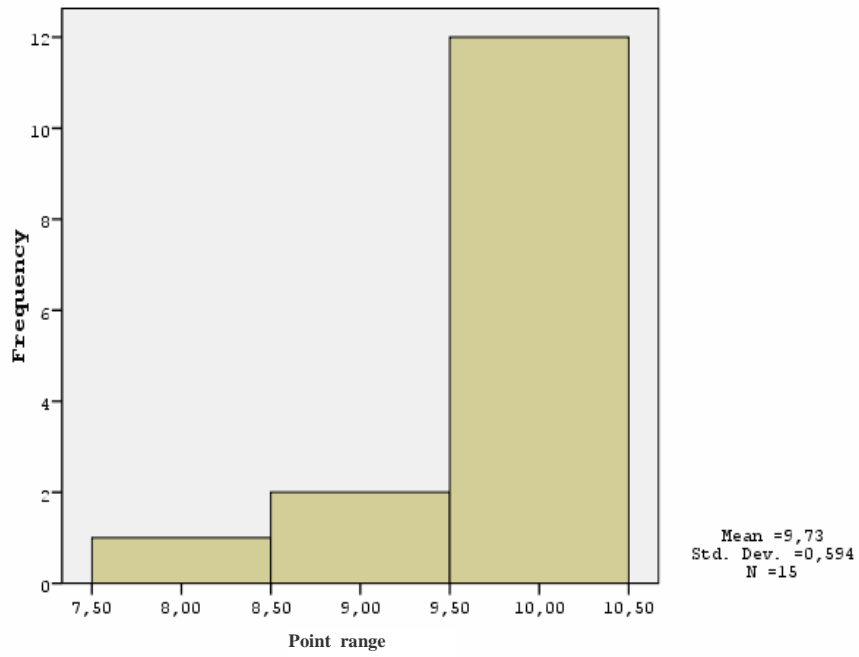
As explained in previous chapter, Likert style questions are corresponded to different concepts of autonomy, patterns and attitudes. In some cases, one item stands for more than one notion. Histograms are used in the presentation of Likert. The histograms were formed from the answers of fifteen Turkish and twelve Irish students. Mean and standard deviation of the patterns are shown in the histograms and SPSS was used to find out the mean and standard deviation of each pattern. A table has also been added above each histogram to show the items that constitute each pattern and the number of students' rates of answers for each particular item. Gender has not been taken into consideration in this study.

Instrumental Motivation

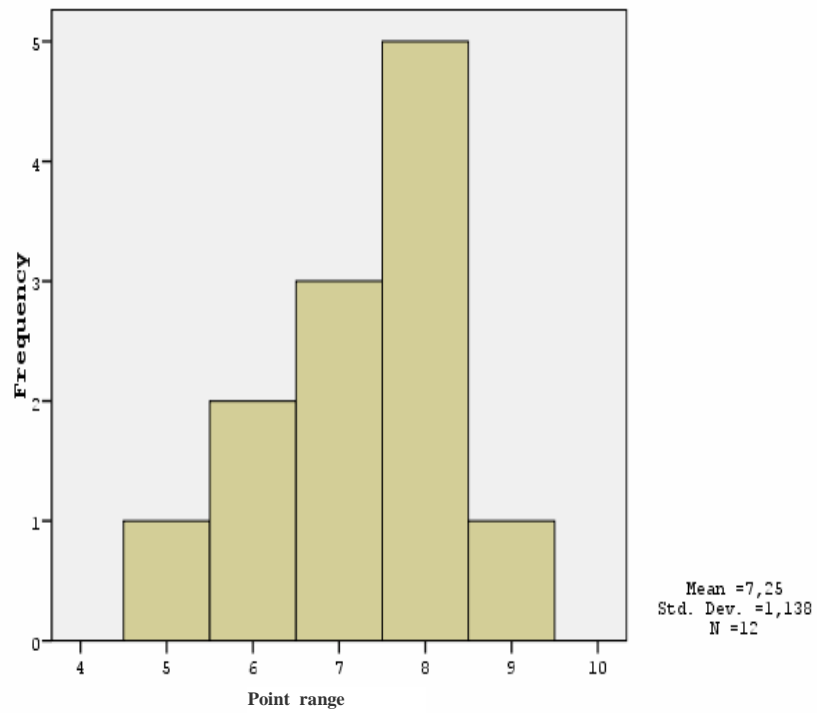
Table 2 shows the items corresponding to instrumental motivation and the number of students for each item. Graph 1 & 2 show the histogram analysis of Turkish and Irish students' replies, respectively and compares them by presenting mean and standard derivation of their answers. The graphs display that Turkish students have higher instrumental motivation than Irish students. Turkish learners regard foreign language learning as a necessity in the proper sense for their future while Irish students' answers display a relatively low tendency of agreement with this statement. The reason for this might be that English is the primary foreign language taught at schools in Turkey. On the other hand, German is studied by a minority of students in Ireland.

Table 2. Instrumental motivation

# QUESTIONS	QUESTIONS	TURKISH STUDENTS (number of students)					IRISH STUDENTS (number of students)				
		strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	Strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	Strongly agree
23	I believe that learning English/German is necessary for my life in university	0	0	0	1	14	0	2	7	3	0
30	I believe learning English/German is important because in a modern world people should know at least one foreign language	0	0	0	3	12	0	0	2	6	4



Graph 1. Instrumental motivation for Turkish students



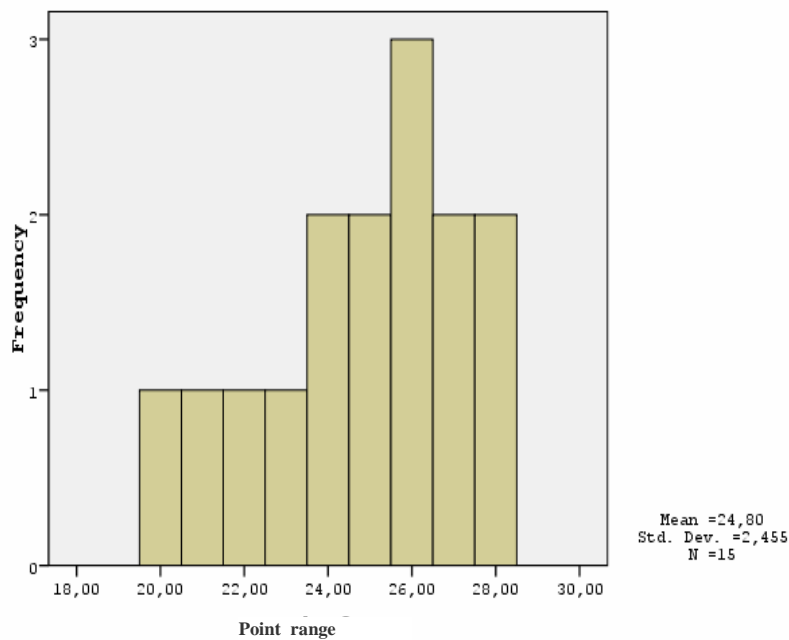
Graph 2. Instrumental motivation for Irish students

Desire for foreign language learning

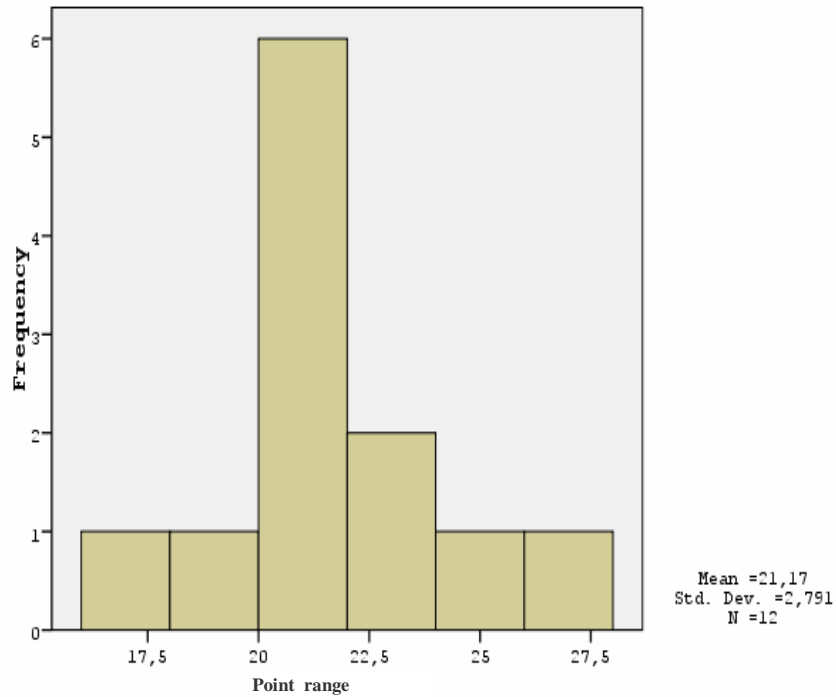
Graph 3 & 4 display that Turkish students are slightly more interested in learning a foreign language when compared to the Irish students. One possible reason for this is the Turkish students' exposure to English through mass media and press media in daily life. In the pre-questionnaire, five Turkish students stated that most of the American and British movies or series they watched at home were in English and only a few of them had Turkish subtitles. Therefore, their interests in foreign language learning and their desire to learn and improve their proficiency in the foreign language were closely connected to the student's desire to be able to watch these movies. As mentioned before, since German is a minority foreign language in Ireland, Irish students are not exposed to German as much as Turkish students are exposed to English. Therefore, there is not a huge amount of incentive for Irish students to improve their German. Another reason for this result may be the perceived value. Turkish students consider English as necessary whereas German may not be seen that much necessary by Irish students. Still, a similar number of students from both groups agrees on the statement that hours allocated for German/English classes should be increased.

Table 3. Desire for Foreign Language Learning

# QUESTIONS	QUESTIONS	TURKISH STUDENTS (number of students)					IRISH STUDENTS (number of students)				
		strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	Strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	Strongly agree
14	I want to improve my English/German as much as possible	0	0	0	3	12	0	0	1	5	6
27	I attempt to develop my own personal vocabulary as well as learning the words presented by the teacher	0	0	3	6	6	0	1	8	2	1
28	I look for opportunities to improve my vocabulary outside the class, because I know I need to in order to be successful in learning English/German.	0	0	2	3	10	0	1	1	7	3
29	I choose English/German movies whenever I have the chance of watching one.	1	1	2	6	5	3	7	2	0	0
31	If I do not understand something in English/German, I try to find out myself, or else ask for help	0	1	2	6	6	0	0	1	6	5
32	I believe the number of hours allocated for English/German Classes should be increased in the school.	0	2	9	2	2	0	2	6	3	1



Graph 3. Desire for foreign language learning for Turkish students



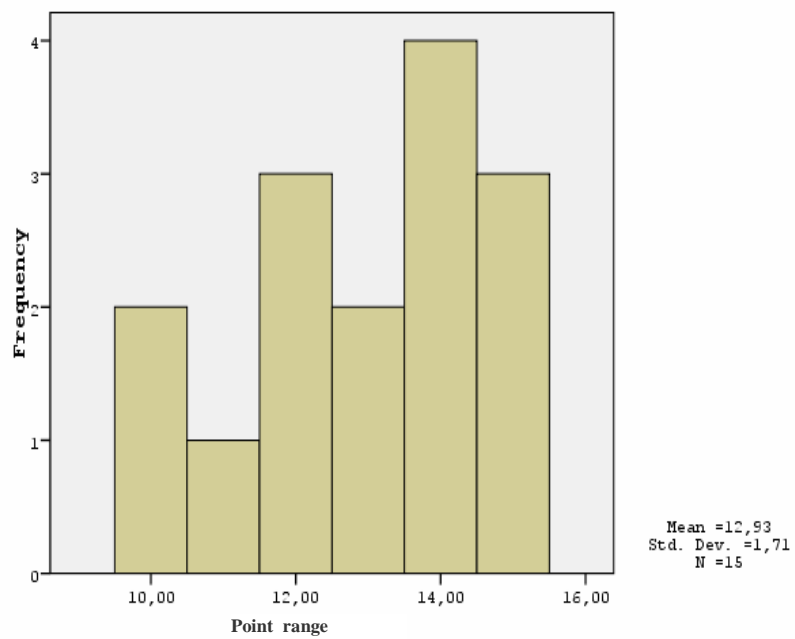
Graph 4. Desire for Language Learning for Irish students

Self-confidence

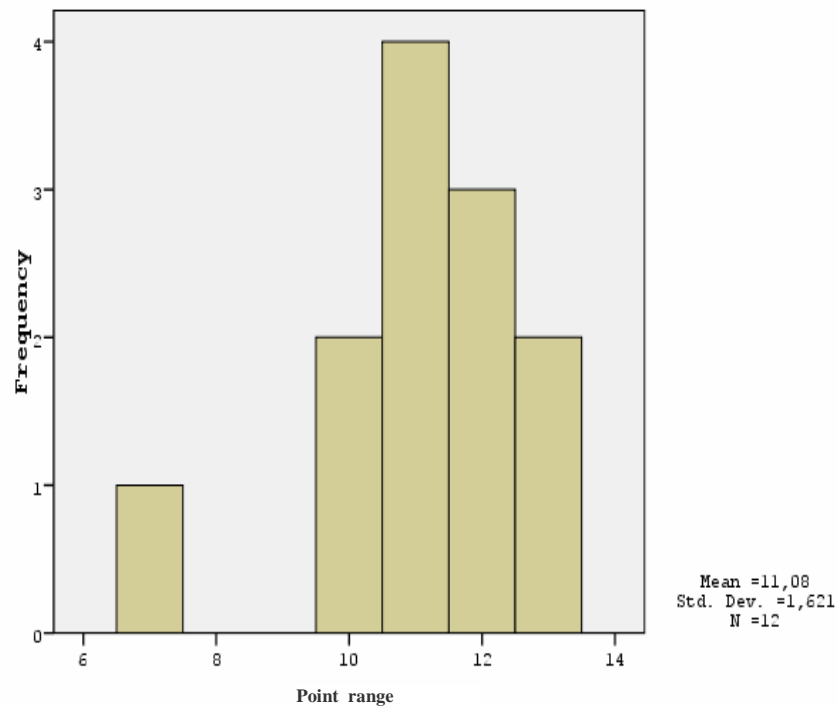
Graph 5 & 6 display that both groups of students have confidence in their foreign language learning abilities. The only discriminating conclusion can be drawn from the second item, “I believe I can do a project/assignment on any topic”. Seven Turkish students marked ‘strongly agree’ and none marked ‘disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’ for this statement, whereas none of Irish student ranked ‘strongly agree’.

Table 4. Self-confidence

# QUESTIONS	QUESTIONS	TURKISH STUDENTS (number of students)					IRISH STUDENTS (number of students)				
		strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	Strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	Strongly agree
1	I always hand in well- prepared assignment and projects	0	0	1	7	7	0	1	1	10	0
10	I believe I can do a project/assignment on any topic	0	0	5	2	8	0	1	6	4	1
15	I trust my ability to do well in class	0	0	2	6	7	0	1	0	10	1



Graph 5. Self-Confidence for Turkish students



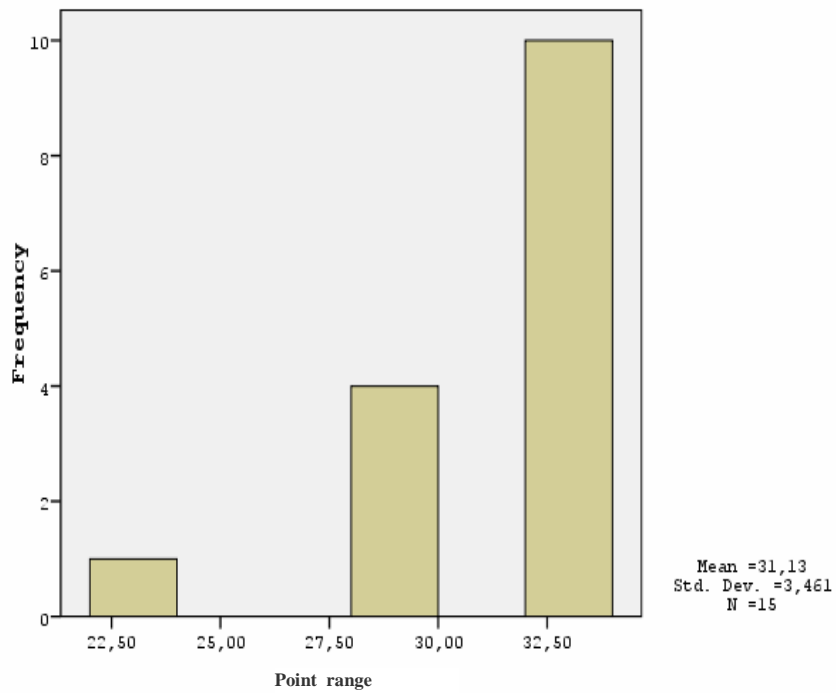
Graph 6. Self Confidence for Irish students

Learner autonomy

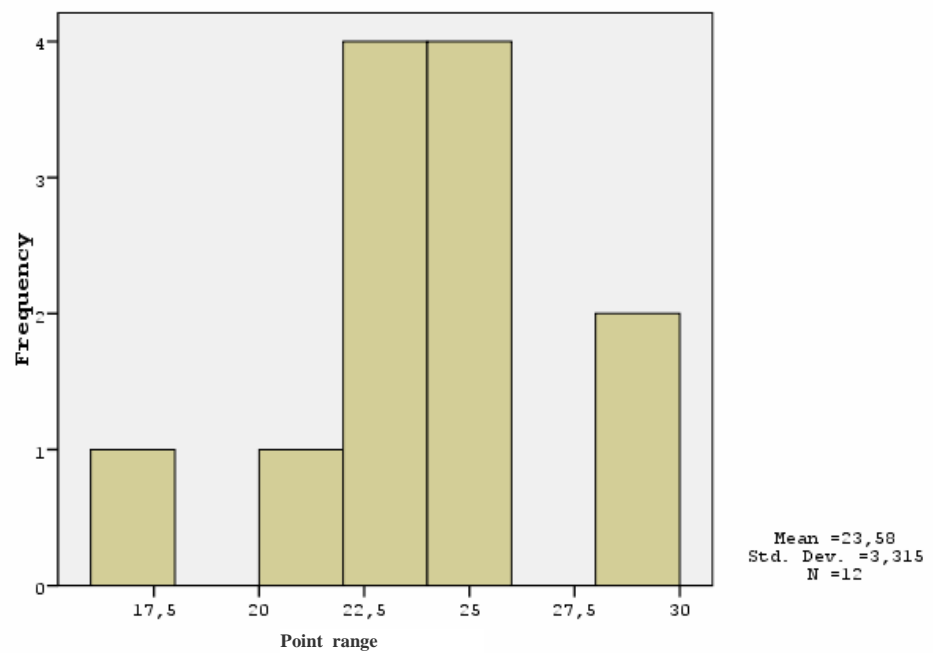
Table 5 presents the items related to the definition of learner autonomy: taking responsibility for their own learning, taking initiatives in learning, planning their own learning, understanding their purpose of certain tasks. Turkish students indicated that in general they are fairly independent learners. They claimed that they like being responsible for their own learning. Nine students marked ‘strongly agree’ for this item. However, it was very clear that both groups of students would prefer not volunteer when asked to do extra homework or tasks. The most marked difference between the two groups was a difference in their attitudes of preference to watch movies and read books/newspapers/magazines in the target language. As depicted in the previous graphs, the Turkish students demonstrated a flourishing desire to read or watch something in target language, a desire which likely stems from the popularity of American/European movies and novels. Therefore, a higher number of Turkish students show willingness than Irish students do.

Table 5. Learner autonomy

# QUESTIONS	QUESTIONS	TURKISH STUDENTS (number of students)					IRISH STUDENTS (number of students)				
		strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	Strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	Strongly agree
4	From time to time I revise my previous assignments to see how much I have improved	1	1	3	5	5	1	6	3	2	0
5	I usually revise my assignments before the exams	2	1	0	5	7	0	1	1	7	3
8	I like being responsible for my own learning	0	0	1	5	9	0	0	5	4	3
13	I will volunteer if my teacher asks to do extra homework	2	6	4	2	1	8	2	1	1	0
26	I read something in English/German in my free time	0	2	2	4	7	1	8	3	0	0
27	I attempt to develop my own personal vocabulary as well as learning the words presented by the teacher	0	0	3	6	6	0	1	8	2	1
29	I choose English/German movies whenever I have the chance of watching one.	0	2	2	6	5	3	7	2	0	0
31	If I do not understand something in English/German, I try to find out myself, or else ask for help	0	1	2	6	6	0	0	1	6	5



Graph 7. Learner Autonomy for Turkish learners



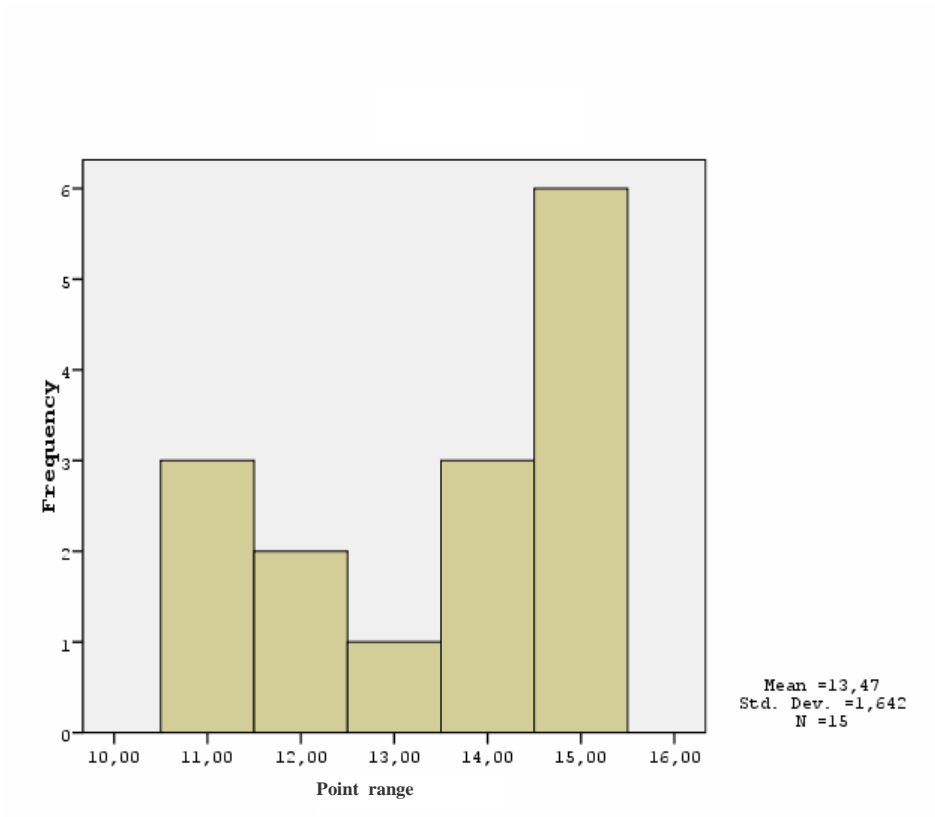
Graph 8. Learner Autonomy for Irish students

Motivation caused by success and positive feedback

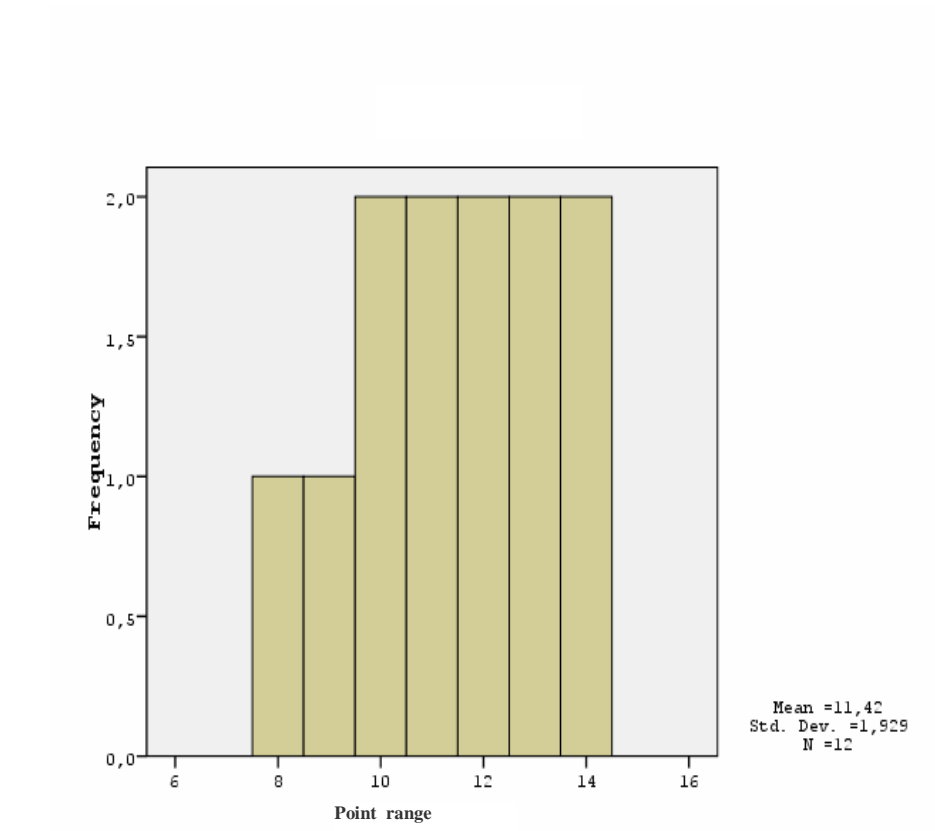
Reinforcement and positive criticism support and encourage language learning. Both groups of students' replies display that they are motivated and positively affected when they are appreciated or given constructive feedback. The table and the histograms draw out a significant result that learners are much more stimulated and motivated by the teacher's approval than by peer approval. Although the number of students who agree with the active role of friend appraisal in promotion of motivation ought not be underestimated, the learners regard teacher as a higher authority and greater source of motivation.

Table 6. Motivation caused by success and positive feedback

# QUESTIONS	QUESTIONS	TURKISH STUDENTS (number of students)					IRISH STUDENTS (number of students)				
		strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	Strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	Strongly agree
17	I pay more attention to my assignments when I receive good comments and constructive feedback	0	0	1	5	9	0	1	1	6	4
18	I try harder when my friends show appreciation of my work and assignments	0	0	4	5	6	0	1	6	4	1
19	I am much more motivated when my teacher praises me.	0	0	1	1	13	0	0	3	7	2



Graph 9. Motivation caused by success and positive feedback for Turkish students



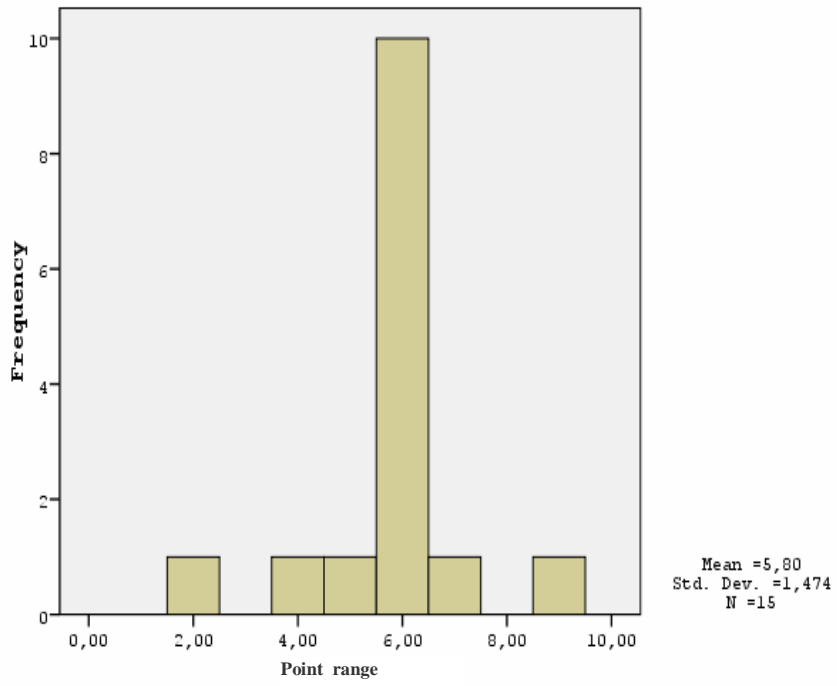
Graph 10. Motivation caused by success and positive feedback for Irish students

Fear of failure

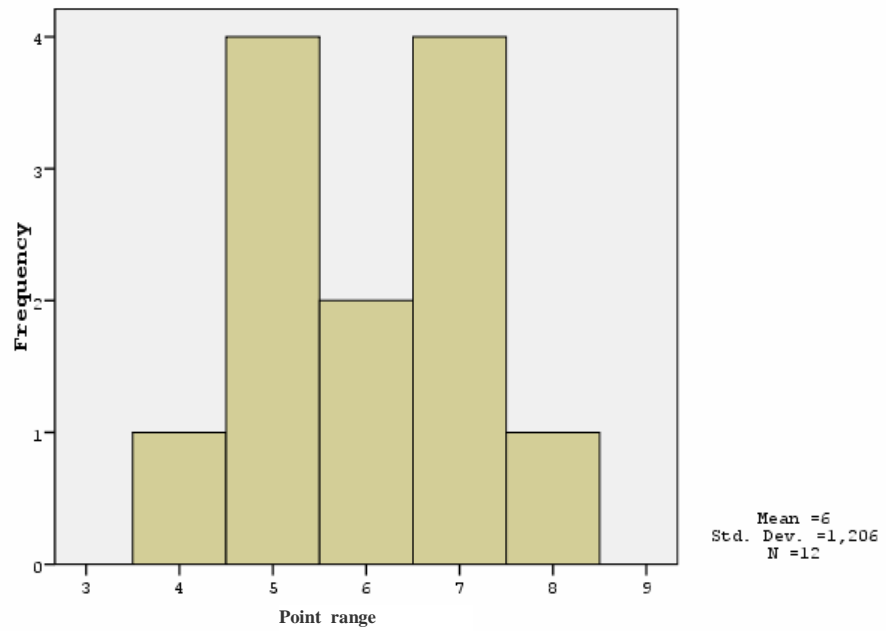
Fear of failure is a prominent factor affecting achievement in foreign language learning. The Turkish students did not agree with this belief. Ten Turkish students ranked ‘strongly disagree’ for this item. They claimed that a fear of failure is not a discouraging element for them. Irish students, on the contrary, partially accepted that a fear of failure might affect their success in foreign language learning by marking only two ‘strongly disagree’. Both groups agreed that they feel worried when they fall behind the subjects covered in the classroom.

Table 7. Fear of failure

# QUESTIONS	QUESTIONS	TURKISH STUDENTS (number of students)					IRISH STUDENTS (number of students)				
		strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	Strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	Strongly agree
20	I am not motivated as I do not believe I will be successful in English/German	10	4	0	1	0	2	7	2	1	0
21	When I fall behind in classroom tasks, I feel uncomfortable	1	0	2	2	10	0	0	4	6	2



Graph 11. Fear of Failure for Turkish students



Graph 12. Fear of Failure for Irish students

The second part of the pre-questionnaire was composed of open-ended questions designed to obtain the ideas and feelings of students about learning a foreign language, classroom activities, their performance in class and their learning experiences.

Students' perception of learning a foreign language

Students' beliefs about language learning, their attitudes towards language learning, their previous learning experiences and their objectives for learning all shape their learning process and their views about the study of language.

In our pre-questionnaire, several open-ended questions were asked to find out the students' general perception of the language learning process, their orientations beyond motivation and also previous learning experiences related to the scope of this study. Describing general student profiles at the very beginning of the study is helpful to recognize any attitudinal changes after the case study. Moreover, knowing the general attitudes of students is also beneficial to designing an implementation process. Therefore, students were encouraged to express their ideas about language learning as much as they wished.

The Irish Group

Since setting one's orientation is an important step to take before engaging in learning a foreign language, students described first and foremost the reasons for studying the particular language and their outlook on learning a language. Irish students explained their motivation for studying German in several ways, discussed below.

Seven students out of twelve stressed that they find German language and culture interesting and rich. Among them, one of the students made an interesting explanation for her interest in culture. She revealed that her interest in history captured her attention to learning German, whereas another girl liked the sound of the German language. Three students wrote that German was their first choice language to learn at the time of picking their academic subjects for the year. On the other hand, one of the students had studied German and another foreign language, French, before. She found German easier to learn and its culture more enjoyable than the previous languages she had

studied. Another student expressed that her interest in learning German arose during her visit to Germany to watch the 2006 World Cup.

Three Irish students had relatives living in Germany and one of them had actually lived in Germany for a short time. Therefore, they believed that learning German would help them communicate with their relatives over there.

Among all of the Irish students only one of them mentioned the necessity of learning a language for entry into college. She did not give any further reasons for deciding to study German but implied that she had to know at least one foreign language to be able to study in a post-secondary institution.

Students' answers indicated that a great many Irish students have an integrative motivation to learn German. They have a communicative purpose. They consider the main advantage integratively and view knowledge of German as necessary or helpful to learn more about the culture and to visit German-speaking countries some day. Only one of them sees German as an external necessity.

The students were also asked to reflect on their experiences of learning German; the assignments, classroom activities and their feeling about learning and speaking German. According to responses given from the Irish students, all Irish students find learning German enjoyable. However, seven out of twelve students explicitly stated that they found German complicated and difficult to learn although they found the learning process intriguing. The grammatical patterns and the vocabulary items were stated as the most challenging aspects of learning German.

When asked about their ideas concerning small projects in language learning, students were divided into two groups in terms of how they benefit from them. Six students mentioned that the projects they carried out helped them learn more vocabulary items, elaborate on how to structure sentences and increase their proficiency in various skills of German. IRE 11 expressed the difficulty as follows:

It would have been easier to learn German if I were living there and naturally picked it up. I find the grammar and sentence structure of German difficult but the projects help us improve it.

Unlike this group, the other six students think that the projects encourage them to research and to find out the interesting points about the German culture. According to

these students, they create an opportunity to explore different lifestyles and tradition outside. One of the students expressed that she became much more eager to learn German and to visit Germany as she found out more about the culture.

As stated in the analysis of the Likert questionnaire, all students were disappointed when they received a lower mark in an exam. Nonetheless, this does not discourage and demotivate them. They study more for the following exams to improve themselves. IRE 8 comments on this situation as follows:

Getting a low mark in an exam is just a reflection of how I have not applied myself. It does not upset me at all because I know I can do much better. I try harder next time to improve on my grade. I learn from my mistakes.

In regard to their discussion of the experience of keeping a folder covering their projects, students were asked whether they have ever kept their projects in a folder and formed a portfolio out of it. Eight students had kept folders before, whereas four of them had never created a folder composed of their works. Those who had kept a folder agreed upon the idea that it helped them study before exams. They felt more organized and had a chance to look over their assignments and projects to revise what they have done so far.

IRE 6:

I had a folder when I first started learning German. It helped me improve my German a lot. But I never kept one again. I think I should do it again.

The Turkish Group

The Turkish group is composed of fifteen students. Similarly they were asked to explain their objectives for studying English. A very different pattern emerged here. As their ultimate aims, eleven students out of fifteen stated that they were learning English to seek out better opportunities in college, to get a good job and to be competent in their university lives. Two of the students regard English as essential for traveling abroad and experiencing different cultures, whereas one of them found it necessary to live and study abroad. On the other hand, TR 15 came up with an interesting reason:

Turkey is a touristic country. Millions of people visit our country from all over the world so it is a shame if we do not speak English. I feel obliged to learn it to be able to communicate with the foreigners in Turkey.

The general pattern drawn from the responses of students was that they understood English to be a *lingua franca* but view the knowledge of English as a means of achieving goals rather than communication. Those who stated that they want to learn English to travel abroad implied that their aims were not intrinsically related to native-speaking people or culture. All students saw English language learning process as enjoyable and stressed its ‘usefulness’. Therefore, a clear instrumental motivation emerges from the responses of students. A majority of students’ instrumental motivation can be explained by several factors. Firstly, English is *a lingua franca*, an international language which is essential for communication, for keeping abreast of current events and recent developing technologies all over the world. Secondly, it is regarded as a *sine qua non* qualification to get a job in Turkey. Thirdly, it is obligatory for third level degree.

In the light of these, Turkish students’ motivational factors can be ranked from highest to the lowest:

1. to get a good job;
2. to be successful in college life;
3. to travel abroad and to know different cultures.

The Turkish group also displayed positive attitudes towards the projects carried out in English classes. Nine of them see the project work essential to revise and study before exams. They also stress that projects prepare them for exams; therefore, they generally pay attention to their assignments and carry them out diligently. Six students think that projects help them improve their English and learn new vocabulary more than revising. TR 6 reflected his ideas on projects as follows:

I really like preparing projects. It is fun to produce something. I think I do not know enough vocabulary in English. This really challenges me when I am speaking or reading something in English. Therefore, my primary aim in my projects is to improve my vocabulary. I believe that I achieve this purpose to a

great deal through the projects. However, I do not look over my projects once they are done. I know that I can learn more if I revise them but I find it boring to read over and over what I have done before.

Like the Irish group, the Turkish group stated that they are disappointed when they receive low grades. Thirteen students expressed, however, that they are not discouraged by low grades; on the contrary, they become more ambitious to improve their grades next time. TR 7 explains his ambition as follows:

English is an enjoyable course for me, I really like studying it. When I get lower grades in English, I try to find out the reason. I usually come up with the answer as a lack of concentration. I know I can do better when I concentrate. This upsets me but stimulates my desire at the same time. I become more ambitious. I know myself. I do better when I am ambitious.

One of them explicitly said that he is severely discouraged and does not feel like studying when he gets lower grades. TR 2 feels ashamed when he does badly in the exams, feels responsible to do well for his parents and hesitates to tell them his grade. This may indicate that TR 2 has an external learning pressure from his parents.

In relation to our scope of study, we also asked the students about their experience of keeping a folder. Twelve students had had a folder covering their assignments in various courses throughout their lives while three of them never had one. One of the students stated that he kept a folder for math class, but had never done so for his English course. Students were generally in agreement that keeping a folder made them organized and enabled them to study easily for the exams.

TR 9:

I first kept my folder when I was 13 years old in secondary school. I did lots of projects throughout the year but I only put the ones I liked in my folder because I wanted my folder to be special and fabulous. That really aroused my interest in English classes. I used to look over my projects from time to time and I was very proud of them. My grades were also high that year, because I was organized and working diligently.

TR 3:

I used to have a folder for the English class last year but it did not work for me. I just kept my projects in a file and never bothered to look over them. It was not any of any help to me.

TR 8:

I had a file composed of my assignments and projects in math class. It was really very helpful. I used to revise from assignments in my file and used to resolve the problems before the exams. I even used to go and check the formulas and rules from the assignments when I was confused. But I never had a dossier experience in an English course. I believe it will be helpful as well. First of all, you feel coordinated and planned for the course. Thus, you are likely to be more successful.

SECTION II

Professional, Peer and Self-Assessment

This section intends to demonstrate student attitudes towards professional, peer and self-assessment processes carried out through implementation of the ELP. To elicit the students' attitudes towards these three assessment types, the following tools were used: assessment forms and reflection sheets. The Irish students replied to the questions in English and the responses of the Turkish group were translated from Turkish to English by the researcher.

Students' perception of the Professional Assessment

The teacher assessment was designed to give feedback to learners on three points;

- a) Their linguistic skills such as the use of grammar, vocabulary, spelling punctuation.
- b) The layout and the style of the assignment
- c) The content of the assignment and the teacher's impressions of the learners' performances

After having read the teacher's assessment for each project students expressed their ideas and feelings on how the teacher assessment matched their expectations,

performance and how they felt about the feedback. The researcher read all the comments each learner made in his/her reflection sheets after each project, examined their answers throughout the study and compared them to the previous reflection sheets they had filled in to uncover whether there had been any changes in their thoughts. The same method was also carried out to clarify and present the students' attitudes towards the peer and self-assessment.

In the Likert-style pre-questionnaire, the students were also asked to express and evaluate their thoughts about the teacher assessment. The statement "I believe teachers assess our learning better than us" was agreed upon to a degree of seventy five percent by the Irish group. The Turkish group displayed eighty six percent agreement on this same statement. Ten students out of the fifteen Turkish students marked 'strongly agree' for this statement, whereas two out of twelve Irish learners said 'strongly agree', and six of them marked 'agree'. The responses indicate that their initial attitude elicited from the Likert-style questionnaire towards teacher-assessment did not change. They kept their idea that the teacher would assess their learning better than themselves and their peers. Both groups of students expressed that teacher assessment was reliable and preferential for them.

The Irish Group

The evaluative and descriptive comments of learners provided the researcher with the necessary data to conclude that all twelve students were generally satisfied with the teacher assessment. Each student expressed their positive attitudes towards teacher assessment throughout the study in their reflection papers. The general attitude displayed in their reflections was that the teacher's comments were significant, useful and supportive for their personal growth.

Only IRE H was a bit critical about the teacher assessment although her attitudes changed towards the assessment procedure at the end of the study.

IRE H:

I think teacher feedback is helpful. Although it discourages me sometimes, it shows me what I need to work on in my study of German. But I feel

disappointed when I see lots of corrections on my work. She also makes good and encouraging comments. (Reflection sheet 2).

I received lots of corrections but I am happy that the teacher was pleased with my assignment. She told me that I did better than the last time. (Reflection sheet 3).

She liked my assignment. I am pleased with my work and her comments. (Reflection sheet 4).

Each student showed a general pattern of satisfaction but they also came up with various essential comments on how the teacher assessment affected their motivation and development in foreign language. The analysis of students' responses illustrated that teacher assessment contributed to the development of Irish students in two ways;

- a) development of students' knowledge and linguistic skills of German
- b) promotion of motivation.

The following extracts taken from students' reflection papers are presented below:

IRE A:

It encouraged me as it showed me what I need to work on in my study of German.

IRE E:

It was good, I feel that I need to improve on certain things .e.g: capital letters on all nouns. I have improved my word order since the last assignment.

IRE F:

She helped me figure out the points I have to elaborate on. I hope to improve my German as much as possible.

IRE K:

I feel much better about the teacher's comments. I am going to work on my confidents.

IRE L:

The teacher feedback gives me clues on the points I have to work on. Thus, I know the points I should focus on when I am studying for exams. I learn through my mistakes.

We may conclude from the extracts that teacher assessment was beneficial to them in terms of developing their German and pointing out the weak points in their knowledge which they need to improve on. Learning through their mistakes can be viewed as an important outcome for the students in teacher assessment procedure. Many students are afraid of making mistakes and regard mistakes as something they should avoid. Therefore, learning through mistakes is a valuable experience for language learning.

IRE A:

I feel positive when I get good feedback from the teacher and it motivates me.

IRE F:

She is pleased with my work. I spend more time on studying German when teacher likes my project. I want to be a fluent German speaker.

IRE H:

It is nice to get positive feedback from the teacher. I feel like I am achieving it.

IRE L:

I feel positive when I get good feedback from the teacher and it motivates me.

It can be concluded that teacher feedback significantly helped to increase motivation when they get positive feedback. It can be inferred that the feedback also created an overall improved learning atmosphere, encouraging students to overcome learning obstacles through a significant increase in motivation.

The Turkish Group

The Turkish participants, who expressed a stronger belief in better assessment of teachers than Irish students did, showed a commitment to teacher's assessment in their comments. Not a single student made contradictory comments in their reflection papers. As with the Irish students, The Turkish students were also pleased with teacher assessment. Neither of the groups made any criticisms about teacher assessment; on the contrary, one student wished the teacher had been a bit more critical when assessing him. They also did not express any dislike of the professional assessment.

As a result of response analysis of Turkish students, it was evident that teacher assessment contributed to development of two patterns among Turkish students:

- a) development of knowledge and linguistic skills of English
- b) promotion of motivation.

With the exception of TR N, none of the students explicitly talked about motivation in their impressions of the teacher's feedback. But they implied the motivational effect of teacher assessment by expressing that the feedback made them work harder and produce better projects.

TR N:

The teacher's feedback was encouraging. Each time I got feedback from her, I went home and studied my project again. She told me that I was improving. I felt more motivated each time she praised me.

Students stressed the idea that teacher assessment served as an effective tool to improve English. They were able to identify the problems in their assignments and concentrate on specific aspects of their work which needed to be developed. Five out of fifteen students expressed that they trusted teacher's assessment and that getting feedback from a reliable source was significant for their language study.

TR D:

I think the teacher tried to give positive feedback not to discourage me while assessing my project. I would not have minded if she had criticized me. I think I could have improved better if she had pointed out more mistakes. Improving my English is very important to me and, she helps me find out my weaknesses.

TR G:

In the light of her comments, I developed my grammar. I am more competent in the use of correct tenses. I can also use the correct form of the verbs.

TR K:

I liked the teacher assessment part of this study. It was organized. I easily found out the grammar points I need to study. If you want to improve your English, you have to take the teacher's assessment seriously.

One of the students mentioned that teacher assessment was far more important for her than any other feedback she received. She explicitly stated she mostly benefited from this particular feedback and found it the most 'accurate and objective' feedback.

TR B:

Of all the feedback I received, the teacher's feedback was the most beneficial to me. Peer and self-assessment were beneficial as well but I think the teacher's assessment is the most accurate one you can trust. Because she knows better than us and can easily see what we need. She tells us just what we need to develop.

The essence of teacher feedback for Turkish students can be derived from the extracts above. The reason why teacher assessment was so important for them might be that a common aim of all the Turkish students was to improve their English study. This results from the importance of being a fluent English speaker in Turkey.

Students' perception of Peer-Assessment

Peer assessment has the following stated aims:

- a) Helping his/her peer find the strengths and weaknesses of his/her peer.
- b) Making suggestions to alter or improve in following assignments.
- c) Expressing students' likes in their partner's project.

Peer assessment was a mutual and reflective process for both sides. It was designed in a way to help the student's assigned peer find out the student's strengths and weaknesses and to explore what the student lacks or needs to develop. Not only do learners direct their partner but also benefit and learn through their projects.

Unlike the teacher assessment, the students were not directed to correct their friends' mistakes but just to express their opinions about his work to enrich the assessment procedure with different expressions, opinions other than those provided by teacher and the student him/herself. The basic aim of this was to offer different and creative ideas to each other. Another reason why students did not comment on their grammar was that good students might evaluate better than the weak students. This might have created an unfair situation for those who received poor feedback.

Neither the Turkish nor Irish students had any previous experience in peer assessment. Therefore, a workshop was given to them demonstrating how to make appropriate peer-assessment before the study began.

The Irish Group

Peer-assessment was challenging for the Irish students as they had no similar experience before. Interesting comments and reflections were made on peer assessment. When analyzing the responses of learners, I realized that I had to make a clear distinction in interpreting the answers of those who liked to be assessed and those who avoided peer assessment. For example, IRE H and L expressed that they were reluctant to write negative feedback to their partner as not to jeopardize their friendship and not to sound rude. For this reason, they wrote down that their feedback was not realistic at all and merely focused on pointing out the strengths of their friends, neglecting their weak points.

IRE H:

I was not comfortable with peer assessment. I did not want to write anything negative not to sound rude. It would have been better for her if I had done some criticism. I just did not want my friend to feel bad and get mad at me.

IRE L:

Assessing my friend is difficult for me. I avoided negative feedback as much as possible as I did not want to hurt her feelings and discourage her. I did not want her to take offence of my comments. I generally mentioned the points she was keen on...

IRE H and IRE L expressed their fear of hurting their friends. But they also showed an understanding that peer-assessment is beneficial if carried out properly. When I analyzed the reflection sheets to get their ideas of being assessed, I came up with positive reactions about being assessed. Although they were reluctant to talk about assessing their friends, they were pleased to be assessed and were open to the comments they received.

IRE H:

She mentioned different things that I would hardly think of. It was a good assessment. I feel good about it. It is nice to get different views and ideas about your work. It is important for my development. I can produce better projects and be more creative.

IRE L:

Her comments are helpful to prepare better assignments. I will take her feedback into consideration to prepare a better one next time. (Reflection sheet 1)

I think her feedbacks are very big help. I improve my assignments and create something new each time. (Reflection sheet 3)

Taking the comments of the students above into account, I have divided students' views of peer-assessment into two: their feelings of being assessed and their feelings of assessing others. All students reported their ideas of being assessed but some of them did not comment on their feelings of assessing.

Four students talked about their assessing experience and they were satisfied with the assessing process. They felt responsibility for their friends while assessing them and tried to give them accurate and effective feedback. A great many of them were happy to read projects other than their own and had a chance to see the perspectives and abilities of other students. Assessing their partners contributed to their knowledge of German as well. This created a fruitful atmosphere where they learned from each other.

IRE B:

I like to see my friend get good feedback. I learn from her mistakes, too.

IRE F:

Assessing my friend was fun. I also learned from her projects. For example, she researched on different aspects of 'Umwelt'. After reading hers, I realized that I could have done better. Her grammar is perfect because she lived in Germany for a while. I also learned a couple of phrases from her. I tried to give her different feedback each time.

IRE I:

I was honest and truthful when I was giving her feedback. I think it has been helpful to her because she got better in each assignment.

IRE J:

I am not sure whether my comments were helpful to her but I liked reading her assignments. It was useful. I learned new things about German culture.

Their views about being assessed indicate that they had a pleasant and rewarding experience. They see the main advantage of peer assessment as benefiting from different views. The Irish students showed sixty one percentage of agreement to the statement 'I try harder when my friends show appreciation of my work and assignments'. Students were generally satisfied with being assessed and some of them implied that it was good in terms of learning from each other and engaging in different ideas. Only one of the students stated that she was skeptical whether her friend was honest in her feedback.

IRE A:

My friends' assessment encouraged me as she pointed out my mistakes...My learning, performance improved after the three assessments as I knew more vocabulary and my grammar got better.

IRE B:

My friend got a higher grade than me which helped me to understand where I went wrong. I will take her recommendations more seriously next time.

IRE C:

I think they are very big help as your peer's opinions tend to mean more....It is very useful and help you improve.

IRE F:

I generally received positive comments but I was pleased with the negative feedback. Sometimes she let me see the points that the teacher did not mention. It is nice to get evaluation from different people. You see various points of views. It is the advantage of peer assessment. It encouraged me.

IRE G:

I was pleased although I am not sure if it was true.

IRE K:

I think they are very good feedbacks. She lets me know what area I have to pay attention to...It shows my strengths and weaknesses.

It can be concluded that peer assessment contributed to the development of students in two ways: allowing them to engage in different perspectives and to receive guidance in finding out their weaknesses and strengths.

The Turkish Group

I have made the same distinction in the analysis of peer-assessment perceptions of Turkish students. TR D was the only student who found peer assessment unnecessary and time consuming. She neither fancied assessing her peer nor getting feedback. She stated that peer assessment was boring and that she did not want to express her thoughts about her friends. She gave her friend general comments about her work and avoided mentioning her own thoughts and recommendations. Similarly, she claimed that being assessed did not change the manner in which she approached her assignments or improve her work and in general she was reluctant to participate in the peer-assessment.

The rest of the students however showed an approval of peer assessment by their comments. Three of them found giving feedback to their peers interesting and were happy to share their ideas with them. One of them defined the peer assessment process as 'a valuable activity'. Not many students commented on their attitudes of assessing. They talked about being honest and critical about their friends' assignments. One of the students explained his critical attitude of the peer assessment, stressing that his friend needs to recognize her weak points as well as her strengths in order to help her improve her English and that praising her will not help her at all.

Several extracts are provided below to demonstrate how these students felt about assessing each other.

TR F:

I gave my friend accurate feedback and criticized her sometimes but not so severely. I just wanted to help her.

TR J:

I liked my friend's projects; she is always good at preparing nice homework. I took her projects as samples to me. I was more interested in her projects than assessing her. I tried to help her but she is always keen on creating nice things so I could not say many things about her assignments.

TR O:

It was an invaluable activity for me. That was the first time I assessed someone. It was a nice experience. I felt happy that she read my comments, took them seriously and paid attention to them in the next assignments.

Turkish students had positive attitudes towards being assessed. Turkish students showed seventy two percent agreement on the statement 'I try harder when my friends show appreciation of my work and assignments'. Six students marked 'strongly agree' for this statement. Six Turkish students talked about being motivated and encouraged after having received feedback from their peers. Three of them stated at the end of the study that peer assessment had had a positive impact on their performance and they had witnessed how much they had improved since the first assignment. One of them talked about 'confidence'. Her self-confidence improved when she got a positive feedback from her friend. The responses below and some other responses from students reveal that their friends helped them see their progress and encouraged them to start comparing their assignments with the previous ones. This is rather a significant development, since helping students to become autonomous learners who can monitor their own development was one of the ultimate aims of this study.

TR F:

Getting feedback from someone different, other than teacher, is useful. She can sometimes realize something that I could not. I do better projects each time.

TR J:

I feel more confident when I get different and positive feedback from my friend. She is reflecting different ideas that I could think of. I pick each of them and put them into my next assignments.

TR L:

I felt more motivated when my friend praised my work. I was not discouraged when she criticized me. She tried to show me my mistakes and my weak points. I can say that it greatly affected my performance.

TR O:

I tried to do my best to improve my assignments after getting her feedback. I think I achieved it. I liked my assignment more than the previous one. I proved what I can do if I listen to other people's ideas.

The responses of students reveal that the peer assessments were useful to them in terms of developing awareness of various points of views and seeing their development.

Students' perception of self-assessment

The self-assessment form was designed to direct learners

- a) to find out their weaknesses and strengths
- b) to reflect on their learning
- c) to monitor their own progress
- d) and to find out their needs in foreign language learning process.

The ultimate aim of self-assessment was to help students gain the ability to monitor their own development and create learners who can apply a critical eye to their learning process.

Both groups of students had little experience in self-assessment. Five Irish students had done self-assessment before, whereas six Turkish students had been involved in self-assessment procedure in previous years.

The Irish Group

All Irish students were positive about the self-assessment. The majority of them liked self-assessment and found it enjoyable. None expressed negative attitudes towards this aspect of the study. Through out the study, I can say that self-assessment was the easiest task for them; none of the students had difficulty assessing their own performance and they were very keen on reflecting on their work. The reason for this might be that students were guided by both the teacher and peer assessments and were asked to reflect on their performance afterwards. The responses of the students and the way they assessed themselves demonstrates that self-assessment helped the students see their progress and be aware of their needs.

IRE A:

I feel positive when I try to reach a high standard in my work and get rewarded for it ... It makes me see what I am good at and my strong points.

IRE D:

I thought it was good but it could have been better...But there are certain areas I need to improve on.

IRE E:

I feel I have improved a lot since my last two assignments because of this feedback.

IRE F:

It is nice to reflect on my learning. I can not be objective but my friend's and teacher's assessment guide me a lot so I can more or less see what I need to study. I also see how much I progressed as I look back.

IRE L:

I realized that I have to improve on my spelling and punctuation. I can figure out what I need to work on. I am also aware of my strengths.

The Turkish Group

The Turkish students expressed mixed feeling towards the self-assessment. They exhibited different responses. Not so many students displayed positive attitudes

towards self-assessment. The interesting point about the Turkish students was that four of them underestimated their performance. The comments they made for the guiding self-assessment questions revealed that their feeling of achievement were below their expectations. They generally complained about the fact that they could have done better. Their dissatisfaction was easily recognizable through the comments they made for the self-assessing questions.

Seven of them were happy to do self-assessment whereas four students were hesitant to talk about their feelings of self-assessment. Although they carried out the self-assessment process and responded to all the questions, they did not explicitly reveal their ideas. Their self-assessments display that they were reluctant to complete it. However, they did not imply a dislike of self-assessment.

Students who enjoyed the assessment emphasized that they became more aware of their needs. They became more active and critical in their learning process. They had a chance to see their progress.

Sample example extracts of students are presented below:

TR C:

Self-assessment is a kind of criticizing your performance and being objective on your performance. It helps me see my mistakes. Especially after reading my friend's projects, I can easily see what I need to do next time. I think I have improved myself so far.

TR G:

I can see that I have certainly improved since my first assignment but I still think that my projects are not any better. I could have been better.

TR J:

I can easily evaluate myself because I know what I need to improve. My writing has improved; I can make complicated sentences and use rich vocabulary in my projects. Self-assessment is a kind of reflection of my abilities and improvement.

Comparison of Professional, Peer and Self-assessments among two groups

The attitudes and general outlooks of Irish and Turkish students towards different assessments have been presented above. Analysis of students' responses reveals different and similar features about their feelings of assessments. The results illustrate that both groups of students benefited mostly from the professional assessment. The professional assessment helped them improve their knowledge of the target language and also strengthened the intensity of their motivation. The discriminating role of professional assessment between two groups was that Turkish students' answers and comments display a strong trust in the assessment of teacher. They regard the teacher as 'the most accurate' source of assessment. However, such a conclusion and implication can not be inferred from the Irish students. On the contrary, one of the students was a bit critical about the teacher assessment at the every beginning.

Peer assessment also created similar efficacy for both groups, although their attitudes slightly differed. Irish students were generally happy with peer assessment with the exception of two students who were worried about the friendship relationships. However, it was clear that they learned from each other and were pleased to get feedback from different perspectives. They also greatly benefited from the peer assessments as they guided them to find their weak and strong points, allowing them to become more aware of their learning processes and be alert learners. The only notable similarity between Turkish and Irish students' attitudes to peer assessment was the fact that their friends were getting feedback from different sources. The Turkish students emphasized how much they were motivated after receiving their friends' feedback. Feedback also allowed them to see their progress.

Student doubts about peer assessment and avoidance of criticizing each other mostly resulted from the fact that it was the first peer assessing experience for them. It has been beneficial for them but still some students were a bit uncomfortable about expressing their thoughts.

The most interesting attitudes were drawn out from self-assessment. Both groups showed only a slight similarity in assessing themselves. All twelve Irish students found the self-assessments quite beneficial in terms of becoming autonomous learners who are aware of their learning needs, whereas Turkish students generally expressed a dissatisfaction of their work in their self-assessment procedures. The Turkish learners

avoided expressing their feelings about this process. Seven out of fifteen students were pleased with self-assessment, the rest of them tended to be neutral. Some displayed a lack of confidence while making comments on their work and regarded their performance as below their expectations and capabilities. The similar feature shared by two groups was that the students who liked self-assessment gained an insight to self-regulated learning. They augmented and integrated their strengths and needs in the learning process. Still, the Irish learners acquired much more learner autonomy than Turkish students did.

SECTION III

Students' Perception of Dossier Experience

After having completed the study, students were administered a post-questionnaire composed of two parts; open-ended questions and an essay. The questionnaire aimed at finding out students' ideas, thoughts and reflections about the dossier component of the ELP. All students found the ELP implementation beneficial and were positive about the ELP experience. Only two Turkish and two Irish students criticized the ELP implementation somewhat negatively. They emphasized a few drawbacks that partially prevented them from enjoying the study. One Turkish student did not form a dossier covering all his projects although he did the assignments. However, he filled in the assessment forms and reflection papers regularly each week. In spite of his failure to keep a dossier, he was pleased to participate to the ELP study as he recognized that it could have been beneficial if he kept one.

Having read the responses of students to the open-ended questions and their essays in the post-questionnaire, I identified some common patterns between the Irish and Turkish students. The notable similarities between two groups can be categorized as:

- a) an enhanced proficiency in German/English
- b) self-confidence in the foreign language.
- c) promotion of motivation
- d) discipline

Enhancing German/English proficiency

The analysis of the responses pointed out that keeping a dossier helped them improve their foreign language both in terms of linguistic skills such as grammar, writing or vocabulary and expanded their knowledge of foreign language culture. They mentioned that they learned through their mistakes but mostly learned from their peers' assignments.

The most frequently mentioned theme was vocabulary. They learned a wide range of new words and tried to use them again. Irish students in particular stressed that their grammar improved. In the previous section, I mentioned that German grammar was challenging for them. They noted that they could construct complicated sentences better after having completed the study. Similarly, Turkish learners made good progress in written expressions and grammatical patterns. A small minority spoke about an increased knowledge of the target language culture.

Although majority mentioned grammatical knowledge, there were two Turkish students who stated that communication skills had improved more than other areas of their language knowledge. In conclusion, students demonstrated that they realized the aim of the nature of language learning by displaying a high self-efficacy through keeping a dossier.

Below are displayed the very wide range of interesting responses about the effect of a keeping dossier on their language skills.

IRE I:

I have improved a lot in German class. I have focused more on my grammar and my vocabulary.

IRE III:

Doing the ELP has helped me with my German studies. It made me look my knowledge about German culture so it has opened my eyes to new, interesting things about Germany.

IRE VI:

'.....My German written work improved and I have a wider vocabulary now. I find it easier to construct sentences and write long questions, etc. I find German

more enjoyable now. I find class tests easier and we probably did more with the study than we would have anyway in class.’

IRE XII:

I can say that this study helped me progress more. I can make more complicated and long sentences. I can use rich vocabulary in my assignments. I can see how much I progressed. I can even sometimes understand some German newspapers’ headlines. I was not that much good at German last year and realized how much I developed my written German. Now, I can also easily understand it though we did not practice so often. I think that’s because I have a wider vocabulary now.

TR II:

I am far better in grammar now. I also learned new things about the cultural stuff. Not only my assignments but also my friends’ assignments help me enhance my English. I am happy to see my progress.

TR IV:

Speaking English is very difficult for me. I know enough grammar and vocabulary but I can make simple sentences. I enhanced my vocabulary and I tried to use the items I learned in my other assignments. It kind of helped my spoken English but did not improve it so much.

Responses indicate that students were alert during the ELP process and tried to develop their level of proficiency in the foreign language. However, they exhibit a lower tendency toward developing their cultural knowledge of English/German.

Self-Confidence in the Foreign Language

There were not any questions associated with exploring the self-confidence of learners but a great many students mentioned this theme in their essays. Both groups pointed out that the dossier alleviated some of the nervousness associated with the language learning process. This might be explained by the fact that students had a chance to discover their weaknesses, strengths and their needs through the assessments. Discovering their positive strengths gave them the sense of competence and achievement, helping to dispel some of the factors that threaten individuals’ self-esteem. They also mentioned the feeling of success they experienced in their essays.

Irish students mainly associated their self-confidence with speaking German, whereas Turkish students did not precisely specify a particular skill.

Some Irish students explained the increase in self-confidence in their ability in language learning as a consequence of monitoring their own development. In other words, seeing what they could achieve and produce raised their confidence. On the other hand, Turkish students barely stressed that they were at ease and were feeling secure about learning a foreign language. They discussed instead a sense of achievement when talking about self-confidence.

IRE I:

I am more confident now when I speak out because I know what my teacher is asking me and also I know what to answer.

IRE VIII:

I am more confident in German classes and I did not resent learning in class speaking out loud.

IRE III:

...Each assignment felt like an accomplishment as I finished them. My German has improved I feel. I can speak about a wider range of topic such as the ones we researched.

IRE IV:

I saw how much I developed in each assignment. I saw what I can do and became aware of my abilities. I started to feel that I was achieving and progressing. As I saw my progress, I took my assignment more seriously. I am feeling more confident now. I feel like I can accomplish any task in German.

TR III:

... My teacher's feedback helped me a lot. I tried to do my best and my friend's assessment helped me see my weaknesses and strengths. As I achieved, I became more confident. I tried to do my best in my last assignment to see what I can do.

TR V:

...At first, I did not like my assignment. My first assignment was very simple. I even did not want to hand it in to the teacher. Later on, I improved it. Assessments were useful. They told me what I should do and what I should

avoid. In my third assignment, I had a feeling of success. My grades also increased after the third assignment. I felt a bit more confident.’

The analysis of students’ answers seems to suggest that students’ self confidence can be interpreted as a natural consequence of the achievement. Similarly, they also indicate a raising of awareness towards their learning process.

Promotion of motivation

Upon analyzing students’ reflections on the study, I concluded that ‘the dossier’ was a new step for them. They clearly noted that they went through significant changes in concentrating on their language study in the long-term. Students usually discussed how traditional methods or conventional classroom practices ruined their interest. For this reason, they were less actively engaged in learning a foreign language. The dossier implementation which is accompanied by self, peer and professional assessments throughout the study was a new experience for them. Therefore a great number of the students stressed that ‘the dossier’ influenced their degree of involvement in the language learning process. They regarded this implementation as an interesting approach that encouraged their interest in the study of language. Another reason why students called their attention to the dossier study was that it was an ongoing activity with regular feedback constructs in an effort to help students develop their proficiency. Students nurtured positive emotions towards learning the language, as they perceived keeping a dossier to be a worthwhile task supported by the regular assessments. Therefore, there was a long-term motivation for the students concerning the language learning process, a motivation which continued to engage them in their studies and consequently motivated them further.

The assigned ELP topics were also exam-focused. During the ELP implementation, students had several exams and quizzes. These quizzes and exams were mostly related to the topics covered in their projects. Therefore, students were also encouraged to carry out organized and neat projects to do well in the exams. Two Irish students mentioned that being responsible for the ELP topics in exams fostered their desire to study, whereas many Turkish students put this forward as a reason of motivation. It can be concluded that the Turkish learners were motivated to study for exams.

Consequently, the Turkish students showed a higher instrumental level of motivation than the Irish students did.

Below are some excerpts from students' questionnaires:

IRE III:

I found that because we had assignments to present, it motivated me to get it done before the deadline, not leaving it always to the last minute where it would be rushed.... Because we ourselves had to research the topics, I found that I worked a lot harder, put a lot more effort into completing my work.

IRE VII:

...The teachers and peers' evaluation showed me my weak points. I feel more motivated to do German work. It has changed my whole attitude towards German.

IRE VIII:

The ELP was a good idea. The assessments were enjoyable and it was not all pressured and you could write what you wanted and use your own ideas. It helped to motivate you because they were projects and activities, no exams or tests.

IRE XII:

I studied from my assignments because the teacher asked similar things in exams. I tried to prepare neat and interesting my assignments to get good marks. This kind of motivated me.

TR III:

The ELP is new for me; I have never tried it before. I really liked it. It kept me motivated and I focused on the language study and assessments. It was useful for exams as well. We were responsible for the same topics in the exams.

TR V :

I liked this study. I worked diligently because my friends and my teacher were going to see my assignment. It motivated me to be creative and work harder.

The students' extracts indicate that ELP enhanced their motivation and it was a source of long-term motivation in language learning. The Turkish students were instrumentally

motivated. On the other hand, Irish students were eager to learn German regardless of exam concerns.

Discipline

Discipline was one of the most frequently mentioned patterns in the questionnaires. Learners' opinions about keeping the dossier composed of their work reveal that most of them became more organized during this study. Many students mentioned the interplay between being organized and success. Keeping their assignment in the dossier helped them become more disciplined learners in the language study and this increased their success. Their comments also indicated that they drew an in-depth insight to achievement through the dossier.

Regarding to the analysis of responses, I concluded that being organized and keeping the assignments neatly in a folder also influenced their studying habits. Some students stated that they started revising their work to see what they had done so far.

When they were asked whether they would like to show their assignments in a folder, four Irish and twelve Turkish students were eager to share their assignments. With regard to questions asking whether the dossier enabled them to see their progress, except for one Irish student, all students exhibited positive answers.

Although some students found it a challenge to keep the dossier and being disciplined, they were aware that it was helpful to them.

IRE VI:

It taught me to be more organized. It made our class do all the assignments on time. It made us want to do more German as we enjoyed doing the class work for it. I learned that I could learn German easier than I expected.

IRE IX:

...I became more organized with my folder. My folder allowed me to see my progress as I went along.

IRE X:

It hasn't changed my attitude; it has just made it cleaner and easier to revise from.

IRE XII:

I kept all my assignment together and became more organized. I know that I could revise them any time I wanted and see how much I was doing. Owning such a folder was also good for studying exams. I got better grades this term.

TR IX:

The ELP helped me a lot with my study of English. Being organized and neat increased my achievement in English. I partially eradicated my negative feelings about learning English.

TR X:

I could not put all my projects in the dossier. I lost some of them but at least I did my best and tried to be as organized and disciplined as I could be. It was a good start for me.

TR XII:

Thanks to my dossier, I studied diligently and regularly this term. In return for, I got higher grades. I learned that I can do better if I am an organized student.

As students answer indicate, students became more disciplined in their studies which led them to experience the feeling of success. They also picked up new study habits. None of the students complained about forming the dossier. Only IRE VII complained about the time the study took:

The only thing I disliked about doing this project is that the amount of the time it took up; but in the end it was worth it.

Drawbacks of the dossier

The Turkish students' attitude towards keeping the dossier as revealed by the students in the current study is similar to that of the Irish students. They all shared the same belief: keeping dossier is helpful. They demonstrated positive reactions and indicated that the dossier component of the ELP was a worthwhile endeavour and experience for them. Students also mentioned the problematic aspect of the dossier and the drawbacks they faced. Two Irish students and two Turkish students reported a number of disadvantages.

Three students, two Irish students and one Turkish student, regarded the choice of topic as a constraint. Since the topics were assigned by the teachers, they had no choice over the task. They sometimes found this an obstacle for their projects as they were not interested in the topic. Instead they would have liked to research and prepare a project on a subject of their choice or would have preferred to be provided with two or three choices to pick from. Although students did not mention how this affected their projects or their performance, offering students a selection of tasks would be an effective way to develop their confidence and to increase their intrinsic motivation (Stipek,1998).

One Turkish student mentioned the difficulty of keeping an organized folder covering all his assignments with their attached assessment papers together. Therefore, he found the dossier component a laborious task and did not keep one.

With regard to the question ‘What challenged you in this study?’, one frequently mentioned disadvantage by Irish students was the difficulty of researching, whereas the Turkish students generally talked about the difficulty of keeping the dossier and being organized.

IRE IV:

The only negative thing I can say about this study is the choice of topics. We could have chosen the topics that interest us. The topics the teacher assigned were ok but some of them were boring so I found it difficult to prepare a project on something that I am not interested in.

IRE XII:

The topics we studied on were not interesting for me all the time so it would have been better if we were allowed to write on anything we want. For example, I found the ‘umwelt’ so boring and I do not think my assignment was well-organized and interesting.

TR III

We did research on the topics assigned by the teacher. They were not interesting at all. Getting feedback was good but the topics just did not capture my interest. But they were useful topics that we can use in daily English conversations.

Students' perception of Continuing keeping the dossier

In an effort to uncover how the dossier affected the students' studying habits, I analyzed the responses of students to get their ideas about continuing to keep a dossier. None of the learners responded negatively to this idea. Every student agreed on continuing keeping the portfolio. The only student who did not form the dossier did not comment on this question. The students agreed upon the benefits of owning a dossier covering their work and explained their reasons as follows:

IRE II:

I will continue so my work will stay neat and not get lost.

IRE VII:

Yes, I would like to continue keeping it because I think it will help me a lot on my written work, grammar, etc.

IRE XII:

I will definitely continue. I became more organized and the folder was helpful for my studies, especially studying for exams.

TR VI:

Yes, because I believe that I will be more successful if I file them.

TR VII:

I will continue keeping it. It helped me get higher marks from the exams and increased my success. Moreover, it can also be helpful for my future projects.

With regard to the question whether they would recommend the dossier to the other students at their school, all the students gave positive replies. Only one student avoided making any comments as he did not own one throughout the study. They also explained their reasons by outlining the benefits they observed and experienced.

IRE IV:

I think every student should own a folder for their language studies because you can look over your studies whenever you want. I will keep this dossier as long as I learn German. I am sure I will need them if I want to do similar studies next year.

IRE VII:

Yes, I would recommend them because I feel it helps you a lot with the language and subject.

IRE XII:

Yes, I would. They should keep their studies in a folder if they want to be more successful and organized. I liked the way it helped me.

TR I:

Yes. They might be more successful as I did.

TR III:

I would recommend them. It requires attention, time and care but it helps success as well. Being organized is good for language study because you often need to go back and check your studies to develop your English.

TR X:

I would recommend them. They can look the things they forget and check the information they need whenever they want.

Conclusion

The findings have been presented in three sections in this chapter. Based on qualitative analysis, the first section presented the learner and their perception of foreign language study, the second section focused on the students' perceptions of assessments and the last section discussed the ideas of the students' dossier experience.

The findings described what Turkish and Irish foreign language learners think about the dossier component of the ELP. According to data results, the dossier has proved to be effective in increasing students' motivation, confidence and achievement in foreign language. It promoted positive attitudes towards learning. The common benefits of the dossier have been elicited and mentioned by both group of learners who each have different socio-cultural backgrounds. The learners exhibited very few negative ideas concerning the use of the dossier and displayed more similarities about the positive effects of the dossier on their learning.

In the next chapter, the data findings will be discussed within the context of relevant literature.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION of the RESULTS

Introduction

Given the scope of research presented in this study, this chapter will analyze and discuss in depth qualitative data within the educational literature. The responses freely written by students gave a more detailed picture for the discussion. The discussion will cover the themes and dimensions underlying in students' comments. A few directions for future research will be suggested.

The value and impact of Peer assessment on students learning process

In general, students were very positive about peer assessment. Both Irish and Turkish students were enthusiastic to read and compare their work with the projects of other students. The problematic aspects experienced by Irish students of peer assessment were the critical activity and being objective towards their peer work. Two Irish students avoided negative feedback for fear of hurting their friends' feelings and one of them was skeptical whether his friend's assessment was accurate. On the other hand, one Turkish student was not satisfied with the peer assessment process and found it time consuming. These results correspond to the findings of previous research carried out by Hanrahan & Isaacs (2001), Pope (2001) and Brew (1999). Brew (1999) highlights the drawbacks of peer assessment in his study and suggests that peer assessment may cause fear of hurting each other's feelings while marking each other. Hanrahan & Isaacs (2001) and Pope (2001) mentioned the stress and discomfort students experienced when their piece of work was being evaluated by their peers in their studies.

None of the students was familiar with the peer-assessment procedure, therefore; I arranged a training session and explained the benefits of the peer assessment and the notions they should take into account during the assessment process. In the available literature, it has also been pointed out that peer assessment needs time and preparation. A workshop given on the assessments process, focusing on the assessment skills, potential benefits, outcomes, and limitations, will increase the efficiency of self-

assessment, dispel the ambiguities in students' mind and enhance the learning to be obtained from the peer assessment (Vu & Alba ,2007; Brew, 1999; Boud et al. 2001). Having analyzed the students' responses, the peer assessment differed slightly from the other assessments in the way it contributed to the students' learning process. Both groups of students agree on the idea that they learned from each other and were engaged in different ideas and views. In relation to this impact on students, Vu & Alba (2007) came up with the same results where students learned through peer assessment and peer projects.

A further benefit mentioned by both groups of learners was monitoring their progress. A great many students Irish and Turkish learners emphasized that their peers' comments and feedback, allowing them see how much they had improved and in what terms they had developed their language study. A previous study carried out by Boud (1995) also revealed similar results. As in our case, Boud (1995) and Hawk & Shah (2007) all indicated that formative peer assessment especially help students to reflect upon the whole process of learning, to develop independence and to improve performance. Boud (1995) indicates that peer assessment helps students develop their autonomy in learning and see their progress. As the previous research of Van den berg (2006) pointed out in his study, students become efficient and produce better work when they engage in the peer assessment process. The replies of students reveal that both Irish and Turkish learners were encouraged to produce better and creative projects each time. They were prompted to display better and higher quality of performance through peer feedback. The responses of students also indicated that since they were aware of their learning needs, they took responsibilities; tried to improve their weaknesses in each assignment and gained insight into their performances. Many scholars stated this outcome among the potential benefits of peer assessment (Topping, 1996 cited in Vickerman, 2008; Race, 1998 cited in Kim 2008; Laverick, 2007).

The notable discriminating effect on peer assessment on Irish and Turkish learners was the notion of motivation. Six Turkish students explicitly stated that the positive comments were a source of motivation for them. On the other hand, Irish students did not talk about the effect of motivation on their learning explicitly. But it can be inferred that they had an increase in their level of motivation as they were eager to improve their German and produce better assignments .The research of Ballantyne, Hughes, and Mylonas (2002) supports this finding. Ballantyne et al. (2002) reveal the value and

impact of peer feedback on students' motivation cannot be underestimated. As a consequence of their research, they noted that peer and self-assessment both help students to understand their work, increase their level of knowledge and motivation. Furthermore, their findings also suggest increased responsibility for monitoring their learning.

Moreover, two Irish students were reluctant to give feedback to their friends because they did not want to be overly critical. Lindblom et al. (2006) found out the same attitudes about peer assessments in his study of self, peer and professional assessment. The participants of their study found the peer assessment difficult in terms of evaluating their friends. Their major concern was their friendship with the students involved and they were not eager to come up with critical comments that might hurt their friends. Therefore, the students' feedback focused on the technical aspects such as grammatical patterns or vocabulary rather than the content of the project.

The value and impact of self-assessment on students' learning process

Unlike peer-assessment, a number of students from both groups of learners had participated in self-assessment experience before. Still, not to place any of the students in a disadvantaged position, I organized a session where we talked on how to conduct a self-assessment so that they could improve on their own assessment (Harris, 1997). Turkish students found the self-assessment process difficult and were not eager to talk about that. Although almost half of the students, seven out of fifteen, found this experience enjoyable, the rest of them did not explicitly talk about their feelings. Four Turkish students underestimated their performance and noted that they were not pleased with the quality of their performance. This finding might be explained by the same research results of Blanche (1988) and Yasmashita (1996, cited in Brown & Hudson, 1998). Their research reveals that self-assessment may cause dissatisfaction and an underestimation of their performances among advanced learners.

All the Irish students were positive about the self-assessment. As in Falchikov's study (1986), students explained its benefits in term of pedagogical value as "increased awareness and independence" in learning. Like The Turkish students who were pleased with this self-assessment process, they implied that they were actively engaged in the

learning process and learned to be critical in their learning process. This finding affirms the results of previous research studies (Harris,1997; Kim 2008).

In relation to the increased awareness in the language learning process, the Irish students in particular became aware of their weaknesses and strengths through self-assessment and the previous assessments made by peers and the teacher guided their assessment process. This finding also highlighted the importance of guidance during self-assessment through teacher feedback (Harris, 1997). As Dickson (1987 cited in Harris, 1997) noted teacher assessment alleviates the assessment responsibility and offers shared responsibility so that students can better focus on their needs.

The interplay between self, peer and professional assessment

The pedagogical value and benefits of the assessments cannot be explained by the dominance of a single assessment. The nature of benefits students acquired is quite extensive from the range of assessments conducted in this study. The combination of assessments strengthened the effect and impact of one another.

Upon analyzing the freely written responses given by the students, I concluded that peer, self and professional assessment overlapped with each other collaboratively and affected the language learning process of learners positively. They complemented each other and strengthened the effects of one another. For example, the professional and peer assessment increased the motivation among the Turkish learners, whereas self-assessment was not very welcome and did not arouse any motivational feelings. The initial motivation brought on by professional assessment was strengthened by the peer assessments afterwards. As Harris (1997) pointed out self-assessment intensifies the efficiency of teacher assessment as students are actively and continuously engaged in their learning in the light of additional feedback. This also eases the process of discovering learning needs.

Similarly, other research studies (Topping, 1996 cited in Vickerman, 2008; Ballantyne et al., 2002; Hanrahan and Isaacs, 2001) reveal that self and peer assessment significantly increase the motivation and developed understanding of various learning strategies when implemented together. This finding was also inferred in our study among the Irish learners who have stressed that both peer and self-assessment contributed to their understanding of learning needs.

The formative peer, self and professional assessment can be considered another reason for the significant efficiency obtained from assessments. Since there were no concerns of grading and marking, assessments were carried out in a comfortable environment where learning was set as the ultimate goal.

A further important point mentioned in the literature to increase the efficiency of peer assessment was the role of teacher in peer assessment. Vu & Alba. (2007) pointed out that teachers should supervise the peer assessment process to reduce the challenges faced by students and encourage students to give more constructive feedback. The teacher should also be interested in the educational benefits of the study, rather than in the daily or immediate successes and failures of the students (Etheridge, 1995). In relation to our study, both the researcher and the teacher took a strong interest in the challenges and questions of students during the assessment procedure.

A contextual overview of the assessments displays that the interplay and the support between the three kinds of assessment expand the educational benefits of the study, intensify their effects on each other and compensate the potential deficiencies of each assessment type. Most importantly, the interdependence of assessments alleviated the doubts students had regarding the feedback they received.

The effect of the dossier component on students' foreign language learning process

The findings suggest that the dossier component of the ELP was an effective pedagogical tool to promote learners' motivation and positive attitudes towards the target language. Both groups of students expressed positive feelings and displayed positive reactions about keeping a dossier.

As presented in the previous chapter, both the Irish and the Turkish students improved their level of target language, gained self confidence, made significant increases in their motivation levels and became organized learners through the use of the dossier. However, the development of these patterns can not be regarded separately from the role of assessments in the implementation process, since the reflection sheets and assessment forms formed part of the dossier. Students kept them together with their work to consider the important criticisms and suggestions made by their teacher and friends.

The students formed positive attitudes towards the target language and displayed an increased level of motivation. As Masgoret and Gardner (2003) suggest learners'

motivation increases and they become more enthusiastic about learning a language when they construct positive attitudes towards learning. In addition to these positive changes, students also formed new studying habits. They became more organized in terms of studying and learned to review their previous assignments. Along with the learning habits, students also discovered that they could learn by their mistakes, by their friends' assignments and they learned to appreciate the various inspirational constructs around them, such as their peer's work or the feedback they received. Since the projects were not graded and there were not any concerns of marks, there was a friendly and relaxing environment where the students were focused on improving themselves and felt encouraged to learn. The increase in their motivation is in line with the Gardner's theory (1985) on motivation. The motivation has three important dimensions; effort, desire for achievement and positive attitudes, each of which fosters the other. The increase or promotion of motivation depends on the intensity of interdependence of these three notions. Both the Turkish and Irish students were encouraged by the feedback. They set a couple of goals to improve on in the following assignments and put effort into achieving these goals. As they got the feeling of achievement and progressed, they formed positive attitudes. Consequently, an increase in the motivation appeared as an expected outcome.

When we apply a general outlook on the research findings, it is apparent that students mentioned generally about being aware of their strengths and weakness and developed self-awareness. As Meister (2005) stressed, the ELP helps the learners be more conscious about their learning process. More specifically, taking into account the dossier component of the ELP on which the study is based, the findings go along with the notions Kohonen & Westhoff (2003) proposed about independent learning. According to Kohonen & Westhoff (2003), the development of self direction, awareness of language and reflection of learning are the key elements of learner autonomy. They proposed self direction can be achieved through formative assessment and encouraged students to keep diaries about their learning experiences so that they can explore their specific learning needs. This was the case for our study. Both group of students mentioned that they became conscious and aware of their learning needs. As they acquired self direction, their sense of reflection also developed.

Feedback and the dossier component were significantly and positively associated with the performance and the attitudes of the learners. They realized that they produced

better projects and improved their grammatical patterns in the target language as they had the chance to consider the feedback after every project and to keep the projects in their folder throughout the study. Thus, this mutual interdependence between the feedback and the dossier component contributed to the students' learning process positively. Since the assigned topic for the assignments were exam-oriented, there also occurred an extra instrumental motivation for the students. This might be one of the reasons why students strove for excellence and got enthusiastic about improving themselves.

Another efficient agent in the development of learner autonomy can be listed as the pedagogical function of the ELP. As Little (2002a) suggests the pedagogical function has two dimensions in student's learning process. It develops learner autonomy by drawing students into self-reflection and it promotes intercultural learning and cultural awareness. In our study, it can be concluded that Irish students expressed learner autonomy more than the Turkish students. On the other hand, six learners in total from both group of students mentioned that their knowledge of target language and culture was improved through their peer's assignments. The first dimension of the ELP dominated the findings of the study.

However, let us consider the general profile of the students; all the Turkish students showed higher instrumental motivation than the Irish students, but had intrinsic motivation as well. On the other hand, the Irish students in this study have predominantly integrative motivation. The exam-focused ELP implementation increased their instrumental motivation. On the other hand, both groups of learners were pleased with the study. They enjoyed the process of assessment and learning from each other. Nonetheless, there were some variations among the groups. Both groups of learners were satisfied with the professional assessment. Conversely, self-assessment displayed that Irish students were keener on self-assessment and showed much more pleasure than did the Turkish learners. Less than half of the Turkish learners found it worthwhile to talk about self-assessment and mentioned their positive ideas. Peer assessment also revealed slight differences between two groups. The students were analyzed in terms of being assessed and assessing. Two Irish learners avoided the peer assessment for fear of criticism. One student expressed her doubts on how sincere her friend was in her comments, and the rest of the students expressed their satisfaction of being assessed although only a few talked about their assessing experience. They

expressed the benefits of self-assessment as finding out different views and exploring their needs. Only one Turkish learner was negative about self-assessment but the rest of the students were pleased to be assessed and assess their friends. Similarly, not so many pupils mentioned their assessing experiences, but did mention many patterns that have been beneficial to them. Confidence, motivation, encouragement and self awareness were the themes drawn out from the responses of Turkish learners.

Since the identities of the participants were kept confidential and were asked not to write their names on the questionnaires, it was not possible to analyze the individuals one by one. Therefore, I split the participants in the Turkish and the Irish groups and analyzed them in two separate groups.

The study also encouraged students to mention the negative aspects of the implementation. Only two important themes have been highlighted as disadvantages of the study. The students were not provided with the choice of topic so some students found it challenging to write on the assigned topics. As Stipek (1998) suggests, learner independence in the choice of topic is efficient in the promotion of confidence and intrinsic motivation. This can be listed as the major weakness of the study. The second drawback is the difficulty of keeping a dossier. The difficulty of keeping a dossier can be regarded as a drawback pertaining to the Turkish learners especially, as it was a commonly mentioned pattern in their replies. The Irish learners proposed the challenge of researching whereas none of Turkish learners touched on this point.

Twenty six students out of twenty seven students explicitly mentioned that they will go on keeping dossier. One student who did not form a dossier also wrote that he might keep a dossier in the future, as he has seen the benefits of it throughout the study. Students reported their feelings of being disciplined. The feelings of success and confidence were also mentioned. There were no points or themes that discriminated the two groups of learners concerning this particular aspect. They mentioned the same topics. The only discriminating factors were expressed in their attitudes towards the assessment process, discussed above.

Suggestions for Further research

One of the limitations of this study was the small number of participants. Nevertheless, the results of this study should encourage researchers to carry out similar studies to investigate a continental tool which can be used in all different nations and with different kinds of learners. Gender and cultural differences have not been taken into account in this study. The Turkish learners' responses and feedback sometimes revealed that they were humble about their learning process and performance. I consider this as a cultural norm pertaining to Turkish learners; therefore, interesting outcomes and results can be obtained if further studies focus on the differences and similarities arising from cultural norms. On the other hand, gender can be another dimension to be taken into consideration.

Furthermore, a logical generalization has been made in this study rather than a statistical generalization, as it was originally designed as a qualitative study. A quantitative study can be carried out to make generalizations. The effect of the dossier component on different age groups can also be discussed.

The study took place over a period of 3 months: an academic term. Four projects were completed in that time. Further research can be carried out over a longer duration where students can be analyzed individually rather than in groups. The individual analysis might provide a deeper understanding of the underlying dimensions and factors beyond the language learning process and the attitudes of each student can be better diagnosed. Interviews can also be carried out with students. The teachers' expectations and ideas can be integrated into the study or parents' involvement can also be reviewed in further studies.

Finally, a more learner-centered, dossier oriented ELP implementation can be carried out. The choice of topic and timing can be left to learners. Despite the limitations of the study, the findings of this study will help both learners and teachers to gain a deeper understanding of the language learning process. Different and interesting outcomes may be obtained if future studies are conducted considering the limitations of this study. It is hoped that this study will encourage more comparative cultural studies in the field of foreign language teaching.

Conclusion

This chapter reviewed and discussed the findings of the study in line with the relevant literature and presented the possible reasons and explanations beyond the displayed attitudes. Recommendations for the future research will be presented in relation to the limitations and the findings of the study. The following chapter concludes this research and provides some educational implications will be reviewed to finalize the study.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Introduction

This chapter will provide a brief summary and conclusions of the study. Some pedagogical implications and suggestions will be presented to guide future research.

Summary of the Findings

This study focused on the ELP implementation, particularly on the dossier component of the ELP. It is regarded as a modification of the ELP, aiming to discover the effects of the dossier component on students' foreign language learning process. Hence, two groups of students were chosen, an Irish and a Turkish group. Working with different group and nationality of learners also brought cross-linguistic dimension to the study and enriched the research with different student profiles and backgrounds.

The primary aim of this study was to elicit students' attitudes towards dossier-oriented ELP study, which is supported by professional, peer and self-assessment. The second and third goals of the study were to compare the two groups of learners and to explore any attitudinal changes towards the language learning. The pre-questionnaire, assessment forms, reflection sheets and the post-questionnaire were the main instruments of this study.

The results indicate that this study has been beneficial for the students in various ways as discussed in the previous chapters. When the learners were analyzed from a national angle, they generally showed similarities in terms of their reactions to the study and elaborated on the same features. A distinction can be drawn between their attitudes towards assessments, especially to self and peer assessment. Turkish students did not express as much satisfaction as Irish students did. Although the students displayed positive reactions towards all types of assessments in general, the negative aspects they mentioned mainly appear to have resulted from their unfamiliarity with peer and self-assessment. They were provided with workshops given by the researcher before the study began. However, elaborating on giving feedback or improving their assessment skills is not an overnight process. Therefore, more emphasis should be placed on

techniques for self and peer assessment. The peer and self-assessment should be integrated more frequently into classroom activities so that learners can both get more experience and learn about different perspectives.

It is important to note that the students were dynamic and alert during the ELP process. The interpretations of their responses indicate that they perceive ELP as an effective learning tool.

Pedagogical Implications

The study displayed that Irish and Turkish learners hold positive attitudes towards the ELP and were motivated to learn the target language, although there were some dissimilarities between them. However, it would not be logical to generalize the presented results for Irish and Turkish students solely depending on this study, as this study has also its limitation, constraints and variables mentioned in the previous chapters.

The study took place in Ireland and Turkey with two distinct groups of learners. One of the drawbacks that I faced throughout the study was the distance. Although the studies in both countries were fortunately aided by the cooperation of the involved teachers, I had more opportunities to deal with the Irish students and encourage them more than I did with the Turkish students during the study. This situation did not affect the course of the study but Irish students had more frequent opportunities to express their ideas more directly than the Turkish learners in this study.

With the help of this study, it is hoped that teachers will be informed about the possible weaknesses and strengths of ELP implementation. Thus, they can be aware of the important aspects they have to consider before implementing it. They will be more prepared for unexpected conditions and will have a better idea of the ways in which they need to encourage their students. It will also assist teachers on how to guide assessment processes in order to create an effective feedback process.

The students were challenged by the peer and self-assessment in this study. More teacher guidance and monitoring can be provided in cases where most students do not have any experience in assessing. As I have mentioned, the Turkish learners found the assessment process to be more of a challenge than did the Irish students. I had more opportunity to stimulate the Irish learners and eradicate their doubts about assessing.

This reveals that the role of researcher in the implementation process is significant as well as the role of the teacher.

Conclusion

In this study, I aimed at creating a fruitful, vibrant and dynamic learning environment where students can effectively benefit from the ELP, gain a deeper understanding of their learning process and develop or become aware of their own learning strategies. The results of the study presents that student accomplished these tasks and perceived the value of assessment and dossier for language study.

Carrying out a cross-linguistic and a comparative study also enriched the study in terms of teacher as well. It helped teachers how to create autonomous learners and how to create long-term motivation sources for students.

It is hoped that this study could shed a light on the important aspects of the language study and encourage further and detail research on ELP and language learning.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A Pre-Questionnaire

Dear Students,

This study aims to determine the effect of dossier component of the European Language Portfolio, self, peer and professional assessment on your motivation and attitudes towards German/English classes. It aims to understand to what extent the dossier develops motivation and how students of two different nations react towards the dossier.

This is a pre- questionnaire of our case study and aims to determine the levels of your motivation and attitudes towards second language learning and classes before we start our study.

I would like you to be as sincere as possible since the study is based on your answers. There is not a “wrong” or “right” answer and your responses will not be graded. Your identity will be kept confidential.

Thanks for your participation and cooperation in advance.

Firdevs Melis CIN
Trinity College Dublin
cinf@tcd.ie

I-PERSONAL INFORMATION

1- Gender

Female Male

2- Age:

3- Number of years studying German:

4- Nationality:

Irish Turkish

II- THE QUESTIONNAIRE

PART A

There are number of statements below I would like you to indicate your opinion after each statement by putting an 'X' in the box that most closely corresponds to your opinion. Please put **only one** 'X' after each statement. Thank you very much for your help.

	Strongly agree	agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I always hand in well- prepared assignment and projects					
I believe that teachers assess our learning better than us.					
I am never satisfied with my assignments.					
From time to time I revise my previous assignments to see how much I have improved					
I usually revise my assignments before the exams					
I get bored when I am doing assignments					
I am not enthusiastic about learning a language.					
I like being responsible for my own learning					
My friend's ideas about my assignment are significant for me					
I believe I can do a project/assignment on any topic					
I do some research before I start my projects					
I never keep my assignments in a folder					
I will volunteer if my teacher asks us to do extra homework					
I want to improve my German as much as possible					
I trust my ability to do well in class					
After I get my assignments back, I always rewrite them and correct my mistakes					
I pay more attention to my assignments when I receive good comments and constructive feedback					
I try harder when my friends show					

appreciation of my work and assignments					
I am much more motivated when my teacher praises me.					
I am not motivated as I do not believe I will be successful in English/German					
When I fall behind in classroom tasks, I feel uncomfortable					
I prefer not to participate in classroom activities					
I believe that learning English/German is necessary for my life in university					

I like studying English/German					
I look forward to English/German classes					
I read something in English/German in my free time					
I attempt to develop my own personal vocabulary as well as learning the words presented by the teacher					
I look for opportunities to improve my vocabulary outside the class, because I know I need to in order to be successful in learning English/German.					
I choose German movies whenever I have the chance of watching one.					
I believe learning German is important because in a modern world people should know at least one foreign language					
If I do not understand something in English/German, I try to find out myself, or else ask for help					
I believe the number of hours allocated for English/German classes should be increased in the school.					

Please answer the questions on next page.

PART B

In this section, read the sentences and answer them as honestly as possible. Write your reasons and if you have any other idea, write and explain it with your reasons, as well. Thank you very much for your help.

- 1- Why are you learning German/English?
- 2- How do you feel about learning German/English?
- 3- Do you find written assignments and small projects useful in learning German/English?
If Yes, explain how they help you?
If No, explain why and what you would like to do instead.
- 4- How do you find the classroom activities you use in class?
- 5- How do you feel when you get a low mark in an exam?
- 6- When I do not understand a classroom activity or find it hard I feel.....
.....
.....
- 7- How do you feel when you are speaking English/German in the classroom?
- 8- How do you feel when you are making a presentation in front of the class?
- 9- What are the advantages of being able to speak English/German?
- 10- What are the disadvantages of being able to speak English/German?
- 11- Do you ever keep a folder covering the assignments and projects you have completed?
If Yes, how did this affect you? Did you find it useful?
- 12- Any other comments....

Appendix B
Assessment forms

TEACHER'S FEEDBACK FORM

Name of the Student:

Assignment No:

Assignment's Title:

Date:

1. Does the assignment have an introduction?
2. Does it have a conclusion?
3. Is it interesting?
4. Are the presented ideas and thoughts well organized?
5. Did s/he pay attention to spelling and punctuation?
6. What do you think about the richness of vocabulary in his/her assignment?
7. What do you think about his/her overall grammar?
8. What should s/he pay attention to next time?
9. What s/he should improve in his/her next assignment?
10. What did you appreciate most in his/her assignment?

Comments....

PEER ASSESSMENT FORM

1. Do you think your friend is showing improvement when compared to other assignments?
2. What are your friend's strengths?
3. What do you think about his/her performance?
4. What did you learn from your friend's project?
5. What did you like most about your friend's project?
6. What would you like to adopt from his/her project to yours?
7. Can you recommend him/ her one thing s/he should pay attention to next time
8. Any other comments.....

SELF-ASSESSMENT FORM

There are number of statements below I would like you to indicate your opinion about your own assignments after each statement by putting an 'X' in the box that most closely corresponds to your opinion. Please put only one 'X' after each statement. Thank you very much for your help.

	Yes	No
I did research on the topic		
I gave myself enough time to do this project.		
I liked my assignment		
I was creative and productive in this assignment		
I handed in a well prepared and organized assignment		
I found it easy to express my thoughts in the assignment		
I used new vocabulary items		
I asked for ideas and help while doing my assignment		

1. What do you think about self and peer evaluation . Do you find it useful?
2. How do you feel about your performance after getting feedback from other classmates and from the teacher?
3. In what ways did you show progress?
4. What do you want to improve in your project next time?
5. What did you learn from the evaluations you have received?
6. What did you learn from this assignment?
7. What challenged you in this assignment?
8. Any other comments...

Appendix C

REFLECTION SHEET

Name:

Assignment No:

Assignment Title:

Date:

Your feelings and ideas about teacher's assessment and feedback;

Your feelings and ideas about your friend's assessment and feedback;

Your own feelings and ideas about your own assessment;

Ideas and feelings about these three assessments;

Appendix D

Post-Questionnaire

Dear students,

This term you kept your German/English assignments in a folder as a part of European Language Portfolio study. Your assignments were also assessed by your teacher and friends. You actualized self-assessment as well. To complete our study, I would like you to answer the questions below.

You do not have to write your names. Your identity will be kept confidential.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Firdevs Melis Cin
Trinity College Dublin
cinf@tcd.ie

1. Were you interested in keeping your assignments in folder? Why or why not?
2. Would you like to go on keeping your assignments in folder in the future?
Comment, why? Why not?
3. Do you think that the folder (the assignments you keep in your folder) has helped you see your progress since you started keeping it?
4. Do you feel that being able to monitor your own progress has changed your attitude towards English/German? If so, how? Comment, please.
5. Would you recommend keeping a folder including their assignments to the students at this school? Please comment and give reasons
6. What did you like most about keeping a folder? Please comment.
7. What did you like least about keeping a folder?
8. What can people learn from your folder about you as a writer?
9. Did keeping your assignments in a folder help you learn the subject better?
10. Was the process of keeping your works in a folder enjoyable? Please comment.
11. Any difficulties you faced while keeping folder? Please comment.
12. What was the best thing about keeping folder?
13. Did this study help you to be a more organized person?
14. What challenged you in this study?

15. Would you like to change the assignments you put in the folder? Why?
16. Would you like to present what is in your folder to someone else? To Whom? Why?
17. How did you find the evaluation process of your work by your teacher and friend?
18. Was the evaluation process better than the traditional methods such as exams or tests?

II- Please write a paragraph about your feelings, emotions, ideas and suggestions about this study. You can mention about the following points;

Change in your motivation and attitudes towards English/German Classes, learning process, your confidence in learning English/German, your improvement in English/German (Minimum 100 words)

Appendix E

Common Reference Levels: self-assessment grid

	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2
Listening	I can recognise familiar words and very basic phrases concerning myself, my family and immediate concrete surroundings when people speak slowly and clearly.	I can understand phrases and the highest frequency vocabulary related to areas of most immediate personal relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local area, employment). I can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements.	I can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. I can understand the main point of many radio or TV programmes on current affairs or topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is relatively slow and clear.	I can understand extended speech and lectures and follow even complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar. I can understand most TV news and current affairs programmes. I can understand the majority of films in standard dialect.	I can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signalled explicitly. I can understand television programmes and films without too much effort.	I have no difficulty in understanding any kind of spoken language, whether live or broadcast, even when delivered at fast native speed, provided I have some time to get familiar with the accent.
Reading	I can understand familiar names, words and very simple sentences, for example on notices and posters or in catalogues.	I can read very short, simple texts. I can find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, prospectuses, menus and timetables and I can understand short simple personal letters.	I can understand texts that consist mainly of high frequency everyday or job-related language. I can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters.	I can read articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular attitudes or viewpoints. I can understand contemporary literary prose.	I can understand long and complex factual and literary texts, appreciating distinctions of style. I can understand specialised articles and longer technical instructions, even when they do not relate to my field.	I can read with ease virtually all forms of the written language, including abstract, structurally or linguistically complex texts such as manuals, specialised articles and literary works.
Spoken Interaction	I can interact in a simple way provided the other person is prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech and help me formulate what I'm trying to say. I can ask and answer simple questions in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.	I can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities. I can handle very short social exchanges, even though I can't usually understand enough to keep the conversation going myself.	I can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. I can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).	I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible. I can take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts, accounting for and sustaining my views.	I can express myself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. I can use language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes. I can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate my contribution skilfully to those of other speakers.	I can take part effortlessly in any conversation or discussion and have a good familiarity with idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms. I can express myself fluently and convey finer shades of meaning precisely. If I do have a problem I can backtrack and restructure around the difficulty so smoothly that other people are hardly aware of it.
Spoken Production	I can use simple phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know.	I can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms my family and other people, living conditions, my educational background and my present or most recent job.	I can connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events, my dreams, hopes and ambitions. I can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. I can narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions.	I can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to my field of interest. I can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.	I can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.	I can present a clear, smoothly-flowing description or argument in a style appropriate to the context and with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.
Writing	I can write a short, simple postcard, for example sending holiday greetings. I can fill in forms with personal details, for example entering my name, nationality and address on a hotel registration form.	I can write short, simple notes and messages relating to matters in areas of immediate needs. I can write a very simple personal letter, for example thanking someone for something.	I can write simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. I can write personal letters describing experiences and impressions.	I can write clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects related to my interests. I can write an essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view. I can write letters highlighting the personal significance of events and experiences.	I can express myself in clear, well-structured text, expressing points of view at some length. I can write about complex subjects in a letter, an essay or a report, underlining what I consider to be the salient issues. I can select style appropriate to the reader in mind.	I can write clear, smoothly-flowing text in an appropriate style. I can write complex letters, reports or articles which present a case with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points. I can write summaries and reviews of professional or literary works.

Appendix F
Student Sample Activities

Die Umwelt

Die Iren sind nicht sehr umweltfreundlich. Stimmt das?

Ich bin einverstanden. Die Iren sind nicht sehr umweltfreundlich denn die Busverbindungen sind schlecht. Deswegen fahren 80% mit dem Auto zur Arbeit und nicht Jeder macht recycling. Aber, ich stimme nicht damit die Iren sind nicht sehr umweltfreundlich denn rauchen ist im Arbeitsplatz verboten und wir bringen Glas, papier und Kleidung zum recycling.

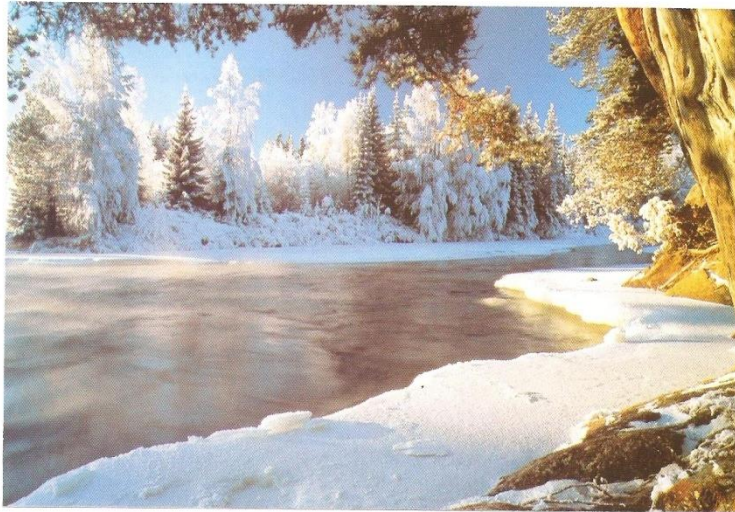


Nicole Kewenig

Die Umwelt

Was können Sie für den Umweltschutz tun? Machen sie drei Vorschläge.

Für die Umwelt, gehe ich zur Schule jeden Tag zu Fuß oder mit dem Fahrrad statt mit dem Auto. Ich bringe Glas, Karton, Papier, Dosen, Plastik und Kleidung zum Recycling und ich benutze nie Plastiktüten und ich trenne den Müll. Ich mache Lichter aus, wenn niemand im Zimmer ist und ich habe einen Kompost im Garten.



Nicola Vekich

Walter, 11/11/11



Recycling

“die iren sind nicht sehr umwelt freundlich, simmt das?”

Ich stimme damit, dass die iren nicht umweltfreundlich sein können, weil wir nicht gut an recycling sind. Viele leute werfen Müll auf der straße. Die Busverbindungen und Zugverbindungen sind schlecht, deswegen fahren 80% mit dem auto zur Arbeit, welcher schlecht für die Umwelt ist. Auf der andern Seite sind wir umweltfreundlich. Wir mächen Lichter aus wenn niemand im zimmer ist, Rauchen ist Arbeitsplatz verboten, wir benutzen nie Plastiktüten.



“Was können sie für den umwelt schutz tun?”

Ich kann Vieles für die umwelt machen. Ich haben eienen Kompost in meinem Garten. Ich bringe Glass, Papier und Plastik zum Recycling, ich stelle die Waschmaschine auf 30°C. Ich verschwende weder Wasser noch Elektrizität zu Hause. Ich werde zur schule zu fuß gehen statt mit dem Auto. Dadurch, Hilfe ich der umwelt.



Speisekarte

Die Vorspeise:

Hüchensalat €5.00

Melon emit Serrano schinken €6.20

Gebackene Champions €4.50

Salat Caesar €5.00

Grüne Kohlsuppe mit brot €3.75

Suppe des tage €3.75

Das Hauptgericht:

Gnocchi mit gorgonzola sauce und Pinenkernen € 10.30

Kabeljou mit ofenkartofflen, kompott von zweiblen und frischen paprika
€11.00

Hüchencurry mit Basmatireis €9.00

Hamburger mit Käse, Speck, Avocado und zweiblen €12.00

Lasagne mit Pommes Frites €14.00

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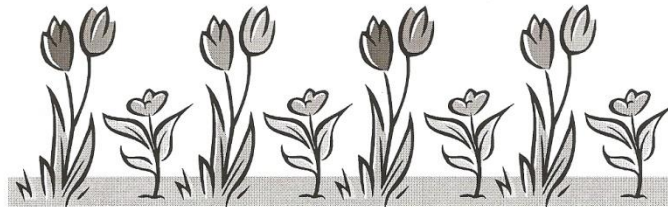
Die Nachtisch

Apfel tarte mit Sahne	€5.00
Zitronen Tarte	€5.00
Schwarzwalderkirschtorte	€5.00
Erdbeere und vanilleeis mit Wackelpudding	€5.00
Schokoladefondatkuchen mit Vanilleeis und Nussen	€5.00



Spring is My Favourite Season

My favourite season is spring. Because there are beautiful flowers in spring. There are a lot of beautiful birds and butterflies. We have picnic with my family. We go to a field and we eat meat. We play volleyball with my father and brother. I like spring very much. The weather is sunny in spring but it is not very hot.



Holly Marie Combs

Holly Marie Combs is a famous American actress. She was born in 1975 and she lives in Los Angeles.

She is a beautiful girl. She has got long black hair and brown eyes. She is kind and honest she never lies to people.

She goes ^{to} the horse riding, gardening and plays with her cats in her free times.

Holly Marie Combs is great. She is an excellent actress and wonderful person.

excellent

