HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
EĞİTİM BİLİMLERİ ENSTİTÜSÜ

Department of Foreign Language Education

English Language Teaching Program

THE EFFECTS OF USING THE EPOSTL ON PROSPECTIVE EFL TEACHERS' TEACHING AUTONOMY

Pınar SASA

Master's Thesis

Ankara, 2024

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EPOSTL KULLANIMININ ADAY İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMENLERİNİN ÖĞRETİM ÖZERKLİKLERİNE ETKİSİ

Pınar SASA

Master's Thesis

Ankara, 2024

Acceptance and Approval

To the Graduate School of Educational Sciences,

This thesis / dissertation, prepared by **PINAR SASA** and entitled "The Effects of Using the EPOSTL on Prospective EFL Teachers' Teaching Autonomy" has been approved as a thesis for the Degree of **Master** in the **Program of English Language Teaching** in the **Department of Foreign Language Education** by the members of the Examining Committee.

Chair	Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ceyhun KARABIYIK
Member (Supervisor)	Prof. Dr. İsmail Hakkı MİRİCİ
Member	Assist. Prof. Dr. Nilüfer CAN DAŞKIN

This is to certify that this thesis/dissertation has been approved by the aforementioned examining committee members on 11/06/2024 in accordance with the relevant articles of the Rules and Regulations of Hacettepe University Graduate School of Educational Sciences, and was accepted as a **Master's Thesis** in the **Program of English Language Teaching** by the Board of Directors of the Graduate School of Educational Sciences from ...../...../.....

Prof. Dr. İsmail Hakkı MİRİCİ

Director of Graduate School of Educational Sciences

Abstract

In pre-service teacher education, it is of importance to match the gap between theory and practice. In order to fill this gap, teacher autonomy has continuing concern within the scope of teacher education. Although extensive research has been carried out on this area, there is little published study suggesting techniques to foster teacher autonomy in the field of English Language pre-service teacher education. Hence, this study sets out to explore the potential use the EPOSTL (European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages) to promote prospective EFL teachers' autonomy. It is a comprehensive guide of teacher competencies for prospective teachers projected by the European Center for Modern Languages to harmonize language education across Europe. Adopting mixed method, this study used Teaching Autonomy Scale and semi-structured interviews to collect data from 19 prospective EFL teachers in the third year of their education at Hacettepe University. Before and after the use of the EPOSTL, Teacher Autonomy Scale was implemented to see the change. After the implementation, semi structured interviews were conducted with the participants to investigate their views on using the EPOSTL. The quantitative analyses were performed using IBM SPSS version 25.0 and the qualitative data were analyzed by content analysis. The study indicated that the EPOSTL is a very useful tool to increase awareness of the prospective EFL teachers on teaching autonomy. The EPOSTL was beneficial for the development of reflective skills. This study provided new perspectives for prospective EFL teachers, instructors, curriculum developers and institutions.

Keywords: autonomy, EPOSTL, language teacher education, teacher autonomy.

Öz

Hizmet öncesi öğretmen eğitiminde teori ile uygulama arasındaki boşluğu doldurmak önemlidir. Bu nedenle öğretmen özerkliği, öğretmen eğitimi alanında önemli bir yer tutmaktadır. Bu alanda kapsamlı araştırmalar yapılmış olsa da İngiliz Dili hizmet öncesi öğretmen eğitimi alanında öğretmen özerkliğini geliştirmeye yönelik teknikler öneren çalışmalar azdır. Bu nedenle, bu çalışma EPOSTL'ın (Dil Öğretmenler Adaylarına Yönelik Avrupa Portfolyosu) İngilizce öğretmen adaylarının özerkliğini arttırmadaki potansiyel kullanımını araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. EPOSTL, Avrupa Modern Diller Merkezi tarafından Avrupa genelinde dil eğitimini uyumlu hale getirmek için öngörülen öğretmen yeterliliklerine dair kapsamlı bir rehberdir. Karma yöntem benimsenen bu çalışmada, Hacettepe Üniversitesi'nde eğitimlerinin üçüncü yılında olan 19 İngilizce öğretmeni adayından veri toplamak için Öğretmen Özerklik Ölçeği ve yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler kullanılmıştır. EPOSTL uygulamasından önce ve sonra, değişimi görmek için Öğretmen Özerklik Ölçeği uygulanmıştır. Uygulama sonrasında, katılımcılarla EPOSTL kullanımına ilişkin görüşlerini araştırmak amacıyla yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Nicel analizler IBM SPSS 25.0 sürümü kullanılarak gerçekleştirilmiş ve nitel veriler içerik analizi ile analiz edilmiştir. Çalışma, EPOSTL'ın katılımcıların öğretmen özerkliğine ilişkin farkındalıklarını arttırmak için çok faydalı bir araç olduğunu göstermiştir. EPOSTL, yansıtıcı becerilerin geliştirilmesi için faydalı olmuştur. Bu çalışma, gelecekteki EFL öğretmenleri, eğitmenler, müfredat geliştiriciler ve kurumlar için yeni bakış açıları sunmuştur.

Anahtar sözcükler: özerklik, EPOSTL, dil öğretmen eğitimi, öğretmen özerkliği.

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Symbols and Abbreviations

EFL: English as Foreign Language

ELT: English Language Teaching

EPOSTL: European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages

CEFR: Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

TAS: Teaching Autonomy Scale

Chapter 1

Introduction

This study attempts to explore the potential use of the EPOSTL to foster prospective EFL teachers' teaching autonomy in language teaching education programs. With this regard this chapter starts with theoretical background to the study. After explaining main constructs, it follows as statement of the problem, aim and significance of the study and research questions. It also includes key concepts, assumptions, and limitations of the study.

In today's globalized world, the need of communication has gained importance more than ever. English is the lingua franca in a wide range of areas from trade to education in the current global environment. The need of creating a mutual understanding among people from a variety of territories brings about new developments in learning and teaching languages, inevitably in learning and teaching English. Contemporary needs have led new paradigms to place considering language learners' needs. Council of Europe (CoE), created in 1948, is one of the leading organizations in this regard. CoE aims to prevail a common way of education based on European understanding in member states. It pursues multilingualism, cultural diversity and plurilingualism. It is inevitable for Turkiye to take part in this entity owing to the fact that English is taught as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Turkiye. In 1949, Turkiye was invited to the organization as a founding member. Since then, Turkiye has upheld the unity and put into practice the suggested practices in education.

Having established the significance of catching the contemporary changes and learning language, the target issue, how foreign language teachers should be educated arises. Contemporary needs have led new paradigms to place regarding language teaching and such methods as Grammar-Translation have fallen behind the current requisites (Çelik & Kasap, 2019). Therefore, new approaches and methods to language teaching have aroused. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Computer-Assisted Language Teaching (CALL) and Community Language Learning (CLL) have emerged to meet the needs of evolving nature of language teaching and learning. Nowadays, cognitive, social,

and socio-cognitive views on language have taken the place of behavioral phycology and context-based and meaning-based views on language are more prevailing. Such a paradigm shift has influenced the way teachers are educated and trained. Therefore, the evolution in educational philosophies and pedagogical practices has necessarily shaped how language teachers are educated.

With the aim of training foreign language teachers, European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML),an organization of international language education projects, realised a document, EPOSTL (European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages) in 2007 to develop a sense of harmony across Europe in the context of self -reflection practices of language teachers. The creators of the document are teacher educators from Armenia, Austria, Norway, Poland, and U.K. Unlike other tools developed for teacher reflection, EPOSTL defines its targeted audience as pre-service language teachers (Newby, 2007, p.1). Newby (2012) portrays the EPOSTL as:

> "A document intended for students undergoing their initial teacher education which encourages them to reflect on the didactic knowledge and skills necessary to teach languages, helps them to assess their own didactic competences and enables them to monitor their progress and to record their experiences of teaching during the course of their teacher education" (p.1)

It predicates on such afore published documents as the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and the European Language Portfolio (ELP). Its primary aim is to make student teachers reflect on their teaching practice. As Bukert and Schwienhorst (2008) suggest:

> "EPOSTL presents an important step to giving student language teachers a tool to externalize their needs/suggestions/expectations. By doing so student teachers are supported in entering into dialogue with peers, teacher educators and last but not least, themselves." (p.247)

Therefore, it is a valuable document for prospective language teachers to reflect on their continuing growth (Newby, 2011; 2012b; Cakir, Balçıkanlı, 2012; Velikova, 2013; Seitova, Mirici & Öz, 2019; Mirici,2019). It can facilitate self-assessment and be useful for professional growth (Mehlmauer-Larcher, 2009). Through integration of the document into English Language teaching programs, its potential to promote transformative approach to language teacher education can be revealed in Turkish context.

Statement of the Problem

Foreign language teaching is one of the most debatable issues in Turkiye over decades. Various methods and approaches to teaching English have been suggested. In align with this concern, the issue of educating effective language teachers has received considerable critical attention both in the academic field and in language education policies. In Turkiye, teacher education can be examined under three main headings. These are induction of beginning teachers, in-service teacher education and pre-service teacher education. The process of “induction of beginning teachers” encompasses training and support aimed at facilitating the adaptation of new teachers when they begin their careers. As to in-service teacher education, it embodies professional development of teachers in the education system in order to enhance their teaching skills and keep them posted on educational practices and new developments in education. Lastly, the focal point of pre-service teacher education, the concern of this study, is to prepare prospective students for their future profession by providing them necessary skills, knowledge, and competencies. The adequacy and efficiency of the education at the initial stage is crucial due to the fact that comprehensive education contributes to educational quality. That is to say, the diverse needs of student teachers such as managing classroom, being equipped with pedagogical knowledge, lesson planning and conducting a lesson can be satisfactorily met thanks to a well-organized and profound pre-service teacher education process.

Teachers' communication skills, time management, classroom management, and leadership abilities are essential qualities for them (Güllaç, 2023). In language teacher education programs in Turkiye, the courses are composed of professional knowledge, general culture and field-specific training to meet these qualities However, when the prospective teachers start their professional career, they encounter several challenges. They are not possessed enough skills to overcome them. Dincer (2019) states that English teachers desire having much more autonomy during the educational processes.

At this point, teacher autonomy arises as an important quality of being a teacher. Autonomy has a lot of definitions. While it was defined as “isolation from others” previously, nowadays it is defined as “sole teaching discretion to collegial collaboration in decision-making about teaching” (Pearson & Moomaw, 2006). It can be said that empowering student teachers with autonomy in administrative processes, curriculum and teaching methodologies can significantly enhance professionalism, educational outcomes, and organizational effectiveness.

Teacher education is a continuous process where they need to theorise from their practices (Mathews, 2014). Therefore, it is a multi-faceted and multi-disciplinary field of work which needs to be researched in order to increase the effectiveness of educational process. The EPOSTL offers an implementation for pre-service teacher education by giving chance prospective EFL teachers to engage a reflective and autonomous practice. This portfolio can serve as a route map for the education of language teachers as it covers the knowledge and understanding central to foreign language teaching, the diversity of learning and teaching strategies and skills, and the values that language teaching should attain (Cullen, 2021). In the relevant literature, there is a notable paucity of studies investigating the potential of the EPOSTL to increase prospective EFL teachers’ teaching autonomy. The previous studies have mainly focused on pre-service and in-service English teachers’ perceptions on the self-assessment descriptors within the context of self-reflection. As a

result of this study, the potential of the EPOSTL, as all sections being included, to promote EFL teachers' teaching autonomy will be revealed.

Aim and Significance of the Study

It is crystal clear that qualified teachers can ensure decent education; therefore, well-educated teachers are essential to achieve educational goals. While managing these aims, what competencies a language teacher should attain to be "qualified" arouses as a critical inquiry. However, it is difficult to specify all the requisites for a complete respond. At this point, the EPOSTL presents a feasible model by including distinctive parts of teaching-methodology, resources, lesson planning, conducting a lesson and assessment of learning. It comprises 5 sections as a personal statement, a self-assessment section with 195 "can do" statements for didactic competences, a dossier, a glossary, and a users' guide.

The EPOSTL intends to contribute to student teachers' personal and professional growth and support them to promote critical and autonomous attitude. (Newby at al., 2011). Also, there are studies showing that being autonomous brings about attachment to teaching and satisfaction (Rosenholtz & Simpson, 1990; Varatharaj et al., 2015). The existing literature on the EPOSTL have predominantly focused on users' perceptions and self-reflective aspect of the document. Therefore, the influences of the EPOSTL on student teachers' developing autonomy are worth to study as it offers a model for pre-service teacher education thanks to its reflective mode.

This thesis aims to investigate how the EPOSTL has an influence on prospective EFL teachers' autonomy. Secondly, determining the challenges faced during the use of the EPOSTL is another concern of this study. Furthermore, the study will contribute to the research line related to the education of autonomous teachers by providing both qualitative and quantitative data.

Research Questions

Focusing on the use of the EPOSTL in the context of pre-service teacher education, this study has included student teachers from Hacettepe University. All the sections of the EPOSTL are included. Including both quantitative data coming from Teacher Autonomy Scale (TAS) (Pearson & Hall, 1993) and qualitative data coming from interviews with the participants, this is mixed methods research. This research addresses the following questions:

Main Research Question: How does the EPOSTL affect prospective EFL teachers' teaching autonomy?

Sub Research Questions

1. Is there a statistically significant difference between teaching autonomy perception of the prospective EFL teachers in the use of the EPOSTL at the beginning and at the end of the academic term?
2. What are the views of the prospective EFL teachers on the role of the EPOSTL in their education?
    a. What kind of effects does the EPOSTL pose for professional growth?
    b. What are the challenges encountered for the prospective EFL teachers during the use of the EPOSTL?

Assumptions

There are some assumptions in this study. They can be respected from general to specific. First of all, from a contemporary perspective, the main aim of education, along with teacher education, is to enhance the nation's well-being (Cochran-Smith, 2004). So, teacher education is a valuable content to research. Secondly, reflective practice is a process and contributes prospective teachers to tie the theory to practice (Bainer & Cantrell, 1992). Next, the integration of the EPOSTL into language teacher programs in Turkiye may lead to

positive conclusions. Also, prospective EFL teachers' perceptions of the descriptors in the EPOSTL may not be the same as the students have different levels of pedagogical interest and practice.

Limitations

The research has been conducted with 19 students at English Language Teaching department in the Faculty of Education Hacettepe University. This means this study has a limited number of participants, especially for the quantitative data. Also, the duration was limited to 12 weeks. That is to say, longer implementation can ensure more valid and reliable results. As a last limitation, the participants in the study might haven't been acquainted with the policies of Council of Europe, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, the European Language Portfolio and the European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages. That's why they might have found the content of the implementation heavy at first.

Definitions

Autonomy: Human desire to self-organize experience and behavior, and to act in accordance with the individual's integrated sense of self (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages*:* It is a comprehensive guide of teacher competencies for pre-service teachers who will be language teachers projected by the European Center for Modern Languages (ECML)

Prospective EFL Teachers: The students who are educated to be teachers to teach English in future.

Pre-service teachers*:* individuals who are in the process of completing their teacher education and training programs but have not yet become fully certified or employed as professional teachers.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Basis of Research and Literature Review

In this section, three main constrains of the study will be explained respectively in accordance with the related topic. First, as the focus of the study is fostering teacher autonomy, the review part will start with the definition of autonomy and follow with its place in education. Then, the relationship between teacher autonomy and foreign language education will be explained. Lastly, the EPOSTL, being the main instrument in the current study to foster prospective EFL teachers' autonomy, will be identified, and related studies will be presented.

The Notion of Autonomy

Being a broad concept, autonomy has gathered scholarly great attention by the researchers. Several definitions of autonomy have been proposed. There is not a consensus about its meaning, therefore there is an ambiguity regarding the definition of this concept. In this study autonomy is defined as one's ability of taking his/her responsibilities, initiating, and finalizing his/her acts without oppression from external sources in general sense.

Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2024) defines autonomy as "the quality or state of being self-governing". It is derived from Greek roots that are *autos* and *nomon. Autos* means "self" and *nomon* means "law". So, being autonomous is merely having one's own law.

Various researchers have discussed the notion of autonomy in relation to diverse contexts. Freud (1961), a prominent figure in the field of psychology, poses that during the stage anal stage of psychosexual development, which is between the ages of one and three, children develop a sense of autonomy. Erickson (1963) also has included autonomy in his model on the stages of psychological development. He confronts autonomy with shame and doubt in the early years. Moreover, autonomy related research line has also

developed on work-related contexts (Wolf & Fligstein, 1978), politics (Vedung, 2015), globalization process (Coleman & Brydon, 2009), ethics and social welfare (Barter, 2018; Niessen, 2022) and public health (Wado, 2018) So, autonomy is a topic that has been studied in diverse ranges of disciplines.

Autonomy in the Context of Education

It can be said that to date the concept of autonomy has been academically studied in various fields. It has been also investigated and discussed in the context of education over decades (Dearden, 1975; Cohen, 2016; Frase & Sorenson, 1992; Öztürk, 2011; Friedman, 1999; Little, 2007; Lamb & Simpson, 2003; Doğan & Mirici, 2017). Rödl (2016) asserts that autonomy represents the ultimate goal of education. It can be said that the concept of autonomy has initially orbited around learner-autonomy. Holec (1985) states that what is meant by the term autonomy is the learner's "capacity". They can choose the materials and the resources in accordance with their tasks, which means that they are the decision-makers in their learning process. Dickinson (1987) described the autonomy as the state of a learner's being responsible for the decisions regarding his learning.

Benson (2011) draws attention to related terms to autonomy which cannot be used interchangeably by stating:

> "…autonomy and autonomous learning are not synonyms of 'self-instruction', 'self-access', 'self-study', 'self-education', 'out-of-class learning' or 'distance learning'. These terms basically describe various ways and degrees of learning by yourself, whereas autonomy refers to abilities and attitudes." (p.114)

In view of all that has been mentioned so far, autonomy can be defined as one's taking charge of own learning. It inherently involves self-reflection, self-evaluation, and self-assessment as well. They are interconnected concepts but should not be substituted.

Moving from Learner Autonomy towards Teacher Autonomy

Little (1995) associates teacher autonomy with learner autonomy. He notes that the learners accepting their responsibility for learning are more likely to develop positive attitudes towards the learning process. Benson (2001) asserts that autonomy is not taught by the teachers, therefore the researchers use the phrase “fostering autonomy” rather than teaching autonomy. According to Benson, autonomy belongs to students.

As learning occurs through interaction and the primary way of interaction in the classroom is student-teacher interaction, the development of learners premises the development of autonomous teachers. In previous studies (Huang, 2005; Manzano Vázquez, 2018; Jiménez Raya & Vieira, 2015; Nakata, 2011; Vieira,2008), it has been reported that there is an interdependence between teacher autonomy and the growth of learner autonomy. According to Doğan and Mirici (2017), teacher support is necessary so that learners can develop autonomy.

Similarly, Onozawa (2014) stated that every learner is not possessed with the capacity to be autonomous. Learners need teacher support which helps them set goals, organize an effective plan, and evaluate themselves. The teacher is the one who can lead the learners to develop their autonomy.

It can be said that a commitment is essential between teacher and the learner. Reeve et al. (2004) notes that autonomy supported environment leads teachers to have more positive experiences. According to their correlational study, the increased number of autonomy-supportive actions by teachers leads students to engage the courses. Moreover, Ashton and Webb (1986) showed that teachers’ perceived level of efficacy is related to their students’ achievement level.

On the other hand, there are other sources (Dincer, 2019; Khalil, 2018) suggesting that the concept of teacher autonomy should not be limited to facilitating learning autonomy and should be recognized as instructor professionalism. At this point, the concept of teacher

autonomy arises. According to Pearson and Hall (1993, p. 172) it is "…the right of teachers to manage themselves and their job environment". Eden (2001) calls 'pedagogical autonomy' as the system where teachers' acts are trusted and not intervened because teachers are seen as fully competent in their work. Suggesting 'practitioner research' as a tool to increase teacher creativity and autonomy, Lamb and Simpson (2003) associate autonomy to the notion of 'capacity', enabling teachers to find alternatives. Kılınç et al. (2018) point out teachers perceived autonomy as "having a good command on subject knowledge, implementing student-centered teaching, making decisions regarding classroom management, participating in school decision-making, achieving professional satisfaction, receiving support from school administration, and maintaining high motivation towards teaching". (p.78)

Dimensions of Teacher Autonomy

it is crucial to note that teacher autonomy is a multidimensional and complex phenomenon. Different models and approaches have been proposed on teacher autonomy in the related literature. These models help us to uncover its extent.

Mc Grath (2000) views teacher autonomy as "self-directed professional action" and "freedom of control by others" (p.101-102). The distinction between the two lies in their perspectives. Whereas the first one is concerned with psychological point of view, the latter is more political (Çakır & Balçıkanlı, 2012). For Mc Grath, encouraging learner autonomy was one of the duties of an autonomous teacher.

Wilches (2007) has presented a diagram on the analysis of teachers' professional autonomy. It shows domains, levels, and constraints of teachers' professional autonomy. While from subjective point of view, teacher autonomy is perceived as freedom to operate the necessary actions, from the objective viewpoint, it is conceptualized as control over curricular matters. Moreover, the four different domains point different professional competences.

Table 1

Dimensions of Teacher Autonomy Smith, 2003

In relation to professional action	
Self-directed professional action	Self-directed teaching
Capacity for self-directed professional action	
Freedom from control over professional action	Teacher Autonomy
In relation to professional development	
Self-directed professional development	Self-Directed teacher-learning
Capacity for self-directed professional development	
Freedom from control over professional development	Teacher-learner autonomy'

Similarly, Smith (2003) has identified different dimensions of teacher autonomy in a comprehensive way. According to Smith, the notions of professional action and development are distinctive. While through professional action teaching is meant, teacher development alludes to teacher-learning. That is why they need to be distinguished. table 1 indicates dimensions of teacher autonomy on the left and the alternative expressions that can be reciprocally used to refer to the dimension at issue.

Rudolph (2006) attempted to identify teacher autonomy's areas. According to the study, the level of teacher autonomy depends on curriculum practice, pedagogy assessment, students' behaviour and classroom interaction.

Frostenson (2015) has divided teacher autonomy into three levels. The autonomy levels are layered as: General autonomy, collegial professional autonomy, and individual autonomy. According to this classification, general autonomy covers organizational systems such as legislation, curricula, and procedures which are mandated by the school

management. Secondly, collegial professional autonomy expresses teachers' collective involvement in decision-making process. Lastly, as to individual autonomy, teachers have control over their teaching practices.

Characteristics of Autonomous Teachers

There have been suggestions to develop autonomous behavior for teachers. Littlewood (1999) put the emphasis on the ability and the willingness to be autonomous. The teachers' desire levels can facilitate the process. Thavenius (1999) discussed what teachers should do for the analysis of teachers' own autonomous behaviour. The teachers should reflect on their teacher role and what they are doing for their students. Furthermore, they should consider the way they foster independence and responsibility and the strategies they use to ease their students' understanding and learning process.

Even though teacher autonomy is multifaceted and defined in various ways, the features of autonomous teachers can be listed based on the related research line. Autonomous teachers:

- can employ the necessary changes to adapt to evolving conditions (Freidman, 1999)
- have institutional knowledge, have a desire to enhance learner autonomy and have a willingness for continuous learning (Ramos, 2006)
- helps their students to progress (Thavenius, 1999)
- can adopt for their career progression (Sehrawat, 2014)
- can reflect on their profession and negotiate with their colleagues and students (Graves & Vye, 2012)
- exercise continuous reflection and have affective and cognitive control (Little,1995)

Taken together, as previously stated, teacher autonomy is multifaceted. It has various dimensions. Autonomy in all its dimensions encompasses the capabilities that teachers need to acquire, develop, and sustain through their professional development process.

Teacher Autonomy and Foreign Language Education

By entering into the context of language learning and teaching thanks to Council of Europe's Modern Languages Project in 1971, autonomy has gained prominence with Holec's (1981) report Titled "Autonomy and Foreign Language Learning" to the Council of Europe (Benson, 2011). It is widely accepted as a pivotal text for further research on learner autonomy, affecting language teaching methodologies. While teacher autonomy is a well-established topic in the context of general education, its exploration in the field of second language education is relatively recent and has not received sufficient scholarly attention (Dinçer, 2019; Jiménez Raya & Vieira, 2015).

It is widely accepted that language learners' autonomy is affected by their teachers. According to Graves and Vye (2012) one significant obstacle to fostering autonomy in language classrooms is that many teachers lack sufficient experience with autonomy-centered learning environments. Providing prospective teachers with training that empowers their autonomy, rather than simply transmitting information, could enhance autonomy in language classrooms.

In accordance with the study of Dinçer (2019) which aims to find out the relationship between EFL teachers' desired and actual autonomy and job satisfaction levels, it was revealed that there is a huge gap between language teachers' desired autonomy and actual autonomy. The study was conducted with 102 EFL teachers who works at public schools in Turkiye by taking benefit of both quantitative data and qualitative data. The study showed that external factors, such as curriculum and classroom environment, hinder teachers' autonomy.

The EPOSTL

There are several proposed and utilized tools to promote teacher reflection as I stated before. EPOSTL is one of them created to assist language teachers' professional development in the form of portfolio as its name suggests. It was projected by ECML (European Center for Modern Languages) in 2007 to develop a sense of harmony across Europe in the context of self -reflection practices of language teachers. The creators of the document are teacher educators from Armenia, Austria, Norway, Poland, and U.K. Unlike other tools developed for teacher reflection, EPOSTL defines its targeted audience as pre-service language teachers (Newby, 2007). Newby (2012) portrays the EPOSTL as:

> "A document intended for students undergoing their initial teacher education which encourages them to reflect on the didactic knowledge and skills necessary to teach languages, helps them to assess their own didactic competences and enables them to monitor their progress and to record their experiences of teaching during the course of their teacher education" (p.1)

The aims of the EPOSTL can be listed as follows:

-to support the students to assess the competencies a teacher strives to attain

-to make simpler to follow their progress with their teaching practices

-to foster an autonomous mode of teaching (Newby, 2012)

-to create opportunities for dialogue and discussion between student teachers and their mentors and educators

-to help student teachers act effectively by making them be aware of their shortcomings and strengths related to teaching

-to promote professional growth by seeing reflection and development as a life-long process.

Figure 1

The Mechanism of the EPOSTL

The EPOSTL is composed of different sections where competencies related to self-assessment of student teachers are covered. These sections are available in this way: *Personal Statement, Self-Assessment, Dossier, Glossary, Index and Users' Guide.* Glossary section presents key terms related to language learning and learning in the document. Index makes simpler to locate terms in descriptors. Users' Guide provides an explanation of the aim of the document and practical tips on how the document can be used more effectively. *Personal Statement, Self-Assessment, Dossier* are the major parts of the document, which is shown in Figure 1.

Personal Statement section contains questions about prospective language teachers' experiences and their expectations regarding aspects of teaching. It sets the ground for the users to identify themselves and indicate their expectations on teacher education process by relating to prior teaching experience. It aims to encourage student teachers to reflect on the aspects of teaching practice at the beginning of teacher education.

Self-assessment contains 195 "can do" statements as the descriptors of didactic competencies a teacher should attain related to teaching and methodology. These

competence descriptors are inclusive of all skills and domains of the language. The users chart their own development to facilitate self-evaluation on the accompanied bar over time. By evaluating the items in different time periods, the users visualize their growing competence. These descriptors help prospective EFL teachers identify their strengths and areas for improvement, guiding their professional growth and development. Seven main categories of the descriptors with their sub-categories are shown in Figure 2. As it can be seen in Figure 2, these descriptors cover a range of skills and areas related to language teaching.

Dossier section is composed of 6 charts with simple explanation of how to fill in them properly. The objective of this section is to provide a place for student teachers to support previously covered “can do” statements convincingly. This part is designated for the users to generate a compile of evidence from given lessons, observations, peers, mentors, classroom experience and action and case studies. The users can accumulate the records for their teacher education and future profession.

Figure 2

Component of the Descriptors, (Newby, et al., 2007)

EPOSTL as a Component of European Language Teaching Policy

The European Centre for Modern Languages of the Council of Europe (ECML) values plurilingualism and aims to harmonize European language education via initiative activities to help Europeans learn languages more efficaciously and encourage teachers to acquire new knowledge in their profession (Martyniuk & Slivensky, 2012). The EPOSTL takes its underpinnings and premises (Fenner, 2012) from three texts published by ECML aiming to lead a mutual understanding in- afterwards out- Europe. Those texts are the European Language Portfolio (ELP) (Council of Europe, 2000), the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2001), and The European Profile for Teacher Education: A Frame of Reference (Kelly & Grenfell, 2004), which are shown in Figure 3. It is needed to take close look at those texts to unfold the basis of the EPOSTL.

Figure 3

ECML Documents Influencing the composition of the EPOSTL

Several countries have utilized and adopted the CEFR (Read, 2014). As a detailed spectrum, the CEFR establishes a common language to talk about learner language abilities and assessment of these skills in any language with an effort to be coherent and transparent. It proposes six main proficiency levels (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2) described in relation to language tasks. The CEFR embodies “language learning, language teaching and language assessment with an action-oriented approach” (Council of Europe [CoE], 2001, p.9) The document is a leading light in European and across the world for language education, making a common reference system for linguistic competences available. (Dhiorbháin, 2019). CEFR introduces three tables to provide a comprehensive understanding and ease. The first table *global scale* presents very generalized information about the descriptors, which can help the teachers and the curriculum makers for orientation points. The second *table self-assessment grid* is a draft for a self-assessment orientation tool primarily based on the six levels. Thanks to this grid, the learners can determine at which stage they might be by looking at the checklist which includes more particular descriptors based on communicative activities. The last table, *qualitative aspects of spoken language use,* presents a self-assessment list where the users assess their spoken performances based on their communicative language competence. All these tables make the users have an idea on their progression in the target language. Therefore, the composition and the aims of the CEFR and EPOSTL are common as their objective is to guide language learning and teaching allowing users to follow their progress systematically.

First propositioned at the Rüschlikon Symposium in 1991 and launched in Coimbra in 2001 by ECML, the ELP is conceived to mediate to language teachers, learners, and the stakeholders (Little, Goullier & Hughes, 2011). The ELP was qualified as essentially complementary to the CEFR. The groundwork of the document is (Scharer, 2000, p. 5): “All competences are evaluated (…); it belongs to the learner; it is based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and a set of directives and common principles are applicable to it”. The portfolio is a self-directed learning instrument

with the intention of facilitating learner reflection, self-assessment of linguistic competences and learner autonomy pertaining to language learning (Little, 2002). Like the EPOSTL, it is composed of three main sections: The Language Passport, The Language Biography, The Dossier, which are principally similar to the EPOSTL.

As to The European Profile for Teacher Education, a frame of reference, (Kelly & Grenfell, 2004) and it can be looked at the text itself in order to grasp the rationale behind the document.

> "*It deals with the initial and in-service education of foreign language teachers in primary, secondary and adult learning contexts and it offers a frame of reference for language education policy makers and language teacher educators in Europe."* (p.4)

It consists of four sections. The structure section deals with the trajectory around educational courses regarding multifaceted aspects of educational setting. The second section Knowledge and Understanding contains items in relation to what a language teacher should know and understand about teaching, which is very similar to the self-assessment section in the EPOSTL. Thirdly, Strategies and Skills includes "What trainee teachers should know how to do in teaching and learning situations" (p.20). The last section is devoted to Values trainee teachers should be endorsed in and through their professional life.

All in all, those texts accompany each other. They approach language teaching and education in a comprehensive manner in the light of the fundamentals of European Language Teaching policy.

Research on the EPOSTL

The EPOSTL has been previously researched mainly focusing on reflective feature of it. Much of the research up to now focus on its precepts and they have described the EPOSTL from top to bottom (Seitova, Mirici, & Öz, 2019). Pilot studies were conducted in 2007. Those studies aim to integrate EPOSTL into pre-service teacher education.

Accordingly, some researchers (Orlova, 2011; Nihlen, 2011; Ingvarsdottir, 2011) have put the document into practice in teaching practicum courses where student teachers go through a practice session and perform actual teaching related to their profession under the supervision of a mentor. Other researchers (Makinen, 2011; Bagaric, 2011; Çakır & Balçıkanlı, 2012) have used it in teaching related methodology courses. Existing literature has studies conducted both in lectures and practicum jointly (Fenner, 2011; Mehlmauer-Larcher, 2011; Velikova, 2013).

Makinen (2011) introduced the EPOSTL into Teaching English as a Foreign Language program of the English Department and she states that majority of the students found the document useful by making them contemplate on their future teaching practice thanks to wide-ranging “can do” statements on theoretical and practical aspects of teaching. She concluded that Personal Statement section was functional since it reinforced their ability to think flexibly with regard to the practice of teaching.

Mehlmauer-Larcher (2011) included the EPOSTL throughout their methodology and practicum courses at Centre for English Language Teaching (CELT) being a part of English Department at the University of Vienna. At the first stage of the implementation, after the students worked with Personal Statement section individually, they attended discussion sessions in small groups. The topics of the course were closely linked to the relevant “can do” statement of the EPOSTL. Towards the end of the course, student teachers made their micro-teachings and received feedback from each other. At the second stage, they were asked to focus on descriptors with a critical eye, prepare lesson plans dealing with four skills and the teaching the language system, and have reflective talk sessions with their tutors. She states that the members of the team have been enthusiastic towards the process and for more intensive use workshops need to be arranged for school mentors so as to incapsulate the EPOSTL while studying with student teachers.

Another study was conducted by Cakir and Balcikanlı (2012) in order to explore STs’ perspective of using the EPOSTL. The dataset came from the interviews with 25 student

teachers and 4 trainers. The findings showed that the document is of benefit and advisable to foster teacher autonomy. On the other hand, previously published studies have revealed some areas seemed unsatisfactory in terms of the practicality and intelligibility. Mirici and Demirbas (2013) had an attempt to formulate an E-EPOSTL in order to modernize, thus making it more accessible. Today, the students are "*Digital Natives*" (Prensky, 2001) who are born into the digital era, challenging *"Digital Immigrant"* teachers to modify their teaching in order to meet the needs of their students and personalize the learning. Keeping this in mind, even though the document is available on the net and can be printed, the portfolio in the form of paper is not practical to use, follow their progress (Mirici & Hergüner, 2015) and find the relevant points or sections immediately.

In the light of existing literature, it is seen that the studies aiming to research the effects of using the EPOSTL to encourage teacher autonomy are scare. In this study, it is addressed to extent this line of research in the literature.

Chapter 3

Methodology

The current study is a case study which aims to explore the potential use of the EPOSTL to promote prospective EFL teachers' teaching autonomy. Seeking answers for main and sub research questions, this study adopts explanatory mixed method as the research methodology. Both quantitative and qualitative data is included. In this section, type of research, research sample, data collection, instruments and analysis are addressed.

Type of Research

Metin In this study, mixed method design, also called mixed method research, mixed research and multimethod, was employed. In mixed method research, being among three primary research paradigms alongside quantitative research and qualitative research, quantitative and qualitative data are embedded to gain insights into the studied issue. While qualitative studies (open-ended) focus on social problems and utilize inductive style with its flexible application, quantitative studies (closed-ended) examine the relationships between variables and use statistical analysis to generalize the findings. Mixed methods research is a type of inquiry incorporating qualitative and quantitative data in order to go beyond the information that are provided by each type alone (Cresswell, 2018). After analyzing various definitions of mixed method research, Johnson, Onwuegbbuzie and Turner (2007) describe mixed methods research as:

> "Mixed methods research is the type of research in which a researcher or team of researchers combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (e.g., use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for the broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration. " (p.123)

There are several reasons to employ mixed type research. By creating opportunity to compare different data set coming from qualitative and quantitative perspectives and

conceptualize them, mixed type research is valuable to reach a more comprehensive understanding of the research questions. Moreover, mixed type is also used to increase the validity and reliability of the conducted study.

Although they are useful and valuable research designs, qualitative and quantitative methods have some weaknesses. Hence, mixed method study provides solutions to overcome these problems and they can be diminished. Johnson and Christen (2019) present the importance of mixed method by comparing to qualitative and quantitative ones as explained below.

While qualitative researchers generally view the world fluid and they are not interested in generalizing the findings, quantitative researchers seek out agreed-on and objective realities. Mixed methods appreciate subjective, objective, and intersubjective realities. While measurement is reduced by numbers in quantitative research, meaning the data is in the form of numbers, words are the way the data is collected in qualitative research.

A mixed method research is not stick to one way of collecting data and present rich data base. Whereas quantitative researchers have “narrow-angle” lens by testing specific hypotheses, qualitative researchers have “wide-angel” and “depth-angel” lens by deeply analyzing the target phenomena. Mixed method researchers have “multilens” focus.

On the other hand, mixed type can be time-consuming. However, this weakness does not threaten the reliability and validity (Okumuş, 2014). Collecting and analysing both quantitative and qualitative data are labor-intensive. Furthermore, it is necessary for the researcher to be competent on these two types of designs.

The primary design of mixed method is examined under three headings: Convergent, Exploratory and Explanatory. Cresswell and Clarks (2018) illustrate the procedural guideline of mixed method research as it is shown in Figure 4:

Figure 4

Designing Mixed Method research, (Cresswell, 2018)

The current study employs an explanatory mixed method design. The quantitative data coming from questionnaire is explained thanks to qualitative data coming from interviews. The primary aim is to explore the potential of the EPOSTL to promote prospective EFL teachers by investigating the change of the prospective EFL teachers' perceived teaching autonomy and examining their perceptions and comments on the use of the EPOSTL. In spite of being mixed, this study is mainly qualitative research which has a rich tradition in the field of human social behavior (Agius, 2013). A major advantage of qualitative design is that it centers on the perspectives expressed by the participants (Auerbach and Silverstein, 2003). Therefore, the study uses qualitative analysis in order to gain insights into prospective EFL teachers' opinions on the EPOSTL to foster autonomy.

Research Sample

The research participants were 19 undergraduate students (seniors) at English Language Teaching Department at Hacettepe University. The primary inclusion criterion was being third grade student because starting from the fifth term, there are courses where pre-service student teachers have micro-teachings intensively. Also, after getting acquainted with theoretical courses, they are getting ready to teach public schools. Thus, the environment needed to develop teaching autonomy is provided. Additionally, students would have got the core competences to be able relate the content of the EPOSTL. At first, 25 students participated the study voluntarily. However, 19 of the participants took part in the whole quantitative phase. Semi-structured interview was conducted with 6 of them according to their consent. None of the participants had professional experience.

Data Collection

In order to start the study, approval was obtained from Ethical Committee of Hacettepe University. This study required the intended participants sign the informed consent form. Also, the form asked for their permission to record audios during the interviews to ensure the confidentiality of data. Consent forms were delivered online due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A one-hour online training was provided to the participants to introduce the EPOSTL. Hard copies of the EPOSTL were distributed to them.

The present study seeks answers for one main research questions and its sub-research questions. The main question is “how does the EPOSTL affect prospective EFL teachers’ teaching autonomy?”. To comprehend and find answers, two data collection instruments were determined as Teaching Autonomy Scale (TAS) (Hall & Pearson, 1993) and semi-structured interviews. The permission was granted by the developers of the scale. TAS concerns teachers’ general and curriculum autonomy with 18 items. The scale was delivered in its original language, English since the participants were students from English language teaching department and they were competent enough to understand the items.

On the other hand, semi-structured interview questions focused on the use of the EPOSTL and its effects on prospective EFL teachers' autonomy. In this study, semi-structured interview is seemed appropriate for the exploration of the perceptions (Barribal & While, 1994). There were 8 leading questions, however, according to the flow of the interviews, the extra questions were asked as this was a semi-structured type of interview. Both the questionnaire and the interview questions are included in appendix section. The process can also be examined from Figure 5 provided below.

Figure 5

The Flow of Data Collection Process

In order to see whether the expected changes would take place in prospective EFL teachers' perceived teaching autonomy over the period, TAS was applied twice. TAS 1, pre-test, was applied at the beginning of the 2022-23 Academic year second term via Google Forms. Up till the end of the year, students were asked to complete the EPOSTL

by relating to their courses. At the end of 2nd term of 2022-23 academic year, after students completed the sections of the EPOSTL, TAS 2, post-test, was applied. The questions were revised after the results of the quantitative data.

After the data was analyzed, the semi-structured interviews were held one by one. The interviews lasted between 15-20 minutes. The meetings were conducted via Zoom. After the meetings, the recordings were transcribed. Additionally, communication with participants was maintained throughout the process to control over the process and provide help. However, these interactions were not recorded as the main concern was just to assist the students. At the end, all scheduled procedures were completed.

Instruments

With reference to current study, the data came from two instruments. For the first sub-research question, “is there a statistically significant difference between teaching autonomy perception of the prospective EFL teachers in the use of the EPOSTL at the beginning and at the end of the academic term?”, Teaching Autonomy Scale was used. As to the second one, the views of the prospective EFL teachers on the role of the EPOSTL in their education, semi-structured interviews were held. These instruments will be presented separately.

The EPOSTL

The use of portfolios in teacher education can encourage reflection and self-assesment, professional development and collaboration with mentors and peers (Zeichner, & Wray, 2001). Portfolios can offer a comprehensive record of the development. In this study, the EPOSTL is the main instrument which is used to foster prospective EFL teachers’ teaching autonomy. It is a portfolio accompanying previously released CoE documents. This portfolio, consisting of 5 sections, has 92 pages. The sections of the EPOSTL is explained in Chapter 2. The participants were expected to fill the document in 12 weeks. During this process, necessary support was provided by the researcher.

The Scale

Scales are used when a researcher aims to measure such abstract concepts as opinions, attitudes, and psychological constructs. They can identify variations with more precise measurement. Moreover, because of undergoing meticulous validation process, scales help ensure consistency and reliability in the findings.

Teacher Autonomy Scale (TAS) developed by Hall and Pearson (1993). Pearson and Hall (1993) employed exploratory factor analysis and they revealed internal consistency reliability (α = .80). Similarly, Pearson and Moomaw (2006) also confirmed the internal consistency of the items (α = .81).

The necessary permission to use the scale was gotten from the developer via e-mail. TAS is composed of 18 items that are devised with Likert four-point scale (see Appendix). As illustrated in table 2, there are scales from 1 to 4 for each statement ranging from “definitely true” to “Definitely False”. In that way, neutral stance is eliminated. The participants were expected to complete the survey according to their current state of ability. Items 1,2,4,6,8,9,10,12,14 and 18 are reversed scored. High total summated scores represent higher teaching autonomy than low summated scores.

Table 2

4 Point Likert Type Scale for the TAS

Indicator	Equivalent
1	Definitely True
2	More or Less True
3	More or Less False
4	Definitely False

The items are on how the participants perceive their teaching autonomy by touching upon curriculum autonomy and general teaching autonomy which are the sub-dimensions of the scale. The scale encompasses the following areas: choosing activities and resources, implementing classroom practice, arranging instruction, and making decisions.

This tool served to find answer for first sub-research question . The questionnaire was be applied two times as pre application and post application. First one was before the use of the EPOSTL. Second one was done after whole implementation. By comparing the results, whether there was any difference between perceived autonomy at the beginning and at the end of the academic term was revealed.

Semi-Structured Interview

Interview is necessary when the intention is to find out the opinions of the people involved in education on their experience. As this study focuses on prospective EFL teachers' experience of the EPOSTL, interview is required to collect data. For the qualitative phase of the study, volunteer participants (n=6) joined semi-structured interview. The interviews were held individually. They were asked about the use of the EPOSTL in ELT programs and their comments on the EPOSTL and its effects on their teaching autonomy. Barriball and While (1994) explain two main reasons to carry out semi-structured interviews as follows:

> "First, they are well suited for the exploration of the perceptions and opinions of respondents regarding complex and sometimes sensitive issues and enable probing for more information and clarification of answers. Second, the varied professional, educational, and personal histories of the sample group precluded the use of a standardized interview schedule" . (p.330)

The questions were designed in a way that pursues the evaluation of the whole process. As the research plan included the interview, the questions were generated before the use of the EPOSTL . After quantitative phase of the study was completed, the questions

were revised based on the descriptive findings. Then, the questions were examined by 3 researchers. After getting feedback, the necessary adjustments and changes were made and. According to the flow of the interaction, extra questions were integrated.

The interviews were performed in the participants' native language, Turkish. The aim was to diminish any possible language related hindrance. The participants would explain themselves better in their native language, which was of benefit of the study as the purpose was to elicit their opinions and feelings. Therefore, the line by line transcribes were translated into English by the researcher. A certified public translator also translated the text into English. Then, the comparisons were made and at the end all texts were examined by another researcher. At the end of the process, the analysis of the qualitative data was performed.

Data Analysis

In the present study, in order to make sense of the data, two types of analyzing method were utilized. The analysis part is classified to two headings as this is a mixed method study. That's why the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data are explained separately.

Quantitative Data Analysis Process: For the current study, quantitative data set came from TAS 1 pre-test and TAS 2 post-test to identify the changes after the implementation. The number of the sample of this phase is 19. All statistical analyses were performed using IBM SPSS version 25.0 (SPSS Inc., Chicago, Illinois, USA). Continuous variables in the tables are presented as Mean±SD and Median (IQR). Categorical variables are presented as number (n) and percentage (%). The reliability analysis of the pre-test and post-test scores obtained from the total and sub-dimensions of the Teaching Autonomy Scale. It was tested with Cronbach's Alpha. When the continuous data of the study were examined for normality assumptions, it was determined that they showed a normal distribution because both the Shapiro-Wilk values were $p>0.05$ and the values obtained by

dividing the Skewness and Kurtosis values by their standard errors were within the ± 1.96 threshold range (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001; Mayers, 2013). Therefore, the Paired Samples t-test was used for the pre-test and post-test comparison of the total and sub-dimensions scores of the Teaching Autonomy Scale. The Mann Whitney U test was used for the comparison of the pre-test and post-test Teaching Autonomy Scale total and sub-dimensions scores in terms of gender. $p<0.05$ was considered statistically significant.

Qualitative Data Analysis Process: The quantitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews. Content analysis was carried out to analyze the dataset. Downe-Wambolt (1992) defines content analysis as:

> " a research method that provides a systematic and objective means to make valid inferences from verbal, visual, or written data in order to describe and quantify specific phenomena" (p.314)

This method is also useful when it is aimed to give an objective and verifiable descriptions of the explicit content messages Although there are various steps and frameworks for content analysis, the process can be examined under two main approaches which are inductive approach and deductive approach .For the current study, in order to understand prospective EFL teachers' opinions and reflections on the use of the EPOSTL, open-ended questions were asked. The audios were transcribed line by line. Then, the transcriptions were read repeatedly by the researcher. The key concepts were determined to form the codes by highlighting the words and adding notes on the text. That is to say, coding was done while reading the data. Then, related expressions were grouped, and categories were generated. Finally, themes for these categories were identified. The process can be seen in Figure 6 which is taken from Elo and Kyngas (2008). Thus, this analysis adopts inductive approach where the process of abstraction is employed to o condense and categorize data, enabling researchers to address study questions through concepts, categories, or themes (2020, Kyngas).

To conclude, in this part methodology related issues were presented. This is a case study where explanatory mixed method design is used. It consists of 19 participants. The instruments were the EPOSTL, Teaching Autonomy Scale and semi-structured interviews. The interview part included 6 of the participants on a voluntary basis. The data coming from quantitative phase were analyzed via IBM SPSS version 25.0 and the data coming from qualitative phase analyzed through content analysis.

Figure 6

Preparation, Organization and Resulting Phases in the Content Analysis

Chapter 4

Findings, Comments and Discussion

This chapter involves the findings of both quantitative and qualitative data subsequently. In the first part, the tables and figures related to statistical analysis are presented. Then, the themes generated through content analysis are given with exemplary quotations of the participants from the interviews. Finally, the comments and discussion part are included. The research questions one by one are referred for discussion part by comparing and contrasting with previous studies.

The Findings of Quantitative Phase

In this section of the study, the findings related to the statistical results of the data obtained from the scale study are presented. The first part of the findings section includes the Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency coefficients and descriptive statistics results for the participants' pre-test and post-test Teaching Autonomy Scale (TAS 1 and TAS 2) total and sub-dimensions, along with the frequency analysis results of demographic variables. In the second part, the analysis results regarding the changes in the participants' pre-test and post-test Teaching Autonomy Scale total and sub-dimensions and their comparison in terms of the gender variable are presented.

6 of the participants who had taken place in pre-test withdrew from the study without explaining any excuse. Some of them did not complete the post test. That’s why their pretest results were removed from the study in order not to manipulate the data.

By conducting a validation study for the TAS, Pearson and Moomaw (2006) showed that the scale is internally consistent, and the structure of the scale is psychometrically sound. The autonomy is examined under 2 categories as “general autonomy”, focusing on critical thinking and reflection, and “curriculum autonomy”, focusing on decision-making process.

Table 3

Cronbach's Alpha Internal Consistency Coefficients for the TAS Total and Sub-dimensions

TAS and Sub-dimensions	The number of the items	Pre- Test Cronbach (α)	Post-Test Cronbach (α)
Teaching Autonomy Scale Total	18	0.761	0.849
General autonomy	11	0.614	0.652
Curriculum autonomy	7	0.605	0.793

Table 3 presents the reliability analysis results for the pre-test and post-test Teaching Autonomy Scale total and sub-dimensions. In the table, Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficients for the used scale in this study is shown. When examining the reliability analysis results, it is observed that the Cronbach's Alpha values for the total score and sub-dimensions range from .60 to .84. Cronbach's Alpha values above the .50 threshold indicate that the scale and its sub-dimensions have adequate internal consistency (Cronbach, 1951). Therefore, it can be concluded that the Teaching Autonomy Scale has sufficient internal consistency in this study.

Shapiro-Wilk, Skewness, and Kurtosis Values for the Teaching Autonomy Scale Total and Sub-Dimension Scores are presented in Table 4.

Tablo 4

Shapiro-Wilk, Skewness, and Kurtosis Values for the Teaching Autonomy Scale Total and Sub-dimensions Scores

Variables	Pre-test				Post- test				Pre- test	Post-test
	Skewness		Kurtosis		Skewness		Kurtosis		Shapiro-Wilk	
	Statistic	SE	Statistic	SE	Statistic	SE	Statistic	SE		

Teaching Autonomy Scale Total	0.07	0.52	-0.557	1.01	0.31	0.52	-0.71	1.01	0.943	0.378
General autonomy	0.13	0.52	-0.93	1.01	0.70	0.52	-0.32	1.01	0.288	0.094
Curriculum autonomy	2.00	0.52	-0.006	1.01	-0.20	0.52	-0.79	1.01	0.547	0.505

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics of the Scores Obtained from the Pre-test and Post-test TAS Total and Sub-dimensions

	Variables	n	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Pre test	Teaching Autonomy Scale Total	19	2.39	3.50	2.95	.30
	General autonomy	19	2.55	3.55	2.97	.31
	Curriculum autonomy	19	2.14	3.57	2.90	.37
Post test	Teaching Autonomy Scale Total	19	2.33	3.67	3.01	.37
	General autonomy	19	2.55	3.73	3.06	.32
	Curriculum autonomy	19	2.00	3.71	2.93	.50

Table 5 provides the minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation values for the scores obtained by participants in the pre-test and post-test Teaching Autonomy Scale total and sub-dimensions.

Table 6

Frequency Distribution of Participants' Gender

Variables	n	%
Gender		
Female	14	73.7
Male	5	26.3

Table 6 gives the frequency distribution regarding the gender of the participants. According to the results of this analysis, it was determined that 73.7% (n = 14) of the participants were female and 26.3% (n = 5) were male.

In Table 7, the frequency distribution of the participants' grouping according to their pre-test-post-test Teaching Autonomy Scale cut-off scores is given

Table 7

Cut-off Points for Teaching Autonomy Scale

Variables	Pre test		Post test		Reference
	n	%	n	%	Cut-off Points
Teaching Autonomy Scale Group					
Low	17	89.5	14	73.7	0 – 3.3
Moderate	2	10.5	5	26.3	3.4 – 4.1
High	-	-	-	-	4.2 – 5.0

According to the results of this analysis, it was determined that 89.5% (n = 17) of the participants were in the low group and 10.5% (n = 2) were in the moderate group in the pre-test. When the post-test groups were examined, it was determined that 73.7% (n=14) of the participants were in the low group and 26.3% (n=5) were in the moderate group. Figure 7 and Figure 8 presents the pie chart for those findings.

Figure 7

Pie chart of Autonomy Levels Based on Pre-Test

Figure 8

Pie chart of Autonomy Levels Based on Post-Test

Table 8 illustrates the analysis results comparing the participants' pre-test and post-test Teaching Autonomy Scale total and sub-dimensions score averages. Based on the results of this analysis, although there was an increase in the participants' pretest-posttest Teaching Autonomy Scale total scores in favor of the posttest, this difference did not reach statistical significance (t=-0.754, p=0.461).

Table 8

Comparison of Participants' Pre-Test and Post-Test TAS Total and Sub-dimensions Mean Scores

Variables		n	Mean±SD	t	p
Teaching Autonomy Scale Total	Pre-test	19	2.95±0.30	-0.754	0.461
	Post test	19	3.01±0.37		
General autonomy	Pre-test	19	2.97±0.31	-1.104	0.284
	Post-test	19	3.06±0.32		
Curriculum autonomy	Pre-test	19	2.90±0,37	-0.383	0.706
	Post-test	19	2.93±0,50		

t=Paired Samples t test, p<0.05

Although there was an increase in the participants' pretest-posttest "General autonomy" scores, one of the sub-dimensions of the Teaching Autonomy Scale, in favor of the posttest, this difference did not reach statistical significance (t=-1.104, p=0.284). Likewise, there was an increase in the participants' pretest-posttest "Curriculum autonomy" scores, one of the sub-dimensions of the Teaching Autonomy Scale, in favor of the posttest, this difference did not reach statistical significance (t=-0.383, p=0.706).

Table 9

Comparison of Participants' Pre-Test Teaching Autonomy Scale Total and Sub-Dimension Mean Scores in Terms of Gender

Variables		n	Mean±SD	M(IQR)	Z	p
Teaching Autonomy Scale Total	Female	19	3.00±0.33	3 (0.54)	-1.486	0.156
	Male	5	2.81±0.12	2.81 (0.22)		
General autonomy	Female	19	3.01±0.33	3.01 (0.57)	-0.886	0.391
	Male	5	2.85±0.25	2.85 (0.5)		
Curriculum autonomy	Female	19	2.97±0.41	2.97 (0.54)	-1.887	0.059
	Male	5	2.71±0.10	2.71 (0.14)		

M=Median, IQR= Interquartile Range, Z=Mann Whitney U test, $p<0.05$

In table 9, the analysis results comparing the pre-test Teaching Autonomy Scale total and sub-dimension scores of participants based on gender are provided. According to this analysis, although the pre-test Teaching Autonomy Scale total scores of participants were found to be higher in females compared to males, this difference did not reach statistical significance (Z=-1.486, p=0.156).

Similarly, when When a comparison is made based on gender, it is seen that the"General autonomy" scores of participants in the pre-test Teaching Autonomy Scale were higher in females compared to males, but this difference did not reach statistical significance (Z=-0.556, p=0.391). Additionally, the "Curriculum autonomy" scores of participants in the pre-test Teaching Autonomy Scale were higher in females compared to males, but this difference did not reach statistical significance (Z=-1.887, p=0.059).

Table 10

Comparison of Participants' Post-Test Teaching Autonomy Scale Total and Sub-Dimension Mean Scores in Terms of Gender

Variables		n	Mean±SD	M(IQR)	Z	p
Teaching Autonomy Scale Total	Female	19	2.94±0.35	2.94 (0.38)	-1.344	0.186
	Male	5	3.24±0.40	3.24 (0.75)		
General autonomy	Female	19	2.99±0.30	2.99 (0.36)	-1.874	0.061
	Male	5	3.29±0.32	3.29 (0.64)		
Curriculum autonomy	Female	19	2.86±0.49	2.86 (0.64)	-1.258	0.208
	Male	5	3.17±0.55	3.17 (0.93)		

M=Median, IQR= Interquartile Range, Z=Mann Whitney U test, $p<0.05$

In Table 10, the analysis results comparing the post-test Teaching Autonomy Scale total and sub-dimension scores of participants based on gender are provided. According to this analysis, although the post-test Teaching Autonomy Scale total scores of participants were found to be higher in males compared to females, this difference did not reach statistical significance (Z=-1.344, p=0.186). Similarly, the "General autonomy" scores of participants in the post-test Teaching Autonomy Scale were higher in males compared to females, but this difference did not reach statistical significance (Z=-1.874, p=0.061). Additionally, the "Curriculum autonomy" scores of participants in the post-test Teaching Autonomy Scale were higher in males compared to females, but this difference did not reach statistical significance (Z=-1.258, p=0.208).

The Findings of Qualitative Phase

This part presents qualitative findings which were obtained from the interviews. The interviews were transcribed and examined repeatedly by the researcher. Based on the participants' opinions and comments, the categories were formed with codes. At the end 6 themes emerged. They will be explained with exemplifying extracts one by one.

Table 11

Theme 1: Attitudes Towards the EPOSTL

Categories	Codes
Positive attitudes	I thought it would be beneficial I thought it might be useful I think this could be enjoyable in some way I realized that it was effective I think it is of benefit I think it is entertaining I think I think it had a positive impact
Negative attitudes	It was boring at the beginning It was hard to complete I struggled a bit at first I didn't know how to handle We could not be able to meet what was expected of us

As seen in Table 11, some of the participants stated that they had difficulties in filling the EPOSTL at first as they were not familiar with such a portfolio. That's why they had negative attitudes. Also, some found it boring, but they stated that they realized it had useful sides later.

"*Honestly, I'm still getting used to the EPOSTL, so at first, I struggled a bit. I was wondering how I could possibly fill it out.*"

Participant 1

Also, they stated that that they mostly took the responsibility themselves throughout the process. It was their responsibility to relate the descriptors to their courses. The following extract presents an example:

"Most of the time, it's our responsibility, and we could not be able to meet what was expected of us."

Participant 3

On the other hand, there are positive attitudes towards EPOSTL. Many participants noted that the EPOSTL was a useful tool and had positive impact. Although the period of implementation was short, they stated that it was beneficial. The following extracts shows their positive opinions:

"When I looked, I saw that it was indeed somewhat effective, even in a short amount of time."

Participant 5

"Even though it was in a short amount of time, I think it had a positive impact."

Participant 2

At the beginning of the process, they thought this was a hard process. It was a huge document and demanded lots of work. They did not expect to learn the EPOSTL. Over time, they realized that it was comprehensive and useful tool to foster their teaching practice. The following extract exemplifies this situation.

"At first, I didn't know how to handle because there were many things to do, which were expected from us. However, as I was getting used to use it, I saw it was of benefit for our professional growth."

Participant 5

It is very new to integrate the EPOSTL into language teaching programs, especially in Turkiye. For that reason, the student teachers do not have any familiarness with it. Therefore, they will learn to relate it with their education. They stated that it is useful regarding their professional development.

All in all, there were both negative and positive attitudes towards the EPOSTL. The negative attitudes orbited around how to use it at the beginning of the process. The positive ones focused on its usefulness for their education on the part of the participants.

Table 12

Theme 2: EPOSTL as a reflective tool

Categories	Codes
Self-assessment	It pushes to assess yourself
	It enables us to self-assess through a document
	My self-assessment has developed
	It is very useful in terms of evaluating ourselves and seeing our shortcomings
	It helped me evaluate myself
Self-reflection	I did all the parts and I thought about them
	It makes us think why we do it and how we do
	It is a nice reflection tool
	I questioned what my shortcomings were and where I was
	I constantly think about what I know, what I don't know, and what I am finally learning
	I say to myself that I must be lacking in this area
	It actually helps us see how much we can meet these skills
	It's quite useful for seeing our shortcomings
	This makes me realize that I have a deficiency in that area
Initiative	I also try to evaluate and improve myself
	It makes me work harder on them
	I need to develop my teaching skills
	I need to improve, read more, or practice
	It actually pushes me to work on my teaching
	I tried to overcome the challenges

As seen in Table 12, all of the participants agreed that the EPOSTL is a useful tool to reflect on their teaching practice overall. They stated that thanks to the EPOSTL they evaluated their current state of teaching practice and knowledge. Also, throughout the process they questioned their abilities. Thus, the EPOSTL showed the participants the expectations from a language teacher.

Following extracts present the participants' opinions on the EPOSTL in relation to its reflective side.

"It shows what needs to be in place and helps us see how well we can meet these requirements. It enables us to self-assess through a document. This way, it helped me evaluate myself."

Participant 4

"I felt I wasn't making any progress. A few weeks after marking something, when I reflected on it again, I thought that despite having theoretical knowledge, my weakness in applying it persisted."

Participant 3

"It's quite useful for seeing our shortcomings in terms of self-evaluation, but it could be more effective if a more detailed study is conducted."

Participant 2

"I constantly think about what I know and what I don't know, and in the end, what I am learning. I try to check this by reflecting inwardly."

Participant 6

Each of the participants addressed that thanks to EPOSTL they reflect on themselves and see in what areas they need to improve their skills. This ongoing reflection helped them identify their strengths and weaknesses, allowing them to focus on areas that need improvement. Over time, this self-assessment process helped them better understand their progress and what steps they needed to take to enhance their skills further.

Moreover, according to the participants' views, they could assess their performance and knowledge. They decided to take actions in order to develop their knowledge, practice and shortcomings as seen in the extract below.

"I checked off the points, saying, "I know this, I can do this," but sometimes I see that I struggle with certain descriptors. This makes me realize that I have a deficiency in that area, and I need to improve, read more, or practice. It definitely reflects back on me in that way and has such an effect."

Participant 2

The findings suggest that the EPOSTL is a document that enables the users to reflect on themselves, assessing themselves and make decision for their future. In that sense, it is highly effective in promoting self-assessment, self-reflection, and initiative among student teachers. It provides a structured framework that encourages deep reflection on teaching practices, helps identify strengths and weaknesses, and motivates continuous professional development. These elements are crucial for the growth and improvement of future educators.

Table 13

Theme 3: General evaluation for the EPOSTL

Categories	Codes
Description	Goal setting tool Pathfinder Guidance Useful device Reflective tool
Aspects	Flexible Multifaceted Not rigid Open to improvement Practical Comprehensive

When Table 13 is examined, it can be said that the participants in this study see the EPOSTL as a tool which shows them what to do. They define it as “goal setting tool”. By examining the descriptors, they realized what they are required to do. Therefore, they used it to shape their professional development thanks to comprehensive content, ranging from classroom management to teaching language skills. Students’ views are as seen in the given extract below.

“It actually pushes me to work on my teaching. Guidance.”

Participant 1

“The EPOSTL offers many different skills in many different areas. It's very comprehensive It includes every area like listening, speaking, methodology.”

Participant 6

“I think the EPOSTL is flexible, it is not so rigid, it can be integrated into most things and work in harmony. I think it is a useful tool anyway, but it is a tool that is still evolving, especially in our department. As I said, it is a very flexible tool.”

Participant 3

Participant 6 draws attention to its inclusive side. The descriptors in the document include methodology section that focuses on how to teach language skills such as listening and language domains such as grammar. It also involves classroom management and conducting a lesson sections. Participant 5 shares its opinions on conducting lesson:

“Thanks to the EPOSTL, I saw how to prepare a well-organized lesson plan. It is very useful device, and I can say that it is multifaceted.”

It is clear that this portfolio gave chance for the students to set their own goals to be teachers. They saw the necessary qualities and realized they needed to prepare themselves for their future profession. Participants 2 and 3 portray this in the following ways subsequently:

"I think the most important thing in the classroom is why you do something, how I teach it, and what will happen in the end when I teach it. The EPOSTL provides reflection in this sense."

"*I used it as a goal tool. To be honest, since it has different uses, since I was in third grade, it was a tool that guided me in terms of setting goals and what I could and couldn't do."*

These findings from student teacher interviews highlight the value of EPOSTL as a versatile, reflective, and practical tool that aids in the comprehensive professional development of prospective language teachers.

Table 14

Theme 4: Suggestions for the EPOSTL

Categories	Codes
Introduction	The descriptors should be introduced in detail
	An awareness-raising process is required
	there should definitely be an introduction
Integration	It can be blended into the curriculum
	It should be integrated more into lessons
	it needs to be put into contexts
	it can be integrated into the materials we use
	I would prefer it to be integrated into lessons
Operation	It may be more efficient if a more detailed study is done
	it will be better if a study is carried out together with the teachers of all courses
	It would be good for the students to be checked by the teachers.
	Small cases can be given, and questions can be asked based on them
	The process should be guided
	The process may extend over years

The student teachers were asked if they had any suggestions for the EPOSTL. As an inductive approach was followed, the categories of the suggestions were not mentioned. Directing the participants to the intended codes and categories was avoided.

Their suggestions focused on three main headings as seen in Table 14. First of all, some of the participants stated that an introduction phase to the EPOSTL before using it should be.

"It may be at the introductory level. You know, there should definitely be an introduction for the EPOSTL."

Participant 3

"There should be an awareness raising process."

Participant 6

All of the participants emphasized its integration into the courses in the faculty. They suggested that the EPOSTL should take place in the program under the mentorship of the instructors. Also, another suggestion was about situating the document's content into contexts. The participants were asked about those contexts. They replied that:

"The contexts such as, in relation to the courses we have, methodology, teaching reading, for example. Not in an isolated way."

Participant 5

"I would prefer it to be integrated into lessons because I think with a student mindset, you know, sometimes it can take you quite a while to convince students, no matter how much there is to learn. You need some external motivation at some point. Unfortunately, sometimes that becomes the lessons themselves and marks."

Participant 3

As for the issue related to the operation, extending the process over years was suggested. The duration for the use of the EPOSTL was 12 weeks for this study. The student teachers suggested a meticulous and detailed implementation. To achieve this, the

use of EPOSTL should be spread over the years to focus on each part in a comprehensive way. Embedding the EPOSTL into daily lessons can make its application more practical and continuous. Moreover, embedding the EPOSTL into daily lessons can make its application more practical and continuous according to some of the participants. Guidance throughout the EPOSTL process is necessary to help users navigate and utilize it properly.

"Slowly over time. It can be integrated gradually. This will give good results."

Participant 4

"You know, it can be spread over the years. And I really think it's necessary because, you know, for me, when it comes to language learning, what the CEFR stands for a language learner; the EPOSTL signifies the same thing for a teacher."

Participant 3

Participant 3 emphasizes the importance of the EPOSTL for prospective EFL teachers. Participant 3 draws a connection between the CEFR and the EPOSTL. The CEFR plays a crucial role in guiding language learning and teaching practices, facilitating communication and mobility, and promoting a deeper understanding of language proficiency levels. Similarly, the findings show that the EPOSTL is of importance for the prospective EFL teachers to promote a comprehensive understanding of language teaching practice.

The suggestions emphasize the need for a detailed introduction, better integration into the curriculum and lessons, and a well-guided, collaborative, and long-term approach to using the EPOSTL. Implementing these suggestions can enhance the effectiveness of the EPOSTL as a reflective tool for pre-service teachers. Additionally, based on the participants' suggestions, a suggestion part is included in the conclusion part for the EPOSTL.

Table 15

Theme 5: Challenges experienced while using the EPSOTL

Categories	Codes
Comprehension-based	I didn't understand how to complete
	I couldn't understand what some parts meant
	I had difficulty in understanding the items
Practice-based	Some descriptors were written assuming we had experiences
	We couldn't deliver enough micro-teachings
	I had a bit of a hard time filling the descriptors
	I couldn't fill it in because I had no teaching experience

One of the aims of this study was to explore whether the participants had any difficulty while using the EPOSTL. So, the participants were asked if they experienced any challenge during the process. Based on their comments and experiences, two categories emerged as seen in Table 15. The challenges faced by the users of the EPOSTL can be examined under two main categories as comprehension-based challenges and practice-based challenges.

Firstly, some of the participants stated that they had trouble with understanding the instructions. Also, some had difficulties in interpreting some of the descriptors.

"It will be difficult for 2nd and 3rd grade students to fill in the parts related to the application. Theoretically they can fill it in, but they cannot fill in the practical part. I could not understand exactly how I should fill in the dossier part. The document itself did not explain clearly enough how we should complete it."

Participant 6

"Personally, I couldn't understand what some parts meant. I had a hard time."

These extracts point to a possible need for simplification or additional training on how to interpret these items. This could be due to unclear guidelines, or a lack of examples provided.

Secondly, some of the participants made a connection with teaching practice. The lack of practice in teaching brought about challenges in relating the some of the descriptors.

"Since I did not have this experience in the previous period, I could not fill it in because I thought I was not making any progress. When I thought back a few weeks after making a mark, I thought that although I had theoretical knowledge that I was not making any progress, I was still weak in putting it into practice, so I could not fill it in. I can say that I had a hard time with this."

Participant 5

It is seen that the users struggled to provide sufficient micro-teaching sessions, which are essential for completing certain parts of the EPOSTL. This is due to time constraints, lack of opportunities, or institutional limitations.

Table 16

Theme 6: EPOSTL for autonomous teachers

Categories	Codes
For general autonomy	Classroom management Lesson planning Assessment of the performance
For curriculum autonomy	Teaching skills Teaching reading Teaching practice

Based on Table 16, the analysis of the interviews shows an emerging theme for two categories constituted from the interviewees' responses. These categories are: "For general autonomy" and "For curriculum autonomy."

The category of general autonomy encompasses the broader aspects of teaching that contribute to a teacher's ability to operate independently within the classroom environment such as classroom management and lesson planning.

"I was able to decide on the materials I used. I teach my lessons more easily in this way. I don't like sticking to a coursebook. When I have to follow a guidebook or something like that, it honestly becomes very boring, and I start teaching in a monotonous way. This leads to a teacher-centered approach, constantly managing and controlling the students. I think this becomes very tedious for both sides."

Participant 4

"If I address my autonomy in lesson planning, I think it has been beneficial."

Participant 3

This suggests that the EPOSTL has helped in developing more personalized lesson plans. Autonomous lesson planning supports the creation of a more personalized learning experience for students by addressing diverse learning styles and needs.

As to second category "For the curriculum Autonomy" focuses on the specific teaching skills and practices that enable teachers to adapt and implement the curriculum independently. The participants' statements contain teaching skills, teaching reading and teaching practice.

"I haven't' paid enough attention to teaching reading. Teaching skills was seemed easy to me. However, it is very complicated."

Participant 6

"I believe the EPOSTL is definitely beneficial for fostering autonomy. This is because the EPOSTL constantly asks why we are doing something and how we are doing it. I think the most important thing in the classroom is why you do something, how I teach it, and what will happen in the end when I teach it. The EPOSTL provides reflection in this sense. Therefore, I think it is particularly important for teachers to have self-awareness and to be able to help their students experience this awareness as well."

Participant 2

The participants assert that the EPOSTL is beneficial for autonomy because it encourages constant reflection on the reasons and methods behind teaching practices. The EPOSTL's requirement to continually ask "why" and "how" promotes a deeper understanding of teaching practices, which is crucial for effective teaching. In addition, these extracts show that the student teachers draw a connection between teacher and student autonomy. When teacher autonomy is performed, the students are supported to be autonomous.

Discussion

This part discusses the findings obtained from the study by research questions and previous research in the literature. In this mixed method study, the main research question was "How does the EPOSTL affect prospective EFL teachers' teaching autonomy?". In order to find answers, two sub-research questions (S-RQ) were generated. They will be examined one by one.

S-RQ1: Is there a statistically significant difference between teaching autonomy perception of the prospective EFL teachers in the use of the EPOSTL at the beginning and at the end of the academic term?

With the help of quantitative data, the Paired Samples t-test was used for the pre-test and post-test comparison of the total and sub-dimensions scores of the Teaching

Autonomy Scale. The analysis focuses on both the overall scores and specific sub-dimensions of teaching autonomy: "General autonomy" and "Curriculum autonomy". The results indicated that there was an increase in the participants' total Teaching Autonomy Scale scores from the pre-test to the post-test. On the other hand, this difference did not reach statistical significance (t=-0.754, p=0.461). It can be claimed that a definitive effect of the intervention is unlikely. This was not expected by the researcher. The possible reasons for these results were investigated thanks to qualitative data.

As to sub-dimensions, an increase is seen in both "General Autonomy" and "Curriculum Autonomy". However, these increases did not reach statistical significance. The t-value of curriculum autonomy was found as t=-0.383. Moreover, the t-value of general autonomy was found as t=-1.104. These findings indicate small size effect regarding the implementation. Furthermore, perception of teaching autonomy, paralleling with Pearson and Hall (1993), did not differ between the genders. Therefore, taken together, these results suggest that the implementation in this study did not reach a significant measurable improvement.

S-RQ2: What are the views of the prospective EFL teachers on the role of the EPOSTL in their education?

This study aimed to explore the effects of the use of the EPOSTL on prospective EFL teachers' teaching autonomy. The instrument used throughout the process was the EPOSTL. In order to address this question, in this mixed-type research, qualitative data were gathered from the interviews on the use of the EPOSTL. Besides, this question was divided into two more questions as:

-What kind of effects does the EPOSTL pose for professional growth?

-What are the challenges encountered for the prospective EFL teachers during the use of the EPOSTL?

The main themes regarding the use of the EPOSTL were presented in the findings section. In the light of these findings, both the views of the participants on the role of the EPOSTL in their education and the reason why the implementation did not lead a meaningful change between the beginning and the end of the process will be discussed.

First of all, the findings showed a generally positive outlook towards the EPOSTL among student teachers. Positive attitudes are centered around the recognition of its benefits and effectiveness. On the other hand, negative attitudes tend to revolve around initial difficulties, suggesting a need for better support and guidance.

The participants emphasized the reflective dimension of the EPOSTL lots of times. The study shows that the EPOSTL is a reflective tool which enable the student teachers to reflect on their teaching practice. Reflecting is a professional practice that is essential in in transformative teacher education models (Dhiorbháin, 2019). The present study found that the EPOSTL has a positive effect on the students' developing their reflective skills . These results corroborate the findings of previous studies (Okumuş, 2014; Seitova et al., 2019; Mirici & Hergüner, 2015; Makinen, 2011).

Based on findings of interviews, it can be assumed that the EPOSTL helps student teachers set clear and attainable goals for their professional development. By using EPOSTL, student teachers can systematically plan their growth and progress in teaching, leading to a more focused and directed development. Moreover, the participants stated that EPOSTL is adaptable to different contexts and needs. This flexibility can allow student teachers to tailor the document to their specific circumstances, making it relevant and applicable in diverse settings. By addressing multiple facets of teaching, it ensures development for student teachers.

Likewise, consistent with the literature, this research found that the EPOSTL can be used for awareness raising, self-assessment (Dunne, 2005), and developing autonomy (Burkert & Schwienhorst, 2008). The students stated that they realized what the abilities they should have and what they should do for their teaching practice. Moreover, the

importance and the effort of decision-making process is realized by the participants. Hence, it could conceivably be hypothesized that the pre-service teachers appreciated the use of the EPOSTL for teacher improvement. means that it is a useful tool for professional growth. It is possible to say, therefore, that the EPOSTL can be used to enhance the quality of professional practice.

The findings showed that there is a relationship between teacher autonomy and learner autonomy. Beyond teacher self-awareness, the participants highlight the importance of enabling students to experience similar awareness, which can improve their learning experience and outcomes.

Another finding that stands out from the results is about the challenges the participants experienced. The participants mentioned several difficulties which are categorized into two groups as they were indicated in the qualitative findings part. Firstly, they stated that they could not understand some of the descriptors. This problem is related to the language used as it was expressed by the participants. For some, the language used in the descriptors was difficult. In that sense, the findings of the current study are contrary to those of Okumuş (2014). In her study, language used in the descriptors is said to be comprehensible, easy, and explanatory. Moreover, in the current study, the inclusion of example cases to be clearer was suggested. Secondly, the participants addressed the paucity of teaching experience in their education.

Third class students have limited chance to practice. In Turkiye, ELT students have compulsory training at the end of their four-year education. Therefore, they had difficulty in both making sense the document and completing it because they did not have opportunities to gain experience in a real classroom setting. This also can be taken account while evaluating the SRQ-1. As the duration of the study and their chance to gain experience in real classroom environment is limited, there was a little change in their perceived teaching autonomy. In the light of the qualitative data, the findings of the t-test can be interpreted in that wa

Chapter 5

Conclusion and Recommendations

In this chapter, the study will be concluded. An overall evaluation will be provided. This chapter involves conclusion of the study, recommendations for the EPOSTL, recommendations for the stakeholders and recommendations for further research in relation to findings of the current research.

Conclusion

The present study was designed to determine the effects of the use of the EPOSTL on prospective EFL teachers' teaching autonomy. This was a mixed-method study where both quantitative and qualitative analysis were performed. The quantitative phase of the study included 19 students. 6 of the participants did not continue the study. Teaching Autonomy Scale, developed by Pearson and Hall (1993) was used as instrument to collect quantitative data. After quantitative part of the study, the qualitative data was gathered through semi-structured interviews that were done individually. The number of the participants for this phase was 6.

The study has showed that ELT students have positive attitudes towards the EPOSTL. Also, study indicated that the integration of the EPOSTL into the curriculum of the faculty of education would be beneficial in order to promote reflective practice, self-assessment, and raising awareness on teaching autonomy for prospective English language teachers. Student teachers stated that they realized what abilities and knowledge they should be possessed with thanks to the EPOSTL. Therefore, they described it as a guide and directory for their continuing professional development and future profession. Based on the findings of this research, it is proposed that the EPOSTL:

1) helps prospective EFL teachers set goals.

2) helps prospective EFL teachers assess and evaluate themselves.

3) is a useful tool to go through their weaknesses and strengths.

4) makes student teachers eager to take action for the development of their teaching practice.

5) is a guide for prospective EFL teachers with its comprehensive sub-sections.

6) is a useful tool to enhance autonomy over language teaching.

7) should be integrated into curriculum in language teaching departments.

These results show the EPOSTL is an effective tool for the prospective EFL teachers to gain awareness on their autonomy. This study enhanced our understanding of the relation between autonomy and the EPOSTL. It is good and beneficial device which enables them to reflect on their practices, analyze their current state, and think critically on the elements of language teaching. It presents a nice content to develop their teaching practice.

The study shows that the student teachers need more practice courses to develop their teaching skills. In Turkiye, the faculty of education includes one-year process to experience a real classroom environment on the part of the student teachers. This period is very limited to gain autonomy over their profession. This time period can be spread over the years. In the second year of education, prospective EFL teachers can make classroom observations, which is made in the last year of their education in the current system. Similarly, the courses can be incorporated micro-teachings which involves practicing teaching skills and strategies.

Recommendations for the EPOSTL

It can be said that the EPOSTL is useful device for student teachers to evaluate, assess and reflect on their teaching and learning process. However, regarding the findings of this study, some recommends have aroused for the use of the EPOSTL both from the

participants and the researcher. The participants inspired the researcher at this point. Therefore, they will be explained hand in hand.

One of the most uttered challenges in the study was about the comprehension of what the document exactly asks for. In some parts it was due to the language used. In order to cope with this challenge, providing clearer instructions, examples, and training sessions on how to fill out the EPOSTL could mitigate comprehension-based challenges. Simplifying language and providing additional explanatory notes or glossaries could help users better understand the items and descriptors. The users' guide part can be extended. Moreover, interactive workshops or detailed video tutorials could be beneficial. CoE can release videos where teaching practices are held and evaluated in accordance with the descriptors to support the use of the EPOSTL. This approach can ensure practical application and continuous engagement with the EPOSTL.

The EPSOTL was designed for pre-service language teachers as intended population to monitor their progress. It can be used with in-service teachers as well. The EPOSTL could be redesigned to better accommodate users with varying levels of teaching experience. Including sections or options tailored for novice teachers might help reduce the barriers faced by those without prior teaching experience. This might reduce negative affective issues towards the EPOSTL for encountering.

As to another suggestion, the EPOSTL is in the form of hard copy and soft copy which is composed of 92 pages. The users can print. The printed version may not be portable. In addition, the soft copy is not present user friendly as it is in the form of PDF. In previous studies, there have been attempts to convert the EPOSTL into an electronic setting. Mirici and Demirbaş (2013) suggested an electronic version of the EPOSTL as E-EPOSTL, which presents user-friendly application. This version can be put into use. Moreover, an application for smart phones can be designed as well.

Recommendations for the Stakeholders

Developing teaching skills necessitates teaching experience. Before their teaching career, prospective teachers lack sufficient practice as it was shown in the current study. For a more complete development , institutions might need to provide more opportunities for micro-teaching or alternative ways to gain relevant experience. Online teaching sessions or peer teaching sessions could be designed as alternatives.

The use of the EPOSTL in the institutions where teachers are trained and educated is getting prevailed. The EPOSTL can be integrated into language teacher education programs. Thus, the instructors and the prospective EFL teachers run this process together to get the highest benefit from the implementation. For that purpose, the instructors from every university where language teaching programs are available can come together and negotiate the integration and modifications. Guidance throughout the EPOSTL process is necessary to help users navigate and utilize it properly.

To sum up, a supportive culture that encourages student teachers to experiment with new teaching practices and share their experiences and strategies with their peers can be created. In that way, the practices can offer professional development opportunities focused on classroom management, lesson planning, and assessment techniques to build general autonomy. Utilizing case studies and practical examples can help prospective EFL teachers practice real-life teaching and learning contexts. By implementing these suggestions, institutions can enhance the effectiveness of the EPOSTL, ensuring that it becomes a valuable tool for the professional development of student teachers.

Recommendations for Further Research

The current study was conducted with 19 participants. The small sample size did not allow generalize the findings. The study can be repeated in larger samples. Besides, teachers of the students, the instructors were not included in the study. For further research, instructors could be a part of the study.

In this study Teaching Autonomy Scale was used. Apart from this, many other scales can be used to get more robust results and to examine thoroughly. For example, questionnaires about self-reflection, self-assessment or motivation can be integrated to compare the results. Due to the time constraints, in this study, only one instrument for the quantitative data was used. Moreover, a questionnaire can be integrated into the study to perform the participants' perceptions on the EPOSTL via quantitative data.

As to another suggestion, small group discussions can be arranged to increase the interaction and to make them scaffold each other thanks to student-student interaction. In that way, they can assist each other.

As the last suggestion, this study should also be replicated with in-service teachers. The EPOSTL can be used with in-service teachers from different backgrounds. In-service language teachers can propose their viewpoints.

To conclude, the EPOSTL opens a broad research area. New studies can be carried out with different samples, different sample size, and with different instruments. New insights into this useful portfolio can be gained in that way.

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APPENDIX-A: Consent Form

Hacettepe Üniversitesi
BİLGİLENDİRİLMİŞ GÖNÜLLÜ ONAM FORMU

Sizi Pınar Sasa tarafından yürütülen "EPOSTL Kullanımının Aday İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Öğretim Özerkliklerine Etkisi" başlıklı çalışmaya davet ediyoruz. Bu araştırmanın amacı EPOSTL (European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages), Yabancı Dil Öğretmen Adayları için Avrupa Portfolyosu, dokümanının Hacettepe Üniversitesi'nde İngiliz Dili Eğitimi bölümünde okuyan 3. sınıf öğrencilerinin öğretim özerklikleri üzerindeki etkilerini araştırmaktır. Araştırma bir ders dönemi sürecektir. Araştırmanın ilk bölümünde 18 maddeden oluşan öğretim özerkliği ölçeği doldurmanız istenmektedir. Ardından çevrimiçi ortamda araştırmacı, araştırmada kullanılacak olan EPOSTL'ı tanıtmak amacıyla 1 saatlik bir eğitim verecektir. Doküman PDF olarak ve yazılı kopya olarak sizle paylaşılacaktır. 12 hafta süreyle dokumanı doldurmanız istenmektedir. Bu süreçte araştırmacı sizinle iletişim halinde olacaktır. Bir sonraki aşamada, öğretim özerkliği ölçeğini yeniden doldurmanız istenecektir. Son olarak çalışma sahibi ile çevrimiçi ortamda gönüllülük önceliğine dayanarak seçilecek kişiler ile 15 dakika sürecek bir görüşme gerçekleştirilecektir. Bu kısımda katılımcının rızası ile ses kaydı yapılacaktır. Bu çalışmaya katılmak tamamen **gönüllülük** esasına dayanmaktadır. Bu araştırma sonucunda katılımcılara hiçbir sorumluluk yüklenmeyecektir. Çalışmanın amacına ulaşması için sizden beklenen, bütün soruları eksiksiz, kimsenin baskısı veya telkini altında olmadan, size en uygun gelen cevapları içtenlikle verecek şekilde cevaplamanızdır. Bu formu okuyup onaylamanız, araştırmaya katılmayı kabul ettiğiniz anlamına gelecektir. Ancak, çalışmaya katılmama veya katıldıktan sonra herhangi bir anda çalışmayı bırakma hakkına da sahipsiniz. Veri toplama süreci tamamlandıktan sonra veri kayıtlarınızın silinmesi için talepte bulunmanız yeterlidir. Bu çalışmadan elde edilecek bilgiler tamamen araştırma amacı ile kullanılacak olup kişisel bilgileriniz **gizli tutulacaktır**; ancak verileriniz yayın amacı ile kullanılabilir. Araştırma tamamlandığında genel/size özel sonuçların sizinle paylaşılmasını istiyorsanız lütfen araştırmacıya iletiniz. Bu araştırmanın yapılabilmesi için Hacettepe Üniversitesi Etik Komisyonundan izin alınmıştır.

Yukarıda yer alan ve araştırmadan önce katılımcıya verilmesi gereken bilgileri okudum ve katılmam istenen çalışmanın kapsamını ve amacını, gönüllü olarak üzerime düşen sorumlulukları anladım.

Bu koşullarda söz konusu araştırmaya kendi isteğimle katılmayı kabul ediyorum.

Tarih:
Katılımcı:
Adı-Soyadı:
Adres:
İmza:

Araştırmacı:
Pınar SASA
Hacettepe Üniversitesi
İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Yüksek Lisans Öğrencisi
İmza:

Sorumlu Araştırmacı:
Prof. Dr. İsmail Hakkı MİRİCİ
H.Ü., Eğitim Fakültesi, Yabancı Diller Bölümü, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi A.B.D

APPENDIX-B: Teaching Autonomy Scale

In English:

	1	2	3	4
1. I am free to be creative in my teaching approach.				
2. The selection of student-learning activities in my class is under my control.				
3. I seldom use alternative procedures in my teaching.				
4. Standards of behavior in my classroom are set primarily by myself.				
5. My job does not allow for much discretion on my part.				
6. In my teaching, I use my own guidelines and procedures.				
7. In my situation, I have little say over the content and skills that are selected for teaching.				
8. The scheduling of use of time in my classroom is under my control.				
9. My teaching focuses on those goals and objectives I select myself.				
10. I follow my own guidelines on instruction.				
11. In my situation, I have only limited latitude in how major problems are resolved.				
12. What I teach in my class is determined for the most part by myself.				
13. In my class, I have little control over how space is used.				
14. The materials I use in my class are chosen for the most part by myself.				

15. The evaluation and assessment activities used in my class are selected by people other than myself.				
16. I select the teaching methods and strategies I use with my students.				
17. I have little say over the scheduling of use of time in my classroom				
18. The content and skills taught in my class are those I select.				

In Turkish:

	1	2	3	4
1. Öğretim yaklaşımımda yaratıcı olmakta özgürüm.				
2. Dersimdeki öğrenci-öğrenme aktivitelerinin seçimi benim kontrolüm altındadır.				
3. Öğretimimde alternatif yöntemleri nadiren kullanırım.				
4. Sınıfımdaki davranış standartları öncelikle benim tarafımdan belirlenir.				
5. İşim benim açımdan çok fazla inisiyatif yetkesine izin vermiyor.				
6. Öğretimimde kendi prensiplerimi ve yöntemlerimi kullanırım.				
7. Benim durumumda, öğretim için seçilen içerik ve beceriler üzerinde çok az söz sahibiyim.				
8. Sınıfımdaki zaman kullanım planlaması benim kontrolüm altındadır.				
9. Öğretimim, kendi seçtiğim amaç ve hedeflere odaklanır.				
10. Öğretme konusunda kendi yönergelerimi takip ederim				

11. Benim durumumda, büyük sorunların nasıl çözüleceği konusunda yalnızca sınırlı bir serbestliğe sahibim.				
12. Derslerimde öğrettiklerimi büyük ölçüde ben belirlerim.				
13. Dersimde, sınıf alanının nasıl kullanıldığı üzerinde çok az kontrolüm var.				
14. Dersimde, kullanılan materyaller çoğunlukla kendim tarafımdan seçilir.				
15. Sınıfımda kullanılan ölçme ve değerlendirme etkinlikleri benim dışımdaki kişilerce seçilir.				
16. Öğrencilerim için kullandığım öğretim yöntem ve stratejilerini ben seçerim.				
17. Dersimde zaman kullanımımın programlanması konusunda çok az söz sahibiyim.				
18. Sınıfımda öğretilen içerik ve beceriler benim seçtiklerimdir.				

APPENDIX-C: Screenshot of the Permission to Use the TAS

Alıcı: ben

İngilizce > Türkçe İletiyi çevir İngilizce için kapat

Pinar:

You have my permission to use the 18-item Teaching Autonomy Scale (TAS) in your research study. I did not copyright the TAS. Therefore, it is in the public domain. All I ask is that you give attribution (i.e., reference the source of the TAS) in your research.

There is no manual for the TAS. However, I have attached to this email both the TAS and the scoring key for the instrument. Note that, based on our 1993 study, Dr. Pearson and I deleted two items from the initial 20-item scale (the 3rd and 5th item in Table 1 of our study) to strengthen instrument reliability. Also, we modified two other items because of their complex factor loadings; these modified items appear as items 4 and 10 on the 18-item TAS.

I wish you well with your research.

Bruce W. Hall, Professor Emeritus
University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida, USA

2 Ek • Gmail tarafından tarandı

APENDIX-D: Sample Pages from the EPOSTL

Personal Statement

4. How important do you consider the following for a language teacher? Add your own ideas. Discuss with a partner and give reasons for your choices.

	How important? not → very important				
1. Cooperating with others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Good organisational skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Being able to explain grammar	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

(Newby, et al., 2007, p.11)

Self-Assessment

A. Using Lesson Plans

1. I can start a lesson in an engaging way.

2. I can be flexible when working from a lesson plan and respond to learner interests as the lesson progresses.

3. I can ensure smooth transitions between activities and tasks for individuals, groups and the whole class.

(Newby, et al., 2007, p.39)

A. Learner Autonomy

1. I can evaluate and select a variety of activities which help learners to reflect on their existing knowledge and competences.

2. I can evaluate and select a variety of activities which help learners to identify and reflect on individual learning processes and learning styles.

3. I can guide and assist learners in setting their own aims and objectives and in planning their own learning.

4. I can evaluate and select tasks which help learners to reflect on and develop specific learning strategies and study skills.

5. I can assist learners in choosing tasks and activities according to their individual needs and interests.

6. I can help learners to reflect on and evaluate their own learning processes and evaluate the outcomes.

(Newby, et al., 2007,p 45.)

APPENDIX-E: Semi-Structured Interview Questions

1. What do you think about the necessity of the EPOSTL in language teacher education programs?

2. Do you generally think about your teaching autonomy? What techniques do you use to improve it ?

3. How did the EPOSTL affect your teaching autonomy?

4. Do you find the EPOSTL as a useful tool to reflect on your teaching autonomy?

5. What kind of difficulties have you encountered while completing the items of the EPOSTL?

6. What kind of changes in your teaching autonomy occurred after the use of the EPOSTL?

7. Do you have any suggestions for the EPOSTL?

8. Do you have any suggestions for the study?

APPENDIX-F Ethics Committee Approval

Tarih: 18/04/2023 17:21
Sayı: E-35853172-399-00002805547
00002805547

T.C.
HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ REKTÖRLÜĞÜ
Rektörlük

Sayı : E-35853172-399-00002805547 18.04.2023
Konu : Etik Komisyon İzni (Pınar SASA)

EĞİTİM BİLİMLERİ ENSTİTÜSÜ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜNE

İlgi: 02.04.2023 tarihli ve E-51944218-399-00002776019 sayılı yazınız.

Enstitünüz Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı İngiliz Dili Eğitimi yüksek lisans programı öğrencisi **Pınar SASA'nın, Prof. Dr. İsmail Hakkı MİRİCİ** sorumluluğunda yürüttüğü **"Epostl Kullanımının Aday İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Öğretim Özerkliklerine Etkisi"** başlıklı tez çalışması Üniversitemiz Senatosu Etik Komisyonunun **11 Nisan 2023** tarihinde yapmış olduğu toplantıda incelenmiş olup, etik açıdan uygun bulunmuştur.

Bilgilerinizi ve gereğini rica ederim.

Prof. Dr. Sibel AKSU YILDIRIM
Rektör Yardımcısı

Bu belge güvenli elektronik imza ile imzalanmıştır.

Belge Doğrulama Kodu: 6F234136-D7D5-454A-9272-462C240CC8DC Belge Doğrulama Adresi: https://www.turkiye.gov.tr/hu-ebys

Adres: Hacettepe Üniversitesi Rektörlük 06100 Sıhhiye-Ankara
E-posta:yazimd@hacettepe.edu.tr İnternet Adresi: www.hacettepe.edu.tr Elektronik Ağ: www.hacettepe.edu.tr
Telefon: 0 (312) 305 3001-3002 Faks:0 (312) 311 9992
Kep: hacettepeuniversitesi@hs01.kep.tr

Bilgi için: Çağla Handan GÜL
Bilgisayar İşletmeni
Telefon: 03123051008

APPENDIX-G Declaration of Ethical Conduct

I hereby declare that…

- I have prepared this thesis in accordance with the thesis writing guidelines of the Graduate School of Educational Sciences of Hacettepe University;
- all information and documents in the thesis/dissertation have been obtained in accordance with academic regulations;
- all audio visual and written information and results have been presented in compliance with scientific and ethical standards;
- in case of using other people's work, related studies have been cited in accordance with scientific and ethical standards;
- all cited studies have been fully and decently referenced and included in the list of References;
- I did not do any distortion and/or manipulation on the data set,
- and **NO** part of this work was presented as a part of any other thesis study at this or any other university.

(11) /(06)/(2024)

Pınar Sasa

APPENDIX-H: Thesis/Dissertation Originality Report

……/……./……

HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY
Graduate School of Educational Sciences
To The Department of Foreign Language Education

Thesis Title: The Effects of Using the EPOSTL on Prospective EFL Teachers' Teaching Autonomy

The whole thesis that includes the *title page, introduction, main chapters, conclusions and bibliography section* is checked by using **Turnitin** plagiarism detection software take into the consideration requested filtering options. According to the originality report obtained data are as below.

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I declare that I have carefully read Hacettepe University Graduate School of Educational Sciences Guidelines for Obtaining and Using Thesis Originality Reports; that according to the maximum similarity index values specified in the Guidelines, my thesis does not include any form of plagiarism; that in any future detection of possible infringement of the regulations I accept all legal responsibility; and that all the information I have provided is correct to the best of my knowledge.

I respectfully submit this for approval.

Name Last name: Pınar Sasa

Student No.: N21132254 Signature

Department: Foreign Language Education

Program: English Language Teaching

Status: ☒ Masters ☐ Ph.D. ☐ Integrated Ph.D.

ADVISOR APPROVAL

APPROVED

Prof. Dr. İsmail Hakkı MİRİCİ

APPENDIX-I: Yayımlama ve Fikrî Mülkiyet Hakları Beyanı

Enstitü tarafından onaylanan lisansüstü tezimin/raporumun tamamını veya herhangi bir kısmını, basılı (kâğıt) ve elektronik formatta arşivleme ve aşağıda verilen koşullarla kullanıma açma iznini Hacettepe Üniversitesine verdiğimi bildiririm. Bu izinle Üniversiteye verilen kullanım hakları dışındaki tüm fikri mülkiyet haklarım bende kalacak, tezimin tamamının ya da bir bölümünün gelecekteki çalışmalarda (makale, kitap, lisans ve patent vb.) kullanım haklan bana ait olacaktır.

Tezin kendi orijinal çalışmam olduğunu, başkalarının haklarını ihlal etmediğimi ve tezimin tek yetkili sahibi olduğumu beyan ve taahhüt ederim. Tezimde yer alan telif hakkı bulunan ve sahiplerinden yazılı izin alınarak kullanılması zorunlu metinlerin yazılı izin alınarak kullandığımı ve istenildiğinde suretlerini Üniversiteye teslim etmeyi taahhüt ederim.

Yükseköğretim Kurulu tarafından yayınlanan "**Lisansüstü Tezlerin Elektronik Ortamda Toplanması, Düzenlenmesi ve Erişime Açılmasına ilişkin Yönerge**" kapsamında tezim aşağıda belirtilen koşullar haricince YÖK Ulusal Tez Merkezi / H.Ü. Kütüphaneleri Açık Erişim Sisteminde erişime açılır.

- Enstitü/ Fakülte yönetim kurulu kararı ile tezimin erişime açılması mezuniyet tarihinden itibaren 2 yıl ertelenmiştir. (1)
- Enstitü/Fakülte yönetim kurulunun gerekçeli kararı ile tezimin erişime açılması mezuniyet tarihimden itibaren … ay ertelenmiştir. (2)
- Tezimle ilgili gizlilik kararı verilmiştir. (3)

11/06/2024

Pınar SASA

"Lisansüstü Tezlerin Elektronik Ortamda Toplanması, Düzenlenmesi ve Erişime Açılmasına İlişkin Yönerge"

(1) Madde 6. 1. Lisansüstü tezle ilgili patent başvurusu yapılması veya patent alma sürecinin devam etmesi durumunda, tez danışmanının önerisi ve enstitü anabilim dalının uygun görüşü Üzerine enstitü veya fakülte yönetim kurulu iki yıl süre ile tezin erişime açılmasının ertelenmesine karar verebilir.

(2) Madde 6. 2. Yeni teknik, materyal ve metotların kullanıldığı, henüz makaleye dönüşmemiş veya patent gibi yöntemlerle korunmamış ve internetten paylaşılması durumunda 3. şahıslara veya kurumlara haksız kazanç; imkânı oluşturabilecek bilgi ve bulguları içeren tezler hakkında tez danışmanın önerisi ve enstitü anabilim dalının uygun görüşü üzerine enstitü veya fakülte yönetim kurulunun gerekçeli kararı ile altı ayı aşmamak üzere tezin erişime açılması engellenebilir.

(3) Madde 7. 1. Ulusal çıkarları veya güvenliği ilgilendiren, emniyet, istihbarat, savunma ve güvenlik, sağlık vb. konulara ilişkin lisansüstü tezlerle ilgili gizlilik kararı, tezin yapıldığı kurum tarafından verilir. Kurum ve kuruluşlarla yapılan işbirliği protokolü çerçevesinde hazırlanan lisansüstü tezlere ilişkin gizlilik kararı ise, ilgili kurum ve kuruluşun önerisi ile enstitü veya fakültenin uygun görüşü Üzerine üniversite yönetim kurulu tarafından verilir. Gizlilik kararı verilen tezler Yükseköğretim Kuruluna bildirilir.*

Madde 7.2. Gizlilik kararı verilen tezler gizlilik süresince enstitü veya fakülte tarafından gizlilik kuralları çerçevesinde muhafaza edilir, gizlilik kararının kaldırılması halinde Tez Otomasyon Sistemine yüklenir

**Tez danışmanının önerisi ve enstitü anabilim dalının uygun görüşü üzerine enstitü veya fakülte yönetim kurulu tarafından karar verilir.*