

A LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF EFFECTS OF EUROPEAN LANGUAGE PORTFOLIO ON READING SKILL

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Abstract

The purpose of this two year longitudinal study was to investigate the effects of European Language Portfolio (ELP) on reading skills of high school students with the standardized language tests. Participants were twenty students selected on the basis of their responses to a questionnaire based on the items in the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). In addition to KET and PET tests, self-assessment checklist was also conducted as pre-test and post test to cross-check the study group. The group was taught reading through materials prepared for the levels in CEFR. Every student did several activities related to reading during the learning process. The study revealed that the ELP made an important contribution to the participants' success in reading skills and to their perceptions about their proficiency.

Key words: *European Language Portfolio, Turkish secondary students, reading language teaching.*

OKUMA BECERİLERİ ÜZERİNDE AVRUPA DİL PORTFOLYOSU'NUN ETKİLERİNİN BOYLAMSAL BİR ÇALIŞMASI

Özet

Bu iki yıllık boylamsal çalışmanın amacı, standart dil testleri ile lise öğrencilerinin okuma becerilerinde Avrupa Dil Portfolyosu'nun (ADP) etkilerini araştırmaktır. Katılımcılar, Avrupa Ortak Başvuru Metni'ndeki (AOBM) öğeleri içeren ankete verdikleri cevaplara göre seçilen yirmi öğrenciden oluşmaktadır. KET ve PET sınavlarının yanı sıra, kendini değerlendirme testi de çalışma grubunun doğrulamasını yapmak için ön test ve son test olarak uygulandı. Gruba, AOBM'deki seviyeler için hazırlanan materyallerle okuma yaptırıldı. Her öğrenci, öğrenme süreci boyunca okuma ile ilgili pek çok aktivite gerçekleştirdi. Çalışma, katılımcıların okuma becerilerindeki başarılarına ve yeterlikleri hakkındaki algılarına ADP'nun önemli bir katkısı olduğunu gösterdi.

Anahtar kelimeler: *Avrupa Dil Portfolyosu, Türk ortaöğretim öğrencileri, okuma, dil öğretimi.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The European Language Portfolio (ELP) has been extensively studied in language teaching and learning fields by many researchers in recent years (1, 2, 3, 4, 5). The ELP created by the Council of Europe is a tool for recording our language and intercultural experiences at school and across a lifetime of learning in our daily life. It is also a document to illustrate our language competences as well as our knowledge and experiences of other cultures through sample of work (6).

The ELP has three components (7): (a) *Language passport* provides an overview of the individual's proficiency in different languages at a given point in time. (b) *Language biography* facilitates the learner's involvement in planning, reflecting upon and assessing his or her learning process and progress. (c) *Dossier* offers the learner the opportunity to select materials to document and illustrate achievements or experiences recorded in the Language Biography or Passport. The Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), which connects with the ELP, is a reference tool which provides categories, levels and descriptors that educational professionals can merge or sub-divide, elaborate or summarize while still relating to the common hierarchical structure (8). The CEFR has a global scale which describes overall communicative proficiency at each level. This language scale which covers language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing can be used to compare language skills and certificates. For each language skill, self-attributed descriptors are formulated, which results in 6 proficiency levels such as A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2. Generally the ELP aims to educate students to become autonomous, life-long language learners who can assess their proficiency realistically in the different language skills and can communicate this knowledge to institutions to acquire further education, future employers, and other interested parties (9).

Regarding language teaching and learning, the ELP supports the language teaching as (3); (a) how I organize my teaching, (b) how I prepare my teaching, (c) how I use the textbook, and (d) how I assess my learners. Furthermore, the ELP is a concrete attempt to harmonise foreign language teaching/learning activities within the European context and to improve the quality of communication among European people, who have different languages and cultural backgrounds (4).

Reading, one of the fundamental language skills, has great importance as the most frequently used instrument in the language teaching and learning process. In general, reading is used as an activity to improve foreign language learners' levels, and is often the only means since foreign language learners in non-English speaking countries like Turkey have limited contact with speakers of the target language (10, 11). The importance of reading in foreign language learning can be understood better considering the fact that Turkish speakers of English have limited contact with speakers of the target language. Therefore, many foreign language learners except for a few learners can learn the target language through reading texts (10). The process of foreign language

teaching and learning how to read in a foreign language are brought to the fore when progress can be made visible in small steps: more exactly, in the form of a portfolio. Moreover, the ELP provides the learner with insights into what he/she wants to learn, collecting in a dossier the concrete results of what has been learnt makes him/her aware of the learning process (12).

There are many studies related to the ELP from different aspects in the world including Turkey. For instance, in the study carried out by Ceylan, the ELP was investigated as a tool promoting self-directed learning focusing on the views of the students, teachers and administrators about the ELP. According to the results of her study, many students believed that the ELP was a significant tool for language learning and had positive attitudes towards the ELP although they had limited time to work with the ELP. Furthermore, the ELP increased the motivation of the students slightly as well because they became more aware of how to learn a language (13).

In addition, learners and their judgements about ELP and CEFR in the assessment process were investigated by Little (14). According to the results of the study, learners open up the possibility of developing an assessment culture in which language tests are much more closely related to teaching and learning than has usually been the case when the CEFR and the ELP are adapted to a specific domain of language learning. In addition, the ELP offers to play a key role in such a culture because it assigns a central role to self-assessment and the development of language learner. In another study, the ELP activities and their impact from 2001 to October 2007 were reported by Schärer (5). He summarizes the activities, developments and outcomes of the ELP as follows: (a) The ELP contributes significantly to the dissemination of European goals, values, concepts and principles, (b) the ELP makes a difference in educational practice, and (c) the ELP is an effective catalyst for change at European, national and local levels.

As for the implementation of European Language Portfolio on the language examination; the CEFR, which is a product of the ELP, provides a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe. The CEFR describes in a comprehensive way what language learners have to learn to do in order to use a language for communication and what knowledge and skills they have to develop so as to be able to act effectively. It has also a growing influence on language testing organisations and stakeholders worldwide. Therefore, many language testers have aligned their exams to the CEFR (15).

Little (16) also expresses that the CEFR was embraced immediately by language testing organisations such as Cambridge ESOL Examinations, and the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE) of which Cambridge Examinations is a member. Furthermore, the CEFR is also in the interest of language examination providers to overcome difficulties in establishing valid and reliable links between the results of their systems and the levels of the CEFR in order to make these links transparent to users of their language examinations. For Cambridge ESOL, CEFR offers a valuable

frame of reference for our work and for our stakeholder community. The quality of the relationship between the CEFR and Cambridge ESOL exams is perhaps best judged by the extent to which together they enable language learning to flourish, encourage achievements to be recognized and so enrich the lives of individuals and communities (17, 18).

CEFR and ELP have been used in many studies concerning the language examinations. (19, 20, 21, 22). For example, Taylor and Jones (18) express that syllabus designers, course book publishers and language test providers worldwide, including Cambridge ESOL seek to align their exams to the CEFR for reasons of transparency and coherence. Furthermore, the relationship between the CEFR and Cambridge ESOL exams can be best judged by the extent to which together they enable language learning to flourish, encourage achievements to be recognised and so enrich the lives of individuals and communities.

In another study, it is stated that Cambridge ESOL has supported the authoring and piloting of the Council of Europe's Manual Relating Language Examinations to the CEFR which presents a linking process based on some sets of procedures. Furthermore, an extensive range of documentation for all exams (examiner training materials, test handbooks and examination reports) assists in specifying the content and purpose of existing and new exams with direct reference to the CEFR (19).

However, Turkey, which is a member of the Council of Europe, tries to arrange its language teaching programs as well as other fields according to standards improved by the Council of Europe. In this sense, the ELP which is the new and alternative model for language teaching and learning has also been researched all along from various aspects and implemented in many schools in Turkey. Although there are many studies about the ELP from different perspectives in Turkey, there is almost no research which investigated the contribution of the ELP or CEFR to the language examinations in reading skills. The present study aims to investigate the effects of ELP on reading skills of high school students with the standardized language tests (KET and PET) from ESOL examinations throughout two years.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Participants

In the first year of the study in the 2009-2010 academic year, this study was conducted on 45 students who were in the 9th grade in a private high school in Erzurum. The age of students ranged between 14 and 15. This study was conducted on the same participants during two years. Gender was not considered a variable for this study. A questionnaire consisting of language proficiency levels A2, B1 and B2 from the self-assessment grids in CEFR was conducted on 45 students, and according to given responses, level classes were arranged as A2, B1 or B2. The study group consisting of

20 students was A2 level for the first year of this longitudinal study since there were not enough students at levels B1 or B2 to study with only a level class.

In the second year of the study in the 2010-2011 academic year, partly the same questionnaire consisting of language proficiency levels A1, A2, B1 and B2 from the self-assessment grids in CEFR was conducted on 65 students at 10th grade at the same school in Erzurum. The students' age ranged between 15 and 16. According to given responses, level classes were arranged as A1, A2, B1 and B2. In the second year, the level of the study group consisting of 20 students was B1, and this study group included the same participants in the previous academic year. According to the CEFR, learners have to be successful at levels A1 and A2 to pass to the level B1. So the students at level B1 should be successful not only at level B1 but also at levels A1 and A2.

2.2. Instruments

2.2.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaire developed by Council of Europe (15) and including 20 yes/no questions on four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) at A1, A2, B1 and B2 levels in the CEFR was administered to 110 students (45 students at 9th grade and 65 students at 10th grade) in order to determine the study group. Firstly, at the beginning of the 2009-2010 academic year, the questionnaire consisting of A2, B1 or B2 levels was conducted on 45 students at 9th grade. Secondly, at the beginning of the 2010-2011 academic year, another questionnaire consisting of A1, A2, B1 or B2 levels was also given to 65 students at 10th grade.

2.2.2 Self Assessment Checklists

In this study, self-assessment checklist developed by Council of Europe (15) consisted of only reading parts of A2 and B1 levels in the CEFR. The sample "Can-Do" statements in the checklists comprised of 8 statements for the level A2, and 8 statements for B1. Self-assessment checklists were in the form of five-likert scale (always, often, sometimes, rarely, never). Both self-assessment checklists aimed to cross-check students' reading skills again in addition to finding out students' perceptions about their language proficiency in two academic years. In 2009-2010 academic year, self-assessment checklist consisting of A2 level was conducted on the study group as pre and post tests. Another self-assessment checklist consisting of the level B1 was also conducted as pre test and post test in 2010-2011 academic year.

2.2.3 Key English Test (KET) and Preliminary English Test (PET) from Cambridge ESOL Exams

Cambridge ESOL Examinations are recognized by many employers, universities and government ministries all over the world. British Council, which administrates these exams around the world, has a system consisting of 8 levels from level 1 (Beginners) to level 8 (Proficiency). The equivalence between British Council (Cambridge

Exams) and the Council of Europe levels is shown in Table 1 (23, 24).

Table 1. The equivalence between British Council and the Council of Europe levels

| British Council Level | Council of Europe Level | Cambridge Exams | Age ranges |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|---|------------|
| Beginner | A1 | Starters | 6 – 8 |
| Elementary | A1 | Movers, Flyers | 6- 10 |
| Pre Intermediate | A2 | KET (Key English Test) | 10 – 16 |
| Intermediate 1 | B1 | | 10- 16 |
| Intermediate 2 | B1 | PET (Preliminary English Test) | 11- 16 |
| Pre advanced | B2 | FCE (First Certificate in English) | 14 – 18 |
| Advanced 1 | C1 | | 14 – 18 |
| Advanced CAE | C1 | CAE (Certificate in Advanced English) | 14 – 18 |
| Very Advanced | C2 | | 14 – 18 |
| Very Advanced 2 | C2 | CPE (Certificate of Proficiency in English) | 14 – 18 |

As seen in Table 1, Key English Test (KET) is at A2 level, and Preliminary English Test (PET) is at B1 level. Regarding the Cambridge examinations, KET is a certificate that shows a person can use everyday written and spoken English at pre-intermediate level, whereas Preliminary English Test (PET) is an English exam at intermediate level which provides practical language practice in a variety of everyday work, study and leisure situations. KET and PET were administered since the participants of the study were at A2 and B1 levels. The above equivalence makes easy for anyone involved in language teaching and testing (learners, teachers, teacher trainers etc.) to see the level of different qualifications. It also means that employers and educational institutions can easily compare qualifications and see how they relate to exams they already know in their own country (25).

The questions in the KET were prepared beforehand by Cambridge ESOL Exami-

nations (26). KET consisted of only reading proficiency part including fifty questions each of which had two points. KET as a standardized test was applied to the study group as pre and post tests both at the beginning and at the end of the study in 2009-2010 academic year.

The PET reading test was also prepared beforehand by Cambridge ESOL Examinations (27). The reading part of PET consisted of twenty-five questions each of which had four points, and it was also conducted as pre test and post test before and after the study in 2010-2011 academic year.

Reading texts and materials prepared for the levels A2 and B1 in CEFR were performed in the study group during the implementation of the research. In addition, extra activities supporting KET and PET were also performed. The results of pre and post tests of KET and PET were compared in SPSS 15.0, and paired sampled t-test analyses of their scores were computed.

2.3. Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

The data for this study, which is quantitative in nature, were gathered nearly throughout two years. After giving information about the ELP to the participants, the ELP was implemented in English courses by the teachers. Moreover, reading texts and materials prepared for A2 and B1 levels in CEFR were studied by the study group. During the data collection, while the level questionnaires were applied at the beginning of each academic year; KET, PET and self assessment checklists for A2 and B1 levels were conducted on the participants as pre tests-post tests both at the beginning and at the end of each academic year.

In the analysis procedure of the data, the questionnaire evaluating students' levels was only used to select the target study groups for each academic year. According to the results of both questionnaires, A2 and B1 levels had the highest number of participants. The number of students in a class at school consisted of 20-25 students. By considering the number of the participants in each level, A2 level for 2009-2010 academic year and B1 level for 2010-2011 academic year were chosen as the study group. The subject group of the study consisted of the same participants during the course of study. When the quantitative data were considered for the study, the fundamental analysis procedure consisted of two sections including KET and PET as standardized tests, and self assessment checklists for A2 and B1 levels. While self assessment checklists were quantitatively analyzed, t-test analyses of KET and PET scores were computed and compared separately. In addition, it was also observed whether there was a significant difference between them.

3. RESULTS

The two instruments used in data collection allowed to conduct two types of analyses on the language levels of the participants. At 9th grade, the self assessment questi-

onnaires and KET reading test for A2 level were performed, while the self assessment checklist and PET reading test were conducted for B1 level at 10th level.

In the first part of the analyses, pre and post KET reading scores were initially analyzed, and a t-test on these pre and post KET reading scores was computed. In Table 2, it was observed the t-test result of KET reading scores and significance of the difference between pre and post reading scores.

Table 2. T-test result of KET reading scores

| KET Reading | N | X | Sd | Df | t | p* |
|-------------|----|-------|-------|----|-------|-------|
| Pre-test | 20 | 64.80 | 12.50 | 19 | 11.50 | 0.000 |
| Post-test | 20 | 86.30 | 8.36 | | | |

* $p < .05$

As seen in Table 2, there was a statistically significant increase from pre test to post test. $t(19)=11,50$; $p<.000$. The result of the t-test conducted between the two mean scores gives a significant result ($p=0.000$). Furthermore, according to the mean scores of pre and post reading tests, participants of the study were more successful in post reading test (86,30) than pre-test (64,80).

Then the responses given to the self assessment checklist for A2 level were analyzed. As KET reading test, the self-assessment checklist was also applied before and after the study, and this gave us the opportunity to cross check the level of students in reading skills again, and to see the differences in the perceptions of the participants regarding their language skills.

Table 3. The results of self assessment check list for A2 level

| | Before the study | | After the study | |
|--------------|------------------|------|-----------------|------|
| | n | % | n | % |
| Always | 74 | 46,2 | 92 | 57,5 |
| Frequently | 55 | 34,5 | 64 | 40 |
| Occasionally | 27 | 16,8 | 4 | 2,5 |
| Rarely | 4 | 2,5 | 0 | 0 |
| Never | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 160 | 100 | 160 | 100 |

As shown in Table 3, when the responses given to “Can-do” statements by the participants at 9th grade were compared, there was a remarkable increase in the percentage of “always” and “frequently” responses from pre test to post test. This shows that the participants developed a high level of self-confidence after having been taught English through ELP.

In the second part of the analyses, pre and post PET reading scores were qu-

antitatively analyzed, and a t-test on these scores was computed. In Table 4, it can be observed the number of students, mean scores, t-test result between pre and post reading scores.

Table 4. T-test result of PET reading scores

| PET Reading | N | X | Sd | Df | t | p* |
|-------------|----|----|------|----|------|-------|
| Pre-test | 20 | 58 | 8.97 | 19 | 8.88 | 0.000 |
| Post-test | 20 | 74 | 9.03 | | | |

* $p < .05$

As can be seen in Table 4, there was a statistically significant increase from pre test to post test. $t(19)=8,88$; $p < .05$. In addition, according to the mean scores of pre and post reading tests, participants were more successful in post reading test (74) than pre-test (58).

Furthermore, the obtained responses from the self assessment checklist for B1 level were also analyzed. The self-assessment checklist was also conducted before and after the study as well as PET reading test.

Table 5. The results of self assessment check list for B1 level

| | Before the study | | After the study | |
|--------------|------------------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | n | % | n | % |
| Always | 38 | 23,7 | 52 | 32,5 |
| Frequently | 64 | 40 | 65 | 40,7 |
| Occasionally | 47 | 29,4 | 43 | 26,8 |
| Rarely | 11 | 6,9 | 0 | 0 |
| Never | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 160 | 100 | 160 | 100 |

As seen in Table 5, there was also a remarkable increase in the percentage of “always” and “frequently” responses from pre test to post test when the results of both self-assessment checklists were compared. In addition, the perceptions of the participants about their language skills seem to have improved.

4. DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION

This longitudinal study indicated that the ELP has a significant effect on reading skills of language learners at high school level. When the given responses to the self-assessment checklists and the scores of KET and PET reading tests were examined, it can be seen that the reading skills of the participants improved by means of the ELP and CEFR. The results of the KET reading test at 9th grade and PET reading test at 10th grade reveal that participants achieved a significant increase in their KET and PET

scores. Furthermore, self-assessment checklists also indicated that the ELP and CEFR have a remarkable contribution to students' reading skills. When the overall results of the standardized tests and self-assessment checklists are looked at carefully, it can be seen that there is a significant increase in reading skills of the participants.

Regarding the results of this study, Milanovic (20) reports that within the CEFR, Cambridge ESOL has attempted to make the interpretation of language examination results as transparent and meaningful as possible. By working collaboratively with the CEFR and ELP, language examinations can be addressed more effectively, with data collected to enable well-informed refinements to be made as our understanding increases. In addition, the findings of this study are also consistent with another study (22) that demonstrates that CEFR can be used as an effective assessment tool (a) for the specification of the content of tests and language examinations; (b) for stating the criteria for the attainment of a learning objective; (c) for describing the levels of proficiency in existing tests and language examinations thus enabling comparisons to be made across different systems of qualifications.

While the data of this research was elicited only via KET and PET reading tests, and self assessment checklists, its results may yet need to be confirmed with additional evidence from empirical studies including other modes of data collection (e.g., data obtained from speaking, writing and listening tests).

To sum up, this study reveals that the ELP contributes significantly to the participants' success in reading skills and to their perceptions about their language proficiency. Regarding language teaching and learning, this study reflects that the ELP can be used to improve students' reading skills and to increase their achievement or success in Cambridge language exams. While this study focuses on the effects of the ELP on reading skills by means of language exams, further research can be conducted to see the effects of the ELP on both students and teachers in foreign language teaching and learning process. In addition, it can also be researched whether the ELP is appropriate for young learners or other age.

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GENİŞ ÖZET

Avrupa Konseyi tarafından geliştirilen Avrupa Dil Portfolyosu (ADP) 2003 yılından itibaren Türkiye'deki ilköğretim okulları ve liselerde uygulanmaktadır. Daha iyi bir dil öğretim ve öğrenimin sürecini benimseyen ADP, yabancı dil öğrencisinin dil öğrenirken elde ettiği başarı ve kazanımları kayıt altına almakta ve dil gelişimi ile dil yeterliklerini ortaya koymaktadır. ADP, dil öğreniminin ve kültürler arası deneyimlerin gelişimini güçlendirmeyi, çok sayıda dil öğrenimini teşvik etmeyi, eğitim ve mesleki amaçlı dolaşımı sağlamayı, Avrupa'da demokratik vatandaşlığı geliştirmeyi ve dilsel çeşitliliğin değerini göstermeyi amaçlamaktadır. Avrupa Dil Portfolyosu üç bölümden oluşmaktadır:

Bunlardan birincisi olan **Dil Pasaportu**, yabancı dil öğrencisinin dil becerilerini, yeterliliklerini ve deneyimlerini göstermektedir. Aynı zamanda, dil pasaportu, dil öğrenim geçmişini, deneyim ve başarıları belgeleyen dosya bölümünü içeren Avrupa Dil Portfolyosu'nun bir parçasıdır. Avrupa Konseyi tarafından önerilen Pasaportu, tüm Avrupa'da yabancı dil eğitiminde denklik ve serbest dolaşım süreçlerini kolaylaştırmaktadır. **Dil Öğrenim Özgeçmişi**, kişinin bildiği her bir dilde neler yapabildiğini belirtmesini, örgün eğitim sistemleri içinde ve dışında kazandığı dilsel ve kültürel deneyimleri hakkında bilgiler eklemesini sağlar. Kişinin öğrenme sürecini ve gelişimini değerlendirip, yabancı dil öğrenim sürecini planlamasını kolaylaştırmaktadır. Ayrıca, birden fazla yabancı dili öğrenmeye de öğrenciyi teşvik etmektedir. **Dosya** ise, Dil Pasaportu ve Dil Öğrenim Özgeçmişi bölümlerinde kayıtlı olan başarı ve deneyimlerimizi örneklerle açıklamamız ve belgelendirmemiz için gerekli materyalleri kayıt altına almanızı sağlar.

Avrupa Dil Portfolyosu içerisinde yer alan Avrupa Ortak Başvuru Metni (AOBM), yabancı dil öğrenimi ve öğretimi için uygulamaya dönük standartlar getirmektedir. Avrupa Konseyi'ne bağlı ülkeler böyle ortak bir metinle, Avrupa'da konuşulan dille-

rin öğrenilmesi için ders programlarını, kitaplarını, sınavlarını ve ders araç-gereçleri ile yöntemlerini ortak ölçütlere dayanan bir doğrultuya sokmayı amaçlamaktadır. Avrupa’da dil programlarının, program yönetmeliklerinin, sınavların hazırlanması için ortak bir temel sunan AOBM, dil düzeylerini A, B ve C olmak üzere Temel, Bağımsız ve İleri kullanıcı olarak üç aşamaya ayırmakla dil kullanımında standart ölçme ve sertifikalandırmalarda ortaklık sağlamaktadır.

Dünya çapındaki ders kitabı yayın evleri ve yabancı dil uygulayıcıları AOBM’yi kendi sınavlarına ve çalışmalarına uyarlamaktadırlar. Bunlardan birisi olan Cambridge ESOL sınavları da dünya genelinde yapılan İngilizce sınavlarını AOBM’ye uyarlamakta ve birçok ülkede bu sınavları uygulamaktadır. Bu çalışmada Cambridge ESOL sınavlarından olan Key English Test (KET) (temel seviye-A2 düzeyi) ve Preliminary English Test (PET) (bağımsız seviye-B1 düzeyi) kullanılmıştır.

Dört temel dil becerisinden biri olan okuma becerileri, dil öğrenme ve öğretmede sık kullanılan araçlardan birisidir. Bunun yanında okuma, yabancı dil öğrencilerinin dil seviyelerini geliştirmek için bir aktivite olarak da kullanılır. Birçok ülke gibi Türkiye de, ana dili İngilizce olan ülkelere uzak olduğundan dolayı, ve bu yüzden de hedef dili konuşan insanlarla sınırlı etkileşime sahip olduğu için okumanın önemi bu tür ülkelerde daha da artmaktadır.

ADP ile ilgili Türkiye’de birçok alanda ve konuda çalışmalar yapılmaktadır. Türkiye’de ADP ile ilgili dil öğretimi ve öğrenimi alanında yapılan birçok çalışma olmasına rağmen, ADP ve AOBM’nin dil sınavlarına katkısı odaklanan hemen hemen hiçbir çalışma bulunmamaktadır. Bu çalışmanın amacı, standart dil testleri ile lise öğrencilerinin okuma becerilerinde ADP’nun yabancı dil sınavlarına katkısını araştırmaktır. Çalışmanın birinci yılda 9. sınıf, ikinci yılında ise 10. sınıfta olan ve çalışma boyunca aynı kişileri kapsayan çalışma grubu, Avrupa Ortak Başvuru Metni’ndeki (AOBM) öğeleri içeren ankete verdikleri cevaplara göre seçilen yirmi öğrenciden oluştu. Bu katılımcılar, 2009-2010 eğitim öğretim yılları için A2 dil seviyesi ve 2010-2011 eğitim öğretim yılları için de B1 dil seviyesinde bulunmaktaydılar.

Veri toplama araçları olarak Avrupa Konseyi tarafından geliştirilen ve dört dil becerilerini içeren anket ve bu ankete verdikleri cevapların tekrar sağlamlasını (doğrulamalarını) yapmak için uygulanan kendini değerlendirme anketi kullanılmıştır. Ayrıca standart testler olarak Cambridge ESOL sınavlarından olan “Key English Test” (KET) (temel seviye-A2 düzeyi) ve “Preliminary English Test” (PET) (bağımsız seviye-B1 düzeyi) testlerinin sadece okuma bölümleri bu çalışmanın veri toplama aracı olarak kullanılmıştır. KET ve PET sınavlarının yanı sıra kendini değerlendirme anketi de ön testler ve son testler olarak katılımcılara uygulandı. Bunun yanında her öğrenci, öğrenme süreci boyunca okuma ile ilgili pek çok aktivite gerçekleştirmiştir.

Verilerin analizinde ise, öğrencilerin dil seviyelerini gösteren anket her yıl için çalışma grubumuzu belirlememizi sağladı. Çalışmada kendini değerlendirme testi nicel

olarak analiz edilirken, KET ve PET testlerin de ön ve son testler olarak ayrı ayrı t-testleri hesaplanmış ve aralarında anlamlı bir fark olup olmadığına bakılmıştır.

Dokuzuncu ve onuncu sınıfta uygulanan her iki kendini değerlendirme testi de ayrı ayrı karşılaştırıldığında aralarında anlamlı farklar ortaya çıkmış ve katılımcıların okuma becerilerinde ilerleme kaydettikleri gözlenmiştir. KET ve PET testlerinin t-testleri de ayrı ayrı hesaplanıp karşılaştırıldığında, ön testlerden son testlere doğru istatistiksel olarak bir artışın olduğu görülmektedir. Ayrıca her iki testin ortalamaları karşılaştırıldığında katılımcıların son testlerde daha başarılı oldukları görülmektedir.

Bu boylamsal çalışma, Avrupa Dil Portfolyosu'nun lise seviyesindeki dil öğrencilerinin okuma becerileri üzerinde önemli bir etkisi olduğunu göstermiştir. Dokuzuncu sınıfta KET sınavı ve onuncu sınıfta PET sınavının sonuçlarına göre her iki testin puanlarında gözle görülebilir oranda bir artış olduğu görülmektedir. Dahası, çalışmanın sonuçları ADP ve AOBM'nin öğrencilerin okuma becerilerine önemli bir katkısı olduğunu göstermektedir. Bu çalışmanın sonuçları daha önce yapılan çalışmalarla da tutarlılık göstermektedir.

Sonuç olarak bu çalışma, katılımcıların okuma becerilerindeki başarıları ve yeterlikleri hakkındaki algılarına ADP'nun önemli bir katkısı olduğunu gösterdi. Dil öğretimi ile ilgili olarak bu çalışma, öğrencilerin okuma becerilerini geliştirmesi ve Cambridge dil sınavlarında öğrencilerin başarılarını arttırması için ADP'nun kullanılabileceğini göstermektedir. Bu çalışma, dil sınavları ile ilgili olarak ADP'nun okuma becerileri üzerindeki etkilerine odaklanırken diğer çalışmalar, yabancı dil öğrenme ve öğretme sürecince ADP'nun öğretmenler ve öğrenciler üzerindeki etkilerini araştırmaya odaklanabilir.