

Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Education

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Edited by

Hasan Arslan, Georgeta Rață,
Ercan Kocayörük and Mehmet Ali İçbay

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P U B L I S H I N G

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Edited by Hasan Arslan, Georgeta Rață, Ercan Kocayörük and Mehmet Ali İçbay

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables.....	xi
List of Illustrations	xvii
Foreword	xix

Chapter One: Teaching and Teacher Education

Empowering Learner Autonomy: A Case for Collaborative Learning Z. Zuhul Güven and Teresa Hecht-Valais	3
Research Use Levels and Lifelong Learning Competencies of Elementary School Teachers Bariş Uslu	15
Problem-Solving Strategies Used by Pre-Service Science Teachers while Solving Physics Problems Ümmü-Gülsüm Iyibil, Funda Aydın Güç and Müge Akpınar	23
Content Characteristics of Science and Nature Books for Children Nihat Bayat and Hakan Ülper.....	31
Perception of Giftedness in Primary School Teachers Esra Altintaş and Ahmet Ş. Özdemir.....	39
Investigation of Job Satisfaction amongst Teachers Erkan Tabancalı and Esra Çakmak.....	47
High School Students' Metaphoric Perceptions of Teacher Image Soner Polat and Ender Kazak	55

Effects of Keeping Portfolios on Trainee Teachers' Perceptions of the Writing Process Hülya Yumru	65
Effects of Metacognitive Strategies and Cooperative Learning on Mathematical Problem Solving Fatma Erdoğan and Sare Şengül.....	71
Foreign Language Assistants in Elementary School: In-class Performance in Terms of Field of Study at College Amador Jiménez-Garrido and Eufrasio Pérez-Navío	79
The Conversion-Integration Methodology for Developing Numeracy Skills Kevin Norley	87
Examination of Pre-service Physics Teachers' Science Process Skills in an Inquiry-Based Laboratory Environment Arzu Arslan, Feral Ogan-Bekiroğlu and Erol Suzuk	95
Attitudes of Pre-school Teacher Candidates towards Cheating Saide Özbey, Aycan Büyüktanir, Oğuz-Serdar Kesicioğlu and Didem Türkoğlu.....	105
Description of the Knowledge, Attitude and Behaviours of Candidate Teachers Regarding Genetically Modified Products Sevil Özcan and Gülşen Altıntaş	119
Significance of Religious Values in Environmental Education Mustafa-Naci Kula	127
Study Skills of Different Achievement Groups: The Case of Tunisian University Students Zeineb Amri	137
Mathematics Teachers' Attitudes towards the Integration of Technology into Mathematics Classes Riza Memiş, Serkan Özel and Mehmet Özcan	145
Medical Students' Note-taking Strategies in Clinical Encounters Mehmet-Ali İçbay and Linda Morrison.....	153

Chapter Two: Psychosocial Development of Children in Education

Parents' Perception regarding School Attendance Mehmet Özbaş and Müjdat Avcı.....	163
Analysis of Adolescents' Communication Skills According to School Type and Gender Zühal Gümüş-Gers and Aynur Bütün-Ayhan.....	179
Reasons for and Impacts of School Dropout: A Case Study in Sanliurfa, Turkey Hüseyin Şimşek and Sevda Katıtaş	187
Parents' Attitudes towards Children's Rights according to Child's Age and Gender Müge Yurtsever-Kiliçgün and Ayla Oktay.....	195
Examining Elementary School Students' Opinions on Violence Yücel Gelişli, Adelet Kandir, Fatma Tezel-Şahin and Elçin Yazıcı.....	205
Exploration of Trainee Teachers' Experiences of Being Cyber Bullies or Victims Nilgün Tosun	215
Problems Parents and Children Face in Families with Different Incomes and Their Expectations from Each Other Selma Ertürk and Nedime Şanlı	227
Education and Family Seval Güven and Zeynep Açık	235
School Adjustment of 5-6 Year-Old Children of Divorced and Undivorced Families Hülya Gülay Ogelman, Zarife Seçer, Alev Önder and Devletyar Mamiyev	243
Youth and Postmodern Identity Patterns: A Sociological Profile of University Youth (The Case of İnönü University, Turkey) Vehbi Bayhan.....	251

Psychological Effects of Natural Disasters on Students and Emergency Response Plans Özgür Batur	259
Behaviour of Pre-schoolers and Adaptation to School Hacer Elif Dağlioğlu, Hatice Dağlı and Nazmiye Merve Dalkiliç	267
University Students' Perception of the Family Hatice Bekir and Remzi Aydin.....	277
Quality in Early Childhood: Acknowledging the Child's Right to Love, Care and Education in the Early Years Diana Didilică.....	287

Chapter Three: Educational Policy

Teaching Democracy and Citizenship: A Case Study in Turkey Mehtap Yıldırım	297
Why Teacher Autonomy? Tugay Tutkun and Salih-Zeki Genç	307
Are Gypsies Without Education or Is Education Without Gypsies? Gypsy Women and Education Dilek Eroğlu, Irem Oğuz and Ali Babahan.....	315
University as a Taylorist Institution and the Perception of the Motto: The Case of Gazi University, Turkey Ahmet-Yekta Kayman and Başak Uysal	329
Transformational Leadership in Higher Education Osman-Ferda Beytekin	339
What Is Happening to Economics Departments in Turkish Higher Education? Sirri-Emrah Üçer and Feride Doğaner-Gönel.....	349
Counterproductive Work Behaviour in Relation to Personality Type and Cognitive Distortion Level in Academics Metin Pişkin, Müge Ersoy-Kart, Ilkay Savcı and Özgür Güldü	357

Potential Educational Emigration of Georgian Students for Study Purposes Ana Tukhashvili	367
Impacts of the Turkish Education System on Migration Ulaş Sunata	375
Monitoring Teacher’s Competences Handan Kocabatmaz	385
The Importance of Service Learning Çavuş Şahin and Serdar Arcagök	393
Logistics Vocational Education in Germany and Turkey Didem Çavuşoğlu and Hakan Keskin	401
Constructivist Program Leadership and Guidance Levels amongst School Principals Ahmet Kaya and Ahmet Göçen	409
Students’ Opinion on the Safety of High Schools: The Case of Çanakkale, Turkey Alper Çalikoğlu and Halil Işık	417

Chapter Four: Language in Teaching

Learning Strategies in Language Course Books Hakan Bayezit and Fatma-Feryal Çubukçu	427
Convergence and Divergence in Online English Language Teaching Materials H.-Sezgi Saraç and Nehir Sert	435
Comparative Study of Turkish BA, MA and PhD ELT Students’ Attitudes towards the Teaching Profession Gamze Almacioğlu	443
Role of Mentoring in ELT Teacher Candidates’ Professional Development Fatma-Şeyma Doğan	451

Learning Success through Composition of Didactics and Technology Margarita Elkina	459
Writing vs. the Red Pen: Omani College Students' Perspectives on Teacher-Student Writing Conferences Badriya AlGhafri	465
Views on the Use of Connectives in Students' Written Discourse Gökhan Çetinkaya, Hakan Ülper and Ergün Hamzadayı	471
English for Specific Purposes in Turkish Higher Education Nehir Sert and H. Sezgi Saraç	477
Teaching Idioms in English as a Foreign Language Suzana Ejupi	485
Quality of English Language Teaching in Turkish Secondary Education Serkan Uygun	493
Contributors	501

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1-1. Distribution of teachers according to specific features.....	16
Table 1-2. Descriptive statistics about LLLCS and sub-dimensions	17
Table 1-3. Correlations coefficients between variables and LLLC	18
Table 1-4. First step regression model’s coefficients on LLLC	19
Table 1-5. Last step regression model’s coefficients on LLLC	20
Table 1-6. Frequency of the use of problem-solving strategies by pre-service teachers for each problem.....	27
Table 1-7. Answers to questions according to themes and categories	42
Table 1-8. Demographics of participants.....	48
Table 1-9. Evaluating questionnaire	49
Table 1-10. Job satisfaction levels of teachers	50
Table 1-11. Job satisfaction level according to gender.....	50
Table 1-12. Extrinsic satisfaction level of teachers according to branches	51
Table 1-13. Positive metaphors used by students about their perceptions of teacher image and their distribution according to themes	61
Table 1-14. Negative metaphors developed by students about their perceptions of teacher image and their distribution according to themes	62
Table 1-15. ANOVA results for the MPSAS pre-test.....	75
Table 1-16. ANOVA results for the MPSAS post-test scores.....	75
Table 1-17. Scheffe test results for the MPSAS post-test scores	76
Table 1-18. Pre-service teachers’ pre-post test scores differentiation Wilcoxon Two Sample Test results	99
Table 1-19. According to factors pre-post scores differentiation Wilcoxon two sample test results.....	100
Table 1-20. T-test results of teacher candidates’ scores on scale of attitude towards cheating according to sex	107
Table 1-21. T-test result of teacher candidates’ scores on scale of attitude towards cheating according to education type	108
Table 1-22. T-test result of teacher candidates’ scores on scale of attitude towards cheating according to choosing department willingly	108
Table 1-23. One-way analysis of variance related teacher candidates’ scores on scale of attitude towards cheating according to high school they have graduated	108

Table 1-24. One-way analysis of variance related teacher candidates' scores on scale of attitude towards cheating according to mother's educational status	109
Table 1-25. One-way analysis of variance related teacher candidates' scores on scale of attitude towards cheating according to father's educational status	109
Table 1-26. One-way analysis of variance related teacher candidates' scores on scale of attitude towards cheating according to mother's profession.....	110
Table 1-27. One-way analysis of variance related teacher candidates' scores on scale of attitude towards cheating according to father's profession.....	110
Table 1-28. One-way analysis of variance related teacher candidates' scores on scale of attitude towards cheating according to academic success perception.....	111
Table 1-29. Percentage and N table related to teacher candidates' views about which kind of exams cheated	111
Table 1-30. Teacher candidates' views about which kind of exams is cheated	112
Table 1-31. Teacher candidates' views about cheating types	112
Table 1-32. Teacher candidates' views about the reasons of cheating	112
Table 1-33. Teacher candidates' views on their own cheating situations	113
Table 1-34. Teacher candidates' views on their friend's cheating situations	113
Table 1-35. Distribution of candidate teachers according to school and branches	120
Table 1-36. Krustal-Wallis test of high-, mid- and low-achievers on the LASSI	140
Table 1-37. Means of high-achievers' scores on the LASSI	140
Table 1-38. The sample characteristics in the study	155
Table 1-39. Note-taking strategies	157
Table 2-1. Factor variances and alpha values of the BCPFAPEA Scale	167
Table 2-2. Perceptions of parents related to the socio-economic properties of poor families	168
Table 2-3. Perceptions of low-income parents in relation to the experience of their children within public education	169
Table 2-4. Variables of parents' educational status in poor families.....	170
Table 2-5. Professional status of father in poor families	171
Table 2-6. Profession of mother in poor families	172

Table 2-7. Number of children in poor families	172
Table 2-8. Level of income in poor families	173
Table 2-9. Kruskal Wallis test results and standard deviation one-way analysis of variance of adolescents' communication skills average scores according to type of school	182
Table 2-10. Mann Whitney U Test results and standard deviation t-test of adolescents' communication skills average scores according to gender.....	184
Table 2-11. Findings related to participants' academic achievement at the year of dropping out of school	189
Table 2-12. Findings related to tendency to violence and participants' status of getting involved in crime	190
Table 2-13. Findings related to harmful substance use habits of individuals who dropped out of school.....	190
Table 2-14. Findings related to family characteristics of individuals who dropped out of school.....	191
Table 2-15. Findings related to participants' views intended for school satisfaction, interest of administrators and teachers at school and violence in school environment in the year they dropped out of school.....	192
Table 2-16. T-test results of attitudes of parents for children's rights depending on gender of children.....	199
Table 2-17. ANOVA results of attitudes of parents for children's rights on age of children	199
Table 2-18. Distribution of students according to gender.....	207
Table 2-19. What does violence towards another person make you think of?	208
Table 2-20. Have you ever seen anyone using violence?	208
Table 2-21. Where did you see somebody using violence?	209
Table 2-22. What was the person being violent doing?	209
Table 2-23. Has anyone been violent towards you?	210
Table 2-24. Who used violence against you?	210
Table 2-25. Why was violence used towards you?	211
Table 2-26. Have you ever used violence against any other one?	211
Table 2-27. Who did you use violence on?	211
Table 2-28. Why did you use violence?	212
Table 2-29. Frequency distribution of students by gender	216
Table 2-30. Cyber bully and victim scale reliability coefficients	217
Table 2-31. The average overall scores of cyber-victim/cyber-bully of participating students.....	217

Table 2-32. Frequency distribution of the answers of participating students to questions in personal information form	218
Table 2-33. Mann-Whitney U-test results; relationship between whether students were educated in boarding schools and whether they were cyber-bullies/victims	219
Table 2-34. Kruskal-Wallis H-test results; relationship between students' mothers' level of education and whether students were cyber-bullies/victims	219
Table 2-35. Kruskal-Wallis H-test results; relationship between students' fathers' level of education and whether students were cyber-bullies/victims	220
Table 2-36. Mann-Whitney U-test results; relationship between whether students' parents were separated and whether students were cyber-bullies/victims	220
Table 2-37. Kruskal-Wallis H-test results; relationship between students' family domicile and whether they were cyber-bullies/victims.....	222
Table 2-38. Mann-Whitney U-test results; relationship between whether students' parents acted violently towards each other and whether students were cyber-bullies/victims.....	222
Table 2-39. Mann-Whitney U-test results; relationship between violence witnessed in students' neighbourhoods and whether they were cyber-bullies/victims	223
Table 2-40. To what degree the expectations of children are met by their parents?.....	229
Table 2-41. To what degree are the expectations of parents met by their children?	231
Table 2-42. Distribution of the type of reactions parents display when their expectations are not met by the children (according to children's and parents' reports).....	232
Table 2-43. Distribution of the type of reactions children display when their expectations are not met by the parents according to children reports and parent reports.....	232
Table 2-44. T-Test results for school liking scores of children based on whether or not their parents are divorced.....	246
Table 2-45. T-Test results for classroom participation scores of children based on whether or not their parents are divorced	246
Table 2-46. T-Test results for school avoidance scores of children based on whether or not their parents are divorced.....	247
Table 2-47. T-Test results for self-directiveness scores of children based on whether or not their parents are divorced.....	247

Table 2-48. T-Test results for total school adjustment scores of children based on whether or not their parents are divorced	247
Table 2-49. The relationships between children's behaviour and the subcategories of school adjustment	270
Table 2-50. The differences between the behaviours of children and their adjustment to school with regard to the socio-economic levels of schools.....	271
Table 2-51. The differences between the behaviours of children and their adjustment to school with regard to teachers' educational backgrounds.....	272
Table 3-1. Gender, teaching experience (years) and educational level distributions	299
Table 3-2. Special training activities by four Turkish civil associations for gypsy women	326
Table 3-3. Success of undergraduate students of YTU Economics	350
Table 3-4. The Model of Counterproductive Work Behaviours (Robinson & Bennett, 1995).....	358
Table 3-5. Distribution of the sample by sex, age, educational level, and term of employment.....	360
Table 3-6. Correlation Coefficients among Personality-CD and CWB-Types.....	363
Table 3-7. Distribution of the respondents according to their answers given to the question 'Why have you chosen to follow that particular profession?'	369
Table 3-8. Distribution of the respondents according to their command of a foreign language	369
Table 3-9. Distribution of the respondents who wish to study abroad according to the countries of emigration they intend to go	371
Table 3-10. Distribution of the respondents according to their answers given to the question "Why do you wish to go to that particular country?"	371
Table 3-11. Education policy in sociological dimensions.....	377
Table 3-12. Numbers of student enrolment and graduates in secondary and tertiary education of Turkey.....	378
Table 3-13. Female participation rates in secondary and tertiary education (1923-2012).....	381
Table 3-14. Distribution of students according to certain features related to teaching practice course.....	387
Table 3-15. Averages related to competencies of supervising teachers expected by prospective teachers and to competencies of supervising teachers, and t-test.....	388

Table 3-16. Averages related to competencies of supervising teachers according to the departments of prospective teachers, including ANOVA results.....	389
Table 3-17. Averages related to supervising teachers' having competencies according to gender of prospective teachers, including t-test	390
Table 3-18. Comparison of the logistics vocational education in Turkey and Germany with the sectors characteristics.....	406
Table 3-19. Constructivist program leadership and guidance levels of school principals.....	411
Table 3-20. Constructivist programme leadership and guidance levels of school principals according to the qualitative interviews	412
Table 3-21. Target population and numerical data of the sample.....	419
Table 3-22. Cronbach Alpha Reliability for the school safety survey	419
Table 3-23. Numeric values for verbal corresponding	420
Table 3-24. Descriptive findings related to the answers.....	421
Table 3-25. Findings related to the dimensions of school safety.....	421
Table 4-1. Frequency (n) and proportion of strategies	429
Table 4-2. Metacognitive strategies.....	430
Table 4-3. Cognitive Strategies	431
Table 4-4. Social and affective strategies	431
Table 4-5. Strategy Combinations	432
Table 4-6. <i>New Headway Upper-Intermediate</i> , online materials	437
Table 4-7. <i>Solutions</i> , online materials	438
Table 4-8. <i>New English File</i> , online materials.....	439
Table 4-9. ELT students' general attitude scores.....	445
Table 4-10. ANOVA results for the correlation between ELT students' attitude scores and their education levels.....	446
Table 4-11. Results of t-test and ANOVA for correlation between ELT students' attitude scores and occupation, gender and age variables...	446
Table 4-12. Results of the regular evaluation	464
Table 4-13. Benefits of writing conferences as identified by students	467
Table 4-14. The acquisition order of connectives in child language	472
Table 4-15. Frequency and distribution of connectives in terms of type.	474
Table 4-16. Most frequently used connectives in texts.....	475
Table 4-17. Frequency and distribution of accurately and appropriately used connectives	475

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 1-1. Examples of problems addressed to pre-service teachers	25
Figure 1-2. Solution of a problem being addressed to pre-service teachers with different strategies	26
Figure 1-3. Example of solutions for problem No. 1 given by pre-service teachers	28
Figure 1-4. Example of solutions of pre-service teachers for the fourth problem	28
Figure 1-5. Percentage per field of study	83
Figure 1-6. Lead teacher evaluation	84
Figure 1-7. Inquiry process in this study	98
Figure 1-8. Distribution of candidate teachers' total attitude scores	123
Figure 1-9. Means of scores of high-, mid- and low-achievers on the cognitive scales of the LASSI	142
Figure 1-10. Means of scores of high-, mid- and low-achievers on the affective scales of the LASSI	143
Figure 1-11. The scatter plot between experience and attitude score	149
Figure 1-12. Characteristics of a good note	156
Figure 1-13. Sample note	158
Figure 2-1. Level of income in poor families	173
Figure 3-1. The distribution of positive and negative perceptions by grades	333
Figure 3-2. Distribution of most important causes of positive and negative perceptions of the motto	334
Figure 3-3. Causes of positive and negative perceptions of the motto on Twitter	336
Figure 3-4. Rank of the last accepted undergraduate student	351
Figure 3-5. Educational background of father (%)	352
Figure 3-6. Educational background of mother (%)	352
Figure 3-7. Income group of father (%)	353
Figure 3-8. Income group of mother (%)	353
Figure 3-9. High school academic background of students (%)	354
Figure 3-10. Information sources that determined preference	355
Figure 3-11. Simultaneous preferences of students of economics	356
Figure 3-12. Proposed model	359

Figure 3-13. Distribution of the respondents according to their command of a foreign language.....	369
Figure 3-19. General structure of the Turkish education system.....	407
Figure 4-1. Number of interactions by students with resources <File> over the period	461
Figure 4-2. Number of interactions by students with resources <File> ...	462
Figure 4-3. Number of interactions by students to resources <Test>	463

FOREWORD

The book *Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Education* is a collection of essays on educational issues written by educators and researchers from three continents—Africa, Asia, and Europe.

The first chapter, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, starts with a study on collaborative learning by Güven and Hecht-Valais. In their attempt to demonstrate how learner-centred teaching methods can be implemented in foreign or second language classrooms, the authors investigate the views of the teachers of EFL about collaborative learning, more specifically about the implementation of project-based learning as a pathway towards learner autonomy. The findings indicate that the topics in the classrooms need to be varied to complement diverse student learning styles and interests, thus offering students more choices. The study by Uslu, that uses the predictive research in the survey model, examines the relationship between educational research use levels and lifelong-learning competencies of elementary school teachers. Questioning 206 teachers from 19 elementary schools of Çanakkale, Turkey, the author shows that lifelong-learning competencies of teachers are high, indicating that the relationships of teachers' lifelong-learning competencies with their frequency of following educational research, performing educational research, following periodical publications and educational status are significant. In their study, Iyibil, Güç and Akpınar examine 24 pre-service teachers' answers in detail. They show that 24 pre-service teachers from the Faculty of Education in the Eastern Black Sea region of Turkey generally use the strategies of linear solution, drawing, finding a pattern, intelligent guessing and testing, adopting a different point of view, considering extreme cases, organizing the data and accounting for all possibilities less, but never use the strategies of solving a simpler analogous problem and working backwards. Altıntaş and Özdemir investigate how 200 primary school teachers view gifted children in their classrooms. They ask two open-ended questions: "What are gifted children for you?" and "What are the characteristics of gifted children?" The findings suggest that gifted children are mostly perceived by their teachers as students who have high interest in the topics and who get easily bored during the lessons when the topics are below their level and when they are not allowed to use their potential. Tabancalı and Çakmak report a study on the teacher's job satisfaction. Employing

239 teachers working in 42 primary schools in Istanbul, Turkey, they use Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire to find out the teacher's job satisfaction levels. The analyses indicate that both male and female teachers' intrinsic satisfaction levels are high. However, female teachers' intrinsic satisfaction levels are statistically higher than male teachers' are. There is no significant difference in teachers' both extrinsic and intrinsic satisfaction levels according to age. Art, music and gym teachers' extrinsic satisfaction levels are higher than primary school teachers' extrinsic satisfaction levels. Examining the use of metaphors in class, Polat and Kazak demonstrate how high school students perceive their teachers. Two hundred and twenty 12th grade high school students produced positive personal images of their teachers: the Counsellor Teacher, the Educative Teacher, the Teacher as a Source of Knowledge, the Fellow Sufferer Teacher, the Caretaker Teacher, the Confident Teacher, the Helpful Teacher, the Leader Teacher, the Relaxing Teacher, and the Big-Hearted Teacher. In her study, Yumru reports her solution to the theory-practice problem of ELT students by reconstructing the first year Reading & Writing course in the Department of English Language Teaching at Cag University, Turkey. More specifically, she investigates whether the involvement in keeping portfolios has an effect on student teachers' understanding of the process approach to teaching writing prior to their pedagogical courses. The results indicate that students' active involvement in a process approach to teaching writing, together with the summative and formative functions of the portfolio assessment prior to pedagogical courses, helps them conceptualize the writing strategies to be taught to the students in their future practices. In their study, Jiménez-Garrido and Pérez-Navío explore the nature of the change that new teachers undergo when they switch from regular education to full immersion education. Monitoring 24 new teachers in a full immersion school in the USA, they suggest that districts and schools need to prepare educators before they start their teaching duties. For them, preparing teachers for immersion education does not mean limiting their performance in class but to give them a wide range of strategies and techniques to choose from. In his paper, Norley highlights the state of numeracy amongst the general British population; he outlines and advocates a methodology for rectifying some of the issues raised, describes the context in which it is used, briefly examines the role of technology in the learning of numeracy, draws conclusions and makes recommendations. In their study, Arslan, Ogan-Bekiroğlu and Suzuk examine the change in the pre-service physics teachers' science process skills in an inquiry-based laboratory environment. During a 12-week study, 25 pre-service teachers participated in inquiry-

based activities for 2 hours per week. Two activities are given to the pre-service teachers: the first activity is about an inclined plane and the second is about free falling. Results show that inquiry-based activities improve pre-service teachers' science process skills. Özbey, Büyüktanir, Kesicioğlu and Türkoğlu explore how teacher candidates view cheating. They examine whether cheating differs according to gender, academic success, grade level, family attitude, family's education level and professions. In their study, Özcan and Altıntaş investigate how candidate teachers regard genetically modified products: 5854 year-candidate teachers in Biology, Science and Elementary Education from eleven different Turkish universities (the Marmara, the Aegean and the Black Sea) complete a survey consisting of 23 questions developed by the researchers. Results show that candidate teachers believe they have not been informed enough about GMOs. Investigating study skills of different achievement groups totalling 156 students, Amri shows that the use of study skills affects academic achievement: cognitive skills, such as self-testing strategies and the selection of main ideas, are positively related to academic success whereas affective skills, such as motivation and anxiety, hinder academic achievement. In their study, Memiş, Özel and Özcan critically investigate mathematics teachers' attitudes toward the use of technology in mathematics classes. Employing mathematics teachers working in Istanbul, Gaziantep, and Balıkesir, Turkey, they show that both female and male students have positive attitudes toward technology while there is a significant difference between high school and primary school mathematics teachers. In addition, mathematics teachers who work in private schools have a more positive attitude than mathematics teachers who work in public schools. Finally, by analyzing how note-taking is accomplished in a set of standardized clinical encounters, İçbay and Morrison seek to determine what medical students and residents do while watching clinical encounters in an experimental setting that contributes to the quality of their resulting clinical chart notes.

The second chapter is dedicated to the *psychosocial development of children in education*. Özbaş and Avcı investigate the relationship between the socio-economic status of the family and the benefits of education. The paper by Gümüş-Gers and Bütün-Ayhan presents the issue of adolescents' communication styles. Adolescents acquire many skills in school, and the school settings have an impact on their communication skills. The authors examine the effect of school type and gender on adolescents' communication skills. A qualitative study written by Şimşek and Katitaş focuses on school-dropout: *Reasons for and Impacts of School Dropout: A Case Study in Sanliurfa, Turkey* presents the reasons of school dropout in

the rural area of Turkey with a case study in Sanliurfa. Another paper gives a valuable perspective on parental attitudes towards the child rights. Yurtsever-Kiliçgün and Oktay discuss this topic considering the child's age and gender. Gelişli, Kandir, Tezel-Şahin and Yazici's paper focuses on students' thoughts and opinions about violence. The study examines the views of primary school students about violence. The research is a descriptive study and the sample consisted of 87 students attending primary school in Yenimahalle, the city of Ankara, Turkey. The authors argue that students use violence as a way to solve problems. Three subsequent studies focus on the association between family type and children development. Ertürk and Şanlı consider the income level of the families in the Eskişehir province, Turkey. Güven and Açık attempt to explore the relationship between family and education and the effects it has on the children. A further study by Ogelman, Seçer, Önder and Mamiyev investigate the effect of divorced and un-divorced families on children. The research paper written by Bayhan examines the postmodern identity of college students. In addition, the paper argues that determining the problems of university students will provide a more analytical understanding of the "social segment" made up by both future managers and elites. Determining the issues through "explaining" and "understanding", and producing the solutions is the most important function of the scientific knowledge from a sociological point of view. Batur pays attention to the *Psychological Effects of Natural Disasters on Students and Emergency Response Plans*. The author states that natural events cannot be controlled, but their effects can be reduced by conscious city planning, by developing physical and environmental protection methods and through mass education. The study written by Dağlioğlu, Dağlı and Dalkiliç examines the relationship between the behaviours of preschoolers and their adaptation to school with regard to several variables. Bekir and Aydin clarify the perception of college students on their families. The authors claim that given that university students will be the intellectual and dynamic segment of the society in the future, their understanding of family is more important than ever. Didilicã underlines the very crucial issue of child's rights in early childhood. The paper provides further knowledge about the children's rights-based approach in the context of early childhood education and care (ECEC).

The third chapter is dedicated to *educational policy*. Yildirim focuses on the teaching of democracy and citizenship. The author underlines the issue of the learning process in the teaching of the rights of children from survival and protection to development and participation. Tutkun and Salih-Genç focus on the importance of social, economic and cultural

changes in teacher's activities and roles. Their paper aims at stressing the need for teacher autonomy in terms of increasing the teacher's role in education. Another interesting paper belonging to Eroğlu, Oğuz and Babahan wonders if the Gypsies are without education or education is without the Gypsies. This study is based on the findings of a group of researchers that aim to make the women in the Roma communities visible. Kayman and Uysal examine the university as a Taylorist institution and the reception of the motto in the case of the Gazi University, Turkey. The data obtained in the study are useful to corporate identity planners and give hints to institutions on the evaluation of the mottos that showcase corporate identity. The paper *Transformational Leadership in Higher Education* written by Beytekin contains an exploration of the nature of transformational behaviours of faculty deans so that a clearer understanding of what it means can cause effective management in higher education. Üçer and Gönel focus on the issue of higher education of economics in Turkey. The authors complain about economics in higher education and are concerned about the transformation of the student profile. The paper by Pişkin, Ersoy-Kart, Savcı and Güldü argue that behaviours are influenced by individuals' personality traits because individuals make conscious choices when adopting certain behaviours. Tukhashvili's study points to the importance of the potential emigration of Georgian students for study purposes. The author argues that many graduates continue to stay in foreign countries for work, and that educational migration turns into permanent migration, causing the country to lose intellectual potential. Another research paper was written by Sunata on the impacts of the Turkish education system on migration. This paper analyses the impact of the education system on migration. Kocabatmaz underlines the importance of supervising teachers' competences and shows how to develop their professional competence during the period of teaching practice. The paper written by Şahin and Arcagök presents the issue of service learning. They approach the issue from four perspectives: the basics of service learning, the foundations of service learning in higher education, the foundations of service learning in Turkey, and the benefits of service learning. Çavuşoğlu and Keskin examine the *Logistics Vocational Education in Germany and Turkey*. The main objective of their study is to present the contribution of education to the success of the logistics sector in Germany, the world's logistics leader, and to compare the current situation of logistics vocational education in Germany and Turkey. Kaya and Göçen focus on the importance of the constructivist program leadership and guidance levels of school principals. The authors argue that these programs have changed not only the roles of teachers and students, but also those of the principals.

Çalikoğlu and Işık's paper shows how to increase safety of high schools based on the opinions of high school students related to the safety of the schools.

The fourth chapter contains papers on *language in teaching*. The paper by Bayezit and Çubukçu compares Turkish and English language course books in terms of learning strategies based on the classification of O'Malley and Chamot (1990). Saraç and Sert debate the issue of *Convergence and Divergence in Online English Language Teaching Materials*. The authors tackle self-regulated learning via the integration of computer-based and e-learning materials to the curricular activities. Another paper written by Almacioğlu on Turkish BA, MA and PhD ELT students' attitudes towards the teaching profession argues that the role of attitudes is crucial because there is a strong relationship among teacher attitudes, society and school. A further study of Doğan examines the *Role of Mentoring in ELT Teacher Candidates' Professional Development* because English is the leading foreign language due to its prestigious position in the world, which has led to the rising of importance of learning and teaching English. The author argues that the possession of good pronunciation and intonation are two crucial professional prerequisites for non-native English language teachers. The paper on *Learning Success through Composition of Didactics and Technology* by Elkina reports on the monitoring of the teaching course "Programming" offered to the students of the specialization "Informatics in Public Administration". AlGhafri's study focuses on *Writing vs. the Red Pen: Omani College Students' Perspectives on Teacher-Student Writing Conferences*. The author claims that writing conferences between the teacher and the students is one of the most popular techniques that will never grow old over time. The paper *Views on the Use of Connectives in Students' Written Discourse* written by Çetinkaya, Ülper and HAMzadayi argues that connectives have a significant role in the linkage of propositions in the text and the organization of information flow. Inaccurate use of connective elements may lead to disconnections between the message that the writer wants to convey and the message formed in the text. The paper *English for Specific Purposes in Turkish Higher Education* written by Sert and Saraç underlines that the origins of Languages for Specific Purposes (LSP) date back to the 16th century with the publication of the first phrase book for foreign tourists. Ejupi's paper *Teaching Idioms in English as a Foreign Language* reflects the complexity of language comprehension for those who lack a native speaking environment. Finally, in his article *Quality of English Language Teaching in Turkish Secondary Education*, Uygun broadens his research on the improvement and maintenance of the

quality of foreign language learning and teaching in Turkish secondary education institutions.

Hasan Arslan

CHAPTER ONE

TEACHING AND TEACHER EDUCATION

EMPOWERING LEARNER AUTONOMY: A CASE FOR COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

Z. ZUHAL GÜVEN
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Introduction

Rapid social, economic, cultural and technological changes in the last century have brought about new insights for education. Those wishing to be competitive in business or academia must ensure they are up-to-date with twenty-first century skills and knowledge. In our global marketplace, lifelong learning is a reality, and the need to develop learner autonomy is an undeniable necessity. Another prerequisite for success in today's world is communicative competence: the ability to use language appropriately in real contexts. In the past several decades, educational specialists have been conducting various studies on how to foster learner autonomy in the foreign or second language classroom as English has taken prominence as an international language. However, teachers' perspectives toward implementing learner-centred teaching methods have not been studied comprehensively. This paper aims to contribute to closing this gap by investigating the views of the teachers who teach English as a foreign language, exploring collaborative learning as a whole, and describing specifically the implementation of project-based learning as a pathway towards learner autonomy.

Literature Review and Background of the Study

Learner Autonomy

Learner autonomy has been discussed with a great deal of interest in the last thirty years and much has been written about the definition, implementation and implications of autonomous learning (Holec, 1981; Little, 1991; Dickinson, 1995; Nunan, 1997; Oxford, 2003; Holec, 2008). According to Holec (1981), who first coined the term "learner autonomy",

autonomous learners are those who take the responsibility for the totality of their learning situation by determining their own objectives, defining the contents and the progression of their course; selecting the methods and techniques; monitoring this procedure, and evaluating what they have learned.

As for the instructional applications of learner autonomy, educationalists have proposed several models, some of which are based on Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development. Vygotsky (1978: 68) emphasized "the distance between the actual level, as determined by independent problem-solving, and the level of potential development, as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers." In the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model of Pearson and Gallagher (1983), which has inspired researchers to conceptualize the notion in various diagrams (Spires and Stone, 1989; Fisher and Freys, 2008; Murphy, 2009), the teacher and learner work together through a carefully guided process where the responsibility for learning is transferred from teacher to learner. This model combines Piaget's work on cognitive structures and schema, Vygotsky's work on proximal zone of development, Bandura's work on attention, retention, reproduction and motivation, and Word, Bruner and Ross's work on scaffolded instruction.

Learner autonomy has taken a significant role in the field of foreign language teaching; however it is said that teachers' roles have not been studied as extensively as the other aspects of learner autonomy (Borg and Al-Busaidi, 2012). The limited number of studies into teachers' views on learner autonomy reveal that teachers display positive attitudes towards learner autonomy, though some have unanswered questions on the subject (Camilleri, 1997; Ustunluoglu, 2009; Balcıkanlı, 2010; Kılınc, 2010; Bullock, 2011; Reinders and Lazaro, 2011; Yoshiyuku, 2011).

Collaborative Learning

Literature on learner autonomy often suggests that the development of learner autonomy in the English language classroom should aim for competency in the following three areas: communicative competence, learning competence, and strategic competence. Project work encompasses these three learning goals as learners engage in a guided, expanded process of inquiry through which they investigate a complex question, problem or challenge, as an extension of what has already been learned in class. Project Based Learning (PBL) is an instructional approach that can be utilized to direct English language learners towards independence through well planned stages of learning which emphasize peer interaction, critical