

The Relationship between Autonomy Perception and the Reading Comprehension Achievement of English Language Learners

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Abstract

Statement of the Problem: Because some language learners are more successful than others, individual differences in motivation, anxiety, strategy, learning style, dependence, and independence, as well as how these influence language learning, have been investigated since the 1970's. The results of this research have helped define the characteristics of a good language learner who is capable of organizing her own learning process. The concept of autonomy has also emerged as a focal point in studies of language learning. While several researchers have investigated this concept, misconceptions about the implications of autonomy remain. Since the concept of autonomy is a multidimensional construct, it might be clarified by observing such behaviors as reading comprehension achievement. This study investigated the relationship between learner autonomy and reading comprehension achievement in a foreign language-learning context.

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between the autonomy perception and reading comprehension achievement of students learning English as a foreign language.

Methods: Descriptive research was used in this study. Proportioned random sampling was used to select 560 university students. Both the Autonomy Perception Scale and the Reading Comprehension Test were completed by members of the sample group.

Findings and Results: On the Autonomy Perception Scale, 161 participants had high levels of autonomy. A significant relationship was found between level of autonomy and reading comprehension achievement.

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Specifically, two autonomy sub-scales that measured language responsibility and meta-cognitive strategy use were found to correlate strongly with reading comprehension achievement.

Conclusions and Recommendations: The findings in this study provide evidence that there is a significant relationship between autonomy and reading comprehension in language learning contexts. Our research also has important implications for educational practitioners. Our findings suggest that including meta-cognitive strategy training in the curricula of language lessons may help foster learner autonomy. Encouraging learners to read more may also aid the acquisition or improvement of autonomy. Letting students participate in choosing materials and the activities and content of lessons, as well as using such alternative assessment techniques as peer-assessment and self-assessment may further assist the creation of autonomous learners.

Key Words: Autonomy perception, learner autonomy, meta-cognitive strategies, reading comprehension, English language learners.

English language learning is obviously affected by a great number of different factors. Foremost is the educational setting in which the learning takes place. Learning of English as a second language (ESL) and learning of English as a foreign language (EFL) occur in completely different educational settings. As Grabe and Stoller (2001) explain, ESL instruction takes place in an L1 English speaking country, whereas EFL instruction occurs in countries such as China, Belgium, or countries (Turkey, in the scope of this study) where languages other than English are used in most types of daily communication. It is generally assumed that it is easier for learners to learn another language within an ESL setting than for learners to learn a foreign language in a non-English-speaking setting. The first set of students are mostly immigrants in L1 English speaking countries. They hear, read, see, and speak the target language in the real world. In contrast, for those who learn the target language as a foreign language, school seems to be the only educational setting in which to learn and practice the language. It is the learners' responsibility to find environments outside school where the target language is used. Otherwise, they cannot use it actively outside the classroom.

In countries like Turkey, schools or private courses are common settings for the study of foreign languages. Unless learners pursue non-compulsory language activities, they rarely develop the skills necessary to use the target language efficiently. They may, of course, find a good job or pass certain exams after completing a language course. However, when they encounter real life situations, like an announcement made by the pilot of a plane, their language skills often fail them. For language learners in countries where the target language is not used, it is important to take advantage of as many opportunities as possible to learn and use the language. In other words, they should be autonomous learners. Autonomous

learners are those who seek opportunities to learn outside classroom settings and create their own instructional settings, free of teachers (Bren & Mann, 1997).

The concept of autonomy is important in western cultures. In non-western cultures, being a member of a society and submitting to authority are expected. People are reluctant to challenge pre-determined rules. Littlewood (1999) points out that students in Asian countries are heavily dependent on teachers. They avoid asking questions or giving individual opinions. Similar studies (Chan, 2002; Peng, 2003) highlight the role of teachers as authorities, knowledge resources, and learning motivators. However, if autonomous learning has important implications for all language learners, understanding how the concept of autonomous learning differs according to cultural setting may suggest ways of creating autonomous learners within such settings.

Autonomy is a precondition to successful language learning. Learner autonomy is defined as "the capacity to take charge of one's own learning" (Benson, 2001, p. 8), and autonomous learning is using this capacity. Autonomous learners feel that they are responsible for their own learning processes. Responsibility can be observed in all stages of the learning process. Holec (1985) describes these stages in detail. In the first stage, the learner determines her learning objectives and the steps to follow to achieve these objectives. However, "this will not be done on the basis of a description of native-like communicative competence but on a communicative competence defined in terms of the language needs of which the learner himself is aware" (Holec, 1985, p. 175). The second stage is defining the content. In this stage, the learner gathers all learning materials and classifies them according to her objectives. In the third stage, selecting the methods and techniques to be used, the learner evaluates the efficiency, advantages, and disadvantages of learning activities. She plans her own learning schedule and knows that each learning activity inside or outside of school is an opportunity to improve herself. Monitoring her own learning procedure is the next stage. Here, the learner knows that each individual learns at her own pace and has preferences for certain activities. She is aware of individual differences and arranges her learning process accordingly. Finally, the learner evaluates what has been learnt. In this stage, the learner has her own criteria for self-assessment and is aware of the necessity of it. "The determination of the criteria and thresholds to be used in evaluation also continues throughout the learning program, along with the definition of objectives but also in accordance with any possible changes in the learner's personal requirements" (Holec, 1985, p. 179). These stages help us conceptualize the abstract term "taking responsibility", which appears to be the key element of autonomy.

Being an autonomous learner requires meta-cognitive knowledge and the use of strategy, as Wenden (1991) notes. Determining needs and learning styles, planning the learning process, organizing learning materials, planning the pace of learning and where it will take place, and monitoring and evaluating learning are among the meta-cognitive strategies used by autonomous learners (Oxford, 2001). Sinclair (2008, p. 243), who defined the term "learner autonomy" as "a construct of capacity which is operationalised when willingness is present" also emphasized that "this capacity

consists of development and conscious awareness of a body of specific meta-cognitive knowledge about one's self as a learner, one's learning context, the subject matter to be learnt, and the process of learning". Several studies have examined students' use of meta-cognitive strategies. Çetinkaya and Erktin (2002), for example, developed a meta-cognitive methods scale. They found that there is a relationship between meta-cognitive strategy use and reading comprehension achievement. In a similar study, Lee (2006) found that there is a strong relationship between reading comprehension and meta-cognitive strategy use. Students who do well with reading comprehension use more meta-cognitive strategies than their peers. Readers who use meta-cognitive strategies are aware of their cognitive processes. As Brown, Armbuster and Baker (1986) have noted, good readers monitor their learning processes, plan strategies, and evaluate their strengths and weaknesses. The concept of autonomy, however, should not be restricted by the use of meta-cognitive strategies alone.

Many researchers who are interested in foreign language teaching (Grabe, 1991; Grabe & Stoller, 2001; Wallace, 2001) think that reading is the most important academic skill. Scientific and technical books and articles are mostly written in English. "This means that students and professionals in scientific and technological fields who are not native speakers or fluent users of English have an especially important need to be able to read relevant subject matter in English" (Lynch & Hudson, 1991, p. 216). Reading is not only a way of accessing information, but an activity that improves foreign language skills and independent learning. In countries where the target language is not spoken in everyday life, reading may be considered the activity most important to improving learning outside school. Yap (as cited in Benson, 2001) found that Chinese L1 speakers learning English preferred activities that focused on receptive, rather than productive, skills because it provided them with more opportunities to listen and read in the target language outside of class. It may be easier and cheaper for learners to find different kinds of reading texts, thanks to simplified or original books, newspapers, magazines, and the Internet.

There are two models of the reading process. The top-down model "refers to the selection of the fewest and most productive elements from a text in order to make a sense of it" (Lynch & Hudson, 1991, p. 218). The reader relates what she has already learned to the new information. According to Rumelhart (1980), people have cognitive constructions called schemata. Schemata are organized structures that help us understand and organize new information. A good reader uses her schemata to comprehend reading passages. If the reader does not have appropriate schemata or the writer's clues do not support the reader's existing schemata, then the reader may have comprehension problems. In the bottom-up model, the reader focuses on lexical items and other grammatical units to derive meaning (Lynch & Hudson, 1991). Using these schematic and linguistic processes, the reader is able to comprehend a given text.

Reading comprehension is a complex process. In EFL, the learning context affects this process. Learners reading in the target language also need to learn about the culture of that language. Because the "texts are written with a specific audience in

mind, cultural knowledge is present in texts and it is assumed that the reader is familiar with such knowledge" (Pang, Muaka, Bernhardt & Kamil, 2003, p. 21). This suggests that the reader, the text and the reading activity itself should be studied in detail while researching reading comprehension. For example, if the reader is the focal point, her talents, motivation, language knowledge, experiences and self-perception affect the reading process (Snow & Sweet, 2003).

Individual autonomy may affect reading comprehension, too. According to studies of autonomy, good readers are those who "take active steps to overcome difficulties in comprehension", "are aware of how well they understand a text while reading", "read more" (Pang et al., 2003, p. 21), and are good at using cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies (Çetinkaya & Erkin, 2002; Salatacı & Akyel, 2002). However, these studies tend not to discuss the effects of culture or perceptions of autonomy in a broader sense. As Benson (2008, p. 30) has noted, "we should work towards a more complex view of the requirements for autonomy in learning and autonomy in life" by "paying attention to learners' perspectives." Therefore, investigating a possible relationship between autonomy perception and reading comprehension achievement in a foreign language-learning context may provide empirical evidence needed to determine the dimensions of the concept of autonomy and foster ways to implement it.

Methods

This study examined whether there is a significant relationship between level of autonomy and the reading comprehension achievement of language learners. Descriptive research was used. The crucial advantage of descriptive research is that it enables researchers to make generalizations about situations. As Best and Kahn (2006, p. 119-121) have stated, "descriptive research deals with the relationships between variables, the testing of hypotheses, and the development of generalizations principles, or theories that have universal validity," and "only descriptive research studies lead to generalizations beyond the given sample and situation." Since studies of autonomy are relatively scarce in Turkey, descriptive research was chosen as the best way of describing the situation being studied.

Sample

The population in this study consisted of intermediate-level English language learners attending preparatory courses in the School of Foreign Languages at Dokuz Eylul University during the 2006-2007 academic year. There were 2701 students in the population. Proportioned random sampling, which reflects the characteristics of whole populations more accurately than other types of sampling, was used to ensure the heterogeneity of the sample selected. The sample included 503 undergraduate and 57 graduate students. There were 238 females and 322 males. The sample represented 33% of the whole population.

Research Instruments

Autonomy Perception Scale. After reading the related literature and asking the opinions of five experts in the field, a 65-item and 5-point Likert scale was developed for the pilot study. Two hundred eighty-six students in the School of Foreign Languages at Dokuz Eylul University, who did not participate in the actual study, scored the items in the scale. The students indicated their opinions by marking "strongly agree", "agree", "no opinion", "disagree", and "strongly disagree". After statistical analysis, 27 items that could not be classified according to any dimension were omitted from the scale. The final version of the scale had four sub-scales, namely: Taking language learning responsibility (17 items), using meta-cognitive strategies (9 items), engaging in English activities outside of school (7 items), and associating language with real life (5 items). The Cronbach Alpha Reliability of the whole scale was 0.90, indicating a satisfactory level of reliability.

Reading Comprehension Test. A reading comprehension test was developed to determine the reading comprehension achievement of participants. The paragraphs used in the test were chosen from the books *Developing Reading Skills, Intermediate 1*, by Markstein and Hirasawa (1994) and *Insights for Today, A High Beginning Reading Skills Text*, by Smith and Mare (1999). These books were not used in courses at the School of Foreign Languages at Dokuz Eylul University.

Thirty-five multiple-choice questions were written for the paragraphs selected. The test was reviewed by experts in curricula and English language instruction, to ascertain the accuracy, clarity, and validity of each question. It was then revised according to their feedback. The test was piloted on 276 students from the School of Foreign Languages at Dokuz Eylul University. These students did not participate in the actual study. After item analysis of the questions, 10 were omitted from the test. The KR 20 Reliability of the 26-item reading comprehension test was calculated as 0.77, indicating that the instrument had a satisfactory level of reliability.

Procedure

The autonomy perception scale and the reading comprehension achievement test were given to 560 students in one session by course instructors. All the data were analyzed using statistical calculations.

Findings and Results

First, participants were divided into three categories, according to their levels of autonomy perception. This division was done using the raw scores in the normal distribution (commonly referred to as a bell curve). In normal distributions, the standard scores of measurements above the average have a (+) value, while those below the average have a (-) value. In this study, students who had scores of 105 or lower were said to have low autonomy perception. Students who had scores of 106-124 were considered to have medium autonomy perception. Finally, students who had scores of 125 and higher were considered to have high autonomy perception. Table 1 shows the results of this division:

Table 1
Mean and Standard Deviations of Autonomy Perception Levels

| Level of Autonomy Perception | n | M | Sd |
|------------------------------|-----|--------|-------|
| Low | 163 | 91.37 | 10.36 |
| Medium | 236 | 115.83 | 5.83 |
| High | 161 | 138.83 | 10.53 |
| Total | 560 | | |

Table 1 shows that 163 students had low, 236 students had medium, and 161 students had high levels of autonomy perception. Descriptive statistics of the reading comprehension achievement of all participants are shown in Table 2:

Table 2
Means and Standard Deviations of Reading Comprehension Achievement

| Number of Questions | n | M | Sd |
|---------------------|-----|-------|------|
| 26 | 560 | 15.08 | 4.80 |

Table 2 shows that 560 participants answered the whole test. The mean was 15.08, and the standard deviation was 4.80.

The Pearson Moments Product Correlation Coefficient Test was used to determine the correlation between autonomy perception and reading comprehension achievement. The results can be seen in Table 3:

Table 3
Autonomy Perception Level and Reading Comprehension Achievement - Pearson Correlation Test Results

| Variables | n | M | Sd | r | p | Significance |
|---------------------|-----|--------|-------|------|--------|--------------|
| Achievement | 560 | 15,08 | 4,80 | 0,14 | 0,00** | Significant |
| Autonomy (Gen) | | 115,26 | 20,01 | | | |
| Achievement | 560 | 15,08 | 4,80 | 0,85 | 0,04* | Significant |
| Responsibility | | 83,13 | 11,98 | | | |
| Achievement | 560 | 15,08 | 4,80 | 0,06 | 0,18 | Not |
| Eng.act.out.school | | 23,39 | 5,73 | | | Significant |
| Achievement | 560 | 15,08 | 4,80 | 0,22 | 0,00** | Significant |
| Meta-cog.str.use | | 32,76 | 4,66 | | | |
| Achievement | 560 | 15,08 | 4,80 | 0,04 | 0,29 | Not |
| Assoc. w/ real life | | 8,79 | 3,23 | | | Significant |

*p<0,05**p<0,01

As Table 3 shows, the mean score on the reading comprehension test was 15.08. The mean autonomy perception score when all sub-scales were included was 115.26. The mean score of the sub-scale for taking language learning responsibility was

83.13. The mean score of the sub-scale for engaging in English activities outside of school was 23.39. The mean score of the sub-scale for using meta-cognitive strategies was 32.76, and the mean score of the sub-scale for associating language with real life was 8.79.

The correlation value (r) between the two measurement instruments was 0.14. This shows that there is a statistically significant ($p=0.00$; $p<0.01$) relationship between autonomy perception and reading comprehension achievement. The correlation between the test scores and the sub-scales of autonomy perception was also calculated. As seen in Table 3, there are significant relationships between reading comprehension achievement and taking language responsibility ($p=0.04$; $p<0.05$), as well as between reading comprehension achievement and using meta-cognitive strategies ($p=0.00$; $p<0.01$). No significant relationship was found between reading comprehension achievement and the sub-scales for engaging in English activities outside of school and associating language with real life.

Scores on the reading comprehension test that assessed autonomy level were calculated to determine the difference between autonomy level and reading comprehension achievement. The results are shown in Table 4:

Table 4
Descriptive Statistics of Autonomy Perception Levels and Reading Comprehension Achievement

| Autonomy Level | n | M | Sd | Standard Error |
|----------------|-----|-------|------|----------------|
| Low | 163 | 14,48 | 5,09 | 0,40 |
| Medium | 236 | 14,95 | 4,30 | 0,28 |
| High | 161 | 15,86 | 5,12 | 0,40 |
| Total | 560 | 15,08 | 4,80 | 0,20 |

As Table 4 shows, the mean score of the low level was 14.48; the mean score of the medium level was 14.95, and the mean score of the high level was 15.86. As evidenced in Table 4, scores increased with autonomy level. A one-Way ANOVA test was used to determine the significance of this difference. The results of the test are shown in Table 5:

Table 5
One-Way ANOVA Test Results of the Differences between the Scores of Students, According to their Autonomy Perception Level

| Variable | Variance | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | f | p |
|------------|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|------|-------|
| Test Score | Between Groups | 161,54 | 2 | 80,77 | 3,53 | 0,03* |
| | Within Groups | 12734,16 | 557 | 22,86 | | |
| | Total | 12895,70 | 559 | | | |

* $p<0$

As shown in Table 5, the difference between test scores, according to autonomy level, is statistically significant ($p=0.03$; $p<0.05$). A Scheffé test was used to understand the source of this difference. The results are shown in Table 6:

Table 6
Scheffé Test Results, According to the Scores of Students with Low, Medium, and High Levels of Autonomy Perception

| Dependent Variable | Autonomy Level | Mean Difference | Standard Error | p | Significance |
|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|---------|-----------------|
| Test Score | Low | -0,47 | 0,49 | 0,33 | Not Significant |
| | High | -1,38 | 0,53 | 0,009** | Significant |
| | Medium Low | 0,47 | 0,49 | 0,33 | Not Significant |
| | High | -0,91 | 0,49 | 0,63 | Not Significant |
| | High Low | 1,38 | 0,53 | 0,01** | Significant |
| | High Medium | 0,91 | 0,49 | 0,63 | Not Significant |

** $p<0,01$

As Table 6 shows, the difference between the test scores of students with low and high levels of autonomy is statistically significant ($p=0.01$; $p<0.01$). There is no significant difference at other levels. It seems that students who showed high autonomy demonstrated greater reading comprehension than students who had other levels of autonomy. The sub-scale for taking language-learning responsibility might have caused this result.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The sub-scales of the Autonomy Perception Scale show that autonomous learners are those who take language-learning responsibility, use meta-cognitive learning strategies effectively, attend or create language learning activities outside school, and associate language learning with real life. In addition, the results of this study show that autonomy is important to reading comprehension.

According to our findings, 163 students had low levels of autonomy perception, 236 had medium levels, and 161 had high levels. This result indicates that 161 university students learning English as a foreign language show a tendency to learn autonomously, while 236 have the potential to learn autonomously. As these students are from cities and colleges all over the country, it may be possible to generalize the findings of our research. However, the purpose of this study was not to determine whether Turkish students are different from their western peers, with respect to autonomy. Therefore, the results do not allow us to directly conclude that Turkish students passively accept authority as some of their peers in non-western cultures do (Chan, 2001; Littlewood, 1999; Peng, 2003). On the other hand, this study reveals that Turkish students reported high levels of autonomy, especially when taking language-learning responsibility. Thus, our findings are consistent with those of Chan (2001) and Peng (2003), who found that university students learning a foreign language are ready to learn autonomously, even though they are members of non-western cultures. As a result, it is assumed that Turkish students learning

English as a foreign language may be autonomous learners if they are given chances to learn in autonomous learning settings.

The findings of this study also show that there is a relationship between autonomy level and reading comprehension achievement. The more autonomous the learner, the more successful she is in understanding reading texts. This is especially true for students who take language-learning responsibility and use meta-cognitive strategies. These findings are consistent with Sancar's (2001) finding that there is a relationship between academic achievement and student autonomy. Unlike that study, however, where the subjects were teacher learners and the relationship between autonomy and academic achievement was not significant, the present study found a much stronger, statistically significant relationship between reading comprehension achievement and autonomy perception. This study's results are also similar to the results of studies conducted by Çetinkaya and Erkin (2002), Lee (2006), and Salatacı and Akyel (2002), who found that there is a relationship between meta-cognitive strategy and skill use and reading comprehension. Autonomous language learners are good at using strategies and can choose ones that are appropriate and effective for their learning processes, as Wenden (1991) notes. As Omaggio (as cited in Wenden, 1991) has observed, these learners arrive at understandings of whole texts by using syntactic and contextual clues and by predicting the meanings of unknown words. Those who are not autonomous learners cannot use these strategies and have difficulty understanding texts.

This study has shown that there is a significant relationship between autonomy and reading comprehension. Our findings support Pang et al.'s (2003, p. 21) contention that "good teaching enables students to learn to read and read to learn." We argue that meta-cognitive strategies should be included in the curricula of language lessons. Teachers should let students participate in the choosing of materials, activities, and lessons. Further, this study provides evidence that alternative assessment techniques, such as peer-assessment and self-assessment, should be used to create self-awareness in the learning process. Teachers should also train themselves to be more autonomous, as they are models for learners. Including autonomous learning in the curricula of education faculties might increase the number of autonomous learners and teachers.

Limitations and Further Research

Several limitations of this study should be noted. First, this study included only intermediate-level English language learners at the School of Foreign Languages at Dokuz Eylul University, in Turkey. Second, the autonomy levels of students were calculated using the data collected. While the instrument was statistically validated for this study, further validation is needed to establish its accuracy and credibility. Third, students' previous language studies, an important contextual element, were not included in this study. These limitations should be addressed in future research on autonomy. Ways of fostering learner autonomy, as well as the demographic characteristics of learners and their relationships to autonomy, and the relationship between L1 and L2 reading might also be addressed in future research.

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Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce Öğrenenlerde Özerklik Algısı ve Okuduğunu Anlama Başarısı Arasındaki İlişki (Özet)

Problem Durumu

Kimi dil öğrencilerinin diğerlerine oranla daha başarılı olmaları güdü, kaygı, strateji kullanımı, öğrenme biçimleri ve öğrenme sürecinde öğretmene bağımlı olup olmama gibi bireysel farklılıkları gündeme getirmiş ve bu bireysel farklılıkların dil öğrenme sürecine nasıl etki ettiği araştırmacıların ilgi odağı olmuştur. Araştırmalar iyi dil öğrencilerinin kendi öğrenme süreçlerinde etkin rol alan bireyler olduğunu ortaya koymuş ve dil öğreniminde özerklik kavramı önem kazanmaya başlamıştır. Özerkliğin tanımını yapmak, onu oluşturan boyutları ayırıştırabilmek bu alanda araştırma yapanların uğraş verdiği bir noktadır. Kavramın çok boyutlu olması araştırmacıların hala özerkliğin ne olup ne olmadığı konusunda tartışmalarına neden olmaktadır. Bu nedenle yabancı dilde okuduğunu anlama başarısı gibi özerklikle ilintili, gözlemlenebilir, ölçülebilir kanıtlar bulmak kavramla ilgili yanlış değerlendirmelerin önüne geçebileceği gibi; elde edilen sonuçlar doğrultusunda dil öğrenen, öğrenenlere uygulama konusunda önerilerde bulunulabilir.

Araştırmanın Amacı

Bu araştırmanın amacı yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğrenenlerde özerklik algısı ve okuduğunu anlama başarısı arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemektir. Ulaşılabilecek sonuçlar doğrultusunda öğrencilerin özerklik algılarının belirlenmesiyle özerk öğrenmeye hazır olup olmadıkları konusunda bilgiye ulaşılacak ve alandaki tanımlara katkı sağlanacaktır.

Araştırmanın Yöntemi

Araştırmada betimsel yöntem kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın evrenini Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi, Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu, Hazırlık Bölümüne devam eden orta düzey İngilizce öğrencileri oluşturmaktadır. Bu araştırmada örneklem oranlı yansız atama ile seçilmiştir. Örneklemde 503 lisans, 57 lisansüstü olmak üzere toplam 560 öğrenci yer almıştır. Bu öğrencilerin 238'i kız, 322'si erkek öğrencidir. Örneklem tüm evrenin %33'ünü temsil etmektedir. Araştırmanın verileri Özerklik Algı Ölçeği ve İngilizce Okuduğunu Anlama Testi ile toplanmıştır. Ölçek ve başarı testi araştırmacı tarafından özgün olarak hazırlanmıştır. Veriler istatistiksel çözümlenmeler sonucunda yorumlanmıştır.

Araştırmanın Bulguları

Araştırma sonuçlarına göre İngilizce öğrenen öğrencilerin özerklik algıları genel anlamda yüksek çıkmıştır. Özerklik algısı ile okuduğunu anlama başarısı arasında anlamlı ilişkiler saptanmıştır. Özerklik algısı yükseldikçe

okuduğunu anlama başarısı artmaktadır. Özellikle öğrenme sorumluluğunu üzerine alma ve bilişüstü strateji kullanımı alt boyutları ile okuduğunu anlama başarısı arasında anlamlı ilişkiler bulunmuştur.

Araştırmanın Sonuçları ve Önerileri

Araştırmanın bulgularına göre 560 öğrenciden 163 tanesinin özerklik algısı düşük, 236 tanesinin orta ve 161 tanesinin yüksek olduğu saptanmıştır. Bu rakamlar öğrencilerin özerklik algılarının orta ve yüksek düzeyde olumlu olduğunu göstermektedir. Ayrıca özerklik algısı ve okuduğunu anlama başarısı arasında anlamlı ilişkiler bulunmuştur. Özerklik algısı yükseldikçe okuduğunu anlama başarısı artmaktadır. Başka bir deyişle, özerk öğrenciler okuduğunu anlamada daha başarılıdır. Öğrenme sorumluluğunu alma ve bilişüstü becerilerin kullanımı alt boyutları ile okuduğunu anlama arasında da anlamlı ilişkiler bulunmuştur. Öğrenme sorumluluğunu kendinde hisseden öğrenciler okuduğunu anlamada daha başarılıdır. Buna ek olarak bilişüstü becerilerini kullanan öğrenciler okuduğunu anlamada daha başarılıdır.

Araştırmanın bulgularından hareketle öğrencilerin özerk öğrenmelerine katkıda bulunmak için dil öğretiminde ders programlarına bilişüstü strateji kullanımına yönelik etkinlikler eklenebilir. Ayrıca dil öğretmenleri sınıfta akran değerlendirme, öz değerlendirme gibi alternatif değerlendirme yöntemlerini kullanarak ve öğrencilerinin ders içeriği, materyali, ve performans değerlendirilmesine etkin katılımlarını sağlayarak özerkliklerinin gelişimine katkıda bulunabilirler.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Özerklik algısı, öğrenen özerkliği, bilişüstü stratejiler, okuduğunu anlama, İngilizce dili öğrencileri