


Project-based EFL learning at the tertiary level: Research, translation, creativity and interaction

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ABSTRACT Project-based learning (PBL) involves real-life-based use of investigative, interactive and creative tasks that extend beyond the classroom and culminate in authentic products. PBL can be used as a means to promote tertiary-level EFL learning, yet there is little research on the issue in Turkish higher education contexts. This study develops a PBL model with research, translation, creativity and interaction components for tertiary-level EFL preparatory class students and investigates its perceived effectiveness. The data were collected by questionnaires and interviews and analyzed through statistical and thematic analyses. The findings showed that there were significant differences in the students' perceived competence in oral presentation skills, speaking fluency, speaking confidence, creativity in writing, creativity in visual or audiovisual output production, and time management before and after the treatment. Besides, thanks to PBL, the students were stated to experience research writing and translation. However, the PBL process was also found to be challenging due to the heavy workload. It is suggested the model be used in all kinds of EFL contexts including tertiary-level classes.

Keywords: *English language teaching, English preparatory classes, Project-based EFL learning, Project-based learning, Real-life-based learning, Tertiary education*

Yükseköğretim düzeyinde proje tabanlı yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğrenimi: Araştırma, çeviri, yaratıcılık ve etkileşim

ÖZ Proje tabanlı öğrenme, sınıf dışına uzanan ve özgün ürünlerle sonuçlandırılan araştırma içerikli, iletişimsel ve yaratıcı görevlerin gerçek hayat temelli olarak kullanımını içerir. Proje tabanlı öğrenme yükseköğretim düzeyinde yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğrenimini ilerletecek bir araç olarak kullanılabilir ancak bu konuda Türk yükseköğretim bağlamlarında az sayıda araştırma vardır. Bu çalışma yükseköğretim düzeyinde yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğrenen hazırlık öğrencileri için araştırma, çeviri, yaratıcılık ve etkileşim öğelerini içeren bir proje tabanlı öğrenme modeli geliştirmekte ve modelin algılanan etkinliğini araştırmaktadır. Veriler anketler ve mülakatlar aracılığıyla toplanmış ve istatistiksel ve tematik analizler yoluyla analiz edilmiştir. Sonuçlar uygulama öncesi ve sonrasında öğrencilerin sözlü sunum becerileri, konuşma akıcılığı, konuşma özgüveni, yazımda yaratıcılık, görsel ya da görsel-işitsel ürün üretmedeki yaratıcılık ve zaman yönetimine ilişkin algılanan yeterliliklerinde önemli farklar olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Ayrıca, öğrencilerin araştırma yazımı ve çeviriyi proje tabanlı öğrenme sayesinde deneyimlediği belirtilmiştir. Ancak proje tabanlı öğrenme süreci ağır iş yükü nedeniyle zorlayıcı da bulunmuştur. Modelin yükseköğretim düzeyindeki sınıflar dahil, yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğretilen her çeşit bağlamda kullanılması tavsiye edilmiştir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: *Gerçek yaşam tabanlı öğrenme, İngilizce dil öğretimi, İngilizce hazırlık sınıfları, Proje tabanlı öğrenme, Proje tabanlı yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğrenimi, Yükseköğretim eğitimi*

Citation: Kemalolu-Er, E. (2022). Project-based EFL learning at the tertiary level: Research, translation, creativity and interaction. *Turkish Journal of Education*, 11(3), 162-182
<https://doi.org/10.19128/turje.1061653>

INTRODUCTION

Project-based learning (PBL) involves the use of tasks that enable learners to conduct an in-depth investigation into a specific topic beyond the classroom, produce their own outcomes out of this research, and present them in written and/or oral form to a given audience in an extended period of time (Beckett & Slater, 2005). According to Blumenfeld et al. (1991), PBL with its purposeful real-life-based activities and personalized learning opportunities helps learners explore different topics, construct their own outputs and develop their reflective thinking, interpersonal communication and creativity-based skills. As pointed out by Beckett and Miller (2006), this approach can widely be used in different educational contexts including those of English language teaching.

Review of Literature

PBL in EFL classes

PBL can be used as a means to promote EFL learning. In this regard, a typical PBL context would be characterized with the real-life-based use of investigative, interactive and creative tasks extending beyond the classroom targeting concrete and original outcomes, and the employment of L2 as an active means of task fulfilment and communication (Gras-Velázquez, 2020). As stated by Stoller (2006), PBL may offer a great potential for learners to actualize themselves as active and dynamic participants in the foreign language learning process since it enables learners to improve in L2, enhance their content knowledge and develop their academic and real-life-related skills by relying extensively on their own potential.

Based on the pedagogical principle of “learning by doing”, PBL is defined to be a “quintessence” of experiential learning (Eyring, 1997). As defined by Kolb (2015), experiential learning entails the processes of experiencing, reflecting, conceptualizing and acting and it is in the very nature of PBL to embrace these acts and enable learners to gain insights into real-life-related matters via action and reflection. Besides, Legutke and Thomas (1991) identify project-based EFL learning as a “strong” version of communicative language learning since it emphasizes language as a meaning potential rather than a set of structures and involves meaningful and purposeful interactions throughout the whole process. As highlighted by Beckett and Miller (2006), in project-based EFL learning, learners construct their own knowledge frameworks and gain genuine types of experience and accordingly, personalize their learning thanks to group work, reflection and interaction. Thus, the process of L2 learning via PBL is also underlain with the tenets of social constructivist learning, which emphasizes individual learning taking place through interactions in a group (Vygotsky, 1962). PBL in this sense offers a comprehensively student-centred approach in the English classroom where the teacher acts as a guide, a coordinator and a facilitator and learners participate in the process as active agents on the way to utilize multivariate self-improvement opportunities (Stoller & Myers, 2020).

Advantages and challenges of PBL in EFL learning

As emphasized by Stoller (2001, 2006), PBL in foreign language learning as a communicative language learning model synthesizing the features of content- and task-based learning offers several linguistic and non-linguistic benefits including increased content knowledge, improved language, academic and real-life skills as well as enhanced confidence, autonomy and critical thinking. According to Gras-Velázquez (2020), via PBL, students can discover and explore their own interests and improve higher-level thinking skills and become responsible for their own learning. PBL, accordingly, paves the way for authentic forms of experience and language and with all these features, it may substantially influence the intensity of motivation, engagement, enjoyment, and creativity among learners (Stoller & Myers, 2020). Besides, when applied in tertiary-level English preparatory classes, PBL may help students become better in

communication and get prepared for higher education and future academic studies. As attested by the studies of Altınmakas and Bayyurt (2019), Hatipoglu (2016), and Yildirim (2010), Turkish secondary schools do not sufficiently endow students with communicative and academic skills in English mainly due to the preparations for the multiple-choice university entrance exam and this causes difficulties in the use of English at the tertiary level. It is suggested by Altınmakas and Bayyurt (2019) that tertiary level preparatory classes as well as faculty courses may serve such a function and students should be given opportunities to particularly improve their English for academic purposes with relevant practices and intensive guidance starting from their first year at university.

PBL can be done individually and/or in groups. When it involves the fulfilment of projects in groups, it may display the benefits of collaborative learning enabling the students to support and learn from each other and share their information and outputs rather than become competitors and focus their energy on purely individual achievement (Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Richards & Rodgers, 2001). When PBL is performed individually, it encourages autonomous decision-making since it allows for a great deal of space for personal choice and freedom via personalized learning. In a democratic society, individuals of all ages should be able to make decisions that affect themselves, their families, communities, country and the world and with its emphasis on real-life-oriented, reflective and autonomous learning, PBL is maintained to be an experience for democratic learning (Legutke & Thomas, 1991; Papandreou, 1994; Sheppard & Stoller, 1995; Stoller, 2001).

In addition to communicative, constructive, collaborative, and autonomous learning-related advantages, PBL also poses several challenges particularly in settings where the teachers are accustomed to conventional teaching methods and attach significance to structural exercises and close monitoring (Beckett & Miller, 2006). The teachers may also complain about the heavy workload and multiple tasks as facilitators, and they might have a hard time adapting to the responsibilities they have to take throughout the entire process (Fried-Booth, 2002). In terms of students, it may be challenging for them to take responsibility for their own learning and handle a great variety of tasks at the same time (Lee, 2002). In order to effectively settle the problems of students and teachers about PBL, regular PBL-focused training and feedback meetings between the project teacher/s and students are suggested (Eyring, 1997; Fried-Booth, 2002; Legutke & Thomas, 1991; Stoller, 2001). Also adopting PBL as a compensatory tool and implementing it parallel to conventional classroom teaching methods marked with teacher lectures and in-class exercises is likely to break the resistance against the learner freedom in the nature of this method and make projects assume a mediating role in-between the conventional and the innovative (Kemaloglu, 2006). Gras-Velázquez (2020) indicates PBL is not a replacement for other teaching methods, it rather acts as a complementary tool that can be used with almost all levels, ages and abilities of students. Thus, it is possible to integrate PBL into the mainstream English curricula by students' administering it extensively outside the classroom and presenting the end product and receiving feedback in the school setting since this synthesis would make it possible to harmonize in-class learning with personalized learning outside the classroom (Kemaloglu, 2008).

Research on PBL-based EFL learning at the tertiary level

Several studies have shown that PBL can be an effective means to promote EFL learning at the tertiary level. In Affandi and Sukyadi (2016), PBL was found to improve EFL writing achievement and it was perceived to help the students think contextually and critically and work together in a group. Sholikhah (2019) also reported the positive impacts of PBL on critical thinking as well as speaking skills. In Alsamani and Daif-Allah (2016), the findings displayed the effectiveness of PBL in developing English vocabulary and improvement in ESP instruction and collaborative learning. Assaf (2018) reported the effects of PBL via videomaking on the motivation and performance level and the improvement of oral presentation, team work, and organization and planning skills. In Fujimura (2016), PBL was found to positively impact content knowledge, which was collaboratively and progressively constructed in multifaceted discursive contexts. In the experimental study of Wahyudin (2017), PBL was reported to have a significant impact on the L2 spoken performance of undergraduate students in English for Business class. Similarly, in the experimental research of Kettanun (2015), PBL was found to have

improved students' speaking skills, cognition, work ethics, and interpersonal skills. Yimwilai (2020) reported the significant impacts of PBL on critical reading skills and positive attitudes of students toward PBL with benefits including improvement in IT and communication skills and increase in self-esteem. Mali (2017) investigated the effectiveness of PBL in a tertiary-level computer-assisted EFL class and declared the perceived advantages of PBL as learning from each other, promoting learning autonomy, and practicing cooperation skills.

On the other hand, there is limited research on PBL in EFL learning in Turkish higher education contexts (Büyükbucaklı, 2021; Genç, 2020; Gökçen, 2005; Keleş, 2007; Kemaloglu, 2006; Subaşı-Dinçman, 2002; Yaman, 2014). Relevant studies have revealed moderate and/or high levels of student satisfaction with PBL (Büyükbucaklı, 2021; Genç, 2020; Kemaloglu, 2006; Yaman, 2014) or dissatisfaction (Keleş, 2007). The students in favor of PBL in the given studies stated that they advanced in language skills, particularly in speaking and writing skills as well as creative thinking, cooperation and disciplined studying (Büyükbucaklı, 2021; Kemaloglu, 2006; Yaman, 2014) and became more productive, independent, and motivated (Genç, 2020). The common points the students complained about PBL in such studies were related to project topics, inadequate teacher support, project expectations' being above the English language level of students and heavy workload (Genç, 2020; Keleş, 2007; Kemaloglu, 2006). Teacher views on PBL applied in tertiary EFL settings also displayed varied perspectives. Some teachers defined PBL as a pedagogically useful method (Gökçen, 2005; Kemaloglu, 2006; Subaşı-Dinçman, 2002) while some others defined PBL to be demanding, and complained about its being effortful (Gökçen, 2005). Lack of clarity and consistent implementations among teachers was another problem mentioned by the participants (Subaşı-Dinçman, 2002). Plagiarism was also stated to be a common issue in Turkish EFL classes at the tertiary level (Kemaloglu, 2006). The suggestions for effective project implementations included sound collaboration and continuous communication among students, teachers and administrators as well as well-structured project training given to both teachers and students (Büyükbucaklı, 2021; Gökçen, 2005; Keleş, 2007; Kemaloglu, 2006; Subaşı-Dinçman, 2002).

This study aims to devise and implement a PBL model for a tertiary context in Turkey and explore its effectiveness based on student and teacher views. The model is intended to make the students discover and analyze the real-life based phenomena in their environment (e.g., tourist attractions and historical sites, films, series, theatre plays, music, fine arts, sports, computer games, design and architecture, etc.) through reflective interactions and take active roles in creating their own products related to these themes and presenting them both orally and in writing to a set audience. The study investigates whether project-based language learning can be an effective means to promote EFL learning at the tertiary level while synthesizing the principles of social constructivist, communicative and experiential learning, particularly in the English preparatory classes of Turkish higher education settings. This is important because tertiary-level EFL teaching governed by teacher-centred and course book-based practices may be limited in helping EFL learners discover and fulfil their potential in linguistic, academic and real-life-based skills (Kemaloglu-Er, 2021a). By putting the learners in the centre and providing them with a wide array of investigative, creative and interactional opportunities extending beyond the classroom, PBL may be used as a complementary means for purely classroom-based EFL teaching. PBL in this sense is expected to have the potential to make learners active and confident in the use of not only linguistic skills but also several real-life-based skills (e.g., research, analytical and creative thinking, and interpersonal skills as well as autonomous decision-making and time management) in and out of the classroom (Astawa et al., 2017; Wahbeh et al., 2021).

The study is significant in the way that there are a limited number of studies on project-based foreign language learning at the tertiary level particularly in Turkey and it presents a specific PBL model for tertiary-level EFL learning with research, translation, creativity and interaction steps as well as intensive training and feedback sessions and investigates its effectiveness. Another significance of the study is that it utilizes translation for pedagogical purposes in project-based foreign language learning for the first time. Translation is a valuable asset of the non-native speakers of English and it is widely used in real life as a means to connect people and cultures. It can also be used as a useful means in all types of EFL teaching since it can help L2 learners to comparatively analyse the source and the target languages

and texts, find out the in-depth meanings and reflect on them (Cook, 2010; Kemaloglu-Er, 2021b; Pym, 2018; Widdowson, 2016). However, the inclusion of translation into EFL learning is not common (Kemaloglu-Er, 2021b) and the study sets an example with such form of a unique application implemented in project-based foreign language learning.

Additionally, the study consists of a research group of students from a tertiary-level English preparatory class, all of whose major was Translation and Interpreting. This is the first study on PBL done with Translation and Interpreting major preparatory class students. It was deemed by the researcher that the students in a preparatory class should be provided with intense knowledge and skills they would possibly make use of in their academic and personal lives before they start their majors; hence, PBL examined in this study is deemed to be a suitable vehicle for such a necessity.

The study addresses the following research questions:

1. Is there a significant difference in the perceived competence of students in the following linguistic skills and their related sub-skills before and after project-based learning: i) using English as a communicative means, ii) using English as a creative means of self-expression, iii) research writing in English, and iv) translation in the languages of English and Turkish?
2. Is there a significant difference in the perceived competence of students in the following non-linguistic skills and their related sub-skills before and after project-based learning: i) using educational technology, ii) autonomous learning, iii) group work, and iv) time management?
3. Is there a significant difference in the perceived self-confidence of students in the use of English before and after project-based learning?
4. What are the benefits of project-based learning according to the students and the teacher?
5. What are the challenges of project-based learning according to the students and the teacher?
6. What are the suggestions of the students and the teacher to deal with the mentioned challenges?

As seen by these questions, in specific terms, this study aims to analyze the effect of project-based foreign language learning on the students' perceived competence in linguistic and non-linguistic skills as well as their self-confidence in the use of English. The research also explores the benefits and challenges of project-based foreign language learning along with suggested solutions on the basis of student and teacher views.

METHOD

Setting

This is a case study conducted about a project-based foreign language learning process in an English preparatory class at an English medium state university in Adana, Turkey. The English preparatory class consists of students whose major is Translation and Interpreting. The class follows the program designed by School of Foreign Languages. The curriculum of the class aims to improve the students' linguistic and academic skills in English before they start their majors. There are four courses in the program: Main Course, Grammar, Reading and Writing, and Listening and Speaking. Project-based language learning in this study was applied in the Main Course. In the Main Course, intermediate- and upper-intermediate-level coursebooks published by a British company are used. Thus, the class mainly follows the program of the course books aiming to improve integrated skills via intensive content-based learning. In addition to the course book studies, the class was exposed to a project-based foreign language learning model specifically designed for this study in the Main Course curriculum.

Project Design

The project-based foreign language learning model in this study was developed and contextualized for

this research setting on the basis of literature review, classroom observations, analyses of the curriculum and course materials and negotiations with the instructors and administrators about the possible needs of the students. Accordingly, it was decided that the students should be provided with knowledge and skills that they would possibly make use of in their academic and personal life.

The projects were done in groups of two or three and the topics were chosen by the groups from a given list. According to the project framework in this study, for each project, after the students form their groups and choose their topics, they follow the steps which are specified as i) research, ii) translation, iii) creativity, iv) interaction, respectively. The outline of the project process implemented in this model is presented below:

STEP 1: RESEARCH

1. Training about how to conduct research
2. Conducting research and writing research reports
3. Feedback about research reports

STEP 2: TRANSLATION

1. Training about how to make effective translations
2. Translations about the given topic
3. Feedback about translations

STEP 3: CREATIVITY

1. Training about the creativity step
2. Creative outcome production
3. Feedback about creative outcomes

STEP 4: INTERACTION

Phase 1: Interaction in real life

1. Interacting about the topic with English speaking people
2. Writing an interaction report
3. Feedback about interaction reports

Phase 2: Oral presentation

1. Training about how to make effective oral presentations
2. Oral presentation about the topic and the project process
3. Feedback about oral presentations

Phase 3: Self-evaluation

1. The student's own evaluation of the project process
2. Sharing self-evaluation results with the class

According to this framework, the students were expected to submit the following project outcomes to their teacher in a given timeline: i) a research report, ii) translations, iii) a creative outcome, iv) an interaction report, v) an oral presentation, vi) a self-evaluation report. According to the project model in this study, the students are first given general information about the outline of PBL. Following this, for the research aspect, they are trained about how to do and write academic research. Then they are asked to conduct research and write their research results in their own words giving the relevant references. After they hand in their research papers to their teacher, she reads each piece and gives intensive feedback and asks the students to finalize their papers. Then comes the translation stage. At this stage, first the students receive general training about how to make effective translations. Then in order that they can comprehend the topic well and do some profession-specific practice related to their translation major, they are asked to translate two 300-word written texts (preferably from their research data). One translation must be made from English into Turkish and the other from Turkish into English. The pieces must summarize the project subject well and be written professionally. After the students submit their translations to the teacher, she checks each piece and gives each group both written and oral feedback. Then they move on to the next step, which involves creativity. In the beginning of this stage, the students are informed about the requirements, and different creative project samples are shown to them to give them inspiration. Then they are asked to create an authentic output (creative writing, a poster, a short film etc.) related to their chosen topic. This is followed by the component of interaction in real life. In

this step, the students are asked to interact with certain number of English-speaking people around them (e.g. English speaking people in their family or environment, and/or people on the internet) about the topic and exchange ideas and share their own research results and creative outputs with them. If they cannot find English speaking people out of school, they are asked to interact with their classmates and/or teacher in English about the given topics. Following their interactions, they are asked to prepare a report summarizing the thoughts of the people they have interacted about the topic. They prepare and submit it to their teacher and receive feedback. The next step includes oral presentation. At this stage, they first receive intense training about how to make effective oral presentations. Then they prepare an oral presentation about their project and present it. Following this, their teacher and peers make evaluations and give feedback about the oral presentations through an analytic rubric. They also express their views about the projects via a holistic rubric. In the final step, students make self-evaluations about their oral presentations via an analytic rubric and holistically assess their project process through descriptions and share them with the class and their teacher. Each component is given points and assessed and graded by the teacher and the students receive an overall grade as a sum of these component grades, calculated as a project grade.

The projects were done in groups of two or three and the topics were chosen by the groups from the given list. Each group completed one project each term and there were two comprehensive multidimensional projects completed by each group in the entire academic year. The participants were provided with a number of topics, and they were given the right to choose their own topic. Efforts were made to relate the topics to the students' interests and issues in daily life. For this reason, they were asked about their topic suggestions; relevant literature was surveyed for the topics and there were also topic-related interactions with their teachers. Consequently, a variety of topics were presented to the students. The topics were about real-life based themes like historical sites and tourist attractions in the city where the students lived, series, films, theatre plays, computer games, music, sports, poetry, fine arts, design and architecture, fashion, ecology, mythology, psychology, sociology, career planning, and business life. The students were given the right to choose their own topics from among the given items. They were also invited to suggest their own topics if they wanted.

The steps of the model, namely, i) research, ii) translation, iii) creativity, and iv) interaction were applied to all the project themes. For example, in the projects with the theme of visiting historical sites, the students first conducted research about the place they were to visit and submitted their research reports to their teacher and received feedback. Then they translated informative texts about the chosen place both from English into Turkish and from Turkish into English and got feedback about their translations from their teacher. After that, in the creativity step, they visited the place they had chosen, analyzed the details of the place, and produced a creative work about the place (e.g., a poster), submitted their product and were again provided with teacher feedback about their outcomes. In the interaction stage, first, the students interacted about the topic with English speaking people in their environment. To illustrate, if the students had been able to find English speaking tourists in the historical sites they visited and had chances to talk to them about those places, they reported their interactions with them to their teacher. If not, they showed the pictures and videos of the place they visited and gave information about it to English speaking people in their immediate environment and answered their questions and reported what they had talked with those people to their teacher, and then were given feedback by their teacher. In the second stage of the interaction phase, they made an oral presentation to their classmates and teacher and gave information about the historical site and their experience in that place as well as what they had done for their project so far. Following their presentation, they were provided with feedback by both their peers and teacher about their oral presentation as well as their project. As the third step of the interaction phase, they made a self-evaluation about their presentation and project process and shared their self-evaluation results with their teacher and classmates.

Participants

The participants were 30 preparatory class students and their Main Course teacher. Their level of L2 proficiency in the preparatory program was intermediate. The major of all the students was Translation

and Interpreting. The students were between 18-22 years old. 21 of them were female and 9 of them were male. The teacher was female. She had twenty-one years of English teaching experience. She received her BA in Translation and Interpreting. She worked as an instructor of English and taught preparatory classes and translation-related departmental courses within the research setting.

Data Collection

The data were collected by a close-ended questionnaire and an open-ended questionnaire given to the students and semi-structured interviews conducted with the students and the teacher. The close-ended questionnaire designed for this study aimed to test the effect of the project-based foreign language learning model on the students' perceived competence in linguistic and non-linguistic skills as well as their perceived self-confidence in the use of English. The questionnaire was given before and after the intervention to investigate whether there were significant differences in the students' perceptions about their competence in the given linguistic and non-linguistic aspects. It was devised based on an in-depth survey of relevant literature and the project goals negotiated with the Main Course teacher and the other teachers of the class and administrators in the setting. The components in the questionnaire represented the project goals aimed to be achieved at the end of the intervention. The linguistic skills included using English as a communicative means, using English as a creative means of self-expression, research writing in English, and translation from English to Turkish and from Turkish to English. The non-linguistic skills tested were using educational technology, autonomous learning, group work and time management. In terms of self-confidence in the use of English, self-confidence in speaking and writing were analyzed. The participants were asked to rate to what extent they demonstrated the given skills and sub-skills as well as self-confidence in the use of English on a 5-point Likert scale through the questionnaires given before and after the intervention.

There were 25 close-ended items on the questionnaire. The items involved the linguistic and non-linguistic categories and their related sub-categories targeted to be developed via the project-based foreign language learning model in this study. Below are the categories and related sub-categories defined and itemized for the close-ended questionnaire. They refer to research questions number one, two and three above.

I- Linguistic skills

1. Using English as a communicative means
 - 1.1. Displaying communicative functions
 - 1.1.1. Giving information
 - 1.1.2. Telling events and stories
 - 1.1.3. Expressing feelings and thoughts
 - 1.2. Oral presentation skills
 - 1.3. Fluency in the use of English
 - 1.3.1. Speaking fluency
 - 1.3.2. Writing fluency
 - 1.3.3. Listening fluency
 - 1.3.4. Reading fluency
2. Using English as a creative means of self-expression
 - 2.1. Creativity in writing
 - 2.2. Creativity in visual/audiovisual production (poster, short films etc.)
3. Research writing in English
 - 3.1. Doing research via sources written in English
 - 3.2. Synthesizing the researched data
 - 3.3. Rewriting the collected data in one's own words
 - 3.4. Referencing
4. Translation (English & Turkish)
 - 4.1. Translation from English to Turkish
 - 4.2. Translation from Turkish to English

II. Non-linguistic skills

1. Using educational technology
 - 1.1. Using technology in research
 - 1.2. Using technology in writing
 - 1.3. Using technology in oral presentation
2. Team work
3. Autonomous decision-making
4. Time management

III. Self-confidence in the use of English

1. Self-confidence in speaking
2. Self-confidence in writing

Through piloting and expert analysis, the items were carefully analyzed and iteratively scrutinized. In these in-depth analyses, following edits and modifications in the wordings, the items were finalized. Also, Cronbach's alpha measure of questionnaire item reliability was found to be sufficient (.72) to proceed with further analyses. The close-ended questionnaires were administered before and after the treatment.

The open-ended questionnaires given to each student asked the respondents to state the learning gains, problems and suggested solutions related to PBL. The semi-structured interviews conducted with all the students and the teacher focused on the advantages and challenges of PBL along with recommended solutions for the challenges mentioned. The data collected through the open-ended questionnaires and interviews addressed research questions four, five and six and were gathered after the treatment when the PBL process was over.

Data Analysis

The close-ended questionnaire data before and after the intervention were statistically analyzed via paired-samples t-test to see whether there were significant differences in the students' perceived competence in linguistic and non-linguistic skills, and self-confidence in the use of English as a result of the application of the project-based learning model. The open-ended questionnaire and the interviews were analyzed via thematic analysis (Creswell, 2013). Accordingly, the advantages and challenges of PBL as well as related suggestions were iteratively analyzed, and through in-depth readings, they were meticulously classified under relevant themes and subthemes. The frequencies of the participants who mentioned the given themes were also calculated and presented in numbers.

Ethical Procedures

Before the study was conducted, the authorization of the Committee of Scientific Research Ethics in the institution was sought and granted. The participants were informed, the consents of the participants were obtained via consent forms and following this, the questionnaires and interviews were administered.

FINDINGS

Findings Regarding Significant Differences in the Students' Perceived Competence

The findings have shown that there have been significant differences in the perceived competence in linguistic as well as non-linguistic skill categories and their related sub-categories. Firstly, the category of using English as a communicative means was analyzed. In this category, significant differences were found in the students' perception in the sub-categories of oral presentation skills, $t(26) = 2.1$ and

speaking fluency, $t(26) = 2.05$; $p \leq .05$. The results are illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1.
Students' Perceived Competence in the Category of Using English as a Communicative Means

Sub-Categories	Related categories	Before / After Treatment	\bar{x}	SD	T	p
Displaying communicative functions	Giving information	Before	3.70	1.06	1.21	.23
		After	4.00	.78		
	Telling events and stories	Before	3.55	.71	.29	.76
		After	3.63	1.07		
Oral presentation skills	Expressing feelings and thoughts	Before	3.29	.86	.59	.55
		After	3.44	.80		
	Fluency in the use of English	Before	3.11	1.01	2.1	.04
		After	3.70	.82		
Fluency in the use of English	Speaking fluency	Before	3.14	.90	2.05	.05
		After	3.62	.79		
	Writing fluency	Before	3.55	.89	.31	.75
		After	3.62	.74		
	Listening fluency	Before	3.85	1.02	.50	.62
		After	3.70	.91		
	Reading fluency	Before	4.07	.82	.72	.47
		After	3.92	.82		

Under linguistic skills, in the category of using English as a creative means of self-expression, there were significant differences in both of the related sub-categories, namely, i) creativity in writing, $t(26) = 2.7$, and ii) creativity in visual/audiovisual output production; $t(26) = 2.45$; $p \leq .05$ (Presented in Table 2).

Table 2.
Students' Perceived Competence in the Category of Using English as a Creative Means of Self-Expression

Sub-Categories	Before / After Treatment	\bar{x}	SD	t	p
Creativity in Writing	Before	3.25	1.02	2.7	.012
	After	3.96	.80		
Creativity in Visual / Audiovisual Output Production	Before	3.18	1.11	2.45	.021
	After	3.81	.87		

On the other hand, within linguistic skills, there were no significant differences found in the sub-categories of research writing in English and translation (English and Turkish) (Presented in Table 3 & 4).

Table 3.
Students' Perceived Competence in the Category of Research Writing in English

Sub-Categories	Before / After Treatment	\bar{x}	SD	t	p
Doing research via sources written in English	Before	4.18	.92	.28	.77
	After	4.25	.90		
Synthesizing the researched data	Before	3.96	1.09	.41	.68
	After	4.07	.82		
Rewriting the collected data with one's own words	Before	3.81	.87	.58	.56
	After	3.96	.85		
Referencing	Before	2.85	.71	1.68	.10
	After	3.29	.95		

Table 4.*Students' Perceived Competence in the Category of Translation (English & Turkish)*

Sub-Categories	Before / After Treatment	\bar{x}	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Translation from English to Turkish	Before	3.07	.91	1.45	.15
	After	3.55	1.12		
Translation from Turkish to English	Before	3.51	1.36	1.58	.12
	After	4.07	1.17		

Under non-linguistic skills, the sub-category of time management was the item that revealed a significant difference, $t(26) = 2.78$; $p \leq .05$ (See Table 5).

Table 5.*Students' Perceived Competence the Category of Non-Linguistic Skills*

Sub-Categories	Related categories	Before / After Treatment	\bar{x}	<i>SD</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>p</i>
Using educational technology	Using technology in research	Before	4.40	1.04	.15	.87
		After	4.44	.80		
	Using technology in writing	Before	4.37	.83	.13	.89
		After	4.40	.88		
Team work	Using technology in oral presentation	Before	3.74	1.22	1.23	.22
		After	4.18	1.07		
	Autonomous decision-making	Before	4.37	1.04	.37	.71
		After	4.48	1.05		
Time management	Before	3.85	.90	1.24	.22	
	After	4.18	.92			
		Before	3.66	1.14	2.78	.01
		After	4.44	.75		

Under the category of self-confidence in the use of English, self-confidence in speaking displayed a significant difference, $t(26) = 2.4$; $p \leq .05$ (See Table 6).

Table 6.*Students' Perceived Competence the Category of Self-Confidence in the Use of English*

Sub-Categories	Before / After Treatment	\bar{x}	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Self-Confidence in Speaking	Before	3.00	.91	2.4	.024
	After	3.62	1.07		
Self-Confidence in Writing	Before	3.66	1.00	.28	.77
	After	3.74	.81		

As a result, there were significant differences found in the aspects of oral presentation skills, speaking fluency, creativity in writing, creativity in visual/audiovisual output production, time management and self-confidence in speaking.

Findings of the Open-ended Questionnaires and Interviews

As for the open-ended questionnaire and interview results related to research questions 4, 5, 6, firstly, the findings of the students will be presented. In this regard, the students stated that they overall enjoyed the PBL process as they had the pleasure of creating their own output step by step and presenting it to a set audience. PBL made them feel that they were using English for real-life purposes and they were said to make the process meaningful and productive. Several students stated that the preparatory school schedule is based on course books and they had less chance to be creative in classroom work as they were constantly busy with covering the units and keeping up with the pace of the syllabus. However, the projects were said to break this routine and enable them to fulfil creative tasks synthesized with reflection, interaction, and investigation. They deemed that they spent their time effectively and enjoyably in and particularly outside the classroom. Here are some sample excerpts about the PBL

process.

The process was very enjoyable and productive for me because I learnt new things and I had the chance to create new things in a group with my classmates. I have done such long research and written professional English texts for the first time in my life.

I learnt new words, new terms and I got informed about new sources. I did translation. I had some difficulty in translating sentences, particularly from Turkish to English and I overcame the hardships by negotiating and collaborating with my friends. I got more disciplined by working in a group. My teacher also helped me a lot. Projects made me gain many new things. I was very satisfied with the project assignments.

Moreover, the participants particularly emphasized their satisfaction with the topics. They said they found the topics very interesting. They were also content with being provided a great number of topics and the right to choose their own topic. The format of the project process, i.e., the steps and relevant written instructions at each step were also mentioned as positive aspects of the project process as they were found to be clear, student-friendly and understandable. As one student said

When you love your topic, you can do your project easily. We were given a lot of topics and we had the right to choose our own topic. That was something nice. We both love travelling so we chose the topic of travelling. We were guided at every step but we had our own freedom as well.

The projects were also praised on the basis of their contribution to the students' speaking skills. It was pointed out that interactions with group members and making an oral presentation for each project were helpful in improving speaking. The students said as they were in an EFL context, their chances to speak English were limited. They added that their English classes gave them a chance to speak English, yet since the class is crowded, they still had limited chances to speak English via whole class discussions and group work. As they emphasized, PBL gave them opportunities to interact in English both in and outside the classroom. Below is an excerpt of a student who commented on such a case.

Thanks to projects, we used English in real-life. We saw our power. We didn't limit it to the classroom, we spoke English continuously. The prep class was now a real English class because we used English in the real sense.

Using translation within the project framework and receiving feedback was also a feature emphasized by most of the students. Out of 30 students 26 referred to this point. They stated that since their major was Translation and Interpreting, the inclusion of translation as a part of PBL was a novelty for them as preparatory class students since this was the first time they had done translation and received professional feedback. It was also emphasized that doing translation prepared them for their majors and gave them a sense that they were doing something very important and serious as this would be their job so the project process was stated to become more meaningful with this addition. The students also emphasized that they thought the content of the preparatory class curriculum should involve not only purely English language-related studies but also content knowledge and if possible skills related to the students' majors as this would increase the interests of the students in the English lessons and provide them with opportunities to gain some department-related initial knowledge and experience before they start their regular BA degree. The participants said although the piece they translated was not long, they received a great deal of feedback from their teacher and this made them realize that translation requires not only in-depth linguistic knowledge but also multivariate interpretation skills and there are several points they had to pay attention in translation. To illustrate, one student said

We are all translation students and this was the first time I had done translation here. There were several points I wouldn't think of without the support of my teacher. I think we did something very useful.

Research component was also mentioned as a benefit of PBL. The students said they had never done

academic research and research writing before and that thanks to PBL they learned how to report academic research about a specific topic as the projects helped them learn how to analyze, synthesize and write research results in their own words and give relevant references. They stated they got to know plagiarism as a concept through PBL, and they learned about why and how to avoid plagiarism and practiced relevant techniques like paraphrasing for the first time in their academic lives. As stated by a student

Academic writing was really new to me. I thought I could copy sentences from the internet but I learnt that that was a crime. I wrote them in my own words. I gave references. I learnt to write at the university level according to certain rules.

The students also mentioned disciplined work as a useful part of PBL. They said that by following the project process step-by-step and regular submission of project components, they formed a meaningful product in the end and this output was like a reward of hard work and discipline. Some students pointed out that they could not regularly study English in the prep class, but the projects' being submitted draft by draft and each step's having a deadline made them study regularly and manage their time effectively. Here is a student's description that exemplifies this.

One important thing I gained through projects is discipline. There were a lot of deadlines and I had to meet them. I was constantly busy. Normally prep classes are comfortable, but ours was definitely not!

As for challenges, a great majority of the students (n = 27) mentioned that heavy workload was the biggest challenge of PBL. They stated that they were content with the benefits of PBL, but that the process was demanding and exhausting and made them constantly busy. They stated that even if they continuously received support from their teacher and peers and the project components were submitted step by step to make the process easy to handle, they still found the overall work challenging. The students who mentioned this challenge suggested that the load of PBL and/or the number of projects be reduced in future applications. Another challenge mentioned was having to deal with the projects in small groups. The students who reported this challenge said that the allocation of work among group members was occasionally hard and they had a hard time with their group partners who did not fulfil their responsibilities by the given deadlines and/or did not do the necessary work as effectively as required. 12 students stated that this is a reality of group work and if one does not work well, the other/s should compensate for these deficiencies and they did not make any specific suggestions. On the other hand, 15 students recommended that students should also be given the right to do PBL individually if they demand. It was added that if group work is to be made compulsory, then each work allocated to the group members should be reported to the teacher with the name/s of the student/s.

According to the research questions of this study, not only the students but also the teacher was asked to comment on the benefits and challenges of PBL and propose suggestions to deal with the challenges. As she stated, through PBL, the students were able to use their preparatory class time effectively and productively. It was emphasized that projects helped the students to improve their knowledge in English, increase their content knowledge and develop the use of four skills namely reading, writing, listening and speaking. Besides, she said thanks to PBL, these skills were integrated and used for lifelike purposes. Also, the projects' addressing specifically Translation and Interpreting major students and giving them relevant project-related tasks like English-Turkish and Turkish-English translation were praised. It was highlighted by the teacher that giving translation as an assignment in the frame of PBL was meaningful since the translation job was related to the students' majors and they were able to experience translation and receive feedback for the first time in their academic lives through this inclusion. Conducting research and reporting them in an academic manner was also stated to be a vital advantage of PBL. The teacher said all the students experienced research writing for the first time in their educational lives since in Turkish high schools students are mostly exposed to multiple choice exam-based practices and they need comprehensive education in research writing in English and PBL had been an innovational step in the prep program in preparing her students for such practice. The teacher also said that in addition to language work and practice, PBL helped the students to improve further real-life-related skills like

autonomous decision-making, group work, time management and disciplined working. She added by taking on regular responsibilities via assignments to be submitted by the given deadlines and by doing these tasks through group work, the students had chances to efficiently improve themselves in and outside the class. PBL was also recommended by the teacher as a compensatory tool for course book-based studies in the preparatory English classroom since she deemed PBL opens a creative path for students to realize themselves and make English language learning their own.

The teacher pointed out that PBL was arduous since she had to check each component in a detailed way and give extensive feedback in both written and oral form. She also said she made a great deal of effort to motivate the students when they said they felt exhausted or reluctant and dealt with each and every student and had comprehensive motivation talks with the class whenever necessary. She added she did her job with great enthusiasm, but she still had times she felt very tired particularly while correcting the mistakes and giving language- and content-related feedback. She stated that she did not have any suggestions since she sincerely believed in the intensive use of PBL in language learning and that hard work is a necessity of project-based foreign language learning. The teacher also said another challenge was the students' poor backgrounds in terms of academic research and writing. Since they were not taught to use these skills in high school, she spent a lot of time and energy to improve these skills. The teacher also emphasized the intensive schedule of the preparatory class was challenging since she had to both catch up with the assigned syllabus and administer PBL. Yet, she said she arranged her time effectively as she acted in a disciplined manner by allocating sufficient time for each.

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The findings of this study have displayed that PBL has been an effective means in the perceived competence of students particularly in speaking- and creativity-related aspects as well as time management skills. According to the results, there have been significant differences in the perceived competence of the students regarding oral presentation skills, speaking fluency, creativity in writing, creativity in visual/audiovisual production, and time management. Additionally, the means were seen to significantly increase not only in these components but also in the students' confidence in speaking. Hence, it can be suggested that due to PBL implementation, the students have perceived themselves as more active, interactive, creative and confident in using their personalized L2 potential to produce outputs of their own. They deemed that they particularly developed in speaking and got more confident in this skill, a noteworthy finding since in tertiary-level EFL preparatory classes, speaking can be an underdeveloped skill due to the limitations of the context in terms of speaking opportunities and constant emphasis on grammar instruction (Akpur, 2017; Balcı et al., 2018; Kemaloglu-Er, 2021a; Sağlam & Akdemir, 2018). However in this setting, by integrating a project model intensive in interaction and creativity into the program, the students interacted with their peers and English speaking people in their own social environments, created their own outputs and presented them to their teacher and classmates for each project, and individually and collaboratively evaluated their projects. Thus, they actively used English for speaking purposes and created and assessed their own products via continuous interaction.

In this entire process governed by the active and purposeful use of English, the findings regarding the students' and the teacher's perceptions also showed that the students significantly improved in time management skills since they had to meet several deadlines in the process of submitting their projects part by part. The students had limited time for research, translation, creativity, interaction and oral presentation steps and for each step they said they had to use their time and energy efficiently to reach effective outcomes. This made them work in discipline and manage their time meaningfully and systematically for the given targets. Thus, improvement in time management skills and disciplined studying have been found to be some other benefits of PBL.

In addition, the analyses have displayed that PBL has positively contributed to the research and translation skills of the students. Particularly the project's being a part of preparatory class curriculum

is meaningful in this sense since the preparatory class is the first step of most students at university and guiding them about the academic research and translation aspects before they start their major is expected to be useful for their future success.

Besides, in the PBL-based model in this study, the students took their own initiative to make their own decisions to fulfil the project steps and they were active and autonomous and worked collaboratively with their groups and teacher rather than totally depending on teacher and course book knowledge. This was reported to open them new horizons and discover themselves and the world via critical and creative thinking skills as in Affandi and Sukyadi (2016) and Sholikhah (2019).

A finding about the problems of tertiary-level English preparatory classes is their being teacher- and/or coursebook-centred and not giving adequate space to learner-centred practices (Kemaloglu-Er, 2021a). This study has found that PBL can be an effective solution in this sense and help learners become an active and dynamic part of the learning process through action and reflection. Also, in this research, PBL acted as a complementary tool and was incorporated into the mainstream English classes dominated by teacher- and course book-based studies. Not making the system fully project-based, but striking a balance between the coursebook-/teacher-centred and learner-centred forms of instruction would also be beneficial since students can make use of the merits of both traditional and innovative forms of instruction depending on their varying needs and situations.

Moreover, in this study, continuous project-related trainings before the steps of the project were thought to be useful for the students since this was their first year in higher education and they did not have the academic knowledge and experience required in PBL most probably due to their high school education based extensively on rote learning and intense preparations for centralized multiple choice exams. Most students said they did not know how to conduct and write academic research and added that they had not practiced creative writing at all. As for oral presentation skills, a great majority of students also stated that they had not done any oral presentations before PBL and even if some of them had performed some oral presentations in high school, they said they were still limited and they had not been trained comprehensively in their contexts. Additionally, plagiarism was an issue commonly emphasized by the participants. Almost all the participants said they did not know the concept of plagiarism before PBL and as they stated through the intense trainings, they were now aware of the meaning of plagiarism and why and how it should be avoided. These findings align with those of Altınmakas and Bayyurt (2019), Hatipoglu (2016), and Yildirim (2010), asserting that Turkish secondary school education system does not adequately equip students with the essential knowledge and skills in English necessary for academic education at the tertiary level particularly due to preparations for the multiple choice university entrance examination. As stated by Altınmakas and Bayyurt (2019), an effective tertiary education system may compensate for such deficiencies. In this study, based on the students' perceptions, it is possible to state that PBL integrated into a tertiary-level preparatory school education has had a substantial impact on the students' academic research, academic writing as well as oral presentation skills.

The benefits of PBL were commonly mentioned by a great number of participants (n=29), yet it was found to be a challenging process with great workload and continuous responsibilities. Several of the participants (n= 27) found it onerous and said although they took pleasure in doing most parts of the projects, they occasionally got exhausted and thought the process would never end. The teacher similarly defined PBL to be a challenging process with a great deal of work, but she deemed this is in the very nature of PBL if it is intended to be of high quality. Some students suggested the load be lessened and the total number of projects be reduced in future implementations.

The findings of the study are similar to those in Büyükbucaklı (2021), Kemaloglu (2006), Kettanun (2015), Sholikhah (2019), and Wahyudin (2017) and Yaman (2014) in that PBL has improved the participants' speaking and communication skills. Moreover, as in Affandi and Sukyadi (2016), Büyükbucaklı (2021), Fujimura (2016), and Sholikhah (2019), thanks to PBL, participants' writing as well as creative thinking skills improved and their content knowledge got enhanced. Similar to Alsamani and Daif-Allah (2016), Assaf (2018) and Büyükbucaklı (2021), PBL has also helped them experience

group work and cooperation skills. Besides, PBL was seen to be a beneficial method in tertiary EFL education as in Affandi and Sukyadi (2016), Alsamani and Daif-Allah (2016), Assaf (2018), Büyükbucaklı (2021), Fujimura (2016), Genç (2020) Gökçen (2005), Kemaloglu (2006), Kettanun (2015), Mali (2017), Sholikhah (2019), Subaşı-Dinçman (2002), Wahyudin (2017), Yaman (2014), and Yimwilai (2020), and heavy workload is stated to be a common complaint about PBL as in Genç (2020), Keleş (2007), Gökçen (2005), and Kemaloglu (2006). The project concept in our study is similar to the ones in the reported studies in that each project has been extensively conducted outside the classroom via intense group work and included research, outcome production and communication components.

On the other hand, the study is different from other related studies in various aspects. Firstly, it has recommended a PBL model for EFL learning that presents a project concept with not only research, creativity, interaction components but also translation. Translation is a valuable asset of the non-native speakers of English and it is widely used in real life as a means to connect people and cultures, but inclusion of translation into EFL learning is not common (Kemaloglu-Er, 2021b). In this study, translation has been utilized for pedagogical purposes in project-based foreign language learning for the first time. The students translated parts from the texts related to the topics of their projects both from English into Turkish and from Turkish into English. Their target audience included Turkish people for the English-Turkish translations and the global audience who uses English for communication purposes for Turkish-English translations. The translations were authentically used for educational purposes, i.e., to acquaint the students with the act of translation as well as have them profoundly comprehend the project topic. The study has shown that the translation aspect of the model has given the participants the chance to experience the act of translation, paved the way for in-depth comprehension of the issues related to the project and helped to improve their critical thinking, and content knowledge.

Moreover, this study is different from the other reported studies about PBL in tertiary EFL teaching in that it has built a model where the research, translation, creativity and interaction aspects were intertwined with systematic project training and feedback sessions. In this research, the topics were stated to be related to the students' interests and the students expressed their satisfaction with intense and systematic support about projects via trainings and feedback sessions and there were no complaints about inadequate support, projects' being unrelated to their interests and lack of knowledge about project necessities unlike Keleş (2007), Kemaloglu (2006) and Subaşı-Dinçman (2002), who reported such issues. In contrast, the intensive student support provided in this study was praised and the perspectives and practices of the participants were in general reported to be positive.

There are several implications of this research. Firstly, it would be pedagogically useful to integrate PBL into tertiary-level EFL contexts. In tertiary-level preparatory classes, the project model suggested in this study would particularly be effective since research, creativity, out-of-class interaction and oral presentation aspects of the PBL model in this study as well as their being supported with training and feedback sessions would provide several pedagogical benefits to students compared to purely teacher-centred education supported with coursebooks. As shown in this study, via such a model, the students take their own initiative and become active and dynamic agents in the learning process and create their own products with academic research and one-to-one interaction with English speaking people as well as their own creativity and present it to a set audience.

Secondly, as the target group was Translation and Interpreting major students, there has been a major-specific addition to the project framework in this study, which is translation. The translation aspect of the model would definitely help preparatory class Translation and Interpreting major students to get acquainted with translation as a concept and a form of practice before they start their majors and give them a chance to personally experience it. Besides, translation, if integrated into project models, would enable all EFL students to profoundly understand and analyze texts about the given project subject and this can pave the way for in-depth comprehension of the topic and improve participants' linguistic skills, translation abilities and content knowledge. Hence, incorporation of translation into project models would be useful whether the learners are Translation and Interpreting major students or not, and it can be kept in future EFL projects addressing all types of students. Moreover, the addition of translation to

the preparatory class projects of Translation and Interpreting major students implies that integration of major-specific aspects into preparatory class projects at the tertiary level would address the interests and needs of the students from different majors. For example, for the English major students that would study English Language Teaching, a simulative teaching component can be added to the projects and for English Language and Literature major students, the projects may include literary readings and analyses related to the given topic. In conclusion, PBL can be incorporated into all EFL settings in varying forms and if it is to be integrated into preparatory school curricula at the tertiary level, it can be applied in multivariate forms with topics and practices relevant to the students' majors.

All in all, PBL as a learner-centred method extending beyond the four walls of the classroom and emphasizing improvement in real-life-oriented content knowledge and skills, is very likely to act as an effective means in tertiary-level EFL learning. In such contexts, integrating research-, creativity- and interaction-intensive components into the project models and enrichment of learning via major-specific additions like translation would possibly yield efficiency in communicative, creative and academic L2 production as well as increase in self-confidence in L2 use as seen in this study. Moreover, through such attempts, real-life-oriented skills of learners like autonomous and collaborative learning and time management skills would be strengthened. Thus, PBL has the potential to have positive contributions to tertiary-level students' immediate academic life and beyond. On the other hand, since PBL requires preparedness and hard work of both the learners and the teacher, there should be orientation and continuous training sessions throughout the process and by showing good samples in the field, all the participants in the project context should be encouraged for effective outcomes. Future research can focus on applying the project model in this study and testing its effectiveness in different ESL and EFL contexts with different age and proficiency groups. Also this model and/or different models of PBL addressing learners at the tertiary level can be implemented and investigated with students from different majors. As seen through the findings of this study, it is crucial to create variety in EFL classrooms governed with coursebook- and teacher-centred practices, make use of the English potential extending beyond the classroom, and incorporate the unique potential and initiative of learners into the learning process via multifaceted pedagogical opportunities provided by project-based EFL learning.

Acknowledgement

This work was supported by Adana Alparslan Türkeş Science and Technology University Scientific Research Coordination Unit [Project Number: 18131002]. I would like to thank them for their support.

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TÜRKÇE GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

Proje tabanlı öğrenme öğrencilerin gerçek hayat odaklı konularda araştırmalar yapmasını, kendilerine ait ürünler oluşturmalarını ve özgün yapıtlarını yazılı ve/veya sözlü olarak belirli bir izleyici grubuna sunmasını içerir. Sosyal yapılandırmacı, iletişimsel ve deneysel öğrenme anlayışlarının ilkelerini sentezleyen proje tabanlı öğrenme, öğretmen ve ders kitabı merkezli öğrenme yaklaşımlarına bir alternatif oluşturarak öğrenciyi ve potansiyelini merkeze almakta ve bu potansiyelin öğretmen desteğiyle ve sınıf dışına uzanan etkinlikler yoluyla gerçekleştirilmesini hedeflemektedir. Proje tabanlı öğrenme yükseköğrenim kurumlarında yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğrenimi alanında bir araç olarak kullanılabilir. Bu durumu global düzeyde araştıran birçok araştırma bu yöntemin düşünsel ve iletişimsel becerileri geliştirme konularında etkinliğini ortaya koymaktadır. Öte yandan Türkiye’de yükseköğrenim düzeyinde proje tabanlı yabancı dil öğrenimi konusunda az sayıda araştırma vardır.

Bu araştırma Türkiye’de bir yükseköğrenim kurumunda İngilizce hazırlık sınıfında okuyan öğrencilere yönelik olarak araştırma, çeviri, yaratıcılık ve etkileşim öğelerinden oluşan proje tabanlı bir yabancı dil öğrenme modeli geliştirmekte ve modelin etkinliğini öğrenci ve öğretmen görüşlerine dayalı olarak araştırmaktadır. Katılımcı öğrenci grubunun tamamı Mütercim ve Tercümanlık bölümü lisans öğrencilerinden oluşmaktadır. Öğrencilerden sinema, tiyatro, güzel sanatlar, müzik, spor, psikoloji, mimari, gezi ve turizm gibi gerçek hayatla ilişkili pek çok temayla ilgili olarak kendilerine sunulan konulardan birini seçmeleri ve proje modeli çerçevesinde tanımlanan adımları gerçekleştirmeleri istenmiştir. Bu adımlarda, öğrenciler gruplar halinde çalışarak sırasıyla i) kendilerine verilen konuyu araştırarak bir araştırma raporu hazırlamışlar, ii) konuyu özetleyen İngilizce ve Türkçe metinler çevirmişler, iii) konuyla ilgili yazılı, görsel veya görsel-işitsel formda yaratıcılık gerektiren ürünler oluşturmuşlar, iv) projeleri ve ürünleri ile ilgili sınıf dışında İngilizce konuşan kişilerle etkileşimde bulunarak iletişimlerinin sonuçlarını bir rapor olarak yazmışlar, v) sınıf önünde projelerini sunmuş ve vi) arkadaşlarına ve kendilerine ait sunum ve projeleri değerlendirmişlerdir. Katılımcılar projenin çeşitli aşamalarında ön eğitimler almış ve öğretmenleri tarafından ürettikleri her yapıtla ilgili olarak kendilerine detaylı geribildirimler verilmiştir. Araştırma proje tabanlı yabancı dil öğrenimi için özgün ve çok boyutlu bir model ortaya koymakta ve çeviri uygulamasını ilk kez proje tabanlı yabancı dil öğrenme ortamına dahil etmektedir. Araştırma ayrıca özellikle Türkiye yükseköğrenim kurumlarında proje tabanlı yabancı dil öğrenme alanındaki sınırlı literatüre katkı sağlamayı amaçlamaktadır.

Araştırma verileri öğrencilere verilen kapalı ve açık uçlu anketler ve öğrenciler ve projeyi gerçekleştirdikleri öğretmenleriyle yapılan yarı yapılandırılmış mülakatlar aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Çalışma için geliştirilen kapalı uçlu anket, modelin öğrencilerin dilsel ve dilsel olmayan becerilerine ilişkin olarak algıladıkları yeterliliklerine ve İngilizce kullanımına ilişkin olarak algıladıkları özgüvenlerine olan etkisini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Katılımcılar uygulama öncesinde ve sonrasında verilen anket aracılığıyla dilsel ve dilsel olmayan beceri ve alt becerilerindeki yeterliliklerini ve İngilizce kullanımındaki özgüvenlerini 5’li Likert ölçeğinde değerlendirmişler ve algıları arasında uygulama öncesi ve sonrasında anlamlı bir fark olup olmadığı araştırılmıştır. Araştırılan dilsel beceriler, İngilizceyi iletişimsel bir araç olarak kullanma, İngilizceyi yaratıcı bir kendini ifade aracı olarak kullanma, İngilizcede araştırma yazımı ve İngilizce ve Türkçe dillerinde çeviriyi ve bunlara ait alt becerileri içermektedir. Dilsel olmayan beceriler alanında ise eğitimsel teknolojiyi kullanma, özerk öğrenme, grup çalışması ve zaman yönetimi ve bunlara ait alt beceriler araştırılmıştır. Açık uçlu ankette öğrencilere proje tabanlı öğrenmeye bağlı öğrenme kazanımları, sorunlar ve çözüm önerileri sorulmuştur. Öğrenciler ve öğretmenle gerçekleştirilen mülakatlarda ise proje tabanlı öğrenmenin avantaj ve zorluklarına ve katılımcıların zorluklarla ilgili çözüm önerilerine odaklanılmıştır. Uygulama öncesinde ve sonrasında verilen kapalı uçlu anketlerin sonuçlarında anlamlı bir fark olup olmadığını incelemek üzere bağımlı örneklem t-testi uygulanmış ve istatistiksel olarak analiz edilmiştir. Açık uçlu anket ve mülakatlar ise tematik analiz yolu ile incelenmiştir.

Kapalı uçlu anketlere ait sonuçlar öğrencilerin sözlü sunum becerileri, konuşma akıcılığı, konuşma

özgüveni, yazımda yaratıcılık, görsel ya da görsel-işitsel ürün üretmedeki yaratıcılık ve zaman yönetimine ilişkin algılanan yeterliliklerinde uygulama öncesi ve sonrasında önemli farklar olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Açık uçlu anket ve mülakatların sonuçları ise öğrencilerin proje tabanlı eğitim sürecini zevkli ve verimli bulduğunu ve modelin konuşma, araştırma ve çeviri becerilerine ve disiplinli çalışmaya katkı sağladığını düşündüklerini ortaya koymaktadır. Öğrenciler öğretmenlerinden aldıkları sürekli desteğe rağmen proje temelli öğrenmenin çok çaba gerektiren bir süreç olduğunu ifade etmişlerdir. Proje sürecini yöneten öğretmen ise proje tabanlı öğrenmenin öğrencilerin kendilerini gerçekleştirmelerine ve dil öğrenim sürecini kendilerine ait kılmaya yönelik yaratıcı bir yol açtığını belirtmiş ve süreci etkin ve verimli olarak tanımlamıştır. Öğretmen sürecin kendisi için de zorlu olduğunu belirtmiş ancak sıkı çalışmanın proje tabanlı öğrenmenin doğal bir yönü olduğunu da vurgulamıştır.

Çalışma proje tabanlı öğrenmenin yükseköğretim kurumlarında yabancı dil öğreniminde etkin bir araç olabileceğini ortaya koymuştur. Özellikle yükseköğretim İngilizce hazırlık öğreniminde proje tabanlı eğitim, öğrencileri konuşma, yazma, okuma, dinleme, araştırma, çeviri ve sunum yapma, yaratıcı düşünme, kollektif çalışma, zaman yönetimi gibi gerçek hayata ve akademik bağlamlara ait alanlarda geliştirerek hem lisans eğitimlerine hem de geleceklerine katkı sağlayacaktır. Üstelik böylesine bir model öğrencilere yabancı dil kullanmaya yönelik özgüvenlerini arttırma fırsatları da sunmaktadır. Araştırmada kullanılan modelin yükseköğrenimin yanı sıra İngilizcenin yabancı dil olarak öğretildiği tüm ortamlarda kullanılabilirliği önerilmiştir.