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SELF-EFFICACY BELIEFS OF TURKISH EFL LEARNERS AND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-EFFICACY AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Funda GÜÇ

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YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ ONAY FORMU

Bu çalışma, Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Anabilim Bilim Dalı'nda jürimiz tarafından Yüksek Lisans Tezi olarak kabul edilmiştir.

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ETİK BEYANNAMESİ

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ÖZET

İngilizceyi Yabancı Dil Olarak Öğrenen Türk Öğrencilerin Öz-Yeterlik İnançları ve Öz-Yeterlik ile Akademik Başarı Arasındaki İlişki

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Bu çalışmanın ana amacı a) İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen öğrencilerin, İngilizce öğrenme sürecindeki öz yeterlik seviyeleri ve b) bu inançların İngilizce yeterlik düzeyi ve cinsiyet gibi farklı değişkenlere göre değişip değişmediğini araştırmaktır. Çalışma ayrıca İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen öğrencilerin, c) dinleme, okuma, yazma ve konuşma becerilerinde kendilerini ne kadar öz yeterli hissettiklerini araştırmayı hedeflemektedir. Bunlara ek olarak, işbu çalışma d) İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen Türk öğrencilerin öz yeterlik seviyeleri ile akademik başarıları arasında bir ilişki olup olmadığını incelemeyi de hedeflemektedir. Çalışma bir hazırlık programında uygulanmıştır. Pamukkale Üniversitesi Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu'nda eğitim gören 525 öğrenci ile 2016-2017 akademik yılının bahar döneminde yapılan çalışmadan edinilen veriler anket ve yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler aracılığı ile toplanmış ve hem nicel hem de nitel olarak incelenmiştir. Çalışmada, öğrencilere Açıkel (2011) tarafından geliştirilen ve araştırmacı tarafından adapte edilen "İngilizce Öz Yeterlik Ölçeği" uygulanmıştır. Ölçek sonuçları Sosyal Bilimler İçin İstatistik Programı (SPSS) 22.0 aracılığı ile analiz edilmiştir. Ayrıca, nicel verileri nitel yönden de desteklemek amacıyla rastgele seçilmiş 24 öğrenci ile protokolü araştırmacı tarafından geliştirilen görüşmeler yapılmıştır.

Nicel verilerin analizi İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen Türk üniversite öğrencilerinin İngilizce öğrenmede orta düzeyde öz yeterliğe sahip olduklarını ortaya koymuştur. Ayrıca, hazırlık sınıfı öğrencilerinin öz yeterlik seviyelerinin cinsiyet değişkeni açısından bir farklılık göstermediği saptanmıştır. Ancak, öğrencilerin öz yeterlik seviyelerinin İngilizce seviyelerine göre farklılık gösterdiği belirlenmiştir. Dil becerileri ile ilgili veriler incelendiğinde, yazma becerilerinde öğrencilerin öz yeterlik algısının en üst seviyede, konuşma becerilerinde ise en düşük seviyede olduğu sonucuna varılmıştır. Son olarak, öğrencilerin öz yeterlik algılarının akademik başarılarını yordamadığı görülmüştür. Sonuçlar alan yazını dikkate alınarak tartışılmıştır.

Anahtar kelimeler: İngilizce öz yeterlik, ikinci/yabancı dil öğrenimi, akademik başarı, İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen öğrenciler

ABSTRACT

Self-Efficacy Beliefs of EFL Learners and Relationship between Self-Efficacy and Academic Achievement

GÜÇ, Funda

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The main purpose of the study was to investigate a) the self-efficacy level of learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) in the process of learning English, b) whether their self-efficacy levels differ according to variables, such as proficiency levels and gender. It also targets c) to explore how self-efficient EFL learners are in terms of listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills. In addition, the study also aims at d) investigating whether there is a relationship between the self-efficacy level of Turkish EFL learners and their academic achievement. The setting of the study is a preparatory program. This study was implemented with 525 students enrolled at Pamukkale University, School of Foreign Languages. The present study was carried out during the spring semester of the 2016- 2017 academic year. The study followed a mixed-method design; first, quantitative data was collected through a questionnaire, "Questionnaire of English Self-efficacy", developed by Açıkel (2011) and adapted by the researcher. The results of the questionnaire were analyzed via Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 22.0. Secondly, semi-structured interviews, whose protocol was developed by the researcher, with randomly selected 24 participants were carried out to assist the quantitative data with the qualitative one.

The findings of the data reveal that Turkish university EFL learners hold moderate level of self-efficacy in learning English. In addition, it is found that participants' proficiency level has an effect on their self-efficacy level although a slight difference was found between the levels. Quantitative data reveal that A2 Repeat participants have the highest self-efficacy level of all. However, none of them stated their self-efficacy in English as high in the interviews. In addition, B1 Repeat level participants outnumber the B1 level participants with their mean scores in the questionnaires in terms of self-efficacy level. Yet, interview findings revealed vice versa. In other words, in the interviews there are more B1 level participants than those at B1 Repeat level who state high level of self-efficacy in English. Additionally, it is also concluded that gender has no effect on English self-efficacy level of participants according to the quantitative data. Yet, qualitative data reveal that female

participants have higher self-efficacy than male participants, most of whom stated to have moderate level of self-efficacy. In addition, when the data regarding the language skills are examined, it is concluded that participants' perception of self-efficacy is at its highest in writing skills while it is at the lowest in speaking skills. Finally, it is also concluded that there is no significant relationship between the preparatory class participants' perceptions of English self-efficacy and their academic performance in English.

Key words: self-efficacy in English, second/foreign language learning, academic achievement, EFL learners

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASE: Academic Self-efficacy

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ESL: English as a Second Language

ELL: English Language Learner

FL: Foreign Language

ELT: English Language Teaching

SE: Self-efficacy

SFL: School of Foreign Languages

SPSS: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the background information on self-efficacy which paves the way to the basis of this study. In addition, this chapter presents statement of the problem and the purpose of the study, states the research questions, identifies the significance of the study, and finally provides the assumptions and limitations of the study.

1.1. Background to the Study

Being the *lingua franca* of this era, English is gaining more importance day by day, and more and more people are becoming aware of the significance of learning it around the world. In our global modern world, people can remove the borders of their motherland to do any kind of business thanks to knowing English. Thus, learning English is a must for most people. Despite the fact that the underlying reason behind the motive to learn English varies from one person to another, the result is all the same: "They want to learn English!" When the university students are taken into account, they have two main reasons to learn English. Either it can be an advantage in their upcoming professional years, or it is compulsory to be proficient in English to gain access to their academic studies in their departments.

Once the importance of English is acknowledged, there comes another issue: "how to be proficient in it". There are numerous factors affecting the process in which students learn a foreign/second language, which is English in this context. In the previous studies investigating the factors affecting learners in language proficiency, learner-related ones such as learner attitudes and motivation stood out (Gardner and Lambert 1972; Oxford, 1996; Dörnyei, 2001). Alderman (1999) also emphasized the role of confidence and motivation in the classroom. The positive correlation between language achievement and motivation was found as a result of different studies (Gardner, 1985; Schunk, 1991; Wang, Haertel and Walberg, 1993). Beside the role of motivation in language learning, researchers also realized that while for some learners it takes a little time to learn a language, the rest is exerting themselves to proceed. Upon this, scholars attempted to identify learner characteristics and preferences. In the following years, the way learners deem language learning and whether they have any specific traits allowing them to learn better and faster or hindering them from these. Naiman, Fröhlick, Stern, and Todesco (1978) concluded that learner characteristics such as intelligence and language aptitude, cognitive style and personality factors, had an impact on language learning process. In spite of all the conflicts on their definition and

classification, another factor, use of language learning strategies, was also accepted as relevant and influential on the success of language learners by the researchers (Chen, 1990; Goh and Foong, 1997; Green and Oxford, 1995; Khaldieh, 2000; Wharton, 2000). Gahungu (2007) investigated the relationships among strategy use, self-Efficacy, and language ability in foreign language learners and concluded that these three variables were positively correlated.

In addition to the abovementioned factors, there have been studies, concluding that self-efficacy is also associated with learning and achievement, (e.g. Mercer and Williams, 2014). As seen in literature, self-efficacy is accepted to be one of the most effective factors in the process of learning a language. The concept of self-efficacy, which forms the basis of Social Cognitive Theory and was defined by Bandura (1977a, 1997) as "personal judgments of one's capabilities to organize and execute courses of action to attain designated goals", is believed to be one of the greatest predictors of motivation and academic success in language learning. Self-efficacy is the determiner of the thoughts and emotional reactions of the learner, the quantity and the quality of effort while carrying out the task (Pajares, 1996; Pintrich and Schunk, 1996). Hence, not only skills and knowledge but also self-efficacy is also called for to accomplish a task well.

Studies carried out on self-efficacy indicate that people holding positive perceptions about themselves are eager to accomplish the objectives and to surmount the difficulties on the way to success. However, the ones with negative or low perceptions of self are likely to be unsuccessful to achieve their goals and fall behind with their potential (Bong and Clark, 1999). Another study carried out by Mahyuddin, Elias, Cheong, Muhamad, Noordin and Abdullah (2006) investigates the relationship between students' self-efficacy and their English language achievement in Malaysia. They conclude that if students hold high self-efficacy in English, their achievements increase (p. 61). Bandura (1997) suggested that self-efficacy is a factor that either can help or hinder the learner's progress.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Learning a second/ foreign language is of great importance in today's global world. Especially for university students to have a better higher education or have better job opportunities after graduation, it is a main requisite to be proficient especially in English. Thus, there are a great number of studies in language learning conducted to find out the underlying reasons that make learners better or worse in the process of learning English. As a result of these studies, language teaching and learning has changed a lot and has had several

changes of paradigm in teaching methodology and pedagogic aims. For instance, instead of teacher-centered instruction, student-centered approach in teaching English has come into prominence. Hence, learner characteristics, beliefs, motivation and anxiety has also gained importance.

Learner beliefs, in other words self-efficacy, which was defined by Bandura (1977) as "personal judgments of one's capabilities to organize and execute courses of action to attain designated goals", is believed to be one of the greatest predictors of motivation and academic success in language learning. In the field of language learning, there is a growing body of studies regarding the self-efficacy and language learning. Researches on self-efficacy and achievement so far has demonstrated the positive and significant relationships between self-efficacy beliefs of the students and their success (Lent, Brown, and Larkin, 1984; Schunk, 1984, 1987; Wood and Locke, 1987; Hackett and Betz, 1989; Multon, Brown, and Lent (1991), Pajares and Miller, 1994; Griffin and Griffin, 1998; Bong, 2001; Chemers, Hu, and Garcia, 2001; Lane and Lane, 2001; Lane, Lane and Kyprianou, 2004). Other studies also concluded that self-efficacy beliefs are the strong predictor of learners' motivation and performance (Graham and Weiner, 1996; Lane and Lane, 2001; Schunk and Pajares, 2002).

In Turkey; on the other hand, it is commonly believed that learning English is difficult and almost impossible unless you go to an English-speaking country. Yet, there are some students who are really successful in language learning whereas there are still a great number of those who struggle and again fail in this process. This problem has paved the way for the current study. Considering the changes and significant role of self-efficacy in language learning and learner achievement, there seems to be a need to investigate the self-efficacy level of the students in an EFL context.

1.3. Purpose of the Study

Since the introduction of self-efficacy in 1977 by Bandura, a growing number of studies by the scholars have been carried out to find out the role of self-efficacy in learning (Huang and Shanmao, 1996; Linnenbrick and Pintrich, 2003; Mills, Pajares, and Herron, 2007; Pajares, 2002a; Schunk and Pajares, 2001). In the light of these studies, the purpose of the current study emerged as self-efficacy is a requisite in learning besides being a reasonable predictor for the performance of learners. Thus, the present study aims to investigate the self-efficacy levels of EFL learners in the process of learning English, whether their self-efficacy level differ according to different variables, such as proficiency levels and gender. It also targets to explore how self-efficient they are in terms of listening,

reading, writing, and speaking skills. In addition to these, the study aims to investigate whether there is a relationship between the self-efficacy level and the academic achievement of Turkish EFL learners. This research intends to provide a clear insight into the relationship between the EFL learners' sense of self-efficacy and their academic performance with the help of the following research questions:

1.4. Research Questions

1. What are the self-efficacy levels of Turkish EFL learners in learning English?
2. Do participants' self-efficacy levels show any differences according to proficiency level and gender?
3. How self-efficient are Turkish EFL learners in listening, reading, writing, speaking skills?
4. Is there a relationship between the self-efficacy level and the academic achievement of Turkish EFL learners?

1.5. Significance of the Study

The importance of motivation and perceptions of learners towards learning English in student-centered approach has gained importance Learners' Being the *lingua franca* of the era, English plays a vital role in university education in Turkey as some departments offer English-medium instruction. For that reason, most universities have preparatory classes either as compulsory or optional for their students. In such universities, the main goal is to educate learners to be proficient enough in English not only in their daily life and communication but also to follow the classes in their departments with ease and/or provide an advantage for their upcoming professional business life. In order to achieve this and create a good learning atmosphere for students, learners should be in the center of learning. In order to make it possible in an effective way, learner preferences and beliefs should be considered. Instead of this, there have been arrangements mostly focusing on improving learners in a cognitive manner. Although they have enough knowledge and cognitive level, learners still have some difficulties to reach their upmost potential in learning English. There can be affective factors which hinder students in that aspect. Hence, there have been studies in the field of language learning to explore the factors that affect their achievement in the process of learning a new language.

Bandura (1997), for instance, asserted that students' self-efficacy beliefs predict their performance to accomplish the given task. In other words, students' opinions of their abilities have an effect on their capability. By suggesting that "the higher the sense of

efficacy, the greater the effort, persistence, and resilience", Pajares (2002b) also agreed with this idea (p.116). There are also other various studies verifying Bandura and Pajares (Chen, 2007; Duman, 2007; Mills, Pajares, Herron, 2006; Tılfarlıoğlu and Cinkara, 2009; Wang, n.d.). In spite of the different variables in these studies, findings of all suggested that self-efficacy plays a crucial role both in learning and as a predictor of achievement.

Although self-efficacy is a broad issue investigated in many areas from dentistry to education, the self-efficacy of learners in English is a neglected concept that needs to be investigated in Turkish sample. Considering the crucial role self-efficacy plays in predicting the student success, the first importance of the current study is to identify the self-efficacy level of the learners in English in a general scope. Following this, to gather a deep insight, variables such as proficiency level and gender are also included in the study to find out whether there is any difference in the participants' level of self-efficacy regarding these. In addition, the scarcity of the studies exploring learners' perceptions of self-efficacy in language skills, such as listening, reading, writing and speaking led the researcher to investigate this aspect, as well. This study is also the first one that tries to discover the self-efficacy perceptions of EFL learners in terms of four skills. Last but not least, this study will shed light on that whether there is any existing relationship between the self-efficacy level and the academic achievement of Turkish EFL learners. As an implication of the study, the findings can also guide researchers, teachers and institutions about significant variables affecting learners' performance in learning English. Upon becoming aware of the importance and the level of the learners' self-efficacy, all the stakeholders can try to foster their students' self-efficacy to make them more successful learners of English. Moreover, the findings of the study can provide information about all mentioned above at the local level but will pave the way for researchers at the global level to research further.

1.6. Assumptions and Limitations of the Study

1.6.1. Assumptions of the Study

- The opinions of the participants about their self-efficacy in learning English are assumed to be low.
- The level of the participants' self-efficacy is assumed to be low in listening and speaking skills, and high in reading and writing skills.
- The participants' self-efficacy levels are assumed to show differences according to gender.

- It is assumed that as the proficiency level of the participants increase, their self-efficacy level also increases.
- It is assumed that there is a significant relationship between the self-efficacy level and the academic achievement of the participants.

1.6.2. Limitations of the Study

There were several limitations encountered by the researcher because of a number of reasons. The first limitation of the study was the context and the number of the participants. Having carried out in just one setting with limited number of participants, the findings of the present study would be less valid if generalized into wider contexts. The second limitation of the study was related to the third research question, which asked how self-efficient EFL learners are in listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills. The findings of these questions could only be obtained from the data semi-structured interviews as in the questionnaire there was no clear-cut dimensions referring to the language skills. This caused the researcher to have difficulty in assisting quantitative data with the qualitative one. Hence, the implementation of a scale assessing learners' self-efficacy in each skill separately would have provided more detailed results. In addition, instead of applying the instruments once, it would have been better to have an experimental study. Hadn't it been for the modular system, the instruments would have been used at the beginning of the second term, and participants would have been asked and given a strategy training on what they needed most to increase their self-efficacy for ten weeks. Following the training section, the questionnaire and the interview would have been carried out once more to allow the comparison between pre-test and post-test results for the researcher. In that way, the study would have provided more satisfactory results. Finally, like the self-efficacy level of the participants, their achievement in English was evaluated in general not by each skill. Instead of that, having the results of each skill would have allowed the researcher to see the participants' weakness and/or strengths in terms of self-efficacy in each language skill. In that way, it would have been more convenient to compare the results of the qualitative data regarding the self-efficacy of the participants in each skill with their achievement scores of each.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter, the literature review, involves definition of self-efficacy, an analysis of Self-efficacy Theory, self-efficacy and other self-beliefs, sources of self-efficacy, effects of self-efficacy, factors playing a vital role in self-efficacy, self-efficacy and its dimensions, applications of self-efficacy, academic self-efficacy, self-efficacy and learning, and finally studies conducted on self-efficacy in second/ foreign language learning will be given to base the theoretical background of the present study.

2.2. Self-Efficacy

Initial studies conducted by Bandura (1977) aimed to clarify the notion of self-efficacy by referring to it as individual's self-belief in accomplishing tasks according to given standards (Bandura, 1997). While trying to establish a new definition for this term, different researchers came up with similar perspectives. McCombs (2001), for instance, refers to the definition of Bandura (1991) and defines the terms self-efficacy as learner’s opinion of his/her own sufficiency to be able to carry out a task. Similarly, according to the definition of Schunk (2001), self-efficacy is "beliefs about one’s capabilities to learn or perform behaviours at designated levels" (p. 126). With reference to Bandura (1986), Pintrich and Schunk (1996) highlighted another definition " self-efficacy is people’s judgments of their abilities to arrange and carry out plans and strategies needed to reach scheduled assignments" (p. 88). Huang and Shanmao (1996), in a very similar way, drew attention to the term self-efficacy by suggesting that it is one's perception of his own abilities in conducting an assigned task.

2.2.1. Self-Efficacy Theory

Social learning theory sees actions or behaviors of a person as being emerged by mutual effect of the circumstances, the person’s act, his understanding and feelings. How individuals regulate their emotional states, motivation, actions and thought patterns via personal and collective efficacy beliefs interest Bandura. He emphasized the impact of one’s perceived abilities on one’s behavior. Social learning theory suggested the idea in which child can learn through observation (Bandura, 1977), and this earned him praise. In time, Bandura expanded his theory by adding concepts such as motivation and self-regulation, and at the end he changed its name into Social Cognitive Theory. Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara

and Pastorelli (1996) point out that Self-efficacy Theory is one element of Social Cognitive Theory.

In 1986, Bandura included the self-efficacy element to his theory, which assumes that people own a self-system that make them control over their feelings, actions and thoughts. Self-efficacy explained by Bandura (1986) as the thoughts of the learners about if they have the necessary abilities to perform required things in order to get any kind of planned performances. Efficacy is not a steady standard ability that individuals own or do not own; rather, to do myriad goals it is a prolific ability which requires organizing and orienting social, emotional, behavioral and cognitive sub skills (Bandura, 1997, p. 36-37). The result of self-efficacy generally has connection with success, and it increases the students' confidence concerning the efficiency in the use of second language both inside and outside the classroom (Dörnyei, 2001).

The way the beliefs of self-efficacy influences human behavior is emphasized by social cognitive theory. However, it is not something fixed, as stated by Bandura (1997). When a student has a higher level of self-efficacy, it is more likely for him/her to believe that s/he can achieve more difficult tasks, to be more flexible when it comes to learn a foreign language, and to be able to evaluate his/her own academic performance. On the other hand, if a learner has low self-efficacy, s/he is more likely to deal with simpler tasks because s/he does not trust himself/herself to do more difficult ones, to give up easily, and therefore not to finish the tasks (Mills et al., 2007). This might be because the students perceive the tasks that are difficult for them as personal threats, thus they might have some concentration problems on sticking to the task. Moreover, self-efficacy is actually not in a direct relationship with learners' natural abilities and capabilities. Self-efficacy is more related to the results of persuading oneself on cognitive processing of different sources like feedback, observations and knowledge of task strategies (Dörnyei, 2001).

According to Bandura (1995), people are different in the aspect with which they deal their sense of efficacy. Teachers should form opinions about their students' strong and weak areas, which depend on their perceptions, not only in general but also in very specific learning tasks. Maehr and Pintrich (1997), as cited by Schulze and Schulze (2003, p. 109), concluded that self-efficacy judgments are both task and situation specific; students use their presumptions about their capabilities appertaining to a specific assignment. Hence, according to Bruning, Schraw and Ronning (1999) someone with high self-efficacy in a specific area or domain should not necessarily be a person with high self-efficacy in a different area, as cited by Schulze and John M. Schulze (2003, p. 106).

2.2.2. Self-Efficacy Beliefs

The experts in the field have been triggered by the underlying reason why learners prefer some assignments while avoiding some others, why they fail in some but not fail in others, and why they handle some tasks with enthusiasm and others with anxiety and made to explore students' self-beliefs. It is thought that the beliefs the learners hold about themselves are the basic factors for academic achievement or failure. Hence, self-efficacy is believed to be the key for learner motivation (Pintrich and Schrunk, 1996). The 'self-efficacy' term was first introduced by Albert Bandura, and it is in the center of social cognitive theory which was put forward again by Bandura in 1977 (Baloğlu, 2011). Bandura defines self-efficacy as the beliefs in one's capabilities to succeed in a particular situation. He also states that these beliefs as determinants of how people think, behave, and feel (Bandura, 1997).

2.2.2.1. Self-efficacy and other self-beliefs (self-esteem, self-concept, self-confidence). Some concepts do not have clear-cut borders between themselves and self-efficacy. As seen in the literature, self-beliefs such as self-esteem, self-confidence, self-concept lead to ongoing confusion. The problem in their definition, precision, and overlap among the above-mentioned self-beliefs are an issue between researchers (Bong and Skaalvik, 2003; Ferla, Valcke, and Cai, 2009). In spite of the fact that some researchers use them interchangeably, the prior self-constructs and self-efficacy differ in their theoretical backgrounds.

One of the abovementioned concepts that can cause bewilderment is self-esteem. Maddux (1995) affirmed that unlike self-efficacy, self-esteem is a personal characteristic. Epstein and Morling (1995) believed that self-efficacy and self-esteem differ from each other in that the former is the evaluation of one's own ability, and the latter is the evaluation of one's self-worth. What a person thinks s/he is able to succeed in something differs from what s/he thinks s/he deserves. According to Bandura (1997), individuals may feel desperately ineffective in an activity without losing any self-esteem because they do not put their self-worth in that activity. To illustrate, a person can possess low self-esteem in math and science, but own high levels of self-efficacy in those fields. Or, s/he can have high self-esteem in learning languages but feel inefficacious in it.

Confidence is another concept that does not have precise borders with self-efficacy. Bandura (1997, p. 382) explains that confidence only identifies the strength of belief but not what it is relating to. Others claim that it is a socially defined and trait-like concept in adults

(Crawford and Stankov, 1996a; Crawford and Stankov, 1996b; Kleitman and Stankov, 2007) and children (Kleitman and Moscrop, 2010; Kleitman and Gibson, 2011). In other words, for confidence the test-taker is asked to assess her/his confidence on a percentage scale regarding the fact that just-provided answer to a cognitive test item is correct.

When it comes to self-concept, it is defined as "a description of one's own perceived-self accompanied by a judgement of self-worth" by Pajares and Schunk (2002, p. 21). Others define it as individuals' knowledge and perception about themselves in successful circumstances (Byrne, 1984; Wigfield and Karpathian, 1991 in Bong and Skaalvik, 2003). According to Bong and Clark (2003), self-concept is shaped through past experiences. To measure self-concept, items which are more general and not only consist of self-evaluative cognitive dimension but also an affective-motivational dimension like "I hate Mathematics" or "I am proud of my Mathematical ability" (Marsh, cited in Bonne, 2012) are used. The items also involve students' self-comparison to their peers and involve cognitive and affective evaluations of the self (Marsh, cited in Bonne, 2012; Schunk and Pajares, 2001; Bong and Skaalvik, 2003). As self-concept items are not task or context specific, students have to make judgments only taking their past experiences and accomplishments into account in a provided area.

In addition, how self-confidence and self-concept differ from each other lies in the way they constitute their judgments: While the former is based on judgments which are made regarding the just-completed task, the latter includes the judgments based on the comparison with others. Domain specificity is another difference between those concepts. To be more specific, self-concept tends to be domain specific, i.e. firmly associated with a particular academic area (English, Physics, History etc.). Self-confidence, however, is a more common concept. Furthermore, self-confidence differs from self-efficacy in the evaluation time. Namely, self-efficacy questionnaires are carried out before a cognitive performance and are predictive, self-confidence is assessed following a cognitive performance.

To be clearer about the difference between self-efficacy and self-concept, it is better to look at the definition of self-efficacy in academic setting. Academic self-efficacy (further referred as ASE) refers to learners' opinions that they can be successful in a given academic assignments at predetermined levels (Schunk, 1991). Self-efficacy is generally measured at task specific level. According to Pajares (1996), self-efficacy can either be judged on a broad or on an item-specific level. Nevertheless, self-efficacy judgments that are more item-specific; i.e. self-efficacy items start with "how confident are you… (e.g. that you can successfully solve equations that contain square roots)" (Pajares, Miller and Johnson, 1999),

are more predictive (Chen and Zimmerman, 2007). In this manner, self-efficacy items, without any doubt, evaluate self-perceived ability at a more task-specific level than self-concept items such as "Compared with others of my age, I'm good at Mathematics" (Ferla, Valcke and Cai, 2009). Namely, self-efficacy items are in search of goal-referenced evaluation, and do not want students to compare their ability with others' (Pajares, 1996; Bandura, 1997; Bong and Skaalvik, 2003). Contrary to self-concept, self-efficacy is future-oriented. Self-efficacy items such as "I'm confident that I will be able to solve following problems" do not only depend on mastery experiences; but they also want students to direct their attention to their future assumptions about their performing well on particular academic tasks (Wigfield and Eccles, 2000 in Ferla, Valcke and Cai, 2009).

In conclusion, there are a number of self-beliefs that can intervene with self-efficacy or can be used synonymously at times. Although some are closely related, they can still be distinguished with their unique traits. Self-esteem, self-confidence, self-concept and self-efficacy have distinctive features when compared to each other. To sum up, self-efficacy can be described as being task and domain specific, competence-based, predictive, and action related, as opposed to similar self-constructs (Bandura, 1977, 1999).

2.2.3. Sources of Self-Efficacy

When it comes to how self-efficacy beliefs are formed, they begin to prosper in early childhood. And it continues developing throughout one's life by gaining new experiences, knowledge and understanding (Bandura, 1992). Self-efficacy belief is the product of a complicated series of actions of self-persuasion that depends on cognitive processing of different sources of efficacy information that Bandura (1992) called self-efficacy appraisals. Bandura identified four main sources of self-efficacy: 1. enactive mastery experiences, 2. vicarious experiences, 3. verbal (social) persuasion, and 4. physiological and affective states (Bandura, 1997).

The first and the most influential source of all, enactive mastery experiences, refers to the student's personal assessment of his or her former practice regarding a particular task or skill and is related to the previous experiences of either success or failure (Bandura, 1977; Usher and Pajares, 2009; Phan, 2012). When students achieve some tough tasks, which are a successful experience, self-efficacy increases (Bandura, 1997). Of course, according to Tschannen- Moran et. al. (1998), the task needs to be a challenging one, and there needs to be no intense external help. On the other hand, an individual's self-efficacy can decrease when s/he fails in accomplishing a task. Continual success at a task forms self-efficacy

belief. People worry less about trivial failures once their self-efficacy beliefs are set. According to Crain, they ascribe such failures to lack of effort and attempt one more time for that task to succeed (cited in Zulkovsky, 2009). For instance, a student who is repeatedly successful in a Math exam does not lose his/her self-efficacy belief in Math just because of one minor failure (Bandura, 1977, 1986; Schunk, 1991).

Mastery experiences' superiority to the other sources of efficacy beliefs has been proved with a number of studies done in different fields. One of the very first researches in this field was carried out to treat different phobias for which researchers executed treatments through performance or symbolic procedures to change apprehensive and defensive behavior. The studies were ended up with the superiority of performance-based treatments irrespective of the method applied. Wolpe (cited in Bandura, 1977), in his desensitization approach, made his clients be exposed to aversive stimulus along with the activities reducing anxiety, involving mostly muscular relaxation. In the treatment, participants were displayed scenes in which they imagine themselves in more threatening activities gradually or depiction of the same order of activities with the real dangers followed by muscular relaxation. The results of studies on different people with different phobias revealed that performance desensitization caused far greater behavioral change than did symbolic desensitization according to Strahley; and Sherman (cited in Bandura, 1977). There are also other studies carried out in different academic settings showing that mastery experience predicts students' self-efficacy in a consistent way (Lent, Lopez and Bieschke, 1991; Lopez and Lent, 1992; Lopez, Lent, Brown and Gore, 1997; Hampton, 1998; Usher and Pajares, 2006; Britner and Pajares, 2006; Pajares, Margaret, Johnson & Ellen, Usher 2007). Milner and Hoy (2003) carried out a case study to African American teacher's self-efficacy sources. The teacher in the study faced an example of racial threat. They found out that despite many difficulties she encountered, she did not give up on her belief and endured. When the sources of her efficacy that make her determined were examined, they discovered that remembering and recreating former successful performances aided her. She remarked that as she felt her efficacy weaken, she reminded herself of her mastery in a prior context with similar features so that she carried a similar experience to her immediate context.

The second source, vicarious experiences, is related to the comparison of a person's performance on a task with another person that has similar abilities (Palabıyık-Yeni, 2013). In other words, it is observation of others while they are performing a task. Even if the enactive mastery experiences are claimed to be the most powerful source of self-efficacy, if a person is not sure about his/her abilities, vicarious experiences become more effective.

This happens because when a person sees that another person with similar talents is successful in a task, that individual becomes more self-efficient by believing s/he can also manage that task successfully. In an opposite situation in which the observer sees other fail despite their efforts, his/her self-efficacy decreases. Bandura (1986) explains this as *"…observing other people who have been once perceived as competent are unsuccessful in spite of hard work lessens observers' perception of their own capabilities and weakens their efforts"* (p.99). Bandura (1994) states this as "the impact of modeling on perceived self-efficacy is strongly influenced by perceived similarity to the models" (p. 72). This situation is true if the capabilities of the compared people are the same. If they are different concerning the capabilities, since it is the key point under this condition, the self-efficacy beliefs are not affected (Bandura, 1997).

There are numerous studies (Schunk, 1981; Schunk and Hanson, 1985; Schunk, Hanson and Cox, 1987; Schunk and Hanson, 1989) carried out to explore effect of vicarious experiences on skills and self-efficacy development. In a study by Schunk (1981) children with low arithmetic achievement were given an instructional treatment as either modeling of division operations or didactic instruction, both of which are followed by a practice period. In "cognitive modeling" as referred by Schunk, an adult served as a model for children to solve division problems and explained strategies explicitly to reach solutions. When the practice part comes, a model helped children when they have difficulties in solving problems, or the model reminded students of relevant strategies. Also, students were guided to the appropriate explanatory page. In the beginning of the didactic treatment, children self-studied explanatory pages. When they have any difficulties in problems, the teacher led them to those pages to review them one more time. During practice, half of the children in each instructional treatment received effort attribution feedback for success and difficulty. As a result, both instructional treatments assisted accuracy and perceived efficacy, but cognitive modeling resulted in greater gains in accuracy (Schunk, 1981). Another study done by Schunk and Hanson (1989) aimed to find out how self-model treatments affect children's achievement beliefs and behaviors in Math. There were four groups of children: peer model, self-model, peer and self-model, and no model, i.e. just videotape control group. As a result of the study, it was concluded that self-modeling promotes cognitive learning skills. The children in the self-modeling group were as successful as those in the peer modeling group in mathematical skill learning; and they were statistically more successful than those with no model. Their achievement beliefs were significantly higher than of the children whose performances were taped but not shown to themselves, or whose performances were not

taped at all. Based on this, Schunk and Hanson (1989) found out that students being doubtful about their ability at first were the ones whose self-efficacy beliefs improved most by watching the recordings of their own performances. Vicarious experiences are proved to be effective with the help of these studies, which confirm that observing others as a model especially the ones being similar to oneself is another source of self-efficacy.

The third source, the comments made by the ones who are accepted as important by the person, is verbal persuasions or verbal judgments, and this source can also develop beliefs in self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986; Alderman, 1999). It is possible to increase the self-efficacy of an individual by encouraging or persuading him/her that s/he can be successful in carrying out a task. This increase leads the individual to be able to face the challenges that s/he might face while carrying out the task. Verbal persuasion makes people put more effort and develop skills required to reach goals, which make them more confident (Bandura, 1994). Verbal persuasion can aid competence provided that it is realistic, or the person giving encouragement is credible. For instance, appraisal by experts in the field, mentors, coaches or teachers can improve personal competence (Bandura, 1982; Mills, 2014). The opposite of this situation is also possible, namely, discouraging or demotivating the individual makes his/her self-efficacy to decrease (Bandura 1977, 1986, 1995, 1997). Negative feedbacks result in avoiding difficult tasks that promote people's capacities. In other words, while positive feedback may strengthen self-beliefs, negative feedback can weaken them. According to Bandura (1986), it is much easier to decrease self-efficacy beliefs via negative comments than to increase them via positive appraisals. Alderman (1999) also suggested that when positive comments are compared to negative comments, the latter affects self-efficacy more than the former. That is, positive comments do not raise self-efficacy as much as the negative ones lower it. When all of these are taken into account, any feedback given by superiors or by those who are thought to be credible are of great importance. Thus, Schunk (1984) points out that giving feedback should be for enhancing students' self-efficacy beliefs because their self-beliefs are being formed accordingly. However, verbal persuasion does not foster self-efficacy beliefs as much as other sources because its results are just described rather than observed.

The fourth and the last source is psychological and affective states affect self-efficacy; and Bandura (1995) stated that "physiological, affective, and mood states like increased heart rate, profuse sweating, fast breathing, high anxiety, nervousness, and tiredness can have considerable effects on self-efficacy" (p. 4). People's emotional stimulations affect their self-efficacy either in a positively or a negatively. A learner's

psychological condition can also affect and interfere with self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Bandura (1994) also asserts that “it is not the sheer intensity of emotional and physical reactions that is important but rather how they are perceived and interpreted” (p.3). If any stimulation is interpreted by the individual to be the consequence of personal deficiencies, his/her self-efficacies will decrease and eventually, s/he will fail. This can be explained by a sample of a teacher. When a teacher who is sweating and has a rapid heartbeat while s/he is teaching in the class interprets this as anxiety or nervousness, his/her self-efficacy will decrease. On the other hand, if this teacher attributes those states to the weather’s being hot, the teacher’s self-efficacy is not affected. (Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk-Hoy, 2007). To sum up, people can heighten their sense of self-efficacy by learning how to lower stress and alter their frame of mind when they are in difficulties or on tough tasks (Bandura, 1994).

2.2.4. Effects of Self-Efficacy

According to Pintrich and Schunk (1996), self-efficacy beliefs not only affect mental and physical health but are also important determinants in one' decision making process, career planning and academic success. An important notion specifically academic self-efficacy can be regarded as a learner's conviction in his/her own potential of performing various academic tasks successfully (Bandura, 1997; Bandura and Barbaranelli, 1996). It is also suggested by Bandura and Locke (2003) that the level of self-efficacy beliefs may vary depending on the tasks or individuals. According to Bandura (1997), low self-efficacy beliefs can play a role in one's low academic success. On the other hand, he maintains that high self-efficacy beliefs motivate students to handle challenging tasks, which leads them to feel more self- efficacious; but if they can't manage the task, they do not put the blame on the external reasons. Rather, by questioning the effort they spend while conducting the task, they attribute the failure to the insufficiency in the amount of their endeavor and set more challenging objectives for the next times. On the other hand, for those having less self-efficacy beliefs, challenging responsibilities pose a great danger and a source of worry due to their lack of trust in their capabilities, which results in not striving enough, as it should be, but giving up (Bandura, 1995; Bandura, 1997). Likewise, Ekizoglu and Özçınar (2010) assert that a high level of self-efficacy stimulates an individual more to do his/her best. In other words, “students with high self-efficacy tend to be more successful and successful students tend to have higher self-efficacy beliefs” (Tılfarlıoğlu and Cinkara, 2009, p.136).

2.2.5. Factors Enhancing Self-Efficacy

Because of its crucial effect in academic success, it has been a matter of interest for researchers to find out the ways to increase students' self-efficacy levels. According to Alderman (1999), modelling, goal setting, information processing, encouragement and feedback and rewards are the factors that can potentially increase this level.

Schunk (1989, 1991) revealed that modelling is of critical significance as it can help students with low performance abilities learn a new skill. Observing that some other people around can manage tasks may lead a learner to enhance his/her own self-efficacy, while witnessing the failing of others with low self- efficacy may reduce their own self-efficacy levels (Bandura et al., 1996). A striking revelation by Schunk (1995) is that the modelling of peers is more effective than teachers' modelling. Also, if a learner observes himself/herself achieving tasks repetitively with great success, which is called self-modeling, then this raises his self-efficacy beliefs and so enhances future performances, whereas experiencing self-modelling of failures would create an opposite effect (Bandura, 1977).

Goal setting is another factor that has a role in achieving an outcome. According to Schunk (1995), having a goal is likely to motivate learners to strive for the goal and to actualize it especially when the goal conforms to three criteria including the proximity of the goal, its specificity and its difficulty.

Information processing: Schunk (1995) also suggested that learners' self-efficacy level for academic materials is likely to affect their understanding of those materials, that is the more self-efficacy they have for those materials, the easier it is for them to understand the material while less self-efficacy causes them more challenge. For students with high self-efficacy beliefs, attempts to learn more in order to achieve a task, the efforts put into action and the positive feedbacks that they get in this process boost their self-efficacy and motivation levels.

Encouragement and feedback: Schunk (1996) proposed that if learners are encouraged and given positive feedback by their teachers and parents regarding their execution of a task with a special highlight on their effort, this can elevate their self-efficacy beliefs. It is also essential for teachers to be clear in specifying tasks and providing constructive feedback (Schraw, Dunkle and Bendixen, and Roedel, 1995).

It is also possible to make use of reward by teachers to develop high level of self-efficacy. Yet, Alderman (1999) argued that, as cited by Schulze and Schulze (2003, p. 109), this is the least effective technique in enhancing self-efficacy. Some examples of reward include teachers' approval of students' works, their encouraging students to share these works

with their parents and appreciating students' class performances. On the other hand, it is an important issue that students are rewarded on the group basis, not individually, in order to create a peaceful collaborative class atmosphere.

2.2.6. Self-Efficacy and Its Dimensions

Self-efficacy beliefs differ in terms of level, generality and strength. Understanding these dimensions is vital in evaluating self-efficacy beliefs; it will help to determine the suitable measurement. If students' self-efficacy beliefs in essay writing are evaluated, a suitable task level should be defined because there are different levels of task requirements. For example, it may vary from writing a simple sentence with the appropriate grammatical structure to writing complex sentences at a higher level or organizing sentences in a paragraph consistently. Then, once the writing level has been defined, the assessment should provide multiple items at different levels that collectively measure the article writing area. In order to measure the strength of their belief in their ability to perform a particular task, students should be asked to consider how much confidence they have in spelling out all the words in a one-page composition and to consider other such questions. Generality means students' belief in their domains. Therefore, students cannot judge themselves effectively for all kinds of writing. Similarly, the aspect of the generality can be explained as, for example; students' academic self-efficacy affects their English learning activities or vice versa.

Researchers have tried to spot the differences between general self-efficacy and specific self-efficacy. Porter, Bigley and Steers (2003, p.133) separated two structures (self-efficacy and general self-efficacy). General self-efficacy is defined as the generalized feature of a person's general estimate of his or her ability to perform a wide variety of tasks under different circumstances while specific self-efficacy is considered as case and task specific. Thus, while self-efficacy represents a dynamic motivational belief system that can vary depending on the unique characteristics of each task and working status, general self-efficacy represents an "enduring" personal trait that successfully applies to a variety of different situations. Equivalently, the measurement of these two elements varies according to the elements, task-specific self-efficacy scales, (a) Imagine whether you believe (yes, no) whether you have the ability to perform this task on each of the levels specified in this scale. Please use column A for these answers. (b) How sure you are about each yes / no answer (0-100%). For example, 0% would indicate no chance, while 100% would show absolute accuracy. Please use B column for these answers; General self-efficacy items can be

exemplified as follows: "I do not seem capable of dealing with most problems that come up in my life."

Choi (2005) investigated whether the self-constructs measured at an intermediate level specificity were better matched by the lecture grades than the general self-constructs or specific self-constructs. Choi looked in the relationship between different kinds of beliefs with different specificity levels (general self-efficacy, academic self-efficacy, specific self-efficacy, academic self-concept, and specific self-concept) and success. As a result of the study, among the three types of self-efficacy courses, self-efficacy was the only important predictor of the term grades. General self-efficacy, as expected, did not make a significant contribution to the amount of variance disclosed in achievement.

2.2.7. Applications of Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy has a significant role in many areas of people behavior, especially those requiring a certain amount of individual control and expertise. According to Maddux and Meier (1995), the low self-efficacy expectations were important characteristics of depression, anxiety and special fears. It is believed that self-regulation is used extensively in various treatments or counseling programs (ibid). Thus, it is the most eminent cognitive capacity in human adaptation. Individuals who think that they are effective in an area have the ability to set compelling targets, planning and self-regulation in pursuit of these goals.

Human functioning is shaped in a variety of ways such as self-efficacy or belief in abilities of the individual according to the self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1997). They envision successful results instead of lingering on personal weaknesses or what might not go well. At the cognitive level, people possessing high self-efficacy have high expectations, set difficult goals, and are committed to realizing themselves. Bandura (1997, p. 1) argues that self-efficacy beliefs determine the goals people have set for them, how much effort they consume, how long they persist, and how flexible they are against failures and setbacks. On an emotional level, self-efficacy sets emotional states. Those with high self-efficacy know that they can achieve difficulties when faced with them; whereas people without self-efficacy are more likely to increase risks or threats.

Another area where self-efficacy belief plays an important role is thought control. Bandura (1997) clarifies that the effect of self-efficacy on thought supervision designates the performance. In order to be good at a difficult skill and situation, people should avoid all disturbance and thoughts which are negative and try to concentrate and motivate their activities. Individuals with low self-efficacy may suspect and perform poorly at this stage.

Furthermore, the impact of self-efficacy theory in the field of health sciences, which is necessary to treat patients suffering from medical conditions, is also important in the application of the change in the behavior of the patient to be treated. Successful and lasting behavioral change requires a lot of effort and determination, later strengthened by strong self-efficacy and self-regulation. Pajares and Miller (1994) conducted a study on the role of self-efficacy and self-concept beliefs in Mathematical problem solving. Path analysis was used to test predictors of self-efficacy beliefs in mathematical problem solving and mediation roles. Findings revealed that self-efficacy predicts problem solving more than mathematical self-concept, perceived benefit of mathematics, mathematical experiences, or gender. Self-efficacy also mediated the effect of gender and previous experiences on self-concept, perceived benefit and problem solving. The self-concept of gender and previous experiences influenced the perceived usefulness and problem solving to a great extent with the role of self-efficacy in the meditation. Men had higher performance, self-efficacy, self-concept, and low anxiety, but these differences were largely dependent on self-efficacy, because gender only had a direct effect on self-efficacy and previous experience variable (p. 1). His results support the hypothetical role of self-efficacy in the social cognitive theory of Bandura (1986). Tierney and Farmer (2002) worked on creative self-efficacy: their potential predecessors and their relationship to creative performance. They collected data from two different companies. His work tested a new structure, creative self-efficacy, reducing the belief that employees could be creative in their work roles. Their findings supported the distinctive validity of the structure and stated that the duration of employment, self-efficacy of the work, supervisor behavior and work complexity contributed to the creative efficacy beliefs. Creative self-efficacy has predicted creative performance beyond the predictive effects of business self-efficacy.

2.3. Academic Self-Efficacy

A student's intellectual performance is based on his perceived self-efficacy, which leads to the development of cognitive ability and academic self-efficacy. Bandura (1977) defined academic self-efficacy as personal judgments of the ability to organize and conduct action courses to achieve specified types of training performance (p.203). Whorton (2009) also maintained its academic self-efficacy as a level of confidence in the student's ability to carry out certain academic tasks successfully (p.12). In addition, Lent, Brown and Gore (1997) argued that academic self-efficacy and academic self-concept are not equal concepts, that the academic self-concept is related and highly correlated with self-efficacy. Bandura

(1997) emphasized that students' self-efficacy has a strong impact on academic achievement. Factors such as cognitive ability level, prior education, achievement, gender and perceived self-efficacy, such as attitudes towards academic activities, affect academic achievement (p. 216). Being short-term instead of long-term goals helps students develop their academic self-efficacy faster. Instead of setting long-term goals that allow them to postpone hard work until a later date, students are more willing to fulfill their duties when the objectives are short-term. Bandura (1997) believes that using benchmarking methods and incentives to encourage students to set short-term goals will help them develop their academic self-efficacy.

Students are expected to develop more cognitive complexities and start thinking more creatively and abstractly. They are also expected to take an active role in their learning and to continue cognitive development through self-regulated learning (Bandura, 1997, p. 229). Zimmerman (1986, 1989) describes that students can be defined as being organized by themselves in the degree of metacognitive, 'motivational and behaviorally active participants' in their own learning process (p. 329).

Chemers et al. (2001) and Lent et al. (1984) reported a positive relationship between high self-efficacy and improved academic achievement. The researchers found that students with higher levels of academic self-efficacy had longer periods than those with academic self-efficacy as stated in Olani (2009, p.1058) and remained longer in academic main branches (Lent, Brown and Larkin, 1984). In the study of Lent and colleagues, it was revealed that there is a relationship between academic self-efficacy and standard tests and high school ranking; at the same time, they found a significant relationship between academic self-concept, self-efficacy and achievement levels.

Mone, Baker and Jeffries (1995) carried out a study on self-efficacy and academic performance. They discovered that academic self-efficacy has a statistically important effect on prediction of personal academic goal setting and academic performance. Chemers et al. (2001) also found a strong connection between academic expectations and academic achievement. Mone et al. (1995), believes that a student's academic self-efficacy perceptions have no effect on the student's goal setting and increasing academic achievement. This idea is different from previous research, which calls for increasing students' self-confidence to improve academic performance and improve personal goal setting (Hersey and Blanchard, 1993).

Zimmerman, Bandura, and Martinez-Pons (1992) identified a strong relationship between students’ present academic self-efficacy and future goal setting in relation to

previous grade achievement, but only when parental hope of academic achievement was high for each student. Ayiku (2005) stressed that parents' goals for their children's academic achievement were apt to be higher than goals students set for themselves. Parental expectations were implied to influence the type of educational notions the students set for themselves, and these students depended on their academic self-efficacy and parental expectations in order to organize and firm goals for the future (p. 23).

Zimmerman et al. (1992) shows that the role of personal goals in academic achievement plays an important role for students, and those who create personal achievement goals also improve their sense of academic achievement. Bandura et al. (1996) mentioned the significant impacts of parents in regulating self-efficacy. She also emphasized that students with parents with high self-efficacy tend to overstress the belief in their parents and gain a high academic self-efficacy as well as their parents.

Elias (2008) studied the impact of anti-intellectualism attitudes and academic self-efficacy on business students' perceptions of cheating. There were 666 business students in three universities to find out potential basis of cheating perceptions in the Elias's study. Academic self-efficacy for the researcher refers to a student's belief in one's ability to accomplish an academic task. As a result, students high in anti-intellectualism attitudes and those with low academic self-efficacy were least likely to perceive college cheating as unethical. The researcher found that university cheating was a predictor of deception in the workplace, and the results encouraged business instructors to reduce intellectuality among students and encourage their best efforts, and the results also served the employers by focusing on these two psychological variables in the recruitment and promotion process (p. 199).

2.3.1. Self-Efficacy and Learning

It is clear that both Bandura's self-efficacy theory is of great significance for education and the self-efficacy of learners affects them in various ways. Decisions that a person can make about his or her abilities may decide whether a person should decide what activities are to be tried, how much they will strive, or when to insist. The student with higher self-efficacy tries to set higher goals, works hard to achieve his / her goal, improves the current level of thinking, uses critical thinking skills and strategies, decides and does not quit easily (Bandura and Schunk, 1981; Bouffard-Bouchard, 1990; Lent, Brown and Larkin, 1984; Pajares, 1996; Schunk and Hanson, 1985). Therefore, the student who is quite efficient is more prone to succeed.

Recent studies have shown great interest in the impact of self-efficacy on education (Pintrich and Schunk, 1996). The importance of having high levels of self-efficacy in the event of new and challenging skills was confirmed by the findings of the self-efficacy survey (Bandura, 1995; Bandura and Schunk, 1981; Schunk and Hanson, 1985). According to Wang and RiCharde (1987), students' self-efficacy is highly influenced by their learning performance. Moreover, students' academic achievement is influenced by their self-efficacy beliefs (Pajares and Miller, 1994; Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons, 1990). Pajares and Miller (1994), in their study to explore the students' ability to solve math problems, the success of solving problems can be more predictive than other variables. Another study by Zimmerman and Bandura (1994) stated that students' self-efficacy levels in terms of writing performance are positively related to the grades they have. Therefore, it can be said that the successful performance of the students reflects their self-efficacy.

It can also be understood that the performance of teachers plays an important role here because they should provide opportunities for students to increase their self-efficacy. Therefore, if a teacher wants learners to deal with all the difficulties which they encounter during their learning process, they need to do their best to make learners have very high self-efficacy. They can assign learner tasks according to their proficiency level so that each student can do it and feel that she will be successful in learning a language. This will increase students' self-confidence, so their self-efficacy will be higher. However, teachers should also have high self-efficacy in order to foster their students' self-efficacy. As stated by Ashton (1984) in his study, teachers with high self-efficacy give a positive meaning to both themselves and their teaching. Moreover, they think that they play an important role in the education of learners and think that they are dedicated to the education of their students, their efforts and their time. Thus, they do their best to design effective teaching strategies. In another study by Gibson and Dembo (1984), researchers observed eight teachers with high or low self-efficacy. They found that those with high self-efficacy were more productive with classroom management and time devoted to teaching. These teachers who have high self-efficacy seem safer and less annoyed when they encounter problems in their classrooms. For this reason, having high self-efficacy for teachers is also important for them to reflect to their students.

Various studies on self-efficacy belief show that students' self-efficacy can be improved through classroom teaching (Pajares, Miller and Johnson, 1999; Pajares and Valiante, 1997; Wang and RiCharde, 1987; Wenden, 1987) and by modeling (Schunk and Hanson, 1985; Wang and RiCharde, 1987; Zimmerman and Ringle, 1981). Wang and Pape

(2005) agree that ‘students' self-efficacy beliefs can be developed through positive feedback through successful past experiences and the scaffolding provided by teachers and parents 2005 (p.76). Consequently, positive past experiences and support from teachers will facilitate higher self-efficacy for students. In other words, teachers should always encourage their learners to use all their potential and ensure that they believe they can.

There are a few basic steps that students must take to grow their self-efficacy. Bandura (1997) claims that students create their own activities by selecting and interpreting the information from the four main root. They have a high qualified experience with the results of their previous experiences. They also develop their self-efficacy with the help of their experience in monitoring others. Bandura (1997) therefore emphasizes the importance of modeling for students to create their own activities. Another source is social persuasion through evaluations from peers, teachers, peers, assessors, peers, and academic performances. Final yet important step is emotional and physiological, such as arousal, anxiety, mood and fatigue, which affect the shaping of self-efficacy beliefs. Therefore, there are several factors that influence the development of students' self-efficacy beliefs.

2.3.2. Studies on Self-Efficacy and Second / Foreign Language Learning

Although self-efficacy is acknowledged as significant in learning, it is not widely researched in second and foreign language learning. A few numbers of studies have been carried out regarding self-efficacy in the field of second language acquisition, and foreign language learning since the late 1990‘s. These studies have mostly aimed at discovering the variables that differentiate successful language learners from unsuccessful ones, and most of them revealed that students with high English self-efficacy were better learners of English. That is to say, studies conducted so far revealed that people with high self-efficacy are high achievers in foreign and second language learning.

There are several studies conducted in Turkish context investigating self-efficacy with regard to language learning. To illustrate, a study carried out by Tilfarlioğlu and Ciftci (2011) in Turkey revealed that there was a highly positive relationship between the participant students’ academic performance and self-efficacy. Özkasap (2009) tried to find out the extent to which Turkish university EFL students feel efficient in regulating their English learning and the extent to which they feel responsibility for their English learning processes, and how these two constructs relate to each other. Findings of the study revealed that Turkish university EFL students had moderate level of self-efficacy in regulating their English learning and perceived themselves to be slightly more responsible than their teachers

for their English learning processes. She also found out that these two constructs were positively correlated. In addition, Sarıçoban (2010) also searched for the views of both teachers and their students on teacher self-efficacy for classroom management in foreign language learning/teaching process. He found out that novice teachers had a moderately higher sense of teachers' self-efficacy in (a) helping students to think critically, (b) giving instructions, (c) classroom management issues and (d) evaluation and assessment, whereas students had a moderately higher sense of their teachers' self-efficacy only in teacher-student interaction. Another study carried out by Sarıçoban and Serbez (2013) investigated the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and being field-dependent or field-independent. As a result of their findings, it was concluded that there was no significant difference between the FI (Field Independent) and FD (Field Dependent) learners' self-efficacy beliefs. Another study conducted by Çubukçu (2008) revealed that students' self-efficacy and language anxiety were not related.

When the literature is reviewed, there are a number of studies conducted in foreign contexts in regard to self-efficacy and language learning. For instance, there are several studies (Schunk, 1981, 1984; Hackett, 1985; Pajares and Miller, 1994; Lent, Brown, and Larkin, 1984, 1987; Chemers, Hu, and Garcia, 2001; Jeng and Shin, 2008; and Cheng and Chiou, 2010) suggesting that self-efficacy is of great importance in predicting success of the students. The study conducted by Huang and Shanmao (1996) investigated four students studying at reading and writing class at a university. They concluded that the students' self-efficacy level and their reading and writing scores in TOEFL had a significant relationship. Templin (1999) conducted a study with Japanese EFL students holding low-efficacy and high-efficacy. To check the difference between these two groups, t-test was implemented, and the findings showed a significant difference between the grades of two groups. However, some other researchers (Graham 2006; Schunk, 2003; Wilhite, 1990) found no significant relationship between self-efficacy and academic achievement. In addition, another study conducted by Templin, Guile and Okuma (2001) aimed to find out the effect of self-efficacy course on increasing the English ability of Japanese college students taking English-I course. Their empirical study revealed that self-efficacy instruction increased the level of participants' self-efficacy significantly (as cited by Gahungu, 2007, p.89). On the other hand, Mills et al. (2006) investigated the relationship among self-efficacy, anxiety and French proficiency in reading and listening skills. Their findings revealed that students' reading self-efficacy and reading proficiency are positively related while listening self-efficacy was positively correlated with listening proficiency only for the females, and listening anxiety

was positively correlated with listening proficiency of both genders. Additionally, Mills et al. (2007) concluded that female students had higher self-efficacy for self-regulation, interest, value and enjoyment in learning about both French language and culture when compared to male students. Another study conducted by Mahyuddin et al. (2006) targeted to find out the relationship between students' self-efficacy and their English language achievement in Malaysia. They concluded that when students have high self-efficacy in the language, achievement in English language will improve (p. 61).

Some researchers addressed the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and language skills. For example, Rahimi and Abedini (2009) examined the relationship between learners' self-efficacy beliefs regarding their listening comprehension and listening proficiency. The results showed that students' self-efficacy beliefs in language learning and their listening proficiency were highly correlated. Similarly, Chen (2007) investigated the influence of English listening self-efficacy, English anxiety, and perceived value of English language and culture on EFL learners' English listening performance. The study concluded that English listening self-efficacy was the best predictor of English listening performance of all. In addition, Huang and Shanmao (1996) investigated the relationship between reading and writing self-efficacy and achievement with four students who are learning English as a second language from the highest-level reading and writing classes and concluded that students have higher self-efficacy levels than their learning achievements. Also, their study revealed that self-efficacy was affected by the participants' interest and the teacher's support. In another study, Schunk and Rice (1993) examined self-efficacy in reading and reading comprehension. Their experimental study concluded that the students who got training to increase their self-efficacy boosted not only their self-efficacy but also their reading comprehension.

There are also other studies investigating self-efficacy in regard to strategy use. For example, Findings of the study by Wong (2005) revealed a correlation between strategy use and sense of efficacy. The ones with higher self-efficacy showed more frequent use of language learning strategies than did the ones with low self-efficacy. In addition, Magogwe and Oliver (2007) explored the relationship between language learning strategies, proficiency and self-efficacy beliefs and their results indicated that despite being weak, there was a positive relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and use of language learning strategies. Also, some researchers (Chamot, Robbins and El-Dinary, 1993; Wang and Li, 2010; Shang, 2010) attempting to find out the relationships between reading strategy use and perceived self-efficacy concluded that the use of reading strategies and perceptions of self-

efficacy are positively correlated. In another study, with 135 high school students enrolled in different foreign languages classes, Anstrom (2000) explored the relationship between the use of language learning strategies and self-efficacy rating of the language learners in Australia. The findings concluded that strategy use, and self-efficacy were positively and significantly correlated.

2.4. Conclusion

This chapter attempted to offer a detailed review of the literature with regard to the concepts and the terms related to the present study. Thus, the definition of self-efficacy and the explanation of the Self-efficacy Theory have both been provided. In addition, self-efficacy and other self-beliefs, sources of self-efficacy, effects of self-efficacy, factors affecting self-efficacy, and self-efficacy and its dimensions have also been given to offer a better understanding of the theoretical background of the study. As self-efficacy is a broad term which is also used in other fields, applications of self-efficacy have also been explained in detail. To clarify the role of self-efficacy in education, academic self-efficacy and self-efficacy and learning have been given a part in this chapter. Finally, recent studies conducted on self-efficacy in second/ foreign language learning from local and global contexts have been provided. Next chapter will cover the research design, instruments and procedures for data collection, data collection procedures, and data analysis.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the method conducted to carry out the present study is explained. Beginning with the presentation of setting and participants, the chapter is then followed by instruments and procedures. In addition, the chapter includes data collection instruments utilized in the study and ends with data analysis procedure.

3.2. Research Design

The purpose of this study is a) to investigate the self-efficacy beliefs of EFL learners in the process of learning English, b) whether their self-efficacy level differ according to variables, such as proficiency levels and gender. It also targets c) to explore how self-efficient EFL learners are in listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills. In addition, d) the study aims to investigate whether there is a relationship between the self-efficacy level and the academic achievement of Turkish EFL learners. To reveal and answer the abovementioned research questions in the present study, mixed methods research is utilized. Concerning this aim, both qualitative and quantitative data are collected to explore the phenomenon in depth (Creswell, 2003). Mixed methods research is gaining popularity as research methodology is changing, and the studies in social and health science are found to be complex; thus, mixed methods contributes to the better understanding of research problems in this fields (Creswell, 2009). Mixed method is also recognized as the third major research approach aside from qualitative research and quantitative research (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, and Turner 2007). According to Madey (1982) integrating quantitative and qualitative research promotes to quantitative findings with qualitative findings of the study, and also it provides to assemble evidences from qualitative data to be used to examine quantitative data. Among different mixed method research design types, sequential explanatory design was used by the researcher. Sequential explanatory design can be defined briefly as the implementation of quantitative research followed by the qualitative one. Hanson et. al. (2015) explains sequential explanatory design as:

> In these designs, quantitative data are collected and analyzed, followed by qualitative data. Priority is usually unequal and given to the quantitative data. Qualitative data are used primarily to augment quantitative data. Data analysis is usually connected, and integration usually occurs at the data interpretation stage and in the discussion. These designs are particularly useful for, as its name suggests, explaining relationships and/or study findings, especially when they are unexpected.

3.3. Setting and Participants

3.3.1. Setting

The current study was conducted at an English preparatory program at a state university in Turkey. This setting was chosen because of some reasons. Firstly, the number of preparatory classes has been growing in recent years and during their education, students take 20 hours of English, which includes listening skills, reading skills, writing skills, speaking skills and core language classes, which can be classified as an intense program and it is hypothesized that this can yield more valid and reliable findings for the researcher. Secondly, the setting is the teaching environment for the researcher, so it was assumed that this would save time and enable the researcher to implement the study in a more efficient way. As the third reason why this setting was chosen is that SFL provides us a great number of learners who are at different levels of English and who are following the same curriculum. This was important for the study and its results to be more reliable and valid.

In the setting of the study, students have to take the English preparatory education for four modules, each of which lasts for 8 weeks, 2 modules for a term and 32 weeks in total with 20 hours of classes each week. The students who are compulsorily attending the preparatory school cannot continue their departments before they succeed in the preparatory year. The level they are supposed to finish is B2 level. However, the curriculum followed is not the same for all students. It depends on the levels of classes; A1 (elementary), A2 (pre-intermediate), B1 (intermediate) and B2 (upper-intermediate). The levels at the preparatory school are in accordance with the Common European Framework (CEFR). The arrangement of placing student into the accurate level is determined via the placement exam administered at the beginning of the academic year. All learners take the core language course besides skill courses including all skills: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. In core language course the focus is language use. They all have 8 hours of core language course per week. Skill courses, on the other hand, focuses of the skill taught and its mastery. Students take 2 hours of Listening Skills, 2 hours of Speaking Skills, 4 hours of Reading Skills and 4 hours of Writing Skills in a week.

The students in all levels take one pre-midterm exam, one mid-term exam, 4 pop quizzes covering listening, reading, writing skills, language use, and vocabulary in each module. At the end of each module, students have one end of module exam, which stands for the final exam of the module they are studying in. However, the final exam in B2 level

is equal to the proficiency exam, which determines whether the students pass or fail in the preparatory class.

Learners failing in the end of module exam have to take the same level again under the name of 'repeat' class. If they fail in the repeat classes again, they have to take proficiency exams held in January and in September to pass. If they fail again in those exams, they start preparatory school again in the following year. After two years, if there are students who are still unsuccessful, they should change their English-medium departments into Turkish-medium ones. If students attending voluntarily at the preparatory class fail in the end of module exam, they do not have to pass the exam. They can continue their education in their own departments without finishing preparatory school. The whole study was completed in the spring of 2017. The data was collected in the second term of academic year as it was assumed that students have more to say about their self-efficacy in English at that time. As it is their first year at university, in the first term, students try mostly to orientate themselves into their new environment. But in the second term, because they are already adapted, they are more aware of their own learning process.

3.3.2. Participants

The study was carried out with a group of 525 preparatory class students enrolled at different departments in the School of Foreign Languages at Pamukkale University, Turkey. The participants in the study were selected randomly and all of the participants were native speakers of Turkish. Out of 525 students, 24 participants were also interviewed for collecting qualitative data and for obtaining a deeper understanding of the participants in terms of their self-efficacy. The sampling size in the interviews was 24.

The participants of the study were from different departments in Pamukkale University; however, in the School of Foreign Languages, they were grouped according to their language proficiency. The participants were in the spring fall and studying English in five different levels of English, namely; A2, A2 repeat, B1, B1 Repeat, B2 (see Table 1). Table 1 shows the demographic information about the participants. In addition, the reason why different level preparatory class students were involved in the research is that it was thought that the self-efficacy of the participants at different levels could be different and be investigated. Furthermore, students from regular and repeat classes were included in the study. Choosing only repeat classes might have misled the results of the study, which is most likely to be lower. On the other hand, taking only regular classes into account might have

given much higher results in terms of self-efficacy. In addition, it was the only way to see the differences, if any, among their self-efficacy level.

Table 3.1. *Descriptive Statistics*

Characteristics		*N*	*%*
Gender	Female	254	48,4
	Male	271	51,6
Level of English	A2	72	13,0
	A2-R (repeat)	36	7,0
	B1	60	12,0
	B1-R (repeat)	22	4,0
	B2	335	64,0
Total		525	100

As shown in Table 3.1., 48.4% of participants were female, and 51.6% of them were male. Participants' level of English consists mainly of B2 Level students (64%), followed by A2 level students (13%) and B1 level students (12%). 7% of students are in A2 Repeat level, and the percentage of B1 Repeat level students is 4%, which is the lowest number of all. Of 525 subjects, 326 were in the morning shift (62.1%) while the number of the participants in the evening shift 199 (37.9%). The reason why the distribution of the levels was so diverse is that in the second term of the preparatory program, the students are mostly in higher levels (B1-B2). This is because the students can only fail once and become repeat students. In the repeat classes, if they fail again, they cannot continue their education in the preparatory program. Repeat classes are mostly consist of lower level (A1-A2) students. Because some of these students fail in the repeat classes and were eliminated at the end of the first term, the second term mostly consists of B1 or B2 regular or repeat classes.

3.4. Instruments and Procedures for Data Collection

3.4.1. Instruments

In order to collect qualitative data, a questionnaire including two parts was applied to the participants. In the first part, demographic data was gathered to get information about participants' proficiency level of English and gender as they were related to first research question. In demographic part, the participants were required to write down their student numbers, which will help the researcher to reach the achievement scores of respondents to reveal the relationship between self-efficacy and academic achievement. In addition to

demographic form, the questionnaire for the main study was administered to the participants called "Questionnaire of English Self-Efficacy". In addition, participants were interviewed about their English learning. The questionnaire included 32 items and aimed to find out the perceptions of the participants' self-efficacy about learning English. As the final step, the scores of the participants were obtained from the End-of-module Exam, which was held at the end of the module, through their student number from Testing Office of the SFL. In addition to quantitative data instruments, qualitative data were gathered via semi-structured interviews by the researcher. The aim of the interviews was to collect any missing data, if any, to gain more insights and also to check and validate the answers given in the questionnaire. All data collection instruments were translated into Turkish to prevent participants from misunderstanding and any kinds of language anxiety they may experience during the data collection procedure.

3.4.1.1. Questionnaire of English self-efficacy. The self-efficacy perceptions of participants were examined through the questionnaire of English Self-efficacy adapted from Açıkel's study (2011). Some items in the original version of the questionnaire were edited because of wording with the views and suggestions of the experts in the field and the final version of the questionnaire was translated into Turkish language in order to overcome any problems for the participants to understand the English version of the questionnaire. The questionnaire included 32 items like the original version of it. The questionnaire was piloted with 70 students, who were then excluded from the main study. The pilot study was conducted to minimize any kind of problems that may be encountered during the main study and also to check whether time allocated for the questionnaire is satisfactory. Following the pilot study, necessary changes were made by taking into account of views of the participants in the pilot study, too. The Cronbach alpha was found .92, which is a satisfactory reliability score for the study. Likert scale was used in this questionnaire, and the participants were required to mark the items from 5 to 1.

3.4.1.2. Interview protocol in the main study. In order to reveal the opinions of Turkish EFL learners about their self-efficacy and reach and gather the data that may not be mentioned in the qualitative part of the study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participants. The researcher also aimed to check and confirm the answers given by the participants in the questionnaire. In total there were 17 questions in the interview protocol, and there were also sub-questions (follow-up questions) in some of them. There were five dimensions in the interview protocol: Background, Experiences in Learning/ Using

English and self-efficacy, English learning environment, Affective and Psychological Response towards English, and Sources of self-efficacy in English. The number of the questions was respectively 3, 6, 4, 2, and 2. Affective and Psychological Response towards English shows the distribution of the items in each category in the interview protocol. The interview questions can be seen in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2. *Interview Protocol Dimensions*

Dimension	Category	N. of Items	Interview Questions
I	English Learning Background	3	1. Can you introduce yourself? How do you define yourself in learning English? 2. What do you think is the course that you feel most successful in during your school life? Why? What's your favorite lesson? Why? 3. What do you think is the course that you feel least successful in during your school life? Why? Which lesson do you like the least? Why?
II	Experiences in Learning/ Using English and Self-efficacy	6	1. How do you study to learn English? What process do you follow? 2. If you were asked to evaluate your success in English between 10 (lowest) and 100 (highest), how would you rate yourself? Why? What score do you think you're going to get in the next final exam? 3. In which skill do you feel most successful in your English learning process? Reading? Writing? Listening? Speaking? Why? 4. In which skill do you feel least successful in your English learning process? Reading? Writing? Listening? Speaking? Why? 5. What do you like doing about English outside school? 6. Do you have a memory that you can tell me about your English learning process (a moment that can describe what kind of a student you are)?
III	English Learning Environment	2	1. Could you tell us about your current English class? a. Do you think you're at the right level? Or should you be at a lower or higher level? How would you evaluate yourself? b. Can you compare your English success and abilities to the class? How about the rest of the class? How would you rate yourself over 100 in your own group? 2. Could you tell us about your English teachers so far? / Can you describe them? a. Do you think your teachers find you successful? What do they say about your performance? b. Can you tell us about your best English teacher ever? What made him/her so good / successful? c. Can you tell us your worst English teacher? What made him so bad / unsatisfactory? d. What can your teachers do to improve your English skills and make you feel more successful? e. In which situations do you feel more successful in English? In which situations are you most unsuccessful? Why? f. How does English make you feel? Happy, desperate etc.

(continued on next page)

Table 3.2. *Interview Protocol Dimensions* (continued)

IV	Affective and Psychological Response towards English	2	1. How do you feel when you take an English exam? 2. How do you feel when you do homework? / How do you feel when you have English homework? a. In which skills do you do the assignments / tasks most willingly in English? Reading? Writing? Listening? Speaking? Why? b. In which skills do you do the assignments / tasks most unwillingly in English? Reading? Writing? Listening? Speaking? Why? c. Which skill or skills are most difficult when you do homework in English? Reading? Writing? Listening? Speaking? Why?
V	Sources of Self-efficacy in English	2	1. You have previously rated your English ability on a scale between 10-100. And how do you evaluate/rate your confidence in English? Why? 2. What would make you feel more confident in English?

3.4.1.2.1. Interview protocol development procedure. As the first step to develop the interview protocol, the participants were asked **"Could you please describe how proficient you are in English?".** According to the responses obtained from the participants, the item pool emerged in consideration with related literature. Out of this item pool, two researchers coded the responses of the learners and ended up with 26 interview questions. These questions, then, were checked by four field experts, three of whom were English Language teachers, and one of whom was a Turkish Language teacher. Their comments about the questions required some changes. They agreed that 6 questions were found either similar to each other or difficult to understand by the participants, and they were omitted from the main study. The interview protocol included 20 questions.

3.4.1.2.2. Interview protocol piloting. Upon the comments obtained by the field experts, item pool had some changes as mentioned above. Arranging the item pool and reducing the number of questions to 20, the protocol was piloted with 8 students. As a result of the piloting, three questions were found to be ambiguous by the participants of the pilot study. As a consequence, these 3 questions were omitted, and 17 questions in total constituted our interview protocol. After completing the pilot study and executing the essential adjustments, the interview protocol was ready to utilize for the study.

3.5. Data Collection

As for the first step in the data collection part, the questionnaire for the participants was administered at their regular class time. Before applying the questionnaire, the participants were assured that the data gathered would not be used for judgments or assessments by their instructors or by the researcher. The participants were also told that the results could be shared with them if they want. For this purpose, the researcher shared her contact information with the participants. In addition, the participants were also assured that they were not supposed to write their name on the questionnaire as they might hesitate and could hinder the objective results. As the next step, the participants completed the questionnaire, and after implementing the questionnaire, the data collected from the participants were numbered in case it might be necessary to be used and gather data to compare self-efficacy and academic achievement, which is one of the domains to be revealed in this research. It took approximately 10 minutes for the participants to fill out the questionnaire.

As the second step, interview protocol is of great importance for the study. Researchers are provided with in-depth information thanks to interviews. (Cohen and

Manion, 1994; Dörnyei, 2007), and semi-structured interviews enable the researcher to build new questions and comment on new issues that come out during the interview (Brown, 2001). Thus, after the quantitative data were collected, the semi-structured interviews were conducted. The interview was administered after the participants' class time by the researcher. In order to determine the interview times, the interviewees' preferences and course schedules were taken into account. After the interview time was determined, the interviews were carried out, and each interview took approximately 15 minutes. Before starting the interview, the participants were assured that the data gathered would be classified. The participants were also informed that the results of the study could be shared with them if they wish to learn, for which the author shared her contact information with the participants of the study. Furthermore, the participants were assured that they did not have to state their name during the interview so as to make sure that they were not hesitant during the interviews to ensure that results are as objective as possible. Even if they say their name, they were guaranteed that their names will be kept confidential in the study. Once all interviews were conducted by the researcher, the responses to the interview questions were tape-recorded, transcribed, and translated into English. According to Dörnyei (2003), "opinions differ widely as to whether respondent anonymity actually fulfills its purpose in encouraging honesty and willingness to disclose" (p.24). Therefore, the participants were given numbers instead of their names in case it might be necessary to quote their responses in the study.

3.6. Data Analysis

3.6.1. Quantitative Data Analysis

In order to analyze the data collected through the questionnaire, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 22.0 was utilized. The items on the demographic form were analyzed by using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean score, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis), and each item in the questionnaire was analyzed and interpreted via SPSS. All data were quantifiable because they were coded using numerical values. Frequency distributions of the variables were also provided. In data analysis, before deciding which tests to use, a data processing was conducted.

In normal distribution, the value of skewness and kurtosis are expected to be between +3 and -3 (Kalaycı, 2018). In table 4.1., the value of skewness was -0.081, and the value of kurtosis was (1.516). In this context, the data obtained from the sampling can be concluded to be normally distributed.

To analyze participants' perception of English self-efficacy according to 'gender' and 'education type' variables, independent-samples t-tests were used. In addition, Kruskal-Wallis Test was used to check whether the perceptions of participants about their English self-efficacy show any meaningful difference according to their English level, as there were five different groups responding to same items. In addition, to identify in which groups there is a significant difference, Mann-Whitney U Test was employed.

3.6.2. Qualitative Data Analysis

The data from the interviews were analyzed by means of qualitative data analysis procedures. To analyze the data interviews, in-depth analysis was used. Following the transcription of the interviews, the transcripts of 24 participants were reviewed and analyzed thoroughly. The key concepts that emerged commonly or frequently were highlighted and coded with color pens, and the concepts that showed difference between the participants were highlighted and coded with different colors. When the participants started to give responses, which are similar and repetitive, the data saturation was reached, and the codes were found out to come up with common themes. Creswell (2011) explained sample size in qualitative research as it is typical "to study a few individuals or a few cases" (p. 209). Marshall (1996) also explained the sampling for qualitative research as follows:

> An appropriate sample size for a qualitative study is one that adequately answers the research question. For simple questions or very detailed studies, this might be in single figures; for complex questions large samples and a variety of sampling techniques might be necessary. In practice, the number of required subjects usually becomes obvious as the study progresses, as new categories, themes or explanations stop emerging from the data (data saturation) (Marshall, 1996, p.523).

Data saturation was defined by Glaser and Strauss (cited in Saunders et al., 2018) in these terms:

> The criterion for judging when to stop sampling the different groups pertinent to a category is the category's theoretical saturation. Saturation means that no additional data are being found whereby the sociologist can develop properties of the category. As he sees similar instances over and over again, the researcher becomes empirically confident that a category is saturated. He goes out of his way to look for groups that stretch diversity of data as far as possible, just to make certain that saturation is based on the widest possible range of data on the category (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p. 61).

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the findings of the study are discussed in the light of literature, and the discussion of the data in comparison with the studies in the literature are put forward. The findings are presented according to and in the order of the research questions of the study. In the current study, it is aimed to investigate the self-efficacy beliefs of EFL learners in the process of learning English, whether their self-efficacy level differ according to variables such as proficiency levels and gender. It also targets to explore how self-efficient EFL learners are in listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills. In addition to these, the study aims to investigate whether there is a relationship between the self-efficacy level and the academic achievement of Turkish EFL learners with the help of the following research questions:

RQ1: What are the self-efficacy levels of Turkish EFL learners in learning English?

RQ2: Do participants' self-efficacy levels show any differences according to proficiency level and gender?

RQ3: How self-efficient are Turkish EFL learners in listening, reading, writing, speaking skills?

RQ4: Is there a relationship between the self-efficacy level and the academic achievement of Turkish EFL learners?

4.1. Findings for the Research Question 1

RQ1: What are the self-efficacy levels of Turkish EFL learners in learning English?

The first research question of the study aimed to find out the self-efficacy levels of Turkish EFL learners in learning English. The result of the quantitative data for the first research question revealed that the participants have moderate level of self-efficacy in learning English as a foreign language. The findings of descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis) in terms of preparatory class students' perceptions of English self-efficacy were displayed in Table 4.1.

Table 4 1. *Self-efficacy level of the participants (quantitative data).*

Variables	$\bar{x}$	*sd*	Skewness	Kurtosis
Self-efficacy Levels of English	3.22	0.42	-0.08	1.51

As seen Table 4.1., the participants' self-efficacy level of English were moderate ($\overline{X}$ = 3.22). In normal distribution, the value of skewness and kurtosis are expected to be between +3 and -3 (Kalaycı, 2018). In table 3, the value of skewness was -0.08, and the value of kurtosis was 1.51. In this context, the data obtained from the sampling can be concluded to be normally distributed.

To support the quantitative data, the data gathered through interviews were also analyzed. It was found that the findings of the qualitative data were in consistent with the quantitative one. The findings of the qualitative data regarding the percentage of the participants according to their "stated" self-efficacy levels were shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2. *Self-efficacy levels of participants (qualitative data).*

	f	%
High	8	33.3
Moderate	10	41.7
Low	6	25
TOTAL	24	100.0

As seen in Table 4.2., out of 24 participants who were interviewed, 41,7% (N=10) stated that they have moderate level of self-efficacy in English. That was followed by 33.3 % (N=8) of participants with high self-efficacy level in English, and by 25% (N=6) with low self-efficacy in English. As those were considered, we can say that most of the participants have moderate level of self-efficacy. The following are stated by the participants during the semi-structured interviews:

> *... out of 10, I would give myself 5 in English if I were to grade my success in English because I have difficulty in understanding some subjects in the lessons (Int. P1)*
>
> *I would grade my English as 6 out of 10. … I say so because I have never been able to do well in English lessons so far (Int. P4)*
>
> *My success in English would be 6 out of 10 if I evaluated myself because I don't like English and I get bored in the lessons. That's why, I don't like studying English (Int. P5)*
>
> *My English is not very good. Out of 10, it would be 4 or 5 because when I get low marks, I don't want to study. And when I don't study, I get low marks. This is kind of a vicious circle for me. (Int. P10)*

The findings of the first research question are in line with studies in the literature. In a study conducted at a state university in Turkey to explore prospective EFL teachers'

perceived self-efficacy and beliefs on English learning, Genç, Kuluşaklı and Aydın (2016) found out that EFL learners have medium scores in their self-efficacy beliefs. Similarly, Shah et al. (2011) investigated self-efficacy in writing at a Malaysian context. They also concluded that with the mean score of 3.36, the participants' overall self-efficacy was moderate. This mean score was very close to the one in our study, which was 3.22. In addition, in a study under the title of "*The Interplay among Academic Self-Concept, Self-Efficacy, Self-Regulation and Academic Achievement of Higher Education L2 Learners*", Kırmızı (2015) pointed out that higher education Turkish EFL learners had a moderate-to-high level of self-efficacy. On the other hand, there are other studies which revealed findings contrary to the first research question of the present study. In a study carried out by Tılfarlıoğlu (2009), which disclosed EFL learners' self-efficacy at GUSFL as high. Kesen Mutlu, Solhi Andarab and Karacan (2019) also declared the level of self-efficacy among Turkish learners of EFL was high. Similarly, in his study, Kyzy (2016) found out in the first assessment of the study that EFL learners' self-efficacy level was high. There were also some other studies finding out that EFL learners had low level of self-efficacy. To illustrate, Rahemi (2007) explored the self-efficacy in English of Iranian senior high school students and revealed that students majoring in humanities had a very low English self-efficacy. However, in some studies, the self-efficacy perceptions of EFL learners was low. Siritararatn (2013) explored the English self-efficacy beliefs of EFL learners with low proficiency and revealed that their self-efficacy level was 'quite low' with the mean score of 2.99. As can be seen, although there are many studies which have similar findings to the first research question of the current study, there are some contradicting studies, too.

When we consider the underlying reason why EFL learners' self-efficacy level of respondents was moderate, the reason might be that the majority of the participants of the current study were in B2 level. It is the last and the most difficult level for the students. Although they have achieved a lot so far, they feel nervous about the upcoming End-of-Module Exam. The anxiety level they have in learning English might affect their self-efficacy. Pappamihiel (2002) stated that when learners find a situation threatening, there can be negative effects on learning. Hence, in return, their self-efficacy level decreases as they are occupied with the overwhelming anxiety rather than their capability to succeed. As B2 level students are the dominant group in the study, this could affect the overall score of self-efficacies in the study because of their anxiety level.

4.2. Findings for the Research Question 2

RQ2: Do participants' self-efficacy levels show any differences according to their a) proficiency level and b) gender?

The second research question of this study attempted to find out whether the perceptions of participants self-efficacy level in English shows any meaningful difference according to their a) proficiency level and b) gender.

a. proficiency level,

Firstly, to find out the relationship between the participants' self-efficacy level and proficiency level, Kruskal-Wallis Test was employed. The test revealed that there was a significant difference in terms of participants' English self-efficacy level according to the variable, "their English level" [$X^2_{(4)}$= 40.563, 6.71; p< .05]. Upon that, to identify between which groups there was a significant difference, Mann-Whitney U test was applied. The findings of Kruskal-Wallis Test and Mann-Whitney U test regarding the perceptions of participants about their English self-efficacy according to their English level were shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3. *Kruskal-Wallis test and Mann-Whitney U test results in terms of their English proficiency level.*

Proficiency Level	*N*	*X*	*sd*	Mean Rank	*sd*	X^2	*p*	Significant Difference
A2	72	2.98	.33	176.40	4	40.563		
A2 Repeat	36	3.40	.41	327.53				
B1	60	3.12	.43	223.20				Between A2RPT and A2 and B1; between B1 and B2
B1 Repeat	22	3.17	.33	241.11				
B2	335	3.27	.41	283.24				

As seen in table 4.3., it was concluded that there is a significant difference in terms of participants' English self-efficacy level according to the variable, their English 'level' [$X^2_{(4)}$= 40.563, 6.71; p< .05]. When the mean ranks of self-efficacy level of the participants according to their proficiency level were examined, the students in A2 Repeat level (mean rank=3.40) and in B2 level (mean rank=3.27) have higher perceptions of self-efficacy than those in A2 level (mean rank=2.98). Likewise, the level of self-efficacy perceptions of B2 level students (mean rank=3.27) is, too, higher than B1 level students' (mean rank=3.12). These findings showed that between A2R level students' self-efficacy is the highest of all, which is surprising as those students had failed in A2 level and were taking repeat classes.

A2 repeat level students were followed by B2, B1 repeat, B1 and A2 level students in terms of self-efficacy level.

To gather a more reliable and more valid data, an interview protocol was applied to 24 students to reveal the relationship between self-efficacy level and proficiency level of the participants. Table 4.4. shows the distribution of the participants of the interviews according to their proficiency level and stated self-efficacy levels.

Table 4.4. *Self-efficacy level of the participants in terms of their English proficiency level.*

Level	*N*	High level of self-efficacy	Moderate level of self-efficacy	Low level of self-efficacy
A2	3	3	-	-
A2 Repeat	5	-	2	3
B1	8	2	5	1
B1 Repeat	4	1	2	1
B2	4	2	1	1
TOTAL	24	8	10	6

As seen in Table 4.4., the number of A2 level participants in the interviews was 3, and all of them stated their self-efficacy level as high, and none of A2 repeat participants stated holding high self-efficacy in English. While there were two B1 and B2 level participants perceived their self-efficacy in English as high, there was only one participant to have stated having high self-efficacy in English. When it comes to the moderate level of self-efficacy, B1 level participants (N=5) outnumbered participants who are at the other levels. In addition, interview findings revealed that A2 Repeat level participants had the lowest level of self-efficacy of all with the number 3 participants stating so. Whereas in A2 level, there were none having low self-efficacy, in B1, B1R, and B2 levels there was only one participant stating low-self-efficacy in English for each level. To sum up, A2 level participants had the highest level of self-efficacy; B1 level participants had the moderate level of self-efficacy; and participants at A2 Repeat level had the lowest level of self-efficacy according to the data obtained through semi-structured interviews.

Although quantitative data findings are contradictory with the ones obtained from qualitative data, it is clear that qualitative data gathered from interview analysis would certainly yield us a deeper understanding of the participants' opinions of their self-efficacy and that is one of the reasons why qualitative data was included in present study. Although quantitative data reflect the overall population in a more accurate way, for a much deeper understanding, qualitative data are needed (Van der Stoep and Johnston 2009). To illustrate, quantitative findings revealed that A2 Repeat participants had the highest self-efficacy level with the mean rank 3.40. However, none of the A2 Repeat level interviewees stated their self-efficacy in English as high in the interviews. In addition, B1 Repeat level participants outnumbered the B1 level participants with their mean scores in the questionnaires in terms of self-efficacy level. Yet, interview findings revealed vice versa. In other words, in the interviews there were more B1 level participants than those at B1 Repeat level who stated high level of self-efficacy in English.

Studies investigating the relationship between the self-efficacy and proficiency level mostly concluded that self-efficacy mean scores and the proficiency level of the students were parallel. Related to this research question, there were several studies carried out. For instance, Çitil (2018) investigated the university preparatory students' self-efficacy perceptions and applied a questionnaire to the participants of the study both at the beginning and the end of the preparatory program. Findings of first application of the questionnaire concluded that A2 level students had higher self-efficacy than A1 and B1 level students. In addition, Tılfarlıoğlu and Cinkara (2009), in their studies on EFL learners' self-efficacy level and its relation to their academic success in English, also found out that elementary level students had quite lower self-efficacy than those in upper-intermediate class. Their findings were in line with the current study, except for A2 repeat level students' having the highest level of self-efficacy. Özkasap (2009) investigated the relationship between level of self-regulatory efficacy and proficiency level of the students. The study revealed that EFL learners at lower proficiency level had lower self-efficacy while more proficient EFL learners had higher level of self-efficacy in regulating their English learning. In another study exploring the relationship between English self-efficacy and English learning achievement of L2 Thai learners conducted by Kitikanan and Sasimonton (2017) indicated that learners with high-self-efficacy were more successful in learning English. In addition, Ayoobiyan and Solemani (2015) investigated the relationship between medical students' self-efficacy and their language proficiency. They measured the proficiency level of the participants via Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency (MTELP) and their self-

efficacy level through the questionnaire which was adapted by Bandura. Their study also revealed that participants' self-efficacy and their language proficiency were positively correlated. In other words, the higher the proficiency level the students had, the higher self-efficacy they held.

However, in the present study, A2 repeat level students, surprisingly, had the highest self-efficacy level of all levels. The reason why A2 Repeat level EFL learners' self-efficacy level outnumbered the others, contrary to the literature, could be because those students were re-taking the same level, they might have felt that they were revising and learning better this time. They might have thought that in their regular A2 classes they had missed some important points to prevent them to be successful. Yet, this time with the awareness they had after they had failed in A2, they might have believed that they would do better in the End-of-Module Exam. On the other hand, students' self-efficacy in other levels were in line with the literature as follows from high to low: B2, B1 repeat, B1 and A2 level, and this finding was in line with the literature.

b. gender,

To find out whether the perceptions of participants self-efficacy level in English shows any meaningful difference according to gender, Independent *t-test* was applied. The result of the quantitative data revealed that there was no difference in terms of level of participants' perception of English self-efficacy according to 'gender' variable [t(-0.21)=0.83, p>0.05]. The responses of female participants ($\overline{X}_F$ =3.22) and male participants ($\overline{X}_M$ =3.23) were almost the same. The findings were shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5. *Self-efficacy levels of participants in terms of gender (quantitative data).*

Variable	Gender	*N*	$\overline{X}$	*sd*	*t*	*df*	*p*
Self-efficacy Levels of English	Female	254	3.22	0.41	-0.21	523	0.83
	Male	271	3.23	0.44			

When Table 4.5. was examined, it was seen that there is no difference in terms of level of participants' perception of English self-efficacy according to 'gender' variable [t(-0.21)=0.83, p>0.05]. The responses of female participants ($\overline{X}_F$ =3.22) and male participants ($\overline{X}_M$ =3.23) were almost the same. According to these results, it can be inferred that gender does not have a significant effect on the differentiation of the participants' perceptions of English self-efficacy.

To check the level of participants' perception of English self-efficacy according to 'gender' variable qualitatively, 24 students were interviewed. Qualitative data obtained via the questionnaires also supported the findings of the quantitative data regarding the level of participants' perception of English self-efficacy according to 'gender' variable. The findings of the interviews were shown in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6. *Self-efficacy levels of participants in terms of gender (qualitative data).*

Gender	*N*	High level of self-efficacy	Moderate level of self-efficacy	Low level of self-efficacy
Female	13	5	4	4
Male	11	2	5	4
TOTAL	24	7	9	8

As seen in Table 4.6., out of 24 participants who were interviewed, 45.8% (N=11) were male while 54.2 % (N=13) of participants were female. As seen in the table, the gender of the participants was approximately even. The data revealed that female participants had higher self-efficacy in English than male participants while the number of the participants from both genders stating low level of self-efficacy in English was even. However, more male participants stated to have moderate level of self-efficacy than did female participants.

According to these findings, it can be inferred that gender does not have a significant effect on the differentiation of the participants' perceptions of English self-efficacy. This finding is in accordance with the findings of some other studies in the literature, which concluded that gender and self-efficacy are either unrelated or only moderately associated (Gonzalez-Hernandez, cited in Aliegro, 2006; Hackett, Betz, Casas and Rocha-Singh; 1992). Hampton and Mason (2003) explored the impact of gender, learning disability (LD) status, and sources of efficacy on self-efficacy beliefs and academic achievement. Their findings also revealed that gender did not affect self-efficacy directly or indirectly. In another study, Ersanlı (2015) targeted to investigate the relationship between the academic self-efficacy levels and language learning motivations of 8th graders. The study concluded that in participants' academic self-efficacy beliefs, there was no statistically significant difference in terms of gender. In another study investigating the relationship between EFL learners' opinions on self-efficacy and their language learning strategy use, Bonyadi, Nikou and Shahbaz (2012) also revealed that gender variable had no significant effect on learners' self-efficacy. However, there were also studies in the literature which concluded conversely.

Pajares and Valiante (2006) investigated the relationship between self- efficacy of college intermediate French students' achievement and motivation and suggested that female participants stated higher self- efficacy in language arts. Özkasap (2009) explored the whether there was a relationship between self-efficacy beliefs for self-regulated learning and perceived responsibility for learning in university EFL learners. Her study concluded that female participants have higher self-efficacy beliefs than the males. In addition, Mahyuddin et al. (2006) investigated the relationship between students' self-efficacy and their English language achievement, and they also revealed that gender affects self-efficacy beliefs of the students in favor of girls. Huang (2013) carried out a meta-analysis of 187 studies on gender differences in academic self-efficacy. Reviewing those studies revealed males as with higher self-efficacy although the difference was small, in which the overall effect size was 0.08. One of the studies in this meta-analysis also found out self-efficacy is domain specific when the gender is the variable. Whereas females had higher language self-efficacy, males expressed higher self-efficacy on mathematics, computer, and social sciences (Meece, Wigfield, and Eccles, 1990). Caprara and Zimbardo (2004) also stated that gender difference in terms of self-efficacy is notable. In addition, Pajares (1996) also suggested that females own higher self-efficacy than the males in language learning. When the literature reviewed, there were a lot more studies asserting the gender as a significant variable affecting self-efficacy (Kaşık, 2014; Doğan, 2016; Uslu, 2016; Bozkurt and Ekşioğlu, 2018). Siebert (2003) carried out a study exploring gender with 64 female and 95 male learners of English and found out differences in males hold higher self-efficacy to learn English in 1-2 or 3-5 years' time if they studied 1 hour daily while females stated that it would take them 5-10 years.

Although the literature suggested contradictory results, Heinzmann (2009); on the one hand, stated that females believed to be better at language learning, and Noran, Elias and Mahyuddin (1993); on the other hand, claimed that girls own higher positive attitude towards the language; the present study revealed that gender did not affect self-efficacy in language learning. This finding might stem from changing role of males and females in the society in Turkey. The beliefs about female or male dominant jobs, for example, is changing nowadays. There are men working as nurse, and there were women being a soldier or a surgeon. This ongoing change contributes to the gender-oriented beliefs. The phenomenon which is in favor of woman in learning a language may also be diminishing and leaving a gender-neutral learning environment behind. On the other hand, as the participants of the current study are limited in number, it could be because of just personal differences. The

participants in this specific study revealed no difference in self-efficacy in learning English. Yet, this does not mean that using the same instruments in a different context would provide the same result.

4.3. Findings for the Research Question 3

RQ3: How self-efficient are Turkish EFL learners in listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills?

The third research question of the present study aimed at finding how self-efficient EFL learners are in four skills including listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills. The findings of the qualitative data revealed that the participants of the study feel a) most self-efficient in writing skills, and b) they feel least self-efficient in speaking skills. The findings regarding the skill that participants feel most efficient were shown in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7. *The distribution of the participants according to the skill they feel most self-efficient.*

Skill	*f*	*%*
Writing	13	54,2
Listening	7	29,1
Reading	4	16,7
Speaking	0	0
TOTAL	24	100

As seen in Table 4.7., out of 24 participants who were interviewed, 54.2% (N=13) stated that they feel themselves most self-efficient in writing skills. That was followed by 29.1% (N=7) of participants expressing themselves self-efficient in listening skills, and by 16,7% (N=4) suggesting that they are self-efficient in reading. Out of 24 participants, none of the participants stated they are self-efficient in speaking skills. The following are some statements by the participants of the interviews:

> *My teachers say that I am good at writing, and I agree with them…… This is because I have time to think before I write. I am the least successful in speaking as I should answer at once. ...if I had to grade myself in writing, I would give 80 (Int. P1)*
>
> *The most successful lesson of mine is writing. I generally like writing because I somehow feel that I have a talent for it. When I learn the organization rules, I can easily apply them into my writing (Int. P4)*
>
> *As I love writing and be able to write, I am good at it (Int. P7)*
>
> *My grammar knowledge is good so that I could write, so I am good at writing (Int. P11)*

Participants also stated the skill/s that they feel least efficient in the interviews. The findings regarding the skill that participants feel least efficient were shown in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8. *The distribution of the participants according to the skill they feel least self-efficient.*

Skill	*f*	%
Speaking	12	50
Listening	6	25
Writing	4	16.7
Reading	2	8.3
TOTAL	24	100

As seen in Table 4.8., out of 24 participants who were interviewed, 50% (N=12) stated that they feel themselves least self-efficient in speaking skills. That was followed by 25% (N=5) of participants expressing themselves least self-efficient in listening skills, and by 16.7% (N=4) suggesting that they are least self-efficient in writing skills. Out of 24 participants, 8.3% (N=2) expressed that they are least self-efficient in reading skills. These findings imply that most participants feel inefficient in speaking skills. This finding also correlates the abovementioned data, which is that none of the participants stated they are self-efficient in speaking skills. When it comes to the skill which ranks the least in terms of participants' answers, it is reading skills. This is somehow surprising as they didn't mention it as their "most" efficient skill in the previous question. It was writing skills which they find most self- efficient. The following are some statements by the participants of the interviews:

> *We do not speak English much; that's why we cannot speak. …. The teacher asks something, and we are dumbfounded and cannot say anything (Int. P9)*

> *I don't know but I think I feel shy. So, I can't speak English. I also think that I am not capable of learning a new language (Int. P10)*

> *As I feel very nervous when I speak English, I can't speak even if I have something to say in my mind. Moreover, I am not interested enough in the lessons; I have never liked English classes in my life (Int. P14)*

These findings imply that although the majority of the participants feel self-efficient in writing skills whereas none goes for speaking skills. It can be considered that participants have the highest self-efficacy level in writing because learning process still goes on and they feel more secure in writing skills compared to speaking skills as they have time to think, plan and implement in writing; however, it is not possible in speaking skills. As the second reason, it can be concluded that they have less experience in speaking compared to writing in their previous institutions and speaking skill is mostly neglected in lower and higher secondary schools in Turkey.

When it comes to receptive skills, the participants who feel efficient in listening skills outnumber those who stated that they are most self-efficient in reading skills. This finding is in contrast with the traditional view as reading can be seen superior to listening. However, it can be asserted that learners who are exposed to listening in English outnumber those who read in English nowadays, and a preparatory program having intense program in four skills including listening may have an effect on this finding.

When the participants' responses to the question that how self-efficient they are in terms of four language skills were analyzed, it was concluded that they feel most efficient in (1) writing. It was followed by (2) listening, (3) reading and they stated that they have the lowest self-efficacy in (4) speaking. It could be concluded that while writing is the skill that the participants feel most efficient, listening and reading self-efficacy of the participants could be inferred as moderate, and speaking skill is the skill in which they have the lowest self-efficacy in the current study. This study is also the first one that tries to discover the self-efficacy perceptions of EFL learners in terms of four skills. Although there was no study examining the level of EFL learners' self-efficacy in all skills, there are several studies focusing on one of the four skills in language learning. The findings of the present study regarding the speaking skill is in line with the study of Paker and Höl (2012). They investigated the attitudes and perceptions of the students and instructors towards the speaking test at a School of Foreign Languages and concluded that majority of the students had no previous experience of any speaking test, and therefore, they feel more anxious during the speaking test. In addition, the speaking test was perceived as the most difficult test by the students when compared to the testing of other language skills. Another study conducted by Dinçer and Yeşilyurt (2013) aimed to find out the perceptions of pre-service English teachers about teaching speaking in Turkey, the importance they give to this language skill, and their self-evaluation of their speaking competence. They concluded that the participants had negative opinions on speaking classes in Turkey despite the fact that they all agreed that it was the most important language skill. They also found out that although the participants had different motivational orientations about speaking English. The participants felt incompetent in oral communication. In another study, Zare and Mobarakeh (2011) investigated the relationship between self-efficacy and use of reading strategies among senior high school students in Iran. Their study concluded that the participants in that study had an average level of self-efficacy in reading, as well with the mean score of 47 out of 70. As the present study suggested, participants had a moderate level of reading self-efficacy, this finding is consistent with the findings of Zare and Mobarakeh (2011). With

regard to reading self-efficacy, Yılmaz (2010) aimed to explore pre-service teacher candidates' attitudes towards reading habit according to some variables and found out that the mean score of pre-service teachers' reading attitude was (X=3.14), which could be stated as moderate. On the other hand, there are some other studies concluding that learners have high level of reading self-efficacy. In addition, Heidari, Izadi, and Vahed Ahmadian (2012) targeted to find out the relationship between Iranian EFL Learners' self-efficacy beliefs and use of vocabulary learning strategies and reported that learners in their study held quite high self-efficacy beliefs.

4.4. Findings for the Research Question 4

RQ4: Is there a relationship between the self-efficacy level and the academic achievement of Turkish EFL learners?

The fourth research question of the current study was: Is there a relationship between the self-efficacy level and the academic achievement of Turkish EFL learners? In order to investigate and answer this question, Pearson product-moment correlation was conducted. The results were shown in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9. *The relationship between self-efficacy in English and academic performance.*

Variables	*N*	*r*	*p*
Self-efficacy in English & Academic performance	525	-.03	.12

When Table 4.9. was examined, it was concluded that there was no significant relationship between the participants' perceptions of English self-efficacy and their academic performance in English (r=-.03; p>.05). Instead, although statistically insignificant, there was negative correlation between two variables.

There were a number of studies conducted on the same question. Yet, their findings were not in accordance with the present study. Tılfarlıoğlu and Cinkara (2009), for instance, studied EFL learners' self-efficacy level and its relation to their academic success in English. With the result of (r = .37) from Pearson Product-correlation, their study suggested that the self-efficacy level of the participants and their academic achievement was highly correlated. Their study was also in consistence with some other researchers Zimmerman, 1992; Bandura, 1997; Bassi, Steca, Delle Fave and Caprara, 2007. Meera and Jumana (2016) aimed to find out the relationship between self-efficacy and academic performance in English of secondary school students. Their study also set forth that self-efficacy of the participants'

and their academic performance. Participants who held high self-efficacy level performed better academically. In addition, Louise and Mistele (2011) suggested that self-efficacy is the predictor of academic performance. Liem, Lau and Nie (2008) also reinforced other studies by revealing that self-efficacy is the predictor of English performance of the students. Kotbas (2018) in his study to explore the relationships among pre-service EFL teachers' English self-efficacy, teacher goal orientations and academic achievements found out positive relationship between English self-efficacy and academic achievements of pre-service EFL teachers. In addition, Kaşık (2014) investigated the students from different departments at a university to find out the the relationship among self-efficacy, attitude and performance in English writing classes at tertiary level. And the result of the study demonstrated that those variables had a positive correlation. Another study conducted by Chen (2007) explored the effect of English listening self-efficacy, English anxiety, perceived value of English language and culture on EFL learners' performances with 277 non-English university students from Taiwan and revealed as a result of the study that English listening self-efficacy predicts English listening performance better than other variables in the study. Wang (n.d.) carried out a study to find the relationship between Chinese EFL learners' self-regulated learning strategies, self-efficacy beliefs and achievement, and it was concluded by the study that those variable own a strong relationship. In another study, Rahimi and Abedini (2009) explored the relationship between EFL learners' self-efficacy beliefs with regard to listening comprehension and listening proficiency by conducting the study with 61 freshmen undergraduate EFL learners. As a result, it was concluded that there was a significant relationship between self-efficacy and listening performance. In addition, Mills et al. (2007) studied with 303 college intermediate French students to investigate the influence of self-efficacy and other self-beliefs on achievement. The result of the study revealed that self-efficacy for self-regulation was a strong predictor of the achievement. Another researcher conducting a study on self-efficacy and English performance Duman (2007) also concluded that self-efficacy played a significant role in English performance. In addition, Rahemi (2007) explored the self-efficacy in English of Iranian senior high school students and his study concluded EFL achievement and self-efficacy of the participants had a positive correlation.

The finding of the current study is contradicting with the previous studies. When the literature was examined, there were loads of studies revealing a positive correlation between the self-efficacy and academic performance. However, in the present study there was no significant relationship between the participants' self-efficacy and their academic

performance in English. In other words, when the academic performance increased, the self-efficacy level of the participants decreased. This might stem from the fact that preparatory students realize that when the level increases, there comes more details to make it difficult to be successful in that level. In addition, students comprehend that learning English has no end; there is always more to learn. This awareness of high proficient learners might have caused them to lose their self-efficacy. In addition, unlike lower levels, students at higher level of English have to achieve more. To illustrate, they have to cover a lot more subjects in grammar, know less frequently-used vocabulary, be better in note-taking in listening, be able to make inferences in reading, use compensation strategies in speaking and write a five-paragraph-essay in writing and use and be proficient in four skills equally. Having to be more productive in higher levels might have caused the participants to be anxious and accordingly might have lowered the self-efficacy level of them. This proves Bandura (1992) right; who stated that low self-efficacy perceptions increase the anxiety and affect academic performance negatively.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

5.1. Summary

In this chapter, a general summary of the study is provided following the previous chapter, the results and discussions. As a concluding statement, suggestions for further studies are presented.

The study aimed at exploring the self-efficacy beliefs of EFL learners. The starting point of the study was the notion that self-efficacy is a strong predictor of academic achievement. Bearing this in mind, the researcher aimed at to find out the self-efficacy level of learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) in the process of learning English, whether their self-efficacy levels differ according to their proficiency levels and gender, to explore how self-efficient EFL learners are in listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills and whether there is a relationship between the self-efficacy level of Turkish EFL learners and their academic achievement.

At a preparatory program, the current study was implemented with 525 students enrolled at Pamukkale University, School of Foreign Languages. The present study was carried out during the spring semester of the 2016- 2017 academic year. The study utilized a mixed-method design to provide more valid data for the research. First, quantitative data was collected through a questionnaire, "Questionnaire of English Self-efficacy", developed by Açıkel (2011) and adapted by the researcher. The results of the questionnaire are analyzed via Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 22.0. Secondly, semi-structured interviews, whose protocol was developed by the researcher, with randomly selected 24 participants were carried out to aid the quantitative data with the qualitative one.

As for the data collection procedure, the quantitative data obtained from the questionnaire were entered into SPSS, and the results of the analysis were demonstrated in tables. Thereafter, semi-structured interviews were carried out with randomly selected participants, and the data gathered were transcribed and analyzed.

The findings of the data revealed that Turkish university EFL learners hold moderate level of self-efficacy in learning English. In addition, it was found that participants' proficiency level had an effect on their self-efficacy level although a slight difference was found between the levels. Quantitative data revealed that A2 Repeat participants had the highest self-efficacy level of all. However, none of the them stated their self-efficacy in English as high in the interviews. In addition, B1 Repeat level participants outnumbered the

B1 level participants with their mean scores in the questionnaires in terms of self-efficacy level. Yet, interview findings revealed vice versa. In other words, in the interviews there were more B1 level participants than those at B1 Repeat level who stated high level of self-efficacy in English. Additionally, it was also concluded that gender has no effect on English self-efficacy level of participants according to the quantitative data. Yet, qualitative data revealed that female participants have higher self-efficacy than male participants, most of whom stated to have moderate level of self-efficacy. In addition, when the data regarding the language skills were examined, it was concluded that participants' perception of self-efficacy is at its highest in writing skills while it is at the lowest in speaking skills. Finally, it was also concluded that there is no significant relationship between the preparatory class participants' perceptions of English self-efficacy and their academic performance in English.

5.2. Conclusion

How to learn English has been in the center of attention of learners as how to teach English better is the concern of teachers. With the shift of paradigms in education in the last a few decades, student-centered approaches elicited learner differences in the field of teaching. Researchers in the field of EFL and ESL mostly agreed that learner differences are of great significance and affect learners' academic performance in a positive or negative way. Hence, Bandura's Theory of Self-efficacy attracted many stakeholders targeting to provide the field with a better understanding of learners besides the others from a wide range of domains. When the related literature is reviewed, self-efficacy, undoubtedly, has an effect on language learners and their academic achievement in learning English.

As a consequence, the overall aim of the study was to find out the self-efficacy beliefs of EFL learners and the relationship between self-efficacy and academic achievement. The study targeted to provide some implications for the educators and teachers of English as a foreign/ second language. To achieve this, the researcher presented the findings of both quantitative and qualitative data from the current study and their links to the relevant literature.

5.3. Pedagogical Implications

Analyses of the current study provide evidence in terms of self-efficacy beliefs of EFL learners and the relationship between self-efficacy and academic achievement in English. The findings of both quantitative and qualitative data revealed that they have moderate level of English. In addition, it was concluded that proficiency level of the participants had an effect on their self-efficacy level although a slight difference was found

between the levels. Most surprisingly, being one of the lowest levels of all, A2 Repeat students had the highest self-efficacy score on the questionnaire. This result was unexpected and contradictory to the previous assumptions of the researcher. However, none of the A2 Repeat participants stated their self-efficacy level in English as high in the interviews. Therefore, it was concluded that quantitative data should be merged with qualitative one to validate the obtained data and to have a better understanding of the opinions of the participants. The implication to be drawn from these findings, EFL teachers should create a learning environment in which their students can express their opinions about their learning process freely.

Additionally, when the findings related to the language skills indicated that participants' perception of self-efficacy is at its highest in writing skills while it is at the lowest in speaking skills. The data obtained from semi-structured interviews also provided detailed reasons for that. For speaking, most of the participants stated that they have anxiety and feel incapable of speaking English. It is strikingly notable that not even one participant stated that s/he feels self-efficient in speaking skill among the students who were interviewed even if there were some participants who stated to hold high level of self-efficacy in learning English. English teachers should really take this into consideration to de-suggest negative attitudes of their students towards speaking English. Teachers and instructors should also encourage their students to participate more in speaking activities by ensuring them that they have right to make mistakes before they become fluent speakers of English. To achieve this, teachers of English should prepare activities considering the different learner types in their class, and they should also create a learning environment in which students somehow feel obliged to speak English with the activities such as information gap or games.

In addition, the interview participants of this present study mostly remarked that they feel efficient in writing skills. And for the underlying reason for that, they explained that knowing and being able to apply the rules of writing give them sense of success. Following this, they become more eager in writing activities. This finding is already good for writing classes, still EFL teachers use the given responses as a clue to be utilized in needed classes, especially in speaking skills which is mentioned above. Bringing activities that both appeal to the learners' interest and give them the message that it is within the boundaries of their capacity can make a difference in their opinions on the skills they feel insufficient.

Finally, it was also concluded that there is no significant relationship between the preparatory class participants' perceptions of English self-efficacy and their academic performance in English. It is another finding that was unexpected before conducting the

research. Even more, there is a slight but negative relationship between the self-efficacy level of the participants and their academic performance. In other words, unlike most of the studies in the literature, this can be interpreted that when the self-efficacy increases academic performance of the learners decrease. There can be several reasons for that, but the dominant one is people who think that they are somehow accomplish a task successfully do not make the most use of their potential. In this setting, it was some of the learners who had thought that they were already good at English and had not studied enough for the exam failed in the End-of-Module Exam. Teachers can take this as a piece of advice to share with their students: No matter how good (you think) you are at something; effort and perseverance are still of great importance.

5.4. Suggestions for Future Research

Based on the findings of this present study, several suggestions can be suggested for future researchers. The main aim of the study was to find out the EFL learners' self-efficacy beliefs in learning English. The current study investigated the self-efficacy level of EFL learners in the process of learning English, whether their self-efficacy levels differ according to their proficiency levels and gender, how self-efficient EFL learners are in terms of four skills and whether there is a relationship between the self-efficacy level of Turkish EFL learners and their academic achievement. However, in different contexts the same study could reveal different findings because of the learning environment and the learners in it. In addition, studies on self-efficacy mostly focuses on one language skill. Thus, further studies could be implemented to discover the self-efficacy of EFL learners on four skills and the achievement of the participants could also be evaluated separately and be compared with the level of self-efficacy in each one. Additionally, the researchers who have access to the non-modular contexts unlike the setting of the current study could design an experimental study. Instead of applying the instruments once, the participants could be given either strategy training or self-efficacy instruction to boost their self-efficacy in English learning throughout a semester or an education/academic year depending on the context. Following the training section, the questionnaire and the interview could be carried out once more to allow the comparison between pre-test and post-test results for the researcher.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Öz Yeterlik Öğrenci Görüşme Protokolü (TURKISH VERSION)

Boyut 1- İngilizce Öğrenme Özgeçmişi

1. Bize kendini tanıtır mısın? İngilizce öğrenmede kendini nasıl tanımlarsın?

2. Sence okul hayatın boyunca en başarılı olduğun ders hangisidir? Neden? En sevdiğin ders hangisi? Neden?
3. Sence okul hayatın boyunca en başarısız/zayıf olduğun ders hangisi? Neden? En sevmediğin ders hangisi? Neden?

Boyut 2- İngilizce Deneyimi ve Öz Yeterlik

1. İngilizce 'ye nasıl çalışırsın? Neler yaparsın?

2. Eğer İngilizce 'deki başarını 10 (en düşük), 100 (en yüksek) olarak değerlendirmen istense, kendine kaç verirdin? Neden? Sence önümüzdeki final sınavından (=modül bitirme sınavından) kaç alacaksın?

3. İngilizce öğrenirken en başarılı olduğun beceri hangisi? Okuma? Yazma? Dinleme? Konuşma? Neden?

4. İngilizce öğrenirken en başarısız olduğun beceri hangisi? Okuma? Yazma? Dinleme? Konuşma? Neden?

5. Okul dışında, İngilizce ile ilgili neler yapmaktan hoşlanırsın?

6. İngilizce ile ilgili bana anlatabileceğin (nasıl bir öğrenci olduğunu tanımlayabilecek/gösterecek) bir anın var mı?

Boyut 3- İngilizce Öğrenme Ortamı

1. Şu anki İngilizce sınıfını anlatır mısın?

    a. Sence doğru seviyede misin? Yoksa bir alt ya da üst seviyede mi olmalıydın? Kendini nasıl görüyorsun?

    b. Kendi İngilizce başarını ve becerilerini sınıfla kıyaslar mısın? Sınıfın geri kalanı nasıl? Kendi grubun içinde kendine 100 üzerinden kaç verirsin?

2. Bugüne kadarki İngilizce öğretmenlerinle ilgili bilgi verir misin? / onlardan bahseder misin?
    a. Sence öğretmenlerin seni başarılı buluyorlar mı? Performansın konusunda ne söylüyorlar?

b. Bize en iyi İngilizce öğretmenini anlatır mısın? Onu bu kadar iyi/başarılı yapan neydi?

c. Bize en kötü İngilizce öğretmenini anlatır mısın? Onu bu kadar kötü/başarısız yapan neydi?

d. Öğretmenlerin, senin İngilizce becerilerini geliştirmek ve daha başarılı hissetmeni sağlamak için ne yapabilir?

3. İngilizce 'de hangi durumlarda çok başarılı oluyorsun? Hangi durumlarda en başarısızsın? Neden?

4. İngilizce sana kendini nasıl hissettiriyor? Mutlu, karamsar vs.

Boyut 4- İngilizce'ye Karşı Duyuşsal ve Psikolojik Tepkiler

1. İngilizce 'den bir sınava girdiğinde nasıl/neler hissediyorsun?

2. İngilizce ödev yaparken kendini nasıl hissediyorsun? / İngilizce ödevin olduğunda nasıl hissediyorsun?

a. İngilizce' de en çok severek yaptığın ödev/ler hangi becerilerin ödevleridir? Okuma? Yazma? Dinleme? Konuşma? Neden?

b. İngilizce' de en az severek yaptığın ödev/ler hangi becerilerin ödevleridir? Okuma? Yazma? Dinleme? Konuşma? Neden?

c. İngilizce' de ödev yaparken en çok hangi beceri/lerde zorlanırsın? Okuma? Yazma? Dinleme? Konuşma? Neden?

Boyut 5- İngilizce Öz Yeterlik Kaynakları

1. Daha önce İngilizce yeteneğini 10-100 arası bir ölçekle değerlendirmiştin. Peki, İngilizce 'de kendine olan güvenini nasıl değerlendirirsin? Neden?

2. İngilizce konusunda kendine daha güvenli hissetmeni ne sağlardı?

APPENDIX B: Interview Protocol on Self-efficacy (ENGLISH VERSION)

Dimension 1- English Learning Background

1. Can you introduce yourself? How do you define yourself in learning English?

2. What do you think is the course that you feel most successful in during your school life? Why? What's your favorite lesson? Why?

3. What do you think is the course that you feel least successful in during your school life? Why? Which lesson do you like the least? Why?

Dimension 2- Experiences in Learning/ Using English and Self-efficacy

1. How do you study to learn English? What process do you follow?

2. If you were asked to evaluate your success in English between 10 (lowest) and 100 (highest), how would you rate yourself? Why? What score do you think you're going to get in the next final exam?

3. In which skill do you feel most successful in your English learning process? Reading? Writing? Listening? Speaking? Why?

4. In which skill do you feel least successful in your English learning process? Reading? Writing? Listening? Speaking? Why?

1. What do you like doing about English outside school?

2. Do you have a memory that you can tell me about your English learning process (a moment that can describe what kind of a student you are)?

Dimension 3- English Learning Environment

1. Could you tell us about your current English class?

    a. Do you think you're at the right level? Or should you be at a lower or higher level? How would you evaluate yourself?

    b. Can you compare your English success and abilities to the class? How about the rest of the class? How would you rate yourself over 100 in your own group?

2. Could you tell us about your English teachers so far? / Can you describe them?

    a. Do you think your teachers find you successful? What do they say about your performance?

b. Can you tell us about your best English teacher ever? What made him/her so good / successful?

c. Can you tell us your worst English teacher? What made him so bad / unsatisfactory?

d. What can your teachers do to improve your English skills and make you feel more successful?

3. In which situations do you feel more successful in English? In which situations are you most unsuccessful? Why?

4. How does English make you feel? Happy, desperate etc.

Dimension 4- Affective and Affective and Psychological Response towards English Response to English

1. How /what do you feel when you take an exam in English?

2. How do you feel when you are doing English homework? / How do you feel when you have English homework?

a. Which skills' assignments do you do most willingly in English? Reading? Writing? Listening? Speaking? Why?

b. Which skills' assignments do you do least willingly in English? Reading? Writing? Listening? Speaking? Why?

c. Which skill or skills do you have difficulty while you are doing homework in English? Reading? Writing? Listening? Speaking? Why?

Dimension 5- Sources of self-efficacy in English

1. You have previously rated your English ability on a scale of 10-100. And how do you evaluate/rate your self-confidence in English? Why?

2. What would make you feel more self-confident in English?

PERSONAL INFORMATION

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