**PAMUKKALE UNIVERSITY**

**INSTITUTE OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES**

**DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

**MASTER'S THESIS**

# PERCEPTIONS ON BLENDED LEARNING: A STUDY ON

# STUDENT AND INSTRUCTOR EXPERIENCES IN AN

# ENGLISH PREPARATORY PROGRAM

**ERSİN BALCI**

**DENİZLİ – 2017**

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**PROGRAM**

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**Supervisor**

**Assoc. Prof. Dr. Turan Paker**

# YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ ONAY FORMU

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## ETİK BEYANNAMESİ

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- Bu tezin herhangi bir bölümünü bu üniversitede veya başka bir üniversitede başka bir tez çalışması olarak sunmadığımı beyan ederim.

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Ersin Balcı

# Özet

**Harmanlanmış Öğrenme Algısı: İngilizce Hazırlık Programında Öğrenci ve Öğretmen Deneyimleri Üzerine bir Çalışma**

Ersin Balcı

Yüksek Lisans Tezi, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı

Danışman: Doç. Dr. Turan Paker

2017

Bu çalışmanın amacı İngilizce hazırlık programında harmanlanmış eğitim üzerine öğrencilerin ve öğretmenlerin görüşlerini araştırmaktır. Bu ortamdaki harmanlanmış eğitim modeli yüz yüze eğitimin yanı sıra internet üzerinden yapılan dil öğrenmeye yönelik web-tabanlı çalışmaları içerir. Bu tarz bir harmanın öğrencilerin öğrenimini geliştirmesi ve dil yeterliliği anlamında daha iyi sonuçlar vermesi beklenmektedir.

Araştırma yöntemi kapsamında, bu çalışmaya 400 öğrenci ve 100 öğretmen katılmıştır. Verilerin toplanması için, hem nicel hem de nitel araştırma yöntemleri kullanılmıştır. Veriler iki ayrı akademik dönemde toplanmıştır. Öğrencilerin ve öğretmenlerin harmanlanmış öğrenme üzerine görüşlerini almak için anketler kullanılmıştır. Ek olarak, bulguların daha detaylı analizi için hem öğrenciler hem de öğretmenlerle yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yapılmıştır.

Verilerin analizi öğrencilerin harmanlanmış öğrenmenin uygulanmasına yönelik hem olumlu ve hem de olumsuz görüşlere sahip olduğunu ortaya çıkarmıştır. Mülakat görüşmelerinde de, öğrenciler harmanlanmış öğrenme fikrinden memnun olduklarını ama uygulamanın yetersiz olduğunu dile getirmişlerdir. Ayrıca, Güz dönemi sonunda elde edilen verilerle karşılaştırıldığında öğrencilerin görüşlerinin akademik yıl boyunca değişmediği gözlenmiştir. Öte yandan, öğretmenler harmanlanmış eğitim fikrinden ve uygulanmasından çoğunlukla memnun olduklarını belirtmişlerdir.

Harmanlanmış eğitimin geleceğin dil öğrenme modelini değiştirme potansiyeli olmasına karşın, bu uygulamanın çağdaş pedagojik prensiplere dayandırılması çok önemlidir.

**Abstract**

**Perceptions on Blended Learning: A Study on Student and Instructor Experiences in an English Preparatory Program**

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2017

The aim of the present study is to investigate the perceptions of the students and instructors on blended language learning in an English Preparatory Program. Blended learning in this context comprises the use of an online platform including language exercises, alongside face-to-face in-class teaching to support students learning. It is expected that having such blend would improve students' learning and provide better outcomes in terms of language proficiency.

As for the methodological design, 400 students and 100 instructors participated in the present study. For data collection, both qualitative and quantitative research tools were used. The data were collected in two academic terms. Questionnaires were used to get students' and instructors' views with regards to blended learning. Additionally, for in-depth analysis of the findings, semi-structured interviews were conducted with both students and instructors.

The analysis of the findings revealed that students had both positive and negative attitudes towards the implementation of blended instruction. In addition, in interview extracts, some students reported that they were content with the idea but not the practice. It was also found that students' attitudes towards blended learning did not change throughout the year after the first data collection at the end of the Fall semester. On the other hand, instructors expressed mostly positive opinions regarding the idea and the implementation of the blended instruction.

While blended learning has the potential to reshape whole language teaching of the future, grounding this way of teaching onto contemporary pedagogical principles is critically important.

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# CHAPTER I

# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background of the Study

The search for optimal basis for language learning has always been a prior concern in English language teaching (ELT) context. For decades, developing better approaches and techniques has been principal mission of applied linguists and researchers in this field. Hence, it would be right to say that developments in ELT have accelerated in recent history. According to Richards & Rodgers (2001) "language teaching in the twentieth century was characterized by frequent change and innovation and by the development of sometimes competing language teaching ideologies" (p.1). Considering technological developments in the 21$^{st}$ century, it is evident that pedagogical innovations go towards that direction. In this concept, Ugur, Akkoyunlu & Kurbanoglu (2011) state that "today's students come pre-skilled with technology proficiencies to universities and a built in acceptance for new technology" (p.6). In the 21st-century, many institutions are required to cater for the needs of new generations by embracing the new technologies.

When it comes to contemporary pedagogy in ELT, there are considerably favourable tenets namely personalisation, authenticity, autonomy and differentiation which shouldn't be separated from language teaching in any particular context. With regards to differentiation, Tomlinson & Allan (2000) stated that:

> "Differentiation is simply attending to the learning needs of a particular student or small group of students rather than the more typical pattern of teaching the class as though all individuals in it were basically alike. The goal of differentiated classroom is maximum student growth and individual success." (p.4)

In a language classroom, a teacher can be faced with students who have their individual learning preferences, different backgrounds, different priorities and reasons for learning a language. In such case, creating appropriate tasks and conditions for learning becomes real challenge for teachers. In attempting to achieve an optimal learning environment, teachers have a number of resources and tools available. Blending right sources and tools with right students and in the right time is the challenge of a language teacher. "The effective implementation of blended learning is

essentially all about making the most of the learning opportunities and tools available to achieve the optimal learning environment" (Marsh, 2012, p.4).

In the 21$^{st}$ century, as it is easy to see the impacts of technology in every corner of our life, to feed the need of different students and create better learning opportunities, technology is being used as the greatest tool in blending learning. Although teachers are familiar with the word "blend", blended language learning in terms of integrating the use of technology into face-to-face learning is still a relatively new concept. Generally, blended learning is the learning delivery methods which combine face-to-face instruction with asynchronous and/or synchronous computer technologies (Osguthorpe & Graham, 2003). Nevertheless, it is not easy to define blended learning shortly as it has various dimensions and formats.

### 1.2 Statement of the Problem

No matter how new blended learning approach is for many of us, when the matter is the integration of technology into instruction, educators, doubtlessly, tend to possess this innovation immediately. However, it has never been as simple as that. In such cases, appropriate blend, teacher and student trainings, assessment, and technological literacy become initial concerns of institutions to run blended instruction smoothly. In the research context, blended learning is being used for the first time. Therefore, this study attempts to find out the attitudes of students and instructors to one-year blended learning English course and its effectiveness.

### 1.3. Purpose of the Study

Blended learning is a miscellaneous phenomenon. According to Graham (2006) "blending can occur at several different levels: the institutional level, the program level, the course level, or the activity level" (p.11). Therefore, it may not be possible to generalise one result to other contexts. The prominent research issues at each different levels can be quite different. The purpose of the study is to investigate the perceptions of blended learning from various dimensions in EFL and higher education context. More specifically, the researcher aims to discover whether blended learning has a positive impact on EFL learners. In addition, the study aims to measure learners' perceptions of blended learning with respect to language skills and learner needs.

## 1.4. Research Questions

In this study, following research questions will be addressed:

1.  What are the students' perceptions of and attitudes towards blended learning instruction?
    a.  To what extent does blended learning respond to the needs and expectations of the students?
    b.  What are the innovations brought by blended learning to the students' motivation and attitude in their language learning process?
    c.  In what ways do the students think blended learning helped them improve their various language competencies, skills?
    d.  What kind of change does blended learning bring to the classroom atmosphere and students' learning English?
    e.  What are the advantages of blended learning in learning English?
    f.  What are the drawbacks of blended learning in learning English?
    g.  Do the students' perceptions change throughout one-year blended learning instruction?
2.  Is there a difference regarding attitudes of genders in blended learning instruction?
3.  What are the instructors' perceptions and attitudes towards blended learning instruction?

## 1.5. Significance of the Study

The integration of technology in foreign language instruction, beyond any doubt, has become institutions' prior action plan for better education. "Blended instruction has become a common delivery format in most universities, yet appropriate procedures or instruments for evaluating blended instruction were minimal in most universities (Oh & Park, 2009, p.339). The picture is not much different in Turkish higher education context. Mostly with the tools generated by publishers, many institutions have started integrating their instruction with technology. With the help of network-mediated educational software, institutions have also extended their scope via distance learning. Accordingly, numerous surveys and researches have been done recently in this respect. In particular, Bilgin, (2013) carried out an experimental study, of which results revealed that experiment class (36) outperformed control class. More, the results of the students' questionnaire indicated that nearly all of the students considered online tool as useful. In addition, Ugur, Akkoyunlu & Kurbanoglu (2011) conducted a study with 31 graduate

students to examine their views on the blended learning method and its use in relation to the students' individual learning style. The results showed that students have a highly positive opinion on the blended learning method. The two studies mentioned above basically illustrate the reflection of blended learning in Turkish higher education. However, in order to get a much clearer picture of the case, a larger number of participants should be examined. Besides, collecting data regarding students' view in a single session might be considered as unreliable. Aycock, Garnham & Kaleta (2002) argue that students do not always grasp the blend easily. Hence, possible change in students' perceptions should be taken into account. Considering the number of the participants (400 students, 100 instructors) and two different administrations of questionnaire after each term, I believe that findings from this study will contribute to the fields of EFL, Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL), and the area of blended learning research. There are other studies addressing the same issue and context which are going to be discussed in the next chapter

## 1.**6. Assumptions and Limitations of the Study**

### 1.6.1. Assumptions of the Study

- The attitudes of participants towards blended leaning are assumed to be positive.
- Statistical descriptions of survey results and interview extracts are assumed to be in correlation.
- It is expected that participants have a sincere interest in participating in this research

### 1.6.2   Limitations of the Study

This study was carried out in the School of Foreign Languages at Dokuz Eylül University with the aim of investigating the learners' and instructors' perceptions of blended learning. Results of the study were expected to give insights into blended learning with respect to foreign language learning. However, there were, admittedly, unavoidable limitations which make it difficult to generalise for other contexts. In the first place, the study was limited to two semesters of implementation process for blended foreign language learning. It would be better if it was done in a longer period of time. Second, the study was limited to the EFL context in the School of Foreign Languages at Dokuz Eylül University.

**CHAPTER 2**

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

**2.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, the relevant literature for this study will be reviewed. First of all, definition of the term-blended learning- with its all features will be presented. In the following section, its relations with contemporary teaching principles will be discussed. Next, research findings related to present study area will be reviewed. In the final section of the chapter, issues based on implementation and future of blended learning will be discussed.

**2.2 Blended Learning in Foreign Language Learning**

The most effective teaching and learning have always involved the use of different methods, approaches, and strategies to maximize knowledge acquisition and skills development. Good teachers will always use more than one method or approach in their teaching, and good learners will always combine different strategies in their learning (Marsh, 2012, p.3).

Is blended learning a new look of technology-integrated learning or an approach for effective teaching using the right blend? In fact, blended learning as an approach is not something invented new. "Blended learning is a 'buzz' word in language teaching. However, it has been in use for almost 20 years, and its meaning has been constantly changing during this period" (Sharpe, Benfield, Roberts, & Francis 2006, cited in Sharma, 2010, p.456). Claypole (2003) has argued that blended learning is not a new matter, it is indeed the logical development of previous attempts involving the mixing of methods of teaching. Generally speaking, it is simply a teaching model including more than one delivery modes. Basically, blended learning refers to the principle that teachers use different media, try different modes and strategies to maximise learning. As such, blended learning has always been in ELT world.

What is new is that today, the rapid development of technology, specifically computer science, combines all different media and presents alternative and simpler delivery options. As Bath & Bourke (2010) expressed, with the advances in technology, teachers find new opportunities to rethink and deliver their courses in which teachers' roles and the students' individual cognitive experiences are being supported and facilitated. Considering the immense impact of developing technology in every single

part of the world, this natural evaluation of the learning, presumably, has been expected. Masie (2006) states that it is very likely for blended learning to be a frequent, everyday educational convention that "blended" foreword will be no longer in use, and we will refer it as just learning.

Recently, a movement towards transforming language learning into multi-platform environment has been supported and fostered by publishers in language teaching. Additionally, a sizeable body of literature on blended learning is corroborating the fact that its use is clearly on the rise in education (Dziuban, Hartman, & Moskal, 2004; Graham, 2006; Shea, 2007). So what is this blended learning?

This chapter will disclose the broad definition of blended learning systems within its all dimensions concerning foreign language teaching and share some issues and trends that are highly relevant to those who follow up similar systems.

## 2.2.1 Definition of Blended Learning

Blended learning is not a simple phenomenon. Whittaker (2013) argues that it is difficult to determine the definite time when blended learning has entered education world, it is also hard to define what exactly blended learning means. As its usage often comprises numerous variations, reaching a consensus on definite definition is not a simple issue. However, Garrison & Kanuka (2004) narrow it down and briefly summarize by also touching its complex implementation process as it follows;

> At its simplest, blended learning is the thoughtful integration of classroom face-to-face learning experiences with on-line learning experiences. (…) At the same time there is considerable complexity in its implementation with the challenge of virtually limitless design possibilities and applicability to so many contexts (p. 96).

Similar definition was given by Stein & Graham, (2014) as follows; "If one imagines a spectrum of technology enhancement, with traditional onsite on the left and fully online on the right (Figure 2.1), a blended course could fall anywhere in between the two" (p.12).



onsite          blended          online

*Figure 2.1*. A spectrum of technology-enhanced teaching or learning (Stein & Graham, 2014)

To clear away its confusion with some other technology mediated teaching/learning modes, it is appropriate to clarify differences between these terms namely hybrid, fully online, web-enhanced, asynchronous/synchronous and blended learning. Smith & Kurthen, (2007) describes Web-enhanced learning as a way of instruction in which online material or activities are minimal and it consists of only functional elements such as syllabus and announcements. However, when it comes to blended learning, with face-to-face classroom instruction, a considerable amount of online activities are embedded into curriculum- but less than 45%. In Hybrid courses the ratio of online activities often becomes between 45% and 80%. (Figure 2.2). If a course has 80% and more online facilities, then it is considered as fully online.
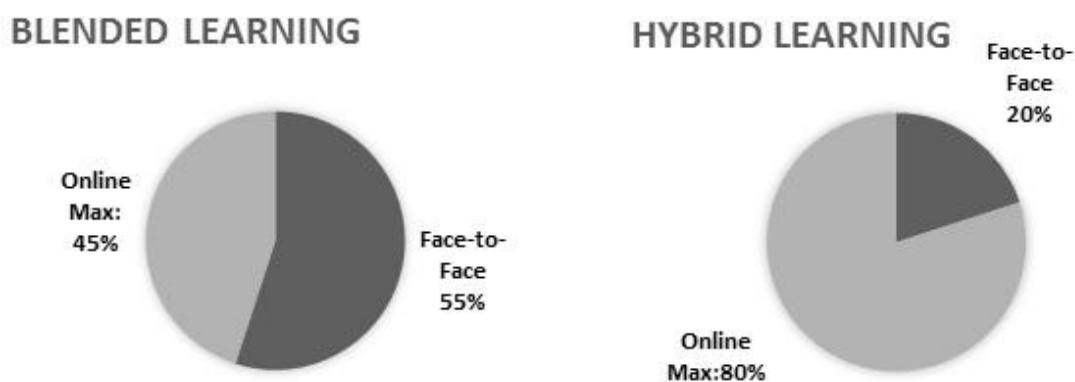


*Figure 2.2.* Proportions online and face-to-face instructions

Asynchronous/synchronous could be counted as the sub-modes of fully online learning (e-learning). Hrastinsky, (2008) defines them as follows;

> Asynchronous e-learning commonly facilitated by media such as e-mail and discussion boards, supports work relations among learners and with teachers, even when participants cannot be online at the same time. Synchronous e-learning commonly supported by media such as video conferencing and chat, has potential to support e-learners in the development of learning communities (pp.51-52).

### 2.2.2 Theoretical Framework

The combination of two delivery modes, as in blended learning, involves reflection of different theories in these separate environments. Behaviourism, cognitivism and constructivism are three commonly used learning theories in

instructional settings (Mayer, 1998, cited in Caner, 2009). Ally (2004) states that the implementation of online materials is also underpinned by these learning theories. "Behaviourism equates learning with changes in either the form or frequency of observable performance. Learning is accomplished when a proper response is demonstrated following the presentation of a specific environmental stimulus" (Ertmer & Newby, 2013, p.48). It considers learning as a habit formation and denied the mental process and activities. However, "cognitive theories stress the acquisition of knowledge and internal mental structures and, as such, are closer to the rationalist end of the epistemology continuum" (Bower & Hilgard, 1981, cited in Ertmer & Newby, 2013, p.51). In cognitive theory, changes in one's behaviour are the indicators of information processing in mind.

From a constructivist perspective, learning is a process of making sense of the world and individual problem solving in which learners actively construct their own knowledge based on their personal experiences. (Piaget, 1952; Duffy & Cunningham, 1996; von Glasersfeld, 1995, Kirkley & Kirkley, 2005). According to the social constructivist approach, learning is considered a social process in which learners actively construct knowledge within social interactions. (Vygotsky, 1978; Brown et al., 1989, Cooper, 1993, Dalsgaard & Godsk, 2007). In line with the social constructive perspective, Vygotsky (1978) argue that:

> Essential feature of learning is that it creates the zone of proximal development; that is, learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers (p. 90)

Similarly, Wood, Bruner & Ross, (1976) put also emphasis on the social aspect of this constructive model. They name such learning process as "scaffolding that enables a child or novice to solve a problem, carry out a task or achieve a goal which would be beyond his unassisted efforts" (p.90). With respect to social aspect of learning, Bandura, (1971) suggest that:

> In the social learning system, new patterns of behaviour can be acquired through direct experience or by observing the behaviour of others. The more rudimentary form of learning, rooted in direct experience, is largely governed by the rewarding and punishing consequences that follow any action (p.3).

"Clearly the focus of constructivism is on creating cognitive tools which reflect the wisdom of the culture in which they are used as well as the insights and experiences of individuals" (Ertmer & Newby, 2013, p.56). From that stand point, it is clear that culture, context, interaction and construction are at the centre of this phenomenon. Therefore, the reflections of constructivist theory in practice are admittedly different compared to traditional teaching. Brooks & Brooks (1995) demonstrated the differences between the traditional and constructivist approaches as follows:

Table 2.1.

*Comparison of Traditional and Constructivist Classrooms.*

| Traditional Classrooms | Constructivist Classrooms |
| --- | --- |
| Curriculum is presented part to whole, with emphasis on basic skills | Curriculum is presented whole to part with emphasis on big concepts |
| Strict adherence to fixed curriculum is highly valued | Pursuit of student questions is highly valued. |
| Curricular activities rely heavily on textbooks and workbooks. | Curricular activities rely heavily on primary sources of data and manipulative materials. |
| Students are viewed as "blank slates" onto which information is etched by the teacher. | Students are viewed as thinkers with emerging theories about the world. |
| Teachers generally behave in a didactic manner, disseminating information to students. | Teachers generally behave in an interactive manner, mediating the environment for students. |
| Teachers seek the correct answer to validate student learning. | Teachers seek the students' points of view in order to understand students' present conceptions for use in subsequent lessons |
| Assessment of student learning is viewed as separate from teaching and occurs almost entirely through testing. | Assessment of student learning is interwoven with teaching and occurs through teacher observations of students at work and through student exhibitions and portfolios. |
| Students primarily work alone. | Students primarily work in groups |

As one moves along to methodology development continuum, it is clear that there is a shift from teacher-centred to student-centred teaching. In the continuum of behaviourist – cognitivist – constructivist, social constructivism seems to be the representative theory of the today's contemporary teaching methodology. In this continuum, where does blended learning stand?

According to Oliver & Trigwell, (2005) many people hold the view that blended learning has the flexibility to reflect the combination of all these three theories. However, considering its huge potential to create learning environments which enable learners to collaborate, to construct knowledge and to be socially interactive, blended learning is mainly based on constructivist perspective. In this respect, Simina & Hamel (2005) suggest that as there is a shift in education and language learning, the assumptions of constructive theory encourages the integration of computers and online materials into language learning environments. Simina & Hamel (2005) also state that "computers allow learners to interact not only with the learning materials but also with other people. The combination of the social and individual aspect is best expressed by social constructivism" (p. 217). Supporting this idea, Al-Huneidi & Schreurs (2013) argue that "blended Learning environment has the characteristics to adapt, support, and facilitate applying constructivism and conversation theories in learning process. Blended Learning environment facilitates and improves discussion, communication, and knowledge construction processes" (p.582).

In conclusion, in the recent history of learning and teaching, constructivism has been the dominant theory and a great deal of researches design blended learning standing on this idea. Integration of computers and online facilities to create constructivist learning environment results in significant change and success in learning (Huffman et al., 2003).

### 2.2.3. Features of Blended Learning

Recent learning theories and contemporary methodologies have always put learners in the centre of teaching-learning environment. In that, teachers are required to create zones where they do the teaching and facilitates learning at the same time. To achieve this, teachers, naturally, need more than basics. With this respect, blended learning is considered a tool to enrich learning opportunities. Is that really so? Why should we adopt blended learning?

Osguthorpe & Graham (2003) identified six reasons why institutions should adopt blended learning: (1) pedagogical richness, (2) access to knowledge, (3) social interaction, (4) personal agency, (5) cost effectiveness, and (6) ease of revision. More specifically, Garrison & Kanuka (2004) pointed out the effectiveness of blended learning with regards to social constructivism as it follows:

What makes blended learning particularly effective is its ability to facilitate a community of inquiry. Community provides the stabilizing, cohesive influence that balances the open communication and limitless access to information on the Internet. Communities also provide the condition for free and open dialogue, critical debate, negotiation and agreement (p.97).

The strength of blended learning lies in its flexibility and its pedagogical effectiveness. Since it fosters mutual interaction and enhances active learning opportunities (Aycock, Garnham, & Kaleta, 2002; Riffell & Sibley, 2003; Waddoups & Howell, 2002; Garrison & Kanuka, 2004; Akkoyunlu, & Soylu, (2008). Supporting this idea, Collopy & Arnold (2009) stated that "this flexibility provides students the personalised time they need to read, think, process and respond" (p.86).

With respect to its connection to 21$^{th}$ century skills, blended English instruction has positive effect on students' critical thinking skills (Yang, et al., 2013, Garrison & Kanuka, 2004.) Similarly, King (2002) reported that online discussions prompt "critical thinking, dynamic interactive dialogue, and substantial peer-to-peer interaction… depth of insight and response, that is, many times not possible in the face-to-face classroom because of time constraints" (p. 237).

When it comes language skills, Garrison & Kanuka (2004) state that "a concomitant property of learning with internet communication technology is that it has a significant educational implication resulting from the emphasis on written communication" (p. 97). Additionally, blended learning has positive effect on students' performances, increases students' participation in class and their motivation (López-Pérez et al.,2012; Liu, 2013; Hughes, 2007).

For many, blended learning could be just an integration of online platform where you can keep multimedia materials to use in language class. From that standpoint, Delialioglu &Yıldırım (2008) simply summarize its effectiveness as: "a carefully designed and well implemented online instruction can help students access more information faster, can give opportunity to use multimedia environments to reach multiple senses of students, and provide support in understanding the content" (p. 475).

### 2.2.4. CALL vs Blended Learning

Computer technology has been a fundamental tool for language learning since it started to enter our daily life. Many forms of this technology has contributed language learning in various ways. McCarthy (2016) summarised its short revolution as follows;

> In the 1960s, language laboratories came to fore, enabling students to practise listening and speaking in the private environment of the laboratory booth, to imitate models and to work at their own pace. This mix of learning modes had much in common with what we now as blended learning. (…) The expansion of computational power and the ubiquity of the internet subsequently led educational practitioners to envision fundamental and radical changes to the way teaching and learning could be delivered (pp.1-2)

Although they seem to be two different methodological implementations in terms of pedagogy, in fact, CALL and todays' blended learning serve for similar purposes. According to Chapelle (2001), the use of computer-assisted instruction dates back to 1950s in the USA. Yet the term "CALL" was first used and agreed on in Toronto at a TESOL conference in 1983. As foreign language teaching has incorporated with the development of computer technology over the years, the theoretical reflections have been observed on its use. This developmental phase of CALL can be put in three different stages as: behaviouristic CALL, communicative CALL and integrative CALL (Warschauer & Healey, 1998). In general, "a lot of CALL software is stuck in a behaviourist rut partly because offering a behaviourist mode of instruction is an easy thing for computers to do" (Beatty, 2010, p. 41). Considering the fact that the Internet has become an inseparable part of computers, and it has better capabilities and functions to make language learning more interactive, socially constructive and communicative, integration of online studies into curriculum are commonly called as blended learning. Treated as an everyday object and its common use everywhere may also have an effect on this perception. In the future, more varied devices within internet function and computers, mobiles phones, tablet PCs, and some other prospective new integrated inventions could be counted as sub-modes of blended learning.

## 2.3. Contemporary teaching principles in Blended Learning

### 2.3.1. Autonomy

Autonomy is, beyond any doubt, a favoured and required skill of 21th century. Learner autonomy is "the ability to take charge of one's own learning, to have and to hold the responsibility for all the decisions concerning all aspects of this learning" (Holec, 1981, p. 3). Regarding its effectiveness Kumaravadivelu (2003) states that "in a rapidly changing world where instant and informed decision making is a prerequisite for successful functioning, helping learners become autonomous is one way of maximizing their chances for success (p. 131). Hence, what is the place of autonomy in blended learning? Many studies support the fact that autonomy constitutes the core of blended learning. For instance, Stracke (2007) suggests that 'the pedagogical rationale behind blended language learning (BLL) is the desire to allow for a higher degree of learner independence in the teaching and learning of second/foreign languages (p.1). In addition, as blended instruction provides flexible, personal learning environments, it is seen to have a positive effect on developing autonomous abilities (Beatty, 2003; Benson, 2007; Kupetz & Ziegenmeyer, 2006; Ying, 2002; Mutlu, & Eröz-Tuğa, 2013) However, this flexibility can present some difficulties to students who have poor time management skills and who are not used to working autonomously (Marsh, 2012).

### 2.3.2. Differentiation

Differentiated instruction is a pedagogical approach for students who have different readiness level, interests and modes of learning within the same classroom. (Tomlinson et al., 2003, Landrum & Macduffie, 2010). Current differentiated instruction is supported by these following guidelines:

> (a) a focus on essential ideas and skills in each content area, (b) responsiveness to individual student differences, (c) integration of assessment and instruction, and (d) an ongoing adjustment of content, process, and products to meet individual students' levels of prior knowledge, critical thinking, and expression styles (Tieso, 2003; Tomlinson, 1999, Rock, Gregg, Ellis, & Gable, 2008).

The guideline above suggests that blended learning and differentiated instruction have many common aspects in terms of learner success and maximizing learning opportunities. Morgan (2014) argues that one of the most important strategies of differentiated instruction that brings benefits to students is the successful

implementation of technology. Online facilities and digital sources help teachers to create instruction ways which matches the learning styles of their students. Thorne (2003) also suggests that blended learning is all about tailoring learning and meeting students' needs by integrating technological and online advances. With regards to social constructivist dimension of blended learning, differentiation can also be considered as in the same line. In this sense, Morgan (2014) states that "differentiated instruction is also based on Lev Vygotsky's concept of the zone of proximal development and benefits learners at all levels to work at their appropriate level" (p.37).

### 2.3.3. Interaction

Interaction, as an important tenet on language learning, simple refers to meaningful conversations. According to Gass & Selinker (2008) "the interaction accounts for learning through input (exposure to language), production of language (output), and feedback that comes as a result of interaction" (p.317). Input basically refers to the exposure that learners have to language in use. Krashen (1982) explains the place of input in language acquisition with Comprehensible Input Hypothesis. He suggests that language acquisition takes place when a learner is exposed to input which contains structure beyond his current level of competence (i+1). As for the role of output, Ellis (2008) states that "comprehensible output plays a part in L2 acquisition. Output can serve as a conscious-raising function by helping learners to help gaps in their interlanguage" (Swain, 1995, p. 49). To what extent can output play a central role in the learning process? According to Gass & Selinker (2008), output has four functions for language learning; (a) receiving crucial feedback for the verification of these hypotheses; (b) testing hypotheses about the structures and meanings of the target language; (c) developing automaticity in interlanguage production; and (d) forcing a shift from more meaning-based processing of the second language to a more syntactic mode (p. 328).

Before the spread of the communicative language teaching method, traditional foreign language classroom was basically based on text-based learning environments. In this new era of language teaching, limited class hours and sizes made it almost impossible to have real interaction (Hojnacki, 2016). In this case, where does blended learning stand today? Is it possible to create blended language courses that enable learners to produce output leading them to higher proficiency levels? Presumably, many

assume that synchronous elements of blended learning might be the solution for learners to interact in a foreign language. Numerous online software programs can create zones where students interact with native or non-native speakers of target language. However, as implementation, goals and objectives of each course vary, and it is not simply easy to say 'yes' for the questions above.  In a research conducted in Liberal Arts College in the USA in 2011, researchers sought to find out whether blended learning modes provide more oral output in comparison with standard face-to-face teacher directed instruction. Results revealed that there was significant increase in oral production in online lessons (Hojnacki, 2016). Although such results seem to be generalizable to overall blended learning, specific limitations and variations should be taken into consideration. Online interactional resources vary according to the particular learning goals in specific time. Therefore, Walsh (2016) suggests that "there is no 'one-fits-all' recipe, which is often a problem with technology-led learning." (p.48).

## 2.4. Blended Learning Research Findings

In the last decade numerous researches, which were based on the effectiveness and perceptions of blended learning, have been done in the field of blended learning in ELT. Table 2.2 illustrate several representative studies which show the overall understanding of blended learning and its success.

Table.2.*2*

*Overview of Findings from Studies of Blended Learning in ESL/EFL Contexts.*

| Studies in the World | |
|---|---|
| Research Study | Research Focus |
| Al-Jarf  (2005) | |
| Hui, Hu, Clark, Tam & Milton (2007) | |
| Borau, Ullrich, Feng & Shen (2009) | |
| Muscarà, Beercock (2010);Pazio (2010) | |
| Shih (2010);Amir, Ismail & Hussin (2011) | |
| GrGurović (2011); Kavaliauskienė (2011); | Positive effect of Blended Learning in ESL/EFL contexts |
| Jia, Chen, Ding & Ruan (2012) | |
| Miyazoe & Anderson (2012);Pop & Slev (2012); Yang (2012);Adas & Bakir (2013);Oberg & Daniels (2013); Šafranj (2013) | |
| Yang, Chuang, Li, &Tseng (2013) | |

| Studies in the World | |
| --- | --- |
| Research Study | Research Focus |
| Sagarra & Zapata (2008) | |
| Comas-Quinn, Mar Domingo & Valentine (2009) | Positive Attitudes of Learners and Teachers towards Blended Learning in ESL/EFL contexts |
| Yang (2011) | |
| Bueno-Alastuey & López Pérez (2014) | |

| Studies in Turkey | |
| --- | --- |
| Research Study | Research Focus |
| Arslan & Şahin-Kızıl (2010) | |
| Şad & Akdağ (2010) | |
| Kırkgöz (2011) | Positive effect of Blended Learning in ESL/EFL contexts |
| Bilgin (2013) | |
| Ekmekçi (2014) | |
| Boyacıoğlu (2015) | |
| Caner (2009); | |
| Baturay, Daloğlu & Yıldırım (2010) | |
| Yılmaz & Orhan (2010) | |
| İstifçi (2011); Aydın (2013) | Positive Attitudes of Learners and Teachers towards Blended Learning in ESL/EFL contexts |
| Bilgin (2013) | |
| Ekmekçi (2014); Sazak (2014) | |
| İnce (2015); Özkan (2015) | |
| Yastıbas & Cepik (2015) | |
| Yağcı, Çınarbaş & Hoş (2016) | |

The research in this dissertation builds on existing knowledge in the fields of blended learning in ELT. The studies- listed and categorized above- were selected from the ones which examined the integration of online tools into face-to-face instruction. These tools were online workbook, wikis, blogs, mobile applications, social media platforms, etc. All implications, technically, were serving for the purpose of blended learning. Therefore, considering the findings of studies illustrated above, there seems to be a general consensus that blended learning has positive outcomes in EFL/ESL contexts.

## 2.5. Methodological Problems and Implementation Issues

Is technology a magical tool to facilitate learning or is it a modern zone where we will place the education? This is one of the biggest confusion that teachers and course designers can be faced with. In this sense, McCarthy (2016) suggests that "decision on the design of blended learning should be pedagogy-led rather than technology-led" (p.3). McCarthy (2016) also states that "technology should be judged against what we know about language learning and should be the servant of best practices grounded in good learning theory and practice, rather than dominating the learning process" (p. 6). Similarly, Moskal et al., (2013) argue that successful blended instruction has to correspond with the institutional, faculty and student goals. Additionally, Moskal et al., (2013) emphasize that "there is no one-size-fits-all approach that is guaranteed to succeed, nor does success come quickly, but rather is achieved through continuous effort over a span of several years" (p.16). Therefore, blended instruction should line up with all variations in learning, most importantly with SLA practices. Regarding this, Thornbury (2016) derived 12 principles and questions to let designers to fit blended learning for their purpose (pp. 31-32);

1. Adaptivity- Does the tool accommodate the non-linear, unpredictable, incidental or idiosyncratic nature of learning?
2. Complexity- Does the tool address the complexity of language including its sub-systems (e.g., grammar, lexis, phonology, discourse, pragmatics)
3. Input- Is there access to rich, comprehensible engaging input?
4. Noticing- Are there means whereby the user's attention is directed to features of the input so that their usefulness is highlighted?
5. Output- Are there regular opportunities for language production?
6. Scaffolding- Are learning tasks modelled and mediated?
7. Feedback- Do users get focused and informative feedback on their comprehension and production including feedback on error?
8. Interaction - Is there provision for the user to collaborate and interact with other users in the target language?
9. Automaticity- Does the tool provide opportunities for massed practice, and in conditions that replicate conditions of use?
10. Chunks- Does the tool encourage/facilitate the acquisition and the use of formulaic language?

11. Personalisation – Does the tool encourage the user to form strong personal associations with the material?

12. Flow- Is the tool sufficiently engaging and challenging to increase the likelihood of sustained and repeated use?

When the technology and its use is the matter, technological literacy comes to the fore. Considering the fact that todays' students, members of generation Y, come to school with a significant technological expertise, blended learning becomes real challenge for teachers. In his study, Yuksel (2009) examined 14 studies to determine teacher roles and required competencies in blended instruction. Yuksel (2009) suggested that in order to be successful in this sort of teaching modes, teachers should also possess technical and technological competencies besides their instructional skills.

## 2.6. Teacher Training and Support

Since learning and teaching is a dynamic process, teachers should always be ready to modify their own professional development. This modification should always be aligned with newest conceptions of teaching (Johnson, 2006). Integration of technology into teaching - so-called blended learning - as a prominent innovation in teaching, requires to be taken into consideration in this respect. The success of a blended instruction strongly depends on how teachers adopted and prepared themselves for the new system (Comas-Quinn, 2011; Nissen & Tea, 2012; Hampel & Stickler, 2005; Comas-Quinn, 2016). One may claim that professional development in terms of online tutoring is just about learning some technological tips. However, Bennett & Marsh (2002) argue that ''in order to be an effective online tutor, it is clearly not enough to know which buttons to press in order to send an e-mail or which HTML coding is required to insert an image on a web page'' (p. 14). According to Comas-Quinn (2016), professional development cannot just focus on the technical aspect of mastering tool and skills, but needs to place more emphasis on the pedagogical aspect of understanding what these technologies enable us to do and how we can effectively apply them to teaching and learning'. Comas-Quinn (2016) also suggests that

> traditional teaching + online tools ≠ online teaching, i.e., that learning to be an effective online teacher is not just learning how to teach online but requires a substantial revision and transformation of the role of the teacher and their approach to teaching (p.71).

The roles and necessary skills of teachers for blended instruction are rather vague. Barker (2002) suggests that using electronic mail, creating, managing, and participating in asynchronous conferences, using chat room, word processing skills, web page authoring, and using specific purpose tools are necessary skills for online tutoring. Similarly, Bennett & Marsh (2002) put forward two types of skills beyond the technical level: (a) to ''identify the significant differences and similarities between face-to-face and online learning and teaching contexts'' and (b) to ''identify strategies and techniques to facilitate online learning and help students exploit the advantages in relation to both independent and collaborative learning'' (p. 16). Hampel & Stickler (2005) argue that although blended learning is common today and sizeable body of research focuses on it, the training of teachers for online learning has been neglected. In their study, Hampel & Stickler (2005) demonstrated a 'skills pyramid' which discloses the necessary skills that an online tutor should possess (Figure 2.3).

The first level of this skills pyramid is about having basic technological competence. This includes the ability to deal with basic equipment necessary for online tutoring. Keyboards, sound systems, internet browsers, word processing, etc. are some of the key equipment that teachers need to able to use. The second level of skills for online tutoring relates to specific software application. These applications could be software developed by publisher or unique program that is developed by the institution for their own students. Tutors need to familiarize themselves with them before they can be expected to use it for online teaching. The third level of skills requires the online language teacher to understand the affordances and constraints of the specific applications. Considering the fact that not all software is perfectly compatible with schools' program, teachers' may be expected to modify it for their students. The fourth level of skills relate to online socialisation or sense of community. Just as in face-to-face instruction, fostering students' participation in online learning and having online protocols for students to prevent misbehaving are considered necessary skills of online tutors. The fifth level of skills relates to communicative competence. Online tutors are required to promote meaningful communicative interaction. Hampel & Stickler (2005) asserted that "meaningful communicative interaction would hardly take place without social cohesion", and "can be achieved in an online course through task design" (p.318). Creativity and Choice are the sixth level skills for online tutoring. Though it has been believed that Internet provides everything a teacher needs, without careful selection and

creating communicative tasks/ activities, it could null list of stuff. The final level of skills for online tutor includes the ability to develop his own online learning environment which is compatible with his students' learning styles, interests, teacher's methodological choice and the academic goals of institution.

7. Own Style

6. Creativity and choice

5. Facilitating Communicative Competence

4. Online Socializing

3. Dealing with constraints and possibilities of the medium

2. Specific technical competence for the software

1. Basic ICT Competence
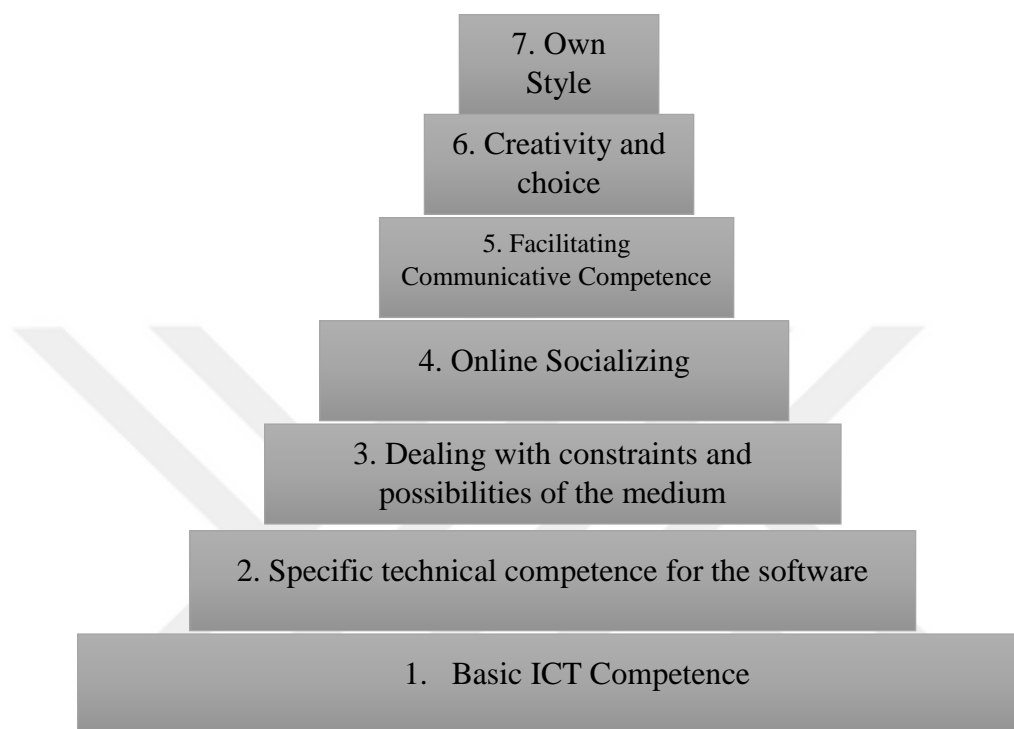
*Figure 2.3.* Skills pyramid (Hampel & Stickler, 2005)

As for the limitations of Hampel & Stickler's (2005) skills pyramid, Compton (2009) argues that "some of these skills can be developed concurrently and do not necessarily have to come in the order implied in the pyramid" (p.80). Compton (2009) states that second and third level of skills are technology related and could be learnt to deal with at the same time. Similarly, Compton (2009) suggests that fourth and fifth level of skills are both pedagogical issues and can be dealt with simultaneously or in any order. "Besides the limitation implied in the sequencing, the pyramid does not provide any indication of when an online language tutor is ready to teach" (Campton, 2009, p.81). Compton (2009) also argues that on the contrary what Hampel & Stickler (2005) claim, this skill pyramid is not solely for online language tutors. Only one skill (i.e. facilitating communicative competence) is specific to online language teaching.

To address the limitations of Hampel & Stickler's (2005) skills pyramid, Campton (2009) proposes a framework for online language teaching skills (Figure 2.4). This framework consists of three major sets for online language teaching: a) technology in online language teaching; b) pedagogy of online language teaching; and c) evaluation of online language teaching. In this first section, technological skills relate to knowledge and ability to deal with hardware and software systems. In the next set, the pedagogical skills refer to knowledge and ability to conduct and facilitate teaching and learning activities. Lastly, the evaluative skills include the ability to assess the tasks analytically and overall course and make necessary modifications to ensure language learning objectives are met.

These skills are also categorised in three levels of expertise: novice, proficient and expert. These levels are not absolute but rather a continuum of expertise. The skills within each level can be developed separately or simultaneously but they are necessary in order to move on the next level of expertise

Recent studies based on the skills for online tutors (Barker, 2002; Bennett & Marsh, 2002; Hampel & Stickler,2005; Campton, 2009) show that awareness of the difference between online and face-to-face instructions, technological competence, pedagogy for online teaching, evaluation of online teaching are the key issues for teacher training and support.
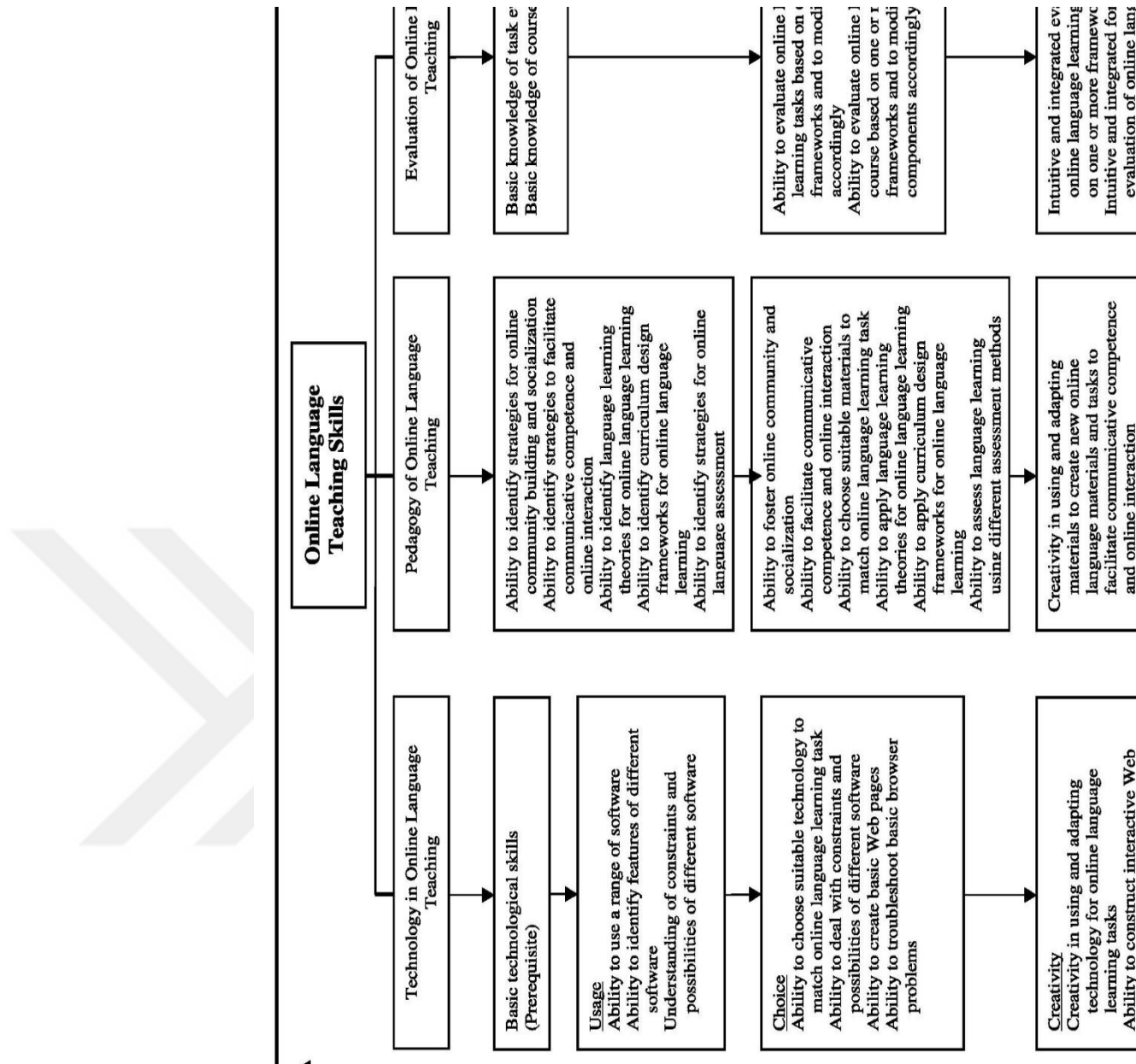
*Figure 2.4.* Proposed framework for online language teaching skills (Campton, 2009)

## 2.7. The Future of Blended Learning

Over the years, technology has evolved so rapidly that specifying blended learning within a single technological tool or software is not the issue since it might quickly become outdated. Yet, mobile devices, as they are an everyday object in our life, seem to be prominent actor of blended learning for the close future. Today, beyond any doubt, the need for the ubiquity has sharply risen up. Therefore, "the advent of hand-held computer-based devices gave rise to Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL)" (Burston, 2013, p. 157). Pegrum (2014) suggests that mobility has not got just one implication in MALL. Rather, Pegrum (2014) puts it into 3 categories as it follows (cited in Dudeney & Hockly, 2016, p. 221):

1. Learning that takes place when *devices* are mobile.
2. Learning that takes place when the *learners* are mobile.
3. *Learning experiences* which are mobile.

The first category describes the traditional learning setting with mobile devices whereas, in the second category, mobility describes learners' being outside the classroom and continuing their learning with mobile devices including simple supplementary activities. In the last category, the emphasis is more on the learning experiences which are based on mobile devices with an extensive range of real-world contexts. Having said that, use of mobile phones in classroom has been relatively serious concern in terms of classroom management. Beneficial aspects of mobile devices in classroom are questionable. In this case, again, implementation process comes to fore. That is to say, no matter what type technology is to be blend, pedagogy should lead the technology and perfect design should be prior goal.

In the last ten years, many smart applications have been developed to foster language learning. In addition, there are many empirical research studies (Borau, Ullrich, Feng & Shen, 2009; Shih, 2010; Amir, Ismail & Hussin, 2011; Miyazoe & Anderson, 2012; Pop & Slev, 2012; Oberg & Daniels, 2013; Hwang & Chang, 2011; Karadeniz, 2011; Şad & Akdağ, 2010) based on social media platforms many of which are controlled via mobile devices. Hence, teachers and institutions will, presumably, have more mobile learning as a means of newest pedagogical model in their teaching. Supporting this Dudeney & Hockly (2016) suggest that "mobile learning is the most modern incarnation of blended learning" (p. 220).

## 2.8. Summary

This section defined the term Blended Learning broadly and described its features with respect to foreign language learning. Additionally, related research findings, methodological problems, teacher training and the future of Blended Learning were discussed. The focus now turns to the methodology of the study. In the next chapter, in relation to overall purpose of the study, the research design, participants, data collection procedures will be presented in detail.

# CHAPTER 3
# METHODOLOGY

## 3.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the design of the research, setting, data collection procedures and instruments, data analysis, and treatment process have been presented in detail.

## 3.2. Research Design

The objective of the present study is to describe the students' and instructors' perceptions in one-year blended English course program. Concerning the aim of this study, Mackey & Gass (2005) suggest that a survey – as a form of quantitative research method, mostly in the form of questionnaires, is one of the commonly used methods when the focus is investigating the opinions or attitudes of large groups of participants. Likewise, Dörnyei (2007) argues that using quantitative methods removes the stress of idiosyncratic human variability and personal bias and brings objectivity into the study. Therefore, primarily, a questionnaire was developed and used as an instrument to gather information about participants' attitudes. Dörnyei (2007) also points out that quantitative instruments are not always enough, and they are limited in terms of judging subjective variety of individual life. Hence, he suggests integration of quantitative and qualitative methods. Besides the surveys, a qualitative research method – in the form of interviews- was included in this study to get an in-depth analysis of students' and instructors' attitudes towards blended learning. Such combination of quantitative and qualitative methods is called 'mixed method research'. Dörnyei (2007) emphasizes the importance of mixed method research as; "the main attraction of mixed methods research has been the fact that by using both quantitative and qualitative approaches researchers can bring out the best of both paradigms, thereby combining quantitative and qualitative research strengths" (p.45). Dörnyei (2007) also suggests that the strength of one method can compensate the other's weakness.

In summary, the mixed method research model described above is assumed to be the best way of collecting rich, detailed data on the participants' opinions about learning within a blended learning environment. It also allows us to have theoretical triangulation in the study.

**3.3 Setting**

The context for this study is an intensive English program at Dokuz Eylül University, School of Foreign Languages in İzmir. School of foreign languages provides intensive language classes to students who come from different parts of Turkey and the world. Students who are to study in English-medium departments take one-year compulsory English preparatory class if they do not meet the English language proficiency requirements. Hence, this study was conducted in foreign language teaching and higher education contexts.

This environment was selected for several reasons. In the first place, this study gives an opportunity to researcher to investigate the perceptions of blended learning both in foreign language teaching and higher education contexts. Second, English preparatory class at Dokuz Eylül University is a typical EFL (English as a foreign language) context and has representative function for other universities in Turkey. Third, blended learning instruction was practiced for the first time in this institution, and an evaluative study required for the assessment of curriculum. Finally, head principal of the institution is very open to research requests and provided permission and access to administer questionnaires to targeted number of students.

In 2015-2016 academic year, the autumn (October-January) and spring (February-June) semesters in which data collection took place, the program had 2400 students enrolled, and 140 instructors were employed to teach these students during these semesters.

*Open Mind*

Open Mind is an English adult course textbook series published by Macmillan Education. The school of foreign languages used this textbook series for its main course. Additionally, institution blended their instruction with online component of publisher - Macmillan Online Workbook & Resource Centre (Appendix 5). Students used their printed textbooks in class and signed in the online platform outside the classroom for practice and revision purposes. Students' performance in online platform was checked by class teachers and used as an added value for their final grades. Once student signed up for the online workbook, they were able to start the exercises right away. The instructors were required to sign up for the system to check their students' progress.

The online platform of Macmillan Workbook is based on recursive practice of language skills except speaking. In listening, video and reading sections, students are able to do the exercises which are contextualised with some images and videos. However, the tasks in these sections are limited with activities such as Matching, True-False, Multiple Choice and Gap-Filling. All activities are given in the same monotone style in each unit repetitively. Besides, all activities are based on finding the correct option and allow almost no interaction among teachers and students. In writing sections, just like in-class training, students are able to submit their written work online and get feedback. For the lower levels, platform comprises activities which require students to write simple words and sentences in the given blanks. In higher levels students are given more complex tasks in which students produce a structured text and submit to their teachers. Teachers are only able to see these written works when they log in. No instant notification is given to teachers and students. Additionally, teachers are not able to give detailed code-based feedback. System allows them to give only verbal feedback and a score. As for the grammar and vocabulary section, students are able practice newly learnt subjects and words with Multiple choice, True-False, Matching and Gap-Filling activities. These activities are very much similar to the ones that students do (paper-based worksheets) in class.

### 3.4. Participants

The participants of the study consist of students attending English Preparatory Class in School of Foreign Languages, Dokuz Eylül University. For the questionnaire, there were 400 students as participants whose age span ranges from 18 to 22. All the participants were chosen from four levels (A1, A2, B1, B1+) randomly and equally. Additionally, at the end of the spring semester, 100 instructors were given a questionnaire. For interviews, 16 students and 10 instructors participated. All participants were chosen from the ones who volunteered to contribute to the study.

As for the sampling strategy, stratified random sampling as one of the probability sampling strategy was used in this study for the quantitative method (questionnaires). That is to say, the levels to choose participants from were specified but the student participants were chosen randomly. In a quantitative method, the key issue was the sampling size since representativeness of the outcomes is the ultimate goal. However, as Dörnyei (2007) stated, there is no simple rule to decide optimal size. In this case, researchers either take similar studies as an example or use the published

calculations and tables. For this research, calculations by Gray et al. (2007) were taken into consideration, and size as 400 students, 100 instructors within ±5% precision of 95% confidence level was set.

Interviews, on the other hand, focus on describing, understanding the aspect that makes up an idiosyncratic experience which is in depth analysis of observed behaviour rather than concerning how representative the sampling size is (Polkinghorne, 2005). Therefore, the real question is not 'How many participants?' but 'Which ones?' In this study, based on 'maximum variation sampling' principle, 16 students, which were equally selected from each proficiency level, were interviewed. Additionally, 10 instructors, regardless of any sort of categorization, were interviewed.

Finally, researcher took the ethical issues into account. All participants were clear on the purpose of the research and what was expected of them. The researcher also ensured that participants felt no pressure or stress.

### 3.5 Data Collection

### 3.5.1 Instruments

*Questionnaires*

In order to examine the participants' attitudes regarding blended learning instruction, two questionnaires (for students and instructors) were used at the end of each term. These questionnaires, adapted from Akkoyunlu & Soylu (2008), were originally designed to understand the perceptions of students and instructors in blended learning instruction. The original blended learning scale consists of 50 items under two categories. The first category, which includes 35 items, is based on the learners' views on the implementation of blended leaning within sub-categories as; (a) Ease of use for web environment, (b) Online Environment, (c) Content, (d) Face-to-Face Sessions, (e) Assessment concerning content. The second category including 15 items is based on learner's views on blended learning in general. All items in the original questionnaire are developed as ten-point Likert type format. The questionnaires developed for the present study were slightly modified to fit blended learning format of the institution and for the purpose of the study. The students' questionnaire has 52 five-point- items (I Strongly Disagree/ I Disagree /I partially agree/ I agree/ I strongly agree) that focus on the perceptions of blended learning and its implementation process under 4 categories as; (a) Online platform, (b) Face-to-face sessions, (c) Assessment, (d) Learners' views

on blended learning in general (Appendix 1). Besides, the questionnaire developed for instructors has 13 five-point- items (I Strongly Disagree/ I Disagree /I partially agree/ I agree/ I strongly agree) that only focus on instructors' views on blended learning (Appendix 2). In order to establish its content validity, the final form of the questionnaires was examined by experts in the field and some minor adjustments were done considering experts' views. The reliability of the final forms of the surveys were calculated by using Cronbach alpha and was found as .904 for students and .892 for instructors which are satisfactory reliability levels.

*Interviews*

To triangulate the findings of surveys and for further in-debt analysis of participants' views, semi-structured interviews were conducted with students and instructors. Initially, the researcher wrote a number of interview questions based on related literature and expert consultations. Then, the researcher consulted with his thesis advisor on these questions to give a final shape to them. After some adjustments, 8 interview questions for students and 10 questions for instructors were chosen (Appendix 3 and 4). Research questions were prepared in English. However, for the sake of the reliability of the survey, all interviews were conducted in participants' native language. All interviews were audio recorded, and there was no significant interruption.

### 3.5.2 Procedures

*Piloting*

'If you do not have the resources to pilot-test your questionnaire, don't do the study' (Bradburn, Sudman, & Wansink (2004, p. 317). This popular quote simply enhances the importance of piloting. Therefore, the researcher conducted piloting with the guidance of thesis advisor and an expert in the field of Educational Measurement and Evaluation. Before piloting, the researcher ensured that participants had enough time and experience with the blended learning environment to have better judgement. After six weeks of instruction, the questionnaire was administered to one-hundred and eighty students. Having entered all the data to SPSS program, the researcher made the reliability analysis.

*Questionnaires & Interviews*

At the end of the first term (January) and second term (May), four-hundred students completed the questionnaire during their class hours. The data collected from individuals participating in the study were analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.0.

Two weeks prior to the end of the 2$^{nd}$ term, the questionnaire developed for instructors was administered to fifty participants for piloting purposes. After its reliability analysis, in the following week the questionnaire was administered to targeted number of people which was one-hundred.

In the final week of the term, selected students and instructors were invited to have interviews regarding their views about the blended learning environment in their institution.

### 3.6. Data Analysis

Data analysis focused on the ten research questions discussed in Chapter 1. The data collected with questionnaires were computed via SPSS software and descriptive analysis was presented. Each research question was discussed separately in the light of the findings gathered from representative survey items (Table 3.2). Additionally, interviews were transcribed by the researcher and coded into several categories.

The score spans as presented in the questionnaires were categorized as follows;

Table 3.1.

*Interval Scale of the Options in the Questionnaire*

| Participation Level | Mean |
|---------------------|------|
| Strongly Agree | 4.21 – 5.00 |
| Agree | 3.41 – 4.20 |
| Partially Agree | 2.61 – 3.40 |
| Disagree | 1.81 – 2.60 |
| Strongly Disagree | 1.00 - 1.80 |

The students were asked to rate each item on a scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). The scores obtained were ranked as follows: "1.00-1.80: Strongly Disagree", "1.81-2.60: Disagree", "2.61-3.40: Partially Agree", "3.41-4.20: Agree", "4.21-5.00: Strongly Agree".

Table 3.2.

*Research Questions and Data Sources*

| Research Question | Data Source | Focused Items |
|---|---|---|
| 1. What are the students' perceptions of and attitudes towards blended learning instruction? | Student Questionnaire Student Interviews | All items All items |
| 1a. To what extent does blended learning respond to the needs and expectations of the students? | Student Questionnaire Student Interviews | 10 – 12 -50 1 |
| 1b. What are the innovations brought by blended learning to the students' motivation and attitude in their language learning process? | Student Questionnaire | 49–51–32–34-41 |
| 1c. In what ways do the students think blended learning helped them improve their various language competencies, skills? | Student Questionnaire Student Interviews | 13–14–15–16–17 4 |
| 1d. What kind of change does blended learning bring to the classroom atmosphere and students' learning English? | Student Questionnaire | 44-46-47-48 |
| 1e. What are the advantages of blended learning in learning English? | Student Interviews | 2 |
| 1f. What are the drawbacks of blended learning in learning English? | Student Interviews | 3 |
| 1g. Do the students' perceptions change throughout one-year blended learning instruction? | Student Questionnaire | All items |
| 2. Is there statistically significant difference regarding gender in foreign language learning? | Student Questionnaire | Demographic Question-Gender |
| 3. What are the instructors' perceptions and attitudes towards blended learning instruction? | Teacher Questionnaire Teacher Interviews | All items All items |

# CHAPTER 4

# RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

## 4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the results concerning overall attitudes of learners and instructors towards blended learning and its implementation process. Both qualitative and quantitative data sources described in chapter 3 in detail were used to get the results. In the following section, with reference to the aim of the study, each research question was discussed in the light of the results separately. Initially, numerical figures of research results were presented, and then verbal extracts of interviewees were added to provide more comprehensive answer to the research questions.

As it was mentioned in the first chapter, the reliability of the study also depends on the students' sincere and respectable answers. Hence, changes in participants' attitudes towards blended learning is one of the researcher's principal concerns. Therefore, in the final part of this section, whether there is a significant difference in the attitude of the students towards blended learning was analysed.

## 4.2. RQ 1. What are the students' perceptions of blended learning instruction?

This research question seeks to find out the overall attitudes of participants towards blended learning. The participants answered a Likert type questionnaire with 52 items. The Likert Scale included the following levels: (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Partially Agree, (4) Agree, and (5) Strongly Agree. A detailed analysis of the questionnaires and interviews provided the data to answer this question.

Our results indicate that students have a neutral attitude towards blended learning, which means the students partially agree with the use of blended instruction (M= 3.02; SD= .55). When we analysed the results of the questionnaire in terms of subcategories as (a) Online Platform, (b) Face-to-face Instruction, (c) Assessment, (d) general views on blended learning, we can see their perception towards these subcategories in detail. The mean scores related to the relevant subcategories are presented in Table 5.

Table 4.1.

*Students' Views on Blended Learning*

| Items on | N | $\overline{x}$ | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Face-to-Face Instruction | 400 | 3.91 | .70 |
| Assessment | 400 | 3.01 | .71 |
| Online Platform | 400 | 2.68 | .76 |
| General Views | 400 | 2.42 | .81 |

As can be seen in Table 4.1, our students still favour having face to face instruction in the classroom (M=3.91; SD=.70). They partially agree that assessment activities and tasks are useful to some extent as a blended instruction (M=3.01; SD =.71). On the other hand, they are not completely happy with the online platform (M=2.68; SD =.76), and therefore, their general views on blended learning are negative (M=2.42; SD =.81), which justifies that the online tool used in this blended instruction seems to be regarded as ineffective. This is also indicated in the following extracts from the interviews with students.

The major complaint about blended learning was the implementation. Most students were happy with the idea but they found some problems in practice. For example, students 2 and 5 stated:

> "I think the idea is fine but the implication is rubbish. Especially, I really want to talk about how inadequate the system is in term of technical features. I still – we have almost finished the term- couldn't enrol in online class. Online platform doesn't help me practice, it gives me trouble". (S2)

> "I think blended learning is good as an idea but in terms of implication, it is not sufficient I think. On the other hand, I think it also has complementary function. You can revise the things you missed in class". (S5)

Similarly, student 12 expressed dissatisfaction about practice and mentioned the pitfalls of the tool.

> "Blended learning is theoretically fine. We are used to face-to-face instruction but in practice it has many pitfalls. I think, as it is used for the first time in the institution, it is not very well developed. It is not very appealing for students because it is not interactive and after a certain time we can be fed up with and get bored of filling the gaps on the screen. I don't remember I enjoyed any moment of my online studies, except first trials". (S12)

The design of the online tool was not favourable for some students. For example, students 1 and 15 stated:

> "I think blended learning format could be more effective. In this way, we (are) kind of get bored and it seems like a burden to us". (S1)

> "I enjoyed this language program here very much, specifically our discussion based lessons. But the only thing I don't like is the online activities. They are more like boring homework which I find useless". (S15)

Student 13 expressed his desire to have more paper based exercises instead of online practice as follows:

> "If there was no online platform and we had more paper based exercises instead, it would be easy for us to develop our proficiency. Online platform was a waste of time at all". (S13)

On the other hand, student 14 explained the causes of the problems reasonably as shown in the following extract:

> "In general, it is ok, but there are things to be developed. It is a new model in this institution maybe that's why there are some problems with it". (S14)

Although the majority of the previous studies on blended language learning shows that there is a consensus on the positive effect of blended learning, the findings of present study are not very much in correlation with previous ones (Al-Jarf, 2005; Hui, Hu, Clark, Tam & Milton, 2007; Borau, Ullrich, Feng & Shen, 2009; Comas-Quinn, Mar Domingo & Valentine, 2009; Jia, Chen, Ding & Ruan, 2012; Bueno-Alastuey & López Pérez, 2014; Arslan & Şahin-Kızıl, 2010; Kırkgöz, 2011; Caner, 2009; Baturay, Daloğlu & Yıldırım, 2010; Bilgin, 2013). In particular, Bueno-Alastuey & López Pérez (2014) examined the study of 36 university students enrolled in a

language course as part of their degree requirements. Their results showed that learners perceived online component as useful for language learning and for the development of all skills and areas of language in a high proportion. As an another example, the study conducted by Jia, Chen, Ding & Ruan (2012) revealed that blended learning of English class with the individualized vocabulary acquisition and assessment system can improve the students' performance in vocabulary acquisition.

The contrast between present study and previous ones may be explained in various ways and it would be unfair to say that students are not contented with blended learning at all. In the first place, as it was the first time for the majority of students to have an integral online study into their education, their unfamiliarity with this new form of learning may have affected their success or motivation negatively. In addition, despite the intense contact of this generation with technology and their surprising expertise, technical issues and system related errors may have caused this dissatisfaction. Considering the neutral overall attitudes of students towards blended learning and positive interview extracts, blended instruction seems to be regarded as a useful way rather than frivolous efforts, yet it needs some adjustment and revision.

In line with general result of the students' questionnaire, some students have had positive perception about blended learning and stated their positive opinions during the interviews. For example, students 3,5,8 and 14 expressed their contentment about listening practice as follows:

"I am personally happy with blended learning but I think listening audios should be more difficult on the online platform because during the listening exam, what we listen to is much more difficult. But I am generally positive to this blended learning". (S3)

"At the beginning of the year, I almost have no listening skills but with the help of this online platform, I feel like I can understand more. I think it was definitely useful for my listening skill. But, online system has no contribution to my speaking skills." (S5)

"Listening, all audios are uploaded to the system and I can listen many times with even scripts. By this way, I always understand. This develops my listening skill. Reading parts is also one of my favourites because they are very rich in terms of content and visual design." (S8)

"Online platform listening activities are very useful for me". (S14)

As for the vocabulary development, students 3 and 11 found online tool useful and stated their satisfaction as follows:

> "To be honest with you, I am content with the blended learning and online platform. It has some visual parts which helps me develop my vocabulary. In face-to-face instruction, we have opportunity to interact in English with our teachers". (S6)

> "It is the first time I have tried such online platform for language learning, and I cannot say it is completely successful but it still has good sides. For example, it helped me to develop my vocabulary" (S11)

Student 8 also mentioned effectiveness of blended learning in terms of compensation as below:

> "I am happy with this blended learning. Compared to my previous education, having online and face-to-face instruction complete each other". (S8)

All these quotations indicate that they find blended instruction useful to some extent and it contributes to their learning English. It seems that students need more orientation and applications for the effective use of online tools. On the other hand, online program requires them to be autonomous as much as possible in their studies. However, our students begin the preparatory program after high school and it seems that they are not autonomous enough to carry out activities and tasks regularly in line with the face to face instruction. Palfreyman (2003) argues that being autonomous is a cultural phenomenon and mostly promoted in Western cultures. Implementation of such instruction may cause some difficulties in other cultures. According to Yumuk (2002), common way of teaching in Turkey is mainly based on memorisation and traditional teaching methods in which teachers are regarded as the source and the students are the receiver of the knowledge. Therefore, pushing students into such learning environment which requires high level of autonomy may affect them negatively. As blended instruction has been used for the first time in the program, students and instructors may have had some adaptation problems.

The highest mean score in this survey (m=3.91) is the 'Face-to-face Instruction'. Students' attitudes towards in-class learning can be considered as relatively positive. This result indicates the fact that students enjoyed and benefited from face-to-face classroom teaching more compared to online support. The following extracts from the interviews with students confirm that as follows:

"I think it (on line platform) is OK, but I prefer face-to-face instruction more because it is more effective and we can check our understanding and get feedback from our teachers immediately". (S3)

"I can say online system is not as successful as the face-to-face instruction. At least I feel that way". (S7)

"I am happy with the face-to-face instruction but online platform has some problems. I cannot say it is entirely useless but need improvements. It could be better. This year, I cannot say it has very much positive effect on my English". (S10)

In this case, instructors should primarily be given the credit for this contentment. However, there are other issues which should be taken into account while considering this positive attitude. First, teacher support in class and students' social interaction with the instructors and classmates may have made it easier for students to practice language. As they have experienced their previous education mostly in face-to-face settings, they may feel much closer and relaxed in this setting. On the other hand, individual online studies may have been a challenge for the students who have more interpersonal intelligent types and for the ones who are less autonomous. Hence, this increases the possibility to get lost in an individual online study and eventually be dropped off.

As for the final category of the survey, it is rather difficult to determine whether students have positive or negative views. The mean score for the assessment category is 3.05. Since this category has questionnaire items for both online and face-to-face ways of learning, each item should be analysed separately. Table 6 illustrates the mean scores of each questionnaire item related to assessment in blended learning format.

Table 4.2.

*Students' Views on Assessment in Blended Learning.*

| Items | N | $\overline{x}$ | SD |
|---|---|---|---|
| 29. Mentoring about the tasks in face-to-face sessions help us a lot. | 400 | 3.78 | 1.02 |
| 28. Evaluation criteria in the online platform guide us in how and what to do in our tasks/exercises. | 400 | 2.54 | 1.06 |
| 30. Evaluation criteria for the exercises in the online platform are clear and understandable. | 400 | 2.46 | 1.10 |
| 31. Quizzes and mid-term exams during the face to face sessions help me to understand what I have learned and reflect my progress. | 400 | 3.43 | 1.13 |

Starting with the item 28, *Evaluation criteria in the online platform guide us in how and what to do in our tasks/exercises (M = 2.54, SD = 1.06),* we found that online tool in this blended format was not considered sufficient in terms of assessment. Similarly, when we look at the item 30 - *Evaluation criteria for the exercises in the online platform are clear and understandable (M = 2.46, SD = 1.10) - it* justifies the fact that there is an evident discontentment about the evaluative function of online tool. Turning the other side of the blend, regarding face-to-face instruction, the item 29 - *Mentoring about the tasks in face-to-face sessions help us a lot (M = 3.78, SD = 1.02) -* has the highest mean score in terms of assessment. Likewise, the item 31 - *Quizzes and mid-term exams during the face to face sessions help me to understand what I have learned and reflect my progress (M = 3.43, SD = 1.13) -* on the basis of face-to-face assessment has the second highest mean score. The following extracts from the interviews with students confirm that as follows:

> "Writing is definitely one of the disadvantages. We get no feedback at all from our teacher. We get feedback in class from our teacher but I can say that online platform doesn't help me practice all skills." (S6)

"Textbook and its online component are very simple. If it was more challenging, it could prepare us for our academic life better." (S5)

On these grounds, we can argue that in this blended learning mode, online tool is not favoured by the students in terms of assessment. However, the consensus view seems to be that students reflect the progress better during face-to-face instruction and benefit from in-person feedback more. That is to say, students are more in favour of verbal in-person feedback rather than some numerical results they get from a software program.

In summary, the available evidence seems to suggest that the students see blended learning in this program as an effective plan with some consequential faults. For the sake of the curriculum and the success of the program, further remedial changes are required. On these grounds, we can argue that blending online software with face-to-face instruction may sound to be an effective plan, however, creating right blend, that is developing fine online platform which suits students' needs and goals is always a real challenge.

## 4.3 R.Q. 1a. To what extent does blended learning respond to the needs and expectations of the students?

In 21th century, in the new era of learning and teaching, the needs and expectations of language learners are rather different and technology oriented. That is to say, all teaching is somehow blended with technology or net-based solutions. No matter how overrated the positive effect of technology in education, blending an instruction with technology may not be successful unless it is designed according to learners' needs and expectations (Marsh, 2012). In the present survey, questionnaire items 10, 12, 50 seek to find out learners' opinions with respect to complementarity function of the blend (see Table 7). The analysis of the related questionnaire items revealed that the blended learning format was not fully satisfactory to fulfil students' expectations and needs. This could be explained as unsuccessful analysis of the needs prior to curriculum design or as inability of online platform in serving its purpose.

Table 4.3.

*Students' Views on Their Needs and Expectations in Blended Learning.*

| Items | N | $\overline{x}$ | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|
| 50. Online workbook is a useful tool for me to study on my own. | 400 | 2.65 | 1.21 |
| 10. Modules in the online platform meet my needs. | 400 | 2.61 | 1.04 |
| 12. I can study and practice language items in the online platform parallel to the face-to-face schedule. | 400 | 2.51 | 1.15 |

In particular, students partially agree with the items 50, 10 and disagree with the item 12. In line with these rating, following extracts justify the fact that students had both positive and negative opinion about needs and expectations:

"It is good to have all skills practice in one place" (S13)

"Online platform is like a homework. Every time I go home I have something to do to practice my English. Also it helps me to memorize the newly learnt vocabulary" (S3)

"With online studies I cannot develop myself, I get lost with them." (S9)

"I think online studies are waste of time. Students do them just to get scores. I wouldn't do them if they weren't compulsory and didn't have additional value on my final grade." (S15)

## 4.4 R.Q. 1b. What are the innovations brought by blended learning to the students' motivation and attitude in their language learning process?

The questionnaire items below seek to disclose whether blended learning has changed students' understanding of language learning process and their motivation levels. As can be seen in Table 8, the related questionnaire items (49 – 32 – 51 – 41) have mean scores below 3 and only the negative written item (34) - My motivation is very low while I am studying in the online platform (M = 3.43, SD = 1.30) - has higher mean score. These results provide confirmatory evidence that this blend had no positive contribution to students' motivation and did not change students' attitudes radically. In other words, there seems to be a unified objection against the idea that the blend was set

to develop more autonomous and blended learners. Based on these results, it can be stated that the findings are broadly consistent with the major trends of the survey.

Table 4.4.

*Students' Views on Their Motivation Levels and Attitudes in Blended Learning.*

| Items | N | $\overline{x}$ | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|
| 34. My motivation is very low while I am studying in the online platform. | 400 | 3.54 | 1.30 |
| 49. Being able to practice through PC or mobile devices provides huge practicality. | 400 | 2.48 | 1.16 |
| 32. Learning through website makes me responsible for the course. | 400 | 2.36 | 1.16 |
| 51. Teaching program with online practice shifted my whole understanding of language learning and sparked my interest. | 400 | 2.30 | 1.14 |
| 41. Studying in the online platform helps me make plans. | 400 | 2.26 | 1.09 |

Following extracts show that student negative ratings about motivation in the questionnaire are in correlation with the interview extracts.

"As for the drawbacks, I can only say that some exercises are very boring." (S8)

"Online platform is not interactive and it becomes boring after a certain time." (S11)

"It is just a boring workbook that was put online platform." (S12

## 4.5 R.Q.1c. In what ways do the students think blended learning helped them improve their various language competencies, skills?

Contrary to overall trend of the survey findings, the results obtained from questionnaire items regarding the language skills development in blended learning is slightly higher. Student's responses to these items are very close to each other and just

below 3. Their opinions about the effectiveness of online platform in teaching skills could be put somewhere between 'low' and 'medium'. The interesting point to state in this figure is that the item 14, which questions the writing skill development, has lower mean score than the other skills. However, as an example of similar study, Arslan & Sahin-Kızıl (2010) suggest that technology integrated writing classes (blogs were used in their study) have potential to provide more effective writing instruction. Similarly, Adas & Bakir (2013) report (based on their research findings) that integrating blended learning into traditional methods in developing writing abilities has significant benefits. All in all, the data yielded by this figure provides convincing evidence that students are moderate in their views on the development of language skills.

Table 4.5.

*Students' Views on the Development of Language Skills in Blended Learning.*

| Items | N | $\bar{x}$ | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|
| 17. Grammar practice in the online platform helps me develop my competency. | 400 | 2.91 | 1.15 |
| 15. I can extend my vocabulary with exercises in the online platform. | 400 | 2.91 | 1.10 |
| 13. Online Platform provides plenty of opportunities to practice my listening and reading skills. | 400 | 2.90 | 1.22 |
| 16. Grammar practice in the online platform helps me satisfy my needs in learning English. | 400 | 2.90 | 1.15 |
| 14. I can easily do writing assignments and submit to my teacher through online platform. | 400 | 2.47 | 1.24 |

In line with survey findings, the analysis of interviews with students demonstrates that there are both negative opinions and positive statements which argue that online platform is useful for particular skills. In the following extracts students 4,5,8 and 14 stated that in blended learning, online tool contributed to their listening, reading and vocabulary development as follows:

"I think I extended my vocabulary knowledge with online activities because it makes us use the same word in different activities repeatedly. Also, it helps me to develop listening skill but no other skills specifically." (S4)

"At the beginning of the year, I almost have no listening skills but with the help of this online platform, I feel like I can understand more. I think it was definitely useful for my listening skill. Online system has no contribution to my speaking skills." (S5)

"Listening, all audios are uploaded to the system and I can listen many times with even scripts. By this way, I always understand. This develops my listening skill. Reading parts is also one of my favourites because they are very rich in terms of content and visual design." (S8)

"Online platform listening activities are very useful for me". (S14)

On the other hand, some students underlined the advantage of having blended way of instruction. Students 1 and 3 stated that both face-to-face and online instruction helped them develop different skills as shown below:

"It is insufficient in terms of grammar development. I enjoy its vocabulary activities though. In addition, speaking is our essential skill to develop and it can only be developed during face-to-face classes. Therefore, there must me more face-to-face instruction." (S1)

"In the face-to-face instruction, I think my grammar and writing skills developed most. In class, we don't do listening very effectively, it is better to listen online individually." (S3)

With regards to skill development, for students 2,7,9,10,11,12 and 13, online platform was not as efficient as face-to-face instruction. These students declared that they developed their speaking, writing skills and grammar better with face-to-face instruction. This is stated in the following extracts:

"Face-to-face instruction develops our speaking ability and also our thinking ability because the topics in our textbooks are controversial and we always think critically and discuss in classes. Maybe they are academic but at least social issues." (S2)

"Face-to-face instruction develops our writing and speaking skills but I think online system has no positive effect on my skills. Not at all." (S7)

"Online platform has little or no effect on my skill development. Especially in face-to-face instruction, we develop our speaking and writing skills a lot." (S9)

"Face-to-face instruction developed all skills but online instruction has some effect on our vocabulary." (S10)

"I developed my speaking and writing skills with face-to-face instruction especially with our native speaker teachers but online platform has no specific effect on any particular skill." (S11)

"We practice all skills during face-to-face instruction. Online instruction has no significant effect on my language skills. If it was developed better, I think, it still would be insufficient for speaking skill. For that, face-to-face in person interaction is necessary." (S12)

"Generally face-to-face instruction developed my grammar and writing skills. But online studies had no impact on my skill development." (S13)

In summary, on the basis on of the evidence stated above, it seems fair to suggest that there is a consensus in terms of the effectiveness of face-to-face instruction for skills development. However, when it comes to online platform, students' opinions differ considerably. The common belief as a result of the questionnaire is that online platform had little impact on students' skill development. Nonetheless, some positive views arose for some specific skills. In particular, listening skill and vocabulary development come to the fore.

### 4.6 R.Q. 1d. What kind of change does blended learning bring to the classroom atmosphere and students' learning English?

This research question seeks to determine how students view the effect of online tool on their classroom performances. The questionnaire items 48-44-46-47 provided information to answer this question. The data appear to suggest that online tool – considering the mean scores for the related questionnaire items - has little positive contribution to students' in-class performances and their learning (see Table 10). Based on these results, we can argue that online platform – in this blended instruction- is far from being a complementary tool which is meant to foster learners' enthusiasm and effectiveness. Thus, I would like to argue that, in this blended instruction, blending online platform with face-to-face instruction does not seem to have any positive

consequences such as learners following the course with extra care and planning. It rather becomes a burden for students.

Table 4.6.

*Students' Views on the Effect of Blended Learning on Classroom Atmosphere.*

| Items | N | $\overline{x}$ | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|
| 48. Online practice makes me spend more time on my learning. | 400 | 2.53 | 1.17 |
| 44. The online platform helps us prepare for the course. | 400 | 2.27 | 1.07 |
| 46. Online practice boosts my effectiveness in classroom. | 400 | 2.23 | 1.07 |
| 47. Online practice makes me more competitive in my own learning. | 400 | 2.07 | 1.09 |

## 4.7 R.Q. 1e. What are the advantages of blended learning in learning English?

This research question tries to disclose the advantages of blended learning perceived by learners in foreign language learning. The following extracts from the interviews with students demonstrate that students express various advantages. Nonetheless, some other students hold negative views about it.

Students 1 and 13 found online tool in blended learning advantageous in terms of skills and vocabulary practice. This was stated in the following extracts as follows:

"I think it has advantages for vocabulary development. Seeing same words on internet repeatedly helps us to memorize these words." (S1)

"It is good to have all skills practice in one place" (S13)

As for the advantages, majority of the participants agree on the idea that, online platform was a useful tool for practicing and revising. Students 3,4,5,8,10,11 and 15 stated their opinions with regards to that as below:

"Online platform is like a homework. Every time I go home I have something to do to practice my English. Also it helps me to memorize the newly learnt vocabulary" (S3)

"It help to prepare for exams.  For example, I only did the online activities before last monthly exam and I did well in the exam. Online activities help in terms of revising, memorising." (S4)

"Sometimes I don't enjoy some classes and I don't attend. But I can study the subjects I missed on my own via online system." (S5)

"It helps me to revise the missing parts of the lesson. If I miss a lesson, I can easily study at home and compensate. Additionally, it gives me opportunities to do reading and listening exercises." (S8)

"Only advantage is that it gives us chance to revise. And also I find listening parts a bit useful." (S10)

"Revising the words that we learned in class with the online platform is, I think, the biggest advantage." (S11)

"I think it has one advantage, we don't need extra material to study at home. It has everything online in one place. Apart from that, there is no other significant advantage that I can talk about." (S15)

Student 6 stressed the connection between his intelligent type and online tool. This was stated in the following extract as follows:

"I think I have visual intelligence and the online platform helps me to memorize words and I can do in the exams easily. Also, I also feel like it helps listening because by listening again and again, I started understanding better in class listening activities." (S6)

Students 2, 9 and 12 were in favour of face-to-face instruction. This was expressed in the following extracts detailed below:

"If it could be modified and developed better, it could be advantageous but now it has no advantages to me." (S2)

"I think face-to-face instruction is more advantageous. Because I don't learn individually, I like to learn with others so I benefit from face-to-face instruction more." (S9)

"It has not advantages at all. And it is rather null and not designed for us." (S12)

In the questionnaire, students' ratings regarding blended learning was partial agreement and online part of instruction was not appreciated as much as face-to-face classes. Nevertheless, interview extracts show that students were content with certain parts of this blended instruction and this way of instruction in this program could be considered as advantageous to some extent. With regards to advantages of blended learning, Collopy & Arnold (2009) stated that it provides flexible learning for students to personalise their own studies. Similarly, the common point of some extracts above is that some students emphasise the importance of being able to work alone in their own pace and style.

## 4.8 R.Q. 1f. What are the drawbacks of blended learning in learning English?

This research question is concerned with the issue of inconvenience. From the interviews with students, it can be seen that there are certain issues students find rather futile and inadequate.

One of the problematic aspects of the blended instruction for students was the boring and non-interactive format of the online tool. Students 1, 8, 11 and 12 stated their opinions with regards to that as follows:

> "Its very time consuming and you have to spend very long hours to complete activities." (S1)

> "As for the drawbacks, I can only say that some exercises are very boring." (S8)

> "Online platform is not interactive and it becomes boring after a certain time." (S11)

> "It is just a boring workbook that was put online platform." (S12)

System related faults could be considered one of the main drawbacks of blended leaning as students 2, 10 and 14 stated this in the following extracts:

> "The system is boring and it has some bugs. Students can easily find the correct answers without even trying. So it demotivates students." (S2)

> "It has software related bugs. Students get 100 point without writing a word. I think program developers should have checked that before and took and precautions." (S10)

> "There are lots of software related bugs and technical problems. This is very annoying, sometimes just because of a single comma our answers are not accepted by the system." (S14)

On the other hand, as for the writing practice, student 6 found online tool inefficient.

> "Writing is definitely one of the disadvantages. We get no feedback at all from our teacher. We get feedback in class from our teacher but I can say that online platform doesn't help me practice all skills." (S6)

In terms of implication, students 3, 5, 9 and 15 found blended learning problematic for different reasons. These are stated in the following extracts.

> "As for disadvantages, I think online system is not developed for students' skills. As every student learns in different pace and way, it doesn't suit everyone." (S3)

> "Textbook and its online component are very simple. If it was more challenging, it could prepare us for our academic life better." (S5)

> "With online studies I cannot develop myself, I get lost with them." (S9)

> "I think online studies are waste of time. Students do them just to get scores. I wouldn't do them if they weren't compulsory and didn't have additional value on my final grade." (S15)

In any blended learning setting, some negative remarks are always expected and welcomed. These remarks are regarded as valuable feedback for the program's success. The interview extracts above regarding the drawbacks of the online tool should be taken into consideration seriously to refine the blend accurately. In a similar research, Bilgin (2013) found that although blended instruction contributed to students' performance considerably, they expressed discontentment for the reasons such as compulsory use of online materials and lack of print materials. Moreover, interview results of the research also showed

that students valued print materials over online sources. Therefore, no matter how good the blend is, it seems that students tend to stick to their old learning habits and reject the new methods which are imposed on them.

### 4.9. R.Q. 1g. Do the students' perceptions change throughout one-year blended learning instruction?

Table 4.7 illustrates the differences between students' views towards blended learning in two separate administrations. The students were given a questionnaire both at the end of the Fall term and Spring term. This research question seeks to find out whether students opinions change regarding the use and effectiveness of blended learning throughout the academic year. As it was addressed in the first chapter, the time for students to perceive the blend may take longer or vary. Therefore, two separate administrations of the questionnaire were considered as crucial. As can be seen in Table 12, the data reveal that the mean scores of the students' ratings for each questionnaire section in two separate administrations seem to be close. When the 'p' levels are taken into consideration (online platform - .372, Face-to-face Instruction - .932, Assessment - .656, General Views - .292), the results from the t-test appear to suggest that there is no significant difference between two administrations. That is to say, students' attitudes towards blended learning remained the same after the first data collection at the end of the Fall term. Additionally, these results provide verification for the analysis of the students' rating for the first administration.

Table 4.7.

*Comparison of the Students' Views in Two Different Questionnaire Administrations*

|  |  | 1. Administration | | 2. Administration | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | N | $\bar{x}$ | SD | $\bar{x}$ | SD | t | p |
| Online Platform | 400 | 2.67 | .75 | 2.71 | .67 | -.89 | .37 |
| Face-to-Face Instruction | 400 | 3.91 | .70 | 3.90 | .69 | .08 | .93 |
| Assessment | 400 | 3.05 | .71 | 3.07 | .67 | -.44 | .65 |
| General Views | 400 | 2.42 | .81 | 2.48 | .78 | -1.05 | .29 |

**4.10. R.Q. 2. Is there statistically significant difference regarding gender in foreign language learning?**

Table 4.8 illustrates the differences between male and female students' attitudes towards blended learning. In the present study, there were 212 male and 188 female participants. As shown in Table 10, the analysis of independent t – tests reveal that the difference between genders is significant for the categories 'Online Platform' and 'Face-to-face Instruction' (p: .032 / p: .005). The findings show that female participants have higher mean scores for the related categories. That is to say, female participants are more in favour of the implication of the 'Online platform' and 'Face-to-face Instruction'. However, in regards to the categories of 'Assessment' and 'General Views', the results of independent t – tests indicate no significant differences between genders (p: .524 / p: .594).

Table 4.*8.*

*Differences of Students' Views in Respect to Gender*

|  | Male ( 212) | | Female (188) | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | $\bar{x}$ | SD | $\bar{x}$ | SD | t | p |
| Online Platform | 2.59 | .76 | 2.76 | .74 | -2.15 | .03 |
| Face-to-Face Instruction | 3.81 | .72 | 4.01 | .66 | -2.79 | .00 |
| Assessment | 3.03 | .70 | 3.07 | .72 | -.63 | .52 |
| General Views | 2.40 | .80 | 2.44 | .83 | -.53 | .59 |

**4.11. R.Q. 3. What are the instructors' perceptions and attitudes towards blended learning instruction?**

Just as the students, the instructors were also involved in this blended learning experience. This research question of the study attempted to investigate the instructors' attitudes related to blended learning and its implementation process. Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used to collect data. The data gathered for this purpose suggest that instructors have slight positive perceptions of blended learning. The consensus view suggests that online platform in blended learning is a practical, innovative method for students to be more autonomous and to provide more input and individualized practice. Table 4.9 illustrates the mean scores of instructors' responses to questionnaire items.

Table 4.9.

*Instructors' Views on Blended Learning*

| Items | N | $\overline{x}$ | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4. Students can study at their own pace with online platform. | 100 | 4.07 | .93 |
| 3. I believe that students can learn language effectively by integrating the materials in the class with the online platform. | 100 | 4.02 | 1.08 |
| 1. Blended learning has positive impact on students. | 100 | 3.94 | .87 |
| 9. Being able to practice through PC or mobile devices provides huge practicality for students. | 100 | 3.92 | 1.01 |
| 12. Blended learning helps learners develop receptive skills (Listening - Reading). | 100 | 3.90 | 1.07 |
| 2. Blended learning makes students autonomous. | 100 | 3.66 | .93 |
| 7. Blended learning motivates students. | 100 | 3.49 | .96 |
| 11. Blended learning makes the course more communicative. | 100 | 3.45 | .92 |
| 8. Blended learning makes students responsible for the course. | 100 | 3.27 | 1.08 |
| 13. Blended learning helps learners develop productive skills (Speaking - Writing). | 100 | 3.19 | .92 |
| 6. Modules in the online platform meet students' needs. | 100 | 3.04 | .87 |
| 5. Learning the contents through the online activities is easier for students than face-to-face instruction. | 100 | 2.62 | .98 |
| 10. I believe that students can learn English only through the printed materials. | 100 | 2.11 | .70 |
| Average | 100 | 3.61 | .68 |

Although the overall mean score (*M= 3.61, SD= .685*) seems to suggest that there is positive attitude towards blended learning, some outstanding items are worth pointing out. First of all, questionnaire items 3 (*M= 4.02, SD= 1.08*), and 10 (*M= 2.11, SD= .700*) indicate that instructors see online studies as a useful tool. However, the rating for the questionnaire item 5 (*M= 2.62, SD= .982*) shows that instructors consider face-to-face instruction as a primary medium and online studies as more complementary. As for the views of instructors on the effectiveness of blended learning in teaching skills, items 12 (*M= 3.90, SD= 1.07*), and 13 (*M= 3.19, SD= .928*) indicate that blended instruction is efficient for receptive skills but not for productive skills that much.

Similarly, the instructors indicated during the interviews that they were mostly happy with the idea of blended learning, and they also believe that blended learning has positive effect on students' learning. The following extracts from the interviews with instructors reflect their ideas related to their perception of blended learning.

With regards to language exposure, which is considered one of the most important tenet of language learning, one instructor stressed the positive effect of blended learning for amount of exposure as shown in the following extract:

> "In language learning, we always try to raise the amount of the exposure
> in terms of foreign language. I think the online platform, which students
> could access even with their mobile phones, makes them spend more
> time with English. I like it."

The following extracts show that instructors were content with the implementation of blended learning as it provided practice opportunities for listening skill, grammar and vocabulary.

> "As our students are never willing to read outside the classroom, they
> generally fail to extend their vocabulary. But what I observed this year is,
> just because they practice the words they learnt in online platform, their
> written productions were better in terms of lexical richness."

> "Our blended system at schools has many advantages. First, it gives
> grammatical and lexical practice to students. And, I find listening
> exercises very useful for them."

"We are living in a country where English is not spoken as a mother tongue. Therefore, students have less listening and speaking practice." "CDs cannot be their everyday regular study practice. But in this online platform, they can listen graded audios anytime. So this is very good. Also, the online activities are correlated with the textbook. Students can follow the course regularly on the platform. This makes them more organised and they don't fall behind the course. I wish we had had such opportunities when learning English."

"Vocabulary is the major problem of foreign language learners. One of the biggest advantages of this online platform is that it gives students various – mostly fun – vocabulary exercises. For example; puzzles, matching etc. (…) In this century, I think every institution should integrate technology into their teaching."

Similarly, another instructor put forward the positive contribution of online platform to students' motivation as below:

"I think blended learning and this Macmillan Online workbook make learners more motivated for the course. Today, it is really difficult to keep students motivated during class hours all the time. I think, online activities compensate this situation. Also, I think students benefited a lot from online vocabulary activities."

As for the practicality, two instructors expressed their opinions about how blended instruction made learning easier for students as follows:

"It is a platform worth trying. It has more advantages than disadvantages. It allows teachers to monitor their students' progress more closely than traditional methods. This way of learning is also very practical, and students can assess it anytime and anywhere. (…) I think blended learning boosted my students interest and engagement."

"I think technology always makes learning easy. Today with this practicality, one can learn a language in a very short time."

Turning the other side of the argument, some instructors – although they are happy with the idea of blended learning - expressed some problems about the implication of the blended instruction. The following extracts reflect instructors' opinions with regards to drawbacks of the blended instruction.

"Registration process was so long and painful. I think this demotivated the students at the beginning of the course. It should be simpler. Not everybody is expert in technology."

"I liked the idea and also the Macmillan Online Workbook. But it shouldn't have been compulsory for students because they just do it for grade not for self-development."

"The online platform is good but not enough. We shouldn't stop doing in-class grammar exercises. They learn better when we explain some points. As for listening, online platform is a must."

"I couldn't create my online class for a long time. There should be more technical help for some teachers. The online activities are good but the students always tell that they get bored. And online platform has nothing for speaking skill."

"The online platform is much simpler than I expected. It is full of some gap filling and matching exercises. I think it should be more interactive and more creative."

In summary, these results provide evidence that in this one-year blended language program instructors were mostly content with both the idea and the implementation of blended format, and they hold the view that student benefited from this way of learning considerably. However, according to the instructors, there are some important points that should be developed. Technical difficulties, compulsory implication and null design of the platform are the major drawback of the blended learning that the instructors mentioned. Additionally, the disparity between students and instructors is understandable as there may not be correspondence between what instructors want and what students actually need. Supporting this, Moskal et al. (2013) state that success of blended instruction depends heavily in accordance between institutional and student goals.

**CHAPTER 5**

**CONCLUSION**

**5.1 Summary**

In this chapter, firstly, a brief summary of the study was presented, and then the conclusions drawn from the findings were included. Lastly, proposals for researchers and further studies were suggested.

This study sought to investigate the attitudes of the students and instructors towards the application of blended learning in English preparatory program at Dokuz Eylül University, the School of Foreign Languages in an academic year. The question of how to create a right blend in an EFL setting was the starting point not just because it is substantial challenge of blended learning but also because it is the researcher's firm belief that technology integrated education regardless of pedagogical implications is common misconception in the field. Another motive for conducting this study was to discover the compatibility between blended learning and EFL settings.

In this research study to get participants' views, both qualitative and quantitative research tools were employed. In this mixed method approach, the researcher's main concern was to include large number of participants via questionnaires. By this way, considering the probability function of the surveys, the researcher tries to get a clear picture of the reflections of blended learning in the institution. Additionally, to have an in-depth analysis of participants' views and to disclose the specific points regarding the drawbacks and strengths of the blended instruction, interviews – as a way of qualitative measurement- were conducted. The population of the study consisted of 400 students attending English Preparatory Class at School of Foreign Languages, Dokuz Eylül University in the autumn and spring semesters of 2015-2016 academic year. Additionally, a separate questionnaire was developed and administered to 100 instructors in the institution. As for the qualitative measurements, 10 students and 10 instructors were interviewed.

Prior to piloting administration, students were given six weeks with the blended instruction to let them get used to this new model of teaching and also to make them have better judgement on questionnaire items. At the end of the Fall term, 400 students completed the questionnaire. The data gathered from the questionnaire were computed and numerical descriptions were presented. To compare the students' responses and find

out the possible change in students' attitudes towards blended learning, the same questionnaire was administered to the same sample group at the end of the spring term again. The interviews, which were conducted with students and instructors at the end of the academic year, were transcribed and coded into certain categories.

The findings of the present study show that students' attitudes towards blended learning instruction are neutral, which means that they partially agree with the activities carried out in the program. However, the online aspect is lower compared to face-to-face instruction. These negative results were verified with the semi-structured interviews which were analysed by categorizing the students' responses. Instructors' attitudes for blended learning were relatively higher. The extracts from the interviews were also in line with the questionnaire ratings of instructors. As for the comparison of the students' responses in two separate questionnaire administrations, the findings gathered from t-test revealed that there was no significant difference.

## 5.2 Conclusions

The findings of the study provided detailed information about how teachers and students experienced teaching and learning in a blended learning environment. The data yielded by this study provide strong evidence that student participants have some positive attitudes as well as negative towards blended learning English course in their institution. On the other hand, instructor participants expressed relatively positive opinions about the idea and the implementation of the blended instruction.

*Brief implications of the results*

With regards to students' attitudes towards blended learning, the analysis of the questionnaires revealed that majority of the students found face-to-face instruction more effective than online studies. This could be explained with the students' readiness level for a blended instruction and adaptation. For students having only traditional face-to-face instruction in their previous education, it is expected for them not to accept new teaching model readily. To get better results, new way of instruction should be piloted with small groups. Furthermore, interview scripts showed that students were in favour of the idea of blended learning but not satisfied with the implementation and online tool. In such cases, amendment of the online tool should be the first action plan since it plays the major role in the success of blended instruction.

As for language skills, there was a consensus that online platform was an effective tool to practice listening and vocabulary. In this sense, questionnaire ratings and interview scripts are very much in line with each other.

The analysis of the survey provides ample evidence that students were not very much motivated with the blended learning. Additionally, the analysis of the interviews indicates that some students (40%) considered online studies as a burden. Motivation level of students in blended instruction is strongly connected with students' overall language learning desire. Besides, institutional policies such as putting deadline for online studies and making them compulsory may have been negative factors for students' low motivation level.

On the whole, revising opportunity, vocabulary/listening practice via online tool and its flexibility were considered as advantages. On the other hand, boring exercises, software related failures and non-interactive format of online platform were featured drawbacks of the blended learning.

Compared to students, instructors had more positive attitudes towards blended learning. They stated that it was good and effective method for language learning. They also emphasized positive contribution of blended learning to vocabulary and listening skill development. However, some instructors expressed dissatisfaction related to the technical aspects of the online set up.

As for material design, the outstanding point is that for online platforms, interactive studies instead of some null workbook type of exercises are more favourable for students. Moreover, registration process and user friendly applications are major factors for students' enthusiasm and success.

## 5.3 Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the results of this study, it is possible to suggest some recommendations for future research in the area of blended language learning. First of all, although the findings of this study have representative function for similar EFL settings, this study should be replicated in different EFL settings. In addition, online components and the form of blended learning have numerous variations. Therefore, the perception of blended learning could be different in other settings because of the tool and participants. Another area that deserves attention in future research is the comparison of the perceptions of participants from different backgrounds, e.g. rural –

urban. A final recommendation for the future studies is that curriculum designers, program developers and administrative actors in an institution could be included in similar researches.

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**Appendices**

Appendix 1

## Üniversite öğrencilerinin harmanlanmış eğitim(yüz yüze ve internet üzerinden) ve uygulama süreci üzerine görüş anketi

Bu anket yabancı dil eğitimi kapsamında üniversite öğrencilerinin harmanlanmış eğitim hakkındaki görüş ve düşüncelerini tespit etmek amacıyla hazırlanmıştır. Ankette bulunan sorulara vereceğiniz yanıtların doğruluğu, araştırmanın niteliği açısından oldukça önemlidir

| Okt. Ersin Balcı | Doç. Dr. Turan Paker |
|---|---|
| Dokuz Eylül Universitesi | Pamukkale Üniversitesi |

**Bu bölümde lütfen uygun boşluklara kişisel bilgilerinizi yazınız. 3. şahıslarla paylaşılmayacaktır.**

Adı Soyadı:　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　Seviye:
Sınıfı:　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　Tarih:
Cinsiyet:　Erkek:　☐　　　Kadın:　☐　　　　　Yaş:

**Bu bölümde ki ifadelere kişisel görüşlerinizi 1'den 5'e kadar olan değerlendirme kriterlerini esas alarak belirtiniz.**

| SORULAR | 1 Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum | 2 Katılmıyorum | 3 Kısmen Katılıyorum | 4 Katılıyorum | 5 Kesinlikle Katılıyorum |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **a. Internet Portalı ( Kullanım - İçerik)** | | | | | |
| 1 Internet üzerindeki çalışmalar dersleri daha kolay takip etmemi sağlıyor. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2 Internet portalında ihtiyaç duyduğum her an yardım alabiliyorum. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3 Internet portalına istediğim her yerde erişim sağlayabiliyorum. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4 Internet portalındaki yönlendirmeler oldukça yeterli. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5 Internet portalını oldukça net ve kullanışlı buluyorum. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 Internet üzerinden yapılan çalışmalar yüzyüze yapılan eğitimler kadar etkili değil. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7 Internet portalındaki bölümler oldukça kapsamlı ve kurs hedeflerine yönelik hazırlanmış. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8 Tüm bölümlerdeki amaçlar açıkça belirtilmiş | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9 Internet portalındaki tüm alıştırmalar net bir şekilde açıklanmıştır. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10 Internet portalındaki bölümler öğrenme ihtiyaçlarımı karşılıyor. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11 Internet üzerinden yapılan çalışmalar yüzyüze yapılan eğitimleri tamamlıyor. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12 Internet portalındaki çalışmaları yüzyüze derslere paralel olarak yapabiliyorum. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13 Internet portalı bana birçok dinleme ve okuma pratiği yapma fırsatı veriyor. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | SORULAR | 1 Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum | 2 Katılmıyorum | 3 Kısmen Katılıyorum | 4 Katılıyorum | 5 Kesinlikle Katılıyorum |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **a. Internet Portalı ( Kullanım - İçerik)** | | | | | |
| 14 | Internet portalında kolayca yazma alıştırması yapıp öğretmenime gönderebiliyorum. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15 | Internet portalındaki alıştırmalarla kelime bilgimi geliştirebiliyorum. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16 | Internet portalındaki gramer çalışmaları bu konudaki ihtiyacımı gideriyor. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17 | Internet portalındaki gramer çalışmaları bu konudaki yeterliliğimi geliştiriyor. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | **b.Yüzyüze dersler (Uygulama - İçerik)** | | | | | |
| 18 | Sınıfta verilen çalışma kağıtları (workshheet) öğrendiklerimizi anlamamızı sağlıyor. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19 | Yüzyüze derslerde öğretmenimiz kaçırdığımız konuları tekrarlıyor ve eksikliklerimizi gideriyor. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20 | Yüzyüze derslerde genellikle tüm sorularıma cevap bulabiliyorum. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 21 | Yüzyüze dersler ünitenin kapsamını detaylı bir şekilde öğrenmemizi sağlıyor. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 22 | Yüzyüze derslerdeki tartışma ve paylaşım ortamını çok iyi buluyorum. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 23 | Yüzyüze derslerde iletişime dayalı çalışmalar yapmak internet üzerinden yapılan çalışmalara göre daha iyi. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 24 | Yüzyüze iletişim, dersi daha iyi anlamamız için gerekli. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 25 | Yüzyüze derslerdeki sözsüz ifadeler ve mimikler anlamamızda etkili. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 26 | Yüzyüze dersler daha iyi öğrenmemi ve öğrendiklerimin kalıcı olmasını sağlıyor. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27 | Internet çalışmalarında sorun yaşadığımızda yüzyüze derslerde destek alabiliyoruz. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | **c.Değerlendirme** | | | | | |
| 28 | Internet portalındaki alıştırmaların değerlendirme kriterleri bizi neyi nasıl yapacağımız konusunda yönlendiriyor. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 29 | Yüzyüze derslerdeki alıştırmalarda öğretmenlerin kılavuzluğu bize çok yardımcı oluyor. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 30 | Internet portalındaki alıştırmaların değerlendirme kriterleri oldukça net ve anlaşılır. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 31 | Yüz yüze dersler süresince yapılan quizler ve ara sınavlar neyi ne kadar öğrendiğimizi ve gelişimimizi gösteriyor. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | SORULAR | **1**<br>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum | **2**<br>Katılmıyorum | **3**<br>Kısmen Katılıyorum | **4**<br>Katılıyorum | **5**<br>Kesinlikle Katılıyorum |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

**d.Öğrencilerin harmanlanmış eğitim üzerine genel görüşleri**

| | SORULAR | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 32 | Internet üzerinden yapılan çalışmalar beni daha sorumlu kılıyor. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 33 | Internet üzerinden yapılan çalışmalarla öğrenmek sınıfta kullanılan materyallere göre daha ilgi çekici. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 34 | Internet portalında çalışırken motivasyonum düşük oluyor. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 35 | Internet üzerinden yapılan çalışmalar oldukça yeni ve farklı bir yöntem. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 36 | Internet üzerinden çalışma yapmak benim için oldukça zor. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 37 | Yüzyüze derslere internet üzerinden yapılan çalışmalarla hazırlanıp girmek öğrenmeme büyük katkı sağlıyor. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 38 | Bence internet üzerinden öğrenme çok etkili bir yöntem. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 39 | Internet portalında kendi başıma daha sessiz ve rahat bir ortamda çalışabiliyorum. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 40 | Konuyu internet üzerinden yapılan çalışmalarla öğrenme benim için daha kolay. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 41 | Internet portalı bana çalışmalarımda plan yapma imkanı sağlıyor. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 42 | Internet üzerinden yapılan çalışmalarda kendi hızıma göre çalışabiliyorum. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 43 | Internet üzerinden yapılan çalışmalarda sıkılıyorum. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 44 | Internet portalı bizi yüzyüze derse hazırlıyor. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 45 | Internet portalında tekrar tekrar çalışabiliyorum. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 46 | Internet üzerinden yapılan çalışmalar sınıf içindeki etkinliğimi arttırıyor. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 47 | Internet üzerinden yapılan çalışmalar beni daha mücadeleci yapıyor. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 48 | Internet portalı kendi öğrenmeme daha fazla vakit harcamamı sağlıyor. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 49 | Bilgisayar veya mobil cihazlar üzerinden ders çalışmak bana büyük kolaylık sağlıyor. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 50 | Bireysel çalışmalarda internet portalı çok yararlı bir araç. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 51 | Internet portalı dahil edilmiş bir eğitim programı dil eğitimine olan bakış açımı değiştirdi. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 52 | Internet üzerinden yapılan çalışmalar benim için gereksiz ve sinir bozucu. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Appendix 2

## Questionnaire on instructors' views on blended learning (face-to-face + online) and its implementation process

**We would like to ask you to help us by answering the following questions concerning foreign language learning. This survey is conducted to better understand instructors' views on blended learning. Please give your answers sincerely as only this will guarantee the success of the investigation.**

**In this section please write your personal information below. These will be kept confidential.**

*I.Name:*

*II. Gender:* [____]Male [____]Female

*III.Years of experience:*

[____] 1-3     [____] 3-5     [____] 5-10

[____] 10-15    [____] More than 15 years

Date:

*IV. Your educational background:*

BA Department:

MA Department:

        Graduate?: [____]Yes [____]No [____] Student

PhD Department:

        Graduate?: [____]Yes [____]No [____] Student

**In the following section we would like you to answer some questions by simply giving marks from 1 to 5.**

| | QUESTIONS | 1<br>Strongly Disagree | 2<br>Disagree | 3<br>Partially Agree | 4<br>Agree | 5<br>Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Instructors' views on blended learning in general** | | | | | |
| 1 | Blended learning has positive impact on students. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2 | Blended learning makes students autonomous | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3 | I believe that students can learn language effectively by integrating the materials in the class with the online platform. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4 | Students can study at their own pace with online platform | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5 | Learning the contents through the online activities is easier for students than face-to-face instruction | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 | Modules in the in the online platform meet students' needs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7 | Blended learning motivates students | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8 | Blended learning makes students responsible for the course. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9 | Being able to practice through PC or mobile devices provides huge practicality for students | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10 | I believe that students can learn English only through the printed materials. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11 | Blended learning makes the course more communicative. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12 | Blended learning helps learners develop receptive skills (Listening - Reading) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13 | Blended learning helps learners develop productive skills (Speaking - Writing) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Appendix 3

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS ON BLENDED LEARNING FOR STUDENTS

1. What do you think about the experience of having a Blended Learning course?

2. Do you think this course has any advantages for the students? Which?

3. Do you think this course has any disadvantages for the students? Which?

4. Which skills do you think blended learning helps you to develop?

5. What do you like the most about this course?

6. What do you like the least about this course?

7. If you could suggest changes to this course what would you suggest?

8. Would you like to take more courses that use blended learning? Why?

Appendix 4

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS ON BLENDED LEARNING FOR INSTRUCTORS

1. What do you think about the experience of teaching a Blended Learning course?

2. What challenges do you face when implementing this Blended Learning course?

3. Do you think this course has any advantages for the teachers?

4. Do you think this course has any advantages for the students?

5. Do you think this course has any disadvantages for the teachers?

6. Do you think this course has any disadvantages for the students?

7. What do you like the most about this course?

8. What do you like the least about this course?

9. If you could make changes in this course, what would you change? Why?

10. How would you describe the amount of support available to you during the semesters?

Appendix 5

Back to Unit    Grammar reference                    Go to another section    ‹ ›

Open Mind Intermediate > Unit 6 > Decisions, decisions

## Grammar 1: third conditional

Select the correct options to complete the sentences.

1. What [_____ ▼] if you [_____ ▼]
   a mus
   - had you done
   - would you have done
   - should you have done

2. I [_____] [_____] if I [_____ ▼] to
   university.

3. If she [_____ ▼] to study science, she
   [_____ ▼] a doctor.

4. If you [_____ ▼] me who she was, I
   [_____ ▼] her!

5. I [_____ ▼] this house if you
   [_____ ▼] me the money.

6. He [_____ ▼] his driving test if he
   [_____ ▼] so nervous.

‹  (1)  2  3  ›                    Submit answer    Show correct answers

Open Mind Pre-intermediate > Unit 2 > Video

## Video: While you watch



Complete the statements from the video with the correct adjective.

1. I don't know of any other festival which has as much [_____] comedy as the
   Edinburgh Fringe.

2. I saw a ballet yesterday and it was [_____]!

3. I saw a physical theatre performance yesterday. It was a bit like dance, but there wasn't as
   much music. It was ... [_____].

## Grammar 1: comparatives with as ... as / not as ... as

Put the words into the correct order to make sentences.

1. Art | as | galleries | museums | as | interesting | aren't | .

2. as | isn't | photography | as | easy | painting | .

3. as | aren't | interesting | TV shows | films | as | .

4. isn't | hip-hop | country music | dull | as | as | .

## Listening: identifying speakers' opinions

Listen and select the adjectives you hear in the conversation.

▶ ■ 00:00 00:46 💬 🔊
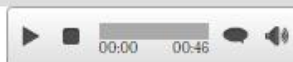
☐ brilliant  ☐ hilarious  ☐ weird  ☐ dull  ☐ fascinating  ☐ incredible  ☐ rubbish  ☐ ridiculous

## Listening: identifying speakers' opinions

Listen to two friends talking about a film.
Select *T* (true) or *F* (false).

1. The man liked the film.
   ○ T  ○ F

2. The man loves comedies.
   ○ T  ○ F

3. The man thinks comedies aren't as good as action films.
   ○ T  ○ F

4. The woman liked the film.
   ○ T  ○ F

5. The woman says the film was as good as the director's last film.
   ○ T  ○ F

## Read and write

Read Max's film review. Then select the correct answers.

Hide review

www.film_reviews.com/forums

**FORUMS WEB**          < previous   next >                    LOGIN

HOME
JOURNALS
FORUMS
PICTURES
FRIENDS

Topic: Prometheus
Comment: posted 19th March

I'm a big fan of sci-fi horror films and the *Alien* films are the best sci-fi films of all time in my opinion, so I was really excited about seeing *Prometheus*, the latest film in the *Alien* series. It's by the same director, Ridley Scott, but it is different from the other *Alien* films because it takes place before the other films start. In this film, a team of space explorers set out to find the origins of human life on another planet. They discover something that is very weird and strange! This film isn't as scary as the previous films, but it's just as powerful especially because of all the special effects and computer graphics. I'm sure it will become a classic.

Max

1. What is the name of the film?
   ○ Ridley Scott
   ○ Prometheus
   ○ Alien

2. What kind of film is it?
   ○ sci-fi horror
   ○ romance
   ○ documentary

## Vocabulary 1: adjectives for expressing opinions

Put the adjectives into the correct categories.

fascinating    ridiculous                    dull    hilarious

| Positive | Negative |
|----------|----------|
| brilliant    incredible | rubbish    weird |

## Writing: linking sentences

Match the sentence beginnings to the endings.

it helps me feel relaxed and happier.    I go to a gallery once a month.

I prefer to send text messages.    I can learn about other cultures.

1. Phone calls can be expensive so [          ]

2. Music is important to me because [          ]

3. I love modern art so [          ]

4. Foreign films are interesting because [          ]

## Writing: linking sentences

Complete the conversation with *because* or *so*.

**Pamela:** Why weren't you at art class last night?

**Mike:** [ Because ] I went to the theatre with my family. It was my sister's birthday. She loves musicals [          ] we went to see *The Phantom of the Opera*.

**Pamela:** Really! Was it good?

**Mike:** Yes, I enjoyed it, but I don't like missing our art classes [          ], you know, art is my favourite subject.

**Pamela:** I know, but yesterday the teacher was ill [          ] we all went to the art gallery. It was great!

## Read and write

# Over to you

Choose a film that you saw recently and answer the questions below. Use your answers to write a paragraph in the box describing your opinion.

**1. What kind of film is it?**

**2. What is it about?**

**3. What is special about it?**

**4. Write three adjectives to describe the film and say why you chose them.**

*The film is scary because the house is haunted.*

**WRITING TUTOR**

*I think this film is exciting because ...*
*This film is not as ... as other (action) films because ...*
*This film is very ... so I think that ...*

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