



**AN EVALUATION OF THE BLENDED LEARNING PROGRAM OF  
ANKARA YILDIRIM BEYAZIT UNIVERSITY PREPARATORY  
SCHOOL BASED ON STUDENTS' AND INSTRUCTORS'  
PERSPECTIVES**

**Ayşe Gül Bodur**

**MA THESIS**

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## TELİF HAKKI VE TEZ FOTOKOPİ İZİN FORMU

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İngilizce Adı : An Evaluation of the Blended Learning Program of Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University Preparatory School Based on Students' and Instructors' Perspectives

## **ETİK İLKELERE UYGUNLUK BEYANI**

Tez yazma sürecinde bilimsel ve etik ilkelere uyduđumu, yararlandıđım tüm kaynakları kaynak gösterme ilkelerine uygun olarak kaynakçada belirttiđimi ve bölümler dışındaki tüm ifadelerin şahsıma ait olduđunu beyan ederim.

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Ayşe Gül BODUR tarafından hazırlanan “An Evaluation of the Blended Learning Program of Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University Preparatory School Based on Students’ and Instructors’ Perspectives” adlı tez çalışması aşağıdaki jüri tarafından oybirliği ile Gazi Üniversitesi İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı’nda Yüksek Lisans tezi olarak kabul edilmiştir.

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Bu tezin İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı’nda Yüksek Lisans tezi olması için şartları yerine getirdiğini onaylıyorum.

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*To my beloved grandfather, Mehmet Bodur*

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HARMANLANMIŞ ÖĞRENME PROGRAMININ ÖĞRENCİ VE  
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**ÖZ**

Bu tez çalışması, Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt Üniversitesi Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu'nda yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğrenen tekrar öğrencileri için sunulan harmanlanmış öğrenme programına yönelik, programın güçlü ve zayıf yönlerinin ortaya çıkarmak ve gerekli değişiklikleri önermek amacıyla öğrenci ve öğretim elemanlarının algı ve görüşlerini analiz etmeyi hedeflemektedir. Program çevrim içi etkinlikler, teknoloji, sınıf içi etkinlikler, sınavlar, kendi kendine çalışma becerisi, ve öğretim elemanı bileşenleri açısından incelenmiştir. Ayrıca, anket maddelerine verilen cevaplarda cinsiyete göre anlamlı bir farklılık olup olmadığı araştırılmıştır. Nitel ve nicel veri toplamak amacıyla karma yöntem kullanılmıştır. Veri toplama üç aşamada gerçekleşmiştir. İlk olarak, nicel veri araştırmacı tarafından geliştirilen bir anket aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. 2016-2017 eğitim öğretim yılında harmanlanmış öğretim programına kayıtlı 89 öğrenci anketi cevaplamıştır. İkinci aşamada 22 öğrenci amaçsal örnekleme yöntemiyle görüşme yapılmak üzere seçilmiştir. Üçüncü aşamada programda ders veren tüm öğretim elemanları ile (N=5) görüşülmüştür. Nicel veri analizi sonucunda ankete verilen cevaplarda cinsiyete göre istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bazı farklılıklar bulunmuştur. Nicel ve nitel veri analizi, programın bazı güçlü yanları ve geliştirilmesi gereken alanları olduğunu göstermiştir. Genel olarak, teknoloji, bazı sınıf-içi etkinlikleri ve sınav bileşenlerine yönelik öğrenci ve öğretim elemanı algıları olumludur. Ayrıca, öğrencilere göre öğretim elemanları da programın bir diğer güçlü yönüdür. Programın çevrim içi ve sınıf içi etkinliklerini başarılı bir şekilde birleştirdiği söylenebilir. Ayrıca, çevrim içi ve sınıf içi etkinliklerinin öğrencilerin dil gelişimine katkı



sağlayabileceği çıkarımı yapılabilir. Fakat çevrim içi ödevlerin, öğrenciler için yeterince ilgi çekici olmadığı görülmüştür. Öğrenciler açısından, hem sınıf-içi hem çevrim-içi etkinliklerde yeterli miktarda konuşma etkinliklerinin olmadığı görülmektedir. Diğer yandan, öğretmenler açısından programın en zayıf yanı öğrencilerin motivasyon ve özerklik eksikliğidir. Son olarak, programın zayıf yönlerine dayanarak daha etkili harmanlanmış öğrenme uygulaması için bazı düzenleme önerileri sunulmuştur.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Harmanlanmış Öğrenme, dil programı değerlendirmesi, çevrim-içi öğrenme, öğrenci algıları, öğretim elemanı algıları

**Sayfa Adedi:** 181

**Danışman:** Doç. Dr. Asuman AŞIK



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**ABSTRACT**

This thesis aims at analysing students' and instructors' perceptions on the blended learning program offered for repeat EFL students at Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University School of Foreign Languages, Turkey in order to reveal strengths and weakness of the program and to suggest necessary adjustments. Online practices, technology, in-class practices, examinations, self-study skills, and instructors were the aspects of the blended program that were examined. Also, whether student responses to the questionnaire differ in terms of gender was investigated. The mixed method approach was employed to gather quantitative and qualitative data. The data collection was carried out in three phases. First of all, quantitative data were collected via a questionnaire developed by the researcher. Eighty nine students who were enrolled in the program during 2016-2017 academic year responded to the questionnaire. In the second phase, 22 students were chosen to be interviewed through purposeful sampling. In the third phase, all instructors (N=5) were interviewed. The analysis of the quantitative data indicated that few statistically significant

differences in responses to the questionnaire items were found in terms of gender. Also, qualitative and quantitative data showed that the blended program had some strengths as well as some areas which need improvement. Overall, student and instructor perceptions are positive regarding technology, some in-class practices, and examination components of the program. Also, instructors are another strength of the program according to the students. It can be concluded that online and in-class modes were successfully integrated. Also, it can be deduced that online assignments and in-class practices had the potential to contribute to students' language development. However, it was revealed that online assignments were not interesting enough for the students. From the students' perspectives, both in-class and online practices lack speaking tasks. On the other hand, for the instructors, the main weakness of the program was students' lack of student motivation and autonomy. Finally, based on the weaknesses of the program, some recommendations for modifications were made for more effective implementation of blended learning.

Key words: Blended learning, language program evaluation, online learning, student perceptions, instructor perceptions

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Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Asuman AŐIK

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AGE	Assessment in General English
AYBU SFL	Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt Üniversitesi Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu
CAI	Computer Assisted Instruction
CALL	Computer Assisted Language Learning
CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference
CMC	Computer Mediated Communication
CMS	Course Management Systems
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
ILC	Independent Learning Center
IT	Information Technologies
LAN	Local Area Network
LMS	Learning Management System
MLE	Managed Learning Environment
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
VLE	Virtual Learning Environment

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of the sections; background of the study, statement of the problem, aim of the study, significance of the study, assumptions of the study, limitations of the study and definitions of the terms.

### **Background of the Study**

Recent developments in technology have added a new dimension to foreign language learning and teaching. Thanks to the immediate accessibility to information and people through the improvements in technology, there has been a significant transformation in our daily lives. The common use of mobile devices such as smartphones, tablets, or laptops enabled people to combine physical and online activities in order to benefit from the strengths of each mode (Stein & Graham, 2014).

Technology enables its users to reach authentic spoken and written language materials, to do a wide range of exercises, to organize and monitor learning and progress (Nunan, 2013, p. 143). Nunan (2013) suggests that the roles of technology in second language instruction include being “a carrier of content, an instructional practice tool, a learning management tool, and a communication device” (pp. 142-143). Work related to using electronic technologies in language teaching and learning is generally categorized under the title of “Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL)” (Gruba & Hinkelman, 2012, p. 5).

As individuals who are born into technological advances, learners expect technology to be all-around their lives. Stein and Graham (2014) point out that it is essential for teachers to

respond to the changing needs of the “digital natives” by teaching differently, and that learning will be effective when it fulfills learners’ needs (p. 12). Therefore, the shift in student characteristics and expectations necessitates the adoption of blended learning designs, in which students can actively and collaboratively participate (Garrison & Vaughan, 2008).

Although the term blended learning has been defined broadly as the combination of any two modes of instruction such as combining instructional methods, or combining delivery media, Graham (2006) states that defining blended learning as the combination of face-to-face instruction with online instruction reflects the real meaning of blended learning better. Blended courses aim to create a new learning environment by mixing traditional and online teaching, which provides flexibility, efficiency, and convenience to learners (Stein & Graham, 2014, p. 12). According to Graham (2006), face-to-face instruction and online instruction occurred as two very different and separate instructional modes in the past; the first was addressing the needs of learners in a teacher-directed environment while the second was used in self-directed learning environments. Blended learning combines these two different modes.

Graham (2006) predicts that as the trend towards using blended systems is going up, it will become normalized to use the word learning instead of blended learning. According to Garrison and Vaughan (2008), higher education experienced a shift from a passive-teacher centered approach towards a collaborative one due to the improvements in communications technology, institutions’ efforts in reducing the costs, and dissatisfactions with learning experiences in higher education.

As Masie (2006) states, one reason for employing blended learning is that as learners have a variety of learner styles, learning through multiple ways and experiencing various learning processes help them master the content. As well as corresponding to the contemporary and connected lifestyle, blended learning also enhances access and convenience; improves learning; and decreases costs (Stein & Graham, 2014, p. 14). With blended learning, it is possible to create a learning environment presenting learning at the right time and at the right place such as at work, in schools, or at home for each learner (Thorne, 2003, p. 18).

Students have the opportunity to get guidance both from teachers and the syllabus in their class time and from online resources and activities at the same time with the help of blended learning practices. In addition, blended courses provide students with the chance to direct their learning activities themselves in line with their own pace and needs (Stein & Graham, 2014, pp. 15-16).

There are some issues that need to be considered while employing blended learning practices. Garrison and Vaughan (2008) emphasize that educators should carefully think about and decide the time that should be allocated for the class time. Also with the adoption of blended approaches, training learners and instructors with necessary technological skills, changing the organizational culture and increased need on instructor time are some of the challenges of applying blended learning (Graham, 2006). According to Hofmann (2006), although blended learning seems to be a perfect option for instruction, there are some barriers preventing its becoming the best way to teach. These barriers include redesigning an existing program instead of developing a new one, creating a program without following the right steps, focusing on the in-class elements and undervaluing the online aspect, traditional organizational culture, and inexperienced learners, administrators, and instructors.

Technological developments are heading program developers to blended designs. In order to create an efficient blended learning design, program evaluation is an important step in the process of program development. Evaluation in language programs can have many meanings. To put simply, it is judgments about the program components by students, teachers, or external assessors, which reflect the link between program components, procedures, processes, and outcomes in order to understand the value of the program and to improve this value (Kiely & Rea-Dickins, 2005, p. 5). Language program evaluation is the examination of language-related interventions, the elements that foster or limit them, and the effects of these interventions (Norris, 2016). Norris (2016) suggests that program evaluation establishes a framework for finding what works and developing practical solutions for improvement.

In this study, a blended learning program was evaluated in an effort to reveal the strengths and weaknesses of several components of the program and to recommend necessary modifications. At Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University School of Foreign Languages (AYBU SFL), a one-year blended course is offered for repeat students who failed the



Assessment in General English (AGE) exam at the end of their first year at Preparatory School. Blended Program comprises of 8 hours in-class courses and 12 hours online assignments. These students are required to attend the classes regularly, do the assigned online homework and take the exams in their levels. Online assignments account for 35 percent of the overall assessment criteria in one period. Sixty-five percent of the overall score comes from the midterms, quizzes and in-class portfolio assessment (Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University, 2016).

In the following parts, the problem and the gap in the literature are clarified. The aims and the research questions of the study are presented. Also, the significance of the study is described in a detailed way in line with the literature. Finally, assumptions that base the data collection procedure and the limitations are clarified.

### **Statement of the Problem**

This study was conducted to reveal the perceptions of the students and instructors of their blended learning course at AYBU SFL. The use of technology has affected language teaching and learning practices at elementary, secondary, and higher educational levels differently. In higher education context, for example, online learning and blended learning have been the topic of exploration in order to address some challenges such as geographic distance and to meet the expectations of language learners and educational authorities (Mendieta Aguilar, 2012). The main reason for going a blended language course design is such opportunities as addressing student needs, improving linguistic outcomes, fostering learner community rather than concerns about space and budget (Rubio & Thoms, 2014). As Bates and Poole (2003) suggest, media production, content of the program, planning of the program, instructional design, student administration, the evaluation of the program are the key factors in achieving a high-quality technology-based teaching. On the other hand, it is clear that there is not only one way of blending online instruction and traditional instruction. Osguthorpe and Graham (2003) state that depending on the instructional goals, instructors' backgrounds, characteristics of the students and instructors, and the availability of online resources, a variety of mixes may occur. In this context, blended learning program is offered for the students who fail in their first year at Preparatory School. Although a number of studies (e.g. Aran, 2015; Deniz, 2016; Istifci, 2017; Koç, 2016)

analyzed blended designs from students' or teachers' perspective and they might inspire the program developers to fundamentals of the blended courses, none of these studies completely fit in AYBU SFL context. Since each blended context is based on the learner and instructors as well as the physical conditions, there is a need to analyze the components of the blended courses offered at AYBU SFL. Also, only a few studies (e.g. Ağgün, 2019) focused on blended courses offered for repeat students. Another point is the evaluation of an existing program to achieve a high-quality technology integrated courses. As developing an online language program is not a straightforward process, careful planning and a variety of arrangements are necessary to manage the program successfully. Therefore, there is a need to a study in which stakeholders of the program express their views and experiences about the program in order to improve and make the necessary modifications. It is also crucial to understand how well students and teachers have adapted to their blended learning experiences after many years of teaching and learning experience in face-to-face education.

### **Aim of the Study**

In accordance with the problem, this study aims at providing a picture of the existing blended program at AYBU SFL by elaborating on the components which work well and the ones which need to be adjusted based on students' and instructors' perspectives. Teachers and students are two important sources of information for the evaluation. Therefore, this study attempts to find out students' and instructors' perceptions of the blended learning program offered for repeat students at AYBU SFL. To achieve this aim, the researcher of the study attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. What are students' perceptions of the blended program offered for repeat students at Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University Preparatory School in terms of the following program aspects: online practices, technology, in-class practices, exams, self-study skills, and instructors?
2. Do blended learning students differ in their perceptions of online content, technology, in-class practices, exams, self-study skills, and instructors' components of the blended program according to their gender?

3. What are instructors' perceptions of the blended program offered for repeat students at Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University Preparatory School in terms of the following program aspects: online practices, technology, in-class practices, and self-study skills?
4. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the blended program offered for repeat students at Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University Preparatory School according to the students and the instructors?
5. What modifications are suggested for the current blended program offered for repeat students at Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University Preparatory School?

### **Significance of the Study**

Graham, Woodfield, and Harrison (2013) state that the adoption of blended learning in higher education is on the increase around the world although little is known about the extent to which blended learning has actually been implemented. Blended learning practices are increasingly being adopted by higher education institutions in an effort to improve student learning as well as providing with facilities such as easy accessibility, flexibility, and cost effectiveness (Graham et al., 2013). Gleason (2013) points out that the experiences of the stakeholders in blended learning setting can be helpful in designing and developing blended learning courses. There have been many studies (Ağgün, 2014; Ağgün, 2019; Balcı, 2017; Banditvilai, 2016; Bueno-Alastuey & López Pérez, 2014; Caner, 2009; Deniz, 2016; Emelyanova & Voronina, 2017; Gleason, 2013; Istifci, 2017; Koç, 2016; Liu, 2013; Pacheco Salazar, 2016; Şahin Kızıl, 2014; Taslacı, 2007) exploring various blended learning settings in language learning and teaching. This study will contribute to the existing literature on blended learning in language learning by analyzing the AYBU SFL case.

While designing a blended course, integrating synchronous and asynchronous interactions, planning the learning time and using the right technologies are some of the key concepts that need to be considered (Stein & Graham, 2014, p.18). This study will help to discover the strengths and weaknesses of the existing blended program. Thus, the data gathered can direct administrators and the instructors to the key concepts that need to be taken in order to redesign and improve their program. This study is also likely to reveal students' and

instructors' views on how blended learning setting contributes to language learning and teaching.

It is debatable how well educationalists have adapted to the changes in the learning environment. Although providing online education, some teachers fail to adapt to these online tools and they simply transfer their in-class experiences to the online environment (Stein & Graham, 2014). The study will also see the case from instructors' perspectives, which can help to develop instructional techniques and strategies for blended learning settings.

### **Assumptions**

With reference to the aim of the study, this study is based on the data obtained through a questionnaire and interviews. First of all, as the results of the study are based on participants' perceptions of the existing program, it is presumed that the participants of the study responded to the items in the questionnaire and the interview accurately and sincerely. It is also assumed that all the students taking part in the study have done most of the online assignments regularly and joined in the class activities.

### **Limitations**

This study is limited to the students who are studying at AYBU SFL blended learning program in 2016-2017 academic year. The program is offered for repeat students, which can be an obstacle for students to evaluate the program objectively due to their high stress level. Also, learning outcomes such as the contribution of online component on students' language development were evaluated based on students' and teachers' self-report as it was not possible to track how much time students spend online. Since this is a case study, and the findings reflect the AYBU SFL case only, the conclusions drawn from this study cannot be generalized into other contexts.

## **Definitions of the Terms**

*Asynchronous Interactions:* It refers to the interactions that are not real time and that do not happen at the same time such as sending an electronic message, posting comments on a forum at any time (Stein & Graham, 2014, p. 19).

*Blended Learning:* It refers to the systems which merge in-class instruction with computer-mediated instruction (Graham, 2006).

*Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL):* The term refers to the study of using computer technologies in language teaching and learning (Levy, 1997).

*E-Learning:* “Electronically mediated asynchronous and synchronous communication for the purpose of constructing and confirming knowledge” (Garrison, 2011, p. 2).

*Synchronous Interactions:* A way of communication in which everyone needs to be connected through an Intranet or the Internet such as live chat or videoconferencing (Thorne, 2003).

*Traditional Instruction:* This term refers to all face-to-face teaching and learning activities that take place in the classroom environment.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

#### **Technology Integration into Foreign Language Education**

The impact of technology on education is undeniable. Over the years, teachers inevitably benefitted from some technological inventions such as tape recorders, film projectors, and computers in the classrooms in order to teach more effectively (M. J. Kenning & Kenning, 1983). After the adoption of World Wide Web and the Internet in educational settings, it was understood that technology is not a neutral delivery mode, but a powerful vehicle that might change the educational paradigm as well as the quality of the learning environments (Garrison, 2011, p. 2). In line with this, Ionita and Asan (2013) state that the continuous endeavour to integrate technology into education resulted in a change in the perceptions of the educators. That is to say, technology is no longer seen as a complementary element in learning, but as an essential element in the classrooms with a variety of options to integrate.

According to Bates and Poole (2003), educational technology can be defined as any means of communication with the learners except for direct, face-to-face communication and it encompasses tools and equipment used to support teaching such as software, networks, programs, projectors, computers, television monitors, the skills necessary to develop and use these tools and equipment effectively, and an understanding of how to select these tools and equipment (pp. 5-6).

Knowledge-based sectors such as computing, telecommunications, financial services and so on require workers who are flexible, highly-educated, competent at using technology,

and open to change and learning. What is more, lifelong learning has been critical in today's competitive, knowledge-based world. Thus, universities and colleges have been trying to adopt new programs and new delivery means in order to respond to this demand and modern technologies enable universities and colleges to present lifelong learning programs through providing the delivery options on as well as off campus (Bates & Poole, 2003, p. 14).

Developments in technology and digitalization affected foreign language teaching and learning as well. Bush (1997) claim that technological advances are going to affect all aspects of language learning, from curricular objectives to syllabus design (p. xiv). Additionally, Pusack and Otto (1997) state that the educational use of computers, which represent the convergence of multiple media used by language educators for a long time such as printed texts, drawings, photos, slides, audios, and videos became a common and usual phenomenon (p.2). According to Thomas, Reinders, and Warschauer (2012), several factors such as the necessity to adapt to changes, the innovations in technology, the rise of the World Wide Web, and Web-based learning helped Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) gain a growing acceptance. Thus, while CALL applications and language programs were accessible via CD-ROMs only a short time ago, today the dominance of digital media and digital devices like smartphones, tablets, or laptop computers in our daily lives has made many applications, electronic dictionaries, and e-books available to everyone.

With the advances in computer technology, computers became a source of authentic materials and a basic medium of communication; thus, new possibilities in foreign language teaching occurred (Kern & Warschauer, 2000, p.3). As Pusack and Otto emphasize (1997), studies in language education indicate a current trend towards a holistic, student-centred approach to language learning, which put emphasis on communicative and cultural competencies for effective communication rather than the form; therefore, it is essential to enhance language curriculum by adding authentic materials, collaborative activities, or performance-based assessment in order to address all language learners in the learning context, so technology is a useful medium to help enhance the language curriculum (p.5). Considering how much time students spend on games and mobile devices out of the classroom and how students enjoy using mobile devices and technology to

complete many tasks, Blake (2014) proposes that using technology in the classroom might increase time on task and students' contact with the target language (p. 12).

### **Computer-Assisted Language Learning**

Studies related to the use of electronic technologies in language instruction are generally found under the title of Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL), which was defined by Levy (1997) as “the search for and study of applications of the computer in language teaching and learning” (p.1). According to Pusack and Otto (1997), although “Computer-Assisted Instruction” (CAI) or CALL phenomenon aimed to achieve individualization and revolution in education in the 1970s, the idea of CAI gained little acceptance due to the limited capacity of early computers (p. 2). However, Levy (1997) suggests that the nature of CALL is always dependent on the developments in technology and as the computers became more user-friendly, smaller, and faster, it became easier for developers to work on more complicated applications.

In the 1950s and 1960s, empiricist theory, which is described as behaviourism in psychology, structuralism in linguistics, and audiolingualism in pedagogy, gained significance in language teaching (Levy, 1997). Thus, early CALL programs were named as “behaviouristic CALL” and they included grammar and vocabulary tutorials, simple drills and testing instruments (Fotos & Browne, 2004, p. 4; Kern & Warschauer, 2000, p. 8). In line with this definition, according to Warschauer and Kern (2000), these CALL programs were providing immediate feedback to the structural accuracy of learner responses, which paralleled the views of structural approach, emphasizing the importance of repeated drills (p. 3). It is essential to note that these drill programs are still being employed in the classrooms in order to practice grammar and vocabulary as they provide immediate feedback, present learners the opportunity to learn at their own pace and encourage learner autonomy (Fotos & Browne, 2004; p. 5). Warschauer and Kern (2000) point out that factors such as being technically inadequate and allowing one acceptable response per item as well as the acceptance of cognitive approaches to language learning rather than purely behaviouristic approaches and the improvements in personal computers have led CALL to move onto its second phase (p. 9).



In the second phase of CALL, the main focus of language teaching shifted from forming accurate habits towards fostering learners' innate mental construction of a language system, achieving communicative competence, and meeting the needs of the individual learners (Levy, 1997; Warschauer & Kern, 2000, p. 9). Also, the 1980s witnessed the emergence of powerful microcomputers, enabling a variety of opportunities for learner interaction. Not only did language teachers develop computer programs, but they also had a central role in integrating these CALL materials into their curriculum (Fotos & Browne, 2004; Levy, 1997).

The present CALL stage features the interaction with other people using the computer rather than the interaction with computers (Warschauer & Kern, 2000, p. 11). Fotos and Browne (2004) point out that person-to-person is the main focus of today's CALL activities such as e-mail exchange programs, multiplayer role-playing games, interactive real-time learning situations and simulation games (p. 6). To summarize, both technological and theoretical developments paved the way for adopting a new approach to CALL. The increasing importance placed on the meaningful interactions in authentic contexts has established the theoretical base while improvements in desktop computers, the use of the Internet and local area networks (LANs) have established the technological base of the today's integrative CALL (Warschauer & Kern, 2000, p. 12).

### **Electronic learning (E-learning)**

E-learning, which gained popularity in the 1990s as a result of the advances in the World Wide Web, is defined by Garrison (2011) as "electronically mediated asynchronous and synchronous communication for the purpose of constructing and confirming knowledge" (p.2). Among various terms used to refer to online learning activities, including online learning, e-learning, Web-based instruction, distributed learning, distance learning, Internet-based training, Khan (2005) calls all these online learning activities *e-learning* (p.3). Alternatively, Khan (2005) defines e-learning as "an innovative approach for delivering well-designed, learner-centred, interactive, and facilitated learning environment to anyone, any place, any time by utilizing the attributes and resources of various digital technologies along with other forms of learning materials suited for open, flexible, and distributed learning environment" (p. 3). According to Long (2004), e-learning refers to

learning that takes place via electronic means and the process of learning may include a variety of procedures and formats.

Although e-learning has distance learning elements, its theoretical and practical roots come from a different field. E-learning represents a paradigm shift that is based on computer conferencing and collaborative constructivist approaches to learning. Therefore, e-learning might support and enhance classroom practices, but, more importantly, it might help develop new approaches and recognize its collaborative nature (Garrison, 2011, p. 2). The instructional technologies that enabled the adoption of e-learning and that supported e-learning activities' collaborative constructivist nature are Web 2.0 tools such as course management systems (CMS), wikis, and blogs, social media, and mobile devices (Garrison, 2011, p. 68).

As it is indicated by Garrison (2011), online and blended learning are the two constituents of e-learning (p. 75). The scope of e-learning depends on the weight of the e-learning activities adopted. The micro end of the continuum of e-learning represents e-learning activities and resources designed for face-to-face instruction, that is blended learning, whereas the macro end of the continuum represents completely distance learning or virtual environments (Khan, 2005, p. 16). The term e-learning can refer to many different delivery modes, processes, media formats or products, but asynchronous modes and synchronous modes form the broadest categories.

### **Asynchronous Modes**

In the asynchronous mode of e-learning, the information is generally sent in recorded format as in online workbook completion or online recording of responses and the learner accesses it at any time thereafter (Long, 2004). As Singh (2004) states, the most significant characteristic of asynchronous learning is that it allows learners to reach the content and to join the activities and interactions at their own pace and time, so learners do not need to be present at a place at the same time. Palloff and Pratt (2007) favour asynchronous environments since asynchronous environments allow learners to join a discussion or post their responses as they wish at any time. In addition, Kung-Ming and Khoon-Seng (2009) emphasize that asynchronous interactions provide learners some opportunities because they are flexible, give learners time to reflect on their responses, and there are no time and

place constraints while getting delayed feedback might be one limitation of it. Sending an electronic message or comments to a discussion forum, using e-mail to communicate, or using Wikis are some examples of asynchronous modes (Stein & Graham, 2014, p. 19).

### **Synchronous Modes**

In the synchronous mode, the participants interact instantaneously and directly as in chat rooms or online dialogues between the learner and the instructor or among learners (Long, 2004). In an online learning environment, synchronous interaction is the most direct and immediate way that connects students and instructors. Some of the tools for synchronous learning include text-based tools like text messaging or chat, live audio and video tools, virtual whiteboards, Web conferencing like Adobe Connect, or Voice over IP such as Skype and Google Talk (Finkelstein, 2006; Stein & Graham, 2014, p. 19). Additionally, Finkelstein (2006) suggests that real-time environments offer new and unique attributes such as immediate access to peers, instructors, and experts, the ability for many people to interact with each other simultaneously, the means to display real-world skills, and the capacity of including a more diverse population. Also, Palloff and Pratt (2007) point out that one concern about synchronous environments is that they are the replications of traditional classrooms as the participant who can type the fastest will probably be the most active one in a synchronous online discussion.

### **Computer-Mediated Communication**

Whether it is a blended or fully online course, a large amount of the course is devoted to “computer-mediated communication” (CMC) either asynchronously or synchronously through the use of different types of CMC tools that might enable learners to exchange only texts, text and audio together, or text, audio, and video together (Blake, 2014, p. 14). According to Lamy and Hampel (2007), CMC refers to learning, teaching, and communicating with computers and it requires new skills to interact and collaborate.

From a social perspective, Goertler (2014) categorizes the social technologies into three in terms of the typical interlocutors and the purpose of communication: “CMC with peers”, “CMC across cultures”, and “CMC that include online communities” (p. 31). CMC with

peers refers to the activities or tasks requiring learner to learner interaction using computer technologies whereas CMC across cultures indicates interaction with an expert (Goertler, 2014).

What makes CMC a powerful communication tool is that it allows learners to communicate with people all around the world at the same time and at a low cost, to archive, and to reflect on their previous words (Shetzer & Warschauer, 2000). Besides, through CMC, several factors that might affect face-to-face communication negatively such as race, gender, accent, status are eliminated. Thus, if it is used effectively, it enables a great exchange of ideas (Shetzer & Warschauer, 2000).

### **Online Learning**

Language learning has been enriched by the improvements in digital technologies and online learning tools that either might be used as additional resources to classroom-based instruction or replace classroom-based instruction (Funk, Gerlach, & Spaniel, 2017). The continuum of online learning starts with classroom-enhanced online learning, in which technology is used as additional resources to in the classroom, goes on with blended learning and ends with fully online learning (Benson & Brack, 2010, p. 56).

A fully online learning environment is different from distance education in that online learning has an interactive nature whereas traditional distance education focuses more on content delivery and independent learning. Also, online learning combines independence and interaction without being limited by time and space and creates a virtual community of learners (Garrison, 2011, p. 3).

Online learning, which is considered to be quite related with blended learning, grew dramatically in recent years for several reasons, from economics to pedagogical applications (Snart, 2010, p. 29). One reason why many people around the world prefer online instruction may be its richness of information, convenience, and quickness to access information (Meskill & Anthony, 2010). In addition, institutions' desire to expand their course offerings, the potential market for online delivery, and the need for finding ways to engage students and improve their learning experiences are some of the motivators for offering online instruction (Snart, 2010, p. 29). Furthermore, Bach, Haynes, and Smith (2007) suggest that some of the drivers to adoption of online learning include rapid

technological changes and the availability of online technologies, changes that occur in students' lifestyles, increase in students' information technologies skills, globalization, competition, as well as shared cultures and shared markets (p. 30).

Bach et al. (2007) state that a fully online learning experience, in which learners have little or no face-to-face contact, is the most complicated mode of online learning, so teaching and learning methods must be carefully selected, planned, and applied (p. 34). According to Funk et al. (2017), the principles of modern language pedagogy such as competence, interaction, orientation, learner activation, learner autonomy, and integration of the media are valued in the design of foreign language classrooms, textbooks as well as in the design of online and offline learning environments. Hampel and Stickler (2005) also suggest that an instructor also need to have technical expertise, subject knowledge, socio-affective skills, knowledge of affordances to teach languages online effectively. Additionally, Meskill and Anthony (2010) put forward that today's learners are described as digital natives. In other words, they have grown up using computers, which has helped them develop highly digital literacy skills. Therefore, although it seems challenging to establish strong relationships and a sense of community in the online environments, digital natives may be more skilful and comfortable in these environments. On the other hand, Bach et al. (2007) propose that although online resources and processes help with making progress on self-directed learning or learner autonomy, which is a requirement for university education, the students who are accustomed to teacher-led learning environments and students who do not feel comfortable with technology might need great support to benefit from online learning (p. 49).

Online learning can be delivered either through the purchase of a standardized commercial virtual learning environment (VLE), a managed learning environment, or through web-based materials developed by the own staff of the institution. As Bach et al. (2007) state, VLE refers to "the integrated package of software features and tools presenting course materials, providing a means of communication between students and the staff, as well as enabling self-assessment, monitoring of progress and giving assignments" whereas managed learning environments (MLE) covers a larger area such as interacting with other information systems or information services like online libraries (p. 35). According to Bach et al. (2007), making progress on online learning in an institution depends on the presence of the following elements (p. 45):

- an Internet platform for delivery (MLE/VLE)
- technical staff to support the Internet platform
- some face-to-face delivery
- the appropriateness of online modules and courses for students' cultural needs
- presence of extra resources
- marketing and promotion of online learning in order to help students understand what they are supposed to do

There are also some concerns about online instruction. Samburskiy (2013) emphasizes that although many instructors have started to value virtual environments with the increasing popularity of online teaching, those instructors' computer skills and self-concept may interfere with online teaching because those accustomed to have powerful roles in the classroom may find it hard to adapt to the virtual classroom environments. In addition, as Bach et al. (2007, p. 20) state, online learning is not suitable for all learner, teachers, and subject materials. For example, students require qualities of self-discipline and initiative in order to develop a study schedule and follow it. In addition, computer literacy skills, for example a basic understanding of word processing, file attachments, web browsing, or sending e-mails, are fundamental to online learning. Also, students need to have access to a computer of their own with an Internet connection as students might have insufficient time to participate in online activities if they share a computer at home. In line with these arguments, challenges faced with the adoption of fully online environments resulted in the rejection of either fully online or fully face-to-face instruction approach (Macdonald, 2008) and blended learning models prevailed.

### **Blended Learning**

The term blended learning can be defined in a variety of ways depending on the two modes, tools, or methods that are combined. Most of these definitions basically focus on three forms: blending instructional methods, blending delivery media, and blending online and face-to-face education (Graham, Allen, & Ure, 2005). Since blended learning as a combination of instructional methods or blended learning as a combination of different delivery media are too broad definitions that can be applied to almost all learning environments, Graham (2006) suggests that defining blended learning as the combination

of face-to-face and computer-mediated instruction or e-learning reflects the meaning of blended learning more accurately.

Although the term *blended learning* first gained acceptance in corporate world to describe the blend of some teaching and learning approaches such as coaching, mentoring, on-job training, face-to-face classes, and online interactions, it was also widely adopted in higher education institutions in an effort to stand at a point between face-to-face learning and distance learning (Gruba & Hinkelman, 2012). It includes two different learning environments: traditional and computer-mediated (distributed) technologies, which have separate historical roots in terms of the type of media used, the methods employed, and the audience addressed (Graham, 2006). That is to say, in the past, face-to-face instruction took place in teacher-oriented environments that were synchronous, live, and interactive while distance learning systems prioritized self-paced education in asynchronous environments.

Thorne (2003) proposes that blended learning is an opportunity that enables trainers to combine innovative and technological improvements offered by online instruction with the participation and interaction aspects of traditional learning, so it provides solutions for the challenges of adjusting the learning environment to individuals' needs and styles. In addition, as Littlejohn and Pegler (2007) state, blended learning helps educators and the students gain a different perspective on when and where learning can take place, what resources can be used to support learning as well as how these resources can be used (p. 2). Moreover, Macdonald (2008) describes the blended learning model as adopting some strategies and media in a principled way in order to respond student needs and to support the objectives of the course.

In the first phase of e-learning, e-learning activities were the online versions of classroom-based courses. However, it was understood that adopting a single delivery mode might lack some opportunities such as providing enough choices, social contact, or engagement. Therefore, more delivery modes were combined, and blended learning models were created in the second phase of e-learning (Singh, 2003).

Stein and Graham (2014) state that blended learning covers any area that falls between fully-traditional onsite experiences and fully online experiences. On the other hand, although the term blended learning is widely linked with the integration of online

technologies into a course or program in order to benefit from face-to-face contact to support students, Macdonald (2008) claims that it might also be used to refer to blending asynchronous technologies such as blogs, e-mails, or forums with synchronous technologies such as text chat or audio.

According to Khan (2005), the concept of blended learning is based on the assumption that learning is a never-ending process, not a one-time event (p. 204). Also, different definitions of blended learning (e.g. Graham, 2006; Khan, 2005; Stein & Graham, 2014; Thorne, 2003) are based on the underlying belief that both face-to-face interaction and online methods bring some benefits to learners and instructors; thus, achieving a harmonious balance between the two delivery modes is the ultimate goal (Osguthorpe & Graham, 2003).

There are some other concepts related to the use of online technologies in the classroom and their meanings need clarification. Smith and Kurthen (2007) draw a line between such concepts as web-enhanced, blended learning, and hybrid learning by using percentages. That is to say, according to Smith and Kurthen (2007), web-enhanced instruction refers to the courses that include a minimum number of online materials and activities such as online course announcements and the syllabus. However, in blended courses, some more online activities such as online quizzes or online discussions might be added, yet the amount of online activities do not go beyond the 45% of the whole course. On the other hand, the percentage of online elements in hybrid courses might vary from 45% to 80%. Nevertheless, the terms blended learning, hybrid learning, and mixed mode are used interchangeably by some (e.g. King, 2009; Rubio & Thoms, 2014; Snart, 2010; Stein & Graham, 2014).

Blended learning has become a popular delivery mode recently with the contribution of several factors (Rubio & Thoms, 2014, p. 1). Graham (2006) explains that the continuous improvements, especially in digital technology, added new aspects to online instruction, which, in turn, increased the possibility for integrating online instructional methods into face-to-face learning environments. For example, developments in communication technologies enabled people to have synchronous and real time interactions in virtual environments. As Khan (2005) states, advances in information technology and delivery media have encouraged many organizations to take the advantage of all delivery media and



design blended learning models rather than adopting single delivery mode programs (p. 204).

Blended learning brings a variety of delivery media together that are complementary to each other, in an effort to promote learning. Real-time virtual software, learning management systems (LMS), Web-based courses are some examples of the learning tools used in blended learning programs (Khan, 2005, p. 202). Additionally, Rubio and Thoms (2014) point out that recent foreign language textbooks include interactive online components which provide teachers the opportunity to flexibly decide what they can teach in and out of the classroom, and this contributes to the increase in the number of blended courses (p. 1). Therefore, Graham (2006) points out that advances in digital learning technologies contributed a lot to the process of integrating distributional learning elements into face-to-face learning environments. As Garrison (2009) suggests, technology is only a tool, not the main focus of the blended courses. The main focus of the blended context is increasing student engagement as well as the quality of the learning experiences in higher education.

As a result of the advances in digital technologies, Prensky (2001) proposes that today's students also experience a change as they represent the first generation to grow up with the tools of new digital age such as computers, video games, cell phones, digital music players. It seems irrational in higher education to wait for an increase in student engagement by offering simply lectures during which students are only passive listeners (Garrison, 2011, p. 4). Prensky (2001) suggests that new generation students speak the language of the Internet, computers, and video games, so they can be named 'Digital Natives'. Stein and Graham (2014) emphasize that being born into digital age led to a shift in learners' expectations and in the ways they get and process information; therefore, educators need to respond to these changes by creating different teaching and learning environments. Graham (2006) presents three categories for blended learning systems, each of which focuses on a different purpose of the blend:

- Enabling blends intends to provide more flexibility to the learners, so the main focus of the blend is on the access and convenience issues.
- Enhancing blends allow instructors to improve the pedagogy without completely changing the way they teach.

- Transforming blends change the pedagogy radically and are concerned with the adoption of a completely new teaching and learning model.

### **Forms of Blended Learning**

There is not a single way of blending traditional instruction and online instruction. According to Garrison (2011), a viable blended learning design is more than simply using online materials that are supplementary or optional in addition to main face-to-face learning environments (p. 76). Garrison and Vaughan (2008) put emphasis on the fact that “blended learning is the organic integration of thoughtfully selected and complementary face-to-face and online approaches and technologies” (p. 148). In order to achieve this, Ionita and Asan (2013) state that the main requirement for finding the most effective combination of old and new is focusing on the end-user. According to Osguthorpe and Graham (2003), depending on the instructional goals, instructors’ backgrounds, characteristics of the students and instructors, and the availability of online resources, a variety of mixes may occur, which means that no two blended courses would be the same. In other words, some may prefer to have more asynchronous face-to-face sessions rather than online components whereas others may value synchronous online interactions more. Littlejohn and Pegler (2007) categorize the factors that affect blending into three: the purpose of the learning, the context of the learning, tutors’ and students’ approaches to teaching and learning (p. 71).

In addition, Garrison and Vaughan (2008) outline the key assumptions of a blended learning design as “thoughtfully integrating face-to-face and online learning”, “fundamentally rethinking the course design to optimize student engagement”, and “restructuring and replacing traditional class contact hours” (p. 5).

According to Graham et al. (2005), a variety of combinations might occur in blended learning environments, and these combinations can be categorized into three levels: face-to-face dominant blends, online dominant blends, and a balanced blend fairly mixing two settings. However, rather than providing a fixed framework or taxonomy, King (2009) provides a representative table (Table 1) in order to introduce the possible blended learning forms and the table can be adapted as the new technologies emerge.

Table 1

*Blended Learning Options Matrix – Technology and Time*

	Face-to-face	Synchronous Online and/or Videoconference (Teacher and students at the same time)	Asynchronous Online (Teacher and students not at the same time)	Pre-recorded Medium (Video, DVD, TV, Podcast, etc.)
Blended 1	xx	Xx		
Blended 2	xx		xx	
Blended 3	xx	Xx	xx	
Blended 4	xx			xx
Blended 5	xx	Xx		xx
Blended 6	xx	Xx	xx	xx
Blended 7	xx		xx	xx
Blended 8	xx	Xx	xx	xx
Blended 9	xx		xx	xx

King, K. P. (2009). Blended learning. In P. L. Rogers, G. Berg, J. Boettcher, C. Howard, L. Justice, & K. Schenk (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of distance learning* (pp. 194-199). Hersey, New york: IGI Global.

As it is seen in Table 1 above, King (2009) identifies some characteristics of blended learning:

- It is possible to create unique blended learning opportunities through various combinations of time and technology.
- Multiple combinations can be made depending on the context, time limitation, learner needs, and the technologies that are available.
- Depending on the needs, more than one blended learning model may be chosen for a school, class, or the students.

Regarding the levels of blended learning, four different stages stand out: activity-level blending, course-level blending, program-level blending, and institutional-level blending (Hickman, Bielema, & Viola, 2009; Graham, 2006). Hickman et al. (2009) point out that policies and procedures of the blended designs at activity or course levels are generally determined by the instructors or the learners while they are determined and implemented

by the administrators or by the faculty at program or institutional level blended designs. These stages are summarized below:

- *Activity-level blending:* The widespread accessibility of World Wide Web and online resources enabled learners and instructors to use their own expanded reference materials during the courses. For example, self-paced review materials for practice, synchronous and asynchronous discussions, and instructors' online office hours are some activities that occur at activity level blended models (Hickman et al., 2009).
- *Course-level blending:* Blended learning at course level is the combination of face-to-face and computer-mediated activities that either overlap in time or follow each other with separated time blocks and it is the most widespread model (Graham, 2006). According to Hickman et al., (2009), several models such as anchor blend and bookend blends can be categorized under the title of course level blended learning. In anchor blends, for example, meetings for introductions and orientations are held and these meetings are followed by technology-assisted instruction. Bookend blends offer face-to-face meetings at the beginning and at the end and offer online assignments in between or vice versa.
- *Program and institutional-level blending:* At program-level blended models, learners might choose a mix of face-to-face course and online courses themselves, or they are offered a mix of the two by the program (Graham, 2006). Hickman et al. (2009) suggest that making such choices gives learners the message that online activities are an essential part of their learning. Also, Graham (2006) claims that many corporations and higher education institutions focus on blended learning and create their own blended learning models as an institution.

### **Dimensions of Blended Learning**

In order to build a meaningful distributed learning environment, a systematic understanding of several factors that are interdependent is required. These factors act as a guide for program developers in the process of planning, developing, delivering, managing, and evaluating blended learning programs, and thus, creating a meaningful learning environment (Singh, 2003). In line with this argument, Khan (2005) presents a

framework entailing these factors with eight dimensions, each of which represents a category of issues that needs to be considered while creating a meaningful learning environment. The dimensions of this framework that can also be addressed in the design of blended learning environments are as follows (Khan, 2005, p. 206; Singh, 2003):

- *Institutional*: Issues concerning the readiness of the organization, the availability of content and infrastructure, the needs of the learners, and student services are addressed in institutional dimension.
- *Pedagogical*: The pedagogical dimension encompasses the issues related with content that is planned to be delivered, the learner needs, the delivery methods, design, and strategy aspects of e-learning.
- *Technological*: Technological issues include the tools to deliver the program such as choosing the most suitable LMS and technical requirements of the program such as accessibility, security, or the issues concerned with hardware, software, or infrastructure.
- *Interface Design*: The different elements of the blend has to be integrated in a way that allow learners to switch between the delivery modes easily and to assimilate online and face-to-face aspects equally well.
- *Evaluation*: The evaluation dimension is related with the usability of the learning program as well as the performance of the learners.
- *Management*: The management dimension is concerned with the issues that occur while delivering a blended learning program, such as registration and scheduling the elements of the program.
- *Resource Support*: Resource support dimension is about organizing and making online and offline resources available as well as providing personal support via e-mail or a chat application.
- *Ethical*: Issues that might offend any group of people such as equal opportunity, nationality, or culture are dealt with under this category.

### **Advantages of Blended Learning**

Blended courses can have many advantages in higher education environments if they are planned and strategized very well. In blended learning programs, the strengths of the

distance learning paradigm are harmonized with the strengths of face-to-face paradigm (Osguthorpe & Graham, 2003). For example, in a blended setting, work that is less productive or that requires more attention and focus such as reading, reflection, careful composing can be done online, giving space for more live conversations in the classroom (Meskill & Anthony, 2010). Graham and Stein (2014) point out that blended learning is already a part of our lives and it benefits students, educators, and administrations since it provides increased access and convenience, decreased costs, and improved learning.

Osguthorpe and Graham (2003) identify six reasons why instructors might adopt a blended design: “pedagogical richness”, “access to knowledge”, “social interaction”, “personal agency”, “cost effectiveness”, and “ease of revision” (p. 231). On the other hand, Graham et al. (2005) suggest that the three most commonly referred reasons for adopting a blended design are its effective pedagogy, increased cost effectiveness and increased convenience and access.

According to Osguthorpe and Graham (2003), blended learning provides pedagogical richness since preferring a blended approach allows instructors to change the way they use their class time. For King (2009), using various instructional methods and modes of communication increased the likelihood of addressing multiple learner styles. Additionally, Meskill and Anthony (2010) state that in a teacher-centred classroom, most of the teacher talk is devoted to establishing control, attracting students’ attention, giving feedback, checking understanding. At this point, Garrison (2011) emphasizes that educators moved away from using limited classroom time for information transfer and they can go beyond the traditional classroom with the help of blended learning (p. 78). Also, Graham et al. (2005) suggest that introducing an online component into the purely face-to-face environment where instructors’ main focus is mostly on transmitting information due to some limitations such as class size, duration, and location might create a new range of instructional strategies.

With the help of course website, time on task might increase in blended designs. Stein and Graham (2014) assert that students are likely to spend more time on relevant work through the website of the course possibly because more guidance and access are provided. Also, the amount of time students spend on task and on the activities students work can easily be tracked in an online environment.

Blended learning designs provide students with a great access to knowledge. Osguthorpe and Graham (2003) underline that more pedagogical alternatives are available in blended designs. That is, unlike textbooks having limited contents, blended courses offer students access to infinite amount of information. In addition, Goertler (2014) points out that online and blended learning environments increase the possibility of being exposed to input, which is essential for language learning (p. 38). That is, more resources are available online, which increases the likelihood of incidental learning.

Blended learning settings are convenient for students as they allow students reach a great deal of information at any place. As it is stated by Stein and Graham (2014), blended courses provide the opportunity to replace a significant amount of onsite sessions by online sessions, which helped students to feel more flexible and freer. Flexibility and convenience of blended designs is of importance, especially for adult learners with some work and family related issues. Therefore, blended learning settings might be convenient for the students who prefer the convenience of online environments without sacrificing the social interaction aspect of onsite settings (Graham, 2006). Thus, Khan (2005) emphasizes that blended learning environments extend the reach of the content. In a purely traditional face-to-face setting, only the students who are present at a specific time and location get access to the program content whereas a virtual classroom event is available for remote access as well as having the option of being recorded (p. 205). Also, according to Stein and Graham (2014), the reason why many students value online learning is that they do not have to be present in the classroom to take the course.

Another advantage of blended designs is the increased chance of social interaction through online and onsite activities when compared to fully distance models (Osguthorpe & Graham, 2003). Garrison (2011) claims that combining online learning with face-to-face learning boosted participation, creates a feeling of belonging, and thus, builds group cohesion (p. 78). On the other hand, as it is suggested by Garrison (2003), asynchronous written communication might be more reflective and less intimidating for some students as they are not disturbed by the immediate presence of the other people, which motivates students to reveal themselves. Additionally, Stein and Graham (2014) suggest that online courses that include class discussions or collaboration contribute to student-to-student interaction, and this may result in more engagement with the subject matter as well as

increased motivation thanks to social interaction. Graham et al. (2005) put forward that blended learning designs put greater emphasis on peer-to-peer learning.

The value of learner control, that is, students' making their own learning choices rather than just following the teacher's directions, has always been emphasized in many instructional designs (Osguthorpe & Graham, 2003). Blended learning environments give space for the learners to make their personal decisions about learning. Macdonald (2008) states that distance technologies encourage learners to develop self-direction, to search for information for themselves, and to move away from a teacher-centred approach to learning. Students can reach digital materials whenever they feel they need them. According to Stein and Graham (2014), this allowed students to direct their own learning activities and to get immediate corrective, feedback with the help of the automated assessment systems mostly used in online settings. Graham et al. (2005) point out that blended learning might be helpful to create a balance between independent learning and social instruction since some learners might feel isolated in a completely independent online system. Therefore, according to King (2009), blended learning might be considered to be an adjustment step for online and distance learning since blended learning allows students to move towards distance learning in a controlled way by still keeping personal contact.

Blended learning environments might also offer cost reduction. Thanks to the flexible scheduling, King (2009) emphasizes that students have less face-to-face meetings, which decreased the demand for classroom space and gives institutions the chance to offer more courses or activities. Also, as it is stated by Khan (2005), developing a fully online program with a variety of resources can be too expensive, but enriching the learning environment with simpler self-paced materials, documents, or text assignments can similarly be efficient (p. 205). Stein and Graham (2014) mentions that designing a blended course might save students and instructors travelling time to school and spending money on transportation.

Engaging in blended learning courses might help students to develop certain skills. For example, King (2009) suggests that students taking blended courses have the opportunity to use digital media and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning skills, so they develop information literacy skills and critical thinking skills.



Unlike purely online distance learning systems, whose online resources are complex and require a design and technology specialist to revise, blended delivery systems are generally built by teachers of the institution or the faculty members (Osguthorpe & Graham, 2003). This means that the online resources used in blended settings are comparatively simple, flexible, user-friendly, and easy to revise; thus, do not require complicated programming skills, graphic arts, or complex video and audio production skills.

In line with the advantages of blended learning settings, it might also be useful to mention some studies related to the scope of the current study. A body of research studies that was carried out in a variety of language learning contexts both around the world and in Turkey are listed below.

To begin with, Liu (2013) carried out a study named '*Blended Learning in a University EFL Writing Course: Description and Evaluation*' in China. The study aimed at describing and evaluating blended learning in a writing course in terms of material development and presentation, course design, assignment submission and grading, teacher reflection, student involvement, and student evaluation. The study demonstrated that blended learning promoted student-student and student-teacher interaction, decreased communication anxiety, encouraged students to be more autonomous, and improved students' writing skills.

Emelyanova and Voronina (2017) explored student perceptions of the blended learning in an English language classroom at the National Research University in Russia. The corporate LMS constituted the online part of the course and tests and questionnaires were used before and after the course to reveal the change. The researcher concluded that there was a positive change in students' attitudes towards their perceived achievements after LMS. Also, it was shown that LMS could be an efficient learning tool as it increased their awareness of their abilities and their self-reliance.

Bueno-Alastuey and López Pérez's study (2014) aimed at comparing student perceptions of the usefulness of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in an EFL course, which integrated ICT fully at the Public University of Navarre in Spain, for the development of language skills and language areas to the student perceptions of a Spanish as a second language blended course that integrated ICT at a lower level at the Public

University of Navarre. The results indicated that students had positive perceptions of the usefulness of ICT.

In the USA context, Jee and O'Connor (2014) investigated the impact of blended learning on learners' performance and engagement. Voxy, which is an educational technology product which offers autonomous and synchronous online language education, was used as the online component of the course. The study demonstrated that learners who joined in synchronous sessions were more engaged; as a result, showed better proficiency improvement.

In an Asian learning environment, Banditvilai (2016) conducted an experimental study in a second year undergraduate English majors in Thailand in which e-learning strategies providing students the opportunity to consolidate, expand, and reinforce the units they covered in the classroom online were integrated into traditional face-to-face language teaching methods of four language skills. The researcher compared the data collected through achievement tests, semi-structured interviews, a questionnaire of the control and experimental groups to reveal the potential effects of e-learning strategies on students' language skills, autonomy, and motivation. The results showed that supplementary e-learning materials contributed to students' language skills more than in-class only teaching, to encourage learners to study independently, and to become more motivated and involved in the learning process.

Blended learning in an English language course at the University of Cuenca was evaluated by Pacheco Salazar (2016). For the blended course, classical teaching with a textbook and instruction via Moodle software were mixed. The data were collected through a questionnaire and interviews. The study revealed that students were satisfied with the blended course and that blended course improved learners' English language skills.

In Japanese EFL context, Alizadeh, Mehran, Koguchi, and Takemura (2019) evaluated a blended course of English for undergraduate Japanese learners. To examine the quality Quality Matters Higher Education Course Design Rubric was used. Also, the usefulness of the course was evaluated qualitatively and quantitatively from the perspective of the students. The findings showed that the course met all the standards and students were overall satisfied with the course despite some technical problems.

In addition to the studies carried out abroad, a number of research studies on blended language courses were conducted in Turkey context. For example, in the master's thesis, *The Evaluation of Blended Learning in a Private Course*, Boyacıoğlu (2015) aimed at revealing whether blended learning contributes to the improvement of students' English language level. For blended learning, students participated in spoken English classes as well as using computer assisted language learning tools whenever they needed. The examination of students' beginner level exam results and three-month exam results showed that the majority of the students reached the target language level; therefore, it was concluded that blended learning is an effective way of improving students' language level.

Taslacı (2007) investigated EFL learners' perceptions of the blended writing course which combined blog and face-to-face instruction at Anadolu University. Student reflections were collected through open ended questions in three different phases for data. The results demonstrated that blended writing class helped learners to change their attitude towards writing classes positively. Also, blended learning enhanced their reflective thinking skills and learner responsibility; helped academic development, personal enjoyment; provided an opportunity for a variety of visual aids, interaction, and authentic language exposure.

In an experimental study, Acar (2014) intended to find out the attitudes of Turkish high school learners' attitudes towards using MOODLE in a blended English course. The data from a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews were compared between control and experimental groups and it was concluded that learners participated in the study had positive attitudes towards the blended course. Also, comparison of the exam scores of the two groups showed that blended course increased learners' achievement.

In a survey research, Şahin Kızıl (2014) investigated student perceptions of a blended language course in an EFL context, which integrated MOODLE, in terms of engagement, learning, and course satisfaction. The results indicated that a blended course design may create an engaging instructional environment in language learning, enhance learning when interaction with their instructors, and peers and exposure to target language is increased; also enhance course satisfaction.

In another study, İstifci (2017) explored EFL students' perceptions of online learning platforms and blended language learning in School of Foreign Languages at Anadolu University. The data were gathered through a questionnaire and interviews and findings

indicated that the students were mostly content with using online language learning platforms and they liked the flexibility of online learning.

Aran (2015) analyzed the Learning Management Systems incorporated into some course books from two different publishers via a checklist. The analysis demonstrated that LMSs bring some benefits such as educational benefits, interest, teaching and interactivity. These systems met the requirements in terms of teaching content, aims, achievements, suitability to learner, skills, and language.

Ince (2015) explored English language teachers' perceptions of the contribution of the blended learning to English language teaching and the perceived barriers impacting blended learning in language teaching. Questionnaire findings indicated that according to the teachers, blended learning might affect language teaching positively thanks to improving learners' skills to use technology and communicating inside and outside of the classroom.

Ağgün (2019) carried out a study in which a blended course was designed for beginner level repeat students in a preparatory EFL class at a public university in order to promote their productive language skills. Based on the findings it was shown that the participants' writing grades and language accuracy in addition to some components of speaking skills such as vocabulary, fluency, and task achievement increased.

### **Limitations of Blended Learning Environments**

Adopting a blended learning design might also hold some challenges and drawbacks. According to Graham et al. (2005), finding the right and most cost-effective instructional strategies that are suitable for the conditions of the two distinct environments is the most significant challenge of delivering a blended learning program because the range of possible strategies that are available is doubled with the combination of face-to-face with computer mediated instruction. Graham and Allen (2009) state that more research that helps instructors and program designers to find the right combination of the two learning environments and to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the blended environments is necessary.

According to Graham et al. (2005), the time demand for the design is much more in the blended models because the institution administers two different learning environments at the same time for one course and instructional materials need to be developed for both environments. Additionally, Rubio and Thoms (2014) suggest that it is necessary that language program directors and instructors have enough time and resources when creating a blended course in order to do some research on various blended course formats, experiment the technologies that are appropriate for the course, contact publishers for textbooks and their online components, and get to know potential hybrid course instructors (p. 3). Graham et al. (2005) also claim that the time instructors allocate for interacting with the students increases in a blended learning model because they need to interact with the students in both learning environments.

Learners and instructors need to deal with some cultural barriers to adapt to blended learning programs. As Snart (2010) indicates, since higher education classrooms have traditionally given high priority to text-based learning, of which basic goal is to develop basic skills like reading, writing, or critical thinking, technology has been viewed as a distraction from basic educational goals (p. 1). On the other hand, as it is emphasized by Graham et al. (2005), the online component of the blended learning program requires autonomy and self-discipline of the learner, but the students in current higher educational online settings lack the self-discipline and are likely to procrastinate.

Broadly speaking, support is an important component of blended systems. As Graham (2006) indicates, a huge amount of guidance is required in blended systems since the success of the learner in the online component often depends on learners' ability to regulate their learning and self-discipline skills. In addition, Graham et al. (2005) put forward that organizational and management support is necessary to apply a blended model successfully as some institutions may not be sure whether adopting a blended approach is appropriate for the culture of the department or the institution. According to Bates and Poole (2003), technology-based education might not always be the best and the most successful way to meet educational goals since several factors such as the context of learners, the demands and expectations of the subject matter, the materials and the resources available determine the appropriateness of technology-based teaching (p. 17).

Training is another essential part of blended learning. Rubio and Thoms (2014) state that it is essential for the potential instructor to get training on what blended learning is and how

technologies can be used efficiently (p. 4). Bates and Poole (2003) point out that many instructors who employ technology in teaching do so without getting any training simply by transferring their face-to-face teaching experience to technology-based teaching, by working alone and learning by doing (p. 22). Graham (2006) suggests that training for professional development should be provided for the instructors who teach blended courses in order to learn about both technological infrastructure and organizational perspective.

Finally, how economical a blended learning model is still a controversial issue. For example, Massy (2006) suggests that e-learning is often considered to favour only the ones with high socioeconomic status. On the other hand, Graham (2006) states that whether it is possible to develop a blended system that is affordable and that might address different learners with various backgrounds is a controversial issue.

Considering the scope of the current study, it is also necessary to focus on some research studies that revealed the challenges or limitations of various blended learning environments in language teaching contexts.

To begin with, Banditvilai's study (2016) revealed that lack of face-to-face feedback from a teacher was difficult for some students in blended settings although there were also some positive findings related with the context.

Koç (2016) aimed to reveal the difficulties that undergraduate students enrolled in English Language Teacher Education program experienced in a blended course. Data from semi-structured interviews demonstrated that lack of support by the faculty, a feeling of isolation, assessment systems, computer-assisted communication, challenges with mentors, heavy paper work for the teachers, learners' not fulfilling their responsibilities, student attendance, and psychological issues were the main problems that student teachers encountered.

In Istifci's study (2017), although the students were mostly content with using online language learning platforms and they liked the flexibility of online learning; however, they preferred in-class communication with their instructors and peers.

Ince's study (2015) also revealed that the barriers in the context could be the lack of experience in technology use and the lack of necessary facilities such as equipment and the Internet connection.

Deniz (2016) conducted a study in order to reveal student and instructor perceptions of a blended setting in an EFL setting at the Preparatory School of Ankara University. The data were gathered by means of a questionnaire and a written form of interviews. Findings revealed that students were negative about the blended setting. Also, instructors were not content with blended instruction as the program needed some modifications.

### **Designing a Blended Learning Program for Language Learning**

Language is another discipline, like many other disciplines, that is experiencing a transition from totally face-to-face instruction to online instruction or blended learning, in the light of a great deal of evidence supporting the effectiveness of a blended approach to language learning (Murphy, 2015). Hybrid language teaching and learning, in other words, blended language learning, proliferated recently and several factors contributed to the increase in hybrid language learning courses. Some of these factors include the development of textbooks with online components, the effort of the institutions to reduce the cost of instruction, and the facilitator role of CALL together with second language acquisition theories in accessing input and producing output, detecting linguistic errors more efficiently, and interacting easily with native speakers (Rubio & Thoms, 2014, p. 1).

A blended or online course might be designed in a variety of CALL formats and might rely on different teaching approaches and theories (Goertler, 2014, p. 37). According to Rubio and Thoms (2014), language program directors are responsible for taking second language acquisition theory – particularly input, output, feedback, and interaction aspects of it – into account (p. 3). In other words, program developers are expected to consider the ways technology contributes to learners' access and interaction with input, production of output, and feedback as well as its contributions to learner autonomy and collaboration.

While designing an online course it is not the curriculum that is converted, but it is the teaching methodology and it is a paradigm shift. Four basic steps to create an effective syllabus are also true for the syllabus for an online course. These steps include defining outcomes and objectives, choosing suitable materials, assignments, and tasks, setting a topic-driven course outline, and developing assessment of activities (Palloff & Pratt, 2007).

Meskill and Anthony (2010) suggest that whether it is a partially online or fully online program, the content and the decisions about the program heavily depend on the learners'

identities and their learning purposes. Blake (2014) examines what is essential for a successful online environment and whether online learning environments are appropriate for all language students and found that it is necessary for course to understand which type of students tends to have a positive online experience and also found that conscientiousness is an indicator of success in blended language courses (p. 21).

In a blended language course, online activities might reinforce and enhance in-class activities or face-to-face activities might reinforce online activities. According to Goertler (2014), it is crucial that in-class activities and online activities are complementary to each other by being grounded on either the same second language acquisition theory or approach (p. 38). According to Ducate, Lomicka, and Lord (2014) wikis, blogs, and some social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter might be used as educational tools in a blended language course in order to create community and collaboration, which two important considerations of blended classes (p. 69). For Meskill and Anthony (2010), it is essential for language instructors to provide guidance and help in directing learners to online writing resources, benefitting from these resources, and developing a written piece with good organization and language choices.

Electronic workbooks and supplementary online materials provided by textbook are also used in foreign language blended classes. These online assignments might include tasks for writing, listening, reading as well as grammar explanations and vocabulary exercises (Young & Pettigrew, 2014, p. 105). Although there are some blended programs that offer interactive and interpersonal online assignments such as discussion boards or journaling software, most of the tools are used asynchronously rather than synchronously. These online assignments serve two purposes: comprehension-based activities that are directly taken from the textbook introduce new material; and online assignments recycle and reinforce previous material (Young & Pettigrew, 2014, p. 106).

Meskill and Anthony (2010) emphasize that Internet resources facilitates reading any text in the target language because online resources give learners access to up-to-date and authentic reading materials as well as providing them with the opportunity to integrate writing and speaking into reading by making it possible to interact with the people who read the same reading text.



According to Joiner (1997), the most significant contribution of technology to teaching listening in foreign language education is providing access to a variety of live and authentic oral language materials through satellite broadcasts, the World Wide Web and through recorded materials such as audio or video magazines, films, and television programs. As it is stated by Meskill and Anthony (2010), the Internet is rich in content for independent listening materials in the target language such as podcasts, some modified for language learners, some authentic listening materials, or songs; therefore, assigning language learners these tools in company with some tasks such as writing a summary or writing a response to the audio, or making a presentation in the classroom on the key points of the audio is an effective way of teaching and learning listening through online materials.

Meskill and Anthony (2010) also point out that online speaking practice, whether it is with or without a script or whether it takes place in real time or delayed time, is very effective thanks to the resources for both production and comprehension, and the variety in the voices heard, the opportunity for participation of each individual learner -unlike traditional classrooms.

Gruba and Hinkelman (2012) propose four key considerations in adopting a blended approach to language learning. These considerations are “purpose, appropriateness, multimodality, and sustainability” (p. 7). The first consideration is that blended approaches are motivated by shared personal, collegial, and institutional goals. The second consideration is about the appropriateness of pedagogies, processes, and the proficiency level of the content for the academic context. In addition, multimodality is related to the use of a range of approaches, materials, and technologies in a variety of ways to enhance learning. The last consideration which is the sustainability of the program is about the management of the resources to achieve long-term results.

Goertler (2014) makes some recommendations for blended language instruction based on second language acquisition theory. Some of these recommendations include (p. 40):

- Determine the language level and computer literacy skills through a needs analysis
- Design online and in-class tasks and materials that address learning goals
- Carry out formal and informal evaluation studies continuously

- Have an iterative curricular design to adapt to technological advances and reforms based on research findings
- Provide a variety of interaction opportunities
- Design a program that is adaptable according to learner performance
- Provide a variety of practice opportunities that are skill-based, structure-based, or communicative in both online and face-to-face environments
- Give assistance in case of technological difficulties
- Address multiple learner styles
- Teach students strategies to do in-class and online tasks successfully
- Provide immediate feedback when necessary
- Balance teacher and learner role in both learning environments

### **Evaluation of a Language Program**

As a result of the advances in technological, blended designs are given a place in education. Program evaluation is an essential step in the process of program development, so it might also be important while designing blended programs. Hofmann (2006) points out that evaluation of a blended model including the design, materials, and technologies is an everlasting and essential step in achieving success.

The term evaluation is defined in a variety of ways. It is broadly defined by Richards and Schmidt (2010) as the systematic information gathering to make decisions. Richards and Schmidt (2010) also define language program evaluation as the decisions regarding the quality of the program as well as the individuals in the program. Alternatively, Kiely and Rea-Dickins (2005) define program evaluation as follows:

It refers to judgements about students by teachers and by external assessors; the performance of teachers by their students, program managers and institutions; and programs, departments and institutions by internal assessors, external monitors and inspectors. Evaluation is about the relationship between different program components, the procedures and epistemologies developed by the people involved in programs, and the processes and outcomes which are used to show the value of a program – accountability – and enhance this value – development (p. 5).

According to Brown (1995), evaluation refers to a systematic data collection and analysis of the relevant information that is necessary to improve a curriculum and to assess its effectiveness in the given context. Weir and Roberts (1994) suggest that asking six –Wh

questions at the planning stage of the evaluation might be useful (p. 10). These questions are as follows:

- Why will the evaluation be carried out?
- When will the evaluation take place?
- How long will the evaluation process take?
- What aspects of the program will be evaluated?
- Who will carry out the evaluation process?
- How will the evaluation be carried out?

In an evaluation study, the relationship between different program components, content and the procedures, the processes and outcomes of the program are examined to understand the accountability of the program or to enhance the value of the program (Kiely & Rea-Dickins, 2005). Evaluation might be conducted for two purposes. Accountability-oriented evaluation is summative in nature and usually carried out for an external authority. Alternatively, development-oriented evaluation is usually formative in focus, but conducting a summative evaluation for development is also possible (Weir & Roberts, 1994). According to Brown (1995), program development is a never-ending process and program evaluation is a crucial step in the process of program development. That is, evaluation might reveal the need for the revision of some components of the curriculum and help keep all the elements of the program together.

The scope of evaluation depends on the areas decisions are going to be made and the assumptions of the insiders. Some include the syllabus and program contents, classroom processes, materials, teaching staff, student needs, or teacher or student progress. However, making such classifications might raise some problems since the significant aspects of a program might differ from one context to another (Weir & Roberts, 2014).

The differences in a program evaluator's perspective while collecting information about a program follow certain patterns. As it is stated by Brown (1995), these patterns are helpful to determine the procedures for the evaluation of a particular program. Brown (1995) categorized these patterns depending on the purpose of the evaluation as formative versus summative evaluation. Richard (2001) also mentions illuminative evaluation, whose purpose is to reveal what parts of the program work or what parts of the program are implemented without an effort to make any changes in the program.

## **Formative versus Summative Evaluation**

Labelling a program evaluation process as formative or summative depends on the purpose of the study. Formative evaluation is carried out during the curriculum development process for the purpose of making necessary modifications to improve the program and it is usually small in scale (Brown, 1995). According to Palloff and Pratt (2007), formative evaluation is carried out at any point throughout the ongoing process in order to see if the course is going on the direction that has been planned previously. As Richards (2001) states, formative evaluation, which is a part of the program development process, aims to reveal what aspects of the program are working well, what parts are not, and what problems need to be solved. Weir and Roberts (1994) view formative evaluation as a quality control process, where progress is monitored systematically and regular feedback is given to make necessary corrections.

On the other hand, summative evaluation is generally carried out at the end of the program for the purpose of assessing the success, efficiency, and effectiveness of the program and it is mostly large in scale (Brown, 1995). Summative model measures the course satisfaction of the participants at the end of the process and is the most commonly used model of evaluation in academia (Palloff & Pratt, 2007). According to Richard (2001), a summative evaluation might seek answers to the following questions:

- Did the course achieve its goals? Was it effective?
- Were the materials effective?
- Do the objectives need to be revised?
- Was there enough number of placement and achievement tests?
- Was the time allocated for each unit enough?
- Were the teaching methods appropriate?
- What problems occurred during the course?
- What did students learn?

Weir and Roberts (1994) suggest that formative and summative evaluation dimensions might be integrated and that both the process and activities during implementation and end products might be evaluated together. Using both formative and summative views of evaluation together might benefit all the participants. According to Brown (1995), formative evaluation can be regarded as a regular part of the program to upgrade and

enhance the curriculum whereas summative view of evaluation might be viewed as a yearly report to a higher positioned manager that assesses the effectiveness of the program.

### **Evaluation of a Blended or Online Language Course**

Contrary to traditional course evaluations that mainly focus on student attitudes towards the course and its conclusion, online course evaluations are expected to address some additional issues such as technology use and instructional strategies promoting interaction between learners and the instructors (Palloff & Pratt, 2009). As it is stated by Rubio and Thoms (2014), in addition to the linguistic components of a blended course, the assessment of how they are taught is crucial to reveal the effects of technology integration on student satisfaction, learner autonomy, adaption to different learner styles so that the standards of the program might be redesigned and enhanced (p. 5).

As Palloff and Pratt (2009) suggest, in program evaluation research, applying multiple measurements increases the possibility of having valid results. Both formative and summative evaluations of the course enable instructors to make the necessary adjustments during the process. Benson and Brack (2010) point out that formative evaluation is of great significance while developing online teaching as it guarantees that emerging online learning environments successfully meet the learning objectives (p. 156).

Several researchers made a variety of categorizations on the procedures and components of the evaluation of an online program (e.g. Balula & Moreira, 2014; Benson & Brack, 2010; Garrison, 2011; Palloff & Pratt, 2009). Palloff and Pratt (2009) point out that an effective summative evaluation of an online course should include the following elements:

- overall online course experience perceptions
- orientation to the whole online course and its materials
- the quantity and the quality of the materials presented in the content
- the degree and direction of interaction, student to student or student to instructor
- level of participation and performance
- the user-friendliness of the course management system and its ability to support learning
- technical issues

- accessibility of the resources

Benson and Brack (2010) put forward that evaluation can be regarded as a quality control process involving four steps that also applies to online learning settings: planning, acting, evaluating, and improving (p. 157). Balula and Moreira (2014) propose a three-dimensional model for the evaluation of e-learning activities:

- *Learning dimension*: The evaluation of teaching activities in the light of students' expected behaviours and observed performance
- *Interaction dimension*: The evaluation of student/content interaction, student/teacher interaction, and Student/student interaction
- *Technology dimension*: The evaluation of how technology is integrated into the curriculum and its implications in the process

According to Garrison (2011), evaluating the effectiveness of an e-learning course is a challenging task and it encompasses following elements (p. 110):

- Identifying the intent of an e-learning course is the first step of course evaluation. That is, understanding why a particular e-learning course has been developed is the fundamental element of evaluating the effectiveness of a course.
- Close analysis of the content is another element of course evaluation. Each component of the content must be accurate, complementary to each other, suitable for the level of the learners, and easy to understand.
- Instructional design of the course also needs to be examined closely.
- Addressing the thoroughness, quality, and quantity of assessment activities of student learning and examining whether the course has multiple forms of assessment that assesses both individual and group work are crucial to online course evaluation.
- To what extent students are supported in the e-learning context is another area that needs to be examined. Whether the course provides support for the content-related issues such as giving remedial activities, technical issues, or personal issues.
- The final element of evaluation of an online course is the extent to which outcomes of the program have been achieved and the extent to which students and teachers are satisfied with the course.

## Data Collection Methods and Tools for Program Evaluation

A variety of methods might be applied in the process of evaluation depending on the purpose of the evaluation, the questions that will be answered, and the practicability. These methods might include reviews, questionnaires, interviews, observations, focus groups, pre and post testing, and each of these tools has both advantages and disadvantages (Benson & Brack, 2010, p. 162).

- *Review of existing documentation:* In this method the evidence is already ready to be used, so there is no need to design a tool, but the process of review might be time consuming (Benson & Brack, 2010, p. 164).
- *Tests:* Achievement tests administered at the end such as institutionally prepared ones, international tests, or student records are some of the indicators of the changes in student learning. Although these tests might give the evaluator the direct measure of achievement, it is difficult to make sure that there are not any other factors that interfere with the test results (Richard, 2001).
- *Questionnaires:* Questionnaires might be used to get information from students, instructors, directors, or other stakeholders about the methodology and course content (aims, materials, activities, objectives). The advantage of questionnaires is that it helps understand the point of view of the majority when data are collected from a large, representative sample (Weir & Roberts, 1994). According to Richards (2001), questionnaires are easy to administer, but the process of designing a questionnaire requires a lot of effort.
- *Interviews:* Interviewing is the best way to learn about informants' perceptions, experiences, and opinions in a detailed way (Weir & Roberts, 1994). Interviews are simple to implement and design. However, coding and analysis of the data might be complicated and time consuming (Benson & Brack, 2010, p. 165). One disadvantage that is pointed out by Richards (2001) is that since conducting an interview is time-consuming, representativeness of it is questionable.
- *Diaries, journals, and student logs.* Diaries and journals are records kept by the teacher about their experiences, impressions, problems, and other issues. Students might also keep the record of what they did during the course, how much time they spent on the assignments, or other out-of class activities. Although diaries, journals,

and student logs can provide detailed information about a course, the data gathered via them are unsystematic and difficult to analyse (Richards, 2001).

- *Observations.* Observations are more effective if the observer uses a specific framework such as checklists or rating scales. Observer can objectively identify the things the teacher is not aware of. However, sometimes the presence of the observer can be a source of stress (Richards, 2001).
- *Focus groups.* In focus groups, data are generated by the participants, not directed by the evaluator. However, it requires a group of people to be available and the process needs some facilitation (Benson & Brack, 2010, p. 165)







## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

In this chapter, the research design, participants, description of the course, data collection, data collection tools, data collection procedure, and data analysis have been described in detail.

#### **Reference to the Aim of the Study**

This study was conducted to reveal students' and instructors' perceptions regarding several components of the blended learning program offered at AYBU SFL in 2016-2017 academic year. Within the scope of this study, the data were gathered from 89 students who joined in the blended learning program in 2016-2017 academic year and five instructors who taught in the blended program.

#### **Research Methodology and Design**

As the aim of this study is to reveal students' perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of the online content, technology, in-class practices, exams, self-study skills, and the instructors components of the blended learning program applied in Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University as well as revealing instructors' perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of the program, case study was selected as the most suitable research method for the current study. In this sense, Creswell (2007) states, "case study research involves the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system (i.e., a setting, a context)" (p. 73). Also, according to Duff and Anderson (2015), a case study

takes a qualitative approach to research in an effort to understand the processes, behaviors, experiences, and features of a specific unit (p. 112). As the purpose of this research is to evaluate a blended program in a single and unique context, this study was defined under case study research title.

Duff and Anderson (2015) assert that the strength of a case study comes from its in-depth and holistic portrayal of the individuals within a specific context, which enables researchers to gain new and grounded insights into an issue (p. 112). Moreover, Duff and Anderson (2015) explicate that case study research permits researchers to get a description of the factors affecting a single entity and to learn about the first-hand experiences of the participants as well as the researcher's and the others' perspectives on someone's behaviors, performance, and attributes (p. 112). As it is expressed by Van Lier (2005), a case study is the best option when the aim of the study is to understand specific learners or groups, the change over time, or a particular context (p. 196). Moreover, according to Duff (2008), boundedness, importance of the context, singularity, multiple sources of information, particularity, interpretation, or in-depth analysis are the terms that are highlighted in different case study research definitions (p. 23).

A single individual like a language learner, a group of individuals sharing the same context, goals, department, and school, or a program within its natural context might constitute the research case in a case study (Van Lier, 2005, p. 196). Ary, Jacobs, and Sorensen (2010) assert that a particular case is selected purposefully since it is unique or a typical example of a phenomenon (p. 454). In addition, Ary et al. (2010) state that the unit selected for the case study must be bounded and identifiable within a certain context; otherwise, case study may not be the most appropriate method to study that unit (p. 454). In this study, the students studying in the blended learning program of Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University constitute the case since the blended learning program applied is limited to Yıldırım Beyazıt University context and since a blended learning environment can differ from one school to another.

Ary et al. (2010) suggest that a variety of data collection methods that can help to understand the case such as interviews, tests, observations, and document reviews may be employed in a case study (p. 456). In addition, Dörnyei (2007) points out that despite being categorized under the title of qualitative research, quantitative data collection instruments such as questionnaires might also be used in an actual case study since case study is a

method of data collection and organization rather than being a specific technique (p. 152). A questionnaire and interviews were used in this case study in order to collect valid data about a variety of the aspects of the program. A questionnaire was administered to gather the quantitative data and interviews were carried out for the qualitative part of the study.

With respect to the research design, the study was designed adopting a mixed-method research approach in an effort to seek an answer for the quantitative and qualitative features of the research questions. The data were collected both quantitatively and qualitatively in order to reveal students' and instructors' perceptions concerning the components of the blended program in a detailed way and to have a clear understanding of the research case.

Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2012) define mixed methods research as using both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods in one study to get a better understanding of the research problems (p. 557). Wiggins (2011) argues that strictly sticking to only one set of methods, either quantitative or qualitative methodologies, might be restrictive and agrees that all research findings might contribute to a study. Creswell (2014) points out that the reasons for choosing a mixed methods design include minimizing the limitations of quantitative and qualitative research, providing access to qualitative and quantitative data simultaneously, and giving the researcher a full understanding of the research questions (p. 52). Besides, Anderson (2016) states that using a mixed methods design might enhance the trustworthiness and the validity of the findings (p. 236).

Among the six mixed methods designs that were described by Creswell (2012), the convergent parallel design was selected as the most suitable mixed method design for this study. Creswell (2012) define the convergent parallel design as a type of mixed method study in which qualitative and quantitative data are collected simultaneously, merged and used in order to benefit from the strengths of each data collection form to get a more complete understanding of a research problem (p. 540). More specifically, both qualitative and quantitative data are collected, analyzed separately and the results are compared and interpreted elaborating on the similarities and differences between two data-sets. In view of this study, convergent parallel design was employed to support quantitative data gathered through a questionnaire with detailed explanations collected through qualitative data via semi-structured interviews.

## Universe and Sample

The universe of this study consists of 191 students who enrolled in the blended learning program at Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University School of Foreign Languages in 2016-2017 academic year and all the teachers having blended courses the same year. Students attending the preparatory program are required to get a minimum score of 69.5 out of 100 from any of the Assessment in General English Exams (AGE) carried out in June, August, or September. For the students who failed in all of these exams in their first year, a blended program is offered (Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University, 2016). In other words, all students in the blended program were repeat students. The total number of the students who enrolled in the program was 191. However, 47 students never attended the classes although they enrolled. Therefore, these students were kept out of the scope of the study. Students who were selected for piloting did not take part either in the actual study and the data were gathered from 89 students who volunteered for participation. Considering the language level of the online material which is mainly North Star Series 2, 3, and few units from 4 (Pearson, n.d.), as well as the proficiency and midterm exams administered by AYBU SFL, it can be said that the CEFR language level of the participants might be around B1, which is named as B+ (n= 30) and C (n= 59) levels by the school. All the students who participated in the study were Turkish. The demographics of these students were presented in Table 2.

As it is shown in Table 2, out of all the students who answered the questionnaire, 46.1% (n= 41) were female and 53.9% (n= 48) were male. The age range of the participants was between 19 and 27 (n= 87). 27% (n= 24) were at the age of 19, 51.7% (n=46) were at the age of 20, 14.6% (n=13) were at the age of 21, 2.2% (n=2) were at the age of 22, 1.1% (n=1) of the students were at the age of 24, and 1.1% (n=1) of the students were at the age of 27.

The research case included participants from different departments (n=88). The students who were from the Business School and the Faculty of Political Sciences account for the majority of the case (32.6%, n=29; 34.8%, n=31, respectively). Also, 19.1% (n=17) of the students were from the Faculty of Engineering and Natural Sciences. The number of the students who were from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and the number of the students who were from the faculty of Law were the same (5.6%; n=5). There was only 1 student (1.1%) from the Faculty of Medicine.

Table 2

*Demographics of the Participants of the questionnaire*

Variables		<i>f</i>	%	<i>Missing Values</i>
Gender	Female	41	46.1	
	Male	48	53.9	
	Total	89		0
Age	19	24	27	
	20	46	51.7	
	21	13	14.6	
	22	2	2.2	
	24	1	1.1	
	27	1	1.1	
	Total	87		2
Department	Faculty of Medicine	1	1.1	
	Faculty of Law	5	5.6	
	Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences	5	5.6	
	Business School	29	32.6	
	Faculty of Engineering and Natural Sciences	17	19.1	
	Faculty of Political Sciences	31	34.8	
	Total	88		1

For this study, the quantitative data were gathered from 89 repeat students who enrolled in the blended program in 2016-2017 academic year while the qualitative data were collected from 22 students who were selected among the same group of students through purposeful sampling. Patton (2002) points out that purposeful sampling leads to choosing information-

rich cases, through which the researcher might gather a large amount of data about the issues that are of great importance to the aim study (p. 46). Eleven of these students (50%) were female and 11 were male. Moreover, 11 participants were selected among the students who passed the AGE exam in January in 2016-2017 academic year and who started their departmental classes while 11 participants were chosen among the students who failed the exam again and who continued the blended program in the spring term in order to get a more detailed picture of the case.

In addition to this, semi-structured interviews were also conducted to learn about the perceptions of the instructors who were responsible for teaching these classes. As for the instructors, four instructors teaching these blended classes and one blended program coordinator who also had a blended class were interviewed to gather the qualitative data. Among all the interviewees, 3 of them were females and 2 of them were male. One of these instructors was responsible for all the issues related to online part of the program and for assigning online homework. He was also teaching a blended class. Other 3 instructors were only responsible for the in-class part of the program. Furthermore, the coordinator who is responsible for preparing the syllabi of the blended courses was interviewed. All the instructors have a degree in ELT and they have been teaching English for more than 5 years.

### **Description of the Blended Course at AYBU SFL**

Students who are not able to be exempt from AGE exam are offered a blended program whose content was planned by the School of Foreign Languages Academic Council at AYBU. The program is composed of four periods and each period lasts for 8 weeks. In this program, students are expected to attend 8 hours in the class at school and to follow an online program for 12 hours. Those who are in their first year are not allowed to participate in the blended program. In the class, students mainly do the tasks that are required for their portfolio. These tasks include four writing tasks and three speaking tasks for each period. Also, grammar topics are presented in the class by the main instructor. Students follow the coursebook *Next Generation Grammar 2* by Pearson and handouts for writing skill in the class. For the online part of the program, an online platform called 'My English Lab' by Pearson is used. This online platform is an integral part of the course books 'North Star

Reading and Writing (levels 2-4), 'North Star Listening and Speaking' (levels 2-4), and 'Next Generation Grammar' by Pearson Education. Students register for the online platform to do online homework. Virtual classrooms are created at the beginning of each period and students enroll in these classes using their passwords and usernames. Students are assigned homework weekly and they are able to do their homework whenever and wherever they want by the deadline set by the instructor. These tasks include reading, listening, writing, speaking/pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar exercises. The system automatically grades the students (except for writing and speaking parts) and this score is a part of students' period average. Although productive exercises such as writing and speaking were assigned in the fall term, students were not graded and given feedback by instructors and these exercises were optional for the students. In the spring term, such productive exercises were not assigned. Students as well as teachers are able to see their progress and grades while they do the exercises.

At school, there is an Independent Learning Centre (ILC) where students can do their online assignments. As well as providing computer facilities to students, this centre also offers some free activities such as speaking clubs and culture days. Attending ILC activities is not obligatory for students. ILC activities are not included in the syllabus.

Attendance to the in-class part and doing the online assignments are obligatory in the blended program. At the end of each 8-week period, an average score is calculated for each student. Students who get an average score of 59.5 out of 100 have the right to continue an upper level. The assessment criteria for level progression are presented in Table 3. According to Table 3, midterm exams account for 40%, quizzes comprise of 15%, portfolio assignments form 10%, and online assignments comprise of 35% of the total average score (Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University, 2016).

Midterm exams are applied twice in a period and they include reading, writing, listening, speaking, grammar, and vocabulary parts. Two quizzes (one reading and one listening) are given in each period. Midterm exams and quizzes are designed by the testing unit. Also, blended group students are given two e-text quizzes in the class as part of the portfolio. Students are expected to read the online text assigned and to answer the questions about one of the e-texts. E-text quizzes are applied in the class as a written task (Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University, 2016).



Table 3

*Assessment Criteria for Level Progression in Blended Program*

<i>All levels</i>	<i>Weight (%)</i>
Midterm I	15
Midterm II	25
Quizzes	15
North Star E-text Quizzes	10
Portfolio	10
Online assignments	25
Total	100

Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University (2016). *Student Handbook*. Retrieved from [http://ybu.edu.tr/yabancidiller/contents/files/Duyuru\\_Dosyalari](http://ybu.edu.tr/yabancidiller/contents/files/Duyuru_Dosyalari)

Five instructors are responsible for teaching blended learning groups. One of them is the coordinator of blended learning program who prepares the syllabus and organizes the classroom tasks. The other instructor is the Information Technologies (IT) unit coordinator who is responsible for assigning online homework and dealing with technical issues. Other three instructors are responsible for conducting the in-class activities as the main instructors. The researcher of this study did not have a blended learning class.

### **Data Collection Procedure**

As the first step, the researcher carried out a broad literature review on the qualities of blended learning environments, components and different models of blended learning as well as online learning and CALL. Literature review enabled the researcher to understand the components of blended designs, strengths and weaknesses of these designs.

Afterwards, the researcher developed the data collection tools which would provide the data to answer the research questions of the study. A questionnaire with the background knowledge of previous literature was designed by the researcher to answer the first and second research question which aims to reveal the student perceptions on the several aspects of the blended learning program at AYBU SFL. Moreover, interview questions for the students were prepared to elaborate on the same aspects of the program. Also,

interview questions were prepared for the instructors to answer the third research question aiming to reveal the effectiveness of some aspects of the blended program. Data obtained from two data collection forms was also used to answer the fourth research question which aimed to reveal the strengths and weaknesses of the program and the necessary modifications that can be suggested. A summary of the study was presented in the Figure 1 below.

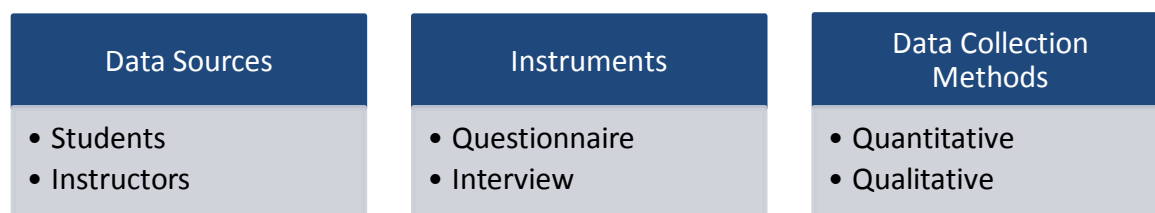


Figure 1. Summary of the research design

The piloting study was carried out by the end of the first period in 2016-2017 academic year. The data gathered from the students and the experts during the piloting process was used to make the necessary changes in data collection tools and finalize them. Necessary permissions were asked from the Ethics Committee of AYBU to conduct the study (Appendix 1).

The study was carried out at the end of the Fall Term in 2016-2017. The researcher visited each classroom, introduced the aim of the study, and asked for students' approval to participate in the study (See Appendix 2 for the approval form). The questionnaire was administered during the class time by the researcher and each application lasted between 20 and 30 minutes. Turkish version of the questionnaire was used in this study in order to collect more reliable data.

When the procedure for questionnaire was completed, interviewing procedure was initiated. All the participants who volunteered to be interviewed were guaranteed that their answers would not have any effects on their grades. Also, the interviewees were informed about the goal of the study. All interviews with the students were conducted in Turkish. Face-to-face meetings were arranged by the researcher with each student. Each interview lasted between 15 and 20 minutes and they were recorded with the permission of the interviewee.

In addition, instructors were visited in their offices to be interviewed. After getting the permission of the participants, interviews with the instructors were administered. Each one was completed between 15-20 minutes. Interview language with the instructors was English. Also, each interview was recorded. All the interview data were transcribed to be analyzed. Finally, each data set was analyzed separately and the results were merged at the end of the study.

### **Data Collection Tools**

In this study, data were collected quantitatively and qualitatively. A student questionnaire was used for quantitative data. Also, two interview forms were used for the qualitative data.

### **Quantitative Research**

Quantitative research is defined as the measurement of amount and it can be applied to the phenomena that can be expressed in quantities (Kothari, 2004, p. 3). According to Creswell (2012), a researcher describes a research problem in terms of trends, that is, the overall tendency of respondents and the diversity of the views among the population (p. 13). Dörnyei (2007) points out that quantitative research is systematic and it produces reliable and replicable data that are far-reaching, free from bias and that can be generalized to other contexts (p. 34). Mackey and Gass (2005) state that surveys in the form of questionnaires are one of the most common types of data collection method to reveal the opinions and attitudes of a large group (p. 92). As it is stated by Dörnyei (2003), administering a questionnaire enables the researcher to collect a great deal of information from a huge number of people in a short time at a low cost (p. 9). Therefore, the researcher of this study developed a questionnaire to reach all the students in the blended program and to learn about the general tendency of them about the effectiveness of the program.

### ***Student Questionnaire***

In order to find out the students' perceptions regarding certain features of the blended program at AYBU SFL, a questionnaire was designed by the researcher. After an extensive

literature review, a questionnaire that exactly fits in the AYBU SFL context could not be found to be adapted. Thus, a questionnaire was prepared by the researcher through following the steps of constructing a questionnaire that are described by Dörnyei (2003) to reveal the student opinions on several aspects of the blended program at AYBU SFL.

After a review of the literature and syllabi of the blended program at AYBU, several aspects of blended learning were listed to be included in the questionnaire. In addition to broad literature review, three students from the blended program were interviewed and were asked some questions about the program, which also helped to determine the components of the questionnaire. An item pool including 85 statements was created. After the revision and categorization of these statements under certain titles, the first draft of the questionnaire was prepared. The first version of the questionnaire was designed in English and included 60 likert-type items under 7 main parts; background information, online assignments, technology, in-class practices, exams, self-study, and the instructors. Also, an open-ended question asking for additional comments and suggestions was added. Afterwards, the questionnaire was given to three experts in order to assure face and content validity. One of these experts was from Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University School of Foreign Languages and two of them were from Gazi University English Language Teaching Department. The items of the questionnaire were revised based on the feedback from the experts.

The questionnaire was prepared in English (See Appendix 3 for the English version of the questionnaire). However, as the language level of the students might cause some misunderstandings, it was translated into Turkish by the researcher as well as being revised by two experts. After the revision of the translation, a Turkish version of the questionnaire was formed (See Appendix 4 for the Turkish version of the questionnaire). However, some terminology such as online homework and blended learning were left since students were not familiar with the Turkish versions of these terms. Afterwards, two classes (40 students in total) were selected from the blended learning groups and the questionnaire was piloted. Students were asked to fill in the questionnaire and to state the items that they need clarification. According to the students' feedback, some items were reformed, and the final version of the questionnaire was created. The reliability coefficient, Cronbach's Alpha, for the student questionnaire was calculated and was found to be at an acceptable level ( $\alpha=.946$ ). The final version involved 57 likert-type questions and seven main categories as

background information, online assignments (items 1-32), technology (items 33-38), in-class practices (items 39-43), exams (items 44-51), self-study skills (items 52-53), and instructors (items 54-57). The data about student perceptions were collected through a five-point likert scale ranging from 5 = “Strongly Agree”, 4 = “Agree”, 3 = “Undecided”, 2 = “Disagree”, 1 = “Strongly Disagree”. Overall, the questionnaire was designed to reveal the perceptions of the students about the several components of the blended program. However, one section in online assignments part (items between 26 and 32) aims to reveal students’ beliefs rather than perceptions since this section is about online assignments that are optional. Also, there is one open-ended question at the end of the questionnaire that asks for further comments and suggestions. In the final application of the questionnaire, item 15 and item 31 were excluded from the analysis as these items were identified not to be suitable for the sections that they were in.

Moreover, some measures were taken during the administration of the questionnaire to assure validity and reliability. Considering the length of the questionnaire, the format of it was designed in a reader friendly way, which might increase the face validity of the questionnaire. To assure reliability, the researcher visited each class and the questionnaire was administered during the class hour. Students were given enough time to answer all the questions and necessary explanations and clarifications were made by the researcher when students needed help. All students participated in the study voluntarily. It was ensured that student names would be protected and anonymous.

In addition, triangulation strategy was employed to increase the trustworthiness of the study. Creswell (2012) defines triangulation as “the process of corroborating evidence from different individuals (e.g. a principle and a student), types of data ( e.g. observational field notes and interviews), or methods of data collection (e.g. documents and interviews) in descriptions and themes in qualitative research” (p. 259). According to Fraenkel et al. (2012), in a triangulation design, strengths of each method will be complementary to each other and weaknesses of each will be balanced (p. 561). In this study, quantitative findings were supported by qualitative findings.

## **Qualitative Research**

In qualitative research, it is aimed to understand a phenomenon about which the researcher has little information. Thus, the researcher needs to learn more through exploration from participants (Creswell, 2012, p. 16). Richards (2003) notes that one reason to adopt a qualitative approach is that it is person-centered and so appropriate for language teaching environment (p. 9). According to Mackey and Gass (2005), qualitative research enables the researchers to have a rich and detailed description of a phenomenon and to present the picture of a phenomenon in the natural setting (p. 162). Ethnography, phenomenology, life history, grounded theory, action research, conversation analysis, and case study are some basic traditions in qualitative research (Richards, 2003, p. 13).

Interviews are common data collection methods in case studies, in which the researcher concentrates on a specific unit, program, institution, or event to describe it in a detailed way (Richards, 2003, p. 20). Since the current study is a case study, interviews, one qualitative data collection method, were conducted in the study in an effort to learn more about student experiences and to get a more detailed picture of the case.

### ***Student and Instructor Interview Forms***

The main purpose of the researcher to conduct interviews is to get a deeper understanding of the research case by focusing on the same themes. Seidman (2007) states that conducting interviews is an influential way to get an understanding of the educational or social issues through learning about the experiences of the individuals (p. 14). To reveal student and instructor experiences, semi-structured interviews were conducted in this study. According to Dörnyei (2007), in semi-structured interviews, the interviewer has pre-prepared questions to guide the interviewee as well as having the freedom to elaborate on the interesting developments during the interview (p. 136).

The interview questions for the students were formed by the researcher, based on the review of literature and the questionnaire prepared for this study. In addition to the items that were designed to measure the same components of the program as measured in the questionnaire, some additional items which focus on the strengths and weakness of the program and suggestions for development were added. The same questions were also adapted for instructor use. Afterwards, these questions were reviewed by three experts for

face and content validity. Based on the feedback received from the experts, necessary adaptations and changes were made. The final version of the student interview questions form included 13 open-ended questions about online practices, technology, in-class practices, self-study skills, exams, and instructors (See Appendix 5 for the student interview question form) while the form for the instructors included 12 open-ended questions about online practices, technology, in-class practices, and self-study skills, strengths and weaknesses of the program and suggestions (See Appendix 6 for the instructor interview question form). Considering the students' language level, the interviews with students were conducted in Turkish while the interviews with the instructors were held in English. Face-to-face meetings were arranged with both 22 students and 5 instructors and they were interviewed individually. All the interviews were recorded with the permission of the interviewees and they were transcribed by the researcher to be analyzed. To ensure the trustworthiness of the qualitative data, randomly selected three transcriptions were coded by two separate raters, and the percentage of agreement between the two raters was calculated using the formula: number of agreements / total number of agreements + disagreements (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 64). The percentage of agreement between two different coders was found to be .77.

### **Data Analysis**

In this study, both quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods were used. Following the data collection procedure, IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Package 21 was used to perform the data analysis of the quantitative data. To answer the first research question, descriptive statistics as well as frequencies and percentages were calculated. Mean scores and standard deviation scores were calculated and tabulated for each item separately. In addition, student responses to open-ended question were listed to be analyzed using content analysis. To answer the second research question, student responses to the questionnaire items were transferred to SPSS software. In order to understand whether student answers to the questionnaire items differ by their gender, Mann Whitney-U Test which is a non-parametric test was carried out as the data-set did not have a normal distribution. Finally, all findings were interpreted, and critical items were identified for further discussion.

To answer the third research question, in the data analysis process of the qualitative data, the researcher employed content analysis. Content analysis is described as the process of “coding data in a systematic way in order to discover patterns and develop well-grounded interpretations” (Friedman, 2012, p. 191). Data analysis procedure involves the preparation and organization of the data for the analysis, the reduction of the data into themes by coding and condensing these codes, and finally the representation of the data in tables, figures, or discussions (Creswell, 2007, p. 148). Although there may be different approaches to qualitative data analysis, the basic elements of all these approaches are coding the data by reducing it into smaller segments and assigning names for these segments, merging these codes with broader themes, and comparing them in graphs or tables (Creswell, 2007, p. 148). According to Dörnyei (2007), the aim of all qualitative coding techniques is to reduce and simplify the data in an effort to highlight the specific features of the data segments and to connect them to the broader categories (p. 250). Miles and Huberman (1994) define data reduction as “the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data that appear in written-up field notes or transcriptions” (p. 10).

In this study, the researcher followed the steps of qualitative data analysis that are described by Creswell (2012) for the analysis of qualitative data. The steps were shown in the Figure 2. In the light of the steps identified by Creswell (2012), the qualitative data were transcribed using Microsoft Word software. Then each student response for interview questions were read carefully, analyzed, and categorized under relevant headings. Later, the results were documented in frequency tables and interpreted. Student answers were reported using specific codes such as Student1 Male/Female instead of using student names.



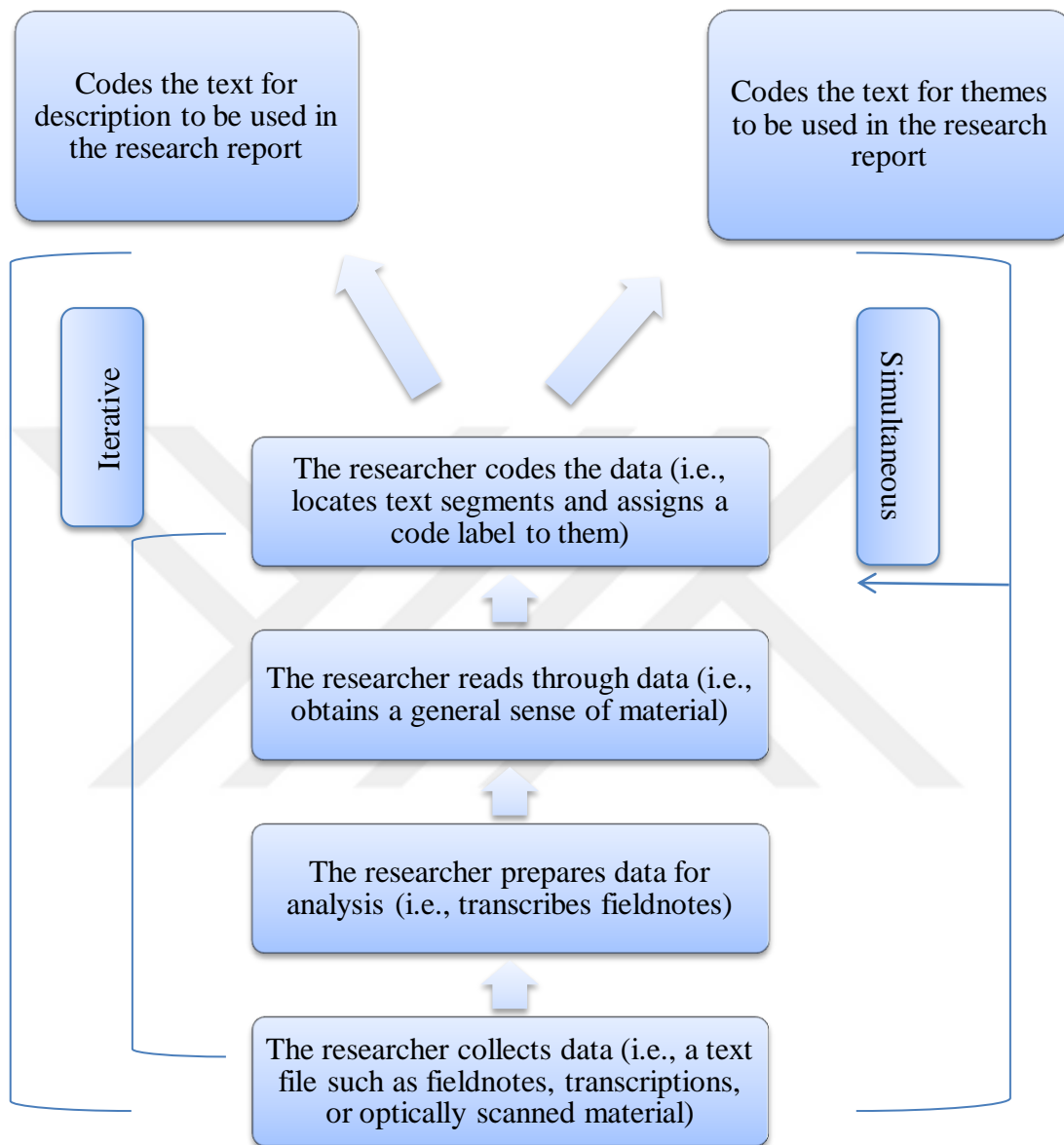


Figure 2. The qualitative process of data analysis. Cresswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational Research: planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Boston: Pearson

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **FINDINGS**

In this chapter, the analysis of the quantitative data obtained through student questionnaire and qualitative data obtained through semi-structured interviews are analyzed and presented in relation to the research questions. Finally, the findings are interpreted.

#### **Student Perceptions Obtained through Student Questionnaire**

To answer the first research question which was stated as “What are students’ perceptions on blended learning applications offered for repeat students at AYBU SFL in terms of the following aspects of the program: online practices, technology, in-class practices, exams, self-study skills, and instructors?” and the fourth research question which was stated as “What are the strengths and weaknesses of the blended program offered for repeat students at Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University Preparatory School according to the students?”, a questionnaire and interviews were conducted with the students. Basic descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) as well as frequencies and percentages of each item are presented and interpreted.

#### **Student Perceptions of Online Practices**

The first three items in the student questionnaire conceptually focus on students’ overall perceptions on online assignments. In Table 4, the mean scores and standard deviations of student responses to each item are presented.

Table 4

*Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of the Items Related with Online Assignments*

Item		Mean	SD
Item 1	Online assignments were interesting enough.	2.24	0.98
Item 2	The time allocated for the online assignments in the blended program was enough for me.	3.01	1.13
Item 3	Online assignments consolidated in-class activities.	2.70	1.08

According to Table 4, Item 2, which indicates that the time allocated for the online assignments was enough, received the highest mean score (3.01). On the other hand, the item with the lowest mean score (2.24) is item 1. It showed that students did not find online assignments interesting enough. Also, in Table 5 below, the frequencies and the percentages of these items are presented.

Table 5

*The Frequencies and the Percentages of the Student Responses to the Items about Online Assignments*

Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Undecided		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Item 1	23	25.8	34	38.2	20	22.5	12	13.5	---	---
Item 2	11	12.4	19	21.3	21	23.6	34	38.2	4	4.5
Item 3	15	16.9	21	23.6	32	36	18	20.2	3	3.4
Total	89	100	89	100	89	100	89	100	89	100

It can be clearly seen in Table 5 that more than half of the students (25.8% strongly disagree; 38.2% disagree) felt online assignments were not interesting enough for them while only 13.5% agreed that online assignments were interesting (Item 1). Similarly, most of the students (16.9% strongly disagree; 23.6% disagree) had negative opinions about the item indicating that online assignments consolidated in-class activities (Item 3). On the other hand, relatively more participants agreed (38.2% agree; 4.5% strongly agree) that the time allocated for the online assignments was enough for them although nearly a quarter of

the students (23.6%; n=21) stated that they were unsure whether the time for the assignments were enough or not (Item 2).

Overall, the results show that students reported that online assignments did not attract their attention and these assignments were not helpful for their in-class activities. However, relatively more students stated that they had enough time for doing online assignments.

### *Perceptions of Online Listening Assignments*

Mean scores and standard deviations of student responses to the items related with online listening assignments are presented in Table 6 below.

Table 6

*Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of the Items Related with Online Listening Assignments*

Item	Mean	SD
Item 4 Online listening assignments were useful for my in-class listening performances.	2.72	1.03
Item 5 Online listening assignments were useful to improve my listening sub-skill of understanding the main idea(s) in listening texts such as summarizing the main idea or finding a suitable title for the texts.	2.89	1.0
Item 6 Online listening assignments were useful to improve my listening sub-skill of understanding the details in listening texts such as filling in the blanks in the summary of a text.	2.84	0.99
Item 7 Online listening assignments were useful to improve my listening sub-skill of inferring meaning from the context in listening texts such as understanding how the speaker feels.	2.94	1.11
Item 8 The number of online listening assignments was enough for me to improve my listening skills.	2.81	0.98
Item 9 The language level of the online listening assignments was appropriate for my language level.	3.0	1.14

It is clear in Table 6 that item 9, which is about the appropriateness of the language level of online assignments, had a relatively higher mean score (3.0). All other items in this section received a mean score which is lower than the middle value 3.0, item 4 with the lowest. Overall, Table 6 indicates students' negative perceptions on some features of online

listening assignments. In addition, in Table 7 below, the frequencies and percentages for each item in this section are presented.

Table 7

*The Frequencies and Percentages of Student Responses to the Items about Online Listening Assignments*

Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Undecided		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Item 4	13	14.6	23	25.8	30	33.7	22	24.7	1	1.1
Item 5	9	10.1	23	25.8	26	29.2	31	34.8	---	---
Item 6	9	10.1	25	28.1	26	29.2	29	32.6	---	---
Item 7	10	11.2	24	27	19	21.3	33	37.1	3	3.4
Item 8	11	12.4	18	20.2	39	43.8	19	21.3	2	2.2
Item 9	13	14.6	16	18	21	23.6	36	40.4	3	3.4
Total	89	100	89	100	89	100	89	100	89	100

When the findings in Table 7 are analyzed, it is seen that a majority (14.6% strongly disagree; 25.8% disagree) stated that online listening assignments were not helpful for their in-class listening performances as well as a high amount of students stating that they were undecided (Item 4). Student ratings for items 5 and 6 showed quite a similar distribution. 35.9% (n= 32) participants in total disagreed or strongly disagreed that online listening assignments were useful to improve their listening sub-skill of understanding main ideas while 34.8% of the students agreed on this statement (Item 5). Relatively lower ratings were observed for item 6, which indicated that online listening assignments did not improve students listening sub-skill of understanding the details. In terms of improving listening sub-skills, item 7 received a relatively higher rating. Nearly half of the students (40.4%; n=36) agreed or strongly agreed that online listening assignments improved their listening sub-skill of making inferences while 38.2% (n=34) were negative about this item (Item 7). As for item 8, stating that there was enough number of online listening assignments, the majority of the participants remained undecided (43.8% undecided; n=39). Finally, a majority (43.7% in total; n=39) was positive about the language level of

the online listening assignments (Item 9). They stated that the language level of online listening assignments were appropriate for their own language level.

The results in Table 7 showed that except for the language level of the online listening assignments, the participants had negative perceptions or were undecided about the contribution of the listening component of the online assignments to their listening skills. Specifically, a majority explained that online listening assignments did not contribute to their in-class listening performances and online listening assignments did not improve their listening sub-skills such as understanding the main ideas, understanding the details, and making inferences. Also, most of the students stated that the number of online listening assignments were not sufficient.

### ***Perceptions of Online Reading Assignments***

In student questionnaire, items between 10 and 16 aim to elicit students' perceptions on online reading assignments. According to Table 8, which shows the mean scores and standard deviations of each item related with online reading assignments, two items, 13 and 16, received a mean score that is lower than 3 (2.94 and 2.96; respectively), depicting that a majority were negative about these items. According to this, students think that online reading assignments did not help students develop inferencing skills and they also think that the number of online reading assignments were not enough for them to meet their needs. Item 10, which is related with the language level of the online reading assignments, was the highest rated item (3.24). Therefore, it can be said that the language level of online reading assignments were suitable for the students' language level.

Table 8

*Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of the Items Related with Online Reading Assignments*

Item		Mean	SD
Item 10	Online reading assignments were appropriate for my language level.	3.24	1.06
Item 11	Online reading assignments were useful for me to improve my reading sub-skill of skimming such as finding the suitable title for the texts or writing a short summary of the texts.	3.06	1.10
Item 12	Online reading assignments were useful for me to improve my reading sub-skill of scanning such as doing fill-in-the-blanks exercises.	3.01	1.05
Item 13	Online reading assignments were useful to improve my reading sub-skill of inference.	2.94	0.98
Item 14	Online reading assignments were useful to improve my reading sub-skill of guessing the meaning of unknown words in a reading text.	3.0	1.04
Item 16	There was enough number of online reading assignments for me to improve my reading skills.	2.96	1.03

The frequencies and percentages obtained for each item related with several features of online reading assignments are also presented in Table 9. When the results in Table 9 were analyzed, it was observed that nearly half of the students (42.7% agree; 5.6% strongly agree) were positive about the language level of the online reading assignments (Item 10). The majority believed that language level of the online reading assignments was appropriate for their own language level while 32.6% were undecided (Item 10). In terms of online reading assignments' contribution to the development of some reading sub-skills, items 11, 12, and 14 received moderately high ratings. According to this, a great deal of students (37.1% agree; 4.5% strongly agree) stated that online reading assignment improved their reading sub-skill of skimming (Item 11). Similarly, 40.5% of the students in total agreed or strongly agreed that online reading assignments improved their reading sub-skill of scanning (Item 12) and 40.4% in total stated online reading assignments improved their reading sub-skill of guessing the meaning of unknown words from the context (Item 14). However, when it comes to reading sub-skill of making inferences, a majority of the students (41.6%, undecided; n=37) were unsure about whether online reading assignments

contributed to their reading sub-skill of making inferences (Item 13). In addition to these, a majority (38.2%; n=34) remained undecided with respect to the sufficiency of the number of the online reading assignments (Item 16).

Table 9

*The Frequencies and Percentages of Student Responses to the Items about Online Reading Assignments*

Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Undecided		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Item 10	10	11.2	7	7.9	29	32.6	38	42.7	5	5.6
Item 11	11	12.4	14	15.7	27	30.3	33	37.1	4	4.5
Item 12	7	7.9	24	27	22	24.7	33	37.1	3	3.4
Item 13	9	10.1	16	18	37	41.6	25	28.1	2	2.2
Item 14	10	11.2	17	19.1	26	29.2	35	39.3	1	1.1
Item 16	11	12.4	14	15.7	34	38.2	28	31.5	2	2.2
Total	89	100	89	100	89	100	89	100	89	100

Concisely, the findings in Table 9 indicated that many students expressed that online reading were at the right language level and that these assignments helped them improve some reading sub-skills such as skimming, scanning, and guessing the meaning of a word from the context. Also, relatively fewer students expressed that these assignments helped them improve the skill of making inferences while reading. On the other hand, participants were doubtful if the number of the online reading assignments was enough for them or not.

***Perceptions of Online Vocabulary Assignments***

Items from 17 to 21 focus on the features of online vocabulary assignments in the student questionnaire. When Table 10 is analyzed, it can be seen that the only item with a mean score lower than 3 (2.65) is item 20, which is about the effects of online vocabulary assignments on students' in-class speaking performances. All other items in this section have quite the same mean scores, ranging between 3.0 and 3.09.



Table 10

*Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of the Items Related with Online Vocabulary Assignments*

Item		Mean	SD
Item 17	Online vocabulary assignments contributed to my in-class listening performance.	3.09	1.12
Item 18	Online vocabulary assignments contributed to my in-class reading performance.	3.02	1.06
Item 19	There was enough number of vocabulary assignments to meet my language needs.	3.0	1.01
Item 20	In my in-class speaking performances, I could use the new vocabulary items which I learned by means of online assignments.	2.65	1.05
Item 21	In my in-class writing performances, I could use the new vocabulary items which I learned by means of online assignments.	3.01	1.19

Frequencies and percentages of each item in this section are presented in Table 11. Table 11 shows that a majority (38.2% agree; 5.6% strongly agree) stated that online vocabulary assignments contributed to their in-class listening performances (Item 17) and 39.3% in total (n=35) agreed or strongly agreed that online vocabulary assignments helped them with their in-class reading performances (Item 18). Likewise, nearly half of the participants (42.7% agree; 4.5% strongly agree) stated that they were able to use the vocabulary items that they learned through online vocabulary assignments in their in-class writing performances (Item 21). As for item 19, it can be seen that almost half of the students (49.4% undecided; n=44) remained unsure about whether there was enough number of online vocabulary assignments. On the other hand, most students (25.8% disagree; 16.9% strongly disagree) had negative perceptions on the contribution of online vocabulary assignments to their in-class speaking performances (Item 20).

Table 11

*The Frequencies and Percentages of Student Responses to the Items about Online Vocabulary Assignments*

Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Undecided		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Item 17	10	11.2	16	18	24	26.9	34	38.2	5	5.6
Item 18	8	9	21	23.6	25	28.1	31	34.8	4	4.5
Item 19	9	10.1	12	13.5	44	49.4	18	20.2	6	6.7
Item 20	15	16.9	23	25.8	31	34.8	18	20.2	2	2.2
Item 21	13	14.6	19	21.3	15	16.9	38	42.7	4	4.5
Total	89	100	89	100	89	100	89	100	89	100

On the whole, it can be stated that students' perceptions on the effects of online vocabulary assignments on their in-class listening, reading, and writing performances were rather positive. However, the majority of the participants explained that online vocabulary assignments did not contribute to their speaking performances. Also, nearly half of the students were unsure about the sufficiency of the number of the online vocabulary assignments.

*Perceptions of Online Grammar Assignments*

Four items (22-25) concentrates on the features of online grammar assignments in the student questionnaire. Table 12 presents the mean scores and standard deviations obtained for each item in this section. When the four items in this section are analyzed, it is clear that except for one item, which is item 25 with the highest mean score (3.48), all other items received a mean score below the middle score 3. According to item 25, it can be said that students think the number of online grammar assignments were sufficient for them.

Table 12

*Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of the Items Related with Online Grammar Assignments*

Item		Mean	SD
Item 22	Online grammar assignments were useful for me to speak in English with accurate grammar.	2.69	1.01
Item 23	Online grammar assignments were useful for me to write paragraphs, essays, letters, or e-mails in English with accurate grammar.	2.80	1.05
Item 24	Online grammar assignments helped me prepare well for my exams.	2.67	1.10
Item 25	The number of online grammar assignments was enough for me.	3.48	1.06

Student responses to each item are also given in detail in Table 13 below. When each item in Table 13 is examined, it can be said that more than half of the students (54% in total; n=48) explained that the number of the online grammar assignments were enough for them (Item 25). However, most students (16.9% strongly disagree; 28.1% disagree) stated that online grammar assignments did not help them prepare well for the exams (Item 24). Similarly, a huge majority (46% in total; n=41) disagreed or strongly disagreed on the statement that online assignments helped them speak in English with accurate grammar (Item 22). Also, 40.5% (n= 36) expressed that online grammar assignments did not help them write in English with accurate grammar (Item 23)

Table 13

*The Frequency and Percentages of Student Responses to the Items about Online Grammar Assignments*

Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Undecided		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Item 22	10	11.2	31	34.8	28	31.5	17	19.1	3	3.4
Item 23	11	12.4	25	28.1	26	29.2	25	28.1	2	2.2
Item 24	15	16.9	25	28.1	26	29.2	20	22.5	3	3.4
Item 25	4	4.5	12	13.5	25	28.1	33	37.1	15	16.9
Total	89	100	89	100	89	100	89	100	89	100

Overall, the findings in Table 13 indicated that students' perceptions on online grammar assignments were mostly negative. Although the majority of the participants stated that there was enough number of assignments, these assignments seemed to contribute to neither speaking nor writing performances.

### ***Beliefs about Online Writing Assignments***

Some features of online writing assignments are inquired through three items in the questionnaire (26-28). In Table 14 below, mean scores and standard deviations for each item in this section are presented. As depicted in Table 14, only item 28 is highly rated, with a mean score of 3.62.

Table 14

#### *Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of the Items Related with Online Writing Assignments*

Item	Mean	SD
Item 26 I believe that doing online writing assignments should be obligatory.	1.94	1.15
Item 27 I believe that there should be more online writing assignments.	2.07	1.15
Item 28 I believe that there should be online writing assignments on which immediate feedback is given.	3.62	1.34

When the student responses to each item presented in detail in Table 15 are examined, it was revealed that a huge majority of the students (50.6% strongly disagree; 20.2% disagree) did not want online writing assignments to be obligatory (Item 26). In addition, most of the students (42.7% strongly disagree; 27% disagree) stated that there should not be more online writing assignments (Item 27). On the other hand, a majority of the students (31.5% agree; 31.5% strongly agree) believed that there should be online writing assignments on which immediate feedback is given (Item 28).

Table 15

*The Frequency and Percentages of Student Responses to the Items about Online Writing Assignments*

Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Undecided		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Item 26	45	50.6	18	20.2	14	15.7	10	11.2	2	2.2
Item 27	38	42.7	24	27	11	12.4	15	16.9	1	1.1
Item 28	12	13.5	5	5.6	16	18	28	31.5	28	31.5
Total	89	100	89	100	89	100	89	100	89	100

On the whole, it can be inferred from the findings in this section that students did not want to have online writing assignments. However, they believed that immediate feedback to their online writing should be given.

*Beliefs about Online Speaking and Pronunciation Assignments*

Items between 29 and 32 are concerned with some features of online speaking and pronunciation assignments. According to Table 16 below, in general, items related with online interactive speaking activities (Items 29 and 30) were rated more positively (3.83 and 3.73; respectively) while the item related with pronunciation (item 32) had mean scores lower than the middle score 3 (2.85).

Table 16

*Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of the Items Related with Online Speaking and Pronunciation Assignments*

Items	Mean	SD
Item 29 I believe that there should be online interactive speaking activities in which I can communicate in English with native speakers on our blended learning online platform.	3.83	1.17
Item 30 I believe that there should be online interactive speaking activities on our blended learning online platform.	3.73	1.10
Item 32 I believe that doing online pronunciation assignments should be obligatory.	2.85	1.30

Moreover, student responses to each item under this section are presented in Table 17 below. According to Table 17, a huge majority of the students (69.7% for item 29; 66.2% for item 30) believed that there should be online interactive speaking activities with native speakers. Regarding pronunciation, the number of the students who believed that online pronunciation assignments should be obligatory (36% in total; n= 32) is the same as the number of the students who disagreed or strongly disagreed on the same statement (Item 32).

Table 17

*The Frequency and Percentages of Student Responses to the Items about Online Speaking and Pronunciation Assignments*

Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Undecided		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Item 29	6	6.7	6	6.7	15	16.9	32	36	30	33.7
Item 30	5	5.6	7	7.9	18	20.2	36	40.4	23	25.8
Item 32	21	23.6	11	12.4	25	28.1	24	27	8	9
Total	89	100	89	100	89	100	89	100	89	100

On the whole, it can be said that students wanted to have online interactive speaking activities. On the other hand, they did not believe that online pronunciation assignments should be obligatory.

**Perceptions of the Technological Aspect of the Program**

The third section of the questionnaire is composed of items that focus on the technology aspect of the program. In Table 18, mean scores and standard deviations for each item in the section are presented. Item 38 is the only item with a mean score which is below 3 (2.93), reflecting students' negative attitude towards that item. On the other hand, the item with the highest means score is item 33, with a mean score of 3.84.

Table 18

*Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of Student Responses to the Items Related with the Technology Aspect of the Program*

Item		Mean	SD
Item 33	I was given enough information about how to use the online platform.	3.84	1.05
Item 34	Technical support was provided when I experienced some technical problems with the online platform.	3.73	1.17
Item 35	The school provided the necessary computer facilities for me to do my online assignments at school.	3.51	1.13
Item 36	I could easily do my online assignments via all kinds of technological tools (smartphones, tablets etc.).	3.74	1.06
Item 37	The online platform on which I do online assignments was easy to use.	3.73	1.07
Item 38	Studying on an online platform contributed a lot to my language learning.	2.93	1.23

As for the student responses to each item in this section, the frequency and percentages are presented in Table 19. According to the findings in Table 19, it was observed that 77.5% of the students (n=69) in total stated they were informed about how to use the online platform at the beginning of the program (Item 33). Similarly, 70.8% (n=63) of the participants in total found the online platform on which they did online assignments easy to use (Item 37). As for the analysis of item 34, which is another highly rated item, a huge majority (43.8% agree; 25.8% strongly agree) stated that technical support was given when they had some technical problems with the online platform. Also, a great deal of students (60.7% in total; n= 54) agreed or strongly agreed on the statement that they had necessary computer facilities at school to do online assignments (Item 35). In addition to these, 74.1% (n=66) in total expressed that they could easily do their online assignments via all kinds of technological tools such as smartphones, tablets, or desktop computers (Item 36). On the other hand, when students were asked whether studying on an online platform contributed to their language learning, a majority of the students (40.4% undecided; n=36) were doubtful and more than a quarter (20.2% strongly disagree; 7.9% disagree) were negative about it.

Table 19

*The Frequency and Percentages of Student Responses to the Items about the Technology Aspect of the Program*

Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Undecided		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Item 33	5	5.6	6	6.7	9	10.1	47	52.8	22	24.7
Item 34	9	10.1	2	2.2	16	18	39	43.8	23	25.8
Item 35	7	7.9	10	11.2	18	20.2	39	43.8	15	16.9
Item 36	5	5.6	8	9	10	11.2	48	53.9	18	20.2
Item 37	4	4.5	10	11.2	12	13.5	43	48.3	20	22.5
Item 38	18	20.2	7	7.9	36	40.4	19	21.3	9	10.1
Total	89	100	89	100	89	100	89	100	89	100

Overall, student responses to each item about the technology of the blended learning program showed positive perceptions of the students. Particularly, it can be said that the online platform was easy to use, and the technical support and necessary computer facilities were provided when needed. However, students were not sure whether studying on an online platform helped them to learn English.

### **Perceptions of the In-class Practices**

The fourth section of the questionnaire includes items (39-43) that focus on the in-class features of the blended learning program. Mean scores and the standard deviations for each item are presented in Table 20. The item with a relatively lower mean score (3.12) was found to be item 39, stating that in-class activities were interesting enough. The item with the highest mean score (3.89) was found to be item 41, which is about portfolio assignments' contribution to writing skills.



Table 20

*Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of the Items Related with In-class Practices*

Item		Mean	SD
Item 39	In-class activities were interesting enough.	3.12	1.15
Item 40	There were not only individual tasks but also pair work and group work activities in the classroom.	3.86	1.04
Item 41	Portfolio assignments contributed to my writing skills.	3.89	1.04
Item 42	Portfolio assignments contributed to my speaking skills.	3.39	1.22
Item 43	There was enough number of in-class presentation assignments and project work.	3.72	1.10

As it is shown in Table 21, 73 students in total (57.3% agree; 24.7% strongly agree) expressed that portfolio assignments contributed to their writing skills (Item 41). Also, more than half of the students (55.1% in total; n= 49) stated that portfolio assignments contributed to their speaking skills (Item 42). In addition, 75.3% (n=67) agreed or strongly agreed on the statement that the classroom activities were composed of a variety of tasks such as pair work and group work as well as individual tasks (Item 40). Similarly, the majority of the students (49.4 agree; 22.5% strongly agree) explained that the number of in-class presentation assignments and project work was enough for them (Item 43). In addition to these, for 41 students (39.3% agree; 6.7% strongly agree), in-class activities were interesting while 24 students (27%) were unsure (Item 39).

Table 21

*The Frequency and Percentages of Student responses to the Items about In-class Practices*

Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Undecided		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Item 39	12	13.5	12	13.5	24	27	35	39.3	6	6.7
Item 40	4	4.5	7	7.9	11	12.3	43	48.3	24	27
Item 41	6	6.7	4	4.5	6	6.7	51	57.3	22	24.7
Item 42	9	10.1	12	13.5	19	21.3	33	37.1	16	18
Item 43	5	5.6	10	11.2	10	11.2	44	49.4	20	22.5
Total	89	100	89	100	89	100	89	100	89	100

On the whole, it can be said that the majority of the students were positive about in-class practices and portfolio assignments. Moreover, they expressed that there were a variety of tasks in the class such as group work, pair work, project work, and presentations.

### **Perceptions of Examination**

The fifth section in the questionnaire including the items between 44 and 51 focuses on examination. According to Table 22 below which presents the mean scores and standard deviations for each item, item 46, which is about the congruence between midterm exams and in-class content, had the highest mean score (3.71) while item 49, which is concerned with the congruence between the question types in the exams and the question types in the online assignments, received the lowest mean score (3.02).

Table 22

*Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of the Items Related with Examination*

Item		Mean	SD
Item 44	The quizzes covered the content which we learned in face-to-face classes.	3.52	1.10
Item 45	The quizzes covered the content which we learned on the online platform.	3.63	1.10
Item 46	The midterm exams covered the content which we learned in face-to-face classes.	3.71	1.06
Item 47	The midterm exams covered the content which we learned on the online platform.	3.46	1.02
Item 48	The question types in all exams were similar to the question and exercise types covered in the classroom activities.	3.40	1.06
Item 49	The question types in exams were similar to the question and exercise types covered on the online platform.	3.02	1.05
Item 50	The level of the quizzes was appropriate for what we learned in the class.	3.45	1.03
Item 51	The level of the midterm exams was appropriate for what we learned in the class.	3.29	1.10

When student responses shown in Table 23 are examined in detail, it is observed that the majority of the students (42.7% agree; 16.9% strongly agree) explained that quizzes

covered the in-class content (Item 44). In relation to this, students (44.9% agree; 20.2% strongly agree) also stated that quizzes covered the online content (Item 45). In terms of midterms, 68.5% of the students in total (n=61) agreed (47.2%; n=42) or strongly agreed (21.3%; n=19) on the statement that midterm exams covered the in-class content (Item 46). Similarly, more than half of the students (46.1% agree; 11.2% strongly agree) expressed that midterm exams also covered the online content (Item 47). Regarding question types, although most of the students (52.8% in total; n=47) agreed (40.4%; n=36) or strongly agreed (12.4%; n=11) on the statement that question types in the exams were similar to the question and exercise types in the classroom (Item 48), fewer students (36% in total; n=32) agreed (31.5%; n=28) or strongly agreed (4.5%; n=4) that question types in the exams were similar to the question types covered in online assignments (Item 49). In addition, most of the students (58.4% for item 50; 51.7% for item 51 in total) stated that the language level of the quizzes (Item 50) and midterms (Item 51) was appropriate for the in-class content.

Table 23

*The Frequency and Percentages of Student Responses to the Items about Examination*

Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Undecided		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Item 44	6	6.7	10	11.2	20	22.5	38	42.7	15	16.9
Item 45	5	5.6	10	11.2	16	18	40	44.9	18	20.2
Item 46	5	5.6	7	7.9	16	18	42	47.2	19	21.3
Item 47	5	5.6	10	11.2	23	25.8	41	46.1	10	11.2
Item 48	6	6.7	10	11.2	26	29.2	36	40.4	11	12.4
Item 49	10	11.2	14	15.7	33	37.1	28	31.5	4	4.5
Item 50	6	6.7	9	10.1	22	24.7	43	48.3	9	10.1
Item 51	6	6.7	17	19.1	20	22.5	37	41.6	9	10.1
Total	89	100	89	100	89	100	89	100	89	100

Overall, the findings in this section revealed that the majority of the students were positive about the content, question types, and the language level of the quizzes and midterm exams. It can be concluded that according to the students quiz and midterm exam contents,

language level and question types were compatible with what they learned in the class and in online assignment.

### Perceptions of Self-study Skills

The sixth section of the questionnaire is composed of two items focusing on students' self-study skills. Table 24 below shows the mean scores and the standard deviations for these items. As it is seen in Table 24, mean scores for both of the items in the section are under the middle score 3 (2.89 and 2.74; respectively).

Table 24

*Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of the Items Related with Self-study Skills*

Item	Mean	SD
Item 52 Doing online assignments on the platform helped me improve my self-study skills.	2.89	1.17
Item 53 Doing online assignments on the platform helped me use my time effectively.	2.74	1.12

When Table 25, which depicts student responses to these items is presented in detail is examined, it can be seen that the total number of the students (38.2%; n=34) who agreed (33.7%; n=30) or strongly agreed (4.5%; n=4) on the statement that doing online assignments on the platform helped to improve self-study skills (Item 52) is equal to the total number of the students (38%; n=34) who disagreed (22.5%; n=20) or strongly disagreed (15.7%; n=14) with it. Also, 23.6% (n= 21) were undecided about item 52. As for item 53, 25.8% of the students (n=23) disagreed and 16.9% (n=15) strongly disagreed on the item stating doing online assignments on the platform helped to use their time effectively.

Table 25

*The Frequency and Percentages of Student Responses to the Items about Self-study Skills*

Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Undecided		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Item 52	14	15.7	20	22.5	21	23.6	30	33.7	4	4.5
Item 53	15	16.9	23	25.8	23	25.8	26	29.2	2	2.2
Total	89	100	89	100	89	100	89	100	89	100

Overall, according to Table 25, the majority of the students expressed that doing online assignments was not helpful for them to use their time effectively and to improve self-study skills although more than a quarter of the students also stated that online assignments improved their self-study skills and time-management skills.

### Perceptions of Instructors

The final section of the questionnaire focuses on perceptions on the instructors teaching blended learning classes. Table 26 below presents the mean scores and standard deviations obtained for each item in this section. All the items in this section received a mean score which is higher than 3, item 54 with the highest mean (4.19) and item 57 with a relatively lower mean score (3.67).

Table 26

*Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of the Items Related with Instructors*

Item	Mean	SD
Item 54 In addition to online assignments, instructors also oriented me to other useful online resources.	4.19	0.94
Item 55 Instructors facilitated the use of online platform.	3.78	1.10
Item 56 Instructors guided me to discover my learning styles and strategies.	3.73	1.20
Item 57 The interaction between the instructor and me motivated me to study in the blended learning program.	3.67	1.31

Detailed student responses to each item in this section are presented in Table 27 below. When the analysis of each item is examined, it is clear that a great deal of students (43.8% agree; 42.7% strongly agree) stated that instructors oriented them to other useful online resources (Item 54). In addition to this, the majority (44.9% agree; 27% strongly agree) expressed that instructors made it easier for them to use the online platform (Item 55). Similarly, 62.9% of the students (n=56) agreed (30.3%; n=27) and strongly agreed (32.6%; n=29) on item 56, stating that instructors helped students to discover their learning styles and strategies that are necessary to study online on their own. Finally, more than half of the students (32.6% agree; 32.6% strongly agree) explained that their interaction with the instructor motivated them to study in the blended learning program (Item 57).

Table 27

*Frequencies and Percentages of Student Responses to the Items Related with Instructors*

Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Undecided		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Item 54	2	2.2	5	5.6	5	5.6	39	43.8	38	42.7
Item 55	3	3.4	13	14.6	9	10.1	40	44.9	24	27
Item 56	6	6.7	8	9	19	21.3	27	30.3	29	32.6
Item 57	10	11.2	7	7.9	14	15.7	29	32.6	29	32.6
Total	89	100	89	100	89	100	89	100	89	100

On the whole, the findings in Table 27 revealed that students' perceptions on the instructors were highly positive. Most of the students expressed that instructors' guidance facilitated learning, motivated learners, and helped them discover their learning styles and strategies.

### **Student Responses to the Open-Ended part of the Questionnaire**

An open-ended item in which students can write any other additional comments about the blended learning program was also placed at the end of the questionnaire. 36 out of 89 students responded to this part and added their comments about various aspects of the blended program. The comments and their frequencies were presented in Table 28. As it is

shown in Table 28, some students (n=17) commented on the number of in-class hours and they stated the number of in-class hours was not enough for them and it should be increased. For example, one student said “*It is not enough to come to school for two days*”. Another student stated “*There should be more in-class hours in the blended program. 3 or 4 days would be better*”. In addition to this, some students believed that the books that are necessary to do online assignments were expensive. Moreover, there were also some students who expressed that doing online assignments was not useful and it was time-consuming. To illustrate, one student said “*I do not think that online assignments are useful to improve my English*”. In addition to this, another student said “*I do not find online adequate...we do online assignments because we have to. We do not do online assignments carefully. Just for points*”. Also, some students stated that they wanted to have more exam-oriented tasks in the class. In addition, some students found it difficult to organize their studies. For example, one student stated “*Having two days at school makes it difficult for me to study regularly*”. In terms of their language skills, some students stated that there should be more speaking tasks in the program. In addition to these, one student mentioned instructors, one student wrote about motivation, and one student said he was not familiar with the blended learning system.

Table 28

*Student Comments on the Blended Program and Frequencies*

Comments	<i>f</i>
The number of class hours should be increased	17
Blended program is costly	10
Online assignments are not useful to improve language skills	12
More exam-oriented tasks should be given	5
It is difficult to organize my studies in the blended program.	4
It is difficult to study on a computer screen	4
More importance should be placed on speaking	3
Students should be motivated	1
Instructors should be more caring	1
Students are not familiar with a blended learning system	1

## Results of Comparison Test

In an effort to answer the second research question, which aims to reveal whether blended learning students' responses to each item in the student questionnaire differ according to their gender, a non-parametric comparison test – Mann-Whitney U – was run. First, in order to understand whether the data set meets the assumption of normality of the distribution and to decide on the analysis technique as a result, Tests of Normality (Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk) were utilized. Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test and Shapiro-Wilk tests showed the data set to be not normally distributed ( $p < .05$ ) (See Appendix 7 for the findings of normality tests for gender data set). Therefore, Mann-Whitney U Test, which is a non-parametric test for two independent samples, was selected as the analysis technique. In Table 29, the results of Mann-Whitney U Test with a significant  $p$  value ( $p < .05$ ) are presented (See Appendix 8 for the findings of Mann-Whitney-U test for all gender data set). According to Table 29, it can be seen that there was a statistically significant difference between male and female students in their responses to the item 10- Online reading assignments were appropriate for my level- ( $U=742.500$ ;  $p < .03$ ); item 12- Online reading assignments were useful for me to improve my reading sub-skill of scanning- ( $U=713.500$ ;  $p < .02$ ); item 34- Technical support was provided when I experienced some technical problems with the online platform- ( $U=739$ ;  $p < .03$ ); item 41- Portfolio assignments contributed to my writing skills- ( $U=766.500$ ;  $p < .04$ ); item 46- The midterm exams covered the content which we learned in face-to-face classes- ( $U=755$ ;  $p < .04$ ); item 47- The midterm exams covered the content which we learned on the online platform- ( $U=749$ ;  $p < .03$ ); item 50- The level of the quizzes was appropriate for what we learned in the class- ( $U=736.500$ ;  $p < .02$ ).

Overall, the findings in Table 29 revealed that there is a statistically significant difference in male and female students' degree of agreement on the items (items 10, 12, 34, 41, 46, 47, and 50) that are mainly about online reading assignments and exam content. When mean ranks of each group were compared, for each of these items with a significant  $p$  value, it can be seen that females have higher mean ranks in all the items, which can be interpreted as females show higher degree of agreement on the items that are mainly about online reading assignments and exam content.



Table 29

*Mann-Whitney U Test for Gender Variable*

Item no.	Item	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	U	p
10	Online reading assignments were appropriate for my language level.	Female	41	50.89	2086.5	742.500	.03
		Male	48	39.97	1918.5		
12	Online reading assignments were useful for me to improve my reading sub-skill of scanning.	Female	41	51.60	2115.5	713.500	.02
		Male	48	39.36	1889.5		
34	Technical support was provided when I experienced some technical problems with the online platform.	Female	41	50.98	2090	739	.03
		Male	48	39.90	1915		
41	Portfolio assignments contributed to my writing skills.	Female	41	50.30	2062.5	766.500	.04
		Male	48	40.47	1942.5		
46	The midterm exams covered the content which we learned in face-to-face classes.	Female	41	50.59	2074	755	.04
		Male	48	40.23	1931		
47	The midterm exams covered the content which we learned on the online platform.	Female	41	50.73	2080	749	.03
		Male	48	40.10	1925		
50	The level of the quizzes was appropriate for what we learned in the class.	Female	41	51.04	2092.5	736.500	.02
		Male	48	39.84	1912.5		

**Content Analysis of the Semi-Structured Interviews with Students**

In addition to the student questionnaire, 22 students who participated in the blended program in 2016-2017 academic year were interviewed in order to understand student perceptions on several aspects of the blended learning program in more detail and to reveal strengths and weaknesses of the blended learning program at AYBU SFL. The qualitative

data also provided data for triangulation. Semi-structured interviews provided data to answer the first research question which was stated as “What are students’ perceptions on blended learning applications offered for repeat students at AYBU SFL in terms of the following aspects of the program: online practices, technology, in-class practices, exams, self-study skills, and instructors?” and the fourth research question which was stated as “What are the strengths and weaknesses of the blended program offered for repeat students at Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University Preparatory School according to the students?”, a questionnaire and interviews were conducted with the students. Also, semi-structured interviews gave insights about the necessary modifications that might be suggested for the blended program, which is the fifth research question. The qualitative data analysis is presented in this part under the sub-titles of online practices, technology, in-class practices, examination, self-study skills, and instructors.

### **Student Perceptions of Online Practices**

In the light of the data collected from the students through semi-structured interviews, the frequencies of the themes created are explained in Table 30. According to Table 30, the content analysis of the semi-structured interviews conducted with the students revealed that 81.82% of the students (n=18) found online assignments useful to improve at least one of their language skills. Four of these students stated that online assignments helped them develop both their listening and reading skills (Q1). Eight students out of 18 agreed that only online listening assignments were helpful for their language skills (Q2) while three out of 18 students said only online reading assignments were effective. Although online speaking and writing exercises were not graded, two out of 18 students found online writing assignments effective in terms of practice (Q3). Also, one student out of 18 (St 5-Female) expressed that online assignments contributed to her speaking skills because they improved her vocabulary knowledge.

Table 30

*The Frequencies and Percentages of the Strengths and Weaknesses of the Online Practices*

Strengths	<i>f</i>	%	Weaknesses	<i>f</i>	%
Useful for improving some language skills	18	81.82	Online exercises' being boring	12	54.55
Complementary to in-class practices	13	59.1	Not instructive	11	50
Simple	12	54.55	Lack of feedback for productive exercises	10	45.45
Useful for the improvement of the language areas (grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation)	9	40.9	Insufficient online speaking exercises	7	31.82
Appropriate for the level	7	31.82	Incompatible with in-class practices	6	27.27
Appealing for students	6	27.27	Costly	5	22.73
Easy access to knowledge	2	9.09	Some exercises' being too difficult	5	22.73
			Excessive amount of online assignments for a short time	4	18.18
			Time consuming and unnecessary	4	18.18
			Too sensitive to minor errors	2	9.09
			Insufficient for improving any language skills	1	4.55
Total	22	100		22	100

Some sample student responses are as follows:

Q1: *Bence okuma ve dinleme bizim online ödevlerde en iyileri. Çok etkili onlar.* (St12-Female)

Q1: *I think reading and listening exercises are the best among all online assignments. They are very effective.* (St12- Female)

Q2: *Dinlemede oldukça faydası vardı. Seviyesi de iyiydi. Sınavdakine yakındı. Anlaşıldı. Açıldı.* (St7-Male)

Q2: *It was very useful for listening. Language level was also appropriate. The level was similar to the exams' level. It was easy to understand and clear. (St7-Male)*

Q3: *Bir yanlış yaptığında, mesela büyük harf küçük harf, onu yapana kadar uğraştırıyor...Nokta, virgül, büyük harf, küçük harf onlara faydası oluyor. Tam düzgün yazmanı sağlıyor. (St19- Female)*

Q3: *When you make a mistake, such as using capital letters or lower case, you try until you write it correctly...It is helpful in terms of mechanics. It helps me write well. (St19-Female)*

Table 30 also shows that more than half of the students (n=13; 59.1%) expressed online assignments were complementary to in-class practices. These students stated that online assignments supported in-class practices in various aspects (Q4) and helped recycle what they had learned in the classroom (Q5). Following excerpts exemplifies some student responses.

Q4: *Hemen hemen birebir gidiyor zaten. Kelimeler aynı zaten gramer konuları aynı. O yönden destekliyor. (St8-Male)*

Q4: *They are almost the same. Vocabulary and grammar topics are the same. It supports in-class practices in terms of these. (St8-Male)*

Q5: *Hazırlıklı geliyorsun derse çünkü konularla birebir bağlantılı readingler listeningler. Kelimeler öğreniyorsun. Dersten sonra yaparsan tekrar dersten önce yaparsan da hazırlıklı bir şekilde gelmiş olabilirsin. Yani destekliyor. Okuldaki programla birebir örtüşüyor. (St1-Female)*

Q5: *You are prepared for the class because the topics are directly related with listening and reading exercises. You learn vocabulary. If you do online assignments after the class, you do revision. If you do it before the class, you get prepared for the class. I mean it supports inclass practices. It completely overlaps with the in-class practices. (St1-Female)*

Quite more than half of the students (n=12; 54.55%) explained that doing online assignments was simple for them. These students expressed that doing online assignments was an easy way of getting some points (Q6). Also, some students stated that the level of the exercises was easy for them (Q7).

Q6: 25 puanı online kaplıyor. Midtermle eşdeğer. Ben midterm'e hazırlanmasam da olur diye düşünüyorum. Online alıştırmalarının blended programda en güzel yanı: Çok yüksek puan ve kalma ihtimalin yok. (St12-Female)

Q6: The weight of online assignments is 25 points. It is the same as a midterm exam's weight. I believe that it is no problem even if I don't study for the exams. The best part of doing online assignments is that you get high points and it is not possible to fail. (St12-Female)

Q7: Dinleme açısından aslında iyi oluyor çünkü test olduğu ve uğraştırmadığı için onu yapabiliyorum. (St20-Male)

Q7: Actually it is good in terms of listening because the exercises were multiple-choiced and they didn't make me try hard, so I could do them. (St20-Male)

In addition, 40.9% of the students (n=9) stated that online assignments contributed to their vocabulary, grammar, or pronunciation knowledge in some way. Student responses were mostly focused on assignments' contribution to the improvement of vocabulary knowledge (Q8) and pronunciation (Q9). Sample student responses are presented below.

Q8: Bence daha çok kelime bilgini geliştiriyor çünkü ben kelimeleri yaparken onların anlamlarına bakıyorum. Anlamlarına baktıktan sonra akılda daha çok kalıcı oluyor. (St21-Female)

Q8: I think it is more useful to improve your vocabulary knowledge because I check their meanings when I do these exercises. Vocabulary items are more permanent when you look up their meanings. (St21-Female)

Q9: Telaffuz açısından yardımcı oluyordu çünkü orda nasıl telaffuz edeceğimizi önce bize söylüyordu daha sonra bizden istiyordu. O açıdan iyiydi. (S3-Male)

Q9: It was good in terms of pronunciation because first we listened to how to pronounce a word and then we practiced. That was good. (S3-Male)

Moreover, seven students (31.82%) expressed that the language level of the online assignments was suitable for their own language level. Six students (27.27%) found online assignments appealing (Q10). Also, two students (9.09%) explicated that online assignments provided them easy access to knowledge and language resources (Q11). Some sample student responses are exemplified below:

Q10: *Konular zaten bilgi veren konulardı. Yani gazetelerde ya da bir tartışma programında görebileceğimiz teknoloji, sağlık gibi konulardı ve eğlenceliydi.* (St1-Female)

Q10: *The topics were informative. They were about the topics that we might see in the newspapers or in discussion programs like technology or health and they were enjoyable.* (St1-Female)

Q11: *Listening alıştırmalarını internette bulmak çok sıkıntılı oluyor... İnternette listening bir tek altyazılı filmlerde dizilerde belki.* (St17-Male)

Q11: *It is difficult to find materials for listening on the Internet....Maybe only in films and series with subtitles.* (St17-;Male)

With regard to the weaknesses of the online aspect of the program, more than half of the students (n=12; 54.55%) found online assignments boring (Q12). Furthermore, half of the students (n=11; 50%) believed online assignments were not instructive. They stated that they did online assignments only for getting high grades, not for studying. Some students expressed that it was possible to find the correct answer in multiple-choiced exercises by trial and error (Q13). Some student responses are exemplified below:

Q12: *Online ödevler sıkıcı. Ben sevmiyordum açıkçası çok....Çok monoton geliyordu bana.* (St6-Female)

Q12: *Online assignments were boring. I didn't like much....I found them too monotonous.* (St6-Female)

Q13: *Online ödevlerin puanı çok yüksek olduğu için ben çalışma bazlı değil de puan bazlı baktım ödevlere. Çünkü çok fazla ödev var ve bize verilen süre çok kısıtlı. O yüzden şöyle yaptığım oluyordu. 3 tane deneme hakkı olduğu zaman 3 şık varsa tek tek deneyerek doğruyu buluyordum... Bana çok bir şey kattığını düşünmüyorum.* (St11-Female)

Q13: *As the point we get from the online assignments is too high, I did them for the points, not for studying, because there too many assignments and the time was not enough. Therefore, I sometimes did it like this: We had three attempts before seeing the answers, so I was checking each answer without reading it to find the correct answer....I don't believe that they contributed a lot to me.* (St11-Female)

Also, 45.45% of the participants (n=10) complained about not getting feedback for productive exercises (Q14) or not being graded although these exercises were assigned

(Q15). Also, seven students (31.82%) expressed that not having online speaking activities was a weakness (Q16). Following excerpts are some sample student responses.

Q14: *Online ödevlerin, öğrencinin bir çok şeyi öğrenmesi için yetersiz yönleri var. Karşılık alamadığın için yetersiz bence.* (St19-Female)

Q14: *I think online assignments are insufficient for student learning in many ways because we cannot get a response/feedback.* (St19-Female)

Q15: *Online yazma ödevlerine hocalar hemen o günün akşamında dönüt verse olurdu ama iki üç hafta sonra dönüt geliyordu. Gelmediği de oluyordu. O yüzden pek bir işe yaramıyordu. Bildiğin kadar yazıyordun, gelişmiyordu.* (St10-Male)

Q15: *It would be OK if the instructors sent their feedback on the same day. However, they were giving feedback after two or three weeks and sometimes they weren't. Therefore, these activities were not useful. You write what you already know. It doesn't improve.* (St10-Male)

Q16: *Konuşma konusunda çok bir şey yoktu. Sadece kelimeleri söyletiyordu bize ya da ufak basit cümleleri. Konuşma konusunda çok iyi değildi... İnternet üzerinden online birisiyle veya hocayla karşılıklı onu yapsak daha iyi olurdu.* (S3-Male)

Q16: *There were not many exercises about speaking. Only we were repeating some individual words or simple sentences. It was not good for speaking...It would have been better if we had had online interactive speaking.* (S3-Male)

Another weakness was that six students (27.27%) stated that online assignments were incompatible with the in-class practices (Q17). Additionally, five students (22.73%) expressed that online materials were too expensive (Q18). In addition, five students (22.73%) found some exercises difficult for their level (Q19). While four students (18.18%) expressed that there were too many assignments for a short period of time (Q20), four students (18.18%) stated that online assignments were time-consuming and unnecessary (Q21). Moreover, two students (9.09%) complained that the platform was too sensitive to minor mistakes (Q22). Finally, although most of the students stated that online assignments improved their at least one language skills, one student (st18-Male) expressed that online assignments did not improve any of his language skills. Some student responses are exemplified below:

Q17: *Online ödevler sınıf içini çok fazla desteklemiyordu. Çok bağımsız değildi ama online ödevi yapmazsam sınıfta çok geri kalırım durumu da yoktu.* (St10-Male)

Q17: *Online assignments did not support in-class practices much. They were not completely independent, but not doing online assignments didn't mean that you would fail in the class.* (St10-Male)

Q18: *Çok pahalı. Öğrenciler onu almak istemiyor.* (St17-Male)

Q18: *It is too expensive. Students don't want to buy it.* (St17-Male)

Q19: *Bulmacalar vardı kelimelerle ilgili. Onlar biraz zordu. Pek yapmıyorduk onları biz.* (S1-Female)

Q19: *There were word puzzles. They were quite difficult. We didn't do them.* (S1-Female)

Q20: *Sayısı çok fazlaydı çünkü yetişmiyordu. Gerçekten deneme yanılma yoluyla yöntemiyle yapsan bile yetişmiyordu.* (St2-Male)

Q20: *There were too many online assignments. I couldn't finish them on time. Even if you do them by trial and error, you cannot finish them all.* (St2-Male)

Q21: *Bence ders sınıfta olmalı evde veya online olabileceğini zannetmiyorum. Zaten internette bulabileceğimiz bir sürü kaynak ve platform var.* (St-15- Male)

Q21: *I don't think that I can learn online and I prefer in-class. We can already find a lot of online resources and platforms that we can use.* (St-15- Male)

Q22: *Yazılı bölümde en ufak bir gramer yanlışında bile bütün soruyu reddediyordu. O yüzden biraz sıkıntılı.* (St6-Female)

Q22: *In written parts, the whole question was rejected when you made even a minor grammar mistake. That was a bit problematic.* (St6-Female)

To summarize, it can be inferred from the statements of the students interviewed that the majority found online assignments useful for the improvement of their listening or reading skills. However, there was one student who reported that these assignments had no contribution to the development of any language skills. In addition, almost half of the students expressed their satisfaction about online assignments' contribution to their pronunciation and vocabulary knowledge. There were also some students who considered these assignments an advantage to pass because this was an easier way of getting high



points for these students. Moreover, the majority were positive about the compatibility of the online assignments with in-class practices. They stated that online assignments provided them the opportunity to get prepared for the class activities as well as giving them the chance to recycle after the class. Also, more than a quarter of the students commented positively about the language level of the assignments and a quarter of the participants found these assignments appealing for them. Few students also expressed that online assignments gave them access to knowledge by providing additional materials to study.

On the other hand, the majority of the students interviewed found online assignments boring and repetitive. It can also be inferred that half of the students considered online assignments a mean of getting points, not a material to study and improve their language skills. Some students stated that this was because of not having enough time for completing online assignments and some believed that they were unnecessary. Other weaknesses expressed by many students were the lack of feedback for online productive exercises and the lack of online speaking exercises. Also, some students were negative about the difficulty of some exercises and the cost of the online material, emphasizing they were too expensive.

### **Student Perceptions of Technology**

According to the data gathered, some common themes about the strengths and weaknesses of the blended program were identified and the frequencies and percentages of these themes are presented in Table 31 below.

Table 31

*The Frequencies and Percentages of the Strengths and Weaknesses of the Technology Aspect*

Strengths	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	Weaknesses	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Ease of use	21	95.45	Inconvenience	12	54.55
Efficient infrastructure	16	72.73	Technical issues with the hardware	4	18.18
Easy accessibility	6	27.27			
Technical support	4	18.18			
Total	22	100		22	100

As it is indicated in Table 31, the content analysis of the data showed that almost all students except for one (95.45%) expressed that the online platform that students used to do online assignments was easy to use (Q1). 16 of these students (72.73%) also stated that they did not encounter any technical problems, which showed that the platform had an efficient infrastructure (Q2). In addition, six students (27.27%) expressed that the online platform provided easy accessibility, enabling them to do online assignments without any time and place limitation (Q3) as well as providing them enough facilities to do assignments at school or on a variety of mobile devices (Q4). Also, four students (18.18%) explained that technical support was given by the instructors when they experienced some technical issues. Some student answers regarding the strengths of the technology aspect of the blended program are exemplified below:

Q1: *Kullanımı kolaydı zaten gösterdiler You Tube'da.* (St 18-Male)

Q1: *It was easy to use. They already showed us how to use it on You Tube.* (St 18-Male)

Q2: *Ben hiç sorun yaşamadım ve gayet kolaydı bence kullanımı.* (St 12-Female)

Q2: *I have not experienced any problems and I think it was very easy to use.* (St 12-Female)

Q3: *Online bölümün güçlü yönü istediğin zaman girebilme, geç saatlerde bile olsa. Boş zamanlarımızda girebilmek.* (St 7-Male)

Q3: *The strength of online part is being able to do the assignments whenever we want, even late at night, or in our free time.* (St 7-Male)

Q4: *Her yerde yapabileceğimiz şeyler var. Telefondan da yapabiliyoruz, bilgisayardan da tablettten de. Belli bir yere bağlı kalmadan.* (St 6-Female)

Q4: *There are exercises that we can do everywhere by using a smart phone, a computer, or a tablet without depending on one place.* (St 6-Female)

Students also mentioned two main weaknesses of the technological aspect of the blended learning program. More than half of the students (n=12; 54.55%) expressed that sometimes doing online assignments was inconvenient for them because it was difficult to use the online platform on mobile devices (Q5) and because they did not have the necessary facilities at home or dormitory (Q6). Also, some of these students explicated that it was inconvenient as it was difficult to read or listen to something on a digital platform because

of their previous learning experiences (Q7). Moreover, four students (18.18%) stated that they encountered some technical problems (Q8). Some student responses concerning the strengths and weaknesses of the technological aspect are presented below:

Q5: *Telefonda çok zor. Sürükleme gibi özelliklere tam uyumlu değildi telefonlarda. Bilgisayar şarttı.* (St 10- Male)

Q5: *It was very difficult on smart phones. Some exercises such as dragging wasn't suitable for the phones. You had to have a computer.* (St 10- Male)

Q6: *İnterneti ve bilgisayarı olmayan insanlar var. İnternet kafede online ödev arkadaşlarım vardı. Benim de mesela bilgisayarım yoktu.* (St 11- Female)

Q6: *There were people who didn't have a computer and Internet connection. They were doing online homework at an Internet café. I also did not have a computer.* (St 11- Female)

Q7: *Ben ekrandan bir şey okuyup çözen tarzdan değilim. Benim elimde kağıt olacak işaretleyeceğim, çizeceğim altını vs. O şekilde alıştırdık lise döneminde.* (St 13-Female)

Q7: *I cannot read or do exercises on a screen. I need paper to take notes and underline. I got used to doing this at high school.* (St 13-Female)

Q8: *Teknik sıkıntı bende çok oldu.* (St 5-Female)

Q8: *I experienced a lot of technical problems.* (St 5- Female)

Overall, the content analysis of the data indicated that the majority of the students were satisfied with the technological aspect of the program. It can be said that in general the online platform was easy to use and efficient although few students experienced some technical problems. It provided the students easy access to language materials at any time and at any place. Also, technical support was provided in case of a system failure. On the other hand, one weakness for more than half of the students was inconvenience resulting from doing assignments on a variety of mobile devices such as smart phones or tablet computers, lacking the necessary facilities at home or at dormitory, and not having previous online education background.

### Student Perceptions of In-class Practices

In the light of the data collected from the students through semi-structured interviews, seven common themes were constructed regarding the strengths and six themes were constructed regarding the weaknesses of the in-class practices of the blended program. The frequencies of these themes are shown in Table 32.

Table 32

*The Frequencies and Percentages of the Strengths and Weaknesses of the In-class Practices*

Strengths	<i>f</i>	%	Weaknesses	<i>f</i>	%
Effective portfolio tasks that contribute to the development of language skills	10	45.45	Inadequacy of in-class hours	16	72.73
Adequate in-class hours	6	27.27	Inadequate in terms of developing some language skills	12	54.55
Balanced time allocation for each language skill in the class	5	22.73	Too much grammar in the class	5	22.73
Enjoyable in-class activities	2	9.09	Unappealing books	3	13.64
Effective use of time in the class	2	9.09	Discouraging classroom environment	1	4.55
Being in touch with other students	1	4.55	Unnecessary activities in the class	1	4.55
Effective book in the class	1	4.55			
Total	22	100		22	100

According to Table 32, nearly half of the students (n=10; 45.45%) expressed that in-class portfolio tasks were effective in terms of developing their language skills (Q1). In addition, more than a quarter of the students (n=6; 27.27%) stated that the number of in-class hours was adequate for them (Q2). Five students (22.73%) were positive about the time allocated in the class for each language skill (Q3). Two students (9.09%) stated that there were enjoyable in-class activities such as Kahoot. Moreover, two students (9.09%) stated that the time in the class was effectively used (Q4). One student (4.55%) found the book that

was covered in the class effective because it was grammar-based. Finally, one student (4.55%) expressed that being able to get in touch with other students was the strength of the in-class practices. Some student responses regarding the strengths of the in-class practices are as follows:

Q1: *Bence en güzel yanı sunumlardı....O sunuma hazırlanma sürecinin çok fazla katkısı oluyordu. Konuşma açısından da gramer açısından da ve yazıya döküyordun çok katkısı oluyordu. Her şeyini geliştiriyordu.* (St 10-Male)

Q1: *For me, the best part was the presentations... The process of getting prepared for the presentation contributes a lot, both in terms of speaking, grammar, and writing. It develops every skill.* (St 10-Male)

Q2: *Biz genel olarak çok fazla derse gitmeyi zaten sevmiyoruz. Ders saatleri gayet iyiydi haftada iki gün. Diğer günlerde zaten hocalarımız bize nasıl çalışmamız gerektiğini anlattığı için ders saatleri gayet iyiydi.* (St3-Male)

Q2: *In general, we don't like coming to school. Having two days in the class was good because the instructors already tell us how to study on the other days.* (St3-Male)

Q3: *Sınıf içi dağılımın gayet iyi olduğunu düşünüyorum. Hocalar İngilizce konuşuyor ders içinde bu sayede hem speaking yapmış oluyoruz. Zaten tasklar var writing için. Reading için de sürekli textler dağıtılıyor. Kitapların okuma bölümleri var. Aslında yeterli bence ders içindeki dağılım.* (St 22 Male)

Q3: *I think the distribution in the class was very good. Instructors speak English during the class, so it is useful for both listening and speaking skills. There were tasks for writing. Extra reading texts were given in addition to the reading parts in the books. Therefore, I think the distribution within the class was sufficient.* (St 22 Male)

Q4: *Bence 8 saat olunca ders kalitesi artmıştı. Daha iyi hazırlanıyorduk daha iyi dinliyorduk. Ödevleri yapıyorduk. Bence dersler verimli geçiyordu.* (St 17-Male)

Q4: *I think having eight class hours increased the quality time in the class. We got prepared well and we were more attentive. I think the classes were more effective.* (St 17-Male)

Regarding the weaknesses of the in-class-practices, the majority of the students (n=16; 72.73%) stated that the number of inadequate classes was insufficient for them and that the

number of class hours should be increased (Q5). Furthermore, quite more than half of the students (n=12; 54.55%) explained that in-class practices were inadequate for the improvement of some language skills (Q6). Five students (22.73%) were negative about the amount of grammar covered in the class and they stated that there was too much grammar in the class (Q7). Three students (13.65%) did not find the book that was covered in the class appealing. One student (4.55%) found the classroom environment discouraging, stating that students in the classroom affected each other negatively. Lastly, one student (4.55%) expressed that some in-class activities such Kahoot was unnecessary. Some student responses concerning the weaknesses of in-class practices are presented below:

Q5: *Haftanın 5 günü okula gelmek çok ama 2 günün az olduğunu düşünüyorum. 3 olsaydı daha iyi olabilirdi. 5 gün çok sıkıcı olurdu.* (St 16- Female)

Q5: *Coming to school five days in a week is too much, but two days in week is not enough. Three days would be better. Five days at schools would be boring.* (St 16- Female)

Q6: *Sınıf içinde bazı beceriler eksik kalıyor. Yazma ve konuşma öyle. Mesela bu kura baktığımız zaman sadece 1 defa konuşma portfolyomuz var. Biz sınava gireceğiz. Sınıfta hocayla yapmamız gerektiğini düşünüyorum. Haftada bir veya iki yapılması gerekiyor.* (St 15- Male)

Q6: *Enough time in the class was not given for some skills such as speaking and writing. For example, throughout this period, we had only one speaking portfolio task. We will take an exam. We have to practice with the teacher at least once or twice every week.* (St 15- Male)

Q7: *Benim anlayamadığım muafiyette gramer olmamasına rağmen kitabımızın gramer üzerine olması...Çok fazla gramer var.* (St 12-Female)

Q7: *I don't understand why our book is a grammar-based book although we don't have any grammar parts in the proficiency exams...There is too much grammar.* (St 12-Female)

To summarize, content analysis of the data indicated that the majority of the students found in-class hours inadequate and they stated that the number of in-class hours should be increased. In addition, although there were some students who agreed that language skills were equally distributed within the class hours, more than half of the students expressed

that there were not enough number of in-class tasks and exercises to develop each language skills. On the other hand, nearly half of the students were positive about portfolio tasks and their contribution to the development of some skills. Some students were not satisfied with the time allocated for grammar teaching and they explained that it was too much. While there were a few students who commented positively about the *Kahoot* games in the class, one student found them unnecessary. Also, a few students were not content with the book that was covered in the class since it was grammar-based. While there was a student who stated that keeping in touch with the friends was the strength of in-class, another student disagreed with this idea and claimed that students affected each other negatively. Finally, effective use of time in the class because of having eight hours was another strength of the in-class practices.

### Student Perceptions of Examination

In the light of the data collected from the students through semi-structured interviews, two common themes were constructed regarding the strengths and three themes were constructed regarding the weaknesses of the in-class practices of the blended program. The frequencies of these themes are explained in Table 33 below.

Table 33

*The Frequencies and Percentages of the Strengths and Weaknesses of Examination*

Strengths	<i>f</i>	%	Weaknesses	<i>f</i>	%
High content validity of the exams	15	68.18	Low content validity of the exams	5	22.73
E-text quizzes' being useful for the reading skill	2	9.09	Being difficult for the level	3	13.64
			E-text quizzes' being ineffective	1	4.55
Total	22	100		22	100

As it is shown in Table 33, the majority of the students (n=15; 68.18%) agreed that the content and the question types in the exams were compatible with the question types and the content of the in-class practices and online assignments (Q1 and Q2). In addition to

this, a few students (n=2; 9.09%) stated that the e-text quizzes were useful in terms of developing their reading skills (Q3). Sample student responses are exemplified below:

Q1: *Bence blended sınavlar için yeterliydi ve uyumluydu. Soru tipleri de örtüşüyordu. Blended da biraz çalışınca sınavda pek bir zorluk yaşanmıyordu. Blended sınava iyi hazırlıyordu bence. Hem muafiyet hem midtermde.* (St 10- Male)

Q1: *I think Blended program was sufficient for studying for the exams and they were compatible. The question types were also compatible. When you study a bit, you will not have any difficulty in the exams. I think blended program prepares us well for the exams, both for the midterms and the proficiency exam.* (St 10- Male)

Q2: *Kesinlikle kapsıyor. Yani hem online ödevleri hem de diğer şeyleri kesinlikle kapsadığını düşünüyorum. Sınıfta öğrendiklerimizin hepsi var sınavlarda.* (St 12- Female)

Q2: *It definitely overlaps both for online assignments and other activities. Everything we learn in the classroom is included in the exams.*(St 12- Female)

Q3: *E-textler güzeldi. Sadece kitaptan okumak değil oradan okumak güzeldi. Değerlendirildiğimizden sonrasında, en azından bir text okuyorduk.* (St 11-Female)

Q3: *E-text quizzes were good. Reading a text online rather than reading from a book was good. As we were assessed afterwards, we were reading at least a text there.* (St 11-Female)

With regard to the weaknesses of the examination, it can be seen that there were a few students (n=5; 22.73%) who expressed that the content and question types in the exams were not compatible (Q4). Also, three students (13.64%) stated that the level of the exams was difficult for their level (Q5). Finally, one student (4.55%) found e-text quizzes ineffective. Some student responses are presented below:

Q4: *İçerik ve soru tipleri örtüşmüyordu ama hocalar bu konuda inisiyatifli davranıyorlardı. Kitapla özdeşmiyordu.* (St9-Female)

Q4: *Content and the question types were not overlapping, but the teachers were using their initiative. Exams were not compatible with the book.* (St9-Female)

Q5: *Sınavlar bana zor geliyor. Hiçbir sınavda tamam çok güzel anladım diyemedim.* (St 19-Female)



Q5: *The exams are difficult for me. In any of the exams, I did not fully understand.* (St19-Female)

Overall, the results showed that the majority of the students agreed that exams had high content validity although there were a few students who said that blended program was incompatible with the exams. The content and the question types both in online assignments and in in-class practices were overlapping and compatible. On the other hand, a few students found the exams difficult for their language level.

### Student Perceptions of Self-study Skills

In the light of the data collected from the students through semi-structured interviews, three common themes were constructed regarding the strengths and one common theme was constructed regarding the weaknesses of improvement of self-study skills in the blended program. The frequencies of these themes are explained in Table 34 below.

Table 34

*The Frequencies and Percentages of the Strengths and Weaknesses of Self-Study Skills*

Strengths	<i>f</i>	%	Weaknesses	<i>f</i>	%
Increased time management skills	7	31.81	Not helpful for self-study skills	3	13.64
Increased self-awareness	4	18.18			
Becoming an independent learner	4	18.18			
Total	22	100		22	100

According to Table 34, more than a quarter of the students (n=7; 31.81%) stated that the program improved their self-study skills because there were only eight class hours (Q1). Therefore, they had to manage their time and study regularly (Q2). In addition, four students (18.18%) expressed that the program improved their self-study skills since their self-awareness increased (Q3). In the same way, four students (18.18%) agreed that the program developed their self-study skills as they learned how to study alone. On the other hand, there were three students (13.64%) who were negative about the blended program's contribution to self-study skills (Q4). Some student responses are as follows:

Q1: *Kesinlikle faydalıydı...Üç gün veya geri kalan beş gün boyunca kendi çalışman olması gerekiyordu.* (St 2- Male)

Q1: *It was definitely useful...For the next three or five days, you had to study individually.* (St 2- Male)

Q1: *Sadece düzenli ders çalışmamı sağladı çünkü ödevler birikiyordu. Onları bir düzene koymazsan eğer kalıyordu. O yüzden sadece düzenli çalışmamı sağladı.* (St 4- Female)

Q1: *Blended program only helped me to study regularly because you cannot finish online assignments on time if you don't organize your time. Therefore, it only helped me to study regularly.* (St 4- Female)

Q3: *Geçen sene herşeyi okula bağlıyordum. Herşeyi okuldan bekliyordum ama bireysel çalışmama bağılymış tekrarlarım kelime bilgime bağılymış onu farkettim.* (St1-Female)

Q3: *Last year, I was expecting a lot from the school and I thought I failed due to the school. However, This year, I realized that it depends on my studies, revisions, and vocabulary knowledge.* (St1-Female)

Q4: *Aslında blended daha kötü oldu benim için çünkü evde tek başına çalışınca belli bir süre sonra sürekli dikkat dağılıyor. Bence 5 gün olmalıydı diye düşünüyorum çünkü öğrenci okula gidip geldikçe belli bir düzen oturtuyor kendine.* (St 22- Male)

Q4: *I think blended program was not good for me because when you study alone at home, you are always distracted. I think we should come to school for five days because the school help us organize our time.* (St 22- Male)

To sum up, the content analysis indicated that the majority of the students agreed that blended program helped them improve their self-study skills since their self-awareness increased, time management skills improved, and they learned to study independently.

### **Student Perceptions of Instructors**

In the light of the data collected from the students through semi-structured interviews, five common themes were constructed regarding the strengths and two common themes were constructed regarding the weaknesses of the instructors in the blended program. The frequencies and percentages of these themes are explained in Table 35.

Table 35

*The Frequencies and Percentages of the Strengths and Weaknesses of Instructors*

Strengths	<i>f</i>	%	Weaknesses	<i>f</i>	%
Provided guidance and support	17	77.27	Lack of providing motivation	3	13.64
Provided extra materials	9	40.90	Lack of providing guidance	2	9.09
Understanding and caring	3	13.64			
Motivating	2	9.09			
Being in contact all the time	2	9.09			
Total	22	100		22	100

As it is shown in Table 35 above, the majority of the students (n=17; 77.27%) agreed that the instructors teaching in the blended program provided guidance and supported the students in their studies (Q1). Some of these students stated that instructors were helpful, gave advice on how to study, and their feedback helped students complete their tasks (Q2). Also, some of the participants expressed that instructors' guidance helped them improve self-study skills (Q3). Furthermore, nearly half of the students (n=9; 40.9%) explained that their instructors provided extra materials to study in and out of the classroom to support their learning (Q4). Some of these students consider instructors strength of the in-class part of the program since they were flexible and provided some extra materials in the class to prepare them for the exams (Q5). Additionally, 13.64 % (n=3) students expressed that instructors were understanding and caring (Q6) while 9.09% (n=2) stated that instructors also provided motivation (Q7). Lastly, 9.09% (n=2) of the students stated that they could keep in touch with the instructors all the time via e-mail (Q8). Some student responses are as follows:

Q1: *Dersime giren hocalarla iyi bir takım çalışması yaptığımızı düşünüyorum. Hocalarım çok yardımcı oldu. Hem anlayışlılardı hem de yönlendirdiler. (St2-Male)*

Q1: *I think we had an effective teamwork with the instructors. They helped me a lot. They were understanding and they provided me guidance. (St2-Male)*

Q2: *Hocamız tekrar altını çizerek anlattığı için etkili. Mesela geçen haftaki dersimizde benim writing kağıdımı yansıttık ve tüm sınıf yanırlarımızı eleřtirdik. Bu durum daha akılda kalıcı. Sınıfın en iyi yanı bu bence.* (St12-Female)

Q2: *It is effective because teachers highlight the important points. For example, we projected my writing paper over the board and gave feedback as a class. This is more effective. I think this is the best side of in-class practices.* (St12-Female)

Q3: *Hocalarımızın bireysel alıřma konusunda yardımı oluyordu ünkü bize nasıl alıřmamız gerektiğini anlatıyorlardı.* (St3- Male)

Q3: *Our teachers helped us with self-study because they taught us how to study.* (St3-Male)

Q4: *Sınıfta da bence hocalarımız gayet iyi. Diđer web sayfalarına yönlendiriyorlar. Oradan alıřabilirsiniz diyorlar.* (St21-Female)

Q4: *I think the teachers are very good. They inform us about other web pages that we can study.* (St21-Female)

Q5: *İerik ve soru tipleri örtüřmüyordu ama hocalar bu konuda inisiyatifli davranıyorlardı. Muafiyete yönelik anlatıyorlardı...O yüzden faydalı oluyordu dersin içeriđi.* (St9- Female)

Q5: *The content and the question types in the class and in the exams were not overlapping, but the teachers took the initiative and made the necessary adaptations for the exams...That's why in-class practices were effective.* (St9- Female)

Q6: *Hocanın bizle iletişimi gayet iyi bence. Sürekli bir ilgi olması...ve bence en güçlü yönlerinden biri ilgilenmeleri.* (St22-Male)

Q6: *I think the communication between the teacher and us is very good. They are always caring... and I think this is one of the strongest part of it.* (St22-Male)

Q7: *Konuřmalar yapıyordu hocalarımız. Motivasyon desteđi oluyordu* (St7-Male)

Q7: *The teachers were giving talks. They were providing motivation* (St7- Male)

Q8: *Hoca birebir ilgileniyordu. Mail atabiliyordum hocaya ekstra writing yazdıđımda. O da bana daha sonra gün saat farketmeksizin geri dönebiliyordu.*(St9- Female)

Q8: *We received individual attention from the teachers. When I wrote something, I could e-mail it to the teacher and he was giving feedback all the time, no matter what time it was.* (St9-Female)

As regards the weaknesses of the instructors, only a few students stated their negative opinions regarding the instructors. There were a few students (n=3; 13.64%) who explained that instructors did not provide motivation (Q1). Also, two students (9.09%) expressed that instructors did not provide enough guidance (Q2). Sample student responses are exemplified.

Q1: *Blended programındayız. 1 buçuk senedir bu okuldayız ve daha çok okuldan atılma baskısı var üzerinde. Hocaların bu konuda destekleyip motivasyon sağlaması gerekiyordu.* (St4-Female)

Q1: *We are blended program students. We are here for one and a half year and we are under the pressure of being dismissed from the school. The teachers should have supported us about this and they should have motivated us more.* (St4-Female)

Q2: *Yardımcı olan hocalar vardı. Olmayan hocalar da vardı...Bazı hocalarda dönüt almakta sıkıntı yaşadım.*(St5-Female)

Q2: *Some instructors were helpful, but some were not. I had difficulty in getting feedback from some instructors.* (St5-Female)

To summarize, it can be seen that the majority of the students were content with the instructors teaching in the blended program. One reason for this was the guidance and support from the teachers. Students stated that their teachers supported and guided them with their feedback and advice. Instructors also informed students about the materials that can support students for their self-study and made the necessary modification in the class in order to prepare students for the exams. Also, according to some students, teachers were motivating, understanding, and caring. Students could easily contact instructors via e-mail. However, a few students were negative about some instructors as these instructors did not provide enough motivation and guidance.

### Suggestions by the Students

The content analysis of the student interview data showed that a majority of the students commented on the insufficiency of the speaking tasks and recommended some ways of practicing speaking either online or in the class. Some students stated that online interactive sessions instead of voice recording could be added in the program to practice speaking. To exemplify, Student 3-Male reported:

*Hocalarla online görüntülü görüşmeler yapabiliydik. Speaking çalışması olsun ya da beraber reading çözme veya online dersler o şekilde daha iyi olabilirdi karşılıklı olsaydı.*

*We could have had online interactive sessions with the instructors. Either speaking or reading activities would be better that way when it is interactive.*

Additionally, some of these students mentioned having online friends and online chat websites to practice speaking. For example, Student 2-Male complained about the inadequacy of speaking tasks and recommended:

*(Konuşma etkinlikleri) Bence yeterli değil. Bir çok online konuşma sitesi var. Üniversitemizde bunu kendi bünyesine entegre edebilir diye düşünüyorum.*

*(About speaking activities) I think speaking tasks are not enough. There are lots of online speaking websites. Some of these websites could be integrated into the program.*

On the other hand, others put emphasis on the speaking activities in the class or at school and gave suggestions for speaking activities at school. For instance, Student 15-Male stated:

*(Online speaking aktiviteleri) Onun yerine daha çok hocalarla burada olması daha mantıklı. Yüz yüze olması daha iyi.*

*(Online Speaking activities) It would be better if it were face-to-face here with the instructors. Face-to-face is better.*

Some students suggested that students could be paired within the school and that some speaking activities could be organized. Also, more in-class presentations could be added. There were also some students who would prefer to have more in-class speaking tasks with foreign teachers. To exemplify, Student 6-Female expressed:

*Bence blended da da yabancı hocaların derse girmesi gerekiyor. Bence beş gün olmalı ve bir iki güne yabancı hocaların gelmesi gerekiyor ve hiç Türkçe konuşulmamalı. Konuşmamız lazım. Bir buçuk yıl hazırlık okudum ama konuşamıyorum hala.*

*I think foreign teachers should also teach in the blended program too. I think we should have five days at school and at least one day, foreign instructors should teach us and we should never speak in Turkish. We have to speak. I have been studying at prep school for one and a half year, but I cannot speak English.*

Another point made by the students was about writing tasks. Some students expressed that they could find pen-friends via a school program Also, some students stated that online writing assignments should be obligatory, and they should be given feedback on these online written tasks. For example, Student 21-Female stated:

*Yazma konusunda öğretmenler feedback verebilirler ve zorunlu olmalı bence.*

*About writing, I think teachers should give feedback and it should be obligatory.*

As regards in-class and online materials, one student recommended that materials including the topics and vocabulary related with their departments could be chosen in the last period of the blended program. One student suggested that online assignment grades should be given as bonus instead of being obligatory. Another student commented that reading texts should be about more up-to-date and about everyday life issues like newspaper articles. Regarding the books, three students stated that using books in the classroom was unnecessary. They suggested that instead of books, there should be a book that is prepared by the school or worksheets that they could study for reading and speaking. In addition, five students stated that materials in the blended program should be exam-oriented. In other words, they stated that blended program should prepare them for the exams, especially for the proficiency exam. Student 9-Female responded as follows:

*Blended olduktan sonra bu öğrenciler muafiyetten kaldıkları için muafiyete yönelik olması gerekiyor.*

*For the repeat students, the blended program should be exam-oriented as all blended program students failed the proficiency exam.*

In addition, two students recommended that there should be more competition in the class. To achieve competition, these students stated that successful students should be rewarded.

Additionally, three students thought that Independent Learning Centre (ILC) was very important and ILC activities should be encouraged and obligatory for repeat students. Also, there were four students who put emphasis on the stress they were under because of the failure in the proficiency exam and they recommended that more enjoyable activities like songs, games, films should be done in the class or online. For instance, student 15-Male stated:

*Sınıf içinde etkinlik sayısı arttırılabilir. Film izleme olabilir. Oyun oynama olabilir. Önemli olan İngilizce sınavını geçmek değil daha zevkli daha akıcı bir hale getirmek.*

*The number of activities in the class like games, watching films could be increased. The important thing is to pass the exam, but to make it more enjoyable and smoother.*

However, one student stated that all activities should be about the exams and that there should not be any fun in the class (Student 17- Male).

*Sınav çok güçlü bir etmen çünkü eğer geçemezsek yarım dönem kalıyor, burslular krediye dönüyor, aile baskısı var bir de hazırlıkta kalmanın stresi var. Ben çok stres yapmıştım eğer bunlar olsaydı (blog yazma, film izleme, tartışma vb.) hiç hoşlanmazdım.*

*Exam is an important factor because if we cannot pass, there are a lot of sources of stress such as studying one term longer, losing the scholarship, being under the pressure of family and exams. I was very stressed, so I would not like to have such activities (blogging, watching films, discussions etc.).*

Finally, one student complained about being in separate classrooms from regular students as repeat students since she stated that being in separate classes from the regular students made her feel isolated. Therefore, the student believed that regular and repeat students should be in the same classrooms.

### **Content Analysis of the Semi-structured Interviews with Instructors**

In addition to student questionnaire and interviews, instructors who taught in the blended program in 2016-2017 academic-year were interviewed in order to understand their perceptions on several aspects of the blended learning program in more detail and to expand the data about the strengths and weaknesses of the blended learning program at AYBU SFL. The data gathered from the instructors through semi-structured interviews



helped the researcher to answer the fourth research question, which was “What are the strengths and weaknesses of the blended program offered for repeat students at Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University Preparatory School according to the students and the instructors?” The data also gave insights into the modifications to be done. The qualitative data analysis is presented in this part under the sub-titles of online practices, technology, in-class practices, and self-study skills.

### **Instructor Perceptions of Online Practices**

With respect to the online assignments’ contribution to students’ development of four language skills, one instructor (INS4-Female) stated that assignments were useful for the development of reading and listening while four instructors were not sure about it and they emphasized that only some students who benefitted from them developed their skills. Regarding the development of language areas such as grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, INS4-Female stated pronunciation was not effective because their pronunciation was bad in the class and vocabulary parts were difficult for them as there were not common words while grammar was useful because students asked questions about the grammatical structures that they had seen in the assignments. INS2-Male stated that some students did online assignments just for the sake of getting some points, but these assignments worked for some students. Also, INS3-Male found online assignments effective as technology provided them a variety of activities, which helped students to get involved and to learn subconsciously. However, he added that only some students developed their skills as most of the students did not know how to study. For example, INS5-Female, who is teaching two blended classrooms and preparing the blended program syllabi as the program coordinator, stated that North Star online content fit very well to their profile in terms of language level, pace, and question types and she emphasized the individual differences in terms of skill development.

*For reading and listening, when we look at student performance, we do not see much improvement, but there were individual differences. My observation was there were enough exercises in the program. (INS5-Female)*

When instructors were asked whether the online assignments were complementary to the in class practices or not, all instructors agreed that online assignments completely supported

in-class practices. INS2-Male stated that receptive skills were online and productive skills were studied in the class and this made each part complementary to each other. INS3-Male mentioned online assignments were complementary to in-class practices as some assignments were based on the course books that they covered in the program. In addition to the point about course books, to show the link between in-class practices and online assignments, INS5-Female, who is the program coordinator, expressed that in-class portfolio assignments were related to the online course books and in-class e-text quizzes were from the online platform. In addition, INS1-Female reported that she liked the way the program was organized in terms of being complementary.

*Generally, the idea was OK in my opinion. Everybody knows that you need to do some practice to improve. So, you get the essence in eight hour in the classroom, do some vocabulary practice; plus, go home and do the consolidation by doing some self-studies.* (INS1-Female)

With regard to the number of online assignments, two instructors stated that there was enough number of online materials while one instructor reported that there was excessive amount of exercises, which was a disadvantage for the students. INS2-Male mentioned that all listening and reading materials that were available on the platform were assigned and students were also given extra online materials for their self-studies. INS5-Female also emphasized the same point and agreed that students were provided with some extra online materials as they demanded more to study for the exams. INS5-Female also explained that online speaking tasks were optional, and they were not given feedback since some students complained that they did not have any equipment to record their voice and teachers did not have enough time to give online feedback.

Another advantage of the online content was its flexibility according to two instructors. INS3-Male stated that doing online assignments was good for the students who had part-time jobs. In addition, INS4-Female emphasized that students use it depending on their own pace.

As for the weaknesses of the online part of the program, two instructors explained that doing online assignments was a disadvantage for the students who are not autonomous. INS1-Female stated that if the students are not autonomous as in her case, students believe they have a lot of time to get lazy. INS5-Female also agreed that the weakness of the

online part was that students were not autonomous, and they were teacher dependent. However, INS5-Female explicated that doing online assignments was an advantage for the students, but they were not aware of it.

*For second-year students, each has different strengths and weaknesses. Some are good at listening while some are good at reading. When we face a student group with diverse abilities, there has to be some common and differing points. Offering the same content for every student as we did in regular groups does not help us reach our target because some get bored and some may want more challenging tasks. For this aspect, online content is very advantageous. However, students were not ready for this and they looked at this from a different perspective...They do not understand this, but we can see this benefit very clearly.* (INS5-Female)

Another weakness stated by the instructors was lacking control. INS3-Male reported that students might get answers of the online exercises that they had been assigned from their peers and instructors cannot control this. On the other hand, INS4-Female explained that the weakness of the online part was the lack of interaction since students could not ask their questions immediately. INS5-Female did not consider lack of interaction a problem and emphasized the importance of the communication between the students and the instructor.

*If they have any difficulty in understanding something, they have no chance to ask it anyone because there is no interaction in that. Just they have to stick to the assignments what are given them as a ready form.* (INS4-Female)

*We communicate with the blended learning groups via e-mail or via other platforms that we use. Actually, through these platforms we always track students and check what they do and what they do not do. This is related to the attitude of instructor. There should not be any difference in the way we do this...Every instructor should answer student questions the following day the latest.* (INS5-Female)

Overall, it can be concluded that in general instructors stated online content offered in this program could be useful for the development of listening and reading skills of the students. Also, these assignments could contribute to their grammar and vocabulary knowledge. However, according to the instructors, the main problem was the student profile rather than the content of the online aspect as the majority of the students were not ready for it and

they were not autonomous to study on their own on an online platform. Furthermore, although the online aspect is considered to be a variety and a chance for the students to learn subconsciously, some instructors were concerned that some students did these assignments just for the sake of getting some points. Therefore, almost all instructors emphasized individual differences in terms of development. In addition, all instructors agreed that online component was compatible with the in-class practices and they supported each other. For some instructors, there were enough number of online materials and students were provided with extra online materials when they needed. Finally, from instructors' perspective another problem revealed was the lack of control over the students and the lack of communication.

### **Instructor Perceptions of Technology**

In terms of the technological aspect of the blended program, three instructors stated that the online platform used was practical and easy to use. INS5-Female also emphasized that students were familiar with the online platform as they had already used the same platform the previous year. In connection with the infrastructure of the online platform, four instructors agreed that the platform was error free and they experienced hardly any technical issues. For example, INS2-Male mentioned how error-free the program.

*It is practical to use, and you rarely see, I mean, it is very developed now, so they always update the program and it is very error free. (INS2-Male)*

In addition, two instructors mentioned the technical support provided when students and teachers experienced any technical problems. Both INS5-Female and INS1-Female referred to the IT coordination as an effective problem solver.

*Nothing at all. We have an IT coordination and they are doing their job great. They give online homework. Whenever comes with a problem, they do some adjustments accordingly. Therefore, there is no problem. There was no problem at all technically. Although we were using loads of technology in the classroom, not only the blended program's itself being online, we were also doing lots of projects so activities based on online activities or else, so we didn't have any problems. (INS1-Female)*

Regarding the easy accessibility of the platform, three instructors stated that using the platform was not limited to a certain area and time and it could be used on any device, which was an advantage of using the online platform. The comment of INS2-Male on easy accessibility of the platform is exemplified below.

*You can use it on any platform you don't have to have your computer all the time. You can do it on phone or tablet... the other strength is actually they can do it any time anywhere like there is no restrictions or limitations like as long as you do your work by the deadline before the deadline there is no other limitation than that. So, it is kind of a very free open area for them. (INS2-Male)*

To sum up, it can be concluded that instructors find the technology aspect of the program effective enough. They agreed that hardly any technical issues occurred, and the problems occurred were solved immediately with the help of IT coordinator and the publisher. Also, it was expressed that the platform enabled easy access for the students. It was user-friendly and it gave students the opportunity to get connected and study whenever and wherever they like as well as using a variety of mobile devices.

### **Instructor Perceptions of In-class Practices**

With respect to the strengths of the in-class aspect of the blended program, except for INS5-Female, four of the instructors mentioned effective use of in-class hours as the strength of the program; however, the points that they emphasized were differing. For example, INS1-Female stated that they benefitted from the in-class hours as much as possible since their time was limited in the classroom. She also reported that the book used in the classroom was good, but it needed supporting. INS2-Male considered the allocation of most of the class time to productive skills effective. On the other hand, INS3-Male and INS4-Female emphasized that the interaction chance with the students and the individual feedback given was good. Two instructors (INS1-Female and INS5-Female) also stated that the syllabus allowed them to make the necessary changes depending on the student needs. Following excerpts illustrate various viewpoints of the instructors.

*From the instructors' perspective, I am as an instructor feeling so nice because I felt so free to do any kind of strategy in the classroom to give them only the essence of it, so maybe because of the program or the coordination was so flexible, it was so fruitful for me.*

*As an instructor, I felt so satisfied after the lesson because I was doing loads of games and loads of activities for kinesthetic auditory and visual students. I don't know this is just because when you cut the hours into one third or half, both instructors and students find that time so precious. So they get benefit from it in max. Maybe this is the key. (INS1-Female)*

*In in-class part, mostly we focused on their personal problems. Sometimes, individually, I gave them piece of advice like... 'You should do this' 'You should follow these' 'You should study from different books' and 'You should see the whole picture. (INS3-Male)*

*In the blended program, the biggest advantage for the instructors is that the teacher can adjust the syllabus depending on his or her own pace and can make additions of omissions. (INS5-Female)*

*In-class part of the program is really important. We just go over very briefly and like one hour every week we go over some grammar points or some stuff like that. The other seven hours is mostly either exam preparation or some kind of productive skills, writing or speaking. So, that is kind of one to one with the students and productive work and in-class feedback, in-class spoken portfolio assignments, and stuff like that, so it is really good for them. (INS2-Male)*

Regarding the weaknesses of the in-class aspect, although one instructor (INS4-Female) stated that the in-class part did not have any weaknesses because it helped students not to feel isolated, other four instructors mentioned some negative aspects. For the instructors, one of the biggest weaknesses of the program was the psychology of the students, which also affected student participation. INS1-Female reported that lack of motivation was a big problem in the classroom. INS2-Male and INS3-Male also agreed with this idea and stated that the students refused to participate in in-class activities and that this affected the classroom atmosphere. On the other hand, INS5-Female mentioned a few issues such as student profile, physical conditions, and their busy program. Some different viewpoints are exemplified below.

*As they are blended students, they are not motivated. I mean cannot be motivated although you do your best. I mean the thing is using your classroom time in a very critical way. This is the instructors' perspective because suppose that they are coming only physically to the class, not mentally. You need to attract their attention and make them engage in the*

*activities. Not only physically but mentally at the same time. The weakness is the psychology in the blended program. (INS1-Female)*

*The main problem was involving them. They came for the sake of being over there not participating ...Most of the students did not participate. We had only two or three students. And in some cases, if they were in the class they affected other students negatively, totally negatively. (INS3-Male)*

*Student profile can be problematic. You have to be flexible all the time. Keeping the balance between being so strict and being flexible is really difficult. They do not do their homework. ... Also, sometimes we have to be the main instructor of two or three different blended classes at the same time. 60 students mean having physically 60 students and you are responsible for them. We need more instructors...Because of the insufficient physical conditions and insufficient number of instructors, our classrooms are too crowded. Lower level students ask more questions and need more guidance, so there must be fewer students in the classroom. (INS5-Female)*

*I cannot say anything about the weaknesses because it is advantageous for them in the class. At least for eight hours because if they do not come into the school, they can feel isolated and they can feel ignored. (INS4-Female)*

To summarize, in terms of the instructors, in-class part of the blended program was flexible enough to make the necessary adaptations to meet students' needs. The syllabus allowed instructors to maximize the in-class time and to use it effectively. On the other hand, it can be concluded that as the students were second year students, they lacked motivation and were reluctant to take part in in-class activities, which also affected the classroom atmosphere negatively. In addition, insufficient physical conditions and number of instructors increased instructors' workload and made the classroom environment more challenging for the instructors.

### **Instructor Perceptions of Self-study Skills**

As for students' self-study skills and the program's contribution to the development of self-study skills, four instructors stated that only a few students had self-study skills and knew how to study on their own, which was one of the biggest weaknesses of the blended

program. INS1-Female mentioned students past learning experiences and stated that the students came from a spoon-feeding culture. Also, INS2-Male was unsure about whether students had self-study skills or not and stated that some students were bad at that. INS3-Male supported the idea that most students did not have self-study skills and that they were dependent on teacher guidance. INS5-Female also mentioned students' profile, past study habits and the negative effects of these habits on their performance in the program. Some instructor viewpoints are exemplified below.

*Starting from the primary school they have been spoon-fed about especially foreign language English. They have been doing some classical direct strategy drills in the classroom. They do nothing until the end of high school, so when they come to university prep school, here they start studying English in the correct way, but this is not enough. We need to change their perspective. We need to impose them how to study correctly. That's the problem. (INS1-Female)*

*This program requires a lot from the learners. It requires students who can manage independent learning process. The learners who can achieve in this program is autonomous learners, but our student profile is totally teacher-dependent. This is how they got used to doing. Therefore, the thing that challenges us most is changing this habit and the expectation. (INS5-Female)*

All five instructors agreed that blended program fosters students' self-study skills while INS5-Female stated that it did not work for the lowest level students (beginner and elementary level students). INS2-Male reported that the biggest advantage of blended program for the students was fostering self-study skills. INS3- Male also agreed that both online and face to face parts of the program helped students find motivation and learn how to study. In addition, INS4-Female stated that the program forced students to become autonomous in their learning. Some instructor responses are exemplified below.

*The program is I guess one of the best programs so far because it is all creating a space for the students to study by themselves, which makes them more autonomous, but the thing is our students are not so used to it. (INS1-Female)*

*For some parts of the language like reading especially skills like reading and listening you can do some exercises in class, but you cannot do everything in class. So you need to make*



*sure that students study by themselves, so it kind of ensures that. It's the biggest strength of the platform (INS2-Male)*

Overall, it can be said that non-autonomous student profile was a very big challenge for the instructors. However, the blended program contributed to students' self-study skills and helped students gain an insight into autonomous learning.

### **Suggestions by the Instructors**

The content analysis of the qualitative data revealed that the main concern of the instructors was the student profile as they were not autonomous learners. Therefore, three instructors gave some suggestions on this issue. For example, INS1-Female stated that there might be an adaptation period at the beginning of the academic year in order to change students' perspective and past habits. INS3-Male also suggested that the main focus should be on changing student perspectives and involving them in the process. INS5-Female agreed that students were not autonomous and that they should be supported this way. In relation to this issue, INS2-Male and INS5-Female stated that there should be some advising hours for the students who need it and they should be obligatory. Sample excerpts are shown below.

*There could be some kind of orientation or adaptation period, but this is nothing that you can do because they did not do the same thing in prep school one year ago. Blended students are the second year student in prep school so this is the first time that they are seeing that autonomous program. But maybe in the first half of the period, there could be some kind of adaptation that makes them understand it in a better way, but I don't know how to do it indeed. (INS1-Female)*

*In addition to eight hours in the class, there must be additional advising hours for two more hours in order to answer their questions. Otherwise, this is done during the class hours. (INS5-Female)*

In addition, two instructors emphasized the importance of the instructors teaching in the blended program. INS2-Male stated that the instructors should be accustomed to the system and the student profile. Also, INS5-Female emphasized that instructors must be

aware of the student needs, expectations, and their profile and there should be a standard among the instructors. The following excerpts illustrate these suggestions.

*That's kind of my suggestion. In the blended program, we need to choose teachers that could really work well with such students and also, we need to assign teachers that would kind of sacrifice some of his or her time to deal with the students problems as well like their personal problems as well. We just talk to them but again that takes some time so we kind of need to have counseling or advising sessions time given or allocated for that.* (INS2-Male)

*The instructors teaching in the blended program must be aware of student expectations. We need to work with the instructors who know how to approach these problems...we always get in touch with the students through some online communication applications. This is related with the attitude of the instructor. This should not differ from one instructor to another. We should have a standard.* (INS5-Female)

Regarding the number of in-class hours, two instructors (INS4-Female and INS5-Female) stated that having eight hours was enough for the students while two instructors (INS1-Female and INS2-Male) remained undecided. INS1-Female suggested that it could be a good idea to decide the number of the class hours based on the students' level. For INS1-Female eight hours in the class might be enough, but for lower level students the number could be increased. On the other hand, INS3-Male suggested that class hours should be increased as students waste their time at home.

As for the in-class practices, INS1-Female suggested that more speaking and writing should be done in the classroom rather than grammar. INS5-Female mentioned the importance of ILC activities in the classroom. In addition, INS5-Female stated that the classrooms in the blended classroom should not be too crowded. On the other hand, only one instructor (INS4-Female) suggested having synchronous online sessions with the students

*Our classroom environment should not be like a normal face-to-face class. Instead, we should have some ILC activities like speaking clubs or workshops. I feel that that this is very necessary.* (INS5-Female)



## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

In this chapter, first, findings of the current study are discussed in relation to the existing literature and research questions. All findings are categorized under the sub-titles of *strengths / weaknesses* and *suggestions for modifications*.

#### **Discussion of the Findings**

The data collected from different sources were analyzed separately, put together afterwards, and discussed in the light of the literature. In this study, several components of the blended program offered for repeat students were evaluated from the students' and instructors' perspectives. According to Norris (2016), language program evaluation entails the involvement of program stakeholders, the search for the data that meet their needs, awareness-raising, finding out program practices, and offering changes through empirical data. Garrison and Kanuka (2004) propose that tracking the use of blended learning applications in terms of outcomes, learner satisfaction, or achievement provides an essential basis for change in blended courses. In this respect, as a result of the current study, male and female students' responses to the questionnaire items were compared. Also, strengths and weaknesses of the program were documented based on students' and instructors' experiences of the blended setting and necessary modifications were suggested in order to improve the quality of the existing program.

According to Heemskerk, Ten Dam, Volman, and Admiraal (2009), it might be possible that the use of an educational technology tool in the class could influence males and

females differently. The findings of this study show that there is not a statistically significant difference in male and female students' responses to the questionnaire except for seven items (items 10, 12, 34, 41, 46, 47, and 50) out of 57 items in total. It was found that females showed relatively higher degree of agreement on these seven items that are mainly related with online reading assignments, and exam content. Ray, Sormunen, and Harris (1999) found that women's attitude towards computers is more positive than men and women see computers a way of simplifying tasks and increasing productivity. One reason for the difference between male and female students in the current study, which is in favour of females, might be the indicator of female students' positive attitude towards studying in blended environments. However, there is a need for further study about gender differences in attitudes towards studying online and it is out of the scope of the current study. Regarding the findings related with the strengths and weaknesses of the blended learning program offered for repeat students at AYBU SFL, it can be said that the program provides the essentials of blended learning with certain drawbacks and it needs some adaptations or modifications in order to satisfy learners' and instructors' needs and to ensure a more efficient and effective blend of the modes, as a result.

### **Strengths and Weaknesses of the Blended Program at AYBU Based on Student and Instructor Perceptions**

With respect to the online aspect of the blended learning program at AYBU SFL, according to the quantitative findings, the item related with online assignments being complementary to the in-class practices received moderate ratings. However, when students are asked about some details, it is clear that for the majority of the students and instructors interviewed, online assignments are complementary to the in-class practices. Some students consider them an opportunity to recycle what they have learned in the classroom and to prepare for the in-class tasks. As for the instructors, online assignments are compatible with in-class practices. Neumeier (2005) suggests that two different modes, face-to-face and online modes, can be either sequenced one after another or can be used in an overlapping, parallel way to each other. The latter might be more beneficial for the novice learners in online setting and for the learner who are not as autonomous as required by the course. Therefore, considering the profile and former experiences of the participants of this study in e-learning, it can be inferred that blended program successfully integrates

the two modes, online materials and face-to-face instruction, through the use of online materials which have parallel contents with in-class textbooks and through e-text quizzes.

According to quantitative data, online assignments are not interesting enough for the students. In line with these findings, qualitative data also revealed that online assignments are not interesting for the students, and also they are boring. Lightbown and Spada (2013) propose that motivated learners are those participate in the class actively, articulate their interest in the subject, and study hard. It can be inferred from the findings of the current study that online contents' being boring and not interesting for the learners is a weakness of the online aspect which might affect students' motivation and achievement negatively.

Furthermore, in open-ended part of the questionnaire and in student interviews, it is seen that some students find online materials expensive. Graham and Stein (2014) state that blended learning might reduce the costs to students, instructors, and institutions. According to the results of this study, although this might be true for the institution in terms of physical conditions, it seems that blended learning program increases the costs to students.

Regarding the contribution of online assignments to students' language development, students moderately find online listening assignments useful for their in-class listening performances and for the development of some listening sub-skills such as skimming, scanning or making inferences. Contrary to the quantitative data, the majority of the students find online assignments useful to improve their listening skills. Student questionnaire results also indicate that student perceptions of online reading assignments are more positive compared to online listening assignments. The majority expresses that online reading assignments contribute to the improvement of some reading sub-skills such as skimming, scanning, guessing the meaning of unknown words from the context. Analysis of the qualitative data shows that online assignments are useful for the students to develop their listening and reading skills. The results of this study are inconsistent with the findings of Deniz (2016), which reveals that students do not find studying online materials beneficial to study. As well as reading and listening skills, it is seen that online assignments are also helpful for the development of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation although pronunciation parts are optional. In parallel with the results of student questionnaires and interviews, interviews with the instructors teaching blended classes show that online assignments can be useful for the students to improve reading and listening skills as well as improving grammar and vocabulary knowledge. However,

instructors emphasized that there are individual differences and only autonomous learners can benefit from online assignments, so student profile is one of the biggest weaknesses of this program. As Stein and Graham (2014) point out, “online activities or resources do not have to be one-size-fits-all. They can extend beyond the needs of the average student and provide additional instruction or remediation for students with less background knowledge” (p. 21). Thus, some learners in this study might need some additional materials. In addition, a number of studies (Acar, 2014; Ağgün, 2019; Banditvilai, 2016; Bueno-Alastuey & López Pérez, 2014; Emelyanova & Voronina, 2017; Pacheco Salazar, 2016) focused on the contribution of the adoption of various online components to the achievement and development of language skills (listening, reading, speaking, and writing) and language areas (vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation) and these studies indicate online components help learners improve their language skills. At this point, the findings of the current study had similarities. However, this study is based on students’ and instructors’ self-reports and the comparison of exam scores of the student is out of the scope of this study, further research is needed in this area. Findings indicate that online assignments might be useful for the development of language skills as well as language areas although some students are undecided about the contributions of studying online.

More specifically, as regards the online vocabulary assignments, the findings of the student questionnaire indicate that online vocabulary assignments contribute to students’ in-class reading, listening, and writing performances; however, students are unsure about the contribution of vocabulary assignments to their in-class speaking performance. Also, the number of online grammar assignments is enough for the students. According to the results of the questionnaire, online grammar assignments do not prepare students for the exams and they do not help students speak or write with accurate grammar. Even though Bueno-Alastuey and López Pérez’s study (2014) concluded that integration of online materials is less effective to develop pronunciation and learners’ productive skills, Ağgün (2019) found the positive effects of blending two modes on productive skills. However, productive skills were not covered online in the case of the current study. One reason for the negative perceptions of the students about the effects of vocabulary and grammar online assignments on speaking or writing skills might be the lack of activities that allow students to transfer their knowledge of vocabulary and grammar to produce a spoken and written output in the target language.

Regarding the optional online assignments (writing and speaking/pronunciation), students did not want to have online writing assignments; however, some students wanted to get feedback on the optional online written productive parts. As Zumbach, Hillers, and Reimann (2004) point out, feedback in general has a potential to influence group performance and to improve student achievement qualitatively and quantitatively. The problem with the feedback mechanism in the context of this study might have resulted from the instructors' heavy workload as Romero Archila's study (2014) demonstrated. According to Romero Archila's study (2014), incorporation of the virtual component is time consuming for the teachers since it is necessary to reply to student questions so that they would not feel alone. In addition, some students believe that it is necessary to have online interactive speaking activities with native speakers. This finding also has parallelism with student interview findings. Grgurović's study (2011) suggests that speaking tasks in virtual environment are likely to engage learners more and they add value to teaching and learning process as they are individual and helpful. In this respect, not having online speaking and pronunciation tasks as the compulsory tasks in the blended program might be one of the limitations of the blended program offered at AYBU SFL.

From students' perspective, on one hand, one advantage of the online assignments is that they are simple; therefore, doing online assignments is an easy way of getting points for the students. On the other hand, it is possible to complete some multiple-choiced online tasks by trial and error without reading anything as students have three attempts before seeing the answers. Therefore, some students do not find online assignments instructive and they do online assignments just for the sake of getting high grades. Moreover, as some students imply, some instructors are also concerned that some students have the potential to do online assignments for the sake of getting some points. Macdonald (2008) suggests that while students are encouraged to study using diverse tools and techniques in blended courses, it is necessary for students to figure out what they are expected to learn, how they will achieve this, and how much time they need to get there. In this respect, the lack of an induction program to increase learners' awareness on the materials used and, on the objectives, might have affected students' perceptions negatively.

Enabling students to reach a great deal of online resources is the strength of the online component of the blended program which is emphasized both by the students and the instructors. For some instructors, online assignments are a variety and a chance for the



students for learning subconsciously. Pardede (2012) also points out that blended learning environments provide learners a variety of activity types such as individual work, pair work, group work, independent learning or collaborative learning. In this respect, blended learning at AYBU also provides learners group work and pair work opportunities through in-class practices, mainly through portfolio tasks; independent and individual learning opportunities through the online components.

Findings indicate that the technological aspect of the blended program is efficient enough according to both students and instructors. For students, the online platform is easy to use and free from technical problems. Even if students encounter some technical problems, technical support is provided by the IT coordination. According to Carrasco and Johnson (2015), it is assumed by many that today's learners are tech-savvy and can handle any technological tasks given them; on the contrary, teachers must acknowledge that learners need training and coaching on tech skills. Thus, it is of great importance to create a course which is easy to manage for all students. In this respect, it can be deduced that user-friendliness of the blended program at AYBU is an advantage for the students. Also, the system allows students to connect via using a variety of mobile devices such as smart phones or tablet computers. In addition to these points, student interviews reveal that the platform has an efficient infrastructure, which is free from technical problems. Students are able to connect at any time any place, which is another strength of the online platform. This result has parallelism with the studies of Ince (2015) and Spadafora and Marini (2018), which revealed that the opportunity to learn at any time and any place without any limitation is one of the main benefits of studying in a blended setting from students' perspectives. Conversely, for some students who do not have necessary facilities at home or at dormitory, doing online assignments is inconvenient. It is also inconvenient for the students who do not have any past online learning experience and for the ones who find it difficult to study from a digital platform. Qualitative data gathered from the instructors also confirm the same points as the weakness of the blended program.

In terms of in-class practices, data analysis of the quantitative data reveals in-class portfolio tasks contribute to students' writing and speaking skills. In line with the questionnaire results, qualitative data confirm that in-class portfolio tasks contribute to the development of language skills. On the other hand, allocating too much time for grammar and having a grammar-based course book in the classroom are the weaknesses of the in-

class practices. In the class, a variety of activities such as individual work, pair work, and group work take place and in-class activities are interesting for the students. Also, there is a balanced distribution of skills in the classroom and the class time is effectively used. As Neumeier (2005) claims, the most significant purpose of blended learning design is to determine the most efficient and effective way of combining two modes to fulfill learning objectives, subjects, and contexts. As a result, it can be inferred that skills are successfully distributed between the two modes in the program while it might be more useful to keep grammar out of the scope of in-class practices.

Quantitative data show that in-class portfolio tasks are sufficient for the students. In contrast to quantitative data, qualitative data indicate that the number of in-class tasks is not enough for the students to develop their language skills. However, regarding the in-class practices, like students, instructors also emphasize effective use of in-class hours although the number of class hours is few. Instructors make the most of the class time as it is limited to eight hours and the syllabus is flexible enough for the instructors to make the necessary changes in accordance with student needs. They have the chance to interact with the students and to give individual feedback in the class. Graham and Osguthorpe (2003) point out that the way class time is used change in blended courses and some tasks could be assigned online. Based on the findings of this study, it is possible to infer that having fewer class hours makes it possible for the teachers to use their class time more effectively and flexibly, which is also a strength of the in-class aspect of the program.

Another point made by the students is that being in touch with other students is both an advantage and disadvantage for the students since students might affect each other negatively, which creates a discouraging classroom environment. This finding is parallel with the finding of Hu (2012). In the current case, however, the reason is likely to be the students' failure as they are all repeat students.

From the instructors' perspective, the biggest weakness of the in-class part, as some students also mention, is the psychology of the students rather than in-class activities. Students lack motivation and this affects in-class tasks as well as the mood of the instructor negatively as students do not want to participate in in-class activities. Also, the student number in each class and the physical conditions, and instructors' workload are the weaknesses that make the classroom environment challenging. The findings of Gedik (2010), who found heavy workload is a challenge for instructors, and Koç (2016), who

indicated that the barriers in blended environments were workload and students' not taking responsibility, are consistent with these findings.

With regard to examinations, quantitative data show that quizzes and midterm exams have high content validity and they are compatible with the in-class and online content and question types. Also, the language level of the exams is at the right level for the students. Student interview data also reveal exams' high content validity. Therefore, examinations might be another strength of the blended program in AYBU context.

Regarding improving self-study skills, findings of the student questionnaire indicate that doing online assignments do not contribute to students' time management skills. However, this finding contradicts with the quantitative data. According to the students, blended program improves their self-study skills since they improve their time management skills, their self-awareness increases, and they become independent learners. From the instructors' perspective, although the majority of the students do not have self-study skills because of their past learning experiences and they are not ready for studying online, which is the biggest challenge of the program, one of the biggest advantages of the blended program is that it forces students to develop self-study skills and to become autonomous learners. The study of Spadafora and Marini (2018) also has similar results on the biggest challenge of the blended setting, which is stated as students' lacking time-management and self-regulation skills. Also, Bitlis's (2011) study and Banditvilai's (2016) study indicated that blended learning environment support the development of learner autonomy. However, some instructors state that while higher level students are likely to become autonomous learners and to manage to study online, lower level students never develop such skills. This result supports the findings of the study carried out by Felea and Stanca (2013) which suggests that higher level of language proficiency is a good predictor of the degree of participation in online activities.

Finally, according to the students, instructors teaching blended learning classes orient students to other useful online resources, help students to use the online platform, and help students to discover their learning styles and learning strategies. For the majority of the students, instructors guide and support students in their self-studies, keep in touch with the students all time, and provide extra materials. Instructors are also understanding, caring, and motivating, which shows that instructors are the strength of the program. In their study, Chenoweth, Ushida, and Murday (2006) conclude that in a blended setting, teachers

might be making more effort than in a traditional setting to keep track of the students and keeping up with them. According to Warschauer and Whittaker (2002), teachers must provide assistance to the students in their experience in the virtual environment a variety of ways such as providing contact details of technology specialist, preparing handouts, and being available to assist students when they need. Thus, in this context, it can be inferred that instructors make an effort to support and guide students. Furthermore, the interaction between students and the instructors motivate students to study English. In this respect, qualitative data gathered from the students also confirms quantitative data about the instructors.

### **Suggestions for Modification in the Blended Learning Program**

The analysis of the data collected through student questionnaire and interviews both with instructors and students has inspired the researcher to suggest the necessary modifications to enhance the quality of the blended program.

Firstly, according to the students and the instructors, there are no online speaking tasks and the number of in-class speaking tasks is not enough. Students state that speaking should be practiced more either through online synchronous speaking sessions or through in-class speaking tasks. For online speaking, online friendship websites could be integrated into the program or online synchronous sessions with their main class instructors could be held. Students suggest having more in-class presentations, speaking classes with foreign instructors, or pair work speaking tasks with peers at school. Instructors also recommend having more speaking and writing practices in the class. As Klímová (2008) suggests, in-class practice and feedback are still necessary to help develop speaking skills although telephone or video-conferencing can solve the speaking problem to some extent. Another point made by Carrasco and Johnson (2015) is that synchronous learning activities are likely to be challenging for the students who do not have immediate access to computer facilities around them; thus, asynchronous activities might be more accessible. According to the instructors, ILC activities such as workshops on how to learn English or speaking clubs should be conducted in the classroom. The findings of this study also show that some students do not have access to computer or Internet facilities as they have in a dormitory. Therefore, for the case of this study, adding asynchronous online activities such as voice

recording or in-class speaking activities might be a better option to suggest. Also, students think that online writing tasks should be obligatory, and they should be given feedback by the instructors. Neumeier (2005) suggests that the level of integration (obligatory use/optional use) should be considered carefully since the existence of a lot of optional course components might influence the learning outcome and experiences of the learners who are less experienced in using CALL tools negatively.

Concerning in-class practices, as blended program is offered for the repeat students, some students recommend using materials that prepare them for the exams instead of covering a course book. For the same reason, some students state that they are very stressed out and that there should be more enjoyable and competitive activities in the class such as songs, games, or films. According to Chun, Kern, and Smith (2016), the form that technology is incorporated in depends not only on the learning goals, but also on the abilities and interests of the learners, available resources, and institution culture. Therefore, it can be deduced that adding some more exam-oriented online and in-class materials and some competitive activities to the flow of the courses might attract students' attention as well as making the program more interesting for the students.

Another point that needs revision is in-class hours. The majority of the students find it necessary to have more in-class hours, on average twelve hours instead of eight hours. However, instructors think that having eight hours in the class is enough for higher level students. Instructors suggest that deciding on the class hours should depend on the language level of the instructors as lower level students need more guidance and support. In many blended settings, in order to have a clear blended structure, it is necessary to determine the lead mode in which sequencing and organization of the course is done, guidance is done, and most of the time is spent (Kerres, 2001, cited in Neumeier, 2005, pp. 166-167). In the current context, determining the lead mode as face-to-face mode seems to be a better option.

For the instructors, the biggest challenge in the classroom is the student profile. Thus, instructors suggest having an adaptation period for the students at the beginning of the program in order to change students' past habits and perspective about autonomous learning. Neumeier (2005) puts forward that learners studying in a blended setting need to be more autonomous and they need to know when to take action or when to hand over responsibility compared to the ones studying only one mode of learning since learners

encounter a larger scope and more diverse roles in the blended setting. According to the instructors, it is necessary to add some obligatory advising hours for the students who need more guidance and support.

Finally, findings show that instructors teaching blended learning classes should be accustomed to blended learning system and the student profile. It is necessary for the instructors to prevent them from feeling alone by keeping in touch with the students all the time, keep track of every student, and to be aware of learning needs of the students in and out of the classroom. According to Hampel and Stickler (2005), institutions must train their teachers in basic technology use, the software used as well as the language specific needs of the learners. As a result, some standards might be set by the institution for the instructors teaching at blended learning program at AYBU SFL and their workload should be decreased.



## **CHAPTER VI**

### **CONCLUSIONS**

In this chapter, conclusions drawn from the current study are summarized. Also, implications for practice and suggestions for further studies on blended learning are presented.

#### **Conclusions**

This study aimed at revealing students' and instructors' perceptions of several components of the blended learning program offered for repeat students at AYBU SFL during 2016-2017 academic year and suggesting necessary modifications accordingly. The study was carried out for formative purposes for an ongoing blended program at AYBU SFL in order to see what aspects are working well and what aspects need some adjustments. To achieve these goals, first related literature and previous studies were reviewed. After a broad literature review, data collection tools were prepared by the researcher by following the necessary procedure. In order to provide a rich description of the research case and to assure reliability, the data were gathered through three different data collection tools: a student questionnaire, a student interview protocol, and an instructor interview protocol, from two different sources, students and teachers. Qualitative and quantitative data obtained were analyzed separately and merged afterwards to be discussed.

The findings and conclusions are presented in parallel with research questions. First research question aimed to reveal students' perceptions of online practices, in-class practices, technology, examinations, self-study skills, and instructors through a



questionnaire and interviews. As for the second research question, it was aimed to reveal whether student responses to questionnaire items differ in terms of their gender. Quantitative data analysis showed that differences in responses between male and female students were statistically significant only for few questionnaire items which are generally related with online reading assignments and exam content. To answer the third research question, which aimed at revealing instructor perceptions of the several aspects of the program (online practices, technology, in-class practices, self-study skills), interviews were conducted with the instructors teaching blended classes. Finally, the data obtained from three different medium were put together and categorized under the titles of strengths, weaknesses, and necessary modifications in an effort to answer the fourth and fifth research questions.

Findings of the current study demonstrate that there are few differences in students' perceptions in terms of gender and that females showed higher level of agreement on seven items related with online reading assignments and examinations. Regarding students' perceptions of several components of the blended program, online assignments are complementary to the in-class practices, which means that two modes are successfully integrated in the program. Online assignments enabled students to reach a variety of online materials and diverse tasks. Also, online assignments have the potential to develop students reading and listening skills although there are also some students who are doubtful about the contribution of studying online to their language learning. Moreover, they contribute to students' vocabulary and grammar knowledge. One problem mentioned here is that students cannot transfer their grammar and vocabulary knowledge that they obtained through online assignments to their speaking or writing performances. According to Macdonald (2008), one way of engaging students in learning is offering them activities that they take an active part. Therefore, students should be provided opportunities and situations either online or in the class in which they can use the related grammar and vocabulary knowledge actively. Another weakness is that online assignments are not interesting, and they are boring for the students. Also, the number of online listening tasks is not sufficient for the learners. For some students, online assignments' being simple is an advantage while some think this is a disadvantage as they are not instructive because some students can do it just by trial and error without reading anything. Carrasco and Johnson (2015) suggest that every activity in the online platform requires to be assessed; otherwise,

students have a tendency not to complete these activities since they are not motivated by the control of their professors or peers like in a face to face classroom. In the context of this study, however, speaking, writing, and pronunciation assignments are optional. Regarding the optional parts in the assignments, some learners believe that they need feedback for the written parts and online interactive speaking activities.

Technologically, the online platform is easy to use, user-friendly, error-free and easily accessible via a variety of mobile devices at any time at any place. For some students, however, it is inconvenient to do online assignments since they do not have necessary computer and Internet facilities at home or at dormitory.

In the class, both according to the students and instructors, there is a variety of tasks in the classroom from individual work to group work. Although having fewer class hours, instructors use their class time effectively and make some adaptations in the syllabus based on the needs of the students. Students have the chance to get individual feedback in the class. Furthermore, portfolio tasks are useful for the development of students' writing and speaking skills, but some students and instructors state that the amount of the time allocated for grammar in the class is too much. On the other hand, the number of speaking tasks is not enough for the learners. Thus, it can be inferred that it is necessary to replace the presentation of grammar topics in the classroom with more speaking or writing tasks.

According to Carrasco and Johnson (2015), the most successful students in hybrid learning environments are open, self-directed, community-oriented, and prepared. More specifically, successful students in hybrid contexts are enthusiastic about trying new activities and improving their technological skills; take the responsibility of their learning and seek outside help themselves when they need it; enjoy the course and can work both individually and cooperatively; and prepare well through online activities to work well in face to face meetings. However, the main weakness of the classroom in this study is students' psychology and unwillingness to participate in in-class activities. This also negatively affects the classroom atmosphere. Other weaknesses related to the class practices are physical conditions, crowded classrooms, and instructors' heavy workload.

Regarding the examinations administered in the blended program, both students and the instructors confirmed that they have high content validity. Also, the question types are compatible with in-class and online practices and exams are at the right level.

Findings also show that most of the students, especially lower level students, enrolled in the program do not have self-study and time-management skills and some students are not ready for studying online. However, the program forces and motivates students to become independent autonomous learners. Macdonald (2008) states that appropriate induction is an important factor that contributes to the success of blended learning since students need to be competent in using online tools and they need to understand when, where, and how to study. This study shows that students should be provided an induction program which clearly introduces what students are expected to do and which provides guidelines at the beginning of the blended learning experience.

The findings show that instructors are the strength of the program. According to the students, instructors guide and support them in their self-studies, recommend additional online materials. They are also caring and understanding. On the other hand, from the instructors' perspective, blended learning increases instructors' workload. Palloff and Pratt (2007) suggest that some boundaries should be set regarding the instructors' time as having an online classroom which is open twenty-four hours a day seven days a week does not mean that the instructor can be contacted all the time. The current study also shows that instructors' schedules should be set carefully while planning a blended course.

To sum up, this study evaluates the current blended program offered for repeat students at AYBU SFL and reveals the strengths and weaknesses of the program to draw a general picture of it and to recommend some modifications in the light of the existing literature. It can be concluded that overall students' and instructors' perceptions towards the program is positive although there are some areas that need improvement.

### **Implications for Practice**

In the light of the findings of the current study, some suggestions for practice can be made as follows:

- As a result of the recent advancements in technology, incorporating technology into traditional classroom environments has become a must at each level of education. One way of technology integration is blended learning environments. As each blended learning environment is context-dependent, there is a range of blended learning models. The evaluation studies of these blended learning programs create a

general framework for possible models. In this study, questionnaire and interviews are important data collection instruments to collect data about the case of this study. It is suggested that this evaluation study will be a guide for the evaluation of the blended learning programs of other universities. As Rubio and Thoms (2014) point out, as well as the linguistic components of a blended course, the assessment of how these linguistic components are taught in order to reveal the effects of technology integration on student satisfaction, learner autonomy, adaption to different learner styles is of great importance since it helps the standards of the program to be redesigned and enhanced. This study might also provide program developers insights into the fundamentals of blended learning that need to be taken into consideration before designing a blended program. By using this framework, program developers can take early measures against the possible problems that might occur during the implementation.

- Specifically, it is evident that the main problem in the existing blended learning program is student motivation and participation. Furthermore, students may not be aware of their learning responsibilities and they lack self-study and time-management skills. In other words, they are not autonomous learners. Macdonald (2008) emphasizes that successful online learners are self-directed and reflective. In accordance with this result, while blended programs are planned, student profile should be analyzed carefully beforehand and learners' awareness should be increased through induction programs.
- As students enrolled in this program are all repeat students and their language level is relatively lower than the regular students, they have difficulty in adapting into a blended setting, which requires learner autonomy. This finding indicates that blended learning might be a better option for the higher-level students. Another suggestion for the solution of this problem might be increasing in-class hours for the lower level students.
- The findings of this study show that some students do not have the necessary facilities to do online assignments as they stay at dormitories. Considering these students, institutions that design blended courses should definitely provide all the facilities such as computers, Internet connection, or the hardware at schools.

- Considering students' previous language learning experiences, it is possible to say that most students are not familiar with blended learning environments. Thus, it is of great importance to adopt an online platform which is easy to use.
- In the current context, students' anxiety level is high as they failed in their first year in the preparatory school. Having fewer in-class hours might be one factor that increases students' anxiety level. Therefore, students' background should be taken into consideration while designing a blended learning course. Instructors should always contact and keep track of each student. As a result, having a few number of students in each class might increase the efficiency of the program.
- In-class hours are of great value for the learners in this context since their self-report shows that they are not autonomous learners. That is why, in-class hours should be carefully planned and some advising hours can be added in addition to regular in-class practices for the students who need further support or guidance.
- At this point, other problems might occur, teachers' workload and willingness to work with this group of students. The findings of this study demonstrate that teaching a blended course increases teachers' workload. Therefore, while planning a blended learning program, instructors' schedules should be organized accordingly. Also, teachers who are enthusiastic about working with blended learning groups should be assigned. Instructors should be aware of the student profile and they should be trained about the basics of the program.
- This study reveals that online assignments do not appeal to students and they find online assignments boring. To attract students' attention, it is recommended to add more real-like online activities or tasks such as discussion forums, wikis, or online speaking tasks that require students to involve actively rather than simply assigning multiple-choiced exercises.
- The results of this study show that students want to be assessed and given feedback when they do the online writing or pronunciation assignments. It can be seen that students are more motivated when they are assigned some grades. Therefore, all the online assignments should be assessed and graded. On the other hand, if it is not possible to grade all exercises that are assigned, it is recommended not to assign these parts.

In conclusion, it is possible to imply that an effective blended learning program requires careful planning and a detailed description of the context and the needs of the stakeholders.

### **Suggestions for Further Study**

Some possible suggestions for further study on blended learning designs can be made as follows:

- First of all, this study was carried out with 89 repeat students. A replication of this study in a context which adopts My English Lab as the online portion of the blended program can be carried out in a different context with successful students. Such studies might be helpful to reveal the relationship between language level and students' perceptions on blended learning environments.
- In this study, the data collected are based on self-report of the learners and instructors and are limited to this case. It was revealed that online assignments contribute to the development of students' language skills and language areas. Whether doing online assignments really contribute to students' achievement or not needs further inquiry. An experimental study based on the relationship between students' exam scores and the time they spend online can be designed to get more generalizable data.
- The results of the current study revealed some weaknesses of the current blended learning program. However, revealing the reasons for these weaknesses in this blended program is also out of the scope of this study. Another qualitative study can be planned in order to get a more in-depth understanding of the challenges of the existing program and the reasons underlying these issues.
- In this study, students stated that they are not in favour of doing online assignments and that they do not find online assignments instructive enough. A comparative study can reveal student preferences between traditional instruction and blended instruction and the reasons for student choices.
- Another study which focuses on the alternative online tasks, online teaching techniques, strategies, or the orientation program that can be used for blended courses might be conducted. An experimental study might contribute to online

teaching literature. Also, it might provide the program developers a variety of activities strategies, and techniques.

- Finally, the roles of the instructors in the blended program go unexamined in this study. A study focusing on teachers rather than students can shed light on the fundamental features of an effective blended learning program.



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## APPENDICES



## Appendix 1. Ethics Committee Form



ANKARA YILDIRIM BEYAZIT ÜNİVERSİTESİ (AYBÜ)  
SOSYAL VE BEŞERİ BİLİMLER ETİK KURULU (SBEK)  
PROJE ONAY BELGESİ



Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt Üniversitesi .....Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu.....  
.....İngilizce..... bölümü akademisyenlerinden Ayşe Gül Bodur 'un, ..... An  
Evaluation of the Blended Learning Program of Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University Preparatory School Based  
on Students and Instructors' Perceptions.... adlı araştırması değerlendirilmiştir. (Bu kısım başvuru sahibi  
tarafından doldurulmalıdır)

Proje etik açısından uygun bulunmuştur.

Proje etik açısından geliştirilmesi gerekmektedir.

Proje etik açısından uygun bulunmamıştır.

SOSYAL VE BEŞERİ BİLİMLER ETİK KURULU KARARI (Etik Kurul tarafından doldurulacaktır)	
Araştırma kodu (Yıl – Araştırma sıra no)	425
Başvuru formunun Etik Kurula ulaştığı tarih	26.12.2016
Etik Kurul Karar toplantı tarihi ve karar no	02.01.2017 /24
Yer	Yıldırım Beyazıt Üniversitesi, Esenboğa Külliyesi
Katılımcılar	Formda imzası bulunan üyelerimiz toplantıya katılmıştır

### KURUL BAŞKANI, BAŞKAN YARDIMCISI VE ÜYELER:

Prof. Dr. Cem Şafak ÇUKUR

Başkan

İMZA

Doç. Dr. Musa AYGÜL

Başkan Yardımcısı

katılmadı

Prof. Dr. Şükrü ÖZEN

Üye

Prof. Dr. Ergün ERASLAN

Üye

katılmadı

Prof. Dr. Metin ÖZDEMİR

Üye

Doç. Dr. Rıza GÖKLER

Üye

katılmadı

Doç. Dr. Tekin AKDEMİR

Üye

Doç. Dr. Necmiye ÜN YILDIRIM

Üye

## Appendix 2. Informed Consent Form

### BİLGİLENDİRİLMİŞ ONAM FORMU

#### LÜTFEN BU DÖKÜMANI DİKKATLİCE OKUMAK İÇİN ZAMAN AYIRINIZ

Sizi Ayşe Gül Bodur tarafından yürütülen "Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt Üniversitesi Hazırlık Okulu Harmanlanmış Öğrenme Programının Öğrenci ve Okutman Görüşlerine Dayalı Değerlendirilmesi" başlıklı **araştırmaya** davet ediyoruz. Bu araştırmaya katılıp katılmama kararını vermeden önce, araştırmanın neden ve nasıl yapılacağını bilmeniz gerekmektedir. Bu nedenle bu formun okunup anlaşılması büyük önem taşımaktadır. Eğer anlayamadığınız ve sizin için açık olmayan şeyler varsa, ya da daha fazla bilgi isterseniz bize sorunuz.

Bu çalışmaya katılmak tamamen **gönüllülük** esasına dayanmaktadır. Çalışmaya **katılmama** veya katıldıktan sonra herhangi bir anda çalışmadan **çıkma** hakkında sahipsiz. **Çalışmayı yanıtlamanız, araştırmaya katılım için onam verdiğiniz** biçiminde yorumlanacaktır. Size verilen **formlardaki** soruları yanıtlarken kimsenin baskısı veya telkini altında olmayın. Bu formlardan elde edilecek bilgiler tamamen araştırma amacı ile kullanılacaktır.

#### 1. Araştırmayla İlgili Bilgiler:

- Araştırmanın Amacı: Harmanlanmış öğrenme programının değerlendirilmesi
- Araştırmanın İçeriği: Program içeriği hakkında anket ve görüşmeler aracılığı ile okutman ve öğrenci görüşleri alınarak programın geliştirilmesi için öneriler sunulacaktır.
- Araştırmanın Nedeni:  Bilimsel araştırma  Tez çalışması
- Araştırmanın Öngörülen Süresi: 2 ay
- Araştırmaya Katılması Beklenen Katılımcı/Gönüllü Sayısı: 100 öğrenci
- Araştırmanın Yapılacağı Yer(ler): Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu İngilizce Hazırlık Programı

#### 2. Çalışmaya Katılım Onayı:

Yukarıda yer alan ve araştırmadan önce katılımcıya/gönüllüye verilmesi gereken bilgileri okudum ve katılmam istenen çalışmanın kapsamını ve amacını, gönüllü olarak üzerime düşen sorumlulukları tamamen anladım. **Çalışma hakkında yazılı ve sözlü açıklama aşağıda adı belirtilen araştırmacı tarafından yapıldı, soru sorma ve tartışma imkanı buldum ve tatmin edici yanıtlar aldım. Bana, çalışmanın muhtemel riskleri ve faydaları sözlü olarak da anlatıldı.** Bu çalışmayı istediğim zaman ve herhangi bir neden belirtmek zorunda kalmadan bırakabileceğimi ve bıraktığım takdirde herhangi bir olumsuzluk ile karşılaşmayacağımı anladım.

Bu koşullarda söz konusu araştırmaya kendi isteğimle, hiçbir baskı ve zorlama olmaksızın katılmayı kabul ediyorum.

Katılımcının (Kendi el yazısı ile)

Adı-Soyadı:

İmzası:

### **Appendix 3. Student Questionnaire (English)**

## **AN EVALUATION OF THE BLENDED LEARNING PROGRAM OF YILDIRIM BEYAZIT UNIVERSITY PREPARATORY SCHOOL BASED ON STUDENTS AND INSTRUCTORS' PERCEPTIONS STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE**

Dear Students,

This questionnaire has been designed as part of a Master's thesis on the blended learning program at Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University. The aim of this questionnaire is to find out about your perceptions of the blended learning program implemented at Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University Preparatory School in 2016-2017 academic year. The data gathered will provide the necessary information to enhance the quality of the program.

You are kindly invited to complete this questionnaire which can take nearly 20 minutes. It is assured that your responses will be used research purposes only, and your identity will be kept anonymous. It is of great importance that your responses to the items are truthful and you do not skip any items in order to get accurate results. The participation in this study is totally voluntary. You can withdraw from the study at any point. If you have any further questions or suggestions about the survey, please do not hesitate to contact the researcher via e-mail. Thank you for your valuable contribution.

Yours sincerely

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## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Please complete the blanks or mark the appropriate box for the following items.

1. Your gender:  Male  Female
2. Your age (Please write): \_\_\_\_\_
3. Your department (Please write): \_\_\_\_\_
4. Your proficiency level in the English Preparatory School:  B  B+  C
5. How many year(s) have you been using computers?  0-5  6-10  11+
6. How many hour(s) a day do you spend online on average?  0-3  4-6  7+
7. Do you have adequate knowledge about computer technology and computer usage necessary to use our online platform?  YES  NO
8. Do you have access to the Internet?  At Home / Dormitory  At School  No

Please read each item below carefully, and choose the statement that is right for you.

ONLINE PRACTICES					
1. Online assignments were interesting enough.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
2. The time allocated for the online assignments in the blended program was enough for me.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
3. Online assignments consolidated in-class activities.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
<b>Online Listening Assignments</b>					
4. Online listening assignments were useful for my in-class listening performances.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
5. Online listening assignments were useful to improve my listening sub-skill of understanding the main idea(s) in listening texts such as summarizing the main ideas or finding a suitable title for the texts.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5



6. Online listening assignments were useful to improve my listening sub-skill of understanding the details in listening texts such as filling in the blanks in the summary of a text.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
7. Online listening assignments were useful to improve my listening sub-skill of inferring meaning from the context in listening texts such as understanding how the speaker feels.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
8. The number of online listening assignments was enough for me to improve my listening skills.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
9. The language level of the online listening assignments was appropriate for my language level.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
<b>Online Reading Assignments</b>					
10. Online reading assignments were appropriate for my language level.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
11. Online reading assignments were useful for me to improve my reading sub-skill of skimming such as finding the suitable title for the texts or writing a short summary of the texts.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
12. Online reading assignments were useful for me to improve my reading sub-skill of scanning such as doing fill-in-the-blanks exercises..	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
13. Online reading assignments were useful to improve my reading sub-skill of inference.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
14. Online reading assignments were useful to improve my reading sub-skill of guessing the meaning of unknown words in a reading text.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
15. The topics of the reading texts in the online assignments appealed my interests.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5

16. There was enough number of online reading assignments for me to improve my reading skills.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
<b>Vocabulary</b>					
17. Online vocabulary assignments contributed to my in-class listening performance.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
18. Online vocabulary assignments contributed to my in-class reading performance.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
19. There was enough number of vocabulary assignments to meet my language needs.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
20. In my in-class speaking performance, I could use the new vocabulary items which I learned by means of online assignments.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
21. In my in-class writing performances, I could use the new vocabulary items which I learned by means of online assignments.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
<b>Grammar</b>					
22. Online grammar assignments were useful for me to speak in English with accurate grammar.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
23. Online grammar assignments were useful for me to write paragraphs, essays, letters, or e-mails in English with accurate grammar.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
24. Online grammar assignments helped me prepare well for my exams.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
25. The number of online grammar assignments was enough for me.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
<b>Beliefs on Optional Online Assignments</b>					
<b>Writing</b>					
26. I believe that doing online writing assignments should be obligatory.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5

27. I believe that there should be more online writing assignments.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
28. I believe that there should be online writing assignments on which immediate feedback is given.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
<b>Online Speaking and Pronunciation Assignments</b>					
29. I believe that there should be online interactive speaking activities in which I can communicate in English with native speakers on our blended learning online platform.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
30. I believe that there should be online interactive speaking activities on our blended learning online platform.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
31. There was enough number of online pronunciation assignments to improve my pronunciation.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
32. I believe that doing online pronunciation assignments should be obligatory.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
<b>TECHNOLOGY</b>					
33. I was given enough information about how to use the online platform.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
34. Technical support was provided when I experienced some technical problems with the online platform.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
35. The school provided the necessary computer facilities for me to do my online assignments at school.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
36. I could easily do my online assignments via all kinds of technological tools (smartphones, tablets etc.).	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
37. The online platform on which I do online assignments was easy to use.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
38. Studying on an online platform contributed a lot to my language learning.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5

<b>IN-CLASS PRACTICES</b>					
<b>39.</b> In-class activities were interesting enough.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
<b>40.</b> There were not only individual tasks but also pair work and group work activities in the classroom.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
<b>41.</b> Portfolio assignments contributed to my writing skills.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
<b>42.</b> Portfolio assignments contributed to my speaking skills.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
<b>43.</b> There were enough number of in-class presentation assignments and project work.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
<b>EXAMINATION</b>					
<b>44.</b> The quizzes covered the content which we learned in face-to-face classes.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
<b>45.</b> The quizzes covered the content which we learned on the online platform.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
<b>46.</b> The midterm exams covered the content which we learned in face-to-face classes.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
<b>47.</b> The midterm exams covered the content which we learned on the online platform.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
<b>48.</b> The question types in all exams were similar to the question and exercise types covered in the classroom activities.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
<b>49.</b> The question types in exams were similar to the question and exercise types covered on the online platform.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
<b>50.</b> The level of the quizzes was appropriate for what we learned.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
<b>51.</b> The level of the midterm exams was appropriate for what we learned.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5

<b>SELF-STUDY SKILLS</b>					
<b>52.</b> Doing online assignments on the platform helped me improve my self-study skills.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
<b>53.</b> Doing online assignments on the platform helped me use my time effectively.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
<b>INSTRUCTORS</b>					
<b>54.</b> In addition to online assignments, instructors also oriented me to other useful online resources.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
<b>55.</b> The instructors facilitated the use of online platform.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
<b>56.</b> The instructors guided me to discover my learning styles and strategies.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5
<b>57.</b> The interaction between the instructor and me motivated me to study in the blended learning program.	<b>Strongly Disagree</b> 1	<b>Disagree</b> 2	<b>Undecided</b> 3	<b>Agree</b> 4	<b>Strongly Agree</b> 5

**Additional statements:**

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#### Appendix 4. Student Questionnaire (Turkish)

### ANKARA YILDIRIM BEYAZIT ÜNİVERSİTESİ HAZIRLIK OKULU HARMANLAMIŞ ÖĞRENME PROGRAMININ ÖĞRENCİ VE ÖĞRETMEN GÖRÜŞLERİNE DAYALI OLARAK DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ

#### ÖĞRENCİ ANKETİ

Değerli Öğrenciler,

Bu anket Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt Üniversitesi harmanlanmış öğrenme (*blended learning*) programının değerlendirilmesi üzerine yürütülen bir yüksek lisans tez çalışması için hazırlanmıştır. Anketin amacı, 2016 - 2017 akademik yılında Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt Üniversitesi Hazırlık Okulunda yürütülmekte olan blended programı hakkında öğrenci görüşlerini almaktır. Toplanan veri, yüksek lisans tez için gerekli veriyi sağlamak ve program kalitesini arttırmak için yararlı olacaktır.

Anketin tamamlanması yaklaşık 20 dakika sürecektir. Ankete vereceğiniz cevaplar sadece araştırma amaçlı kullanılacaktır ve kimliğiniz kesinlikle saklı tutulacaktır. Maddelere doğru cevaplar vermeniz ve hiçbir maddeyi atlamamanız araştırmada doğru sonuçlar elde etmek açısından oldukça önemlidir. Soru ve önerileriniz için aşağıda verilen e-mail adresi aracılığıyla araştırmacıya ulaşabilirsiniz. Katkılarınız için teşekkür ederim.

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## KİŞİSEL BİLGİLER

Lütfen aşağıdaki boşlukları doldurunuz veya ilgili kutuyu işaretleyiniz.

1. Cinsiyetiniz:  Kadın  Erkek
2. Yaşınız (**Lütfen Yazınız**) : \_\_\_\_\_
3. Bölümünüz (**Lütfen Yazınız**): \_\_\_\_\_
4. Blended programda hangi kurda öğrenim görüyorsunuz?  B  B+  C
5. Kaç yıldır bilgisayar kullanıyorsunuz?  0-5  6-10  11+
6. İnternette günlük ortalama kaç saat harcıyorsunuz?  0-3  4-6  7+
7. Online platformumuzu kullanabilmek için bilgisayar teknolojisi ve bilgisayar kullanımı ile ilgili yeterli bilgiye sahip misiniz?  
 Evet  Hayır
8. Evde/Yurtta veya okulda internet bağlantısına sahip misiniz?  Evet  Hayır

Lütfen aşağıdaki maddeleri dikkatlice okuyunuz ve her bir madde için fikrinizi en iyi yansıtan ifadeyi seçiniz.

ONLINE ÖDEVLER					
1. Online ödevler yeterince ilgi çekiciydi.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
2. Blended programda online ödevler için verilen süre yeterliydi.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5

3. Online ödevler sınıf içi etkinliklerini pekiştirdi.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
<b>Online Dinleme Ödevleri</b>					
4. Online dinleme ödevleri sınıf içi dinleme etkinliklerini başarıyla yapabilmeme katkı sağladı.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
5. Online dinleme ödevleri dinleme metninin ana fikrini özetleme, metinlere uygun başlık bulma gibi ana fikirleri anlamaya yönelik dinleme becerilerimi geliştirmemde yararlı oldu.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
6. Online dinleme ödevleri metnin özetindeki boşlukları doldurabilme gibi dinleme metnindeki detayları anlama becerilerimi geliştirmemde yararlı oldu.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
7. Online dinleme ödevleri konuşmacının nasıl hissettiğini veya ne imâ ettiğini anlayabilme gibi dinleme metnindeki durum ve içerikten (bağlamdan) anlam çıkarma becerimi geliştirmemde yararlı oldu.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
8. Online dinleme ödevlerinin sayısı dinleme becerilerimi geliştirmem için yeterliydi.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5



9. Online dinleme ödevlerinin dil düzeyi dil düzeyime uygundu.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
<b>Online Okuma Ödevleri</b>					
10. Online okuma ödevlerinin dil düzeyi dil düzeyime uygundu.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
11. Online okuma ödevleri metne hızlı bir şekilde göz atarak metne uygun başlık bulma, metne kısa özet yazma gibi genel konu ve mesajı anlama becerimi geliştirmemde yararlı oldu.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
12. Online okuma ödevleri boşluk doldurma alıştırmalarını yapabilme gibi metindeki ayrıntıları anlama becerimi geliştirmemde yararlı oldu.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
13. Online okuma ödevleri okuma metinlerinde doğrudan ifade edilmeyip ima edilen anlamları çıkarma becerimi geliştirmemde yararlı oldu.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
14. Online okuma ödevleri okuma metinlerinde anlamını bilmediğim kelimelerin anlamını tahmin etme becerimi geliştirmemde yararlı oldu.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
15. Online okuma ödevlerinde yer alan okuma metinlerinin konuları ilgimi çekti.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5

16. Online okuma ödevlerinin sayısı okuma becerilerimi geliştirmem için yeterliydi.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
<b>Online Kelime Bilgisi Ödevleri</b>					
17. Online kelime bilgisi ödevleri sınıf içi <u>dinleme</u> etkinliklerini başarıyla yapabilmeme katkı sağladı.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
18. Online kelime bilgisi ödevleri sınıf içi <u>okuma</u> etkinliklerini başarıyla yapabilmeme katkı sağladı.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
19. Online kelime bilgisi ödevlerinin sayısı dil ihtiyaçlarımı karşılamam için yeterliydi.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
20. Online kelime bilgisi ödevleri aracılığıyla öğrendiğim yeni kelimeleri sınıf içi <u>konuşma</u> etkinliklerinde kullanabildim.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
21. Online kelime bilgisi ödevleri aracılığıyla öğrendiğim yeni kelimeleri sınıf içi <u>yazma</u> etkinliklerinde kullanabildim.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
<b>Online Gramer Ödevleri</b>					
22. Online gramer ödevleri doğru gramerle İngilizce konuşmamda yararlı oldu.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5

23. Online gramer ödevleri doğru gramerle İngilizce paragraf, kompozisyon, mektup, e-mail vs. yazmamda yararlı oldu.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
24. Online gramer ödevleri sınavlara iyi hazırlanmamda yardımcı oldu.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
25. Online gramer alıştırmalarının sayısı yeterliydi.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
<b>Yapılması Zorunlu Olmayan veya Programda Hiç Yer Almayan Online Ödevler</b>					
<b>Online Yazma Ödevleri</b>					
26. Online yazma ödevlerinin zorunlu tutulması gerektiğine inanıyorum.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
27. Online platformda yazma etkinliklerinin daha fazla yer alması gerektiğine inanıyorum.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
28. Anında geri bildirim (feedback) alabileceğim online yazma ödevlerinin olması gerektiğine inanıyorum.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
<b>Online Konuşma ve Telaffuz Ödevleri</b>					
29. İngilizce akıcılığımı geliştirmem için ana dili İngilizce olan kişilerle iletişim kurabileceğim online konuşma etkinliklerinin olması gerektiğine inanıyorum.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5

30. İnteraktif (etkileşimci) online konuşma etkinliklerinin blended platformumuzda olması gerektiğine inanıyorum.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
31. İngilizce telaffuzumu geliştirmem için yeterli sayıda online ödev vardı.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
32. Online telaffuz ödevlerinin zorunlu tutulması gerektiğini düşünüyorum.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
<b>TEKNOLOJİ</b>					
33. Online platformun nasıl kullanılacağına dair yeterince bilgilendirildim.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
34. Online platform ile ilgili teknik sorunlar yaşadığımda teknik destek sağlandı.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
35. Okul, online ödevlerimi yapabilmem için gerekli bilgisayar imkanlarını sundu.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
36. Ödevlerimi çeşitli teknolojik araçlar (akıllı telefon, tablet vs.) kullanarak kolaylıkla yapabildim.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
37. Online ödevler yaptığım platformun kullanımının kolaydı.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5

38. Online bir platformda çalışmanın İngilizce öğrenmeye katkı sağladı.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
<b>SINIF-İÇİ BÖLÜM İÇERİĞİ</b>					
39. Sınıf içi etkinlikler yeterince ilgi çekiciydi.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
40. Sınıf içi etkinliklerde sadece bireysel çalışmalar değil ikili çalışmalar ve grup çalışmaları da vardı.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
41. Gelişim dosyası (portfolyo) etkinlikleri, <u>yazma</u> becerilerimi geliştirmemde yararlı oldu.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
42. Gelişim dosyası (portfolyo) etkinlikleri <u>konuşma</u> becerilerimi geliştirmemde yararlı oldu.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
43. Yeterli sayıda sınıf-İçi sunum ve proje ödevleri vardı.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
<b>SINAVLAR</b>					
44. Küçük sınavlar (quizler) <u>sınıfta işlenen</u> içeriği kapsıyordu.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
45. Küçük sınavlar <u>online platformda</u> işlenen içeriği kapsıyordu.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5

46. Ara sınavlar <u>sınıfta işlenen içeriği</u> kapsıyordu.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
47. Ara sınavlar <u>online platformda işlenen içeriği</u> kapsıyordu.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
48. Sınavlardaki soru tipleri <u>sınıf içinde yapılan</u> etkinlik ve alıştırmalardaki soru tiplerine benziyordu.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
49. Sınavlardaki soru tipleri <u>online platformda yer alan</u> alıştırmalar soru tiplerine benziyordu.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
50. <u>Küçük sınavların</u> dil düzeyi sınıf içinde işlenen konuların dil düzeyine uygundu.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
51. <u>Ara sınavların</u> dil düzeyi sınıf içinde işlenen konuların dil düzeyine uygundu.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
<b>BİREYSEL ÇALIŞMA</b>					
52. Platformda online ödevler yapmak kendi kendime İngilizce çalışma becerilerimi geliştirdi.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
53. Platformda online ödevler yapmak zamanı etkili ve verimli bir şekilde kullanmama yardımcı oldu.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5

<b>ÖĞRETİM ELEMANI</b>					
<b>54.</b> Dersi veren öğretim elemanı online ödevlerin yanı sıra diğer faydalı online kaynaklara da yönlendirdi.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
<b>55.</b> Dersi veren öğretim elemanı online platformun kullanımını kolaylaştırdı.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
<b>56.</b> Dersi veren öğretim elemanı öğrenme tarzımı ve dil öğrenme stratejilerimi keşfetmeme yardımcı oldu.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5
<b>57.</b> Dersi veren öğretim elemanı ile aramdaki etkileşim beni blended programda İngilizce çalışmaya motive etti.	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b> 1	<b>Katılmıyorum</b> 2	<b>Kararsızım</b> 3	<b>Katılıyorum</b> 4	<b>Kesinlikle katılıyorum</b> 5

**Blended program ile ilgili başka bir düşüncenizi eklemek istiyorsanız lütfen aşağıda verilen boşluklara yazınız.**

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## Appendix 5. Student Interview Form

1. Blended Programdaki online ödevleri, dört dil becerisini (okuma, yazma, dinleme ve konuşma) geliştirmesi açısından nasıl değerlendirirsiniz?
2. Konuşma becerisini geliştirmeye yönelik etkinlikler yeterli mi? Konuşma becerisinin geliştirilmesi için nasıl etkinlikler olması gerektiğini düşünüyorsunuz? Örneğin okul arkadaşlarınızla İngilizce sohbet edebileceğiniz görüntülü ve sesli sohbet odaları, anında geri bildirim veren online telaffuz programları, vb.
3. Online ödev platformunun teknik anlamda kullanımı kolay mıydı? Online platformda teknik destek birimi var mı? Yeterli mi? Teknik sorunlara anında çözüm bulabiliyor mu?
4. Blended Programın online bölümünün güçlü yönleri nelerdir?
5. Blended Programın online bölümünün zayıf ya da geliştirilmesi gereken yönleri nelerdir?
6. Blended programının online özelliği sınıf içi etkinlikleri destekleyebiliyor mu? Sınıf içi etkinliklerini bütünleyici mi?
7. Blended Programının yüz yüze olan bölümünün güçlü yönleri nelerdir sizce?
8. Blended Programının yüz yüze olan bölümünün zayıf ya da geliştirilmesi gereken noktaları nelerdir sizce?
9. Blended program, bireysel ve bağımsız olarak öğrenme becerilerinizi geliştirmenizde faydalı oldu mu? Bu konuda hocalardan veya okuldan yardım aldınız mı?
10. Sınavlar sınıf içi derslerin ve online platformun içeriğini kapsıyor mu?
11. Sınıf içi ders saatleri sizce yeterli mi? Arttırılmasını ister misiniz? Neden?
12. Blended program nasıl daha çekici hale getirilebilir? Önerileriniz nedir? Örneğin blog yazma, film izleme ve sanal ortamda tartışma gibi etkinlikler kullanılabilir mi?
13. Ekleme ya da önermek istediğiniz bir şey var mı? Lütfen belirtin.

Katıldığınız için teşekkürler



## **Appendix 6. Instructor Interview Form**

1. What do you think about the online part of the blended program in terms of its contributions to the development of four skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening)?
2. What do you think about the online part of the blended program in terms of its contributions to the development of students' language use, pronunciation, and vocabulary knowledge?
3. Do you think the online platform is practical? Have you ever experienced any technical problems? Is there a unit dealing with the technical problems immediately?
4. What do you think are the strengths of the online platform?
5. What do you think are the weaknesses of the online platform?
6. Do you think the online part of the blended program is complementary to the in-class part?
7. What do you think are the strengths of the in-class part of the blended program?
8. What do you think are the weaknesses of the in-class part of the blended program?
9. Do you think students have self-study skills that are necessary for the blended program?
10. Do you think the number of in-class hours should be increased?
11. Do you have any suggestions to improve the quality of the blended program?
12. Do you have any additional comments or suggestions?

Thank you

## Appendix 7. Results of Normality Tests for Gender Variable

Table 36

### *Tests of Normality for Gender Variable*

Item No.	Gender	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
		<i>Statistic</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Item 1	Female	,237	41	,000	,864	41	,000
	Male	,231	48	,000	,867	48	,000
Item 2	Female	,248	41	,000	,862	41	,000
	Male	,223	48	,000	,884	48	,000
Item 3	Female	,177	41	,002	,919	41	,006
	Male	,245	48	,000	,868	48	,000
Item 4	Female	,194	41	,001	,906	41	,003
	Male	,209	48	,000	,870	48	,000
Item 5	Female	,189	41	,001	,866	41	,000
	Male	,240	48	,000	,832	48	,000
Item 6	Female	,219	41	,000	,853	41	,000
	Male	,208	48	,000	,853	48	,000
Item 7	Female	,200	41	,000	,901	41	,002
	Male	,259	48	,000	,851	48	,000
Item 8	Female	,266	41	,000	,889	41	,001
	Male	,238	48	,000	,890	48	,000
Item 9	Female	,237	41	,000	,881	41	,000
	Male	,252	48	,000	,843	48	,000
Item 10	Female	,281	41	,000	,835	41	,000
	Male	,242	48	,000	,845	48	,000
Item 11	Female	,245	41	,000	,884	41	,001
	Male	,211	48	,000	,871	48	,000
Item 12	Female	,296	41	,000	,832	41	,000
	Male	,214	48	,000	,900	48	,001
Item 13	Female	,256	41	,000	,846	41	,000
	Male	,225	48	,000	,897	48	,001
Item 14	Female	,216	41	,000	,876	41	,000

	Male	,253	48	,000	,818	48	,000
Item 15	Female	,238	41	,000	,895	41	,001
	Male	,233	48	,000	,899	48	,001
Item 16	Female	,269	41	,000	,887	41	,001
	Male	,244	48	,000	,838	48	,000
Item 17	Female	,228	41	,000	,880	41	,000
	Male	,232	48	,000	,889	48	,000
Item 18	Female	,236	41	,000	,874	41	,000
	Male	,196	48	,000	,905	48	,001
Item 19	Female	,280	41	,000	,875	41	,000
	Male	,250	48	,000	,894	48	,000
Item 20	Female	,199	41	,000	,907	41	,003
	Male	,209	48	,000	,858	48	,000
Item 21	Female	,279	41	,000	,843	41	,000
	Male	,262	48	,000	,853	48	,000
Item 22	Female	,219	41	,000	,891	41	,001
	Male	,208	48	,000	,907	48	,001
Item 23	Female	,215	41	,000	,850	41	,000
	Male	,169	48	,001	,907	48	,001
Item 24	Female	,179	41	,002	,913	41	,004
	Male	,197	48	,000	,909	48	,001
Item 25	Female	,286	41	,000	,868	41	,000
	Male	,176	48	,001	,902	48	,001
Item 26	Female	,318	41	,000	,761	41	,000
	Male	,281	48	,000	,800	48	,000
Item 27	Female	,291	41	,000	,788	41	,000
	Male	,225	48	,000	,826	48	,000
Item 28	Female	,250	41	,000	,813	41	,000
	Male	,233	48	,000	,855	48	,000
Item 29	Female	,268	41	,000	,842	41	,000
	Male	,243	48	,000	,820	48	,000
Item 30	Female	,331	41	,000	,813	41	,000
	Male	,198	48	,000	,865	48	,000

Item 31	Female	,246	41	,000	,898	41	,001
	Male	,214	48	,000	,894	48	,000
Item 32	Female	,208	41	,000	,887	41	,001
	Male	,185	48	,000	,879	48	,000
Item 33	Female	,357	41	,000	,733	41	,000
	Male	,303	48	,000	,830	48	,000
Item 34	Female	,259	41	,000	,821	41	,000
	Male	,286	48	,000	,819	48	,000
Item 35	Female	,248	41	,000	,874	41	,000
	Male	,289	48	,000	,860	48	,000
Item 36	Female	,357	41	,000	,780	41	,000
	Male	,322	48	,000	,819	48	,000
Item 37	Female	,325	41	,000	,801	41	,000
	Male	,280	48	,000	,870	48	,000
Item 38	Female	,272	41	,000	,854	41	,000
	Male	,214	48	,000	,897	48	,000
Item 39	Female	,227	41	,000	,862	41	,000
	Male	,247	48	,000	,878	48	,000
Item 40	Female	,359	41	,000	,716	41	,000
	Male	,254	48	,000	,869	48	,000
Item 41	Female	,349	41	,000	,682	41	,000
	Male	,359	48	,000	,782	48	,000
Item 42	Female	,241	41	,000	,882	41	,001
	Male	,240	48	,000	,876	48	,000
Item 43	Female	,378	41	,000	,739	41	,000
	Male	,266	48	,000	,868	48	,000
Item 44	Female	,264	41	,000	,875	41	,000
	Male	,257	48	,000	,878	48	,000
Item 45	Female	,356	41	,000	,791	41	,000
	Male	,217	48	,000	,887	48	,000
Item 46	Female	,309	41	,000	,803	41	,000
	Male	,272	48	,000	,864	48	,000
Item 47	Female	,343	41	,000	,809	41	,000

	Male	,207	48	,000	,891	48	,000
Item 48	Female	,277	41	,000	,864	41	,000
	Male	,218	48	,000	,894	48	,000
Item 49	Female	,212	41	,000	,885	41	,001
	Male	,229	48	,000	,892	48	,000
Item 50	Female	,333	41	,000	,823	41	,000
	Male	,239	48	,000	,857	48	,000
Item 51	Female	,248	41	,000	,887	41	,001
	Male	,262	48	,000	,859	48	,000
Item 52	Female	,238	41	,000	,873	41	,000
	Male	,196	48	,000	,895	48	,000
Item 53	Female	,221	41	,000	,843	41	,000
	Male	,176	48	,001	,887	48	,000
Item 54	Female	,295	41	,000	,760	41	,000
	Male	,275	48	,000	,750	48	,000
Item 55	Female	,291	41	,000	,832	41	,000
	Male	,306	48	,000	,835	48	,000
Item 56	Female	,213	41	,000	,880	41	,000
	Male	,216	48	,000	,837	48	,000
Item 57	Female	,287	41	,000	,811	41	,000
	Male	,217	48	,000	,854	48	,000

## Appendix 8. Results of Mann Whitney-U Tests for Gender Variable

Table 37

*Results of Mann Whitney-U Test for Gender Variable*

Item no.	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	U	p
Item 1	Female	41	44.02	1805	944	.73
	Male	48	45.83	2200		
Item 2	Female	41	42.74	1752.5	891.5	.42
	Male	48	46.93	2252.5		
Item 3	Female	41	48.98	2008	821	.16
	Male	48	41.60	1997		
Item 4	Female	41	46.22	1895	934	.66
	Male	48	43.96	2110		
Item 5	Female	41	42.72	1751.5	890.5	.42
	Male	48	46.95	2253.5		
Item 6	Female	41	43.37	1778	917	.56
	Male	48	46.40	2227		
Item 7	Female	41	44.34	1818	957	.81
	Male	48	45.56	2187		
Item 8	Female	41	44.46	1823	962	.84
	Male	48	45.46	2182		
Item 9	Female	41	45.83	1879	950	.76
	Male	48	44.29	2126		
Item 11	Female	41	49.57	2032.5	796.5	.10
	Male	48	41.09	1972.5		

Item 13	Female	41	46	1886	943	.72
	Male	48	44.15	2119		
Item 14	Female	41	46.61	1911	918	.56
	Male	48	43.63	2094		
Item 15	Female	41	44.91	1841.5	980.5	.97
	Male	48	45.07	2163.5		
Item 16	Female	41	41.43	1698.5	837.5	.20
	Male	48	48.05	2306.5		
Item 17	Female	41	46.17	1893	936	.68
	Male	48	44	2112		
Item 18	Female	41	47.16	1933.5	895.5	.44
	Male	48	43.16	2071.5		
Item 19	Female	41	44.73	1834	973	.92
	Male	48	45.23	2171		
Item 20	Female	41	46.22	1895	934	.66
	Male	48	43.96	2110		
Item 21	Female	41	47.71	1956	873	.33
	Male	48	42.69	2049		
Item 22	Female	41	47.45	1945.5	883.5	.38
	Male	48	42.91	2059.5		
Item 23	Female	41	48.15	1974	855	.27
	Male	48	42.31	2031		
Item 24	Female	41	47.01	1927.5	901.5	.48
	Male	48	43.28	2077.5		

Item 25	Female	41	45.41	1862	967	.88
	Male	48	44.65	2143		
Item 26	Female	41	44.34	1818	957	.81
	Male	48	45.56	2187		
Item 27	Female	41	40.72	1669.5	808.5	.12
	Male	48	48.66	2335.5		
Item 28	Female	41	46.51	1907	922	.59
	Male	48	43.71	2098		
Item 29	Female	41	42.65	1748.5	887.5	.40
	Male	48	47.01	2256.5		
Item 30	Female	41	43.37	1778	917	.56
	Male	48	46.40	2227		
Item 31	Female	41	42.59	1746	885	.40
	Male	48	47.06	2259		
Item 32	Female	41	49.16	2015.5	813.5	.14
	Male	48	41.45	1989.5		
Item 33	Female	41	49.82	2042.5	786.5	.07
	Male	48	40.89	1962.5		
Item 35	Female	41	48.48	1987.5	841.5	.21
	Male	48	42.03	2017.5		
Item 36	Female	41	46.22	1895	934	.65
	Male	48	43.96	2110		
Item 37	Female	41	49.84	2043.5	785.5	.80
	Male	48	40.86	1961.5		



Item 38	Female	41	45.93	1883	946	.74
	Male	48	44.21	2122		
Item 39	Female	41	45.04	1846.5	982.5	.99
	Male	48	44.97	2158.5		
Item 40	Female	41	50.17	20.57	772	.06
	Male	48	40.58	1948		
Item 42	Female	41	45.40	1861.5	967.5	.88
	Male	48	44.66	2143.5		
Item 43	Female	41	46.71	1915	914	.53
	Male	48	43.54	2090		
Item 44	Female	41	49.39	2025	804	.11
	Male	48	41.25	1980		
Item 45	Female	41	49.32	2022	807	.12
	Male	48	41.31	1983		
Item 49	Female	41	45.37	1860	969	.89
	Male	48	44.69	2145		
Item 48	Female	41	46.33	1899.5	929.5	.63
	Male	48	43.86	2105.5		
Item 51	Female	41	48.62	1993.5	835.5	.20
	Male	48	41.91	2011.5		
Item 52	Female	41	44.5	1824.5	963.5	.86
	Male	48	45.43	2180.5		
Item 53	Female	41	47.44	1945	884	.39
	Male	48	42.92	2060		

Item 54	Female	41	44.17	1811	950	.76
	Male	48	45.71	2194		
Item 55	Female	41	45.09	1848.5	980.5	.97
	Male	48	44.93	2156.5		
Item 56	Female	41	41.95	1720	859	.28
	Male	48	47.60	2285		
Item 57	Female	41	44.83	1838	977	.95
	Male	48	45.15	2167		



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