

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN USING BLOGS AND
ACHIEVEMENT IN READING SKILLS OF PREP-CLASS
STUDENTS AT TERTIARY LEVEL**

**ÜNİVERSİTE DÜZEYİNDEKİ HAZIRLIK SINIFI
ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN OKUMA BECERİSİNDEKİ BAŞARILARI
İLE BLOG KULLANIMI ARASINDAKİ İLİŞKİ**

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Hacettepe University as a Partial Fulfillment to the Requirements
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ÜNİVERSİTE DÜZEYİNDEKİ HAZIRLIK SINIFI ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN OKUMA BECERİSİNDEKİ BAŞARILARI İLE BLOG KULLANIMI ARASINDAKİ İLİŞKİ

Tuğçe TEMİR

ÖZ

Bu çalışma üniversite seviyesindeki öğrencilerin okuma becerisindeki başarıları ile blog kullanımı arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemektedir. Aynı zamanda hazırlık sınıflarındaki okuma derslerinde blog kullanımı için etkili bir ölçüt bulmayı amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmada uygun örneklem modeli uygulanmıştır. Çalışma 19'u deney grubunda 19'u ise kontrol grubunda olmak üzere toplamda 38 katılımcı ile 2014-2015 akademik yılı güz döneminde yürütülmüştür. Deney grubundaki 19 öğrencinin altısı kız, 13'ü ise erkek öğrencilerden oluşmaktadır. Diğer taraftan, kontrol grubunda dördü kız, 15 erkek öğrenci bulunmaktadır. Katılımcılar Türkiye'deki özel bir üniversitenin hazırlık sınıfı öğrencileridir. Gruplar hazırlık sınıfı yönetim kurulu tarafından yapılan seviye tespit sınavı ile oluşturulmuştur. Bu sebeple, grupların seçiminde müfredatta belirtildiği gibi araştırmacının okuma becerilerini geliştirme dersini verdiği gruplar arasından deney ve kontrol grubu tesadüfî örneklem yöntemiyle seçilmiştir.

Çalışmaya gelince, katılımcılara okumak istedikleri konular sorulmuş fakat araştırmacı hangi okuma becerilerinin uygulanması gerektiğini diğer okuma dersi hocaları ile görüşerek kendisi karar vermiştir. Çalışma sekiz hafta sürmüştür ve bu süre boyunca hem deney hem kontrol grubunda spor, gösteri, festival gibi konular işlenmiştir. Deney grubunda araştırmacı uzmanlardan destek alarak ve farklı okuma kitaplarını kullanarak bizzat kendisinin hazırladığı sınıf blogunu kullanmıştır.

Çalışma planı olarak hem deney hem kontrol grubuna ön-son test tasarımı uygulamıştır. Buna ek olarak öğrencilerin görüşlerini öğrenmek için anket ve röportaj yapılmıştır. Ön-son testlerden ve anketten elde edilen veriler SPSS İstatistik 20[©] programı ile analiz edilmiştir. Çalışmanın başlangıcında bu iki grubun okuma anlama becerilerinin yakın olduğunu gösteren bir ön test yapılmıştır. Buna ek olarak, bu sonuç uygulamanın hemen öncesinde yapılan bir seviye belirleme (T-0) testi ile doğrulanmıştır. Sekiz hafta süren uygulama boyunca üç haftada bir deney ve kontrol grubunun okuma seviyesindeki gelişimlerini gözlemlemek

amacıyla iki adet gelişim ölçme sınavı (T-3 ve T-6) uygulanmıştır. Bu sınavlardan toplanan sonuçlar her iki grubun okuma becerilerinin gelişirken, deney grubunun kontrol grubuna göre daha yüksek notlar aldığını göstermiştir. Buna ek olarak, bu gelişim testleri deneyin uygulama süresi arttıkça blog kullanımının okuma becerisi üzerine etkisinin daha açık olduğunu göstermektedir. Çalışmanın sonunda, (sekiz haftanın sonunda) gruplara son test verilmiştir. Veri analizinden elde edilen sonuçlar blog kullanımının deney grubundaki öğrenciler üzerinde olumlu etkileri olduğunu ve deney ve kontrol gruplarının son test sonuçlarında istatistiksel olarak belirgin bir fark olduğunu göstermiştir. Bunun yanı sıra katılımcılar öğrenme ve okuma becerilerini geliştirdiği için blog kullanmayı sevdiğini yapılan anket ve görüşmeler aracılığı ile bildirmişlerdir. Ayrıca, blog kullanımının onları daha fazla okumak için motive ettiğini ve okuma becerisi sınavlarından daha iyi sonuçlar aldıklarına inanmaktadırlar. Bununla birlikte, röportajlar kullanımı kolay şablonlar, popüler okuma parçalarının seçimi ve CEFR'e göre İngilizce düzeylerine karar vermek gibi konuları ele alarak nasıl etkin bir blog oluşturulduğunu göstermiştir.

Sonuç olarak, bu çalışma blog kullanımının okuma becerilerini geliştirmede etkili, motive edici ve çağdaş bir yol olduğunu açıkça göstermektedir.

Anahtar sözcükler: Blog, okuma yeteneği, İngilizce öğretimi, teknoloji

Danışman: Doç. Dr. Arif SARIÇOBAN, Hacettepe Üniversitesi, Yabancı Diller Anabilim Dalı, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Bilim Dalı

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN USING BLOGS AND ACHIEVEMENT IN READING SKILLS OF PREP-CLASS STUDENTS AT TERTIARY LEVEL

Tuğçe TEMİR

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the relationship between blogs and achievements in reading skills of prep-class students at tertiary level. Another purpose of the study is to find out the effective criteria in the use of blogs in reading courses of prep-classes. For the purpose of the study, a convenient sampling procedure was handled. The study was conducted in the fall semester of 2014-2015 academic year with a total number of 38 students 19 of whom constituted an experimental group and the rest 19 were in the control group. Out of 19 participants in the experimental group six were females, 13 were males. On the other hand, there are four females and 15 males in the control group. The participants were prep class students at a private university in Turkey. The groups were formed by the prep class administrative board after gathering results of the preliminary exam. Therefore, in choosing the samples, the ones to whom the researcher herself taught reading as a part of the curriculum were randomly selected students.

As to the study, the participants were asked to decide on the topics that they would like to read, but the researcher decided to use which appropriate reading skills to employ upon negotiation with the other reading teachers. The study itself took eight weeks during which the same topics such as sports, shows, festivals, etc. were discussed with both the experimental and control groups. In the experimental group, the researcher used the class blog that she herself prepared for which she had support from the experts of the fields and make use of different reading course books.

As the design of the study, a pre-test/ posttest design was applied to both the experimental and the control groups. In addition to this, a questionnaire and an interview were conducted to learn the attitudes and thoughts of the students. The data from pre-test, posttest and questionnaire were analyzed through SPSS Statistics 20[®]. At the outset of the study, a pre-test the results of which indicated that these groups did not differ in terms of overall reading comprehension was administered to both groups. Moreover, this was checked by another test called T-

0, a reading progress test, the day before the beginning of the study. Then during the period of the experiment which takes eight weeks, two reading progress tests, T-3 and T-6, were applied once in three weeks to observe the improvements of the experimental and control groups in reading skills. The results gathered from these tests indicated that while both of the groups improved their reading skills, the experimental group had higher grades than the control group. Furthermore, the progress tests have shown that as the duration of the experiment is extended, the effects of using blogs on reading skills become more vivid. At the end of the study (the end of week eight) a posttest was administered to both groups. Results obtained from the data analysis indicate that there is a statistically significant difference between the posttest results of the groups which means that the blog has positive effects on students' achievements. Moreover, participants state that they like to use a blog since it helps them learn the language and improve their reading skills. Additionally, they believe that using blogs have motivated them to read more and to get better results from the reading exams. Besides, interviews show how to organize a blog effectively with handling the topics such as arranging easy-use templates, choosing popular reading passages, deciding the level of English based on CEFR, etc.

As a result, it is clearly understood from the study that the use of blogs is an effective, motivating and contemporary way of improving and enhancing reading skills.

Keywords: Blog, reading skill, English language teaching, technology

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ETHICS

In this thesis study, prepared in accordance with the spelling rules of Graduate School of Educational Sciences of Hacettepe University,

I declare that

- all the information and documents have been obtained in the base of the academic rules,
- all audio-visual and written information and results have been presented according to the rules of scientific standards,
- in case of using other works, related studies have been cited in accordance with the scientific standards,
- all cited studies have been fully referenced,
- I did not do any distortion in the data set,
- and any part of this thesis has not been presented as any other thesis study at this or any other university.

Tuğçe TEMİR

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LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CEFR: Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

CG: Control group

EG: Experimental group

ICT: Information and Communication Technologies.

IWS: Internet World Stats

M: Mean

SD: Standard deviation

SNSs: Social Networking Sites

TÜİK: Turkish Statistical Institute

WebCT: Web Course Tools

1. INTRODUCTION

This part of the thesis introduces the background of the study, states the problem, expresses the aim of the study, gives the research questions and indicates the significance of the study together with the limitations and assumptions. Moreover, the definitions of the terms which are used frequently are presented in this section.

1.1. Background of the Study

In today's world, technology is the most common tool to discover the world and make the life easier, and it is developing rapidly. In the last decade, the most widespread product of technology is the computers. While in 2005, the use of a computer was 17,7 percent, in 2011 it became 46,4 and probably it is above 50% today in the world. The reasons why computers are so common today are that it is a need for everyone, it is getting cheaper, and Internet is accessed easily via computer based technology. It means that every year, the number of people who uses Internet for many different purposes are increasing. According to the IWS, Turkey is the 18th country among 20 countries with the highest number of internet users.

Table 1. 1: 20 Countries with Highest Number of Internet Users

	<i>Country Region</i>	<i>Population 2014 Est</i>	<i>Internet Users Year 2000</i>	<i>Internet Users Dec 2013</i>	<i>Penetration Population</i>	<i>% Growth 2000 - 2013</i>
1	China	1.355.692.576	22.500.000	620.907.200	45,8 %	2.659,6 %
2	US	318.892.103	95.354.000	268.507.150	84,2 %	181,6 %
3	India	1.236.344.631	5.000.000	195.248.950	15,8 %	3.805,0 %
4	Brazil	202.656.788	5.000.000	109.773.650	54,2 %	2.095,5 %
5	Japan	127.103.388	47.080.000	109.626.672	86,2 %	132,9 %
6	Russia	142.470.272	3.100.000	87.476.747	61,4 %	2.721,8 %
7	Germany	80.996.685	24.000.000	69.779.160	86,2 %	190,7 %
8	Nigeria	177.155.754	200.000	67.319.186	38,0 %	33.559,6 %
9	UK	63.742.977	15.400.000	57.266.690	89,8 %	271,9 %
10	France	66.259.012	8.500.000	55.221.000	83,3 %	549,7 %
...
18	Turkey	81.619.392	2.000.000	37.748.969	46,3 %	1.787,4 %
19	Italy	61.680.122	13.200.000	36.058.199	58,5 %	173,2 %
20	Spain	47.737.941	5.387.800	35.705.960	74,8 %	562,7 %
Total World Users		7.181.858.619	360.985.492	2.802.478.934	39,0 %	676,3 %

Retrieved from: www.internetworldstats.com/top20.htm.

If it is compared to the statistics of the year 2000, when the use of internet was around only 2,95%, it can be seen that it exceeds 46% of the population in 2014 in Turkey (<http://www.tuik.gov.tr>). According to the data of TUIK, young adults who are 16-24 years old, are the most frequently Internet users who spend their 6,8 hours online in a day. Moreover, it is clear that today's university students have grown up with technological tools, so they are eager to use them both in their daily lives and in their school lives (Pinkman, 2005). They use Internet via smart phones, tablets, and computes to have fun, share their opinions, communicate, search for information, do their homework, read news, etc. After seeing this common use of technology which is a great system to teach and learn, the educators want to use it as a tool in education which is changing dramatically and significantly. Thus, they try to keep up with the new developments in the education and technology (Tuan, 2011). They have spent lots of efforts to integrate the technology into their educational system starting from natural science to social science, and of course language teaching is the most crucial one.

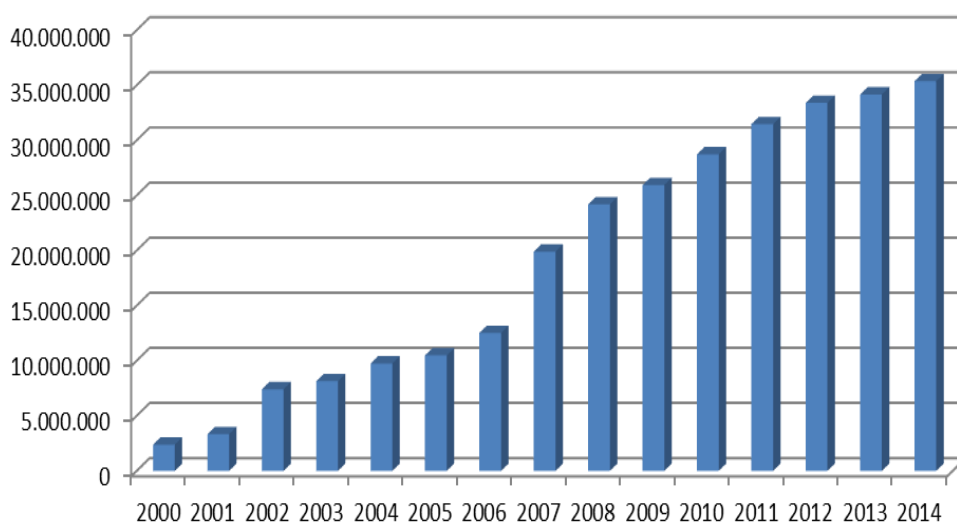


Figure 1. 1. Growing Internet Users in Turkey

Retrieved from: www.internetworldstats.com

When it comes to language learning which should be updated regularly with the newest developments in technology, it is easily seen that educators or tutors should stay in touch with these innovations and improvements because it has been found that when the learners are not eager to learn the language, traditional and conventional way of teaching English is not appealing for them (Allum, 2002). Thus, technology can help educators teach a language with up to date tools rather

than using only traditional ways which are not preferred. Moreover, pedagogy has been influenced by technology,(Bakar & Ismail, 2009), and this shows us that learners are interested in technological tools which may be easily engaging to today's students, whose daily lives may include a wide range of technologies, including instant messaging, downloading audio, video files, online games, and blogging (Roberts, Foehr, & Rideout, 2005). Thus, it is a certain fact that these tools can be the most widely used ones for learning or teaching a language.

After discovering the importance of the use of technology in language teaching, the linguists explained the term CALL which is the study of the use of computers and internet in learning and teaching languages. CALL can be stated as “the search for and study of applications on the computer in language teaching and learning” (Levy, 1997, p.1). The development of CALL helps the educators build a relationship between technology and pedagogy. CALL has rapidly been developed and shifted to Internet based language learning and teaching. It provides many kinds of opportunities for the language educators (Yadav, 2011) for example, it attracts learners' attention, students can have fun while they are working on computers, they can learn autonomously, their critical thinking skills can be developed by the help of activities, and collaborative and cooperative learning can be easier when CALL is practiced in language teaching and learning (McCabe, 1998).

Computer based language learning presents many other web 2.0 tools such as Wiki, Pinterest, Edmodo, and blogs, which can be used in the language classes. Among all of these tools and applications, blogs are one of the most promising ways to support teaching a language in recent years. In 2005, it was presented in the Fortune Magazine that blog is the first innovation among 10 technological trends (Wu, 2006) which shows the popularity of blogs over other applications and tools. To Darabi (2006, p.56), “The core principles of learning communities focus on integration of curriculum, active learning, student engagement, and student responsibility...” When the combination of these terms can be gathered together in the real life, it makes blogs a meaningful and appealing platform. Williams and Jacobs (2004, p.232) think that blogging is “the potential to be a transformational technology for teaching and learning”.

To understand the concept of the term “blog”, etymological root should be considered. Blog is a short form of two words: web and log which means a personalized web page (Yunus, Tuan & Salehi, 2013). In other words, it is “a web page that contains a running log of commentaries, multimedia, and hyperlinks” (Armstrong & Retterer, 2008, p.234). Another definition of a blog is that “a web application that displays serial entries with date and time stamps” (Thorne & Payne, 2005, p.382). In a broad sense, a blog can be described as an easily created and updated webpage for personal publishing without any knowledge of HTML (Bella, 2005; Şahin & Arslan, 2012; De Almedia Soares, 2008; Yadav, 2011). It is an easy tool to use which can be updated regularly and gives the entries in chronological order so that readers can search through database and understand the last entry easily (Blood 2000; Winer, 2003; Dyrud, Worley & Flatley, 2005; Pikman, 2005; Du & Wagner, 2007; Zhang, 2009; Bakr, 2011; Noytim , 2010).

Stanley (2006) identifies the term in his blog as blogs are like a small language teaching community in which anyone can learn what is happening. Furthermore, blogging means to write on a blog or adding an article to the blog, and a person who writes and posts the entries is called a blogger.

Moreover, blogs have several advantages. It can give the learners’ the opportunity to read authentic materials, write their thoughts, reflect what they read or think, communicate with their friends, it can develop their listening skills, they can learn new patterns, gain information about the whole world, and they can have fun while they are learning new input. Blogs can motivate the learners, and it helps them study autonomously. As it is stated in a research that they can stimulate reading and motivate learning, provide a real learning space for the learners (Yang, 2009). From an educational perspective, blogs support student interactivity, enhance learner engagement and provide collaboration and gain knowledge (Halic, Lee, Paulus & Spence, 2010). These are some of the features and benefits of using a blog.

The most important property of the blog is that blogs which are free and user-friendly are created and designed easily, and they do not require the users to know any code or FTP. It is like sending an e-mail (Richardson, 2006; Noytim, 2010) so everyone can use it without any difficulty (Du & Wagner, 2007).

Among the advantages of using blogs, skills which are used with blogs attract attention. As it is known, to be able to learn a language all of the skills including listening, writing, reading, and speaking are very important. Without even one, it is hard to say that one knows a language. Of these skills, reading has a special place because without reading and understanding, learning and using a language will be really difficult. However, from the perspective of the students, reading seems as a dull skill, so they are not eager to read anything. To prevent this and encourage the learners to read and increase their achievements, educators start to use new tools, and one of them is blogs. Different studies have been carried out to find the correlation between using blogs and learning a language or skill like writing, but there are a few studies which investigate the effectiveness of using blogs to improve reading skills, especially within Turkish context. Therefore, this topic has been debated nowadays.

As it can be understood, among the technological developments, one of the most popular inventions is blogs, and as the young adults and university students are the ones who are eager to use blogs and internet the most, and as the reading skill is very important for the learners of English in Turkey, the relationship between using blogs and the achievements of the tertiary students is examined in this study.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

In the literature, it is stated that blogs are one of the widely used educational tools, so there are many studies about using blogs, blogging, their effects on language classes and skills. In other words, there are many implementations in which the effectiveness of blogs or their results have been studied. In Turkey, blog is a new term, and it has been researched in a few studies. However, there is not enough data and results about their effectiveness especially in reading skills for the tertiary students. In most of the studies, required steps to design an appropriate blog and effective use of a blog for reading skill are not defined precisely, so the perspective and style of the educators may affect the relation between a blog and reading skill. Thus, the performance of the students in reading is not examined through well-defined techniques satisfactorily.

This study is carried out in a reading class as an additional learning tool. There are two groups taking part in the study; an experimental group and a control group. During the study, qualitative and quantitative data methods are used. To find out whether there is a relationship between using blogs and reading skills, these tools will be applied. As the results of quantitative data are announced by the administration of the school, the study is based on the reliable and objective data. Therefore, this current study makes contribution to the literature with its accurate results.

1.3. Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to develop reading skills of the university students by using an educational blog which is a medium of teaching reading skills and enhancing vocabulary knowledge of the students and to figure out the relationship between blogs and achievements of the students in reading skill. Moreover, it is aimed to learn the beliefs and perceptions of the students and taking these beliefs and data gathered from the quantitative method into consideration, a suitable blog design will be suggested. As stated in the literature (Wu, 2004) the most effective type of blogs, class blog, is applied during this experiment.

1.4. Research Questions

This study explores the impact of blogs on reading skills of prep class students and answers defined research questions based on the implication of a class blog on A2 level students in the experimental and control groups at the tertiary level in a Turkish University. Accordingly, the present study seeks to account for the research questions below:

1. Do the experimental group and control group significantly differ in the pre-test?
2. Do the experimental group and control group differ in the T-0 progress test?
3. Is there any significant difference between pretest and T-3 test scores of the experimental group?
4. Is there any significant difference between pretest and T-3 progress test scores of the control group?

5. Do the experimental group and control group differ in the T-3 progress test?
6. Is there any significant difference between pretest and T-6 progress test scores of the experimental group?
7. Is there any significant difference between pretest and T-6 progress test scores of the control group?
8. Do the experimental group and control group differ in the T-6 progress test?
9. Is there any statistically significant difference between pre-posttests scores of the experimental group?
10. Is there any statistically significant difference between pre-posttests scores of the control group?
11. Is there any statistically significant difference between experimental and control groups in terms of posttest scores?
12. Is there any statistically significant difference between experimental and control groups in terms of vocabulary scores?
13. How do the students view their own progress in reading skills before and after the study?
14. What are the attitudes of experimental group towards using
 - a. internet
 - b. blogs
 - c. the class blog to improve their reading skills?

1.5. Significance of the Study

This study will be a significant endeavor in putting forward the results of using blogs and achievements in reading skills of tertiary level students in Turkey. Moreover, this study will also be beneficial to the instructors at universities about how to set up a blog, what kinds of steps should be followed, what level should be used, what kinds of topics should be used and what kind of categories should be included inside the blog. Furthermore, this research will provide a synthesis of students' perceptions and beliefs about blogs to the literature.

1.6 Assumptions and Limitations

In the research, it is planned that there are control and experimental groups which have the same level in reading skills, and this is understood from the result of the pre-test conducted at the beginning of the term. Another assumption is that both the control group and the experimental groups' teachers follow the same curriculum given by the Curriculum and Testing Office of the University while the experimental group uses their class blog after their class hours as an extra curriculum tool.

One of the limitations of the study is that it includes two small-scale groups, each of which consists of 19 students. Normally in each class there are 23 students, but two of them have come from Libya at the end of October, so since they could not take the pre-test exam, they could not be included to the study. Moreover, two of them did not get the pre-test applied in the study, so they have used the tool, but their scores from posttest will not be included. Therefore, it may be claimed that the number of students in each group could be more than that. Another limitation is that as the instructors are given one class in the university, the control and experimental groups' teachers are different. However, as the regulation of the university, standardization is so important that the teachers teach the same topics to their classes. The difference is that experimental group uses a class blog. Additionally, the third limitation is that the research takes place in the first term of the school year which has 14 weeks. However, because the students are in A1 level at the beginning of the semester, the blog could not be used during the first six weeks to prepare the students, so the experimental group uses their class blog eight weeks in total. It could be along a term or a year. Another one is some of the students could not do all the activities on their blog saying sometimes they do not have internet access at their dormitory or home.

1.7. Keywords

The following terms are frequently used in this thesis.

Autonomous learner: They are learners who can learn by themselves.

Blog: It is short form of weblog which is a personalized web page.

CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning): is the area of technology and using this technology in second language teaching and learning.

Class blog: This is a type of blog which is run by the entire class and the tutor together.

EFL (English as a Foreign Language): English is used as a foreign language that occurs in non-English speaking countries.

Learner blog: They are blogs which can be created and used by the learners.

Reading comprehension: It is component of reading in which the learners should understand from words to paragraphs in detail.

Tutor blog: The teacher or instructor creates the blog and upload everything under his/her control for the language learners.

Web 2.0 Tools: It includes many of the tools which are used for language teaching and learning and they are easy to use for the users who can form their own content to them such as blogs, wikis, social network sites, etc.

Website: It has web pages which are served from a single web domain.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents the literature review about the studies conducted before this study. All of the components related with this topic are taken into consideration to be able to understand the study and what to do along the experiment better. First of all, the improvements in technology, ICT and its effects on education are given because the use of blog is directly about the technological developments. Then, definition of blog and its features are given in broad sense. After understanding the use of blog, its use in ELT is handled deeply, and types of blogs which are used in education are categorized, and blogs' effects on language teaching and learning are researched. When finishing the studies about blogs, reading skill, and sub-skills of reading; extensive and intensive skills, importance of vocabulary, effects of blogs on reading are dealt with. Lastly, benefits of using blogs in language teaching, and challenges that are faced in the previous studies are presented. All of these components are given with a reference to its chronological progress in history. The purpose of the study is to find the relationship between use of a blog and its effects on reading skill, so this part is very important to understand the previous studies and learn the thoughts of the researchers or educators.

2.1. Technology

Technology has been used in education for years, one of the first tools used in the class is tape players which were used to listen to the audios of the books, then overhead projectors came forward which were used to project the visuals or texts. Immediately after overhead projectors, computers were invented, which is one of the biggest inventions ever. When the first computer was invented, it was very big and expensive, but in a few years, computers became smaller, and most of the schools set up a computer lab in their schools. Then, digital projectors were invented which are more practical to use for the teachers. Later, CD players, laptops and white boards have been used, and today most of these tools are used in the classes, and there are numerous studies about their effectiveness or applications in a class.

One of the greatest products of the technology, indicated above, is computers which play an important role for the education. CALL is put forward to find and use computers in education, and educators have attempted to find out its effects on

language learning. In most of the studies, it is given that students can gain independence while dealing with computers themselves, and as they have the control, it can bring them future success in time (Capper & Copple, 1985). Moreover, Brown thinks that students achieve self-reliance, and they can become autonomous learners (Brown, 1989). In another study, it is found that computer learning environments motivate the students by maintaining educational experiences (Lindsey, 1993).

Along the period of discovering CALL's features, new questions have emerged such as how CALL activities can be used in language teaching and learning effectively, what benefits or challenges CALL has, etc. To be able to enlighten educators and teachers, Chapelle has given some recommendations which can be applied while using CALL tools or activities; the first one is language learning potential which is about both the learners and the environment that they learn the language, the second one is appropriate tasks for the learners which should be on their needs and level, the third one is meaningful tasks which can make sense in students' mind when doing the task, the fourth one is authenticity with which students should see that it is a real life, and the last ones are positive impact and practicality, students should have positive attitudes while doing computer based activities, and the instructions should be clear and the tasks should be practical (Chapelle, 2002).

After these recommendations had started to be used in the classes, studies began to be conducted. In one of these studies which was carried out to gather the teachers' beliefs and to suggest some implementations, five important elements which can be used in the class to have more useful CALL activities have been shared. These elements are said to be the goal of the teacher, the aim of the activity, complexity of the task, teacher support and to involve the learners in the process actively. These are thought as the core elements that should be taken into consideration while using CALL in the class (Warschauer & Whittaker, 2002).

After learning the core elements, other questions were appeared like whether technology enhance the students' learning, or what benefits students get if they use technology, or whether the tech improves their language skills, etc. Thus, studies have been carried out to answer these questions.

In one of the studies, researchers use discussion boards in their research and the result of which shows that technology has a significant effect on students' learning because more students took part in the discussion boards. Moreover, their grades were higher than that of not using those (Krentler & Willis-Flurry, 2005).

When it comes to the advantages of technology in education, many researchers think that it really affects teaching and learning in a positive way. One of these researchers is Wang who thinks that with technology, learners can check what they do, correct themselves, improve their four skills, publish their works, communicate easily, etc. (Wang, 2005). It is also said that "Technology integration in foreign language teaching demonstrates the shift in educational paradigms from a behavioral to a constructivist learning approach" (Wang, 2005, p.2) which is seen as one of the most important developments in education.

Moreover, computer based activities help learners to be autonomous, be motivated and increase their participation in the lessons. Also, they affect the language skills of the learners. One of the recent studies shows that computer-mediated communication activities make the learners both study individually, and promote cooperative learning in the class (Sun, 2009).

Another study is about the international students' use of technology to improve their language skills. The study includes qualitative data and case study. According to the students interviewed, the use of technology helps them improve their communication skills. Also, they think that it provides a platform in which they can also develop their listening, reading and writing skills. The interviewees informed the researcher about all the technological tools and their benefits for them such as ; using e-mails and chat programs help them improve their informal English, searching some websites, reading articles and gathering information from the Internet enhancing their vocabulary knowledge, grammar and reading skills, etc. (Akyol, 2010). Moreover, Akyol (2010) states that technology is more efficient way of teaching because new generation has grown up with technology, so they find it more interesting than the traditional ways.

Therefore, for a few decades, technology and its applications in education, especially in language teaching and learning, have been accepted as hot topics,

and they are all tried in most of the educational environments, and they are thought to be effective teaching and learning tools in language teaching.

2.2. ICT

Technological developments direct the education to new areas. One of the most important ones is Information Communication Technologies (ICT) which has gained a worldwide growth and popularity (Sarıçoban, 2013) and has captured a great interest of educators and researchers who think that it is an effective way for the learners to be engaged in the lessons and is an integral part of our lives (Öz, 2014). It gives opportunities to the learners to learn easier (Goh, Quek & Lee, 2010; Sidek & Yunus, 2011) and the use of ICT in language teaching has positive impacts on students (Işısağ, 2012).

There have been many researches about ICT and its use in the class, its effects on language skills, its impact on the teachers and the students, etc.

In one of the studies which was carried out at the University of Latvia, it is found that ICT is an inseparable tool of education in this era, and the use of ICT in education motivates the learners and their teachers to be curious about the language and the culture and to be innovative in using the tools (Kalnina & Kangro, 2007).

Şimşek (2008) states in his study that internet and the tools about it have been investigated, but little is known about their effects on reading skills. One of them was employed at Middle East Technical University, Turkey. It was about a reading course taught with ICT, and its primary aim was to make the students understand anything they read, to teach new words and to give them an opportunity to combine their background knowledge with the texts that they read in these reading lessons. The results indicate that students like to use the tools in their lessons despite the fact that they have faced some difficulties while doing the tasks, and they have positive thoughts about using them (Şimşek, 2008).

Another study was conducted with pre-service English language students in Turkey. The study is about the relationship between students' use of ICT and their self-efficacy skills. The results show that ICT helps the learners in a positive way, and it encourages the learners to develop their computer skills, to be more confident and to have more experiences. However, it is added to the results that

lack of knowledge about ICT and technical problems influenced the learners' success negatively (Bozdoğan & Özen, 2014).

As understood from the researches which have been carried out so far, ICT is gaining importance day by day and it mostly influences the learners positively.

2.3. Blogs

When the importance of technology and ICT is understood, new tools start to emerge, and these tools are applied and researched in most of the areas to see their effects in practice.

One of these tools is blogs. Blog which has been popular over the last decade is one of the Web 2.0 tools. Blog can be used both as a noun and a verb. If it is a noun, it means a web diary, webpage or journal. If it is a verb, it can be blogging which means to write on a webpage-like a platform (Wu, 2006).

Blog as a word can be described with different words. One of the definition is that "A weblog sometimes called a blog or a news page or a filter is a web page where a web logger sometimes called a blogger, or a pre-surfer 'logs' all the other webpages s/he finds interesting. The format is normally to add the newest entry at the top of the page, so that visitors can catch up by simply reading down the page until they reach a link they saw on their last visit" (Barger, 1999, p.1). Another definition could be that blog is a personal journal which has entries ordered in chronologically like a paper diary (Poling, 2005). There are numerous studies about when the term blog was found, what it is, what features it has, what benefits it has, how and where it can be used, etc.

First of all, Blood (2000) indicated in his study that blogs have existed in technology community since 1998. In 1999, the site Blogger was opened and fostered the rapid growth of blogs. Later, it is used in many areas such as business, journalism (Blood, 2000), advertising (Hall & Davison, 2007) and education (Blood, 2000; Downes, 2004; Pinkman, 2005; Poling, 2005; Ray, 2006; Wu, 2006; Ellison & Wu, 2008; Wong & Hew, 2010).

While using most of the technological tools, users need to have step by step education whereas blogs are tools which can be created and used easily. It does not require any technical background such as computer coding or knowledge about HTML (Downes, 2004; Pinkman, 2005; Huffaker, 2005; Huette, 2006;

Zhang, 2009). Moreover, the style of a blog depends on the blogger because it is characterized by the reflection of the person who uses it (Downes, 2004).

Blogs have some features such as; they can set a link with other sites and blogs, give information about the writer, get feedback from the readers, upload many materials like videos, books, magazines, pictures, audios, etc. (Ellison & Wu, 2008; Zhang, 2009). Moreover, it can publish instant messages or texts, archive the uploaded materials, show chronological order of posts, and let the readers recognize the most recent posts which have been published since they read the blog (Zhang, 2009).

Blogs are accessible tools for everyone, they are like open-source materials, but authors can restrict the readers and the areas of the blog if they want to form groups among their readers (Wong & Hew, 2010). Zhang (2009) stated that in some kinds of blogs, authors write or upload an article or passages that they want to publish, and readers can comment on them, but there are community blogs whose authors are equal, so everybody posts and writes an article, and when it comes to the reader, they can have a false name just for the blog to feel free to comment or write anything.

Moreover, Wang and Hsu (2008) indicate in their study that blog entries can be private, or they can be open to the public; they can be achieved, and blog entries can be categorized according to their section meaningfully and blogs allow everybody to be taken place in it. Additionally, Huette (2006) states that blogs have some certain features which distinguish them from standard webpages because they are easier to be set up, and they have automated templates which help the bloggers to add the data which can be entered into a simple form with title, category, uploading date, and the body. It allows to easy filtering by date, category, author, topic, title, etc. Thus, it is indicated above that blogs have these kinds of certain features which distinguish them from standard web pages.

Components of a blog should be understood clearly in order to control and use it effectively, and many researches have explained these components. According to these studies, there are nearly 10 elements, and these are; postdate which shows the time that the post is published, category in which the post is labelled, title which shows the main idea of the item , body which is the real content of the post,

track-back which shows the links of other sites, comments part that can be added by the readers, footer which is at the bottom of the text and shows how many times the post is read, when and by whom it is read, hyperlinks which can bring anything to be read like advertisements, news, and other information from other sites to the readers of the blog (Duffy & Bruns, 2006; Huette, 2006; Zhang, 2009), and blog content can be shared via subscriptions in which anyone can register to a blog and afterwards whenever the author writes anything to that blog, the reader will be sent an email about the time and content of the entry (Zhang, 2009).

There are many advantages of using blogs studied in literature. For example, according to Hsu and Wang (2010), blogs create a fast online publication which gives people an opportunity to reflect, to collect resources, to project, or to set up communication stations among individuals. In addition, the use of blogs develops social interaction in which everyone feels being a member of that community, fosters communication skills, and writes for a real audience (Hsu and Wang, 2010).

To conclude, after investigating these studies, definitions, components, features and advantages of blogs, it is understood that it could be beneficial to use blogs in education, especially in language teaching and learning.

2.4. Blogs in ELT

After seeing the rise and popularity of blogs in the late 90s and its use in most of the areas, it is thought that it can be used in language teaching and learning, and it becomes a well-known tool as a substitute for other types of the Social Networking Sites (SNSs) such as Instagram, Facebook, Friendster or Twitter (Sidek & Yunus, 2011). The use of blog is seen as a novel method of blended learning since it merges face-to-face learning with technology (Sharma & Barret, 2007).

Immediately after blogs are thought to be helpful for the learners, educators wanted to combine their curriculum with the use of blogs, but firstly it was a need to research and figure out its benefits, advantages, and challenges, so they started to discover the new world. The more blogs have been studied, the more popular they have become. They are used in every part of education, but especially in language teaching and become one of the most popular ICT tools used in language learning and teaching (Sidek & Yunus, 2011), and since 2000, when

weblogs were broadly available, a wide variety of blog users have been observed in research studies (Zhang, 2009). There are numerous reasons for this.

Firstly, teachers prefer to use blogs instead of the standard class web page because they can post everything about their class easily such as the deadlines for homework, class rules, reading passages, exercises, games, and they can motivate students to write anything to the blog. Therefore, as they provide greater flexibility, blogging tools offer a wealthier learning platform than traditional ones (Hsu & Wang, 2010). Secondly, instructors begin to connect to the Internet and search for items that are related to their courses. Thirdly, the students try to know each other better by blogging and reading blogs with respect to other students, so they can be more sociable, and they can develop their communication skills. Another reason of using blogs is that teachers may improve their students' skills by providing a real audience for writing in a blog, creating an online portfolio for their writing, providing authentic passages for reading, listening from blogs, encouraging learners to participate. Moreover, it supports cooperative and autonomous learning (Sidek & Yunus, 2011). Blogs also suggest an efficient learning platform which gives the students an opportunity to establish a strong sense of community. In addition to this, they can be more active while learning the language (Amir, Ismail & Hussin, 2011).

There are many studies which have given information and feedback about the use of blogs. Williams and Jacobs (2004), for instance, carried out a research about discovering the use of blogs as learning places in the higher education, and they figured out that students presented positive feedback on the use of blogs as learning tools, and that blogs improved interactivity among students and gave many kinds of reflective activities. Another study was taken place to show the positive and negative capacity of weblogs for language teachers, and the use of weblogs in a writing class for non-native English speakers when they started their term, and feedback gathered from the participants of the study. Findings show that although students generally had not any experience of web design, most of the students liked the assignments, and they had belief in that the blog helped them improve their English and produce good works (Ward, 2004).

After a year, Pinkman (2005) conducted a study about using blogs in the foreign language classroom to encourage learner independence. The research was an out

of class project aiming at increasing students' motivation in authentic environments. According to the quantitative and qualitative data gathered during the project, it is suggested that using blogs increases learners' interest and motivation. Also, it helps the learners improve their language skills. As a result of the study, it is stated that blogs are authentic, stimulating and communicative resources that can give a variety of purposes in language classrooms. Thus, most of the students want to go on using blogs. Moreover, Pinkman adds to her study that to understand the effects of blogs better, more research should be done.

In 2008, Tekinarslan conducted a study about blogs which was a qualitative investigation of an instructor and undergraduate students' experiences and gave details on the experiences of the teacher and an undergraduate class who used a blog in their teaching and learning setting at Abant Izzet Baysal University, Turkey. The data, collected, shows that the blog is user friendly and suitable tool for sharing studies, and they think that blog implementations contributes positively to their information searching and writing skills, despite the limited chances that most of the students can have because of the Internet access outside the university (Tekinarslan, 2008).

De Almedia Soares (2008) carried out a study in Brazil with the pre-intermediate students who used a class blog. The researcher tries to understand whether the students notice the blog as a learning tool and what blogging was like in the language teaching area. To answer these questions, Soares used the blog for three months and found out that they used the blog as a learning tool. To be able to discover the learners' thoughts and beliefs about blogs and their usages in this context, an online survey was conducted to the students and findings showed that they had positive thoughts about blogs. For instance they thought that it was fun, and it motivated them to learn a language, etc.

The employment of weblogs was analyzed as an instrument in reading skills by Izham Shah (2008) and he shows that blogs give equality to all the students in their learning process, and new topics can appear easier out of classroom (Izham Shah, 2008). This is one of the most beneficial features of blogs because not only each student can observe his/ her learning process, but they can all trust the system as they think they all are equal as well. Another study similarly suggests

that blogs foster language practice, motivation, and development of learning strategies (Sun, 2009).

The study investigating the possible value of blog use on English language learning in a university in Thailand researched students' thoughts and attitudes towards using weblogs. The findings indicate that the students perceive weblog as a tool to improve their English, in terms of skills, vocabulary, and recording their learning experience. In addition to these effects, weblog is described as a free platform in which they feel free to say something about themselves, to write for the audience, to be creative, to foster critical thinking skills, to create social interaction and good relationships between the author and readers, and to support their learning (Noytim, 2010).

A PhD project in India was presented as an investigation that focused on the students' perceptions of using blogs as a means to supply in-class language learning activities. These 42 students taken part in the study were at tertiary level of engineering departments. After students used their blog for six months, they were given a survey, and data collection reveals that despite encountering some difficulties, students have overall positive attitudes towards using blogs in their learning of English, and most of the students find blogging activities useful (Ahluwalia, Gupta & Aggarwal, 2011).

Another research was carried out about the application of practices within different levels of courses in English for academic purposes in an English medium university in Japan. Results from the questionnaire conducted over two semesters with 11 classes of 145 students demonstrates that they have positive thoughts towards blogs, and it is stated that there could be three important reasons why blogging is effective or positive for the learners. One of them is their availability over the restrictions of the traditional classrooms, the second one is the personalized, student-centered nature of the interactions that they have, and the last one is their capacity to motivate students to work autonomously. Thus, students who took part in the research have positive thoughts about using blogs (Blackstone, Spiri & Naganuma, 2007). Another study was carried out to investigate students' perceptions of using blogs for EFL learning. 49 students who were first-year university students from Southern Taiwan were divided into ten groups. Students were given tasks such as reading articles, posted in the

teacher's blog, and writing group reflections via their group blog for four weeks. After the application of the blog, students were given a survey to find out their perceptions about it. The results attest that most of the students perceive the use of blogs for EFL learning positively. They declare that it is easy to use, and they can use it in the future. It also reveals that blogs have the potential for developing reading and writing skills, so it is thought that blogs have the potential for literacy advance (Wu, 2011).

2.5. Types of Blogs

After blogs have obtained importance in education, especially in language teaching, educators have identified three types of blogs which are used for different ways and purposes. These are tutor blogs, learner blogs and class blogs (Campbell, 2003).

2.5.1 Tutor Blogs

In this type of blog, the organization and management of the blog are governed by the trainer who creates and sets up a blog in which students can read passages daily since learners sometimes get bored while they are reading passages in the class, but they can prefer online one as their instructions are easier, and it can be used for the revision of vocabulary; new words and definitions can be provided, clarification can be made on the blog if the learner has a question, they can easily ask it to the tutor (Bakr, 2011), and the tutor can give other websites or links which are selected by the instructor to the learners to check if they can be used for improving one of their skills (Nadzrah & Kemboja, 2009). This type of blog can be used as after class activity to make students take part in online communication, improve their reading skill or learn new words. Besides, it can help the learners to find the materials of that course or their homework online easily. Apart from these, Campbell (2003) identified the tutor blog as a main source for self-study and claimed that there can be permanent links for the learners via which they can practice their reading or language day by day.

Considering all these features of tutor blogs, it is obvious that they are like a personal library where they can find books for spare time or training, which encourage the learners to become self-sufficient or autonomous learners (Soares, 2008; Bakr, 2011). On the other hand, Soares (2008) argues that the tutor blog

usually restricts the learners from writing comments on the topics which are posted by the tutor.

2.5.2 Learner Blogs

In this type of blog, learners create their own blog and they can use it alone or with a group of students or even with their class (Bakr, 2011). As there are more than one blog, it can be difficult to arrange and follow (Ozkan, 2011). Students generally prefer learner blogs to improve their writing skill because they can write whatever they want without restrictions, and then they can get feedback about what they have written from their peers in this platform.

The learner can use the learner blog as an online journal in which learners reflect their thoughts, and keep them as a portfolio. The good thing here is that when they post, the others instantly read the comments, so it can be beneficial for writing and reading skill (Bakr, 2011; Ozkan, 2011). Thus, this type of blog is suitable for both reading and writing classes because learners generally feel free to write their thoughts about the topics that they are interested in, and it will be easier to post their products. In addition to this, it is good for the learners to have a real audience for themselves as a reader (Campbell, 2003; Bakr, 2011).

As a limitation of using a learner blog in the class, managing the use of it can be pointed since it is under learners' control, it could be hard to handle for the tutors to check each of the blog.

2.5.3 Class Blogs

This type of blog is set and used by the whole class in which both the tutor and the learners are engaged in the process of creating the blog and using it effectively. It can be a platform in which class related stuffs such as calendar, syllabus, homework and announcements can be done, games can be played, vocabulary activities can be performed, the teacher can share new passages about contemporary issues with the learners to read, react and reflect, create an online book club, posting student written essays or articles, building a link between the class blog with another class blog which is somewhere else in the world, academic text to improve their skills, share new sites with the learners and about their class, projects can be prepared and learners can upload the tools that they think useful,

they can share their thoughts about anything with their classmates and discussions can be arranged (Huette, 2006; Campbell, 2003).

In summary, a class blog can be used as a bulletin board because both the learners and the tutor can upload materials or notices. Additionally, a class blog is a platform in which all of the learners should use a common language, so it can be an international place (Bakar & Ismail, 2009). The class blog is a platform in which both the teacher and the learners take part in. Thus, it increases the feeling of unity (Campbell, 2003). Learners can also make collaborative reading in their blog. Soares (2008) indicates in his study that learners can practice their language in the blog, but also they can share their culture. Thus, this can be more fun for them, and it gives authentic use of target language for communication. A brief summary of types of blogs can be found below.

Table 2. 1: A Brief Summary of Types of Blogs

<i>Tutor Blog</i>	<i>Learner Blog</i>	<i>Class Blog</i>
Teacher has a blog	Each learner has a blog	Both the teacher and the whole class have a common blog
Teacher decides what to upload	Learner writes what s/he wants to write	The class decide together what to share
Reading passages, homework, revision of vocabulary, etc.	Keeping an online journal, writing whatever they want, etc.	Announcements, deadlines, homework, syllabus, reading passages, news around the world, games, puzzles, etc.
Easy to follow for the teacher	Difficult to handle for the teacher	Easy to follow for the teacher
Boring for the students	Fun for the students	Fun for the students
Limited activities	Limited activities	Enough variety in terms of the number of activities
Observable process	Observable process	Observable process

2.6. Using Blogs in Different Skills

Blogs have been used in numerous areas in education. Most of the subjects such as language lessons, history, art, etc. use a blog with students. The common aim of these subjects is to help students internalize and share the knowledge that they have learned, reflect their thoughts about each of them and work collaboratively with their friends and teachers.

In English language teaching, blogs have been used to improve many of the skills such as language teaching, writing skill, grammar, fluency, general knowledge of English as well. Especially for writing skill, it has been used a lot because in a blog

students can write their opinions freely, reflect their ideas, comment on the topics given, or write well-developed essays. Because of these kinds, researchers have been searching for blogs and their effects on writing for years, and they have declared that it is a beneficial tool to improve students' writing skills. Moreover, students have positive attitudes towards using blogs to write.

Many of the researches have been carried out to find out students' perceptions about the implementation of blogs in the writing classes. Most of the data gathered from interviews, open-ended questions, surveys and students' journals in which they reflect show that the students all like the blogging aspect of their classes for writing tasks, and it is understood that students have positive attitudes towards using blogs (Ward, 2004; Jones, 2006; Kavaliauskiene & Vaičiūniene, 2006).

Similarly, most of the researchers have found out that students are more eager to write and deal with the writing process when using ICTs than using ordinary writing techniques which have restricted audience and their interaction with others (Ellison & Wu, 2008; Hsu, Wang, & Comac, 2008; Yunus, Tuan & Salehi, 2013).

Specifically, Blackstone, Spiri and Naganuma (2007) made a research on blogs using blog activities within different levels of students in Japan. They think that it is impractical for the students to make their writings available in a hard copy format and give it to their pairs. Thus, they applied "blogging buddy" system in which students have their friends to check and help their writing. They declared that the result was great because there was reflection and interaction between students and findings from an attitudinal survey conducted with 145 students indicated that students had positive thoughts towards both blogging and the blogging buddy system as well.

Nadzrah and Kemboja (2009) made a research on some students who are taking basic English course. The students used the blog as an out-of-class activity in an authentic environment. Their findings show us that blogs decrease barriers against learning English, and they provide the students opportunities to blog freely without being judged for their mistakes.

Another study was carried out with 70 undergraduate students in Marmara University in Turkey to find out the effect of blog integrated writing instruction on students writing performance. In the study a questionnaire was made, and

students written products were examined. The findings gathered from these tools indicate that the blog improves the writing performance of the students. Moreover, the researcher adds that the students are positive towards using a blog (Şimşek, 2009).

Moreover, blogging is thought as a learning setting in which students have opportunities to learn English so that students can improve their language and their performances in writing. One of the papers focused on the use of blogs in language class and helped the students increase their writing skills. In the study mixed method research design with quantitative and qualitative approach was used with a questionnaire and blog writing. Findings of this study suggest that while students were using a blog, they could practice their language using different skills. Moreover, it is a collaborative place where students can learn from each other by sharing information. Thus, it is helpful for the students to enhance their writing skill (Amir, Ismail & Hussin, 2011).

One of the other studies was conducted by Sun (2010) in Taiwan. It was on the effects of extensive writing by comparing the writing performances of the students. A survey was used to examine participants' blogging process and their thoughts about blogging. The results of the study indicate that using blogs for writing can enhance participants' overall writing performance, and promote positive attitudes toward writing in a foreign-language, so using a blog can improve the students' writing skill.

In addition to this, a study was done to find out the effects of blogging and scaffolding on teaching narrative writing in Singapore. One group pre-posttest method was applied in the study. The results of the study attested that it helped students improve their writing abilities in terms of language use. Moreover, their posttest results indicated that there was a significant difference between their pre and posttests. The researchers think that these results could be because of the facts that blogs are motivational tools, and they give authentic place and audience to write, etc. (Wong & Hew, 2010).

Another study was conducted as a project which was used as an out-of-class activity by the students to communicate each other in an authentic environment. The aim of the study was to discover the effectiveness of blogs in improving their

ability to write constructively. After analyzing the data gathered from a questionnaire, it was seen that students had positive attitudes towards blogging. Moreover, when comparing writing on blogs with writing on paper, 73,4% of the students declare that they could write better on a blog, and they add that they could be more creative when they are blogging their opinions. The researchers conclude that this could be because of the materials that they could add to the blog such as videos, pictures and sounds. Thus, they find it as an appealing and motivating tool, because interacting with their friends through a tool like this helps them improve their critical thinking skills, (Nadzrah & Kemboja, 2009).

Montero-Fleta and Pérez-Sabater (2010) conducted a study to find out whether there is a positive effect to use a blog in writing lessons, and they used pre-posttests with two groups method, and they made a questionnaire to the learners to understand the result of using blog and its effect on their motivation. Having analyzed their data, they discovered that the students improved their writing skill while they were using blogs. In addition to this, they thought that even though the aim of the study was about writing skill, students' reading skill was improved while they were reading their friends reflections or comments extensively.

In another paper, the aim was set as an alternative use of blogs in writing lessons and its effects on the students of tertiary level. After using a blog for 12 weeks, the researcher finds that despite some difficulties or disadvantages such as accessibility and security, blogs can be used as an alternative way of writing as it has positive effects on the learners (Nepomuceno, 2011).

After discovering these positive effects of using blogs on students, a study was conducted in Turkey to analyze the effects of blog use on pre-service teachers. In the study, there were 130 third year students of language teaching department. After their lessons, participants were asked to enter their blogs and write their reflections about the lesson or topic. Then, the data was gathered through these blog entries and interviews. When analyzing the interviews, the researcher declares that there are both positive and negative thoughts about using a blog. When it was investigated to find the negative sides they thought that there could be technical problems, immediate feedback made them tired, or they felt offensive while they were writing. On the other hand they thought that they improved their writing skills a lot, and they could use computers better than before. Thus, the

researcher suggests that the positive sides of the blog are more than the negative ones, but it is important to take these negative concerns of the students into consideration and design the tool preventing them. Thus, in this current study, these negative sides were tried to be diminished (Ozkan, 2011).

Another study was carried out about integrating feedback into prospective English language teachers' writing skills, which is related to the previous pre-service teachers study. The purpose of the study was to figure out the effect of blogging and portfolio keeping on the writing skill of a group of pre-service teachers in a university in Turkey. The study took 28 weeks, and there were two groups; one of the groups used a blog and blogged their ideas on their own page and the other one, portfolio group, kept a portfolio. Both of the groups got feedback from their lecturers. After analyzing the pre and post questionnaires, it was found that both of the tools were beneficial to enhance their writing skills. Moreover, both of the groups' teachers have positive attitudes towards using a blog and portfolio (Arslan, 2014). This shows us that students want to be aware of their learning process, and shape it at their own will.

Besides writing skill, Sun (2009) thinks that blogs can create a lively setting which encourages and supports extensive language practice, and blogs have outputs in the development of learning techniques and motivation.

Apart from the use of blogs in writing skill, there are researches about its effectiveness and impact on reading and writing integrated (Akçay & Arslan, 2010), and language teachers have put forward that reading is very important in connection with writing (Ward, 2004). Students learn how to write while they are reading texts, so blogs are authentic places where students can easily observe and analyze the texts. As Huffaker (2005) states in his study, blogs are multidisciplinary tools because most of the subjects can be integrated in blogs such as reading and writing which can be used in a variety of context.

It is because while the students are writing something, they should read it as well, or they should read their friends' comments or reflections, so that they can improve their reading skill in this real life like platforms (Ward, 2004). In that sense, there are a few studies which have both writing and reading skills in it.

In one of the studies, the researchers prepared a year-long project in which students should both read and write. They differentiated the terms, and in the first term, students would read, in the next one, they would write. At the end of the study, students were asked questions, and they were evaluated which show that they all like to use the blog (Ducate & Lomicka, 2008).

2.7. Reading Skills

Reading is not just about a process of the text or decoding the exact meaning of the text. It is an "active, complex process of making meaning in which a reader draws information and understand the representation of a text's message" (McLoughlin 1995, p.29). The basic idea is that if the learners enjoy reading, they want to read more (Hendricks & Lassiter, 2009). Moreover, Paulson (2006) specifies in his study that reading for fun plays an important role in the development of reading abilities, boosting vocabulary, and language acquisition, and he concludes that reading is the only way to improve comprehension skill. Thus, it is suggested that one should read for the sake of reading which is named as pleasure reading by Paulson.

It is generally discussed that new types of strategies for reading are essential for teachers to know and develop new literacies for the educational program. With the help of these new ways or technological tools, students should have the chances to search for information from online sources, to control increased amount of information, and to form and understand items in both printed and soft formats. Moreover, instructors should track the developments happening in the technology and help the learners use these tools in the light of these necessities (Leu, Kinzer, Coiro & Cammack, 2004). In other words, it is thought that teachers should know how to guide the students' reading skills in teaching and learning.

There are some important points in reading lessons. The first one is that as the researches on reading show that learners have difficulty in reading academic journals without an explicit purpose (Finlay & Faulkner 2005), the goals of the study should be set because they are very critical to be able to make the study or learning environment valid and clear (Fujimoto, Hagel, Turner, Kattiyapornpong & Zutshi, 2011).

The second important element is inferred from the research done to increase reading comprehension and engagement through concept-oriented reading instruction. It suggests that reading-comprehension instruction should include explicit cognitive strategy instructions (Guthrie, Wigfield, Barbosa, Perencevich, Taboada, Davis, Scaffidi & Tonks, 2004), so the teachers or the materials that are used in the reading lessons should explain everything clearly so that students do not face with the difficulties.

Furthermore, reading materials should be authentic to show students the whole world and give them opportunity to see the real language. To develop this skill and use it effectively, reading authentic materials is very important which can be easily found on Internet, so learners will confront the real world and the real language (Tuan, 2011). Herrington, Oliver and Reeves (2003) give very detailed description of authenticity which has some features to have such as; it should be related with the real world, students should be given enough time to finish the task, collaboration is important to finish an authentic task, students should reflect when they finish the task, and it should be seamlessly evaluated. Assuming that the task is authentic, the teacher should give clear objectives and instructions for the learners.

McCrudden and Schraw (2010) define a term as "relevance instructions". These kinds of instructions may include advice or suggestions about what content to focus on as a part of reading, and how to solve the text about the main idea of the reading. Relevance instructions are thought to be crucial, since they navigate students' reading skills, attention and time to improve their efficiency in using text resources (McCrudden & Schraw, 2010).

Students can improve their comprehension just by reading which has two ways, so it is important to analyze these types of reading (Lee, 2013). To be able to improve reading skill, it is a need to know the types of reading. Intensive reading and extensive reading are two strategies that have been used to develop reading skill. A short review of the intensive reading and extensive reading is given below.

2.7.1. Intensive Reading (IR)

Intensive reading is thought to be as skill-based reading. Palmer (1964) explains the procedure; the readers find the text, read it intensively, and look up all of the

words from dictionary. Students read the text in detail to understand every piece of it. Similarly, intensive reading is explained as analyzing the whole text as understanding the main idea of it, deducing the inference questions, finding the unknown words, etc. (Tuan, 2011).

All these definitions showed Paran (2003) four main reasons to use intensive reading: to help learners understand written texts, to make them notice the text organization, to find out how to use and check effective reading strategies, and to foster literacy skills which are essential to generate productive expressions in the second language.

Thus, in this thesis, with extensive reading which is described below, intensive reading is used while using the blog because learners are asked to understand some of the texts in detail and answer the questions related to the passage. Texts are studied intensively to present and practice reading skills such as differentiating the main idea of a passage, figuring out pronoun referents, or finding the meaning of unknown words, understanding the comprehension questions, etc. (Bamford & Day, 1997).

2.7.2. Extensive Reading (ER)

Palmer (1964) thought that extensive reading is accepted as fast reading in which meaning of the text itself is focused not the language. Hafiz and Tudor (1989, p.4) considered extensive reading to be “the reading of large amounts of material in the second language over time for personal pleasure or interest, and without addition of productive tasks or follow up language work”. Extensive reading is generally linked with reading large amounts with the aim of getting an overall understanding of the material. Moreover, in the studies, it is seen that reading is a lot more than decoding the text; it is a process of inferring meaning from the written text (Hellekjær, 2009).

A study was carried out by Hayashi (1999) on the impacts of extensive reading on Japanese university students’ English proficiency, and it was discovered that students who are thought to read more English books had significantly greater improvement in their reading skill and vocabulary than those read less, as a result of pre-test and posttests.

Readers are more worried with the meaning of the passage than the meaning of each word inside the text (Bamford & Day, 1997). Moreover, Krashen (2004) explained the term as “free voluntary reading”. If there can be exposure to lots of texts or written passages and desire to read, then reading skill can be improved.

In extensive reading, students should be interested in the meaning of the text rather than learning each component of the text. The relationship between silent reading and pleasure reading shows that students gradually shift from a learning-to-read mode to a reading-to-learn one which is beneficial for their improvement both in vocabulary and in reading (Nation, 2005; Meng, 2009).

Tuan (2011) thinks that the purpose of extensive reading is for pleasure and information, and it has been discovered that a wide number of extensive reading programs use basic books or grade readers as general reading tools.

Some of the features for a successful extensive reading program were listed by Day and Bamford (1998):

- Students should read as much as possible.
- There should be variety in the materials.
- Students should be aware of their interest.
- The purpose should be related to fun, information and basic understanding.
- There are no practices to be completed after reading.
- Reading should be appropriate to the students' level in terms of vocabulary and grammar.
- Reading should be quite and at the student's own pace.
- Reading speed is generally faster.
- Teachers should adapt students to the goals of the program.
- The teacher should be a model for the students.

After comparing the intensive reading with the extensive reading approaches, Palmer (1964) also tells that both types of the reading are essential as the main purpose of reading is to understand any of the passages. Thus, in this research, the blog is used to teach reading that contains both intensive reading and

extensive reading. Below can be seen a brief summary of the features of both intensive and extensive reading.

Table 2. 2: A Brief Summary of Intensive – Extensive Reading

<i>INTENSIVE READING (IR)</i>	<i>EXTENSIVE READING (ER)</i>
➤ Learning new grammar, vocabulary, reading skills	➤ It is for pleasure
➤ Input + 1	➤ On the level of the learner
➤ Short passages	➤ Long passages like books
➤ Applied in the class or as homework	➤ Out of class activity
➤ Comprehension, vocabulary, referent questions	➤ Summary, reflection or discussion
➤ It is a must	➤ It is for free time activity
➤ Can be found boring	➤ It is fun.

2.8. Vocabulary Knowledge in Reading

Vocabulary is one of the most important components of reading because if the learners do not know any of the words, they cannot understand or interpret the text. When analyzing the reading lessons and materials, it is easy to recognize that all of the teachers and the books' main aim is to give the vocabulary meaningfully so that students can enhance their vocabulary knowledge. To improve their vocabulary knowledge, students should read and recognize the words inside these texts. The main component on automatic word recognition, which helps and forms the basis for higher-level processing, is getting the meaning of the information from the text and the reader's knowledge of the language (Hellekjær, 2009).

In addition, students have some difficulties in slow reading and unfamiliar words, and if the reader can guess the meaning of the word, then it is getting easier for them to understand the text (Hellekjaer, 2009; Boran, 2015).

Additionally, Day, Omura, and Hiramatsu (1991) made a research and studied with 191 high-school students and 397 Japanese university EFL students involved in silent reading for pleasure. After the treatment, it was announced that students' grades in the experimental group were significantly higher than the students in the control group (as cited in Meng, 2009). This shows that they could improve their language and enhance their vocabulary knowledge while reading. Thus, this is a

well-known fact for years that reading helps someone a lot to improve language skills.

Moreover, as it is indicated in that research, in this study, practicing vocabulary and analyzing a text are the components which have great importance in the blog. When it comes to use blogs in reading, the scholars recommend that EFL students should use blogs as they use dictionaries or the Internet to evaluate their vocabulary knowledge and convey their thoughts and feelings clearly (Al-Fadda & Al-Yahya, 2010).

2.9. Blogs in Reading Skill

The term new literacies or technology literacies describes reading skills which is necessary in an interactive multimedia environment to be able to create, evaluate, comprehend, produce and publish information via online technologies (Hsu & Wang, 2010). Moreover, the process of reading online, interacting in a community, and reflecting it online is steps of bringing life into learning (Downes, 2004). Richardson (2006) thinks that the blogging process is much closer to the learners than the traditional way of teaching, and blogs can be used to discover, learn and foster learners' skills.

Thus, after finding out the necessary items of reading skills which tends to be priority of all the skills in the English curricula at universities and identifying that blogs are tools that can be used to teach and learn English and improve learners' skills, it is a need to analyze its effects on reading skill which is the main topic of this thesis. It is investigated in this study because there are not enough researches about this context, and reading is one of the most important parts of learning a language. Moreover, first of all, blogging is about reading but more importantly it is about reading up to the readers' interest (Downes, 2004).

Nearly for two decades, the technology has gained an enormous importance and its effects are tried to be figured out as it is given in the introduction part, and one of the most popular applications of the technology is a blog whose effects are given in the previous parts.

In this part of the study, researches about using blogs to improve reading skill will be given. It is important for this study that although there have been many studies

about using blogs in education; very few of them are related to its effects on reading skill (Hsu & Wang, 2010).

According to Ward (2004) blogs help to improve reading skills through both content and form because in a blog there are many authentic materials, and learners can develop their skimming and scanning strategies in time while they are reading, and they can observe the form of the language so that they can understand the structure of the language better.

In another study done with pre-service teachers about new literacies and their application in the classroom and outside the class, it is found that pre-service teachers are ready to use these new tools because they have known how to use almost all of them (Larson, 2008). This shows two important results one of which is that there can be more researches about using new tools, and the second one of which is that students have been growing with technology anymore, so using these kinds of tools are easy for them.

Jolliffe and Harl (2008) studied the reading habits of 21 college freshmen. The study took place after seven weeks of students' participation in the lessons. It is concluded that students would feel more motivated if they used digital tools because they think that it is easier to communicate. However, it is announced by the researchers that there should be meaningful curriculum besides this.

Another study was conducted in Turkey. It is about ICT integrated reading skills course, and 30 first year students of the foreign language education (FLE) department took part in the study for four weeks. The purpose of the study was to find out students' attitudes towards the use of information and communication technologies in a reading skills course given at Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey. Data was collected via a questionnaire and an interview, and the results show that the learners have some difficulties in using them, but despite of this fact they have positive thoughts towards using ICTs in reading classes (Şimşek, 2008).

In another study, 18 students in a developmental reading class used some of the WebCT tools such as a discussion-board and chat-room to complete reading activities, and to observe their critical thinking skills. The findings suggest that students' reading employment and critical-thinking skills have been improved and

they have felt more willing, they are motivated to read more; however, it is not an exact result because there was not a control group of the study (Burgess, 2009).

Another study was carried out in a public university aiming at exploring the effectiveness of blogs to promote extra reading practice in a freshman EFL science-technology and reading program. Three blogs were used in the study, and although students had difficulty in accessing computers and internet, the results indicate that students like to use the blogs and want to use these online social platforms again. Thus, the researchers believe that this new innovative tool is well perceived by the students, and it can be used in most of the lessons, (Izquierdo & Reyes, 2009).

Moreover, the impact of using blogs on college students' reading comprehension and learning motivation was investigated. The purpose of the study is to figure out whether students' reading level will improve if they have the opportunity to use digital texts within a blog. To find out this, the researchers worked with 149 students and two instructors, and they integrated blogs in the reading course of the students. Both quantitative and qualitative data were gathered. The results present that there is no significant difference between reading achievements of both groups, but both of the groups significantly increased their reading achievement in posttest, so it shows that developmental courses are beneficial for all of the learners, and using blogs affects the learners' reading ability positively. Researchers declare that they trained the learners, but the training for the instructors was not enough because they were afraid of unfamiliarity to use a blog. Moreover, they suggest that a more successful plan and schedule should be done. Furthermore, qualitative data indicates that the blog activity increases students' sense of community and strengthens classroom rapport (Hsu & Wang, 2010).

One more study conducted about freshman students to report on their experiments of using blogs to make them do pre-class reading assignment and reflections after class. Class discussion is very important for the students in higher education to make them realize that they are learning. However, for an effective discussion, students should do pre-class readings. If they do so, they will have background information about the topic so that they can join the discussions, and it will be more beneficial for them. To encourage students to do pre-class readings, teachers have used blogs. There are five graduate students from teaching

methods course, and 90 software engineering undergraduate students took part in the study. Two blogs were used; one of them was for the ESL course, and the other for the SW (Software Engineering) engineering course. Students were asked to read an assignment about the topic as a pre-class task, then they had discussion about that topic in the class. After that students were to write their thoughts about the topic and the class hour on the blog as a reflection. To analyze the students' experience, a survey was conducted about their attitudes towards effectiveness of using blogs. Results show that students like using blogs. However, the researcher wants to indicate that the study was successful, but it is important to take some components into consideration such as class size, level of the learners, and type of reading assignments (Al-Fadda & Al-Yahya, 2010).

Another study was carried out to support students in reading academic articles in readiness for completing an essay for an assessment. The research involved many types of exercises which took two weeks. A survey was used to get the reflections and attitudes of the students. The findings show that all of the students are positive about the value of the exercise. Moreover, the study confirms the necessity of discipline-specific reading and writing tasks for students to make them construct and connect their knowledge in their university studies, and read efficiently (Fujimoto, et. al., 2011).

As it is seen other than these studies, there are some researches to find out the impact of weblogs on college students' reading-learning results, but they are not enough in quantity (Downes, 2004; Hsu & Wang, 2010).

2.10. Benefits of Blogs

When reviewing the literature about the use of blogs and their effects on the skills, nearly all of the studies indicate that it is a good tool because it has many advantages and benefits. These positive sides of using a blog have been given in the literature including why teachers and learners should use it. In this part of the study, advantages of the blogs in education will be given explicitly.

With the help of developing technological tools and internet, blogs which motivate teachers to catch up with the newest technology and ICT tools have become very popular among young people, so they try to use them in their lessons at the

university level. These tools are seen as improving the level of students and enhancing their participation (Halic, Lee, Paulus and Spense, 2010).

Some of the benefits of blogs are that they provide real communication opportunities in an authentic learning environment, give chances to the students to interact with their peers and teachers who can provide course materials, and form a new community among themselves, so they can think that they are not just with their classmates but the whole world, they can be self-confident learners when they see that they can learn better (Tuzi, 2004; Zhang, 2009; Hsu & Wang, 2010; Fadda & Yahya, 2010). Thus, it makes students become aware of what they write and what they read (Ward, 2004; Du & Wagner, 2006; Noytim, 2010). Students can create their own knowledge, they can observe their process of success, they can improve their writing skills and reduce misspelled words while they are writing, and there can be good and effective exchange between students and teachers or students and students, and they can cooperate and collaborate while they are doing something on the blog (Yang & Chen, 2006; Gupta, Ahluwalia & Aggarwal, 2011; Sidek & Yunus, 2011). They can share and express their thoughts freely (Bloch, 2004; Du and Wagner, 2006; Goldman, Cohen & Sheahan, 2008; Hsu & Wang, 2010). They can improve their writing skills and reading comprehension skills (Pinkman, 2005). On the blog, all entries and posts are archived, so it is claimed that their developmental metacognitive strategies are fostered while they are monitoring their process (Richardson, 2006). In addition to these facts, blogs facilitates meaningful texts and meaningful learning platform for the students because they can search for information, and they can find cultural hints on the blogs, so they not only learn a new language but also recognize its culture as well. Thus, they can get new perspectives with the help of their blog (Zhang, 2009).

Additionally, blogs can be used as interdisciplinary tools, so that students can discover the real world easier, and they can improve their problem solving skills, they can achieve more information naturally while doing research (Dudeney & Hockly, 2007). Apart from these benefits, there are some more which are very important components for language learning or teaching process.

2.10.1. Motivation

Over the past few decades, researchers and educators have had great interest about whether ICT tools and especially blogs motivate learners while they are learning a foreign language, and motivation has been seen vital for learning a language (Dornyei, 2003). As it is technological era, students nowadays are growing with computers and internet, so they have positive attitudes towards using them. Thus, ICT tools motivate students to learn a language (Öz, 2014).

When it comes to blogs and their benefits, motivation is one of the most important outcomes of using a blog, and as it is in ICT tools, there are numerous researches for blogs, and when the findings and results are investigated, it is easily seen that there is a common result of these studies, which is motivation. They all declare that using blogs motivate students to learn, to write, or to improve their reading skills.

Some of these studies find out that new-literacies such as using digital video composing, using blogs, writing and reading online motivate learners more than traditional ones do (Ranker,2008; Hsu & Wang, 2010).

Similarly, Nadzrah and Kemboja (2009) believe that students have good thoughts about using blogs. The students perceive blogs as an appealing and inspiring learning platform because interacting through blogs help them think critically and notice peer feedback in their writings.

In another study, researchers want to understand the motivational part of blogs and students worked in groups and post their writings. Besides the effect of blogging on writing, they find out that students have a high motivation while they are using it (Fleta & Sabater, 2010).

One of the other studies aimed to find whether a blog can encourage students to read as a pre-post class activity, and the findings indicate that the use of blogs is successful in encouraging and motivating students to do readings before class and help them be prepared for the discussions in class (Fadda& Yahya, 2010).

A few more studies examining the use of blogs to encourage to increase learners' motivation figure out and put forward similar results; they have found out that blogs motivate learners to read, write and learn better (Stapleton, 2005; Blackstone, Spiri & Naganuma, 2007; Ellison & Wu, 2008; Sun, 2009; Hsu& Wang, 2010;

Kızıl& Arslan,2013; Kashani, Mahmud & Kalajahi, 2013) because students want to make an impact on their readers with their thoughts or reflections, and they feel emotionally connected and be happy.

Moreover, they feel like intellectual explorers (Zhang, 2009) because they can find whatever they want on their blog, and they have the feeling of learning while they are reading, so they can explore the world. They have found these results because according to the teachers, students who are using blogs have stronger sense of community (Hsu & Wang, 2010), and build a better relationship with their peers because they share their opinions freely, so their motivation is getting higher.

As it is given in one of the studies, a student who was interviewed said “Once or twice a week I check my blog and then other students write comments for me, my motivation is up, usually teacher check my blog, so if I read teacher comments my teacher thought about me, my motivation up” (Pinkman, 2005, p.20).

As a result, it is understood from the studies in the literature that blogs motivate learners to learn the language, make them be eager to read more, write better, and present them opportunity to enhance their vocabulary knowledge.

2.10.2. Autonomous Learning

Language learning can be manageable both interactively and with the help of self-study. There are some tools such as Facebook, Instagram, Edmodo and Flickr etc. in which the students can interact with their peers and improve their language skills, while educational materials such as practice books, Wikipedia and reading websites etc. help the students study alone. However blogs presents a platform in which learners can interact with their peers and teachers, and learn from each other or improve their skills. In addition to this, blogs give them opportunities to study alone. They can read intensively or extensively, or they can write a reflection, practice from listening activities, do exercises, observe their language learning process, etc. When the researchers have started to search the effects and benefits of the blogs, they have noticed many features including being autonomous learners. Thus, there are several studies whose results showed that autonomy can be ensured by using blogs.

Sun (2009) presented in his study that using blog can foster students to develop their own strategies about how to learn the language. Other studies also show that independence and autonomy of the learners are increased and promoted while they are using blogs by learner centered approach which encourages students to read and write more so that they can improve their language skills and they can have more control over their own learning (Ward, 2004; Pinkman, 2005; Blackstone, Spiri & Naganuma, 2007; Zhang, 2009; Amir, Ismail & Hussin, 2011; Noytim, 2010; Yadav, 2011; Gupta, Ahluwalia & Aggarwal, 2011; Ozkan, 2011).

2.10.3. Critical Thinking Skills

One of the other benefits of using a blog for improving skills or learning a language is critical thinking skill which is one of the most crucial elements of the sub-skills. As the learners see many different sources and as there are multiple-thoughts that can be seen on the blogs, the fallibility level of the students force their critical thinking skills so that they can foster themselves (Ward, 2004).

Durrant & Green (2000) put forward 3D model which is a need to observe in all of the studies according to them. The first D is operational dimension which is about operational elements of language, computers and network technology, the second one is cultural dimension which is about the use of technologies in a meaningful context, and the last one is the critical dimension which is about fostering critical thinking skills of the students. These dimensions are important to make a study which is about new technological literacies and ICT tools meaningful. Because the application of this model is applicable and possible in using blogs, another benefit of using blogs is critical thinking skills.

In addition to it, students see different kinds of passages on a blog, they learn to look at these topics from a different point of view, they share their thoughts and reflect their opinions, interact with others, evaluate what they read and write and link the resources that they read all of which foster their thinking skills (Zhang, 2009).

There are many studies in which the researchers declare that blogs help learners to foster their critical thinking skills, take creative risks, read and analyze complicated language and produce an output. Thus, they think that blogs give

opportunity to the students to improve their critical thinking skills (Duffy & Bruns, 2006; Ellison & Wu, 2008; Noytim, 2010; Kashani, Mahmud & Kalajahi, 2013).

Specifically, in one of these studies which lasted four months and aimed to enhance critical thinking and engagement of reading students by using WebCT, it has been found that students enhance not only their critical thinking but their reading skills as well (Burgess, 2009). Thus, it can be judged both from the previous studies and this study, using blogs for educational purposes can foster and develop critical thinking skills of the students.

2.10.4. Reflection

Among all these benefits of using blogs, reflection can be one of the most important ones. Reflection means to record experience and convey thoughts, then revisit them and revise (Zhang, 2009). There are many ways to encourage learners to reflect. One of them is using Interpersonal Process Recall; the others can be group reflection, journal writing, keeping diary, etc. Among these tools, journal writing is an element of weblog (Pinkman, 2005).

Weblogs are important to make the students reflect on a topic easily because in the class they cannot want to talk or write something, or they withdraw themselves and do not share their thoughts. Even with a topic which is directly related to them which can be fun to talk, they go silent. However, on the blogs, they feel free to write because they are not face to face with their friends and teachers, and they think the platform as a safe place (Sidek & Yunus, 2011). That's why they think that they can write better. Therefore, blogs help the learners reflect their ideas, which have been found by most of the studies.

A study was carried out to enhance students' perceived learning (Halic, Lee, Paulus & Spence, 2010). Students in an undergraduate nutrition course were had to be involved in blog conversations over the course of the term to foster reflection. The participants reported that their blog experience was good and improved their language learning, so it can be inferred that students can reflect their ideas easily, and they find it useful.

Therefore, most of the studies have indicated that blogs help learners reflect their ideas which are seen very important because it is a part of self-evaluation. Additionally, blogs are raising awareness for the students because they can vividly

see both their weaknesses and strengths while they are writing or they may discover something about themselves while they are reading so that they can reflect better as they personalized them (Huetter, 2006; Zhang, 2009; Hourigan & Murray, 2010; Ozkan, 2011; Sidek & Yunus, 2011). Table 2. 3 below shows a short summary of benefits of using blogs.

Table 2. 3: Summary of the Benefits of Using Blogs

<i>Why To Use a Blog?</i>	
1	It is popular among university students.
2	It is easy to use.
3	No need to know computer coding.
4	It is easy to access.
5	It is free.
6	It provides authentic materials to read.
7	There is an authentic environment to share your materials or ideas.
8	It improves students' use of language.
9	It improves students reading skills.
10	It helps students write better.
11	Students can see their products.
12	It motivates the students to learn a language.
13	It fosters critical thinking skills of the students.
14	It gives the students opportunity to study alone.
15	It makes the students reflect their thoughts.
16	It lets the students observe their own process.

2.11. Challenges of Blogs

Although there are many benefits and advantages of using blogs in language classes and for reading skill, in some of the studies, researchers, educators and students state that there are some challenges encountered while using blogs in language classes.

One of the challenges is that there are thousands of blogs which have many passages in them, but normally, blogs should be prepared by the professionals so that they can be used for education, otherwise, if everyone opens and writes a blog, this cannot be beneficial for the readers. Moreover, the level of the passages should be decided just by the professionals, so that the readers can improve themselves (Wrede, 2003).

Additionally, students think that they have limited time for doing an activity because they say in the interviews that they use blogs as an out-of-class activity,

so it can be an overload for them. When the teacher gives very long passages to the learners, they can be bored, and they will not want to spend that much time for reading them (J. Wu & L. Wu, 2011). In addition to this, some of the students think the level of the activities or reading passages are above their capability. Because of it, they could not do them or they have difficulty in doing the tasks. To solve this problem, if the teacher can adjust the passages to their level of English, then it can foster students to read willingly. Moreover, a few of them say they cannot notice the presence of the teacher in the blog and while this discourages some of them to do something without a guide, it can affect some of them in a positive way because they could feel free or relaxed without an authority (Al-Fadda & Al-Yahya, 2010).

Another difficulty is put forward by Armstrong & Retterer (2008) about the platform itself. They think that blogs should be secure and appropriate for the privacy issues, and it should be affordable. They add that even if it does not cost a lot, the person who would pay it is another issue. After their declaration, many blog sites were set up most of which have manageable privacy settings and are free.

One another challenge is about immediate feedback given by the teacher. The participants or students need an explicit direction and immediate feedback. This causes a difficulty for the teacher because every student has the same right, and if they write or ask something, the teacher should answer to make everything clear. This is a disadvantage of all the ICT tools because all of them lack face-to-face interactivity, so everything should be given as in written form, and it can take time for the teachers (Hourigan and Murray, 2010; Ozkan, 2011). However, to be able to solve this problem, some precautions can be taken such as giving oral feedback or giving an extra session about general mistakes.

Lack of objectivity can be another theme for the teacher because teachers generally do not want to offend the presenter, so they try to explain the mistakes in a general way, and students cannot comment on their peers' entries objectively not to offend them (Ozkan, 2011).

These are the challenges that can be faced with while using a blog with the students, but nearly all of them have some solutions. Therefore, when the

literature is reviewed, it is easy to have enough knowledge about blogs so that teachers can prevent most of the problems by taking precautions beforehand.

2.12. Conclusion

Throughout the second chapter of this study, the literature has been reviewed to explore the components of the study. First of all, technology and ICT tools have been given shortly. Then blogs and their features are described. After that, studies about blogs in ELT are searched and the effects of blogs on skills, reading skill and vocabulary as a sub-skill are the topics given in the literature. While reviewing the literature, it is aimed to give every component a detailed view to be able to understand the study better. The use of blogs and their effects on students and language teaching and learning are given weight since the main aim of the study is to discover whether there is an impact of the blogs on reading skill. Understanding the use of blogs throughout the time helps the research draw its way easier.

3. METHODOLOY

This chapter aims to present the methodology of the research applied throughout the study. It primarily introduces the design of the study which helps to draw an overall outline, and the study itself which shows the procedure of the experiment week by week. Then participants of the study are investigated, and instruments which are collected through both qualitative and quantitative tools in the study are described. Lastly, materials used along the experiment are given.

3.1. Research Design

The current study examines if there is a relationship between using blogs and achievements of the students in reading skill at tertiary level at a private university in Turkey. The study was conducted in the fall period of 2014-2015. In the study, two groups, random selection, Pre-test/ Posttest design was used. In addition to the quantitative data collection, qualitative one was also used. A flow-chart of the design of the study can be seen in Figure 3. 1.

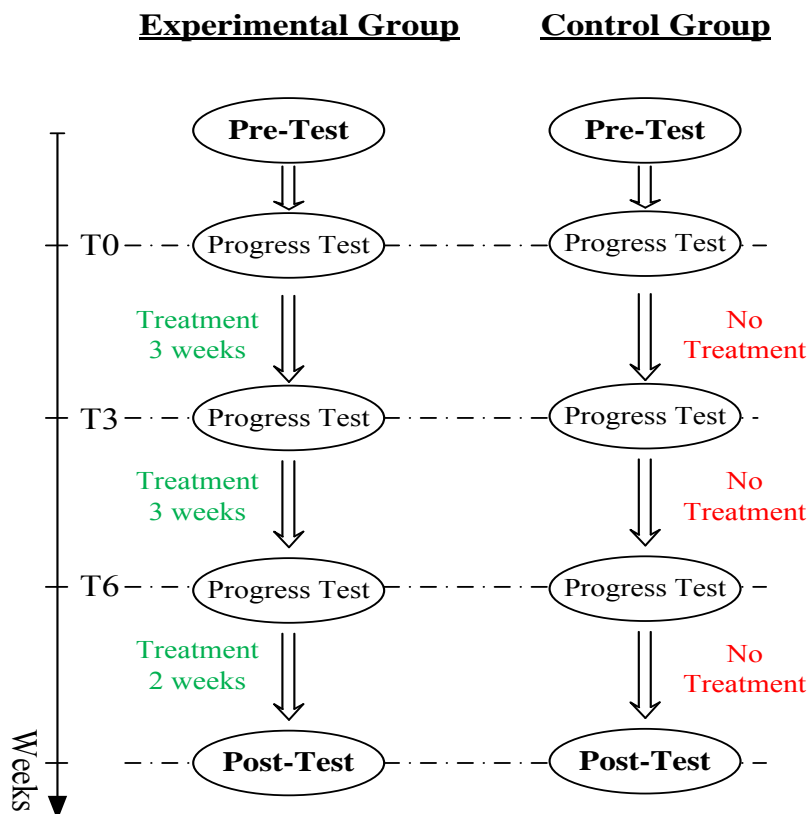


Figure 3. 1. Design of the Research for Experimental and Control Groups

3.2. Participants

The participants of the study were preparatory students of a university in Turkey. The research was conducted with two groups; an experimental and a control group. The class which took the treatment had 23 students in the first term. However, two of the students could not take the pre-test and two of them are foreigners; one from Libya, the other one is from Congo, and because they started the term late, they used the blog, but they were not included in the study as they did not have pre-test scores. Thus, 19 students (female: 6, male: 13) were included in the study. Likewise, the control group has 23 students and two of them are foreigners who started the prep-school very late and two of them could not take both the pre and posttests, so there are 19 students (female: 5, male: 14) in the control group. Therefore, in total 38 students were included in the study. Additionally, all of the students from the experimental group used the blog, and all of the students took the progress tests, so they were included for these progress tests when comparing their level with the control group. Thus, there are 46 students who got the T-3, and T-6 reading tests. The students taken part in this study are from the departments of computer engineering, electric and electronic engineering, aviation, business, management, etc.

The students in both of the groups have nearly the same background, they are at the same age range (18-21), and they are all at the same level of English, A1 at the beginning of the term. According to the result of pre-test which was given as a preliminary exam to 700 students at the beginning of the term, the experimental group and the control group had the same scores which will be analyzed in the next chapter.

Both of the groups had 30 hours of English, six hours a day every week. They had 15 hours main course, and each skill take five hours every week. The experiment took place as an out-of-school activity, so they did not miss any of their classes during the study.

3.3. Instruments

The data in this study was collected by a pre-test, T-0 progress test, T-3 progress test, T-6 progress test and a posttest all of which are reading exams. Moreover, a

questionnaire was conducted, and an interview was made. These instruments are described in this section in detail.

The pretest, T-0, T-3, T-6 tests and posttest have been analyzed by independent-samples t-test in comparing the results of both the experimental and the control group in reading skill and paired-samples t-test in comparing the results of the achievement of the students inside their group in SPSS Statistics 20[®]. The questionnaire was analyzed by the help of SPSS using the mean scores of the items.

3.3.1. Pre-Test/ Post Test

Pre-posttests used in this study are the same tests. Pre-test was administered at the beginning of the term, and posttest was given after the use of the blog. The test was prepared by the Testing Office of the institution professionally and has eight passages with 40 multiple choice questions.

The testers who are working in the institution declared that the test was conducted several times to see its reliability and validity. In 2013-2014 academic year, the testers administered the test to 500 students as a piloting, and in 2014-2015 academic year the same test was given to 654 students to be able to form the classes. The reliability of the test was analyzed by using SPSS, and it is found that the test has high reliability ($r=.85$). Thus, this reading test was taken from the administrative board and administered as a posttest to the students after the treatment.

Moreover, for the validity of the test, the test was checked by both a group of testers who are working in the institution and a professional, supervisor of this study, and they all thought that the test is valid for the aim of the test. Additionally, the institution informs that if the students cannot take 70 from that exam then they are not capable of using the language, so they should attend the prep class. If they pass the exam though, then they can take the proficiency exam from which they should get at least 60 points to be able to pass the prep class education and start to the department courses. Moreover, the administration of the institution informed that they could not publish the test as they would use it next year again.

3.3.2. Progress Tests

Progress tests are used in the study in certain periods to check the improvements of the learners in the reading skill. Totally, there are three reading progress tests in the study which are named T-0, T-3 and T-6 all of which are reading exams. They are named by using T in front of them which shows the time that they are applied. Thus, T-0 means that it is a reading progress test which was given to the students before the treatment, T-3 is a reading progress test which was administered in the third week of the study, and lastly T-6 is a reading progress test which was carried out in the sixth week of the treatment. All of these exams were carried out by the school administration and testing office, and the results were declared by them as well. As it was done to the pre-posttest, reliability was sought in the progress tests. T-0, T-3 and T-6 progress tests' reliability levels are shown respectively ,81 ; ,68 ; ,71. Thus, it is seen that all of the progress tests are reliable. For the validity of the tests, professionals were asked to check the tests, and they informed the researcher that the tests are valid for the aim of the exams.

T-0 progress test was carried out the day before the study was started to be conducted on first of November, so it is not in the timeline of the process. It can be called as a controller pre- test because it checks the results of both the experimental and control group to observe if they are still at the same level of English. The exam questions were included multiple choice questions with the aim of finding main idea, understanding the stated questions, finding the referents, guessing the unknown words, etc.

T-3 progress test was conducted on the third week of the study on 20th of November which has the same specifications as in the other tests. The aim of the researcher in that test is to observe the difference between the experimental and control group to be able to understand the effects of the use of class blog with the experimental group.

T-6 progress test was applied on the sixth week of the study on 11th of December. The aim of the researcher is to find the difference between the experimental and control group to understand whether the use of blog is beneficial for the experimental group or not. All of these exams will be analyzed and commented in the next chapter in detail.

3.3.3. The Questionnaire

The questionnaire was administered to the experimental group (n= 18) after they finished using the blog, and they were kindly asked to fill the survey about the blog that they used, and clear instructions were given. The survey had five parts and 50 items in it (Appendix 27). The parts contain questions about Background Information, Student's Attitudes towards the Reading Skills, Student's Internet Use, Attitudes towards the use of blogs, and Attitudes towards the use of the class blog that they used. In the background part, the researcher wants to learn the department, gender, age and experience in learning English of the students. In the second part, the main aim is to analyze the level of the students before they started to use the blog and after the experiment. In that part of the survey, the statements are taken from CEFR to decide the level of the students. In the third part, which is about use of internet, there are eight questions and the researcher wants to decide on how many hours the learners spend their time online, use their computers, and for what they use these tools. In this part of the questionnaire, there are items which are about activities the students do. In the fourth part, students' general attitudes towards blogs are aimed to be taken, and there are 10 questions. In the last part of the questionnaire, there are 22 questions and students are asked to answer the questions about the class blog that they used. The students could answer the question from five options which are Always, Often, Sometimes, Seldom and Never for the C part of the questionnaire, and they can mark Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree for the D and E parts of the questionnaire. To evaluate if the items formed a reliable scale, the reliability coefficients for each set of parts was calculated via the Cronbach's alpha. The results in Table 3.1 below showed that for all the items in the D part of the questionnaire, the Cronbach's Alpha is ,854 which shows that the items are reliable in that part, and E part of the questionnaire has 22 items and the Cronbach's Alpha which is ,804 shows that the statements in this part are also reliable. As the first three sections are charts and general knowledge about the students, their reliability depends on the students' declarations. Then, the results of the questionnaire are analyzed via SPSS in the fourth chapter.

Table 3. 1: Reliability of the Data Based on Parts

	<i>N of Items</i>	<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>
Part-D: Attitudes towards the use of Blogs	10	,854
Part-E: Attitudes towards the use of Class blogs	22	,804

3.3.4. Interviews

In addition to the questionnaire, five of the students were selected randomly from the experimental group, and they were interviewed after the application of blog to get the attitudes of the learners. First of all, the researcher announced that there would be an interview and most of the students wanted to join and talk about their experience, and after they were randomly selected by the researcher, they were invited to a class and kindly got the permission to record their speech. They all agreed. The students were divided into two groups. While in the first group there are two students, in the other one there are three students according to their wish. They were asked 15 questions about their experience (Appendix 28). Their thoughts are taken into consideration in the discussion part of the study.

3.4. Materials Used in the Study

The study primarily aims at improving reading skills of the students and keeping their vocabulary knowledge alive and teaching new words. To achieve this goal, the researcher designed a blog and upload materials for the learners. The materials are passages and questions below them, news taken from the news broadcasts, books, words, their descriptions and pictures. As the learners have academic reading passages like TOEFL format reading passages in the exams, it is aimed to improve the students' reading skills for their tests. Thus, the passages of the skills which are appropriate for the level of the students, A2, are selected from the Longman Preparatory Course TOEFL Tests book. The researcher selects and prepares all of the words and designs the words category without using a course book. For the news, authenticity is very important, so the passages are chosen in coherence with the students' level from the newspapers or magazines. While selecting these passages, students' interests are taken into consideration so that they can like reading extensively. For the books section, the researcher gives a list of books which was given to all of the instructors in the institution for the learners, and the learners select seven books from them and upload them to their

class blog. Moreover, students are given a chance to upload materials, website links, books; passages after the instructor check them. Thus, the learners are observed to have fun while dealing with the blog because they see the blog as their own product.

3.5. The Study

The study was eight-week process in which both the experimental and the control group have the same curriculum, but the experimental group used a class blog as an out-of-class activity for the aim of improving their reading skills, learning the strategies of reading and acquiring new words. The experiment took place in the 2014-2015 academic year in a private university in Turkey. The term in that academic year started in September when the students first took the preliminary exam which is the pre-test of this study. Then, the administration of the school was declared the results of this test. According to the result, students who took below 70 failed and started to attend the prep class.

At that period there were 31 classes at the university. As the standardization among the classes are very important in the institution, the administration board formed the groups from the average of the students' exam results, so each class had the same average according to the preliminary exam. Before the study started, the researcher wanted permission from the administration of the university (Appendix 2). Then the participants in the experimental group who were informed about the research were selected randomly by the administration of the school among 31 classes, and the participants in the control group was selected randomly by the researcher among these classes. Both the control and experimental groups started the term with the same level of English, A1 according to CEFR. Then during the first six weeks, both of the groups followed the same syllabus and used the same materials to improve students' English level to be able to conduct the study. To verify the results gathered from the pre-test, the researcher carried out one more exam which was given to all of the students by the testing office of the institution on the 31st of October. After gathering and confirming the results, the experiment was started on the third of November and ended on December 24th.

The experimental group started to use a class blog which was designed by the researcher as an extra out of class activity done to improve reading skills while the control group went on the reading lessons with the same tools that they have used.

The name of the blog is TTemir Reading Skills with A18, the class code of the experimental group, and the web address of the blog is <http://ttemir.edublogs.org/>. In the blog there are seven sections, all of which are included on the home page seen in Figure 3. 2. Home page shows all of the sections and widgets from where anyone can see the passages that are shared or commented. Thus, home page includes the name of the blog, all of the sections used, recent comments, recent posts, passages, and date.

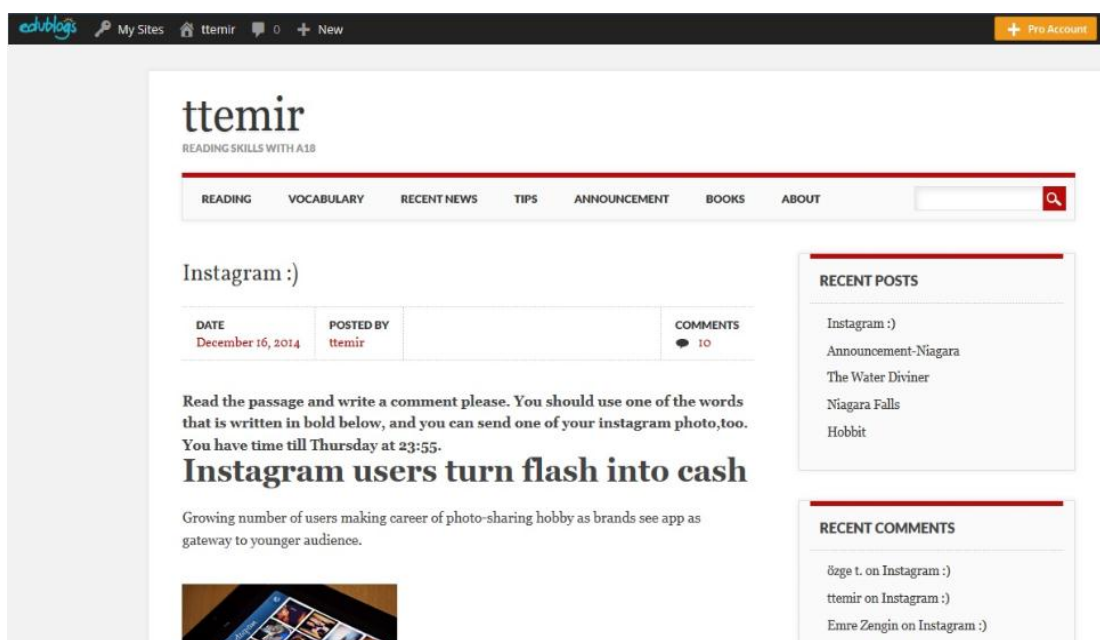


Figure 3. 2. Home Page of the Applied Blog

Each passage published is seen on the home page of the blog. Students can see the passages, the instructions and their friends' comments on that page. Moreover, when they register to the blog, the first page that they will see is the home page of the blog. Below is seen a sample passage on the home page.

The selfie experience

DATE	POSTED BY	COMMENTS
November 23, 2014	ttemir	51

Please read the passage and comment about it. What do you think about selfie? Please write **at least 5 sentences** (they can be about the new words, topic, new things that you have learned, and your opinion about selfie or passage). You have time till **Tuesday at 23:30**.



Wherever you go in the world, there is one word, and you can find it in any language, no matter what country you are in, and it has increasingly become very popular; that word is **selfie**. Over the past year, selfies have become a global **obsession** with very important political leaders such as Barack Obama, David Cameron and Helle Thorning-Schmidt. They are taking a selfie together, and famous celebrities such as Jennifer Lawrence, Meryl Streep and Brad Pitt are coming together in Ellen Degeneres' selfie to create the most 'A-List' selfie

Figure 3. 3. A Sample Reading Page from the Blog

When it comes to the parts inside the blog, it can be seen that all of them are designed according to the needs of the students. The first section is the Reading part, and this part has six skills of reading such as finding the main idea, answering the stated questions, inferring vocabulary from the context, finding pronouns, transition questions, determining the tone and purpose of the passage. In each skill, the description of the skill is given, the clues how to find the correct answer are presented taken from Longman Preparatory TOEFL Book and a sample passage with two or three questions is given to the learners to read and answer. A sample page of one of the skills is shown in Figure 3. 4.

READING	VOCABULARY
WORDS	
SKILL 1	
SKILL 2	
SKILL 3	
SKILL 4	
SKILL 5	
SKILL 6	

SKILL 1

SKILL 1: ANSWER MAIN IDEA QUESTIONS CORRECTLY

If a passage consists of only one paragraph, you should study **the beginning of this paragraph** to find the main idea. If the passage consists of more than one paragraph, you should study **the beginning of each paragraph** to determine the main idea or topic.

Figure 3. 4. Reading Skill and Sub-skills of the Blog

The second category is the Vocabulary part in which there are newly-learned words, their definitions, and pictures. For each chapter, there is a good saying by one of the famous people about the topic of that unit. This makes the students be interested in the topic and learn the sayings. Guessing the meanings of the words that the students do not know from the context is one of the reading strategies, so here it is aimed to teach the words by giving sentences and pictures together (Boran, 2015). The Figure 3. 5 shows that in each new chapter, there is a title of the unit, a saying about the topic of the unit, and there are pictures with sample sentences near them.

UNIT 7- ON VACATION

College is the longest vacation you will ever take.

Dan Indante and Karl

Marks



The nature at the camping site was amazing, so we stayed there along the week.



Because of the awful weather we had to wait at the bus stop for an hour.

Figure 3. 5. Vocabulary Category of the Blog

The next part is seen below about the Recent News in which there are that day's news around the world and the news are categorized according to their topics which are kindly asked to the learners to select since their interests are important for extensive reading.

The Water Diviner

DATE	POSTED BY	COMMENTS
December 12, 2014	ttemir	14

Russell Crowe to come to Istanbul for film premiere



The premiere will be held on Dec. 5 at the Zorlu Center PSM, and Crowe will be accompanied by Kurylenko throughout his visit to Turkey. The two will also attend a press conference along with Erdoğan and Yılmaz on the day before the screening of the film.

Figure 3. 6. Recent News Category of the Blog

The fourth category is the Announcements part in which the teacher has shared the announcements which are about the class such as announcements of homework, activities, newly shared passages, etc. The next part is Books in which the researcher shared seven books which were chosen by the learners each for a week. Each book was downloadable, so students can easily read them with their phones, tablets or computers. Moreover, all of the books are given by the testing office of the institution to all of the instructors. The last part is the About part in which there is information about the aim of the blog. In addition to these sections, there is Recent Comments part on the home page in which learners can easily see their friends' comments which are listed according to the timeline.

31 Comments

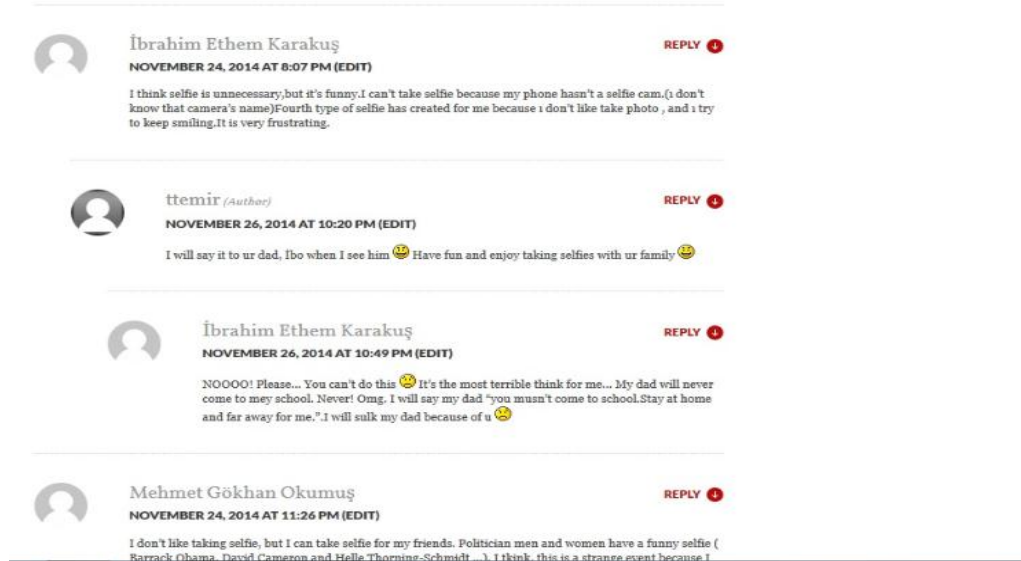


Figure 3. 7. Recent Comments Page

To illustrate the blog study, below can be found the week by week schedule of the use of blog.

Week 1:

On the third of November, this researcher started conducting the study. On that first day, students encountered with their class blog. First of all, the researcher explained the study and its aim to the learners and asked if there was anyone who does not want to take part in the study. All of the students (n=19) who took the pre-test were volunteer to use the blog. After students agreed with the study, the researcher taught them how to register for the blog. Moreover, the parts of the blog were explained, and the students were asked if there were any other parts that they wanted to add to their blog. As it is a class blog, all the members of the blog were given chances to add anything they want because they all had the same opportunity to use it.

The researcher announced one important rule that the students should follow. It was about the deadlines of the tasks. It was said that there would be many tasks all of which would be completed at home after class, and they all had deadlines to finish so that the researcher could give the other tasks, and they all could comment on the passages or learned the answers of the text at the same time. They all agreed with that rule. As it was important for the study to be free for choosing topics, students were asked to say some topics about which they wanted

to read and comment. The researcher found out that they all wanted to learn something around the world, sports, music, fashion, etc., so these topics have been included in the experiment.

Thus, as the first week activity, the researcher uploaded a passage which was about football (Appendix 3). Because it was the first week and students tried to accommodate the use of the blog, the researcher just gave them one passage and wanted them to read, comment, and find the new words from the passage and learn them.

Moreover, apart from the passage published in the first week, the vocabulary items for that week were presented to the students. As it was the seventh week of the school, learners have taught the first five units of their course book, so all the target words were given with the title of the book, a saying about the topic, their definitions and pictures (Appendix 4).

Week 2:

In the second week of the study, 10-16 November 2014, the researcher uploaded seven passages two of which are related with the reading skills. On the 10th of November, news about a music group, Simply Red, was uploaded to the Music category of the blog (Appendix 5). It was observed in the class that students started to talk about the group because they probably did not know the group, and they informed the teacher that they would listen to their songs once then they would share their opinions. On the same day, a passage about electricity which has seven questions with it was published (Appendix 6). The students had difficulty in answering the questions because they did not know how to answer them. In the curriculum the reading skills would begin to be given via the reading course book and the additional TOEFL booklet. Thus, the researcher helped the learners read and find the correct answers showing some tips. On the 12th and 13th of November, two passages about Steven Jobs and Tech-Applications respectively were presented to the students, and they were just asked to read the texts, recognize the new words and comment about them (Appendix 7). On the same day of the text about Steven Jobs, students were to read another passage about Central Park which has seven comprehension questions such as finding the main idea, referents, guessing the unknown words, etc. (Appendix 8). Students were

given three days to read these three passages. On those days, students want to have clues about how to answer the questions, so the researcher formed a category as Skills under the Reading category in which there are six skills. Then on 15th of November the first skill, finding the main idea of the passage, was introduced to the students (Appendix 9). They could see the definition of it; some clues how to understand it and a short sample with two questions to assess them if they understood it and whether they could apply what they learned. On the same day, students were given another passage which is about Jazz with seven questions (Appendix 10).

On the last day of the second week, students were announced to find the second skill which is about answering stated questions, on the reading part of the blog. Additionally, there is a short passage which is about hurricanes with two questions assessing this skill (Appendix 11).

Week 3:

The third week of the study took place on 17-23 November of 2014. Along that period students were given five more passages. On the 17th of November, a passage about ESA which was one of the most popular topics of that day was uploaded, and they were asked to read the text, write a short reflection and check out the unknown words (Appendix 12). The next day, the third reading skill which is about finding pronoun referents from the text was given to the learners with the passage named of Mardi Gras (Appendix 13). Students were given three days to read and answer the questions. On the 22nd of November, another skill which about the transition words was uploaded (Appendix 14). In addition to these, to be able to give the news, the researcher uploaded recent news to the blog. It was about Turkish Football Team (Appendix 15).

As the last passage of the third week, the researcher uploaded a passage about Selfie which was fun for the students because their selfie photo was placed above the text (Appendix 16). Moreover, the students were asked to write a reflection about the topic. This was the topic which got the highest comment number among all the passages on the blog. It was thought that as the students saw their own photo on their blog and as the topic was the most popular topic of that day, they all

liked and wanted to talk about it because it was informed by their teachers that they all showed that page to their friends who were in other classes.

At this week, students were given a list of leveled books which was prepared by the Test Office of the institution and given to all the instructors, and the students were asked to choose the ones that they would like to read. When they submitted the list to the researcher, seven books were uploaded inside a different category called "Books". They were informed to read the books for fun, and the researcher gave information about the effects of extensive reading to the students, and it was observed that most of them read some of the books because they talked about the books, asked questions to their teachers, and summarized them.

The third week was very important for the researcher because the learners were given a progress test by the testing office of the institution. Thus, it was possible to see the progress of the study and achievements of the students from that progress test.

Week 4:

Along the fourth week which was on 24-30 of November, the researcher shared four passages. The first one was published on 24th of November. It was the fifth skill of the reading part, and it was about finding unknown words. For practicing, a text named Teddy Bear was given to the students with three questions (Appendix 18). After that a passage about the Talent Show in Britain which was one of the most widespread TV show on those days was presented (Appendix 19). It was announced for the students that they would just read the text and comment about them. Then the researcher gave the last skill which is finding the answers of tone and purpose questions (Appendix 20). The same way was applied to present, so the learners read the text and answer three questions which are all related with the skill. After that skill, the researcher uploaded one of the recent news around the world which is about basketball and wanted the students to read and comment about it.

Week 5:

In the fifth week of the study, the researcher aimed to give the students texts to practice their reading and to learn the sixth skill which is about finding tone,

purpose and course. Thus, on the first day of the fifth week, they were given skill 6 with its explanation and sample passage about environmental problems (Appendix 20). On the third of December, a passage titled Rain was published with 10 questions below it and unknown words were explained (Appendix 21). After students were given three days to read and answer the questions, one more passage about rattle snakes was published again with ten questions.

Week 6:

Sixth week was the exam week for the students, so they had fewer lesson hours than the normal schedule. Thus, the researcher announced that they would have just three passages, and they could select the topics themselves. On that week the movies Hobbit and Water Diviner were started to run at the cinema, so they wanted to know something about them. Because of that, passages about the movies Hobbit and Water Diviner were provided to the students (Appendix 22).

On 12th of December, a text about Niagara was uploaded with eight questions because in the curriculum, the topic of their reading lessons was about famous places (Appendix 23). On that week, they took a T-6 exam which will be analyzed in the data discussion part.

Week 7:

On the last two weeks, students were given too much homework by the school administration because these last two weeks were the last two weeks of the first term. Thus, they should finish their online homework which took much time. They declared that they could not find time for answering questions, but they could make extensive reading, so they were given a passage about Instagram, and they were asked to read and comment about the passage (Appendix 24). Then they read one of the books which was about Sherlock Holmes, and in the class they talked about it and summarized it with the researcher.

Week 8:

This was the last week of the first term and the study. The students were asked to read the last passage of the blog and comment about it (Appendix 25), and they were informed that they should check the vocabulary part of the blog because all the words from the units they dealt with were uploaded (Appendix 26). Moreover, they read one of the books and summarized it in the class.

The last day was the day when they were given both the posttest and the questionnaire. Therefore, this eight week process ended on 24th of December.

During this eight week experiment of the study, both the experimental and the control group took the same exams. In the fourth chapter their results will be analyzed using SPSS. After quantitative data was acquired, the students were given a questionnaire and made an interview both of which will be described in the instruments part.

3.6. Conclusion

In the third chapter of the study, methodological components are explained in detail. Firstly, research design is presented. Then the study with its week by week explanations is given. After that, the information about the participants is revealed. The methods of collecting the data gathered from both quantitative and qualitative tools are explained with the instruments such as pre-test/posttest, progress tests, questionnaire and interview. Lastly, the materials used along the experiment are explained. In the next chapter, results and analyses of the data gathered from the implementations of the tools, explained, are presented.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

In this part of the study, the analysis of the data collected via pre-test which was used to determine the experimental and control group, T-0, T-3, T-6 progress tests which were used to indicate the progress of the experimental group, posttest which indicated the difference between the experimental and control groups after the treatment of using a class blog with experimental group and the questionnaire which was designed to learn the attitudes and beliefs of the students will be presented. In the study, both quantitative data which was analyzed by the help of SPSS Statistics 20[©] and qualitative data which was interpreted by the researcher were collected. Additionally, independent-samples t- test and paired samples t-test were used to analyze to see if there is a significant difference between the groups comparing their achievements in reading skill, and alpha level 0,05 was looked for the significance.

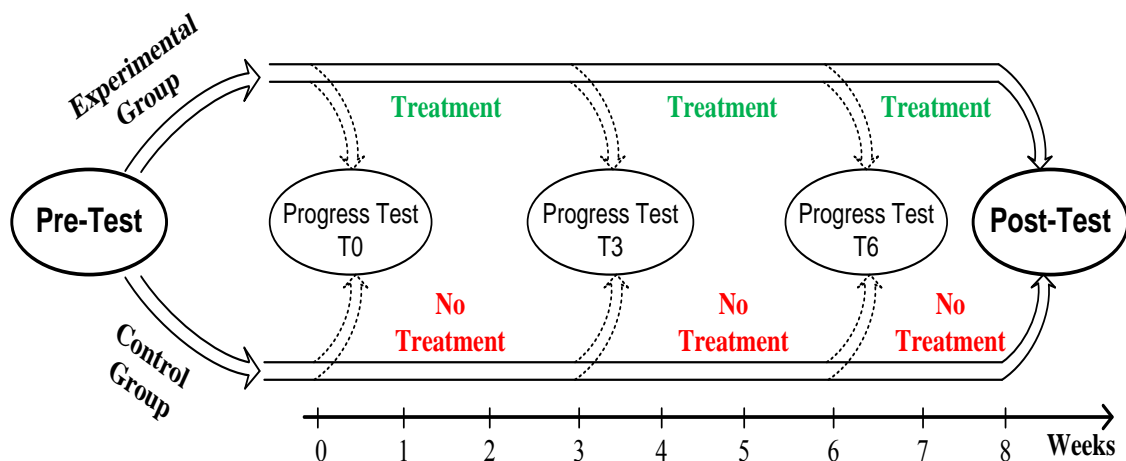


Figure 4. 1. Process of the Research for Experimental and Control Groups

4.1. Results and Discussion for Research Question 1

Research Question 1: Do the experimental group and control group significantly differ in the pre-test?

The first research question seeks to find the pre-test scores of the experimental and control groups. Experimental group is shown as EG, and control group is indicated as CG shortly in the tables. To be able to answer this question, the pre-test was applied to both of the groups. The results were analyzed by independent-

samples t-test in SPSS. The results are shown and discussed in the following tables.

Table 4. 1: Descriptive Statistics about EG and CG for Pre-Test

	<i>GROUPS</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>
PRE_TEST	EG	19	39,868	15,996	3,670
	CG	19	41,842	15,497	3,555

Table 4. 2: Independent Samples Test for Pre-Test Results

		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	<i>Mean Diff.</i>	<i>Std. Error Diff.</i>	<i>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</i>	
							<i>Lower</i>	<i>Upper</i>
PRE_TEST	Equal variances assumed	-,386	36,00	,702	-1,977	5,110	-12,337	8,389
	Equal variances not assumed	-,386	35,96	,702	-1,974	5,110	-12,339	8,389

As it can be seen from the Table 4.1 and Table 4.2, there are 19 students who took the exam in each group. The mean of the experimental group (EG) was found as 39,868 and control group's (CG) mean was 41,842. The standard deviation of the experimental group was 15,996 while control group's SD was 15,497. Thus, as it was shown in the Table4.2 there was no significant difference in the reading achievements of EG and CG before the treatment, $t(36) = -,386$; $p=,702 >,05$. Therefore, the answer of this first research question is negative because they did not significantly differ in the pre-test. This means that before the treatment which would be applied just to the experimental group, both groups were at the same level of English or have the same level in reading skills.

4.2. Results and Discussion for Research Question 2

Research Question 2: Do the experimental group and control group differ in the T-0 progress test?

T-0 which means time zero because the study did not start yet, is a progress test done to the whole school in definite times of the month. This progress test was conducted to check if the experimental and control groups' mean scores were still the same as they were in the pre-test. This would not be accepted as a pre-test but it was an exam which controls the students' level, and it was aimed to find out

the place of the classes among 31 classes in the school. The progress tests are analyzed to show the improvement and level of the classes among 31 classes in the school. The test was given to the students two days before the experiment on second of November.

Table 4. 3: Descriptive Statistics about EG and CG for Progress_Test_T-0

	<i>GROUPS</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>
PROGRESS_T-0	EG	23	69,565	24,258	5,058
	CG	22	69,546	23,900	5,096

As it can be understood from the Table 4.3, the whole class entered to the exam because the progress tests affect their averages of that term which would help them pass their classes. However, although in the progress tests the whole class was taken into consideration (n=23), in the pre and posttests 19 of them in each group (EG and CG) would be analyzed because those students took both the pre and posttests. In addition, it is important to add that all of the students used the class blog, but as the four of them did not get the pre-test, they were excluded. When looking at the mean scores of the groups, it can be seen that they had nearly the same mean scores (EG=69,565; CG=69,546). This showed the researcher that both of the groups were in the same level of English.

Table 4. 4: Independent Samples Test for Progress Test_T-0 Results

	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	<i>Mean Diff.</i>	<i>Std. Error Diff.</i>	<i>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</i>		
						<i>Lower</i>	<i>Upper</i>	
PROGRESS_T-0	Equal variances assumed	,003	43,00	,998	,0198	7,182	-14,464	14,504
	Equal variances not assumed	,003	42,96	,998	,0198	7,180	-14,460	14,450

From the Table 4.4, it can be interpreted that there was no significant difference in the reading achievements of experimental and control groups before the treatment, $t(43) = ,003$; $p = ,998 > ,05$.

Moreover, Table 4.5 showed the progress results (T-0) of the whole school. It can be understood from the table that there were 31 classes with 674 students and their mean scores were listed. It was seen that the experimental group was in the

15th row, while the control group was in the 16th row. This showed the researcher that they were very close to each other, and they were in the middle of the list, so their English level was neither too high nor too low according to the criteria of the school.

Table 4. 5: Progress Test_T-0 Results for 31 Class / 674 students

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Class Code</i>	<i>Average Score (.../100)</i>	<i>Rank</i>	<i>Class Code</i>	<i>Average Score (.../100)</i>
1	23	79,17	17	26	68,70
2	24	78,26	18	2	68,50
3	7	77,75	19	3	68,00
4	22	77,61	20	16	67,95
5	13	76,59	21	25	66,59
6	19	75,65	22	4	66,00
7	14	75,25	23	29	65,87
8	9	74,50	24	15	65,68
9	1	73,10	25	12	65,48
10	27	72,69	26	28	65,21
11	8	72,11	27	11	65,00
12	6	72,00	28	21	63,81
13	5	71,75	29	30	62,05
14	17	70,91	30	10	58,75
15	18	69,57	31	31	55,00
16	20	69,55			

4.3. Results and Discussion for Research Question 3

Research Question 3: Is there any significant difference between pretest and T-3 test scores of the experimental group?

After the T-0 progress test, the treatment in the experimental group started, so the students began to use their class blog with their instructor. Thus, T-3 progress test was a progress test done in the third week of the study. During that period of time, students dealt with 14 passages and vocabulary items from these passages and their course books. The progress tests were given to all of the classes, and T-3 progress test was also given to the whole school. The results were kindly recommended from the administration of the institution and analyzed using independent-samples t-test for both groups. Moreover, this exam was carried out to see whether the study went on well, and if there was a difference between the groups or not, so it can be thought as a trial test or check point.

When the improvement of the experimental group in T-3 was compared with their results in the pre-test, there was a significant difference in the achievements of the experimental group in reading skills (M, T-3 = 67,373, SD = 12,562) (M, Pretest = 39,868, SD = 15,996), $t(18) = 8,205$; $p = ,000 < ,05$.

Table 4. 6: Paired Samples Statistics about EG for Pre-Test and Progress_T-3 Test

		<i>Mean</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>
Pair 1	Prog_T-3	67,373	19	12,562	2,882
	Pre	39,868	19	15,996	3,670

Table 4. 7: Paired Samples Test between Pre-Test and Progress_T-3 Test for EG

		<i>Paired Differences</i>					<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
		<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>	<i>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</i>				
					<i>Lower</i>	<i>Upper</i>			
Pair 1	Prog_T-3 - Pre	27,505	14,612	3,352	20,462	34,548	8,205	18	,000

This results show that experimental group had improvement in their reading skills when it was compared with the pretest results of theirs, which was thought that the treatment can be beneficial for the experimental group. However, to be able to prove this, it was a must to investigate the results of the control group and compare both of them.

4.4. Results and Discussion for Research Question 4

Research Question 4: Is there any significant difference between pretest and T-3 test scores of the control group?

While the experimental group was using their class blog to improve their reading achievements, the control group followed their curriculum with their traditional way of learning, without using any technological tool like a blog, and they took the T-3 progress test at the same time as the experimental group did. The results showed in Table 4.8 and Table 4.9 that the control group improved their reading skill as the experimental group did in that period of time, so there was a significant difference between pre-test scores of the control group (M = 41,842, SD = 15,497) and the T-3 progress test (M = 59,995, SD = 15,863); $t(18) = 5,429$; $p = ,000 < ,05$.

Table 4. 8: Paired Samples Statistics about CG for Pre-Test and Progress_T-3 Test

		<i>Mean</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>
Pair 2	Prog_T-3	59,995	19	15,863	3,639
	Pre	41,842	19	15,497	3,555

Table 4. 9: Paired Samples Test between Pre-Test and Progress_T-3 Test for CG

		<i>Paired Differences</i>					<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
		<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>	<i>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</i>				
					<i>Lower</i>	<i>Upper</i>			
Pair 2	Prog_T-3 - Pre	18,1526	14,575	3,344	11,128	25,177	5,429	18	,000

This shows that in that period of time both of the groups had improvements in their reading scores. Then it was important to compare the results of the experimental and control groups taken from the T-3 progress test.

4.5. Results and Discussion for Research Question 5

Research Question 5: Do the experimental group and control group differ in the T-3 progress test?

After analyzing the T-3 results of the groups, it was understood that both the experimental and the control groups improved their reading skills at that period of time. Then it was aimed to analyze and find the difference between these groups.

As it can be understood from Table 4.10, mean score of the experimental group was 64,352, and the mean score of the control group was 57,387. It vividly shows that the experimental group had better exam results, and showed a difference when looking the other group's scores.

Table 4. 10: Descriptive Statistics about EG and CG for Progress Test_T-3

	<i>GROUPS</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>
PROGRESS_T-3	EG	23	64,352	14,170	2,955
	CG	23	57,387	16,043	3,345

Although a difference can be seen from these means, there was not a significant difference between the experimental and control groups $t(44) = 1,561$; $p = ,126 > ,05$. However, it can be interpreted that while the significance was ,702 in the pre-

test, it was ,126 in the T-3 progress exam. Thus, this can be thought as the use of blog in the experimental group started to be beneficial in that group, which seems good because it can show the effects of the blog. However, the time might not be enough for obtaining a certain outcome. Thus, the treatment went on for three more weeks till the T-6 progress test.

Table 4. 11: Independent Samples Test for Progress Test_T-3 Results

		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i> (2-tailed)	<i>Mean</i> <i>Diff.</i>	<i>Std. Error</i> <i>Diff.</i>	<i>95% Confidence</i> <i>Interval of the</i> <i>Difference</i>		
								<i>Lower</i>	<i>Upper</i>
PROGRESS_T-3	Equal variances assumed	1,561	44,00	,126	6,965	4,463	-2,030	15,960	

Moreover, it can be seen in the Table 4.12 that the exam was carried out to all of the students in the prep classes, and while the experimental group was in the 15th row in the T-0 progress test, it went up to the third row in that exam, and while the control group was in the 16th row, it was in the 11th row in that exam. It can be commented as there was a much greater improvement in the experimental group than the control group among the other classes in the institution, which in fact shows a success.

Table 4. 12: Progress Test_T-3 Results for 31 Class / 677 students

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Class Code</i>	<i>Average Score</i> (.../100)	<i>Rank</i>	<i>Class Code</i>	<i>Average Score</i> (.../100)
1	22	68,12	17	30	54,72
2	19	67,83	18	21	53,62
3	18	64,35	19	28	53,61
4	23	64,17	20	12	53,33
5	16	63,03	21	8	52,98
6	17	61,45	22	15	52,42
7	7	61,33	23	9	52,00
8	25	60,29	24	1	51,43
9	24	59,42	25	10	51,33
10	27	58,13	26	29	51,11
11	20	57,39	27	26	51,11
12	14	57,33	28	6	50,53
13	2	57,19	29	4	49,67
14	5	57,00	30	31	46,67
15	13	56,36	31	3	45,67
16	11	55,45			

Figure 4.2 which shows the statistics of the use of the class blog is given below. As it can be understood from the figure, there are 10 weeks but the first and last weeks are beginning and closure of the blog, so there are eight weeks left. It enlightens that the learners are very curious about using the blog, so they have used it five weeks a lot, and this lets them improve themselves a lot. The difference between the groups has been getting wider and wider in the T-3 and T-6 progress tests, and this can be thought as the use of blog and its effects on the learnings of the students.

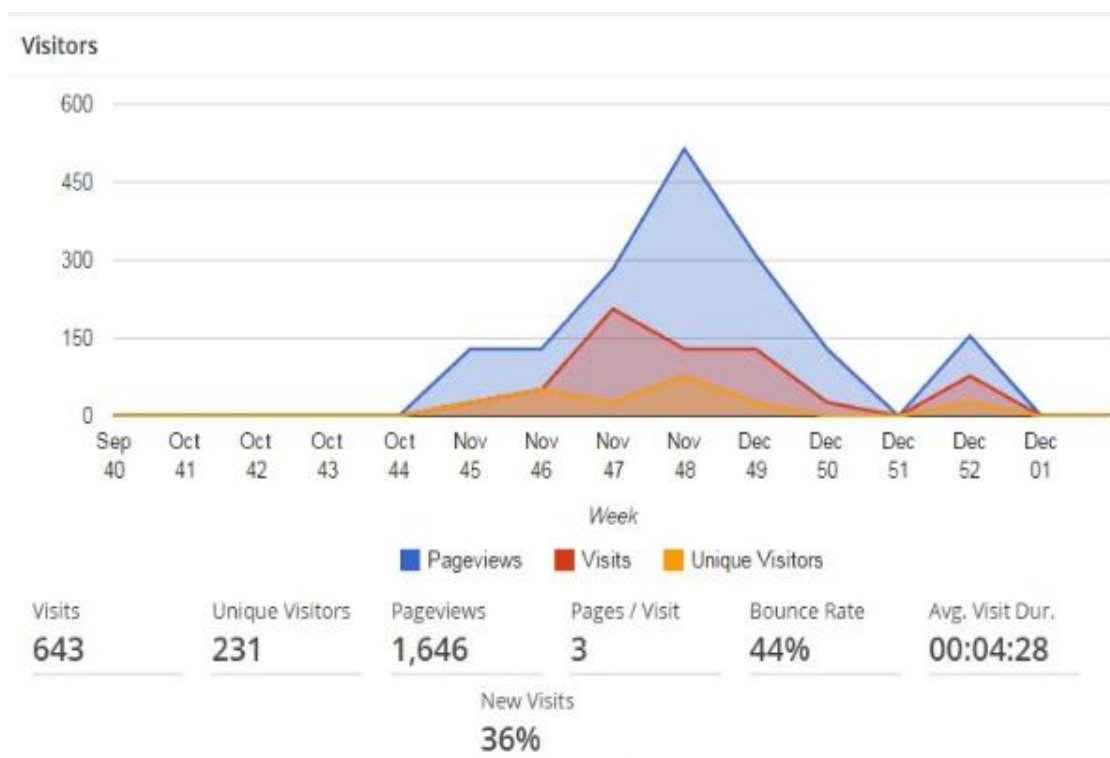


Figure 4. 2. Statistics of the Use of Blog

Retrieved from: <http://ttemir.edublogs.org>

4.6. Results and Discussion for Research Question 6

Research Question 6: Is there any significant difference between pretest and T-6 progress test scores of the experimental group?

After the T-3 progress test was conducted, the experimental group used the blog three more weeks during which the control group went on its education as they did. Then both of the groups had T-6 exam which was the last exam before the posttest. The main aim of the researcher was to see the improvement and progress of the experimental group while conducting the test.

Table 4. 13: Paired Samples Statistics about EG for Pre-Test and Progress_T-6 Test

		<i>Mean</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>
Pair 1	Prog_T-6	66,842	19	12,716	2,917
	Pre	39,868	19	15,996	3,670

As it can be interpreted from the Table 4.13 and Table 4.14, the experimental group improved their reading skills in six week-time because their mean score in the T-6 was 66,842 and it was 39,868 in the pre-test and the standard deviation of T-6 was 12,716, and it was 15,996 in the pretest, so when looking at the Table 4.14, it is also clear that there was a significant difference between the pre-test and T-6 progress test of the experimental group ($p = ,000 < ,05$).

Table 4. 14: Paired Samples Test between Pre-Test and Progress_T-6 Test for EG

		<i>Paired Differences</i>					<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
		<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>	<i>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</i>				
					<i>Lower</i>	<i>Upper</i>			
Pair 1	Prog_T-6 - Pre	26,974	15,151	3,476	19,671	34,277	7,760	18	,000

4.7. Results and Discussion for Research Question 7

Research Question 7: Is there any significant difference between pretest and T-6 progress test scores of the control group?

After the T-3 exam, the control group went on their education, and they took the T-6 exam at the same time with the experimental group as they did in the T-3 exam.

Table 4. 15: Paired Samples Statistics about CG for Pre-Test and Progress_T-6 Test

		<i>Mean</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>
Pair 2	Prog_T-6	62,632	19	16,86288	3,86861
	Pre	41,842	19	15,49736	3,55534

As it can be understood from the Table 4.15 and Table 4.16 the control group improved their reading skills. After analyzing the T-3 results, it was seen that both of the groups improved their reading skills when their results were compared with the pretest results, so the aim in analyzing this exam was to confirm the improvement of the groups. Thus, one more time it was vividly seen that there was

a significant difference between the results of pre-test and T-6 progress test of the control group ($p = ,000 < ,05$). Moreover, this can be interpreted that students can improve their reading skills in time. They may use traditional ways to improve themselves or it is a natural outcome of the time. However, to be able to comment about it, it is a need to compare the results of both of the groups.

Table 4. 16: Paired Samples Test between Pre-Test and Progress_T-6 Test for CG

		Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower				Upper
Pair 2	Prog_T-6 - Pre	20,7895	13,896	3,188	14,092	27,487	6,521	18	,000

4.8. Results and Discussion for Research Question 8

Research Question 8: Do the experimental group and control group differ in the T-6 progress test?

After seeing the improvement in both of the groups, it was aimed to find out if there is a significant difference between the results of the groups. It is known from the research question one and five that students in the experimental group showed a little more improvement than the others, but this difference was not significant in the T-3 progress exam.

Table 4. 17: Descriptive Statistics about EG and CG for Progress Test_T-6

	GROUPS	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
PROGRESS_T-6	EG	21	67,381	12,209	2,664
	CG	22	58,636	17,195	3,666

To be able to answer this research question, both of the groups' T-6 results were analyzed and compared. The results indicated that the experimental group's mean score was 67,381 and the control group's was 58,636. Moreover, from the Table 4.17, it can be understood that for that exam, there were 21 students in the EG, 22 students in the CG. As it was explained in the methodology part of the study, while comparing the classes in the progress test, the whole class was taken into consideration, but when comparing the pre-test, it was a must to take 19 students

who took the pretest. In the experimental group, all of the students used the blog, so in the progress test their scores combined with the whole class.

As can be seen from the Table 4.18, there was not a significant difference between the experimental and control groups $t(41) = 1,915$; $p = ,063 > ,05$. However, when looking the difference in the pre-test, it was ,702. In the T-3 progress test it was ,126 and in the last progress test, T-6, it was ,063. This can show that there is an improvement in the experimental group, but the posttest will show the real result.

Table 4. 18: Independent Samples Test for Progress Test_T-6 Results

		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	<i>Mean Diff.</i>	<i>Std. Error Diff.</i>	<i>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</i>	
							<i>Lower</i>	<i>Upper</i>
PROGRESS_T-6	Equal variances assumed	1,915	41,00	,063	8,745	4,568	-,480	17,969
	Equal variances not assumed	1,930	37,93	,061	8,745	4,532	-,430	17,919

Moreover, the Table 4.19 showed the place of the experimental and control groups. While the experimental group was in the fifth row, the control group was 18th class out of 31. When comparing this with T-3, it can be understood that the experimental group improved their reading skills and showed it among the other classes because in the pre-test and T-0 progress exam, the experimental and control groups had the same mean scores, and they were on average rows. Therefore, it can be commented that this six week time can be beneficial for the learners to make a difference between the other classes, but for a significant difference, a few more weeks are needed so that the results can be more reliable.

Table 4. 19: Progress Test_T-6 Results for 31 Class / 674 students

Rank	Class Code	Average Score (.../100)	Rank	Class Code	Average Score (.../100)
1	13	74,55	17	27	58,85
2	19	68,39	18	20	58,64
3	23	67,88	19	21	58,26
4	14	67,50	20	16	58,18
5	18	67,38	21	25	57,39
6	22	65,87	22	15	56,82
7	28	65,21	23	12	55,48
8	7	64,50	24	9	55,25
9	24	62,83	25	29	55,00
10	26	62,73	26	1	53,81
11	8	62,63	27	10	53,50
12	17	61,52	28	4	53,50
13	2	60,79	29	3	52,25
14	11	60,24	30	31	48,48
15	6	60,00	31	3	45,67
16	5	59,25			

4.9. Results and Discussion for Research Question 9

Research Question 9: Is there any statistical significant difference between pre-posttests scores of the experimental group?

After taking the T-6 progress test, students were given two more weeks of treatment with the use of the blog. Thus, at the end of the eight week period of using the class blog with the experimental group, both the experimental and the control groups were given the posttest. They did the test at the same time under the same conditions.

It was understood from the Table 4.20 that the mean scores of the experimental group was 39,868 in the pretest (SD= 39,868), but they got 67,763 from the posttest (SD= 67,763). There was a huge difference between these results.

Table 4. 20: Paired Samples Statistics about EG for Pre-Test and Posttest

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Post_EG	67,763	19	13,967	3,204
	Pre_EG	39,868	19	15,996	3,670

It can be seen in the Table 4.21 that correlation between the pre-test and posttest scores of the students was ,515 which means that the students as a class got improvement in their scores since the correlation is above ,50.

Table 4. 21: Paired Samples Correlation between Pre-Test and Posttest for EG

		<i>N</i>	<i>Correlation</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Pair 1	Post_EG & Pre_EG	19	,515	,024

When interpreting the analysis of the Table 4.22 below, it was understood that there was a significant difference between the results of the pre-test and the posttest of the experimental group $p = ,000 < ,05$. Therefore, students have shown a great success in their reading lessons as it is understood from their posttest results. This can be thought that the use of blog for the purpose of improving the reading skill of the students is successful, but the results of the control group should be analyzed before supporting such an idea.

Table 4. 22: Paired Samples Test between Pre-Test and Posttest for EG

		<i>Paired Differences</i>					<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
		<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>	<i>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</i>				
					<i>Lower</i>	<i>Upper</i>			
Pair 1	Post_EG – Pre_EG	27,895	14,867	3,411	20,729	35,060	8,179	18	,000

4.10. Results and Discussion for Research Question 10

Research Question 10: Is there any statistical significant difference between pre-posttests scores of the control group?

Control group who did not use any kinds of a blog were given the posttest at the same time with the experimental group. They went on their education and reading lessons with the traditional or usual way of teaching and learning of a language. However, during eight week time, it is a predicted result that they also improved their reading skills. Their mean scores from the pretest was 41,842 (SD= 15,497) while the mean scores of posttest was 54,737 (SD= 9,856).

Table 4. 23: Paired Samples Statistics about CG for Pre-Test and Posttest

		<i>Mean</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>
Pair 2	Post_CG	54,737	19	9,856	2,261
	Pre_CG	41,842	19	15,497	3,555

Moreover, the correlation of the pre-posttests of the control group was ,720 which is very high to say that most of the students improved their reading skills in that group.

Table 4. 24: Paired Samples Correlation between Pre-Test and Posttest for CG

		<i>N</i>	<i>Correlation</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Pair 2	Post_CG & Pre_CG	19	,720	,001

Table 4.25 below shows that the mean difference of the control group between pre-test and posttest is 12,763 (SD= 10,830), and the control group had a significant difference between their pre-test and posttest scores $t(18) = 5,137$, $p = ,000 < ,05$. This result can be interpreted as the control group improved their reading skills and probably their level of English along the time between the pre-test and posttest. This is a well-known fact that without any support such as using an additional online tool, students can achieve improving themselves. However, when the posttest results of the experimental and control groups are compared, it will be clearer to see the difference between these two groups.

Table 4. 25: Paired Samples Test between Pre-Test and Posttest for CG

		<i>Paired Differences</i>				<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
		<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>	<i>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</i> <i>Lower Upper</i>			
Pair 2	Post_CG – Pre_CG	12,763	10,830	2,485	7,543 17,983	5,137	18	,000

4.11. Results and Discussion for Research Question 11

Research Question 11: Is there any statistically significant difference between experimental and control groups in terms of posttest scores?

From the research questions 9 and 10, it is understood that both the experimental and the control groups improved their reading skills in the time of the experiment.

In this question, it is aimed to discover if there is a significant difference between the posttest scores of the experimental and the control groups.

Table 4. 26: Descriptive Statistics about EG and CG for Posttest

	<i>GROUPS</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>
POST_TEST	EG	21	67,763	13,967	3,204
	CG	22	53,290	12,858	2,950

Results taken from the independent-samples t-test indicated in the Table 4.26 that there were 19 students in each of the group, and while the mean score of the experimental group was 67,763 (SD=13,967) , the mean score of the control group was 53,290 (SD=12,858).

Table 4. 27: Independent Samples Test for Posttest

		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	<i>Mean Diff.</i>	<i>Std. Error Diff.</i>	<i>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</i>	
							<i>Lower</i>	<i>Upper</i>
POST_TEST	Equal variances assumed	3,323	36,00	,002	14,474	4,355	5,641	23,306
	Equal variances not assumed	3,323	35,76	,002	14,474	4,355	5,639	23,308

Moreover, as it can be seen from the Table 4.27 above that there was a mean difference between the groups as 14,474 (SD=4,355). Again from the Table 4.27, it is seen that there was a significant difference between the experimental and control groups (M = 67,763, SD = 13,967) and control group (M = 53,290, SD = 12,858), $t(36) = 3,323$; $p = ,002 < ,05$.

This shows that the experiment carried out is beneficial for the students in the experimental group to be able to improve their reading skills. This does not mean that the control group could not improve their reading skills, but it can be judged that the students in the experimental group improved themselves more than the control group did.

4.12. Results and Discussion for Research Question 12

Research Question 12: Is there any statistically significant difference between experimental and control groups in terms of vocabulary scores?

As it is known, vocabulary is very crucial for reading skill. It is not this study's aim to enhance vocabulary capacity of the students, but their T-0, T-3 and T-6 exams were also analyzed in terms of their vocabulary skills.

Table 4. 28: Descriptive Statistics about Vocabulary Achievements for EG and CG

		<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>
VOCAB_T-0	EG	23	86,522	13,521	2,819
	CG	22	85,682	14,334	3,056
VOCAB_T-3	EG	23	81,439	16,806	3,504
	CG	23	67,539	20,424	4,259
VOCAB_T-6	EG	23	73,913	20,668	4,310
	CG	23	73,478	20,025	4,175

From the Table 4.28 and Table 4.29, the results of each exam can be seen. In the T-0 progress test, they had nearly the same means. The mean score of the experimental group was 86,522, and the mean score of the control group was 85,682 which shows that there was not a significant difference between the groups $p = ,841 > ,05$

In the results of the T-3 progress exam, as it can be understood from the Table 4.29 below that there was a significant difference between the EG and CG ($M = 81,439$, $SD = 16,806$) and control group ($M = 67,539$, $SD = 20,424$), $t(44) = 2,520$, $p = ,015 < 0,05$. This can be interpreted that students used their blog efficiently in terms of vocabulary revision section which helps learners review the newly learned words and acquire new ones. Moreover, the students in the experimental group used the vocabulary section of the blog a lot in that period of time, so they may get the help and support of this.

Table 4. 29: Independent Samples Test for Vocabulary Achievements

	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	<i>Mean Diff.</i>	<i>Std. Error Diff.</i>	<i>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</i>	
						<i>Lower</i>	<i>Upper</i>
VOCAB_T-0	,202	43	,841	,840	4,152	-7,534	9,214
VOCAB_T-3	2,520	44	,015	13,900	5,515	2,785	25,015
VOCAB_T-6	,072	44	,943	,435	6,000	-11,659	12,528

Above can be seen the results of T-6 which shows that there was not a significant difference between the groups $t(44) = ,072$; $p = ,943 > ,05$. This can be because students in the experimental group were interested in the vocabulary part of the blog a lot in the first weeks in which there are many words which can be asked in these progress tests, but in the last three weeks they prefer reading books which probably improves their vocabulary knowledge again, but it may not be identified just from these progress tests.

4.13. Results and Discussion for Research Question 13

Research Question 13: How do the students view their own progress in reading skills before and after the study?

After finishing the experiment of the use of blog with the experimental group, the students were given a questionnaire with five parts in it. In the first part of the questionnaire, they were asked some background information questions. According to their answers, six of the students are female, and the rest of them, 13, are male students. 61% of the students attend engineering departments such as computer engineering, electronic engineering, etc., and 22% of the students attend management departments such as logistic management, and the rest of them, 17%, attend business departments as English Business or Turkish Business. This shows that most of the students will attend to one of the Science departments. Their ages are in between 18 to 21 range ($m = 18,6$). Moreover, they were asked about their experience of learning English, and they declared that they had nearly 4 to 12 years of experience in learning ($m = 8,3$), ($SD = 1,78$).

In the second part of the questionnaire, students were asked their levels in reading skills which are assigned as “1” (A1), “2” (A2), “3” (B1) can do statements defined in CEFR. The main aim of this part is to see their thoughts about the difference between their level before and after the treatment.

Table 4. 30: Reading Levels of the Students

	<i>Descriptive Statistics</i>		
	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
Before Treatment	18	1,06	,236
After Treatment	18	2,72	,461

As it is seen from the Table 4.30 above, the students in the experimental group thought that before the treatment their level had been in A1 level according to the can do statements given in the questionnaire (M= 1,06, SD=,236). A1 level is given as “I can understand basic notices, instructions or information” in the CEFR. Thus, the students declared that they could just understand basic and short instructions before the treatment. On the other hand, the students thought that when they have finished the use of the blog, their levels of reading skills are between two and three which means they can be *B* according to the can do statements (M=2,72, SD=,461). 2, A2, means that “I can understand straightforward information within a known area, such as on products and signs and simple textbooks or reports on familiar matters.”, and 3, B1, is “I can understand routine information and articles, and the general meaning of non-routine information within a familiar area.” They are closer to the statement 3, which means that they could understand most of the information within a familiar area.

This shows that students have thought or believed they improved their level of reading skill. This can be because they can easily observe their reading exam results, and they can compare their results with their friends who attend other classes.

4.14. Results and Discussion for Research Question 14

Research Question 14: What are the attitudes of experimental group towards using

- a) *Internet*
- b) *blogs*
- c) *the class blog to improve their reading skills?*

After obtaining information about the students and their thoughts about their reading levels, C part was introduced in which they are asked questions about their Internet use. They can answer the questions in this part of the questionnaire as Never (1), Seldom (2), Sometimes (3), Often (4), and Always (5).

The first question of this part is about how often they use internet. The aim of this question is to understand how long they spend their time online. As can be seen

from the table below, the mean score of the question is 4,50 which shows that the students use the Internet almost always (SD= ,786).

Table 4. 31: Students' Internet Use

	<i>Descriptive Statistics</i>		
	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
1. How often do you use the Internet?	18	4,50	,786

In the second, third, and fourth questions, it is aimed to find out how often they use Internet for pleasure, for studying or for reading. They affirmed that they used Internet for pleasure a lot (m=4,06) which shows that they often use Internet for their pleasure such as playing games, listening to music, watching films, etc.

Table 4. 32: Students' Internet Use

	<i>Descriptive Statistics</i>		
	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
2. How often do you use internet for pleasure?	18	4,06	,802
3. How often do you use the internet for your English courses?	18	3,67	,767
4. How often do you use the internet for reading (Newspapers, magazines, books, blogs, etc.)	18	3,22	,878

Students used the Internet for their English courses or for studying English nearly often (m=3,67). This shows that students get help from Internet while they are studying English. The last one is about how often they use the Internet for reading newspapers, magazines, books, blogs, etc. The aim of the researcher to ask this question is to determine if the students read something for improving their English. They answered the question as sometimes (m=3,22). This indicates that students have used Internet for studying nearly often, and they sometimes have used Internet for reading something. They did not identify what to read in the questionnaire, but they were asked this question again in the interview and three of them said they read monthly magazines, and they had opportunities to read anything they saw about the reviews of the movies or summaries of the games.

The last three questions in *part C* are related to the place in which the students connect Internet and the time about how often they connect from these places.

Most of the students connect to Internet from their home or dormitory almost always (m=4,67). This can be because they are university students who live in Ankara or who came from other cities. Some of the students marked as they sometimes use the Internet from the school (m=2,56). This can be because they are at the school for five hours, and the rest of the time they are out of the school or at their home. However, in the interview one of the students said that he did not have internet access on his phone, and in his dorm it was very difficult to connect the network, so he preferred doing the assignments at the school or public places. In the last question, they were asked how often they use Internet in the Internet cafes or public places, and they declared that they rarely went to these kinds of places to use Internet (m=1,83). This is as a predicted result because most of the students have Internet access in their phones, so they do not need to go somewhere for the Internet.

Table 4. 33: Students' Internet Use

	<i>Descriptive Statistics</i>		
	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
5. How often do you connect to the internet from your home or dormitory?	18	4,67	,594
6. How often do you connect to the internet from the school?	18	2,56	1,381
7. How often do you connect to the internet from the internet cafe or public places?	18	1,83	,786

For the b part of the research question, D part of the questionnaire was prepared which is about blogs in general and students' attitudes towards using blogs in general. In this part of the survey, there are 10 questions. Below was given the mean scores and standard deviations of the each question. Students can mark Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Neutral (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1) for the D and E parts of the questionnaire.

For the first question which is "I believe I should read to improve my reading skills." 100% of the students chose strongly agree option (m=4,61). This shows that students are aware of their deficiencies. For the second and third statements of this part, the mean scores are 4,44 and 4,72 which show that 94,4% of the

students have the belief in blogs because they think blogs can be helpful for them to improve their reading skills. The mean score of the fourth question is 4,11 which shows that 83,3% of the students are interested in blogs, and they agree that blogs can increase their interest towards reading. 88,8% of the students agree with the fifth item about motivation, and they think blogs help them be motivated towards reading (m= 4,22). 77,8% of the students agree with the sixth item of the questionnaire which states that blogs can improve the students' reading skills while 22,2% of them are neutral about it. In the seventh and eighth items, all of the students mark as between strongly agree and agree, so they think that if they use a blog their achievements in reading and vocabulary skills can be improved (m=4,83 and 4,50). Moreover, 88,9% of the students agree that they can find authentic real life materials in the blogs (m=4,22). In the last item, 94,4% of the students think they can reflect their ideas about the passages that they read (m=4,44).

Table 4. 34: Students' Attitudes towards Blogs

	<i>SA/A</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>D/SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
1. I believe I should read to improve my reading skills.	100%	-	-	4,61	,502
2. I believe blogs are useful for developing reading skills.	94,4%	5,6%	-	4,44	,616
3. I have positive attitudes towards using blogs.	94,4%	5,6%	-	4,72	,575
4. My interest to reading can be increased by blogs.	83,3%	16,7%	-	4,11	,676
5. My motivation to reading can be increased by blogs.	88,8%	5,6%	5,6%	4,22	,808
6. My reading ability can improve via blogs	77,8%	22,2%	-	4,39	,850
7. Blogs can increase my vocabulary knowledge.	100%	-	-	4,83	,383
8. Blogs can increase my achievements in reading skills.	100%	-	-	4,50	,514
9. I can access authentic reading passages from blogs.	88,9%	11,1%	-	4,22	,647
10. I can express my thoughts after reading in blogs.	94,4%	5,6%	-	4,44	,616
Part D : Overall Result				4,450	,41622

The overall result of the D part is given in the Table 4.34 as 4,450 which shows that students nearly strongly agree with these statements.

In the C part of the research question, the attitudes of the students towards the use of their class blog after the treatment are researched. There are 22 questions in that part of the questionnaire which are all about learning their beliefs and thoughts about the blog that they used in their reading classes.

Table 4. 35: Students' Attitudes towards Using the Class Blog

	<i>SA/A</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>D/SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
1. It was good to have a blog of my class.	94,4%	5,6%	-	4,83	,514
2. It made me share my thoughts.	83,3%	16,7%	-	4,44	,784
3. It was enjoyable to read from a blog.	100%	-	-	4,67	,485
4. It was good to learn new reading skills for the exams.	100%	-	-	4,78	,428
5. It revised the words that I learned in the class.	100%	-	-	4,83	,383
6. It taught new words.	100%	-	-	4,89	,323
7. It gave authentic passages or news.	100%	-	-	4,50	,514
8. It gave passages which are appropriate for my interest.	100%	-	-	4,44	,511
9. It enabled me to understand the passages better.	100%	-	-	4,56	,511
10. It helped me to do better in the exam.	94,4%	5,6%	-	4,61	,608
11. It prepared me to the exams.	94,4%	-	5,6%	4,56	,784
12. It gave tips for the reading exams.	100%	-	-	4,72	,461
13. It was easy to use.	100%	-	-	4,72	,461
14. It took too much time.	33,3%	38,9%	27,8%	3,00	1,085
15. I prefer blogging to the traditional way of reading.	83,3%	16,7%	-	4,39	,778
16. I had difficulty in using it as I do not have computer or internet access.	22,2%	27,8%	50%	2,56	1,464
17. I liked to use the blog.	100%	-	-	4,72	,461
18. I expressed my thoughts in the blog after reading passages.	88,9%	11,1%	-	4,39	,698
19. My motivation in reading increased.	94,4%	5,6%	-	4,72	,575
20. I believe that the blog improved my reading skill.	100%	-	-	4,78	,428
21. I could control my learning process.	100%	-	-	4,61	,502
22. I want to use it again.	100%	-	-	4,89	,323
Part E : Overall Result				4,522	,28674

Above is seen the results of the attitudes of the students towards using the class blog to improve their reading skills in English. As it can be understood from the Table 4.35 above, nearly all of the students are happy to have a class blog of their class, and just a few of them are neutral against it ($m=4,83$, $SD= ,514$). 83,3% of the students think that the blog helps them share their opinions, but some of

them, 16,7% are neutral about the item ($m=4,44$ $SD=,784$) which can be interpreted that they may be embarrassed to share their ideas with their friends.

All of the students agree that they had fun while they were reading from the blog ($m=4,67$), it was good to learn new reading skills from the blog ($m=4,78$), blog revised the words that they learned in the class ($m=4,83$), and made them learn new words ($m=4,89$), blog provided authentic passages ($m=4,50$) according to their interests ($m=4,44$), thanks to the passages in the blog, they could read well and understand the passages better ($m=4,56$). These are all positive effects of using the class blog for the students which can be thought as students have gained a lot while they are using their blog.

94,4% of the students think that the blog helped them do better in the exams while 5,6% of them neutral about that issue ($m=4,61$). This can be because of their exam results. They may not get better results from all of the exams done in the school. However, from the results of the posttest, it is seen that all of the students have higher scores when it is compared with their pre-test results. 94,4% of them think that the blog made them prepare for the exams while 5,6% of the students disagree with that, so they think that the blog does not prepare them to the exams but helped them do better from the exams ($m=4,56$).

All of them agree that the blog gave tips to do better in the exam ($m=4,72$), and it was easy to use ($m=4,72$). 33,3% of the students think that using blog took too much time while 38,9% of them are neuter and 27,8% of them disagree with that item ($m=3,00$). This item is thought to be very important because most of the students either could not decide or agree with it. It was asked them again in the interview, and they think they do not have to spend much time in a day, but they have to check the blog everyday which can take too much time sometimes.

83,3% of the students prefer using a blog rather than the traditional ways, but 16,7% of the students are neuter ($m=4,39$). 22,2% of the students had difficulty in using the blog because of the technical problems such as lack of a computer or internet access problems while 27,8% of them do not decide if they had difficulty or not and 50% of them disagree about having any difficulty ($m=2,56$). This shows that half of the students do not think that using blog is a challenge for them, but

some of them had some difficulties, maybe because of the internet access or the activities may seem too many for them.

Nearly all of the students think that their motivation for reading something was increased by the help of the blog (m=4,72). Last but not least, all of the students think that the blog improved their reading skill (m=4,78), they think they could control their learning progress (m=4,61), and they want to use a blog again (m=4,89). This indicates that as all of the students think that they have improved their reading skills, the aim of the study is accrued.

In addition to these quantitative data analysis, interview was carried out to learn the beliefs and thoughts of the students. Five of the students were kindly asked to answer questions, and they were all very eager to reflect their thoughts about using the blog. First of all, they were asked their names, departments, and level of English as they gave in the questionnaire. Below is given their responses with the numbers near them which refer the students from 1 to 5. First of all, the researcher asked about the templates of the blog, and the students;

“The templates were always changing. It depends on the importance of the days because for example, our teacher changed the template on the New Year Day. It became green with gift boxes and trees on the top of the blog. It was fun because we are curious about the appearance of the blog.” (1-2)

“It seems fun because it was changing a lot.” (3-4-5)

Then, the researcher asked about what parts they like most in the blog and what its reason is.

“I really like using the blog. I mean all of the parts are very beneficial for me. We have reading part and skills we have, vocabulary part. There are a lot of words in this part, and normally I do not want to write the words to my notebook, so just checking them from the blog so that I can remember every word, so I like both the reading and vocabulary part a lot.” (1 and 2)

“I like the recent news part a lot because I can learn the news around the world in that part. There were much news about football and it is my hobby.” (4)

“I like reading skills part a lot because after I read them, I got better grades from the exams.” (3 and 5)

After that, the researcher asked if it is a beneficial tool for them. If so, how it helps them. They all agreed that it was beneficial for their reading. They thought that they learned a lot from the blog.

“I think it is very beneficial. I got high grades from the reading part after I used the blog. I have the highest grades in fact in this school.” (1)

“I agree with my friend. I learned a lot and still I have used the things that I learned and I am checking the blog for the new thing.” (2)

"It was very helpful for my reading. Thanks to it, I could do my best in the exams." (3-4)

Then the researcher wants to know if they had anything that they dislike or find challenging.

"...just a challenge. We had to comment on our friends' answers. Then they commented on ours. Then we commented again. This goes on like this. Then it could be difficult to catch them, and every time you have to check what they wrote." (1)

"Nothing. Nothing. I like everything, but it can be challenging sometimes because we have deadlines to complete the activities, but sometimes we had a lot of homework, so it can be hard to finish all of them" (4-5)

Then the researcher asked what they think about the teacher's immediate feedback and if they had immediate feedback or not. They thought feedback was important to see if their answers are true or false, and they said they were curious about the comments.

"It was good to read from our teacher. She answers immediately as the deadline finishes, but all of us had different deadlines because sometimes our teacher lets us read it one more time, so it was as it needs to be." (1)

"Immediate feedback was important because we wanted to learn the result of our answers, and our teacher gave the results or commented after we comment quickly." (4)

The researcher asked them what the advantages they can list or what else can be done to have a better blog. They all agreed that they improved their reading skills and enhanced their vocabulary knowledge. They thought they got better exam results from the reading parts, so using blog affected their achievements positively. Besides, they added that they uploaded a few videos, but they could share more videos, some games or visuals to have more fun.

"Thanks to the blog, I got better and better from the exams." (2)

The last question was whether they want to use a blog again or not, and what the reasons can be. Four of them agreed to use it again because they thought without it, they could not do the tests like they did, and having a shared tool or product was fun for them. One of them said;

"Absolutely I want to use it again. In fact after the term finished, I checked the blog nearly 10 times to see if you uploaded anything new." (1)

"I do not need to use a blog again because it improved my reading skill a lot, and this is enough for me." (3)

4.15. Conclusion

In the fourth chapter of the study, both the quantitative and the qualitative data analysis have been presented to research the pre-posttests, T-0, T-3, T-6 progress tests, a questionnaire and an interview to put forward the thoughts of the students. Pretest was carried out to determine the experimental and control groups. T-0 progress test was conducted to check the level of the students, and to see if they were homogenous in terms of their levels. T-3 and T-6 progress tests were applied to check whether the treatment has been working or not. Then the posttest was done to understand if there is a significant difference between the groups after the treatments employed to the experimental group. After finishing the tests, a questionnaire about the attitudes of the students towards using blogs was conducted. Moreover, an interview was done to listen to their thoughts directly.

The results have been analyzed to be able to answer 14 research questions by using different components of SPSS. The research questions have been interpreted by the help of the statistical tables, and direct comments of the participants have helped the research a lot.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The fifth chapter of the study presents a brief summary of the study, the overall evaluation of the findings, and recommendations for the future studies. The summary of the study gives information about the study explaining each chapter briskly. The findings are summarized in the second part of this chapter to show what the research design and questions have concluded. Moreover, some recommendations for the further studies are provided in this chapter of the study.

5.1. Summary of the Study

This study has investigated the relationship between the use of a blog and achievements of the students in the reading skills at tertiary level at a private university in Turkey. In the first chapter of the study, an introduction to the subject and content is defined. Background of the study is given, and the problem is stated. After the problem is explained, the purpose of the study is presented as it is to improve the reading skill of the students via using a blog as an additional tool. Then 14 research questions are given to seek to reach the aim of the study. After that, significance of the study is granted, and both the assumptions and the limitations of the study are given. In the last part of the first chapter, the key words used inside the study are explained.

In the second chapter of the study, a detailed review of relevant literature is explained. Thanks to technology and ICT, blog has been appeared for years, so these two important parts are given to understand the developments in technology. Then blog in general is defined, and its features are given inside the title of "Blog" in the literature review chapter. Understanding the meaning and features of a blog, the studies about using blogs in ELT are presented to see the research done before this study. After seeing the studies in ELT, types of blogs used in education are explained as tutor blogs, learner blogs, and class blogs. Then using blogs with different skills is presented. Following the unearthing of the studies in different skills, reading skill is explained with intensive and extensive reading parts, and vocabulary knowledge in reading is given. After understanding the reading skill, using blogs with reading is reviewed from the literature and seen that there are not enough study about using blogs with reading skills. After seeing the studies done, benefits of using blogs are explained with subtitles as motivation,

autonomous learning, critical thinking skills and reflection. Then challenges in using blogs are identified.

In the third part of the study, methodology of the study is presented. The research design of the study is explained and shown in a flow chart. Then participants taken part in the study are defined, and instruments used during the experiment are given. Apart from the tests, a questionnaire is conducted to see the attitudes of the learners, and an interview is made to support the findings gathered from the questionnaire. Materials used in the study are given. In the last part of the third chapter, the study is eight week experiment of using a blog. Pre-posttests and three progress tests are applied to both the experimental and control groups. The experiment is identified week by week. The procedure of the study is explained in detail.

The fourth chapter of the study presents data analysis and discussion part. In this chapter, all the research questions are explained and answered with the help of the data gathered from the exams and the questionnaire. The data is analyzed through SPSS Statistics 20© tools with the help of independent-samples t-test and paired-samples t-test. The mean scores and percentages of the items in the questionnaire are calculated with SPSS and commented looking at the mean scored of each item.

In the last part of the study, after giving the short explanation of the study, a suggested class blog which can be used in the reading skill is presented. The steps which are to follow while designing a class blog and the aims of using each item are presented. It is aimed in this part of the study that a reading teacher can read and apply the steps and use a well-designed blog with his/her students overall summary of the findings and recommendations for the further study are presented.

5.2 Summary of the Evaluation of the Findings

Participants are grouped and identified as the experimental and control groups according to the result of the pre-test. After the groups have been divided, their mean scores have been analyzed to see if they are similar groups. The mean score of the experimental group has been found as 39,868 (SD= 15,996), and the mean score of the control group has been 41,842 (SD= 15,497). After the groups

are formed, a T-0 progress test is carried out to check if they are still at the same level before applying the treatment. The results of this progress test have showed that they are not significantly different from each other because their mean scores are almost the same $t(43) = ,003$; $p = ,998 > ,05$. As the results of the first progress test (T-0) are seen, the treatment, using a blog, has been started in the experimental group.

In the third week of the study, a T-3 progress test was done to see if there is an improvement in the reading skills of the groups. The results have indicated that both of the groups have increased their scores in reading, and the experimental group ($m = 64,352$) has improved themselves in reading more than the control group did ($m = 57,387$), but there is not a significant difference between the groups $t(44) = 1,561$; $p = ,126 > ,05$. Moreover, the rank of the mean scores of the whole school is given in the data analysis part to show that while in the T-0 test the experimental group and control group were in the 15th and 16th rows respectively, in the T-3 progress test, the experimental group is in the third and the control group is in the 11th row among 31 classes. This indicates that the experimental group has started to improve themselves more than the control group did.

After that exam, the experimental group has gone on using their blog for three more weeks, and at the end of the sixth week of the experiment, a T-6 progress test was conducted. That progress test shows that their mean scores are different from each other, but the result is not significantly different, but very close to be ($t(41) = 1,915$; $p = ,063 > ,05$). The mean score of the experimental group was 67,381, and it is 58,636 for the control group. As it has been shown in the T-3 exam, the table of the mean scores of the whole school is also given in that part. The experimental group was in the fifth row while the control group was in the 11th row among 31 classes.

The treatment has continued for two more weeks and the posttest has given to both of the groups. The main aim of the study is to figure out if there is a significant difference between the experimental and control groups in their posttest scores. Thus, firstly it is analyzed if there is a difference between the pre-test scores and posttest results of the experimental group. It is seen that there is a significant difference between the results $p = ,000 < ,05$. Then the same procedure is conducted for the control group to see that there is a significant difference

between the pre-test and posttest results of the group $p=,000 < ,05$. Lastly, posttest results of both of the groups are analyzed and have found that their posttest results are significantly different from each other $t(36) = 3,323; p = ,002 < ,05$. This shows that the implementation of the use of the blog with the experimental group has worked and helped the students improve their achievements in the reading skill.

It has been proved that the use of blog can improve the reading skill of the students in eight weeks. Along this period of time, students have been given three vocabulary tests with the progress tests. The results of these tests have been analyzed and found that while both of the groups have had nearly the same mean scores in the T-0 progress test (m (EG) = 86,522; m (CG) =85,682), they are significantly different in the T-3 progress test (m (EG) =81,439; m (CG) = 67,539); $t(44) =2,520; p=,015<,05$. This can be interpreted that the experimental group has frequently used the vocabulary section of their blog at that period of time. In the T-6 progress test, again there is not a significantly difference between groups (m (EG) =73,913; m (CG) =73,478). Thus, it is understood from this study that enough coherent data about vocabulary improvement of the students could not be gathered while focusing on reading skills.

After the exams have been over, the students of EG have been given a questionnaire which has five parts in it to take their attitudes and thoughts about using a blog to improve their reading skills. The results of the questionnaire have been analyzed through SPSS. The mean scores of the items have shown that students like to use the blog, and they think that it is a beneficial tool for them to improve their reading skills.

To support the questionnaire, an interview has been made with five of the blog users and interpreted to be able answer the last research question, and it has been seen that they like the templates and content of the blog, and they have recommended some activities or additional parts which will be suggested in the recommendation part of the study.

Moreover, the benefits explained in the literature review part of the study are seen in this study. According to the results of both the questionnaire and the interview, students have declared that their motivation has increased towards reading after

they have used the blog, and they have thought that they have learned how to study alone without a teacher with them. In addition to them, they say that they could think critically because of the activities they did, and they could reflect their thoughts better because they have commented about the topics uploaded on the blog. Thus, these statements and benefits found before this study have been approved and proved by the help of these data collection tools.

When it comes to the challenges that the students faced, some of the students have thought that they have spent too much time for the activities, or the time given is not enough. However, all of the activities had been prepared before the treatment, so the deadlines for the activities were given the students beforehand. Moreover, to be able to be beneficial to the students, they should be exposed to read a lot, so maybe they have difficulty at the beginning of the study, but they will be accustomed to reading in time.

5.3. Steps to Create a Blog for Reading Skill

In the light of these findings, the researcher has jiggged ideal steps about how to create an effective blog which helps the learners improve their reading skills. These steps are set by the help of the experiment and the interview done by the students for the teachers, educators and the researchers who want to use a class blog with their reading classes.

The first step before creating a blog is to understand the level of the students in the class. Their level is very crucial because teachers should navigate their learning strategies according to it. It can be determined by the help of a test. It could be a preliminary test to see their overall understanding of the language. If the blog or the activities in it are not in an appropriate level, the students probably get bored while they are using it. The second thing is to determine students' interests. To do so, a questionnaire can be used or interview can be done to learn their interests. This is important to be able to attract their attention. If the students see the topics that appeal to them, automatically they will want to read it.

Thus, determining level and interests of the students are the steps which should be done first. When these are ready, then a class blog can be created. There are many sites which give opportunity to create a class blog without any charge. After getting the user name of the blog, the teacher should decide on the parts which

will be included in the blog. The parts of the blog can be selected with cooperation of both the teacher and the students. However, if the blog is aimed to improve the reading skill of the students, then there should be a reading part and sub-skills of reading, there should be vocabulary part in which all of the words can be given by the definitions and pictures of them. One of the parts can be recent news part in which passages or news can be uploaded according to their interests. This part will be beneficial for their extensive reading. They can write comments about the news or reflect their ideas. There should be books uploaded to make the students be aware of the importance of reading extensively. According to the students, there should be videos part in a blog. In that applied blog, there was not a video part, but students could share the video links which are related to the topics that they read. If there is a video part, there should be passages which are relevant to these topics.

After the parts are identified, students should be informed about each part and each student should check them. After that, the activities can be started to be attached to the parts. In that step, students should be given the deadlines of the activities. To the researcher's advice, they can be given the syllabus of the passages beforehand.

As a last step of this process, students should be assessed in certain periods. This is important to understand the effects of the blog use. In that part, the teacher can decide better for how many weeks blog use will take because exam results are getting better and better, and the achievements of the students are higher than before. Moreover, students should be informed about their improvements so that they can see that they are doing a useful job by using a blog. If there is not, the reasons behind it can be researched.

This experiment shows that these steps may be beneficial for both the teachers and researchers to create and apply a blog.

5.4. Recommendations for the Further Studies

The implementations of the blog use have shown some limitations which make some recommendations come through. The first one is the number of the participants. In this research, one group was assigned as an experimental group, and one group was selected as a control group. However, if there can be another

study which is related to the use of blogs to improve reading skills, then the number of the students can be increased. In the next academic year, it is planned to use a class blog with most of the classes to improve reading skills of the students in the same institution.

Moreover, this study has been conducted to the tertiary level students; the other levels of the students may be included to see the effects of the use of a blog in reading skills on other levels. If this can be done, then the use of blogs and their effects on reading can be proved for all of the levels and students.

Thirdly, when reading the literature, it has been discovered that most of the researches could not figure out the exact results of the use of blogs in reading. In this research, it is thought that the implementation period is very important to be able to find out the valid effects. Thus, as this research is eight week time and becomes successful, it is predicted that at least eight week time is needed, but this can be researched in another study to find the relationship between the use of blog and the time on which it is applied.

Additionally, this study shows that reading skill can be improved via using a blog. There are studies which found its effects on other skills. Thus, there can be an overall study to show the effects of blogs on language teaching and four skills.

These are the recommendations which can be used in other researches, and as it is understood from them, there can be many other studies which are about using blogs. It is predicted that if all of these studies can be done and shown with accurate results, then a curriculum design can be formed by using a blog in language teaching.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX-1: ETİK KURUL İZİN MUAFİYETİ FORMU

Form: 40

Tez Çalışması Etik Kurul İzin Muafiyeti Formu

10 / 01 / 2015

Hacettepe Üniversitesi
Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü
Yabancı Diller Anabilim Dalı Başkanlığı'na


Tez Başlığı / Konusu:	Relationship between Using Blogs and Achievements in Reading Skills of Prep-class Students at Tertiary Level
------------------------------	--

Yukarıda başlığı/konusu gösterilen tez çalışmam:

1. İnsan ve hayvan üzerinde deney niteliği taşımamaktadır.
2. Biyolojik materyal (kan, idrar vb. biyolojik sıvılar ve numuneler) kullanılmasını gerektirmemektedir.
3. Beden bütünlüğüne müdahale içermemektedir.
4. Gözlemsel ve betimsel araştırma (anket, ölçek/skala çalışmaları, dosya taramaları, veri kaynakları taraması, sistem-model geliştirme çalışmaları) niteliğinde değildir.

Hacettepe Üniversitesi Etik Kurullar ve Komisyonlarının Yönergelerini inceledim ve bunlara göre tez çalışmamın yürütülebilmesi için herhangi bir Etik Kuruldan izin alınmasına gerek olmadığını; aksi durumda doğabilecek her türlü hukuki sorumluluğu kabul ettiğimi ve yukarıda vermiş olduğum bilgilerin doğru olduğunu beyan ederim.

Gereğini saygılarımla arz ederim.



Tuğçe TEMİR
(Öğrencinin Adı, Soyadı, İmzası)

Öğrenci Bilgileri

Adı Soyadı	Tuğçe TEMİR
Öğrenci No	N11225335
Anabilim Dalı	Yabancı Diller Bölümü
Programı	İngiliz Dili Eğitimi
Statüsü	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yüksek Lisans <input type="checkbox"/> Doktora <input type="checkbox"/> Bütüncülük Dr.

Danışman Görüşü ve Onayı

Yukarıda belirtilen konu üzerinde çalışan öğrencimin herhangi bir etik kurul iznine ihtiyacı olmadığını onaylıyorum.


Doc. Dr. Arif SARİCOBAN
(Danışmanın Ünvanı, Adı ve Soyadı)

APPENDIX-2: THE LETTER OF PERMISSION

TÜRK HAVA KURUMU ÜNİVERSİTESİ
YABANCI DİLLER BÖLÜM BAŞKANLIĞI'NA

Okulumuz okutmanlarında ben Tuğçe TEMİR Hacettepe Üniversitesi İngiliz Dili Eğitiminde yapmakta olduğum yüksek lisans tezim için okulumuz Yabancı Diller kordinatörleri ve okutmanlarının da desteği ile " Relationship between Using Blogs and Reading Skills of the Students in Tertiary Level" başlıklı konuyu 2014-2015 eğitim-öğretim yılı güz yarı yılında yapmayı istemekteyim. Yapacağım tez içeriği gereğince şahsıma verilen sınıf ile blog çalışması yapıp ardından anket ve röportaj yaparak öğrencilerin düşüncelerini almak istiyorum. Gereğini arz ederim.

25/06/2014



Tuğçe TEMİR

APPENDIX-3: FOOTBALLER

Announcement-1



Hey Guys,

Welcome to our class blog. Please find the passage in the **READING page**. I want you to read it and comment about it under the passage. You can write anything about Messi, his features, interesting things about him or your opinions about him.

Please bring your TN1, MGL and Reading book with you tomorrow.

See you all tomorrow 😊

[“The Little Magician of Football”](#) Posted on November 3, 2014

Please read the passage and practice the new words. Everybody should comment about Messi, his career or interesting things about him.

Lionel Andrés Messi



Lionel Andrés Messi was born on 24 June 1987, and he is an Argentine footballer. He plays for Barcelona and the Argentine national team. He is one of the best football players of his **generation** and generally people **consider** him as the world’s best **contemporary** player.

Lionel Messi’s playing style and ability are **compared** with **Diego Maradona** and he **declared** that Messi was his “successor.”

Lionel Messi’s talent was early **detected** by his father. When he began playing with the local team, his potential was quickly identified by Barcelona. Because of a **growth hormone deficiency**; *his* body does not produce enough *growth hormone* and he needs a lot of money for his **treatment**. He moved with his family to Europe, as Barcelona offered treatment for his illness.

When we think his career, perhaps his most successful season was the 2008–09 season, because he scored 38 goals in that season.

In 2006, he became the youngest Argentine to play in the FIFA World Cup. In 2008, in Beijing, he won his first international **honor**, an Olympic gold medal, with the Argentina Olympic football team.

Generation (n): all the people in a society or family who are approximately the same age

Consider (v): think

Contemporary (n): present time, modern

Compare (v): to examine the ways in which two people or things are different or similar

Declare (v): announce

Detect (v): to discover or notice something, especially something that is difficult to see or hear

Deficiency (n): when you do not have enough of something

Honor (n): when people respect you because you have done what you believe is honest and right, or the quality of doing this

Treatment (n): Cure

APPENDIX-4: VOCABULARY ITEMS U1-5

➤ Unit 1 - Getting Acquired

“Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do.”

Steve Jobs

1. Actor /Actress(n) a person that acts in a play or a movie
2. Hairdresser(n) they cut your hair or give it a new style.
3. Tailor(n) a person that makes clothes for others, many times producing exclusive items of clothing.
4. Author/Writer(n) a person who writes books or novels.
5. Pilot(n) a person who flies a plane.
6. Butcher(n) a person that works with meat. They cut the meat and sell it in their shop.
7. Chef/Cook(n) a person that prepared food for others, often in a restaurant or café.
8. Soldier(n) a person who works for the army.
9. Doctor(n) a person you go to see when you are ill or have some type of health problem.
10. Engineer(n) a person who develops solutions to technical problems. They sometimes design, build, or maintain engines, machines, structures or public works.
11. Waiter/Waitress(n) a person that works in a food outlet, looking after customers and serving food.
12. Painter(n) a person that paints pictures or the interior and exterior of buildings.
13. Lawyer(n) a person that defends people in court and gives legal advice.
14. Farmer(n) a person that works on a farm, usually with animals.
15. Lecturer(n) a person that gives lectures, usually in a university.
16. Nurse(n) a person trained to help a doctor look after the sick or injured.
17. Dentist(n) a person that can fix problems you have with your teeth.
18. Photographer(n) a person that takes photos.
19. Architect(n) a person that designs building and houses.
20. Scientist(n) a person that works in the science industry. They do many experiments.

- 21. Baker(n) a person who makes bread and cakes and normally work in a bakery.
- 22. Mechanic(n) a person that repairs machines, especially car motors.
- 23. Teacher(n) a person that passes knowledge to students, usually at school.

➤ **Unit 2 – Music Genres**

*“There's only one type of music and that's good music, no matter what genre it is.” **will.i.am***

- 1. Rhythm and Blues (n) R&B or RnB, a genre of popular African-American music from the 1940s.
- 2. Reggae(n) A music genre from Jamaica; it refers to most types of popular Jamaican dance music.
- 3. Rock(n) A genre of popular music. Its origin is "rock and roll" and it is from the United States, from 1950s.
- 4. Salsa(n) It is a general term referring to Cuban, Colombian, and Puerto Rican popular dance music.
- 5. Classical Music(n) It is a music genre called art music. It is the root of Western music.
- 6. Folk Music(n) Ordinary people (not professional musicians) sings or plays this musical genre. It is traditional music that people learn by listening to other people playing it and then copying them.
- 7. Movie soundtracks(n) An audio recording created or used in film production
- 8. Jazz(n) A type of music genre from the United States. It combines African-American music with European music.
- 9. Show Tunes(n) These songs are a part of a stage musical.

Live music (n): *It is music that is not recorded; people are playing at the moment you are listening.*

Perfect (adj): *Great*

Genre (n): *Kinds of music*

Carry (v): *move (someone or something) from one place to another*

A talk (n): *A period of conversation or discussion*

An art exhibit (n): *Publicly display (a work of art) in an art gallery or museum*

.....

➤ **Unit 3 – The Extenden Family**

“You don’t choose your family. They are God’s gift to you, as you are to them”.

Desmond Tutu

Twins (n): People who were born at the same time.

Adopted (adj): Take another’s child and bring it up as one’s own

Divorced (adj): Finish one’s marriage

Married (adj): Of two people united in marriage

Single (adj): Not married

Engaged (adj): Having formally agreed to marry.

Stepfather (n): A man who is married to one’s mother

Stepmother (n): A woman who is married to one's father

Chores (n): Housework

Expenses (n): The costs

Pay (v): Give someone money that is money for work done

➤ **Unit 4- Health**

“It is health that is real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver.” Mahatma Gandhi

Healthy/ Healthful (adj) :good for your health

Fatty/High fat (adj) :containing fat especially in unusual amounts

Sweet (adj) :containing a lot of sugar

Unhealthy/unhealthful (adj):harmful to your health

Salty (adj) :containing too much salt



1. a dessert



2. an appetizer



3. an entrée



4. beverage



5. a salad

1. Vegetables

- Carrots
- Peppers
- Broccoli
- Onions
- Spinach

2 Fruit

- Apples
- Bananas
- Grapes
- Oranges
- Mangoes

3. Grains

- Pasta
- Rice
- Bread
- Cereal
- Noodles

4. Dairy Products

- Butter
- Milk
- Cheese
- Yogurt
- Cream

5. Meat

- Chicken
- Lamb
- Sausage
- Beef

6. Seafood

- Fish
- Shrimp
- Squid
- Clams
- Lobster

➤ **Unit 5- Technology**

“Technology is just a tool. In terms of getting the kids working together and motivating them, the teacher is the most important.” **Bill Gates**

- 1) A product that does not cost too much money is **affordable (adj)**.
- 2) A product that is easy to use is **convenient (adj)**.
- 3) A product that many people know and use is **popular (adj)**.
- 4) A product that you can send back if you do not like is **guaranteed (adj)**.
- 5) A product that you can carry easily is **portable (adj)**.
- 6) If a product doesn't work it is **broken (adj)**.

- 7) If a product is not good or if it is badly designed it is **defective (adj)**.
- 8) If a product uses new or recent technology it is **up-to-date (adj)**.
- 9) If a product is hard to use because the technology is old it is **obsolete (adj)**
- 10) If something has problems and does not work correctly, it is **called a lemon (exp.)**.
- 11) If something has a problem, it is **on the blink (exp)**.
- 12) If something is very old, it is an **antique (n)**.
- 13) **Good < pretty good < great < terrific < awesome (adj)**
- 14) If something **flushes (v)**, it cleans something, especially a toilet by water to pass through it.

1. Blender		4. Dishwasher	
2. Juicer		5. Electric kettle	
3. Coffee maker		6. Hair dryer	

7. Fan		10. Vacuum cleaner	
8. Freezer		11. Mixer	
9. Iron		12. Oven	
13. Fridge Refrigerator		16. Toaster	
14. Shaver		17. Pressure Cooker	
15. Stove		18. Washing machine	

APPENDIX-5: MUSIC GROUPS

“[Music](#)”, *Posted on November, 2014*

‘Simply Red’



Pop group Simply Red will reform next year for a 30th anniversary tour, five years on from their last performance. “I like an anniversary and this is a big one,” singer Mick Hucknall said. “It feels like the right time.”

The chart-topping group has same hits such as Holding Back the Years and Money’s Too Tight to Mention.

The band will play in 2015 starting in Denmark on 20 October.

The Big Love tour will take in 10 cities in Germany and eight other countries before going to the UK and Ireland for 14 dates.

The comeback will come to an end with two dates in London, almost five years to the day from their last appearance there.

‘See you there’

The line-up will include the long-time Simply Red members: saxophonist Ian Kirkham, guitarist Kenji Suzuki and bass player Steve Lewinson.

On the band’s website, Hucknall said: “Hello everyone. I am happy to celebrate with you our 30 years in music.

“We hope you’re gonna enjoy the shows as much as we will. See you there!”

Taken from: <http://www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-29884145>

APPENDIX-6: SCIENCE

“[Electricity](#)”, Posted on November 10, 2014

Read the passage and answer the questions, please. You should write the answers to the comment part above the passage. You have time till 23:30 on Tuesday.

The modern age is an age of electricity. People are so used to electric lights, radio, televisions, and telephones that it is hard to imagine what life would be like without them. When there is a **power failure**, people use candlelight. Cars hesitate in the streets because there are no traffic lights to **guide them**, and food **spoils** in silent refrigerators.

However, people began to understand how electricity works only a little more than two centuries ago. Nature has **apparently** been experimenting in this field for millions of years. Scientists are discovering more and more that the living world may hold many interesting secrets of electricity that could **benefit** humanity.

All living **cells** send out tiny pulses of electricity. As the heart beats, it sends out pulses of recorded electricity. The brain, too, sends out brain waves of electricity, which can be recorded in an electroencephalogram. The **electric currents generated** by most living cells are extremely small. They are so small that sensitive instruments are needed to record them.

The **electric eel** is an amazing storage battery. It can send a **jolt** of as much as eight hundred volts of electricity through the water in which it lives. An electric house current is only one hundred twenty volts. As many as four fifths of all the cells in the electric eel's body are specialized for generating electricity, and the strength of the shock it can deliver corresponds **roughly** to the length of its body.

Power failure (exp): when electric stops working

Guide (v): to tell someone what they should do

Spoil (v): If food spoils, it starts to decay and you cannot eat it.

Apparently (adv): something seems to be true

Benefit (n): something that helps you or gives you an advantage

Cell (n): the smallest living part of an animal or a plant

Electric current (n): the flow of electricity through a wire

Eel (n): a long fish that looks like a snake

Jolt (n): a sudden, violent movement

Roughly (adv): approximately, nearly

1. What is the *main idea* of the passage?

- (A) Electric eels are potentially dangerous
- (B) Biology and electricity appear to be closely related
- (C) People would be at a loss without electricity
- (D) Scientists still have much to discover about electricity

2. The author mentions all of the following EXCEPT

- (A) refrigerated food items may go bad
- (B) traffic lights do not work
- (C) people must rely on candlelight
- (D) elevators and escalators do not function

3. Why does the author mention electric eels?

- (A) To warn the reader to stay away from them
- (B) To compare their voltage to that used in houses
- (C) To give an example of a living electrical generator
- (D) To describe a new source of electrical power

4. How many volts of electricity can an electric eel emit?

- (A) 1,000
- (B) 800
- (C) 200
- (D) 120

5. It can be inferred from the passage that the longer an eel is the _____

- (A) more beneficial it will be to science
- (B) more powerful will be its electrical charge
- (C) easier it will be to find
- (D) tougher it will be to eat

6. What does 'them' refer in line 4?

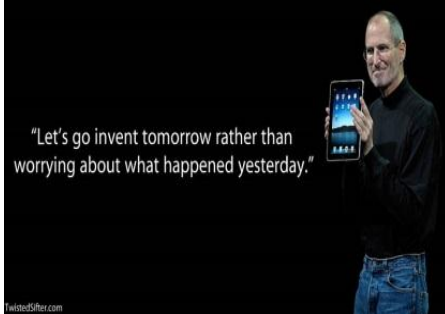
- A) people
- B) scientists
- C) cars
- D) streets

7. What does 'generated' mean?

- A) used
- B) produced
- C) taken
- D) given

APPENDIX-7: BIOGRAPHY

“Steven JOBS”, Posted on November, 2014



Steven Paul Jobs was born on February 24, 1955, in San Francisco, California, to Joanne Schieble and Abdulfattah Jandali. They are both graduate students and they gave their son, Steven, for adoption. Shortly after Steve was placed for adoption, his biological parents married and had another child, Mona Simpson. It was not until Jobs was 27 that he was able to uncover information on his biological parents.

As a child, Steven was **adopted** by Clara and Paul Jobs and named Steven Paul Jobs. The family lived in California, within the area that would later become known as Silicon Valley. As a boy, Jobs and his father would work on electronics in the family garage. Paul would show his son how to take apart and reconstruct electronics.

While Jobs was always an **intelligent and innovative thinker**, his youth was riddled with frustrations over formal schooling. Jobs tested so well that administrators wanted to skip him ahead to high school, but his parents declined (rejected).

A few years later, while Jobs was enrolled at Homestead High School (1971), he was introduced to his future partner, Steve Wozniak. Wozniak was attending the University of California, Berkeley, at the time.

There are some interesting facts about Jobs;

Studied Calligraphy



He likes fancy handwriting. As he pointed out, 10 years later he used those skills to make what he described as “the first computer with beautiful typography.”



In the summer of 1974 he traveled to India. Steve ended up traveling the country for seven months, after which he returned to the States with a shaved head and traditional Indian clothes.



It is hard for people who didn't grow up in it to understand, but "Beatle mania" was probably something similar to "Bieber mania" multiplied by five. Steve Job actually named the company as APPLE after Beatles.



This court case didn't die easily. For years Steve and Apple Inc went up against the Beatles and Apple Corp over the issue of their trademarks. We're still not sure whether meeting one of your favorite bands in court is really cool or sort of bummer. At least if you can't get a signature you can maybe keep one of the signed legal

documents.



No meat for Steve. Just he could eat fish.



Produced Toy Story

As a result of his partnership with Disney, Steve lit the spark that led to movies like *Finding Nemo*, *The Incredibles*, and *WALL-E*. For almost 15 years he dominated the animation industry but Toy Story was a more personal endeavor as he was Executive Producer.

Big business ‘must learn to love apps’



Apps will continue to increase in number like websites in the 1990s and become a necessity rather than a luxury, according to app analyst Marcos Sanchez.

The number of mobile apps for smart phones will continue to rise and big businesses that lack them risk being left behind, analytics company App Annie has warned.

Apple’s App Store and Google’s Play Store both have 1,3 million apps actively being developed and downloaded, while those apps have been downloaded billions of times. Some have speculated that the number of apps and app downloads will level off as developers struggle to make money and justify development efforts and consumer appetite wanes.

That is a view rejected by Marcos Sanchez, vice-president of communications for App Annie. “A load of other firms like Deloitte have said things like ‘oh, no more apps are going to happen’ – what a load of shit. I’ve heard this all before. The number of apps can and will grow and swell.”

In Sanchez’s view, apps are like the worldwide web in the 1990s, when a rapid expansion soon meant that there were tens of millions of websites online.

“Along comes Mozilla and HTML and by golly, now you can put up your own website for your business. At the time there were calls of ‘oh my gosh there’s 10,000, no, 1m, no 10m sites; it’s got to stop’. I’ve heard this all before,” explained Sanchez.

“The reality is that apps might not be quite as prolific as websites, but you can have niche apps that have 1,000 users and that’s fine because they make a couple of bucks off each user a month.”

He continued: “Things like the Garden Gnome collectors app or the Ham Radio station selector app – there’s going to be a place for these small apps; maybe they’re not making a crapload of money but they can find a niche. There will be folks who supplement their income with apps, a much smaller group of folks who can make a modest living and then there’ll be a sliver of the top 10 companies who are pulling down a billion dollars.”

APPENDIX-8: A FAMOUS PLACE

Please read the passage and answer the questions. You should write the answers to the comment part above the passage. You have time till 23:30 on Thursday.



Central Park, emerging from a period of **abuse and neglect**, remains one of the most popular attractions in New York City. About 15 million individual visits are made each year.

Summer is the season for softball, concerts, and Shakespeare; fall is **stunning**; winter is wonderful for sledding, skating, and skiing; and springtime is the loveliest of all. It was all planned that way.

About 130 years ago Frederic Law Olmsted and his collaborator Calvert Vaux **submitted** their landscaping plan for a rectangular parcel two miles north of the town's center. The **barren** swampy tract was reported as a spot where bad odors spoiled every breath of air. It took 16 years for workers with **pickaxes** to move five million cubic feet of earth and rock, and to plant half a million trees and shrubs, making a tribute to nature—a romantic nineteenth-century perception of nature.

What exists today is essentially Olmsted and Vaux's plan with more trees, buildings, and asphalt. Landscape architects still speak **reverently** of Olmsted's genius and **foresight**, and the sensitive visitor can see the effects he **sought**.

Abuse (v): when something is used for the wrong purpose in a way that is harmful or morally wrong

Neglect (v): to not give enough care or attention to something or someone-ignore

Stunning (adj): very beautiful

Pickaxes (n): a tool for breaking hard surfaces, with a long wooden handle

Barren (adj): Land that is barren does not produce crops.

Odors (n): smell

Reverently (adv): showing great respect and admiration:

Foresight (n): when you know or can judge what will happen or what you will need in the future

Sought (v): (Seek) try to get or have something

1. With what subject is the passage mainly concerned?

- (A) The lives of Olmsted and Vaux
- (B) New York City's tourist industry
- (C) Examples of nineteenth-century art in New York City
- (D) The development of Central Park

2. According to the passage which is *the prettiest time of year* in Central Park?

- (A) Winter
- (B) Spring
- (C) Summer
- (D) Fall

3. It can be inferred that the '*rectangular parcel*' mentioned in line eight is

- (A) the site of Central Park
- (B) a gift presented to New York
- (C) a skyscraper in New York
- (D) the proposed design for Central Park

4. According to the passage before Olmsted and Vaux began their work, *the area now occupied by Central Park* was _____

- (A) a romantic place (B) an infertile, marshy space
(C) a green and hilly park (D) a baseball field

5. It can be inferred from the passage that *today's landscape architects praise Olmsted* for his _____.

- (A) enthusiasm for sport
(B) skill at designing factories
(C) concern for New York's homeless people
(D) foresight in anticipating New York's urbanization

6. Where in the passage does the author mention unpleasant smells?

- (A) Lines 1-3 (B) Lines 5-7 (C) Lines 9-11 (D) Lines 15-16

7. What does 'submit' mean in line 8?

- A) give (B) take (C) have (D) buy

APPENDIX-9: SKILL 1- ANSWER MAIN IDEA QUESTIONS CORRECTLY

Read the passage and answer the questions please. These are main idea questions, so read the first sentences of the paragraphs and try to find the correct choices. You have time till 23:30 on Sunday.

Hurricanes generally occur in the North Atlantic from May through November, with the peak of the hurricane season in September, only rarely will they occur from December through April in that part of the ocean. The main reason for the occurrence of hurricanes during this period is that the temperature on the water's surface is at its warmest and the humidity of the air is at its highest.

Of the tropical storms that occur each year in the North Atlantic, only about five, on the average, are powerful enough to be called hurricanes. To be classified as a hurricane , a tropical storm must have winds reaching speeds of at least 170 kilometers per hour, but the winds are often much stronger than that; the winds of intense hurricanes can easily surpass 240 kilometers per hour.

1) The passage mainly discusses

- A) how many hurricanes occur each year
- B) the strength of hurricanes
- C) the weather in the North Atlantic
- D) hurricanes in one part of the world

2) The best title for this passage would be

- A) The North Atlantic Ocean
- B) Storms of the Northern Atlantic
- C) Hurricanes: The Damage and Destruction
- D) What Happens from May through November

APPENDIX-10: MUSIC GENRE

Read the passage and answer the questions please. You should write the answers to the comment part above the passage. You have time till 23:30 on Sunday.



The first jazz musicians played in New Orleans during the early 1900s. After 1917, many of the New Orleans musicians moved to the south side of Chicago where they **continued** to play their style of jazz. Soon Chicago was the new-center for jazz.

Several **outstanding** musicians **emerged** as **leading** jazz artists in Chicago. Daniel Lotus "Satchmo" Armstrong, born in New Orleans in 1900, was one. Another leading musician was Joseph king Oliver who is also credited with having discovered Armstrong when **they** were both in New Orleans. While in Chicago. Oliver asked Armstrong, who was in New Orleans, to join his band. In 1923 King Oliver's Creole Jazz Band made the first important set of recordings by a Hot Five and Hot Seven bands under Louis Armstrong.

Although Chicago's South Side was the main jazz center, some musicians in New York were also **demanding** attention in jazz circles. In 1923 Fletcher Henderson already had a ten - piece band that played jazz. During the early 1930s, the number of players grew to sixteen. Henderson's band was **considered** as a leader in what some people have called the Big Band Era. By the 1930s, big dance bands were the rage. Large numbers of people went to **ballrooms** to dance to jazz music played by big bands.

One of the most popular and also a very famous jazz band was the Duke Ellington band. Edward "Duke" Ellington was born in Washington, D.C., in 1899 and died in New York City in 1974. He studied the piano as a young boy and later began writing original musical compositions. The first of Ellington's European tours came in 1933. He soon received international **fame** for his **talent** as a band leader, composer, and arranger. Ten years later, Ellington began giving **annual** concerts

at Carnegie Hall in New York City. People began to listen to jazz in the same way that they had always listened to classical music.

Emerge (v): to become known

Leading (adj): very important or most important

Outstanding (adj): excellent

Demanding (adj): needing a lot of your time, attention, or effort

Consider (v): Think

Ballroom (n): a large room where dances are held

Fame (n): when you are known by many people- famous (adj) -fame (n)

Talent (n): skill

Annual (adj): happening once a year

1. It can be inferred from the passage that Louis Armstrong went to Chicago for which of the following reasons?

- (A) To form his own band
- (B) To learn to play Chicago - style jazz
- (C) To play in Joseph Oliver's band
- (D) To make recordings with the Hot Five

2. According to the passage, which of the following Black bands was the first to make a significant set of jazz recordings?

- (A) The Hot Seven band
- (B) Fletcher Henderson's band
- (C) The Red Hot Peppers band
- (D) King Oliver's Creole jazz Band

3. As used in line 3, the word "continue" could best be replaced by which of the following?

- (A) go on (B) give (C) think (D) sing

4. The nickname "Duke" belonged to which of the following bandleaders?

- (A) Louis Armstrong (B) Joseph Oliver
(C) Edward Ellington (D) Fletcher Henderson

5. The passage supports which of the following conclusions?

- (A) By the 1930s jazz was appreciated by a wide audience
(B) Classical music had a great impact on jazz
(C) Jazz originated in New Orleans in the early nineteenth century
(D) Jazz band were better known in, Europe than in the United States

6. Which of the following cities is NOT mentioned in the passage as a center of jazz?

- (A) New York (B) Washington, D.C.
(C) Chicago (D) New Orleans

7. What does 'them' refer in line 7?

- A) Duke Ellington and Armstrong
B) Joseph king Oliver and Armstrong
C) Fletcher Henderson and Chicago
D) Hot Five and Hot Seven

APPENDIX-11: SKILL 2-ANSWER STATED DETAIL QUESTIONS CORRECTLY

It can be asked to find a piece of **specific information** in the passage rather than the passage as a whole. The answers are generally given **in order** and the correct answer is a **restatement of what is given** in the passage.

Please read the passage and answer the questions. The questions are about specific information. You have time till 23:30 on Sunday.

Ice ages, those periods when ice covered extensive areas of the Earth, are known to have occurred at least six times. Past ice ages can be recognized from rock strata that show evidence of foreign material deposited by moving walls of ice or melting glaciers. Ice ages can also be recognized from land formations that have been produced from walls of ice, such as U-shaped valleys, sculptured landscapes, and polished rock faces.

1) According to the passage, *what happens during an ice age?*

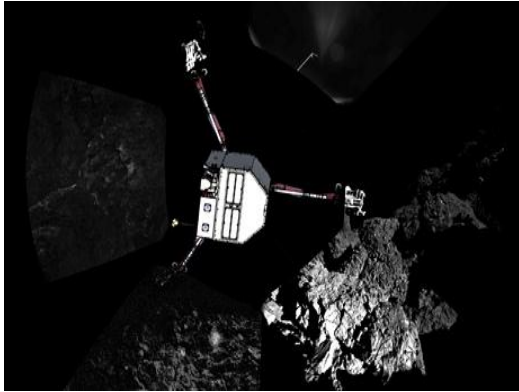
- A) Rock strata are recognized by geologists.
- B) Evidence of foreign materials is found.
- C) Ice covers a large portion of the Earth's surface.
- D) Ice melts six times

2) The passage covers *how many different methods of recognizing past ice ages?*

- A) One
- B) Two
- C) Three
- D) Four

APPENDIX-12: TECHNOLOGY

This is news from The Guardian. Please read the news and comment about it. What do you think about it? You have time till 23.30 on Tuesday.



Probe's final resting spot in the shadow of a cliff has meant that **insufficient** sunlight reached its solar panels.

Scientists claim these photographs provide strong indication that Philae touched down for the first time almost **precisely** at the place that scientists wanted.

The European Space Agency (ESA) has released pictures which were taken by the Rosetta orbiter that **reveal** the location of the Philae probe on the surface of the comet 67P.

The larger circle on the left reveals the **dust cloud** created when the probe first touched down on the comet on Wednesday. A mechanism intended to **anchor** the craft to the surface failed and it then **bounced** back into space due to the comet's **weak** gravity. The first bounce took it high over the comet, but there was never a risk of it **vanishing** into space. The comet's gravity is 100,000th that of the Earth, making the 100 kilogram lander weigh no more than a gram, but even that was enough to pull it back down.

Philae has gone into hibernation mode after running low on power. The probe's final resting spot in the shadow of a **cliff** has meant that insufficient sunlight reached the solar panels that should be recharging its batteries. It still managed to transmit all of its data before **running out of** power.

Insufficient (adj): not enough

Precisely (adv): exactly

Reveal (v): to allow something to be seen

Dust (n): dirt or soil that you see on a surface

Bounce (v): to jump up and down several times on a soft surface

Anchor (v): to make something or someone stay in one position by fastening them firmly

Cliff (n): an area of high, steep rocks

Weak (adj): not strong

Vanish (v): to disappear suddenly

Run out of (p.v): not have enough energy to finish doing something

APPENDIX-13: FIND THE PRONOUN

In some questions, you should decide which pronoun refers to a noun. If you are asked to find a pronoun, you should look **before the pronoun to find the noun**.

Read the passage and answer the questions please. You have time till Wednesday at 23:30.

Mardi Gras means “Fat Tuesday” in French, and it was introduced to America by French colonists in the early eighteenth century. From that time **it** has grown in popularity, particularly in New Orleans it begins well before the actual Mardi Gras Day. Parades, parties, balls, and numerous festivals take place throughout the week before Mardi Gras Day; tourists from various countries throughout the world flock to New Orleans for the celebration, where **they** take part in a week of nonstop activities before returning home for some much-needed rest.

1) The pronoun “it” in line2 refers to

- a) Mardi Gras
- b) French
- c) That time
- d) New Orleans

2) What does “they” refer in line6?

- a) Countries
- b) Tourists
- c) Festivals
- d) New Orleans

APPENDIX-14: SKILL 4 - ANSWER TRANSITION QUESTIONS CORRECTLY

You can be asked to answer what came before the reading passage (preceding paragraph) or what comes after the readings passage (following paragraph). This is **transition** question.

Read the first line for preceding question. Read the last line for following question.

Read the paragraph below and answer the questions please. You have time till Sunday at 23:30.

Another program in popularization of science was Cosmos. This series, broadcast on public television, dealt with topics and issues from many fields of science. The principle writer and narrator of the program was Carl Sagan, a noted astronomer and Pulitzer Prize-winning author.

1. The paragraph preceding this passage most probably discusses

- a. A different scientific television series
- b. Carl Sagan's scientific achievements
- c. The Pulitzer Prize won by Carl
- d. Public TV

2. The paragraph following this passage contains information on what?

- a. The popularity of science
- b. The program Cosmos
- c. The astronomer Carl Sagan
- d. Topics and issues from various fields of science

APPENDIX-15: SPORTS



Turkey National Football Team squad for international friendly match against Brazil on Nov. 12 and UEFA Euro 2016 Group A qualifier against Kazakhstan on Nov. 16 has been unveiled.

The 28-man Turkey squad for Brazil and Kazakhstan games is as follows:

Goalkeepers: Volkan Babacan (Istanbul Basaksehir), Volkan Demirel (Fenerbahce), Harun Tekin (Bursaspor)

Defenders: Tarik Camdal and Semih Kaya (Galatasaray), Gokhan Gonul, Bekir Irtegun and Caner Erkin (Fenerbahce), Kaan Ayhan (Schalke 04), Serdar Aziz (Bursaspor), Ismail Koybasi (Besiktas)

Midfielders: Hamit Altintop and Selcuk Inan (Galatasaray), Mehmet Ekici (Trabzonspor), Bilal Kisa (Akhisar Belediyespor), Oguzhan Ozyakup, Olcay Sahan and Gokhan Tore (Besiktas), Alper Potuk and Mehmet Topal (Fenerbahce), Ozan Tufan and Volkan Sen (Bursaspor), Arda Turan (Atletico Madrid)

Forwards: Adem Buyuk (Kasimpasa), Umut Bulut and Burak Yilmaz (Galatasaray), Mevlut Erdinc (Saint-Etienne), Mustafa Pektemek (Besiktas)

Taken from: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-squad-for-brazil-and-kazakhstan-games-announced.aspx?pageID=238&nID=74057&NewsCatID=361>

APPENDIX-16: SELFIE

Please read the passage and comment about it. What do you think about selfie? Please write **at least five sentences** (they can be about the new words, topic, new things that you have learned, and your opinion about selfie or passage).

You have time till **Tuesday at 23:30**.



Wherever you go in the world, there is one word, and you can find it in any language, no matter what country you are in, and it has increasingly become very popular; that word is **selfie**. Over the past year, selfies have become a global **obsession** with very

important political leaders such as Barrack Obama, David Cameron and Helle Thorning-Schmidt. They are taking a selfie together, and famous celebrities such as Jennifer Lawrence, Meryl Streep and Brad Pitt are coming together in Ellen Degeneres' selfie to create the most 'A-List' selfie possible. Now we can buy a 'selfie stick' so that we can take the photo from the best possible angle and get as many people as we can into the photo.

I live and work in Barcelona and, like any cosmopolitan European city, it has a mixture of people from all over the world, whether residents or tourists, and this means it has its **fair** share of 'selfie-takers'! Day to day I see many different selfies and have **witnessed** different 'types' of selfies. Therefore, here is a list of different types of selfies:

5. The 'this-is-my-thousandth-selfie-of-the-day' selfie

A truly dedicated 'selfie-taker' who takes so many selfies every day that they have a practiced facial expression for nearly every social situation.

4. The 'embarrassing parent' selfie

In this selfie the parents manage to **persuade** their children to take a family selfie, often thinking they are very hip and modern in doing so, whilst the children try to keep smiling!

3. The over-enthusiastic selfie

Often taken in **mundane** moments this selfie makes any situation look fun.

2. The 'sly selfie'

Often taken in public spaces this selfie is a big achievement.

1. The 'selfie stick' selfie

This signifies true dedication as the owner is so determined to ensure the best selfie possible that they buy a **gadget** to help themselves (although perhaps it looks slightly strange in public).

Obsession (n): someone or something that you think about all the time

Fair (adj): treating everyone in the same way, so that no one has an advantage

Witness (v): to see something happen, especially an accident or crime

Persuade (v): to make someone agree to do something

Mundane (adj): ordinary, or not interesting

Sly (adj): deceiving people in a clever way to get what you want

Gadget (n): a small piece of equipment, tool

Taken from: <http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/magazine/science-and-technology/selfie-experience>

APPENDIX-17: BOOKS

Hey Everybody,

Below find the PDF books. They are all easy for you. I am sure that you can read them in a week 😊 Please let me know when you finish reading a book. You can write as a comment here. Enjoy 😊

[Robinson Crusoe](#)

[London](#)

[Seasons and Holidays](#)

[Scotland](#)

[Football](#)

[USA](#)

[Sherlock HOLMES](#)

Hey guys,

Find the book Sherlock Holmes attached. It has 16 pages, so it will be easy to read. There is not an exact time. When you finish it, let me know and write a comment here.

APPENDIX-18: SKILL 5 - FIND THE WORDS

When you are asked to find the meaning of a word from the passage, you should;

- Find the Word from the passage
- Read the sentences before the word and after it.
- Then guess the meaning.

Questions can be;

- What is the meaning of “___” in line ____.
- The word “___” is closest meaning to
- The word “___” could be replaced by _____

Read the passage and answer the questions. You have time till Tuesday at 23:30.

The teddy bear is a child's toy, a nice stuffed animal. It is a toy, but it has an interesting story behind it. Theodore Roosevelt was called as Teddy and he was president of United States from 1901 to 1909. He was an unusual man with **pastimes** and one of them is hunting. One day, he was invited to join a bear hunt, and because he was the president, everybody wanted him to catch a bear. Then they caught a bear and tied it to a tree. However, Teddy refused to shoot the bear and saved the bear from ropes and set it free. Because of that, all of the journalists wrote it as news. Then first **cartoon**, drawn by Berryman, appeared on a newspaper. Moreover, toy manufacturers began producing a toy bear and called it as “teddy bear”.

1. According to the passage, what is “teddy bear”.

- a. an animal b. president of US c. a famous hunter d. a play thing

2. The word “pastimes” could be replaced by_____

- a. past event b. previous job c. hunting trip d. free time activity

3. What is the meaning of “cartoon” in the passage?

- a. a newspaper b. a type of teddy bear
c. a drawing with a message d. a newspaper article

APPENDIX-19: SHOWS

"Britain's got talent", Posted on November 28, 2014.

Read the passage and write a comment about the topic. What do you think about these kinds of TV shows? You should write at least five sentences.(You can write about the words that you have learnt, the passage, your thought) You have time till **Sunday at 23:30**.



Talent competitions are very popular on British television. Britain's Got Talent is the most famous talent show in the UK and has been running for eight series already. In this programme, people from around the country come and perform a live **audition** in front of famous judges, like the music businessman Simon Cowell and the actress Amanda Holden.

In the first episodes of the show, people come and **show off** lots of different talents. Some of them are really **impressive**. The other day I watched an audition in which an 80-year-old lady danced extremely fast! You can also hear some really **gifted** singers, of all different types of music, as well as magicians and dancers.

Some of the auditions are not very good though. The producers select some of the worst ones to show on television. I once saw a man who wanted to make his pet, owl, do tricks but the owl didn't move: it must have been very **embarrassing** for him! There are also people who don't sing or dance very well, and sometimes the judges can be quite mean to them.

This is why some people disapprove of Britain's Got Talent. Sometimes they can seem a bit **humiliating** for the people performing and the famous judges can give quite **hurtful** comments. Other people think that it is just harmless fun and a great way to see lots of different performers on the same TV show. The viewing figures for the programme are always very high and it has already been announced that it will return in 2015. People can't get enough of talent on television!

Audition (n): when someone does a short performance to try to get a job

Show off (v): someone who tries to make other people admire their abilities or achievements in a way which is annoying

Impressive (adj): Someone or something that is impressive makes you admire and respect them.

Gifted (adj): has a natural ability or is extremely intelligent

Embarrassing (adj): making you feel embarrassed

Hurtful (adj): Hurtful behavior or remarks make someone feel upset.

Humiliating (adj): making you feel stupid or ashamed

Taken from:

<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/magazine/entertainment/talent-television>

APPENDIX-20: SKILL 6 - DETERMINE THE TONE, PURPOSE OR COURSE

What is the tone of the passage?

Tone is the way of writing style and it is asked if the writer shows any emotion.

If the writer is funny= Humorous

If the writer makes fun of something= sarcastic

If the writer thinks something is right or wrong= impassioned

If there is not emotion= factual, informational, explanatory

What is the purpose of the passage?

It is asked to understand what the writer is trying to do.

Which university course can it be included?

History, science, language, art, etc.

Read the passage and answer the questions please. Be careful for the tips above. You have time till Sunday at 23:30.

The rate of deforestation of the world is alarming. In 1950 nearly 25 percent of the earth's land surface was covered with forests, and less than 25 years later, the amount of forest reduced to 20 percent. This decrease from 25 percent to 20 percent from 1950 to 1973 represents an astounding 20 million square kilometers of forests. Predictions are that an additional 20 million square kilometers of forest land will be lost by 2020.

The majority of deforestation is occurring in tropical forests in developing countries, fueled by the developing countries' need for increased agricultural land and the desire on the part of developed countries to import wood and wood products. More than 90 percent of the wood is imported from developing countries.

1. The author's main purpose is to_____

- a. cite statistics about an improvement on the earth's land
- b. explain where deforestation is occurring
- c. make the reader aware of a worsening world problem
- d. blame developing countries for deforestation

2. This passage can be assigned in which of the following course?

- a. geology
- b. geography
- c. geometry
- d. biology

3. Which of the following best describes the tone of the passage?

- a. Concerned
- b. Disinterested
- c. Peaceful
- d. Exaggerated

APPENDIX-21: NATURE

“Rain”, Posted on December 3, 2014.

Read the passage and answer the questions please. You have time till Friday at 23:30.

What makes it rain? Rain falls from clouds for the same reason anything falls to Earth. The Earth’s gravity pulls it. But every cloud is made of water droplets or ice crystals. Why doesn’t rain or snow fall constantly from all clouds? The droplets or ice crystals in clouds are exceedingly small. The effect of gravity on them is **minute**. Air currents move and lift droplets so that the net downward displacement is zero, even though the droplets are in constant **motion**.

Droplets and ice crystals behave like dust in the air made visible in a shaft of sunlight. To the casual observer, dust seems to act in a totally random fashion, moving about chaotically without fixed direction. But in fact dust particles are much larger than water droplets and **they** finally fall. The cloud droplet of average size is only 1/2500 inch in diameter. It is so small that it would take sixteen hours to fall half a mile in perfectly still air, and it does not fall out of moving air at all. Only when the droplet grows to a diameter of 1/125 inch or larger can it fall from the cloud. The average raindrop contains a million times as much water as a tiny cloud droplet. The growth of a cloud droplet to a size large enough to fall out is the cause of rain and other forms of precipitation. This important growth process is called “coalescence.”

1. What is the main topic of the passage?

- (A) The mechanics of rain (B) The climate of North America
(C) How gravity affects agriculture (D) Types of clouds

2. The word ‘minute’ in line 4 is the closest in meaning to which of the following?

- (A) Second (B) Tiny (C) Slow (D) Predictable

3. Why don't all ice crystals in clouds immediately fall to earth?

- (A) They are balanced by the pressure of rain droplets.
- (B) The effect of gravity at high altitude is random.
- (C) They are kept aloft by air currents.
- (D) The heat from the sun's rays melts them.

4. What does the word 'motion' in line 6 mean?

- (A) Wind
- (B) Descent
- (C) Movement
- (D) Humidity

5. What can be inferred about drops of water larger than 1/125 inch in diameter?

- (A) They never occur.
- (B) They are not affected by the force of gravity.
- (C) In still air they would fall to earth.
- (D) In moving air they fall at a speed of thirty-two miles per hour.

6. In this passage, what does the term "coalescence" refer to?

- (A) The gathering of small clouds to form larger clouds
- (B) The growth of droplets
- (C) The fall of raindrops and other precipitation
- (D) The movement of dust particles in the sunlight

7. What is the diameter of the average cloud droplet?

- (A) 1/16 inch
- (B) 1/125 inch
- (C) 1/2500 inch
- (D) One million of an inch

8) What does 'they' refer to in the second paragraph?

- A) dust particles
- B) water droplets
- C) clouds
- D) rain falls

APPENDIX-22: MOVIES

"Hobbit", Posted on December 12, 2014.



Peter Jackson's Hobbit trilogy becomes most expensive film production ever

According to financial documents published in New Zealand, the trilogy of films telling Tolkein's classic fantasy tale have reached a cost of over £460m – with the final few months of spending still not included.

Peter Jackson's trilogy of Hobbit films, currently heading towards its climax with the release of The Battle of the Five Armies in December, has been named as the most expensive film production of all time, at 934m New Zealand dollars (£464m).

The figure was disclosed in financial documents filed in New Zealand, where the films were made, with their studio Warner Bros refusing to comment on the expenditure (expenses). The films were shot back-to-back in a giant single production, generating the record amount – the most expensive single film remains Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End, which cost around £185m.

The financial reports for the Hobbit, for a separate company set up by the studio to run the film, only go up to March of this year, meaning there could be further costs that drive the figure up further come 2015. It's not clear whether marketing costs are included.

Taken from: <http://www.theguardian.com/film/2014/oct/22/peter-jackson-hobbit-trilogy-most-expensive-film-production-ever-battle-of-the-five-armies>

"The Water Diviner", Posted on December 12, 2014.

Russell Crowe to come to Istanbul for film premiere



The premiere will be held on Dec. 5 at the Zorlu Center PSM, and Crowe will be accompanied by Kurylenko throughout his visit to Turkey. The two will also attend a press conference along with Yılmaz Erdoğan and Cem Yılmaz on the day before the screening of the film.

"The Water Diviner," released on the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Gallipoli, is set to hit cinemas on Dec. 26. The film is based on a screenplay by Andrew Knight and Andrew Anastasios. The story focuses on a father from New Zealand-born Crowe's adopted homeland of Australia who travels to Turkey in 1919.

There, he hopes to discover what has happened to his two sons, both of whom have gone missing following the battle for Gallipoli.

Following shootings in Australia, the Turkish scenes of the film were made in Istanbul and the Aegean district of Fethiye's Kayaköy.

Taken from: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/russell-crowe-to-come-to-istanbul-for-film-premiere.aspx?pageID=238&nID=74902&NewsCatID=381>

APPENDIX-23: WORLD WONDERS

“Niagara Falls”, Posted on December 12, 2014.

Read the passage and answer the questions please. You have time till Monday morning at 8:30 😊



Niagara Falls, one of the most famous North American natural wonders, has long been a popular tourist destination. Tourists, today, **flock** to see the two falls that actually constitute Niagara Falls: the 173-foot-high Horseshoe Falls on the Canadian side of Niagara River in the Canadian province of

Ontario and the 182-foot-high American Falls on the U.S side of the river in the state of New York. Approximately 85 percent of the water that goes over the falls actually goes over Horseshoe Falls, with the rest going over American Falls.

Most visitors come between April and October, and it is quite a popular activity to take a **steamer** out onto the river and **right up** to the base of the falls for a close-up view. It is also possible to get a spectacular view of the falls from the strategic locations along the Niagara River, such as Prospect Point or Table Rock, or from one of the four observation towers which have heights up to 500 feet.

Tourists have been visiting Niagara Falls in large numbers since the 1800s; annual visitation now averages above 10 million visitors per year. Because of concern that all these tourists would inadvertently destroy the natural beauty of this scenic wonder, the state of New York in 1885 created Niagara Falls Park in order to protect the land surrounding American Falls. A year later, Canada created Queen Victoria Park on the Canadian side of the Niagara around Horseshoe Falls. With the area surrounding the falls under the jurisdiction of government agencies, appropriate steps could be taken to reserve the pristine beauty of the area.

1. What is the major point that the author is making in this passage?

- a. Niagara Falls can be viewed from either the American or the Canadian side.
- b. A trip to U.S isn't complete without a visit to Niagara Falls.
- c. Niagara Falls has had an interesting history.
- d. It has been necessary to protect Niagara Falls from the many tourists who go there.

2. The word "flock" could best be replaced by

- a. Come by plane
- b. Come in large numbers
- c. Come out of boredom
- d. Come without knowing what they will see

3. According to the passage, which of the followings best describes Niagara Falls?

- a. Niagara Falls consists of two rivers, one Canadian and the other American
- b. American Falls is considerably higher than Horseshoe Falls
- c. The Niagara River has two falls, one in Canada and one in the U.S.
- d. Although the Niagara River flows through the U.S and Canada, the falls are only in the U.S

4. A "steamer" is probably

- a. A bus
- b. A boat
- c. A walkway
- d. A park

5. The expression “right up” could best be replaced by

- a. Turn to the right
- b. Follow correct procedures
- c. Travel upstream
- d. All the way up

6. The passage implies that tourists prefer to

- a. Visit Niagara Falls during warmer weather
- b. See the falls from a great distance
- c. Take a ride over the falls
- d. Come to Niagara Falls for a winter vacation

7. According to the passage, why was Niagara Park created?

- a. To encourage tourists to visit Niagara Falls
- b. To show off the natural beauty of Niagara Falls
- c. To protect the area around Niagara Falls
- d. To force Canada to open Queen Victoria Park

8. The paragraph following the passage most probably discusses

- a. Additional ways to observe the falls
- b. Steps taken by government agencies to protect the falls
- c. A detailed description of division of the falls between U.S and Canada
- d. Further problems that are destroying the area around the falls

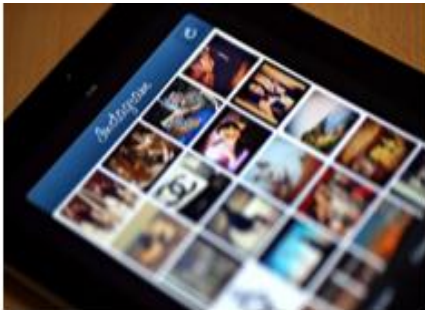
APPENDIX-24: APPLICATIONS

"Instagram", Posted on December 16, 2014.

Read the passage and write a comment please. You should use one of the words that is written in bold below, and you can send one of your Instagram photo, too. You have time till Thursday at 23:55.

Instagram users turn flash into cash

Growing number of users making career of photo-sharing hobby as brands see app as gateway to younger audience



Seen through the filter of Instagram, the world is a beautiful place: high-contrast blue skies; sepia-tinted sunsets; plates of food and raindrops sliding down windows in perfect formation. It may be a **manipulated** perspective on life, but 200 million people across the world now use the photo app,

sharing 60m pictures a day. Yet for some users, Instagram is **generating** more than **appreciative** likes and comments as they document their lives, travels and eating habits on their smartphones.

From Nike to the Namibian tourist board, brands and organizations are turning to the most followed users in the pursuit of a broader and younger audience – and are paying handsomely for their services.

Cue the rise of the Instagram professionals, users who began using the app for fun but are now earning six-figure salaries and being **flown** around the world to take photos to share with their thousands, sometimes hundreds of thousands, of followers.

manipulate (v): to control someone or something in a clever way

generate (v): Produce

Flown(v): Fly- Flew- Flown

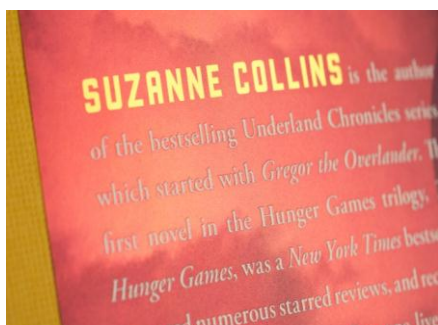
appreciative (adj): showing that you understand how good something is

Cue (n): an action or event that shows that something should happen

APPENDIX-25: A REVIEW OF A BOOK

"Hunger Games", Posted on December 24, 2014.

Please read the passage and answer the questions below. You have time till Thursday at 23.30. Enjoy it.



The Hunger Games is a book by the American author Suzanne Collins. It was published in 2008 and has sold millions of copies. It is the first book for young readers to sell a million electronic books and you can buy it in 26 different languages. The Hunger Games is now a very successful film. It made 152,5 million dollars in its first weekend in North America!

The story is set in the future, after the **destruction** of North America. The country is called Panem. There are twelve poor districts **governed** by the rich Capitol. There was a thirteenth district in the past but the Capitol destroyed them because they **rebelled**.

The Capitol organizes the Hunger Games every year to **punish** the districts. One boy and one girl, aged 12 to 18, fight in a **battle**. Only one person will live. The chosen teenagers are called "tributes". The whole country must watch the games on television.

The story is about Katniss Everdeen, a sixteen-year-old girl. Her father died and now she has to kill animals for her family to eat. Her younger sister, Prim, is chosen to be a "tribute", but Katniss volunteers to go instead. The other "tribute" from District 12 is a boy named Peeta.

Where did the idea for The Hunger Games come from?

One night in 2003, Suzanne Collins was watching TV. It was at the time of the US invasion of Iraq. The only programmes she could find on TV were 'reality' programmes of young people competing to win a million dollars and news

programmes about the war. Suzanne says that the two things started to mix together in **her** head and she had the idea for The Hunger Games.

She has always found news programmes of wars **upsetting**. When she was a child, her father was a pilot in the US air force and he fought in Vietnam. It was a very frightening experience for her.

Too much violence?

Some parents in the US have complained about the violence in the book. But Suzanne says she was very worried about how much violence we see on TV nowadays. Suzanne is also worried about the amount of reality TV we watch. “We put too much of our lives on TV,” she says. “And we care less for people because of this.” She said that writing about death and violence in the story was the hardest thing for her to do and she hopes it will make people think about what they watch in future.

destruction (n): when something is destroyed

govern (v): to officially control a country

rebel (v): someone who fights against the government in their country

battle (n) : a fight between two armies in a war

upsetting (adj) : making you feel unhappy

1. What does ‘her’ refer in the passage?

2. What does ‘punish’ mean in the passage?

3. What do you think about the book?

APPENDIX-26: VOCABULARY UNITS 6-10

➤ Unit 6- Staying In Shape

“Just play. Have fun. Enjoy the game.” Michael Jordan



Play basketball



Go running



Go swimming



Play soccer



Go bike riding



Do aerobics



Lift weights



Cook dinner



Sleep



Clean the house



Play golf



Go dancing



Go shopping

Take a shower

Talk on the phone

➤ Unit 7- On Vacation

“College is the longest vacation you will ever take.” Dan Indante and Karl Marks



The nature at the camping site was **amazing**, so we stayed there along the week.

Because of the **awful** wait at the bus stop for an



hour. weather we had to



At the first day of my job everybody was **friendly**.

If you don't want to **lose** use a map.



your way you should



Comfortable: providing relaxation

Scenic: views of



beautiful natural scenery



Bumpy: involving sudden movements or jumping a lot.

➤ **Unit 8- Shopping For Clothes**

“A bargain is something you can’t use at a price you can’t resist.” **Franklin P. Jones**



Sweatshirt Pumps Cardigan Turtleneck Oxfords Windbreaker



Flats Blazer Running shoes Loafers Sweatpants Tank top

Appropriate (adj): Socially correct

Liberal (adj): without many rules for appropriate dress

Conservative (adj): with more rules for appropriate dress

Formal (adj): not casual

Informal (adj): Casual clothes

In shape (exp): Be in physically good condition

Out of shape (exp): not healthy or physically strong

➤ **Unit 9- Transportation**

“Transportation is the center of the world! It is the glue of our daily lives. When it goes well, we don’t see it. When it goes wrong, it negatively colors our day, makes us feel angry and impotent, curtails our possibilities.” Robin Chase

Coincidence (n): when two very similar things happen at the same time but there is no reason for it.

What a small world = what a coincidence

A one-way ticket (exp): A one-way ticket for a journey can only be used to travel in one direction and not for returning.

A round-trip ticket (exp): a ticket that lets you travel to a place and back again, for example on a train

A direct flight (exp): It makes intermediary stop where some passengers get off the plane while others remain. New passengers can get on the plane at this stop.

Aisle (n): a passage between the lines of seats in a plane, train, bus, etc.

Rental car (n): an arrangement to rent a car.

Depart (v): Leave

Take off (p.v): when an aircraft leaves the ground and begins to fly

Land (v): The plane arrives on the ground after a journey

Overbook (v): to sell more tickets or places for an aircraft, holiday, etc. than are available

Delay (v): to make something happen at a later time than originally planned

Cancel (v): to say that an organized event will not now happen

Bump from (p.v): it means someone lost his seat on a flight or bus or train.

No-shows (exp): people who have reservations but don't show up for the flight.

➤ **Unit 10-Shopping Smart**

“Bargain... anything a customer thinks a store is losing money on.” **Kin Hubbard**

Currency: the units of money used in a particular country

Exchange rate: the amount of another country's money that you can buy with a particular amount of your own country's money

Expenses: money that you spend when you are doing your job

Fee: an amount of money that you pay to do something

Transaction: when someone buys or sells something, or when money is exchanged

Charge: the amount of money that you have to pay for something

Tip: an extra amount of money that you give to someone

Customary: normal, traditional

Round off the fare: If the fare is 4,75; you can round off it. Then it will be 5,00.

Porter: someone whose job is to carry other people's bags

Maid: housekeeper

Bargain: something that is sold for less than its usual price or its real value

Rip-off: something that costs far too much money

➤ **Top Notch 2**

Unit 1: Greetings and Small talk



Bow (v): to bend your head or body forward

Hug (v):

Polite (adj): x Rude

Consider (v): Think

Customs (n): Traditions



Keep in touch (exp): Someone call you or email you in the future.

Go sightseeing (v): the activity of visiting places which are interesting because they are historical, famous, etc.

Expert (n): someone who has a lot of skill or knowledge in something

Firm (adj): strong and tight

Get off on the wrong foot (exp): Make a bad start

Sensitive (adj): able to understand what people are feeling

Find out (p.v): Learn

Fascinating (adj): extremely interesting

Thrilling (adj): very exciting

Frightening (adj): making you feel afraid or nervous

Disgusting (adj): extremely unpleasant

Unit 2: Movies and Entertainment

Involve (v): to make someone be part of an activity or process

Touching (n): making someone feel emotions

Con artist (n): a person who tricks or lies to people in order to get money

Ill-fated (adj): have an unhappy ending

Base on (p.v): If you base something on facts or ideas, you use them to develop it.

Struggle (v): to try very hard to do something difficult

Magnificent (adj): very good or very beautiful

A bunch of (adj): a lot of

Frankly (adv): To tell the truth

It is my treat (exp): I will pay

Can't stand (p.v): don't like

Oversleep (v): to sleep longer than you had intended

Hilarious (adj): very funny

Weird (adj): very strange in a negative way

Thought-provoking (adj): something that makes you think

Violent (adj): bloody

Commit (v): to do something that is considered wrong, or that is illegal

Consequences (n): results

Demonstrate (v): show

Exposure (n): when someone experiences something or is affected by it because they are in a particular situation or place

Convict of (p.v): to decide officially in a court of law that someone is guilty



Unit 3: staying in hotels

Rollaway bed: a bed on wheels that you can move very easily

Twin bed: one of a pair of two beds

Let someone down: disappoint someone

Suite: group of rooms that connect together

Put this on: pay with

Give you a hand: help

Check out of: leave



Hangers: a wire, wooden, or plastic object for hanging clothes on

Make up the room: to tidy the room



Turn down the beds (p.v): preparing the bed for use

Bring up a newspaper (exp): take away the dishes:

Located (v): to be in a particular place

fabulous (adj): extremely good



Fountain (n): a structure that forces water up into the air as a decoration



Impeccably (adv): Extremely

Attentive (adj): listening or watching carefully and showing that you are interested

Concierge (n): someone who is employed in a hotel to help guests arrange things

APPENDIX-27: QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire on Using a Class Blog to Improve Reading Skill of the Students

This questionnaire is prepared to be able to investigate students' opinions about using blogs to improve their reading skill along a term. In the first section of the questionnaire, there is a background part in which there are questions for your information. In the second part, you will see some statements that you will give your level of English. In the next part, there are statements to learn your thoughts about Internet Use. In the fourth part of the questionnaire, there are general statements about blogs. While answering this part, you can think about all of the blogs that you follow. In the last part, there are 22 statements all of which are related with your experience of the use of your class blog. Everything that you share will remain confidential. The questionnaire will take 10 minutes. Please pay attention. Thank you for your participation.

Tuğçe TEMİR,

E-mail address: ttemir@thk.edu.tr

PART A: Background Information

Department :
 Age :
 Sex :
 Year of studying English:

Part B: Student's Level in the Reading Skills

<i>Tick the one that applies to you</i>	<i>Can Do Statements</i>	
How would you rate your reading skills <u>in September</u>?	I could understand basic notices, instructions or information.	<input type="checkbox"/>
	I could understand straightforward information within a known area, such as on products and signs and simple textbooks or reports on familiar matters.	<input type="checkbox"/>
	I could understand routine information and articles, and the general meaning of non-routine information within a familiar area.	<input type="checkbox"/>
How would you rate your reading skills <u>now</u>?	I can understand basic notices, instructions or information.	<input type="checkbox"/>
	I can understand straightforward information within a known area, such as on products and signs and simple textbooks or reports on familiar matters.	<input type="checkbox"/>
	I can understand routine information and articles, and the general meaning of non-routine information within a familiar area.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part C: Student's Internet Use

<i>Tick the appropriate option for you.</i>	<i>Always</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Seldom</i>	<i>Never</i>
1. How often do you use the internet?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. How often do you use internet for pleasure?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. How often do you use the internet for your English courses?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. How often do you use the internet for reading (Newspapers, magazines, books, blogs, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. How often do you connect to the internet from your home?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. How often do you connect to the internet from your dormitory?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. How often do you connect to the internet from the school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. How often do you connect to the internet from the internet cafe?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part D: Attitudes to Blogs

What do you think about using blogs to develop reading skills in English?

Tick the one that applies to you	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. I believe I should read to improve my reading skills.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I believe blogs are useful for developing reading skills.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I have positive attitudes towards using blogs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. My interest to reading can be increased by blogs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. My motivation to reading can be increased by blogs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. My reading ability can improve via blogs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Blogs can increase my vocabulary knowledge.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Blogs can increase my achievements in reading skills.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. I can access authentic reading passages from blogs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. I can express my thoughts after reading in blogs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part E: Attitudes Towards The Teacher-facilitated Blog

What do you think about using your class blog in this term?

Tick the one that applies to you best	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. It was good to have a blog of my class.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. It made me share my thoughts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. It was enjoyable to read from a blog.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. It was good to learn new reading skills for the exams.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. It revised the words that I learned in the class.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. It taught new words.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. It gave authentic passages or news.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. It gave passages which are appropriate for my interest.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. It enabled me to understand the passages better.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. It helped me to do better in the exam.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. It prepared me to the exams.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. It gave tips for the reading exams.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. It was easy to use.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. It took too much time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

15. I prefer blogging to the traditional way of reading.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. I had difficulty in using it as I do not have computer or internet access.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. I liked to use the blog.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. I expressed my thoughts in the blog after reading passages.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. My motivation in reading increased.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. I believe that blogging increased my reading skill.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. I could control my learning process.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. I want to use it again.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

APPENDIX-28: INTERVIEW

My name is Tuğçe TEMİR. I am both an instructor in UTAA and an MA student in Hacettepe University ELT Department. As for my thesis, I want to interview with you. The questions are selected from your experience of using blogs to improve your reading skill as an out-of-class activity. If you give permission for the recording, I want to record your voice to be able to transcribe and use your thoughts inside my study to enlighten the literature. Please feel free to say what you think about the questions honestly. If you have difficulty to speak English please let me know. Shall we start?

1. What is your name?
2. What is your department?
3. What was your class in the first term?
4. How was your English when you came to school at the beginning of the term?
5. You used a class blog with A18, How was its templates?
6. What are the parts in the blog?
7. What do you think about use of the blog?
8. Was it beneficial for you? If so, how?
9. Did you improve your reading or vocabulary skills by using the blog?
10. Did you like the use of the blog?
11. Is there anything that you dislike about using it?
12. How did you feel about your teacher's comments on your blog?
13. Did you get an immediate feedback from your teacher?
14. What do you think the advantages of using a blog?
15. If you have a chance, do you want to use it again? Why?

I want to thank you to give answers to these questions. They will be very helpful for the study. If you want you can send me an email to learn the results of the study.

Here is my e-mail: ttemir@thk.edu.tr

A sample interview transcription of student-1 is given in below.

Coding: “yellow” for benefits, “green” for challenges and “blue” for suggestions.

My name is Emre Zengin. My department is astronautical engineering. My class was Alpha 18 in the first term. At the beginning of the term my English was not good. I was a little bit away from English part of the hardest level. It gets better every day.

The template was good because the admin of the page is keeping us cheerful so the templates were always changing. They are in an appropriate way. It depends on the importance of the days because for example, our teacher changed the template on the New Year Day. It became green with gift boxes and trees on the top of the blog. It was fun because we are curious about the appearance of the blog.

We have reading part and skills we have, vocabulary part, announcement and news parts. There are a lot of words in this part, and normally I do not want to write the words to my notebook, so just checking them from the blog so that I can remember every word, so I like both the reading and vocabulary part a lot. The best one is reading because I did not know anything about reading then I started to use and learned many things. I think it is very beneficial. I realized its benefits in reading exams because I got high grades from the reading part after I used the blog. I have the highest grades in fact in this school. In the last term it was TOEFL term and my friends and I who were from Alpha 18 have better grades for reading than others. I really like using the blog. I mean all of the parts are very beneficial for me.

It was very good because my teacher ask me to write vocabs that I don't know but sometimes I couldn't find time to do so but on the web site there are all of the words so I could check everything from there. Some words had definitions some have pictures and some are mentioned inside the texts so we can learn them from there.

It was good to read from our teacher' comments. Not immediate but it was about the due date it was about how we suppose to find the answers. We have to do the questions but not everyone at the same time. She answers immediately as the deadline finishes, but all of us had different deadlines because sometimes our teacher lets us read it one more time, so it was as it needs to be.

Actually I had time to do everything but the part of the comments was challenging. We had to comment on our friends' answers. Then they commented on ours. Then we commented again. This goes on like this. The whole page become bigger and bigger. Then it could be difficult to catch them, and every time you have to check what they wrote. Except that there is nothing.

For a suggestion, it should have gone on till the end of the year. And as you know we were changed our classes, in fact I want to use it in my other classes, too because I loved it when it finished I felt gap. Absolutely I want to use it again. In fact after the term finished, I checked the blog nearly at least 10 times to see if you uploaded anything new. Thank you

APPENDIX-29: ORIGINALITY REPORT

21-Jul-2016 11:23AM
https://app.ithenticate.com/ithenticate_dv?lang=en_us&o=18742633
 33098 words • 282 matches • 118 sources
 Using Blogs in Reading
 BY TUĞÇE TEMİR
 Quizes Excluded
 Bibliography Excluded
 9%
 SIMILAR

ÜNİVERSİTE DÜZEYİNDEKİ HAZIRLIK SINIFI
 ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN OKUMA BECERİSİNDEKİ BAŞARILARI
 İLE BLOG KULLANIMI ARASINDAKİ İLİŞKİ

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN USING BLOGS AND
 ACHIEVEMENT IN READING SKILLS OF PREP-CLASS
 STUDENTS AT TERTIARY LEVEL

Tuğçe TEMİR

Submitted to the Graduate School of Educational Sciences of
 Hacettepe University as a Partial Fulfillment to the Requirements
 to the Award for Degree of Master
 in English Language Teaching Program
 2015

PAGE 1 OF 34

Match Overview

1	Internet 240 words crawled on 07-Oct-2014 www.themethods.com	1%
2	CrossCheck 133 words Tuan, Luu Trong, "Reading Reading through WebQuest", <i>Journal of Language Teaching and Research</i> , 2011.	<1%
3	Internet 118 words crawled on 28-Aug-2014 tabaran.ac.ir	<1%
4	CrossCheck 80 words EIT Editor, "Vol.2, No.2, June 2007", <i>English Language Teaching</i> , 2009.	<1%
5	CrossCheck 65 words Hui-Yin Hsu, "The Impact of Using Blogs on College Students' Reading Comprehension and Learning Motivation", <i>Litara</i>	<1%
6	Internet 61 words crawled on 26-Apr-2015 www.academpublisher.com	<1%
7	CrossCheck 79 words Hossein, Edin, Shahrzad Sarafshah, Fateme Bakhtpour, and Hamed Reza Dolatabadi, "The Impact of Using Eynodj, ..."	<1%
8	Internet 70 words crawled on 25-May-2015 dc.asu.edu	<1%
9	Internet 78 words crawled on 14-Jun-2015 admission.ode.edu	<1%
10	Internet 69 words crawled on 08-Aug-2010 www.russ.edu.sg	<1%

TarConv Report

CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

<i>Name Surname</i>	Tuğçe TEMİR
<i>Place of Birth</i>	Ereğli
<i>Date of Birth</i>	26.07.1988

EDUCATION

<i>High School</i>	Aydın Efeler Super High School	2006
<i>Undergraduate</i>	Gazi University	2011
<i>Postgraduate</i>	Hacettepe University	2015
<i>Languages</i>	English: Advance German: Beginner	

Work Experience

<i>Projects</i>	European Language Portfolio	2012 - 2013
	Erasmus+	2015
<i>Working Places</i>	TED Kayseri College	2011 - 2013
	TED Polatlı College	2013
	THK University	2014 -

Academic

Publications

Temir T. (2014) 'Portfolio Assessment', International Online Journal of Education and Teaching, Vol.1 No.1
--

Seminars and Conferences

Sarıçoban A., Temir T. (2015) "Relationship between using blogs and students' achievements in reading skills at tertiary level" 13 TH ELTA Conference / Serbian
--

Certificates

Sarıçoban A., Temir T. (2015) "Relationship between using blogs and students' achievements in reading skills at tertiary level" 13 TH ELTA Conference / Serbian
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Contact

<i>E-mail</i>	ttemir@thk.edu.tr
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<i>Date of defense</i>	10.07.2015
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