A Clarificative Evaluation of an Internet-Based MA program in English Language Teaching (E-ELT) Project at Yeditepe University

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Abstract

Developments in the information and communication technologies (ICT) brought revolutionary changes in some forms of education during the last decades. In order to meet increasing education needs, web-based learning has emerged as an alternative to conventional way of education that confines teaching and learning into schools, and become a preferred model of training in many disciplines including teacher education (Miguel et al., 2006; Sakar, 2009). A web-based project that offers a distance MA program to the experienced teachers of English language was initiated by the Institute of Educational Sciences at Yeditepe University. The present study explores the way this program is delivered, and aims to define its logic model in order to see the relationship between the program inputs, outputs, and the intended outcomes. Data was obtained through a needs assessment questionnaire, interviews with eight participating teachers of English, and three e-ELT staff, and the detailed analysis of written documents about the project. The findings were used to propose a program logic and to identify the elements of the program that needs to be improved to better meet the stakeholders' needs.

Keywords Clarificative evaluation, logic model, e-ELT, internet-based education, distance teacher education, e-learning

1. Concepts of e-learning and blended-learning

The initial applications of web-based learning programs were the online versions of classroom-based courses (Singh, 2003). Although such programs provided a flexible and interactive environment for a performance oriented learning at individual pace, the learners were deprived of the benefits of in-class learning such as social contact, personal supervision for confidence and motivation (Tick, 2006), various modes of instructional delivery (Singh, 2003) and immediate feedback (Lim, 2002). Having realized that e-learning with a single delivery mode cannot provide the context for successful learning, the educators combined face-to-face instruction with distance education delivery systems trying to maximize the benefits of in-class and online methods (Osguthorpe & Graham, 2003). Thus, using multiple training approaches and communication technologies available to learners and instructors, they created a *blended learning* context richer than either type of learning environment (Harding et al., 2005; Tick, 2006).

Although there is a general tendency to describe blended learning as educational situation in which e-learning is combined with traditional face-to-face instruction, there are a variety of views on the elements that should be included in this type of learning design. Valiathan (2002) differentiates between skill, attitude, and competency-based approaches to blended learning design. Skill-driven model combines self-paced learning with instructor support to improve specific skills while attitude-driven learning combines various events and delivery media to encourage the development of some behaviors. For attitude development, face-to-face meetings, online discussion forums, chat modules or technology-based collaborative activities are integrated in the learning process. Competency-driven model,

however, emphasizes the improvement of competencies that can be learnt through online mentoring and performance support tools with knowledge management resources.

Carmen (2002) suggests that blended-learning should integrate self-paced learning, live events, collaboration, assessment, and performance support materials; and should use technologies like synchoronous communication tools, electronic and printed materials, multimedia and resuable learning materials like audio and video clips, texts, and graphics. After a detailed review of blended designs Mortera-Gutierrez (2006, p.316) lists the most used elements of blending learning as (a) traditional classroom or lab settings (face-to-face instruction), (b) reading assignments (print-based workbooks), (c) CD-ROM (self-paced content), (d) performance support tools (e.g., collaboration software, discussions, online testing, etc.), (e) teletraining (e.g., videoconferencing, audioconferencing), (f) stand-alone web-based training (virtual classroom), (g) asynchronous web-based training (e.g., through e-mail, discussion boards, etc.), and (h) synchronous web-based training (e.g. chat rooms, computer conferencing).

Having criticized the definitions which lead one to believe that any supplementary use of technology within conventional education is blending, Yoon and Lim (2007) propose a conceptual framework which offers purposeful mix of face-to-face instructions and technologies to support instructional (e.g. live class, workshop, tutoring, etc.) and noninstructional (e.g. feedback, resources, reward systems, etc.) performance solutions. In this strategic blending framework, the ingredients of the design are derived from institutional expectations and learner needs that are addressed by various delivery formats adaptable to specific situations. In that case, for instance, some blended designs may need ‘web for the first

and final stages with face-to-face sessions in between' format while some others need more onsite workshops, group work activities or classroom set-ups.

In this framework, Yoon and Lim acknowledge the important role of administrative and organizational resources and constraints for the effectiveness of instructional decisions. In other words, as also suggested by Khan (cited in Singh, 2003), issues regarding the availability of needs analysis and learning objectives, pedagogic content to be delivered, technological infrastructure, qualified personnel, and appropriate management decisions need to be handled for the construction of an effective design. Besides, budget issues for producing materials, arranging equipments, and providing instructors should also be considered as e-learning requires substantial funds and sources for "purchasing, developing, implementing, maintaining and updating technologies" (Yoon & Lim, 2007, p.485).

Within the light of these accounts, web-based or distance education programs can be designed in a variety of forms; and those designed with an appropriate balance of face-to-face interactions and technology can provide a number of advantages when implemented with appropriate methods and tools. On the one hand, learners benefit from the advantages of face-to-face learning in a more interactive environment. On the other hand, they get an active control over the pace of learning, instructional flow, and selection of resources (Chung and Davis, 1995) and enjoy a sense of accomplishment from working independently in their own time frame. In the meantime, they get skilled at technology and internet resources (Altunay & Mutlu, 2008).

2. Distance English Language Teacher Education in Turkey

Web-based distance education has found support in many countries in a variety of disciplines including teacher education. As reported by UNESCO (2001, 2002, cited in Altunay & Mutlu, 2008) the number of students who are out of school and who cannot receive quality education increases all over the world; and hence, demand for well-trained and qualified teachers increases as well. Not only does this situation add to the load of available teacher education programs to graduate more teachers, but also it requires in-service teachers to update their skills and knowledge with further professional development to keep up with the demands for quality education. At this point, distance education is regarded a solution to the problem of quality and quantity; and therefore, programs that offer distance teacher education and training has been encouraged. Altunay & Mutlu (2008) presents the partial list of institutions which offers such programs in the world.

Similarly, a global increase in the need for learning English has resulted in the need for English language teachers. In Turkey, the Higher Education Act of 1981 authorized Anadolu University to establish Open Education System to be the national distance education provider. With the introduction of eight-year compulsory education in 1998, foreign language courses became part of curriculum for the 4th and 5th graders in elementary school. This change caused a serious deficit in the number of English language teachers, and encouraged Anadolu University to offer a four-year bachelor degree (BA) blended learning ELT programme in 2000 (Latchem, 2006). In the programme, the enrolled students received 10 hours a week on-campus language teaching and e-learning in education during the first two years. In year 3 and 4, however, almost all courses were delivered online. Today, the Open Education Faculty ELT BA is the only programme providing distance education in ELT in Turkey (Sakar, 2009).

The first attempt to initiate an MA program in internet-based English Language Teaching (e-ELT) in Turkey, on the other hand, was made by the Institute of Educational Sciences at Yeditepe University.

3. Construction of a program logic for the e-ELT project

Within the framework of e-ELT program that was initiated as a pilot project at Yeditepe University during the academic year of 2007-2008, web-based courses were offered to experienced English language teachers who wanted to hold an MA degree. Before describing the project, it is of great importance to make an explicit description of its underlying rationale and logic model.

According to Owen (2007), the construction of a program logic is one of the approaches in clarificative evaluation that describes the program by showing the links between its assumptions, objectives and activities. In other words, a logic model is a simplified picture of a program that displays the logical relations among the resources invested in the program, the activities undertaken, services provided to program participants, and the changes or benefits that result. As such, it establishes a framework for understanding the elements of the program and the causal relations between them. Besides, logic model also identifies the realistic goals of a program that are atttainable as well as those that are unattainable, and thus forms the basis for the program development by building the shared understanding and expectations within the stakeholders of the program (Wholey et al. 2004).

In an attempt to understand the way this pilot e-ELT program is designed in order to achieve its objectives, the present study aims to 1) define its logic or underlying rationale by

displaying the relationship between the program input, output, and the intended outcomes, 2) identify the needs of the program stakeholders, i.e, students enrolled in the program, e-ELT instructors and the institution, and 3) identify the elements or the components of the program that needs to be modified to better meet the program needs. Finally, the study makes suggestions regarding the ideal way the program needs to be implemented based on their perceptions of the program.

II. Method

2.1. Internet-Based English Language Education Project at Yeditepe University

Internet-Based English Language Education program that has been evaluated in this paper is a project implemented by the English Language Teaching Department of the Institute of Educational Sciences at Yeditepe University. This internet-based projet aimed to develop an interactive and student-centered distance education program in order to support the professional development of English language teachers with at least 2 years of teaching experience in Turkey. The project also aimed to offer distance education service to teachers from the schools that are connected to American and Canadian Universities which Yeditepe University has exchange protocols with; and teachers who are enrolled in an MA program at these universities.

The piloting of this project was initiated during the academic year of 2007-2008, and was terminated in 2008-2009. During that period the e-ELT program had been offered for three semestres. At the very beginning of the project, the principals of the Anatolian High Schools the graduates of which have a high rate of application to and acceptance by the ELT

department at Yeditepe University were contacted to be informed about the pilot program. Thus, 13 teachers from Ankara Atatürk Anadolu Lisesi, Bornova Anadolu Lisesi, and Bursa Anadolu Lisesi volunteered to participate in the program. The project was first introduced to these teachers in June 2007 at Doga Club of Yeditepe University.

The project team included four full-time professors one of whom is the head of department and of the project, and the rest are ELT staff who are the instructors of the internet-based ELT courses offered. The Institution of Educational Sciences also hired a graduate assistant to work on this project throughout her doctoral studies. Besides, the University Rectory assured the project team of any technical support to be provided by the teaching staff of the department of Computer Engineering.

2.2. The Medium of Content Delivery: Moodle

As emphasized by Tick (2006), the key issue in the implementation of e-learning is the management and delivery of the learning content by an appropriate learner or course management system (LMS/CMS). These sytems are web applications with a variety of tools that allow educators to create web sites for internet-based courses, and give them access control so the course can be viewed only by the enrolled students. In order to select the most appropriate management system, it is important to consider the delivery format of e-learning (i.e whether it will be blended or completely online with no face-to-face interactions).

For the current e-ELT project, the team decided to use *Moodle* which is a commonly used, open source software package built on a sound educational philosophy. Based on the principles of social constructionist pedagogy suggesting that people learn best when they are

engaged in a social process of constructing knowledge, Moodle provides the users with many tools for discussion and sharing ideas to construct knowledge (Cole & Foster, 2005). It allows student registration, uploading and sharing materials, forums and chats, reviewing assignments and posts, tracking student activity reports, assessment, and recording grades. Besides, it is available cost-free on its website (http://www.moodle.org), and accessed easily through a web-browser and installed by any educator who is willing to create online learning communities.

The e-ELT staff who were in charge of the development and implementation of the internet-based program adapted four class-based courses that are already offered in the preparatory phase of face-to-face MA program to Moodle environment. These were the core courses on second language acquisition, language teaching methods, the use of technology, and testing in ELT. After the program web site was created, e-ELT staff was given a training on how Moodle works by an instructor who has previous experience in the use of Moodle to teach foreign languages. Later, the e-ELT staff visited participating schools to introduce Moodle to the volunteer participants of the program. In these visits, they were provided with a visual demonstration on Moodle, and shown how to register in the program through their moodle accounts.

2.3. Participants

Although there had been 12 volunteer participants of the e-ELT project, data used in the identification of student needs came from the eight of them in the summer of 2009. Due to the timing of data collection, four of them could not be reached throughout the summer despite their initial consent to participate in the study. All of the eight participants, 6 females and 2

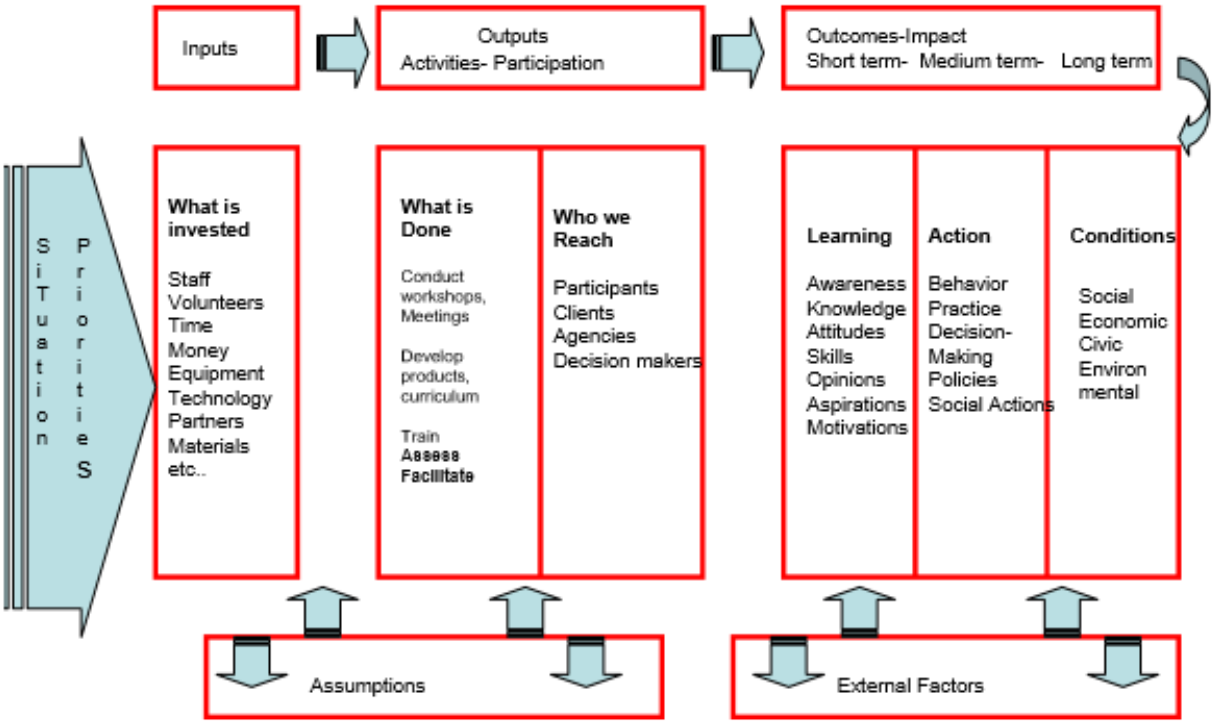
males, were graduates of a four-year language teaching program, and working at the capacity of English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers in three Anatolian High schools with a teaching load of 20-25 hours a week. These teachers with an age range of 34-to-49 had 11-to-28 years of teaching experience in EFL. The background questionnaire given to them has revealed that all of the participants had prior experience in using computers, especially Microsoft word and internet to prepare course materials and to check e-mails; however, they had no previous experience in web-based distance learning. Besides, they all had access to internet at their home and schools.

In order to clarify the program theory, three members of the project team who were the teaching staff of the department of English Language Teaching were interviewed. As their views reflected their perceptions of the program logic, it was vitally important to take their perspective to understand the perceived needs and objectives of the pilot e-ELT project. Except for one of these professors who had taken online courses during her graduate studies, the rest had no previous experience in web based education and the use of Moodle.

2.4. Data Collection and Analysis

In the identification of program logic, any written document about the program and the perceptions of those involved in the program form the most significant sources of information (Owen, 2007). Therefore, any e-ELT documents including program proposals presented to Yeditepe University Rectory and the Higher Education Council were investigated with a normative approach to be able to clarify the relation between the program input, output and impact. Besides, Moodle print outs of the student activity reports in the web-based courses

were studied with the course instructors in order to understand how internet-based courses were implemented. These documents were analyzed in consideration with a logic model proposed in UW-Extension web-site (http://www.uwex.edu/ces/Imcourse/#) with the following elements:



To be able to identify learners' views on and expectations from the pilot distance MA program, a questionnaire was developed based on participating EFL teachers' e-mail responses to five preliminary questions on their perceived needs (see Appendix A). The questionnaire was also inspired by the guide provided by Marsh (2001) in order to determine the most effective blended learning program. Hence, the instrument had four brief sections to collect data on personal background, technical background and available resources, learners'

expectations, and concerns with the program including their suggestions. The questionnaire included 5-point likert type, yes/no, multiple-choice, and open ended type of questions, and was pilot tested for the verbalization of its items before the actual data collection (see Appendix B).

Data were also collected through semi-structured interviews conducted on the phone with these participants. As the subjects were residing in different cities, face-to-face or focus group interviews were not feasible to make in this study. Therefore, each participant was contacted to set an appropriate date for a telephone interview that lasted about 30-40 minutes. During the interviews, notes were taken for the content analysis.

In order to take all stakeholders' point of view in the development of program theory, the e-ELT staff was also interviewed and made part of the process of developing logic model. The interviews that were all conducted in Turkish were audio-recorded to be transcribed later.

3. Results

3.1. The results of the needs assessment questionnaire and the interviews with participants

Some of the data obtained through the questionnaire (Part C, Q14, 15 & 16) were analyzed by SPSS 15.0 to see the frequency of answers and the mean values of these items. Although the sample size of this evaluation study is too small to make any assumptions, some descriptive statistics may be used to have a rough idea about the expectations of participating teachers from the distance education program. The results obtained on this section of the

questionnaire revealed that all of the participating teachers (100%) joined the program in order to keep up with the recent developments in the field of ELT as they also verbalized during the interviews. They explained that as it has been at least 10 years since they graduated from college, and they have a strong need to update their knowledge to be able to better respond to their students' needs. This reason was followed by a need to get a master's degree for career advancement, for professional development, collaboration with colleagues, and the convenience of the program in terms of time and place with a response frequency of 87.5 % (see Appendix C). Only one of the teachers stated that he joined the program, because he had an intention of pursuing his doctoral studies in the future. As they have a quite a load of teaching at their schools, distance education is his only choice to achieve his future goals. Considering their needs, teachers expect the program to offer courses on language testing and materials development & adaptation (100%), teaching methods, research methods, teaching skills and use of technology (87.5 %). 75 % of the teachers, on the other hand, preferred courses on classroom and ELT management, second language learning, sociolinguistics, and cross-cultural communication. According to the 87.5 % (7) of teachers, distance MA program should be conducted with a balance of 75 % online and 25 % on-campus activities. Only one of the participants (12.5%) prefers the program to be 100% online. Similarly, 87.5 % of them want the integration of on campus activities once a semester while only one participant wants on-campus meetings twice a semester. As for the activities, the following table shows the type of activities they prefer to get involved in the internet-based

MA program. According to the answers obtained through the questionnaire, team projects and communication through e-mails are the most preferred activities by the participants. They are followed by face-to-face feedback sessions, on-campus seminars and course reviews. Interestingly, half of the teachers went against the idea of integrating video conferencing into the courses. During the interviews, the reason for that was revealed to be their concerns with the use of technology required for videoconferencing. Although they were excited about the program and had positive attitudes in general, some of the teachers still felt uncomfortable as they saw themselves as the incompetent users of technology.

Table1: Activities the learners want to get involved in the e-ELT.

	Always % (N)	**Often % (N)**	**Sometimes % (N)**	**Rarely % (N)**	**Never % (N)**
Team projects	50 (4)	37.5 (3)	12.5 (1)	-	-
Individual projects	25 (2)	25 (2)	25 (2)	-	25 (2)
Face-to-face feedback sessions	37.5 (3)	25 (2)	25 (2)	-	12.5 (1)
e-mail	50 (4)	37.5 (3)	-	-	12.5 (1)
Videoconferencing	12.5 (1)	12.5 (1)	25 (2)	-	50 (4)
Discussions	25 (2)	25(2)	37.5 (3)	-	12.5 (1)
On-campus seminars	50 (4)	12.5 (1)	25(2)	12.5 (1)	-
On-campus workshops	25 (2)	12.5 (1)	25(2)	12.5 (1)	25 (2)
On-campus exams	37.5 (3)	12.5 (1)	25(2)	-	25 (2)
On-campus reviews	50 (4)	12.5 (1)	25 (2)	-	12.5 (1)

According to the participants, in the online phase of the program instructors should

have activities that encourage more collaboration, exchange of information and experiences, as well as of lesson plans and practical tips that they can use in their daily teachings. Assignments, reading materials, synchronous question-answer sessions, discussions and forums should also be part of online teaching. During the interviews, only one of the teachers insisted that videoconferencing should be an indispensable part of online meetings. He said:

> Now that Moodle allows videoconferencing, it is a great opportunity for us to learn it now, so we can use it with our students as well. The school I work in has great facilities, so I can easily apply what I have been learning in this program.

The rest of the teachers, however, remained reluctant to the idea of video conferencing as they believe that it is too difficult to schedule a certain time appropriate for everyone. As for the face-to-face phase of the program, they believe that on-campus meetings should not be loaded with activities, but involve course reviews, and seminars on the issues that need to be clarified.

Both the questionnaire and the interviews with participants also revealed that the biggest difficulty they had during the piloting of the project was meeting the assignment datelines due to their teaching loads, busy exam weeks, and unavailable Moodle sites, and reaching the library sources due to the limited off-campus access to the subscribed databases. Although they feel under pressure when they face such difficulties, they seemed to be content with their instructors' flexibility especially in delays caused by technical problems and their busy schedule.

3.2. The results of the interview with the e-ELT instructors

The instructors of the program point to the necessity of including more skills and task

based activities in the program to promote a better interactive and collaborative e-learning environment. Having reached a consensus on the suitability of the delivery format of e-ELT to the objectives of the program, they emphasized the importance of having face-to-face interactions both using more of Moodle modules in online sessions, and including more student presentations to on-campus meetings. Therefore, they believe, they need to gain more experience in the use of Moodle, and do more thinking in the adaptation of their curriculum to the internet environment.

The e-ELT staff also indicated that they needed to observe the teaching practices of participating teachers at their schools as part of their evaluation of the project. During these visits, they observed that teachers especially benefited from what they learned at the internet based skills course. They aim to keep observing them in the following semesters as well to see if the program makes any difference in their practices.

3.3. The Logic Model of the e-ELT Project

Based on the information obtained through the content analysis of any written documents, the interviews with the ELT staff, and the needs of program stakeholders, the following logic model is proposed for the e-ELT project:

Situation: In parallel with an increasing global deficit in the number of well-trained teachers of English, Turkey is in need of qualified English teachers who can keep up with the

demands of rapid changes in the field of education. The internet-based e-ELT project aims to meet this need by supporting the professional development of experienced English language teachers with an interactive distance education program based on internet technologies so they can raise competent speakers of that language.

In Turkey, the fact that students in Anatolian High schools are no longer required to attend one-year preparatory schools affects the improvement of students' language skills. The graduates of these schools who cannot achieve high levels of proficiency in English tend to spend years in the prep schools of universities to improve their basic communicative skills in English. One way to overcome this problem is to train the teachers of these students and update their knowledge of teaching methodologies and skills through the MA programs. The face-to face pilot MA program offered by the Institution of Educational Sciences at Yeditepe University has been offering this sort of education to any English language teacher who wants to have an MA degree. However, as regular attendance is required, only the teachers who live in Istanbul and its vicinity can benefit from the program. Therefore, the same quality of education is intended to be offered to the teachers of Anatolian high schools in long distances with a blended web-based MA program. Thus, the professional development of those who otherwise do not have the opportunity to attend on-campus programs due to a variety of reasons is supported to a great extent.

Priorities: As mentioned earlier, teachers of the Anatolian High schools that applied to the university with a demand for in-service training before was given the priority in this pilot

project due to the reasons stated above. The program aims to provide these teachers with an MA certificate in the first place. In the upcoming years, however, the program will be extended to provide more teachers with quality education.

Inputs:

Staff: The project team includes four full-time ELT staff, one of whom is a professor of ELT who is also the head of department and of the project, and the rest are assistant professors of ELT at Yeditepe University. There is also a graduate assistant hired by the Institution of Educational Sciences to work as the webmaster of the project website throughout her doctoral studies. During the implementation of online courses, six more teaching staff from Marmara University and Boğaziçi University will join the program as part-time lecturers when needed. Besides, the University Rectory assures the project team of any technical support to be provided by the teaching staff of the department of Computer Engineering.

The responsibilities and the workload percentages of the teaching staff who are in charge of this project are specified as follows:

The head of project is responsible for:

- drawing the institutional frames of the e-ELT program
- redesigning the courses to be offered online,
- designing the related internet-based research projects,
- assigning project-related responsibilities to the mbers of project team,

- providing institutional support
- evaluating the project-related reports
- coordinating the process of composing the final report (40 %).

Project team member 1 is responsible for:

- coordinating technological issues,
- preparing group reports,
- supporting the head of project in administrative and technical issues,
- adapting the Applied Linguistics course to Moodle environment. (15 %)

Project team member 2 is responsible for:

- coordinating the instructors who are working on the adaptation of courses to

Moodle environment

- writing up group reports,
- adapting the Testing and Teaching Methods course to Moodle environment. (20

%)

Project team member 3 is responsible for:

- coordinating the pedagogical content knowledge

- adapting the Skills course to Moodle environment. (15 %)

Graduate Assistant hired for the project is responsible for:

- creating, maintaining and updating the program webpage
- opening the student accounts
- dealing with students' technical problems (10%)

Time: The e-ELT MA program will be offered during the fall and spring semesters of the academic year. As the program is designed in a blended format, the participating teachers will be invited to the campus once in each semestre at the end of the school year for face-to-face interactions. Asynchronous online activites that do not require participants and instructors to be in front of the computer at the same time can be carried out independently by each participant, while timing of synchronous activities that require the presence of all at the same time will be scheduled consensually during the semester.

The preparation for and the implementation of the web-based courses takes instructors 5 to-8 hours a week. The development and conduct of the pilot project, however, took almost two years (from June 2007 to April 2009). The program has a detailed timetable that describes its monthly schedule.

Budget/Equipment: For the implementation of the project, the following equipments were needed to be purchased:

1. Two HP Compaq laptops (1000 $ each) and color printers (150 $ each), 2 webcams with

microphones (20 $ each), 10 headphones with microphones (10 $ each), LCD projector (1500 YTL), and white screen to be used by the project team during their project-related visits to the participating high schools.

2. One digital sound recording machine (200 YTL) to be used in face-to-face interviews in project related researches.

3. Digital video cameras (520 YTL) for observing the participating teachers in their classroom environment, and one DVD player (130 YTL).

4. Stationary Materials: A4 size papers to be used in the project for the writing of reports; discs and toner.

5. A certain amount of budget to cover the travel

Technology and Materials: For the management and delivery of the learning content, the project team decided to use Moodle for the reasons provided elsewhere in this report (see 2.2). The courses that are already offered in the face-to-face MA program will be redesigned for Moodle.

The main books that will be used in each course will be sent to teachers enrolled in the program. Handouts and other supplementary materials will be scanned and posted electronically in Moodle environment so the participants can download or print them out. For the production of the course materials, and the face-to-face activities of the program, a multimedia lab with a capacity of 30 computers that is arranged for this project by the Institute of Educational Sciences will be used.

Resources: The enrolled participants of the program will be able to benefit from the university library and its electronic facilities. Currently, Yeditepe University library has the subscription to many periodicals includıng Language and Communication, Learning and Instruction, Learning and Motivation, Linguistics and Education, Studies in Educational Evaluation, The Journal of Higher Education, T.H.E Journal and System; and Electronic Databases including Web of Science, EbscoHost, Taylor and Francis Online. The participants of the e-ELT will have access to these resources through their student ID numbers.

Outputs:

Activities: The e-ELT program is composed of internet-based activities and face-to-face interactions. Internet-based activities involve the use of Moodle modules that allow discussions, forums, peer reviews and feedback, online quizzes, and uploading of assignments. Any one of these activities is integrated into the weekly schedule of the program. Videoconferencing that could not be achieved during the piloting of the program will be integrated into the program in the next semesters. The face-to-face interactions, on the other hand, are carried out once a semester and generally during the last week of the program. The participating teachers who are invited into the campus for such interactions are provided with accommodation in the guesthouse of the university. During that week, seminars, workshops, course reviews, student presentations, and in-class examinations are implemented from 9 am to 5 pm.

Training: At the very beginning of the project, students were trained on the use of Moodle. The participants can also reach the instructors and the webmaster whenever they need technical help.

Assessment: Students are assessed through the scores they obtained on online and on campus quizzes and exams. Besides, they need to post assignments on Moodle and participate in forums and discussions. The frequency and the quality of responses and feedback each student gives to their peers will also be used for assessing student participation. Besides, the participants will be asked to do a couple of micro teachings throughout the semester and observed by their course instructors.

Participation: The participants of the program are experienced English language teachers working in Anatolian High schools in three different cities in Turkey. The program is developed and implemented by the ELT staff at Yeditepe University. The decisions about the program are made by the Institution of Educational Sciences with the consent of university rectory based on the needs of participating teachers, and the objectives of the program.

External Factors: Any decision taken by the University Rectory and the Higher Education Council might affect the implementation and the future of the program. Changes in the attitudes of high school principals towards the program may also affect their support to their participating teachers. Similarly, changes in the stakeholders' needs might require some modifications in the program. These are some of the external factors that need to be considered in this program.

Outcomes:

Having considered the input and the output of the program outlined above, in the short run e-ELT project will have:

- provided the experienced teachers of English working in three Anatolian High schools with an opportunity to earn a Master's degree in the field of ELT.
- provided these teachers with a flexible, interactive, and student-centered program that encourages self-paced learning.
- provided these teachers with a sense of accomplishment from working independently.
- increased their awareness of the recent developments in the field of ELT.
- improved their teaching skills by updating their knowledge in second language learning and teaching.
- provided these teachers with a platform to share their teaching experiences with their colleagues in a collaborative environment.
- increased their familiarity with internet technologies.
- increased their awareness of the internet sources (e.g. electronic journals, databases, etc.) that they can refer to for their professional development.
- improved their attitude towards distance education.

The medium term goals of the program include the following:

- teachers' ability to integrate internet technologies into their curriculum will have been improved.

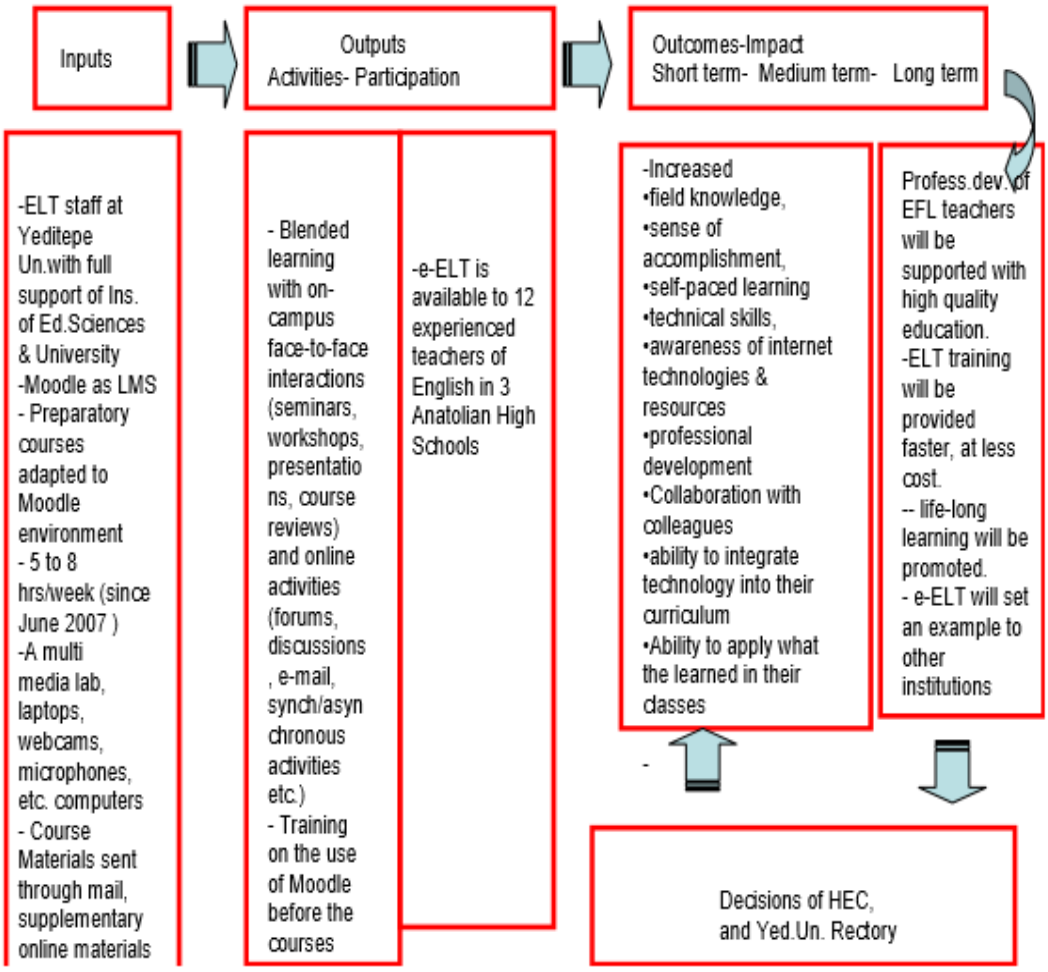
- teachers will be able to apply what they learned in the program to their daily teaching.

The long term goals and the contributions of this project to national education and economy, on the other hand, are expected to be as follows:

- Internet-based MA program offered within this project will support the professional development of EFL teachers with a high-quality education.
- Education will be provided faster in a more interactive way, at less cost; and the continuity of the EFL education will be ensured regardless of time and place.
- Within the framework of "life-long learning" concept that is encouraged by the distance MA program, teachers will be motivated more to go on with their graduate studies.
- In case e-ELT program gets an approval from the National Committee of Higher Education Council, distance education in EFL will be offered to more teachers all over the country, and Yeditepe University will set an example to other institutions with its contributions to our education.

In the long run, the project also aims to offer distance education service to teachers from the schools that are connected to American and Canadian Universities which Yeditepe University has exchange protocols with; and teachers who are enrolled in an MA program at these universities. Besides, the program has some contacts with some outstanding professors of ELT from these universities who accepted to contribute to the program in the future.

The program logic identified in this paper is summarized briefly in the following table:



Discussion and Conclusion:

The e-ELT project implemented by the Institution of Educational Sciences at Yeditepe University is the first attempt to initiate an internet-based distance MA program that offers blended education to the teachers of English. With this pilot project, the program makes an

alternative to conventional education for experienced ELT teachers who seek support for their professional development. The project aims to achieve the same quality of education in distance MA as in the conventional face-to-face MA program for these teachers. Therefore, it was of great importance to establish a common understanding of the program logic by clarifying its objectives based on the needs of its stakeholders.

The results of the needs analysis, interviews and a thorough examination of the project documents contributed to the efforts of showing the relation between program inputs, outputs and outcomes in this paper. The logic model identified above clearly showed that the project included the elements suggested in the literature of blended learning. It acknowledged the importance of self-paced learning, collaboration, and synchronous communication as suggested by Carmen (2002), and inluded many of the elements listed by Mortera-Gutierrez (2006) and Yoon and Lim (2007). In addition, the program was conducted by a well-qualified teaching staff who deployed quite an effort to prepare the pedagogic content to be delivered, build the technological infrastructure, and take the appropriate management decisions for the construction of an effective design.

Considering the findings of this clarificative evaluation, however, the e-ELT program

can be improved in future by having more activities that promote social contact, immediate feedback and peer interaction. Since the participants do not find it feasible to increase the number of on-campus meetings because of their teaching schedule and other responsibilities, the instructors are suggested to use the limited time for face-to-face teaching more effectively, and add more synchronous activities that also involve the use of videoconferencing to the online phase of the project. Although both participating teachers and the e-ELT staff are generally pleased with the way the courses are implemented, instructors can be trained more on the different modules of Moodle so they can benefit from its assets in a full extent. Besides, in order to minimize the technical problems encountered during the course of the program, more technical support should be provided to the participating teachers so they can have access to the program website without any problem.

Although this study achieves to offer a logic model for the pilot e-ELT project, the limitations of the study should also be mentioned. First of all, data could not be gathered from the population, but a sample of 8 participants due to the time of data collection. Besides, the study lacked the views of decision makers like the rector or the head of the Institution. Having their views, however, could have added a significant perspective to the study. Secondly, the

results regarding the way the courses are implemented are mainly based on the perceptions of the participants and the instructors, and therefore, it is not possible to make strong claims about whether or not the courses really achieved its objectives. Hence, this is suggested to be the aim of a larger scale evaluation study in the future.

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Appendix A

Sevgili Öğretmen Arkadaşlar,

Internet destekli Master programımızın sizlerin ihtiyaç ve beklentilerinize daha iyi yanıt verebilmesi için aşağıdaki 5 soruyu cevaplamanızı rica ediyorum. Sizlerden gelen yanıtlarla ihtiyaç analizi anketi oluşturulacak ve tekrar görüşleriniz alındıktan sonra program ve içeriği değerlendirilecek ve yeniden düzenlenecektir. Katkılarınız için çok teşekkürler.

1. Internet destekli MA programımızdan beklentileriniz nelerdir?

_____

_____

_____.

2. Programa katılırken alanınızla ilgili geliştirmeyi düşündüğünüz eksikleriniz/yönleriniz nelerdi?

_____

_____

_____.

3. Program ihtiyaçlarınıza cevap verebiliyor mu?

_____

_____

_____.

4. Programda karşılaştığınız zorluklar nelerdir?

_____

_____

_____.

5. İhtiyaçlarınızı daha iyi karşılayabilmek için programda yapılmasını istediğiniz değişiklikler, veya önerileriniz var mı?

_____

_____

_____.

Appendix B:

A Needs Analysis Questionnaire Developed for English Language Teachers who are enrolled in Internet-based MA program at Yeditepe University

by Evrim Eveyik-Aydin

This questionnaire is designed to identify the needs of English Language Teachers who participated in the Internet-based MA program initiated as a pilot project by the Institute of Educational Sciences, the program in English Language Education at Yeditepe University. Your responses will be used in the determination of the program content and its structure in order to respond to your learning needs better. We also assure you that your responses will be used only for the stated purpose and will remain confidential. If you have any questions, please contact me at the following mail address: evrimaydin@yeditepe.edu.tr

Thank you for your contribution.

Evrim Eveyik-Aydin

Part A: Personal Background Information

1. Gender: Female ------ / Male--------
2. Age: _____
3. Location: _____
4. Years of experience in EFL teaching: _____

5. How many hours a week do you teach? _____

6. Level(s)/ grade(s) you taught: Preschool _____

Primary _____

High School _____

University Prep _____

7. Levels you are planning to teach upon the completion of this program?

Preschool _____

Primary _____

High School _____

University Prep _____

8. Degrees previously earned?

BA _____ MA_____ PhD _____

Field? _____ _____ _____

9. Are you available to travel for on-campus meetings and project presentations?

Yes _____ What time of the semester/ year? _____

No _____

Part B. Technical Resources and Background

10. Do you have any previous experience in using computers?

    Yes _____ For what purpose? _____

    No _____

11. Do you have any previous experience in learning via computers?

    Yes _____ On what occasion? _____

    No _____

12. Do you have access to the following?

    a. Computers Yes_____ (home ____/ office_____/ other ____) No_____

    with full media

    b. Internet Yes_____ (home ____/ office_____/ other ____) No _____

    c. labs Yes_____ (home ____/ office_____/ other ____) No _____

    e. Headsets Yes_____ (home ____/ office_____/ other ____) No_____

    f. Microphones/ Speakers Yes_____ (home ____/ office_____/ other ____)
    No_____

13. How often do you use the following?

	Always (5)	Often (4)	Sometimes (3)	Rarely (2)	Never (1)
Microsoft Word					
Power point					
Acrobat Reader					
E-mail					
Chat/ Instant Messaging					
Videoconferencing					
Newsgroups					
Forums					
Skype/ Netmeeting					
Internet Journals					
Electronic databases					
Moodle					
Blackboard					
WebCT					

Other:

_____

_____

_____.

Part C. Expectations about the program

14. What are your reasons to join the EELT program? Please mark the ones that apply.

a. To get a master's degree for career advancement _____

b. To keep up with the recent developments in the field _____

c. For professional development _____

d. The convenience of the program in terms of time and place _____

e. Access to resources _____

f. Collaboration with colleagues _____

g. More hands-on opportunities with technology _____

h. Financial reasons _____

i. Preferred learning styles _____

Other:

_____

_____

_____

15. Which of the following courses do you need to be included in the program?

a. Foreign Language Teaching Methods _____

b. Second Language Learning _____

c. Second Language Acquisition _____

d. Foreign Language Testing _____

e. Research Methods _____

f. Language Teaching Skills _____

g. Issues in INSET (In-service Training) & Professional Development _____

h. Sociolinguistics _____

i. Cross Cultural Communication _____

j. Psycholinguistics _____

k. Bilingualism _____

l. Use of Technology in Foreign Language Teaching _____

m. Syllabus Design _____

n. Materials Development & Adaptation _____

o. Teaching Young Learners _____

p. Mentoring _____

r. Program Development and Evaluation _____

s. ELT Management _____

t. Classroom Management _____

Other: _____

_____.

16. Which of the following instructional activities would you like to participate in the EELT program?

	Always (5)	Often (4)	Sometimes (3)	Rarely (2)	Never (1)
a. Team projects					
c. Individual projects					
d. face-to-face feedback sessions					
e. E-mailing					
f. Video conferencing					
d. Discussion forums					
e. On-campus seminars					
f. On-campus workshops					
g. On-campus exams					
i. On-campus course review sessions					

Other:

_____

_____

_____

17. How should the EELT program be conducted?

a) 100% online

b) 75% online, 25 % on-campus

c) 50% online, 50 % on-campus

d) 75% on-campus, 25% online

e) 100% on-campus courses supported by technology

f) Other

_____

_____.

18. How often should on-campus activities be integrated into the program?

a) once a month

b) once a semester

c) twice a semester

Your suggestion _____.

19. What activities should be included in the online component of the program?

_____

_____.

20. What activities should be included in the on-campus component of the program?

_____
_____.

21. Which type of program (completely online vs. blended) would suit your needs better in terms of:

a) improving pedagogical skills online ____ blended* ____

either ____

b) accessing resources (library, teaching materials, etc.)

online ____ blended ____

either ____

c) having more collaboration with peers & teachers

online ____ blended ____

either ____

d) cost of attending the program online ____ blended ____

either ____

e) encouraging self-paced learning online ____ blended ____

either ____

* Blended learning refers to a mix of on-campus/face-to-face interactions and online learning.

f) increasing your motivation to complete the program

online __ blended __

either____

g) other

_____

_____.

D. Concerns with the program

21. What kind of difficulties did you have while participating in the pilot program in terms of:

    a. Using moodle in the program

    Please explain:_____

    _____.

    b. Learning through technology in general

    Please explain:

    _____

    _____.

    c. Meeting the datelines and other course requirements

Please explain:

_____

_____.

d. Carrying out the instructional activities

Please explain:

_____

_____ .

e. Accessing resources

Please explain:

_____

_____.

f. Reaching the teaching staff

Please explain:

_____

_____.

g. Duration of the program

Please explain:

_____

_____.

h. Getting technical support

Please explain:

_____

_____ .

i. Other: _____

_____ .

22. If on-campus activities were integrated into the program, what suggestions would you have in terms of

a. Type of instructional activities

_____

b. Implementation of the course content

_____

c. Timing/schedule of the activities

_____

d. Any other suggestions:

_____

_____

Appendix C

Descriptive Statistics of learners' expectations from the e-ELT:

Items on the Needs Analysis Questionnaire	Frequency % (N)	Mean	Standard Dev.
Q 14. Reasons to join the e-ELT?			
a. to get an MA degree for career advancement	85.5 (7)	1.1250	.3536
b. to keep up with recent developments	100 (8)	1.000	.0000
c. for proffessional development	85.5 (7)	1.1250	.3536
d. convenience of program in terms of time/place	85.5 (7)	1.1250	.3536
e. access to resources	62.5 (5)	1.3750	.5176
f. collaboration with colleagues	85.5 (7)	1.1250	.3536
g. hands-on opportunities with technology	62.5 (5)	1.3750	.5176
h. financial reasons	12.5 (1)	1.8750	.3536
i. preferred learning styles	50 (4)	1.5000	.5345
Q 15. Which courses should be included in the e-ELT?			
a. Foreign Language Teaching Methods	85.5 (7)	1.1250	.3536
b. Second Language Learning	75 (6)	1.2500	.46291
c. Second Language Acquisition	62.5 (5)	1.3750	.5176
d. Foreign Language Testing	100 (8)	1.0000	.00000
e. Research Methods	85.5 (7)	1.1250	.3536
f. Language Teaching Skills	85.5 (7)	1.1250	.3536

g. Issues in INSET (In-service Training) & Professional Development	62.5 (5)	1.3750	.5176
h. Sociolinguistics	75 (6)	1.2500	.46291
i. Cross Cultural Communication	75 (6)	1.2500	.46291
j. Psycholinguistics	62.5 (5)	1.3750	.5176
k. Bilingualism	62.5 (5)	1.3750	.5176
l. Use of Technology in Foreign Language Teaching	85.5 (7)	1.1250	.3536
m. Syllabus Design	50 (4)	1.5000	.53452
n. Materials Development & Adaptation	100 (8)	1.0000	.00000
o. Teaching Young Learners	62.5 (5)	1.3750	.5176
p. Mentoring	50 (4)	1.5000	.53452
r. Program Development and Evaluation	62.5 (5)	1.3750	.5176
s. ELT Management	75 (6)	1.2500	.46291
t. Classroom Management	75 (6)	1.2500	.46291

THE USE OF L1 IN THE EFL CLASSROOM

Monika Gaba

Zeynep Kocoglu

Abstract

In English Language Teaching (ELT) profession, there still is no general consensus on the use of mother language (L1) while teaching a target language (L2). Views on the issue differ from both person to person and approach to approach. There are proponents of L1 who believe it can be used when necessary. There are also those who totally shun the use of the mother tongue because, according to them, it hinders the learning of a foreign language. This study tries to contribute to ELT field by examining the effects of the use of L1 on the internalization of L2 grammar structures in Turkish university English preparatory school. 165 students whose major is business, participated into the study. The study attempts to analyze how one of the variables changes when another variable is manipulated and has an explanatory nature. The relationship between the dependent and independent variables is established through the analysis of data collected through two tests: an achievement test and a progressive test by means of descriptive statistics and t-tests. This study could not find hard evidence in favour of L1 being used in the L2 context.

Introduction

It is a widely acknowledged fact that the use of native language (L1) in the classroom while teaching target language (L2) has always been the source of considerable controversy. Many schools have strict policies about the use of L1 in the L2 classroom; that is, instructors should avoid using L1 at all times. However, in some cases, the use of L1 may be not only beneficial, but also extremely necessary, especially if both the teacher and the students share the same mother tongue. This paper aims to contribute to the English Language Teaching (ELT) field by examining the effects of the use of L1 in the context of a private university in Istanbul, Turkey.

For many years, research has encouraged instructors of English not to use any language but English in their classrooms (Mattioli, 2004). Still, Mattioli believes that despite this, the use of L1 in the language classroom is sometimes inevitable, especially with beginners as L1 might facilitate the comprehension process and make the teacher's instructions clear. However, he emphasizes the fact that although such a compromise is necessary for elementary students, it is no longer necessary for those learners who move past this phase in the proficiency ladder. In a similar vein, Howatt (1984) posits that as long as the medium of instruction is concerned, the prevailing idea in L2 education is that a second or foreign language should be learned by using that language. The use of L1 in the language classroom has been largely associated with negative consequences in the acquisition of L2 (Song, 2009). Teachers hold different views towards the use of L1 in the L2 classroom; beliefs which have been shaped by their experience and teaching philosophies. In a study conducted with instructors at a tertiary educational institution, Song (2009) found that the teachers' attitude towards L1 ranged from neutral to negative and positive. In addition, those beliefs were sometimes not applied in practice. Atkinson (1987) argues that the issue of L1 being used in the L2 classroom has been taken for granted and has been never given the attention that it deserves. He argues that the students' mother tongue can play a great role in helping adult learners to develop fluency, especially activities which are based on translation. Auerbach (1993) investigates the same issue from a different perspective; he examines the issue from a political and social issue. The claim made by Auerbach is that the pressure to use English in L2 classrooms has been justified on linguistic and pedagogical grounds, which are not supported by evidence. Auerbach offers an alternative explanation to the prevailing only English policy. He argues that such a policy stems from a specific ideology which serves to increase the inequality in the world. According to Auerbach, the use of L1 in the L2 classroom is not only beneficial but also mandatory for those adult learners that have limited literary skills in L1. Greggio and Gil (2007) conducted a qualitative study which aimed at examining the code-switching that occurs in a language classroom. They concluded that the use of the students' mother tongue (Portuguese) facilitated the interaction among students. Another conclusion reached by the researchers was that code switching enhanced students' performance as the language

learning process became easier for them. Anton and Dicamilla (1999) are strong advocates of the utilization of L1 in the L2 classroom. According to them, L1 constitutes a psychological tool which the learners can easily manipulate in order to "construct effective collaborative dialogues in the completion of meaning-based language tasks". Anton and Dicamilla further contend that L1 is an indispensable mechanism for adult learners in providing each other with "scaffolded" feedback. In such cases, L1 takes over a social function as it creates an environment where sharing and mutual contribution help learners fulfil their tasks. In a similar vein, an anonymous Internet-based questionnaire carried out by Levine (2003) in order to investigate the relationship between the use of the target language and the students' anxiety language revealed a strong negative correlation between the variables.

De La Funte and Scott (2008) posit that the use of L1 in the language classroom can have a positive impact on the learning process. In a study conducted with intermediate level students De La Funte and Scott, found that when asked to complete a grammar task, the students who were allowed to communicate and collaborate in their mother tongue outperformed the groups required to use L2. De La Funte and Scott concluded that the use of L1 enhanced the students' performance because their cognitive overload decreased. Harbord (1992) contends that the use of L1 in L2 education should not stem from a desire to make things easier for both students and instructors. On the contrary, both teachers and students should resort to L1 when there is a need for further clarification or in order to generate discussions and speculations. The use of the target language in the language classroom has long been justified by comparisons drawn between the first and second language acquisition and the maximal exposure of students to the target language (Cook, 2001). However, Cook argues that all these assumptions are questionable and that different methodologies have already legitimized the use of L1 in teaching a foreign or second language. Seeing the mother tongue as a resource and not a hindrance will open up new avenues for both teachers and students. Cooks argues that L1 within the language classroom can serve different purposes ranging from facilitating group work among students to explaining a difficult grammar point. She further claims that the use of L1 in L2 education can be a useful mechanism in order to create" L2 authentic users", provided that such a mechanism is manipulated wisely. Although in theory L2 education has been

dominated by an only English policy and a total avoidance of L1 in the L2 classroom, many teachers still resort to the use of L1 quite frequently (Littlewood and Yu 2011). In emphasizing such a big discrepancy, Littlewood and Yu suggest a balanced compromise between the use of L1 and TL in the classroom. They offer various strategies to achieve such a balance where the ultimate aim is a maximal exposure to the target language while enjoying the benefits that L1 might offer, especially benefits, which enhance the students' performance. Turnbull and Arnett (2002) acknowledge that there is some kind of consensus on the fact that teachers should made great efforts to maximize the exposure of their students to target language input; however, defining the amount of input in terms of quality and quantity remains elusive. Therefore, they feel the need for further research in this area. According to Turnbull and Arnett, further research is also needed to determine whether using L1 might facilitate the process through which input is transformed into intake. Liu et al. (2004) justifies the uses of L1 as explaining difficult vocabulary and grammar, giving background information, overcoming communicative difficulties, and saving time.

As it emerges from the review of existing literature, the use of L1 in the L2 classroom has both opponents and supports. Although L1 has been shunned from the L2 classroom for a long time, recent evidence suggests that it can be a beneficial tool in foreign language teaching.

Theoretical Framework

At this point, there seems to be no general consensus on the use of L1 in the L2 classroom. While the use of L1 used to be shunned with the advent of the Communicative Approach in the early 1980s, over time, many linguists have changed their minds on this issue. Today, there are both proponents and opponents of L1 use in the classroom, and no study to date has succeeded in demonstrating a "casual relationship between exclusion of L1 and improved learning" (Macaro, 2001).

Research question

Do advanced young adult learners who receive instructions and feedback in L1 achieve a better internalization of L2 (target language) grammar structures than students who receive instructions and feedback in the target language?

The research variables and other operational definition:

Independent variables

Instructions and feedback in L1: detailed explanations of grammar rules and corrections made in the students' mother tongue (Turkish) whenever it is necessary.

Instructions and feedback in L2: detailed explanations of grammar rules and corrections made in the target language (English)

Dependent variable

Internalization of L2 grammar structures: The internalization of L2 grammar structures refers to the process during which L2 grammar structures become part of the learner's interlanguage system. In other words, when a structure is internalized, the learner is able not only to recognize the grammar structure, but also use it correctly. This construct can be measured through tests that are administered after the grammar structures have been taught and reinforced through positive and negative feedback delivered during the lesson.

Controlled extraneous variables

The choice of the grammar structure: Students were taught the same grammar structure because certain grammar structures are acquired more easily than others. Therefore, in order to avoid such a bias, the same grammar structure was taught and reinforced in both classes. The target grammar structure that was covered in class was ***relative clauses*** (reduced and non-reduced).

Other operational definitions:

Young adult learners: The term is used to define learners whose ages range from 18 to 20 years old.

Advanced learners: Learners who scored between a minimum of 59 points and a maximum of 100 points in the Placement Test administered at the beginning of the academic year.

Pre – test: achievement test which aims at finding out whether all the participants in the study had the same level of proficiency.

Post – test: progressive test which aims at measuring and comparing the performance of participants in the experiment and control group.

The research method

This is a quantitative study as it seeks to investigate the relationship between two variables: the use of L1 in the L2 classroom and the internalization of L2 grammar structures. The study attempts to analyze how one of the variables changes when another variable is manipulated and has an explanatory nature. The relationship between the dependent and independent variables is established through the analysis of data collected through two tests: an achievement test (see Appendix A) and a progressive test (see Appendix B). This means that a statistical analysis of numeric data was implemented. However, the study cannot be defined as an experimental one because the sampling method that was utilized for the research was not random. The participants for this study were chosen according to a nonrandom sampling procedure, namely convenience sampling. Consequently, the research is a study of quasi-experimental nature. In addition, this research falls under the category of primary research because it involved the collection of data that did not already exist; the research collected original data. The entity that is analyzed in this study is the performance of individual students in two different classes; therefore, the students constitute the unit of analysis.

Population and sampling method

The target population of this study comprises all the A level (advanced level) students at a Turkish private university Preparatory School. The accessible population for this study comprises 8 A level classes which consist of students whose major is business, 165 in total. In other words, all the students in these classes receive ESP lessons which focus on business.

The students for this study were drawn from the business classes. For this research, the researchers elicited the participation of four advanced A level medicine classes which were conveniently available. These classes have 20 advanced students each, thus we had the participation of a minimum of 80 students. We realized that it could be argued that such criteria for class selection as well as the sample size do not provide a basis for

generalization. However, there was no other viable alternative given the resources we had available. Despite these limitations, care was taken to provide a detailed description of the participants in the study, which would make the replication of the research possible. First of all, the participants' ages vary from 18 to 20 years old (69 participants were 18 years old, 10 participants were 19 years old and one participant was 20 years old). The control group had 18 females and 22 males. The group that received the treatment consists of 24 females and 16 males. The control group was made up of 21 females and 19 males. All participants receive six hours of intensive English instructions every day, three hours of reading, writing and grammar and three hours of ESP or content-based English where they are taught business-related concepts and specific vocabulary related to their major. At the time of the experiment, all the participants in the study had been exposed to English for at least 8 months. Their first language was Turkish. Two classes which served as the control group received for two weeks instructions and feedback in the target language (English). The other two classes served as an experiment group, so they received instructions and feedback in L1 (Turkish).

Data elicitation instruments and data analysis tools

Two different data elicitation tools were utilized for this study:

1. A pre-test (achievement test): the test aimed at comparing the linguistic ability of the control and the experiment group prior to the intervention.
2. A post test (progressive test): the test aimed at comparing the students' grammar performance after the experiment group received the treatment.

The instruments that were used to gather data were an achievement test, used as a pre-test and a progressive test, used as a post-test. Both tests were developed by the testing office of University Preparatory School. The data consist of the students' scores; the pre-test was administered to both groups in order to make sure that all participants were of the same linguistic level. The post-test was administered to both groups after the target grammar structure (relative clause) had been practised and reinforced. The post-test results were compared to see whether the experience group outperformed the control group. The instruments chosen for this research fall under the category of subject – completed instruments. The tests were 100 point criterion-referenced tests with a cut-off of 60 points. The tests have a relatively high usability as it takes only 50 minutes to complete them, so

they can be administered during normal classes. In order to avoid scoring subjectivity, two different markers assessed the students' papers. In case there were discrepancies, the judgement of a third marker was required.

Data collection

At the beginning of the experiment, before the treatment was given, both the control and experiment group were given an achievement test to make sure that the groups were on the same or similar levels of English ability. This achievement test served as a pre-test. In other words, the pre-test was administered to rule out the possibility that some of the students in either group may have had prior knowledge on the Grammar point tested. All students took the test at the same time. During the test they were allowed to ask questions if they needed further clarification. After the pre-test, both groups were taught the grammar point (defining and non-defining relative clause); for two weeks the structure was practised and reinforced. However, in the control group the teacher's instructions and feedback were all the time in English, while in the experiment group, the teachers used the students' mother tongue in order to give feedback or explain the grammar rules whenever it was necessary. After the intervention was delivered, both groups took a progressive test. The results from this post-test were compared in order to see whether the difference in the groups' performances were statistically significant. All the students took the exam at the same time.

Results and discussion

The pre-test results of both groups, the control and the experiment group, were analysed in terms of central frequency and dispersion. The data was also analysed by using a paired samples t-test. As it can be seen from Tables 1 and 2, the average of the experiment group (72, 20) is higher than that of the control group (66, 45). However, such a difference is statistically insignificant, as was shown by the paired samples t-test. The results in the experiment group have a slightly wider spreading (22,062) compared to the scores spreading in the control group (17,891).

As far as the kurtosis, the maximum and the minimum scores are concerned there is either a slight difference or no difference at all.

Figure 1. Graphic representation of pre-test results

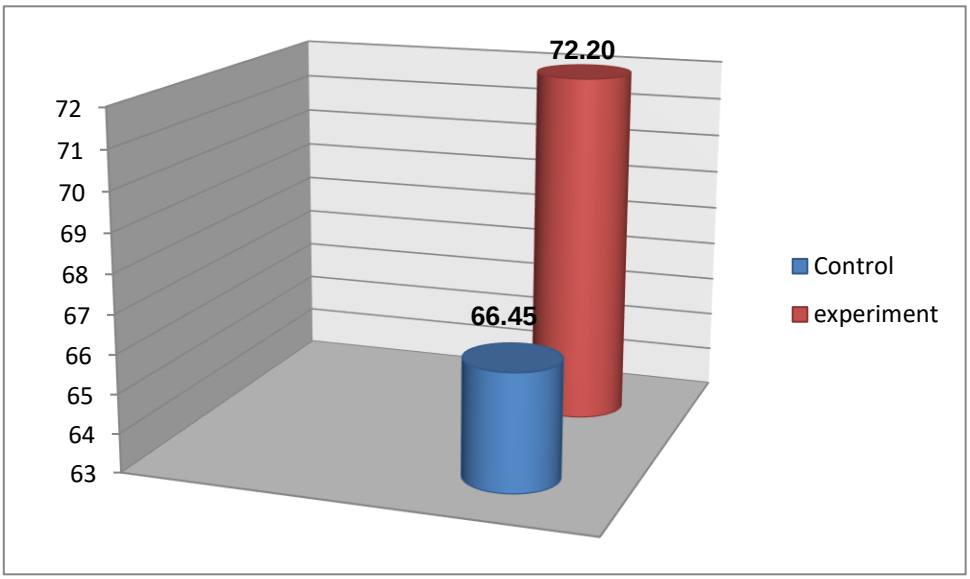

Table 2. Descriptive analysis (pre-test results)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
control	40	21	100	**66,45**	**17,891**	**-,121**	,374	**-,131**	,733
experiment	40	20	100	**72,20**	**22,062**	**-,680**	,374	**-,212**	,733
Valid N (listwise)	40								

As mentioned above, the pre-test scores were also compared through a paired samples t-test. The results of the paired samples t-test (see Table 3) reveal that the performance of the students in the experiment group is not significantly different from the performance of students in the control group, since the alpha coefficient is only .211. Since the alpha

coefficient is significant if its level is between .00 and .05, the difference in performance between the experiment and control groups is not significant. This means that at the beginning of the experiment all students had the same level of linguistic ability. Therefore, we were able to rule out any alternative explanations related to students' linguistic ability. In other words, prior to the delivery of the intervention, all the participants had similar levels of language proficiency.

Table 3. Paired samples T- Test (pre-test results)

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	control - experiment	-5,750	28,613	4,524	-14,901	3,401	-1,271	39	**,211**

The post-test scores were analysed through descriptive analyses and an independent samples t-test in oder to see whether the experiment group performed significantly better than the control group. The results of the post-test revealed that the experiment group performed slightly better than the control group (see table 3 & 4). The average mean of the experiment group was 69, while that of the control group was 63. The results in the experiment group have a slightly wider spreading (22,019) compared to the scores spreading in the control group (21,408). As far as the maximum and the minimum scores are concerned there is only a slight difference between the two groups. Still, although the discrepancy in the performance of both groups is obvious, it is not big enough to be considered statistically significant.

Figure 2. Graphic representation of the post-test results

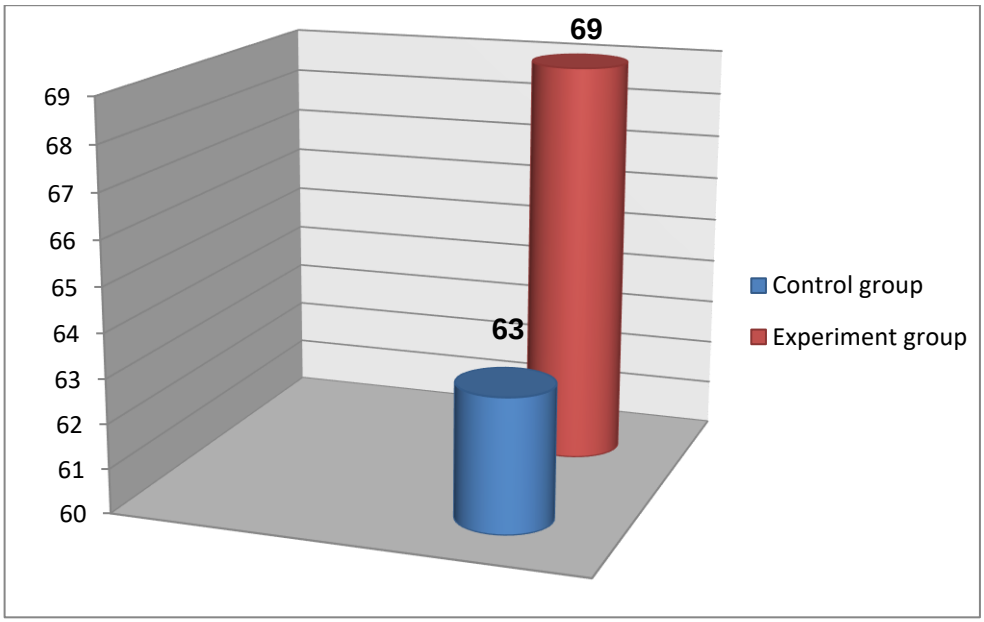

Table 4. Descriptive analysis (post-test results)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
control	40	16	99	**63**	**22,109**	**-,473**	,374	**-,695**	,733
experiment	40	20	100	**69**	**21,408**	**-,772**	,374	**-,159**	,733
Valid N (listwise)	40								

The post-test scores were also analysed through an independent samples t-test (see table 5). The aim was to see whether after receiving the treatment (explanations and feedback in L1), the experiment group would outperform the control group. The results of the independent samples t-test reveal that the performance of the students in the experiment group is not significantly different from the performance of students in the control group

since the alpha coefficient is 0,227. An alpha coefficient bigger than 0,05 means that the discrepancy in performance between the groups is not statistically significant, therefore, the hypothesis set at the beginning of the experiment cannot be confirmed. Although I started with the assumption that the experiment group (the group that received the instruction in L1) would achieve a better internalization of grammar structures than the control group (the group that received the instructions in L2), I could not find enough support to confirm this hypothesis. To briefly sum up, the difference in performance between the control and the experiment group is not statistically significant.

Table 5. Independent Samples T-Test (post-test results)

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	,286	,594	-1,218	78	**,227**	-5,925	4,866	-15,612	3,762
Equal variances not assumed			-1,218	77,919	,227	-5,925	4,866	-15,613	3,763

The present study gives some empirical evidence that adult learners who receive instructions and feedback in their mother tongue achieve a better internalization of grammar structures than those who receive the instruction in the target language. However,

the research findings are not strong enough to support the hypothesis formulated at the beginning of the study. Although the experiment group did better than the control group, the difference in their performance is not statistically significant.

Limitations of the study

The findings of this research are not in line with (Macaro, 2001) and Atkinson (1987), who assert that in the context of second language acquisition, the use of L1 in the L2 classroom enhances students' performance. The reason behind such a disagreement might be the weaknesses of this study. External validity is the weakest point of this research. Since a random sampling was not feasible, the sample was drawn from resources that were available to the researcher; consequently, the findings of the research cannot be generalized to the whole population. However, the study can be replicated to see whether it yields the same results or not. Another weak point is the sample size. Based on Krejcie and Morgan's (*1970*) table for determining sample size, this study should have had a minimum of 226 participants as the target population (N) is 586 students. Yet, due to certain circumstances, only 80 students could be drawn for the study and this might have compromised the reliability of the findings. The limitations of this study might offer alternative explanations to the study's findings. Therefore, all these limitations should be taken into consideration when the data is interpreted or if the study is to be replicated in the future.

Conclusion and suggestions for further research

Unfortunately, in the world of ELT (English Language Teaching), there still is no general consensus on the use of L1 while teaching L2. Views on the issue differ from both person to person and approach to approach. There are proponents of L1 who believe it can be used when necessary. However, the term 'when necessary' remains ambiguous. There are also those who totally shun the use of the mother tongue because, according to them, it hinders the learning of a foreign language. This study could not find hard evidence in favour of L1 being used in the L2 context. However, further studies should be conducted on this issue involving both sides of the spectrum. Rather than entirely focusing on what is or what is not viable in the field of ELT from the perspective of academicians, students should also be consulted. After all, they are the ones who are facing the biggest obstacles while learning

a new language. In what circumstances, if at all, would students like their teachers to resort to L1? Also, in a classroom where the students and the teacher share the same mother tongue, how does a teacher feel when he or she knows that the students do not understand what is being taught? If the teacher is a proponent of L2 use at all times, how does he or she deal with this issue? Does he or she completely ignore it or employ another technique to handle the situation? These are issues that need to be investigated thoroughly.

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Brief Overview into Inclusive Settings in Higher Education in Turkey

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Abstract

Problems that individuals with disabilities meet can be listed as social exclusion, inequality in access to health services, education and personal development, and inhibition of their access to fundamental rights and freedoms such as participation in professional life. Among possible preventions against these problems, the significance of inclusive education arises. Inclusive education provides the individual with special needs with the opportunity of being educated with his peers and obtaining ideal educational facilities for his requirements. Statistical data related to the rates of individuals with disabilities benefiting from educational services in Turkey is considerably worrisome. In addition, attending primary and secondary education is viewed as satisfactory for people with disabilities. Therefore, current conditions are not able to meet the needs of university students with disabilities in Turkey. For making higher education system in accordance with inclusive education in Turkey, a framework which will be used for developing programs including phases and adaptation of these programs may be created. This framework may be a useful guideline for adaptation of any program to inclusive education. The phases in this framework may be structured as pre-system arrangement, recognition of inputs, participation to process and transformation to dynamics, evaluation, and monitoring life span development.

Keywords: disabilities; higher education; inclusive education

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Introduction

Criteria of expertise, prevalence and expediency in main service areas such as security, education and health have been largely noticed by individuals and society with the increase in expectations and awareness related to these areas. Expectations and demands of stakeholders especially in education related to implementations which are equitable, participating and respecting individual differences have been seen as a significant element of social pressure. One of the fields that these demands and expectations, focus on is inclusive education coming into question as a requirement related to principles of human rights and equality in education. As a matter of fact, also individuals with special needs have the right of reaching educational facilities meeting the requirements ideally just as typical individuals. Inclusive education emerging as an idea with the expression of these rights of the individuals with special needs, provides the individual with special needs with the opportunity of being together with their peers and reaching educational facilities meeting his requirements ideally.

In the literature, inclusion is widely defined as "educating students with special needs in normal classrooms which are the least restrictive educational setting for them, with the help of necessary supportive facilities for full time or part time (Batu et al., 2004). In another study, it is defined as "making individuals with special needs participate in education programs which are appropriate for their educational, personal and vocational development by providing supportive educational services together with other individuals". In addition, researchers defined inclusion as "educating the student with special needs in regular educational settings providing the student or/and class teacher with supportive special education services whenever needed" (Kırcaali-İftar, 1992) Although inclusion has been defined differently by several researchers, requirement for providing supportive services that individuals with special needs need has been emphasized by all of these definitions. As a matter of fact, educating individuals with special needs is not merely sufficient for that implementation to be a part of inclusive education. Individuals with special needs need different regulations in terms of types and levels of their needs through the process of being educated together with normally developing peers. According to ISCED accepted by Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 1997), there are three categories for the children who need special education (Peters, 2003) (see Table 1).

Table 1. The special education categories according to international standard classification of education-ISCED

The Special Education Categories According to International Standard Classification of Education-ISCED
Category A: Certain biologically impaired children
Category B: Children having Learning Disability with no concrete reason
Category C: Children facing difficulties as a result of disadvantages

Considering special needs of people with disabilities, the terms impairment, disability and handicap are proposed to be used by World Health Organization (1980). However, it is seen that health characteristics of individuals are focused on more in creating these terms. Although these terms are frequently used in field research, they are considered as not to be sufficient in expressing all characteristics of individuals with special needs when evaluated in terms of both social-cultural and educational sciences. Since disability is a part of human life and almost every person will lose abilities and strength after a while so may be disabled (World Report on Attitudes of Disability). For this reason, disability refers to negative states emerging from the interactions of the individual with personal and environmental factors affecting the individual and environment. As it is understood from this definition, it is possible that every individual will experience a specific disability in a period of his lifetime. When educational processes of individuals with special needs are considered, current and developing scope and significance of special education and inclusive education can be estimated.

Defining the Increasing Need for Inclusive Education

Number of people with disabilities has been increasing rapidly. The reasons for this increase can be listed as the increase in the incidence of disorders such as depression being caused by the stress emerging from current life conditions, several disorders (Autism, Asperger, etc.) whose causes are not determined yet, disabilities caused by increased mean age of the population and chronic diseases such as diabetes and coronary heart problems in all over the world. As a matter of fact, a research conducted by NPSAS (2008) in USA, shows that the number of students with disabilities have increased by 20% in schools with pre-university education, at schools in California and 40% at schools in New York from 1999-2007 (National Postsecondary Student Aid Study, 2008, cited in United States Government Accountability Office Report, 2009). These statistics demonstrate remarkable increases. According to another

research conducted by General Directorate of Family and Community Services in Turkey (2011), there is an individual with disabilities in need of care in 5.3% of all houses in Turkey. The percentage of the houses hosting an individual with disabilities who is in need of care is 4.5% in cities. This percentage rises to 7.5% in rural areas. (Research on Family Structure in Turkey Report, 2011). In light of all these striking statistical data, referral to the disadvantaged groups and people with disabilities by the constitutional change in Turkey (2010), demonstrates that the needs of people with special needs became more visible. People with disabilities are not able to take opportunities for living in harmony with society in Turkey due to the problems they meet, although their existence in society are generally accepted. These problems basically stem from external factors such as prejudice and indifference for people with disabilities in society, but not from the factors related to disability. "In order to find satisfying solutions to disability, we need firstly to create a sound footing theory. This is the best possible way to pass next step, implementations based on theory. The implementation step requires qualified staff. To meet qualified staff in the opening, new initiatives also in education and training should be done. To provide service network, challenges in regions and diversities in cultures should be regarded. To inform the families about the services will also be useful for effectiveness of initiatives" (Tübitak Research Report, 2006). According to the UNDP "The Human Development Report" (2010), although Turkey has the 83rd place among the 169 countries in terms of Human Development, it has a lower rank (109th out of 169) in terms of "Average Education Time" which is the subcomponent of the human development (Kavak, 2011). Statistical data related to the rates of individuals with disabilities benefiting from educational services is considerably worrisome. At the Education year 2011-2012 in Turkey, 238.917 students were provided with special care facilities. Except for the students in special care institutions, out of 169.711 students, 20.958 were educated in special care classes, 137,893 students at primary-schools and 10,860 students at secondary schools benefited from inclusive education. (ERG Report, 2011). Although development related to these numbers is gladsome when compared with previous years, it is considered that these numbers are not sufficient given the potential number of students who need inclusive education and that inclusion is one of the first priorities to be improved.

Problems that individuals with disabilities meet can be summarized as social exclusion, inequality in access to health services, education and personal development, and inhibition of their access to fundamental rights and freedoms such as participation in professional life. Among preventions against these problems, the significance of dissemination of special and inclusive education arises. Developed countries have completed legal regulations related to

providing people with disabilities with educational and social services and have taken precautions intended for implementation of these services. In last ten years, these countries have taken intensive effort for making higher education more accessible for individuals with disabilities (Barnes, 2007; cited in Claiborne et. al. p. 513).

Inclusive Education and Higher Education in Turkey

In Turkey, the right to education for all is assured by the second paragraph of article 42 of the Constitution of the Republic of Turkey. This article is related to the implementation of the principle of "*No one shall be deprived of education and learning".*

Regulation for Special Education Services in Turkey (2006) defines inclusive education as "special education services which are based on the principle that individuals' maintaining their education with normally developing peers in public and private preschool, primary, secondary and formal educational institutions with the help of supportive educational services". The lack of referral to higher education in the definition may be due to a bureaucratic lack of coordination between Ministry of Education and Higher Education Board related to understanding that regulations related to higher education should be conducted by Higher Education Board. However, whatever the reason is, considering changes in the field of education in recent years, and demands emerging with educational approaches such as "education for all" and "lifelong learning", the lack of step related to higher education in this definition draws the attention.

Higher education includes all of the educational institutions providing at least two year higher education based on secondary education. Purpose of the higher education in Turkey is defined as "training students according to their interest, competence and abilities in parallel to science policy and need for human resources of the country, conducting research in scientific fields, publishing studies that demonstrate research findings and improve science and technology, conducting studies requested by the government and expressing opinions about the results, emitting informative scientific data to the community both verbally and in written documents, and providing formal education services (TUBITAK, Vision 2023 Report http://www.tubitak.gov.tr/tr/kurumsal/politikalar/icerik-vizyon-2023). As understood from this definition, universities are institutions both in that knowledge is produced and reproduced, and the abilities needed by individuals for having a profession are provided. Considering this critical function of universities, providing all individuals with the opportunity to equally utilize from

this educational service come into prominence as a main function of the state (Kalyon, 2012). In Turkey, attending primary and secondary education is found to be sufficient for people with disabilities and implementations encouraging them to attend higher educational institutions are rarely conducted. The access to especially higher education is extremely difficult for individuals with disabilities. Although the number of people with disabilities having the opportunity for higher education is still not sufficient, this number has been increasing until 2000. When the number of students with disabilities being graduated from universities was 97, this number had increased to 410 in 2008 and to 1090 in 2009. As of 2011, the number of students with disabilities studying in universities was reported as 3584 (AÜ, 2011). Although possibility to study in universities for individuals with disabilities become closer with that for normally developing individuals, problems related to higher education of people with disabilities are not limited to this issue. The following process is considerably corrosive for students with disabilities obtaining the right for higher education by passing the university entrance exam. It is obvious that individuals with disabilities have serious problems related to access to higher education or obtaining qualified education during the following process. Even though there are several efforts such as special higher education institutions for individuals with disabilities (Anadolu University, Vocational High School etc.), current conditions are not sufficient to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities who want to be educated with normally developing peers on a field they prefer. In addition, these institutions are not exactly match the existing definition of inclusive education. However, considering all these needs, one of the most significant steps taken is the publication of "Regulation for Disabilities Consultation and Coordination in Higher Education Institutions" by Higher Education Board and that efforts for establishing Disability Support Units in universities have begun. The purpose of this regulation is explained as taking precautions and making arrangements to make higher education process for university students with disabilities easier. In accordance with the regulation, establishing of the units for students with disabilities has been accelerated. However, implementation of laws and regulations takes time. As of the year 2014, 118 universities have their own support units for students with disabilities in Turkey (http://www.tiu.org.tr/turkce/content/view/34/65/). Although universities have these support units, quality of services provided for university students with disabilities should be questioned. In this direction, expectations from higher education institutions were defined by the Platform for University Students with Disabilities as participating in decision making mechanisms, equality and struggle against isolation, accessibility and inclusive universities and respect for individual differences (Platform for University Students with Disabilities Report, no date).

Development of Programs in Accordance with Inclusion in Higher Education

Higher education in all over the world is in a dynamic process being shaped by needs, demands and expectations of students, society and academia. As in all levels of education, planning should be completed considering educational needs of in individuals in also higher education. As Lingard mentioned (2007), educational programs should be planned by transferring from pedagogy of the same to pedagogy of the different. It is indispensable that needs should be defined and consistently evaluated when designing or developing higher education programs with an educational approach making differences and disabilities more visible.

Universities are structures having different patterns and every unit, person and function should be structured according to the nature and philosophy of inclusive education. Thus, whatever the reason is, understanding and meeting the needs will be easier. At this point, support units in universities should work in collaboration with other units and support them related to knowledge and skills they need. Therefore, individuals working in support units should know inclusion and adaptations needed well and provide required guidance. Since every individual with disabilities generally has different needs in different fields, he needs different planning for every course. Therefore, existence of specific standards related to staff working in support units will increase the quality of services. In addition, the student in inclusive program should be made a part of university dynamics. Energy for being more visible and creating new structures according to their interests and needs will ensure this dynamism. It would be good to have changes up to bottom in which the change would be in the system itself and not forcing the individual to make these changes happen. Policies on higher education include the principles of non-discrimination should set. Today, lifelong learning is one of the most valuable educational approaches. Universities have responsibilities especially on both professional development and social acceptance of the students. Monitoring and evaluation should be conducted about effectiveness and potential contributions to monitoring regulations of higher education programs.

Conclusion

Although people with disabilities are accepted in society with their general existence, they have difficulties in living in harmony with the society. These difficulties generally stem from external factors such as prejudice and indifference of society rather than factors related to impairment. Individuals with disabilities will be productive and have the opportunity for self-

realization when they participate in professional life. As a matter of fact, individuals with disabilities are able to have appropriate professions differing in terms of the type of disability. However, they have difficulties in participating professional life due to prejudice in society and the fact that laws are not implemented. According to the results of Disability Research in Turkey, the rates of participation to production for people with disabilities is extremely low. Low rates of placement to jobs is one of the significant discriminations that people with disabilities experience in society. Working in a job is important for people with disabilities in terms of their integration to society. Unemployment rates' being high among people with disabilities causes them to be excluded from society (ÖZİDA 2002, cited in Aslan & Şeker 2011). Turkey recognizes disabilities and the rights of people with disabilities with many national and international contracts, laws and decrees. Transforming this condition to a more concrete structure, social inequalities should be resolved and necessary regulations should be made.

The principle of continuity in education has a more critical importance for children with disabilities. Access to education for individuals with disabilities is limited because of difficulties in preventing, determining and evaluating disabilities, lack of physical equipment and insufficiency in implementation of special and inclusive education. It is extremely difficult for individuals with disabilities who completed their compulsory education even in difficult conditions, to reach higher education. Even though there are several higher education institutions for individuals with disabilities (Anadolu University, Vocational High School etc.), these institutions are not sufficient to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities to be educated with their normally developing peers. Inclusive education from preschool to higher education is a system that will make contributions for all students, their families and instructors. Therefore, laws and implementations should overlap for disabilities to gain a place in every field in society. For this reason, efforts towards configuring positive social perception related to disabilities should be planned and implemented as a social policy. When quality in education is defined as child centered and different elements of education is designed considering aspects and needs of the child, effective inclusive education will be implemented. Strengthening educational institutions and practitioners and providing them with necessary knowledge and skills should be seen as a natural extension of this approach (ERG, Inclusive Education in Turkey: Suggestions for Policies and Implementations Report, 2012). In the framework of lifelong learning philosophy, the model for inclusive education may be realized with an approach of creating equal and accessible educational opportunities. Although the process related to laws and contracts about social acceptance are about to be completed in Turkey, more

concrete and observable implementations should be accelerated. The point that research related to inclusive education focus on is generally the fact that supportive educational services should consistently be developed. The quality of supportive educational services will certainly increase with an effective planning and coordination. Increasing the quality of education, analyzing planning, implementations and evaluation programs in other countries which use integrated educational model, and creating a model specific to Turkey are the facts that come into prominence.

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