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CHALLENGE, CREATE, INNOVATE

Voices of ELT Professionals from the Virtual Classroom

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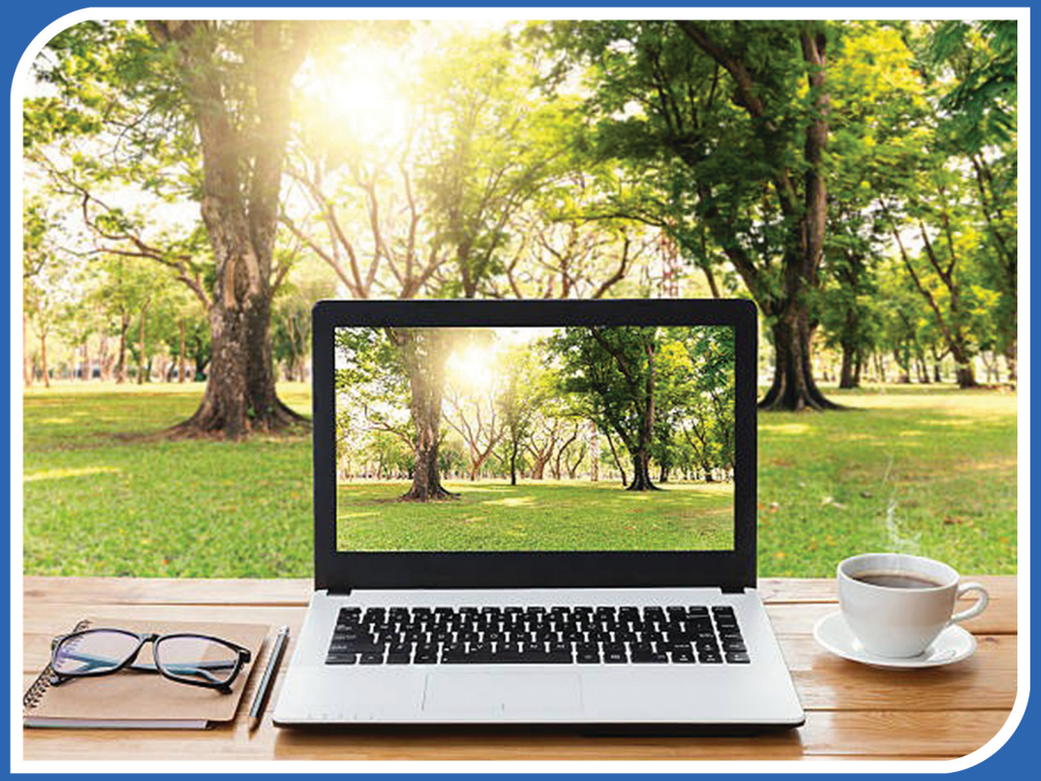

Editor
Elif Tokdemir Demirel

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Voices of ELT Professionals from the Virtual Classroom

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LIVRE DE LYON

PREFACE

"The computer was born to solve
problems that did not exist before."
Bill Gates

Dear Respectable Colleagues,

I am happy to have realized this book project that I have been planning for a long time with your contributions and support as an editor.

The impetus behind this edited book "**Challenge, Create, Innovate: Voices of ELT Professionals from the Virtual Classroom"** has been the sudden shift to online education with the Covid-19 pandemic which has deeply affected education practices worldwide. As English language educators, similar to educators in all other fields, we were forced to find solutions to the problems that arose while teaching online which range from managing the online teaching environment, solving technical problems, assisting students in their technical issues, assessment and so on.

We faced many challenges in the process: how to enrich the content of our classes, how to teach skills-based courses, how to manage students' technological challenges such as lack of access, how to manage large class sizes. We had to find creative ways to solve these problems, though many remained unsolved. However, after experiencing all the challenges of emergency online teaching, we are more prepared for the future as educators.

In order to look into the future with confidence we need to take lessons from our past experiences and sharing these experiences can help others to learn from them as well. Since it is evident that online teaching is going to become an increasingly important component of higher education in Turkey in the future, it is vital that we take lessons from the emergency online teaching period during the Covid-19 lockdown. Only in this way, can we benefit from the opportunities offered by online learning technologies and overcome the challenges it brings in our way.

I am in the opinion that this edited book is going to provide a platform to share experiences with teaching online which will pave the way for more effective online teaching practices in the future.

I would like to thank all the chapter writers who contributed to the publication of their book with their studies. And I would like to extend my thanks to the reviewers who provided invaluable comments for the chapters: Prof. Dr. Bena Gül Peker, Prof Dr. Nuray Alagözlü, Prof. Dr. Onur Köksal, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Safiye İpek Kuru Gönen, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Perihan Korkut, Dr. Işıl Günseli Kaçar.

With respect to all my colleagues who fought in the frontline to continue education.

27/12/2021

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Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elif Tokdemir Demirel

REFEREES

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

TEACHING ONLINE IN THE COVID-ERA: A SURVEY OF THE TURKISH HIGHER EDUCATION CONTEXT

Elif TOKDEMİR DEMİREL[1] & Güner KOÇ AYTEKİN[2]

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Abstract

This study reports the findings of a comprehensive survey carried out with teaching faculty at Turkish Higher institutions from all geographical regions of Turkey in order to find out about their experiences with emergency online teaching imposed after the declaration of a pandemic on March 11, 2020, by the WHO. After the declaration of a pandemic by the WHO, online teaching was started in Turkey on March 23, 2020, and this was a rather unprepared and sudden shift. The purpose of this study is to first provide an overview of the experiences of Turkish academicians during the emergency online teaching, then to analyze the relationships between various variables such as regional differences and institutional differences in regards to the institutional infrastructure and institutional support provided by Turkish higher institutions in the implementation of online teaching. The findings indicate that generally in all institutions, infrastructure and institutional support were provided at varying degrees but in the overall picture, there is still room for improvement. On the other hand, in terms of equity, it was found that there is a difference between

geographical regions and types of institutions private or state-funded in terms of the institutional infrastructure and institutional support provided. The results have implications for future planning of online teaching activities which are going to remain to be an important component of Higher education in the future.

Keywords: covid-19 pandemic, higher education, online teaching

Introduction

After the announcement of the COVID-19 pandemic on March 11, 2020, by the World Health Organization (*WHO,2020)*, the world has not been the same and the reality is that it will never be the same. All fields of life have been deeply affected by the pandemic and the realities it has brought about such as lockdowns, travel restrictions, and school closures. In the field of education, the pandemic brought about an abrupt shift to online education and like the rest of the world higher education institutions in Turkey, online teaching started on March 23, 2020 (Anadolu Agency, 2020) which was rather unprepared due to the extraordinary situation. The coronavirus outbreak forced educators to put into focus online teaching and educational technology which were previously regarded as somewhat trivial or extra as more and more important even vital. Although there had been many developments in the online teaching sphere in the last decades, it was never thought to replace face-to-face education completely. Rather, online education was thought to be something that is somewhat necessary but could be lived without. Almost all countries in the world had somewhat invested in digital technologies in education at different levels and for different purposes but they had never presumed that it would come to replace the total reality of face to face teaching. The teachers were also divided in this matter. While some preferred teaching with the traditional methods, some tech savvy teachers integrated technology into their teaching. As far as internet connection was concerned, some traditional minded teachers even thought of the internet and mobile devices alike as distractions that prevented students from studying properly.

Online learning has been defined by OECD (2000) as the use of digital materials to support learning which does not necessarily take place at a distance and which can be used in physical classrooms to complement more traditional teaching methods, in which case it is called blended learning. Distance learning on the other hand has been defined as learning that is done away from a classroom involving mainly online education, with an instructor that gives lessons and assigns work digitally. There have been attempts to categorize and explain levels of adaptation to e-learning systems which are defined according to the level of technology integration into teaching/learning activities, the nature of communication, and the level of independence they allow the learners.

For example, according to Algahtani's (2011) categorization, there are three ways of using e-learning: adjunct e-Learning in which e-learning is seen as complementary to traditional learning; blended e-Learning in which course content is delivered through both traditionally and online; and lastly wholly online learning in which learners are totally independent of the traditional classroom and all content is delivered online.

Many research studies were done on online teaching to determine how it can be applied in the best way in the last decades. Some research studies compared traditional face-to-face teaching with online teaching in terms of advantages and disadvantages. Studies investigating students' perspectives about advantages of online learning revealed certain treads such as convenience in terms of time and space, continued availability of resources, saving time and money in reaching resources, flexibility, and convenience to instructors and learners (Zhang et al., 2021), opportunities for the educational institution to extend its course offerings and move beyond geographical borders (Toven-Lindsey et al., 2015) and providing opportunities for independent learning and the quality of information (Valantinaitė & Sederevičiūtė-Pačiauskienė, 2021). However, studies also revealed certain drawbacks including students missing lectures, technical complications, and a lack of institutional help and training (Mouchantaf, 2020). Studies carried out on online teaching before the pandemic reported positive findings; for example, Bunescu & Stoeber (2018) prepared a comprehensive report titled "Learning and teaching in the European Higher Education Area" with the support of the European University Association. In their report, they listed main institutional trends in digital learning during the three years preceding 2018 in European higher education:

> General acceptance of digital learning has improved (93%)
>
> Used for innovating learning and teaching (93%)
>
> More strategic use of digital learning (87%)
>
> Increased use in regular teaching (e.g. through blended learning) (87%)
>
> Digital learning becoming part of the institutional strategy (85%)
>
> Lectures are available on video/podcast (75%)
>
> More online learning – for non-degree purposes (52%)
>
> More online learning degree programs (49%) (p.60)

Akçıl and Baştaş (2020) investigated the relationship between university students' attitudes towards e-learning and digital citizenship behaviors in Cyprus. Their results indicate a positive relationship between digital citizenship behaviors and

attitudes towards e-learning. This also coincides with the social norm aspect of the TAM model since digital citizenship behaviors have become the accepted norm among university students today. Alan (2021) investigated attitudes towards online learning through metaphors. While the positive metaphors were related to concepts of efficiency, freedom, and savior, there were also negative and neutral metaphors. The study revealed that the number of negative metaphors was higher than others such as artificiality, desperation, inefficiency, lack of interaction, restriction, and uncertainty. The neutral metaphors stated by academicians were interest/ability and indifference. The negative metaphors could be an indication of the fact that the academicians did not have a chance to do adequate planning and preparation due to the sudden shift to online education.

As is true for all innovative practices, there are certain factors that determine the success of the integration of technology into teaching and learning practices. Barclay et al. (2018) investigated critical success factors influencing students' perception and use in online learning settings. According to the results of their study supportive cultural practices, access to computers, system or online environment availability, computer, and online learning self-efficacy, user perception of usefulness, and ease of use. As a result of their comprehensive survey, they developed a research model which extends the boundaries of Davis's (1989) TAM (Technology Acceptance Model) to include additional external factors that can impact the adoption and use of e-learning systems in higher education. Here it would be useful to present the TAM model in more detail.

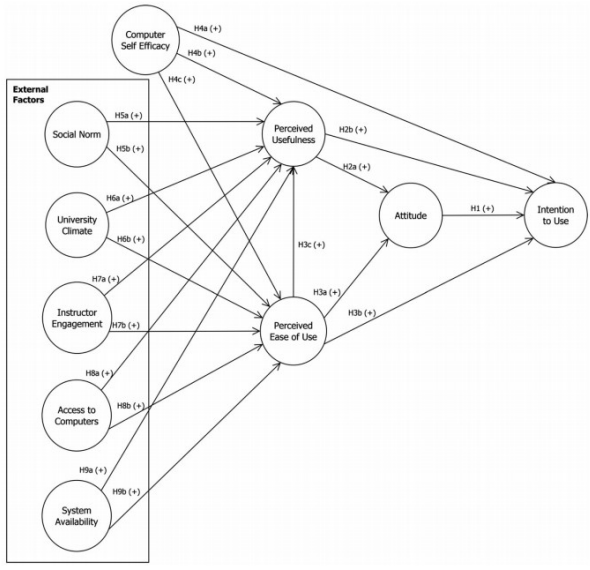

Figure 1. The Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989)

The TAM model includes the factors which explain students' perception and use in online teaching. These factors can be listed as follows: computer self-efficacy, social norm, university climate, instructor engagement, access to computers, and system availability. Specifically, computer self-efficacy refers to "An individual's perceptions of his or her ability to use computers in the accomplishment of a task rather than reflecting simple component skills (Barclay et al., 2018, p.). The social norm concept makes up the second factor in the model. This concept has been put forward originally by Deutsch & Gerard, (1955) who divide it into two as normative and informational social influence. When normative social influence is concerned one conforms to the positive expectation of others; on the other hand, in the case of informational social influence the individual accepts information received from another individual as evidence about reality. Applied to acceptance of online teaching, the social norm can be realized when a group of individuals or in this case, groups of teachers and students conform to the positive expectations of the larger group. In emergency online teaching the existence of social norms could be questionable since it did not come about as a natural product of social dynamics in time but was rather forced due to the circumstances. But as computer literacy is increasingly seen as a positive trait, it could be argued that being able to successfully take part in online teaching activities fulfills the social norm as a normative social influence. The third factor, university climate also is highly relevant to online teaching since its success directly relies on the appropriate and adequate infrastructure provided by the university. The fourth factor is instructor engagement which refers to how much help, guidance, and encouragement is provided to students in the online teaching environment. The last two factors are access to computers which refers to access to ICT devices (computers, laptops, smartphones), and off-campus access to the online teaching environment and system availability which is the availability of the online system from both onsite and off-site locations.

Although online teaching was far from being the norm in Turkish Higher Education institutions before the pandemic, the use of computers and online learning applications was seen as an additional alternative to face-to-face teaching limited to certain subjects and courses offered to a wide range of students in universities in the past decades. Accordingly, many universities already had established distance teaching centers that served the student body especially for obligatory courses which had a high enrolment rate such as elective language courses, Turkish language courses, and Turkish History courses. Even before the COVID pandemic made it necessary, online teaching had found its way into higher education. For example, many Turkish universities already had Distance

Education Centers which helped the transition to online education easier. However, these centers were seen as secondary facilities which supported face-to-face teaching which was the main norm.

However, after the Coronavirus outbreak, schools were forced to resort to online teaching altogether because of health concerns on March 23, 2020. At this point, technological infrastructure such as stable internet connections and practical knowledge of educational technologies became vital for both students and teachers. Due to the Covid-19 crisis and the sudden shift to online teaching educators were faced with new challenges. Korkmaz & Toraman, (2020) listed the following problems experienced by the educators at Turkish educational institutions during online learning processes:

> Student motivation in online education is lower compared to face-to-face classes (69.5%), Online education is inappropriate for teaching every subject, knowledge, or skill (63.3%), Not all the learning outcomes determined for students can be gained through online learning environment (63.2%), educator-student interaction was poor in online learning practices (61.9%), online education is not efficient in providing skills teaching (such as listening or speaking in language classes, drawing in visual arts lesson, etc.) (60%), Reliable assessment could not be made in the online education environment (57.9%), Giving feedback to students during online education is difficult (57.3%), in online learning, it is difficult to teach according to the individual interests and abilities of the students (56.9%), Educators do not have enough knowledge on how to evaluate the learners' knowledge and skills in the online education environment (51.9%). (p.294)

In the past two years, many research studies have been carried out in Turkey on the experience of emergency online education which focused on various aspects of online education. The focuses of these research studies included attitudes of students and teachers towards online education (Serhan, 2020; Topçu & Başbay, 2020; Dolmacı & Dolmacı, 2020; Savaş, 2021; Ustabulut, 2021; Yıldız et al., 2021; Alan, 2021) readiness of teachers and students for online learning (Ateş-Çobanoğlu & Çobanoğlu, 2021), effects of online teaching on educational system in Turkey (Akbulut et al., 2020; Beltekin & Kuyulu, 2020; Çankaya & Durak, 2020; Durak et al., 2020), the perspective of educational planning and learning management systems during online teaching, professional development needs and gains of teaching faculty at universities (Elçi, n.d.), the perspectives of pre-service teachers relating online teaching (Erumit et al., 2021; Önal & Özdemir, 2021; Düzgün & Sulak, 2020; Taşkaya, 2021; Yurdakal & Susar

Kirmizi, 2021; Karahan et al., 2020; Önal & Özdemir, 2021) and the outline of experiences with online teaching at various institutions (Okray, 2021; Özen & Abdüsselam, 2021; Tosun, 2021; Yılmaz İnce et al., 2020), challenges faced during the implementation of online education in Turkish higher institutions (Karademir et al., 2020, 2020; Karataş et al., 2021; Özüdoğru, 2021; Tosun & Bayzan, 2021) and digital skills of students and teachers (Bulut & Del, 2021; Çelik & İpçioğlu, 2021; Kaya, 2021; Yurtseven et al., 2021).

Çalışkan et al. (2020) investigated lecturers' attitudes towards online education in relation to such as the transition to online learning and adapting lectures to the online environment. In terms of transition, the researchers found a generally negative attitude due to equipment shortage, slow transition process, unpreparedness, and decision changes by the administration. The majority of the lecturers reported that they had trouble adapting their course materials to the online environment. However, despite these negative attitudes, the lecturers' opinions about the online teaching application were mostly positive. This indicates that lecturers' attitudes can change depending on the effectiveness of the technological tools used and that their criticism is not due to the technology used itself but the problems caused by the fast transition to these devices and the lack of training and planning. This view is supported by the recommendations provided by the lecturers which are the need for teacher and student training, controls during the lesson, and adequate technical support.

Studies investigating attitudes of academicians from fields that require hands-on activities and laboratory work such as Yıldız et al. (2021) from music education field. I the study by Yıldız et al (2021) additional challenges imposed by distance education in the teaching of musical instruments are discussed and recommendations are made such as not conducting distance instrument training for all types of instruments since the sound characteristics of all instruments differ from each other, they also point to the need for training of instructors for effective distance education, and lastly they offer a combination of synchronous and asynchronous methods specifically for music education.

Similarly, Ustabulut (2021) stated that in science education in addition to feeling caught unprepared in distance education teaching and digitalizing course contents the instructors also stated that distance education is not appropriate for laboratory applications and workshops courses in Science. They also added the need for "preparing more visual content", "producing different and extensive material", and "producing content that is interactive and for all levels" since they were generally dissatisfied with digital content/ teaching materials.

Regarding challenges faced in online education during the covid-19 period, Karademir et al. (2020) point to the need for setting standards for distance education. In addition, they highlight the importance of designing materials suitable for distance education and also point to the problems in testing and assessment posed by distance education.

Overall the literature on online teaching is getting richer day by day since academicians continuously share their experiences. There is still a long way to go to achieve effective online teaching and future planning should be done in the light of the research reflecting the one-to-one experiences of academicians and teaching faculty and researchers.

Methods

This study was designed in order to provide a comprehensive and clear picture of the experiences of teaching faculty in higher education institutions through an online survey was carried out with the participation of 303 faculty members teaching in various universities around Turkey. An Ethics Board approval was obtained before the distribution of the survey in the online environment to the universities. This comprehensive survey investigated various aspects of online teaching educational practices in Turkish higher education institutions during the Covid-19 period when universities practiced complete online education. The online questionnaire specifically focused on issues put forward by the Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989) such as institutional support, technical infrastructure level of experience of teaching faculty in distance/ digital education, and integration of technology in teaching concerning regional differences, the field of experience and gender. The questionnaire included questions inquiring about demographic, regional, and institutional information; level of readiness for online education; institutional support provided during the emergency online teaching period; level of institutional infrastructure; self-evaluation of teaching faculty in terms of integration of technology in and out of class activities and self-evaluation of faculty in terms of proficiency in using educational technologies and the various types of educational technology used in online courses. Question types were mainly 6 point Likert scale questions but there were some open-ended questions as well.

In the questionnaire, the participants were first asked to provide demographic, regional, and institutional information such as gender, age, years of professional experience, current status in the institution, field of research, the region where the institution is located, class size, the language of instruction at institution and type of teaching methods employed. In terms of the level of readiness for online teaching the teaching faculty were asked whether they

participated in and organizations on educational technologies, and whether they took any training in using educational technologies. In terms of institutional support, the questionnaire enquired the hardware and software infrastructure provided by the institution, the opportunities provided to teaching faculty to familiarize themselves with online education, in-service training provided by the institution for online education, adequacy of technical staff, accessibility of internet by students and teaching faculty and accessibility of digital resources. The teaching faculty were also asked to self-evaluate their level of integration of technology in and out of class activities and their proficiency in using educational technologies. The last part of the questionnaire was aimed at obtaining information about the types of educational technology employed in online classes. The questionnaire also included an open-ended question for additional comments and ideas.

The following research questions were investigated in the study:

Research Question 1: What are the perceptions of teaching faculty members in terms of the online learning technologies provided by Turkish institutions in online teaching during the covid-19 pandemic and what is the level at which they are provided?

Research Question 2: What are the perceptions of teaching faculty members in terms of the technical support provided by their institutions in online teaching during the covid-19 pandemic?

Research Question 3: What are the perceptions of teaching faculty members in terms of student and staff access to computer/internet and digital resources in online teaching during the covid-19 pandemic?

Research Question 4: Are there any significant differences between faculty members in getting technical support from their schools in terms of the institutions /regions they work in?

Research Question 5: Are there any significant differences between faculty members in the technical infrastructure of their schools and the level of experience of the staff in distance/digital education concerning the institutions/ regions they work for?

Results and Discussion

The purpose of this study is to provide a comprehensive overview of the experiences with emergency online teaching in Turkish Higher Education institutions. To this end, a questionnaire was administered and 303 academicians who experienced teaching during the covid-19 emergency online teaching period participated in the study. This section first provides a general overview of the information gathered about the participants in terms of both demographics and

professional environment. Figure 1 shows the gender distribution of participants which indicates that more female participants have joined the questionnaire.

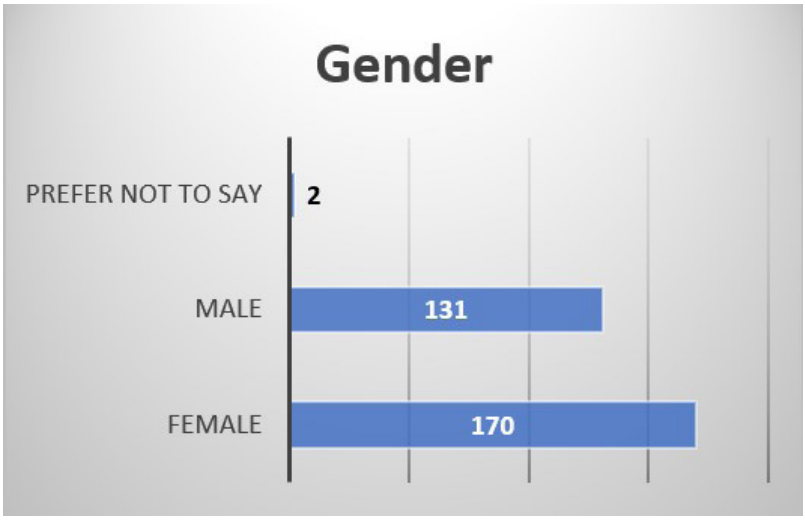

Figure 2. Gender distribution of participants

The second demographic variable obtained from participants was their age. As shown in Figure 2, the participants' ages range from 23 to 73 but the vast majority of participants are between the ages of 26 and 44 which is considered the Millennials or Generation Y, the computer-savvy generation. The computer native generation or generation X has a lower representation among the group of participants. The age distribution according to generations may have relevance with the study since computer skills is an important predictor of adaptation to online teaching.

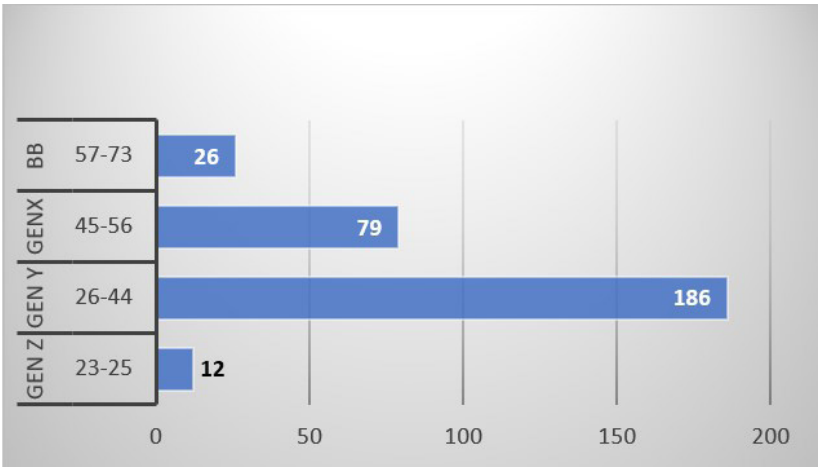

Figure 3. Age and generation distribution
of participants, BB: Baby Boomer Generation

Figure 3 below shows the distribution of the professional experience of the participants. If we look at the overall picture, the majority of the participants have experience of more than 10 years.

Figure 4. Professional experience of participants

The participating academicians come from many different departments of the universities and their departments were grouped under general fields of study. Accordingly, the fields of research of the participating academicians are medicine (n=61), business and finance (n=51), languages (n=41), planning (n=34), science (28), engineering (n=26), education (n=21), social sciences (15), psychology (11), agriculture (8), art (6), sports sciences (n=1). The fact that there are participants from a wide range of fields increases the representativeness of the study respectively. In terms of the type of institution participants from state-run institutions (n=224) outnumber those from private institutions (n=79). The participants come from institutions located in 8 geographical regions of Turkey from namely Middle Anatolia (n=74), Marmara (n=59), Aegean (n=41), Black Sea Region (n=28), Mediterranean Region (n=28), Central Anatolia Region (n=22), Eastern Anatolia Region (20) and South-Eastern Anatolia Region (n=20).

After the general demographic information and general institutional information were obtained through the questionnaire, the participants were asked to reply to questions about the technologies offered for online teaching in their institutions. Thus, Question 13 inquired about the range of technologies installed or employed by the university in online learning. The question specifically inquired whether the university installed content management systems, learning management systems, or classroom management systems which are important

components of online learning, and other systems that could complement online learning such as websites or blogs, social media sites, and mailing/ messaging systems. As seen in Figure 4, a majority of the participants reported that their universities have installed a learning management system, a content management system, or a classroom management system to manage online learning effectively. Most universities provide all of the three online technology systems. In fact, content management systems at Turkish universities have been in use before the pandemic and emergency online teaching. As shown in Figure 4, mailing and messaging systems have the highest positive response (n=247) which shows that almost all universities are employing e-mail or messaging systems. Web sites or blogs or social media sites are also in use by universities but not at a rate as high as the other online learning technologies.

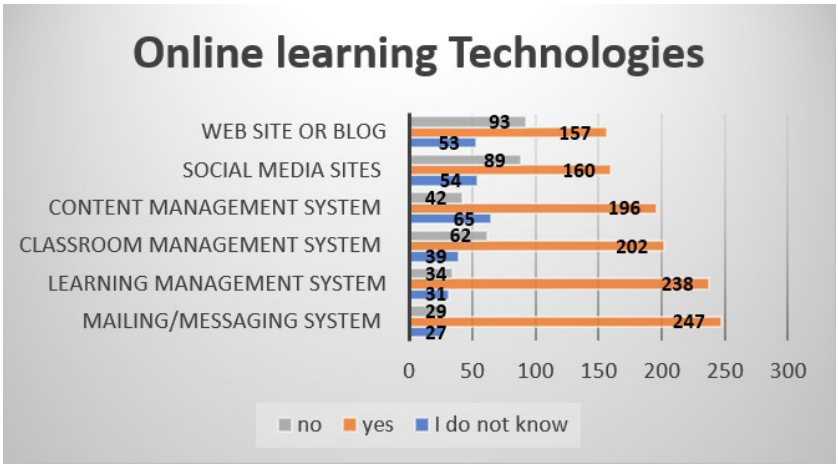

Figure 5. Online learning technologies provided by universities

Questions in Section 3 in the questionnaire inquired the institutional support provided for online teaching during the Covid-19 pandemic on a 6-point Likert scale which ranged in the following way: 1-strongly disagree, 2-moderately disagree, 3-slightly disagree, 4-slightly agree, 5-moderately agree, 6-strongly agree. An average Likert score was calculated for all the responses to get an overall result for these questions. The results are summarized in Table 1 below. These results do not take into account individual differences between institutions but just provide the overall tendency put forward by all responses. The Likert score average of Question 14 about whether the institution provides hardware and software infrastructure support for online teaching/learning processes is 4.4 and could be interpreted as between slightly agree to moderately agree. Therefore, the average agreement level for this item is moderate not a strong

agreement, indicating that although hardware and software support is provided it is still not at the desired level at all institutions. Another important component in the success of online teaching is inquired in Question 15 regarding the help of the institution in becoming familiar with online learning/teaching technologies. Similarly, to Question 15, the responses indicate a moderate level of agreement with an average Likert score of 4,5. Question 16 is asking whether the institution provided adequate in-service training in the use of learning technologies. The average Likert score for this item is 4 which corresponds to slightly agree. This average indicates that in-service training has not become widespread in all Higher Education Institutions in Turkey. The highest-ranked item in Section 3 is Question 17 which received an average Likert score of 5,5 indicating a higher agreement rate compared to the other items between moderately agree and strongly agree. Although the level of in-service training is not adequate in Turkish higher education institutions, the support from technical staff was made adequately available in many of the institutions.

Table 1. Responses to questions regarding institutional support for online teaching during Covid-19

Questions	**Average Likert Scale Score**
14. My institution provided required hardware and software infrastructure and support for online teaching/learning processes.	4.40
15. My institution made me familiar with the technologies to be integrated into the teaching/learning process via online meetings and instructional documents in our school.	4.50
16. My institution provided adequate in-service teacher training in the use of technology for learning.	4.00
17. My institution assigned technical staff who support us in online teaching processes.	5.53

Section 4 in the questionnaire inquired about the experience of participants with computer/internet technologies in their institutions. The average Likert scores for student and staff access to computer/ internet technologies were 3,9 and 4,6 respectively which indicates a slight to moderate agreement level which shows that there is still room for improvement regarding access. When staff access to digital resources is concerned the average Likert score value is similarly between slight and moderate agreement (4,5). The academicians' rating of themselves in integrating computer technologies in their in-class and out-of-class activities are both 4,5 which is again between slight to moderate agreement indicating

that all teaching faculty members do not have a high rating of themselves in the integration of computer/internet technologies. Similarly, the self-evaluation of teaching faculty of their own proficiency level in using computer/internet technologies is at the slight to moderate level.

Table 2. Responses to Section 4 in the questionnaire

Questions	**Average Likert scale score**
18. How would you rate student access to computer /Internet technologies at your school?	3.90
19. How would you rate staff access to computer /Internet technologies at your school?	4.60
20. How would you rate staff access to digital resources (online databases, journals, scientific magazines, etc.) in your school?	4.50
21. How would you rate yourself in integrating computer/Internet technologies in your in-class teaching activities?	4.40
22. How would you rate yourself in integrating computer/Internet technologies in your out-of-class teaching activities?	4.50
23. How would you rate your proficiency level in using computer/Internet technologies for teaching/learning purposes?	4.53

Table 3. Chi-Square test results regarding technical support and type of institution

			Getting technical support (14)						*p*
			1	2	3	4	5	6	
Type of institution (8)	State run	n	6	21	32	55	70	40	0,033*
		%	2.7%	9.4%	14.3%	24.6%	31.3%	17.9%	
	Foundation/ Private	n	1	1	10	18	23	26	
		%	1.3%	1.3%	12.7%	22.8%	29.1%	32.9%	

* $p<0.05$

In order to investigate the main research questions of the study, relationships were sought between certain variables of the study. Research Question 1 read as follows: Are there any significant differences between faculty members in getting technical support from their schools in terms of the institutions /regions they work in? A Chi-square test analysis was done to find out about this relationship

using SPSS statistical package. The results of the Chi-square test are shown in Table 3 below. According to the results, there is a significant relationship between the institutions in terms of technical infrastructure ($p<0.05$).

Table 4 below shows the results of the Chi-square test about the technical support provided and regions of the institutions. The test results indicate a significant relationship between regions where the institutions are located and the level of technical support provided by institutions ($p<0.05$). According to the radar graphic in Figure 5 the regions can be ordered in terms of technical support provided as perceived by academicians as follows: the highest perceived support was reported by Marmara Region academicians, followed by those from Middle Anatolia, East Anatolia, South East Anatolia, The Aegean, the Black Sea, and the Mediterranean. The lowest perceived technical support was reported by academicians in the Mediterranean region. It should also be noted that all data are inclined towards agreement in the Likert Scale, but this agreement level ranges between moderately agree and slightly agree.

Table 4. Chi-Square test results regarding technical support and type of institution

			Getting technical support (14)						*p*
			1	2	3	4	5	6	
Region (9)	Aegean	n	1	1	9	12	9	9	0.014*
		%	2.4%	2.4%	22.0%	29.3%	22.0%	22.0%	
	Black sea	n	2	5	7	8	11	6	
		%	5.1%	12.8%	17.9%	20.5%	28.2%	15.4%	
	Marmara	n	0	4	5	16	21	13	
		%	0.0%	6.8%	8.5%	27.1%	35.6%	22.0%	
	Mediterranean	n	0	4	10	6	2	6	
		%	0.0%	14.3%	35.7%	21.4%	7.1%	21.4%	
	Middle Anatolia	n	3	7	7	21	32	26	
		%	3.1%	7.3%	7.3%	21.9%	33.3%	27.1%	
	Eastern Anatolia	n	0	0	1	9	8	2	
		%	0.0%	0.0%	5.0%	45.0%	40.0%	10.0%	
	Southeastern Anatolia	n	1	1	3	1	10	4	
		%	5.0%	5.0%	15.0%	5.0%	50.0%	20.0%	

* $p<0.05$

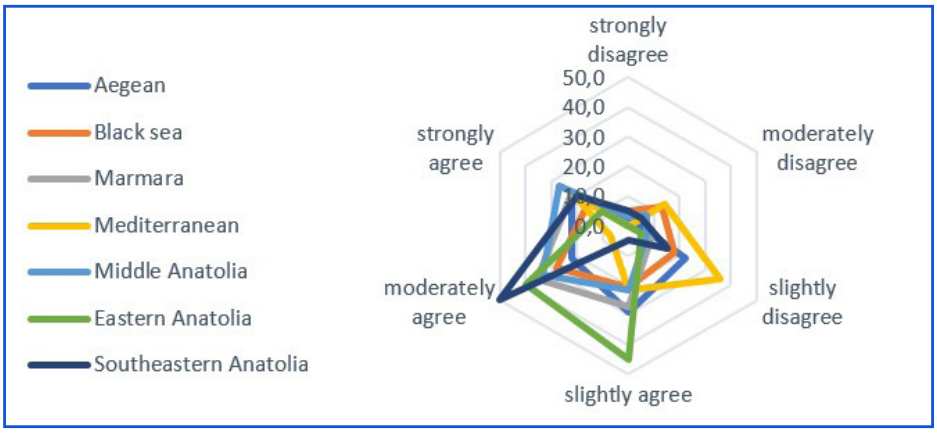

Figure 6. Relationship between technical support and type of institution

Table 5 below shows the results of the Chi-square test about the technical infrastructure of the institutions and the type of institutions state sun or private. The test results indicate a significant relationship between institution types and the technical infrastructure of the institutions ($p<0.05$).

Table 5. Chi-Square test results regarding type of institution and technical infrastructure.

			Technical infrastructure-Student (18)						*p*
			1	2	3	4	5	6	
Type of institution (8)	State run	n	10	29	53	65	48	19	0.004*
		%	4.5%	12.9%	23.7%	29.0%	21.4%	8.5%	
	Foundation/ Private	n	0	5	14	18	33	9	
		%	0.0%	6.3%	17.7%	22.8%	41.8%	11.4%	

* $p<0.05$

Table 6 below shows the results of the Chi-square test about the technical infrastructure of the institutions and the regions where the institutions are located. The test results indicate a significant relationship between regions of the institutions and the technical infrastructure of the institutions ($p<0.05$).

Table 6. Chi-Square test results regarding regions of institutions and technical infrastructure.

			Technical infrastructure-Student (18)						*p*
			1	2	3	4	5	6	
Region (9)	Aegean	n	1	4	12	13	7	4	0.063*
		%	2.4%	9.8%	29.3%	31.7%	17.1%	9.8%	
	Black sea	n	4	6	8	9	10	2	
		%	10.3%	15.4%	20.5%	23.1%	25.6%	5.1%	
	Marmara	n	1	6	14	14	21	3	
		%	1.7%	10.2%	23.7%	23.7%	35.6%	5.1%	
	Mediterranean	n	0	5	9	9	3	2	
		%	0.0%	17.9%	32.1%	32.1%	10.7%	7.1%	
	Middle Anatolia	n	4	7	16	26	27	16	
		%	4.2%	7.3%	16.7%	27.1%	28.1%	16.7%	
	Eastern Anatolia	n	0	3	1	5	10	1	
		%	0.0%	15.0%	5.0%	25.0%	50.0%	5.0%	
	Southeastern Anatolia	n	0	3	7	7	3	0	
		%	0.0%	15.0%	35.0%	35.0%	15.0%	0.0%	

* $p<0.05$

The radar diagram in Figure 6 shows the responses regarding the technical infrastructure of academicians from different regions. According to the diagram, the technical infrastructure as perceived by academicians can be ordered in the following way: the strongest agreement that the institution provided has been reported by academicians from the Eastern Anatolian region, followed by those from the Middle Anatolia, Marmara, Aegean, Mediterranean, Blacksea and southeast Anatolia. It should be noted that the agreement rates range from slight agreement to moderate agreement which means although the technical infrastructure is provided, it is not perceived as at the highest level possible and there is still room for improvement.

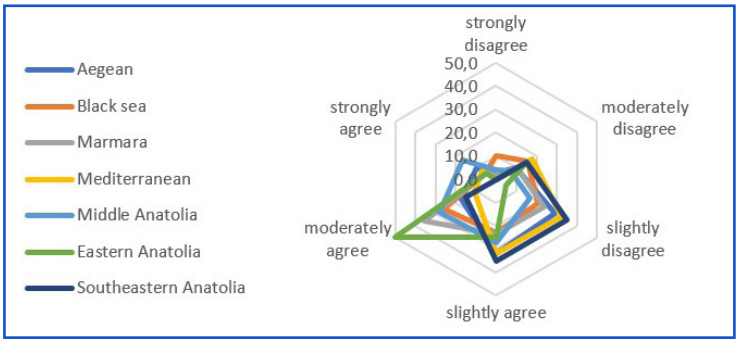

Figure 7. Relationship between regions of institutions and technical infrastructure

Conclusion

The success of online teaching similarly to all other teaching activities depends on many external and internal factors which are interrelated. As research suggests, specifically put forward by the TAM (Technology Acceptance Model) by Davis (1989) the most critical success factors range from external factors such as social norm, university climate, instructor engagement, access to computers and system availability, and internal factors such as computer self-efficacy, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, attitude and intention to use. The questionnaire for this study was designed to include the components of the TAM model.

According to the results of the items relating to the university climate, access to computers, and system availability, the results indicate moderate success levels as reported through agreement levels by the participants. Additionally, significant differences were found between regions and different types of institutions in terms of these external factors. This reflects a lack of equity in technical infrastructure and institutional support in Turkish Higher Education Institutions. The reality is that online teaching has become an indispensable part of Higher Education in the world and Turkey and it is going to be here to stay even after the pandemic is completely wiped away. For this reason, Turkish Higher Education institutions in all geographies in Turkey should be provided with the same standards when it comes to online education to provide equity in educational opportunities.

When it comes to internal factors of the model such as computer self-efficacy, attitude, perceived usefulness, and perceived ease of use the responses of the participating academicians indicate the following. In terms of self-efficacy overall, the academicians rate themselves as good but not very good or excellent. In terms of access to computers/internet resources, the ratings indicate student access as good whereas staff access is close to very good which indicates that staff has better access to computer/internet resources compared to staff. IN terms of integrating internet technologies in class and out of class activities the academicians rate themselves somewhere between good and very good. These results can be interpreted in the following way, the instructors do not have difficulty using technology in teaching although they do not see themselves as experts, they have adequate skills. However, there is a lack of training and to some extent technical support which could help them improve their skills much more.

Overall we could say that Turkish academicians are supportive of using online learning technologies, they do not have a negative attitude towards the

use of online learning technologies but they feel the need for more technical support and training. There is also a need for stronger infrastructure in order to have a more effective online teaching experience. Since online teaching is going to become an increasingly important component of higher education in Turkey in the future, it is vital that we take lessons from the emergency online teaching period during the covid-19 lockdown. Only in this way, we can benefit from the opportunities offered by online learning technologies and overcome the challenges it brings in our way.

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CHAPTER 2

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN VIRTUAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSES AND SOLUTIONS TO THESE PROBLEMS

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Abstract

The shift from traditional English language teaching (ELT) to online and distance ELT due to Covid-19 has increased the significance of the use of technology in English language teaching. Because of this, virtual English language classes have become the key teaching environment in ELT. However, the rapid transition to online and distance ELT has brought different problems to virtual English language classes. Accordingly, the aim of the present study is to find out what kind of problems have emerged and how these problems have been dealt with in virtual English language classes. The present study was designed as a qualitative case study. Seven Turkish EL teachers working at three different Turkish universities participated in the study. The data were collected through a semi-structured interview. The collected data were content analyzed. The findings of the present study have indicated that the participants encountered 23 problems resulting from students, technology, teachers, and the nature of online and distance education. The findings have also showed that the participants developed their own solutions such as making motivation speeches and using different technological tools to deal with the problems they encountered. The

findings of the present study were discussed, its implications were mentioned, and suggestions for further research were made.

Key Words: Virtual English language classes, English language teachers, problems encountered, solutions developed

1. Introduction

Technology is used commonly in ELT for different purposes ranging from teaching four skills to assessing students' English language learning. To achieve these purposes, digital technologies such as blogs and wikis and technological devices including laptops and smartphones are used extensively in ELT. The use of such digital technologies and technological devices can have positive impacts on students such as motivating students to learn English and increasing their participation and engagement in English language classes. As a result of these situations, a new ELT method called technology-enhanced language teaching and learning (TELTL) has emerged and become popular.

TELTL has become more significant with the breakout of Covid-19 as Covid-19 has led schools and universities to be suspended for an uncertain time all over the world to avoid its spread. Suspending schools and universities have ended all face-to-face and in-person education. Therefore, continuing education has become one of the most essential issues that the countries in the world have needed to focus on and deal with. This need for the continuation of education has stemmed in a swift shift to online and distance education around the world, so physical English language classes have turned into virtual English language classes. As a result, technology has started to be used in ELT extensively. However, the rapid transition to online and distance education has brought about several problems in virtual English language classes.

The problems that EL teachers have encountered and have had to deal with can be categorized into four groups depending on the causes of these problems. The first group of these problems is student-related. EL students may not be ready for online and distance education (Dweikat & Zyoud, 2021; Naqvi & Zehra, 2020), take responsibility for their own learning (Naqvi & Zehra, 2020), and have sufficient self-regulatory skills (Erarslan, 2021). They might not be motivated to learn English online (Civelek, Toplu, & Uzun, 2021; Erarslan, 2021; Hakim, 2020; Hermansyah & Aridah, 2021; Khatoony & Nezhadmehr, 2020; Jem, Gunas, & Beda, 2021; Naqvi & Zehra, 2020; Nugroho, Haghegh, & Triana, 2021; ur Rahman, 2020; Sumardi & Nugrahani, 2021; Şener, Sağlam

Ertem, & Meç, 2020; Tram, 2021). They may not participate in classroom activities (Civelek et al., 2021; Dweikat & Zyoud, 2021; Sundarwati & Pahlevi, 2021; Şevik & Yücedağ, 2021) and be autonomous (Şener et al., 2020). They could have misconceptions about (Erarslan, 2021) and negative attitudes towards online and distance education (Civelek et al., 2021). They may not have the skills (Civelek et al., 2021) and knowledge (Berbar, 2020) necessary for online and distance education. They might not submit their assignments on time (Naqvi & Zehra, 2020; Yulianto & Mujtahid, 2021). They may not have enough knowledge and experience about online and distance education (Erarslan, 2021; Hermansyah & Aridah, 2021; Lukas & Yunus, 2021). They could lack enough attention (Hakim, 2020; Khatoony & Nezhadmehr, 2020) and concentration (Şevik & Yücedağ, 2021) in online and distance education. All of these issues can make online English classes more teacher centered (Sundarwati & Pahlevi, 2021).

The second group of these problems stem from the nature of online and distance education. EL teachers may have more difficulties in teaching English to their students effectively in online and distance education (Ma'rufa & Mustofa, 2021; Naqvi & Zehra, 2020; ur Rahman, 2020; Sumardi & Nugrahani, 2021). They might not give feedback to their students (Naqvi & Zehra, 2020; Nugroho et al., 2021; Raheem, Maryaam, & Ullah, 2021) and grade their students effectively (Naqvi & Zehra, 2020; Ramadani & Xhaferi, 2020). They could not make their English language classrooms interactive (Berbar, 2020; Civelek et al., 2021; Erarslan, 2021; Hamad, Dafaallah, & Alhaj, 2020; Naqvi & Zehra, 2020; Raheem et al., 2021; ur Rahman, 2020; Sundarwati & Pahlevi, 2021; Şevik & Yücedağ, 2021; Şener et al., 2020; Tram, 2021) and communicative (Jem et al., 2021). They may not be sure that their students learn what is studied in the classroom (Berbar, 2020; Civelek et al., 2021; Naqvi & Zehra, 2020; Sundarwati & Pahlevi, 2021). They might not assess and evaluate their students (Alwehebi, 2021; Hamad et al., 2020; Khatoony & Nezhadmehr, 2020; Naqvi & Zehra, 2020; Ramadani & Xhaferi, 2020; Yulianto & Mujtahid, 2021) as their students may cheat and plagiarize in online assessments (Hamad et al., 2020; Hermansyah & Aridah, 2021; Naqvi & Zehra, 2020). They could not manage their classrooms effectively (Gao & Zhang, 2020; Lukas & Yunus, 2021; Raheem et al., 2021; ur Rahman, 2020; Sumardi & Nugrahani, 2021). Their workload might increase due to the nature of online and distance education (Civelek et al., 2021; Hamad et al., 2020; Şener et al., 2020). They may also lack enough time to meet the requirements of online and distance education (Tram, 2021).

The third group of these problems are related to technology and the internet. Technology and the internet may be hazardous for EL students if they are not used correctly in online and distance education (Naqvi & Zehra, 2020). Internet connection creates problems if they are not good (Berbar, 2020; Chiatoh & Chia, 2020; Dweikat & Zyoud, 2021; Gao & Zhang, 2020; Hakim, 2020; Khatoony & Nezhadmehr, 2020; Jem et al., 2021; Nugroho et al., 2021; Sundarwati & Pahlevi, 2021; Şevik & Yücedağ, 2021; Şener et al., 2020). Also, EL students cannot have the internet and/or the necessary hardware for online and distance education (Civelek et al., 2021; Erarslan, 2021; Dweikat & Zyoud, 2021; Fitri & Putro, 2020; Hakim, 2020; Lukas & Yunus, 2021; Raheem et al., 2021; Sundarwati & Pahlevi, 2021; Şevik & Yücedağ, 2021; Yulianto & Mujtahid, 2021). EL teachers cannot also have the necessary technical equipment for online and distance education (Erarslan, 2021; Hakim, 2020; Şener et al., 2020). Power failures may also negatively affect online and distance education (Chiatoh & Chia, 2020).

The fourth group of these problems is related to EL teachers. EL teachers may not have enough knowledge, experience, and competency about how to use different digital platforms to deliver their English lessons online (Alwehebi, 2021; Chiatoh & Chia, 2020; Civelek et al., 2021; Fitri & Putro, 2020; Gao & Zhang, 2020; Hermansyah & Aridah, 2021; Erarslan, 2021; Lukas & Yunus, 2021; Nugroho et al., 2021; Raheem et al., 2021; Şevik & Yücedağ, 2021; Tram, 2021) because they might lack proper training (Chiatoh & Chia, 2020; Tram, 2021). They may not vary their activities and make their activities engaging (Erarslan, 2021). They could not feel motivated (Hermansyah & Aridah, 2021), but stressed (Alwehebi, 2021) in online and distance education.

Few of these studies have mentioned the solutions that EL teachers have used to overcome these problems and the suggestions/strategies that can be used to deal with these problems. According to Naqvi and Zehra (2020), EL teachers have developed their own ways such as using interactive applications, including Kahoot. Dweikat and Zyoud (2021) stated that EL teachers have adopted the new ways and technologies to communicate with their students and deliver the contents of their lessons. Similarly, Hermansyah and Aridah (2021) explained that EL teachers have improved their technology skills and changed their attitudes towards online and distance education. Also, Gao and Zhang (2020) said that EL teachers have improved themselves in terms of using different digital platforms, become more aware of their students' conditions, and used new ways to manage their online classes. These studies have shown that EL teachers have improved themselves and developed their own ways to deal with the problems mentioned in the previous paragraphs.

In addition to teacher-initiated solutions, two studies reviewed in this study have made suggestions to overcome the problems resulting from online and distance education. According to Nugroho et al. (2021), professional development activities, designing online interactive activities, using different applications and programs, and improving lesson plans and time management can be used for this purpose. Civelek et al. (2021) have also suggested improving EL teachers' and students' computer literacy skills and online and computer-based facilities in online lessons, blending face-to-face and online education, and training EL teachers about online teaching methods to handle the problems faced in virtual classes.

As the literature review indicates, the literature on the problems that EL teachers have faced in their virtual classroom is growing, while there is a scarcity of research in the literature related to what EL teachers have done to overcome the problems. Therefore, the present study aims to find out the problems that EL teachers have encountered in their classes and how they have tried to overcome these problems to contribute to the growing literature on these issues by answering the research questions below.

1. What kind of problem(s) have EL teachers encountered in their virtual English language classes?
2. What solution(s) have EL teachers used to deal with the problem(s) in their virtual English language classes?

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Design

A case study concentrates on a contemporary phenomenon and investigates the phenomenon in its real context (Yin, 2009). As the explanation indicates, the present study focuses on the problem(s) encountered in the virtual classes due to Covid-19 in the virtual English language classes and solutions to the problem(s), which can be considered as a contemporary phenomenon. It also researches this phenomenon in its real context with the participation of seven EL teachers who have taught English to university students online during Covid-19. Therefore, the present study was designed as a case study.

2.2. Participants

Seven EL teachers (3 female and 4 male) who worked at three different Turkish universities participated in the research voluntarily. Their ages ranged from 28

to 39, and the length of their teaching experiences varied from seven years to eighteen years. All of them taught English to university students online during Covid-19.

2.3. Data Collection Tool

A semi-structured interview was used to collect data from the participants. It was composed of two questions: The first one focused on what kind of problem(s) each EL teacher encountered in their virtual English language classes, and the second one asked how they dealt with the problem(s) they faced in their virtual classes. Each participant had to be interviewed through WhatsApp because there was a curfew due to Covid-19 when the data were collected.

2.4. Data Analysis

Content analysis was used to analyze the data. After transcribing the data, the researchers read the data many times and derived codes from the data. Then, they developed themes that could cover the derived codes depending on the similarities and differences between the codes. They organized the data according to the codes and themes. They presented the data without adding their own comments. Finally, they interpreted the data without conflicting with the data analysis.

2.5. Trustworthiness

Two strategies recommended by Lincoln and Guba (1985) were used to make this qualitative case study trustworthy. First, the researchers made the changes in the data analysis after analyzing the data separately and comparing their analysis with each other. Second, the data analysis was supported with the quotations from the participants.

3. Findings

The findings of the present study were explained according to the order of the research questions.

3.1. Problems Encountered by the Turkish EL Teachers in Their Virtual English Language Classes

Table 1 below presents the themes and codes related to the problems that the Turkish EL teachers encountered in their virtual English language classes.

Table 1: The Themes and Codes Related to the Problems That Turkish EL Teachers Encountered in Their Virtual Classes

Themes	**Codes**
Student-related problems	Low student motivation
	Negative student attitudes toward distance education
	Low student participation
	Lack of student interest in the lesson
	Not being able to follow the coursebook
	Not being willing to turn on the camera
	Low student attendance
	Attending the lessons wherever students wanted
	Not creating a sense of community
Technology-related problems	Internet connection
	Software
	Equipment
Teacher-related problems	Low teacher satisfaction
	Low teacher motivation
The problems related to the nature of online and distance education	Problems in pair and group work
	Lack of interaction with students
	Assessing students
	Cheating
	Difficulty in making speaking exams
	Difficulty in doing writing activities
	Difficulty in doing portfolio activities
	Not understanding whether students listened or not
	Not being able to create synergy in the classes

As understood from Table 1, each code serves as a problem encountered in the virtual English language classes, and each theme represents how each of these problems is grouped depending on their causes.

3.1.1. Student-related Problems

According to five of the participants, *low student motivation* was one of the student-related problems they encountered in their virtual English language classes. The quotations below indicate this clearly.

> Participant 1: "[One of the problems in online education is] the students whose motivation is low."
>
> Participant 5: "… [another problem he encountered in the virtual classes is] motivation problem. That is, their [students'] motivation is low although we [teachers] try to engage students who attend the lesson in the lesson somehow."
>
> Participant 6: "... Then, there is a serious motivation problem."

Participant 3 stated that *the negative attitudes of the students towards distance education* were another problem she encountered in her virtual English language classes. This is understood from the quotation below:

> Participant 3: "In distance education, students have a negative attitude."

Participants 4 and 7 mentioned that *low student participation* was one of the problems in their virtual English language classes. The quotations below support this.

> Participant 4: "Apart from exams, the other biggest problem is to increase student participation in the lesson and to keep their motivation high."
>
> Participant 7: "This [lack of interaction] caused low motivation and unwillingness to participate in the lesson among the students."

According to participant 5, *lack of student interest in the lesson* was one of the problems he encountered in his virtual English language classes. To illustrate:

> Participant 5: "The kids [students] are not interested [in the English lesson]. It is normally like this. As we [teachers] teach service lessons, they [students] think that their departmental courses are more important, and their English lessons are not so important as they are."

Not being able to follow the coursebook was one of the problems that participant 1 faced in her virtual English language classes. The quotation below points out this.

> Participant 1: "[Another problem is] difficulty in following the course book."

Not being willing to turn on the cameras was another student-related problem in the virtual English language classes of participant 6. The quotation below demonstrates this.

> Participant 6: "For example, one of the problems that I have been experiencing recently is that the kids [students] do not want to turn on their cameras."

Low student attendance was another problem that participants 2 and 5 had in their virtual English language classes. The quotations below support this.

> Participant 2: "Apart from this [lack of social interaction], maybe the most difficult thing experienced in distance education is that students do not prefer to attend the lessons regularly."

> Participant 5: "The problems I encountered while giving online lessons. First of all, attendance was not obligatory, so the number of the students who followed the lessons was very low."

Also, one of the student-related problems that participant 6 had in her virtual English language classes was *that the students attended the lessons wherever they wanted*. The quotation below indicates this.

> Participant 3: "One thing caught my attention. I noticed a perception that attendance was not obligatory, attendance was not taken, and even if it was taken, it did not mean anything. Therefore, there was a thing among the kids [students]. Normally when a student comes to a face-to-face class, to the classroom, he/she attends his/her lesson and listens to it, but here [in distance education], for example, students said: "Teacher, I am going to the hospital" and connected the lesson online in the hospital. Yet, they connect just to be considered attending the lesson or to show that they are in the lesson. They can neither listen to the lesson nor do anything apart from it. There were students that connected the lesson after going to the market, to the park."

In addition, participant 3 explained that *creating a sense of community* was another problem in her virtual English language classes. The quotation below shows this.

> Participant 3: In addition to this, instructors must encourage collaborative learning and a sense of community among the students in a brand-new learning environment, which is a challenge. Creating a community is important for an effective class, but what you can do is limited when your students do not have to turn their cameras and microphones on.

3.1.2. Technology-related Problems

Participants 4, 6, and 7 stated that *internet connection* caused them to experience problems in their virtual English language classes. To illustrate:

> Participant 4: "Technological problems related to the internet sometimes occurred. Loss of internet connection... The problems that occurred while we [teachers] were using Safe Exam browser in the exams and the problems related to the loss of voice due to the microphones happened."
>
> Participant 6: "For instance, the technical problems that come to my mind are the problems resulting from internet connection or the problems stemming from the microphones of the computers of some students."
>
> Participant 7: "I can categorize the problems I encountered while giving online lessons under two titles. The problems that I will place under the first title is technical problems. I can classify the technical problems as software-related and internet connection-related problems."

As the quotations above indicate, *the equipment* used in distance education created problems in the virtual English language classes of participants 3, 4, 6, and 7. Also, the quotations have shown that *software* caused participants 4 and 7 to have problems in their virtual classes.

3.1.3. Teacher-related Problems

Low teacher satisfaction was one of the teacher-related problems that participant 3 encountered in her virtual English language classes. The quotation below reveals this.

> Participant 3: "Quality of instruction drops because the effectiveness of distance learning requires more preparation by the instructor and administration, but there are no rewards or compensations for adjusting your curriculum and instruction, so teachers and administrators naturally feel overwhelmed. As a result, when they start to consider this as a second-rate form of teaching with a defeatist attitude, this has a negative influence on the quality of instruction."

Another teacher-related problem was *low teacher motivation* which participant 4 faced in his virtual English language classes. To illustrate:

> Participant 4: "Another problem is our [teachers'] motivation and the difficulty of our getting motivated in the online period because the

motivation of the students is low, and when the cameras are off, your [teacher's] motivation decreases."

3.1.4. The Problems Related to the Nature of Online and Distance Education

Participants 1 and 5 stated that the nature of online and distance education created *problems in pair and/or group work*. The quotations below indicate this.

> Participant 1: "[Another problem is] the group work problem of the students who could not see their friends."

> Participant 5: "Pair work and group work are OK. There were breakout rooms in the conferencing program we used, but pair work is not the same as the one in face-to-face [education]. We [teachers] cannot use pair work completely, and it is not practical."

Lack of interaction was one of the problems related to the nature of online and distance education encountered by participants 2 and 7. The quotations below support this.

> Participant 2: "But social interaction was less in distance education than it was in face-to-face education. Because of this reason, reaching students became difficult."

> Participant 7: "[in online education] the cases where we [teachers] cannot feel and experience the power of interaction occur."

According to participants 3, 4, and 5, *assessing students* and *cheating* were two of the problems that they faced in their virtual English language classes.

> Participant 3: The impossibility to prevent cheating is the greatest deal-breaker in distance education.

> Participant 4: In my opinion, the biggest problem was assessing students, that is, administering the exams because if we [teachers] had the exams online, there were big problems related to the security of the exams… We tried to do something like having the students turn on their cameras on Zoom, check their IDs, and keep their microphones on, but there was a possibility that someone else might take the exam instead of a student. That is, while he/she was sitting in front of the computer screen, someone else might take the exam by using another computer. Avoiding this might not be possible."

> Participant 5: "Apart from this [low student motivation], there is an originality problem in the assessments made - the problems related to whether the student does the assessment on his/her own or has someone else do the assessments."

Difficulties in making speaking assessments, doing writing activities, and doing portfolio activities were among the problems that participant 6 faced in her virtual English language classes. The quotation below reveals these.

> Participant 6: "For instance, there were serious problems in doing portfolio activities. In fact, the kids [students] were supposed to shoot videos for speaking activities or make presentations. While making the presentation, the kid [student] read. I was sure about it, but I could not reduce any point as I could not prove this clearly. A similar thing happened in speaking exams. The kids [students] looked at their right and left and looked up and down. When I asked "What are you doing?," he/she gave answers such as "Teacher, I am not doing anything. I am looking at the camera. I am thinking." I could not provide any proof and could not know whether he/she was cheating, doing something else, or was thinking in fact. As I could not be sure, I could not punish. There were difficulties in writing. At this point, the difficulty experienced was that the kids [students], for example, used Google Translate extensively to an unbelievable extent as they were writing online, and we could not control while they were writing."

In addition, *not understanding whether students listened or not* and *not being able to create a synergy in the classroom* were among the problems related to the nature of online and distance education that participant 5 experienced in his virtual English language classes. The quotation below clearly points out these.

> Participant 5: "As we [teachers] could not force students to turn on their microphones, participate in the lesson, and start their cameras, there was not an opportunity to know whether the students attending [the lessons] were doing and whether they were really listening… I could not catch the synergy [that was] in face-to-face lessons in online lessons."

3.2. Solutions the Turkish EL Teachers Used to Deal with the Problems Encountered in Their Virtual English Language Classes

Table 2 below indicates the themes and codes related to the solutions the Turkish EL teachers used to deal with the problems encountered in their virtual English language classes.

Table 2: The Themes and Codes Related to the Solutions the Turkish EL Teachers Used to Deal with the Problems Encountered in Their Virtual English Language Classes

Themes	**Codes**
Solutions to promote participation in classroom activities	Varying the content of the lessons
	Encouraging students to turn on their cameras
	Making the lessons enjoyable and comfortable
	Using applications
	Using question-answer method
	Engaging students in the lesson
	Using small group work
	Integrating process- and product-oriented activities with the lessons
	Encouraging the active participation of students
Solutions to motivate students	Providing active student participation in the lessons
	Encouraging students for answering the questions correctly
	Integrating activities relevant to the characteristics of students
	Relating the subjects in the topics with other subjects
	Using question-answer method
	Engaging students in the lesson
	Using small group work
	Integrating process- and product-oriented activities with the lessons
	Varying the content of the lessons
	Encouraging students to turn on their cameras
	Making the lessons enjoyable and comfortable
	Using applications
	Adapting the lessons and materials according to the students
	Making lessons more interesting
	Indicating that English lessons are important
	Building good relationships with students
Solutions to make following the lessons easy	Screen sharing
	Making students read the texts

Solutions to increase interaction	Making motivation speeches
	Encouraging the active participation of students
	Using question-answer method
	Engaging students in the lesson
	Using small group work
	Integrating process- and product-oriented activities with the lessons
Solutions to increase students' interest in the lessons	Adapting the lessons and materials according to the students
	Making lessons more interesting
	Indicating that the lessons are useful
	Building good relationships with students
Solution to promote turning on the cameras	Forcing students a little
Solution to enhance teacher satisfaction	Trying to avoid the negative situation personally
Solutions to change negative student attitudes towards online and distance education	Raising students' awareness
	Encouraging students to become autonomous learners
Solution to check whether students were listening or not	No solution
Solution to deal with the attendance problem	No solution
Solutions to improve writing activities	Googling non-original sentences
	Feedback about not using translate software
Solution to increase teacher motivation	Students' needs to learn
Solutions to improve online assessment and evaluation	No solution
	Using Zoom
	Making students turn on their cameras and microphones
	Checking IDs

Solutions to improve pair/group work	Using breakout rooms
	Using online tools
Solutions to overcome technology-based problems	Being technology literate
	Being familiar with computers and technology
	Not finding a solution on one's own
	Receiving support
	Taking personal precautions

In Table 2, each code serves as a solution used to deal with the problems encountered in the virtual English language classes, and each theme shows how each of these solutions is grouped according to the problems encountered in the virtual English language classes.

3.2.1. Solutions to Promote Student Participation in Classroom Activities

Participant 4 used *varying the content of his lessons, encouraging students to turn on their cameras, making his lessons enjoyable and comfortable,* and *applications* to promote his students' participation in his classroom activities. To illustrate:

> Participant 4: In fact, I tried to vary the lessons as best as I could do. Yet, some teachers made turning on cameras and microphones obligatory, but I did not do something like this. I suggested that students should turn on their cameras. I did not make it obligatory. Yet, as I said, I tried to make the lessons more enjoyable and comfortable for them [students] as much as possible. In addition, I tried to get support from different platforms. That is, instead of using PowerPoint or I-tools of the book, I used games such as Kahoot or Quizlet where students could join and technology-based programs.

In addition, participant 7 preferred to *provide active student participation in the lessons*, *use small group work and question-answer method, engage students in his lessons, integrate process- and product-oriented activities with his lessons,* and *encourage the active participation of his students* to deal with the problems related to low student participation. The quotation below indicates this.

> Participant 7: "In terms of the problem related to motivation, we [teachers] tried to improve in-class interaction with question-answer method. In

fact, the participation of the students in the lessons… We tried to promote their active participation in the lessons by involving them in the lessons. How did this happen? That is, in the physical classroom environment in which students are, you [teacher] can monitor that they follow the lesson individually, but in online lessons, in front of the computer, if the connection problems that I mentioned exist, if the student does not turn on his/her camera, you [teacher] cannot control whether the student follows the lesson or not really. In this case, we [teachers] often asked questions related to following the lesson. By involving students in the process, we [teachers] tried to overcome this motivation and participation problem. If I do not misremember, the software we [teachers] use did not allow small group work until the mid of the first term. That is, there was not a feature like this, but when this feature was added, we started to be able to use small group work. We [teachers] made students do small group work in a place where they could discuss themselves, listen to each other, respond to each other by placing the students in two-person, three-person, five-person groups. Thanks to this, we [teachers] tried to enable them to follow the lessons actively, participate in the lessons. Apart from this, we [teachers] tried to add assessments for production, for process. That is, we [teachers] brought portfolio studies into the forefront. Students' doing writing activities during the lesson. At least, we [teachers] featured studies like this which promoted monitoring the procedure in writing lesson. We [teachers] tried to find such solutions to the problem related to participation in the lesson and motivation we experienced."

3.2.2. Solutions to Motivate Students

Participants 1, 6, and 7 tried to motivate their students by *providing their active participation in the lessons*. The quotations below indicate this.

Participant 1: "First of all, I think that I could solve the motivation problem by providing student participation in the lesson."

Participant 6: "After that, what did I do? I tried to make them [students] active, not myself in the lesson because if they are passive, you [teacher] almost lose the children [students]. Therefore, I tried to find activities to enable them [students] to speak more than me. I integrated them [activities] with the lesson."

In addition to this solution, participant 1 also *encouraged her students for their correct answers* to motivate them. To demonstrate:

> Participant 1: First, I think I could solve the motivation problem by providing student participation in the lesson and encouraging them when they answered the questions correctly.

Like participant 1, participant 6 also utilized two other solutions to motivate her students which are *integrating activities relevant to the characteristics of students* and *relating the subjects in the lessons with other subjects*. The quotation below supports this.

> Participant 6: "How do you overcome motivation problem? I could not overcome it recently in the last two, three weeks, but apart from this, that is, I tried to add the characteristics of students and things in which they could be interested to the lesson. For example, some of my students like some activities a lot. I tried to use them [activities] more and add them to the lesson. Except for this, what did I do more? I could not do anything related to the subjects. Some subjects are really boring in online education, especially because he/she [student] cannot see his/her teacher in front of him/her, and I could not do more. Maybe if I could relate it [subject] to another thing [subject], I covered the subject in the book a little fast and tried to teach the target vocabulary or grammar by relating them to another thing that I think could catch their [students] interest."

Similarly, participant 7 also used the same solutions that he used to promote student participation in his classes (*i.e., using question-answer method, engaging students in the lesson, using small group work, and integrating process- and product-oriented activities with the lessons*). The quotation that belongs to him in part 3.2.1. clearly shows this. Like participant 7, as the quotation belonging to participant 4 in part 3.2.1. indicates, he also used the same solutions he used to promote his students' participation (i.e., *varying the content of his lessons, encouraging students to turn on their cameras, making his lessons enjoyable and comfortable,* and *applications*) to motivate his students.

Participant 5 *adapted the lessons and materials according to his students, made his lessons more interesting, indicated that English lessons are important, and built good relationships with his students* to motivate his students. The quotation below clearly shows this.

> Participant 5: In terms of the solutions to the problems, I tried to adapt the lessons according to the students. They [students] push English lessons

> into the background, but I tried to explain that they need it [English] in their educational lives and future lives. I tried to motivate them for exams in terms of its [English] being important for exams… I tried to adapt the materials according to them. I tried to make it [the lesson] more interesting for them by using the tools of this conferencing program and other online tools… When students came to the lesson, I tried to show them that the lesson was very beneficial for them… Apart from that, one of the solutions is to build good relationships with them [students] that I always do in face-to-face education. That is, when they like the lesson, when I build a good relationship with them, a lot of students come to the lesson for the sake of me."

3.2.3. Solutions to Make Following the Lessons Easy

Participant 1 *shared her screen* and *made her students read the texts* to make following the lessons easy for them. To illustrate:

> Participant 1: For the difficulty in monitoring where the students followed us while listening to the lesson, screen sharing and having them read the texts … made their following the lessons easy.

3.2.4. Solutions to Increase Interaction

Participant 2 *made motivational speeches* to increase interaction in his class as understood from his statements, "But social interaction was less in distance education than it was in face-to-face education. Because of this reason, reaching students became difficult. I sometimes made motivation speeches to help students feel more comfortable." As the quotation that belongs to participant 7 in part 3.2.1., he utilized *providing active student participation in the lessons*, *using small group work and question-answer method, engaging students in his lessons, integrating process- and product-oriented activities with his lessons,* and *encouraging the active participation of his students* to increase interaction in his classes.

3.2.5. Solutions to Increase Students' Interest in the Lessons

Participant 5 *adapted the lessons and materials according to the students, made his lessons more interesting, indicated that the lessons are useful,* and *built good relationships with students* to increase his students' interest in the lessons. The quotation that belongs to him and is given in part 3.2.2. clearly indicates these.

3.2.6. Solution to Promote Turning on the Cameras

Participant 6 *forced her students a little* to turn on their cameras as the quotation below indicates:

> Participant 6: I forced it [turning on the cameras] slightly. That is, I said to them [students] that I would not start the lesson and would mark you as absent if you did not turn on your cameras, but these warnings are unrealistic [meaning: she started her lessons and did not mark her students as absent even if they did not turn on their cameras].

3.2.7. Solution to Enhance Teacher Satisfaction

Participant 3 *tried to avoid any negative situation that might affect her satisfaction personally* as seen in her statement: "Personally, I have tried to steer clear of that as much as I can."

3.2.8. Solution to Change Negative Student Attitudes towards Online and Distance Education

Participant 3 utilized *raising students' awareness* and *encouraging them to become autonomous learners* to change students' negative attitudes towards online and distance education as understood from her statement "I have tried to make them more aware of this and encourage them to become more independent learners."

3.2.9. Solution to Check Whether Students Were Listening or Not

Participant 5 stated that there was *no solution* that he could use to check whether his students were listening or not, so he could not overcome this problem in his virtual English language classes.

3.2.10. Solution to Deal with the Attendance Problem

Participants 2 and 5 thought that there was *no solution* that they could use to deal with the attendance problem.

3.2.11. Solutions to Improve Writing Activities

Googling non-original sentences and *feedback about not using translate software* were used by participant 6 to improve writing activities in her class. To illustrate:

> Participant 6: "I googled almost every sentence that I believed they [students] could not write on their own. I searched them [sentences] in quotation marks to see whether it [sentence] was taken from a source or not, if the sentence was grammatically correct, and if it was not relevant to the level [of the student]. Some students were caught with these [methods]. Apart from this, I informed the ones [students] who wrote by using Google Translate by giving feedback about the meaninglessness of the sentences, and I warned them not to do it again and that they could not have any grade if they did it again."

3.2.12. Solution to Increase Teacher Motivation

Participant 4 used *students' needs to learn* to increase his motivation as a teacher as seen in his statement "In terms of the method to avoid this [low teacher motivation], the consciousness that students need to learn something led me to teach."

3.2.13. Solutions to Improve Online Assessment and Evaluation

While participant 5 thought that there was *no solution* to the problems in online assessment and evaluation because of the structure of online assessment, participant 5 said that they [the teachers including him in his institution] *used Zoom, made their students turn on their cameras and microphones,* and *checked their IDs* to deal with the problems in online assessment and evaluation.

3.2.14. Solutions to Improve Pair/Group Work

Participant 1 used *the breakout rooms on Zoom* to improve group work in her virtual English language classes as her statement below indicates:

> Participant 1: "There were a group work activity and writing-a-report activity in one of our [teachers' including her in her institution] lessons. Gathering students in breakout rooms was a good solution to give feedback and gather them together."

Participant 4 utilized *online tools* to improve pair and group work in his virtual English language classes. The quotation below shows this.

> Participant 4: "As I said, I tried to overcome the problems in pair and group work by using online tools."

3.2.15. Solutions to Overcome Technology-based Problems

While participant 6 stated that she *could not find a solution to technology-related problems on her own,* participant 4 dealt with such problems by *being technology literate and familiar with computers and technology*. The quotation below supports this.

> Participant 4: "I could overcome these problems [technology-related problems] myself, but some teachers could not. Sometimes they received help from me. That is, I think being a technology literate and being familiar with the internet and computers are required."

Also, participant 7 *received support* and *took personal precautions* to deal with technology-related problems in his virtual English language classes. The quotation below points out this.

> Participant 7: "How did we [teachers] overcome these problems [internet connection and software-related problems]?... We used several alternatives to deal with the problems related to internet connection that we experienced. That is, if we could not use the internet in the place where we were, if there was a problem resulting from the internet, a problem related to the wireless or cable internet, we found a temporary solution – by sharing the mobile internet in [our smartphones]. For the problems resulting from software, we tended to receive technical support. Naturally, our school had a technical team that continuously monitored Microsoft Teams and Moodle, which we used for things such as material and exams. The team followed the problems and tried to overcome the problems. We informed them [technical team] about the problem and tried to overcome the problem in the software."

4. Discussion

The findings of the study were discussed under two titles in order: (a) problems encountered by the Turkish EL teachers in their virtual English language classes and (b) solutions the Turkish EL teachers used to deal with the problems encountered in their virtual English language classes

4.1. Problems Encountered by the Turkish EL Teachers in Their Virtual English Language Classes

The findings of the present study have revealed that the participant EL teachers encountered several student-related problems in their virtual English language

classes as the literature review in the present study has indicated (Civelek et al., 2021; Dweikat & Zyoud, 2021; Erarslan, 2021; Hakim, 2020; Hermansyah & Aridah, 2021; Khatoony & Nezhadmehr, 2020; Jem et al., 2021; Naqvi & Zehra, 2020; Nugroho, Haghegh, & Triana, 2021; ur Rahman, 2020; Sumardi & Nugrahani, 2021; Şener et al., 2020; Tram, 2021). Student-related problems including low student motivation, negative student attitudes toward distance education, low student participation, lack of student interest in the lesson, low student attendance, not being able to follow the course books, and not being willing to turn on the camera might stem from the fact that students may not have been used to online and distance ELT as they were taught English in face-to-face classrooms. Their unfamiliarity with online and distance ELT might have led them to think that they would learn English in online and distance ELT like they learnt in face-to-face education, so they might have transferred their face-to-face English learning strategies and experiences to their online and distance English learning. However, they may have realized that online and distance ELT was very different from face-to-face ELT, which might have had negative effects on their motivation, attendance, participation, interest, and willingness to learn. In addition, that they may not have had the skills, abilities, competencies, and knowledge necessary for online and distance education might also have resulted in these problems.

According to the literature review, the nature of online and distance education can lead to several problems in virtual English language classes (Berbar, 2020; Civelek et al., 2021; Ma'rufa & Mustofa, 2021; Naqvi & Zehra, 2020; Nugroho et al., 2021; Raheem et al., 2021; Ramadani & Xhaferi, 2020; Sumardi & Nugrahani, 2021; ur Rahman, 2020). Similarly, the findings of the present study have revealed that the participant EL teachers encountered several problems resulting from the nature of online and distance education. That EL teachers might not have taught English online before Covid-19 may have resulted in several problems such as problems in pair and group work, lack of interaction with students, assessing students, not understanding whether students listened or not, and difficulty in doing activities (i.e., portfolio and writing activities) and making speaking exams. The EL teachers' lack of online and distance ELT experience might have led them not to develop their knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary to teach English in online and distance education, so they may have encountered the problems found in the present study.

According to the findings of the present study, the participant EL teachers have faced technology-related problems, especially internet-related problems in their virtual English language classes, which is corroborated by the literature

(Berbar, 2020; Chiatoh & Chia, 2020; Dweikat & Zyoud, 2021; Gao & Zhang, 2020; Hakim, 2020; Khatoony & Nezhadmehr, 2020; Jem et al., 2021; Nugroho et al., 2021; Sundarwati & Pahlevi, 2021; Şevik & Yücedağ, 2021; Şener et al., 2020). The internet can be considered as the main reason for the technology-related problems mentioned in the present study. In case of the loss of internet connection or weak internet connection, EL teachers could not have gone on their instruction as they could not have developed any solution to deal with the loss of internet connection or weak internet connection on their own except for calling the internet service providers. Similarly, they could not have handled any problem related to the software properly as they were not computer programmers.

As the literature review has indicated, there may be problems resulting from EL teachers (Alwehebi, 2021; Chiatoh & Chia, 2020; Civelek et al., 2021; Fitri & Putro, 2020; Gao & Zhang, 2020; Hermansyah & Aridah, 2021; Erarslan, 2021; Lukas & Yunus, 2021; Nugroho et al., 2021; Raheem et al., 2021; Şevik & Yücedağ, 2021; Tram, 2021). In line with this finding of the literature, the findings of the present study have shown that the participant EL teachers have encountered two teacher-related problems. One of these problems is low teacher motivation as Hermansyah and Aridah (2021) found out. This finding may be the result of not feeling comfortable with teaching English in online and distance education because of not experiencing teaching English online before and being familiar with face-to-face English teaching. The other problem is low teacher satisfaction. It is known that the workload of EL teachers has increased due to Covid-19 (Civelek et al., 2021; Hamad et al., 2020; Şener et al., 2020), so they may not have sufficient time to carry out the requirements of online and distance ELT (Tram, 2021) or may have to spend most of their times on meeting the requirements of online and distance ELT. Yet, their efforts may not pay back. Therefore, they may not feel satisfied in the job. This situation may also be another reason for low teacher motivation among the participant EL teachers in the present study.

4.2. Solutions the Turkish EL Teachers Used to Deal with the Problems Encountered in Their Virtual English Language Classes

The studies in the literature have indicated that EL teachers in different contexts have developed their own solutions to deal with the problems that they have faced in their virtual English language classes due to Covid-19 (Dweikat & Zyoud, 2021; Gao & Zhang, 2020; Naqvi & Zehra, 2020). In line with this literature, the findings of the present study have indicated that the participant EL teachers have developed their own solutions to handle the problems encountered in their

virtual English language classes. The solutions that the participants in this study have developed are mostly individual though there are some similar solutions such as providing the active participation of the students in classroom activities. Almost half of these solutions have also been developed to deal with only specific problems. For example, sharing screen and making students read the text are the solutions used to overcome a specific student-related problem (i.e., not being able to follow the coursebook). The rest of these solutions have been used to solve more than one problem encountered in virtual English language classes. For instance, using small group work and question-answer method was used by one of the participants to deal with the problems of low student motivation, low student participation, and lack of interaction with students.

The findings of the present study have also showed that the participant EL teachers have used their face-to-face teaching experiences and skills to develop their own solutions to the problems existing in their virtual English language classes. Accordingly, the EL teachers might have compared the problems they have encountered in their virtual classes with the ones that have existed in their face-to-face classes, and then they might have re-used the solution(s) that they have used to solve the problem(s) in their face-to-face classes in order to overcome the problem(s) in their virtual classes. To give an example, one of the participants paid attention to building good relationships with his students in his face-to-face classes, so his students became interested in his face-to-face English language classes. To increase his students' interest in his virtual English language classes, he also used this solution. Similarly, the skills that the participants have may have helped them to overcome the problems, especially the technology-related ones in their virtual English language classes. To illustrate, one of the participants considered himself technology literate, so he thought he could deal with the technology-related problems.

5. Conclusion

Since Covid-19 led to the suspension of schools and universities and the cancelation of face-to-face and in-person education, schools and universities suddenly started to use online and distance education to go on their instructional activities. This sudden transition to online and distance education brought about several problems in virtual classes in different branches of education. Similarly, the findings of the present study have indicated that EFL teachers might encounter several problems resulting from students, teachers, technology, and the nature of online and distance education in virtual English language classes and that EFL teachers have had to develop and use their own ways as solutions to the

Covid-19-initiated problems in their virtual classes. Therefore, understanding what kind of problems EFL teachers might encounter in their virtual English language classes and how EFL teachers might deal with the problems on their own becomes significant to assist EFL teachers in teaching English online effectively and to sustain the quality of English language teaching in online and distance education in schools and universities.

6. Limitations of the Study and Suggestions for Further Research

The present study has two limitations. The number of the participants is the first limitation of the present study. Also, the context in which the present study was conducted is another limitation. Future studies can be conducted on the problems that EFL teachers who work in primary, middle, and high schools have encountered and how they have handled the problems in their virtual English language classes by using the methodology of the present study. In addition, future studies can be made with the EFL students in primary schools, middle schools, high schools, and/or universities by focusing on what kind of problems they have encountered and how they have dealt with the problems in their virtual English language classes. Future studies can also be carried out by focusing on the problems encountered by EFL teachers and students and the solutions used by EFL teachers and students to overcome the problems in virtual English language classes together. The findings that will be obtained from any of these studies can help to have a general understanding of the effects of Covid-19 on EFL teachers and students in virtual English language classes in terms of the problems encountered and the solutions to the problems.

7. Implications of the Present Study

The present study has several implications that can be used to enhance online and distance ELT. These implications are as follows:

1. Training about the features and requirements of online and distance English language learning should be given to EL students to help them have enough knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary for online and distance English language learning.
2. EL teachers should be trained about the features and requirements of online and distance ELT so that they can have enough knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary for online and distance ELT.
3. The infrastructure used for the internet should be developed to meet the increasing need to use the internet for educational purposes including ELT.

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CHAPTER 3

ONLINE ASSESSMENT IN THE TIME OF BLACK SWAN DAYS: A TOOL BOX FOR ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE (EFL) TEACHERS

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Abstract

Teaching and testing have always been in a complicated and tough relationship. Even sometimes, testing leads to learning or vice versa has always been discussed and this leads to a hot debate on which came first the chicken or the egg? Throughout this period, measuring students' performance had some major developments and adaptations. However, none of these developments and adaptations was as the one in the first half of the 21st century. Facing a sudden pandemic led to a dramatic change in the testing, evaluation and assessment practices of teachers. That was the time learners had been away so long from traditional education practices, and accordingly, being tested in a traditional way. As a consequence of this, language testing, assessment and evaluation had to adapt to rapid and drastic modifications in their measurement practices in a short time. With this changing trend, measuring students' performance on learning English has a new format, which has been embedded as an obligation during lockdown days, and teachers were expected to find new solutions to measure the performance of their learners. Accordingly, teachers have faced some challenges, while trying to measure the skills in foreign language teaching in a valid way, they have to take into consideration that testing is also important to contribute to

the learning process. This chapter opens with the situation analysis of the shift from traditional testing and assessment to online testing procedures, and then, will outline some task types for each skill in a virtual world.

Key words: testing, assessment, virtual classroom

Introduction

Teaching and testing have always been in a complicated and tough relationship. Even sometimes, testing leads learning or vice versa has always been discussed and this leads to a hot debate among teachers on which should have the priority: teaching or assessment? In the second half of the 20th century, measuring students' performance had some major developments and adaptations. However, none of these developments and adaptations was as the one in the first half of the 21st century. During this process, with the evolving effect of technological developments, online and blended learning began to gain a place in education. In addition to the developmental process of technological tools at an evolving pace, facing a sudden pandemic, COVID-19, which is also called *Black Swan*, led to a sudden and drastic change in testing, evaluation, and assessment practices of teachers. That was the time learners had been away so long from traditional education practices, and accordingly, being tested in a traditional way. As a consequence of this, language testing, assessment and evaluation had to alter the traditional and existing practices and adapt to rapid and drastic modifications in their measurement practices in a short time, so educators, teachers and institutions needed to reconceptualize the format of assessment. This changing trend, an evolved version of measuring students' performance on learning English has a new format, has been embedded as an obligation during lockdown days, and teachers were expected to find new solutions to measure the performance of their learners. To this end, teachers have faced some challenges, while trying to measure the skills in foreign language teaching in a valid way, they had to include concepts such as validity and reliability of their assessment practices in the online environment. This chapter opens with the situation analysis of the shift from traditional testing and assessment to online testing procedures, and then, will outline some formative assessment tools, which have become a trend as they have transformed the assessment process for EFL teachers.

The Old and the New: Historical Background of Second Language Assessment

Language assessment has been around since people began to learn a second language as learning and testing are always hand in hand. 'Tests' and

'examinations' are ancient practices and the origin of them, mostly subjected to interpretations, can date back to the 'pre-historic' period of education. From Greeks to Romans, there have been many examinations in many areas including education. Nevertheless, the present sort of testing in academic contexts is a modification of the assessment that was in use in the nineteenth century (Giri, 2010). This can be considered as a foundation of three important terms, which are assessment, evaluation, and testing. When it comes to second language assessment, which is English in this concept, it can be said that it goes back to the 1850s when a system of public examinations was set and controlled by the universities (Giri, 2010). This traditional way of testing lasted for nearly a century, and with the developing need for proficiency tests, the first international standardized English test, TOEFL, was developed in 1962 for those who intend to study in the United States. A second standardized English test, International English Language Testing System, IELTS, was introduced in 1980 and launched after several versions in the final version in 1989. All these developments can be labeled as a new reformist movement in testing as they are applied globally and in a more standardized way. In addition to these standardized English language proficiency tests, there have been many English proficiency tests in the local context.

LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT IN A DIGITAL WORLD

Assessment is still seen as a dark swan in the field of foreign language teaching and learning. Like all other educational assessment practices, language testing is a very complex phenomenon (Fulcher, 2010). While EFL learners have a high level of anxiety because of being tested, similarly, teachers feel confused, exhausted, suspicious and not sure whether they are testing in a valid, reliable and satisfying way. With the drastic change in education on COVID-19 days which has already had devastating impacts that are likely to last for a long time in every field, this "trouble" began to gain an important place in second language assessment. With this movement from the traditional board and chalk classrooms into the screens on learners' study tables, this existing black swan migrated into these screens. While this chapter is being written, it is impossible to predict the consequences of this migration from teachers' and students' perspectives. On the other hand, these screens bring about limitless opportunities for teachers which range from preparing tests to assessing pronunciation in a more valid and reliable way. To this end, this chapter aims is intended to give all stakeholders including institutions, researchers, teachers, and students' educational system stakeholders a crisis-inspired

glimpse into the areas of testing, evaluation and assessment and address some potential opportunities to improve themselves. Morillo et al. (2010) stated that virtual worlds are an effective platform for education and testing because they supply a common, authentic, and comprehensive environment in which students may discover, participate and alter the world, as well as communicate and collaborate with one another. Because of these characteristics, virtual worlds may be a potential way to solve issues on second language assessment. Using virtual worlds in EFL classrooms means a far more comprehensive examination of learners. Even when utilizing the same sorts of test items that many typical exams employ, virtual worlds may provide many new forms of assessment.

AN EFFECTIVE ASSESSMENT TOOLBOX FOR TEACHERS IN THE DIGITAL WORLD

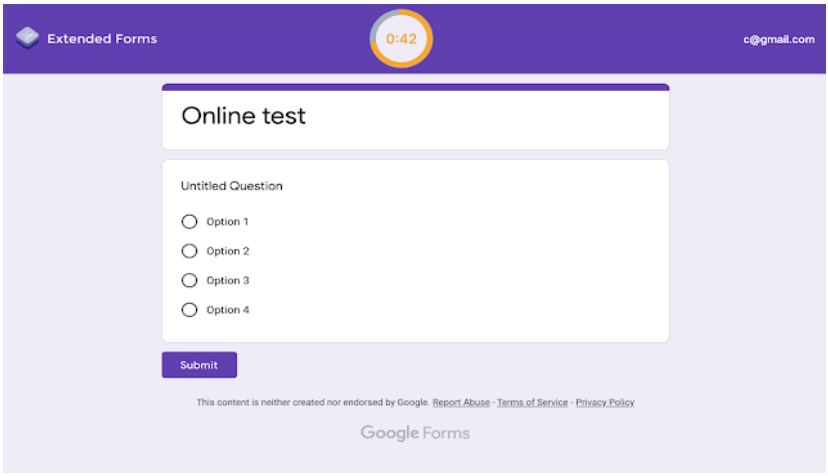
Teachers, without a doubt, try to do their best for both online teaching and assessment. However, the term "online or digital assessment" has not a long history in education. The first and the most important reason for this is that theories and practices in "Effective Online Pedagogy" are a new phenomenon for teachers worldwide, so is the online assessment. The second reason can be the traditional characteristics of universities, institutions, and governmental bodies, which have a more traditional outlook on teaching and, accordingly, the lack of support they can provide to teachers. Whatever the reason is, teachers need to develop themselves in online assessment, and they need to be trained in the most effective assessment practices and the use of available online assessment applications for their students (Rahim, 2020). Although the theoretical foundations of online assessment may have been ignored by researchers, universities, and institutions, which may have an adverse effect on developing online assessment practices for EFL teachers, they need to shift from traditional classrooms to online classes and they need to focus the core principles and the most practical practices of online teaching. With this respect, we can meet many practical Web 2.0 tools which make assessment more valid, more reliable, and more practical for EFL teachers. These tools, while saving time and improving validity in assessment, can be regarded as one of the most important developments in 21st-century education. Accordingly, many researchers have tried to introduce some online assessment tools with EFL teachers, including Google Forms, Blackboard, Plickers, Socrative, and Kahoot! (Alharbi and Meccawy, 2021; Elbasyouny,

2021; Jazil et al., 2020; Fageeh, 2015; Dobson, 2008). "Online assessment tools do not offer only informative content, but they also provide enjoyable and interactive activities to improve learning" (Elbasyouny, 2021, p.50). For instance, digital assessment through Blackboard allows students to engage in various practices, which influences accomplishment; also, computerized grading and rapid feedback allow students to address misunderstandings instantly (Fageeh, 2015). Students consider the usage of Google Forms in a digital grammar evaluation as a useful tool that enabled them to receive instant feedback after they finish the exam (Jazilel at., 2020). Likewise, Alharbi and Meccawy (2021) examined the effect and use of Socrative as a formative evaluation tool in Saudi EFL classes, garnering an excellent response from students. Dobson (2008) found in his research that integrating formative online tests before each class favorably improved students› test scores since it drives students to read and be ready before classes. In comparison, Gürişik and Demirkan (2019) evaluated 50 high school students and discovered that, while a great number of students chose Plickers over pen and paper tests. Similarly, a significant and expanding body of research has explored EFL teachers' opinions of the efficacy of various online formative aids (Dobson, 2008; Nguyen&Yukawa, 2019; Sari et al., 2020). Such platforms promptly capture a great quantity of data on students' knowledge, which allows teachers to adapt content and methods of delivery to match students' requirements (Dobson, 2008). Furthermore, it has been observed that adopting Kahoot! as a formative technology saves instructors more time while evaluating their students than conventional techniques, allowing EFL teachers to focus more on their teaching practices (Nguyen&Yukawa, 2019). EFL teachers like Google Forms due to some particular capabilities, such as automated scoring, thorough reports of students' development, and the diversity of question kinds that allow teachers to add videos, audios, and photos, which are vital in EFL assessment (Sari et al. 2020). Anamalai and Yatim (2019) also found that formative evaluation tools including Kahoot, Quizizz, and Socrative are examples of virtual tools that can be considered as useful for teaching aid. These classroom assessment tools help learners to enhance their learning through memorization practices they need (Countryman, 2017).

From these studies, it can be concluded that "new" assessment tools offer EFL teachers positive tools that enhance students' achievement in different ways. With these in mind, in this part, we try to create a practical toolbox for EFL teachers that they can use in EFL classes.

Google Forms Online

Google Forms is a very popular and practical Web application that allows users to create tests. It is completely free to use, and the tests prepared can be distributed to authorized users. It is available in Google Drive, which is Google's cloud-based, file-storage system. Responses submitted through Google Forms by students are automatically gathered, viewed, and exported as Microsoft Excel. In Google Forms, teachers can create online tests, various assignments, and quizzes. Students have scored automatically, and teachers can also immediately see an analysis of the results. It is time-saving and practical because the teachers do not need to analyze the results of student assessments manually. Therefore, Google Forms is a practical and easy-to-use option for EFL teachers.



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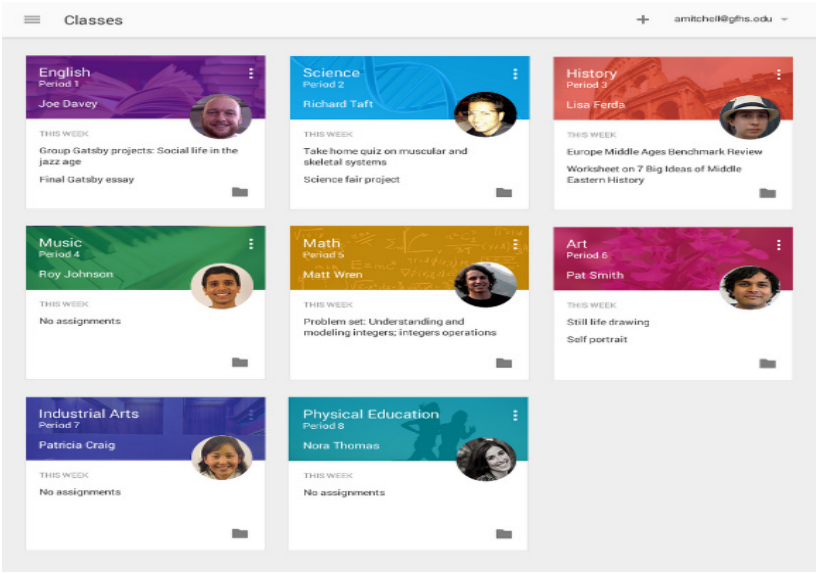
Google Classroom

Google Classroom is a completely free web service developed by Google for teachers, schools and institutions that distribute, and grade various assignments for their learners. In addition to distributing course materials, teachers can assess the performance of their learners. Google Classroom's key qualities are timesaving and organizing capabilities that are convenient to apply. Google Classroom functions as a virtual addition to the traditional classrooms. It all begins with the creation of classes and the addition of students. Therefore, it delves into the app's functions, such as conveying content, conducting conversations, sharing, and accumulating tasks (Sudarsana et al., 2019). This

platform allows teachers to create a virtual classroom, assign tasks, tests, and score in a short time.



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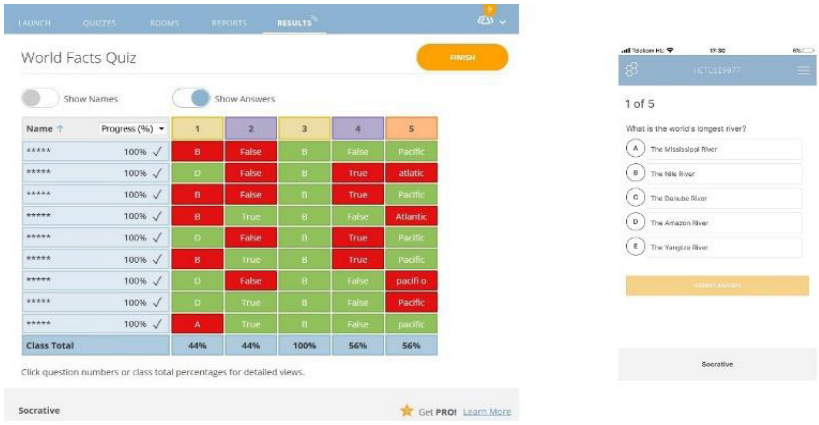
Socrative

Interaction between teachers and students has always been an important core of education, so it can be one of the most important pitfalls of virtual classrooms, and it is vital to bridge this gap. Active participation from students is considered one of the essential ingredients for making language classrooms successful (Stowell & Nelson, 2007). The question on how to have more interaction and more active students in our classes brought a new change in education: Student Response System (SRS), which helps learners interact more actively in EFL classrooms. SRS has been extensively accepted by educators as the core of education is interaction (Dakka, 2015; Hunsu et al., 2016), which is more challenging during the online classroom days. With the development of technology, SRS has also evolved and one of the most popular Internet-based platforms was created in 2017. Socrative has "the most flexibility and ease of use" (p. 99) compared to other SRSs. Through Socrative, instructors could generate quizzes and various types of test items in a short time. It further allows immediate responses from students, and thus, instructors can provide feedback and monitor students' performance in real-time. Furthermore, the results of the students' responses

are organized in a report format (Awedh et al., 2014; Dakka, 2015; Kaya & Balta, 2016). Socrative is a digital tool that aims to improve digital interactions between students and teachers. It accomplishes this by responding to a questions teaching model that instructors may develop. Socrative is a digital question and answers system that encourages students and instructors to connect digitally. It allows teachers to provide rapid feedback to learners. Therefore, it has a wide range of evaluation applications, from in-person to virtual learning. Socrative is accessible in IOS, Android, and Chrome apps, as well as through an internet browser. The above makes it simple for most students to utilize on practically any devices they have availability to, even their own phone, allowing for out-of-class replies if needed. Students may be provided a room passcode, which they must input in order to view questions. As students send their answers, their answers will be instantaneously registered on the teacher's device.



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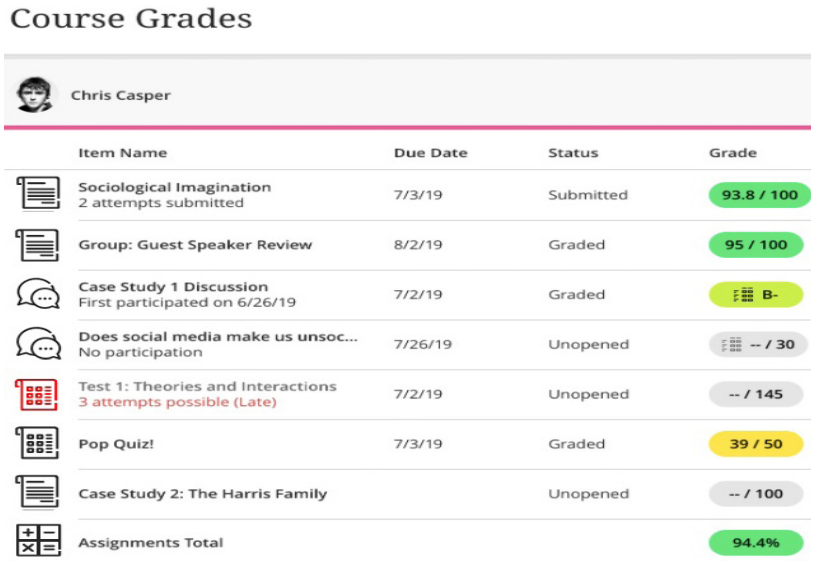
Blackboard

Blackboard is one of the most popular learning through management systems (LMS). Blackboard includes many tools, and teachers can use it for many reasons including course portfolios, assignments, and tests, so it is a multi-functional tool that serves both summative and formative assessment. Blackboard is a patented learning management system (LMS) that supports online learning and teaching in 90 countries and reaches about 100 million registered users from about 30 languages (Blackboard, 2018). Blackboard is a real-like environment with its web-conferencing platform. Teachers can use Blackboard to assess productive skills in EFL classrooms, which are speaking and writing. In addition, discussion boards, forums and emails can be used as other assessment tools. Blackboard

has two mobile apps, one for students and one for instructors. Students utilize the Blackboard app to browse course information and materials, complete assignments, and quizzes, connect with other students through messaging or discussion forums, and get notifications and reminders. This Blackboard instructor app also allows teachers to see course content, evaluate tasks, submit files, and send text messages to students. The Blackboard app and teacher app are available for IOS 4.0 and up, Android 2.2 and up, and Windows devices, which makes it an easy-to-reach platform.



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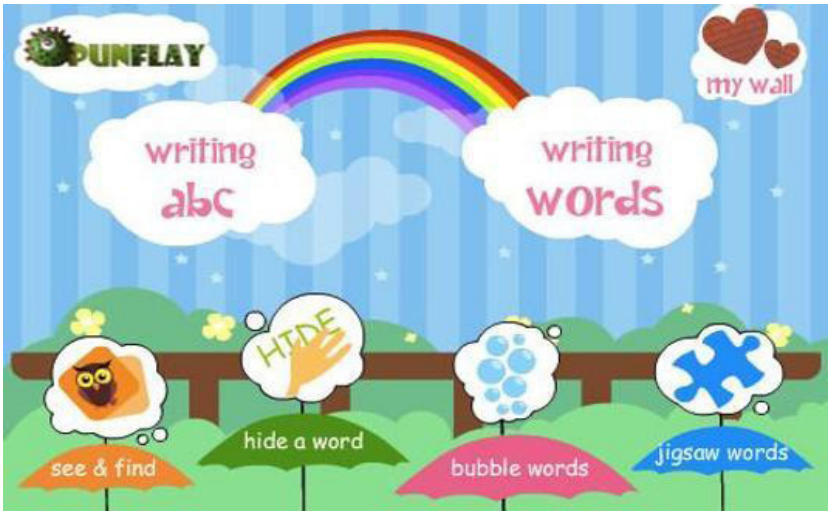
Wordwall

Wordwall is another ideal interactive tool for assessing vocabulary. It offers a diverse range of game styles that are helpful and engaging to the targeting group, especially for elementary school students. In addition, it is critical to choose a game that is engaging while also efficiently satisfying the learning objectives, even though there are games with learning benefits but no enjoyable aspect (Jantke& Hume 2015). A right combination of mobile learning resources is necessary for the effective inclusion of theories of learning into e-learning, which may integrate instruction and enjoyment effectively and, as a result, attracts students' attention and enhance motivation for learning (Hasram et al., 2021)



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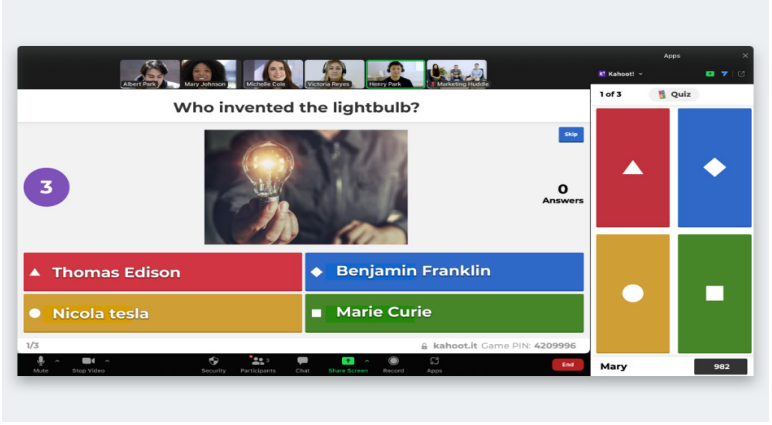
Kahoot

Kahoot is a game-based online course that is being employed in teaching English as a second/foreign language classroom. It is a public, real-time, game-based learning tool that has garnered widespread acceptance globally, with over 30 million users worldwide (Plump & LaRosa, 2017). It enables teachers to construct game-based quizzes, polls, and a variety of other activities during which users play against one another. After the Kahoot activity, the top respondents for each question are disclosed, and the ultimate winner(s) are presented (Johns, 2015). The winners will be displayed on the score at the closing of the game. The excellent thing about Kahoot is that the findings, containing qualitative gathered information, may be downloaded, and stored by educators for further use (Ismail & Mohammad, 2017). Teachers must first sign in to the Kahoot website (https://getkahoot.com) to create a Kahoot activity. Once selecting a Kahoot possibility, teachers can use its available options to construct questions. Lastly, they will be given a code that has been produced manually. Their learners may join the game through a laptop or smartphone by utilizing the Kahoot app or viewing the website, www.kahoot.it. Students must input the code displayed on the page and submit their names. When the Kahoot game begins, students will receive points for the right answers and quick reactions. Kahoot has recently been employed

as an extra resource for predictive evaluation throughout feedback sessions. Students must convene in their classroom at particular times – generally twice a week for each subject – for a Kahoot session. Minimum 20 questions are asked throughout each round (Ismail & Mohammad, 2017).



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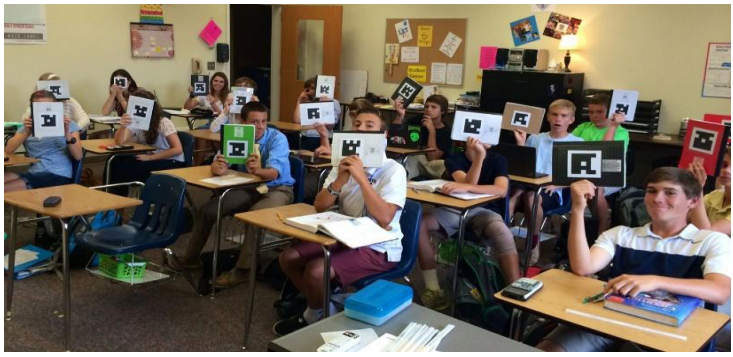
Plickers

Plickers is an online assessment tool that can be reached at www.plickers.com. The tool enables teachers to show questions on a screen and gather student responses with Plickers flashcards, which can be downloaded easily from the website (Koleva&Duman, 2017). Plickers (https://plickers.com) is a common formative evaluation tool that may be utilized by K12 EFL teachers in particular. It is a free Classroom Response System (CRS) software that Apple and Android users may install to collect formative evaluation information from students in a matter of seconds. Unlike most CRSs, Plickers only require the instructor to have a tablet or phone (Krause et al., 2017). Furthermore, students have not required any form of equipment to participate; only a paper piece a Plickers card, that can be readily accessed and printed by the instructor for use in EFL classes, is sufficient. It is simple to utilize with minimum technology and requires a setup process. Teachers determine what to evaluate, and afterward, the Plickers flashcards are printed. Every Plickers flashcard includes a code and number on each of its four faces, as well as a little letter. Every flashcard is allocated to a student and the software pairs individuals with the flashcards that have been allocated to them. Because the same set of flashcards can be utilized for more than one session, just one collection of Plickers Cards is required (Krause et al., 2017).



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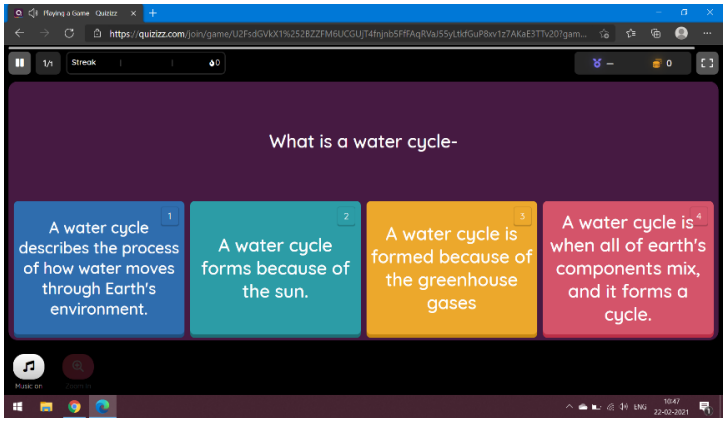
Quizizz

Quizizz is an interactive game-based application that allows students to assess their learning. The sequence of the test items in Quizizz may vary for each learner. Instructors may also offer assignments to learners using Quizizz to give them more practice. Every question should include multiple-choice responses with two or four options. Quizizz is a free, easy-to-use virtual formative evaluation application that assists instructors in assessing students' language skills and also curricular information (Bury, 2017). Quizizz's key advantages are rapid feedback, a monitoring section, the chance to retake the exam, and the opportunity to carry a new quiz. These four characteristics regarding the phases of performing self-assessment using Quizizz take on a gradable order, as proposed by Wang (2008) and Gikandi et al. (2011). Quizizz feedback includes a game overview (scoring and ranking), as well as progress data. In the reviewing part, learners may check the correct answer for each question.



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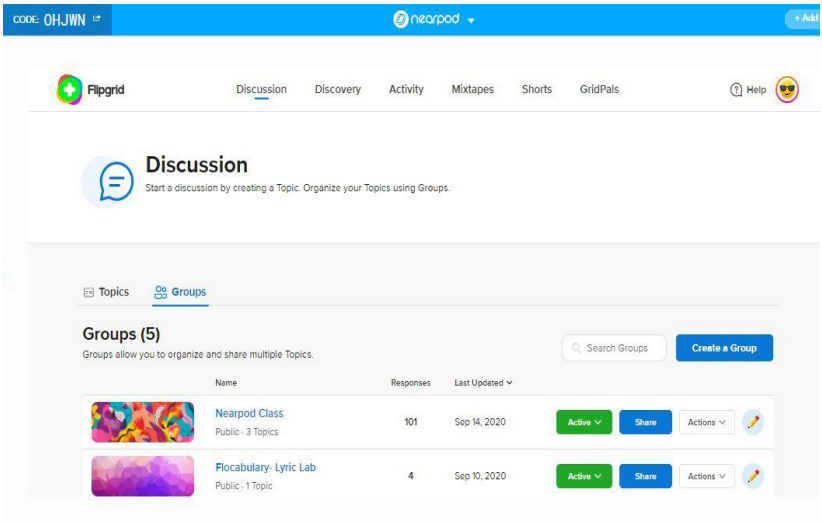
Nearpod

Nearpod is another Web 2.0 tool that EFL teachers can use in their classes effectively. In this platform, teachers can easily create interactive presentations that may include formative assessment test items. Teachers can create and import their own Google Slides, Powerpoint PDF lessons in minutes and add interactive activities such as;

- *Quizzes - They assess students' understanding through multiple choice questions and receive instant feedback.*
- *Polls - They highlight students' opinions, check for understanding or provoke discussion.*
- *Collaborate Board- creates collaborative learning opportunities where students can share ideas in real-time.*
- *Draw it – Helps students to draw, highlight, type and add pictures on an interactive whiteboard.*
- *Time to climb; Assesses students' understanding with a game-based activity* (Bogveradze&Mardaleishvili, 2021).

Nearpod is accessible from numerous platforms, including the Apple Store, Google Play, Windows Store, and Chrome Web Store. The timing of the PPT is controlled by the instructor, so that as the teacher changes the slide, the learners watch the slide progress on their separate displays. Students can adjust the screen to magnify material, but they cannot go to the next slide. The teacher can monitor the number of learners that are participating in the PPT. Nearpod PPTs might include activities (also called formative evaluations) that let learners participate with the material (Dunbar, 2016). These tasks may be performed by every student, and the instructor's phone displays how many learners finished the task, the responses provided by each learner, and the numbers and percentages of right answers or views if appropriate according to the task. The learner replies and numeric data, if appropriate, are preserved in a summary that the instructor may export when the PPT is over (Dunbar, 2016).



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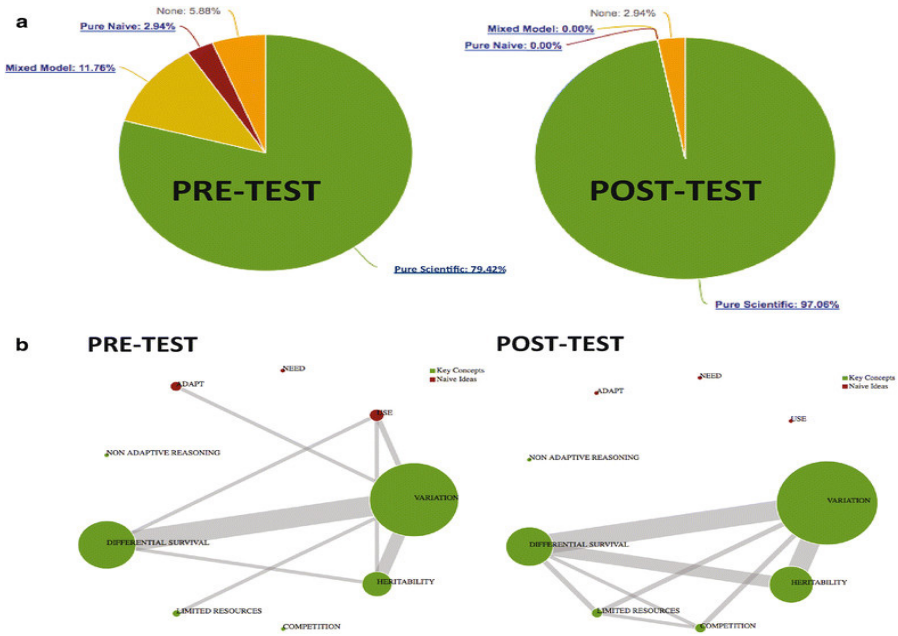
EvoGrader

EvoGrader is an online formative assessment tool that evaluates the writing skills of EFL learners. EvoGrader (http://www.evograder.com) is a free web program that evaluates open-ended replies to development and strong selective questions and delivers formative feedback to participants (Pennock et al., 2016). EvoGrader scores updated replies from online visitors using these verified methods. Visitors should transfer files in a certain format, which is verified by the site. If the data is properly prepared, EvoGrader assesses each answer using the current verified methods and produces computer-graded information in an exportable .csv file as well as a range of online representations of the results. The program examines the replies instantly and offers specific data on the logical elements included in each participant's answer, and also overall participant reasoning model types. Moharreri and Nehm (2014) stated that even though the statistical mechanism used by EvoGrader is complicated, the system is simple to use. Visitors simply need to be familiar with spreadsheets in order to arrange student replies, submit data to the web, and operate an internet browser.



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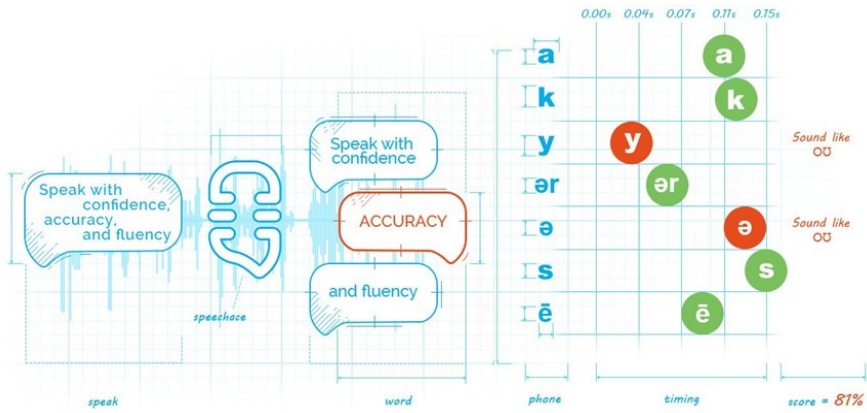
Speechace

Speechace is a web-based platform and application that can be used in many electronic devices. It is mostly used to assess the pronunciation and speaking skills of EFL learners, which is one of the most ignored skills in virtual classrooms. It also gives hints and clues for the IELTS test. Speechace Application Programming Interface (API) evaluates voice in both American and British English. An analysis is offered for each sound and phrase, indicating if it was comparable to a standard pronunciation and, if it is not, how (Speechace,2021). API may also be used to get a number of words, syllable per second, pausing data, right word percentage, and other information. Speechace seems one of the most practical web-based platforms in this sense (Pliushchenko&Zaslavskiy, 2021; Aiello &Mongibello, 2019).



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CONCLUDING REMARKS

The value and strength of online assessment entail more than merely assessing and grading learners and needs a strong integration with teaching. Similarly, teachers' adaptation and self-development are a must as online assessment requires feedback and "construct" their assessment in a systematic way. In this sense, EFL teachers need to adjust their testing activities to give relevant feedback, responsibility, and chances to exhibit excellence by remembering certain primary testing concepts and online evaluation should be seen as a technique for assessing students' educational progress. Robles and Braathen (2002) argue that teachers need to consider their assessment techniques as they focus on teaching approaches and integrate distance classes as a communication form of visuals for education. A successful digital instructor must develop methods to support student learning. One form of evaluation will not be sufficient to assess all of the intended goals and outcomes. In order for virtual testing to be efficient, teachers must broaden the evaluation methods utilized all through the online program's teaching process. As education is going to output evaluation, online schooling is a great medium for assessing student achievement and knowledge application. Traditional instructional evaluation approaches may typically be adjusted to suit the structure and pedagogy of virtual classrooms (Robles and Braathen, 2002).

Another high priority is for institutions, governmental bodies, and universities. There is no doubt high priority needs to be given to online assessment

in two ways. The first and the most important one is "standardization". These institutions need to develop web tools that may contribute to EFL teachers' assessment to improve the validity and reliability of assessment. This will certainly lead to standardization for teachers teaching to similar groups and will make the picture clearer. Secondly, teachers should have opportunities to train themselves in online assessment. This can be a part of pre-service training or in-service, and this will reconceptualize the term "online assessment" for them. The main aim is as virtual teachers continue to improve their methods of assessment, this will mean assessing EFL learners in a more and reliable way with the support of online assessment tools, which will definitely have a positive effect on EFL learners' foreign language learning process.

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CHAPTER 4

ONLINE TEACHING EXPERIENCE: CHALLENGES AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS IN A HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

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Abstract

After COVID-19 was declared as a pandemic on March 11, 2020 by the WHO, education in Higher Education Institutions shifted to the online environment and Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT) started. This sudden shift brought about many challenges. The purpose of this study is to present the experiences, challenges and possible solutions offered in the context of ERT during COVID-19 outbreak in a university. In the study, the educational context, the approaches, policies and applications at a preparatory school before and after ERT were described in detail. Afterwards, the challenges faced during ERT and possible solutions. Like other higher institutions, when the conventional (face-to-face) education was immediately and carefully transferred to online

education, all related bodies were aware that this process was not actual online teaching but the educational philosophy of the university and the necessary actions were taken into consideration by all parties, and everyone tried their best to continue the usual way of teaching but online.

Keywords: Emergency Remote Teaching, COVID-19, Language Teaching, Online Teaching, Online Approaches, Online Procedures, Online Applications

Introduction

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) was initially discovered during an outbreak of respiratory illness in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China, and it was reported immediately to the World Health Organization (WHO) on December 31, 2019. WHO described the COVID-19 outbreak as a worldwide health emergency on January 30, 2020. COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic by WHO on March 11, 2020 (Cennimo, 2021). As a result, governments all over the world decided to implement a lockdown to protect people from this pandemic. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, to protect students and teachers from this illness, school buildings from pre-school education to universities around the world were closed in early 2020. However, it is vital that education continues, as educating new generations is essential. That is why it was decided to continue delivering education online to avoid penalizing students, and this was a huge opportunity in the whole world's education system.

The COVID-19 epidemic triggered an urgent shift from traditional to distance learning, known as Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT), in all levels of education (Hodges et al., 2020). As explained by Misirli and Ergulec (2021), for professors, students, and parents, the situation was unlike the well-planned typical technique of online learning since it was unexpected and unprecedented. Although it was unexpected and unprecedented, it was the reality of that time, and none of the educational institutions across the world could afford to stop delivering education, which is one of the cornerstones of the community.

Like other countries, our country's government decided to implement a lockdown, which forced everyone to start working at home. Similar to all the sectors in the community, administrators in the education field needed to come together to find a better way to continue the delivery of education. As Saraç described in his analysis (2021), COVID-19 caused chaos on campuses all around the world. Face-to-face teaching was banned at Turkish universities on March 16, and instruction was quickly replaced by digital online modes. That is why the Senate of our university immediately came together and decided to try

online teaching for two months as of the end of March 2020, and to meet again at the end of this two-month period (in May or June at the latest) to evaluate whether instruction would continue to be delivered online or not by considering the spread of COVID-19. Following this decision, all faculties and schools at our university started preparations to commence online teaching, and as of March 23, online teaching started throughout the university, which is similar to what was happening across the world. This change affected all stakeholders (teachers, students, and administrators) directly. As no one had experienced the delivery of online teaching on this scale, many problems arose at the beginning of this operation even though it was attempted to complete many preparations and train teachers and students. At that time, the University Senate decided that Microsoft Teams (MT) would be used for synchronous classroom activities and sent messages to all the staff to inform them of this decision. To be successful in online teaching, the academic and administrative staff in all the faculties and departments throughout the university worked together.

To run ERT at the school and help the academic staff overcome the problems that were encountered, the members of the Preparatory School Professional Development (PD) Unit organized various workshops. At the Preparatory School, there are units where a certain number of colleagues have extra responsibilities, such as designing the syllabus, implementing the syllabus and designing tests, and administering exams for groups. These people held meetings with the academic staff to guide them and help them with the problems they faced. In addition to creating classrooms on MT, different teams were created to enhance healthy communication among the staff. The staff were asked to record not only the synchronous lessons but also all types of lessons and meetings held on this platform for further evaluation. In other words, MT was used as the medium of communication among all the academic staff and students.

The university decided to implement online teaching by using MT mainly, and the faculties and schools were asked to find other programs suitable for their specific needs. Communication of decisions and clear guidance on the steps to be followed were the two main issues on which the School Administration focused. Since everything on this new platform was new and unknown for everyone, the Administration made it clear that no one was better than the other, and this reassured the teachers. The School Administration, like the other faculties and schools at the university, transferred the conventional (face-to-face) education to online education very carefully. This process was not actual online teaching but could be described as “emergency remote education”, as it did not include the

usual steps and applications of online education. The educational philosophy of the university and the necessary actions were taken into consideration by all bodies, and everyone tried to do their best to continue the usual way of teaching but online.

CONTEXT

The university discussed in this study is an international university located in North Cyprus. It was established in the late 1970s. Since the establishment of the university, the medium of instruction has been English only; therefore, the English Preparatory School (EPS) was also established for students whose English level was not high enough to follow the instruction in their chosen departments. Later, the name of this school was changed to the Foreign Languages and English Preparatory School (FLEPS), which consisted of the Foreign Languages (FL) Division and the EPS Division. FLEPS now has three divisions: the EPS Division, the FL Division, and the Turkish Preparatory School (TPS) Division.

- ✓ Students who chose English-medium departments and whose English is not good enough to follow lessons attend the EPS Division to improve their English. The objective of the EPS is to equip students with sufficient language skills and to help them follow their lessons in their faculties.
- ✓ In the FL Division, Academic English courses are offered to students to improve their English to enable them to follow their courses and be successful. In this division, students who chose Turkish-medium departments to study Basic English (Survival English). Furthermore, students who would like to learn another foreign language, such as Greek, German, Russian, or French, can take any of these elective courses offered by FLEPS. Students from non-Turkish-speaking countries take a compulsory Survival Turkish course to help them in their daily lives in North Cyprus.
- ✓ In the TPS, students who come from non-Turkish-speaking countries and who would like to attend Turkish-medium departments but do not have a sufficiently high level of Turkish are offered Turkish education to improve their Turkish to be able to study in their chosen departments.

PART I: APPROACHES, POLICIES AND APPLICATIONS AT FLEPS BEFORE ERT

- **Syllabus**

  A syllabus is a document that contains all the necessary details for a course. It includes the breakdown of topics that will be covered, as well

as the deadlines for any coursework, such as tests, quizzes, or exams. As mentioned above, there are different divisions under FLEPS. Within each division, different courses are offered, and each course has its own syllabus. The members of the syllabus unit in the specified divisions prepare these syllabi. The syllabus of each course in FLEPS includes learning outcomes, aims and objectives that are aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), as well as dates for tests, quizzes, or exams and any other in-class assessment. The printed documents are shared with academic staff and students. Throughout the course, the academic staff follows the given course outline. As there are multiple groups under each course, it is crucial that a standard syllabus is followed.

- **Assessment**

  Suitable assessment tools, methods, and components are always specified in each syllabus based on the learning outcomes mentioned. Moreover, for each tool, method, and component, "test specifications" are prepared. These specifications are used to demonstrate the extent to which the teaching/learning was achieved. There is also a timeline for each assessment, for both summative and formative assessment tools. Assigned members of the Testing Unit prepare different testing tools by using test specifications, and students are assessed accordingly. Throughout the course, it is ensured that there is consistency in the grading of students in different groups. To achieve this, standardization meetings are held before the exams and grading period and after the exam moderation meetings. Moreover, different components of the assessment are correlated.

- **Materials**

  Teaching/learning materials refer to the variety of resources and instructional materials that teachers can utilize to instruct students. These instructional materials are used to support the learning objectives of every course. They can be categorized as follows:

- **Books**

  Internationally accepted books from different publishers that are suitable for the level of students are preferred after book selection, evaluation, and piloting procedures.

- **Online component**

  As the total number of contact hours of students is not high enough to reach the total number of hours for levels specified by the CEFR, it is crucial to have an online component so that students are exposed to English outside the classroom. To support our students' learning environment, in addition

to live, face-to-face sessions, they are expected to complete the given tasks set online. These tasks are assessed, and they become part of their official grades.

- **In-house prepared materials**
  - **Continuous assessment**
    Students are expected to complete continuous assessment tasks. These can be writing and speaking tasks given in their Portfolios or Language Files or writing essays and presentations.
  - **Authentic materials with exercises**
    Some authentic texts are prepared for students to provide an opportunity for them to access materials of this type.
- **Meetings**

  As Noordin (2002) stated, meetings between educators are one of the most essential ways of broadening their experience, enhancing their talents, and improving their performance. Since the school is the central axis for achieving educational goals, organizing meetings between employees require extra care in their preparation, subject selection, goal determination, and adoption of a method for rooting the educational concepts that the school aspires to achieve, unifying the path to achieving them, and developing teamwork skills among those in charge of the school to the highest degree possible. At FLEPS, meetings of different types are held throughout the semester.
  - **Teaching Team Meetings (TTM)**
    The aim of these meetings is to give the academic staff teaching the same level or the same course an opportunity to come together to share ideas. Furthermore, the syllabus members and/or testing members of these groups can guide teachers to follow the syllabus and obtain feedback from teachers to improve the course in the future in TTMs.
  - **Exam Administration Meetings**
    Usually, these meetings are held before exams to ensure that everyone in the group follows the rules and regulations for the exams.
  - **Temperature Check Meetings**
    These meetings are held with teachers of a specific course to ascertain whether everyone is on the same track, and if any problems occur, messages are sent to teachers for clarification.
  - **Standardization Meetings**
    Before assessing written or oral work of students, it is important to ensure that grading among the academic staff is standardized. To do this, people come together and grade the randomly selected work of

students in line with the given criteria to determine whether the grades of the teachers are standardized.

- **Professional Development Meetings**
  As the full-time academic staff have been working at FLEPS for more than 20 years, twice-yearly training sessions (seminars, workshops) are organized by inviting external experts and trainers. Furthermore, Professional Development (PD) Unit members carry out observations and have meetings with the part-time staff to give feedback on how to improve their teaching. In addition, PD Unit members organize formal and informal meetings as in-house training sessions such as workshops on a voluntary basis. Volunteers present workshops or sessions on an area about which they feel confident.

Were there any policies and procedures? What were they, how were they prepared, updated, and announced?

In FLEPS, everything is well-prepared and designed and communicated with teachers, students, and parents. The Prep School website was designed accordingly, and everybody can find any type of information there. Moreover, student and teacher handbooks, as well as administrative, academic, and student policy handbooks are available as a reference. The policy handbooks are finalized after discussion with teachers and approved by the School Council. Finally, there are detailed course descriptions and study guides that include the syllabus handbook for both students and teachers.

For communication, there are many channels on the School Discussion Board for official announcements made by the Administration and units. Institutional e-mail accounts for students, teachers and secretaries, the open door policy of administrators, the student and academic Portal system, social media channels such as WhatsApp and Facebook closed groups, a website, and contact forms are available for healthy communication among the Administration, students, and teachers. The necessary information regarding the responsibilities of positions, how to apply for posts, how to attend conferences, or what to do in certain cases is provided in the policy and procedure handbooks. These handbooks were mainly prepared by the School Administration with the support of unit members, discussed with teachers, and approved by the School Council. They are updated every year in June and reprinted to be distributed to teachers and students. As mentioned earlier, the soft copy of teacher and student handbooks is available on the website, and the soft copy of the policy and procedures is on the discussion board.

Would feedback be collected? From whom would it be collected? How often? How? What was done later about this feedback? How would the latter applications (results) be announced to everyone?

The School Administration collects feedback from both staff and students via different channels. First, evaluation questionnaires are completed by students toward the end of every semester. In these questionnaires, students evaluate themselves, their teachers (all teaching partners individually), school facilities, and the School Administration. This questionnaire is available on the Student Portal before the final exam week, and students complete it online. In addition, another questionnaire on expectations is distributed to students at the beginning of each year. Additionally, a satisfaction questionnaire is given to randomly selected students as focus groups, and they are asked to complete it during class hours. Each group is represented by a class representative, and in regular meetings with these students (monthly), feedback is received. After collecting the feedback given in the semester/year, it is evaluated and processed, and any necessary changes are made. Later, this is discussed with the teachers so that they can give this information to students. As a university policy, changes are made annually to avoid causing inequality or unfairness to any students.

Students are also given feedback on their performance during exams or in class. Teachers have office hours, and they can work with students individually on their weaknesses or the areas on which they prefer to work. In addition, students are given written feedback on their portfolio tasks, and then they are asked to edit their performance based on this feedback. Furthermore, in the middle of the semester after the mid-term exams (progress tests), students are given written feedback on their speaking and writing performance based on the criteria on which they are assessed so that they can work with their teachers and improve their weaknesses.

Moreover, teachers have different alternatives to give feedback, such as suggestion boxes, focus group meetings, temperature check meetings, and TTMs. Especially in speaking exams, teachers are given feedback forms to specify what the problematic items are or what does not go well. Feedback is collated during the year, and changes are made at the end of the year and communicated to the teachers at the beginning of the next academic year.

How would the records be kept, archived? Who would organize them? Who would keep them? How often were they rearranged, reviewed? Where would they be kept? Who had access to these records? To what extent did these people have access?

The university has its own Portal system designed by the University Computer Center, which is responsible for its security and confidentiality. This system is fully accessible by the Rector's Office, different access permissions are given to the people holding different positions within the university, and limited access is available for teachers and students. For instance, students can see their academic performance in previous years and the grades and attendance (absenteeism) record of the current semester. They can also apply for a scholarship or freeze a semester or select courses on their Student Portal until they graduate/leave the university.

Teachers have access to the Portal to enter their students' grades and absenteeism data. Once a student is registered at the university, their record becomes available on the Portal at all times. The same applies to teachers, namely, all information relating to teachers is also available on the Portal, and only teachers themselves and the people holding positions, such as Directors, Deans, and Vice-Rectors, have access to the teachers' personal information, such as leave dates and disciplinary issues. On the other hand, basic information such as a spouse, children, marital status, educational background, extension number, and personal cell phone number can be seen by all the EMU staff.

PART II – ONLINE APPROACHES, POLICIES AND APPLICATIONS

What is meant by change? What needs to change? How can these changes be systematic? In what order do these changes occur? Whom does it affect? How is it announced? To whom? When?

Before COVID-19 was declared as a pandemic by WHO, on March 10, 2020, our university sent everyone home for a few days. On March 11, when it was declared as a pandemic, our university made quick and difficult decisions regarding the transition to online education within 12 days. Therefore, on March 23, the School Administration asked the academic staff to complete a trial week and start the actual lessons as online classes as of March 30. During this period, the Administration members and unit members worked very hard and finalized the preparations for online teaching that were actualized across the world.

The University Senate convened and made a decision about the measures to be implemented during the pandemic, and how education can be delivered during the pandemic period. As a result, education started online as of the end of March, after a period of almost a month. During this process, all types of activities required to switch to online education were planned and communicated to both students and teachers. All types of needs were determined, and training videos were prepared accordingly. The University Distance Education Institute and its

director played a major role in making this happen. In addition, as mentioned by Thompson et al. (2020) but contradicting the finding in Tanzania mentioned in a recently published study by Upor (2021), some colleagues and PD Unit members got on track very fast; they shared more user-friendly videos for their colleagues, helped in live online meetings, and showed others how to share screen and how to take attendance on Moodle.

To ensure that the system works properly, the necessary arrangements were made by the Administration of the university. First, a committee was established. In this committee, each faculty and department is represented. The decisions were taken in this committee and announced to all the faculties and schools via their representatives. Each faculty and school arranged online meetings with responsible people to organize online education. To ensure the smooth running of the school, the following online meetings were held regularly.

- **FLEPS School Council**
  In these meetings, the general policies of the school were discussed, and the necessary decisions were made and disseminated around the school.
  - **FLEPS Senior Administration**
  The Director and the Assistant Directors met to discuss the recent problems and applications, and the decisions were implemented via the Assistant Directors.
- **Teaching Teams**
  The decisions taken by the School Administration were communicated to all academic staff in TTMs on a weekly basis. In these meetings, the problems encountered in daily lessons were also discussed to find solutions. Sometimes, these issues were brought to the FLEPS Administration via responsible Assistant Directors.
- **PD Unit**
  Different platforms were used to identify the problems academic staff encountered. When these problems were specified, the responsible unit (PD Unit) organized a number of workshops and seminars to help the academic staff achieve a smooth transition and adaptation to online teaching.

In addition to TTMs, different online platforms were used to communicate the decisions made by the Higher Administration. During the lockdown period, the importance of online communication was better understood. These platforms were the only means of communication for each member of the academic staff. Some of the online methods used within the school are described below.

- **E-mail**
  Official university e-mails were used to share necessary information among the university staff. This is the major medium of communication for our university. All the students and teachers were able to send e-mails to each other easily via their given e-mail accounts.
- **University Portal**
  In the university, there is a portal system for academic staff and another one for students. The portal for academic staff is used for entering and retrieving all types of data, such as course definitions, teachers' timetables, workloads, assessment breakdowns of courses and grades for all these assessment breakdowns, and official marks of students. Therefore, an official data storage tool, the University Portal, was announced, which was similar to the one for face-to-face education. The attendance records of students, as well as their performance, grades, and exam results were stored and announced on this platform. Access to any information on the Portal was open to all academicians in the amount deemed appropriate in line with their authorization. Students and their families also had certain rights to access their records on the Portal.
- **Discussion Forum**
  Another official communication tool was used by the Prep School family. All types of information were sent to all the academic and administrative staff using this online tool. This can be considered as the major medium of communication for the school.
- **Microsoft Teams**
  The University Senate decided that MT should be used for synchronous classroom activities and to send informative messages to all the staff. For the Prep School, different groups were created, and MT became the medium of communication among all the academic staff within the school.
  The university also decided to switch to online methods by mainly using MT, and the faculties and schools were asked to find other programs suitable for their specific needs. However, it was vital to deliver lessons on MT. Therefore, videos on how to use MT were prepared as the first step and shared with teachers and students, who were asked to give feedback. After the evaluation of the gathered feedback, the needs of teachers and students were identified, and additional helpful videos were prepared. Regular meetings were held with teachers via MT, and the results of these meetings were analyzed for the necessary steps to be taken. Generally, videos were prepared and shared on the questions asked or the issues identified as

needed. Both teachers and students also requested more channels to reach the Administration by highlighting the communication channels that are already in use and the practicality of MT.

As mentioned above, information flow and assistance on the steps of procedures were the two main concerns raised during this period. Even though there were some other concerns, such as how long an online lesson should last, all the staff expended great effort to achieve a smooth transition while keeping the student satisfaction level high. The labor division among units and the cooperative working environment made this period less challenging. That is why both the Administration and the academic staff considered this period as a great success for the university (and for the Prep School) since having such a systematic transition in a big organization was not easy. Of course, there were problems and concerns due to the lack of policies and some unforeseen issues; however, it was agreed that the school managed to survive by working cooperatively. As the academic staff comprised teachers with over 20 years of experience, there was another disadvantage regarding their views on online learning and teaching; however, the practice could ultimately be considered a success.

Application of the institution's (university's) educational philosophy to the language school

In general, the transition from face-to-face education to online education was planned and applied very carefully within the whole university. However, it has to be confessed that this was not a typical example of online education. "Emergency Remote Education" may describe this process better since it did not include the usual steps and applications of online education.

Hodges et al. (2020) described ERT as a temporary change of instructional delivery to an alternate delivery channel owing to crisis conditions, as opposed to experiences that are planned from the start and designed to be online. It entails the use of only remote teaching solutions for instruction or education that would ordinarily be offered face to face or as blended or hybrid courses, with the intention of returning to that format after the crisis or emergency has passed.

The educational philosophy of the university and the necessary actions were taken into consideration by all bodies, and almost everybody tried their best to continue the usual way of teaching. For instance, the timetables remained the same, lessons started and finished as announced earlier, and teachers followed the same procedures previously announced. Furthermore, attendance and other disciplinary policies remained unchanged to maintain peace and discipline.

This had a positive effect on students since it gave them a comfort zone, as while everything in their lives was changing, lessons were not. Additionally, the Rector's Office helped the students who were unable to return to their hometowns due to the closure of country borders. They were supported to attend their online classes with the necessary equipment (such as the Internet) and even provided with food and beverages if they were stuck on the island with limited or no finances.

During the pandemic, many studies have been conducted, and a huge number of researchers around the world have attempted to gain an understanding of how successful or challenging this transition from face-to-face education to online education (actually ERT) has been. An example of such studies (Sofianidis et al., 2021) was conducted on this island, and the researchers found that students from families with middle or high socioeconomic status (who are mainly in private schools) have better ICT skills, a high level of readiness, quiet and personal space, and proper ICT tools compared to students from families with low socioeconomic status (who are mainly in public schools). The researchers focused more on the voice of students, but while focusing on students, the environmental factors should also be taken into consideration. In the institution discussed in this chapter, such factors were considered, and special packages were provided for the students. For example, students from low-income families were supported financially with food and beverages, and even sometimes with accommodation. Students with different needs were supported based on their needs.

Advice and support for teachers and students

Considering the transition experience the school has had, it should be confessed that the School Administration or the Higher Administration was sometimes a little late in making decisions and communicating them before the need arose. From time to time, they should have assessed the needs of students and/or teachers regarding certain issues, and they were not able to foresee those. Therefore, they should have been more careful and more ready to take some actions immediately after decisions were made. Another aspect to mention is the netiquette rules. Even when students sent messages to their teachers in the middle of the night, they expected their teachers to be available and reply to them quickly. Therefore, the netiquette rules should have been taken into consideration and explained clearly from the outset. Additionally, the PD Unit was very active in exploring and sharing new ideas and useful tools in online teaching, and this was a great benefit for the academic staff.

Non-pedagogical activities, namely, extra-curricular activities, in online education

In face-to-face education within the school, different types of extra-curricular activities were prepared every semester for the benefit of the students, such as Orientation Day, Backgammon and Chess Tournaments, Quiz Monster, Charity Bazaar, International Diversity, Reader Competitions, and Poster Presentations. In such activities, students had opportunities to meet new students from different countries and establish good relationships and make more foreign friends. Moreover, Civic Involvement Project activities were maintained, and students had opportunities to attend social responsibility activities. However, during the pandemic, none of these activities were able to take place. The School Administration strongly believes in the benefit of such non-pedagogical activities, and therefore various ways to implement such activities in online education were investigated.

There was a center where students had the opportunity to use a variety of equipment to improve their language skills, such as watching a film, recording their voices and listening to them, doing extra practice outside class with the guidance of learning advisors (older peers who were student assistants from different departments), and borrowing graded reader books for a certain period. Due to the pandemic, such opportunities could not be offered to students, and embedding them in online education should be considered.

The challenges experienced during the transition and suggested platforms and tools to be used

Quality assurance is essential for big organizations both internally and externally. Even though the pandemic was unexpected and almost all parts of the world were affected negatively, appropriate policies and procedures had to be implemented since the documentation was vitally important. Unfortunately, this was the biggest weakness of this school, and it should be the first point to consider for the upcoming semester. As the transition to online teaching was unexpected and caught all stakeholders unprepared, the students, the teachers and the Higher Administration were unable to plan anything at the beginning. Nevertheless, toward the end of last semester, some policies were written, and various documents as evidence were filed and stored securely. While being kept busy with the semester-based routine, developing policies and procedures and implementing them was not possible; however, there were many discussions, and ideas were noted, and during the summer period, the preparation and finalization

of these was prioritized. That is why the School Administration feels proud of themselves and the school in terms of quality assurance.

In terms of overcoming the challenges of this period, the Administration have developed previously used platforms to collect feedback and adapted them to be used in online education. They also attempted to collect enough documentation for the previous semester, and for information they lack, they have developed and written new policies to be followed. Lesson delivery models and practices were investigated to make suggestions to the academic staff. New study guides were developed to train students on how to study and learn online, and new tools were investigated to monitor learners' progress.

In the university, online data was stored on a well-developed in-house tool, namely, the Portal system. This system allows all stakeholders to keep track of students' performance and achievements, and any data collected within a semester can be stored securely. This was a big advantage of the university, and during the pandemic, no problems were faced in terms of maintaining the availability of the data, storing the data, and retrieving previous data, as this system was available online. Moreover, this pandemic led to the Portal being used more effectively and efficiently by both teachers and students. The Portal was used to gather feedback from students on the courses offered, the university facilities, and their teachers, so this was also used for feedback purposes and, similar to previous semesters, the data were stored securely. However, the data of recorded lessons, exams, results, feedback received from students, and materials are huge, and therefore more secure storage methods were investigated by the Computer Center. Consequently, they chose the cloud (OneDrive) for archiving such data.

The pandemic was the time when everyone was inexperienced in and stressed by online teaching, which is a part of ERT, and with the keywords "emergency" and "remote", the challenges can be guessed more easily. Therefore, the teachers were unsure about which tools to use and how to deliver lessons. Some even decided to stop teaching and retire, as this was frightening for them. However, teachers soon adapted their teaching to online teaching and started sharing their experiences in this new world with each other. This is one of the gains of this period. Sharing among the teachers has become very important and crucial. Teachers are always open to learning from each other, and the joy of sharing and learning from each other was experienced during this painful process.

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a change in the dimensions of education services and made it mandatory for educators to use Internet technologies, which

became the only medium available for teaching and learning (Sofianidis et al., 2021). In other words, it has played an important role in the digitalization of education. In this way, it helped teachers develop different ideas and strategies by improving themselves and enriching their teaching. In short, it accelerated a renewal/change in education in a way that would break new ground. Another benefit in the field of education is that teachers have started to feel more secure and more confident while implementing technology in their classes. Before the COVID-19 outbreak, although professional development training sessions were provided, only a limited number of teachers were eager to use technology in class. However, as mentioned in the literature (Upor, 2021), the majority soon adapted and started sharing new ideas, methods of technology implementation, and useful applications with colleagues.

New tools and platforms were explored, new ideas were investigated, and new methods and practices were tried. Of course, some tools helped teachers improve their online teaching and made learning fun and more beneficial for the students. YouTube was one of the main resources they found useful, as they were able to see real-life online lesson recordings. Additionally, students found this very practical, as there are many more teachers explaining the same item in different ways. Moreover, wikis were preferred, as editing a page made students feel more confident and created the atmosphere that they were together, and they could also contribute. Kahoot, Padlet and Flipgrid were other applications that were popular among teachers and students. Mentimeter was mainly used for warm-up exercises, and new ideas were shared on the use of this tool. Google Forms and Moodle were used for exam purposes, and even SafeBrowser was explored and used for some exams. Google Drive was commonly chosen as the data and material sharing tool by a large number of teachers. WhatsApp was another application that was used by almost all teachers and students, as it was very easy to share documents and pictures and to send messages. As can be seen from the examples above, a wide variety of online tools were explored, and more will definitely be added to this list during the upcoming semester(s).

Despite being inexperienced in online learning compared with most of the other schools around the world, as shown in the study conducted by Mondol and Mohiuddin (2020) in Bangladesh, the School Administration was able to handle the first semesters successfully. The doors to a new world were opened, and the journey there enabled teachers, students and the Administration members to gain new experience and improve themselves in many ways. By entering these doors, the beliefs and prejudices of some teachers changed positively, and reflection, particularly students' self-reflection, and learning autonomously

gained importance. New methods of testing and assessment were explored, and more will be tried. It was proven that the data storage tools in use were safe and ready to be used at different times effectively, even during the pandemic. Therefore, it is possible for this institution to announce that even though difficult times and painful periods were experienced, it has learned a significant amount and improved unexpectedly but enormously.

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CHAPTER 5

FROM CHALLENGES TO OPPORTUNITIES, AN ARTICLE ON ONLINE ENGLISH LANGUAGE PRACTICES DURING THE GLOBAL PANDEMIC

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Abstract

The unexpected nationwide declaration of the Covid-19 as a pandemic has severely affected all walks of human life, the field of education is thus no exception. The unprecedented health crisis has changed the instructional delivery across the educational world from elementary to tertiary level, leading online teaching and learning to be a high priority in almost all countries in the world. English language teaching and learning (ELT-L) received its share from this transition (from face-to-face teaching and learning to online teaching and learning). Many studies were carried out to examine the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on online English language teaching and learning (OELT-L). In this current integrative literature review study, the 88 research papers carried out between January 2020 and August 2021 in various countries on the impact of the pandemic on OELT-L were analyzed to investigate the challenges and opportunities of OELT-L. The results revealed that though the transition to OELT-L, due to technological infrastructure, mainly created challenges both for

students and teachers, it also provided opportunities for both parties. However, regarding the OELT-L practices, the research studies provided conflicting results. Solutions and recommendations were also offered in the current study. The study also recommended conducting future research to determine solutions for the challenges encountered by teachers and students and to implement opportunities to enable to be most effectively incorporated into an OELT-L class in an EFL context.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid spread of the Covid-19 virus to almost all countries across borders and the declaration of this outbreak as a global pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) in March 2020 created an unexpected nationwide lockdown in many countries. A myriad of issues such as high infection/mortality rate, uncertainty, and concerns relating to and caused by the pandemic has required a sudden change in every walk of life in many ways, the field of education being only one of many aspects severely affected (Rahardjo & Pertiwi, 2020). According to the UNESCO (2020a), as a result of this most catastrophic global pandemic, over 60% of the student population from 138 countries were deprived of their education which was also reported by the European Commission's (2020) Digital Action Plan and due to the effect of the closure of schools, 87% of the world's student population suffered to some extent. According to the new report by UNESCO (2021), this quite sudden change in instructional delivery has impacted almost 1.5 billion students in the world and led 800 million students to have experienced severe challenges. Thus, this unprecedented health crisis has shaken up the foundation of the entire education system and in this way, its impact of it has spread the educational world from elementary to tertiary level (Abidah et al., 2020; Mishra et al., 2020; Zubaşcu, 2020). Indeed, due to the increasing number of COVID-19 cases worldwide, numerous countries around the globe have recommended or made it obligatory to close schools nationwide and to implement online teaching and learning (OTL) at all school levels to stop or contain the spread of the virus (Moorhouse, 2020). UNESCO (2020b), having declared that OTL can help prevent its spread by ensuring social and physical distancing, has supported this decision. Consequently, during this crisis time, OTL has become more popular than ever before and thus due to the closures of schools around the world the demand for OTL has dramatically augmented (Orfan et al., 2021).

There is a wide range of concepts (e.g., online teaching, distance education, emergency remote teaching (ERT), emergency online education) in the existing literature on OTL. These concepts are sometimes used interchangeably though they encompass different meanings. Simply, in an emergency situation, the adoption of OTL represents a vital need, yet it has urged teachers, students, policy makers, experts to find new solutions. This leads to a change from the OTL concept to ERT, which encompasses "a temporary shift of instructional delivery to an alternate delivery mode due to crisis circumstances" (Hodges et al., 2020). To differentiate ERT from OTL, Hodges et al. (2020) highlighted that while ERT is an alternative and temporary solution to face-to-face teaching and learning (F2FTL) during times of crisis circumstances, OTL was a planned activity from the very beginning. Thus, ERT differs from OTL though in some respects they may be considered the same. ERT has mostly, during the Covid-19 pandemic, been implemented on the online format, although online instruction or technology may not necessarily be required in the delivery of ERT (Moser et al., 2021). Throughout this study, OTL will be referred to for any online teaching including ERT during the Covid-19 pandemic.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Minister of Education of Turkey and YOK have called for all education units to carry out OTL to ensure the continuity of education from March 2020 due to the increasing number of COVID-19 cases. Hence, at this case, these policies lead to fully F2FTL in a classroom setting, namely traditional way of formal classroom learning to replace into OTL outside the classroom, including English language teaching and learning (ELT-L) in Turkey. The sudden transition of the traditional methods of teaching and learning inside the classroom into OTL beyond the classroom has obviously created confusion, directly affected all stakeholders such as students, teachers, families and administrators, and thus resulted in several consequences. First, due to the unanticipated global pandemic situation, this sudden shift from F2FTL to OTL, with no doubt, has surprised both students and teachers and also any authorities inside and outside schools (Amin & Sundari, 2020; Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020). Second, to improve the efficacy of ELT-L, students and teachers have to adapt to some changes in ERT (Abdulkareem & Eidan, 2020; Lai et al., 2015; Yamagata-lynch, 2020). Third, this rapid, unexpected, and 'forced' shift exhibits a number of opportunities, constraints, and challenges for students and teachers in nature (Ivone et al., 2020; Satar, 2018; König et al., 2020). As such, it is crucial to learn about the use and potential of OTL of English for more quality and informed online English language teaching and learning (OELT-L).

Regarding the issue ELT-L through OTL, several research studies, in the age of Covid-19 pandemic, were carried out focusing on a variety of aspects of OTL involving technological resources, online teaching practices and platforms, teaching of language skills in different level of education, and teacher and student-related issues (e.g., Abdulkareem & Eidan, 2020; Adnan & Anwar, 2020; Allo, 2020; Atmojo & Nugroho,2020; Krishan et al., 2020; Lee, 2021; Maican & Cocoradă, 2021; Nartiningrum & Nugroho, 2020). As such, both for the current situation of ELT-L during OTL and for the outbreak of a crisis in the future requiring an urgent shift to ERT, identifying opportunities and challanges gathered from research studies may provide valuable insights into the nature of ELT-L in crisis circumstances like this. Therefore, to synthesise the research studies on the topic is vital to inform future practices and to enhance the outcomes and quality of OELT-L.

This chapter provides an integrative review of literature on OELT-L during the Covid-19 pandemic by analysing the studies conducted around the world about the issue of OELT-L in the age of Covid-19 pandemic and then highlighting the challenges and opportunities of OELT-L created by the current global pandemic, learned in different countries. Investigating the challenges and opportunities that emerged in the current pandemic in OELT-L and identified by previous research can help us not only adapt more effectively to the new conditions but also prepare us to minimize disruptions of ELT-L in the event of an emergency. This poses a special opportunity for ELT departments to examine the impact of the crisis on ELT-L and to ensure quality OELT-L even in the post-pandemic period. This study may be able to become the basis for further research in providing some possible paths towards effective OELT-L and developing effective online teaching programs in L2 learning. Therefore, this paper aims to address the following research questions:

(1) What are the challenges explored in the research studies on online English language teaching and learning (OELT-L) during the Covid-19 pandemic?
(2) What are the opportunities examined in the research studies on OELT-L during the Covid-19 pandemic?

In order to answer these research questions, the literature on OLTL during the Covid-19 pandemic has been reviewed and analysed.

METHODOLOGY

The Research Procedure

The current study focused on the literature on OELT-L published between January 2020 and August 2021 in various countries. A certain criterion was used to select the documents used in the study. Online databases including Web of Science (SSCI) and Education Resources Information Centre (ERIC), Scopus, ESCI, DOAJ (Directory of Open Access Journals), ERIH Plus, Index Copernicus, ULAKBIM and related others were checked to search for peer-reviewed and data-driven research documents in different indexed journals. In order to search online for research studies to be used for the analysis, a number of keyword combinations were utilized. The research studies whose title included the key word combinations 'coronavirus/Covid-19/pandemic, English language + learning/teaching, ESL, EFL, online/virtual/e-/digital/web-based/distance/ emergency remote learning' in their title were sought. A wide range of concepts that are rather different in nature were sought in the existing literature on OELT-L, but they were considered relevant for aim of the present paper as ELT-L has been carried out through OTL in an emergency remote scenario. In each search, these key word combinations were utilized separately and interchangeably on online databases and online websites on the net. Several studies such as conference proceedings, book chapters, and papers that were not based upon research data were excluded as they did not fit into the scope of the study. Finally, a total of 88 research papers fulfilling the inclusion criteria were selected for analysis.

Content analysis was implemented to the selected research papers that were subject (Ryan & Bernard, 2000) to sort the data into categories in terms of the challenges and opportunities of OELT-L during the Covid-19 pandemic. Without disregarding the particular features of the selected research studies, to find patterns that seemed logical, it was required to gather the results for each category across each study (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Initially, to implement the content analysis, two analysers identified meaning units, namely created their code list, then grouped the selected papers and recontextualized them based on their findings firstly in terms of their focus, then in terms of their challenges and opportunities. While doing so, the recurring themes were grouped for categories and reviewed by more focused re-reading as specified by Bowen (2009). Then, for each category, they checked their created themes and subthemes and tried to reach an agreement on the tabulation of the final themes and subthemes. Subsequently, related to each category (opportunities and challenges), a cross-analysis of the data was implemented.

ANALYSIS OF ONLINE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING: During CORONA VIRUS PANDEMIC

The Challenges of Online English Language Practices

During this long pandemic duration, the unplanned abrupt transition to OTL or ERT of English has affected the teaching of English from several viewpoints, as the findings of several critical studies on the impact of Covid-19 on ELT-L have shown (e.g. Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Astuti & Solikhah, 2021; Davies et al., 2021; Hadianti & Arisandi, 2020; Hafidz, 2020; Huang et al., 2021; Karakuzu et al., 2020; Maican & Cocoradă, 2021; Moser et al., 2021; Mustadi et al., 2021; Ng, 2020; Rinekso & Muslim, 2020; Sendogan, 2020; Setyaningrum et al., 2020; Situmorang et al., 2020; Svalina & Ivić, 2020; Turchi et al., 2020; Wen & Hua, 2020; Wong, 2020). As evidenced by almost all the findings, all parties in education, including the institutions, teachers, students, as well as other stakeholders were caught off-guard, therefore such a sudden and unplanned transition left them in a challenging situation (e.g. Almekhlafy, 2020; Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Hazaea et al., 2021; Huang et al., 2021; Karim & Hasan, 2020; Kawinkoonlasate, 2020; Luporini, 2020; Munian & Ling, 2020; Nartiningrum & Nugroho, 2020; Rahman, 2020; Russell, 2020; Shaaban, 2020; Zboun & Farrah, 2021). This was considered normal and common as all parties in education had little or no time to prepare properly in response to the crisis of this pandemic, thus any challenges that teachers and students have faced during this vibrant circumstance is common and normal (Fitria, 2020). However, it is essential to identify these challenges to provide more effective OTL in the context of ELT-L (Kebritchi et al., 2017). Even for the post-pandemic period, it is crucial to identify the challenges as the preferred mode of ELT-L, has been shifted to OTL. In this regard, the findings have also exhibited that OTL has obtained a permanent status rather than being an option to diminish the effects of the Covid-19 (Andriivna et al., 2020; Scully et al., 2021).

Nearly all of the findings reported that the most direct effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on ELT-L was such a sudden transition itself (e.g. Moser et al., 2021; Novikov, 2020; Turchi et al., 2020). The themes regarding the challenges of OELT-L emerged from the content analysis of the related literature were grouped into three general clusters; technological challenges, pedagogical challenges and social challenges.

Indicated by almost all findings, regarding the technological challenges of OELT-L, the first challenge is technological sufficiency (e.g., Almekhlafy, 2020; Huang et al., 2021; Novikov, 2020; Shahzad et al., 2020). This challenge relates

to a set of challenges that teachers and students experience when accessing sufficient/stable internet connectivity and available online technologies for ELT-L. As we all know, OTL requires a large amount of data shared through a learning management system (LMS) or an effective online platform by relying on a stable internet connectivity. In order to do that, having access to smartphones, laptops, computers or tablets is of necessity. During the pandemic, the lack of stable internet connection (in other terms, the lack of proper infrastructure) or/ and online technological tools/resources thus hinders both the efficiency and effectiveness of OELT-L (e.g., Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Nartiningrum & Nugroho, 2020; Rahman, 2020; Turchi et al., 2020). Unicef (2021) has reported that two-thirds of students initially did not have internet access in their homes or the necessary technological equipment for OTL, which is a worldwide occurrence as evidenced by that report. Agung, Surtikanti and Quinones (2020) revealed how the lack of proper infrastructure, the initial problem of OTL, leads to a circumstance in which all parties have had to get accustomed to and learn new forms of teaching and learning to sustain their education. Hazaea et al. (2021) further explained that the lack of proper technological infrastructure was found as the main challenge in low-tech countries, while technical and pedagogical ones were in high-tech countries. The reason behind the lack of access to internet connectivity might be due to monetary or technical issues (Krishan et al., 2020). From students' perspective, this problem causes them not to follow the online learning as scheduled by the institutions and/or submit their works after deadline either because of the lack of internet access/quota or the lack of technological tools (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020). For such circumstances, educational institutions have to provide adequate computer labs, rearrange their curriculum and design proper online materials for OELT-L as if the problem related to technology access cannot be solved, good pedagogy is insignificant (Burston, 2014; Cakrawati, 2017). It is necessary to take action as such problems may cause students to get discouraged to participate in OTL or even worse to drop out (Demuyakor, 2020). Thus, teachers are required to take the problems of slow internet connection or less internet quota into account while designing their online English courses, thus they need to choose the online platforms or applications running even in slow internet connection and not requiring much internet quota.

Additionally, the transition from regular F2F English classes to OEL-L has raised several challenges on pedagogical issues, one of which is the lack of technological literacy. During the Covid-19 pandemic, teachers and students have utilized OTL platforms and applications, and LMSs that required

technological literacy from both parties. In this respect, one of the challenges of OELT-L is that most of the teachers and students had no earlier experience and preparedness of OTL, namely to carry out the OELT-L, both parties have had insufficient knowledge about technological and digital resources (e.g., Bailey & Lee, 2020; Huang et al., 2021; Nartiningrum & Nugroho, 2020; Sepulveda-Escobar & Morrison, 2020; Shaaban, 2020). Thus, the teachers and students who was not familiar with such resources during the OELT-L was found to face a problem of low digital literacy (e.g., Agormedah et al., 2020; Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Krishan et al., 2020). As evidenced by these findings, they thus have not been fully competent in using digital learning devices and have limited training and experiences to operate the applications and OTL platforms and to perform the mission which requires technological knowledge on the part of the teachers and students (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Krishan et al., 2020). From the teachers' perspectives having low technological literacy and thus having no control over this mode of instruction yields negative consequences such as causing them make no use of varied and engaging OELT-L activities (Bailey & Lee, 2020). However, the teachers who had prior online English teaching experience both have enjoyed the benefit of utilizing more engaging and varied activities for their students and they also have become role models and guides for their colleagues and students. One significant finding underlying this challenge has revealed that teachers' lack of knowledge and experience in OTL leads them to feel that OTL is simply performing the traditional way of teaching in a digital platform, thus making it of little use or no use (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Sepulveda-Escobar & Morrison, 2020; Moser et al., 2021; Novikov, 2020). Specifically, the findings of these studies shed light on the fact that the teachers and students did not use to perform OELT-L and use those platforms/applications before (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Sepulveda-Escobar & Morrison, 2020; Moser et al., 2021; Novikov, 2020). However, one issue that should be addressed is that OELT-L classes need to be adapted to the new normal even when all the parties have sufficient access to the internet and the adequate use of technology (Lynch, 2020). Even further, as the findings indicated (e.g. Bailey & Lee, 2020; Situmorang et al., 2020; Sepulveda-Escobar & Morrison, 2020), many students have complained about their teachers' not adapting the curriculum to fit the new normal of E-learning and designing proper materials for OELT lectures, leading to an interruption between the digital English classes and the curriculum and causing a lack of direct interaction during the courses (Andriivna et al., 2020; Bailey & Lee, 2020; Sepulveda-Escobar & Morrison, 2020; Situmorang et al., 2020; Toquero, 2020). These challenges have to inspire

teachers to keep adapting exploring new forms of teaching and assessment of English, taking courses about digital applications, tools, platforms to help them improve their teaching and support the needs of their students as advocated by Bao (2020) who suggests that an effective online lecture requires to include "an elaborate lesson plan design, teaching materials such as audio and video contents, and technical support teams" (p. 114).

Among the hurdles that need to be overcome by teachers, there are some other challenges such as the problem of a heavy workload, in line with the previous one the problem of reduced teaching time because of more management tasks, thus the lack of time in preparing to handle each student's need and in preparing teachers for adapting OELT practices and also the lack of effective pedagogical training on material development (designing interactive activities), on utilizing effective assessment tools, and encouraging students' engagement (e.g. Adnan and Anwar, 2020; Apriliyanti, 2020; Chiatoh & Chia, 2020; Dahmash, 2020; Farrah & Al-Bakry, 2020; Hakim, 2020; Hashemi & Kew, 2021; Hazaea, Bin-Hady, & Toujan, 2021; Huang et al., 2020; Munian & Ling, 2020; Noori et al., 2020; Pustika, 2020; Rahayu & Wirza, 2020). In order to design and implement online teaching properly, more time and bigger investment are needed than traditional F2F lectures as the sudden shift to OELT-L has created an unexpected workload (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020; MacIntyre et al., 2020; Winthrop, 2020). As teachers are in charge of adapting OELT-L contents, resources and assessment tools from F2F to digital platforms, they are confronted with the pressure of extra workload (Adnan and Anwar, 2020; Noori et al., 2020). This brings about less interaction between teachers and students and leads teachers to provide less control, guidance, and feedback to their students compared to F2FELT-L in class education, thus giving rise to loosen students' commitment and engagement in online learning and feel them like in disconnection and isolation (e.g. Adnan and Anwar, 2020; Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020; Agung, Surtikanti, & Quinones, 2020; Aji, Ardin, & Arifin, 2020; Ariyanti, 2020; Dahmash, 2020; Huang et al., 2020; Noori et al., 2020). As emphasized by Adedoyin and Soykan (2020) during the COVID-19 pandemic EFL learners are often left in circumstances in which they have to struggle to understand and learn the target languages alone as teachers have not had enough time to evaluate and provide feedback to their students' assignments (Malathy, 2019). Furthermore, the lack of responsive feedback and student-teacher engagement may reduce the motivation of students, giving rise to losing students' attention during the pandemic (Fuentes Hernandez, Naren, & Florez, 2020; Kaur & Aziz, 2020). Online English language learning (OELLing) needs teachers' presence though it allows enhancing their language.

This is because student learning involves narrowing the gap between targeted and actual performance and students get more motivated to engage in online English language learning practices when prompt feedback is provided by their teachers (Forrester, 2020). To ensure learners' academic progress specifically in LLing, their engagement and fulfillment are among the vital aspects to digital LLing (Chung, Subramaniam, & Dass, 2020; Pazilah, Hashim, & Yunus, 2019). Even it is also challenging for teachers to receive feedback from passive learners as it is difficult for teachers to capture their students' attention through OELT-L practices (Kaur & Aziz, 2020). To accomplish the anticipated OELT-L outcomes, teachers are required to receive efficient pedagogical training on recognizing apps, designing digital interactive activities/materials, sustaining students' persistent engagement, and assessing their online learning in order to choose and use effective and appropriate OELT-L platforms and applications timely. No doubt, assessment is critical to any OTL practices. However, during the pandemic, ELT-L courses need to be carried out online which in turn makes the assessment more complicated (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020). Thus, it is necessary to utilize new approaches to assessment with the adoption of OELT-L during this crisis time and in the post-pandemic period. Teachers' less control over their students' work during OELT-L causes teachers to have difficulty in ensuring that the assessment tasks are completed by students themselves, thus regulating cheating (Noori et al., 2020). Taking into account that in online learning student-centered learning is the key, in order to ensure their academic development by assessing their OELL practices, appropriate approaches, means, and technologies have to be developed and used in this regard.

Nearly all of the studies carried out, during the COVID-19 outbreak, on the challenges and opportunities of online teaching has reported teacher/student and student/student isolation (e.g., Adnan and Anwar, 2020; Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020; Daniel, 2020; Farrah & Al-Bakry, 2020; Gacs, Goertler, & Spasova, 2020; Gonzelez-Lloret, 2020; Guillén, Sawin, &Avineri, 2020; Huang et al., 2020; Noori et al., 2020;). For this reason, one of the critical challenges in online ELLing is to create a sense of community in the digital platform associated with online ELLing (Ariyanti, 2020; Hadianti & Arisandi, 2020; Ivone, Jacobs, & Renandya, 2020; Lestiyanawati & Widyantoro, 2020). Considering that in ELLing, psychological factors have an impact on students' engagement (Sison & Bautista, 2021), during the OTL process of ELLing, student-student and student-teacher interaction and communication are quite crucial and have significant effects on students' engagement and satisfaction (Hernandez & Flórez, 2020). Also, as evidenced by most of the related studies, in the midst of

the pandemic, students find OELT-L practices to be tedious without support and assistance from peers, family members, institutions, and policymakers (Allam, Hassan, Mohideen, Ramlan, & Kamal, 2020). What's more, such circumstances lead students to lose their motivation as they are constantly faced with only digital tools (Toquero, 2020). In line with this problem, minimum interaction and collaboration lead the learning materials to become harder to grasp. Such online circumstances (without F2F meetings and interaction) also cannot facilitate the emotional bond between students and teachers. Furthermore, through OELT-L practices, teaching moral value to their students is hard for teachers with the lack of socializing with teachers and peers than ELT-L in the F2F environment (Evisen, Akilmaz & Torun, 2020). Therefore, during the implementation of OELT-L, it is significant to promote social collaboration and presence (Sun & Chen, 2016; Guillen, Sawin, & Avineri, 2020). Thus, in order to build effective OELT-L communities, all parties have to work jointly to foster student-teacher and student-student collaboration and communication. From the teachers' perspective, to enhance students' OELLing, teachers are required to scaffold student-teacher and student-student interactions through their OELT practices. This may create a situation in which learners must adapt quickly (Kibler, Sandstead, Wiger, & Weiss, 2021; Pace, Pettit, & Baker, 2020). Another emerging problem that they face during the OELT-L practices in this crisis time is the problem of online teaching and learning of some skills (Hopp & Thoma, 2020; Karataş & Tuncer, 2020; Kusumawati, 2020; Loo, 2020; Popova & Rozhdestvenskaya, 2020)

the heavy workload associated with household chores, giving rise to negative effects on their studies and leading them to feel despondent and depressed (Mishra, Gupta, & Shree, 2020).

The Opportunities of Online English Language Practices

As evidenced by the findings, OELT-L during the Covid-19 pandemic offers a number of opportunities despite the fact that the unprecedented change to OELT-L has brought about many challenges discussed above (Guillen, Sawin, & Avineri, 2020; Zhao, 2020). Even, Covid-19 has been regarded as a silver lining during the crisis in some countries (Heng, 2020) as it has given birth to the digital transformation of education and improved technology integration into the classroom environment. Hence, during the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic, OTL exploded (Favale et al., 2020). Up to date, the research on OELT-L during the pandemic has indicated that OTL of English has recognized some opportunities that F2F ELT-L may not be able to provide. Accordingly, now it is necessary for

academic institutions to grasp these opportunities by letting their teachers teach and students learn via OELT-L practices. It is also necessary to better understand how current OELT-L are effective to improve OTL practices worldwide. As evidenced by the studies conducted on the impact of Covid-19 on OELT-L practices, the opportunities of OELT-L can be grouped under five themes; scope for digital transformation and innovation, interactivity, individualized learning and teaching (self-pacing), the increased level of knowledge and experience, and flexibility (e.g. Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020; Aji et al., 2020; Allo, 2020; Andriivna et al., 2020; Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Bailey & Lee, 2020; Dahmash, 2020; Dhawan, 2020; Farrah & Al-Bakry, 2020; Fatima, 2020; Gacs et al., 2020; Ghao & Zhang, 2020; González-Lloret, 2020; Jung, 2020; Lee & Kim, 2020; Lie et al., 2020; Hadianti & Arisandi, 2020; Harthson & Mcmurry, 2020; Huang & Yang, 2021; Marstaller, 2020; Moser et al., 2021; Mustadi et al., 2021; Rifiyanti; 2020; Sepulveda-Escobar & Morrision, 2020; Shaaban, 2020; Situmorang et al., 2020; Tan et al., 2020; Turchi et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2020).

An alternative online English communicative means to traditional F2F ELT-L emerged as a result of the unexpected transition in the age of Covid-19 pandemic, having enabled students to have the opportunity to learn English through digital tools. Though educational technologies and online platforms were first considered as an alternative to F2F ELT-L, they were more than just an alternative as they have been used for many purposes; teaching materials, individualized teaching, modular instruction, communicative teaching, and testing and assessment (Andriivna et al., 2020). Additionally, for students and teachers, OELT-L platforms and LMS have proved to be helpful (Fitria, 2020). These have enabled students to feel confident as students could sustain their exposure to English through being a part of this digital community, which could be thought as unique to this crisis (Hadianti & Arisandi, 2020; Kawinkoonlasate, 2020; Shahzad et al., 2020). In response to the crisis, the transition has also provided the opportunity of training teachers on designing a richness of effective OELT-L materials and enhancing OELT-L platforms (Dhawan, 2020). More specifically, such an experience has enabled teachers to get to know a variety of high-quality OELT-L tools, materials and platforms and also to enhance their technological literacy (Novikov, 2020). In line with this, one another opportunity that was evidenced by the OELT-L studies is the increased level of digital literacy of teachers and students, which have contributed them to be equipped with new ELT-L technologies and platforms by being forced to learn them in the Covid-19 pandemic (Chiatoh & Chia, 2020; Sepulveda-Escobar & Morrison, 2020). As digital literacy is regarded as a 21st century skill, this pandemic has created

an excellent opportunity for both parties to learn and interact with EdTech tools, apps, and platforms that they did not have a chance to encounter prior to the pandemic (Andriivna et al., 2020; Byun, Sooyeon, & Slavin, 2020). Today's students' interaction with various EdTech for different purposes led them to obtain actively from OELLing as they are native speakers of the technological language (Prensky, 2001).

Teachers in this process have tried to adopt various OTL practices and methods in line with the aims of the lesson and the needs of their students. As in this transition period, teachers have facilitated various OTL tools, apps, materials and platforms for teaching, the researchers, having studied the impact of the pandemic on ELT-L, have concentrated on the necessity on educational technologies and OTL platforms (Almekhlafy, 2020; Hakim, 2020; Kamhi-Stein et al., 2020). The findings demonstrate that teachers commonly made use of Facebook, WhatsApp, Moodle, Google Meet, Zoom, Blackboard and other digital platforms to take place of the brick-and-mortar classrooms to offer course subjects and to provide intra-communication, thus creating an online classroom environment during the pandemic (Almekhlafy, 2020; Destianingsih & Satria, 2020; Fitria, 2020; Hakim, 2020; Hamid, 2020; Nartiningrum & Nugroho, 2020; Ritonga et al., 2020; Shaaban, 2020; Hadianti & Arisandi, 2020; Kholis, 2020). Thus, by making use of these tools, apps, materials, and platforms, an effective learning environment could be created as there are no external disturbances confronted in the traditional classroom environment. During this critical moment, additional opportunity that can be effectively considered in OTL is teachers can collaborate and share knowledge with their colleagues, which in turn have positive impact on their OTL practices (Alghasab, 2020). OTL of English provides students, teachers and institutions additional opportunities to engage, asynchronously or synchronously, in collaborative activities (Gonzalez-Lloret, 2020; Khafaga, 2021; Kibler et al., 2021). During the Covid-19 pandemic, the opportunity of intra-collaboration between these parties has offered a clearer insight in fighting this crisis and also provided effective OELT-L environments (Stone et al., 2020).

Apart from these opportunities, OELT-L practices have provided opportunities for different learners with different skillsets and needs including disabled students who need special care. As the findings suggested, when courses are designed in an inclusive way to promote individualized learning, students with disabilities and with special needs benefit from such an online program (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020). Using OELT-L practices can change the ELT-L environment into one more conducive to more individualized learning

environment, thus promoting student engagement and motivation (Alghasab, 2020). This is due to the fact that teachers can benefit from designing new materials and thus providing more flexible OELT-L platforms in compatible with the needs of their students, can be effectively considered as another opportunity in OELT-L (Dhawan, 2020). Thus, it can be characterized by the ability to promote individualized learning.

One another silver lining is the increase of the knowledge and experience of students and teachers with the new ways required by this crisis to enrich ELT-L, from a global perspective, to provide collaborations and creativity in OELT-L practices (Yi & Jang, 2020). For teachers and students, having always been complacent and thus never tried new modes of ELT-L, have had an opportunity to try and make use of OELT-L technologies. This critical situation generates a fruitful number of educational technological (EdTech) innovations and developments (Andriivna et al., 2020). The development and usage of innovative pedagogical OELT-L approaches have numerous opportunities to give rise to radical transformations in almost all facets of education; learning, teaching, assessment, evaluation, results, grades, and so on. Both teachers and students' knowledge and experience, gained through practicing OELT-L in this crisis time, may enhance their adaptability, problem-solving and critical thinking skills, requiring empirical evidence for the impact of the use of OELT-L on 21st century skills of both parties. On the other hand, all of such knowledge and experience obtained through OELT-L practices bring together to enable them to build a foundation of strong technological and pedagogical content knowledge (Fuad et al., 2020). By the way, they have opportunities to gain more knowledge on a variety of subjects, namely whatever and whenever they want and need. Therefore, OELT-L is a safe, cheap and suitable way to acquire more skills and knowledge. Additionally, the practice of OELT-L enables students to have the opportunity to improve their skills covering the ability to distinguish reliable and useful sources/apps/platforms/tools between unreliable and inessential ones, designing online presentations, and the ability to find the information they need, which will be beneficial in their future life beyond education. As noted by plenty of studies conducted before this crisis, the use of OELT-L is beneficial to the branch of ELT-L especially in terms of improving students' autonomy and independence, leading to a more student-centered learning (e.g., Costley, 2014; Xiao, Liang, Li, & Jia, 2017). From students' perspective, the use of OELT-L is of benefit in terms of enhancing independence, autonomy and student-centered learning generated during unexpected OTL courses than prior more traditional, courses (Lee & Kim, 2020; Toquero, 2020). This is due to the increased level

of responsibility they have to take on their own, enabling them to manage their own learning. Such circumstances improve students' "autonomous learning skills to direct their own learning, as they engage in L2 learning activity on their own outside of the teacher's sight" (Reinhardt, 2020, p. 235).

Different from F2F ELT-L, OELT-L provided an opportunity to deliver education and access resources and course content in a flexible way as OTL is characterized by flexibility (Gacs, Goertler, & Spasova, 2020). Teachers and students can reach a wide range of information, learn in their own rhythm, are motivated to interact with colleagues and peers due to this flexible aspect of OELT-L which diminishes barriers of time and space (Fatima, 2020). The accessibility of OELT-L practices globally also saves time, effort and money and also provides the comfort of learning from anywhere they want, by enabling the access to courses convenient (Sepulveda-Escobar & Morrison, 2020). If students have a digital tool with an internet connection, OTL helps them participate in their courses from anywhere at relatively convenient timings, which is considered as a main advantage of OTL. Teachers and students did not have to go to institutions even for a single class, causing them to save their time and energy. This may allow teachers to concentrate more on their students as the use of such materials can cut much of the heavy workload out of OELT. Moreover, that OELT-L makes course content accessible to a broader spectrum of teachers and students is one of the main opportunities of OTL (Fatima, 2020; Toquero, 2020).

Therefore, considering all the aforementioned opportunities of online ELT-L practices, we think that these opportunities have been considered as essential and thus vital factors that affect the implementation of online ELT-L practices in the future and they enable us to frame our current situation as an opportunity for thinking about further online ELT-L practices with the intention of continued advocacy for technology in ELT-L practices.

Solutions and Recommendations

In this section, based on the review of the literature on the opportunities and challenges of online ELT-L practices, this section provided several solutions, instructional strategies and recommendations in order to minimize the challenges in online ELT-L that both teachers and students may face in this crisis time and even in the post-pandemic period.

The findings revealed that the crisis time did not enable teachers to implement the planned teaching of English through online practices as OELT-L during the pandemic was somewhat unplanned and was carried out

by English teachers across the globe as an extension of F2F ELT-L not as a different mode of teaching, thus yielding several challenges discussed above. Hence, OELT-L has caused some technological challenges associated with the lack of necessary infrastructure (internet connectivity, tablets, smart phones or computers/laptops) (Andriivna et al., 2020). In delivering effective OELT-L, access to necessary infrastructure was the most reported challenge faced by teachers and students in this process. Thus, it can be concluded that even in the post-pandemic period, the inequalities between students regarding access to technological infrastructure will, unfortunately, continue to cause difficulties for the delivery of efficient and effective online ELT-L practices. In order to enable teachers and students to access to necessary infrastructure, experts, policy makers, enterprises, institutions, educators, students and families should need to collaborate to develop affordable and accessible OLEs, LMSs, EdTech resources and tools to sustain the education, its sociality, and inclusiveness and also to access to a wider range of people (see Leng et al., 2020). Regarding this problem, one solution should also be to utilize various modalities (radio, TV, telecourses etc.) in order to access to students in remote areas, which was also suggested by Eder (2020). Apart from this, all the involved actors in education should prepare clear and consistent plan B and even plan C regarding the emergency circumstances.

Among these globally-reported challenges, pedagogical challenges were of the outmost importance. As above-mentioned, one of the biggest challenges associated with pedagogical challenges was the low digital literacy, as not all teachers and students had experience or training on OELT-L prior to the pandemic (Moser et al., 2021). For this reason, as reflected in the studies, the intended outcomes were not achieved in online ELT-L due to this pedagogical challenge and also the ones including the lack of preparation, planning, and insufficient TPACK of teachers (e.g. Hakim, 2020; Hazaea, Bin-Hady, Toujan, 2021; Karim & Hasan, 2020). Several findings reported that the online ELT-L was regarded as an obstacle for language development by many teachers and students (Bailey & Lee, 2020; Carrillo & Flores, 2020; Hartshorn & Mcmurry, 2020; Gao & Zhang, 2020; Moser et al., 2021; Patricia Aguilera-Hermida, 2020). In fact, there were also conflicting results for this issue in the studies analyzed in the current study that the online ELT-L was seen as an opportunity to enhance the knowledge and experience in OTL of English (Chiatoh & Chia, 2020; Hadianti & Arisandi, 2020). Therefore, the policy makers and teacher training programs, for quality of online ELT-L in educational institutions, should equip and support teachers with the necessary TPACK both on traditional F2F and online modes of ELT

through proper orientation and training to make sure that they can implement well-equipped OLEs, LMSs, digital tools and thus to provide quality online English language instruction (see Dhawan, 2020; Fuad et al., 2020). Apart from this, teachers also should not use the tools or platforms that they do not know well, but rather they should design their online courses with the ones they are comfortable with. This is because if properly implemented, they can aid the motivation of EFL learners, promote increased engagement with the course content and OELL materials and also enable them to take more control over their own learning. In order to ensure that, the teacher should be vigilant to reach learners with various needs and learning styles. English language teaching programs and training should create strategies for online assessment, virtual lesson plans, grading software to decrease the heavy workload of teachers. The lack of digital literacy or low digital literacy was also true for students in dealing with technological issues. Thus, training programs should also be offered to get students familiarized with OELL to improve their technological literacy.

As with the social challenges, the policy makers and teacher training programs should create strategies for communication and interaction to enable teachers and students to build a community group to maintain constant contact with the content, the course materials, the peers and the educators. The successful implementation of online ELT-L should enable learners to improve their interactions with their teachers and peers by fostering collaboration.

Overall, modern English teaching and learning should involve modern technology not only in crisis circumstances but also on each and every occasion. The use of OELT-L by means of various types of technology in an EFL context will probably allow all the parties to develop the skills needed for present day life such as collaborating with others, solving complex problems, critical thinking, and communication and leadership skills. Thus, to achieve such desirable outcomes in the realm of technology, all educational facilities should make an effort.

Conclusion and FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

Though this crisis time has been painful and stressful for all stakeholders (learners, teachers, policy makers, and society at large), it has enabled them to obtain a better understanding of the vulnerabilities and benefits of present education system not only in developing but also developed countries. The pandemic has also underlined the vital need that people must be digitally literate to operate and sustain in a world where technology integrated interactions and social distancing may be a standard in an indispensable way later on. The

transition to OTL and the need to prepare all stakeholders in its use has become a high priority in nearly all countries over the world. With this shift, ELT-L has been provided either fully online or in blended form. Though OELT-L is not new to language education, the pandemic secured the place of OELT-L in crisis circumstances. It seems fair to assume that even in the post-pandemic period OELT-L will dominate teaching and learning practices throughout the world. Thus, experience obtained in this time and reflected in the studies so far have provided valuable insights for further OTL practices of English, potentially paving the way for greater adoption of OELT-L practices. For this reason, the in-hand study attempted to identify challenges and opportunities reflected in the studies on OELT-L in the age of the pandemic and also to offer some alternative recommendations and solutions.

The rapid and unplanned transition to OTL has brought not only challenges due to little preparation, insufficient bandwidth, training but also opportunities. In the current study, as discussed above, the challenges that teachers and learners encountered in OELT-L were grouped in three main themes associated with technological challenges, pedagogical challenges and social challenges. The primary technological challenges were the lack of proper technological infrastructure and technological equipment for OTL. Additionally, teachers and students faced some pedagogical challenges during ELT-L, as the lack of technological literacy, not adapting the course to fit the new normal (incompatibility with some course contents and cultures), not designing and using proper materials, assessment tasks for OTL lectures, extra workload for education staff and teachers and the lack of responsive feedback due to the lack of effective pedagogical training. There are also other ones linked to social challenges including teacher/student and student/student isolation, minimum interaction and collaboration on the part of the teachers, students, and families. Regarding the opportunities of digital ELT-L, the study found five themes reflected in the related literature; scope for digital transformation and innovation, interactivity, individualized learning and teaching (self-pacing), the increased level of knowledge and experience, and flexibility. Meanwhile, various suggestions, recommendations, and insights are also provided by the researchers to address the challenges. Some of the above-mentioned solutions centre around three key factors associated with the three main challenges (technological, pedagogical and social). The key solutions are to do with technological infrastructure, preparation, quality online ELT-L, course delivery, interaction, communication, engagement, and government support and investment.

Overall, the current study, concerning the challenges and opportunities of online ELT-L practices in this crisis time, provides global insights into the general picture of ELT-L by reviewing the literature on OTL in the context of EFL, thus the findings may guide all stakeholders regarding the use of OELT-L practices. In order to ensure quality instruction for digital OELT-L, more government investment and support are required. Educational institutions need to invest in enhancing OELT-L platforms, and providing digital resources and internet connectivity to students and education staff. Challenges associated with pedagogical issues required for effective digital ELT-L are the most important ones, for this reason, more attention needs to be directed towards minimizing the pedagogical underlying factors. On a regular basis, training and orientation programs should be provided to students and teachers about OELT-L platforms, tools, strategies in order to enable them to enhance their knowledge of OELT-L, envisioning new possibilities for the future of ELT-L. As the technology integration in EFL content is inevitable, the specific courses need to be included in the future teacher training and education programs such as information and communication technology, the integration of technology in LL, and technology improved LL. It is recommended to further researchers to conduct studies to understand the digital English teaching practices of teachers to overcome the challenges encountered in their classes during the pandemic and to what extent they work.

The current study has some limitations. This integrative literature review study is limited to the research papers as the documents utilized as the data. Besides, it is limited to the studies conducted from the beginning of this crisis time to August 2021. The study would have been better if it had used a meta-analysis method.

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CHAPTER 6

SIGNIFICANCE OF SELF-REGULATION IN ONLINE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

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Abstract

Self-regulated learning (SRL) attracted much attention as an effective approach to English as a Foreign Language (EFL) field is a broad term comprising both cognitive and affective components and concerning with the notion of the learner-centred way of teaching. Self-regulated learners taking the initiative for their learning and engaging actively have been expected to exhibit better results in online education, which has become popular with the sudden shift of the education system due to the outbreak of Covid-19 Pandemic. Thus, being self-regulated language learners controlling the entire process in the flexible and the autonomous nature of the online learning has emerged as a crucial point. Although the literature presents studies that provide insights into SRL in traditional face-to-face classroom settings, there are limited studies concerning the effects of SRL on students' language learning process in online settings. To this end, the present study intends to address this gap and reveal the significance of being self-regulating language learners to deal with the challenges of online learning. Additionally, the current paper suggests instructors to develop their

digital-literacy skills to address the needs of self- regulated online language learners.

Keywords: EFL, self-regulated learning, online learning, learner autonomy, self-regulated online language learning

Introduction

Among various teaching theories developed over the years, self-regulated learning has emerged as a broad term comprising both cognitive and affective components and concerning with the notion of the learner-centered way of teaching which gives authority to learners during the whole process of learning (Paris & Paris, 2001). The concept of self-regulated learning (SRL) originated in educational psychology during the mid-1980s to describe the process by which learners turn into masters of their own learning (Zimmerman, 1990). Zimmerman (2002) has argued that SRL is a teachable skill that can be transferred to new learning environments. Therefore, educationalists suggest various methods to promote learners' engagement in the learning process (Brown, 1981; Paris & Winograd, 2003; Paris & Paris, 2001; Winne & Perry, 2000). Besides, considerable attention focused on the results of research that have been conducted about the factors affecting self-regulated learning such as age, gender, motivation, the ability of the learner, external regulation, external constraints and teacher factors (Paris & Byrnes, 1989; Pintrich & Zusho, 2002; Schunk, 1982; Bidjerano, 2005).

With the rapid changes in technology, the educational paradigm has shifted in a form, requiring the area of second language study and teaching to become more technology-oriented (Harasim, 2000). Besides, the appearance of the Covid 19 pandemic accelerated the implementation of online learning which becomes an inevitable part of education. In the online language learning process, students are considered active producers, both seeking information and sharing it with others with the help of software tools (Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2012). Online language learning environments that can be applied anytime, anywhere with multimedia-enhanced activities offer students a collaborative learning opportunity (Harasim, 2000). These online environments assist learners to preserve their interest and expand their knowledge of the target language and culture (Blake, 2011). Moreover, the flexible nature of online environments encourages students to feel comfortable while being digitally involved in the learning process to collaborate with members of the target language.

Research have revealed that self-regulated learners exhibit better adaptation to online education which in turn enhances effective learning (Huh & Reigeluth 2018; Usta, 2011; Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2005; McLoughlin & Lee, 2010, Barnard et all., 2010). The flexible and autonomous nature of the online learning environments supports the learning style and strategies of self-regulated learners (Broadbent and Poon, 2015). Self-regulated learners have more control over their learning processes in deciding when and where they will study or the method to be used during training. Moreover, in the online learning process, the absence of instructors or limited teacher assistance requires students to take responsibility for their learning (Kizilcec et all., 2017). Self-regulated learners have the ability to regulating their time and effort in order to prevent scheduling problems. In addition, self-regulated students can enhance their motivation with the help of the goals and rewards they have set, and they can search and solve the technology-related problems that they encounter in the online learning process. In this manner, self-regulated learners can easily deal with online education dropout issues that stem from programming conflicts, lack of motivation and low digital literacy, and this affects the efficient implementation of online learning (Huh & Reigeluth 2018). Consequently, successful adaptation to online learning contexts improves the academic performances of self-regulated learners. Enhancing effective English learning in online environments, the new trend of education is a highly significant issue that curriculum designers and teachers work on (Chen et all., 2014; Wang & Zhan, 2020). In online environments, self-regulation is a critical skill that helps language learners sustain their efforts and manage the challenging process successfully (Wang & Zhan, 2020).

Although SRL has been studied in traditional face-to-face classroom settings, there is not sufficient research about the effect SRL on language learners' performance in online environments. Therefore, this study aims to reveal the significance of being a self-regulated language learner in an online environment and examine the effect of self-regulation on the success of language learners in online contexts.

A General Scope Of Learning

Brown (2000:7) defines learning as "acquiring or getting of knowledge of a subject or a skill by study, experience and instruction". Briefly, Slavin claims that learning, from an educational psychologist's view, is "a change in an individual caused by experience" (as cited in Brown, 2000:7). Correspondingly, teaching is guiding and supporting someone to get knowledge about the procedure of achieving the specific goals, by explaining the detailed knowledge to make the objective clearer. (Brown, 2020).

Through the years, various theories of teaching have been developed to meet the learners' demands that change as a result of technological, social, and economic improvements. Learning theories that have been applied since the beginning of the twentieth century are presented within key components in Table 1 (Brown, 2020:15).

Table 1. Schools of Thought in Second Language Acquisition

Time Frame	School of Thoughts	Typical Themes
Early 1900s and 1940s and 1950s	Structural Linguistics and Behavioral Psychology	Description Observable performance Scientific method Empiricism Surface structure Conditioning Reinforcement
1960s, 1970s and 1980s	Generative Linguistics and Cognitive Psychology	Generative linguistics Acquisation innateness Interlanguage Systematicity Universal grammar Competence Deep structure
1980s, 1990s, and 2000s	Constructivism	Interactive discourse Sociocultural variables Cooperative learning Discovery learning Construction of meaning Interlanguage variability

Constructivism which has emerged as a dominant theory through the end of the twentieth century is a holistic approach compounding *linguistic, psychological, and sociological* paradigm (Brown, 2000). Among the branches of constructivism, Piaget's cognitive constructivism demands learners to construct knowledge upon their existing knowledge; on the other hand, Vygotsky's social constructivism underlines the importance of interaction and collaboration. Both cognitive constructivism and social constructivism require inquiry teaching through which learners generate ideas based on prior experience in a meaningful and authentic context (Powell & Kalina, 2009).

The approaches putting learners in the center of the learning process and giving control of the process to them have proved to be more successful when compared to methods which have been developed concerning schools of thought (Lee, 1998). When the research related to education and the outcomes of learners have been examined, it is obvious that the main focus of education should be

learners' own experiences, skills, abilities, background knowledge, and desires. Therefore, the notion of learner-centered education which entails learners be motivated to create their own learning strategies in taking responsibility of the process has been emphasized as a crucial issue (Harmer, 2001).

The affective factor that has been proved to have a positive influence on learning is described by Gass & Selinker (2008) as a feeling differentiated from cognition, notion, or behavior. Learners are expected to be active participants in their learning process by being engaged cognitively and affectively with the social support from peers and teachers whose role is to facilitate and guide instead of being the authority in the learning environment. Not only learners' cognitive but also affective aspects such as anxiety level, motivation, attitudes, self-efficacy have to be considered during the learning process through which learners are required to construct their own knowledge (Chastain, 1975).

According to Harmer, when learners intend to use the language outside the classroom teacher could not become available to assist and giving everything in a classroom setting is not possible (as cited in Cotteral, 2001). This issue gives rise to the use of self-regulated learning in which dependence on the instructor is limited and learners are expected to take charge of their own learning in each phase of the process (Zimmerman, 2002).

Moreover, self-regulated learning reflects the characteristics of constructivist theory by the virtue of emphasizing the way learners construct their academic competence, endeavor, and strategies (Paris & Byrnes, 1989). The researchers draw attention to the active role of learners in the constructivist view using the metaphor of "children as scientists" (Paris & Byrnes, 1989: 173).

Considering all these aspects, self-regulated learning has emerged as a broad term comprising both cognitive and affective components and concerning the notion of the learner-centered way of teaching which gives authority to learners during the whole process of learning (Paris & Paris, 2001). Self-regulated learning studied by many researchers gained popularity in the field of education because of its positive effect on learners' academic performance.

Self-Regulated Learning

The concept of self-regulated learning (SRL) emerged in educational psychology during the mid-1980s to describe the process by which learners turned into masters of their own learning (Zimmerman, 2001). SRL focuses on the importance of cognitive competence of learners and encourages learners to become cognitively active during the learning process with the guide of the teacher when needed. Zimmerman (2000) describes SRL as the aspect to which students are motivated by using metacognitive strategies and becoming behaviourally active in their

learning process to complete their goals successfully. Zimmerman highlights the importance of taking responsibility for the process by stating "the ultimate goal of the education system is a shift to the individual the burden of pursuing his own education" (as cited in Gardner, 1990:4). According to Zimmerman (1990), self-regulated learners showing personal initiation in learning view learning as a manageable process through which they set specific goals, monitor and evaluate the process. Following the goal setting phase, learners evaluate the feedbacks on the effectiveness of the process and make arrangements if necessary throughout the monitoring phase (Zimmerman, 1990).

Pintrich (1999) defines SRL as a process whereby learners may utilize numerous cognitive and metacognitive strategies to examine and arrange their learning. A self-regulated process is an intentional process in which learners are aware of both their performance & competence and also weakness required to be regulated to overcome deficiencies encountered during the process (Pintrich, 1995).

Pintrich (2000) analyses the SRL under four phases: "forethought, planning, activation; monitoring; control; reaction, reflection" and he focuses on areas for regulation (p.454).

Table 2. Phases and Areas for Self-Regulated Learning

	Areas for regulation			
Phases	Cognition	Motivation/Affect	Behavior	Context
Forethought, planning, and activation	Target goal setting Prior content knowledge activation Metacognitive knowledge activation	Goal orientation adoption Efficacy judgments Perception of task difficulty Task value activation Interest activation	Time and effort planning Planning for self-observation of behavior	Perceptions of task Perceptions of context
Monitoring	Metacognitive awareness and monitoring of cognition	Awareness and monitoring of motivation and affect	Awareness and monitoring of effort, time use, need for help Self-observation of behavior	Monitoring changing task and context conditions
Control	Selection and adaptation of cognitive strategies for learning and thinking	Selection and adaptation of strategies for managing motivation and affect	Increase or decrease effort Persist, give up Help-seeking behavior	Change or renegotiate task Change or leave context
Reaction and reflection	Cognitive judgments	Affective reactions	Choice behavior	Evaluation of task Evaluation of context

Learners are anticipated to set goals and plan their learning in Phase 1 to be *cognitively, metacognitively, and behaviorally* ready for the process. In Phase

2, learners need to monitor the process actively in accordance with their goals. Phase 3 concerns efforts to control and regulate different aspects of processes such as *self, task, and context*. Lastly, Phase 4 represents various kinds of *reactions and reflections* toward components of SRL.

Along with phases of self-regulated learning, Pintrich (2000) also concerns with the regulation of the areas. Self-regulation of behavior entails learners controlling their time, environment, and people helping them in necessity such as peers or instructors. In the self-regulation of motivation and affect phase, learners are required to control their feelings toward the course such as *anxiety, self-efficacy, and goal orientation*. Self-regulation of cognition refers to control cognitive strategies for learning.

McCombs & Marzano (1990), highlight the importance of fusing *will and skill* which is a significant component of SRL. Learners' desire to engage in the process should be enhanced initially, then the skill part takes place to contribute to self-regulated learning. When learners' interests and needs are addressed, they could engage the process successfully, and to achieve this success tasks need to meet the intrinsic interests of learners, give them a sense of possession, relate them to real life, and offer cooperation (Paris & Paris, 2001).

Roeser (2009) emphasizes the concept of "*I-self*" which refers to SRL by the virtue of involving structures of *self-system* whereby learners are expected to take control of their actions from planning, monitoring to evaluating.

Zimmerman's model is more preferable as including metacognition and affective factors in all stages of SRL. Furthermore, Zimmerman's model highlights the importance of the implementation of SRL strategies in traditional classrooms. An overview of Zimmerman's model is presented within sub-phases in Figure 1 (2002:67).

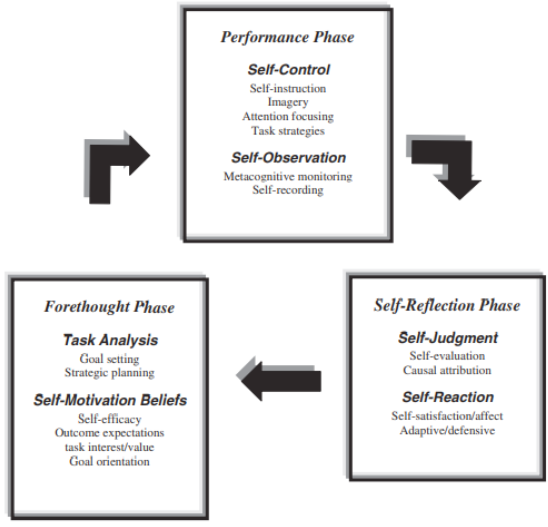

Figure 1. Phases and Subprocesses of Self-Regulation

Zimmerman's SRL model presents cyclical phases under three sections: *forethought phase* concerns with the processes before engaging the learning, *performance phase* concerns with the processes in the course of behavioral application and *self-reflection phase* concerns with processes at the end of learning event (Zimmerman, 2002).

The forethought phase, which aims to engage learners in the learning process, involves sub-phases of *task analysis* and *self-motivation*. In the task analysis phase, learners are expected to set specific goals and plan their learning initially, on the other hand, they need to be ready to learning motivationally with the help of components of self-motivation such as *self-efficacy, outcome expectations, intrinsic interests and learning goal orientation*. Learners prepare themselves not only cognitively but also motivationally because without being engaged motivationally, successful learning could not be achieved (Paris & Paris, 2001). Previous studies on SRL have reported that self-regulated learners who have belief in themselves to achieve their goals which they set following their own intrinsic interest without fear of grade or any kind of extrinsic interest are more successful academically.

The performance phase involves two main sub-phases: *self-control* and *self-observation*. The self-control phase entails learners implementing the strategies selected in the forethought phase. During this phase, learners may benefit from imagery, attention focusing, and self-instruction about the way to follow during the learning event. Self-observation necessitates learners to evaluate their performance to decide how well they succeed in a task which eventually improves self-monitoring.

The self-reflection phase occurs at the end of the process. In the *self-judgment sub-phase* learners are required to evaluate all their learning processes and make a comparison between prior knowledge and existing knowledge, after that they decide their strengths and weaknesses. The *self-reaction* phase concerns self-satisfaction and defensive-adaptive reactions. When the learning event has been completed, learners feel pleasure in their performance which eventually enhances motivation. To obtain better results, learners make necessary arrangements which are *defensive reaction*, avoiding situations in case of a problem and *adaptive reaction*, regulating the learning situations to increase effectiveness.

SRL is viewed as a cyclical model by the virtue of motivation factors affecting all sub-phases through the process. The self-reflection phase of previous learning process affects the following forethought phase of another learning process.

Key Sub-Processes of Becoming Self-Regulated Learner

Zimmerman (2002), one of the prominent educationalists of SRL, has argued that SRL is a teachable skill that can be transferred to new learning environments. During the self-regulated process, whose effect on academic performance has been proved by considerable research, learners need to be induced and prepared to learn on their own. Educationalists suggest various methods to promote learners' engagement in the learning process.

According to Brown "learning to learn" activities should be introduced to enhance learners' performance (1981:14). Brown identifies three types of instruction (1981:15) which are:

- *Blind training study*
- *Informed training*
- *Self-control training*

In the first type of instruction, blind training, learners are encouraged to use a strategy without ensuring them any knowledge about this strategy. Through the learning process, learners are not explicitly informed about the reasons for using a specific strategy or when to utilize this strategy. Blind training can improve learners' use of a specific activity; however, generalizing this activity is a questionable issue. The second type of instruction, informed training, concerns both the application of the specific strategy and having some information about the importance of this strategy. Learners are educated in various contexts to understand the strategy; hence, they can recognize how useful the strategy is. When learners experience the same kind of activity, they have the ability to adapt what they know to the new situation. The third type of instruction, so-called self-control training, units the instruction of using a strategy with explicit instruction way of the applying, monitoring, checking, and evaluating that strategy. It has been demonstrated that self-control training is the most successful type of instruction in transferring a strategy to an appropriate setting.

In order to meet the necessities of work and life, teachers should raise students in such a way that they can take responsibility for their learning process which is the key point of SRL. To accomplish this goal, Paris & Winograd (2003) view the methods of teachers' modelling and fostering SRL for their students. According to Paris & Paris learners' comprehension of SRL is developed in three ways (2001:98):

- *Indirectly through experience*
- *Directly through interaction*
- *Elicited through practice*

Concerning the first method, which is an indirect way of supporting SRL, learners are supposed to enhance SRL skills by acquiring them from *authentic* and *repeated experiences*. Observing others such as teachers, peers, or family members assist learners to improve their knowledge and skills of SRL. In the second method, the direct way of supporting SRL, teachers provide the instruction explicitly to prevent distractions. Teacher explains the meaning and the importance of SRL to raise awareness of learners. During the process, teacher clarifies the target skill by demonstrating activities with examples besides non-examples, also teacher offers a chance of practice to learners with feedbacks. In the third method, learners' SRL skills can be fostered by engaging learners in practice through which SRL is merged into the nature of the task. When engaging in group work, learners are required to contribute various sides of SRL such as monitoring the process, changing strategies or applying requisite strategy, utilizing time and resource management in a collaborative learning environment.

Cleary & Zimmerman have also mentioned developing the self-regulated learner through Self-Regulation Empowerment Program (SREP), and they analyzed this program under three steps which are given in Table 3 (2004:543).

Table 3. Goals and Intervention Procedures
Used in Self-Regulated Learner Development Component

Intervention Steps	**Goal of Intervention Steps**	**Interventions**
Empower-ment	To enhance student perceptions of control over academic performance and learning processes	Self-monitoring forms Graphing procedures
Study/Learn-ing Strategies	To teach the student various study/ learning strategies and self-regulation strategies	Cognitive modelling Cognitive coaching Guided practice
Cyclical Feed-back Loop	To teach the student how to use fore-thought, performance control, and self-reflection phase processes in a cyclical manner	Self-regulation graph Cognitive modelling Cognitive coaching

In the first step of SREP, aiming to empower learners to become more self-regulated by transferring weaknesses of them to strengths, learners get control of their learning process. Cleary and Zimmerman (2004) suggest the use of the *self-recording* technique which facilitates the evaluation of performance and outcome. Thanks to self-recording techniques, learners can detach their mistakes and adjust the requisite strategy accordingly. Along with self-

recording, the *graphing* method is also proposed to enhance learners' control over their learning. Graphing technique includes *plotting* school grades and taking notes of the strategies which are used to get these grades. Learners note the outcomes and processes of the strategy on the graph, after that, they evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy used during the learning process. Eventually, both self-recording and graphing methods help learners to recognize the relationship between *strategy use* and *school performance.* The second step intends to teach learners learning strategies by using the *social-cognitive model of strategy instruction. "*Cognitive modelling (thinking aloud during execution of strategy), cognitive coaching (hints and feedbacks provided to the students as they execute a strategy), and guided practice sessions" are essential sessions of social-cognitive strategy which necessitates learners initially to learn the usage of strategies from the social environment before being independent user (Cleary & Zimmerman, 2004:544). The third step of SREP entails learners applying what they have learned in a cyclical manner. The cyclical *feedback loop* step intends to teach the learner the ways of using *forethought, performance control and self-reflection phases* in a recurrent way with the help of specific techniques such as graphing which is an effective method for teaching the feedback loop.

Pintrich indicates five suggestions to enhance self-regulated learning which concerns both students and faculty (1995:9).

- *Students need to have greater awareness of their own behavior, motivation, and cognition.*
- *Students need to have positive motivational beliefs.*
- *Faculty can be models of self-regulated learning.*
- *Students need to practice self-regulatory learning strategies.*
- *Classroom tasks can be and should be opportunities for student self-regulation.*

In the first suggestion, Pintrich (1995) underlines the importance of feedbacks enabling learners to be aware of their strength and weak sides and adjust the learning process accordingly. *Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire* (MSLO) and *Learning and Study Strategies Inventory* are among one of the most preferable assessment instruments that offer learners feedback about their motivational beliefs and learning methods.

The second suggestion points out the necessity of motivational engagement which facilitates the learning event. To engage learners motivationally, *mastery goal-orientation* and *self-efficacy* beliefs have a crucial impact during the learning

process. Research has revealed that when learners have mastery goal-orientation, paying attention to learning events instead of performance orientation focusing on getting high grade they get better results in the long term. Additionally, self-efficacy which refers to one's judging his/her capability has a positive effect on learning. It is suggested that instructors should encourage learners to believe in their capacities and capabilities to do a task.

The third suggestion deals with the notion of *faculty's modelling* to help learners become self-regulated learners. Learners engage in the learning process by observing the ways of thinking or learning strategies of people around them. To achieve modelling in a successful manner, instructors should be qualified enough to reflect characteristics of self-regulated learning.

The fourth suggestion stresses the significance of the *practice* which has a crucial effect on learning. Becoming a self-regulated learner takes time and it necessitates effort and opportunity presented through tasks and situations. The effort and opportunity facilitate learners becoming self-regulated learners. In the practice step, instructors are expected to guide learners in such a manner that learners become self-regulated learner over time with the help of feedback and hints provided by the guidance of the instructor.

The last suggestion by Pintrich (1995) states the significance of *choice and control*. Instead of following a strict curriculum, tasks should be designed by means of developing learners' decision-making skills which in turn enhances their mastery orientation. In other words, learners should be provided the ability to arrange their learning environments.

Factors Affecting Self-Regulated Learning

Winne & Perry (2000) pay attention to the intertwined structure of SRL with an emphasis on its binary features involving *aptitude* and *an event*. To them, besides environmental factors, mental factors are also essential indicators of SRL. Considerable attention focused on the results of the research that have been conducted about the factors affecting self-regulated learning such as age, gender, motivation, the ability of the learner, external regulation, external constraints and teacher factors.

Age / Grade level

Considerable research have been conducted to reveal the effect of the age factor in SRL. There are various views on this controversial issue. While some of the researchers claim that adult learners are better at self-regulation of their learning process compared to younger learners, the other side defends that the age

factor is not a significant determiner in terms of being a self-regulated learner. The points of the former researches are about younger learners' deficiency in thinking and management skills which are the core of the SRL (Paris & Byrnes, 1989). According to the results of their study which has been conducted with ten elementary and middle school teachers on their perceptions of SRL, Spruce & Bol (2015) find out from the responses of interviewees that middle school students are lack of capacity to self-regulate their learning process.

Concurring with the idea of getting better self-regulation capabilities with age, Pintrich & Zusho (2002) suggest that the focus should be on the cognitive and motivational development of learners instead of their age. Toward this end, the main point in self-regulation is to gaining experience with the task or activity. Huh & Reigeluth (2018) have investigated the online K-12 teachers' perceptions of SRL in the United States. According to the average thought of 112 teachers participating in this study, the age factor is not a determiner in the self-regulation of learners.

Paris and Paris (2001) summarize the effect of the age factor in SRL. To them learners in later grades achieve better SRL than learners in early grades; however, this originates from the reasons such as cognitive development which improves with age and experience. Besides, class requirements and learning environment giving chance to learners to enhance their self-regulation contribute to the cognitive developments of learners. Paris and Paris (2001) claim that learners of all ages can benefit from SRL in line with their level and objectives of the tasks with the systematic assistance of their teachers in necessity.

Motivation

Motivation and SRL have a cyclical relationship. On the one hand, motivation plays an initiative role in facilitating learning, on the other hand, it is a success of the self-regulated learning method. The learners who have been educated in a self-regulated way of learning show higher levels of motivation. Along with cognition, motivation is also a key component of SRL through which learners engage in the learning process initially. Zimmerman (2008) mentions the importance of motivation in the forethought phase of SRL with the sub-phases of self-efficacy, intrinsic interest and goal orientation.

Schunk (1984) defines *self-efficacy* as believing in one's own capability to arrange and perform behaviors in specific settings. Self-efficacy which plays a crucial role in achievement is affected by various components such as learners' ability and capacity, learners' endeavor, task difficulty, and outcome sample. To this end, learners have a sense of self-efficacy while keeping track of their

development through the learning process (Schunk, 1982). Moreover, Bandura (1978) indicates that self-efficacy is efficient in determining activity and environmental setting preference as it reinforces the expectations of learners.

Zimmerman, Bandura, and Martinez-Ponz (1992) have conducted research to detach the impact of self-efficacy and personal goal-orientation by evaluating learners' prior and final grades of social studies course by using questionnaires. According to the result of the study, in which they used path analysis, self-efficacy had a direct influence on the academic grades of learners.

Besides self-efficacy, intrinsic motivation is also one of the motivational components in SRL. Intrinsic motivation entails learners engaging the language learning process with pleasure as the activity itself or goal compensates the needs of learners. (Frey & Osterloh 2001). Achievement of personal goals, which learners determine according to their interests and needs, enhances learners' learning enthusiasm. The positive influence of motivational components on success has been revealed through various studies conducted in language learning (Dörnyei, 1998; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993).

Gender

The role of gender in SRL is a contradictory issue in educational psychology. While some of the research exhibit the superiority of gender in SRL, remarkable studies have revealed that there is no difference in SRL with respect to gender. The reason for success in SRL has been related to motivational factors such as self-efficacy, rather than gender (Pintrich and Zusho, 2002). Female learners exhibit less adaptive patterns of SRL when compared to male learners because of their lower self-efficacy. The patriarchal system, impeding the engagement of female learners to the learning process, may influence the lower self-esteem levels of female learners.

Cebesoy (2013), has investigated the effect of gender on pre-service science teachers' self-reported use of motivational strategies and learning strategies with 104 participants in Turkey. Results of this study show that pre-service science teachers who had a higher level of self-efficacy exhibit better academic achievement scores in physics. However, no difference with regard to gender has been detached from the academic achievement score of learners.

Another research which has been conducted by Bidjerano (2005) investigated the relationship of self-regulated learning strategies usage with gender. The researcher chose The Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) as a data collection method and 198 undergraduate students at a university in Northeastern U.S. participated in this study. According to the results, female

students are highly prone to use strategies such as rehearsal, organization, metacognition, time management skills, elaboration, and effort. No statistically significant gender differences were found concerning studying with peers, help seeking, and critical thinking skills.

External regulation

The natural approach, developed by Krashen, is one of the methods of language learning which emphasizes the significance of affective filter in language learning (Krashen, 1982). Language learners want to feel secure in a learning environment in which they do not have enough experience. Their psychological barriers are high in the initial process of learning before gaining familiarity with the task and this psychological barrier hinders effective learning (Scovel, 1978). In such cases, learners need an external regulation provided by their teachers (Boekaerts, 1999). They desire teacher direction leading them what to do, how and when to do the specific requirements of learning event. However, these learners fail when they have to deal with the responsibilities on their own. Relying on the teacher restrains learners to perform self-regulatory skills and this dependence affects the learning in a negative manner.

Learners' Ability / Capacity

In general, classroom settings are homogeneous in terms of involving students of different capacity levels. Not only learners' cognitive capacities, but also their abilities vary in accordance with the goals and expectations of the specific task. These diversities entail teachers expanding their teaching skills by considering learners' learning styles and strategies.

In the study of Spruce and Bol (2015) which have been conducted with 10 elementary and middle school teachers about their perception of SRL, some of the interviewees claimed that during the study not all learners are capable enough to regulate their learning process, even most of them cannot fulfil the requirements of the given task. In other words, learners attending to study are lack of ability to arrange their learning.

Lau (2013) searched Chinese language teachers' perception of SRL with 31 teachers and their 10th-grade students from six secondary schools in Hong Kong. Questionnaires, interviews and observations have been used in this researcher-teacher collaborative project. The researcher states that learners' insufficient ability to manage and control their learning process affects their teachers' decision of implementing SRL-based instruction. Therefore, arranging

teaching methods in accordance with learners' ability and performance has been suggested. Furthermore, researchers recommend providing more scaffolding to the learners with low ability in order to develop their self-regulatory skills instead of ignoring them (Lau, 2013; Paris & Paris, 2001).

Cebesoy (2013), investigated pre-service science teachers' perception of SRL in Turkey with 104 pre-service science teachers by using the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ). During the study conducted in the 2010-2011 spring semester, it has been observed that learners' preference of strategy was shaped according to the task difficulty, besides learners' capacity and ability.

To Paris & Paris "cognitive fatigue" influences the SRL in a negative manner while "alertness" facilitates the application of SRL (2001:99). They suggest designing tasks to foster *alertness* which in turn contributes to SRL. Briefly, learners with higher cognitive capacity or ability exhibit better results in regulation of their learning process.

External Constraints

Offering an appropriate environment to achieve successful training is essential in language education. Gass (2002) pays attention to the context of language learning and the way learners use their linguistic environment. Crucial constraints affecting the classroom atmosphere have to be taken into account to lessen the undesirable outcomes and promote SRL.

The traditional way of education is one of the factors influencing the implementation of SRL. Avalos (2011) highlights the influences of history and tradition on educational policy affecting teachers' education style. In the study conducted in China, Lau (2013) analyzed the Confucian culture which is a traditional way of teaching, emphasizing teacher autonomy in the classroom. This traditional Confucian culture arises problems in corresponding with the principles of the SRL. The researcher reports that Chinese language teachers who experienced Confucian culture through their training, have difficulty in adapting new educational paradigms entailing the integration of SRL.

According to Avalos (2011), while designing a curriculum, the expectations of the education system and the educational needs of the learner population have to be examined, then educational policy and approaches have to be formed accordingly. Curriculum designs, even those with the most proof of positive results, may not be applicable to all learning settings. Thus, the curriculum has to be arranged to meet specific needs of the learner population and education system. Lau (2013) also pointed the significance of the curriculum which has been altered to correspond to the requirements of the new innovative mode of

instruction. Following a strict curriculum, which does not attach importance to learner autonym, aggravates the application of SRL. According to the result of Lau's study, public examination restricts the independence of the learners which is also same in Turkey. While preparing learners to the exams, the skills students need to acquire are ignored and the focus is shifted merely to passing the exam.

A broad curriculum poses practical problems such as lack of appropriate materials, heavy workload, and time constraints inhibiting the implementation of SRL. As the classroom environment involves a vast number of learners with different learning styles, designing various materials to address their individual needs and learning styles constitutes a crucial part of the learning event. Offering choices to learners empowers their self-regulation skills which in turn foster language learning (Zimmerman, 2002).

Enforcement of cognitive, metacognitive and behavioral self-regulation takes a great deal of time. In order to acquire the skills of SRL, learners have to expose to active practices of SRL in their learning environment. Through direct interaction of teacher and students, indirect ways of instruction such as *modelling, scaffolding, fading*, and *coaching* foster learners' acquisition of SRL skills (Collins, Brown & Holum 1991). In modelling, the learners observe their teachers' strategy use to learn. Scaffolding refers to the assistance of the teacher to learners by giving hints. In fading, the teacher gradually reduces the assistance and gives more responsibility to the learner. Coaching involves the whole process of instruction such as choosing tasks, giving hints and feedbacks, scaffolding, and planning the procedures of the learning process. Execution of SRL instruction, requiring a long time, may not be applicable to the learning settings with time constraints.

As well as time constraints, the heavy workload is also a major limitation of SRL. Contrary to the effortless view of traditional methods, in SRL teachers are encouraged to expertise in new instructional techniques to promote their learner's development of self-regulation.

As it reduces the time devoted to each student by the teacher, the number of students in a class negatively affects the implementation of SRL during the initial process. This crowded structure of the class may arise discipline problems especially with primary graders which in turn affects the implementation of SRL.

Teacher Factors

Research on the promotion of SRL has revealed that teachers' capabilities, experiences and beliefs have a strong effect on their perception of SRL, which in turn affect the implementation of it (Lombaerts et al., 2009).

To Dignath & Werf (2012) having positive attitudes toward SRL is not adequate, teachers are expected to be capable enough to manage learner autonomy in their classes which is a key component of SRL. The challenging SRL instruction process requires time and effort besides professional knowledge and pedagogical skills. In order to adapt their teaching skills to the new educational paradigm, teachers have to relinquish their prior beliefs toward education focusing on the teacher-centered way of teaching (Lau, 2013). Creating SRL environments entails teachers gaining expertise in instruction shaped according to the demands of the new educational paradigm.

Research conducted on teachers' beliefs on SRL indicates the inconsistency between teachers' beliefs and practices. Although teachers have a positive attitude toward SRL, most of them do not integrate SRL strategies into their teaching which may result from their lack of knowledge and experience on SRL (Dignath & Werf, 2012; Spruce & Bol, 2015). Based on this, it is suggested by researchers to educate teachers on SRL practices by considering their conceptions and misconceptions about SRL (Dignath & Werf, 2012; Huh & Reigeluth, 2018; Lau, 2013; Spruce& Bol, 2015; Cebesoy, 2013). Furthermore, teachers' active engagement in the self-regulated process has been offered because without being self-regulated to understand the systematicity of the training process, they cannot develop their students into self-regulated learners (Lau, 2013). During the whole process of gaining SRL experiences and training, the collaboration of teachers is highly recommended through which they interact with each other to exchange knowledge (Avalos, 2011).

Online Language Learning

With the developments in technology, the educational paradigm has shifted in a form, requiring the area of second language study and teaching to become more technology-oriented (Harasim, 2000). Prensky (2001) states that *digital natives*, who were born into the technology and can benefit from the technological tools at a very early age, have a distinct way of learning. Therefore, the education system and curriculum must be reconsidered and designed to meet the needs and interests of these learners. To Blake (2011), proper integration of online language learning methods into curriculum enriches learning environments which in turn affect successful language learning. Additionally, language teachers have to invest in their digital competencies to cope with the educational needs of the new technology-driven system (Garrett, 2009).

In the online language learning process, students are considered active producers, both seeking information and sharing it with others with the help of software tools (Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2012). Online language learning environments that can be applied anytime, anywhere with multimedia-enhanced activities offer students a collaborative learning opportunity (Harasim, 2000). These online environments assist learners to preserve their interest and expand their knowledge of the target language and culture (Blake, 2011). Moreover, the flexible nature of online environments encourages students to feel comfortable while being digitally involved in the learning process to collaborate with members of the target language.

Online education has been categorized under three modes by Harasim as "adjunct mode, mixed mode, and totally online mode" (2000:46). In the adjunct mode, the web is used to facilitate traditional learning, the web is not perceived as a requisite component of the process. In the mixed mode, web is integrated into the curriculum as a crucial part of the traditional education process. The totally online mode refers to the usage of web as the main channel of the whole training process. These online education modes, which vary according to the demands of learning situations, have been preferred to facilitate language learning.

The implementation of online language learning has been facilitated through computer-assisted language learning (CALL), online language games, and Web 2.0 tools. CALL aims to use the target language in real situations with the integration of technology (Beatty, 2013). Accessing more authentic learning environments through multimedia facilitates language learning. In addition, CALL enables students from different parts of the world to develop their language skills by interacting with each other. Within the scope of CALL, it has become crucial that online materials assist learners to gain familiarity in the new learning environments (Garrett, 2009).

CALL approach involves newer Web 2.0 tools such as blogs, wikis, podcasts, wordle, online chatting, and social networking sites (Kitsantas & Dabbagh 2011). While Web 1.0 was a more traditional way with slow and static tools, Web 2.0 provides collaboration with a vast array of services that are more complex and faster. The Web 2 technologies, enabling learners to advance at their own pace and expanding learning beyond the classroom, facilitate language learning by offering socialization, collaboration, creativity, and authenticity.

Gamification which is described as "the use of game elements and game-design techniques in non-game contexts" has emerged as a concept in business and adapted to language learning (Werbach & Hunter 2012: 26). Gamification facilitates language learning by increasing participation and motivating learners

through the use of game elements such as points, leaderboards, and immediate feedback (Flores, 2015). The use of Gamification helps learners to engage in the language learning process actively and intentionally which in turn enhances better understanding and fosters learning.

In the era of technology, *digital native* language learners become more motivated by using online learning technologies and tools. The language learners get the opportunity to develop their four language skills with the assistance of rich online environments which allow them to interact with others across time and place.

The Covid-19 outbreak, which first appeared in Wuhan, China at the end of 2019, changed the education system in a form requiring digitalization (Mukhtar et all., 2020; Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Basilaia & Kvavadze 2020; Tümen Akyıldız, 2020). As face-to-face learning is not possible due to this pandemic, online education has gained popularity with the combination of synchronous and asynchronous modes. Synchronous classes allow teachers and learners to interact with each other in real-time with the help of applications such as Zoom, Skype, Google Meet (Plaisance, 2018). On the other hand, asynchronous mode requires learners to complete tasks from anywhere with access to the internet with the help of applications such as Moodle, Schoology, Google Classrooms.

Mukhtar et all. (2020), conducted a study in Pakistan on the perception of 12 faculty members and 12 students regarding online education's advantages, limitations, and recommendations. A qualitative case study was conducted from March to April 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic. According to the findings of their study, online education has advantages such as flexibility and student-centered learning. Online education offers flexible environments in terms of administration, accessibility and less use of resource and time. Learners can easily access the learning without time and place constraints. Besides, learners become self-regulated learners who can manage their learning process. On the other hand, online education has limitations such as inefficiency to teach psychomotor skills, lack of student feedback, limited attention span, lack of discipline, gadget problems and plagiarism. Researchers recommend the use of alternative applications to facilitate the learning process and highlight the importance of faculty training in online education.

Atmojo & Nugroho (2020) investigated the implementation of online EFL learning and its challenges in Indonesia. 16 EFL teachers attending to the study made written reflections concerning their practices throughout the online language learning process and the challenges of the process. According to the result of this study, language teachers benefit from various applications and platforms

which are helpful for different purposes such as content creating, chatting, video conferencing, managing the process in general, and assessing the process. To achieve these aims secondary school English teachers in Indonesia preferred online technologies such as Google Classroom, Schoology, Zoom, Whatsapp, Autodesk, FastStone Capture, TEDEd, Google Form, Quizizz, Kahoot, Youtube, and Ruangguru. According to reflections of English teachers, financial problem was one of the biggest problems during the online learning process. Lack of sufficient devices or insufficient internet quota to connect to online courses stem from financial problems and affects the successful implementation of online learning. Learners' low digital literacy was another major factor causing challenges during the process. Besides learner factors, teacher factors such as lack of experience and knowledge in online education influence online language learning. Authors suggest collaboration among teachers, learners, and parents to facilitate the online learning process. In addition, they propose teacher training and student familiarization to get successful results from online language learning.

Basilaia and Kvavadze (2020) investigated the transition from traditional learning to online education in a case study conducted in a private school with 950 students in Georgia. Authors state that during the pandemic, various methods have been offered by countries to maintain the education process such as online libraries, TV broadcasts, guidelines, resources, video lectures, online channels. Education channel "Teleskola" (TV school) was introduced as a method to continue education in Georgia. Besides, aSc Edupage, a digital management system was used. The system which provides teacher-parent-student cooperation is preferred because it includes homework, grading and messaging features. According to their study, Basilaia and Kvavadze (2020) have concluded that the transition was successful and the experiences gained during the process can be used in the post-pandemic period.

Tümen Akyıldız (2020) researched university students' perceptions of online education during the pandemic with focus group discussion. The study conducted in Turkey with 12 undergraduate students aims to reveal students' views about Covid-19 and pandemic education. According to the results of the study, learners experienced anxiety, despair and boredom during the pandemic education process. In addition, the students participating in the study stated that the pandemic education process has both advantages and disadvantages. According to students, the flexibility of time and place, taking responsibility for their learning and feeling comfortable in exams are among the advantages of the process, while disadvantages include factors such as lack of interaction, lack of

effective communication with instructors, dependence on traditional practices, time management problems and heavy workload. Finally, students make suggestions to improve the implementation of pandemic education. According to them, online courses should include interaction in both synchronous and asynchronous modes. Besides, instructors are required to develop their digital literacy levels and communication skills. Moreover, learners express that the way of assessment needs to change by giving feedback, easing the homework burden, and using more useful assessment techniques.

Self-Regulated Learning in Online Learning Settings

Research have revealed that self-regulated learners exhibit better adaptation to online education which in turn enhances effective learning (Huh & Reigeluth 2018; Usta, 2011). The flexible and autonomous nature of the online learning environments promotes the learning style and strategies of self-regulated learners (Broadbent and Poon, 2015). Moreover, Oxford (1990) claims that learning strategies of metacognitive, affective, cognitive, and social-affective support the learner autonomy which is the key concept of self-regulated learning. Self-regulated learners have more control over their learning processes in deciding when and where they will study or the method to be used during training (Littlejohn et all., 2016). In addition, self-regulated learners take primary responsibility for their learning in online environments where the ongoing support of the teacher cannot be provided when they need it (Kizilcec et all., 2017). Self-regulated learners have the ability to regulating their time and effort in order to prevent scheduling problems. Moreover, self-regulated students can enhance their motivation with the help of the goals and rewards they have set, and they can search and solve the technology-related problems they encounter in the online learning process. To this end, self-regulated students can easily deal with online education dropout issues that stem from programming conflicts, lack of motivation and low digital literacy, and this success positively affects learners' performance in online learning environments (Huh & Reigeluth 2018).

Dabbagh & Kitsantas have conducted research to confirm the aforementioned studies on the impact of Web-based pedagogical tools (WBPT) in supporting SRL skills (2005). According to the results of the study, which has been conducted with 65 students, WBPT tools such as communication tools, content creation and delivery tools, administrative tools, and assessment tools have a powerful and favourable effect in prompting SRL processes. Researchers examine the results in relation to three main learning tasks which are "Exploratory Learning Tasks, Dialogical Learning Tasks, and Collaborative

Learning Tasks" (Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2005:535). The WBPT help learners to engage in courses by scaffolding learner SRL processes of goal setting, help seeking, self-evaluation, time planning and management, self-evaluation.

McLoughlin & Lee (2010) have conducted a case study on personalised and self-regulated learning in a technology-driven curriculum designed with the help of Web 2.0 tools. The researchers state that Web 2.0 tools, when used properly, promote learner autonomy which is the key point of self-regulated learning. Because Web 2.0 tools enable learners to manage their own learning with active participation in the learning process. The learning experiences offered in social software tools are tailored to the interests of the learners and this gives learners a sense of ownership. New learning practices designed with the idea of learner ownership in online settings, offer flexibility in terms of time and place while accessing knowledge. McLoughlin and Lee point out that self-regulated learning is encouraged in online settings by allowing flexibility, promoting creativity, and enabling freedom and empowerment to learners. The researchers reflect their claims with global examples of teachers who provide self-regulated and personalized learning using social software tools in their education. Furthermore, McLoughlin and Lee (2010) highlight the role of teachers to facilitate self-regulated learning in online environments. To them, teachers should help students make use of technological tools in education to cope with the challenges of the process. Besides, teachers are required to track students' performance and give them feedback when necessary.

Broadbent and Poon (2015) highlight the flexibility and accessibility advantages of online learning and claim that self-regulated students who can learn autonomously and take an active part in their learning exhibit greater success in online learning. The researchers evaluated 12 empirical studies to investigate the relationship between SRL strategies and online academic success. Based on the results of ten years of research, it has been proven that SRL strategies of metacognition, time management, effort regulation and critical thinking are more positively associated with academic outcomes than other SRL strategies such as elaboration, rehearsal, organization, and peer learning.

Self-Regulated Language Learning in Online Learning Settings

Enhancing effective English learning in online environments, the new trend of education is a highly significant issue that curriculum designers and teachers work on (Chen et all., 2014; Wang & Zhan, 2020). In online environments, self-

regulation is a critical skill that helps language learners sustain their efforts and manage successfully the challenging process (Wang & Zhan, 2020).

Meanwhile, Holec (1979) states that autonomous language learners take full responsibility for the learning process, from setting goals to monitoring and evaluating the process. In doing so, language learners decide on goals based on their needs, which shape the grammatical, lexical, and phonological forms to study. Autonomous learning which is one of the most significant grounds of self-regulated learning improves language learners' performances in online settings. It has been revealed with considerable research that self-regulated online language learners are more successful in acquiring a new language (Andrade & Bunker, 2009; Chen, Wang, & Chen, 2014; Zheng, Liang, Li, & Tsai 2018; Wang and Zhan, 2020).

Besides cognitive and metacognitive components of self-regulated learning, the motivative component has also a crucial role in online language learning, because it helps learners handle affective factors hindering learning. Due to the obstacles posed by the online learning context, learners need more assistance than they would in a traditional face-to-face classroom (Zheng et all., 2018; Wang and Zhan, 2020).

To reveal the effect of self-regulation on online language learning, Andrade & Bunker (2009) have conducted a study in which they examined the six dimensions of self-regulated language learning "motive, methods, time, physical environment, social environment, and performance" which was introduced by Dembo et al. (2006:189). The researchers claim that the components of time, social environment, and physical environment are particularly beneficial to the online language learning context.

In online language learning, *motivation* plays a crucial role. Language learners having integrative motivation which refer to a desire to communicate with the native speakers, exhibit better result in language learning. Online language learners may not physically integrate with the speakers of the target language, but they have the opportunity to access native speakers from all over the world with the help of online tools. In addition, self-regulating online language learners avoid the problem of dropping the course by regulating their motivation.

Method refers to the learners' way of learning. Online language learning and practice tools help self-regulated language learners improve and evaluate their learning strategies by observing their peers. Andrade and Bunker (2009) cited in a study where concepts derived from self-regulating learning were used to write prompts for learner journals. The test was designed to evaluate learners'

responses about their study habits and attitudes in their journals. According to the results, learners engaging in reflection and evaluation of their habits and strategies gained awareness of strategy and improved their language learning.

The third dimension, *time*, appeal to procrastination and time management. Time management is a significant skill for online learners as distractions and other responsibilities disturb learners' concentration. Similarly, procrastination is another factor affecting efficient language learning in online settings. Self-regulated online learners who can set a regular schedule for studying cope with the problems of procrastination and time management.

The *physical environment* refers to arranging the learners' environment as a quiet and comfortable place to study. This is particularly important for online language learners as they need a place where they can listen to language material and practice orally; therefore, self-regulated online language learners reconfigure their environments according to requirements of the course.

The *social environment* involves the people who help learners when needed. Dembo et all. (2006) claims that in the language learning context, the social environment allows language learners for engagement and the growth of communicative skills. Additionally, the instructor helps students make use of technological tools in online environments.

The last dimension of self-regulated learning is *performance*, which means what is learned during the process. Learners evaluate their performance in terms of success and deficiencies and set new goals based on these evaluations. Technology-enhanced learning in the form of reflective weblogs helps learners conduct performance evaluations. Through interactive feedback, self-regulated language learners recognize gaps in their linguistic form and communicative abilities, then make necessary arrangements to improve their language learning.

Chen et all. (2014) have conducted research with Grade 7 students at a junior high school in Taiwan to investigate the effect of the SRL mechanism combined with a digital reading annotation system (DRAS) on the reading comprehension performance of the learners. To reveal the effect of the proposed system designed to improve the English reading performance of online self-regulated students, the researchers conducted a quasi-experimental method. According to the results of this study, compared with control group learners, the reading comprehension and reading annotation ability of experimental group learners who used the proposed DRAS with the SRL mechanism for English-language reading improved significantly (Chen et all., 2014). The researchers claim that web-based digital reading annotation system offer a flexible learning environment that can be utilized anytime and anywhere. Therefore, the proposed

system implemented in online environments helps self-regulated online language learners improve their reading comprehension and performance.

Zheng et all. (2018) investigated the association between English language learners' motivation and their online self-regulation with 293 Chinese university students. The researchers administered two questionnaires - Online Language Learning Motivation (OLLM) and Online Self-Regulated English Learning (OSEL)- to 293 Chinese university students. The first questionnaire has five dimensions "online language learning experience, cultural interest, instrumentality-promotion, instrumentality-prevention, and others' expectations" while the second questionnaire comprises of six dimensions "goal setting, time management, environment structuring, help seeking, task strategies, and self-evaluation" (Zheng et all., 2018:149). According to the findings of the study, it has been revealed that students with positive beliefs and intrinsic motivation towards learning English are better at self-regulation in online language learning environments and this has a positive effect on language learning. One another significant finding of this study is the negative relationship between language learners' previous learning practice and their online self-regulatory efforts. Learners with positive online learning practices are more resilient and independent in their self-regulatory learning process. Finally, the researchers emphasized the need to design effective online tasks that increase students' motivation and therefore improve language learning.

Wang and Zhan (2020) aim to draw attention to the importance of being self-regulated learners in online language learning, which has become popular with the widespread use of the Internet. The researchers examine the relationship between the learner characteristics of belief, anxiety, motivation and online self-regulated language learning. The research was conducted with 475 undergraduate students from the college of computer science and software technology at Jilin University in China who wanted to improve their academic English writing skills. The study was carried out with the help of electronic questionnaires in the first semester of the 2018-2019 academic year. The Chinese version of the Online Self-regulated English Learning Questionnaire which was initially developed by Zheng et all. (2018) have been attained to participants. The questionnaire included six dimensions (Wang and Zhan, 2020: 10):

- *setting goals* "I set daily or weekly goals (short-term goals) and even monthly or semester goals (long-term goals) when learning academic English writing online."

- *creating environment* "I choose a good location for online academic English learning course to avoid distraction."
- *learning strategies* "I will take more comprehensive notes in online academic English writing course than in regular classroom teaching."
- *seeking help* "find classmates who are knowledgeable so that I can consult with them if I meet problems or uncertainties in online academic English writing course."
- *managing time* "I follow a fixed time schedule to learn online instructional materials about academic English writing and attend the online academic English course."
- *self-evaluation* "I have a regular discussion with my teachers to evaluate my recent online academic English learning performance."

Wang and Zhan (2020) founded that positive learner beliefs, less anxiety and more learning motivation help online self-regulated language learning. Additionally, the researchers concluded that online learners who are driven by integrative motivation, periodically reflecting their learning performance, perceiving the importance of language learning, having an ability of self-evaluation, having control of language learning anxiety, setting specific goals and monitoring the learning process accordingly, managing time efficiently, and possessing the capability of handling online learning tools are better in language learning.

According to the results of these studies, it has been clarified that self-regulated language learners are better at dealing with the challenges of the online language learning process. Thus, having self-regulation skills facilitates the adaptation of language learners to flexible and autonomous online environments. Namely, self-regulated online language learners can regulate the language learning process cognitively, metacognitively and motivationally that affect language learning in a positive manner.

Conclusion

Numerous approaches have been developed over the years to ensure effective language teaching. SRL is one of the leading teaching approaches that take into account the cognitive, metacognitive and motivational components and emphasizes the importance of learner autonomy (Paris & Paris, 2001). Learners are expected to take primary responsibility for their learning process, from goal setting to assessment (Zimmerman, 1990). Therefore, educationalists and curriculum designers sustain their works on the implementation of SRL strategies into the curriculum and education system. In addition, teachers are

encouraged to be self-regulated teachers to guide learners in the best way. However, there is not adequate research in the literature on self-regulated online language education. Nowadays, with the outbreak of Covid 19 online education has become more popular; therefore, more attention needs to be paid to self-regulated language learning in this new trend. It has been proven with considerable research that self-regulated language learners easily adapt to the flexible and autonomous context of online education system (Broadbent and Poon, 2015). Self-regulated language learners have more control over their learning processes in deciding when and where they will study or the method to be used during training (Littlejohn et all., 2016). Besides, in the online learning process, the absence of instructors or limited teacher assistance requires learners to take responsibility for their learning. (Kizilcec et all., 2017). Self-regulated learners can prevent scheduling problems by regulating their time and effort. Moreover, self-regulated students can enhance their motivation with the help of the goals and rewards they have set, and they can search and solve the technology-related problems they encounter in the online learning process. To this end, self-regulated language learners can easily deal with online education dropout issues that stem from programming conflicts, lack of motivation and low digital literacy, and this success positively affects learners' performance in online learning environments (Huh & Reigeluth 2018).

To sum up, this study has been conducted to remark the significance of being a self-regulating learner in an online environment and examine the effect of self-regulation on the success of language learners in online contexts. The findings of the study have been analyzed by relating to the known research. As there is not sufficient research about this topic, the research will contribute to the field of the self-regulation effect on students' language learning process in online education.

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CHAPTER 7

HOW DOES THE CAMERA AFFECT STUDENTS' LANGUAGE ANXIETY IN ONLINE SETTINGS?

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Abstract

It has been a well-known fact that foreign language learning is associated with affective factors such as motivation, attitudes, self-confidence, empathy, risk-taking, and anxiety that have great effects on the language learning process. Foreign language anxiety (FLA) among those factors, is considered as an obstacle to be overcome in learning a foreign language. Several studies have been conducted to reveal the reasons to overcome FLA and have much better foreign language performance. One of their salient findings is the necessity of being aware of anxious students by observing their behaviours in order to deal with FLA in English as a foreign language EFL classes. Even so, in online learning settings, it is not so easy to observe the nonverbal clues of students to cope with their anxieties. Numerous studies have indicated the reasons for FLA in online learning. However, there is not any research emphasizing the effects of using cameras on students' FLA in online learning. Focusing on the effects of camera use on FLA in online settings, this study aims to contribute to the field by exploring the perceptions of secondary school (EFL) learners. Providing a perspective of students about the effects of using camera in online language classes on FLA, findings showed that there is a possible relationship

between camera use and FLA. Although some physical and emotional states may prevent students from using their cameras, the teacher's turning on her/his camera comforts the students and eases their learning.

Keywords: Foreign language anxiety, EFL, camera use, online language learning.

Introduction

Language learning is one of the fields in which students have difficulties cognitively and affectively (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986). For years, researchers have been trying to find out the reason for the challenges in language learning. According to the results of the studies, anxiety has been expressed as one of the important barriers to learning a foreign language. Numerous studies have tried to the factors emerging anxiety in language learning and the methods to overcome this barrier effectively. The reasons for FLA such as communication apprehension (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope 1986; Young, 1986), test anxiety (Cassady & Johnson, 2002), fear of negative evaluation by peers and teachers (Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2009; Yan & Horwitz, 2008; Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002), learners' insufficient language proficiency and knowledge (Chen & Chang, 2004; MacIntyre, Noels & Clément, 1997), classroom climate (Young, 1991; Khajavy, MacIntyre & Barabadi, 2018; Yan & Horwitz, 2008), and teacher (Chen & Chang, 2004) have been searched and claimed as the factors which should be taken into consideration to overcome FLA.

Several studies have been conducted to find out the reasons for FLA to overcome the stress of learning and have much better language performance (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991; Oxford, 2017; Zheng, 2008). One of the salient findings of them is the necessity of being aware of anxious students by observing their behaviours to deal with foreign FLA in the classes (Kleinke, 1986; Brown, 1994; Gregersen, 2005).

In face-to-face language learning environments, it is easier to observe the anxiety-provoking factors and overcome anxiety. Most of the time, nonverbal language may be a miracle notion to determine psychological barriers. Thus, anxious learners could be observed by their physical reactions such as movement of their face, case of gazing, posture, and body movement. Hence, observing learners' body movements and gestures is crucial to determine anxious learners and to overcome anxiety for a more efficient language performance. However, with the changes in technology and the emergence of the deadly Covid 19 pandemic in recent years, online learning has become an inseparable part of

education. In online learning settings, it is not so easy to observe the nonverbal clues of students to deal with their anxieties. Some studies have indicated the reasons for FLA in online learning (Pichette, 2009; Hurd, 2007). However, there is not any research emphasizing the effect of using cameras on students' FLA in online learning.

Arranging the online language learning process is crucial to overcome FLA as an affective barrier since online learning environments includes more different aspects than face-to-face language learning environments. One of the factors which should be searched is the camera's effect on students' feelings and performance in online language lessons. The camera enables learners to see each other and their teacher to communicate reciprocally (Develotte, Guichon & Vincent, 2010). The camera anxiety in online language learning can play an important role in addressing the issue since the previous studies did not dealt with it. Consequently, this study set out to investigate whether turning on the cameras in online classes causes FLA or not. Thus the current study aimed to explore the experiences and opinions of secondary school students in detail. It is hoped to contribute to the field by providing new insights for future implementations. By this aim anxiety in general, FLA, and causes of FLA will be explained respectively.

What is Anxiety?

As one of the increasingly important areas among affective factors, anxiety is a well-known feeling by each person; however, it is challenging to describe anxiety in a simple sentence (Brown, 1994). Spielberger defines anxiety as a subjective emotion of tension, perturbation, and worry correlated by arousal of the nervous system (cited in Spielberger, 2010). Moreover, according to Scovel (1978), anxiety is a physical issue that can be evaluated through only three ways: tests examining behaviors, reports of subjects' own statements, and tests investigating the psychology of an individual.

Some researchers discussed anxiety as a grand obstacle restraining lots of people from being successful in some specific fields such as mathematics, science, and particularly foreign language learning (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986). For many years, anxiety has been researched as one of the most significant factors affecting foreign or second language learning by educators and researchers. Whether anxiety is associated with personality or affectional reaction to a specific circumstance or a composition of both is not distinct (Gass & Selinker 2008).

Foreign Language Anxiety

Foreign language learning is a specific process as learners are expected to interact in the target language (Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2009). Many learners have some cognitive obstacles against learning a foreign language; however, those same learners also are not bad at getting forward in other courses; the reason is that learning a foreign language is a stressful process (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986). In other words, learning a foreign language is perceived as a "traumatic process" by anxious students (Zheng, 2008, p.1) Therefore, it is crucial to deal with anxious learners studying a foreign language.

FLA is defined as a term causing worry, fear, and negative emotions related to learning a foreign language (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012). Horwitz (2010) underlines FLA as a matter of preventing foreign language production. The results of previous studies make it clear that anxious students have trouble while performing the language (Horwitz, 2001).

MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) investigated FLA under three approaches: "*trait anxiety, state anxiety and situation-specific perspective"* (p.87). They pointed out that a learner with high *trait anxiety* would most likely behave anxiously in many of various conditions (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991). According to Brown (1994), trait anxiety is a "permanent anxiety" and the people who have trait anxiety are nervous about lots of things in general (p.161). Trait anxiety investigates people's reactions to different conditions (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991). *State anxiety* includes both trait and situational anxiety as a result of previous language experiences and the learners with state anxiety are displaying more anxiety in stressful conditions (MacIntyre & Gardner 1991). Brown (1994) states that to overcome the anxiety of learners, teachers must identify whether a learner's anxiety derives from a more extended trait or it originates from a specific situation. MacIntyre & Gardner (1991) observed two learners in a language classroom; and they observed that one of the students felt anxious in social cases but felt relaxed while having written tests; on the other hand, other participants felt anxious during written tests but felt relaxed in a social environment. The researchers concluded the survey by stating that a high level of trait anxiety is related to the increased level of state anxiety. The last approach *situation-specific perspective* can be regarded as trait anxiety extent restricted to a specific context (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991). By defining the situation of anxiety, the basis of anxiety can be obtained (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991)

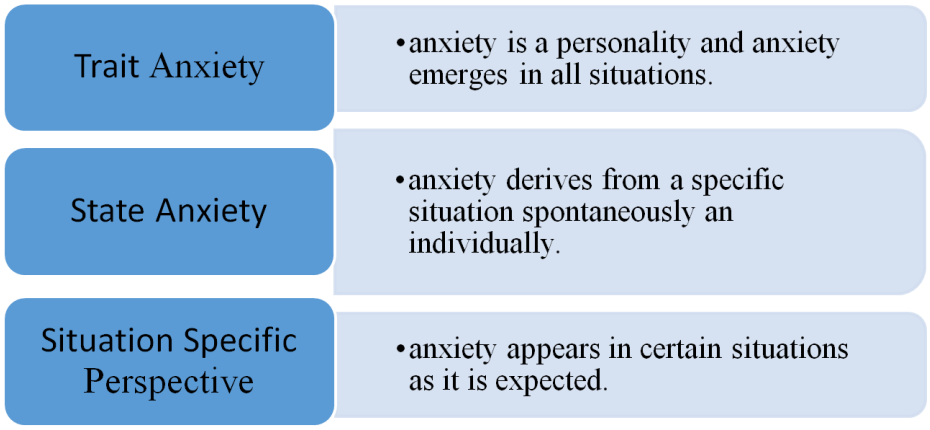

Figure 1: A general review of anxiety approaches

Spielmann and Radnofsky (2001) have analyzed stress as a more objective term by emphasizing both "*euphoric*" (beneficial) and "*dysphoric*" (harmful) aspects of anxiety on language learning (p.262). The researchers claim that psychological approaches of anxiety such as state and trait anxiety are not completely sufficient to comprehend the anxiety that can be defined as a result of the interplay of learners' anticipation and perception of a circumstance's reality. Hence the researchers suggest dealing with enhancing euphoric anxiety rather than endeavouring to prevent stressful situations. The researchers highlight the fact that anxiety is a personal fact that is related to learners' thoughts and wishes about language learning. The researchers' observation indicates that if students believe the beneficial side of anxiety, both euphoric and dysphoric, during their language learning period, they mostly respond positively. The findings of the research also make it clear that the students are unwilling to subtract the activities making them feel anxious from the curriculum; the reason for this reaction is the awareness of learners about the importance of those stressful exercises. The researchers also accentuate cognitive and affective aspects of learning; therefore, using easy materials and activities is not found beneficial as learners feel the "infantilization" which is a result of students' inadequacy during communicative tasks (p.274)

Several studies demonstrated that anxiety prevents the process of learning and practicing a foreign language (Horwitz, 2010). On the other hand, some researchers emphasized the positive effect of anxiety on language achievements and grades. (Chastain, 1975) According to some studies, FLA has an effect on the students' achievement or non-achievement in their class (Chastain, 1975), (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994). FLA prevents learners' foreign language

performance and grades in a negative manner. (Yan & Horwitz, 2008), (Azher, Anwar & Naz, 2010). If students feel anxious during learning a foreign language, they learn less because anxiety may prevent them from focusing on the lecture; as a result, they practice defectively. (MacIntyre, 1995)

The role of anxiety in foreign language learning has hinged on the research of psychological impressions of anxiety by MacIntyre (1995). The researcher has propounded that anxiety may restrain each of cognitive activities based on codifying, memory, and readjustment process by constructing a partite distracted attention circumstance for nervous learners. As anxious learners concentrate on both replying to the teacher's question and commentating on the social inference of the answer, anxious learners may not master the language as impetuously as non-anxious learners. When learners' anxiety increases, the learners will carry out the desired goals defectively as they haven't obtained the expected knowledge adequately.

The Causes of Foreign Language Classroom anxiety

Anxiety affects language learning from numerous different aspects; for this reason, defining the factors conducing FLA is the key point dealing with it effectively and extensively (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986), (Zheng, 2008). Therefore, describing the reasons for FLA in the classroom is crucial to make modifications to reduce students' anxiety (Yan, & Horwitz, 2008; Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986). Researchers made considerable studies to find out thosereasons for FLA to overcome the stress and manage much better language performance. These are some of the factors researched:

Communication apprehension

Speaking and expressing oneself in target language is one of the most challenging parts of the language learning process. FLA is observed mostly during speaking activities which is an essential part of second language learning. (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991) Students' willingness to participate in speaking activities is crucial to provide learners opportunities (Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2009). Furthermore, students with a high level of anxiety tend to avoid taking part in activities and cannot manage to speak even a few words in the target language because of fear of humiliation (Oxford, 2017).

Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) related communication apprehension with shamefacedness symbolizing the apprehension which emerges while communicating with someone. The researchers incorporated having difficulties

while speaking in front of a group or a public setting, or trying to comprehend spoken words. Fundamentally, comprehension apprehension stems from the individual perception that the learner has some difficulties comprehending others and not to be understood by people.

Young (1986) researched about oral proficiency interviews. The findings indicated that oral interview performance can be affected by anxiety. Therefore, a negative correlation between anxiety and oral performance interview was identified, which makes it clear that when "the anxiety increase, oral proficiency decreases" (p.443). The researcher also claimed that the reason for anxiety may result from an evaluative position which threatens learners.

Anxiety might be acknowledged as one of the crucial issues for learners and teachers due to not only learners' oral tests' performance but also their affective reactions., One of the most important effects of anxiety on language learning is its influence on learners' and intent to continue learning the foreign language and attitudes about it(Phillip, 1992).

Learners experiencing communication apprehension do not feel relaxed while communicating in target language in front of others because of their insufficient knowledge including speaking and listening skills (Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2009). The researcher employed a case study by observing fifteen third-grade students studying English. Six of them experienced FLA while speaking English in front of their peers.

MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) preferred the term "*communicative anxiety"* associating it with. with foreign language vocabulary and performance. In the study the participants who had been learning French as a foreign language applied different kinds of anxiety scales and methods The results demonstrated that the participants experienced much more anxiety while communicating in a foreign language which prevent them to acquire the new vocabulary.

Çubukçu (2008) found out the correlation between self-efficacy and FLA. The participants declared their anxiety while speaking in front of their classmates However, they feel more relaxed while communicating with native speakers.

Test anxiety

Test anxiety emerges when the learners feel "unprepared, unsure of the abilities" or insufficient expected performance during any phase of an assessment, they encounter emotions of "apprehension, distress unease and depression." (McDonald, 2001, p.90). According to Young (1986) test anxiety arises when the learner detects a circumstance as disquieting or hard to achieve.

The learners experience test anxiety because these learners set non-realistic goals for themselves and when they cannot accomplish these goals they perceive the result as a failure (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986). In a foreign language curriculum, the quizzes and tests are used frequently therefore the "test-anxious learners" have difficulties.

Cassady and Johnson (2002) conducted research to find out the correlations between cognitive test anxiety and academic success. The findings promoted the fact that the learners with a high level of test anxiety experience poor academic achievement especially as learners are interference by cognitive obstacles such as thinking about the results of a failure, extreme stress about the evaluation, being compared by peers while preparing for tests and during the test procedure.

In addition, test anxious learners are more sensitive to the atmosphere of classroom where the learners are compared and evaluated accordingly (Hancock, 2001). Even the learners are not anxious they perform worse when they feel a high evaluative threat.

Fear of negative evaluation by peers or the teacher

Tsiplakides and Keramida (2009) described one of the reasons for students' anxiety as the fear of negative evaluation by their peers. Hence, students are not willing to take part in speaking activities. They do not usually find themselves skilled enough at speaking tasks and they feel uneasy when assessed negatively by their peers.

Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) indicated that fear of negative evaluation by peers should not be restricted to the tests or grades. It is because this kind of anxiety may arise in any social circumstance requiring communication in foreign language. The reason for anxiety related to peer comparison or evaluation may be due to the characteristics of the learners. Those kind of anxious learners try to avoid the communicative activities for not to be laughed at or humiliated by their peers.

Young (1990) found out the relationship between FLA and speaking activities as well. Students feel anxious while speaking in front of others. However, the reason is not entirely communication apprehension; but also the fear of being evaluated by others.

Insufficient language proficiency and knowledge

Another reason of anxiety is defined as the language proficiency level of learners. Brown (1994) defined the key factor of being successful as believing in oneself to achieve the goals. In his social cognitive theory, Bandura also (1988) related

"perceived self-efficacy" to anxiety and claimed that people judge the events and results by evaluating their own experiences and capabilities, which causes negative outcomes (p. 90). Chen and Chang (2004) indicated that students experienced foreign language learning problems, low grades and insufficient improvement feel anxious while learning a foreign language.

MacIntyre, Noels and Clément (1997) tried to reveal the relationship between FLA and learners' prejudices about their bad performances. The results of their study indicated that the anxious learners are unwilling to participate the communicative activities because of their prejudices which are consequences of their previous poor performances.

Learners' insufficient knowledge of vocabulary and language skills also influence FLA. One of the studies demonstrated that students performed poorly are more anxious than the students performed perfect. (Daud, Daud, & Kassim, 2016).

Classroom climate

The classroom environment is another interest of researchers to create a low-anxious learning environment. Classroom climate not only affects pleasure and voluntariness to interact with others in the target language; but it also affects anxiety (Khajavy, MacIntyre & Barabadi, 2018). Creating a low-anxiety classroom and comfortable atmosphere by increasing learners' interest and motivation for effective language learning should be one of the duties of instructors (Young, 1991). The learners labelled as insufficient or incapable of learning a foreign language may not probably find the appropriate classroom setting for their learning. (Gass, & Selinker, 2008). Teachers should design their classes and diversify the activities by giving opportunities for different learning styles and strategies to integrate every individual into the activities (Harmer, 2001). The classroom environment which has not been designed regarding different kinds of learning styles and strategies may increase FLA of learners. Facilitating language activities for anxious learners experienced language problems and got low grades previously is crucial to reduce anxiety and create a comfortable environment for learning (Chen & Chang, 2004)

In a classroom climate where learners believe that making errors is a natural process of learning a language the learners are not afraid of making mistakes so it is easier for them to deal with anxiety (Gregersen, 2003). Correcting errors frustratingly in front of peers is one of the anxiety-provoking reasons.

In Çubukçu's (2008) study, the reason for anxiety was revealed as the teacher's position in the classroom. If the teacher takes place in all activities

as an authority, the students feel more anxious and stressed. Harmer (2001) described the teacher as a facilitator who provides democracy instead of being the authority and encourages learners to participate in group and pair activities by acting as a source of the knowledge rather than being a narrator.

Young (1991) emphasized the importance of the classroom environment where successful communication is attached importance instead of correcting errors and underlining grammar rules. To create a more relaxed and low-anxiety climate, Young suggested to create a learner-centred classroom environment by praising and giving positive reinforcement to reduce anxiety.

Another factor making the classroom climate more relaxed and comfortable is humour. Korobkin (1988) stated that humour contributes to making activities less threatening and exhaustive. The researcher claimed that humour is one of the new paradigms of the last century. The researcher underlined that laughter during the language learning process may allow reducing anxiety and making students satisfied with the experiences. Moreover, according to Young (1990), teachers who create a more interactive classroom environment by using their sense of humour may help learners to reduce anxiety.

Moreover, Khajavy, MacIntyre, and Barabadi(2018) highlighted the importance of funin language classes to reduce anxiety and encourage students to participate in the communicative tasks.

Characteristic and feedback of teacher

The last key point of the less anxious classroom setting is the teacher who makes his/her language classroom comfortable using different ways such as organizing various activities regarding the needs of learners, facilitating learning, guiding and supporting the learners, listening to them and giving feedback, etc. (Harmer, 2001). Learners learn more with the help of the teacher knowing about anxious students and having the ability to support learners to overcome anxiety during classes (Aida, 1994). On the other hand, the teacher may sometimes become an anxiety-provoking factor in the classroom. Chen and Chang (2004) stated that learning a language may be harder in the existence of a teacher just lecturing, speaking fast, avoiding using the blackboard. Thus that teacher figure may cause high anxiety and low grades.

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

Research revealing students' and teachers' perceptions about FLA and online language education during the Covid-19 pandemic are abundant in the literature. However, there is no research examining the FLA arising from camera use.

Therefore, this paper attempted to reveal the thoughts of secondary learners about camera use during online language teaching. Accordingly, the present study was designed to address the following questions:

1. How do the students feel in online language classes compared to the traditional face-to-face ones?
2. How do the students feel when turning on their cameras during online classes?
3. What are the effects of teachers' turning on her/his camera on students' language anxiety?

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative approach with the aim of giving suggestions on how to do better and how to get better services concerning the similar experiences, problems, and thoughts of others (Silverman, 2010). It is also a kind of inquiry on a very little-known phenomenon or a system that is needed to explore knowledge and practice (Marshal, 1985). In qualitative studies, the focus is on the experiences and reflections of the participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This study uses the qualitative method in order to gain insights into the perceptions of the participants on camera anxiety in online language classes. Since it emphasizes the way people interpret and create meaning of their perception in recognizing the social context (Zohrabi, 2013). Thus, it was thought to be more useful for identifying and characterizing their own experiences about the effects of camera use on FLA which has not known well so far.

Participants

This research was conducted with 20 secondary school students in Elazığ a city located in the Eastern Anatolia region of Turkey. Participants were divided into two groups which had 10 participants each based on their class levels. 5th graders were the beginners of secondary school so they would not participate in the study in desired way; 8th graders on the other hand, were preparing for the high school entrance exam and they concentrated on the test system for the exam. Therefore, only 6th and 7th graders were included in the study. Of the 20 students, 11 were female and 9 were male. They agreed on participating the current study voluntarily.

Data Collection

Data were collected using the focus group discussion technique. Focus group technique is an effective and economic way to collect data using a group of

well-organized participants in a socially-oriented environment (Onwuegbuzie, Dickinson, Leech & Zoran, 2009). The Focus group discussion technique have proper features for the pandemic process. It is practical to be conducted online. Thus, as an internet software application, 'Zoom' was used to conduct the discussions. The second one is its being convenient for one of the researchers as a moderator, because, she is an English Language teacher and has taught them throughout the pandemic process so she was also aware of the topic and could facilitate the discussions easily. The last one is that the participants were familiar with one another as they were chosen from the same class. Therefore, they engaged in discussions feeling comfortable as Kitzinger (1994) suggested that being familiar with one another is advantageous for the trust among them.

Data were collected through the discussions using semi-structured interview forms. The questions were prepared by the researchers conferring on two academics in the Faculty of Education. The second researcher was the moderator and the first one was the observer who directed her when necessary and took notes during the discussions. In an attempt to make each participant feel as comfortable as possible, the moderator asked some opening and introductory questions to let the group feel connected. The researchers hold two sessions for two groups. Each discussion took two hours. The data were recorded on a digital audio recorder. After the sessions the researchers transcribed them. To ensure reliability they re-coded the same data after two weeks.

Data Analysis

Two sets of data were analysed using qualitative content analysis which is used to examine the meaning of patterns, words, or perceptions. Qualitative data is collected employing interviews, focus groups, open-ended questions, and conversations. The aim of this analysing technique is to divide the content of the discussion into categories that have the same meaning (Moretti, Vliet, Bensing, Deledda, Mazzi, Rimondini, Zimmenmann, and Fletcher, 2011). Accordingly, similar codes were brought together into the main categories. Two academics confirmed the codes formed by the researchers to provide uniformity. To protect the privacy of the participants, codes were used to report statements such as 6F1 and 7M1. These codes represented 6th grade first female student and 7th grade first male student.

Findings and Results

Data analysis revealed the opinions of the students about the effects of using the camera on their FLA. The results of each research question were provided below.

RQ1- How do the students feel in online language classes compared to the traditional face-to-face ones?

Findings related to the first research question resulted in the categories and codes given in Table 1.

Table1. Students' feelings about online learning

General Categories	Codes	F
Negative Thoughts	Less disciplined	14
	Less effective	12
Positive Thoughts	Comfort in learning	6
	Enhancing digital literacy levels	5
Total		37

Two categories were formed for the first research question. The analysis showed that negative thoughts about online language learning overweighed the positive ones. Examining the answers, the researchers identified the first category as 'negative thoughts'. The participants of this category (f = 26) generally declared that they have negative feelings towards online language teaching. In terms of the first category, 2 codes were labelled. Most of the students declared that they find online learning 'less disciplined' (f=14) which is necessary in learning according to them. 6F2 stated in this respect "*I prefer the disciplined classroom environment because I cannot concentrate on what I learn in online learning*". 7M3 remarked "*Once I felt hungry and went to the kitchen to eat something, then I idled around and missed the class*". Other negative thought about online language teaching is its being less effective comparing to the face-to-face teaching (f=12). 7M1 commented as "*Due to the internet connection and other technical problems I find online learning less effective. Sometimes I cannot join online classes because of these reasons*", 6F7 stated "*In face-to-face classes I can ask you a lot of questions in break times and the duration of the lessons is forty minutes. However, in online meetings I cannot ask you any questions when you finish the zoom meeting and the lessons take thirty minutes*". As for the second category 'Positive Thoughts' 2 codes were formed. The first code of this category is '*comfort in learning'* (f=6). Some participants declared that online learning is more comfortable comparing to the face-to-face one. 6F5 indicated "*I felt ashamed in front of others when I couldn't answer the questions in the classroom. However, in online lessons I am very comfortable to answer the questions. Because I do not see the others' faces and do not know what they think about me and my mistakes*." 6M1 similarly reported "*When the teacher*

asked me a question I usually used the text chatting function which made me more relaxed." The second code was about enhancing students' digital literacy levels through online classes. In this code the participants reported their pleasure in learning new digital ways in language learning and they emphasized that they became more competent and self-directed in language learning. 7M3 stated "*My teacher taught us new digital ways to learn English, I especially love the game based ones. In traditional classes lessons are not that kind of enjoyable. After classes I went on playing and learn. So I my attitude towards English changed positively*."

RQ2. How do the students feel when turning on their cameras during online classes?

Findings related to the second research question were formed into the categories and codes given in Table 2.

Table2. Effects of Students' Turning on their Cameras

Categories	Codes	F
Anxious	Communication	6
	Physical Environment	5
	Personal issues	4
Comfortable	Physical Environment	4
	Communicating	4
Neutral		3
Total		26

When the participants were asked about their feelings when their cameras on most of them declared that they were anxious (f=15). In terms of this category two codes were formed. Most of the participants declared that they felt anxious communicating in the target language (f=8). 7M1 put it: "*When I turn my camera on, I cannot say what I want. I think I make mistakes and all my friends and my teacher despise me. However, if I speak while my camera off, I feel as I am alone in the room so I speak comfortably without the fear of being ashamed in front of the others*". A number indicated that they were anxious about their home environment when their cameras on (f=7). 6F3 reported "*I do not want my teacher and friends to see my room. It is because I and my 3 sisters share the same bedroom and it is never tidy. Also, they are usually in the bedroom when I attend online classes so I cannot turn my camera on*". Furthermore, some of the participants (f=4) reported some personal issues such as camera shyness that is thought to be related to lower self-esteem. 7F3 commented "*When I turn my*

camera on my heart starts beating faster, and I do not want my friends see my face because I think I seem strange from the front camera of the computer. And with this I cannot concentrate on language learning."

For the participants (f=15) declaring their anxiety while their cameras on the researchers asked one more question to probe in language learning depth*: In which skill do you feel yourself more anxious while your cameras on?* Findings related to this sub-question were labelled as codes given in Table3.

Table3. Skill-based Anxiety

Codes	F
Speaking	13
Writing	5
Reading	3
Listening	1
Total	22

The analysis of the data revealed that most of the participants (f=13) of this sub-question declared that they have difficulties in speaking while their cameras on. The second anxiety provoking skill is listening (f=5). It is known that these two skills are productive skills. The others reported some anxiety problems in other skills.

On the other hand, a number of students declared that they felt comfortable when their cameras on. Commenting in this manner 7M4 expressed "*I do not have to wear my school uniform and sit chairs every day, I wear my pyjamas and a t-shirt on my top sit my comfortable sofa and feel comfortable while having my online classes while my camera on. In home comfort I can concentrate on what I learn, so I learn better. For example, when you want us to make a dialogue I am better in this environment than the classroom because this is my safety zone.*" 4 of the participants noted that they were comfortable communicating to their teacher and friends when their cameras are on. 6M5 indicated "*I just see my teacher while talking to her and I feel we are alone in my bedroom so I can speak English better than I do in classroom*." 7F4 remarked "*When my camera is on I can express myself easier. For example, I sometimes forget the words and then I can use my gestures and mimics to tell them and the teacher can understand in this way*." The last category of this research question is 'Neutral'. 3 of the students declared that it did not matter whether their cameras on or off.

RQ3. What are the effects of teachers' turning on her/his camera on students' FLA?

Findings related to the third research question were resulted into two categories and some codes given in Table4.

Table4. Effects of Teacher's Turning Her Camera on

Category	Codes	F
Positive about using non-verbal communication techniques	Using gestures and mimics	15
	Eye Contact	9
	Smiling	5
	Humour	4
Neutral	Screen sharing	3
TOTAL		36

When the students were asked about their feelings when their teacher turned her camera on, 17 of 20 declared that they felt positive when they see her. In terms of 'Positive about using non-verbal communication techniques' category three codes were identified. Fifteen participants appeared to declare 'Using gestures and mimics' was the important reason for feeling less anxious. 6F4 stated "*I sometimes cannot understand what the teacher tells us however, if her camera is on I can see her mimics and gestures and I can guess the meaning of the word that I have not understood. Then I feel myself as good as I am in the classroom and do not have any anxiety about learning.*" The other code of this category is 'eye contact'. Indeed, 7M2 reported "*When you turn your camera on, I can see your face and eyes most importantly. I feel you look into my eyes while lecturing so I feel myself comfortable and concentrate on what you teach better*." 6M2 stated in a similar vein "*When you look into my eyes I feel myself in the classroom and do not do about trivial things when you lecture so I learn better*." The last code of this category is 'smiling'. Participants (f=5) noted that they learn better and feel less anxious when their teacher smiles at them. In this vein 7M3 stated "*When the teacher smiles on the screen I feel happier and stronger to overcome the barriers to learning English.*" 4 participants declared that they feel less anxious and enjoy the language classes more when their teacher turned her camera on and joked with them. 7F1 reported "*Sometimes you make jokes when your camera is on and it makes me laugh a lot. Moreover, I go on laughing even the class is over and remember what I learn in enjoyment*."

As for the second category, participants declared no difference between the teacher's camera on and off and it is labelled as 'Neutral'. In this category all of the students (f=3) noted that as long as the teacher shares her screen, seeing her or not does not change anything related to anxiety. 6M3 remarked "*I always*

concentrate on the screen not the faces on it, so it does not affect me when I do not see the teacher on the screen."

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether the use of camera in online language classes affects students' FLA or not. Based on the qualitative content analysis, the findings of this research can shed light on camera use and FLA in online learning. The results revealed that there is a possible relationship between camera use in online classes and LA.

First, the present study investigated secondary school students' feelings in online and face-to-face language learning. The results showed that most of the students have negative thoughts about online language learning comparing it to face-to-face one. They reported that they felt themselves less disciplined than the traditional classroom environment and that decreased the effectiveness of language learning process which required to be more interactive, social and collaborative. Sun (2014) noted that students find fully online language learning difficult in terms of lacking physical place, group activities, study regularly, collaborate with the peers, and socialize. Maican and Cocorada (2021) emphasized some stressors occurred when they did not understand some concepts, rules and constraints affecting students' feelings towards online language teaching. On the other hand, some other students in this study expressed their positive feelings about online language leaning regarding comfort in learning and enhancing their digital literacy levels. As for the introverted students online learning can be regarded as an opportunity. Since the participants admitted their comfort in online learning. Kim (2012) also claimed that introverted students mostly preferred online learning. In the present study some students declared that they do not want to participate discussions and prefer text chatting. Blau and Barak (2012) noted that introverted students preferred text chatting function more than the extroverted ones and they avoided discussions using communication media.

Second, this study investigated the students' feelings when they turn on their cameras. It was found that most of them felt anxious due to communication in target language, inconvenient physical conditions, and some personal problems. It is not an unexpected result that students' feeling more anxious in communicating in English when their cameras on. It is because the insufficiency in a field causes anxiety. This case is not different from face-to-face language classes. Students feel more anxious when they feel themselves unsecure as emphasized by Daud, Daud and Kassim (2016). In another study it was revealed that communicative activities cause more anxiety in language classes (MacIntyre,

Noels & Clément, 1997). As found by several research, communicating in target language cause fear because of the fear of being evaluated by their teacher and friends negatively (Horwitz, Horwitz & Come, 1986; Young, 1990; Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002; Tsiplakidas & Keramida, 2009). Besides, some participants talked about their inconvenient physical environment related anxiety. Most of them admitted to be troubled with their home environments while having online classes which brought about anxiety if they turned their camera on. The circumstances students told are the negative factors affecting language learning. Since, the students declared they shared the same room with several siblings and could not concentrate on the lesson. Engzell, Frey and Verhagen (2021) shared a similar result of their study as well. In spite of the comfort of home environment, learning experiences of the students in the Netherlands are not at the expected level during Covid-19 pandemic. Disadvantageous home environments cause inadequate learning.

As a sub-question researchers probed into the skills which cause anxiety. The finding is not a surprising one which indicated that participants were more anxious while speaking and writing in the target language. A possible explanation for this might be that using productive skills creates more anxiety among learners than the receptive ones. This finding is consistent with those of Young (1991) who reported using listening activities instead of speaking activities lessen the anxiety levels of students and Young (1986) and Çubukçu (2008) who found that speaking anxiety threatens learners.

Third, the current study inquired the effect of teacher's camera use during language teaching on students' LA. Nearly all of the participants indicated that they felt less anxious and more positive when their teacher turned her camera on. When the teacher turns her camera on s/he can utilize her gestures and mimics to facilitate language learning. Students then learn better and feel themselves more confident due to their teacher's using some non-verbal communication techniques. It is known that teacher's using her gestures and mimics facilitate language learning comparing to the verbal learning (Tellier, 2008) which may lessen the anxiety levels of students. McCafferty (2002) supported the idea that teachers' use of gestures in language teaching creates the zone of proximal development which promotes language learning and ease the interactive language teaching. Having eye contact was the second code. The participants (f=9) declared they felt less anxious when their teacher turned her camera on due to providing eye contact. Richmond and McCroskey (2000) emphasized that because of eye contact communication and interaction among people continue a long time. So the participants of the current study reported that

they felt more positive about the lesson when they make eye contact with their teacher through camera. Whereas in research conducted predicating traditional language teaching, it was proved that anxious students avoid making eye contact (Gregersen, 2005). This different finding of this research may be derived from the differences between face-to-face and online language teaching. In traditional language teaching classrooms students can avoid making eye contact when they do not feel themselves competent enough to interact with his/her teacher. However, in online language teaching settings making eye contact is one of the way to establish a relationship between the teacher and the students to make them included to the process. The last code of this category is another nonverbal communication technique 'smiling'. It is a universal fact that smiling can solve most of the problems which cause anxiety. Creating a comfortable classroom environment, teachers can include all the students in the process. In the current study participants also declared that when they saw their teacher on the screen particularly smiling they feel less anxious and more comfortable in learning. Chen and Chang (2004) emphasized that in a classroom atmosphere where the teacher lectures fast ignoring the feelings and needs of students creates more anxiety among students. Similarly, some other participants emphasized the role of the teacher's humour as an anxiety-reducing factor when her camera is on. This result reflects those of Korobkin (1988), who found that humour is an important factor to reduce anxiety in language classes and Khajavy, MacIntyre & Barabadi (2018) who also found that enjoyment can compete with FLA.

A small number of those interviewed (f=3) declared that as long as the teacher shares her screen they do not feel more or less anxious while learning. This result of the study shows that some of the students are not affected by the use of cameras thus they declared that they do not need to see the teacher while learning. This finding suggests that some students at the secondary school level are dependent on teachers more than the others. They need to see the teacher while learning. However, some others are just learning-driven and not seeing the teacher is not an anxiety-provoking factor for them. Moreover, it is not surprising that the same students did not report any negation about online learning. It can be inferred that the students have no problems with online learning are in a relaxed state about the conditions required by online classes.

Conclusion

Based on the investigation that the present study conducted, the results identified most of the students' dissatisfaction about online language teaching comparing it to the traditional face-to-face instruction. Most of the participants noted their

anxiety turning their cameras on but comfort their teachers' using her while teaching. Taken together these results suggest that some physical and emotional states may prevent students to use their camera. However, the teacher's turning on her camera comforts the atmosphere by the help of her humour and favourableness. In general, therefore, it seems the existence of teacher in the environment is still necessary for the students to maintain communication and interaction in the target language. Aida, (1994) emphasized the importance of the existence of teacher in language learning environments to reduce the anxiety levels of students. Another significant finding emerge from this study is that speaking and writing skills are regarded the most anxiety-provoking ones among others. As they require productivity the participants normally feel themselves more anxious in front of the camera performing those skills.

All in all, either in online or face-to-face environments, arranging language learning activities in terms of the needs of students and instead of being an authority teacher figure being a supporter creating a friendly learning atmosphere and guiding them in the process are essential factors to overcome affective barriers such as anxiety. Since, anxiety has been expressed as one of the important barriers to learn a foreign language. Several studies have tried to the factors emerging anxiety in language learning and the methods to overcome this barrier effectively in face-to-face language teaching settings. This paper attempts to provide a perspective of the secondary school students about the effects of using camera in online language classes on students' FLA. Hence, not only observing learners' body movements and gestures but also students' seeing their teacher while teaching is crucial to overcome anxiety for a more efficient language performance. It is thought that it could provide a sound basis for the EFL teachers in the online language learning field.

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CHAPTER 8

A NARRATIVE INQUIRY OF ONLINE TEACHER TRAINING WITH LOCAL MENTOR SUPPORT

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Abstract

Online education, especially in higher level education has become the norm with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, however, it was not invented and implemented with the pandemic. Even in teacher training there had already been online courses which equipped the teacher candidates with practical information. One such English language teacher training course is offered by an American university but has an audience from all over the world. The present study set out with the assumption that, the generic content that is not culture-specific, and delivered through an interaction pattern that does not require virtual video conferencing can be supplemented and can benefit from

the support of the experienced teachers of English from the local context of the teacher candidates. The course in the present study had two rounds with different participants, and the same local mentors employed different strategies in the first round offered before the pandemic and the second one offered after the pandemic broke out. The present research is based on the reflections of the four local mentors who worked in collaboration with the main course offered to Turkish preservice teachers by an American University. The qualitative data collected from the local mentor journals, field notes and interviews were analyzed through content analysis, and the results revealed that the pandemic period was much more productive in that the regular video conferencing component was included which humanized the mentoring process. Another component that proved to be very productive was the student conferences held at the end of the two courses. The presenters will explore the reasons behind the local mentor practice that were both efficient and unproductive in this preservice teacher training support with an emphasis on the changes that took place in the longitudinal process.

Key Words: Online education, mentoring, covid-19 pandemic

The title of this book suggests the apparent fact that as English language teachers and teacher educators, we had to be even more creative to address the challenges of online education enforced by the Covid-19 pandemic that confined higher education stakeholders to their homes when they still bore the responsibility of teaching and training future teachers for a world of education that was full of unexpected expectations much more than it were before the pandemic. When physical classrooms transformed into their virtual counterparts, innovations speeded up trying to adapt to the sudden shift that brought about its own unwritten rules and norms on teaching practices, principles, media, and methods. The present chapter dwells on the endeavour of four teacher trainers, who will be referred to as "local mentors" in this chapter for reasons which will be explained below, to manage their training and mentoring practices when working with 100 preservice teachers studying at English Language Teaching (ELT) Departments in 38 different universities in Turkey. Through a narrative inquiry methodology, the four local mentors will report on how they solved problems that relate to the medium of instruction, content, and assessment. The chapter bears importance in that it will shed light on instruction that is not only outside the traditional brick and mortar classroom but also outside the formal education curricula of ELT programs affiliated with Education Faculties in Turkish universities. The chapter will first provide information about the design of the local mentoring program the informants in the study are actively engaged in as teacher trainers,

portray the literature on studies in online mentoring and discuss the perceptions of the four local mentors through a narrative inquiry method.

Introduction

Online education, especially at tertiary level has become the norm with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, however, it was not invented and implemented with the pandemic. In teacher training, too, there had already been online courses which equipped the teacher candidates with theoretical and practical information. Two of such English language teacher training courses are offered by two American tertiary level education institutions but have participants from all over the world. The present study is on a different practice devised to supplement these online teacher training courses, the local mentor support. The local mentor support practice burgeoned on the assumption that the generic content that is not culture-specific, and delivered through an interaction pattern that does not require virtual video conferencing could be supplemented with experienced English language teachers and teacher trainers and mentors from the local context of the participants so that the participants could relate to the course content more and have more confidence in implementing the content in their local context and setting. To this end, the four local mentors proposed a project in which they could provide local mentoring support to the participants of two teacher training courses funded by the Regional Language Office (RELO) of the American Embassy in Ankara, Turkey. The courses, one of which is titled "Using Technology in the Language Classroom" offered by Iowa University and the other titled "Teaching Grammar Communicatively" offered by the World Learning Institute, were offered in 2020 and 2021, each for a duration of eight weeks. The group of local mentors remained the same throughout the project and they employed different strategies in the first round offered before the pandemic and in the second one offered after the pandemic broke out. The local mentors worked in collaboration with the main course instructors who offered the course online at the above-mentioned institutions.

The main objective for the courses was to supplement the generic content with the collaboration of experienced English language teachers who worked as mentors for the course participants studying at English Language Teaching departments as junior or senior students from a wide range of universities in Turkey. Participants from 38 universities in Turkey were selected as a result of a competitive screening process. The selection process was based on several criteria such as, geographical representation, type of university (state, private or foundation), gender of applicants, their letter of intention, etc.

The participants followed the course modules asynchronously at their own pace but there were set deadlines for the tasks within each module. They needed to invest 5-8 hours of coursework in one module, and discussions, hands-on tasks, quizzes, and reflections were used as formative assessment throughout the course. Apart from the regular course work, local mentors provided input through various means. Mentor input for the courses offered in 2020 and 2021 differed in terms of the means and tasks used. In the 2020 courses which had started before the pandemic and continued well into it, the mentors mainly used an online discussion forum, WhatsApp groups and e-mail for communication and mentoring purposes. The discussion forum was used to start online discussions that are related to the content of a specific module and aimed at engaging the students in discussions about how the new information could be implemented into the Turkish context. The mentors set up a WhatsApp group for instant messaging, building rapport, building a community of participants and other announcements as well. In the 2021 courses that started and ended during the pandemic, the mentors used an online discussion forum, WhatsApp groups, e-mail, and weekly Zoom meetings during the mentoring process. In addition to the means used in the previous year, Zoom meetings were introduced to cater for the face-to-face contact and additional input sessions of the mentors. Another addition to the courses was the presence of two facilitators for each course who were chosen among the alumni of the previous courses on a voluntary basis. The four facilitators were introduced in order to provide peer support to participants and also include the perspective of alumni of the courses into the process.

Considering the effects of the pandemic in all areas of education including the continuous professional development of teachers, this study is significant in that it provides a framework and an example on how online mentoring can be implemented as a component of an existing online course and how both mentors and participants can benefit from the process. Furthermore, this blended approach is important because it demonstrates how both generic and customized input might be blended into an online course and also how the mentoring process can remain meaningful for both participants and mentors despite the disadvantages of the pandemic where face-to-face interaction opportunities are limited.

Literature Review

A brief overview of the undergraduate ELT programs in Turkey will provide a more thorough understanding of the online teacher training course and its contributions to the preservice teachers. The Council of Higher Education (CoHE) is a regulatory supervision institution that determines the content and

intensity of the courses offered in undergraduate programs, including that of ELT departments. Although throughout the years the ELT programs in Turkey witnessed several major changes, to put it in a nutshell the 1997 curriculum reform revisions mostly envisioned an increase in methodology courses and practice teaching while regarding linguistics and literature courses as elective courses rather than departmental required courses. The curriculum revision made by CoHE in 2018, also emphasized the practicum courses with an intention to align the content of the ELT undergraduate curriculum with their counterparts in EU countries (Kırkgöz, 2017; Altundiş, 2006; Nergis, 2011). Today, ELT undergraduate curriculum education offers courses on methodology, materials design, assessment, and practicum (Doğan, 2020; Seferoğlu, 2004). While some programs offer courses on technology integration in language teaching, some other programs do not offer such courses due to lack of qualified faculty.

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs offers theme-specific Online Professional English Network (OPEN) Programs to teachers and candidates of English to support them with more practice-oriented training in their profession to introduce the resources and tools available to ELT teachers. Because the present paper is on providing local mentor support to the participants of two OPEN courses online, the literature on mentoring and online mentoring is relevant to the present study.

Mentoring

A 'mentor' is a person who is ready and willing to pass down wisdom and provide all of the answers to those who are novice teachers and/or inexperienced. A "mentor" in the profession of education is considered as the experienced teacher who guides, facilitates, and challenges the novice and/or inexperienced teachers (Bataeineh, 2020, Daresh, 2004; Akçamete, et al., 2010; Aslan et al., 2020; Aslan & Dayıoğlu-Öcal, 2012; Henning et al., 2015). The teacher having this guidance and facilitation is referred to as "mentee" and this process is defined as a mentoring process. The relationship of the mentee and the mentor is based on mutual trust and solidarity. Therefore, the competence of the mentor is crucial. Mentors need personality traits such as patience, understanding and integrity; the effective communication skills such as scaffolding to sustain the relationship with the mentee and the knowledge on the field and the context (Ersin & Atay, 2021; Squires, 2019).

The role of mentors is various as guide, model, supporter, observer, advisor, demonstrator, educator, and professional peer. (Richter et al. 2013; Adlesi & Bizjak, 2010; Tawalbeh, 2021; Gray et al. 2021; Wexler, 2020).

Mentors as guides are responsible for the facilitation of the mentee in terms of the implementation and the administrative issues in a program. The role of the supporter refers to helping the novice and inexperienced teachers to deal with any challenge they face. The role 'observer' mainly focuses on examining the classroom implementation and giving constructive feedback to establish an effective learning environment. Mentors are teacher educators who share their experience with the novice teachers for their professional growth. Mentors are professional peers who have collegial relationships with the mentees.

Mentoring is an important part of teacher education (Ginkel et al., 2016; Akçamete et al., 2010; Sundli, 2007; Henning et al., 2015) as mentors provide hands-on skills related to the context and the experience of teaching. The main benefits of mentoring are listed as practical guidance, developing interpersonal skills, finding, and solving academic problems, social networking, increasing personal satisfaction and trust (Allen & O'Brien, 2006; Ginkel et al., 2016). According to Flesch (2005), four basic components of mentoring are clinical supervisory/observation, apprenticeship, competence, and reflection. Clinical supervisory/observation refers to a systematically stepped observation of the mentee in the classroom. Apprenticeship is jointly planned and/or implemented by both the mentor and mentee. Competence means an accumulation of knowledge on teaching and learning processes shared and developed by both the mentor and mentee. Reflection is an essential part in which both parties share their experience in that specific mentoring context. Competence means an accumulation of knowledge on teaching and learning processes shared and developed by both the mentor and mentee. Reflection is an essential part in which both parties share their experience in the specific mentoring context. The process is a learning experience for both parties (Ginkel et al., 2016; Aslan & Dayıoğlu-Öcal, 2012)

Online Mentoring and Online Teacher Training

Mentoring process is mostly face-to-face and in some cases – such as distance learning -it is virtual or online. Single and Muller (2001) define e-mentoring or online mentoring as follows:

> E-mentoring or online mentoring is a naturally occurring relationship or paired relationship within a program that is set up between a more senior/ experienced individual (the mentor) and a lesser skilled individual (the mentee), primarily using electronic communications, and is intended to develop and grow the skills, knowledge and confidence of the lesser skilled individual to help him or her succeed… (Single & Muller, 2001, p. 108)

Both the recent technological developments and the Covid-19 pandemic forces virtual or online mentoring instead of face-to-face (Tarihoran et al., 2021). Kuzu and Akbulut (201) stated that it was necessary to have an online mentor supporting individuals' personal and professional development in this new era, guiding their careers, and helping them adapt to new environments. Briscoe (2019) indicated that the virtual mentor-mentee relationship was positively impacted by technological advances. They suggest that virtual mentoring is "a viable solution for shaping preservice teachers in the early stages of their careers, establishing a commitment to professional learning and mitigating teacher attrition rates and burnout by improving well-being among prospective teachers" (p. 251) Olivier and Trivedi (2021) also add that online mentorship is increasingly becoming important and it is viewed as one of the ways of self-improvement practices in the field.

Online mentoring also brings about the advantages of "relative independence of time and place, less hierarchical horizontal dynamics and mode of communication" (Dorner et al., 2020). Moreover, asynchronous, and synchronous tools are helpful to promote reflection since the mentors and mentees are both in the relaxed environment of their homes (Ersin & Atay, 2021). Online mentoring pushes the limits of learning, and it can be applied effectively as the face-to-face one. However, computer literacy, appropriate computer equipment, internet access, effective communication skills, availability, arrangement of meetings, ensuring the privacy of the messages, willingness for feedback and establishing a sincere, honest, and open environment are necessary for the effective application of online mentoring (Clutterbuck & Lane, 2004). Smith et al. (2018) highlights the importance of the online mentoring process in education, and he indicates that the virtual environment, through discussion boards, builds an interactive collaborative space that can work against isolation, and this motivates students to become "self-organized and participatory learners" in a mentor-supported online distance learning context.

Online mentoring can be applied in a context where education and work are maintained by technology and access to the Internet, on the other hand it is apparent that there are also negative aspects of online mentoring, "including misunderstandings, flaming, and coldness of the medium" which can be reversed by training prior to the mentoring process (Ensher et al., 2003, p. 283). In the COVID-19 period some technological problems were experienced such as the inadequacy of the equipment and internet access. Sometimes these led to the cancellation and delay in mentoring programs (Tarihoran, et al. 2021).

Most online mentoring before the pandemic was with the intention to train in-service and preservice teachers with a course design that would appeal to teachers from different cultures in various parts of the world. Although online teacher training does not date back to years before the spread of the internet in the late 1990s, there is a surplus of literature that concentrates on the benefits of such online teacher training programs due to their being asynchronous and self-paced which increases the accessibility of these programs. The fact that online teacher training programs integrate more audiovisuals also make them appealing to teachers and teacher candidates (Dumford & Miller, 2018; Alshamrani, 2019). While online teacher training programs can be very beneficial because of the above aspects, the interaction with the mentors and the peers stand out to be the main drawbacks of these online programs (Baloran, 2020; Wang et al., 2020). The literature on the drawbacks of online teacher training programs suggests that teachers who are trained through online programs need to continue their professional development to develop multiple skills and strategies in teaching (Zweig & Stafford, 2016; Duncan & Bernett, 2009). The content and methodology of online teacher training programs vary to a great extent when their objectives, the material available and cultural content is considered (Delfino & Persico, 2007). What makes online teacher training effective is the methodological design of the content. The task design can bring in authentic communication to online training programs, both among the peers and between the mentors and the attendees (Adnan, 2018; Araya, 2019; Jung & Choi,1999). In addition to authentic interaction, what makes an online teacher training program effective is providing ample opportunities for reflection on teachers' or preservice teachers' beliefs and ideas through collaborative projects that are directly relevant to real life teaching settings and circumstances (Káplár-Kodácsy & Dorner, 2017; Rodesiler & Pace, 2015; Teräs, 2016). Considering the research mentioned above, in addition to their cognitive, teaching, and social presence in an online course, teacher trainers who are involved in online mentoring need to be also emotionally present. This is a newly added component to the Community of Inquiry (CoI) model (Cleveland-Innes & Campbell, 2012). Garrison et al. (2000) define social, cognitive, and teaching presence in the following ways. Social presence is the ability of participants in a community of inquiry to project themselves socially and emotionally, as 'real' people (i.e., their full personality), through the medium of communication being used. Cognitive presence is the extent to which learners are able to construct and confirm meaning through sustained reflection and discourse in a critical community of inquiry. Teaching presence is the design, facilitation, and direction of cognitive and social

processes for the purpose of realizing personally meaningful and educationally worthwhile learning outcomes. As an addition, Cleveland-Innes and Campbell define emotional presence as the outward expression of emotion, affect, and feeling by individuals and among individuals in a community of inquiry, as they relate to and interact with the learning technology, course content, students, and the instructor (2012). Hence, as evidence concludes the presence of emotion in online learning communities (Derks et al., 2008; Marchand & Gutierrez, 2011; Lehman, 2006; Ge, 2021), it is of great importance that online mentors take them into consideration in their interaction with course participants.

The working definition of Local mentoring in this study

In the present study, as part of the online program that the teacher candidates were registered to, the local mentors assigned preservice teachers with tasks and discussion questions parallel to their weekly modules about the local setting, they kept regular contact with them, and they pursued their active involvement in the program. In addition, they encouraged the teacher candidates to participate in local context discussions and helped them to brainstorm on the teaching practices in the local settings. In the light of this information, local mentoring can be defined as guiding pre-service teachers with local context feedback and assisting them to develop their teaching capabilities by releasing and enriching their professional potential in the local setting.

Methodology

Research questions:

- What have the local mentors assumed their role to be in the mentoring process?
- Which specific modifications does the pandemic enforced on the local mentoring roles?
- Which specific modifications does the experience of the local mentors' enforced on the local mentoring roles?
- What is the conception of the local mentors of local mentoring?

Research Design

The methodology of the study is based on a participatory narrative inquiry method which is based on narratives of the participants in the research analyzed by themselves. Stories are created by the participants and researchers form the

data of narrative inquiry research. In narrative inquiry the researchers can be the participants of the research. In the present case too, the researchers are the participants of the study.

The present study lends itself to narrative inquiry because education and educational research is the construction and reconstruction of personal and social stories; learners, teachers, and researchers are storytellers and characters in their own and other's stories (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). It is not uncommon to conduct research based on a narrative inquiry design when writing biographies, yet the rationale behind the choice of this particular research design in this study is that the researchers acted as local mentors of a mentoring program they themselves designed. The local mentoring was offered when the OPEN course participants were taking the online teacher training courses, and they revised the mentoring content and media the second time they did local mentoring after the pandemic broke out. Hence, the particular circumstances of two rounds of the local mentoring process are not replicable and the experience of the four local mentors is not generalizable, yet the findings of the research still bear importance in that they will shed light on future online local mentoring program design and emergency remote teaching local mentoring. Connelly and Clandinin (1999) stated that unlike more traditional methods, narrative inquiry successfully captures personal and human dimensions that cannot be quantified into dry facts and numerical data. The four mentors revealed their mentoring journey through their "stories to live by" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999, p. 4). The researchers decided on the narrative inquiry method since it would provide richer insights than the structured predetermined interview or survey data input encompassing possible personal experiences and perspectives. In narrative inquiry how the particular participants perceive and interpret their experience is the focus. Thus, the narratives are a representation of how the participants make sense of their story. The content and the wording of how the participants make sense of their story reveals that the participants are actively involved in shaping their experience as meaning generating agents rather than input providing organisms. The contextual features of the pre-pandemic and pandemic period that the local mentoring was performed are unique experiences that situate the narratives of the four local mentors during which the concept of local mentoring was generated and regenerated with the influence of the four local mentors. In the narrative inquiry method, the phenomenon is discursively addressed. The fact that the local mentors are all language teachers is advantageous considering how proficient they were in expressing their perceptions and observations when plotting their major storylines.

Data collection

The researchers went through the following steps of narrative inquiry research method: First they identified semi-structured interview questions. Next, they answered the questions in a coherent narrative story. This part comprised the interpersonal process recall. Larsen et al. (2008) define the interpersonal process recall as the process in which the researcher elicits data on how the participant makes sense of the concept under inquiry. When the researchers interviewed the other local mentors the fact that they were very familiar with the local mentoring process helped with the flow of the narrative. The researcher local mentor made sure that the participant local mentor was not guided or emotionally influenced by the interviewer. The participants went over the narrative summary. Later, the narrative story was reviewed and coded under the common recurring topics and similar topics that fall under the same codes were merged. Later the codes were re-coded with more generic titles that would let overarching themes of meta-narratives emerge. The aspects that the researchers linked to their discourse describing their mentorship were identified by the four local mentors and are reported in the findings section of the paper. The data collection procedure can be seen in figure 1 and the interview procedure can be observed in figure 2.

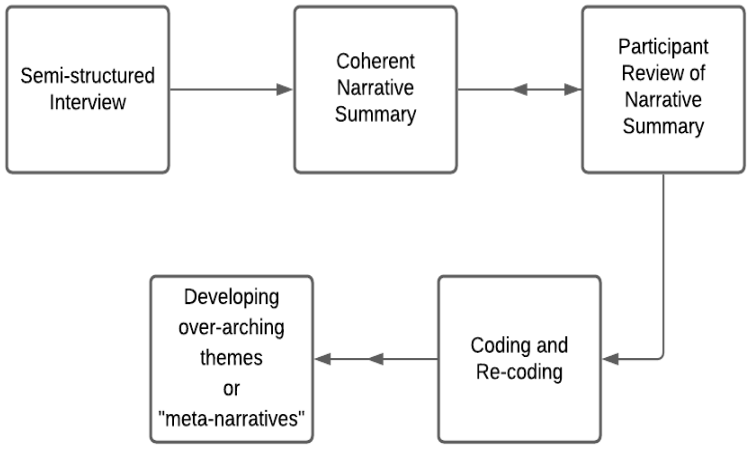

Figure 1. The data collection procedure

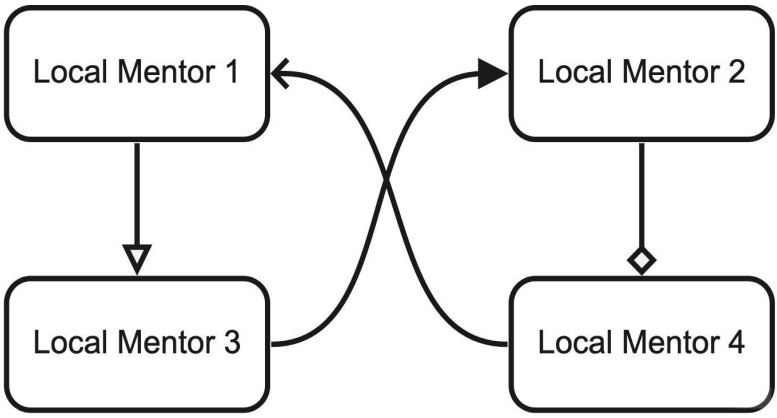

Figure 2: The Participant (Local Mentor) Interview Flowchart

Data analysis

The study followed a situational analysis approach in its data analysis. Situational data analysis is a qualitative data analysis method that is based on a grounded theory approach where the researchers do not start with a hypothesis before they collect and analyze the data. Clarke (2005), who developed the method of situational analysis, defines the situational analysis procedure as a mapping scheme in which the interviews are cross coded with another researcher to note down the internal and external contextual factors that have influence on the narratives of the participants. The narrative of the participants are based on their subjective experience, perception and expression and accepted as true. The narratives are therefore taken at their face value to explore the subjective perception of the participants in the "social world" they exist in (Josselson, 2004, p. 5).

Participants

The participants were selected according to a purposive (or non-probability) sampling method.

Participant	1	2	3	4
Teaching experience: Started teaching in ...	1997	1995	1998	1997
Teacher training experience: Started teacher training in ...	2018	2004	2005	2011
Mentoring / Online mentoring experience	None	Involved in formal and informal mentoring but has no experience in online mentoring	Involved in formal and informal mentoring but has no experience in online mentoring	None
Holds an MA degree in ...	ELT	Foreign Language Teaching	Educational Sciences, Curriculum and Instruction	Educational Sciences, Curriculum and Instruction
Holds a PhD degree in ...	ELT	Applied Linguistics	Educational Sciences, Educational Administration	Educational Sciences, Curriculum and Instruction
Teaches at ...	Freshman English Department at a state university	Freshman English Department at a state university	Department of English Linguistics	School of Foreign Languages, Prep and Academic English
Experience in pre-service teaching	Has taught four different ELT undergraduate courses	Has taught four different courses to freshman and junior level students	Has taught some courses at Department of English Linguistics and Educational Sciences	None

Figure 3: Demographic profiles of the participants

Findings

The Narrative of Participant 1

Participant one did not have any prior experience on mentoring preservice teachers although she had taught departmental and elective undergraduate courses in ELT departments. She was not sure about the exact job definition of being a mentor, and hence could only imagine the responsibilities of a local mentor assisting an online pre-service teacher training course. She states her attitude towards the local mentoring position as follows:

> "I thought together with the other local mentors we would be able to create more opportunities for the preservice teachers to reflect on the content of the online course they were attending in relation to the teaching setting in Turkey. I was not confident about the fact that my own Turkish state school experience was limited, and I believed that the preservice teachers that I would be mentoring would be more informed of the realities of the local teaching circumstances. Yet, this thought did not hinder my volunteering for mentoring, since I thought I could still ask the right questions and make relevant and constructive comments to broaden the horizon of the teacher candidates."

The first participant defined the roles of the mentoring process mostly as asking reflective questions and giving written feedback to individual teacher candidates on their answers. However, she reports that the local mentor role assumed a totally different process when the same online teacher training course was offered the second time to a different student cohort after the pandemic. She reports that the mentoring role took up a different interaction medium after the pandemic. She stated that the online platform that landed itself to virtual communication between the students and the mentor was not satisfying any more, and also added that both the students and the mentors were not enthusiastic to bear with one more online interaction where the correspondents did not meet and did not engage in a dialectic real time communication pattern. To quote her directly, the first participant explained the shift in their mentor role as follows:

> "The mentoring role in my mind changed to a dramatic extent in the second round the course was offered, which was after the pandemic broke out. The preservice teachers were confined at home and took their departmental courses online, so we as local mentors tried to reduce the online asynchronous workload that the local mentors assigned them in the previous period. We wanted to, in fact, engage in a more humanized

> interaction, online but face to face at the same time, so we added holding the weekend sessions component to our local mentoring role, which, to my observation, worked even better than we thought, because the participants knew us as human beings rather than just as "script". I mean, in the second round, the reflective questions and feedback comments the local mentors posted in the first round before the pandemic were also supplemented with informal chat on the video conferencing platform during or after the weekend sessions. Still, I cannot say that we reached out to all the participants. Some of them were already overwhelmed with other video conferences they had to attend during the semester and remained relatively passive during the weekend sessions too."

The first participant stated that the experience they gained from the first round made the local mentors make some significant changes in their mentoring process the second time the course was offered. Interestingly enough, the major change was to include more video conferencing sessions where the participants and the mentors met and covered not necessarily only local context-related issues but more generic issues that a teacher needs to be exposed to when developing their teaching philosophy, such as discriminatory practices in education, stereotyping, overcoming prejudices, adopting a humanistic approach to teaching and researching skills and methodology as a practicing teacher. The first participant expressed that while the first time they did local mentoring, they felt confined by the boundaries of the word "local" in local mentoring they themselves coined. Yet, the second time, during the pandemic period, the focus of the mentoring issues switched from local to general, but the discussions after the weekend workshops remained local. She also added that the preservice teachers attending the online teacher training course were more eager to provide information and reflect on their own background and the possible teaching setting during the second time.

As for her overall experience the first participant expressed that she had not expected to be emotionally engaged in the local mentoring process. In addition to that she stated that the mentoring process contributed to her perspective as a teacher maybe just as much as it did to the preservice teachers. She reported that the fact that the preservice teachers were from a wide variety of backgrounds, from different universities and different cities was a major factor which affected her learning experience as a mentor. She said:

> "I came to the realization that I had some prejudices about universities in peripheral areas of Anatolia. I assumed that the metropolitan area

> universities offered a more profound teacher education, however, I have seen ample proof of the quality education in many universities. The preservice students we were mutually engaged in a reflective education process made comments throughout both courses that reflected a deep analysis of their teaching philosophy and the present teaching setting circumstances in Turkey with specific references to either their observations or personal experiences. Sometimes specific references to Chomsky or Krashen or the current ELT trends, or references to practical online websites and programs used in ELT, were made by the students which elevated the level of discussions on the tasks assigned or during the videoconferencing sessions."

The Narrative of Participant 2

The second participant also did not have any preceding experience on mentoring pre-service teachers even though she had been working as an English instructor and a teacher educator at the tertiary level. She had guided, trained, and monitored in-service teachers at various institutions, however, online local mentoring for pre-service teachers was an entirely brand-new experience for her. Furthermore, the digital aspect of the experience was another challenge for a Gen-X teacher who had only face to face teaching and teacher training practice. The second participant had dozens of questions in her mind about local mentors as a term and online local mentoring process before starting the project. To quote her directly, she expressed her feelings at the beginning of the first round of the course as follows:

> "It was my first online course mentoring experience. I thought I would feel more comfortable with a person than I would do with a computer screen, as the experience was more genuine. It took me a while to figure out how to use the digital platform. I learned where I would write the questions, how I would assign tasks and reply to the participants. I was following the discussion boards of the main course and trying to learn about the course participants' views and their backgrounds. I strongly believed it was essential to master every detail in the course to become a better local mentor. I can say that the mentoring during the first round was more stressful, but the satisfaction I felt in the end was great."

Depending on her previous teacher training experience, she thought that her roles and responsibilities would probably include guiding pre-service teachers

by sharing her previous experiences and providing them with a context where they could reflect on their own experiences in the field. Even though her local context-Turkish state school- teaching experience was limited, she was eager to convey her teaching enthusiasm to pre-service teachers. She reported that the first round of the project was a discovery phase in terms of mentoring. They did not have a kind of mentor role model to be inspired by or to hold as an example. She believed that pre-service teachers had different needs and expectations, which would be another challenge for her. She states her thoughts about the first round of the online local mentoring process as follows:

> "I really wanted to be a part of this project where I could improve myself as a language teacher and a teacher trainer in the digital age. I had so much experience to share, what's more, I was curious to know more about the teacher candidates of the digital age and their practices in the field. I believed that the local mentoring experience would be a mutual learning opportunity for both mentors and pre-service teachers. I imagined that my relationship with the candidates wouldn't be one-directional, and I would be open to learn from them. At the beginning of the first round, I wasn't sure about my roles and responsibilities as a local mentor. This period can be described as the stage at which we were in an attempt to express the mentoring process in our own way. Then, I decided to set an inspiring role model as a teacher, guide them whenever they needed, raise an awareness for self-improvement, let them reflect on the course content and share their teaching experience with us."

The second participant reported that in the first round of the project their mentoring roles involved initiating discussions by asking reflective questions about the local aspect of the course content and giving written feedback to the preservice teachers. She believed that this way of guiding was an absolutely unique experience, on the other hand, she felt the need to do more for effective mentoring so that they would involve more teacher candidates in the local discussions. She reflected on her experience as follows:

> "We sent the teacher candidates reflective questions about that week's course content and then we gave them feedback on what they had written in the local discussion groups. While some of the candidates regularly participated in the online local discussions, some of them never showed up or joined the discussions. Actually, witnessing their reluctance in sharing and participating was very disappointing for me. However, I was able to

> empathize with them when I recalled my last year at the university. Most probably, they were overwhelmed by the workload at school, which was an acceptable excuse during the pandemic. As their local mentors, we tried to identify the problem and motivate them to participate in the local discussions. As the next step, we contacted them individually and sent them motivational emails and text messages. We called the ones who had never joined the local group discussions and asked the reasons in friendly conversations. Since our interaction was limited to the local discussion groups and WhatsApp groups for announcements, communicating in person made me thrilled at the time. As I mentioned before, we were forming our own mentoring style with my colleagues, and we adopted a humanistic touch as an essential part of our mentoring process."

The second participant indicated that their local mentor role was entirely altered or reshaped when the same online teacher training course was offered the second time to a different student cohort in the second round of the project. The local mentors organized video conferencing sessions where the course participants and the mentors met weekly. These sessions covered not necessarily only local context-related issues but more general themes. She stated that these online meetings with the course participants decreased the online asynchronous workload which constituted a problem in the previous period. Furthermore, they were helpful to know the participants better and they contributed to the humanistic aspect of the course. Consequently, the second participant believes that these online gatherings positively developed their interaction with the teacher candidates and as a local mentor she felt much more satisfied with the close communication. She reflected on her experience as follows:

> "I view the mentoring process as an adventurous journey along which we discover new routes or new places whenever we take the road. After having tried different mentoring activities, I felt more than a 'local' mentor in the second round of the project: I was a teacher, learner, teacher trainer, academic and professional advisor, a colleague and sometimes just an observer in the virtual meeting room. Most importantly, the course participants had an opportunity to reflect on their experiences face to face even if it was an online gathering. Although there were course participants who were reluctant to attend the video conferencing sessions, most of them had a positive attitude towards our activities. It was an enriching experience to communicate with the teacher candidates and listen to their views about the recent developments in the field."

The second participant stated that her involvement in this project was one of the best learning adventures ever. She defined this experience as an exhilarating and revitalizing learning opportunity. She narrated what she had learned as a local mentor, and she expressed her changing views about the online mentoring process as follows:

> "Online local mentoring was an awareness-raising transformation process for me as a person and an educator. Once a scholar said, "Teachers are not only in the school, they are everywhere," so are the mentors, thanks to online education. Before this project, I always believed in the power of face-to-face communication teaching and learning. Contacting the trainer/ mentor/ teacher in-person and learning from his/her academic knowledge, personality and character traits are indispensable aspects of any teacher training process. However, particularly in the second round, I came to the realization that advantages of online teacher mentoring outweigh those of traditional mentoring. No matter what knowledge and experience you have, when you enter the digital world, you start to learn something new - both in terms of discoveries and challenges. Besides, we developed life-long connections with the teacher candidates. Weekly video-conferencing sessions and pre-conference meetings positively improved our communication with them. You may think it is really difficult to connect on a human level with people when they only exist in two dimensions on your computer screen, yet we were able to build genuine and long-lasting relationships with our mentees. To sum up, self-development is a life-long process, we can always develop new skills, competencies and knowledge at any stage of our lives."

The Narrative of Participant 3

The third mentor was an experienced teacher trainer and reported that she was enthusiastic about the prospect of online mentoring considering the participants' age, experience level and motivation. However, she also had some concerns about the experience as she was not sure about the sufficiency of the online platforms and tools she would be using. She stated that at the beginning, she regarded having physical contact with the mentees as an indispensable part of any efficient mentoring relationship. As the course would finish with a student conference, she stated that she was content with what the courses entailed because she would get to know the participants in person. In her own words she said:

> "I have been a teacher trainer for 17 years now and before this course, I had mentoring experience with in-service teachers and colleagues which was limited only to face-to-face environments. I was very excited about the prospect of mentoring pre-service teachers as I was aware that it would be a different and enriching experience for me. I have always regarded pre-service education as a privilege because you get to have an impact on teachers in the making, you have more opportunity to instill good habits from the start, and I thought considering the age difference, I could learn from them as well. The Z generation fascinates me and having the opportunity to mentor a group of Gen Z prospective teachers was very exciting. Overall, I was looking forward to the experience considering factors like age, experience level and motivation of the participants. I had never had any experience in online mentoring environments and although I had a very positive attitude, I wasn't quite sure if the means that we selected and virtual learning spaces that we created would suffice to get our message through and most importantly facilitate the positive rapport that I always thought was an indispensable part of any mentoring relationship. I was looking very much forward to the student conference that was planned to be held at the end of the course in another city in Turkey where all participants would come together and share their experiences. I thought that the student conference would be the highlight of the whole process as it would physically bring people together in the end. I thought that my role would be of a colleague who had started off much earlier, a person who had a lot of stories from the classrooms to tell during the discussions. I also thought that I would be coaching them as well in this challenging course so that they do not lose momentum and drop out. I would also bring more input from the local context, namely the challenges and opportunities of teaching English in Turkey. This aspect would be very meaningful for the participants as well. I have also always believed that being a role model with your code of conduct as a teacher (I mean the observable behaviours) is very important, so I perceived the end of course conference as a good opportunity to come together with the participants."

The third participant expressed a great paradigm shift regarding her role as a mentor who is "being physically present" during a mentoring process. Although she was disappointed about not being able to meet her mentees in the first round, she said that soon she realized through the feedback she received from her mentees that she actually achieved to build a strong mentoring relationship

with them regardless of which space and tools she was forced to use due to the COVID-19 pandemic. She narrated how she felt much more confidently when the second round of the courses started after her positive experience in the first round.

> "When the COVID-19 pandemic broke out, it became clear that the student conference was going to be online. The modules were already over, and we had had the mentoring process behind us, just waiting for the last event to happen to complete the courses. The forced cancellation was frustrating for me as I really wanted to meet the participants in person, I thought that it would increase the impact we make to a great extent. In my mind, a mentoring project that has no face-to-face interaction component would be missing an important aspect and be incomplete somehow. However, apart from my initial disappointment I soon came to realize that through the discussion forum and texting and voice messages, I somehow could build quality interaction with my group. Soon we were exchanging news, voice messages, even sharing personal stories both related to the course content and also life in general. I felt completely in-synch with my mentees and realized that you could actually build a mentoring relationship that is completely online. When the second round started in the middle of the pandemic, I felt much more confident and less concerned about being physically close to my mentees in order to be more efficient. I put more emphasis on my online presence during the course and we added weekly Zoom meetings to our mentoring program in addition to the already existing spaces in order to have more contact with the participants. In the process I became less stressed about meeting mentees in person and increasing online presence satisfied me with what I was doing. I became less reliant on physical contact and more trusting in the efficiency of online mentoring."

The third participant narrated also how the pandemic forced them to integrate video conferencing into their courses, and how it served to build closer contact and interaction with the participants which was very important for her. She seemed to have found an efficient way of mentoring that balances online asynchronous interaction with real time interaction. She also sounded more liberated from the idea that the mentor and mentee have to share the same physical environment, she even adds that mentors 'should' do online mentoring in the future.

> "The mentoring relationship that I could build was satisfying for myself and I saw from the feedback of my mentees that it was valuable for them too. They contacted me outside the course context to ask for reference letters, for advice about which graduate program to choose, for further development opportunities, etc. I can now see that the Zoom meetings we had to make sure that we are more available to the participants, actually served two purposes. We were more available and provided more input, that is correct. But also, we had the opportunity to have some real time chat with students. It felt good to see what our mentees looked like. It felt like I was talking to real people, and I liked putting a face to a name in my mind. What we did in the second round was much more satisfying for me. I am convinced that we successfully established the relationship that I would normally have if there were normal conditions and the same was happening in the school environment. This has been a rewarding and eye-opening experience for me. I now think that I could mentor anyone anywhere if given the appropriate time and space to build rapport and establish bonding with my mentees. Changing my attitude and belief about what the means of successful mentoring should be and how you should do it, is a real paradigm shift for me and I am grateful for the experience. While I am not denying the value of mentoring processes that take place in the same school, I have also come to see that you "can" and considering the pandemic circumstances, you "should" engage more in online mentoring activities, as they are equally efficient and gratifying for both the mentees and the mentors."

The third participant expressed her enthusiasm about her experience and mainly talked about how her attitude has changed about online mentoring. She also stated that this experience transcended from online mentoring and is reflected in her online teaching as well. She stated that she saw the experience as a challenge but now sees it as an opportunity rather than a challenge. She concluded that colleagues who would like to engage in online mentoring should still keep in mind to create spaces where participants and mentors can build meaningful connections.

> "Overall, this has been a positive experience that reassured me about my skills as a mentor. I learned that you can build a strong mentor-mentee relationship in online spaces as well. I feel confident about how to plan, design, and implement an online mentoring process now. This experience re-shaped how I regard online mentoring and also online teaching in general.

> As a teacher who puts great emphasis on building rapport with students and being available for them, the whole experience was challenging at the beginning, and I had my doubts about how effective this online mentoring would be. However, looking back I see that it went amazingly, and it was a tremendous success. I have learnt a lot from the experiences and changed one idea or two about online teaching and mentoring spaces. I do not see it as a challenge anymore, in fact, considering the circumstances online teaching and mentoring environments provide a wealth of opportunities for all of us. The only aspect I would recommend to colleagues is to make sure they plan and add online spaces for informal chats, real time meetings and any means that would increase meaningful interaction."

The Narrative of Participant 4

The fourth participant was an experienced language instructor, faculty member and teacher trainer at the tertiary level. She participated in various field-specific conferences and professional development activities related to teacher training and teacher education. She had also organized teacher development programs including mentorship in her institution. However, she had very little experience in the online mentoring process and pre-service teacher education, which was, in her own words "one of the challenges to deal with" in this process. She expressed her ideas and feelings as follows:

> "In-service teacher training is different from pre-service teachers. They have different needs and expectations. In-service teachers are in the process of designing and conducting lessons whereas pre-service teachers are still student teachers. However, pre-service teachers are not in the progress of teaching so the experiential content cannot be meaningful for them unlike in-service ones. Local mentors in this online course have a crucial role to make the pre-service teachers scrutinize their context and guide them to possible alternatives for the implementations and applications introduced in the modules. This is what makes me excited in this mentoring process. When the program ends, I can see the development in their comments they have made about their projects and presentations. I feel satisfied and pleased with this end."

The fourth participant focused on the generation gap in terms of effective usage of the technological tools. She stated that local mentors were members of Gen-X while the course participants were from Gen-Z so digital learning

tools were learned by Gen-X individuals, but Gen-Z individuals were native to these programs, which was similar to the difference between language acquisition and language learning. This was the second important challenge for the last participant. She described herself as a life-long learner following the innovation and learning opportunities. Yet, the pre-service teachers in the first and second round had better skills in digital tools. She explained as follows:

> "OPEN programs have their own online platform and the activities of the local mentors have also been included in the system. In the first round of our local program a student conference was planned face-to-face but due to the breakout of COVID-19, the conference had to be online. I had had some digital tools integrated into my courses; however, I was not familiar with digital learning platforms. It is not easy to use them as me and my colleagues are not well-equipped with the digital skills. In the second round, as the pandemic was still in progress, the local mentor's formal platform on the OPEN programs interface changed. Thus, we decided to use some different platforms for meetings and communication. This was not easy for me regarding my limited technical skills. However, the participants of the course could easily guide us on how to solve the technical problems faced. Two of the participants from the first round were the facilitators in the second round, so they helped us in the digital platforms as well as in the arrangement of the content and also in motivating the pre-service teachers in the second round. In the second-round, there were four different platforms to be used as the interface of the OPEN courses changed. The participants could adapt to this very easily. I was very relieved working with both groups and feel more knowledgeable about various digital tools in the context of teacher training programs. This process was a mutual learning opportunity."

The fourth local mentor emphasized the transformation of understanding the role of the local mentors. She mentioned that in the first round, the participants sometimes asked questions related to the modules and the content; but the local mentors had no intervention inside the program and added that this caused confusion in the minds of the course participants. Also, she stressed that the technical and administrative problems about the online course could not be handled by the local mentors. The mentees needed to contact the course designers of the OPEN Program. She explained:

> "Local mentoring is not common in online teacher training programs. The role of the local mentor in our program was coaching, facilitating, and "mirroring" the pre-service teachers. The mentees were really sensitive and some of them could easily quit the course, so the local mentor had to motivate them to go on. Moreover, the limited experience of the mentees is at times a hindrance to make sense of the input they receive; thus, the local mentor kindly and sincerely collaborates with them to provide guidance. Lastly, reflection was an important part of the local mentoring process. The local mentor "mirrored" their learning journey and helped them reflect their strengths and weaknesses and threats and opportunities. I understood that I could positively impact the professional development of these pre-service teachers. This was a win-win case."

Finally, the fourth participant defined the local mentoring process in online education with these expressions "local networking", "learning contextual information" and "building rapport with the prospective teachers". She perceived the course participants as the members of the ELT community. The mentees now have more contacts in the ELT community. Furthermore, the context matters for the teachers and teaching setting requires familiarity with the profile of the students, the socio-economic status of the parents, the physical conditions of the school and similar background features that affect teaching directly. Hence, she stated that local mentors created written and oral tasks and activities for the course participants, and this caused them to consider the language classrooms in Turkey. Lastly, local mentors succeeded in establishing rapport with the course participants. They could share individual, even familial issues with us. She exemplified that she had a call from one of the participants who asked her about his career plans. The participant emphasized that local mentoring is extremely beneficial in sustaining the relationship between the mentor and the mentees.

Discussion

The present study set out to explore the local mentoring process of the four experienced teachers who supplemented a generic pre-service teacher training course. The course was offered to preservice teachers studying at ELT programs in 24 cities of Turkey from 38 different universities. The four participants of this narrative inquiry were the local mentors who supplemented the course with the intention to relate the content of the course to the local teaching context of the participants. The participants discovered what local mentoring can be due to having experienced the local mentoring process twice with the freedom

to design their own local mentoring program. The narrative inquiry findings indicate that the participants defined their process of local mentoring in somewhat similar terms, however the individual gains and perceptions of the mentors on mentoring varied slightly. The results suggest that the personal characteristics, such as creativity, the prior mentoring experience of the participants and the circumstances that the pandemic introduced and imposed on the students and the mentors were the main factors in determining what local mentoring comprised in the pre and post COVID-19 period.

This study signified some concerns and some benefits of pre-service teacher online mentoring training. One of the concerns was the capabilities of the mentors about the digital tools. Ersin and Atay (2021, p. 5) referred to the same challenge for the mentors trained for face-to-face training and explained that "mentors' lack of specific training enables high quality engagement and developmentally progressive support for PTs on online platforms". However, they emphasized that the expectation and the need of the pre-service teachers are similar in both face-to-face and online mentoring programs. Also, the mentoring process is helpful for the pre-service teachers and novice teachers to establish networking and empower the professional growth of the mentors and mentees. In this study, the narratives of the mentors expressed this contribution to the course participants (Squires, 2019; Tarihoran et al., 2021).

While the literature on the effects of the pandemic on mentor support and online teacher training is burgeoning (Ersin & Atay 2021), there is not much research on a similar comparison of the two periods in an online course where there are local mentors reaching out to the preservice teachers. Therefore, the study is important in that it can shed light on the design of online teacher training and mentoring courses which will be more common in the digital education era that speeded up with the breakup of the pandemic. Dorner et al. (2020) expressed the flexibility of mentoring in their research with novice faculty members and expressed that online faculty mentoring provides support that otherwise may not be available.

While the study bears significance in the design of future generic online language teacher training courses that are supported with local mentors familiar with the teaching setting of the teacher candidates, there are still some limitations of the study. To start with, the study, as is the case with any other narrative inquiry design research results does not yield generalizable findings. Narrative inquiry method is a fruitful social sciences investigation method that presents in depth data on the specific. It is a useful part of the social science investigation but may not always stand alone for evidence and support for the conclusions of similar

other cases. There is a time commitment for analysis, and it makes the method unsuitable to be conducted with large numbers of participants. The results are illuminating to understand the circumstances and the specific solutions the local mentors came up with before and after the pandemic periods, yet they are open to interpretation, that is, the subjectivity of the researcher has a particular impact in narrative inquiry (Peshkin, 1988).

When narrating about their local mentoring experience, mentors expressed some negative emotions and concerns about the project reflecting back on the first days of the project. There were 14 negative phrases used by mentors compared to 50 positive phrases. It is seen in the thematic analysis phase that the negative words/ phrases the participants used were particularly about their roles as the mentors at the beginning of the project. Mentor 1 expressed some concern about her own competence in mentoring "I had limited experience; I wasn't confident" at the beginning about her role in the project. Regarding the modifications that she had to make during the pandemic, she mentioned challenges related to participant behaviour such as "participants were overwhelmed; participants were relatively passive". When talking about her expectations about her role and the changes she had to make later in the project, the second mentor focused only on participants, "some participants never showed up; witnessing participants' reluctance was disappointing; participants were overwhelmed by school workload; some participants were reluctant to attend". Mentor 3 mentioned that the project was "challenging" at the beginning, and she mostly focused on the problems related to the cancellation of the face-to-face component "cancellation of conference was frustrating", which she stated as the highlight of the project. Her reflection concerns the lack of face-to-face communication with the participants. The 4th mentor mentioned that she felt insecure about using an online platform "...not well equipped for online platforms" and also expressed her opinion about using online platforms at the beginning of the project, "... not easy to use online platforms". All negative words and phrases were used when responding to the first two interview questions that were related to their initial understanding about their roles as mentors and about which specific modifications the pandemic enforced on the local mentoring roles. It is clear that all mentors had some challenges about their roles at the beginning. Furthermore, for mentors 1, 2 and 3 students seem to have been a driving factor of change, while mentor 4 focused more on the means where the mentoring took place (the digital platform.)

Through analysis of the positive words/phrases mentioned in the narrations of the mentors, some emerging themes were found. Regarding the first question

which was about how the mentors assumed their roles in the mentoring process, the emerging theme was self-improvement and mutual learning opportunity: "...improve myself; ...enriching experience, ...broaden my horizon; …a mutual learning opportunity", other adjectives used by mentors that stood out were: excited, satisfied, pleased, fascinating, exciting, meaningful, and relevant. Regarding the modifications they had to make in their mentoring roles because of the pandemic, the strongly emerging theme was their concern about building a strong mentoring relationship. All mentors expressed great care for their mentees and the mentoring relationship: "...communicating in person thrilled me; ...humanistic touch; be a role model; ...quality interaction; ...feeling in sync with participants…", other adjectives used by the mentors to describe this process were, feeling confident, less concerned, less stressed, less reliant, more trusting, relieved, and feeling more knowledgeable.

The third discussion point was which specific modifications the experience of the local mentors enforced on the local mentoring roles. All mentors expressed positive emotions about this process and the emerging theme was satisfaction from the whole experience of being an online local mentor: "...a positive and adventurous journey; ...an enriching experience; ...satisfying; ...much more satisfying; ...a rewarding experience", other adjectives that the mentors used were positive, more available, eye opening, grateful. The last question was about their overall comments and reflection about the process and the mentors described the experience as: "an awareness-raising transformation process; happiness about having life-long connections with the teacher candidates; reassuring; feeling confident; a tremendous success; a wealth of opportunities. It is clear from the analyses that although the mentors had some uncertainties and questions at the beginning of the process, and although they had to make many changes in their predetermined roles and processes due to the pandemic, their experience has been a positive one and they found that there was a mutual benefit in the end both for mentees and for mentors, that they were able to build a positive mentor-mentee relationship even though there were adverse circumstances, and it has been an enriching journey for them.

Implications and Suggestions

This study is significant with its method, a participatory narrative inquiry method, in the field of mentoring. Since the purpose was to comprehend the local mentors and this unique mentorship, this method guided the researchers more than the others. The findings of this inquiry showed that local mentors in

this study believe that they have crucial roles to keep the course participants on track about the local language teaching context. Their tasks and activities raised the awareness of the course participants and they focused on the contextual strengths and opportunities as well as the weaknesses. Hudson (2010) highlights the importance of the system requirements in educational context and mentoring can be a useful tool to help the teacher candidates to learn about the system requirements beforehand since "…final-year preservice teachers…need to know about the practicalities of the requirements of an education system (p. 35). In addition, Kahraman & Kuzu (2016) state that mentoring preservice teachers is beneficial as "...mentors transfer their knowledge and experience to mentees and through which mentees can increase their readiness levels following their university education" (p.86). Thus, it can be proposed that local mentorship should be considered in the professional development, teacher training and teacher education.

Another implication is related to having local mentorship in online teacher training programs. In this study, OPEN programs sponsored by the RELO were offered with Turkish pre-service students in ELT programs with the integration of local mentorship. As the local mentors stated in their narration, this implementation was unique. Online teacher training has become more common since the COVID-19 pandemic started and one of the drawbacks of these programs is having limited interaction with real-life cases. The participation of the local mentors provided support to fill in this gap. Thus, local mentorship can be one of the components of the other professional development, teacher training and teacher education programs. Additionally, more research on mentorship in online teacher education could enlighten this process. The researchers maintain that there needs to be more research done on online mentoring to be able to reach validated results; however, this study clearly showed that online mentoring can be as satisfying and as efficient for both mentors and mentees as face-to-face mentoring.

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CHAPTER 9

THE CHANGING ROLE OF TEACHERS WITH THE CURRENT TRENDS IN MATERIAL DEVELOPMENT FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AND SOME SUGGESTED WEB TOOLS FOR LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Abstract

This chapter aims to briefly explain the current condition of utilized materials in foreign language classes after the Covid 19 pandemic, which has caused unscheduled school closures worldwide. After the importance of material development and its adaptation according to the current needs of teaching conditions are explained, the relationship of material development and TPACK framework is noted to show the essential role that technology integration into lessons played in the last two years. Finally, the chapter finishes with some suggested websites and web tools for language teachers to develop their digital materials or use publicly available sources in their classrooms.

Keywords: *Material development, TPACK, web 2.0 tools, web sites for material development.*

Introduction

The materials development process includes production, evaluation, adaptation, and exploitation of materials utilized to achieve language attainment in language classes (Tomlinson, 2012). Tomlinson (1998) highlights the importance of material development by stating that writers or teachers develop or adapt materials to provide sources of language input in ways that maximize the likelihood of internalizing subjects. That is, to facilitate learning, materials like coursebooks, videos, interactive worksheets, mobile phones, computer-based materials, poems, novels should be appropriately used in language classes. These materials can be informative (increasing knowledge of learners on the target language), instructional (letting the learners practice the target language), experiential (giving learners opportunities to experience language in use), eliciting (motivating learners to use the language), and exploratory (aiding learners to discover the target language) (Tomlinson, 2012, p. 143). As it is widely known, each classroom setting is unique, and the needs of classes may differ from one to another; the ready-made materials may not be enough to meet the demands of all teachers. Therefore, teachers are expected to be continuously updated on the current trends in language teaching and attempt to evaluate, replace, adapt, or supplement available instructional materials to facilitate learning.

In recent years, school closures caused by the Covid 19 pandemic have significantly affected the delivery of courses. As a result, nearly all schools have resorted to online or hybrid courses, which has given rise to the emergence of various needs for materials in such learning conditions. As such, language teachers have needed to consider new methods and tools to promote a communication environment in which students can interact or develop their language skills (Edwards & Lane, 2021). With this in mind, teachers have tended to create more computer-based materials to reach the objectives of their lessons. In this sense, most teachers have been trying to fight post-pandemic influences with the help of web sources, tools, or other interactive materials, either with their creations or ready-made ones. To shed more light on material development in the era of Covid-19, this chapter presents the current condition of material development and its relation with the technological, pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK) framework.

Current Condition of Material Development

Instruction books heavily used in language classes worldwide serve as key components of language classes (Richards, 2001). They provide much of the

language input to learners and offer various exercises to balance the skills practice in each language domain. Well-designed books provide effective language models and input, standardize education, maintain quality, and develop language teachers professionally. However, they may sometimes fail to meet the audience's demands and context (Tomlinson, 2012). The sudden shift from traditional classes to distance education has given rise to the need for online interactive materials used in language classes. Although some coursebooks offer online learning management systems where learners can log in and complete assigned tasks, most English instruction books do not include such facilities. Most probably inexistence of such facilities did not bother teachers so much two years ago. The last two years have witnessed various approaches that are different from historically dominated ones in the literature of second/foreign language acquisition due to the ongoing Covid 19 pandemic, which has posed serious concerns, promoted unscheduled closure of schools, and shifted the attention of teachers from traditional courses to the online modes. This sudden shift in course implementation has resulted in a change in teachers' role as material developers. Tomlinson (2010) highlighted that material writers should develop flexible frameworks that result in effective materials for the target language. As Tomlinson (2010) claimed, the current needs of students and different classroom contexts have changed dramatically in the last two years, making most of the popular materials less functional and less attractive.

It is crystal clear that foreign language education is a highly complex and multifaceted phenomenon. Even before the coronavirus outbreak, with the integration of technology in language classes, a shift in the roles of teachers and students could be observed in language classrooms in most parts of the world. The fast-growing technological advancements and availability of technological equipment in most classes have brought the idea of utilizing more computer-based materials to appeal to different senses of learners in language classes and involve all of them in the learning process. Some online platforms have been designed to serve the community of teachers, allowing them to create their content with a wide variety of question types, easily add media or visual sources, or use ready-made worksheets that can be edited or wholly manipulated for their classroom purposes. As a result, newly combined acronyms in teaching literature have emerged. Some of these acronyms are Internet-based language instruction (IBLI), computer-mediated communication (CMC), web-based language learning (WBLL), computer-assisted language learning (CALL), mobile-assisted language learning (MALL), etc. Most articles published in language learning journals employed web tools as interventions and shared their results.

The Covid 19 outbreak brought a shift from conventional schooling to distance or hybrid education and forced nearly all teachers to reconsider the materials used in language classes because all courses are required to be conducted fully or partially online. To efficiently run the courses and optimize student attendance and language attainment in distance education, teachers have needed to resort to web tools that offer them various sources such as interactive worksheets, games, songs, chants, quizzes, etc. The ubiquitous use of virtual learning to maintain continuity in education has been highlighted rapidly so that teachers, who were once resistant to use online sources due to lack of digital or technological literacy, laziness, or other factors, have both had to utilize available online sources and develop their online materials with the aid of computer technology. Heavy emphasis on technology integration in language classes brought the term of Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge, which is presented in detail in the following title.

Teachers' Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK)

The creation of personal computers and the launch of the Internet paved the way for educators and governments to reform their educational settings using information and communication technologies (ICT) (Greenhow, Robelia, & Hughes 2009). Recently, due to the heavy dependence on online sources, the question of what teachers need to know for effective ICT integration in their classrooms has been a center of intense debate. The first step for such reform was to increase teachers' technological knowledge, enabling them to transmit their knowledge using ICT tools. To attract attention to teacher education, Göktaş, Yıldırım, and Yıldırım (2009) argued that teacher educators must constantly design, evaluate and redesign pre-service education for an effective ICT integration in an attempt to raise awareness on the effectiveness and importance of the ICT usage in classrooms. Previous literature studies have proved that teachers' ICT integration in their classrooms correlates with their technological skills. If they have a higher level of ability to use ICT, with increased self-efficacy, they are more likely to integrate ICT in their real classroom settings (Hammand et al., 2009; Hammond, Reynolds & Ingram, 2011). However, for effective technology integration to teach subject matter, Keohler, Mishra, and Yahya (2005) claimed that it is not enough to have clear and distinct knowledge about content, technology, and pedagogy. Still, teachers should know the interrelation among these constructs. Therefore, they have introduced a new framework that conceptualized Technological, Pedagogical

Content Knowledge (TPCK), which contains seven categories: 1) technology knowledge (TK), 2) content knowledge (CK), 3) pedagogical knowledge (PK), 4) pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), 5) technological content knowledge (TCK), 6) technological pedagogical knowledge (TPK), and 7) TPCK). Later on, the acronym of TPCK was changed to TPACK for ease of memory and pronunciation (Koehler & Mishra, 2006).

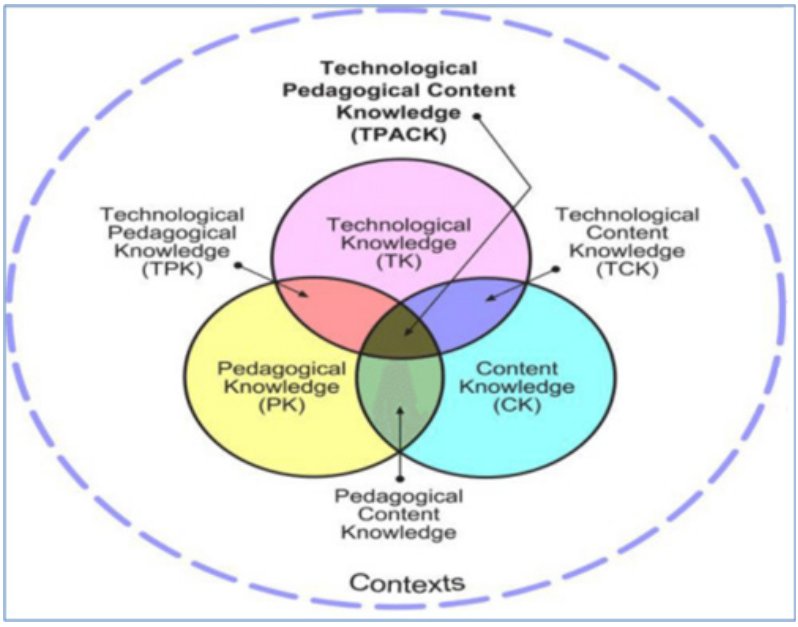

Figure 1 : TPACK Model formed by Koehler & Mishra (2009)

As a counter-argument for those who believe growth in any of the related constructs (i.e., content, technology, pedagogy) automatically contributes to growth in TPACK. Angeli and Valanides (2008a) claim that growth in the related construct does not automatically mean growth in TPACK after they have extensively tested the interrelationship of constructs and conducted several empirical research regarding the educational uses of computer technology. The results of their study indicated that in-service teachers with long years of teaching experience and knowledge of several computer programs do not perform well if they are not trained on how to teach with computers. When their performance was compared with those with less teaching experience and good computing skills, no significant difference was found (Valanides & Angeli, 2008b). However, Valanides and Angeli (2008a) found that when teachers are trained on how to teach with computers, those with more vital pedagogical skills and better content and student knowledge outperformed other teachers

with less knowledge in the same areas. As material development is related to all components of TPACK, specific attention is given to the relationship between these concepts and material development.

TPACK and Material Development

Recently, numerous online discussion forums, blogs, and virtual classrooms have been developed for educational purposes. The implementation of such facilities has led learners to perform various learning activities and paved the way for the appearance of more learning opportunities when learners are engaged in interactive activities and, most importantly, they have encouraged self-expression on the part of the users (Hourigan & Murray, 2010; Veermans & Cesareni, 2005). Therefore, the increasing interest of educators in taking advantage of Web 2.0 technologies which aid in making learning more interactive and dynamic, has been witnessed. Although universal adaptation of distance learning has highlighted the need for technological competence, each component of the TPACK framework is precious for material developers. Any computer-based tool that is used for educational purposes can be regarded as technology integration. Therefore, all materials designed or presented with the technology are considered to require sufficient knowledge in all components of this framework on the part of the teachers (Graham, 2011; Koehler & Mishra, 2005; Niess, 2011). It is emphasized that teachers are expected to be proficient in the intersection of technology, pedagogy, and content to facilitate the learning process (Özgün-Koca, Meager, & Edwards, 2010). Teachers need to know how to utilize technology to teach specific content, support learning through technology by resorting to specific pedagogies, or teach specific content with particular pedagogies. Teachers with deepened pedagogical content knowledge can blend content and pedagogy to present successful instruction that is organized in accordance with learners' proficiency levels and diverse interests. In this category, the development of well-organized materials depends on teachers' PCK. Therefore, keeping in mind that to meet the demands of learners' current needs, teachers and pre-service teachers should be sufficiently qualified in all categories of TPCAK to be able to conduct successful lessons. As the TPACK framework suggests, knowledge of only one or two components is not enough for a successful teaching attempt. Teachers should be well aware of their students' proficiency levels to find appropriate computer-based tools and manage time and energy appropriately to utilize these tools. If learners' current level of knowledge is not enough to achieve the task, they cannot benefit from even the best tool

or online activity. Therefore, to design perfect match materials, teachers should first be well-equipped with TPACK. The advantages that online or offline sources offer should be regarded, and teachers should act in accordance with the benefits they can drive from these sources. Some online modes are provided below in detail.

Synchronous or Asynchronous Interaction Modes

There is a growing adaptation of computer tools to current educational practices as educators discover opportunities for better learning environments that allow the development of skills within authentic contexts with asynchronous or synchronous online interaction modes (Chapelle, 2001). Asynchronous tools such as e-mails, blogs, or Wiki sites, which allow users to write a reflection to the shared comments at any time they want, have been suggested as a better mode than synchronous one. Synchronous online mode, on the other hand, is a kind of interactive form that allows users, at the same time, have real-time conversations with other people, as users may feel need to be more careful about the content and structure as they are aware of the fact that their audience is real (Godwin-Jones, 2003). Additionally, asynchronous tools give students more time to read others' comments, revise and reflect on them (Hansen, 2005). On the other hand, the synchronous mode has been regarded as messy due to lags in turn-taking and the possibility of participants going off-topic (Meskill, 2009). What makes the synchronous mode disadvantageous in an educational context is the necessity of writing fast and meaningful at the same time, which can be a problem in L2 classes (Hata, 2003). On the other hand, what makes the asynchronous mode of interaction more favorable is that it gives opportunities for learner and instructors interaction and helps both parties shape the nature of exchange. It also encourages students to revise their posted comments and organize their ideas before responding (Pena-Shaff & Nicoles, 2004). To explain differences in two modes Hrastinski (2008: 54) is quoted as saying in Farr and Riordan (2014) as follows:

> synchronous communication makes it possible to monitor the receiver's reaction to a message, making the receiver feel more committed and motivated to read it. However, when communicating asynchronously, the receiver has more time to comprehend the message since the sender does not expect an immediate answer. Thus, synchronous e-learning increases arousal and motivation, while asynchronous e-learning increases the ability to process information.

In light of the current research findings on the advantageous sides of the asynchronous mode of communication, the majority of research on online learner interaction was conducted over asynchronous computer networks (Pena-Shaff & Nicholls,2004; Keer & Valcke, 2004; Mand Wever, 2006). Considering these studies, material developers can benefit more from asynchronous modes in their classrooms. However, designing a lesson including multi-modal exercises can be overwhelming with teachers whose technological pedagogical content knowledge is weaker than the others. Therefore, some websites and Web 2.0 tools that are considered less time and energy-consuming for teachers are suggested in the following section.

Some Suggested Web 2.0 Tools for Material Development

For 21st century learners, many instructional tools and practices are available online, which are essential and flexible in foreign language teaching and learning to promote students' efficiency and improve their performance. Thanks to the advances in ICT, it becomes easier for teachers to create effective learning environments for EFL/ESL learners with different needs and learning styles. The important thing is the selection of suitable web-based materials or tools that are consistent with the goals of the course and fit into the levels of students. The following tools that we recommend are categorized by basic language skills and purpose.

1. Reading

Newsela: It is a free educational online resource that offers many highly engaging informational texts about current events and various academic topics. Teachers can search for any issue they are interested in and select from the available articles about that topic. One of the best facilities of this platform is that one can access the same article at different language levels. Furthermore, there is an option to select the lexical level of a particular article, so that teachers can assign articles according to the reading level of their students. In this way, the content remains the same, but the complexity of the article changes to make it more understandable for target groups of learners. Besides, teachers can create quizzes based on the articles that they have assigned and monitor their students' progress. (https://newsela.com/)

2. Listening

Lyrics Training: It is an excellent free website for language learners that allow them to listen and learn a language simultaneously. This platform can be used by

language teachers who want to increase the lexical knowledge of their learners and improve their listening skills at the same time. There is a language option to list English songs that you can listen to and fill in the blanks while listening. Once you click on the song, you have a menu asking for your level. If you choose beginner, 10 % of words will be missing from the lyrics to write while listening to the music. It also enables teachers to create their exercises by uploading their favorite songs. They can also print the lyrics of the songs. (https://lyricstraining.com/)

Listen Notes: This vast podcast search engine provides teachers with a good number of podcasts with a great variety of topics. Teachers can make their queries on specific topics or create their classroom materials by embedding these podcasts into their interactive worksheets or presentations. There are some podcasts for EFL learners, but most podcasts are authentic and can be used with higher levels learners. The interface of the engine is straightforward and usable by any teacher. (https://www.listennotes.com/)

Synth: This tool provides teachers and learners with opportunities for creating dynamic audio conversations to exchange ideas. In other words, they can create their own podcasts or audio files that address the debated topic. Teachers can create a Synth Channel and divide it into different channels with different topics. Learners can be assigned to have their voice in conversations by posting their thoughts. (https://gosynth.com/)

3. Speaking

Flipgrid: Flipgrid is a video and audio-based learning tool whose video sharing and discussion platform allow students to record themselves. Teachers can design their classes by creating topics and asking learners to present their ideas. The platform enables students to see others' presentations and make comments on them, too. This facility makes Flipgrid an online public presentation tool that aids learners in getting prepared and presenting something in the target language. Using this tool, teachers can empower every voice in classes where it is impossible to watch all student presentations. Additionally, it allows learners to improve their speaking performance with repeated presentations. (https://info.flipgrid.com/)

VoiceThread: It can be used as a speaking tool with the help of which users can record their voices over slides. Teachers or students can upload many

media types on this App, such as images, videos, audio, documents, or slides. It provides best practices for creating audio presentations that are more interactive and engaging for students. Other peers can add their comments or insert their questions either by text or audio. Students can also make group presentations on the VoiceThread app. Not surprisingly, it may be challenging for language teachers to encourage students who have speaking anxiety to use PowerPoint presentations alone in front of the classroom. On such occasions, VoiceThread is a great platform that turns presentations into a fun and easy activity for those learners. VoiceThread can be used for many learning activities such as project collaborations, reflection, topic discussions, narration, presentation, and more. (https://voicethread.com/)

ECHO app: Teaching learners pronunciation is very crucial in language teaching. This application allows learners to record their voices and compare their voices and native speakers by listening to both, respectively. By using this App, teachers can provide learners with video or audio recordings and assign learners to imitate their voice just like those in the video or audio. This great practice would surely make learners more competent in pronunciation and speaking. Learners can also take advantage of this App by practicing their pronunciation through YouTube videos or other available videos on the web.

4. Writing

Padlet: Padlet is an online digital bulletin board that allows all students to write on the same screen simultaneously or at different time intervals. What is good with this tool is that it enables all participants to see what others have written, and in synchronous lessons, it gives the teacher power to correct students' language-related mistakes as soon as they do it. Learners can also create posters by adding images or video links to their writings in the Padlet. (https://tr.padlet.com/)

Animaker: It is a free video-animated platform that can be used for creative writing activities in language classrooms. The students can work individually or in pairs to create their animations. Teachers can give some creative writing prompts such as stolen money, a secret diary, a lost treasure, a space creature, a traffic accident, a broken mirror, or a mysterious letter, or students can be free to use their imagination to write a short story on a specific idea which is either impressive, fun, or terrifying. After writing their short stories, the teacher or peers can give some constructive feedback. In the end, they can create an

animation of their story on Animaker. In this way, students turn their story into a short animation movie easily. Since it includes both writing and editing, Animaker is an efficient animation platform that adds creativeness to the writing activity.(https://www.animaker.com/)

5. Classroom Response Systems

Classroom Response Systems (CRS) have been frequently used in language classrooms to get immediate feedback from students. In addition, teachers prefer these systems for online formative assessment to determine how much or how well their students have learned. Many different forms of CRS have emerged in recent years. The most widely preferred systems in classroom settings to create quizzes, surveys, and spot questions are presented below:

Quizzes: This free web service helps teachers save time and energy. You can explore millions of teacher-created quizzes. You can create your quizzes by compiling questions from different quizzes according to the level of your students and can use them in your classrooms. After you finish editing your quiz, you have it in your quiz library and use it whenever you want. After your students complete their quizzes, you see all the responses from the reports section and give immediate feedback by sharing your screen with them. Quizzes can be used as a warm-up activity at the beginning of the lesson, as a formative assessment at the end of each lesson, and as a game to revise some previously learned topics. Apart from starting live quizzes, you can also assign the quiz to your students. (https://quizizz.com/)

Quizlet : Quizzlet is an application that allows all teachers to create a set of learning resources according to their students' needs. Teachers from all over the world put their resources on the platform so that other teachers and learners can also benefit from it. Quizlet activities can be used for reading, listening, and writing classes where teachers need to recycle some unknown lexical items. For instance, teachers can take some target or salient words from a reading passage and create some definition matching or multiple-choice activities to increase learners' receptive and productive word knowledge. Quizlet also offers text-to-speech functions, which aid teachers in developing some pronunciation activities that can improve their speaking ability. (https://quizlet.com/tr)

Kahoot!: It is a popular gamified response system that allows teachers to create learning games or multiple-choice quizzes with embedded images or videos. It

provides a simple interface that teachers can easily create tests, surveys, quizzes, or more. This free online platform also offers publicly available quizzes that teachers can check out through quick Kahoot! search. It is a practical way of formative assessment because it provides a final report that allows teachers to evaluate their students' performance and understanding of the subject being covered. It is competitive because students have to answer all questions within a certain period, and the winners' names are presented on a leaderboard. (https://kahoot.it/)

6. Social Media

Instagram: Today, many teenagers worldwide actively use Instagram in their personal lives to share photos or videos with captions. For instructional purposes, using something that excites or amuses students is a golden opportunity for teachers and educators. Students can create an account on Instagram and upload their photos or videos on a specific topic. It can be efficient in groups or collaborative works to promote project-based learning and motivate students. For instance, students can be asked to create animations, posters, short informative videos, or public service announcements on environmental issues such as pollution, natural disasters, water consumption, global warming, deforestation, climate change, ozone layer depletion, etc. and to write attention-grabbing texts including relevant vocabulary or grammar subjects. In this way, students gain an opportunity to share their products with their classmates and with the public. In this way, they can get feedback from different groups and likes/comments from others.

Twitter: Twitter is one of the most popular social networking sites commonly used for maintaining communication and exchanging opinions. Students can create a free account for educational purposes and write twitter posts on any related topic. In this way, teachers connect their students to the real world. Twitter posts can be used after reading or listening courses for brainstorming and writing summaries or reflections in language classes. Students can highlight the most important thing they have learned by paying attention to the character limit. They are asked to define the content only in 140 charters. It may be fun to come up with an idea in limited words. Those who do not want their students to create an account for security reasons can print or copy ready-made Twitter templates available on the Internet.

7. Digital Worksheet

Wiserme : This tool is more than a worksheet tool that pulls together digital education content for your students' experience and participation. You can browse any community worksheets that people have shared previously. On this web page, you can see a webpage with a title and interactive content at each of which learners can respond and write their answers. These digital worksheets can be used at any time at anywhere. Teachers can quickly digitize their worksheets with many questions designed to serve interactive mode. They can embed videos and commentary sections in these videos. You can assign worksheets to your students via google classroom or worksheet links.(https://www.wizer.me/)

Liveworksheets: This incredible worksheet site offers a significant number of interactive worksheets that can be found by searching on the site. Teachers can upload their worksheets and convert them into interactive ones using some codes provided by the site. Teachers can create matching, gap filling, multiple-choice or open-ended exercises with the help of this website. When the worksheet is ready, teachers can send the link to the learners and ask them to practice. As the answers are already provided, learners can easily self-assess their development. (https://www.liveworksheets.com/)

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CHAPTER 10

VOICES FROM THE FIELD: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED AS L2 TEACHERS DURING THE COVID-19?

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Abstract

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has led to disruptions in every level of education all over the world and school closures have affected teachers, students and other stakeholders severely. English language teachers at the K-12 level are among the groups impacted by the widespread school closures as well The present study was conducted to investigate what English language teachers have experienced and learned during emergency remote teaching. The data was collected from eight L2 English language teachers working at state high schools in Turkey via semi-structured interviews. Each interview lasted approximately 80 minutes. The interview data were transcribed via speech-to-text software and the thematic analysis method was utilized to analyze the data. English language teachers' views revealed how they interpret their online teaching experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of both the shortcomings and the new things they learned.

Keywords: Covid-19, English language teaching, emergency remote teaching, adaptation, coping skills

1. Introduction

COVID-19 emerged as a global pandemic during spring 2020 and forced schools across the world into changing the ways in which they delivered instruction. The pandemic led to 194 country-wide closures, causing unprecedented disruption to education. These figures correspond to the number of learners enrolled at pre-primary, primary, secondary levels of education as well as those tertiary education levels. According to UNESCO Institute for Statistics data, by March 4, 2020, nearly 1.6 billion students, which constitute 91.3% of the total enrolled learners at these levels across the globe (UNESCO, 2020), started to have online education and teachers had to adopt online instruction to minimize the negative impact of school closure on student learning.

K-12 schools have been dramatically affected by the school closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Face-to-face education was terminated and the whole educational process was expected to be immediately shifted to online environments. This sudden shift has created challenges for most of the educators around the world. Many teachers had to adapt their ways of teaching from traditional classrooms to online environments unexpectedly and unpreparedly and found themselves with the task of attempting to transition all of their learning materials onto an online platform, often with little-to-no preparation and instruction on how to proceed. No matter what the challenges were in distance, online or virtual learning environments, educators around the world were expected and challenged to cater to their students' needs and bring relevant and effective educational practices to their online classrooms. Though not being new, these learning environments were experienced by many teachers for the first time during the pandemic. Thus, in accordance with the adaptation to the emergency remote teaching, teacher roles have been changed as well. With the immediate school closures, teaching and learning experiences were transported to online platforms and the teachers were expected to get accustomed to the new technologies while being away from their students (Baird, 2020).

Early research from remote teaching during the pandemic suggested that teachers need more support in implementing remote learning and using technology effectively to create online lessons (Anderson & Hira, 2020). In order to best support teachers during remote teaching, it is important to understand what challenges teachers teaching different subjects experienced while implementing remote learning.

The present study was conducted to gain in-depth understanding of K-12 English teachers' experiences of online teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Literature review

There is increasing research on the topic of teachers' challenges and outcomes during COVID-19 emergency remote teaching. Although the majority of research on online learning has been conducted in higher education, research on K-12 online learning continues to grow. To gain an in-depth understanding of K-12 teachers' feelings, experiences, and perspectives regarding online teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic, An et. al. (2021) explored how K-12 teachers felt about online teaching, what strategies and tools they used to teach online, and what challenges they faced in the spring of 2020 as well as teachers' perspectives of the "new normal" after COVID-19 and of what should be done to better prepare teachers for future emergencies. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected from an online survey and follow-up interviews. A total of 107 teachers from 25 different states in the United States completed the online survey, and 13 teachers from 10 different states participated in the follow-up interviews. The major challenges faced by teachers during the pandemic included lack of student participation and engagement (or lack of parental support), students without access to technology, concerns about students' well-being, no face-to face interactions with students, no work-life balance, and learning new technology. The results also underlined that professional development for online learning would be necessary to better prepare K-12 teachers for future emergencies as some teachers lacked adequate devices and tools for online teaching, while others received all technology devices and trainings from their schools or school district

While some challenges are inherent to online learning and teaching in general, the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated some of those difficulties. The literature reveals several challenges that teachers faced during the pandemic. Ferdig et al. (2020) identified four major challenges under the umbrella of equity issues, which include the 'homework gap', digital divide, mental wellness, and accessibility issues. The sudden lack of face-to-face interactions between teachers and learners and a lack of support at home widened the "homework gap," which refers to the lack of the connectivity students need to complete schoolwork at home (Clausen et al., 2020; Daniel, 2020; Reimers & Schleicher, 2020). The stress coming from a sudden change of routine and uncertainty about the effect of the pandemic, as well as economic and health concerns. Other challenges during the pandemic relate to a digital divide, the disparity between those with access to internet technology and those without (Van Dijk, 2006), and accessibility issues (e.g., lack of access to digital devices or the Internet). Hall et al. (2020) stressed the importance of addressing the digital divide even after the

pandemic, suggesting that teachers should better utilize existing resources and continue collaboration between scholars and educational technology specialists with the goal of "ethical, equitable, and culturally responsive technology integration in post COVID-19 instruction" (p. 439).

In another study conducted with a total of 831 teachers in the US, (Leech et al. 2020), findings similarly indicated that teachers needed additional support in implementing remote teaching. It was particularly found out that elementary teachers in particular were experiencing disproportionate challenges in this area. Thus, providing professional development to all teachers, but to elementary teachers in particular, could help to mitigate the challenges these teachers report experiencing in delivering remote instruction to their students. Technology training would provide the opportunity for teachers to feel more confident in their remote instruction, to provide higher quality and more effective remote instruction to their students, and to increase student learning and development.

Giovannella et al. (2020) conducted one of the first investigations within the Italian school system to capture teachers' perspective, experiences and perceptions about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on school education. The study was performed two months after the beginning of lockdown, when online teaching and learning processes were fully in place and had reached a steady state. The paper reports a descriptive analysis.The survey was carried out by means of a three-section questionnaire presenting a total of 80 items amd data were collected from 336 teachers. Generally, respondents reported that the reactions of educational institutions and individual teachers were satisfactory, preventing the collapse of the education system in spite of loss of contact with 6-10% of the student population and a significant teacher workload increase that posed individual time management challenges. Although teachers tended to adopt teaching strategies that reproduced standard classroom dynamics, the possibility of operating in this comfort zone generated a positive feeling about using technologies, a perception of increased digital skills mastery and a change in mindset about educational processes. In turn, this led to an increase in the perceived sustainability of online education, with about a third of the teachers expressing the wish to adopt a blended configuration for future teaching activities. Almost all participants recognized the significance of a digital pedagogy and the need to include it in the training curricula to prepare future teachers.

There were a number of studies conducted in Turkey as well. With the decision of the Ministry of National Education on March 12, 2020, face-to-face education in schools was suspended at the beginning of March 16, 2020. Alper (2020) conducted a case study in a private school in Ankara with the start of

distance education right after the decision. In order to examine this process, the researcher collected data by means of semi-structured questions and analyzed the answers by a qualitative analysis method. Findings showed that apart from some negative aspects such as not being face-to-face and being on the screen all the time, online teaching provided some opportunities: students could listen more carefully and the teacher could teach lessons faster.

Kavuk and Demirtaş (2021) aimed to determine the difficulties of teachers experienced in distance education during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study was conducted with the phenomenological design with 43 teachers. Data were collected using a semi-structured interview form. In the first part of the interview form, there were four questions to determine the demographic characteristics of the participants, and six questions to determine the difficulties experienced by teachers during the pandemic period in the second part. Teachers stated that the main difficulties they faced were the insufficiency of students in terms of technological devices and the high number of internet connection problems for distance learning. In addition, inequality of opportunity, inadequacy of the Education Information Network (EBA) system, students' inability to actively participate in the course, technical problems, excessive involvement of parents in the process were other important problems.

Bakırcı, Özcan and Kara (2021) explored the opinions of middle school teachers about distance education during the pandemic. By using a case method, the researchers collected data from 12 teachers from different branches working in a state school in the Eastern Anatolia Region in the 2020-2021 academic year by means of a semi-structured interview form. Content and descriptive analysis techniques were used to analyze the data. Findings of the study revealed low participation rate of the students, the inadequacy of the infrastructure, the limited technological opportunities, the high number of siblings in the family and the lack of eye contact with the students as the problems they encountered during the distance education process. Another important problem faced by the teachers in the distance education process during this process is the inequality of chance and opportunity. In addition to these, the teachers stated that distance education cannot be replaced with face-to-face education.

According to MacIntyre et al. (2020) teacher workload multiplied considerably and maintaining a balance between the professional and private life has become challenging for teachers.

As mentioned above, there is increasing research on the topic of teachers' challenges during COVID-19 emergency remote teaching . Teachers needed to find ways to connect with their students and transition to unfamiliar modes of

teaching swiftly. Accordingly, this study focuses on the challenges of Turkish high school L2 teachers, a topic that has not been dealt with in detail. The study also explores the lessons they and their students learned during this period of emergency remote teaching and learning.

3. Methodology

The present study adopted a qualitative design to gain in-depth information from the K12 teachers about their remote teaching experiences during the pandemic. As qualitative methods can be more useful for in-depth investigation of a phenomena Creswell et al., 2007), we adopted a case-study approach to explore the factors that affected EFL teachers in their delivery of the online lessons.

3.1. Setting and Participants

One of the researchers of this study worked with the participant teachers between the years of 2014-2019. Thus, this study used a convenience sampling. 8 female participants with a mean age of 31 years and 10 years of experience on average participated in the current study. These teachers were in public high schools. They were working in Beşiktaş (socio-economically advantaged district of Istanbul), Küçükçekmece and Bağcılar (socio-economically disadvantaged districts of Istanbul). They are having lessons with each grade of secondary school level. Two teachers from Küçükçekmece district had previous education or seminars on technology use, but this sudden shift was new to most of the teachers and the remaining participants had no training beforehand.

3.2. Data Collection Tools and Analysis

Semi-structured focus group interviews were conducted and recorded upon receiving the consent of the participants. In total, three interviews were conducted in Turkish with groups of 2-3-3 teachers. Turkish was preferred for sake of convenience in expressing their ideas clearly as Turkish was the participants› native language. Each interview required two Zoom sessions that lasted 80 minutes.

The participants were asked a variety of questions to explain what they experienced and learned during emergency remote teaching due to COVID-19 (Appendix 1). Data were transcribed by means of the speech-to-text software and checked by the researchers afterwards for verification. Thematic analysis approach in which data were analyzed in scrutiny to determine the recurring

codes was employed. The first step was open coding during which the researchers found similarity between the words and sentences and coded them accordingly. Later on, the codes were categorized according to the familiarity between them. Consequently, themes were obtained upon grouping these categories in terms of relevance.

4. Results

The results of this study show the reflections of English language teachers regarding the period they were to teach during the pandemic lockdown between March 2020 and June 2021. Main themes and sub-themes that came up upon the utilization of thematic analysis on the qualitative interview data are: 1) Challenges of emergency remote teaching and adaptation: a) The effects and use of online platforms and tools, b) The need of professional development opportunities, c) Coping Skills. 2) Equality of educational opportunities and digital divide: a) Digital divide, b) Inclusive education, c) Problems in assessment. 3) The relationship between the stakeholders.

4.1. Challenges of emergency remote teaching & adaptation

This main theme has been explored with sub-themes related to the challenges teachers experienced, the ways they make use of online tools and their adaptation to these tools.

4.1.1. The effects and use of online platforms and tools

As a result of the sudden and unpredicted outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic all educational activities were immediately shifted to the online platforms. When the teachers who participated in this study were asked to reflect upon the challenges that online education brought, the common view that they all expressed was the lack of digital literacy that was necessary for integrating online tools into their digital classes:

> It is not like whether you know how to turn on and turn off a computer. Here, you are expected to use every platform and every tool smoothly, but everything changed so suddenly that we had not got the time to explore these tools and platforms. Still, I see myself competent enough to some extent that I could fluently run my lessons. As an English teacher I had high intrinsic motivation and was able to adapt myself quickly to the new circumstances. (English teacher 1, working in a socio-economically disadvantaged district of Istanbul)

On the contrary to the teachers experiencing problems during online education, a teacher from a socio-economically disadvantaged district reported the ease of use that online teaching provided for her in terms of classroom management:

> I was definitely experiencing the same problems with my colleagues but as I got used to the challenges of the online education, I started to manage my classes easily and as I was not taking attendance a full 40-minute online session was left for me to use in teaching. As the lessons continue, I realize that students became engaged and started to participate more. (English teacher 8, working at a socio-economically disadvantaged district of Istanbul)

Similarly some teachers from a socio-economically advantaged district of Istanbul reflected on their transition to online environments:

> This was an unexpected shift. We were all surprised and some of our friends were literally trapped in the cities they went to attend a conference. We did not know what to do but our school was more proactive than most of the schools and we were able to gather all our students on an online platform at first. We used it until we had our own server on another platform. Then everything went so smooth. (English teacher 2, working at a socio-economically advantaged district of Istanbul)

4.1.2. The need of professional development opportunities

Another important common view shared by the teachers was how insufficient and unsatisfactory were the actions taken by MoNE and the problems they experienced while delivering online lessons on EBA platform:

> We did what we did by ourselves. First, they asked us to conduct our lessons on MoNE's own platform EBA. As good as it sounds, having a unique platform for online education was not practical to use. Most probably, since millions of students attempted to use the platform suddenly, EBA was always crashing. That's why education was not effective at first. But then we started using ZOOM, which was really helpful, but this did not last long. We switched to Microsoft Teams and that was a disaster, too. I was really shocked about how they ignored these problems and pushed us to use a platform experiencing a lot of technical problems. (English teacher 3, working in a socio-economically disadvantaged district of Istanbul)

One very important thing was missing during this period according to these teachers was the training for the teachers necessary to inform them about digital integration:

> Personally, I have some training about implementing digital tools into face-to-face classes but physically and psychologically, education during the pandemic was totally different for us. Having some support when we need it would be ideal but unfortunately neither MoNE nor our administrators provided any practical training. (English teacher 4, working at a socio-economically disadvantaged district of Istanbul)

While some teachers stated that they had no training during the period, the others looked for some training online and attended to them:

> I visited my MoNE page and saw some online training on digital tools and these trainings were given by foreign educators. Some of them were practical and interactive. I definitely benefited from them, but the important thing was the follow-up was missing. (English teacher 5, working in a socio-economically disadvantaged district of Istanbul)

4.1.3. Coping Skills

Lastly, it was put forward by the teachers that during the obligatory online education they had developed some tools of their own to tackle the obstacles of constantly being online and adapt easily to the circumstances:

> It took some time for me to get used to online education. I remember my energy being consumed by the classes I had. The problem was I had had 30 hours in a week but when we switched to online education, the teaching hours were the same. In my opinion, they are not equal in density. As I felt consumed, I took a walk everyday around my house leaving every mobile device behind. I needed to relax. (English teacher 5, working in a socio-economically disadvantaged district of Istanbul)

Another teacher linked the advantage of being online with having time to learn new hobbies so that they were able to cope with the hardship that the online education brought:

> To be honest, against all the hardship and extra burden we had I and my colleagues-friends started doing yoga. We felt like that was the right time for us and it really helped me to develop a positive mindset during these

> hard times but unfortunately there was no support from our administrators. I would really want that (English teacher 6, working at a socio-economically advantaged district of Istanbul)

4.2. Equality of educational opportunities and digital divide

Equality in childrens' access to educational resources and opportunities in terms of digital equipment, internet access and education of disabled children were the second theme that the participant teachers clearly touched upon during the interviews when they were asked further about their experiences with the ERT. This theme has brought out sub-themes related to educational opportunities and the digital divide.

4.2.1. Digital divide

Participants of this study commented on the equality of educational opportunities from different perspectives. With the sudden shift to online education, teachers and students were expected to conduct online lessons. Another problem that this situation brough was the access to digital equipment. Apart from students who did not have a computer in their houses, there were even teachers who did not have digital devices except the mobile phones.

> The one thing that I really found hard to grasp during this period was the students' circumstances. Not every student had the same opportunities with the rest. There are millions of students in Turkey from east to west, and this sudden decision which was probably necessary due to the widespread of the disease caught us unprepared. In my opinion, providing equal opportunities was MoNE's responsibility. But we know that there were many students who did not have computers, tablets or internet connection. In our school we did a quick survey and spotted some students experiencing these problems. We tried to help as much as we can as teachers. (English teacher 2, working at a socio-economically advantaged district of Istanbul)

4.2.2. Inclusive education

There were also teachers who referred to the inclusive education aspect of educational opportunities. They mostly focused on the negligence of action that was needed to be taken for students with special needs.

> It was so chaotic. During the lockdown some students were unable to join online classes due to lack of access to digital devices and/or internet

> connection, but another group with learning disorders were totally neglected. Personally, I do not have students with special needs, but I know some counselor teachers reaching out to their students but mostly from social media we learned that there were many students with special needs that needed our attention as educators. (English teacher 7, working at a socio-economically advantaged district of Istanbul)

While some teachers referred to lack of access to digital equipment, some from different schools stated that the ministry tried to help some students with this issue:

> The administration wanted us to collect the names of the students who needed digital devices to attend the online lessons and after a while just a few tablets were distributed, three or four tablets, and this was not enough. Because we knew that we had students who had four other siblings at the school age and as their online lessons overlap with each other only one of them were able to attend the lessons. This was another concern. (English teacher 5, working in a socio-economically disadvantaged district of Istanbul)

In addition to the issues stated above, another aspect of the problems with providing equal opportunities was voiced by English teacher 4:

Leave everything aside! I was calling the parents to ask why their children were not in online lessons and you know what they told me. They told me that their children were working. With some, their fathers were unemployed because of the pandemic and the children had to work. This really hurt and still I cannot stop thinking about it. This is unfair. (English teacher 4, working at a socio-economically disadvantaged district of Istanbul)

4.2.3. Problems in assessment

Furthermore, the common point that the teachers touched upon was the problems they experienced during the assessment procedure. MoNE decided that attendance to the online lessons was not mandatory, and students would pass to the next grade without being assessed in any way. According to the participant teachers, this policy was not for the benefit of the students. On the contrary, this approach affected their academic stance negatively.

> Another problem was assessment. At first, we started as we always did in our face-to-face classes. Attendance rate was somewhat acceptable even though the various problems we experienced such as access to resources,

> adaptation etc. But when MoNE announced their policy regarding attendance and passing to the next grade, we observed that the attendance rate decreased dramatically. This was not helpful for the children. (English teacher 7, working at a socio-economically advantaged district of Istanbul)

There were other dimensions to this issue as stated by the teachers and it was the (un)willingness of students to learn. Though being students, these teachers thought that students forgot how to be so.

> Personally, I take this year as a gap year. I would suggest repeating the same grade during the next education term. All the students in Turkey have to take high stakes exams to be able to start higher education and I cannot think of another way to create equality for all the students. Some were able to attend online lessons, some did not have a chance. We should consider this and take action as educators. (English teacher 1, working at a socio-economically disadvantaged district of Istanbul)

4.3. The relationship between the stakeholders

The common issue that the teachers who participated in this study frequently referred to was the lack of communication between the stakeholders or the violation of it. By stakeholders we mean the parents, students, administrators and MoNE. As teachers commented on their experiences it became clear that there were no clear boundaries for the other side of the equation, namely parents, students and MoNE. One of the teachers put forward the following:

> I was really lost. Even though the lessons finished by 5 o'clock in the afternoon, students kept sending e-mails or messages via mobile applications. I had students texting in the middle of the night as if something was urgent. But no, this was just inappropriate. They assumed that we were available all the time. At first, I was able to ignore this but as time went by and we got tired during this period I clearly asked them to avoid communication after 9 pm. It helped to some extent but to achieve this we needed the support from administrators which we did not get. (English teacher 7, working at a socio-economically advantaged district of Istanbul)

Unlike the teachers commenting on the insufficient policies of the administrators, English teacher 8 reported that:

> We had not experienced total flexibility but still the administration was not closely following the teachers. The problem was the time-consuming things

> that MoNE demanded such as lesson documents. At the end of each week we were supposed to write a report about the lessons that we delivered that week. This was totally redundant. (English teacher 8, working at a socio-economically disadvantaged district of Istanbul)

In this section, the participant teachers' views and reflections on the emergency remote teaching were clearly demonstrated. It is clear that there was no unity in practice among the high schools in Istanbul and each had its own procedures. We will discuss these findings in detail in the following section.

5. Discussion

Starting from the 12th of March, 2021, all schools in Turkey were closed, and teachers had to deliver their lessons to their students from home. Thereafter, schools opened partly and it was left to students' and parents' choice to join face-to-face classes. In Turkey, the emergency remote teaching imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic was a mixture of traditional face-to-face classes and online classes.

There is now no doubt that every stakeholder in the field of education has been greatly affected by the sudden outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic. The present study was designed to determine the challenges high school English teachers experienced during the emergency remote teaching and how they adapted to them and/or tackled with them, and what they learned during this period.

Up to now, the relevant research has tended to focus on tertiary level rather than on secondary level and there has been no particular research focusing specifically on teachers' views and challenges (Moorhouse & Kohnke, 2021). In this respect, this study aims to give voice to the teachers about their views and experiences of online emergency teaching during COVID-19 pandemic in Turkey.

The interview data showed that the participating teachers are well aware of the fact that online teaching has both challenges and benefits for them and the students alike. Returning to the first research question posed at the beginning of this study, as Gao and Zhang (2021) it is now possible to state that teachers developed unique ways and increased their digital literacy to tackle the challenges they were facing. Moreover, as their digital literacy level increases, they benefit more from the online resources while teaching English (Arkorful & Abaidoo, 2015; Dumford & Miller, 2018; Gao & Zhang, 2021). Furthermore, it has been reported by the teachers that they spent less time on classroom management

and allocated more time into communicative activities with which they engaged their students (Gao & Zhang, 2021). Unlike some teachers reporting this, the rest argued the efficiency of online teaching since most of the students neither opened their cameras not participated in the activities even though they joined the online classes. The reasons for this issue might be students' motivation level and and their self-regulatory learning skills (Gonzalez & Louis, 2018). In addition to this, this finding may indicate that online teaching needs rigorous preparation (Green, 2016) and the craftily designed lessons should prevent students from being detached and confined (Plaisance, 2018).

Owing to the teachers' lack of training and experience in online teaching, they played it by ear to find efficient ways for this mode of tutoring (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Sepulveda-Escobar & Morrison, 2020) even though some had previous ICT education or in-service online training though these trainings were not openly announced for the attendance of the teachers. Since online teaching is mostly limited by teachers' level of digital literacy (Gao & Zhang, 2021), professional development opportunities and trainings should be provided for the teachers. It is now clearly understood from the reflections of the participant teachers that continuing professional development, especially in terms of integrating the ICT tools into lessons, plays an important role in teachers' adaptation to online mode of instruction (Moorhouse, 2021).

Another important finding is that teachers cultivated their own tools to cope with the stress that the pandemic and the sudden shift to online education brought to their lives. Teaching was already an arduous profession before the pandemic (Johnson et al., 2005; MacIntyre et al., 2019). With the outbreak, being a language teacher has become more strenuous since teachers needed to consider their students' proficiency and motivation as well as strive to enhance their communicative activities (Gkonou et al., 2020). Besides the teaching aspect of stressors, perception of change in identity and working conditions of participant teachers were other stressors (Borg, 2006; Cosgrove, 2001). The participants criticized the fact that the students, parents, and administrators assumed them to be available and accessible 7/24. Coping strategies are categorized as emotion-focused and problem-focused strategies Lazarus and Folkman (1984) in their prominent 'transactional model'. While teachers try to eradicate the circumstances causing problems in their environment by using problem-focused coping strategies, emotion-focused strategies help reduce or control the factors causing emotional difficulty (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The participants of this study adopted the emotion-focused aspect of

coping with stress as they did not want to spend their remaining time and energy on complaining about things that they accepted that they could not afford to change. Even though professional support and counseling were not provided by the administrators and the MoNE, these teachers developed positive psychology, adopted new hobbies, and increased their physical activity, created their own ways to cope with the stress with the support of each other.

In the previous section, teachers referred to some advantages of online teaching such as access to quality resources, decreased classroom management issues etc. However, the common problem they emphasized was the equal educational opportunities and digital divide, a term for the mismatch between the developed and developing countries in terms of accessing to technology and infrastructure and the reason for that is put forward by Van Dijk (1999) as poverty, location of a country and related determinants. In a recent review of UNESCO (2020), it has been reported that access to stable internet connection and required devices for online learning were not available to most of the students. Thus, the gap between the students became inevitably wider due to educational inequalities. In a recent survey of World Bank (2021) it has been confirmed that digital divide led to learning loss of students in approximately 40 low- and middle-income countries.

Apart from digital divide, another key problem that was highlighted exclusively by the participant teachers was the education of vulnerable students and students with disabilities. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2020) informed about the tremendous impact of COVID-19 on children. i.e. physical, emotional and psychological. According to Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights"many students with disabilities are being left behind, particularly students with intellectual disabilities"(2020, p. 6). Same impact was experienced by already-vulnerable and disabled children in Turkey leading to a learning loss or recess in already-existing knowledge. This finding reflects that of Yazcayir and Gurgur (2021) who also found that disabled students and students with special needs were not able to benefit from online education as no educational assistance was provided for this disadvantaged group of students. In short, a global survey conducted by World Bank (2021) corroborates the findings of this study that since the onset of COVID-19 pandemic students with disabilities and special needs experienced various challenges.

Thus far, there is no definitive knowledge on the topic of the relationship between the stakeholders during online education and COVID-19. This study found that there was a lack of communication and collaboration between the teachers, parents, and the administrators as well as the MoNE. It has been

reported that having supportive stakeholders is crucial to enhance the effect of online lessons (Barr & Miller, 2013). What is interesting about the results was even though teachers aimed at providing the best possible online education for the students, they could not get support from the parents or the administrators. However, to keep the parental satisfaction at the highest level, administrators were not flexible with the teachers in delivering the online lessons. This led to stress and extra workload on the teachers which would inevitably affect their negatively. Since teachers and school administrators faced the responsibility of parental satisfaction during lockdown as parents are important stakeholders (Haller & Novita, 2021), administrators became disturbing to some extent as the participant teachers reported. What's more, they are expected to perform well without any support from the other stakeholders.

6. Conclusion

The current study aims to address the gap in literature in terms of K-12 high school English teachers' experiences during COVID-19 pandemic and focuses on exploring the changes that occurred in their lives, challenges they experienced due to emergency remote teaching and lessons they learned during the COVID-19 lockdown.

The findings of this study may be helpful for educational stakeholders by propelling them to develop adaptable instructional models and create professional development opportunities for teachers to enhance their technology integration related knowledge in a world where there is unpredictable and constant change. Furthermore, teacher education programs should integrate technology use into their curriculum more as an essential competence for pre-service teachers. Pre-service teachers should be prepared for digital integration and use of various digital tools in their future careers.

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APPENDIX 1

Semi-structured Interview Questions

1. Were you ready for the abrupt transition to emergency remote teaching in terms of your digital literacy?
2. Did you have professional development opportunities during the emergency remote teaching?
3. How do you think you handled this process?
4. What were the coping skills you employed or developed during online teaching?
5. How was your communication/relationship with the other stakeholders? Students, parents, and administrators?
6. What would be your suggestions for the future?

CHAPTER 11

INTERPERSONAL DIMENSIONS OF EFL PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' BLOG DISCOURSE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL LINGUISTICS

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Abstract

The aim of this mixed methods case study was two-fold. It attempted to investigate 60 English as a Foreign Language (EFL) pre-service teachers' perceived learning, sense of community, and perceptions of collaborative learning in a blended blog-integrated freshman contextual grammar course in the fall semester of the 2014 and 2015 academic year. It also examined the interpersonal dimensions of blogging as a social medium associated with social presence in their interactive collaborative text-based discourse via peer comments through the lens of the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). The blogging experiences of the EFL pre-service teachers in the study were explored in terms of their sense of community, perception of collaborative learning, and perceived learning. The quantitative data were collected through online surveys and analyzed through correlation and regression studies. The qualitative data from the peer comments on blogs were analyzed via an analysis of interpersonal semantics. The findings indicated pre-service teachers' positive feelings about collaborative and perceived learning and moderate feelings concerning the sense of community. The study also suggested that the online interactive collaborative text-based blog discourse, as revealed through the peer comments, tends to be interwoven with the interpersonal engagement of the participants. Blogs can be

regarded as a promising online tool in terms of promoting the sense of community, perceived learning, and collaborative learning. To improve students' learning experiences, instructors can be recommended to create a supportive online classroom community by focusing on group dynamics and group cohesion and empowering students in terms of computer skills and expertise.

Keywords: Sense of community, perceived learning, collaborative learning, interpersonal dimensions, blogs, discourse, Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)

Introduction

With the features such as ease of use, functionality and flexibility, Web 2.0 technologies have become an indispensable component of online learning environments, particularly in the higher education context (Ajjan & Hartshorne, 2008; Churchill, 2009; Ellison & Wu, 2008; Top et al., 2010). These technologies including blogs promoted online content creation and publication as well as online communication. The integration of blogs into the educational settings is likely to promote student engagement, collaborative learning, and knowledge construction in tertiary contexts (Top, 2012; Lenhart & Fox, 2006). It is also likely to enhance the quality and effectiveness of instruction (Top et al., 2010).

Blogs are interactive text-based online learning environments with embedded links to other online resources. Via their comment feature, they enable instant feedback from the audience (Burgess, 2006), as well as providing access to the earlier entries/posts chronologically (Biberman-Shalev, 2018) through the threading feature (Viegas, 2005). Blogging facilitates learning in different ways (Efimova & Fiedler, 2003) via self-directed and community learning (Beldarrain, 2006; Hall, 2008; Yang, 2009), distributed apprenticeship (Du & Wagner, 2006; Oravec, 2003; Williams & Jacobs, 2004), the development of meta-learning skills (Farmer et al., 2008; Rockinson-Szapkiw & Walker, 2009; Yang, 2009) and the provision of multiple perspectives for learning (Xie & Sharma, 2004; Xie et al., 2008). Blogs are also convenient platforms for problem solving, exchange of ideas, self-expression, collective expression, and self-reflection (Biberman-Shalev, 2021; Brescia & Miller, 2006; Goktas, 2009).

The use of blogs in educational environments provides numerous opportunities for active and social learning as well as promoting collaborative activities (Ajjan & Hartshorne, 2008; Yang, 2009). Blogging has been found to facilitate the learning process in terms of individual knowledge development and group knowledge sharing (Churchill, 2009; Fessakis, et al., 2008; Makri

& Kynigos, 2007; Yang, 2009). Educational applications of blogs may include writing, interpreting, problem-solving, exchanging ideas collaboratively, expressing individual or group voice (Brescia & Miller, 2006; Goktas, 2009). Blogs enable student learning to become transparent and provide an alternative space "where a greater understanding of student meaning-making can be gained" (Paulus, Payne et al., 2009, p. 13).

From an instructional perspective, the previous studies on the integration of blogs into teacher education point out the potential contributions of blogs to the prospective teachers' learning process (Tang & Lam, 2014). Blogs have been indicated to foster the reading and writing skills development of teacher candidates (Stoszknowsk & Collins, 2017), sharpen their critical thinking skills, and enhance their social interaction (Osman & Koh, 2013). Blogs also provide prospective teachers with a valuable opportunity to be engaged in the reflection, and interpretation of their educational practices that they are not able to accomplish in class (Koban Koç & Koç, 2016). They also encourage students to become experts in particular subjects (Ferdig &Trammell, 2004), self-reflect and make meaning via writing and peer commenting (Ellison & Wu, 2004; Heo & Lee, 2013; Kirkwood & Price, 2014; Williams & Jacobs, 2004). Hence, blogs may be regarded as creative spaces for prospective teachers to enhance their conceptual and pedagogical knowledge (Deng & Yuen, 2013; Wood, 2012). They may be viewed as an appropriate professional learning platform for teacher candidates to engage in a critical examination of their pedagogical perspectives and beliefs in initial teacher education (Avila, 2013; Macia & Garcia, 2016; Mitchell et al., 2019; Turvey & Hayler, 2017). The benefits of blogging such as enhancing motivation to learn, improving academic achievement, promoting engagement in deep learning, peer interaction and collaborative learning opportunities through peer commenting were also cited in literature (Ellison & Wu, 2008; Kirkwood & Price, 2014; Williams & Jacobs, 2004).

Although blogs are embraced by teacher educators for their potential to support student interactivity and collaboration (Godwin-Jones, 2006) and by college students for understanding course content and providing and receiving peer feedback (Ellison & Wu, 2008), the research corpus on the blog integration into teacher education has primarily focused on the impact of blog integration in specific courses (Biberman-Shalev, 2021) or the impact of blog integration on the language skills development of pre-service teachers. However, the potential of blogs for the promotion of interpersonal learning/ communication process of prospective teachers (See Halic, et al., 2010; Kim, 2008; Top et al., 2010) and the investigation of the interpersonal interactional dynamics revealed through

their linguistic choices in the blog discourse are still underexplored. Hence, this mixed methods case study addressed the following research questions:

1. What are the freshman English as a Foreign Language (EFL) pre-service teachers' sense of community, perception of collaborative learning, and perceived learning?
2. How are the interpersonal dimensions of community associated with social presence realized in the blog discourse of the freshman EFL pre-service teachers?

Blogs in higher education

Blogs are increasingly becoming part of tertiary educational environments (Çırak Kurt & Yıldırım, 2021; Leslie & Murphy, 2008). It is revealed that blogs provide two main pedagogical benefits for educational settings: the opportunity for interaction and the opportunity for reflection (Deng & Yuen, 2011). The incorporation of blogs into learning environments involves construction and co-construction of knowledge, exchanging experiences, and framing and reframing beliefs via the open dialogue between participants (Turvey & Hayler, 2017). Blogging involves evaluating things from multiple perspectives and reflecting about issues (Cirak Kurt & Yıldırım, 2021; Leslie & Murphy, 2008). Blogs have been found to promote critical thinking, problem-solving, and reflection skills (Yang, 2009). In higher education contexts, the studies on blog use mostly focus on the impact of blogging on the promotion of reflective practices (Bener & Yıldız, 2019; Eustsler & Curcio, 2019; Too, 2013), student engagement (Cakir, 2013), self- regulated learning (Goktas & Demirel, 2012; Ubaque et al., 2016), social, cognitive, and meta-cognitive skills development (Ubaque et al., 2016) and language skills development (e.g., writing) (Aydın, 2014).

With a conceptual shift from the individualistic focus on learning in the 20th century to a situated, socially-constructed view of learning grounded in the socio-constructivist approach by Vygostky (1978) and sociocultural theory (Kilpatrick, et al., 2003; Lantolf, 2000), different frameworks of situated learning (e.g., Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger 1998) emerged. These frameworks emphasized the view of communities as sites of learning, aiming to "strike a balance between individuality and social connectedness…[as we begin to] see the essential role of relationship, participation, reciprocity, membership, and collaboration" (Feldman, 2000, as cited in Kilpatrick et al., 2003, p.1). Online communities are considered to be part of this paradigm. These communities are concerned with the creation and perception of social presence in technology-

mediated learning environments (e.g., Garrison et al., 2006; Seufert, 2000; Kilpatrick et al., 2003). Although there have been various attempts to define the characteristics of technology-mediated learning communities (Palloff & Pratt, 2005), the research on interpersonal interaction in different educational contexts including online learning environments is still scarce to date (Reeder et al., 2004). Hence, the aim of this study was two-fold. The first one was to investigate the EFL pre-service teachers' sense of community, perceived learning, and perceptions of collaborative learning in a blog-integrated freshman Contextual Grammar I course. The second one was to explore how the linguistic profiles of interpersonal interaction are manifested in the text-based discourse of pre-service teachers enrolled in a blog-integrated freshman EFL contextual grammar course.

Perceived Learning

The utilization of perceived learning as a research tool commenced with a study on immediacy and perceived cognitive learning by Richmond et al. (1987). In the absence of available measures of actual student learning, they considered college students' perceived learning to be an alternative to standardized tests and grades. The examination of perceived student learning is still regarded as the focus of interest for researchers (See Canbolat & Top, 2020; Caspi & Blau, 2008; Goldman et al., 2008; Kurucay, 2015; So & Brush, 2008). As regards the impact of the social presence of perceived learning in discussion forums in blended courses, Caspi and Blau (2008) revealed that posting more messages is associated with a higher level of perceived learning. The findings also pointed out that group identification was related to perceived learning. In the same vein, So and Brush (2008) found collaboration to be an indicator of perceived learning in a blended health education course. The researchers found a direct relationship between the level of student collaboration and the level of perceived learning. With respect to the impact of blog use on the students' perceived learning, Goldman et al. (2008) showed that blogging enhanced the student learning of the course material in a graduate class on environmental health and helped the students' understanding of the course content. In fact, the level of pre-service teachers' perceived learning in the current study was measured via a survey instrument used by Top (2012).

The Sense of Community

Being a construct similar to the sense of belonging, the sense of community supposes that the individuals in a group are bonded with one another as

members of a community (Top, 2012). The sense of community is associated with perceptions of acceptance, care, appreciation, and respect (e.g., Battistich et al., 1995; Willms, 2000; Yasuda, 2009). In this study, the sense of community is defined as "a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to being together" (McMillan & Chavis, 1986, p.9).

Two key concepts can be identified in relation to the sense of community. The first concept is interdependence and supportive interpersonal relationships (Sarason, 1974). The group acts as a tool for meeting individual members' needs and for creating opportunities to facilitate the members' participation in decision-making and goal-setting activities and the group membership is strengthened by rewards such as competence and status (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). The group membership becomes more meaningful and valuable through the individual commitment to the group values and the individuals' identification with the group (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). The second concept associated with the sense of community is supportive interpersonal relationships through frequent and positive interactions via affectionate and stable interpersonal relationships (e.g., Nichols, 2008; Solomon et al., 1996).

Concerning the previous research on the sense of community, Yang (2009) and Haliç et al. (2010) pointed out that blogs are likely to produce a strong sense of community among participants due to their potential to increase learner involvement. Blog-integrated learning environments have been found to facilitate feedback provision and reduce the feeling of isolation and promoting the sense of belonging to a community (Cameron et al, 2009; Dickey, 2004; Rockinson-Szapkiw & Walker, 2009). Nichols (2008). However, the establishment of good group dynamics and the avoidance of mistrust, competition, dominance or exclusion, and the threat of privacy are essential to generate a sense of community in these learning environments (Rovai, 2000, 2002; Xie & Sharma, 2004).

Collaborative Constructivism and the Community of Inquiry Framework

In blended learning environments, the sense of belonging can take the form of collaborative constructivism. Although collaboration through the use of Web 2.0 tools such as blogs facilitates learner engagement in meaningful discourse to share meaning and validate understanding (Garrison & Akyol, 2009), it might be hard to achieve in large lecture classes. To achieve meaningful learning experiences, in line with the Community of Inquiry Framework (Garrison et al., 2000), three types of presence are needed in online or blended environments:

cognitive, social, and teaching presences. The integration of all three presences is required before meaningful learning can occur (Garrison et al., 2000; Garrison & Akyol, 2009). Of these three types, the social presence is regarded as a prerequisite for a successful community of inquiry (Garrison et al., 2005). Social presence is defined as "the ability of participants in the Community of Inquiry to project their personal characteristics into the community, thereby presenting themselves to the other participants as 'real' people" (Garrison et al., 2000, p. 89). It is regarded as a "measure of the feeling of community that a learner experiences in an online environment" (Tu & McIsaac, 2002, p.131). A correlation has been found between the student perceptions of social presence and their perceptions of overall learning (Richardson & Swan, 2003). In online learning environments, social presence has been found to contribute to the sense of belonging, social cohesion, and collaboration in the community (Na Ubon, 2005; Palloff & Pratt, 2005).

Since "simple discourse analysis is not adequate to capture the social life of an online community" (Tu & Corry, 2002, as cited in Goertzen & Kristjánsson, 2007, p.213) to link the social and linguistic dimensions of the blog discourse, a Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) perspective was adopted in the current study by highlighting the lexical choices the participants make in their blog entries.

This systematic discourse analysis from multiple perspectives is considered to have a lot to offer to reveal the sociolinguistic landscape in blogs (Goertzen & Kristjánsson, 2007). SFL "connects the linguistic and the social by highlighting how language choices contribute to the realization of social contexts, including contexts of academic inquiry" (Goertzen & Kristjánsson, 2007, p.213) (See also Schleppegrell, 2004). From an SFL perspective, different features of social context are represented via linguistic choices including "the subject matter (Field), the relationship between participants (Tenor), and expectations for how different texts, written or spoken, should be organized (Mode)" (Goertzen & Kristjánsson, 2007, p.214). There are three kinds of meaning mapped onto each act of communication: "the nature of experience or goings-on related to the subject matter (ideational meaning), how social relationships are being negotiated (interpersonal meaning), and the nature and structure of the information flow (textual meaning)" (Goertzen & Kristjánsson, 2007, p.214) (See also Schleppegrell, 2004; Martin & White, 2005). The current study investigated how interpersonal meaning was negotiated between EFL pre-service teachers as a community of practice via their linguistic choices on a blog-integrated blended learning environment. It aimed to reveal how participants

displayed their social presence via their linguistic choices in their collaborative peer commenting endeavors.

Context

The data in the study were collected in the freshman Contextual Grammar 1 course in the fall semester of the 2014 and 2015 academic year. It involved a blended learning environment with face-to-face and online components. The face-to-face component consisted of class sessions at university where participants interactively revised major grammar topics through collaborative learning activities with the aid of PowerPoint presentations. On the other hand, the online component involved weblogs where participants had an exchange of ideas on various topics through blog comments. The course aimed to develop students' communicative competence in English through expanding their knowledge of English grammar in a variety of contexts including the academic context. It was organized to increase student awareness of how meaning is created through structure and how structure and meaning are related. The emphasis was placed on the development of critical thinking skills and the analysis of the usage of target grammatical structures in different contexts.

As to the blog work integrated into the course, the participants were asked to upload a topical blog journal entry of 300-400 words on a weekly basis to reflect on the news articles or scientific articles of their own choice on culture, technology, sports, economy, education, and books. Every other week, they were asked to upload an audio-visual journal entry, an entry where they reflected on a video/picture/song/film to their blogs, related to the topical blog entry they posted the previous week. They needed to explain the rationale for their audiovisual content choice and in what ways the audiovisual content was related to the topical blog entry. They needed to describe the audiovisual content, summarize the main arguments, and express their personal opinions about them, and point out the personal and societal significance of the audiovisual content. The study was launched in the fourth week of the 14-week fall semester of the 2014 and 2015 academic year and lasted 10 weeks (including the two-week hands-on training for the pre-service teachers to facilitate their blog use and effective peer comment writing at the beginning of the study). The participants were asked to write one blog entry and two peer comments on a weekly basis throughout the study.

The word limit for the topical and audiovisual journal entries was 300-400 words. They were asked to write 4 topical and 4 audiovisual blog entries

throughout the semester. The word limit for the peer comments was 150-200 words.

Participants

The participants were 60 freshman pre-service teachers of ELT who were enrolled in the Contextual Grammar 1 course. The pre-service teachers were within an age range between 18 and 20. The female participants (N= 48, 76%)) outnumbered the male ones (N= 12, 24%). The overwhelming majority of them (98%) reported not having any previous experience with blogs. With respect to the participants' computer skills, the students rated their skills as average (76%) or low (24%). They were chosen via convenience sampling procedures. The participants had a B2 level of proficiency in English (TOEFL IBT 86). The written consent forms were obtained from the participants at the beginning of the study so that the study data could be used for research purposes.

Method

Research Design

The current study adopted a mixed methods case study research design. Yin (2014) defines case study as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the 'case') in-depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomena and context may not be evident". The mixed methods case study reasearch design enables the exploration of a complicated phenomenon via an "integrative thinking mindset" that foster an in-depth investigation from various angles (Cook & Kamalodeen , 2020, p.57). It enables the exploration of a complicated phenomenon via an "integrative thinking mindset" that foster an in-depth investigation from various angles (Cook & Kamalodeen, 2020, p.57). It is "a deductively-driven' approach that requires the integration of a qualitative case study into a quantitative research design to comprehend and interpret the quantitative results. The mixed method case studies highlight the strengths of both types of designs and reduce the potential weaknesses entailed in each (Cook & Kamalodeen 2020, p. 60).

The quantitative approach was based on correlational survey design principles to analyze the relationships between variables (See Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). In this regard, the study investigated the pre-service teachers' sense of community, perceived learning, and perceptions of collaboration.

The qualitative approach was geared towards the discourse analysis of the data from blog comments rooted in SFL (See Goertzen, & Kristjánsson,

2007). The purpose was to examine the interpersonal elements associated with social presence and the related aspects of online collaboration in the EFL pre-service teachers' asynchronous communication in the blog comments as they are revealed via their linguistic choices.

Data Collection Instruments and Procedures

The quantitative data in the study were collected through the three online surveys administered at the end of the semester. The online instruments used in the data collection process were the adapted versions of the following scales: the Collaborative Learning scale (So. & Brush, 2008), the Sense of Community scale (by Halic, et al., 2010), and the Perceived Learning Scale (by Halic, et al., 2010).

The Collaborative Learning scale (CL) originally developed by So and Brush (2008), is composed of eight items on a five-point Likert scale regarding students' opinions on their preferences to work individually or in groups, as well as their face-to-face interaction versus online interaction, the collaborative work, and general satisfaction with collaborative learning. The reliability figure of the original scale was calculated to be 0.72.

The other two scales, the Perceived Learning scale (PL) and the Sense of Community scale (SC), were developed by Halic, et al. (2010). The former aims to investigate the amount of perceived student learning and the sense of community in a blog-integrated learning environment. It consists of seven items to measure student perceptions of learning in blog-mediated learning environments. The reliability of the original scale is 0.874. The latter, The SC scale, is made up of six items to examine the students' attitudes related to community building via blogs. Both scales are on a five-point Likert scale. The reliability of the original SC scale is 0.865. Both values indicate a high level of reliability (See Lounsbury, et al., 2005).

The adapted versions of the above-mentioned data collection instruments (in English) were used in the study. The course instructor, who was also the researcher, worked together with two experienced colleagues from the instructional technology department at the university and examined the adapted versions for clarity and relevance. The Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficient for the adapted versions were indicated as follows: 0.82 for PL, 0.76 for SC and 0.77 for CL.

Data Analysis

The quantitative data from the online surveys were initially analyzed via descriptive statistics (e.g., means and standard deviations). Then, bivariate, and

multivariate analyses were carried out on the data via the Statistical analysis software SPSS15.00. The relationship between pre-service teachers' perceived learning and their age, gender, their previous blogging experience, computer skills were investigated through the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation. Also, a linear step-by-step regression analysis was performed to check to what extent the pre-service teachers' gender, computer knowledge, sense of community, and perception of learning could account for perceived learning.

Regarding the analysis of the qualitative data in the study to explore the interpersonal dynamics of the target language community, the data from the peer comments on the blogs were coded based on an analysis of interpersonal semantics, in line with Goertzen and Kristjánsson (2007), Eggins and Slade (1997), and Martin and White (2005). A departmental colleague experienced in the qualitative data analysis was involved in the coding process. The inter-relater reliability was found to be 0.90. The interpersonal elements in comments to blog journal entries, representing asynchronous reflective discourse, were investigated as indicators of social presence within the framework of Community of Inquiry (Garrison et al., 2000). In the study, the interpersonal dynamics of the online blog community of pre-service teachers were investigated through the examination of attitudinal expressions, indicating how participants establish and indicate 'the degree of closeness and solidarity in relationships' (Eggins & Slade, 1997, p. 116). Linguistic sources for attitudinal expressions were explored via the semantic systems called Appraisal and Involvement (Eggins & Slade, 1997; Martin & White, 2005).

The Appraisal system incorporates "*Attitude, Engagement* and Graduation" (Goertzen & Kristjánsson, 2007, p. 217). In order to investigate the participants' linguistic profiles of the interpersonal dimension of collaborative action, the Attitude domain was taken into consideration (Goertzen & Kristjánsson, 2007). The Attitude domain constitutes the sub-domains such as "Appreciation" (related to reaction and evaluation), "Affect", (concerned with emotional states), and "Judgements", with a focus on ethical, moral, and societal values, including people's behavior (Goertzen & Kristjánsson, 2007, p.217). In determining the attitudinal profile of participants, the attitudinal expressions were also categorized in terms of 'positive or negative contextual polarity or sentiment at the discourse level' (Goertzen & Kristjánsson, 2007, p. 217).

The semantic system "Involvement" acts as complementary to "Appraisal" through the negotiation of interpersonal relations and the construction of different degrees of "intimacy and affiliation" (Martin & White, 2005, p.33). Within this system, the focus was placed on the terms of address, Naming, including

"titles, full names, nicknames, terms of endearment, abuse and so forth", which displays "the nature of the relationship and construction of distance between participants" (Eggins & Slade, 1997, p. 145).

In addition to the semantic systems Involvement and Appraisal, humor was added to the data coding as a semantic source as it is related to both systems (Eggins & Slade, 1997). The paralanguage and emoticons were also added as as separate categories to account for the unconventional symbolic uses of language which are acknowledged to be the indicators of interpersonal dimensions of computer-mediated communication (See Garrison et al., 2001; Goertzen & Kristjánsson, 2007).

An overview of the coding scheme utilized in the qualitative data collection from peer comments with examples from the data set can be seen in Table 3 in Appendix C.

Results

The findings are presented in line with the research questions.

Research Question 1: What are the freshman English as a Foreign Language (EFL) pre-service teachers' sense of community, perception of collaborative learning, and perceived learning?

The study pointed out that the integration of blogs into the face-to-face learning environment of EFL pre-service teachers was found to enhance their perceived learning, sense of community, and collaborative learning, which was consistent with the previous studies (Churchill, 2009; Halic et al., 2010; Petersen et al., 2006). Table 1A, 1B, 1C in Apppendix A present the descriptive statistics (means and standard deviation) of the pre-service teachers' perceptions related to perceived learning, sense of community, and collaborative learning. The pre-service teachers' mean scores were found to be M= 3.51 M= 3.16, M= 3.35, respectively.

The prospective teachers adopted a positive stance regarding their collaborative learning experience and their perceived learning experience while they adopted a moderate stance towards their sense of community in the blog-integrated blended learning environment. The pre-service teachers had a consensus on the blogs' facilitation of their construction, understanding, and sharing knowledge with their peers as a result of their peer commenting experience on the blogs. They enjoyed the opportunity of receiving and providing stimulating, and inspiring comments with their peers outside class in the asynchronous blog environment, which seemed to act as a safe alternative

space for self-expression for them. These results, in fact, echoed the findings of the previous research studies in the literature (Goktaş, 2009; Halic et al., 2010) on students' blog experience in class. Although the study corroborates the previous studies indicating the contribution of the blogs to the prospective teachers' reflective thinking skills development via the provision of alternative perspectives related to content (Sharma & Xie, 2008), it does not confirm the findings of some others that demonstrated the promotion of critical thinking skills via blogs (See Maurino, 2007). Due to the tendency of the pre-service teachers to use overwhelmingly positive comments as opposed to critical comments, to sustain the sense of solidarity and the strong affective bond between the members of the community of practice, the peer comments did not seem to promote the critical thinking skills development much among the pre-service teachers, as shown via the qualitative data analysis results.

In addition, the majority of the participants expressed their satisfaction with their collaborative learning experiences via peer commenting on the blogs. They appeared to be content to become a member of a virtual community of practice while acknowledging their satisfaction with being part of a face-to-face learning experience in their course setting (See Top, 2012).

The prospective teachers seemed to agree on the beneficial impact of peer commenting on their learning process in general. They regarded the threads of peer comments as highly valuable contributions to their blog work (See Maurino, 2007). They pointed out their satisfaction with their peers' appreciation of the novelty and the authentic content of the content and the informative nature of their blog entries led them to pursue their academic writing endeavors in a more enthusiastic manner. They also pointed out the opportunity blogging and peer commenting provided for them in terms of reflecting on their own and peers' academic writing and their use of English for academic purposes in content and becoming more familiar with the academic writing style and conventions.

In fact, a detailed examination of the blog discourse and the peer comments revealed that pre-service teachers tended to refrain from negative feedback while writing peer comments (Ellison & Wu, 2008). As they seemed to regard negative feedback as a face-threatening act, they tended to feel uncomfortable with receiving and providing such feedback. Some prospective teachers in the current study might have found the peer comments not so valuable due to their heavy focus on the strengths of the blog post but not on the points that need to be improved.

Addressing the relationship between pre-service teachers' perceived learning, their sense of community, and their perceptions of collaborative

learning, as displayed in Table 2 in Appendix B. EFL pre-service teachers' sense of community was found to be positively correlated with their sense of perceived learning. The study indicated a statistically significant correlation between pre-service teachers' perceived learning and their sense of community ($r= 0.70$) at a significance level of 0.005. The study indicated that pre-service teachers' sense of community (50%) and their computer knowledge level (an additional 3.5%) accounted for the 53.5 % of the variance in pre-service teachers' perceived learning, the statistically most significant predictor of perceived learning ($p= 0.04$) in the study. In fact, the sense of community was stated as one of the most significant predictors of perceived learning in blog-integrated learning environments in literature (e.g., Halic et al., 2010; Petersen, et al., 2006; Yang, 2009). Except for the computer knowledge level, the other variables such as gender, previous blogging experience did not have a significant contribution to the variance in perceived learning ($p>0.05$). As the computer skills were found to have an impact on the students' perceived learning in the study, in order to foster the sense of community among the students, the instructors might consider providing continuous scaffolding and technical support and training for the students in terms of different aspects of blog use and how to use the comment function effectively (See Halic, et al., 2010).

This finding is in line with some other previous studies, such as Yang (2009) investigating the blog use as a reflective tool in initial teacher education context, where the sense of community and computer knowledge level was shown to predict prospective teachers' perceived learning significantly. Yang (2009) highlighted the benefits of blogging for teacher candidates in terms of facilitating their learning process and acting as a catalyst for establishing a community of practice and reinforcing the collegial bond between the members of the learning community and fostering interaction among them. Similar to the current study's findings, in their exploration of the blogs' potential to sustain the student involvement, collaboration, and sense of community, Petersen et al. (2006) found that blogs could promote interactivity, collaboration, and team spirit among students, contributing to their learning process. The literature also provides evidence in relation to the link between the students' sense of community, perceived learning, and course satisfaction (Canbolat & Top, 2020; Barnard et al., 2007; Drouin, 2008). Sharma & Xie (2008) emphasized that the importance of sharing learning experiences and being informed of other people's opinions promoted "mutual growth" for the participants, conducive to the development of a sense of community (p.145).

In addition, the pre-service teachers' perception of collaborative learning was not observed to have statistically a significant contribution to the variance in perceived learning in the study ($p>0.05$). This might be attributed to the nature of the peer comments on the blogs. The majority of these comments contained appreciative remarks for the blog writers' work, highlighted the strengths of the blog entries, and a sense of solidarity among the participants, they lacked the suggestions for further improvement of the entries in general. Hence, some prospective teachers were not likely to view the peer comments as highly conducive to their new knowledge construction as they did not find the comments thougth-provoking and critical enough to activate their higher order thinking skills although they liked the collaborative learning experience through blogging (See So & Bush, 2008),

The moderate feelings of student teachers related to the sense of community in the current study might be attributed to the blended design of the course as they also had the opportunity to interact with one another in the face-to-face sessions, apart from their online interactions through peer commenting on the blogs. Although the majority of the pre-service teachers in the study appeared to be satisfied with their engagement in peer commenting (Canbolat & Top, 2020; Sher, 2009), online peer commenting did not seem to augment the amount of their interaction with their peers significantly. This might be attributed to the frequency and the amount of peer commenting the participants were involved in. Each participant was required to make two comments on their peers' blog entries on a weekly basis, and they were free to choose the blog entries they would like to comment on. Therefore, some pre-service teachers might have chosen their favorite classmates' blogs to comment on throughout the semester, which might have lowered the frequency of the interaction with the other blog writers. On the other hand, some other prospective teachers might have started interacting with their classmates through online peer commenting, with whom they did not normally interact in face-to-face sessions. This might have led to a certain amount increase in their face-to-face interaction with their peers; however, no significant changes were found in the quality of their interaction with their peers through the peer commenting process on the blogs. Furthermore, some students might have found the topic of their peers' blog posts stimulating and they might have commented on their entries by asking their peers some questions for elaboration. However, this did not seem to affect the quality of interaction among the pre-service teachers significantly, either. As the study started in the 4th week of the semester, the course instructor engaged the pre-service teachers in ice-breaking and other team building activities prior to

their involvement in the study. Therefore, the pre-service teachers might have developed strong group dynamics and a strong sense of community beforehand, which might account for their moderate feelings regarding the impact of online peer commenting on the establishment of the sense of community.

Rovai (2002) and Top (2012) emphasized the importance of developing a positive sense of community when students are engaged in the learning process through online discussion and through social opportunities, which is likely to enhance their perceived learning, perceived course satisfaction, and collaboration. Canbolat and Top (2020) also found that the provision of an online learning environment with social opportunities for students tended to have a positive impact on their sense of community and their sense of course satisfaction. Hence, it is of crucial importance for course designers and teachers to effectively promote the sense of community in blog-integrated learning environments via online course design and practices such as team building activities and interactive group activities as well as peer commenting to form a strong bond among the members of the online blog community (See also Barnard et al. 2007; Top, 2012). In addition, as suggested in Halic et al. (2010, p. 211), building "a sense of community, or social and teaching presence within the blogging structure" is likely to enrich students' learning gains. The teacher might explicitly state the instructional expectations related to community building and its impact on the learning experience (Halic et al. 2010). Creating opportunities for students to be engaged in online peer commenting in small groups, to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the online individual peer comments on the blogs as a face-to-face or online whole class/ small group activities or increasing the amount and frequency of online peer commenting, might also promote the sense of community in virtual learning environments. Creating an inclusive classroom community where students can enjoy a feeling of belonging through blogging can contribute to their learning experiences. Teachers could provide a deep learning experience for their students by ensuring three types of presence in blog-integrated environments (Garrison et al., 2000): the social presence (the connections in the learning community), the cognitive presence (a combination of active learning and reflection) and the teaching presence (the teacher-student relationship). Particularly the teaching presence is likely to play a very important role in enhancing the quantity and the quality of the interaction in online learning environments (See Garrison et al., 2006). Thus, the instructors might be recommended to monitor the peer comments on the blogs and contribute to the thread of comments to sustain the idea flow in the comments and to ensure the participant engagement in a blog-based peer feedback activity.

As pointed out by Paulus, Evans et al. (2009), the provision of a structured blogging tasks with teacher prompts for facilitation is likely to generate more focused blogging. Also, the teacher-facilitated interaction in technology-mediated learning environments is conducive to students' cognitive engagement and perceived learning, (Garrison & Cleveland-Innes, 2005), as the student interaction in online environments on its own does not guarantee cognitive engagement (Halic et al., 2010)

Research Question 2: How are the interpersonal dimensions of community associated with social presence realized in the blog discourse of the freshman EFL pre-service teachers?

The results of the qualitative analysis of the interpersonal dimensions of the online text-based blog discourse in the peer comments appeared to be complementary to the results of the quantitative data analysis in the study.

In relation to the interpersonal dimensions of community associated with social presence realized in the blog discourse of the freshman EFL pre-service teachers, although the peer comments were not coded for the degree of positivity or negativity, no evidence was found in relation to the expressions with a negative orientation, which corroborates Goertzen & Kristjánsson, (2007)

Regarding the attitudinal orientation of interpersonal elements in peer comments on the blogs (Please see Table 3 in Appendix C for the categories of interpersonal elements and some examples from the study data), the majority of the peer comments (85%) on the blogs tend to have a positive and encouraging tone for the blog writers. The pre-service teachers generally reflected a sense of appreciation for the novel and informative features of the blog posts via constructive feedback. As far as the linguistic realization of interpersonal elements related to the social presence in collaborative peer commenting endeavor is concerned, the discourse evidence pointing out the positive interpersonal interaction in the peer commenting process might reveal that the dynamics of Politeness Theory might be at work for the management of "face-threatening-acts" (Morand & Oecker, 2002, as cited in Goertzen & Kristjánsson, 2007, p. 217). The EFL pre-service teachers in the study might have considered providing negative or questioning comments to their peers' blog posts to endanger the sense of solidarity prevalent in their community of practice, they tended not to make any such comments to their peers' blog posts. As negative /deconstructive peer comments might be viewed as face-threatening acts with the potential to disrupt the team spirit, camaraderie, and group harmony, prospective teachers might have refrained from making comments on

the blogs that would lead to a potential interpersonal communication breakdown and misunderstanding. Their positive comments seemed to elevate the sense of unity and cohesion in the group (See also Goertzen & Kristjánsson, 2007), which confirmed the sense of community among the pre-service teachers as the online community of practice. An in-depth analysis of the peer comments revealed that pre-service teachers tended to provide comments for their close friends' blogs, which may have accounted for the moderate feelings for the sense of community in the quantitative analysis. These results corroborate the previous studies indicating the factors weakening the sense of community such as the exclusion of some students (Rovai, 2001; Xie & Sharma, 2004). However, unlike other studies (Rovai, 2002) the current study did not reveal any instances of mistrust or competition between the pre-service teachers as factors detrimental to the development of the sense of community. Also, the pre-service teachers' tendency to avoid any critical comments may account for the moderate level of sense of community in the study, which might be promoted through the participants' engagement in the activation of the higher-order thinking skills such as evaluation and assessment (See So & Bush, 2008).

As to the use of the interpersonal elements associated with social presence in the peer comments, the comments in the category of Appreciation (85.5%) focused on an exclusively positive evaluation of the pre-service teachers' blog entries (e.g., "the perspective you adopted towards the topic is so different and innovative.", "Your perspective is so realistic.", "Your analysis of the topic is so informative and detailed."). The prospective teachers used words of Affect (80%) (e.g., "I really like the way you personalize the topic." "I admire the way you put forward a controversial perspective regarding the topic." Pre-service teachers' comments of judgement in the data (35%) also tended to focus on the positive evaluation of their peers' work ("You have made so important points in your blog entry"). The functions of the above-mentioned interpersonal elements are consistent with those in Goertzen and Kristjánsson, 2007. The qualitative data analysis also seemed to provide support for the quantitative results. The prospective teachers' positive reflective comments on their peers' engagement in the composition of the blog entries (Yang, 2009) appeared to motivate their peers' cognitive engagement in the knowledge construction process. In addition, the blog-based peer comments in the study appeared to foster individual knowledge development and group sharing (Yang, 2009).

Naming (70%) was mainly used to give credit to the blog writer's work and to indicate appreciation for his/her effort (e.g., "Thanks Begüm for showing me a different perspective." There were also some instances of humorous nicknaming

such as "my super intelligent friend" or short forms of address, or the use of initials (e.g., "A.K."). The consistent use of first names also seemed to "reinforce the sense of immediacy within the community by creating a sense of reduced social distance" (Goertzen & Kristjánsson, 2007, p. 220). The use of naming in the study are in line with that in literature (See Goertzen & Kristjánsson, 2007).

Paralanguage (20%) was mainly used to emphasize the points made by the blog writers (e.g., Thanks!!!, "WOW!") On the other hand, emoticons (25%) were used to signal the positive orientation of the peers commenting on the blog entries (e.g., "So I will follow your recommendation;)", "Thank you for your amazing sharing ;)". The use of paralanguage and emoticons in the study appeared to signal familiarity and closeness among the pre-service teachers in the study, which corroborates the findings in previous studies (See Goertzen & Kristjánsson, 2007). The qualitative analysis results are consistent with those of the quantitative results indicating the sense of community embracing the pre-service teachers in the study (Rockinson-Szapkiw & Walker, 2009)

Although the data analysis of the peer comments did not reveal a prevalent use of humorous expressions (4%), the pre-service teachers were found to prefer such expressions to indicate their state of intimacy with their peers (e.g., "You know you can always ask me when you are looking for a new dress. I am the new Prada, you know, LOL!"). The use of these expressions appeared to indicate a relatively strong bond between the pre-service teachers as a community of practice, which was aligned with the sense of collaboration among the pre-service teachers, as indicated in the quantitative results (See also So & Bush, 2008) . The pre-service teachers' use of paralanguage and humorous expressions was aligned with the previous research studies as well (See Goertzen & Kristjánsson, 2007).

Hence, the use of the above-mentioned interpersonal elements associated with social presence in the study suggests the important role interpersonal elements play in the process of online text-based peer commenting which tends to be a highly collaborative and interactive process.

Conclusion

The study investigated the interpersonal dimensions of blogging and the blog discourse in the peer comments in a blog-integrated blended initial teacher education course. The findings suggested the sense of community was the most significant predictor of the perceived learning experiences for prospective teachers. To enhance the student teachers' learning experiences through blogging, the instructors might consider creating an interactive and

collaborative classroom community where members are united around a common goal and a strong team spirit. They might also think of providing opportunities for the pre-service teachers to develop their digital literacy skills and improve their digital competence. As the prospective teachers' computer skills and expertise at the beginning of the course are likely to affect their perceived learning experiences, the teachers should provide ongoing guidance and scaffolding related to blog formation and different aspects of blogging for the prospective teachers throughout the course and help them whenever they are confused about the blog maintenance. As opposed to unstructured blogging (Paulus, Evans et al., 2009), teachers may choose to incorporate relatively more structured blogging tasks (with clear and precise prompts) to enable the students to engage in more focused blogging (Paulus, Payne et al., 2009). They might also consider facilitating the online blog interaction among students as unfacilitated interaction may not result in a satisfactory level of cognitive engagement (Garrison & Cleveland-Innes, 2005) In fact, teaching presence in online environments is acknowledged to be conducive to student interaction and collaboration in online learning environments (Garrison & Cleveland-Innes, 2005)

In the study an SFL-based coding system was used to profile social presence in a blog-integrated learning environment (See Goertzen & Kristjánsson,, 2007) The findings indicated that the establishment of a strong sense of community between participants through close collaboration and interaction via blog-based peer comments s conducive to their perceived learning in blog-integrated learning environments. The study also pointed out that the formation of socio-emotional relationships among participants is highly conducive to the knowledge construction process.

The analysis of the interpersonal dimensions of the blog discourse related to peer comments in the study revealed the close connection between the effectiveness of a collaborative learning engagement and the features of interpersonal engagement (Goertzen & Kristjánsson, 2007). It is important to bear in mind that not all members of the community of practice may necessarily share the same beliefs and assumptions but they are likely to contribute to the establishment of the interpersonal dynamics at work in the community and have an impact on the nature and flow of the collaborative learning process (Goertzen & Kristjánsson,, 2007). Online task design may play an important role in facilitating such collaborative interactions. In fact, the task designs that promote teacher-student /student-student interaction and student-resource

interaction (e.g., Garrison et al., 2001; Garrison & Cleveland-Innes, 2005) may be considered to foster collaboration in online learning environments.

One of the limitations of the study is the lack of an experimental group in the study. The short duration of the study and the limited number of participants might also be considered two other limitations in the study. However, the findings are likely to provide a road map and guidelines for the instructors and teacher educators for the effective integration of blogs into their learning environments in the other similar EFL higher education contexts. As the study highlighted the issues involved in establishing an interactive and collaborative classroom community of practice with a strong sense of community aiming to achieve an effective learning experience, it is likely to be beneficial for the teacher educators to determine their priorities in organizing, managing, and sustaining their blog-integrated learning environments. Further studies might be conducted using an experimental, a quasi-experimental research design or a comparative perspective involving the blended and fully online learning environments. Qualitative case studies investigating the interpersonal dimensions of the blog discourse might also be considered.

APPENDICES

Table 1 A. Descriptive statistics of the pre-service teachers' perceived learning (Adapted from Halic et al., 2010)

Perceived learning	N	Mean	SD
Commenting on my peers' blogs has helped me to share my knowledge and experience with my peers.	60	3.7	0.9
Commenting on my peers' blogs helped me to share my knowledge and experience with my peers.	60	3.0	1.2
Other students' comments on my blog posts are important.	60	3.6	0.8
Peer comments on the blogs has helped me understand other points of view.	60	3.5	0.9
The exchange of ideas on the blogs via peer comments has made me think about the ideas/ concepts outside of this class.	60	4.0	1.0
My point of view has been acknowledged by my peers in this course.	60	3.5	1.2
Overall, commenting on my peers' blogs helped me to learn.		3.3	1.0
Average		3.51	1

Table 1B. Descriptive statistics of the pre service teachers' sense of community (Adapted from Halic et al., 2010)

Sense of community	N	Mean	SD
The exchange of ideas on the blog with my classmates via peer comments has helped me get to know them better	60	3.5	1.1
The peer comments on the blog has helped me feel connected to other students in this course.	60	3.4	0.9
Due to class blog, I feel that I am an important part of the classroom community	60	2.8	1.0
I have been stimulated to do additional readings or research on topics discussed on the blog.	60	3.3	1.1
In comparison to my other classes, the amount of interaction with other students in this class has increased due to the blog-based peer comments.	60	3.0	1.1
In comparison to my other classes, the quality of interaction with other students in this class has increased due to the blog-based peer comments	60	3.0	1.1
Average		3,16	1.05

Table 1C. Descriptive statistics of the pre-service teachers' perception of collaborative learning (Adapted from So & Bush, 2008)

Perception of collaborative learning	N	Mean	SD
Collaborative learning experience in the blog-supported environment is better than in a face-to-face learning environment.	60	2.2	1.2
I felt part of a learning community in my group.	60	3.7	1.1
I actively exchanged my ideas with group members via blog-based peer comments.	60	4.1	0.8
I was able to develop new skills and knowledge from other members in my group.	60	3.6	1.0
I was able to develop problem-solving skills through peer collaboration on the blogs.	60	3.6	1.1
Collaborative learning in my group was effective	60	3.5	1.2
Collaborative learning in my group via blog-base peer commemts was time-consuming.	60	3.0	1.4
Overall I am satisfied with my collaborative learning experience • in this course.	60	3.1	1.3
Average		3.35	1,13

Appendix B. Correlations among variables

Table 2. Correlations among variables (N=60)

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1. Gender	-0.005	-0.25	-0.02	-0.08	-0.06
2. Computer knowledge level	0.35	0.13	0.08	0.25	
3. Previous experience with blogs	-0.02	0.12	0.12		
4. Perception of collaboratie learning	0.25	0.25			
5. Sence of community	0.71*				
6. Perceived learning	1				

*p>0.05

Appendix C. Coding scheme for peer comments on blogs

Table 3. Coding scheme for interpersonal elements in peer comments on blogs (adapted from (Goertzen & Kristjánsson, 2007)

Category	Description	Guiding Question	Example
Appraisal: *Appreciation*	Reaction to and evaluations of reality; along range of positive to negative	What does the person think of that?	Your first year in METU must be too difficult for you as you weren't a boarding school student in high school.
Appraisal: Judgement	Evaluations of the ethics, morality, or social values of people's behaviour; along range of positive to negative	How does the person judge that behaviour?	It would be better if you hadn't written it in only one paragraph.It looks so confusing. Apart from this ,your writing is good. As I can see from your reflection it ensures priceless experience.
Appraisal: Affect	Expression of emotional states; along range of positive to negative	How does the persons feel about it?	When these difficult times have passed, you will look back on what you have done, and will just smile. Your process will be much easier if you join an activity.

Involvement: Naming	Use of naming (vocatives) to construct varying degrees of intimacy and interactional direction	Who addresses who? How does the person address others?	Dear Sinem. My dear friend Mualla. My dear friend, my panther "Ahmet" :) Dear handenurcum
Paralanguage	Use of non-standard spelling, abbreviations, punctuation, and capitalization to express attitude and degrees of intimacy/informality.	What unconventional forms does the person use?	dear Ahmet I think u r right..:) 4ever devrim :) ours songs will last 4ever :) I thought that priceless and unprizable have the same meaning, am I wrong??
Emoticons	Use of symbols to convey emotional tone; along range of positive to negative	What symbols does The person use to Convey non-verbal expressions?	I congratulate you! :D :D on BEING A STUDENT AT METU.
Humour	Use of teasing, ironic remarks, jokes, and other devices considered humorous by participants.	What does the person do to be "funny"?	I have got a broad back,you know. :) if I have mistakes you can always tell me :) thank you very much for your comments.

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